



Democratization after Civil War: A Brush-Clearing Exercise¹

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Why do some states emerging from civil war take significant strides toward democracy while others do not? The existing literature comes to contradictory and puzzling findings, many of which, we argue, are driven by methodological problems. We examine the determinants of democratization in the short, medium, and long term after civil wars ending between 1945 and 1999. Other than a short-term effect of negotiated settlements, we find little support for the prominent claim that the outcome of the war shapes the prospects for postwar democratization. Neither does peacekeeping foster democratization. Meanwhile, consistent with the more general democratization literature, we find that economic development aids democratization while oil wealth hinders it. In short, we find the determinants of democratization to be much the same for post-civil war societies as for other societies.

Why do some states emerging from internal conflict take significant strides toward democracy, while others do not? Why, for example, did Mozambique, Nicaragua, and Peru become more democratic after their civil wars ended, while Angola and Sri Lanka did not? The few extant studies that address this question come to a number of contradictory and puzzling findings. This paper attempts to clear the considerably tangled brush on the subject of democratization after civil war. The aim is empirical: rather than present a novel theory, it improves on existing research methods to examine the determinants of democratization for all countries emerging from civil wars ending between 1945 and 1999.² We use the term democratization to refer to moves along a continuum toward democracy, not necessarily to convey the crossing of a threshold to democracy.

Our findings are rather striking with respect to existing studies on regime change after intrastate conflict: correcting for several methodological issues that we believe contribute to some of the contradictory findings in the literature, we find little support for the prominent notions that the war's outcome, its death toll, or the presence of peacekeepers affects the prospects for democracy. Rather, democratization in societies emerging from civil war is shaped by much the same factors thought to affect democratization in other societies. Patterns of democratization after civil war are not so puzzling after all.

The Literature on Democratization after Civil War

According to existing studies, civil war can be surprisingly good for democracy. A growing body of theoretical and empirical work indicates that democratization can and often does occur in the aftermath of civil war (Weingast 1997; Wood 2001; Wantchekon and Neeman 2002; Wantchekon 2004; Wantchekon and Jensen 2011). While the causal mechanisms of the arguments differ, the explanations share a sense that civil war can often open up space for political liberalization because of, or despite, the ravages of war.

However, while many countries democratize after civil war, many do not. A small but growing set of quantitative studies examines this variation, but these studies come to some contradictory and surprising conclusions. As discussed below, there is no consensus, for instance, on the effects of the war's outcome, lethality, or duration, or of the presence of peacekeepers on the prospects for postwar democratization (see, for example, Sambanis 2000; Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Fortna 2008; Gurses and Mason 2008; Huang 2008; Toft 2010a,b; Wantchekon and Jensen 2011). Other findings are more consistent within this set of studies, but are puzzling with respect to the broader literature on democratization. For example, existing studies of post-civil war democratization find no positive effect of economic development (Sambanis 2000; Gurses and Mason 2008; Wantchekon and Jensen 2011) and even inklings of a negative effect (Fortna 2008; Huang 2008).

What are we to make of these various findings? This paper aims to improve on existing research methods in order to better understand why some states democratize in the aftermath of civil war while others do not. Each of the existing studies has significant strengths and begins to answer the question we address here. However, each (and here we include our own previous studies) also has methodological limitations that we hope to remedy.

¹ We thank Nancy Bermeo, Nisha Fazal, Desha Girod, Terrence Lyons, Ingrid Samset, anonymous reviewers, and co-panelists and participants at the Columbia University Comparative Politics Seminar, 2008 International Studies Association annual convention, and 2009 American Political Science Association annual meeting for helpful comments on earlier drafts of the paper. We also thank Rachel McMillan and Sean O'Keefe for research assistance.

² Our data set, codebook (containing the list of cases, including democratization scores), and full set of statistical results are available as a web appendix, at <http://www.isanet.org/pubs/data-archive.html/>.

One reason for some of the contradictory and puzzling findings in existing studies has to do with what one counts as the baseline for measuring change in democracy levels. Several studies (Gurses and Mason 2008; Huang 2008; Wantchekon and Jensen 2011) measure change as the difference between postwar and prewar democracy levels. This measure thus combines changes in democracy levels that occur during the war with those that occur afterward. This is problematic for assessing the effects of certain variables of interest, such as the war's outcome, because some of the changes in levels of democracy (the dependent variable) occur before the war outcome (the independent variable) is determined. The same is true for assessing the effects of the war's cost or duration, and the effects of peacekeepers deployed as the war ends. These variables cannot plausibly be said to cause what are often significant changes in democracy levels during the war.

Second, while Toft (2010a) traces democracy levels before, during, and after the war, she does not employ multivariate analysis in examining postwar democratization.³ Tracking the trends in democratization over time is illustrative; however, given the complex nature of the phenomenon and the likelihood of relationships among key independent variables, multivariate analysis is required to assess effects in an unbiased fashion.

A third reason for inconsistent findings in the literature has to do with the time period examined. Fortna's (2008) results, based on post-1989 civil wars, differ greatly from those covering the post-World War II era (Gurses and Mason 2008; Toft 2010a,b). The effects of some variables may be quite different during the Cold War and after it ended (Huang 2008). Similarly, as Toft (2010a,b) argues, effects on democratization in the short-term (such as those discerned by Fortna 2008; Huang 2008; and Wantchekon and Jensen 2011; who examine no more than 5 years after the war ends) may not hold up over longer periods (such as those examined by Gurses and Mason 2008; or Toft 2010a,b).

Finally, existing studies all use Polity scores (Marshall and Jaggers 2005) to measure changes in democracy levels. This may be problematic for studies of civil war because Polity incorporates a measure of political instability and violence into its measure of democracy, possibly making conclusions about the relationship between democracy and war tautological (Vreeland 2008).⁴

In this paper, we attempt to improve on existing studies by: (i) using a measure of postwar democratization that does not conflate postwar changes with those that occur during the war; (ii) employing multivariate analysis; and (iii) examining democratization (or lack thereof) over both the short and long term. We also

examine differences between the Cold War and post-Cold War eras and check whether our results are robust when the parts of the Polity index that may be "contaminated" by measures of domestic instability are removed.

Hypotheses

Why do some states democratize after civil war while others do not? As noted above, the existing literature comes to often conflicting conclusions. These are reflected in sometimes directly opposing hypotheses.

War Outcomes

We might expect wars that end in a negotiated settlement to lead to democratization. Apart from the political compromise that they reflect, many negotiated settlements explicitly call for political liberalization and national elections (as in Mozambique). Conversely, we would intuitively expect the opposite after wars that end in a victory for one side. A party that has defeated its opponents militarily has little reason to liberalize (Gurses and Mason 2008). Wantchekon and Jensen (2011) argue that warlords will turn to democracy to extricate themselves from costly civil wars when neither side is able to win decisively, implying that military victories should be followed by less democratization. Meanwhile, wars that end with only a truce to halt the fighting but no political settlement seem unlikely candidates for democratization. Democratization requires at least an implicit bargain on who will run the country and how rulers will be selected; this is fundamentally what civil wars are about. Together, these conjectures lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1a: *Wars that end in a negotiated settlement will be followed by greater democratization than will wars that end in other outcomes.*

On the other hand, Toft (2010a,b), drawing on the literature on state formation, argues that wars that end in victory lead to stronger institutions because they leave resources consolidated in the hands of the winning side. Stronger institutions lead to "a more stable, and perhaps more democratic system of government" (Toft 2010b:40), whereas negotiated settlements are more likely to lead not only to renewed violence, but also to authoritarianism as governments crack down in efforts to avert a reversion to war (Toft 2010b:60). According to this argument:

Hypothesis 1b: *Military victories lead to greater post-civil war democratization than do other war outcomes.*

For Toft, it also matters crucially which side wins the war: victory for the rebel side is much more likely to lead to democratization than victory by the government. Governments that win are more likely simply to repress the opposition that threatened their existence through rebellion. Meanwhile, rebel groups that prevail have had to build effective and often representative institutions of governance in order to do so.

³ Note also that Toft's data include a number of colonial wars of independence that are treated as "extra-systemic" in other data sets. This is likely to affect results on the effects of rebel victory (something that is true by definition in wars of independence).

⁴ For other critiques of Polity, see for example, Munck and Verkuilen (2002) and Treier and Jackman (2008).

These institutions then pave the way for a more democratic system once the rebels take power.

Hypothesis 1c: *Military victories by rebels lead to greater post-civil war democratization than other military outcomes.*

The Cost of War

There are similarly contradictory hypotheses relating to the cost of war. Intuitively, we might expect the hostility built up in the most deadly wars to hamper the trust, compromise, and accommodation necessary for democracy to take root (Huang 2008).

Hypothesis 2a: *The more costly the war in terms of human life, the more difficult will be democratization.*

Contra this, Wantchekon (2004) argues that it is the cost of war that induces warlords to turn to democracy as a way out of their conflict. Similarly, Gurses and Mason (2008:322) hypothesize that the longer and costlier the war, the more likely the war will convince protagonists “to agree to a democratic post-civil war order.”

Hypothesis 2b: *The deadlier the war, the more likely will be democratization.*

Identity Conflict and War Aims

There is less debate over the expected relationship between conflicts fought along identity lines, where the warring sides are divided along ethnic, religious, or linguistic lines, and the prospects for democratization. Democracy is widely considered to be harder to create and sustain in ethnically divided societies (Horowitz 1993). When these divisions have either caused civil war or been hardened by ethnically based violence (Kaufmann 1996), they will make democratization particularly problematic.

Hypothesis 3a: *Wars fought along identity lines will be followed by less democratization than wars fought along political or ideological divisions.*

Some civil wars are fought for secession or increased territorial autonomy, while others are fought for control of the central government. Theories of post-civil war democratization often assume the latter (for example, Wantchekon and Jensen 2011): the idea that the war sweeps away the old equilibrium and leads to democratization of the central government implies that this is a country-wide experience. However, many conflicts fought for secession or autonomy have relatively little effect on day-to-day life in the rest of the country. Unless these wars result in the creation of a new state (and this is rare), we might expect that:

Hypothesis 3b: *Wars fought for control of the central government will be followed by more democratization than those fought for autonomy or exit.*

Prewar Democracy Level

In countries that were democratic just prior to the war, the fact that the democratic system could not stave off civil war may lead citizens to view political institutions as a failure. Meanwhile, states that were autocratic before the war are the ones most likely to experience war as a watershed event that opens up political space for reform and democratization. Regression toward the mean may also contribute to this pattern, as highly democratic states become less so, and highly autocratic states more democratic. Whether for statistical reasons, or because civil war sweeps away previous institutions and leads to new ones, we expect that:

Hypothesis 4: *Pre-war levels of democracy are inversely related to postwar democratization.*

Note that to avoid omitted variable bias, it is important to control for pre-war democracy levels in any assessment of the effects of war outcomes on postwar democratization, because wars in former autocracies are more likely to end in military victory, particularly rebel victory (Toft 2010a:23).

Economic Factors

There is a long-standing consensus in the democratization literature that richer countries are more likely to democratize. While the causal relationship has been debated at length (for example, Lipset 1959; Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub, and Limongi 2000; Boix 2003), the correlation between economic development and democracy is quite robust. Despite contrary findings in the empirical literature on postwar democratization, nothing in the more general theoretical literature suggests that post-civil war states should be different from other states in this regard.

Hypothesis 5: *More economically developed countries are more likely to experience democratization.*

There is also a growing consensus in the democratization literature on the negative effects of natural resources, especially oil (Ross 2001; Jensen and Wantchekon 2004; Smith 2004; Wantchekon and Jensen 2011). These studies argue that “oil and democracy don’t mix,” either because states generating rents from oil exports do not need to develop representative institutions in order to collect taxes from their citizens, or because these states can afford to repress or buy off the opposition.

Hypothesis 6: *Democratization is less likely in oil exporting states.*

Peacekeeping

The focus of our own previous studies (Fortna 2008; Huang 2008) on the issue of post-civil war democratization has been on the effects of peacekeeping (see also Doyle and Sambanis 2006). Second only to main-

TABLE 1. Types of Regime Change after Civil War

| | Democratizing (%) | | | Sub-Total | No Change (%) | Autocratizing (%) | Total |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------|---------------|-------------------|-------|
| | Autocratic Liberalization | Democratic Transition | Democratic Consolidation | | | | |
| 2 Years Out | 18 (78) | 3 (13) | 2 (9) | 23 (19) | 85 (69) | 15 (12) | 122 |
| 5 Years Out | 32 (80) | 6 (15) | 2 (5) | 40 (34) | 54 (46) | 24 (20) | 118 |
| 10 Years Out | 30 (71) | 9 (21) | 3 (7) | 42 (44) | 28 (29) | 25 (26) | 95 |
| 20 Years Out | 23 (82) | 3 (11) | 2 (7) | 28 (48) | 9 (16) | 21 (36) | 58 |

(Notes. Percentage figures under the three types of democratization shown are percentage of democratizing cases in each category. Percentage figures in the subtotal, no change, and autocratizing columns show percentage of all cases.)

taining peace, a key goal of international peacekeepers is to build democracy in war-torn states. As noted above, several studies find that peacekeeping often meets this goal (Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Huang 2008; Wantchekon and Jensen 2011).

Hypothesis 7a: *Peacekeeping leads to greater democratization.*

On the other hand, Fortna (2008) argues that while peacekeeping has positive effects on stability and trust, it also entails a large role in state-building for foreign actors who are unaccountable and who can crowd out local efforts at democracy-building, leading to no net positive effect.

Hypothesis 7b: *Peacekeeping has no effect on democratization.*

Data and Research Design

Like most of the studies we critique, we use data on civil wars from Doyle and Sambanis (hereafter D&S). The universe of cases is the 128 civil wars that ended between 1945 and 1999.

Dependent Variable: Democratization

Our dependent variable is based on the widely used 21-point Polity IV (v.2008) index of political regimes. In an alternate version, we use Vreeland's (2008) "X-Polity" index, which omits the components of Polity that measure the regulation and competitiveness of political participation because they may include measures of political instability, fractionalization, and violence. We report only the Polity results here, but discuss any consequential differences.⁵ We calculate the difference between the country's Polity score at 2, 5, 10, and 20 years after the war ended and the Polity score in the year the war ended.⁶

Democratization, as defined here, encompasses three conceptually distinct types of cases: autocratic liberalization, democratic transition, and democratic

consolidation. As Table 1 indicates, the vast majority of our cases of democratization are autocracies that liberalize, but do not cross the threshold to democracy (for example, Tajikistan).⁷ There are also some cases of autocracies that transition to democracy (for example, Guatemala) and very few cases that see the consolidation of already existing democracy. Table 1 also shows the percentage of cases in each time period that experience no regime score change and those that move toward autocracy.⁸

Independent Variables

Data on our independent variables are from D&S unless otherwise noted. War outcomes are denoted with dummy variables marking wars that end with a peace settlement, a truce or cease-fire, or a military victory for one side. This last category is further distinguished in some analyses by separating government from rebel victories.

The cost of war is measured as the natural log of the number of people killed or displaced. As alternative measures we also examine the duration of the war, counted in months, and its intensity (deaths divided by duration), on the expectation that war-weariness induced by very long or intense wars may have different effects than the overall number killed or displaced. A dummy variable distinguishes wars fought along identity lines from those fought along ideological or other lines.

We measure prewar democracy as the average Polity score over the 5 years preceding the war.⁹ We control for the baseline level of democracy—that is, the Polity score in the year the war ends. This is a way of accounting for the bounded nature of our dependent variable (for instance, if a state has a Polity score of 9 at the end of the war, it cannot take on positive change greater than 1, as 10 is the upper limit on the scale), as well as the possibility of regression toward the mean.

We proxy economic development with per capita electricity consumption (logged) in the year the war ended (or the closest available year). A dummy variable marks countries whose oil exports are valued at more than 30% of GDP. A dummy variable denotes

⁵ Details of the data, including the X-Polity-based measure and alternate measures of several independent variables, as well as results of robustness checks and tests of some hypotheses that could not be included here due to space constraints, are available in the web appendix.

⁶ On how we treat missing values for periods of interregnum and transition in Polity IV, see the codebook.

⁷ For the purposes of this table, we define democracy as a state with a Polity score of 7 or higher.

⁸ For the latter, our dependent variable takes on negative values.

⁹ For details of how we handle the lack of prewar Polity scores for break-away states that only gained independence after the war, see the codebook.

TABLE 2. Full Model

| | 2 Years | 5 Years | 10 Years | 20 Years |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Settlement | 1.06 (0.58)* | 2.03 (0.83)** | -0.28 (1.14) | -0.55 (2.64) |
| Identity War | -0.18 (0.48) | -0.67 (0.55) | -1.34 (1.07) | -0.85 (1.87) |
| Cost of War | 0.01 (0.10) | -0.13 (0.11) | -0.04 (0.27) | 0.01 (0.33) |
| Prewar Polity | -0.02 (0.05) | -0.07 (0.06) | 0.03 (0.17) | 0.08 (0.20) |
| Polity at End of War | -0.10 (0.06)* | -0.21 (0.07)*** | -0.43 (0.16)** | -0.73 (0.24)*** |
| Development | 0.02 (0.14) | 0.33 (0.21) | 0.65 (0.45) | 1.72 (0.87)* |
| Oil | -0.75 (0.45) | -1.62 (0.79)** | -2.64 (1.06)** | -4.65 (2.07)** |
| Military Size (per cap.) | 0.19 (0.21) | 0.25 (0.27) | -0.38 (0.44) | 0.73 (0.74) |
| Peacekeeping | -0.44 (0.44) | -0.90 (0.68) | -0.81 (1.11) | 1.40 (2.60) |
| Post-Cold War | 1.27 (0.52)** | 2.24 (0.61)*** | 4.87 (1.18)*** | |
| War by 2 Years | -0.85 (0.58) | | | |
| War by 5 Years | | 0.45 (0.59) | | |
| War by 10 Years | | | -0.58 (1.00) | |
| War by 20 Years | | | | 2.58 (1.57) |
| Constant | 0.46 (1.44) | 0.48 (2.48) | -4.43 (4.72) | -6.55 (7.77) |
| Observations | 117 | 113 | 90 | 53 |
| R-Squared | 0.16 | 0.30 | 0.34 | 0.42 |

(Note. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.)

cases in which rebels fought for “exit,” that is, autonomy or secession. It is based on Fearon’s (2004) data on rebel aims, and our own research (for cases not included in Fearon’s data). A further dummy variable marks conflicts that saw the deployment of peacekeepers. This includes both UN peacekeeping and peacekeeping by regional organizations or other entities and combines consent-based peacekeeping missions (observation, traditional, and multidimensional missions) with enforcement missions.¹⁰

Civil wars are fairly likely to resume, and the renewed outbreak of hostilities may affect the prospects for democratization. We therefore control for cases in which war has resumed within 2 years for analyses of democratization at 2 years out, and so on for the other years.¹¹

Because there are secular trends in democratization over the 1945–2007 period, we include a dummy variable for wars that ended after the Cold War (1989–1999).¹² We also run our base models for the Cold War and the post-Cold War periods separately to examine any differences between them.

We test the hypotheses outlined above using OLS regression. For states that experience multiple civil wars, trends in postwar democratization are not independent of each other. We therefore cluster our cases by country and report robust standard errors.

Analysis

Table 2 shows the effects of variables on democratization over 2, 5, 10, and 20 years after the end of the war.¹³ This full model indicates that a number of

hypotheses do not pass muster. For many key variables, there is simply no significant effect on democratization. Table 3 shows model variations at 5 years out only, due to space constraints. Model 1 is a pared down “base model” which omits some of the insignificant variables from the full model; subsequent models test for some of the hypotheses using variations of the base model.¹⁴ (A web appendix contains the full results of our tests, including those discussed but not shown here.)

In our opinion, one of the most interesting findings in this paper is a non-finding. Much of the literature on democratization in the aftermath of civil conflict has focused on the effect of the war’s military outcome. As Tables 2 and 3 indicate, we find some support for Hypothesis 1a but none for Hypotheses 1b and 1c. Peace settlements may improve the chances for democratization in the short term, 2 and 5 years out, but this effect is only robust at 5 years out. By 10 and 20 years out the effect of settlements has turned negative. Thus, negotiated settlements have at most a short-term positive association with postwar democratization, increasing states’ Polity scores by about 1.7 points at 5 years after civil war.

We find no support for the hypothesis that military victories improve the prospects for democratization. The sign of the coefficients for victory is inconsistent over time and is never significant (see Table 3, Model 2 for results at 5 years out). Hypothesis 1c suggested that it matters not just that one side emerge victorious, but also who wins the war. Again, we see no stable or significant effects (Table 3, Model 3) for any of the years we examine. These (non)results also hold when we compare rebel victories to all other outcomes. Rebel victories are no more conducive to democratization than other outcomes. In short, war outcomes have no consistent or robust effects on democratization.

¹⁰ For analysis of the effects of these various types of missions, see Fortna (2008) and Huang (2008).

¹¹ We use UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Data (v.4) to identify war recurrence after 1999. See Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Eriksson, Sollenberg, and Strand (2002).

¹² Including dummies for each decade does not affect other results.

¹³ At 20 years out, the results may be less reliable due to the small number of cases.

¹⁴ We checked that the variables we omit from the base model were not unduly ruled out due to nonlinearities or multicollinearity.

TABLE 3. Results at 5 Years Out

| | <i>Model 1</i> | <i>Model 2</i> | <i>Model 3</i> | <i>Model 4</i> |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Settlement | 1.74 (0.82)** | | | 1.74 (0.84)** |
| Victory | | -1.36 (0.85) | | |
| Government Victory | | | -1.02 (0.82) | |
| Rebel Victory | | | -1.69 (1.12) | |
| Identity War | -0.74 (0.53) | -0.80 (0.52) | -0.90 (0.53)* | |
| Rebel Aim = Exit | | | | -0.31 (0.59) |
| Prewar Polity | -0.04 (0.05) | -0.06 (0.06) | -0.06 (0.05) | -0.05 (0.06) |
| Polity at End of War | -0.23 (0.07)*** | -0.23 (0.07)*** | -0.23 (0.07)*** | -0.21 (0.07)*** |
| Development | 0.39 (0.21)* | 0.43 (0.21)** | 0.44 (0.22)** | 0.34 (0.21) |
| Oil | -1.27 (0.70)* | -1.49 (0.72)** | -1.57 (0.70)** | -1.18 (0.68)* |
| Post-Cold War | 1.81 (0.54)*** | 1.57 (0.57)*** | 1.73 (0.57)*** | 1.83 (0.54)*** |
| War by 5 Years | 0.34 (0.58) | 0.08 (0.61) | 0.14 (0.58) | 0.26 (0.57) |
| Constant | -2.77 (1.27)** | -1.51 (1.05) | -1.63 (1.13) | -2.87 (1.19)** |
| Observations | 114 | 114 | 114 | 118 |
| <i>R</i> -squared | 0.27 | 0.26 | 0.27 | 0.26 |

(Notes. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.)

Hypotheses 2a and 2b fare no better. The cost of the war, measured by the number of deaths and displacements, has no significant bearing on postwar democratization (see Table 2). The results (not shown) are no different if we look at the duration or the intensity of the war—none of these variables has a statistically significant effect over any time period examined here.

We find diverging results for the effect of identity wars in the Polity and X-Polity analyses. While negative, the coefficients for identity wars are largely insignificant when Polity is used. In contrast, with X-Polity, identity wars have significant and negative effects at 2 and 5 years out, as expected by Hypothesis 3a; at 5 years after war, identity wars are associated with a 1.07-point move toward autocracy compared to non-identity-based wars. It is possible that this difference is due to X-Polity's omission of participation in its measures—if identity wars have a greater effect on executive recruitment than on participation, we would observe this difference between the two versions of our dependent variable. But we cannot think of a theoretical reason why this might be so. Rather, we expect that identity wars are more likely to be coded as “fractionalized” in ways that “corrupt” the Polity coding. We thus place more weight on the X-Polity results for this variable.

We find no support for Hypothesis 3b on rebel war aims. When the identity war variable is dropped and replaced with the dummy for exit wars (the two are correlated at 0.48), we find that the coefficients are inconsistent and statistically insignificant (Table 3, Model 4).

Overall, then, other than negotiated settlements in the short run and whether the war was fought along identity lines, characteristics of the civil war have relatively little effect on the prospects for postwar democratization. This is a surprising finding given the general expectation in the existing literature that various aspects of the war will have determinate and lingering effects on how regimes develop in the postwar years.

Our control variable for the democracy level at the end of the war is, as expected, consistently negative

and significant in all models. This reflects the fact that more democratic countries have less room to democratize, and autocracies have less room to autocratize. To test the effect of democracy in the years immediately prior to the war, we drop this control variable as these are obviously highly correlated (0.63). As expected by Hypothesis 4b, prewar democracy has a consistently negative and significant relationship with postwar democratization (results not shown). At 5 years out, for example, a one-point increase in the average prewar democracy score is associated with a 0.18-point move toward autocracy. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine whether this reflects a substantive causal relationship in which democracies that fail to stave off civil war are discredited while autocratic regimes tend to get swept away (or at least reformed) by civil war, or whether it simply reflects regression toward the mean.

Hypotheses 5 and 6 receive moderate to strong support in the data (see Tables 2 and 3). As the democratization literature suggests, more economically developed countries are more likely to move toward democracy than are poorer countries. This relationship is significant at 5 and 20 years in most models using Polity, but is larger and consistently significant when X-Polity is used. While wealth in general is good for democracy, oil wealth is not. As expected, countries with large oil exports are much less likely to move toward democracy. According to Table 2, oil-rich states are 2.6 points closer to autocracy at 10 years out compared to non-oil-rich states. This association is consistently negative and is significant in most models. Again, this supports findings from the wider democratization literature: oil and democracy do not mix.

The war resumption controls included in our models take on inconsistent signs and are not statistically significant. War resumption apparently does not affect the course of postwar democratization. This is a surprising finding given the political, economic, and social consequences of internal warfare on a state, but is consistent with the finding above that most characteristics of the civil war have no significant effect on postwar regime trajectories. Finally, as Table 2 shows, peacekeeping has no significant positive effect on democratization. As peacekeeping only became com-

mon in civil (as opposed to interstate) wars after the end of the Cold War, it is possible that we would only see an effect of these international missions after 1989. However, analysis (not shown) of the post-Cold War cases on their own indicates that peacekeeping has no effect at 2 years out and a weakly significant negative effect at 5 years out. We thus find support for Hypothesis 7b but not 7a.

As noted above, we checked whether separating these periods affects other results. Most results are fairly consistent across the two time periods, albeit with lower levels of significance because of the smaller N in the analysis. Two variables have somewhat different effects, however. Settlements have an inconsistent and insignificant effect during the Cold War, but the coefficients turn positive and significant in the 5-year analysis after the end of the Cold War.¹⁵ And the resumption of war, which has no significant effect during the Cold War, has the expected (albeit weak) relationship with democratization at 2 years out in the post-Cold War analysis.¹⁶

We ran numerous additional robustness checks to examine whether our statistical model, the measurement of our dependent variable, or the inclusion of consolidating democracies was affecting results. Among other things, we checked our base model OLS results against tobit analysis to account for the bounded nature of our data. We also recalculated our dependent variable using the year before the war ended rather than the year it ended as our baseline to make sure that changes in regime levels that occurred immediately after the war were not missed.¹⁷ We tried alternate measures of economic development, including GDP/capita; used alternate measures for handling missing data for newly independent states; and dropped, in turn, cases of war resumption, the few cases of consolidating democracies, and cases of successful secession, to see whether any of these issues were affecting results. None of these robustness checks substantially changed our results.

Conclusion

The motivation for this article was to make sense of the contradictory and often puzzling findings in the nascent literature on post-conflict democratization (including those in our own previous studies on the subject). We find that democratization in post-conflict societies looks much like democratization elsewhere. The characteristics of the war itself have surprisingly little bearing on regime developments after the war. Aside from the short-term positive effects of negotiated settlements, only one other aspect of the war, whether it was fought along identity lines, has an effect on postwar democratization. And this is arguably as much a characteristic of the society as a whole and

the salient cleavages within it as of the war itself, though war may well harden these differences. Other aspects of the war, such as military victory, the war's cost or duration, and whether peacekeepers are deployed, have no effects on the prospects for democracy. Even the resumption of war has not historically affected democracy levels, except in the most recent past (after the Cold War). These findings run contrary to many prominent arguments in the existing literature and show the importance of the methodological fixes employed here.

Rather than characteristics of the war just fought, postwar democratization hinges more on the economic structures of society, and thus, its determinants are much the same as those of peaceful societies. Economic development generally promotes the growth of democracy, while oil riches hamper it. Hypotheses generated from the broader democratization literature fare better than those from the literature on the more specific question of democratization after civil war.

One aspect of this research that requires more theoretical and empirical attention concerns the possibility of differences between the Cold War and the Post-Cold War periods. Two variables that had no significant effect during the Cold War—negotiated settlements and the resumption of war—look to be important determinants of democratization in the post-Cold War era (with positive and negative effects, respectively). Why do these effects differ by time period? It may be that the joint increase in the relative frequency of negotiated settlements (Fortna 2009) and international involvement in post-conflict settings in the post-Cold War era provides one answer. It is plausible that such changes would make the breakdown of peace, which causes international organizations to leave, more detrimental to democratization than was previously the case, though more research is needed to determine such effects.

More generally, the burgeoning research on post-civil war democratization is in need of deeper theorizing about the incentives of the actors—the state, rebel groups, the domestic population, external actors—that are involved in making choices about postwar regimes. Given that a deadly civil war has occurred, who gains or loses with political liberalization, and why? Given the salience of the question of post-civil war democratization in current affairs, further scholarly research on the topic is clearly worthwhile. We hope to have helped clear the path forward.

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¹⁵ Military victory, compared to all other war outcomes, has insignificant effects in both periods.

¹⁶ The economic development variable also shows some differences but not in ways that are consistent across the two versions of the dependent variable, leaving us with little confidence that these results reflect true differences across the time periods.

¹⁷ Here, coefficients for identity wars become negative and significant at 2, 5, and 10 years out, supporting the X-Polity results discussed earlier.

- Paper prepared for the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Toronto, September 3–6.
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