Charles University

Faculty of Social Sciences

Diploma Thesis

Master in International Security Studies

Jakob J. Gilg

2019

Local Self-Defence Militias as Counterinsurgents

The Possibility, Willingness and Rationality of Selective Violence against Insurgents

Master Thesis

Author	**Jakob J. Gilg**	
Submitted	31.07.2019	
Supervisors	JUDr. PhDr. Tomáš Karásek, Ph.D., M.A. Kamil Klosek	Prof. Dr. Katharina Holzinger
Study program	M.A. International Security Studies	M.A. Politik- und Verwaltungswissenschaften
Academic year	2018/2019	2018/2019
University	Charles University Prague	Universität Konstanz

Declaration of Authorship

1. The author hereby declares that he is the sole author of this master thesis and used only the listed resources and literature.

2. The author hereby declares that all the sources and literature used have been properly cited.

3. The body of the diploma thesis (pages 1-50) as submitted here consists of 126 830 keystrokes (19 826 words).

Name	Date	Signature
Jakob J. Gilg	31.07.2019	

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my supervisors and thank my proof-readers Christoph Dworschak, Christoph Steinert and Simone de Roode.

Abstract

How do local self-defence militias (LSDMs) influence violence against civilians in civil conflicts? Compared to other types of pro-government militias (PGMs), LSDMs are active in their home area. This results in abundant local information that can be used to identify and target insurgents and their supporters selectively. Furthermore, LSDMs are part of the local community, resulting in strong social ties, making indiscriminate violence against the community less likely. Finally, since LSDMs are dependent on popular support and cannot move on to a new area after violent acts, they are incentivised to retain local support by abstaining from civilian targeting. Therefore, I hypothesise that LSDMs are more likely to employ selective violence, and that their deployment decreases civilian fatalities in civil conflicts. To empirically test this claim in a global sample, I use 1) a logistic regression to assess the likelihood of selective violence of PGMs (H1), and 2) a negative binomial regression to evaluate the expected number of civilians killed by the government (H2). The results for the first hypothesis suggest an increased likelihood of selective violence for LSDMs (60%) compared to 50% for other PGMs, although they do not allow inference beyond the observed sample. The analysis of the second hypothesis shows that states using LSDMs decrease their civilian deaths by 30 per year (75%). Consequently, this study contributes to an improved understanding of the different types of PGMs, and informs policies on intra-state security administration.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

1. Introduction

"A well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained in arms, is the best most natural defense of a free country."

- James Madison,
Founding Father and 4. President of the United States of America (Constitution Society 2019)

This famous quote by James Madison relates to the main point of this thesis. To protect a country and its people, a militia is a viable solution. While Madison referred to a somewhat different context and I would not go so far as to claim that it is the best protection, I do argue that a certain type of militia can be useful as a counterinsurgent in a civil conflict.

Civil wars have been a widespread phenomenon throughout history and remain an ongoing challenge for the international community. As the boundaries between combatants and civilians blur these conflicts usually come with high numbers of civilian casualties and human tragedies (Mednick 2018). This makes the study of civil wars a topic of major importance for politics and academia. But while the actions of states and insurgents have been covered in numerous studies, one actor remained largely neglected: militias (Jentsch et al. 2015, 1-2). While they have gained some well-deserved scholarly attention in recent years, many aspects are still relatively understudied. Militias usually fight on the side of the government and are often comprised of former civilians. The news and several scholarly articles dealing with pro-government militias (PGMs), often present them as the perpetrators of atrocities against rebels and civilians alike (Mitchell et al. 2014; Human Rights Watch 2015; Marsh 2019).

However, the category of 'militia' is relatively wide and encompasses substantively different groups that should be considered separately. While some PGMs are small clandestine groups of well-trained fighters hunting down insurgents or government critics, others are mostly comprised of civilians formed to defend their village from rebel attacks. It should not be surprising that these very different groups also have different consequences for the dynamics of civil wars. However, although militias in general are regarded as extremely violent, many are used effectively as counterinsurgency forces (c.f. Lyall 2010a; Carey et al. 2011). Still, the mechanisms through which PGMs can be effective are not yet sufficiently explored and may vary for the different types of groups.

In this thesis, I investigate how local self-defence militias (LSDMs)[1] differ in their use of violence from other types of PGMs and how this influences civilian casualties during conflict.

I answer this question by arguing that LSDMs rather employ selective and limited violence compared to other PGMs that are not sedentary in their home area. I posit that this is due to three main reasons: LSDMs have a greater *possibility* for selective violence, a higher *willingness* to avoid the indiscriminate targeting of civilians, and incentives that increase the *rationality* to abstain from civilian targeting. The mechanisms behind this are firstly that LSDMs have better local knowledge about the culture, population, and terrain that enables them to target insurgents selectively. Secondly, they are embedded in their own community and among friends and family which means LSDM members do not want to harm the civilians around them. Lastly, LSDMs depend on local support to continue operating which decreases the likelihood of indiscriminate violence that would antagonise the population. Such selective violence leads to better counterinsurgency (COIN) performance. As this connection has been convincingly argued and supported before (e.g. Kalyvas 2006; Nidiffer 2012), I desist from investigating this point again and concentrate on the nexus between LSDMs and selective violence.

I would like to emphasise Madison's view of militias being "composed of the body of the people" as this is the important part from my perspective: since the population is what makes an insurgency successful, the best counterinsurgency comes from the people as well. This echoes a point made by many researchers and practitioners: the population is the key to defeating an insurgency (e.g. Galula 2006; Thompson 1966). When the people support the government by forming LSDMs, they help the government by providing valuable local intelligence and effectively protecting the population. This, in turn, further increases government support among civilians. These effects, however, are only present if the militia consists of civilians from the community in which it is deployed. More mobile PGMs do not have these benefits of local intelligence, nor do they have strong relations to the local population resulting in comparatively higher levels of violence that make them less-effective counterinsurgents.

Resolving internal conflicts and ending civil wars across the globe is one of the major challenges that politicians and militaries currently face. With ongoing counterinsurgency campaigns, as the one in Afghanistan for instance, the practical relevancy of researching

[1] See complete definition of an LSDM in section 3.1 on page 19.

effective COIN is apparent. Without understanding the complex interactions of all actors, it will be difficult to find effective and sustainable solutions to protect civilians and end these conflicts.

It is important to note that this thesis investigates the consequences of LSDMs in an empirical manner from a positivist perspective. The several morally problematic implications and potential negative consequences such as turning untrained civilians into combatants and creating another armed non-state actor, which undermines the state's monopoly of force, are not discussed in this thesis. This work is simply intended to deepen the understanding of LSDMs and potentially inform the discussion of effective COIN. It does not arrogate to judge the normative aspects of the use of LSDMs in civil conflicts.

To investigate the consequences of militia type for the use of violence, this thesis proceeds as follows: first, I give background information on the topic by reviewing the empirical literature on violence against civilians, counterinsurgency, and militias. In the subsequent theoretical section, I define my main concepts, propose the mechanisms that make LSDMs more likely to employ violence selectively, and briefly present the case of the Kamajor militia in Sierra Leone. From this I derive my hypotheses, which are tested in the ensuing quantitative analysis. In the final section, I summarise the study and draw my conclusions about its implications.

2. Literature Review

In this section I review the literature on the topics that my article is concerned with. The aim is to give background information, show the current state of research and to place my paper among the existing literature. This thesis connects to the work of many scholars who researched the dynamics of civil wars and counterinsurgency (COIN) before me. To present their research in a more structured way, I split the literature overview into three parts: first, I present the literature on civilian targeting in civil wars, then I review the work on effective counterinsurgency, before turning to the research on pro-government militias (PGMs).

2.1 Civilian Targeting in Civil Conflict

Civilian victimisation is a common and gruesome feature of civil wars (Eck/Hultman 2007). Civilians are robbed, maimed, raped or killed during most civil wars and these gross human rights violations regularly draw international attention and denouncement to the perpetrators. Nonetheless, armed actors continue to target civilians in conflicts. It is thus not surprising that

there are many scholars who try to explain these patterns of violence and find strategies to prevent, or at least reduce, civilian targeting. The literature on violence against civilians is split into two general factions: the first sees civilian targeting as a strategic choice by commanders to achieve their goals (e.g. Kalyvas 2006), while the second strand argues that violence against civilians is due to the groups' structure and the conflict setting (e.g. Weinstein 2006). In the next two sections I present these strands and their respective explanations for violence against civilians.

2.1.1 Strategic Violence

The majority of researchers holds the view that violence in civil wars is used strategically. [2] The most prominent example of this strand of research is arguably Kalyvas (2006) with his book 'The Logic of Violence in Civil War'. Kalyvas argues that both, discriminate (or selective) and indiscriminate violence, is used as a rational deliberate strategy to achieve the aims of military commanders: on the one hand, employing violence in a selective manner - that is, the targeted punishment of only enemies and their supporters - makes it less likely to lose popular support. This is difficult, however, as insurgents as well as counterinsurgents face the 'identification problem': neither group can be fully certain who supports their respective enemy and who does not (Kalyvas 2006, 89-91). Given this uncertainty it may be the rational choice to target the whole suspected group (e.g. a whole village or ethnic group). Additionally, such indiscriminate violence can be used as a deterrent to prevent civilians from joining or supporting the other side (cf. also Van Creveld 2008). Kalyvas further argues that territorial control is ultimately the cause of violence against civilians as it alleviates the identification problem. In areas where either the state or the rebel group has complete control, the respective actor also has sufficient information about the enemy (Kalyvas 2006, 203-204). This enables the actor to target enemies and their supporters selectively and makes indiscriminate targeting of civilians less likely.[3]

This problem of identifying the enemy is also prominent in other studies supporting the strategic view on violence. Valentino et al. (2004) argue that governments face significant challenges when trying to target insurgents directly, making it an attractive option to instead cut off their support. It is much easier and requires less information to kill the population that supports the rebellion than to identify and selectively target the actual rebel fighters. As insurgents face the

[2] In this section of the review I consider state and non-state actors because their rationale for violence against civilians is in many cases similar and because PGMs (or LSDMs) are conceptually somewhat in between.

[3] Analysing a sub-category of civil conflicts, called 'conventional civil wars', Balcells (2010) argues that this literature neglects political factors of violence against civilians. She finds that pre-war political competition plays an important role in explaining civilian targeting in conflicts that are not waged with guerrilla tactics but have clear frontlines.

same problem, this mechanism also works from their perspective. According to Fjelde and Hultman (2014), ethnicity plays a major role in the collective targeting of civilians: to increase the likelihood that the enemy's support base is hit, armed actors target the enemy's co-ethnics. Lacking more precise intelligence, ethnicity acts as heuristic of civilian allegiance and thus determines civilian targeting.

However, not just a lack of information can lead to violence against civilians, but also a lack of power and resources. According to Wood (2010), an insurgent group's capabilities impact their interaction with the civilian population: strong rebel groups are able to provide positive incentives like public services and protection to generate popular support, whereas weak groups are unable to do so. If a group's capacity is low, it is unable to provide positive incentives to create voluntary collaboration which limits the strategic options available for commanders. Such groups are then likely to resort to violence as a strategy to generate - albeit coerced - support (Wood 2010, 603). Wood extends this capability argument in a subsequent article, combining it with the idea of an external sponsor (Wood 2014). In this study, he finds that higher rebel capabilities only decrease violence if the group is dependent on the population for support. If the group is supported by an external sponsor or natural resources, the incentives change, and the group can victimise the local population without having to fear negative consequences. In this case, a higher capability is translated into a higher opportunity for violence against civilians.

Salehyan and colleagues (2014) come to the same conclusion: external sponsorship increases the likelihood that insurgents target the civilian population. While they also subscribe to the strategic view on violence, they propose a different mechanism as they understand rebel violence against civilians as signalling. The idea is that a rebel group is the agent in a principal-agent relationship and uses the killing of civilians to signal its commitment and willingness to the sponsor, who acts as the principal. More precisely, the group hopes to signal that they are actively working towards the principal's goals, whilst shirking and risking as little as possible: actually fighting government troops involves greater risk than killing unarmed civilians.

Rebels can not only use violence against civilians to signal to an external sponsor, but also to signal to the domestic government (Hultman 2009). Analysing the civil war in Mozambique, Hultman (2009) posits that the rebels used violence to demonstrate "the power to hurt" and to destabilise the government. She argues that the aim of civilian targeting was to weaken government support among the population by demonstrating that it is unable to provide protection and thus pressure the government into negotiations. In an earlier article, she proposed

a similar idea arguing that rebel violence against civilians is a way to increase the political and military cost for the government (Hultman 2007). Civilian victimisation is thus used to pressure the state into making concessions to avoid further civilian casualties.

Using process-tracing in a case study of the civil war in Guatemala, Schwartz and Straus (2018) found evidence that government troops considered the population as loyal to the insurgents and impossible to win over. Violence against the population was therefore used to achieve two goals. First, targeting civilians meant weakening the insurgents and second, violence was used as a coercive instrument to shape civilian allegiance and deter further rebel collaboration. The latter argument relates to the previously mentioned signalling: according to Schwartz and Straus, the violence "served a communicative function" to show the costs of supporting the insurgents (Schwartz/Straus 2018, 223).

2.1.2 Non-strategic Violence

The second strand of research, examining violence against civilians, deems violence as determined by the individual group members and the conflict context and thus ultimately as non-strategic. One of the most critical scholars of the strategic violence argument is Mkandawire (2002). Analysing African insurgencies he rejects the assumption of rationality in civil wars and deems it useless for investigating violence against civilians (Mkandawire 2002, 191). The author argues instead that the rebellions are "driven by essentially urban issues" that makes the rural population indifferent to the insurgents' goals (Mkandawire 2002, 191). Combined with the fact that the rural population mostly owns the land and agricultural means of production, it renders the rebels unable to mobilise popular support in these areas. This creates a societal situation in which the rebels must resort to indiscriminate violence to forcibly extract resources from the population.

While being less critical of the rationality assumption and the strategic violence approach, Weinstein (2006) nonetheless argues that civilian targeting is determined by a rebel group's internal constitution. This structure is influenced by the country, external aspects of the conflict and ultimately by the type of recruits. If a group has access to natural resources, income through criminal activity or external sponsors - what Weinstein calls 'economic endowments' - then the group is likely to attract 'consumers' (Weinstein 2006, 9). These recruits are not committed to the groups ideals and join the rebellion for material gains. Other groups - often because they do not have access to other resources - rely on 'social endowments' like ideology to mobilise popular support and facilitate recruitment. Such groups are rather joined by 'investors' who are committed to the groups' goals and hope for a later reward in the case of successful insurgency

(Weinstein 2006, 9). Groups with these different initial endowments differ radically in their behaviour towards the civilian population: commanders in groups of 'consumers' are unable to police recruits' behaviour and effectively prevent defections from the group's policies, which makes strategic decisions about civilian targeting impossible leading to more violence. Furthermore, initial acts of indiscriminate violence lead to a 'circle of violence' as they alienate the population and create the need for more violence to extract support (Weinstein 2006, 198/206). On the other hand, this is not the case with groups of 'investors' - so called 'activist rebellions' - as the rank-and-file members' interests are more closely aligned with the rebel commanders'. The members of such groups usually have shared values of cooperation and norms against the killing of civilians and these groups possess the institutions to police defections from these norms.

The importance of institutions in rebel groups is reiterated in a more recent study by Hoover Geen (2016). As military training increases combatants' appetite for violence, commanders must find ways to regulate this violence. Hoover Green does not reject the theoretical possibility of strategic violence. She claims, however, that in most situations, violence is perpetrated by members that are out of the leadership's control and thus non-strategic from the group's perspective (Hoover Green 2016, 621). To increase restraint towards civilians she argues that political education institutions are effective and concludes from her analysis that communist rebel groups display lower levels of sexual violence and civilian killings.

While not relying on principal-agent theory, others argue that violence against civilians is mostly shaped by the conflict situation. Ottmann (2017) and Koren and Bagozzi (2017) likewise acknowledge that strategic violence is possible, however, they argue that the choices are determined by the context. For Ottmann (2017) the rebels' civilian constituency is the decisive factor: ethnically heterogenous or polarised constituencies are more reluctant to support a rebel group than if the group and the civilian constituency are ethnically homogenous (Ottmann 2017, 33-34). This leaves only coercive resource extraction as possible option to gain support in fractionalised constituencies. Furthermore, individual rebel fighters have incentives to prey on communities of the other ethnic group(s) without having to fear community punishment after the conflict. Koren and Bagozzi (2017) focus instead on food security and thus cropland as determining factor of violence against civilians: in a conflict setting, actors have short time horizons, leading to a preference for obtaining food immediately, neglecting the effects on future interactions. In areas where no food is produced, the opportunity to extract supplies is lower resulting in lower levels of violence against civilians.

As this part of the literature review shows, there is substantial research into the determinants of civilian targeting. While some scholars dismiss the idea of rational strategic violence, most at least acknowledge its possibility. I argue in my theory that for LSDMs violence is likely influenced by both, strategic decisions of group commanders, and the context that shapes the inclination of rank-and-file members towards violence.

2.2 Effective Counterinsurgency

Counterinsurgency is as relevant today as it was during the leftist insurgencies in the Cold War or during the anti-colonial uprisings. The ongoing involvement of Western armies in Afghanistan shows that it is no easy task to successfully quell an insurgency and maintain sustainable peace. But what makes a COIN campaign successful? How can a state effectively and sustainably pacify its territory? While research into these questions gained substantive momentum in the last two decades, no universal formula applicable to all conflicts has been found. Most likely because every new conflict is different from previous ones and the situations and circumstances are never equal, creating the need for individual solutions. While this is definitely true to a certain extent, there are two general approaches to COIN that have been brought forward: *enemy-centric COIN* and *population-centric COIN*.[4] In the following sections I give an overview of what these two COIN strategies entail and how successful they are empirically.

2.2.1 Enemy-centric Counterinsurgency

The first approach is known as coercive counterinsurgency or authoritarian model of COIN, but mainly as *enemy-centric* COIN. As the latter implies, enemy-centric COIN campaigns put the focus on defeating the insurgents. This is mostly achieved through coercive means, the logic aptly expressed by Joseph Stalin: "Death solves all problems - no man, no problem." (Byman 2016, 62). Thus, much effort is focused on more conventional military tactics like attacking rebel strongholds, artillery shelling, air strikes and defeating them in actual fights (Toft/Zhukov 2012, 787; Paul et al. 2016, 1023).

Despite the label of 'enemy-centric', the coercive actions are not limited to targeting the rebels and often the civilian population suffers from state repression as well. The state's tactics include

[4] There are very few recent studies diverging from the dichotomy between enemy- and population centric COIN, namely Paul et al. (2016) who argue that these two approaches are not mutually exclusive, and most COIN campaigns combine elements of both. Another author arguing along similar lines is Ucko (2016) who claims that autocracies are not limited to repression and employ similar tactics as democracies.

forcibly moving the population to different areas to separate the civilians from the insurgents but also indiscriminately killing suspected enemy supporters to drain the proverbial sea in which the rebel swims (Paul et al. 2016, 1023). Such measures deprive the insurgents of access to the local population on which they rely for support (supplies, shelter and importantly information), thus weakening the rebels quickly (Valentino et al. 2014).

As one of its labels indicates, this approach is mostly employed by authoritarian regimes. However, it is certainly not exclusive to non-democracies - especially considering the colonial era. Several scholars see autocracies as having inherent advantages over democracies in fighting insurgencies because they are less constrained by the domestic population or international norms (e.g. Zhukov 2007; 2010; Merom 2003; Luttwak 2007; Lyall 2010b):

Compared to democracies, autocratic governments rely less on popular support enabling them to wage a COIN campaign without self-restraint regarding the civilian population. This means they can use excessive force to target insurgents and their suspected supporters, thus weakening the rebellion and raising the costs for participation (Zhukov 2010). Furthermore, as Merom (2003) argues, autocracies are less sensitive to casualties on either side giving them the advantage in COIN. Similarly, Luttwak (2007) claims that collective punishment is an effective way to achieve COIN victory, but democracies like the U.S. are unable (or unwilling) to employ such measures. A case in point is Lyall's (2009) study in which he found that the indiscriminate shelling of villages in Chechnya reduced the number of rebel attacks. Furthermore, Eastin and Gade (2018) found evidence that high levels of violence can be effective in reducing rebel attacks in contrast to lower levels, which provide opportunities for the insurgents.

However, most studies that research the enemy-centric or authoritarian COIN focused on case studies of Russian (or Soviet) COIN campaigns, limiting the external validity and comparability of the work (cf. Zhukov 2007; 2010; Lyall 2009; Toft/Zhukov 2012; Souleimanov 2015; Ratelle/Souleimanov 2016). Moreover, even some of those scholars who see autocracies as having advantages for conducting COIN, find that the lack of constraints on force is simultaneously a drawback as it invites excessive violence which can be counterproductive (Zhukov 2007). In the same vein, Toft and Zhukov (2012) find that punishment strategies that use violence in offensive COIN operations are least effective in containing an insurgency. Concluding, while there are a number of scholars arguing that coercive enemy-focused COIN is more effective, the empirical support for this view is limited.

2.2.2 Population-centric Counterinsurgency

The second approach has been established as the dominant view on how to conduct effective COIN in the last two decades. By now most scholars agree that a *population-focused* COIN campaign is the key to success. As many insurgent groups rely on popular support, it is a straightforward idea to deprive them of this asset and to gain the population's support for the government. This idea that not the insurgent, but the civilian population should be the focus of the COIN campaign is not new: in their seminal works in the 1960s, Galula (1964) and Thompson (1966) already established that a COIN operation is first and foremost a political campaign aimed at gaining the support of the local population (Galula 2006; Thompson 1966). Using the British COIN campaign in Malaya (1948-1960) as example, they claim that rule of law, good governance and security are the mechanisms to defeat an insurgency.

However, even after the disastrous experiences in the Vietnam War, where the U.S. attempted to win a guerrilla war with mass air strikes and other conventional tactics, and the unsuccessful first years of the COIN campaign in Iraq, it took the U.S. until 2007 to come to the same conclusions as the earlier COIN thinkers. In 2007, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps published a new field manual containing strategies for counterinsurgency which relate to Galula's basic ideas: successful COIN needs to focus on winning the "hearts and minds" of the local population by providing good governance, a higher standard of living, and most importantly security (U.S. Army/U.S. Marine Corps 2007). Numerous scholars agree with this view and - with some exceptions like Gentile (e.g. 2009) - the field manual was praised as a change of paradigm and a step towards successful U.S. counterinsurgency (e.g. F. Hoffman 2007). COIN forces must build legitimacy among the population and address its grievances to make the insurgents redundant (U.S. Army/U.S. Marine Corps 2007). The insurgency will continue as long as the local population supports the insurgents. It is thus imperative to strip the rebels of the popular support and win the civilians over by implementing a mix of political, economic and security reforms that improve the situation (Kilcullen 2006).

Apart from these good governance aims, most studies stress the importance of minimal violence[5], seeming straightforward considering that the provision of security is one of the main COIN tactics: naturally security suffers if the COIN forces themselves cause civilian deaths; be it as unintended 'collateral damage' or through purposeful indiscriminate civilian targeting. Indeed, most scholars of the population-centric approach agree that selectively targeting the

[5] While minimal violence and selectively targeting only involved individuals is obviously desirable from a moral viewpoint, it is only relevant for this discussion insofar as disregarding morality and international laws decreases the legitimacy of the counterinsurgent.

relatively few actual insurgents is the only way to achieve COIN success (e.g. Lyall/Wilson 2009; Odomovo 2014; Hultquist 2017). Every act of harming unrelated civilians massively undermines the efforts to build trust and legitimacy. Or as Kilcullen puts it: "Every action in counterinsurgency sends a message" (Kilcullen 2006, 5). The significance of selective violence and avoidance of 'collateral damage' has increased even more in recent insurgencies where information technologies enable rebels to spread information about such acts quickly and leverage it effectively for their propaganda (F. Hoffman 2007, 8).

Hultquist (2017) agrees that collective civilian targeting in an insurgency is counterproductive and finds that it in fact strengthens the rebels' position. The mechanisms for this effect are specified in other articles: when civilians know that it is equally likely to be targeted by the government regardless of actual rebel support, it is rational to join the rebel group for protection (Kalyvas/Kocher 2007, 189; Lyall/Wilson 2009, 77). Furthermore, such indiscriminate violence creates new grievances among the population, driving previously neutral or pro-government civilians into the arms of the insurgency (Lyall/Wilson 2009, 78).

After having established the importance of selective violence for COIN success, the question remains how to best enable selective violence. As stated in the section on strategic violence, counterinsurgents (and rebels) face the 'identification problem' of not knowing who is, or supports, the enemy. Consequently, information about the allegiance of the civilian population is one of the most valuable commodities in a civil war without which selective violence is impossible (Kalyvas 2006, 174; Kilcullen 2006, 4-5).

So, how then can this crucial information be obtained? Several scholars suggest that the best way is through extensive interaction with the local civilian population (e.g. Kalyvas 2006; Dyke/Crisafulli 2006; Lyall/Wilson 2009). Kalyvas argues that while there are other options, like material indices (such as photographs or captured documents) or violent information extraction through intimidation, blackmail or torture, these methods have significant drawbacks: they are either difficult to interpret, need advanced technologies or are simply unreliable (like false confessions through torture) (Kalyvas 2006, 175). Thus the most effective - and historically also most common - way to generate intelligence is through voluntary information provision by locals (Kalyvas 2006, 176).

According to the aforementioned authors, it is necessary to have personal contacts with the civilians to gain their trust and encourage denunciations and thus information provision about enemy activity. Some argue that this became harder when armies mechanised after the first World War, creating a distance between soldiers and the population resulting in 'information

starvation' for the COIN forces (Lyall/Wilson 2009, 73). From this follows their recommendation of lightly armed soldiers that patrol on foot and engage in direct contact with the local civilian population. Nidiffer supports this point, adding that a COIN force, which is armed too heavily and employs more conventional tactics, is easily provoked into overreacting in their retribution to rebel activity (Nidiffer 2012, 6). This will seem exaggerated from the perspective of the civilians which can create domestic backlash; manifested as sympathy and increased support for the seemingly repressed, weaker insurgent group (Carey 2006). Case in point, a recent study by Wright and colleagues (2017) found convincing empirical support for the argument that harming civilians prompts them to provide information to the opposing side. More specifically, using de-classified military records of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, they show that insurgent attacks on civilians lead to an increase in intelligence sharing with the COIN forces. This mechanism also holds when the roles are reversed and the counterinsurgent harms civilians: ISAF violence against civilians in Afghanistan resulted in reduced support for ISAF and increased Taliban support (Lyall et al. 2013).

The above-mentioned recommendations by Lyall and Wilson (2009) for an ideal COIN force (lightly armed, non-mechanised) describe most PGMs very well. As elaborated in the next section, most militias consist of lightly armed personnel with low levels of equipment, enhancing the possibilities for extensive direct contact to the population. It is thus very likely that PGMs present an excellent COIN force. Additionally to the advantageous force structure, militias often possess another favourable feature: common ethnicity. As some authors found, no matter what strategies the counterinsurgent employs, the ethnicity may play an important role in determining support (Fitzsimmons 2008; Lyall et al. 2015). In a survey experiment, Lyall and colleagues (2015) found out that Afghan villagers systematically favour information provision to co-ethnics. This further underscores the usefulness of native forces like PGMs in COIN.

2.3 Pro-Government Militias

From the 'Rondas Campesinas' in the Peruvian civil war to the 'Sons of Iraq' program in 2007, pro-government militias (PGMs) are a common feature of civil wars. According to Carey and colleagues (2013), PGMs were present in over 80 percent of civil war country-years from 1981 to 2007. Yet, despite their pervasiveness all around the world, the topic was largely neglected until recently. While still remaining one of the least studied armed actors in civil war, militias

have gained much needed scholarly attention in recent years (e.g. Carey et al. 2013; Jentzsch et al. 2015; Mucha 2016; Jentzsch 2017). In this section of the literature review, I present some common and differing features of PGMs and the consequences for the dynamics of civil war that scholars ascribe them. As a precondition, I first define what exactly I mean by 'militia' or 'PGM'.

As most scholars, I disregard all groups which could be considered a 'militia' but that have no clear stance on the government. If they are in opposition to the government, they are classified as rebel or insurgent groups and if they are on the side of the government, they are pro-government militias (PGMs). More precisely, I follow previous research and define a PGM as a group that is pro-government or government sponsored (including subnational governments), not part of the regular security forces, armed, and at least minimally organised (Carey et al. 2013, 250-251). Consequently, I use the term 'militia' interchangeably with 'PGM' in this paper.

2.3.1 Characteristics of PGMs

Considering the widespread use of PGMs, the first question that needs to be answered is the one of *PGMs' origins*. Not surprisingly this answer varies for different militia groups and depending on the conflict context.

Ahram (2011) considers the formation of PGMs in the developing world as a path dependent result of decolonialisation through revolutions: state breakdown such as a revolution encourages the formation of non-state armed groups, which are later co-opted by governments, and that persist if no external threat compels the state to instead create a more conventional military force (Ahram 2011, 551). Others see defection from the insurgent side as the origin of many PGMs (Staniland 2012; Hazelton 2011). According to Staniland (2012), fragmentation among rebel groups and the often-following bloody turf wars lead to ethnic defection where former rebels defect to the government side to fight against their co-ethnics and former allies. Similarly, Hazelton (2011) suggests that defectors from the rebel side can be used effectively as COIN militias and that the state should create incentives for them to join forces with the government.

Another common way how militias form is through bottom-up processes (Ero 2000; Fumerton 2001; Blocq 2014). Local tribes or communities can form militia groups to defend against rebel attacks (ibid.; Ferme/Hoffman 2004; Clayton/Thomson 2016). Such groups can then later be co-opted and supported by the government. An example is the Kikuyu Home Guard in Kenya which was initially formed by dissatisfied locals who were intimidated by the Mau Mau rebels

or sought revenge for past atrocities (Branch 2007). These self-defence militias are the focus of this paper. However, governments can also create militias directly by arming civilians or form militia units from trained local fighters as the Portuguese did in Mozambique in the 1970s (Jentzsch et al. 2015; Jentzsch 2014, 97). The reasons why PGMs may potentially be beneficial for governments are presented in the following paragraph.

After shedding light on the origins of PGMs another question arises: why would a state allow or even create such groups which undermine the state's monopoly of violence? States are often assumed to be unitary actors; nevertheless many states - autocratic as well as democratic ones - form links to such armed non-state actors which are only partly under government control. The literature identifies five main *reasons for the toleration or creation of PGMs*: first, militias are a cheap way of increasing the number of forces. They can support the regular military in times of crises and are especially useful when the military is weakened such as after purges in autocracies (Eck 2015). Second, governments can outsource violence and repression to informal militias to avoid domestic and international backlash. Such a shift of blame is especially attractive for governments which are sensitive to accountability costs - such as recipients of foreign aid from democracies (Carey et al. 2015). Another reason to tolerate PGMs is regime ideology. Staniland (2015) argued that states cooperate with militias that are operationally useful and whose goals fit the ideology of the government. The fourth reason for working with militias is 'coup-proofing' (Carey et al. 2016). Leaders in authoritarian regimes frequently fragment their military as a measure to 'counterbalance' other units in a potential coup attempt (De Bruin 2018). Personal links to PGMs can be used to create an independent force outside of the regular military which may help to keep the leader in power during a coup d'état (Carey et al. 2016). The fifth main advantage of PGMs is that they can be useful in a counterinsurgency because of various reasons like local knowledge or legitimacy (Kalyvas 2006; Lyall 2010a; Nidiffer 2012; Clayton/Thomson 2016). Especially for foreign occupiers or interveners, having a native force can be a major advantage for population control and information gathering (Lyall 2010a; Lyall et al. 2015). The usefulness of militias in COIN is further underscored by the findings of Peic (2014), which indicate that the use of civilian defence forces substantially increases the probability of the state winning a civil war. This last reason is also the one that forms the basis of this paper.

Militias also vary in their *relationship to the state* (Jentzsch et al. 2015). Regardless of how the militia was originally formed (bottom-up from the local community or top-down from the government), the state can choose to cooperate openly with the group, or in a more clandestine way (Jentzsch et al. 2015, 759-760). Semi-official PGMs like the 'Village Defence

Committees' in India or the 'Rondas Campesinas' in Peru are openly created, trained, equipped, or paid by the government (Carey et al. 2013, 251). On the other hand, with informal PGMs governments try to deny control over - and cooperation with - them, while being secretly supportive. As mentioned above, such informal PGMs are useful to outsource violence and to avoid accountability. While governments might not be convincing in their account of innocence, they may only need to maintain 'plausible deniability' to avoid negative consequences (Carey et al. 2015, 852-853). This mechanism can be used for 'death squads' - like the ones in El Salvador - to target insurgents, but also government critics, and other civilians. This is an interesting argument as it shows that the use of PGMs can be rational and advantageous not only for weak and failing states, but also for stronger states or democracies that are sensitive to audience costs of their actions.

2.3.2 Consequences of PGMs

The existence of militias in civil conflicts can have consequences for the dynamics of the conflict, like the level of violence, but also impact the society and stability long after the conflict has ended. The following section provides an overview of these consequences of PGM use.

Many actors in civil war settings are notorious for their violence. PGMs are no exception and, by some, indeed deemed as prime example for the brutal tactics used against enemies and civilians alike (Dearing 2011, 6-9). Especially informal militias increase the level of human rights violations in a country (Mitchell et al. 2014). This is the result of two mechanisms, of which the first one was already mentioned above: governments can use informal links to militias to evade accountability for repression by claiming they are not under government control (Mitchell et al. 2014, 819; Carey et al. 2015). The second reason is that governments may be indeed unable control or train these militias which can result in lower discipline and increased violence (Mitchell et al. 2014, 816-817). Members of PGMs are likely to have private interests which they can pursue if they are not properly monitored - something that is inherently difficult with informal PGMs (ibid.). Thus, informal PGMs are associated with more human rights violations. Similarly, Koren (2017) uses PGMs to predict mass killings and finds that militias are associated with a substantive increase in the likelihood of massacres.

However, Stanton (2015) contradicts the view that PGM activity in a conflict automatically increases the level of violence. Instead she believes that governments either encourages both the regular military and PGMs to use violence, or both to abstain from it. She argues that PGMs do not inherently lead to more violence and that, if the militia is recruited from the same "ethnic

or religious constituency" as the rebels, PGMs are less likely to target civilians than the official security forces (ibid., 905).

Barter (2013) and Mucha (2013) take another approach. For them the level of violence perpetrated by PGMs is mostly dependent on their organisation. A militia that is organised in a defensive way to protect civilian communities from predatory rebels is likely to be less violent. However, if a militia is structured in a more mobile way and is active in areas where the state is strong, the militia is more likely to warrant the label of 'death squad' and perpetrate high levels of violence (Barter 2013, 76). This relates closely to the theory presented in this paper where I argue that PGMs that operate locally in a defensive way are less likely to kill civilians.

Apart from the level of violence, PGMs also influence other dynamics of an ongoing conflict. While some authors point to the potential stabilising effects of militias in ungoverned spaces, they can just as easily enable warlordism in such areas of low or no government control (Jeursen/van der Borgh 2014; Kan 2019, 56-57). Such militias might be loyal to local elites or tribal leaders which can have destabilising effects on society and undermine state authority and rule of law (Nidiffer 2012, 19). Moreover, the use of - especially ethnic - militias can further polarise societies and create or exacerbate long-lasting ethnic divisions among the population of a state and fuel violence among communities (Francis 2017, 20). Additionally, PGMs may have an interest in prolonging the conflict for personal gain like retaining positions of power or sources of illicit income (Kan 2019, 92). This makes it likely that militia groups resist demobilisation efforts and prevent successful peace negotiations (Francis 2017, 21; Steinert et al. 2019).

Furthermore, militias not only impact the political sphere during conflict, they can also negatively affect the economic development of a region and increase poverty for local civilians (Kan 2019, 57-58). They are often active in the exploitation and illicit trade of natural resources or drug trafficking during war-time with negative effects potentially on an international scale (Kan 2019, 81).

However, neither the economic nor the political implications of PGM activity in civil wars end with the conflict; instead they can endure even after conflict termination. Most notably, the use of PGMs as counterinsurgents increases the likelihood of conflict recurrence (Steinert et al. 2019). PGMs have incentives to act as 'spoilers of peace' in post-conflict environments because they usually are ignored in peace negotiations, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programs and would lose the ability to enrich themselves with impunity (Steinert et al.

2019, 253-254). This highlights that despite the potential benefits for an effective COIN campaign, governments need to be aware of the risks that come with the use of PGMs.

2.4 Motivation and Contribution

Violence against civilians is one of the most appalling features of civil war and should be prevented to the best of our abilities - from a moral standpoint, as well as from a strategic one for effective COIN. However, to prevent something, one must first understand its causes, which makes research into civilian targeting so valuable for COIN and humanitarian reasons.

Furthermore, the use of PGMs is not only promoted in academia, but also by many governments that face an insurgency. For example, in Iraq the U.S. encouraged and then co-opted the 'Sunni Awakening' movement and formed the semi-official civilian defence militia 'Sons of Iraq' (Clayton/Thomson 2014, 921). Considering the drastic real-world implications, leaders must be aware of the effects of PGM employment in COIN.

Previous research has shown the ambivalent role of pro-government militias in civil conflicts. On the one hand, they might be effective as counterinsurgents, but on the other hand, many PGMs are associated with extreme violence that is mostly seen as counterproductive in COIN. To solve this puzzle, it is necessary to further differentiate the various types of PGMs (Carey/Mitchell 2017).

In this thesis, I focus on one specific type of PGM which I call 'local self-defence militia' (LSDM). It is analogous to the civilian defence forces (CDFs) that some authors recommend for COIN, but very few actually assess their effectiveness in a quantitative manner: Peic (2014) and Clayton and Thomson (2016). Peic's (2014) article evaluates the use of CDFs on conflict outcomes and finds that a state using CDFs is more likely to defeat an insurgency compared to a state that does not. This argument would be in line with my theory. However, in his analysis he only uses a binary indicator for CDF deployment thus conflating the cases where a different type of PGM was used with cases where no PGM was used for potentially effective COIN (ibid., 169).

In their analysis of violence against civilians, Clayton and Thomson (2016) make the same choice of assessing the broader impacts of CDFs on civilian targeting by state and rebels. While they argue that CDFs are less violent and reduce the level of total state violence against civilians, their analysis does not, in fact, analyse violence by CDFs compared to other PGMs.

Like Peic (2014), they assess CDF use in comparison to no PGM presence or other types of PGMs. While certainly of substantial interest, it does not contribute to directly assessing the level of violence that local defence forces commit compared to other PGMs. Furthermore, their theoretical argument remains underdeveloped with regards to the question why CDFs should reduce the level of state violence.

This is where my thesis makes its contribution: first, it assesses whether local self-defence militias are indeed more limited and selective in their violence by analysing PGMs on the group level. This sheds light on potential differences between LSDMs and other types of PGMs concerning their violence against civilians. In a second analysis, I evaluate the level of state violence conditional on the question of whether LSDMs or other types of PGMs are used. This will clarify distinct effects of different forms of PGMs in an empirical manner.

It is argued here that PGMs are less likely to harm civilians if they are local self-defence forces and more likely if they are mobile groups that are deployed in regions other than their home. Thus, LSDMs should be better counterinsurgents than other PGMs. The mechanisms, through which this selective violence is achieved, are elaborated in the next section.

3. Theory: LSDMs and Selective Violence

I argue that local self-defence militias are better counterinsurgents than other types of PGMs because they are more likely to employ violence selectively. The theory consists of three main mechanisms that make LSDMs more likely to employ violence in such a manner: LSDMs have better local information, which makes selective violence *possible*, they have local social networks in the community, which makes them *willing* to employ selective violence and LSDMs are reliant on local support, which makes it *rational* to be selective. This theory is summarised in Figure 1 below.

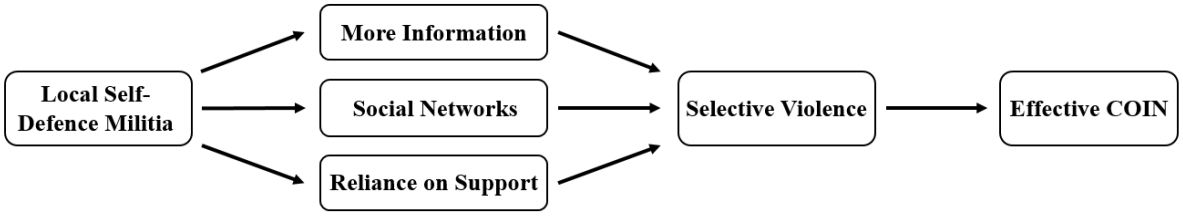


***Figure 1**: Mechanisms leading to LSDMs' better COIN performance.*

The theory argues that LSDMs perform better in COIN than other types of PGMs due to the fact that their preferred strategy is selective violence. The way in which more selective violence

leads to more effective COIN, is not analysed in this paper, as there already is sufficient evidence to support this link (see section 2.2.2). Instead, I focus on how LSDMs are linked to selective violence which is interesting for two reasons: first, it is the main mechanism linking militias to effective COIN, and second, for the reduction of civilian casualties it is necessary to understand what increases and what decreases its probability. However, before these mechanisms are explained in detail, some terms have to be defined.

3.1 Terms and Definitions

First, what is a *local self-defence militia* (LSDM)? There are numerous labels for these types of PGMs: 'local militias' (Carey/Mitchell 2017), 'civilian defence forces' (Peic 2014; Clayton/Thomson 2014; 2016) and 'community militias' (Yoroms 2005, 35). For the purposes of this thesis, I use the term 'local self-defence militia' - abbreviated as 'LSDM' - because it captures best what is most important about these groups: their area of operation and their purpose of defence against rebels.

LSDMs consist mostly of civilians who are recruited from one community - a village, town or neighbourhood. While there might be some recruits who either previously received some sort of training, or are rebel defectors, the majority are still local civilians.

LSDMs' purpose is to defend their communities. They are primarily formed in response to insurgent threats or attacks. If the government forces fail to protect the population, the latter is left with two options: collaboration with the rebels in order to evade their punishment, or forming militias in order to protect themselves. To defend their village or neighbourhood they might employ methods as security patrols, intelligence gathering, using this intelligence to target rebels and their supporters in their community, or even perform limited attacks on rebel hideouts - as long as these are in the LSDMs' home area.

This last part is crucial - LSDMs remain rooted in the community where they are recruited from. They live among the population and are not stationed in external bases or get deployed throughout the country to fight insurgents. This would make them a different type of PGM which would rather be closer to either regular military forces or 'death squad' type militias.

As long as they meet these criteria, it is irrelevant whether the LSDM was formed bottom-up by the local community or whether the process was initiated top-down by the government. If their goal is the defence of the local population against rebels who are looking for resources,

information about government activities or targets for random violence and abuse, they fall into the category of LSDM. Many of these, mostly ill-equipped and untrained or poorly trained militias are then supported by the state. As shown in section 2.3.1, the reasons are that such militias are an easy way to increase the number of pro-government forces, the possibility of avoiding accountability for violence and, which is the main point of this thesis, such militias make effective counterinsurgents. This government support can take various forms from provision of arms, small weapons, ammunition and other material support, to payment, or the training of militia members. LSDMs are assumed to have no objections to government support for two reasons: first, the main goals of both actors are aligned - protect the population and defeat the insurgency. Second, even if some militias are driven by private motives, they are unlikely to refuse supplies which they can use however they see fit.

Some information on *selective violence* was already provided in the literature section. Nonetheless, the term is revisited and clarified here. Selective violence from the pro-government forces (including PGMs) means the targeting of only those people who are either insurgent fighters, or their active supporters. This 'targeting' can range from detention, over expulsion from the area, to killing them. Often selective violence is also *limited* in scope, meaning not many people are targeted - because typically there are less individuals involved than is assumed when indiscriminate violence is employed. If, for instance, an entire village supports the rebels, it is highly unlikely that a PGM would form in this village.

The mechanisms that make LSDMs more likely to use selective violence - and consequently more effective at COIN - are explained in the next sections.

3.2 Local Information

In a civil war the insurgents usually have a "highly asymmetric information advantage" over the state military, because they live among the population (Dyke/Crisafulli 2006, 24). This advantage disappears, however, if the insurgents are compared to LSDMs, which live in the same area and equally among the civilian population. This means that LSDM members are much more knowledgeable about local affairs than regular state forces or other, more mobile, militias. They live in their home community meaning they know the local culture, traditions, people and terrain.

Denunciations

State forces, other types of PGMs, and especially the militaries of foreign interveners, usually suffer from a critical lack of local intelligence which hinders their COIN efforts. As they are part of the local culture and population, it is unnecessary for LSDMs to labour to gain the trust of the people, like actors which are foreign to the area would have to. This sort of trust has been identified as a crucial factor for COIN (Dyke/Crisafulli 2006). Its absence makes the collection of reliable intelligence about insurgent activity hard or even impossible. Usually, trust is earned over an extended period of time in which the COIN forces have to be present and active in building legitimacy and support for their cause. These measures are impeded by differences in culture and language that complicate communication. As Kilcullen puts it: "in counterinsurgency, linguistic and cultural competence is a critical combat capability" (Kilcullen 2005, 613). This problem is again worse for external forces (from a different state), but even the domestic military forces might be unfamiliar with local languages or dialects (Carey et al. 2011, 7). Apart from possible language barriers, cultural differences complicate trust-building measures: small gestures or acts, which are fine in one culture, may be seen as insulting in another (Kita 2009; Anderson et al. 2019).

LSDMs do not suffer from these problems: they are permanently present in the community and have been even before the conflict began. This gives them legitimacy and local trust that foreign forces are unlikely to gain even after years (Gawthorpe 2017). Additionally, they are familiar with the local languages and traditions making grave misunderstandings much less likely.

Another advantage of LSDMs is that they are often of the same ethnicity as the local community because they are recruited from said community. As some scholars have shown, the perceived legitimacy and the willingness of information provision is higher among co-ethnics (Fitzsimmons 2008; Lyall et al. 2015). Thus, LSDMs have an inherent advantage that forces from outside the area (or even the country) cannot attain.

Information gathering usually relies mainly on tips and denunciations of rebels or their supporters by villagers to the COIN forces. One major problem with this type of intelligence gathering is that of 'malicious denunciations' (Kalyvas 2006, 178): people use denunciations to settle personal scores and accuse local rivals of working with the rebels. It is of great difficulty for foreign forces to distinguish actual political denunciations from personally motivated ones (ibid, 183-189). Thus, they are easily tricked into killing people who are innocent, which harms their COIN effort in two ways: they did not stop actual insurgents and additionally they killed innocent people decreasing their standing with the local population. In

the Spanish town of Zamora during the civil war, COIN forces "shot without knowing who their victims were" according to a local woman (Kalyvas 2006, 180); they simply targeted whomever was pointed out as being a rebel without verifying the actual allegiance. This problem is much smaller for LSDMs, however, as they have the means to confirm or refute the claims made by denunciators. They are present in the community and know many of the people resulting in a widespread network of social relations that can be used for information gathering (Peic 2014, 165). Thus, they are much less likely to be tricked into disposing of personal rivals or enemies of collaborators. Even if they do not have the means to verify, they can still credibly claim to do so and thus discourage 'malicious' denunciations.

Pre-conflict knowledge

Apart from facilitating credible denunciations, LSDMs are simultaneously less dependent on them compared to foreign forces. LSDMs originate from the contested area implying that they are familiar with the local community and terrain. This means they are also likely to be knowledgeable about personal feelings concerning political issues - like for example support of the rebels' goals. Such pre-war information can then be exploited during the conflict, giving the militia a good starting point for their rebel identification mission. Furthermore, LSDMs are in a position to notice changes in activity in certain areas, or suspicious changes in the behaviour of individuals. Similarly, an influx of strangers into the village or neighbourhood is likely to be noticed by an LSDM, but not by an external COIN force. Insurgent sympathy or activity is much harder to conceal from a permanent force that has in-depth knowledge of local dialects and traditions, as such a militia is able to spot and understand certain behaviours.

In addition to the increased cultural awareness and the knowledge about social issues, LSDMs are familiar with the terrain around their home (Kalyvas 2006, 107). Therefore, they know potential insurgent hideouts, camps and places where weapons or supplies might be stored, which enables LSDMs to attack such places directly. Regular state forces or foreign militias, on the other hand, are much more likely to target the surrounding settlements/communities when they see insurgent activity emanating from the area. They are unaware of the potential hiding places and - in lack of better local intelligence - they are likely to target the people living in the area. This becomes a deadly cycle of indiscriminate violence, decreased willingness to share information with the COIN forces and - due to this lack of good local intelligence - more indiscriminate violence.

Furthermore, the LSDMs' familiarity with the local terrain makes them less likely to fall prey to rebels' surprise attacks with hit-and-run tactics. Instead, rather the opposite is the case:

LSDMs operate in their home region and know the surroundings that act as the battlefield, which increases their fighting performance vis-à-vis the rebels or any external force. Such external forces do not possess this advantage and are much easier to kill when deployed in areas unfamiliar to them, as the U.S. military experienced in the Vietnamese jungle. The increased propensity of casualties creates feelings of anger and frustration increasing the likelihood of retaliation against the first group of people the forces encounter - often the civilians in the next village. As established above, this is counterproductive to their COIN efforts.

Concluding, COIN forces from outside the area have significant disadvantages in countering rebels that operate locally among the population: they have to work much harder to gain the trust of the locals, are dependent on information these are content to provide, cannot distinguish between rebel-related and malicious denunciations and are much more vulnerable to surprise attacks and falling into the trap of using violence indiscriminately. In contrast, LSDMs have much better information about local culture, languages, traditions, relations, people, and terrain. This information advantage creates the *possibility* of punishing insurgents and their supporters selectively instead of relying on collective targeting. This superior possibility, in turn, increases local support and thus COIN effectiveness.

3.3 Local Social Networks

A major characteristic that shapes the behaviour of LSDMs towards the local civilians is their recruitment from the exact community in which they then serve. LSDM members have strong connections to their local community decreasing the probability of committing atrocities against it.

If a militia member grew up with his neighbours and has developed bonds of friendship with others in the community, it is unlikely that these become irrelevant as soon as a civil war begins or a self-defence militia forms. Usually, LSDM members would have not just friends, but also family in their community. Parents, siblings, spouses and even wider family networks create strong bonds among communities - especially when they are located in more rural areas. According to social network theories, such ‘strong ties’ create tightly-knit cliques of close friends that have similar ideas and interests (Granovetter 1973). These groups of friends and family are highly unlikely to fall apart and turn against each other when confronted with an insurgency. Even if some members of such groups joined an LSDM, the LSDM members will not start to target their friends among the civilian population.

Apart from these strong ties of friendship and family, individuals usually have a number of 'weak ties' to acquaintances. These ties are what connect the various closely-knit groups and hold society together as a whole (Granovetter 1983, 202). This makes civilian victimisation among (small) local communities less likely, because even when not all members of community are one circle of close friends, they will still have weak ties to most of the other locals.

These social networks are not only a source of solidarity and thus restraint in violence against civilians but are also important for recruitment. Gould (1991) showed that informal social networks in Parisian neighbourhoods played a major role in mobilisation in the insurgency in the Paris Commune in 1871. Furthermore, Hoffman calls the Civilian Defence Forces (CDF) in Sierra Leone "the militarization of a particular network of social relations", thus further stressing the importance of pre-war relations (D. Hoffman 2007, 656). LSDMs usually are an undertaking of larger parts of the local community: while the men patrol the terrain, women clean and cook for them and sometimes additionally take on the jobs the men held before joining the militia (Fumerton 2001, 484). As larger parts of the community are involved in defending it, the probability that the fighting element of the LSDM turn on the rest of the community is relatively low. As Fumerton puts it when describing the self-defence militias in Peru "the militia members were none other than the villagers themselves" (Fumerton 2018, 70).

Working in the community in which they grew up means that LSDM members are influenced by the local traditions and norms. As Hoffman explains using the CDF in Sierra Leone as example, the 'Kamajor' militia members had a strong moral obligation to their villages and to the protection of the community (D. Hoffman 2007, 647).[6] Such norms can work in two ways: first, through actual internalisation. The militia members are socialised in the community and come to accept certain rules, traditions and behaviours. These are highly likely to include norms against harming others, which should result in a lower inclination towards violence - especially when they are among the socialising agents.

However, even if these norms were not internalised, they still influence the behaviour of militia members, since LSDMs are accountable to the local community they live in. As Carey and Mitchell suggest, local militias are easier to monitor and sanction than other types of PGMs which operate in areas other than their home region (Carey/Mitchell 2017, 136). LSDM members and their families live among the community and are thus vulnerable to social sanctions. As respect for physical integrity and property are norms established nearly

[6] The Kamajor/CDF militias during the civil war in Sierra Leone are elaborated in the case illustration section 3.5 below.

everywhere, LSDMs that engaged in looting or violence against civilians would be sanctioned by the community. Public shaming is one of the potential consequences that has been shown to generally increase compliance (Makkai/Braithwaite 1994).[7] This is akin to the method of 'naming and shaming' of human rights violators, which is used by NGOs and various governments. Through such tactics even major international companies or autocratic regimes are forced to adhere to some standards, and LSDMs acting within their own community should be as well (Spar 1998; Murdie/Davis 2012).

These social sanctions are effective because the LSDMs remain in their home area. If they simply moved from one place to the next without being permanently stationed in one area, they would have much less incentives to exercise restraint in their interactions with the local civilians. LSDMs, in contrast, cannot simply move on to avoid the sanctions by the community, as they and their families are part of the community. Furthermore, while LSDM members might be able to avoid the most drastic sanctions due to their membership in the militia, this advantage will not continue indefinitely: a predatory LSDM is likely to be sanctioned once the conflict ended and the militia was demobilised. As militia members are likely to anticipate the eventual end of their position of relative power, LSDMs should show restraint in their civilian targeting in anticipation of future reintegration into the community, resulting in only limited and selective violence.

Another reason that increases the solidarity among local communities is that they frequently have shared features like ethnicity or religion (Kan 2019, 7). These characteristics have a connective and unifying effect (Seul 1999) which should lead to a lower willingness to use violence against civilians. Forces from outside the area are less likely to share these common features and thus less likely to profit from the effect that increases trust, solidarity and ultimately the selective use of violence. In heterogenous communities, however, a rift between different ethnic or religious groups might lead to increased inter-communal violence if the conflict setting allows for it. But according to Granovetter, weak ties can act as bridges in ethnically or religiously divided communities (Granovetter 1973, 1373-1375). These are deepened by the people living and working together which is the case in many rural villages. So even in relatively fragmented communities, LSDMs are expected to show restraint due to their local social networks.

[7] Makkai and Braithwaite (1994) analyse misbehaviour of children and the compliance with rules after shaming, but as socialisation is not limited to one's youth this mechanism should also be applicable in this context.

Furthermore, as Granovetter (1983) posits, these 'weak ties' are also important for the flow of information. This point relates to the previous section: being acquainted with many people results in the influx of new information from outside of one's core group (Granovetter 1983, 202). This favours LSDMs over regular forces or other PGMs which come from outside and must invest major effort to build up such networks.

Moreover, support for the government - and by extension information provision from LSDM to regular government forces - is enhanced because the militia members have direct personal stakes in the fight against insurgents. If the LSDM is unable to protect the area from rebels, it means that not only they are in danger, but also their friends and families. Thus, the effectiveness of an LSDM has much more direct impacts on the safety of their loved-ones as the performance of PGMs deployed in other regions. This incentivises LSDMs to increase their efficiency and thus their employment of effective tactics like cooperating productively with the government and employing selective violence.

Summarising the points above and relating back to the literature on violence against civilians, local community networks provide strategic and non-strategic reasons that make LSDMs less likely to target civilians. Strategic reasons include better information through social networks, community monitoring, and the anticipation of unavoidable sanctions for stationary militias. The non-strategic motivations are first, the simple fact that militia members have strong social connections to the local civilians and do not want to harm their friends and families. And second, the socialisation in the community and the internalisation of local norms like the obligation to protect their homes. These factors lead to an increased *willingness* of LSDM members to use violence selectively and thus ultimately to better COIN performance.

3.4 Reliance on Local Support

In all armed conflicts a major issue is to supply the troops with the resources they need for effective operations. Modern armies have elaborate supply lines to be independent of the terrain and situation they are deployed into. Many actors in civil wars, however, do not possess that luxury and rely instead on the support of the local population. These actors try to avoid alienating the population by employing violence selectively.

While LSDMs and other PGMs in general are fighting for the government, they are not part of the regular security forces. This means that they have no supply lines and have to gain their resources on their own. In this regard, militias are closer to insurgent groups than to regular

state militaries. Like most rebel forces, militias rely on the civilian population for support. Militias, and especially LSDMs, gain food and water, shelter, labour services and information from the local civilians. This dependence makes militias aware of the costs of indiscriminate violence: the loss of civilian support. Without such support most militias would be unable to continue their missions and either have to demobilise or turn to other, more violent means of resource extraction.

This relates to the previously mentioned cycle of indiscriminate violence (Weinstein 2006): once a group starts using it, it is very difficult to change towards selective violence. While this is theoretically valid for all PGMs, it is much more central for LSDMs because they cannot simply move on after a repressive episode of killing civilians and looting the population's resources. Although they too will gain a certain reputation, more mobile PGMs have the opportunity to make a new first impression in every area they come. This is not the case for LSDMs: once they misbehave and arbitrarily target civilians, they are likely to lose the support of most local civilians. Therefore, LSDMs are more likely to abstain from violence against civilians in anticipation of the costs of such violence.

This point is supported by Olsen's (1993) rationale of roving and stationary bandits. He makes the case that a rational self-interested warlord, who is stationary, has incentives to provide security and public goods to ensure a continuous flow of 'tax theft' (Olsen 1993, 568). The provided security from other - roving - bandits incentivises the population to invest and produce. This, in turn, increases the profits for population and the stationary bandit. Furthermore, rulers have an incentive to ensure the physical integrity of their 'citizens' because harming them would also reduce the extraction of taxes (ibid.). This closely mirrors the case of militias: mobile PGMs have short time horizons, provide no incentives for the population to be productive and gain their resources from 'migratory plunder' (ibid.). They consequently do not care about what happens to the population or what the locals think of the PGM. LSDMs, in contrast, are stationary and thus have a rational interest in the security of the population for the purpose of resource extraction. If the LSDM is on good terms with the local civilians, they will voluntarily support the LSDM with the resources it needs. If the they are kept safe, more resources can be extracted. Thus, restraint towards civilians produces mutual benefits for the population and the militia.

But what about the argument of economic endowments or foreign sponsorship (Weinstein 2006)? If an LSDM has access to natural resources or income from an external actor, would this mechanism still work? I argue that it will at least partly still do so due to several reasons.

First, assuming the LSDM has an external sponsor that provides it with weapons or money: the militia members still need other resources that are difficult to obtain even with money. Reliable information is the most valuable resource in a COIN campaign and problematic to acquire if the population is not supportive of the COIN (Kalyvas 2006, 176). Thus, even militias that get money from external sponsors have incentives to exercise restraint towards the population.

Second, one could argue that the domestic government constitutes such a sponsor making PGMs less dependent on local civilians. But such government support is not sufficient to make militias independent from the population: in many cases the government only provides military training or some basic arms to improve the PGM's fighting performance, which will not be enough to support living and operating in the field.

Third, in case an LSDM has access to natural resources like diamonds or precious metals, which it could use to fund its operation, it usually means that the community has access to these as well. Plundering these natural resources would alienate the locals. Even if this was disregarded, resource exploitation still needs workers to facilitate. These workers would come from the local population, which would make harming them counterproductive for LSDMs.

Furthermore, in all the scenarios above, the local resource providing population consists of the LSDM's own community with friends and family. Thus, LSDMs do not want to harm these communities by relying on violent means of resource extraction. Moreover, as mentioned above, support is not only material like food or shelter, it is also nonmaterial such as information and moral or ideological support. This kind of support cannot be obtained with money and makes even externally sponsored or resource endowed LSDMs more likely to show restraint in interactions with civilians.

Concluding this section, I argued that LSDMs' material and non-material support comes mostly from the local population. Due to the lack of military-style supply lines, LSDMs have to maintain popular support to survive since they cannot simply move on to a different area after violent acts. Furthermore, as Olsen (1993) suggests, it is advantageous to protect the local civilians from harm to ensure a steady flow of support from them. Even resource-endowed LSDMs are not self-sufficient. Due to this dependence on local support, it is *rational* for LSDMs to limit their violence and be as selective as possible.

3.5 Case Illustration: The Kamajors/CDF in Sierra Leone

To illustrate my theory, I describe the case of the Kamajor militias and the Civilian Defence Forces (CDF) in Sierra Leone. This is an interesting case, as the militias set out as LSDMs and later transformed into a more offensive, mobile PGM. Before going into greater detail, I provide a brief overview of the civil war in Sierra Leone.

The conflict began in March 1991 when fighters from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) crossed the border from Liberia. The group was originally formed in opposition to the one-party rule of the All People's Congress (APC) and initially found willing recruits in many poor and dissatisfied youths. Sierra Leone's Army (SLA) was unsuccessful in dealing with the uprising and by early 1992 the conflict had spread to the whole country. In April of the same year, the APC government was deposed by a military coup d'état that established the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). The NPRC recruited many young soldiers and waged a more aggressive COIN against the RUF succeeding in pushing the insurgents back by the end of 1993. This, however, resulted in the RUF rebels switching to more guerrilla style tactics in what the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) designated as the second phase of the conflict (TRC 2004, 88). The NPRC tried to defeat the RUF with the help of the South African private military company Executive Outcomes but could not achieve victory.

In 1996, Sierra Leone elected Ahmed Tejan Kabbah from the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) as president. This new civilian government consolidated the various local militias, which resisted the RUF, under the organisation of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF). The extensive use of the CDF and Kabbah's support for the militia disgruntled many in the official SLA, culminating in a coup in May 1997 which initiated the third phase of the civil war (TRC 2004, 88). The new group in power was the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which allied with the RUF and declared that the war was over. In 1998, Nigeria led a force of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that intervened in Sierra Leone and recaptured the capital Freetown in support of the exiled government of President Kabbah. However, the fighting continued and led to a bloody attack on Freetown by the RUF and AFRC in January 1999. After they were expelled by ECOWAS troops, the SLPP government signed a peace agreement with the RUF in Lomé in July 1999. This peace did not last, however, and the continued fighting prompted the deployment of a United Nations force (UNAMSIL) in early 2000. While this force was weak and disorganised, a subsequent British intervention supported by Guinean forces was successful in defeating and disarming the RUF. In February 2002, President Kabbah declared that the civil war was over. The TRC estimates that about 70 000

people died during the conflict, with the RUF being responsible for most of the atrocities (Conibere et al. 2004).

During the conflict, militias played an important role in fighting the RUF. There were several different militias, often based on one ethnic group.[8] The Kamajor militia was the largest and most influential one and later became somewhat synonymous with all the civil militia groups. 'Kamajor' is the anglicised word for 'traditional hunter' and they are predominantly from the Mende ethnic group (Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 74). Originally, only very few villagers were part of these hunters, who were initiated into the Kamajor society by rituals that were believed to grant them special magical powers (Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 74-75; D. Hoffman 2007, 642). The Kamajors were responsible for hunting and the protection of the community from any animal or human danger (ibid.).

The militias that formed in the beginning of the Sierra Leonean conflict are a fitting example for my definition of local self-defence militias (LSDMs): first, their members were civilians. Most of the people, which organised in the self-defence militias, were ordinary citizens with no military training or experience (Alie 2005, 52). While some were armed with guns, in the beginning, most militia members used knives, cutlasses and bows to fight or scare off enemies (Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 86; Hoffman 2006, 15).

Second, their purpose was community defence. When the official state army was unable or in some cases unwilling to protect many of the rural communities, the civilians organised themselves to resist the RUF (D. Hoffman 2007, 647). Often, the villagers were exploited and mistreated by the RUF insurgents as well as the SLA soldiers, many of whom were corrupt and enriched themselves at the civilians' expense (Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 80).

Third, the Kamajor militias were part of the community and operated in their home area. To quote Hoffman: "a kamajor's responsibility to the community remained central to his identity" (D. Hoffman 2007, 647). The sentiment that the Kamajors were part of the local community is further supported by the fact that they were under the control of local chiefs (Ero 2000, 27; Bellows/Miguel 2009, 1146; Chaves/Robinson 2010, 24).

The case of the Kamajors nicely illustrates my theory. First, there is evidence that the Kamajors were employed by the SLA as scouts and local guides due to their superior local knowledge (Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 75; Alie 2005, 55). While there is not much information that the militias

[8] While the militias were based on ethnic groups, most scholars agree that the ethnic component did not play an important part in the civil war (e.g. Conibere 2004; Mucha 2013, 10).

themselves used this knowledge to target insurgents selectively, this is likely because the RUF was usually attacking villages making friend and foe obvious. The fact that the SLA made use of the Kamajors indicates that their local knowledge was indeed helpful in the fight against the insurgents.

In the first few years of the conflict, the Kamajors were sedentary and remained in their community. One officer is quoted stating that "[…] the person willing to be initiated and recruited should be willing to stay within the community until the crisis was over." (Humphreys/Weinstein 2008, 438), indicating that the members were active only in their home area (Alie 2005, 57). The strong connection to the local community is also reflected in the fact that, to be admitted into a Kamajor militia, a potential recruit needed the community e.g. local elders to vouch for him (Chaves/Robinson 2010, 24).

The third mechanism is also present with the Kamajors: initially, there was no support from the government and the militias relied on the civilian population. The civilians voluntarily provided the Kamajors with the support they needed (Alie 2005, 61).

Until 1996, the Kamajors were locally initiated, organised, and deployed. During this period, they largely abstained from targeting civilians and primarily fought to defend local villages from the RUF and predatory SLA units (Alie 2005, 61; Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 79-81). However, from 1996 onwards the Kamajors' structure changed. The civilian government of President Kabbah consolidated the numerous local militias under the umbrella of 'CDF' and worked to establish a more centralised command structure (Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 76). The CDF then increasingly became the substitute for the dysfunctional SLA and deployed nationwide to fight against the RUF (ibid.; D. Hoffman 2007, 642). Thus, the Kamajors changed from an LSDM to a mobile, offensive PGM (Humphreys/Weinstein 2008, 437). Another fact indicating this change is that many new recruits were initiated centrally by a select few priests or shamans, mostly against payments and without recommendations from their respective community (Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 77).

The loss of the direct connection to their own community resulted in increased violence against civilians. The statistical appendix of the TRC states: "The Kamajor force mobilized on a grand scale in the third phase of the war, from 1997 onwards. Seventy-four percent (1505/2031) of the recorded violations, with year documented that are attributed to the Kamajors, occur in 1997 or later." (Conibere et al. 2004, 27).

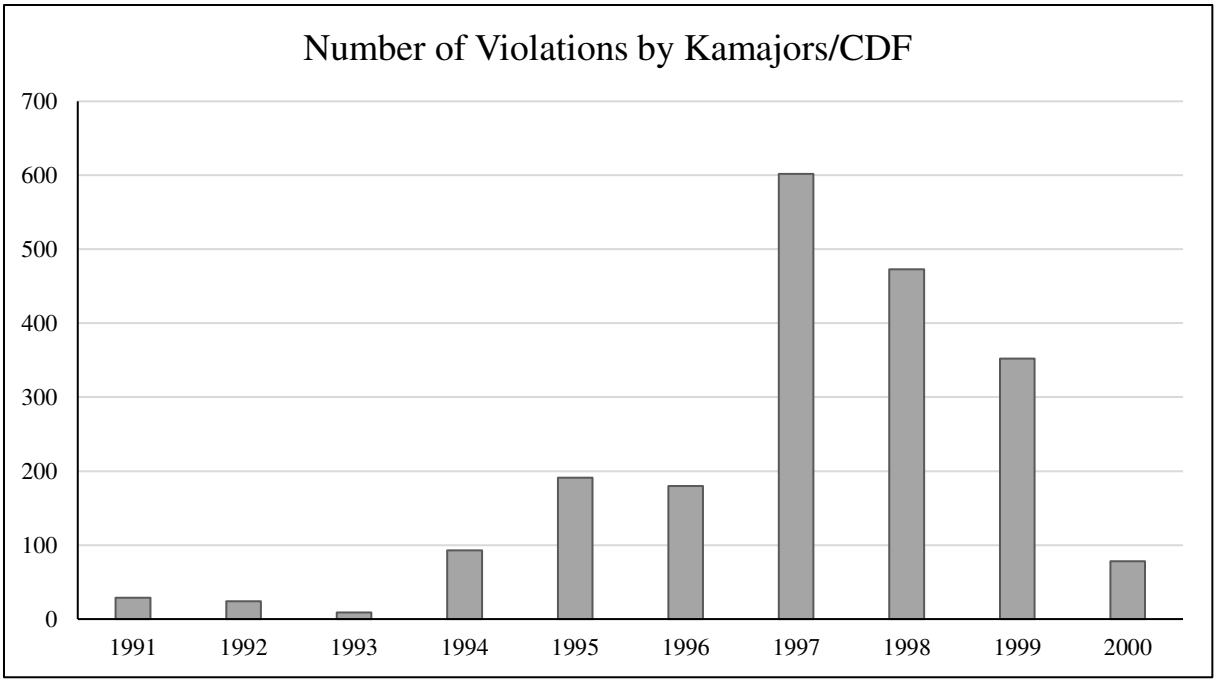


***Figure 2**: Yearly figures of violations[9] committed by the Kamajors/CDF (own figure using data from Conibere et al. 2004, 28).*

Figure 2 clearly shows the drastic increase of violence from 1996 to 1997. This increase coincides with the change from LSDM to mobile offensive PGM. Writing about violence against civilians by the Kamajors, Ferme and Hoffman (2004) state that the TRC was uncovering more acts of violence "particularly in cases where the link between individual kamajor units and their home communities was broken by deployment elsewhere in the country" (Ferme/Hoffman 2004, 80). This was especially the case during the regime of AFRC and RUF from May 1997 to February 1998 where the CDF operated on both an international and regional scale to support their government in exile (ibid., 76). Møller (2006) further supports this point by stating that Kamajors were "quite in line with the humanitarian laws of war - and especially so when they were deployed in their home areas" but that this changed with "their deployment further afield" (Møller 2006, 16). This anecdotal evidence directly relates to my theory and increases my confidence that the theorised mechanisms indeed apply to real-world situations. Before I empirically analyse the relationship, my theory is again briefly summarised in the next section.

[9] Violations include killings, but also physical assault, sexual violence, forced recruitment, arbitrary detention, looting, and destruction of property (Conibere et al. 2004). While the Kamajors/CDF did commit such acts, their numbers were far lower than those of the other conflict actors (RUF, AFRC, SLA).

3.6 Summary and Hypotheses

I argue that local self-defence militias have several inherent advantages for COIN compared to other types of PGMs or regular government troops. Tying back to the literature, there are strategic and non-strategic reasons why LSDMs would harm civilians less. Strategic reasons include the dependence on local support, which makes alienating the population counterproductive. This is enabled by LSDMs' better local intelligence. Non-strategic reasons - reasons that influence the groups inclination to violence without being based on a rational decision - are for example the fact that the LSDM members are recruited from the community and serve among friends. This means that they have positive feelings towards the civilians and similar interests: the protection of the community. The suggested mechanisms leading to more selective violence from LSDMs are summarised below. Subsequently, I present the hypotheses derived from the theory.

First, as they are operating in their home area, LSDMs have major information advantages over foreign troops: they know the local people, culture and languages which makes obtaining information from civilians much easier and the threat of verifying denunciations credible. Thus, LSDMs are less prone to be used for personal vendettas and more likely to have high quality intelligence about insurgent activity. In combination with their pre-war knowledge of people's sympathies and alignments, this makes it *possible* to identify and target rebels in a selective manner. Hence, the number of civilian casualties is reduced.

Second, LSDMs are embedded in the local community and have extensive social networks. They have strong ties to their friends and families, who also live in the community. That makes LSDM members less likely to employ indiscriminate violence such as massacres of civilians or large-scale burning down of houses of suspected groups. Doing so would mean harming their own community, running counter to their interests. This is due to the internalisation of social norms, the monitoring of the community, and of course due to the bonds of friendship and family among the community. These mechanisms apply exclusively to sedentary militias like LSDMs. Consequently, LSDM members are *willing* to target selectively only those who in fact are fighting for, or supporting, the insurgency.

The third mechanism that leads to more selective violence from LSDMs is their reliance on local support. Unlike regular militaries, LSDMs have no supply lines supporting them. And unlike mobile PGMs, they cannot simply move on after violently extracting resources from the locals. Instead, they have to live with the consequences of an alienated community. This makes them more likely to treat the civilians with restraint to retain their voluntary support. Following

Olsen's (1993) logic, stationary groups have an interest in the well-being of the population for continuous resource extraction. Thus, it is *rational* for LSDMs to protect the civilians from the rebels and not to harm them themselves.

These mechanisms are working together and are likely to mutually reinforce each other. The fact that the LSDM members are part of the community not only increases their willingness for selective and limited violence but also their legitimacy. Thus, the social relations they have improve their information gathering capacity. This high-quality information means the LSDM is able to target rebels selectively further improving the relations to the local community. This favourable relationship subsequently increases the civilians' willingness to support the LSDM with whatever they may need, further decreasing the necessity of violence against civilians. Thus, from this theory I derive the following hypothesis:

***H1**: LSDMs are more likely to employ selective violence than other types of PGMs.*

This hypothesis on the militia group level can be extended to pertain to the state level for the following reasons: first, civilian victims of a PGM count towards the total number of government-caused fatalities. Thus, naturally this number is lower if the government-employed PGM kills comparatively less civilians.

Second, I argue that sedentary LSDMs have an advantage in local intelligence over other types of PGMs. This information advantage transfers to the government-level: only a group that has superior information can pass it on to the government. Mobile PGMs do not possess the same quality of local information as LSDMs and are thus less useful for intelligence gathering. States that use LSDMs can tap into their information network and profit from their pre-war knowledge which enables the government troops to overcome the identification problem reducing the need for indiscriminate violence.

Third, LSDMs equal local territorial control, which has been shown to reduce violence by the actor in control (Kalyvas 2006). The presence of an LSDM can assure the government that the area - or at least the local community - is free of insurgents and that there is no need for potentially excessive government violence. This is not the case with the use of other PGMs, which leave the area as soon as their task is fulfilled, as there is no reason why rebels would not seep back into the area as soon as the PGM left.

Fourth, LSDMs generate local support for the government through the continuous provision of security from the rebels. Harming such supportive civilians would also mean harming their own

COIN efforts. This makes it counterproductive and thus less likely for government troops to target these civilians.

Finally, if government troops were to target the civilian constituency of an LSDM, they antagonised not only these civilians but also the militia trying to protect them. As the local community consists of the friends and families of the militia members, LSDMs are unlikely to take kindly to government massacres against it. Since the government can anticipate this reaction and does not want the LSDM to switch sides, it is likely to exercise restraint in areas controlled by LSDMs. As other types of PGMs are not placed in their own constituency, they are less likely to react the same way to indiscriminate government violence.

From this argumentation follows my second hypothesis:

> ***H2****: States that employ LSDMs in their COIN kill on average fewer civilians than states using other types of PGMs.*

In the following section these two hypotheses are examined in an empirical quantitative analysis to find out if the use of LSDMs can indeed reduce the number of civilian casualties.

4. Research Design and Empirical Evidence

In this section, I present my research design for analysing the impact of LSDMs on selective violence compared to other types of PGMs. As different data and methods are used for the two different hypotheses, this section is split into two parts.

4.1 Hypothesis 1: LSDM Group-Level Analysis

Here the first hypothesis on the group-level is examined. Are LSDMs more selective in their targeting? Before answering that question, I present the data, the operationalisation of the variables and the method of analysis.

4.1.1 Data, Operationalisation & Method

The data that for the analysis of hypothesis one is gained from the Pro-Government Militia Database (PGMD) (Carey et al. 2013). The PGMD is the most comprehensive data set on militias that is currently available. It ranges from 1981 to 2007 and includes 332 different PGMs in 88 countries. The PGMD is coded from major news outlets and contains 16 variables,

including information on the membership, targets, government-link and purpose of the militia groups. For the purpose of this hypothesis test, the unit of analysis is on the militia group level.

I code my independent variable *LSDM* as a combination of the membership and purpose variables. In these variables, Carey and colleagues (2013) record the main characteristics of PGM members and the purpose of the PGMs respectively. In my analysis, LSDMs are those militias that have "villagers/rural" as membership and "self-defence and security" as purpose. I argue that this best captures the sedentary and defensive nature of LSDMs given the available data. This results in a binary variable indicating whether a militia group is a local self-defence militia or a different kind of PGM.

The dependent variable is *selective violence*. It is a binary variable capturing whether the PGM engaged in indiscriminate or selective violence. The variable is self-coded from the 'targets' variable in the PGMD. PGMs that have "rebels, insurgents, or other armed group" as targets, but do not target "civilians" are considered "selective" in their use of violence. PGMs that also target civilians are coded as "indiscriminate".

By creating a cross-tabulation of PGM type and the type of violence the group employs (*Table 1*), some patterns are rendered visible. First, the absolute number of LSDMs is relatively low: out of 332 PGMs, only 32 fall into the category of LSDM. This means that the number of treated units is not very large. Second, the majority (58%) of PGMs is not selective in their targeting, indicating that there may be some support for those who see militias as perpetrators of atrocities in civil conflicts. Third, when comparing LSDMs to other PGMs, a pattern that follows the expectations from the theory is evident: while most other PGMs (60%) are indiscriminate in their violence, only about 44 percent of LSDMs use violence against civilians.

		Non-Selective Violence	**Selective Violence**	***Total***
Other PGM	N	180	120	*300*
	Percent	60.00 %	40.00 %	*100 %*
LSDM	N	14	18	*32*
	Percent	43.75 %	56.25 %	*100 %*
Total	*N*	*194*	*138*	*332*
	Percent	*58.43 %*	*41.57 %*	*100 %*

***Table 1**: Cross table of PGM type and selectiveness of violence.*

However, this pattern is not necessarily caused by the type of PGM alone: it is possible that various other factors confound this relationship, making it necessary to include these in the

analysis. Thus, I adjust the model for several variables that may influence both the type of PGM employed and whether this PGM uses violence selectively.

First, I include a binary variable indicating whether the PGM is informally linked to the government or whether it has a semi-official status. It is possible that *informal PGMs* are less likely to be LSDMs because their existence is more difficult to conceal than smaller covertly operating death squads (Carey/Mitchell 2017, 131). Informal PGMs are also more likely to employ indiscriminate violence against civilians because they face less pressure from the government to adhere to human rights standards (Carey et al. 2015). Therefore, whether or not a PGM is informal may introduce a spurious correlation between LSDM existence and the type of violence employed.[10]

Democracies may have incentives to rather employ the services of LSDMs because they are internationally more accepted than other types of PGMs (as seen by the support for the Sons of Iraq program), and because they want to protect their citizens (Lyall 2010b, 167). Autocracies on the other hand may rather hunt down insurgents and thus use more offensive PGMs. Furthermore, autocratic governments are unlikely to be overly concerned with militias' violence against civilians as long as they fight for the state. However, democracies are usually sensitive regarding indiscriminate violence, making intervention against their PGM likely when it kills civilians. Therefore, I include the *regime type* of the country in which the PGM is active via the Polity IV score (Marshall/Jaggers 2007).

The third variable I add in my model is the *Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita* in the country the PGM is active (Gleditsch 2002). The GDP serves here as an indicator for the general capabilities of a state. An economically weaker state might be less able to protect its citizens which increases the probability that threatened civilians form LSDMs to protect themselves (Clayton/Thomson 2016, 503). Simultaneously, weaker states have less power to enforce compliance with human rights by PGMs which may increase the likelihood of violence against civilians (Kan 2019, 52).

Next, I consider the *size of the excluded population* (Cederman et al. 2010). If large parts of a country's population are excluded from political power, they cannot rely on security provision by the government and are more likely to form LSDMs to assume the protection role themselves. A different possibility is that large excluded populations lead to widespread rebel

[10] As it is possible that the PGM forms first independently of the government and then is adopted by the government afterwards, the type of PGM may influence the link to the government instead. Since this may introduce post-treatment bias, I repeat the analysis without the 'informal PGM' variable, finding similar results.

support (ibid.) which hampers LSDM formation. Furthermore, these excluded groups are likely to be targeted collectively by a PGM that lacks better information about the actual alignment of individuals (Fjelde/Hultman 2014, 1234).

Similar mechanisms are at work regarding *ethnic fractionalisation* (Clayton/Thomson 2016). Highly fragmented communities make the formation of an LSDM more difficult but may ease the creation of other PGM types (Ottmann 2017, 33). Moreover, ethnic fractionalisation provides incentives for many militias to target civilians that belong to a different ethnic group without being accountable to them and thus act with impunity (Ottmann 2017). To account for these possibilities I adjust for the ethnic fractionalisation of a country's population in my model.

Lastly, I include an indicator for the logged percentage of *mountainous terrain* in a country (Fearon/Laitin 2003). Because inaccessible areas impede the deployment of government troops (Buhaug/Gates 2002, 422), LSDMs may form as a more efficient source of protection from insurgents. As more rugged terrain hinders governmental control (ibid.), it simultaneously means that governments are less able to monitor and police the behaviour of PGMs. This is likely to result in more indiscriminate violence by militia groups.

For all of these country-level variables I use the values of the year in which the PGM was formed, unless the PGM was established before the beginning of the observation period, in which case I use the values for 1989 (the beginning of the observation period). As these variables are constant (e.g. mountainous terrain) or slow moving (GDP), inaccuracies due to changes in these possible confounders are assumed to be minimal and non-systematic.

The dependent variable in the analysis is binary and indicates whether a group used violence selectively (coded as one) or whether it targeted civilians (coded as zero). Thus, I employ a logistic regression for estimation. I also use robust standard errors clustered on the country-level because the variance across countries might be heteroscedastic.

4.1.2 Results & Discussion

Table 2 below displays the results of my analysis. Model 1 is a base model that includes only the main independent variable 'LSDM'. In Model 2 I added the control variables described above.

	Model 1	Model 2
	Base Model	Full Model
LSDM	**0.66** **(0.415)**	**0.45** **(0.524)**
Informal PGM		-0.22 (0.415)
Polity IV		0.07 (0.042)
GDP p.c.		-0.32 (0.333)
Size of Excluded Population		-0.19 (1.232)
Ethnic Fractionalisation		0.54 (0.899)
Mountainous Terrain		0.04 (0.181)
Constant	-0.41* (0.189)	2.08 (2.833)
Number of Observations	*332*	*204*

Robust standard errors in parentheses (clustered by country)
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

***Table 2**: Logistic regression results for selective violence by different PGM types.*

The indicator for LSDM is not 'statistically significant' in either model. [11] However, the coefficients are positive, indicating that LSDMs are more likely to employ selective violence.

I refrain from an interpretation of the coefficients of the covariates because the model only creates unbiased estimates - if at all - of the main independent variable. This is because each covariate has a different set of potentially confounding variables themselves that would need consideration in separate tests. However, these relationships are not relevant to the empirical testing of my theory.

Because the coefficients in logistic regressions as well as odds ratios are rather unintuitive to interpret, I utilise the CLARIFY package in Stata (King et al. 2000). It uses simulations to predict the probability of selective violence when a PGM is an LSDM and when it is not while

[11] While there are moves to abandon the p-values as a quality measure for statistical results (Wasserstein et al. 2019), it is still common practice to report them. Thus, I refer to them in the discussion of my results.

holding all other variables at their mean and the informal PGM indicator at zero.[12] The results can be seen in *Figure 3* below.

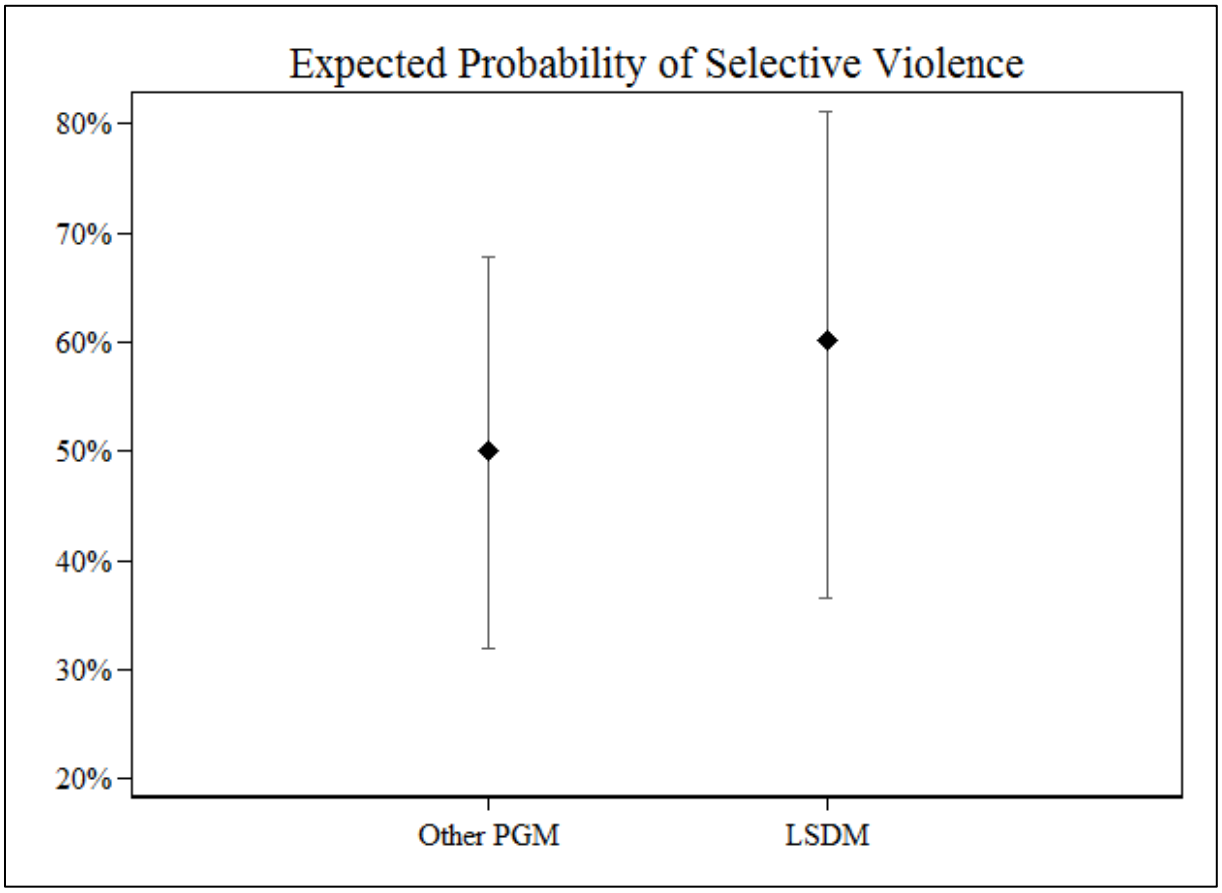


***Figure 3**: Expected probability of selective violence by LSDMs and other types of PGMs with 95% confidence intervals.*

The predicted probability of selective violence for LSDMs is 60 percent and only 50 percent for other PGMs, providing tentative support for my hypothesis. It seems that LSDMs could indeed be more inclined towards using violence selectively and rather spare civilians.

However, the confidence intervals overlap substantively. The high standard errors and low statistical significance are likely due to the relatively low number of cases (N) and the especially low number of LSDMs in the sample (32).

Another problem of the analysis is the imprecise coding of the dependent variable. As the original data is a summary data set, my dependent variable of 'selective violence' (as well as the main predictor of LSDM) pools all years during which the PGM was active. This means 'selective violence' is coded as zero as soon as one incident of violence against civilians was

[12] To make sure that the results are not determined by the arbitrary setting of 'informal PGM' to zero, I repeat the analysis while holding it constant at one, switching it from zero to one, and from one to zero with similar results for the predicted probability (see Table A1 in the appendix).

registered over the PGM's whole period of existence, reducing the variable's internal validity for measuring the concept at hand. Consequently, PGMs are likely to be assessed as more violent than they might actually be. Future analysis should strive to use better data to assess the overall type of violence employed, but considering these limitations my results are quite suggestive that LSDMs are indeed more likely to use selective violence.

4.2 Hypothesis 2: Country-Level Analysis

In this section, I analyse my second hypothesis, which claims that states using LSDMs instead of other types of PGMs are killing less civilians on average. The analysis is conducted on the country-year-level and the data and methods are described in the following section.

4.2.1 Data, Operationalisation & Method

For this analysis I rely on the replication data made available by Clayton and Thomson (2016). It is based on the coding evidence for the PGMD (Carey et al. 2013) and some additional major news sources combined with various other data sources for additional variables. Their data consists of 1000 units of observation (country-years) ranging from 1989 to 2005. From their data, I exclude all cases where no PGM is present, as only the comparison between states with LSDMs and states with other PGMs is meaningful for testing H2. The resulting data set contains 508 observations.[13]

In their data Clayton and Thomson (2016, 503) identify 50 civilian defence forces. Their definition is congruent with my definition for LSDMs, enabling me to use their coding as my main independent variable *LSDM presence*. It is operationalised as a militia that consists mainly of civilians, remains in their home area, and has primarily a defensive role providing security for a village or neighbourhood. The number of country-years with and without an LSDM can be seen in *Table 3* below.

PGM Type	Number of Observations	Percent
Other PGM	296	58.27
LSDM	212	41.73
Total	*508*	*100*

***Table 3**: LSDM presence in the data.*

[13] In the final models the number of observations drops to 442 (base model), 426 (state controls) and 423 (full model) respectively due to missing data for some variables and the exclusion of one outlier.

The independent variable in this analysis is the *number of killed civilians* by government forces.[14] This number is drawn from the Uppsala Conflict Data Project (UCDP) One Sided Violence data set which includes intentional, direct killings of civilians by an actor if the threshold of 25 fatalities per year is reached (Eck/Hultman 2007). The accuracy of data on civilian fatalities is always difficult to determine due to the various interests to misrepresent their magnitude and their difficulty to collect in conflict regions. However, the UCDP has a reputation for the reliability of their data, and provides a low/conservative estimate, a high estimate and a "best estimate" of the fatality numbers that is usually between the other two. I use the latter for my analysis. *Figure 4* shows the bivariate association of PGM type and the number of killed civilians by the government.

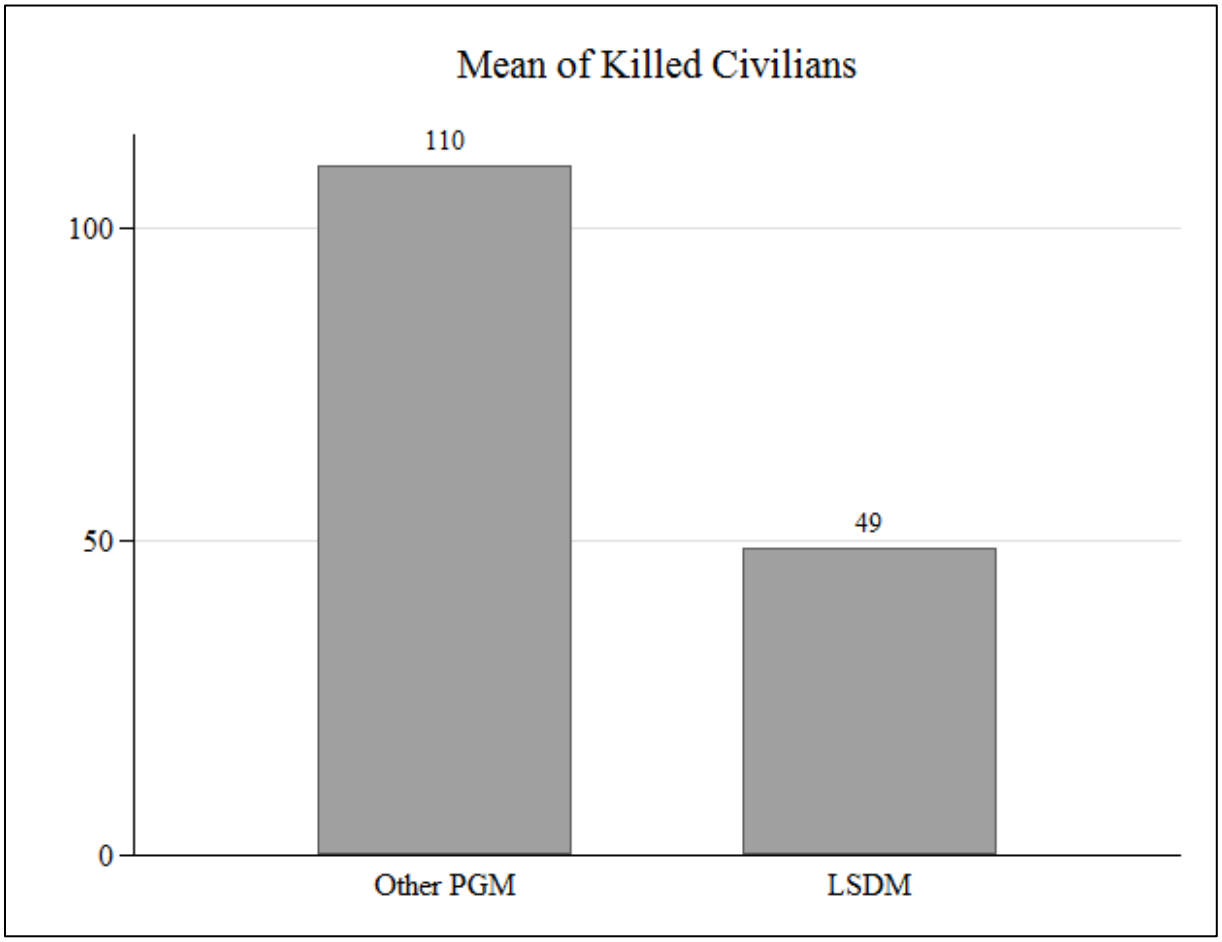


***Figure 4**: Mean number of government-killed civilians per year when LSDMs or other PGMs are active.*[15]

[14] It would be ideal to measure all types of violence against civilians including physical mistreatment, sexual violence and property damage like plundering or burning down of houses. However, since it is nearly impossible to gather reliable data on all potential forms of violence against civilians, I focus on direct killing.

[15] The outlier of Rwanda 1994 is already excluded here; otherwise the mean for killed civilians in a year for mobile types of PGMs would be 632. While this would be in line of my theory, the results would be unduly influenced by this one case.

However, while it seems that governments using LSDMs kill fewer civilians, it is possible that this association is due to the influence of other variables that cause both the type of PGM employed and the number of civilians killed. Thus, it is necessary to adjust for potential confounding factors.

I include the following control variables into my model:[16] first, democracies may have a preference for LSDMs because they seem more acceptable than 'death squad' style militias (Kan 2019, 7). Simultaneously, democracies are less prone to civilian killings than autocracies (Zhukov 2010, 5-6). To account for this, the *regime type* is included in form of the Polity IV score (Marshall/Jaggers 2007).

The second variable I adjust for is the *GDP per capita* of the previous year, taken from Gleditsch (2002): states that are weaker economically may have to rely on LSDMs which could take less capacity to maintain than other PGMs. Furthermore, states with weak economies are less able to provide positive incentives for civilians to support the government and may have to rely on violence instead (akin to the capacity argument of Wood (2010)).

Third, the *size of the excluded population* is considered (Cederman et al. 2010). If larger parts of the population are excluded from political power these might form LSDM to protect themselves from rebel attacks because they cannot rely on the government to protect them. Large excluded parts of the population might also make government violence against civilians more likely because it has to fear less consequences due to the groups low political influence (Clayton/Thomson 2016, 503).

Ethnic fractionalisation can influence the type of PGM that forms. While LSDMs are more likely in homogenous populations (c.f. Ottmann 2017, 33), many mobile PGMs are ethnic militias that specifically target other groups, increasing their likelihood of existence in fractionalised populations. Moreover, high ethnic fractionalisation is likely to increase collective targeting of some ethnic groups by government forces leading to higher numbers of killed civilians (Fjelde/Hultman 2014). Thus, an indicator for this fractionalisation (Clayton/ Thomson 2016) is included in the analysis.

If a country has large amounts of inaccessible terrain, it is less able to send its regular troops or mobile PGMs to protect rural villages from rebels (Buhaug/Gates 2002). Instead a permanent presence by LSDMs is more effective and thus more likely. This lack of territorial control may

[16] While there is overlap with the potential confounders of hypothesis one, the logic differs in some cases. Thus, I explain the reasoning for their inclusion again in this section.

also lead to more violence against civilians (Kalyvas 2006). To account for this possibility, the logged percentage of *mountainous terrain* (Fearon/Laitin 2003) is included.

Informal PGMs are less likely to be LSDMs and vice versa.[17] LSDMs are more often semi-official militias because they are generally more accepted than other types of PGMs which the government does not want to be publicly associated with (Carey/Mitchell 2017). The existence of informal PGMs is likely to increase government violence against civilians because the government can deny responsibility for the violence (Carey et al. 2015). To alleviate the risk that the results are driven by the PGM's government link I include a dummy variable for informal PGMs (Carey et al. 2013).

If a conflict is concentrated in a smaller region of the country, governments may not have to rely on LSDMs to protect the population and could instead rather use mobile PGMs to hunt down rebels. Furthermore, if the conflict is spread over a large area it may be more difficult for governments to victimise civilians because there are less opportunities (for the importance of location and land area c.f. Buhaug/Gates 2002). To account for this possibility, the logged *size of the conflict area* (Clayton/Thomson 2016) is included in the model.

In a conflict in which insurgents kill many civilians the formation of an LSDM may be more likely (Kan 2019, 29). Either initiated by the communities for self-defence or by the government to protect the civilians from rebel attacks. In addition, very violent insurgents may either decrease the need for violence to promote civilian support for the government, or it may reduce the need for restraint, resulting in more civilian fatalities. Thus, the log of the *number of killed civilians by the rebel forces* (Clayton/Thomson 2016) is taken into account.

Also the *ratio of rebel and government forces* (Wood et al. 2012) is likely to influence both the presence of LSDMs and the number of killed civilians by the government. Relatively weak rebels do not necessitate the protection of the population by LSDMs. Rather, mobile PGMs to hunt down the weak rebels might be more fruitful. The relative capabilities are also likely to impact government violence: a weak government may feel more threatened by a stronger insurgency and thus target suspected enemies indiscriminately (Wood et al. 2012).

The dependent variable in this analysis is a count of incidences in a country-year observation with theoretically no upper bound. To model such a count variable a Poisson or Negative Binomial Regression are the appropriate tools for analysis (Gardner et al. 1995). In a Poisson Regression the variance is assumed to be equal to the mean. To relax this arbitrary assumption,

[17] Potential concerns of post-treatment bias are addressed in the robustness tests.

I employ instead a Negative Binomial Regression in my analysis, leaving the variance free to differ from the mean.

To account for serial correlation over time a lagged dependent variable should be included (Beck/Katz 1995, 645). Thus, I integrate a count of the civilians killed by the government in the previous year in my model, assuming a first-order autoregressive process. Furthermore, I use robust standard errors which are clustered for the respective conflicts.

Lastly, I exclude the observation of Rwanda in 1994 from my analysis because it is a major outlier (see *Graph A1* in appendix). In this year government troops killed more than 150 000 civilians - over 40 times more than the next highest number of killed civilians. While there were no LSDMs active and its inclusion would be in line with my theory, I drop this case from the analysis to avoid that my results are driven by this single case. The results of my analysis are presented in the next section.

4.2.2 Results & Discussion

The results of the analysis of my second hypothesis are displayed in *Table 4* below. Model 1 is the base model, Model 2 includes the variables pertaining to the country itself, while I added more control variables for the ongoing conflict in Model 3.

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**
	Base Model	State Controls	Full Model
LSDM Presence	**-1.08****	**-0.84***	**-1.43****
	(0.407)	**(0.410)**	**(0.443)**
Polity IV Score		-0.11**	-0.05
		(0.039)	(0.064)
GDP p.c. (lag)		-0.05	-0.75
		(0.357)	(0.554)
Size of Excluded Population		-0.22	2.44
		(1.114)	(1.354)
Ethnic Fractionalisation		-0.39	-0.01
		(0.919)	(1.771)
Mountainous Terrain (log)		-0.04	0.12
		(0.296)	(0.381)
Informal PGM			0.49
			(0.445)
Total Conflict Area (log)			-0.73***
			(0.212)

Rebel-Killed Civilians (log)			0.16 (0.143)
Ratio of Rebel & Government Forces (log)			-0.41 (0.253)
Government-Killed Civilians (lag)	0.01*** (0.002)	0.01* (0.002)	0.00 (0.002)
Constant	3.69*** (0.323)	4.52 (3.849)	15.58* (6.799)
Alpha (log)	2.65*** (0.167)	2.58*** (0.179)	2.48*** (0.177)
Number of Observations	*442*	*426*	*423*

Robust standard errors in parentheses (clustered by conflict)
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

***Table 4**: Negative binomial regression results of the number of civilians killed by the government.*

As expected, the coefficients for 'LSDM presence' are negative. This supports my hypothesis that governments which employ LSDMs kill less civilians than governments which use other types of PGMs. Furthermore, the effects are 'statistically significant' at the 1% level (Model 1 and Model 3) and the 5% level (Model 2).

As in the previous section on the first hypothesis, the coefficients of the covariates cannot be interpreted. This is because they each have their own set of variables that would have to be considered, resulting in different model specifications than the one I estimate for the effect of LSDM presence. Moreover, my key predictor could introduce post-treatment bias in the relationship between some of the covariates and the dependent variable of killed civilians.

For a substantive interpretation of the effect, I generate predicted values for civilian casualties under LSMD presence and absence using the CLARIFY package in Stata (King et al. 2000). It simulates the expected number of civilians that a government would kill if the 'LSDM presence' variable changes from zero to one, while holding all other variables constant at their mean and 'informal PGM' at zero.[18] The simulation predicts that governments that use LSDMs kill about ten civilians per year. However, if a government employs other more mobile PGMs (with all other factors being equal) it is expected to kill about 40 civilians per year (see *Figure 5* below).

[18] When conducting the simulations with 'informal PGM' set to one in both conditions, changing it from zero to one with 'LSDM presence' and vice versa the results remain significant and in the expected direction.

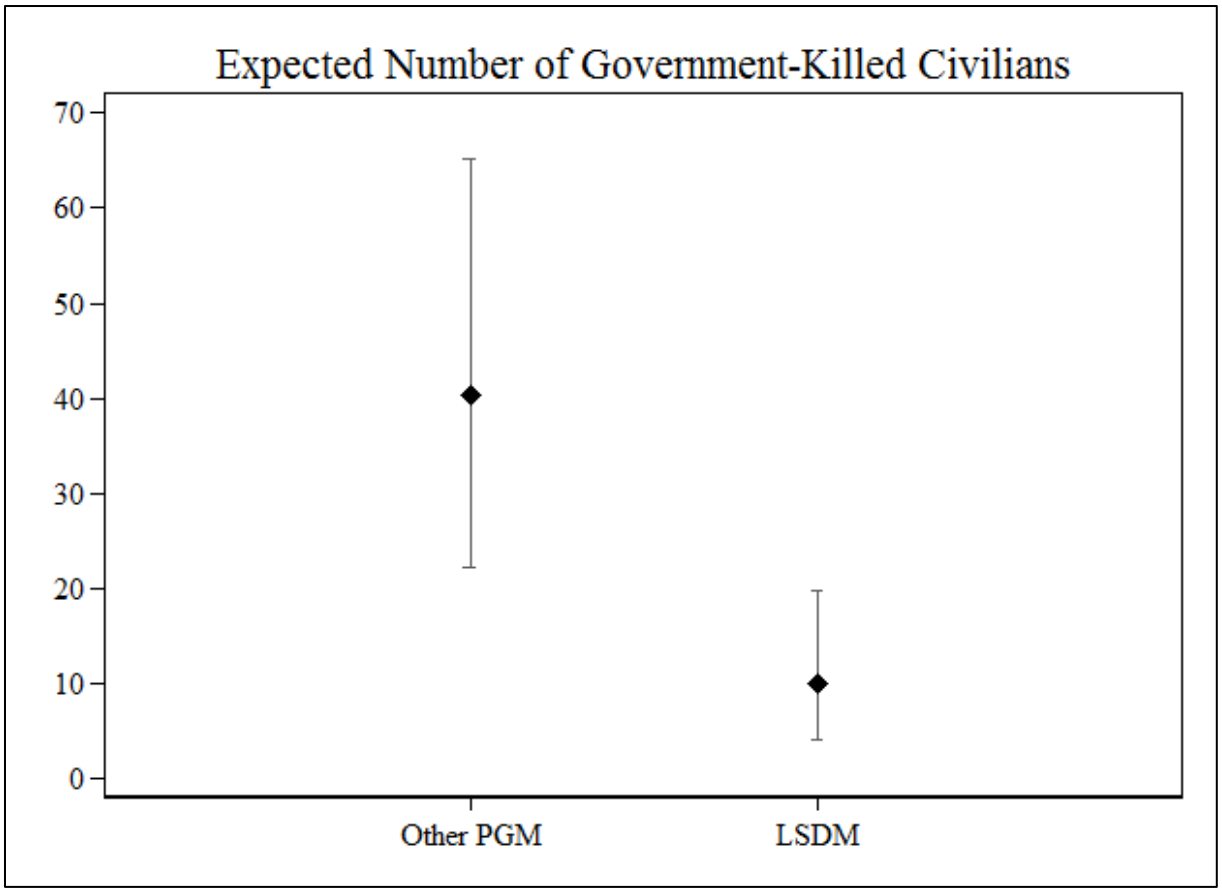


***Figure 5**: Expected number of civilians killed by the government per year when LSDMs or other PGMs are active (with 95% confidence intervals).*

In summary, using LSDMs instead of other PGMs in conflict is expected to reduce the number of government-killed civilians by 30 - which constitutes a 75% decrease. This constitutes a strong substantive effect supporting my hypothesis that states employing LSDMs kill less civilians than states using other PGMs.

To increase the confidence in my results I conduct various robustness test and in most instances the results are even stronger than the ones reported here. I use an OLS regression to conduct the analysis and find that the average reduction in killed civilians per year when using LSDMs is 59 and statistically significant (see *Table A2* in appendix). Although the dependent variable is a count, an OLS may be used if the mean of the dependent variable is not very close to zero with the rule of thumb being about 10 (Coxe et al. 2009). In my sample the mean of government-killed civilians per year is 84[19] rendering OLS feasible as a robustness test.

To avoid that the expected values are unduly influenced by the artificial setting of 'informal PGM' to zero, I replicate the simulation with it set to one in both conditions, resulting in a reduction of civilian fatalities of 51. Furthermore, I repeat the simulation with 'informal PGM'

[19] This is the mean without the outlier. If Rwanda in 1994 was included the mean would be 386.

switching from zero to one and vice versa. In both conditions the use of LSDMs is associated with a lower number of civilians killed by the government, although the 95% confidence intervals overlap in the zero to one condition.

The inclusion of the binary variable 'informal PGM' could potentially introduce post-treatment bias when PGMs are first formed and the government then afterwards decides about its connection to them. Thus, I repeat my main analysis excluding the indicator whether a PGM is only informally connected to the government. Here I find a statistically significant reduction in civilian casualties by 41 in a year.

In another analysis I include the outlier of Rwanda in 1994 and find a statistically significant decrease of 43 civilians in a year when a government employs LSDMs instead of other PGMs.[20]

The results are also robust to various model specifications, in which I exclude different sets of my control variables. These robustness checks indicate that the reported effect of 30 fewer killed civilians when LSDMs are used is a rather conservative estimate. This increases confidence in my findings.

5. Conclusion

This thesis set out to investigate the empirical connection between the type of militia and its treatment of civilians. I argued that local self-defence militias (LSDMs) are effective counterinsurgents because they prefer selective violence and abstain from indiscriminate violence. This is due to three mechanisms: first, LSDMs are active in their home region which means they have superior local knowledge about the terrain, culture and the population's alignment. This makes it *possible* for the militia (or by extension the government) to target the insurgents selectively reducing the likelihood of indiscriminate violence. The second mechanism is that LSDMs serve in their own community among friends and family, which makes them *willing* to kill as few as possible and desist from indiscriminate violence. Furthermore, unlike mobile PGMs they are held accountable by the local community and have to bear its social sanctions. The third mechanism is based on the fact that LSDMs are dependent on the support of the local population. Unlike mobile PGMs, they are unable to move on after potential violent resource extraction, making it *rational* to foster voluntary resource provision

[20] The results for this analysis and the robustness checks concerning the 'informal PGM' variable can be seen in *Table A3* in the appendix.

by refraining from violence against civilians. From this followed the hypotheses that LSDMs are more likely to employ selective violence than other types of PGMs and by extension that states using LSDMs kill on average fewer civilians than states employing other PGMs.

Using a logistic regression to analyse the effect of LSDMs on selective violence, I did not find definite support for my first hypothesis. Although the results showed that LSDMs use more selective violence, they were not statistically significant at conventional levels. This means that while they provide some support for the claim that LSDMs are more likely to use violence selectively than other PGMs, I cannot reject the null hypothesis that these results may be induced by chance alone. There was stronger evidence for my second hypothesis, however: using a negative binomial regression I found that states employing LSDMs are expected to kill 30 civilians less per year than when they use different types of PGMs. This is a substantive reduction of civilian casualties by 75 percent. In contrast to the first hypothesis, these results are statistically significant at conventional levels and lead to the rejection of the null-hypothesis. In combination with the suggestive results of the first analysis, I consider my theoretical framework as largely supported by the empirical analysis. Therefore, I tentatively conclude that LSDMs are more effective COIN forces due to their inclination towards more selective violence.

However, while the results point in a promising direction, this study suffers from some limitations. First, as the results from the first hypothesis are not statistically significant, I cannot be certain that it is indeed the LSDMs that kill fewer civilians. It is possible that the results of the second hypothesis are driven by a confounding variable that I failed to include in my model.

Even if I was convinced that LSDMs indeed kill fewer civilians I could not be certain that this is due to the proposed mechanisms as I only investigated the macro-effect, and not the exact mechanisms. This might be addressed in future research, for example in form of an in-depth case study.

Despite the UCDP's commitment to high-quality data collection, obtaining data on civilian fatalities in conflicts is a difficult endeavour. Underreporting in certain circumstances and various conflicting interests of war actors may skew the numbers to one side and thus bias the outcome. However, addressing this problem is beyond the scope of this thesis. Moreover, it is not expected to induce systematic bias, but mere inefficiency, meaning that the obtained results would be conservative estimates of the true parameters.

Previous research attributes several undesirable consequences to PGMs in general. Examples are the undermining of the state's monopoly of force and the creation of another armed group, which may spoil peace agreements out of self-interest in the continuation of the conflict (e.g. Steinert et al. 2019). Further research is needed to investigate whether LSDMs have the same negative consequences for post-conflict environments, which other PGMs have, or if their implications are more positive like they are for the level of violence against civilians. Moreover, the field would profit from increased efforts in the collection of reliable micro-level data on PGMs in general and LSDMs in particular. The available data is aggregated to year- or even group-level and is not up to the emerging standard of geo-coded, micro-level data that allows researchers to finer scrutinise the proposed hypotheses.

As stated above, any type of militia - including LSDMs - may have potential negative consequences. Thus, while they have advantages over other PGMs and can be used effectively for COIN, it is unclear whether their use may be advocated to policy-makers.

This thesis contributes to our understanding of an important actor in civil wars: pro-government militias. By disaggregating this category of PGMs, I found that LSDMs have distinct consequences for violence against civilians. Moreover, these results suggest that the perceived effectiveness of PGMs in COIN may be driven by the subsection of LSDMs, which make civilian killings less likely and COIN thus more successful. This hopefully spurs further research into the different types of militias and may have implications for the real-world politics in counterinsurgencies.

References

Ahram, Ariel I. 2011. “Origins and Persistence of State-Sponsored Militias: Path Dependent Processes in Third World Military Development.” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 34 (4): 531-556.

Alie, Joe. 2005. “The Kamajor Militia in Sierra Leone: Liberators or Nihilists?” In: David J. Francis (ed.). *Civil Militia: Africa's Intractable Security Menace?* Aldershot, UK: Ashgate: 51-70.

Anderson, David/Matthew Stuart/Mark Abadi/Shayanne Gal. 2019. “5 Everyday Hand Gestures That Can Get You in Serious Trouble Outside the US.” *Business Insider*. 05.01.2019. https://www.businessinsider.de/hand-gestures-offensive-different-countries-2018-6?op=1, Retrieved on 22.7.2019.

Balcells, Laia. 2010. “Rivalry and Revenge: Violence against Civilians in Conventional Civil Wars.” *International Studies Quarterly* 54 (2): 291-313.

Barter, Shane Joshua. 2013. “State Proxy or Security Dilemma? Understanding Anti-Rebel Militias in Civil War.” *Asian Security* 9 (2): 75-92.

Beck, Nathaniel/Jonathan N. Katz. 1995. “What to Do (and Not to Do) with Time-Series Cross-Section Data.” *The American Political Science Review* 89 (3): 634-647.

Bellows, John/Edward Miguel. 2009. “War and Local Collective Action in Sierra Leone.” *Journal of Public Economics* 93: 1144-1157.

Blocq, Daniel S. 2014. “The Grassroots Nature of Counterinsurgent Tribal Militia Formation: The Case of the Fertit in Southern Sudan, 1985–1989.” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 8 (4): 710-724.

Branch, Daniel. 2007. “The Enemy Within: Loyalists and the War against Mau Mau in Kenya.” *The Journal of African History* 48 (2): 291-315.

Buhaug, Halvard/Scott Gates. 2002. “The Geography of Civil War.” *Journal of Peace Research* 39 (4): 417-433.

Byman, Daniel. 2016. “‘Death Solves All Problems’: The Authoritarian Model of Counterinsurgency.” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39 (1): 62-93.

Carey, Sabine C. 2006. “The Dynamic Relationship between Protest and Repression.” *Political Research Quarterly* 59 (1): 1-11.

Carey, Sabine C./Michael P. Colaresi/Neil J. Mitchell. 2011. “Why Do Governments Use Militias?” *Conference Paper*. St. Gallen: ECPR Joint Sessions.

Carey, Sabine C./Michael P. Colaresi/Neil J. Mitchell. 2015. “Governments, Informal Links to Militias, and Accountability.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59 (5): 850-876.

Carey, Sabine C./Michael P. Colaresi/Neil J. Mitchell. 2016. “Risk Mitigation, Regime Security, and Militias: Beyond Coup-Proofing.” *International Studies Quarterly* 60 (1): 59-72.

Carey, Sabine C./Neil J. Mitchell. 2017. “Progovernment Militias.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 127-147.

Carey, Sabine C./Neil J. Mitchell/Will Lowe. 2013. “States, the Security Sector, and the Monopoly of Violence: A New database on Pro-Government Militias.” *Journal of Peace Research* 50 (2): 249-258.

Cederman, Lars-Erik/Andreas Wimmer/Brian Min. 2010. “Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis.” *World Politics* 62 (1): 87-119.

Chaves, Isaías N./James A. Robinson. 2010. “Political Consequences of Civil Wars.” *Unpublished Manuscript.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Clayton, Govinda/Andrew Thomson. 2014. “The Enemy of My Enemy is My Friend… the Dynamics of Self Defense Forces in Irregular War: The Case of the Sons of Iraq.” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37 (11): 920-935.

Clayton, Govinda/Andrew Thomson. 2016. “Civilianizing Civil Conflict: Civilian Defense Militias and the Logic of Violence in Intrastate Conflict.” *International Studies Quarterly* 60 (3): 499-510.

Conibere, Richard/Jana Asher/Kristen Cibelli/Jana Dudukovich/Rafe Kaplan/Patrick Ball. 2004. “Statistical Appendix to the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone.” *Human Rights Data Analysis Group.* Palo Alto, CA: The Benetech Initiative.

Constitution Society. 2019. *Selected Quotes of James Madison*. https://www.constitution.org/jm/jm_quotes.htm, Retrieved on 12.6.2019.

Coxe, Stefany/Stephen G. West/Leona S. Aiken. 2009. “The Analysis of Count Data: A Gentle Introduction to Poisson Regression and Its Alternatives.” *Journal of Personality Assessment* 91 (2): 121-136.

De Bruin, Erica. 2018. “Preventing Coups D’état: How Counterbalancing Works.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62 (7): 1433-1458.

Dearing, Matthew P. 2011. “Formalizing the Informal: Historical Lessons on Local Defense in Counterinsurgency.” Montréal: Réseau de Recherche sur les Opérations de Paix.

Dyke, John R./John R. Crisafulli. 2006. “Unconventional Counter-Insurgency in Afghanistan.” *Thesis Paper*. Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School.

Eastin, Joshua/Emily K. Gade. 2018. “Beheading the Hydra: Counterinsurgent Violence and Insurgent Attacks in Iraq.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 30 (3): 384-407.

Eck, Kristine. 2015. “Repression by Proxy: How Military Purges and Insurgency Impact the Delegation of Coercion.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59 (5): 924-946.

Eck, Kristine/Lisa Hultman. 2007. “One-Sided Violence against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data.” *Journal of Peace Research* 44 (2): 233-246.

Ero, Comfort. 2000. “Vigilantes, Civil Defence Forces and Militia Groups. The Other Side of the Privatisation of Security in Africa.” *Conflict Trends* 1: 25-29.

Fearon, James D./David D. Laitin. 2003. “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War.” *American Political Science Review* 97 (1): 75-90.

Ferme, Mariane C./Danny Hoffman. 2004. “Hunter Militias and the International Human Rights Discourse in Sierra Leone and Beyond.” *Africa Today* 50 (4): 73-95.

Fitzsimmons, Michael. 2008. “Hard Hearts and Open Minds? Governance, Identity and the Intellectual Foundations of Counterinsurgency Strategy.” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31 (3): 337-365.

Fjelde, Hanne/Lisa Hultman. 2014. “Weakening the Enemy: A Disaggregated Study of Violence against Civilians in Africa.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58 (7): 1230-1257.

Francis, David J. (ed.). 2017. *Civil Militia: Africa's Intractable Security Menace?* Abingdon: Routledge.

Fumerton, Mario A. 2001. “Rondas Campesinas in the Peruvian Civil War: Peasant Self-Defence Organisations in Ayacucho.” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 20 (4): 470-497.

Fumerton, Mario A. 2018. “Beyond Counterinsurgency: Peasant Militias and Wartime Social Order in Peru's Civil War.” *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies/Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe* 105: 61-86.

Galula, David. 2006. *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Gardner, William/Edward P. Mulvey/Esther C. Shaw. 1995. “Regression Analyses of Counts and Rates: Poisson, Overdispersed Poisson, and Negative Binomial Models.” *Psychological Bulletin* 118 (3): 392-404.

Gawthorpe, Andrew J. 2017. “All Counterinsurgency is Local: Counterinsurgency and Rebel Legitimacy.” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28 (4-5): 839-852.

Gentile, Gian P. 2009. “Let’s Build an Army to Win all Wars.” *Joint Force Quarterly* 52 (1) Washington, DC: National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies: 27-33.

Gleditsch, Kristian S. 2002. “Expanded Trade and GDP Data.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46 (5): 712-724.

Gould, Roger V. 1991. “Multiple Networks and Mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871.” *American Sociological Review* 56 (6): 716-729.

Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. “The Strength of Weak Ties.” *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (6): 1360-1380.

Granovetter, Mark S. 1983. “The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited.” S*ociological Theory* 1: 201-233.

Hazelton, Jacqueline L. 2011. “The Use of Guerrilla Defectors as Fighting Forces in Counterinsurgency: Preliminary Lessons Learned from Five Campaigns.” *APSA 2011 Annual Meeting Paper*. Seattle: American Political Science Association.

Hoffman, Danny. 2007. “The Meaning of a Militia: Understanding the Civil Defence Forces of Sierra Leone.” *African Affairs* 106 (425): 639-662.

Hoffman, Frank G. 2007. “Neo-Classical Counterinsurgency?” *Parameters* 37 (2): 1-17.

Hoover Green, Amelia. 2016. “The Commander’s Dilemma: Creating and Controlling Armed Group Violence.” *Journal of Peace Research* 53 (5): 619-632.

Hultman, Lisa. 2007. “Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19 (2): 205-222.

Hultman, Lisa. 2009. “The Power to Hurt in Civil War: The Strategic Aim of RENAMO Violence.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35 (4): 821-834.

Hultquist, Philip. 2017. “Is Collective Repression an Effective Counterinsurgency Technique? Unpacking the Cyclical Relationship between Repression and Civil Conflict.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 34 (5): 507-525.

Human Rights Watch. 2015. Iraq: “Militias Escalate Abuses, Possibly War Crimes” 15.02.2015. http://www.hrw.org/news/2015/02/15/iraq-militias-escalate-abuses-possibly-war-crimes, Retrieved on 27.07.2019.

Humphreys, Macartan/Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2008. “Who fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (2): 436-455.

Jentzsch, Corinna. 2014. *Militias and the Dynamics of Civil War*. New Haven, CT: Yale University.

Jentzsch, Corinna. 2017. “Auxiliary Armed Forces and Innovations in Security Governance in Mozambique’s Civil War.” *Civil Wars* 19 (3): 325-347.

Jentzsch, Corinna/Stathis N. Kalyvas/Livia I. Schubiger. 2015. “Militias in Civil Wars.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59 (5): 755-769.

Jeursen, Thijs/Chris van der Borgh. 2014. “Security Provision after Regime Change: Local Militias and Political Entities in Post-Qaddafi Tripoli.” *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 8 (2-3): 173-191.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kalyvas, Stathis N./Matthew A. Kocher. 2007. “How “Free” is Free Riding in Civil Wars? Violence, Insurgency, and the Collective Action Problem.” *World Politics* 59 (2): 177-216.

Kan, Paul R. 2019. *The Global Challenge of Militias and Paramilitary Violence*. Basel: Springer International Publishing.

Kilcullen, David J. 2005. “Countering global insurgency.” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28 (4): 597-617.

Kilcullen, David J. 2006. “Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency.” *Conference Remarks*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Conference.

King, Gary/Michael Tomz/Jason Wittenberg. 2000. “Making the Most of Statistical Analyses: Improving Interpretation and Presentation.” *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (2): 341-355.

Kita, Sotaro. 2009. “Cross-Cultural Variation of Speech-Accompanying Gesture: A Review.” *Language and Cognitive Processes* 24 (2): 145-167.

Koren, Ore. 2017. “Means to an End: Pro-Government Militias as a Predictive Indicator of Strategic Mass Killing.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 34 (5): 461-484.

Koren, Ore/Benjamin E. Bagozzi. 2017. “Living off the Land: The Connection between Cropland, Food Security, and Violence Against Civilians.” *Journal of Peace Research* 54 (3): 351-364.

Luttwak, Edward N. 2007. “Dead End: Counterinsurgency Warfare as Military Malpractice.” *Harper’s Magazine* 314 (1881): 33-42.

Lyall, Jason. 2009. “Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks? Evidence from Chechnya.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53 (3): 331-362.

Lyall, Jason. 2010a. “Are Coethnics More Effective Counterinsurgents? Evidence from the Second Chechen War.” *American Political Science Review* 104 (1): 1-20.

Lyall, Jason. 2010b. “Do Democracies Make Inferior Counterinsurgents? Reassessing Democracy’s Impact on War Outcomes and Duration.” *International Organization* 64 (1): 167-192.

Lyall, Jason/Graeme Blair/Kosuke Imai. 2013. “Explaining Support for Combatants during Wartime: A Survey Experiment in Afghanistan.” *American Political Science Review* 107 (4): 679-705.

Lyall, Jason/Isaiah Wilson. 2009. “Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars.” *International Organization* 63 (1): 67-106.

Lyall, Jason/Yuki Shiraito/Kosuke Imai. 2015. “Coethnic Bias and Wartime Informing.” *The Journal of Politics* 77 (3): 833-848.

Makkai, Toni/John Braithwaite. 1994. “Reintegrative Shaming and Compliance with Regulatory Standards.” *Criminology* 32 (3): 361-385.

Marsh, Charlotte. “Should the Sudan Crisis Spark a Western Intervention?” *The Speaker* 16.06.2019. https://speakerpolitics.co.uk/analysis/1311-should-the-sudan-crisis-spark-a-western-intervention, Retrieved on 25.07.2019.

Marshall, Monty G./Keith Jaggers. 2007. “Polity IV Project. Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2006. Dataset Users’ Manual.” *Polity IV Project*. Vienna, VA: Center for Systemic Peace.

Mednick, Sam. 2018. “South Sudan’s Latest Civil War Atrocities Kept out of Sight.” *The Associated Press*. 06.06.2018. https://www.apnews.com/ab5a4b3621b4439cb5b722c09f71338c, Retrieved on 05.07.2019.

Merom, Gil. 2003. *How Democracies Lose Small Wars: State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mitchell, Neil J./Sabine C. Carey/Christopher K. Butler. 2014. "The Impact of Pro-Government Militias on Human Rights Violations." *International Interactions* 40 (5): 812-836.

Mkandawire, Thandika, 2002. "The Terrible Toll of Post-Colonial 'Rebel Movements' in Africa: Towards an Explanation of the Violence against the Peasantry." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 40 (2): 181-215.

Møller, Bjørn. 2006. "The Role of Militias and Other Paramilitaries in African (Un) Civil Wars." *DIIS Working Paper* 2006/23. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies.

Mucha, Witold. 2013. "Victims, Perpetrators, or Both? Militias during Civil War in Peru and Sierra Leone." *7 ECPR General Conference.* Duisburg: Institute for Development and Peace (INEF).

Mucha, Witold. 2016. "Securitisation and Militias during Civil War in Peru." *Conflict, Security & Development* 16 (4): 327-346.

Murdie, Amanda M./David R. Davis. 2012. "Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights INGOs." *International Studies Quarterly* 56 (1): 1-16.

Nidiffer, Andrew T. 2012. "The Other Side of the Coin: The Role of Militia in Counterinsurgency." *Thesis Paper*. Atlanta: Georgia State University.

Odomovo, Afeno S. 2014. "Insurgency, Counter-Insurgency and Human Rights Violations in Nigeria." *The Age of Human Rights Journal* 3: 46-62.

Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *American Political Science Review* 87 (3): 567-576.

Ottmann, Martin. 2017. "Rebel Constituencies and Rebel Violence against Civilians in Civil Conflicts." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 34 (1): 27-51.

Paul, Christopher/Colin P. Clarke/Beth Grill/Molly Dunigan. 2016. "Moving Beyond Population-Centric vs. Enemy-Centric Counterinsurgency." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 27 (6): 1019-1042.

Peic, Goran. 2014. "Civilian Defense Forces, State Capacity, and Government Victory in Counterinsurgency Wars." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37 (2): 162-184.

Ratelle, Jean-François/Emil A. Souleimanov. 2016. "A Perfect Counterinsurgency? Making Sense of Moscow's Policy of Chechenisation." *Europe-Asia Studies* 68 (8): 1287-1314.

Salehyan, Idean/David Siroky/Reed M. Wood. 2014. "External Rebel Sponsorship and Civilian Abuse: A Principal-Agent Analysis of Wartime Atrocities." *International Organization* 68 (3): 633-661.

Schwartz, Rachel A./Scott Straus. 2018. "What Drives Violence against Civilians in Civil War? Evidence from Guatemala's Conflict Archives." *Journal of Peace Research* 55 (2): 222-235.

Seul, Jeffrey R. 1999. "'Ours is the Way of God': Religion, Identity, and Intergroup Conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 36 (5): 553-569.

Souleimanov, Emil A. 2015. "An Ethnography of Counterinsurgency: Kadyrovtsy and Russia's Policy of Chechenization." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 31 (2): 91-114.

Spar, Debora L. 1998. "The Spotlight and the Bottom Line: How Multinationals Export Human Rights." *Foreign Affairs* 77 (2): 7-12.

Staniland, Paul. 2012. "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Insurgent Fratricide, Ethnic Defection, and the Rise of Pro-State Paramilitaries." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56 (1): 16-40.

Staniland, Paul. 2015. "Militias, Ideology, and the State." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59 (5): 770-793.

Stanton, Jessica A. 2015. "Regulating Militias: Governments, Militias, and Civilian Targeting in Civil War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59 (5): 899-923.

Steinert, Christoph V./Janina I. Steinert/Sabine C. Carey. 2019. "Spoilers of Peace: Pro-Government Militias as Risk Factors for Conflict Recurrence." *Journal of Peace Research* 56 (2): 249-263.

Thompson, Robert G. K. 1966. *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam*. London: Chatto & Windus.

Toft, Monica D./Yuri M. Zhukov. 2012. "Denial and Punishment in the North Caucasus: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Coercive Counter-Insurgency." *Journal of Peace Research* 49 (6): 785-800.

TRC. 2004. "Chapter Three: The Military and Political History of the Conflict." *Final Report, Volume 3A*. Freetown: Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission. http://www.sierraleonetrc.org/index.php/view-the-final-report/download-table-of-contents, Retrieved on 28.06.2019.

U. S. Army/U.S. Marine Corps. 2007. *Field Manual (FM) 3-24: Counterinsurgency.* Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Government Printing Office.

Ucko, David. 2008. "Militias, Tribes and Insurgents: The Challenge of Political Reintegration in Iraq." *Conflict, Security & Development* 8 (3): 341-373.

Valentino, Benjamin A. 2014. "Why We Kill: The Political Science of Political Violence against Civilians." *Annual Review of Political Science* 17: 89-103.

Valentino, Benjamin/Paul Huth/Dylan Balch-Lindsay. 2004. "'Draining the Sea': Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare." *International Organization* 58 (2): 375-407.

Van Creveld, Martin. 2008. *The Changing Face of War. Combat from the Marne to Iraq*. New York City, NY: Presidio Press.

Wasserstein, Ronald L./Allen L. Schirm/Nicole A. Lazar. 2019. "Moving to a World beyond "p< 0.05"." *The American Statistician* 73 (1): 1-19.

Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2006. *Inside Rebellion. The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wood, Reed M. 2010. "Rebel Capability and Strategic Violence against Civilians." *Journal of Peace Research* 47 (5): 601-614.

Wood, Reed M. 2014. "Opportunities to Kill or Incentives for Restraint? Rebel Capabilities, the Origins of Support, and Civilian Victimization in Civil War." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 31 (5): 461-480.

Wood, Reed M./Jacob D. Kathman/Stephen E. Gent. 2012. "Armed Intervention and Civilian Victimization in Intrastate Conflicts." *Journal of Peace Research* 49 (5): 647-660.

Wright, Austin L./Luke N. Condra/Jacob N. Shapiro/Andrew C. Shaver. 2017. "Civilian Abuse and Wartime Informing." *Pearson Institute Discussion Paper* 42. Chicago, IL: The Pearson Institute.

Yoroms, Gani J. 2005. "Militias as a Social Phenomenon: Towards a Theoretical Construction." In David J. Francis (ed.). *Civil Militia: Africa's Intractable Security Menace?* Aldershot, UK: Ashgate: 31-50.

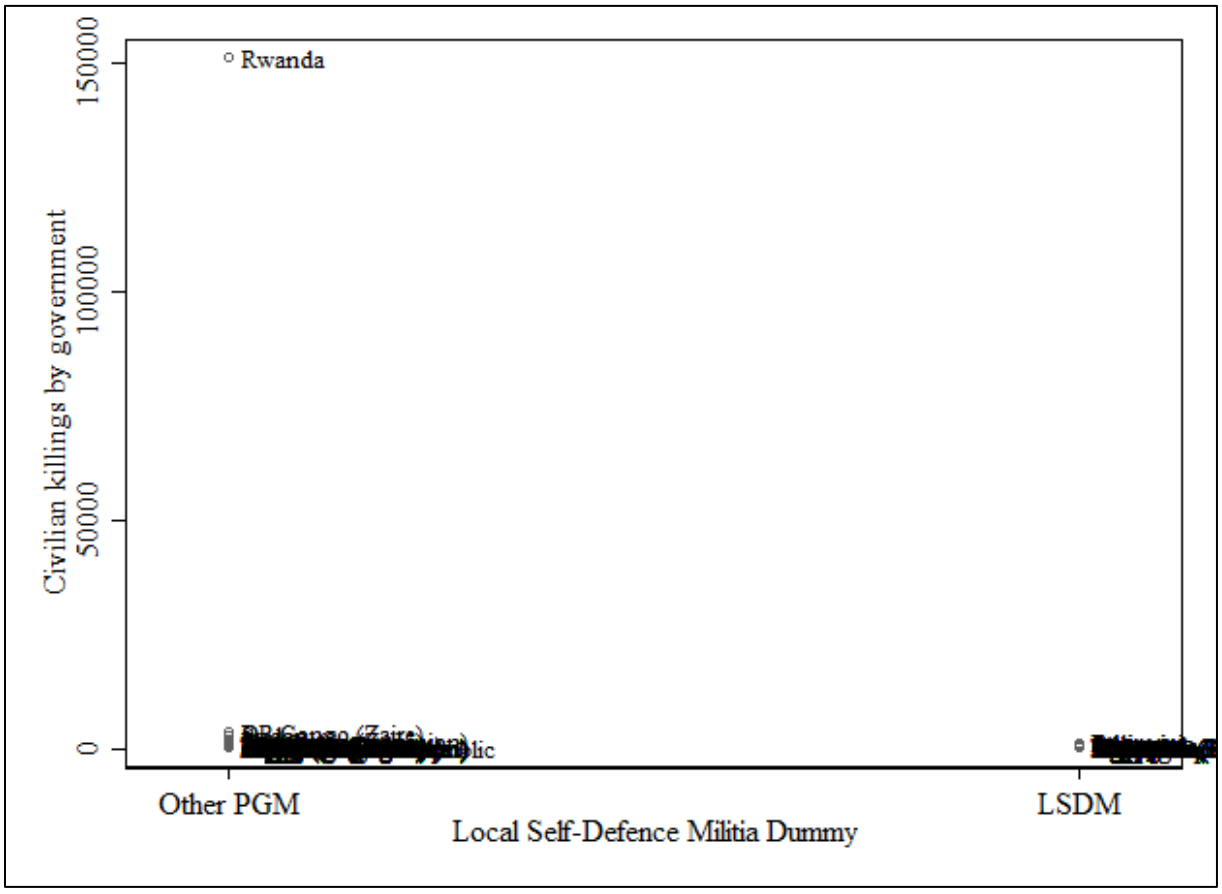
Zhukov, Yuri. 2007. "Examining the Authoritarian Model of Counter-insurgency: The Soviet Campaign Against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 18 (3): 439-466.

Zhukov, Yuri. 2010. "Counterinsurgency in a Non-Democratic State: The Russian Example." In: Paul B. Rich/Isabelle Duyvesteyn (eds.). *The Routledge Companion to Insurgency and Counter Insurgency.* London: Routledge.

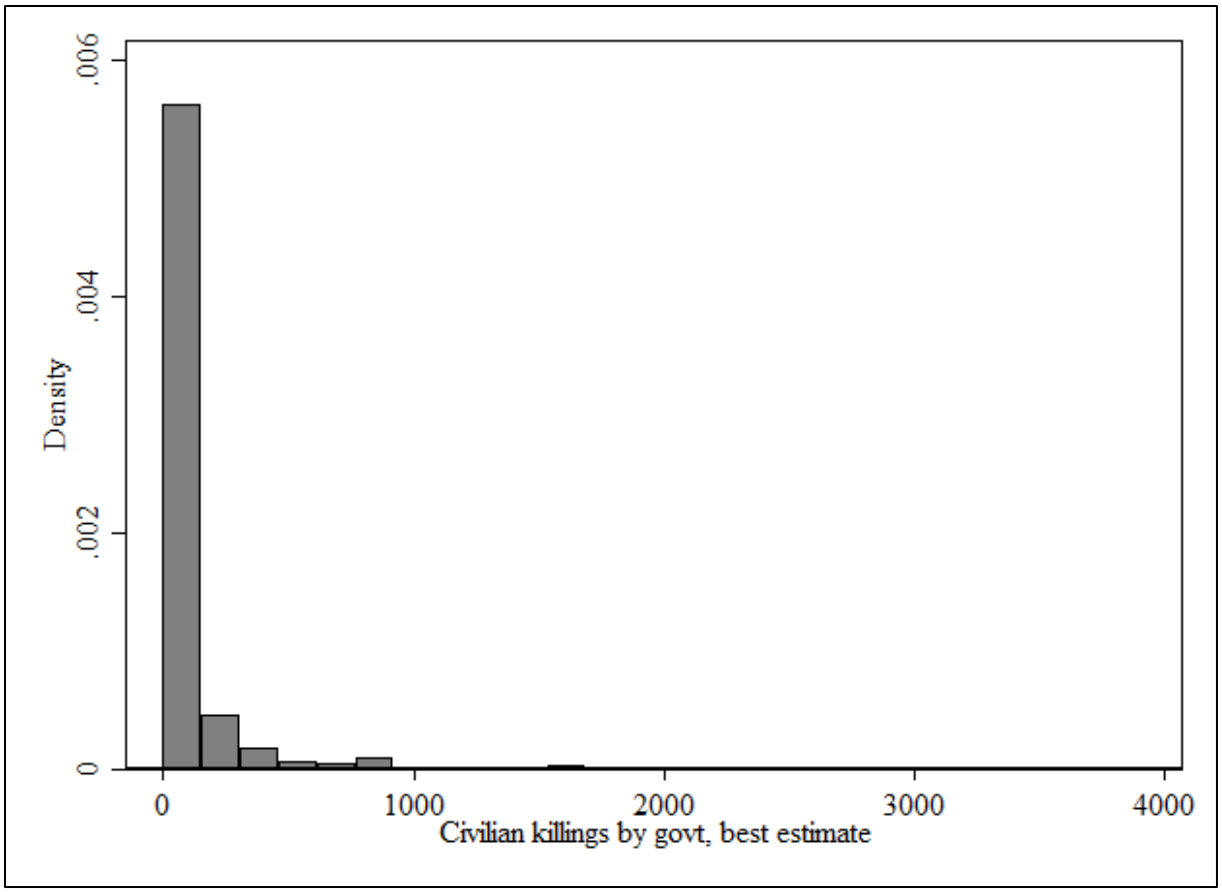
Appendix

Changing 'informal PGM'	Probability of selective violence	
	Other PGM	LSDM
Setting both at 0 (reported for H1)	50%	60%
Setting both at 1	45%	56%
From 0 to 1	50%	56%
From 1 to 0	45%	60%
Without 'informal PGM' variable	46%	58%

***Table A1**: Robustness test of expected probability of selective violence (H1): Changing the setting of the 'informal PGM' variable in the simulations.*



***Graph A1**: Identifying outlier of Rwanda 1994.*



Graph A2*: Dependent variable is not normally distributed making OLS inappropriate.*

	OLS Model
LSDM Presence	**-58.77**** **(21.146)**
Polity IV Score	-3.52 (2.808)
GDP p.c. (lag)	4.71 (17.756)
Size of Excluded Population	211.68* (92.620)
Ethnic Fractionalisation	49.91 (44.338)
Mountainous Terrain (log)	-7.30 (10.530)
Informal PGM	80.49** (23.657)

Total Conflict Area (log)	-2.27 (9.483)
Rebel-Killed Civilians (log)	8.82 (6.508)
Ratio of Rebel & Government Forces (log)	-6.06 (6.186)
Government-Killed Civilians (lag)	0.31*** (0.036)
Constant	-67.78 (185.620)
Number of Observations	*423*
R^2	*0.214*

Robust standard errors in parentheses (clustered by conflict)
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

***Table A2**: OLS regression of government-killed civilians on LSDM presence.*

	Expected Number of Gov.-Killed Civilians	
Changing 'informal PGM'	**Other PGM**	**LSDM**
Setting both at 0 (reported for H2)	40	10
Setting both at 1	68	17
From 0 to 1	40	17
From 1 to 0	68	10
Without 'informal PGM' variable	54	13
Including Outlier (Rwanda 1994) ('informal PGM' fixed at 0)	53	10

***Table A3**: Robustness test of expected number of government-killed civilians (H2): Changing the setting of the 'informal PGM' variable in the simulations or including the outlier.*