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Civil Wars: Domestic fights, International competitions

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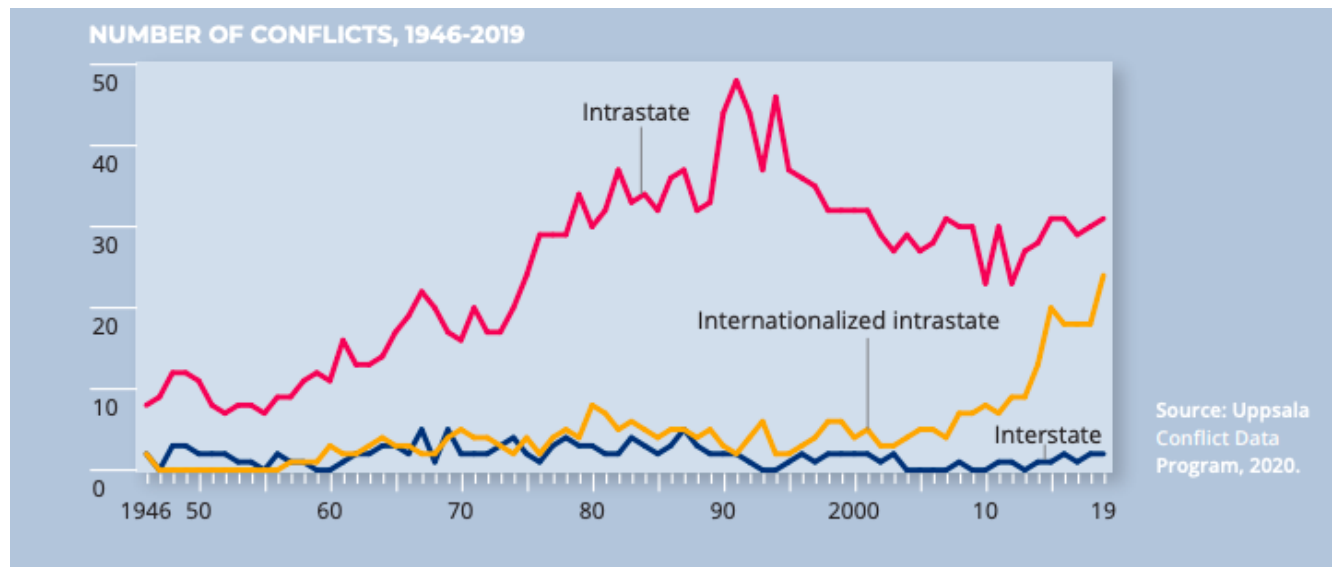
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INTRODUCTION

Since the end of World War II, conflicts have been shifting from the traditional interstate structure to a significant rise and persistence in intra-state conflicts (Blattman & Miguel, 2010), specifically civil wars. Civil wars have been defined as conflicts between at least two parties within the same state. In other words, such conflicts traditionally occur within a sovereign state between the government and a nonstate challenger which aims at gaining full or partial sovereignty of the territory (Cederman & Vogt 2017). However, to better reflect the ambiguity and complexity of contemporary forms of civil conflicts, it is important to keep in mind that modern civil wars are not limited to the fight between two parties, namely a legitimate government and a non-state actor. Therefore, we rather believe that “civil wars are not binary conflicts but complex and ambiguous processes that foster an apparently massive, though variable, mix of identities and actions—to such a degree as to be defined by that mix.” (Kalyvas 2003, 475).



This shift to intra-state conflicts has directly challenged the international system which is still based on Westphalian principles and institutions. What is more, not only do we witness this significant shift towards intra state conflicts, but our contemporary world is also subject to a rise in those kinds of conflicts. Both the spread and prevalence of civil wars is a clear reflection of the quick pace at which civil wars broke out while settling them has become more of an issue from 1945 onwards (Fearon 2017). In addition, in the recent decade, these conflicts have tended to extend beyond national borders with the involvement and intervention of external actors. In fact, almost half of all civil wars since World War II have been subject to foreign involvement (Cunningham et al. 2009). Consequently, scholars have continued to study civil wars from their causes to their termination while introducing the phenomenon of foreign interventions. Nevertheless, most of the academic papers related to this third-party intervention, whose number has grown over the years, mainly focus on the effects of such foreign involvement on the different phases of civil conflicts: outbreak, duration, termination and aftermath. Thus, very few scholars have come up with theoretical explanations and empirical results to analyze the phenomenon of internationalization itself. In other words, they fail to address what the reasons behind the internationalization are, as it seems to be obvious that most civil wars have to some degree been subject to some form of foreign intervention since 1945. In other words, there is a lack of analysis on why some civil wars seem to be more ‘targeted’ than others, more prone to internationalization and as a result facing deeper foreign interventions from an array of different actors. Consequently, as a means to understand this phenomenon, we will analyze why some civil wars are facing a deeper internationalization than others.

After shortly reviewing the existing literature on civil wars in Chapter 1 – divided in the three most studied phases of civil wars: the outbreak, the duration and mediation process, the termination and aftermath - we will demonstrate both the lack of analysis on the phenomenon of internationalization itself and highlight the importance of studying and understanding why some civil wars are more predisposed to foreign involvement in general. In the end of the chapter, we will clearly state our research question, namely why some civil wars are subject to more internationalization than others.

In Chapter 2, we will then proceed to introduce our theoretical framework relying on neo-realist assumptions of, partially, theory of security and underlining the importance of national

interests which lay at the core of motivations for third-party interventions in civil conflicts. We will then proceed to analyze the concept of internationalization when defining its scope as our dependent variable and explaining the different layers which are part of this concept. It is also in this chapter that we will conceptualize our independent variables which we believe can clarify the phenomenon of internationalization of civil wars. We will theorize that geography, cultural influence, economic integration, sectarian fractionalization, and political alliances all have an impact on the incentive of a civil war to become more internationalized. Finally, the chapter concludes by putting forward five hypotheses.

In Chapter 3, we will proceed to operationalize both our dependent and independent variables of our hypotheses. Further, we will share our quantitative model of testing based on an analysis of civil wars which have occurred over the timeframe between 1975 and 2009, and explain the different variables used in our model of testing as well as the unit of analysis chosen. The different models used to test our hypotheses rely on the use of multilinear regressions with the Ordinary Least Square method, best suited for cross-sectional data.. Finally, Chapter 4 will describe the empirical results of our testing and their compatibility with our hypotheses. We will interpret those results before reviewing the potential limits of our analysis.

CHAPTER 1 - LITERATURE REVIEW

The academic literature on civil wars has mainly focused on three key areas which correspond to the three main phases of war. First, it seeks to explain the causes behind the outbreak of such conflicts. Second, it focuses on the duration and impact of mediation attempts on the conflicts. Lastly, scholars have concentrated on the termination of civil conflicts and its aftermath. As we will see in this overview of existing literature, the issue of internationalization of civil wars has, although touched upon especially related to the duration and mediation of civil wars with foreign intervention, largely been overlooked from a theoretical perspective and fails to provide a direct explanation on why some civil wars are subject to a deeper internationalization involving not only one but several external interveners.

1.1 The Outbreak of Civil Wars

The first main dominant aspect of civil wars which has extensively been studied by scholars are the causes creating the conflict. One of the most common empirical evidence found in the literature is that civil wars are believed to emerge more commonly in poor societies whose low capita per income increases the chances of internal war (Fearon 2003). This establishes a positive causal relationship between poverty and the probability of outbreak of a civil war. However, various case studies, among which one interesting work on the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, scholars have found this relationship to be reversed with poverty as the consequence rather than the cause of civil conflict (Coghlan, Ngoy, Mulumba, et al. 2007). Further, other scholars have identified different elements they believe increase the risk of civil strife. As a matter of fact, politically unstable states (Håvard et al. 2001), resource rich countries (Collier and Hoeffler 2004) and ethnically heterogenous regions (Ellingsen 2000) are all causes increasing the propensities for civil wars. In addition, it is believed that civil wars create so-called conflict traps and war recurrence which means, in short, that states with a history of civil conflicts are more likely to experience other civil wars (Collier et al. 2002) but this point will be further developed

in the section dedicated to civil war termination and aftermath. Nevertheless, one of the most common explanations for the root causes of civil wars stands out the ‘greed and grievances’ dichotomic debate. This debate emerged from the rational choice paradigm which claims that conflict is a result of choice.

On the one hand, mostly from the perspective of economists and using quantitative methods, greed driven approaches - following opportunity logics - claim that the opportunity cost for newcomers is a determinant factor in the outbreak of a civil war as well as in sustaining the conflict (Collier&Hoeffler 2002a). In other words, it is as the result of both a cost/benefit calculus as well as a consideration of alternative income including the level of risk by the parties that civil war breaks out. In addition to this financial viability, the conflict also encompasses competition over natural resources while inequality is believed to have little to no effect to determine the motivation for conflict. Furthermore, some scholars believe that civil wars are rarely solely a consequence of ethnic or religious diversity and rather reflect the lack of state in a poor context - so called ‘weak states’-, thus greed but also grievances are an effect rather than a cause of civil wars (Fearon& Laitin 2003). Both these approaches – economical perspective and weak state argument - highlight that civil war usually occur in poor contexts with ineffective regimes and in which combatants are motivated by opportunistic reasons, due to the presence of mineral resources, oil dependent economy or simply conditions which favour a rebellion (regime type, state weakness, political instability...).

On the other hand, some scholars hold, from a political perspective rather than economical, that it is grievances which are the fuel to the outbreak of civil conflicts. The model of grievances, with at its centre identity and group formation, holds that issues such as inequality, discrimination, repression, ethno-linguistic fractionalization are all factors which create grievances and create collective action for rebellion (Gurr 1970). More specifically, Gurr (1970) introduced the “relative deprivation theory” according to which frustrations from the failure of achieving specific goals triggers grievances which ultimately lead to violence. Furthermore, according to Stewart (2008), resulting grievances and ‘horizontal inequalities’ – “inequalities in economic, social, or political dimensions or cultural status between culturally defined groups” – are a rationale behind how civil

wars are caused and shaped. It is nevertheless interesting to note the effort of Davide Keen (2012) to combine both greed and grievances to explain the causes of civil war.

Other explanations for the outbreak of civil war that go beyond greed and profits suggest that people are rather moved by desperation to join rebellion movements as a way to improve poor living conditions (Walter 2004) or as a mean of “personal vengeance” (Kalyvas 2000). Nevertheless, according to bargaining theories, civil wars are more likely to flare up in countries where leaders are unwilling or not able to make concessions to challenges and challengers (Walter 2017). Furthermore, according to theories of neo-patrimonialism, ‘patronic networks’, corruption and coercion have pushed for the creation of ‘shadow states’. The outbreak of violent conflicts emerges in such systems once the political elites no longer have the means to misappropriate funds or suppress protest to secure their support (Reno 2000). From a political perspective, the theory of failed states can also explain the outbreak of civil wars (Carment 2003). Indeed, as the traditional functions of a state can’t be fully assumed when the state is failed, trends such as a degradation of living standards, infrastructures, slower economic growth and overall insecurity favours the emergence of civil conflicts. According to some other scholars relying on economic theories of conflicts rather than from a political perspective, rapid economic modernization was found to have some negative impact on a state, resulting in an increase of group competition for scarce resources which could intensify and end up in the outbreak of a civil war of ethnic nature (Newman 1991). In contradiction, according to Horowitz (1985) ethnic civil conflicts are more likely to happen in countries with low levels of economic modernization.

It is true that some scholars have argued that civil wars are not entirely due to domestic factors but also involve transnational mechanisms related to refugees (Salehyan et al. 2006), ethnic kin (Saideman et al. 2009), demonstration effects of grievance-based conflicts caused by ethnic exclusion (Metternich, Minhas and Ward, 2017) all of which may trigger civil war onset. Consequently, the study of civil wars cannot be reduced to “closed polity” models as both (ethnic) grievances and opportunities contain an important transnational dimension (Forsberg 2016). This aspect briefly sets the stage for the international effects of civil wars, although it does not address the question of why some civil wars are more prone being regionalized or even internationalized.

Instead, it focused on what caused the civil conflicts in order to try to better address underlying issues and potentially prevent them in the future.

1.2 The Duration and Mediation of Civil Wars

The duration of civil wars is another aspect of internal conflicts that has raised interest among scholars. The main idea behind this scholarly interest is to determine if the root causes of a specific civil war could also be an explanatory element to war duration and termination. What is interesting to note here as an opening observation, is that the increase of civil wars since 1945 is mainly due to a complication of these conflicts which, contrary to popular belief, are not necessarily more frequently breaking out but because they became more difficult to settle, they tend to last longer. Most scholars agree upon the fact that the duration of a civil war is either affected by the difficulty of reaching either military victory or reaching a satisfying agreement for all parties as both these options are usually marking the termination of a civil conflict (Cunningham 2010). Additionally, Collier, Hoeffler and Soderbom (1999) proposed a hazard model of the duration of civil wars with a sample of 45 conflict and found that ethnic fractionalization had a strong, although non-linear, influence on the duration of the conflict. Further, they argue that the balance of capabilities between the government and rebel group(s) influence the length of the conflict and they argue that civil war outbreak and duration are two distinct phenomenon that should be studied separately. This theoretical approach is also supported by Fearon (2001), who has put forward a model of civil war dividing them in five categories, typologies which will then be the only way to determine the duration of the war.

However, it is important to keep in mind that almost half of all civil wars since World War II have been subject to foreign involvement (Cunningham et al. 2009). Therefore, external interventions, third-party intervention and internationalization in civil conflicts is the aspect of civil wars that has been the most studied by scholars in relations to the duration of such conflicts. Intervention can either be direct by inserting troops in the conflicts or indirect with by subsidizing the war effort of one specific party in the conflict through for instance logistic support (Kane 2020). As a matter fact, it is believed that the main issue with external interventions, lies in the fact that -

regardless of the benevolent or cynical interests driving external states to intervene – these often prolong, complicate, and worsen the stakes of the conflict (Elbadawi and Sambanis 2000; Regan 2002; Cunningham 2006; Lacina 2006; Heger and Salehyan 2007). Furthermore, these conflicts become deadlier, with a significant increase in violence against civilian populations who ultimately suffer the most (Einsiedel, 2017). In contrast, some studies argue that foreign involvement tends to decrease the duration of conflict and help to end it (Escriba-Folch 2010; Lektzian and Regan 2016). Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that, while the timing seems to have little to no effect on the duration of a civil conflict, neutral or multilateral interventions are strongly associated with longer conflicts than are biased interventions - unilateral interventions supporting either the government or the opposition (Regan 2002). Furthermore, the war would last longer only if external states interventions have the military capabilities to continue the war when other parties are ready to sign an agreement (Cunningham 2010). In short, in case the actors are strong enough to block the agreement while avoiding being excluded by internal combatants, the conflict will not be likely to stop without the achievement of their goals set up once they had decided to intervene.

The central debate regarding foreign intervention in civil wars tends to focus on the role of such actors, namely promoting the conflict or inhibiting it (Sawyer et al. 2017). Furthermore, it is believed and debated among scholars that third party intervention in civil wars are not only conducted to stop the fighting but also undergo a utilization of intervention to promote preferred outcomes (Gartzke et al. 2006). Indeed, some scholars argue there is a wrong assumption that states intervene to help one side or facilitate negotiations/ reach of an agreement but in fact rather a result of cost/utility and to pursue their own agenda (Cunningham 2010). The real issue stands in the mediation and negotiations of civil wars exposed to external interventions. Indeed, as it is not simply a conflict between two parties - a government and a rebel party - but involves a multiplicity of actors which continuously challenge stable alliances. All of which prevents the emergence of a stable conflict situation that could be brought to the negotiating table (Cunningham, KG. 2016). What is more, bringing a multiplicity of actors to the negotiating table not only constitutes an issue because of the high number of parties and the shrinking bargaining range but also due to the reluctance of some actors – such as jihadi groups – to engage in negotiations (Dudouet 2010). Indeed, the multiplicity of actors translates into more “veto players” which each could spoil a peace agreement if it doesn’t comply with their interests (Jenne and Popovic 2017). In other words, once the war

shifts from a civil war to an internationalized one, not only is the civil conflict prolonged but there is also the need to satisfy external participants or neutralize external conflict processes (Tsebelis 2002).

1.3 Termination and Aftermath

Civil wars are usually terminated either through military victory of one party or through the establishment of a settling agreement between all parties. However, seldom do civil wars end up in settled agreements and between 1940 and 1990 only 20% of intrastate conflicts were solved at the bargaining table (Walter 1997). Furthermore, since 1990s the pace of termination of civil conflicts has plunged to an average of 1.77 per year (Fearon 2017) and since 2003 – beginning of the third wave of civil wars according to Walter (2017) – even less civil conflicts end in negotiating settlements as a result of mix of trends such a decrease of UNPKO, US decision to invade Iraq and the Arab Springs. Additionally, according to a war-weariness effect, Mason and Fett (1996) quantitatively found that a negotiated settlement would be more likely reached after long civil wars and a small military on the side of the government. Nevertheless, it is also commonly recognized that civil wars which have been terminated through a set of negotiations leading to a settled agreement are more prone to a resumption of hostilities than a termination by military victory from one of the parties (Center for Humanitarian Dialogue 2007). Walter (1997) further developed this idea, highlighting the time inconsistency of peace agreements as the main challenge in reaching lasting peace settlement after a civil war. What he means by inconsistency, is that after a peace agreement has been reached, governments have the ability to easily turn back on their promises after the rebels have agreed to disarm. The expected termination of civil has also been studied by Fearon (2004) who, relying on the type of conflict, found that civil wars which originated from coups or popular revolution are more likely to end quickly while they tend to last longer when land and natural resources conflicts are at stake between different ethnic groups and when rebels can benefit from financial advantage from illicit goods. Moreover, building on economic theories of civil wars, Doyle and Sambanis (2000) created a statistical model which linked civil war termination and root economic causes.

Nevertheless, it is believed that factors such as the presence of peacekeeping forces, foreign aid as well as exclusion of some parties from the peace agreement have important roles in post war states (Elbadalwi et al. 2008). In contrast, Ohmura (2011) claims that the presence of peacekeeping operations or power-sharing agreements are only relevant for a durable peace in the aftermath of a civil war terminated by military victory and not in the case of negotiated peace settlements. On the one hand, some argue that external interventions are necessary to maintain peace and stability of the negotiated settlement. In fact, it is true that maintaining peace after a peace agreement has been settled requires confidence from all sides. But the government usually has the upper hand with the ability to rearm more easily, which translates into reluctance of opposition to agree to terms of negotiation. Therefore, external involvement secures the implementation of such agreements by imposing costs if one of the parties decides to rearm (Walter 2000). In short, a big part of the academic community dealing with civil wars argues that third party commitment is not only necessary in negotiations but crucial to implement power sharing agreements in the long-term following a civil war (Walter 1997, Fearon 1998). Kim (2017) agrees with the idea that foreign interveners have a crucial role in post war stability but takes this argument a step further when making a differentiation based on the nature and the intentions of the intervenor. What she means is that “‘Good’ motivation increases the possibility that ‘good’ results occur, through corresponding actions” (Kim 2017, 636). Thus, she finds that multilateral humanitarian interventions through international organizations such as the UN are best to promote post-war stability and development than unilateral and self-interested state initiatives. On the other hand, as seen in the previous section of this paper, some scholars argue that interventions – regardless of their nature (military or economic) – are not effective tools to settle the conflict and that they only worsen the severity of the crisis while lengthening its duration (Regan 2002; Cunningham 2006; Lacina 2006). This is core debate in the context of International Relations theory, whether the international community indeed might alleviate post-civil war risk by taking part in the process.

Another issue, briefly mentioned before and embodying a particular risk for civil war termination and aftermath, is the risk of post-war violence and civil war recurrence. Both these phenomena reflect a failure of a long-term termination of a civil conflict displaying the weakness of negotiated agreements. This failure in a permanent termination of the conflict and potential recurrence is, in most cases, due to the severity of the civil war that took place, increasing the level

of animosity between the parties and reduce the commitment they have to a negotiated agreement (Gurses et al., 2008) in combination with a settlement agreement that might not have equally taken into consideration the interests of all parties.

1.4 Research Question

All in all, the existing academic literature on civil wars addresses many different aspects such as the causes, the duration, mediation process and termination. Civil wars are an intra-state type of conflict that, in contradiction to international conflict, is confined to the geographical arena of one respective state experiencing turmoil between internal factions (Mingst, 2008: 218-221). However, it is important to keep in mind that “civil wars do not simply affect the war state and its dyadic relation to individual third parties. Civil wars are international events. The effects of their hostilities are also felt by parties external to the war state, most notably those that share a border with the conflict country” (Kathman 2011, 849). Thus, civil wars are a central issue to the field of international relations as this type of conflict are known to have serious diffusion effects (Brown, 1996).

Although some scholars touched upon the issues of internationalization, the focus has either been on the influence of external parties on the duration of the conflict or their role in the termination and aftermath of civil wars. The only few papers who did deal with outside intervention focused either on which type on civil wars are more likely to motivated third parties to intervene and the result of a decision calculus to intervene (Regan 1998), on a coherent model about why states decide to intervene but lacking any theoretical predictions to support it (Mc Kibben & Skoll 2021) or on theory-based approaches lacking empirical result (Austvoll 2005). Further, some scholars insist about the positive correlation between civil wars leading to intra-state disputes and argue that states suffering civil conflicts are more likely to become part of disputes with other states and get involved in intra-state conflicts (Gleditsch and al. 2008). Consequently, this paper aims at filling in the lack of direct explanations by encompassing both theoretical predictions and empirical results in one quantitative study analyzing all civil wars between 1975

and 2009, in order to understand the mechanisms which could explain why some civil wars are more prone to face a deeper internationalization independently from the decision of a third-party state to intervene.

CHAPTER 2 - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, we will present our theoretical framework from a realist perspective of security to explain why some civil wars are more subject to being internationalized than others. It is nevertheless important to clarify that we do not see foreign intervention in civil wars as a natural phenomenon and we acknowledge that these are highly dependent of the decision of a foreign state to intervene. However, this aspect, although closely related to our work, constitutes another question which has already been studied by several scholar from both a political and economic perspective highlighting the non-randomness of external intervention in civil conflicts (Mc Kibben & Skoll 2021, 491). In other words, the question we are looking at is why some civil wars face a deeper phenomenon of internationalization independently from the decision of one or several third-party states to intervene. Before proceeding to explain the theoretical mechanism and factors behind why we believe that some civil wars are more prone to internationalization than others, it is important to define what the concept itself means.

2.1 The Concept of Internationalization

In our understanding, the phenomenon of internationalization of civil conflicts can be defined as the result of a third-party state intervention or non-state actors in a civil war – although this study will focus solely on internationalization as a result of intervention by sovereign states . In other words, the intervention must be state-sponsored and from an external state to the civil

conflict taking place. More specifically, internationalization underlines the multiplicity of foreign intervention whose nature can emerge either from a simple intervention by one or several neighbouring states, the involvement of regional players, the intervention of great powers or a combination of these different levels of intervention. This concept is the dependent variable that will be measured as a function of the independent variables introduced later. Therefore, we believe that to determine the degree of internationalization of a civil war, our dependent variable, four measures need to be looked at. First, one must observe if the conflict is subject to foreign intervention or not. Secondly, it is important to analyse how many foreign actors have intervened in the conflict, as in the cases where the conflict is only subject to one foreign intervenor, it can't be considered as an internationalized civil war per se, but rather as a simple foreign intervention. Third, in order to weight the 'deepness' of the internationalization, the different intervenors will be divided between neighbouring states, regional actors and great powers. This step will not only allow us to assess the scope of the internationalization geographically but also the importance of the conflict's outcomes for the different external players. Lastly, our fourth measure to determine the level of internationalization lies on the importance to note that the phenomenon of internationalization can be divided into at least five categories: troops support, logistic support, intelligence backing, economic support and involvement through proxies.

On the one hand, what can be summarized as direct foreign involvement most often translates into the physical sending of troops in the country where a civil war is happening, in order to support one of the parties in the conflict¹. In short, this direct form of foreign intervention can also be understood as military backup, the direct insertion of troops on the battleground or sometimes a simple access given by one of the parties to the territory where the conflict unfolds. On the other hand, there also exists indirect forms of intervention which do not presuppose the physical involvement of a third-party states' troops in the civil wars. Indeed, logistic, intelligence infrastructure and material and economic support all fit into this category and consist of either providing anti-tank weapons, military training, communication gears, war equipment or simply provide intelligence on what is happening on the ground. In addition, economic support in forms

¹ In most cases, external direct intervention either sends troops to support the government or the rebels. However, this is providing that the civil war is a 'traditional' one and does not include other local actors apart from the government and the rebels, trend which has shifted towards civil conflicts with a multiplicity of local actors (i.e Yemen)

of funding, economic sanctions, or an increase in foreign aid to the government can be seen as a form of indirect involvement in the conflict.

The last type of indirect intervention is through proxies. In the context of civil wars, proxies are a type of conflict which entails support from external actors for factions fighting on the ground in order to increase momentum in an existing rivalry with another external intervenor or simply to advance their national interest in the state where the civil war is taking place. Typically used by the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, a proxy war occurs when an external power plays a major role in a conflict, most of the time, with limited actual involvement to not fighting itself in the conflict and thus not directly taking part in the hostilities. For instance, the Houthis faction in Yemen supported by Iran – acting as a proxy for Iranian interests - to gain leverage against Saudi Arabia in the context of a broader rivalry for regional hegemony. History offers us many other examples, such as Hezbollah – a Lebanese Shiite militant/political group – backed by Iran and said to act on its behalf in Lebanon, Israel and to some extent Syria or the support of rebels by both Ethiopia and Eritrea in the other state since 1993 on account of a contested border. It is important to clarify the difference between a state intervening through proxies or indirectly, as seen before, with weapons, intelligence, or economic funding. Indeed, although in both cases the involvement is indirect, a war by procurement differentiates itself as the factions on the ground are fighting *on behalf of* an external party – to advantage its interest - with whom it has a direct and long-term relationship. As a side note, it is important to keep in mind that these five categories of internationalization are not a predefined, exhaustive list defined in the academia. There exist other categories such as mercenaries (ie. Russia in Libya) which can be considered as a sub-category of the phenomenon of internationalization but that we won't consider in our study.

All in all, the concept of internationalization is a complex multi-layered one to grasp and in order to reply to our research question, a clear definition of our dependent variable was necessary. To sum up, to measure the degree of internationalization of civil wars, four elements need to be looked at, namely if an intervention exists, how many external intervenors are involved, what kind of actors are intervening and finally, which kind of intervention the civil conflict is subject too. The weights of each of these elements will be further developed in the third chapter

dedicated to methodology after we have presented the rest of our theoretical framework and the results we expect to obtain.

2.2 Conflict in a Neo-Realist World

In this section, we will define what our independent variables are and how they influence our dependent variable, namely the degree of internationalization of a civil conflict. Basing our reasoning on the school of neo-realism, we will theoretically conceptualize the relationship between our independent variables and how they influence the degree of internationalization of a civil conflict. Consequently, the first part of this section will first introduce the theory of security from a neo-realist perspective before dedicating a detailed section to each of the independent variables which we believe can explain the phenomenon and degree of internationalization, independently from the decision-making process and justification of third parties to intervene. After having exposed our conceptual framework and reasoning, we will put forward our hypotheses as well as the results we expect to find after having statistically run our different models.

Prior to exposing the choices we made for our independent variables, it is important to explain from which perspective we are seeing and understanding world affairs as well as how international relations work in general and why states behave the way they do in the international arena. Thus, we have decided to look at international relations through the lens of Neorealism, also known as structural realism, paradigm which allows us to look at security matters and how these can influence the rational behaviour of states. This theory emerged in the end of the 70s², in the context of the Cold War, with as a central figure Kenneth Waltz who ‘remasterized’ the classical

² First outlines in 1979 to be more precise, with the publication of Kenneth Waltz’ book: Theory of International Politics.

theory of realism. Indeed, neo-realism seeks to give a coherent theoretical basis to traditional realism by returning to and reversing Morgenthau's anthropological presupposition of classical realism. In other words, according to Waltz and neorealists, the source of laxity of states does not come from human nature but from above, from the international system (hence the term of structural realism, based on the international system). Some basic assumptions, however, remain the same as in the theory of classical realism such as states as unitary and rational actor, the central notions of power and self-interest and survival as the ultimate goal of states. Living in a neorealist world presupposes an anarchical structure of the world system, that is, one in which there is no world government thus no 'international authority', overlooking and policing states for each action they take or decisions they make. In short, it is this absence of world government, orderer, which means that international politics is anarchical. Anarchy thus describes the social relations among sovereign nation-states that causally explain why wars occur or in Waltz's simple words "international anarchy is the permissive cause of war" (Waltz 1959) and therefore "the state amongst states, conducts its affairs in the shadow of violence. Because some states may use force at any time, all must be prepared to do" (Waltz 1979, 102). Furthermore, according to his theory of defensive realism, states are unitary entities - comparable to "billiard balls" - that act according to the same rational principles of "self-help", "security maximization" and the search for the "balance of power" as a dominant strategy.

However, not only is Waltz' theory of defensive neorealism relevant to understand the emergence of conflicts and the phenomenon of internationalization, but another sub-category of neo-realism as theorized by John J. Mearsheimer, namely offensive neorealism. The main difference with the defensive branch of neorealism is that the offensive view rather believes in states looking for "power maximization" and the search for hegemony rather than a simple balance of power. Nevertheless, whether the goal of states is either defence or expansion, the central idea behind these behaviours is that states need to provide for their own security. In other words, no matter the driver of state behaviour to increase their security – stabilization or lust for power - both approaches can explain the phenomenon of internationalization of a civil conflict. All in all, they both reflect the exacerbation of the so-called security dilemma and increase the importance of the neorealist theory of International Relations to explain neighbourhood effects.

As a matter of fact, the choice of neorealism for our framework relies on the fact that it is a structural theory and thus does not consider intentions but only pressures of states. Although, we will not study the *ratione*, motivations and decisions making calculus behind a foreign intervention, it is important to keep in mind that there are of course the national interests of intervening states at stakes, either material or ideational, in making the decision to intervene in a foreign civil war. Instead, what is important to understand here, is that neorealism can explain why states decide to intervene in one specific civil wars and not in another which indirectly explains why some civil wars are subject to a higher level of internationalization. However, as mentioned several times already, we are not trying to theorize and explain why third-party states decide to intervene, their cost-benefit considerations, the internal decision-making reasoning, nor the personal gains they could obtain by getting involved in a foreign civil war. Nevertheless, the independent factors present in the country in which the civil conflict unfolds will ultimately impact whether a foreign state will intervene or not and, consequently, the degree of internationalization. In other words, the relationship between the factors related to a specific country in which a civil conflict is taking place and a foreign intervention are closely intertwined as it is the former that will trigger foreign interventions and determine the level of internationalisation of a conflict as we have discussed in the first part of Chapter 2.

All in all, basing our argument on neorealist assumptions, we have decided to look at the following independent variables as potential explanations of the incentive of a civil conflict to be more internationalized than other one: the strategic importance of the state in which the conflict unfolds, the level of sectarian fractionalization, alliances, and economic ties. The conceptual understanding as well as elements of each chosen variable are developed and explained in detail in the next section.

2.2.1 Strategic Importance

The first variable which, according to us, can explain why some civil conflicts are more internationalized than others, is the strategic importance of a particular state. The strategic importance of a state relies on several different factors such as the geographical location of a particular state, the number of bordering countries, the access to sea, the availability of natural

resources, as well as cultural influence and economic integration. More specifically these factors can be divided in two subcategories; on the one hand, most of the indicators of the strategic importance variable are material elements which have not been chosen by the states themselves and are independent from state behavior in the sense that they are purely due to the ‘random’ distribution of countries around the globe. These include the number of borders, the geographical location, the access to bodies of water and the richness in natural resources which are taken as environmental constraints imposed on the state. On the other hand, other indicators have gained of strategic importance due to the added value that the state has dedicated to developing it such as cultural influence and economic integration.

Keep in mind that we have decided to include geographical factors into this variable as, while it is true that the geographical factors might have been considered as a variable of its own, we believe that it should be included within this variable in the theoretical section as they are closely interlinked, and largely contribute to the strategic importance of a country. As a matter of fact, this adjacency of both elements has been conceptualized and is better known as geostrategic significance, or as its own field of study, geopolitics. However, even though geographical factors and strategic factors are closely intertwined, we will be separating them when running our models in order to test them as different independent variables.

Theoretically, neorealism's defensive and offensive versions both discuss the role of strategic threats. Thus, it appears as quasi natural that a country intervenes in a civil war if it fears that a faction supported by a competitor, or a rival regime may emerge. However, more importantly, this fear of a potential takeover by a competitor stems out of the strategic importance of the state – and the perception of the “rival” state - in which the civil war unfolds, factors of importance for the third-party state who believes that his interests in the strategic importance of the state might be impacted depending on the outcome of the conflict.

I. Material factors – Geography and Natural Resources

First of all, let's look at the first category of strategic factors, namely the ones that we have defined as being material, "independent", and solely due to the way history unfolded or the random distribution of countries around the globe. In other words, these elements can also be understood as a result of the geographical location of the state whose power was partly defined by the physical nature of the world and thus embody its level of geostrategic importance³. Indeed, the most important geographical considerations include location on the globe – in which region does it lay, does it have any access to sea (and maybe strategic maritime Chokepoints) and how many countries does it share borders with. It is important to keep in mind the importance of the geographical factor in International Relations, as, in political theory, the second aspect of the state relies on the spatial demarcation of the territory in which the state can exercise its power – geography and power are closely intertwined. Moreover, from the perspective of critical geography, not only does geography defines the area in which a state can exercise its power and influence politics, but geography is interpreted in the direction of pursuing some political interests.

Coming back to the origins of geopolitics, on the one hand, geopolitician Alfred Thayer Mahan - one of the founding fathers of maritime geopolitics - believed that countries with most power will be the ones whose location is most accessible and who has control of the seas thanks to having developed a powerful navy. On the other hand, Halford Mackinder as advocate of land power, shifted Mahan's theory of power and warfare from sea to land. He introduced the concept of geographical pivot of history, a "Pivot area" – the heartland as he calls it - lying in the northern and interior parts of the Eurasian continent where the rivers flow to the Arctic or to salt seas and lakes, and argued that in order to gain power as a state you have to think about that Pivot area, which he argues is easy to defend and therefore hard to conquer.

Consequently, as already explained in the previous theoretical section, neorealism emphasizes the competition of states within an anarchic international system and their constant search for – relative - power. This search for power, as showed before, is closely linked to

³ These are going to be the elements related to geographical location only and will be a variable of its own when we will be running our models. Further explanations are in Chapter 3, the methodology section.

geography, as it is not only a way for states who benefit of a strategic geography to be powerful, but also to create alliances or intervene in foreign states to have access to crucial geographical benefits. In other words, geographical significance is important to measure the looming possibilities of conflict. These benefits - or potential sources of conflict - can range from the importance of maritime chokepoints such as the Strait of Hormuz, the Strait of Malacca, or the crucial hub of the South China Sea or even the access to oil and gas fields in different regions of the world. Indeed, access to sea and especially chokepoints are both critical for states to, on the one hand, develop infrastructure and ports but mainly, on the other hand, open a window of trade – both of which will influence their strategic importance in the international arena. Furthermore, another element that stems out from the random geographical distribution, and which increases the strategic potential of a state, is the availability of natural resources. Indeed, some regions are more known for a high level of natural resources such as for instance the Middle East, more specifically the Persian Gulf, or Northern Asia.

The role of energy in contemporary politics has always been a crucial matter of strategic importance, especially more so recently as resources are getting scarce. As a matter of fact, the scarcity of natural resources such as oil and gas fuels has gone to the extent of generating a power competition between states for unclaimed territories, most famous of which is the race for Antarctica. However, most importantly, natural resources are often used as leverage tool by some states in order to coerce other states to comply with their demands. Therefore, they can offer significant strategic potential to states but while this might seem like a considerable advantage, these states also expose themselves to a higher risk of foreign intervention in case of a civil war unfolding within their borders. The reason behind this exposition to a higher risk of third party intervention if a resource-rich country going through a civil conflict is that the intervenors decide to get involved to either secure their own interests or see an opportunity in increasing their power by whether having access to those resources or supporting a faction in the civil conflict which, in case of the latter ends up at the head of the state will facilitate the access to natural resources.

Lastly, for the factors due to geographical location contributing to the strategic importance of a state, we have to look at geographic proximity and the significance of borders. Geographic location and proximity highly influence the intervention of a third-party state - most likely contiguous or in the same region - in a foreign civil war (Findley and Teo 2006). Moreover, borders

are particularly important when we look at a foreign intervention into a civil conflict from a regional perspective. As a matter of fact, most scholars argue that neighboring countries sharing a border with the state experiencing a civil war are, first of all, most likely to get either directly or indirectly impacted by that conflict (Kathman 2011, Gleditsch 2007). This phenomenon is often referred to as civil war contagion or diffusion, mainly theorized as a result of migration flow towards those neighboring countries creating negative externalities for neighboring states. Furthermore, at times, to avoid the impact of conflict unfolding in a country, states choose to act preventively and intervene in the conflict to refrain the latter from spreading within their own borders. Indeed, one must not forget that, following neorealist principles, states are to always ensure their survival, maximize their security in a world in which the structure of the international order is anarchical. Whether the motives behind an intervention are preemptive at their core or if the involvement purely reflects natural interests - or is most likely even the result of a mix of both aspects - the influence of borders remains unchanged. Therefore, we believe that the more a country – in which a civil conflict unfolds – shares borders, the more likely it is to be subject to foreign intervention by neighboring states and experience a regional type of involvement and a diffusion of the conflict. Consequently, we expect to find that countries - experiencing civil conflicts – are more likely to become internationalized either because of a geographical proximity logic, their location of the globe or/and the availability of natural resources.

H1: The more a country experiencing a civil conflict is geographically strategic and/or proximate to other states, the more likely it will become internationalized.

While it is true that geography is a crucial factor to take into consideration to understand the strategic importance of a state, it is not the only element contributing to the strategic potential of a state and thus, the incentive of a conflict happening within its borders to become internationalized. As previously mentioned, the location of a country, the number of borders as well as the availability of natural resources are all material components that the state has not himself chosen or strategically developed. Therefore, it is essential to consider factors which, on the one hand, go beyond geographical scrutiny and, on the other hand, reflect the concrete and

deliberate, added value and efforts of a state to develop its strategic potential. Therefore, the last part of the conceptualization of the variable dedicated to strategic importance, will look at these factors to which the state has contributed in order to enhance its strategic importance, - interactive factors. The elements we believe also contribute to the strategic importance of a state, beyond geography, are cultural influence and economic integration.

II. Interactive Factors –Economic integration and Cultural Influence

It is commonly accepted that military strong states will discourage foreign interventions as they have developed and enhanced their strategic importance by, for instance, investing in Research & Development (R&D), material capabilities or military power. Further, when a state is strong, beyond continuing to invest to strengthen its security, territorial integrity and maximize its power, it will also know how to protect itself against interference and will, on the one hand, be less likely to experience a civil conflict within its borders and, on the other hand, in case of the outbreak of a civil war, the latter will be less likely to become internationalized. However, we believe that less commonly analyzed factors also contribute to the strategic importance of a state and increase the chances of a civil conflict within its borders to become internationalized. These include how deeply a state is economically integrated in the world economy but also the cultural influence this state exerts on other countries.

Economic power has significantly gained importance over the last few decades and, besides military capabilities, largely and accounts both for a country overall strategic importance as well as its weight on the international stage. More specifically, the volume of trade between states has skyrocketed under the phenomenon of globalization and the creation of global value chains (GVCs), increasing economic cooperation between regions of the world. Indeed, international trade has created a relationship of interdependence between states who rely on each other for the construction or dispatch of certain goods. However, this relationship is rarely perfectly balanced as some states do import more than they export or vice versa. Thus, a country which imports more leads to a relationship of dependence of that state towards its economic partner. This complex

relationship of economic ties is creating power dynamics between states, determined by the concepts of leverage and vulnerability. Timothy M. Peterson (2018), defines, on the one hand, leverage as “the ability to harm others” and on the other hand, vulnerability as “the susceptibility to harm”. However, it is important to keep in mind that these two concepts are interdependent from one another in determining the strength of economic ties between two states.

In regards to the relationship between economy and civil wars at the international level, it has been argued that international trade affected the risk of civil wars through paradoxical mechanisms of insurance and deterrence (Martin and al. 2018). However, barely any works have focused on the role that economic ties play in civil conflicts in relation to foreign states and a probability of internationalization. Consequently, we believe that the concepts of leverage and vulnerability – who define economic ties – can be used to determine the incentive of a civil conflict to become internationalized. Indeed, a state can be said to be vulnerable – and thus sensible to the leverage of other states – if it is highly dependent on some trading partners whereas the latter’s economic survival do not rely a lot on this particular economic tie. Moreover, vulnerability also entails that a state has only a few trading partners and a low connectedness to the rest of the world, namely it is not highly integrated in the world economy.

The reason behind this reasoning and link to internationalization of a civil war, is that the state(s) who will potentially intervene won’t suffer too badly from an interruption of economic relations and will be able to compensate its lost benefits by redirecting to alternate markets and other economic partners in case the intervention in the civil conflict triggers such a reaction by the state. Keep in mind that, states being rational actors, foreign intervention will only happen if the benefits outweigh the costs. Therefore, a state which has little importance – vulnerable - in the overall world economy and in which a civil war unfolds has more incentive to see its domestic conflict internationalize. In simple terms, the more economically integrated and less economically vulnerable is a state, the less chances that a civil conflict becomes internationalized.

H2: The more a country under civil strife is economically integrated, the less likely will the conflict become internationalized.

However, one crucial thing to keep in mind is that economically integrated countries will be overall less likely to experience a civil conflict. This assumption stands from the belief that economically developed and integrated states most often are, on the one hand, considered as developed countries in addition to usually embracing democratic values and thus limiting the chances of factions wishing to overthrow the government or initiate conflict towards another minority present in the country – limited greed and grievances. Although this idea cannot be verified – and it is not our work to establish a causal mechanism between economic integration, regime type and civil war outbreak - the counterexample of China embracing an authoritarian regime and what can be considered a highly developed economy follows another logic of fear and mass surveillance used by the regime to avoid the possibility of civil strife. Consequently, we expect our hypothesis to be true although it is important to consider that it might be potentially biased because of the belief that economically integrated countries are in general less likely to even experience a civil conflict within their borders.

Beyond economic integration, the cultural dimension is also an important factor when it comes to determining the incentive of a civil war to spill over and become internationalized. As a matter of fact, whether cultural influence constitutes the result of history - which has persisted throughout the years as a result of soft power maintenance - or whether soft power creation entailed the attraction of values independently of the unfolding of history, we believe that cultural influence strongly impacts the probability of internationalization of a civil war.

When one thinks about cultural influence, history most often is the starting point. Indeed, it has been studied by scholars that historical colonial ties could be a driver of internationalization of a civil war (Stojek & Chacha, 2019). The *ratione* behind this correlation is that, as a consequence of the declaration of independence of many colonies, colonial ties remained rooted in the newly formed states. In other words, colonial history was a driver forming political, social and economic ties that persisted after colonialism (Findley & Teo, 2006). Whether these political, social and/or economic ties are still sustained in a post-imperialist context, highly determines if the phenomenon of internationalization through foreign intervention(s) will indeed take place. However, beyond any material legacy or economic shared markets, such as, for instance the existence of French military bases in its former colonies in Africa, socio-cultural connections are more meaningful to

analyze the actual cultural influence of the former colonizer on the countries once under its rule and the persistence of post-colonial ties. One example of this legacy and shared identity is the transmission of language which, after independence, has remained embedded and was adopted by former colonies under the rule of France, Britain, Portugal and Spain. In addition, another element that goes with the language legacy is that TV channels and radio broadcasting from the former imperialist power might still be largely watched and listened to in former colonies. Therefore, we believe that colonialism has contributed to the creation, in particular, of social colonial ties which increase the likelihood of intervention in a foreign conflict and thus the internationalization of the latter.

Further, it could also be argued that the legacy of the Cold War as exerted crucial influence on the culture of some states. This could be observed during the ideological race between the United States and Soviet Union, both trying to exert influence on as many countries as possible. Indeed, although these new countries gained independence from the USSR, they kept and some still to this day – to a lesser extent - some strong cultural influence such as Russian language, TV channels or the promotion of university exchanges with - well-known in post-soviet states - Russian universities. Nevertheless, in this case it could be argued that it is more about the result of the ideological struggle rather than cultural influence *per se*. However, it is undeniable that ideology is still a component and a form of culture influence that has to be taken into consideration.

Further, it would be reductive and deterministic to assume that cultural influence is solely due to history and colonial influence. Although it often is the result of the unfolding of history, it is a power that needs to be sustained by states to ensure that their culture and values appear attractive to others. As a matter of fact, and as theorized in the late 1980s by Joseph Nye, culture is one of the elements composing and used to measure a state's soft power. Soft power is the ability to get 'others to want the outcomes that you want' (Nye, 2004), focusing on attraction rather than coercion. Culture constitutes power, a source of soft power, through language, values, ideology and popular culture. Consequently, cultural influence is the result of the attraction emanating from soft power.

This idea partly departs from the colonial ties which, in a way, remained as the result of an imposed culture during their time under the colonizer. Furthermore, if one looks at the United

States – which can be considered a superpower in cultural influence and soft power - the case is peculiar as they exert a type of worldwide cultural influence, based on the creation of the ‘American Dream’ image implicitly pushing people to move there to realize their dreams or student to go to ‘the land where everything is possible’ there for an exchange semester. The country has worked on this storyline and managed to create a robust soft power less directly dependent on history, with the image of the American Dream, the production of Hollywood movies, TV programmes and brands exported all around the globe. However, we believe that when it comes to the internationalization of civil conflicts and thus the incentive of a foreign intervention, the constructed cultural influence exerted – as it is the case with the United States – ‘independent’ from historical events, does not increase the chances of internationalization as much as cultural influence exerted by colonialism or the Cold War, - language constituting a big part of the reasoning.

Further, although the neoliberal theory of soft power is not fully endorsed by the neo-realist school of thought, the cultural influence that can be derived from it is still an important component taken into account by states to intervene in a foreign civil conflict following a neorealist logic. Indeed, when a state has strong cultural influence on a state, it might feel more legitimate to intervene and the conflict has thus more incentive to be subject to foreign intervention and potentially internationalization. In short, cultural influence remains a crucial component which influences the internationalization of a conflict following a neorealist perspective as soft power is only the means through which cultural influence is brought to a country. On the one hand, cultural influence can, as mentioned before, be due the persistence of historic legacy such as the periods of colonialism or the Cold War. On the other hand, soft power remains an important element to consider as culture is an integral part of it.

H3: The more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized.

All in all, we have seen that strategic importance can be divided in two subcategories. Firstly, the factors linked to geography, which do not depend on any type of state action – we

defined these as materially distributed factors of strategic importance and these include the number of sharing borders with the state in turmoil following the proximity logic for a spillover of the conflict, the strategic location of the country on the map and the availability of natural resources. Secondly, we have identified and conceptualized the less-commonly analyzed factors of economic integration and cultural influence, both contributing to the strategic importance of a state resulting from either added value by state actions - efforts to develop its strategic potential – or as a consequence of history as a starting point. In short, following our theoretical development, we expect that civil wars unfolding in states with strategic importance mainly due to the ‘material’ geographical factors previously analyzed – location, borders and natural resources – are more likely to experience, to some extent, some type of internationalization (Hypothesis 1).

Further, in the theorization of the factors considered the – at least – partial result of state efforts to enhance its strategic potential, we expect economic integration to act as a dissuasive tool for foreign intervention in civil conflicts, thus we would ideally observe a negative correlation between both variables (Hypothesis 2). What is more, in what regards cultural influence, especially as a consequence and persistence of historical legacy, we expect to find that culturally influenced states are more like likely to experience the internationalization of an intra-state conflict (Hypothesis 3). In short, these three hypotheses are part of what we conceptualized as strategic importance with the sub-division between material factors mostly related to geography and economic integration as well as cultural influence. We are aware, as mentioned before, that strategic importance embodies a wide concept that could include another range of indicators such as military capabilities, technological advancements, R&D among others. However, in the context of this paper, we chose to focus solely on the above-mentioned indicators, but it could be interesting for further research to analyze the variable of strategic importance with a broader range of indicators.

2.2.2 Sectarian Fractionalization

As Samuel P. Huntington suggests in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996): "The most important distinctions among peoples are [no longer] ideological, political, or economic. They are cultural" (p.21). Therefore, according to him, new patterns of conflicts were to emerge in a new post-Cold War order. This new order would be composed of a fading Western power and influence as well as emerging civilizations which would contribute to the identity of a state. Post-Cold War international relations would thus be ruled by "inter-civilizational issues" rather than conflicts fueled between superpowers, and world politics would be rooted in civilizational-cultural and religious factors. Nevertheless, Huntington, although trying to distance himself from past paradigms, does not create a new one as his thesis as well as his arguments fit into the political theory of realism. What is more, the author only divided the world into eight major civilizations⁴ and thus does not analyze the internal cultural, ethnic, or religious differences within the borders of states, which might justify the internationalization of a civil conflict.

Ethnic polarization within a state has been positively correlated to the initiations of domestic conflicts, namely civil wars (Vanhanen 1999). In other words, at the domestic level, the more a country is heterogeneous and fractionalized along cultural, ethnic, or religious lines, the more likely it is to experience a civil war. What is more, the origins of ethnic conflicts have been of interest to many scholars. From a realist perspective, the origins of an ethnic conflict are believed to stand out of from a security dilemma (Posen 1993) which will ultimately lead to competition between domestic groups. It has also been argued that 'greed/opportunity' as well as grievances can also have a role in the escalation of domestic ethnic conflicts (Gurr 1970; Carment and al. 2009). Furthermore, it is believed that sectarian conflicts in one state act as a trigger for the outbreak of similar conflicts in one or several neighboring states, phenomenon known as a "demonstration effect" (Davis and al. 1997). Nevertheless, not only are cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity a source of internal conflict nor a source of a type of 'copycat syndrome' in neighboring states, but they also largely contribute to the internationalization of a civil war. Indeed,

⁴ Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Orthodox, Western, Latin American and African.

in the name of the protection of ethnic kin, states with ethnic ties to one of the parties fighting in the civil conflict will be more likely to intervene to protect this group while ensuring that they will win the war – pushed by affective motivations. In other words, it is the power of a shared identity, religious affinity, similar ideological principles, or racial-cultural affinity which will favor third party intervention in an ethnic conflict⁵ (Carment and James 2000). What is more, it seems like internal conflicts of ethnic nature might be more prone to face internationalization if they emerge from separatist or irredentist tendencies (Durneika 2020).

Further, following the concept of affective motives, some scholars argued that sometimes external intervenors tend to intervene as a result of a sense of obligation, a duty in the name of humanitarian beliefs, to protect minorities in a conflict without necessarily having ethnic affinities (Posen 1993, Kaufmann 1996) – some claiming they have to act because of a Responsibility to Protect (R2P). However, from the neorealist perspective we chose to adopt, humanitarian motivations are only a justification and a veil used by, although sometimes benevolent states, to benefit from the situation, pursue some kind of foreign policy interests or preemptively act to avoid a spillover of refugee flows within their own borders. This stance reflects the other spectrum of motivations categorized as instrumental motives in which intervention is the result of a cost-benefit analysis. Nevertheless, even though our work does not focus on the decision of an intervenor to get involved in a civil war, it is interesting to note that both instrumental and affective motivations can explain why foreign states chose to intervene in a foreign civil conflict (Heraclides 1990), although most of the time both are intertwined and difficult to differentiate.

As previously mentioned, most scholars working on understanding the relationship between sectarian and ethnic fractionalization in civil war and conflict diffusion, tend to argue that the phenomenon of internationalization is most likely to occur due to the nature of the civil conflict, namely it being an ethnic conflict. In other words, they argue that it is the nature of the conflict which triggers the potential occurrence of internationalization. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that a civil conflict is most often the result of several causes and depending on who talks

⁵ According to us, the civil war does not need to necessarily be an ethnic conflict at its core nor labeled as such to trigger foreign intervention on behalf of protection of ethnic kin (some cultural affinity might indeed exist between one of the parties fighting in the conflict and the foreign intervenor).

about it, can be seen in different perspectives. Thus, the nature of the civil conflict at its core does need not be ethnic for the elements mentioned above to apply, as it is often either only one of the factors which led to the outbreak of the conflict or just a label used by foreign states to justify their intervention. Consequently, we believe that the more the state in which the civil war unfolds has sectarian fractionalization and an overall heterogeneous population; divided along ethnic, cultural, or religious lines— regardless of the conflict being an ethnic one at its core, the more the civil war will be likely to become internationalized. That relies mainly on the assumption that ethno-sectarian affinity can be a significant contributor to foreign intervention in a civil conflict.

H4: The more a state that experiences civil strife is fractionalized along sectarian lines, the more the civil war will be likely to become internationalized.

2.2.3 Political Alliances

Alliances can be seen as the expression of pure neo-realist logic. As a matter of fact, the formation of alliances reflects states' behavior to, on one side, protect itself from external threats and thus maximizing its own security while, on the other side, benefit from potential opportunities. In spite of a major focus of studies on alliances on their role in interstate traditional conflicts, a few academics have still analyzed the dynamics related to alliances in relations to intrastate conflicts. As a matter of fact, it has been pointed out by Fletcher (2015) that there has barely been works focusing on the crucial role those international alliances play in civil war onset and argues that international alliances provide foreign states with security from domestic threats and thus decrease the onset of civil war. Beyond a focus on international alliances and the start of civil conflict and focusing on the role of alliances in foreign interventions, some scholars argue that both military interventions into civil wars, but also interstate conflicts, alliances as well as geographical proximate states and great powers are more likely to intervene. In short, alliances can be seen as predictors of military intervention (Shirkey 2017), especially when legal obligations have been explicitly laid down in the alliance treaty (Leeds, Long, and Mitchell, 2000).

As a consequence, in case of a civil conflict unfolding in an allied state, states will favor a quick victory of their allies in the civil conflict to ensure their own security towards external threats

– which is indirectly impacted by the non-availability of the ally busy with dealing with the civil conflict - and not to lose the exploitation of benefits (Shirkey 2017). Therefore, most third-party states tied by an alliance will chose to intervene in the early stages of the conflict and probabilities of states intervention as the conflict unfolds sharply decreases (Melina and Koch 2010). Through the mechanism of alliances, some third-party state interventions also, at times, results from a direct request to intervene by the state in which the conflict is taking place. It is interesting to note that there is also a debate going on between scholars in what regards military intervention to oppose rivals (Lee and Thompson 2015), with some arguing that rivalry pushes states to intervene, while some others claim that there is no correlation between rivalry and military intervention (Shirkey 2007). However, we believe that not only the aspect of military interventions – direct form of involvement, but as explained in our understanding of internationalization in the first section of Chapter 2, other forms of involvement could also occur because of the existence of alliances.

Further, other scholars argue that alliance forming during the civil conflict as a tactical tool used to maximize victory while ensuring wartime returns to maximize political payoffs (Fotini 2013). It is interesting to note that alliances can either be tactical – to avoid a direct threat or rival which might have the potential to challenge state’s survival and most crucial interests (Ghez 2011) -, historical alliances and natural alliances which exist thanks to shared political cultures and world visions. As a matter of fact, civil wars especially long-term ones, undergo both the formation and disintegration of alliances as the conflict unfolds, at the domestic level - that is within the country and the different groups taking part in the conflict. For instance, strong evidence was found that shared sponsors increase the probability of the creation of inter-rebel alliances (Popovic 2017). We will nevertheless only look at well-established and pre-war alliances, without taking consideration of the unfolding of the war and the creation, fractionalization, and dissolution of alliances during the conflict. In other words, this means we won’t analyze internal networks of alliances within the civil war and between the different factions, but we will only focus on the pre-conflict alliances of the parties with foreign state actors. Consequently, we will be able to determine if international alliances do indeed influence a foreign state intervention and confirms our argument that allies are more likely to intervene and come to each other’s defense in the context of civil wars.

H5: Alliances increase the probability of the internationalization of civil wars as allies are more likely to intervene.

To sum up our second chapter, we have started by defining our dependent variable; not only the concept of internationalization itself but more specifically how we understand how deep a civil war can be internationalized. In short, to measure the degree of internationalization of civil wars, four elements need to be looked at, namely if an intervention exists, how many external intervenors are involved, what kind of actors are intervening and finally, which kind of intervention the civil conflict is subject too. Further, as we have chosen to approach and conceptualize the different variables and indicators from the perspective of neo-realism, we proceeded to explain the main postulates of this theory of International Relations. In the last section, we have defined our diverse independent variables as well as explained how we believe these are correlated to the scope of internationalization of a civil conflict. Further, from each of these variables, we came up with five different hypotheses that we will quantitatively test. To put it shortly, on the one hand, we expect to find positive correlations between geographical factors (Hypothesis 1), cultural influence (Hypothesis 3), sectarian fractionalization (Hypothesis 4), political alliances (Hypothesis 5), and the level of internationalization of civil wars. In addition, on the other hand, we expect to observe a negative relationship between economic integration and the scope of internationalization following the logics of economic leverage and vulnerability (Hypothesis 2).

One theoretical argument that we could also have conceptualized and then analyzed in our models is the evolution of the effect of internationalization of a civil conflict with the passing of time. Indeed, what we expect to observe, but without analyzing it as such, is that as the civil war is unfolding more and more actors will get involved on the basis of a tit for tat logic, which means that once a state gets involved in a foreign civil war, more states are going to intervene as well for their own reasons – always following neorealist assumptions; either because of the geographical strategic importance, cultural influence, sectarian fractionalization or political and economic aspects of the state. This aspect might be interesting to study in further research by running a model

taking the passing of time of the civil conflict into consideration and one might come to study another hypothesis that involvement in civil conflicts will experience that of a domino effect; it will most likely start by interventions from neighboring states before being exposed to regional third-party interference and eventually undergo a full-scale internationalization with distant great power implication.

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

After having reviewed the existing literature about civil wars and the three main phases of these conflicts – outbreak, duration as well as termination and aftermath -, we have found a lack of academic work attempting to explain the phenomenon of internationalization that some civil conflicts can experience. We have therefore, to address that lack, created a theoretical framework and defined hypotheses to test in order to better understand how the mechanism of internationalization works and seek to explain factors which can influence its scope and degree. In this chapter, we will proceed to translate our theoretical framework into testable quantitative data. In other words, we will operationalize the dependent variable as well as the chosen explanatory independent variables into data to be able to test our different models and after analyzing the results in the following chapter, either confirm or inform our diverse hypotheses. This section will thus detail and explain the choices we have made to operationalize our variable and build up the dataset.

Nevertheless, before detailing the operationalization of the variables, it is important to set a time frame to the study. We have decided to depart our operationalization from an existing dataset analysing foreign intervention in armed conflicts from 1975 to 2009 (Högbladh, Pettersson and Themnér, 2011). This dataset stands from a project within the Uppsala Conflict Data Programm (UCDP) at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University. In that way, although our study will not analyse civil conflicts taking place after 2009, this data will help understand if the core concepts of our theoretical framework are indeed well-founded. In other words, by either confirming or infirming our diverse hypotheses to explain the the

internationalization of civil conflicts, one will be able to understand the influence of some factors on the incentive of internationalization. Consequently, for further research, the theoretical framework used could as well be further applied to civil wars after 2009. Further, we will plug in additional data into the existing dataset, especially our independent variables as we will display and explain in the next sections of this chapter.

3.1 Dependent Variable

As explained in our theoretical section, the dependent variable of the study – what we are trying to explain – is the degree of internationalization of civil wars. Recall that the research question tries to answer why some civil conflicts are more prone to being internationalized than others. That is, what are the factors – independently from the decision-making process of the external direct or indirect intervenor – which render a civil conflict more prone to spill-over. The research question was formulated as such, after quickly overlooking the data, and accordingly observing that, indeed since 1975, most if not all civil wars do experience, to some extent, some degree of internationalization. Therefore, simply looking at why some civil wars are subject to internationalization and others not at all in a dichotomic manner, would be reductive, most likely wrong and would not bring any significant advances in the research on civil wars. That is why, it is important to look at the degree of internationalization rather than simply analyze if there was indeed external intervention or not.

As previously mentioned, we will start building our full dataset from an existing one analysing foreign intervention in wars from 1975 to 2009 (Högbladh, Pettersson and Themnér, 2011). More specifically, we will use the yearly and more compact dataset, rather than the disaggregated one, as our analysis will focus more from the perspective of the receiver of support. As a matter of fact, what is of interest to us is to understand the phenomenon and scope of internationalization but not who specifically intervened. This dataset already lays the foundation of the degree of internationalization and thus, only a few quantitative elements of our theoretical framework will be added to match our theoretical approach to this phenomenon. Indeed, the dataset

already includes – directly or indirectly – all the four elements we have conceptualized and assumed as necessary to measure the degree of internationalization of civil wars.

The first one is to determine if an intervention exists, and this is summarized by two variables; *external_exists* and *external_alleged*. As defined in the codebook, the former results from any form of clearly established external support received from one or several external supporter(s) in a specific year whereas the latter embodies claims of external support having a significant impact on the conflict but being non-confirmable. Both are operationalized as dummy variables, taking the value of 1 or 0. In other words, if there is clear evidence of support the value of 1 will be assigned to *external_exist*, instead if only alleged support has been found, that same variable will take 0 as a value and *external_alleged* will take a value of 1. Further, if among several external supporters, there is for some clear evidence of support while for others only alleged support, it will be *external_exist* taking the value of 1. In short, there will be no cases when both variables are coded as 1, where one is coded as 1, the other one will be coded as 0. What is more cases in which no foreign support has been noted will simply be valued as 0 and missing values as -1. These two variables will thus not only determine if there is an external intervenor but also if this intervention does indeed exist or is allegedly non-confirmable.

The second element used to determine the degree of internationalization that is already present in the dataset from the project within the UCDP, is who is/are the foreign supporter(s). However, rather than operationalizing what kind of actors are intervening – as we explained in our theoretical section between neighbouring states, regional states, and great powers – the dataset provides the names of the foreign intervenors. It is the variable *external_name*, which enumerates the supporter(s) while differentiating between clear supporters and alleged ones (explicitly written when a specific supporter is only alleged). Therefore, we will proceed to add a column called *external_category* which will contain text to summarize which category of state(s) intervene(s) in the civil conflict. This will be useful to determine how deep and spread out the level of internationalization is but will also be helpful to determine the influence of borders and geographical proximity - one of our independent variables aimed at explaining the scope of internationalization. When the supporting state is a neighbouring one – that is it shares a direct

border⁶ with the country in which there is a civil war – the abbreviation “*N*” will be used. When the support is from regional actors – lies in the same region as the country with civil unrest but does not share any direct borders with it - the abbreviation “*R*” will be used. To avoid any complication with the contested regions of the world and which countries compose them, the regional division will respect the logic of continents (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, Oceania and South America). Further research could more thoroughly differentiate regions of intervenors such as the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia, to only name a few, but as our work does not focus in detail on who intervenes and where they come from, a more detailed division was put aside. Nevertheless, the precise region in which the civil conflict unfolds will be added to the dataset, specifically taking the geographical factor into consideration (see further in the section focusing on the geographical factors as independent variable) in order to analyse if conflicts in certain regions are more prone to conflict. Finally, when great powers are concerned it is the letter “*G*” which is used in the dataset. This includes important powers that lie far away – in a different continent - and cannot be considered neighbouring nor regional. In the case in which there are several intervenors, each of them will be categorized as just mentioned and a cell will thus contain several letters. It is important to keep in mind, that throughout the paper, we speak about states – i.e countries – as foreign intervenors, non-state actors such as organizations, terrorist groups are not taken into consideration in this study but would be interesting to focus on for further research. This categorization was further operationalized with categorical variables to facilitate the running of our models (*cat_weight*). The following subjective weight was given to each of the possible combination of categories of intervening actors in a given civil conflict:

⁶ In cases in which islands are concerned we will count as neighboring countries the other islands or countries lying in the area an which can be considered neighboring although there is no direct physical border but a recognized maritime one.

<u>Combination of Categories</u>	<u>Weight Assigned</u>
N	1
R	2
G	3
NR/RN	4
NG/GN	5
RG/GR	6
NRG	7

This table summarizes the weight we assigned to the possible combination of categories of intervenors. As an ordinal categorical variable, 1 represents the smallest scope of internationalization whereas 7 indicates the highest level of internationalization. The reasoning behind the weight assigned relies on both the number of categories of third-party states intervening in a given civil conflict but also the categories of actors itself. In other words, on the one hand, single categories intervening is at the lowest on the scale of intervention (N; R; G), double ones in the middle (NR; NG; RG) whereas when the three categories are present in the intervention of a civil conflict, the internationalization is at its highest degree (NRG). This is based on the assumption that if the third-party states intervening come from different parts of the globe the civil war has a wider scope of internationalization than if, for instance, only neighbouring countries are intervening. On the other hand, the weight assigned rely on the nature of intervenors following the logic that the closer they are to the country in which the civil conflict is unfolding, the less weight they are assigned.

In addition, the third element we deemed crucial was to plug a column with the number of intervenors for each of the conflicts to numerically analyse the number of intervenors regardless of who is involved. Another column, called *external_number* will be added and will contain the number of intervenors. More specifically, each clear intervenor will be valued as 1 whereas those deemed to only be alleged will be valued as 0.5. In the case of several intervenors, each value will be added, giving out a final number determining, in part, the degree of internationalization according to the given number.

The fourth element to determine the degree is the type of intervention the conflict is subject too. In our theoretical explanation of different types of internationalization, we defined that the phenomenon of internationalization could be divided into at least five types: troops support, logistic support, intelligence backing, economic support and involvement through proxies. In the present dataset, the types of intervention are divided into ten categories, nevertheless those 10 categories encompass sub-categories that we have included in each of the five main categories defined in our theoretical section. The only type of intervention that was not and that we have decided not to operationalize and plug in the dataset is intervention by proxies. Intervention and wars by proxies remains a very contested and debated notion among scholars and a strict operationalization of this concept would be difficult. Therefore, we have decided not to operationalize it as it would be a result of our subjective understanding of a specific civil war and would not be objectively agreed upon by most scholars.

Consequently, using all ten types instead of five broader types will give us an even more detailed understanding of the type of intervention in the civil conflict although the main focus of our study does not solely rely on the type of support provided by the external intervenor. The ten types are as follows: troops as secondary warring party (*external_X*), access to military or intelligence infrastructure/joint operations (*external_L*), access to territory (*external_Y*), weapons (*external_W*), material/logistics support (*external_M*), training/expertise (*external_T*), funding/economic support (*external_\$*), intelligence material (*external_I*), other forms of support (*external_O*) and support of unknown type (*external_U*). In the dataset, under the text variable of *external_type*, the type(s) or intervention are mentioned right next to the foreign intervenor(s) and the party it supported, structured as such as to know which intervenor pursued which type of intervention for which party to the conflict. In addition, every intervention type can also be found in columns dedicated to each one of them (name in brackets above) and working like a dichotomic variable for each conflict (taking the value of 1 if this type was present and 0 if not, thus not specifying which way and whom the intervenor supported). The definition of each type of intervention is thoroughly explained in the codebook although the overall picture in our theoretical framework might be sufficient to understand the different elements. Additionally, as our work does not focus on the types of interventions itself, another column - *external_type_tot* – was added to

determine the number, out of 10 types of external type of interventions which were provided in a given conflict. Therefore, this will help us to determine the scope of intervention according to the diversity of support provided regardless of their nature. This last point could be an interesting point to analyse for further research, by looking deeper into each type of external support provided in a civil war.

Further, it is important to mention that the dataset also considers external intervention in interstate conflicts. For the sake of our study and to answer our research question which focuses on intrastate conflicts, we will remove all conflicts confronting two governments from the dataset. Procedurally, it means that the columns of both *country2* and *locatonid2* will be removed in addition to the conflicts that had data in those two categories as they are interstate conflicts, which do not interest us for this particular study focused on civil wars. Other modifications, as previously mentioned include the addition of two other columns; *external_category* and *external_number*. The former differentiating the origin of intervenors between neighbouring, regional or great powers for sovereign states while the latter simply calculates how many intervenors are present in total in the civil conflict weighting differently between clear intervenors and alleged ones.

In this section dedicated to the dependent variable, we have only detailed the most important, relevant, and most difficult to understand indicators present in the Uppsala dataset, for further details on the remaining textual variables used, the Uppsala codebook is available at the end of our study. In addition, we have explained the modifications made to the original dataset to, on the one hand, only consider intra-state conflicts and, on the other hand, complement our theoretical understanding of the degree of internationalization by adding the category and the number of intervenors to simplify the understanding of the data once the model will have been run.

To sum up, three different dependent variables were used to reflect the four dimensions described in the theoretical conceptualization of what internationalization is. First, *external_number* to reflect if there was indeed a foreign intervention in a conflict and how many third-party states intervened. Second, *cat_weight* to analyze the scope of internationalization based on the category of states intervening (neighboring, regional, great powers). The last dependent variable, *external_type_tot* reflects the number of the different types of external support provided for a specific conflict.

3.2 Independent Variables

After having explained the operationalization of the dependent variable, namely the degree of internationalization, it is now crucial to operationalize the independent variables which will potentially answer our research question by either confirming or infirming the hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework and concepts established. That way, there will be a deeper understanding of the effect of internationalization and potential explanations and causes will have been empirically tested. In the dataset used as foundation for operationalizing the scope of internationalization, no explanatory variables are plugged in. Consequently, we will proceed to add all necessary data to the present dataset in order to run our different models and test the hypotheses. Data specific to independent variables will only be added where there is an intervention in the civil war. The next section details each variable and the way it is operationalized in detail.

3.2.1 Geographical Factors

The first explanatory indicators revolve around geographical benefits and factors. As thoroughly explained in our theoretical framework, geography is a crucial factor to take into consideration to understand the strategic importance of a state, and thus, the incentive of a conflict happening within its borders to become internationalized. What is more, the location of a country, the number of borders as well as the availability of natural resources are all objective components that the state has not himself chosen or strategically developed, hence why they were considered as material factors in theoretical terms.

The first component to operationalize this variable is the location of the country in which a civil strife is ongoing. Indeed, some regions are believed, on the one hand, to be more sensible to the outbreak of a civil war within its borders and, while on the other hand, some specific regions are more prone to see that intra-state conflict become internationalized. Nevertheless, there is no universal agreed upon division of the world in different regions as scholars most often adopt diverse perspectives and regional division of the world. To keep things simple and concise, going

beyond a simple division by continents – like we opted for when looking at the intervenors – we will look at the following ten regions, coded under the column *region* as such:

North America	<i>N</i>
Latin America and the Caribbean	<i>LAC</i>
Europe	<i>EU</i>
Eastern Europe	<i>EE</i>
Middle East and North Africa	<i>MENA</i>
Sub-Saharan Africa	<i>SSA</i>
Eurasia	<i>EUA</i>
Central Asia	<i>CA</i>
Asia	<i>A</i>
Oceania	<i>O</i>

This division will enable us to analyze if the regional location of the country is positively correlated with the dependent variable, namely the incentive and scope of internationalization of a civil conflict. More specifically, we especially expect countries lying in the MENA region to be subject to that phenomenon and a multiplicity of third-party intervenors, most notably for its political instability and strategic location.

Furthermore, another element to operationalize is the effective number of borders that the country under civil strife shares with other states, as we believe that the more a country borders other states, the more these will be likely to intervene in the conflict. This explanation also touches upon the logical theory of geographical proximity and goes hand in hand with the indicator of *external_category* which we have designed to understand if the intervenor is a neighboring state, a regional one or a great power. The operationalization of the border element simply consists of adding a column named *borders_t* and including in each cell the number of physical borders that the state in which a civil war takes shares with its neighbors. In addition, nevertheless, for what regards islands with no direct physical borders to other states, recognized maritime borders will be taken into consideration. Therefore, to avoid any bias, another column (*borders_m*) will be

included in the dataset for each state, taking maritime borders into account not only for islands but for all states concerned. What is more, not only is the addition of maritime borders operationally necessary to be viable but contributes to the importance of a state. In other words, maritime borders entail an access to a body of water and increases the strategic power of a state thanks to its location.

In short, the analysis of borders is translated in three columns in the dataset: territorial borders (*borders_t*), maritime borders (*borders_m*) and the total of borders – regardless of whether territorial or maritime – of the country under civil strife (*borders_tot*).

The last geographical element that materially contributes to the strategic potential of a country is the availability of natural resources. We believe that the most efficient way to quantify the availability of natural resources and create an indicator is by looking at the income as percentage of GDP coming from natural resources between 1975 and 2009 for each country. The total rents from natural resources include the sum of oil rents, natural gas rents, coal rents (hard and soft), mineral rents, and forest rents. The source for these numbers comes from World Bank datasets dedicated to each of the years (Total natural resources rents % of GDP, The World Bank). The values will be included in a new column *res%gdp* in the form of a percentage, and when data is unavailable or missing, NA will be used. To put it simply, the higher the number, the higher the given state is able to make money from natural resources represented as percentage of GDP for a given year.

All in all, by operationalizing those three geographical indicators, we will be able to analyze and verify our first hypothesis, namely whether the more a country experiencing a civil conflict is geographically strategic and/or proximate to other states, the more likely it will become internationalized. As a matter of fact, we expect to find that countries - experiencing civil conflicts – are more likely to become internationalized and experience multiple foreign intervention, either because of a geographical proximity logic, their location of the globe or/and the availability of natural resources.

3.2.2 Economic Integration

Economic power contributes immensely to the strategic importance of a state as well as its overall stability on the international stage. Indeed, a stable and strong economy is, on the one hand, known to bring stability in a country while, on the other hand, it enhances the worldwide importance of a given state and can act as a leverage tool internationally. Thus, the second explanatory variable we believe to be relevant to explain the scope of internationalization of certain civil wars, is economic integration. Economic integration might seem like a very broad variable to operationalize through various indicators. However, Prakash and Hart (2000) suggested that Trade and FDI stand as the two main indicators for measuring economic integration. Consequently, we will operationalize the variable of economic integration in these two suggested indicators: trade and foreign direct investment in order to verify our second hypothesis suggesting that the more a country under civil strife is economically integrated, the less likely will the conflict become internationalized.

Trade is the first indicator of economic integration and more specifically determines how well a state is connected to others on the international stage, the openness of a given economy with respect to other economies as well as the degree of globalization. In order to better understand the importance of international trade for a given state, it needs to be operationalized in relations with the state's GDP. In other words, the indicator - *trade%GDP* – is a succinct way to measure both globalization and economic integration in the world economy by using the trade/gross domestic product (GDP) ration. This trade openness ratio is measured as the sum of total exports and total imports of goods and services over a country's gross domestic product for a given period. The data was retrieved from the database of the World Bank, displaying the values of trade (%of GDP) for all countries and economies. The indicator and its value imply that the more the ratio, the more integrated and globalized an economy is. Moreover, sometimes the obtained value is higher than 100% meaning that its trade volume exceeds the 100% of its GDP. This can possibly happen when the combined value of a country's imports and exports exceed the GDP and consequently imports are subtracted from GDP calculations. This phenomenon is positive for a country as it means that the state's economy is heavily involved in the international trade world.

The second important indicator of economic integration reflecting the attractiveness of a given country on the international stage is, foreign direct investments. Indeed, FDI highly contributes to the growth of a country, and it was found that there is a trend which suggests that increasing FDI also translates into the increase of the GDP of a given country. FDIs can be either analyzed from the perspective of net inflows or net outflows. The former refers to inward direct investments made by foreign entities – individuals or firms -, including non-resident investors in the economy of a specific country, whereas the latter refers to the value of outward direct investments made by residents in an external economy. With regards to the economic integration of states on the international stage, FDI inflows offer more important information as it reflects the capacity of one state to attract FDI. Indeed, inflows of FDI are mainly the result of a foreign actor who has analyzed the economy of the chosen country, favoring open economies with a skilled-workforce and growth prospects for the investment made. In addition to being an indicator of economic integration, FDI can foster and stabilize economic growth in the recipient country. Therefore, taking data from the World Bank database, we created an indicator called *FDI_in%GDP*, which summarizes the percentage of net inflows of foreign direct investments in ratio to the GDP of a given country, at a given time.

All in all, the two indicators of trade and FDI inflow in ratio to GDP respectively indicate the connectedness and attractiveness of a given state on the international stage. In other words, these two indicators are the most efficient to determine the level of economic integration of a state's economy in the international arena. Basing our analysis on these two values and our second hypothesis, we expect to observe a negative relationship between economic integration and the scope of internationalization that a civil war might experience. In other words, the more a country under civil strife is economically integrated, the less likely will the conflict become internationalized.

3.2.3 Cultural Influence

It is important to keep in mind that internationalization of civil wars and the scope of third-party intervention can also be highly influenced by cultural ties and shared values. Therefore, our third hypothesis relies on common values as a potential explanatory variable to justify the scope of internationalization of civil conflicts. In other words, we believe that the more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized. Further, as conceptualized, we suggested that common cultural ties can come from three different be divided in three distinct categories: post-colonial ties, Cold War ideology during the conflict and legacy as well as, lastly, soft power.

The first component to operationalize this variable is to look at post-colonial ties as our timeframe, 1975-2009, suggests that most countries have already gained independence from their former colonizers. All of the relevant data was taken out, before being filtered to extract what is of interest to our study, from the Colonial Dates Dataset (COLDAT) (Becker 2019) which analyses the reach and duration of colonial empires. Taking some of the data from COLDAT, the initial column added in our dataset, *former_colony*, is operationalized as a dichotomic variable. Indeed, for each of the countries in which a civil war is unfolding, it was taken into consideration if that country used to be a colony in its history or not regardless of whom it was colonized by and if it has been under several different colonial powers at given times. When the state with an ongoing civil conflict used to be a colony, the indicator is coded 1, and when no colonial rule was found it is coded 0.

What is more, in order to facilitate building our models that will later be run and to actually be able to analyse if post-colonial ties have an impact on the incentive of the former colonizer to intervene in a civil war unfolding in one of its former colonies, an additional column – *fomer-colonyinter* – has been plugged into the dataset. This indicator was created to determine, for each country, if the external intervenors were indeed a former colonizer of the country in which they intervene or not. To do so, both indicators *former_colony* and *external_name* have been jointly analyze to create *fomer-colonyinter*. The values are also dichotomic in this new indicator: 1 if there was an intervention from one or several former colonizers and 0 where none of the intervenors were exerting imperial power on the country during colonization. In addition, in cases where the

state under civil strife has never been a colony or no foreign intervention at all was found in the civil war, the cells are left empty. In other words, a cell remains empty if a civil war was not exposed to third-party intervention at all and if the state in which the conflict is ongoing has never been a colony. This will enable us to thoroughly analyse, if former colonies have an impact on the internationalization of civil war and more specifically if it a motive for a former colonizer to intervene in a civil conflict ongoing in a country that used to be under its rule.

The second relevant factor to analyse in order to measure shared cultural background is to look at the Cold War and the alignment of the countries during this historical time but also the cultural legacy left by this ideological war around the globe. In other words, just like with post-colonial ties, we believe that the Cold War has left some marks of the power that the two opponents – the United States of America and the Soviet Union - wish to keep on their respective sphere of influence. Therefore, two indicators were plugged into the dataset: *CW_side* and *CW_int*. The first one considers which side a specific country was on towards the end of the Cold War. States allied to the Soviet Union are coded as *SU*, to the United States *USA* whereas non-aligned and neutral countries are coded as *NAM*. Further, the second indicator, *CW_int* jointly observes the relationship between *CW_side* and *external_name*. In other words, it analyses if the ideological values and culture – legacy of the Cold War either from the United States or the Soviet Union - driving a particular state under civil strife has an influence on a potential intervention from the superpower and the sphere of influence to which that country belonged.

However, there is a particularity in the operationalization and the analysis of the cultural values relating to the Cold War, the end of the Cold War is taken as a reference to know which side states are on rather than each specific year (*CW_side*), because civil conflicts happening between 1975 and 1991 will not be considered in relations to the shared, common values and legacy emanating from the Cold War. Indeed, the Cold War was a period of geopolitical and ideological tension between the two superpowers in which each of the two opponents tried to spread their ideologies and values across the globe by reinforcing and expanding their respective sphere of influences. Therefore, intervention in civil wars was a common practice, on the one hand, in their respective spheres of influences in order to prevent a state to tilt to the other side but, on the other hand, even more in non-aligned countries with the aim of both superpowers to compete

in order to influence these states. Consequently, we will partly control this indicator – from 1975 to 1991 - to avoid any bias linked to the actual years of the Cold War where intervention by either the United States of America or the Soviet Union was linked to the conflict and race itself and not to the cultural legacy post-conflict. In this way, we will be able to verify if shared values post-Cold War – and highly due to that competition - are a motive for a civil conflict to become internationalized and more specifically if the ‘influencer’ of a specific state at the time of the Cold War actually is more likely to intervene.

The last element mentioned in our theoretical section about cultural influence revolved less on historical facts but rather on what is called soft power. Indeed, it would be reductive and deterministic to assume that cultural influence is solely due to history and colonial influence. Although it often is the result of the unfolding of history, it is a power that needs be sustained by states to ensure that their culture and values appear attractive to others. However, this is a difficult element to quantitatively measure as the concept of soft power can contain a lot of different factors, most of which are difficult to quantify. Therefore, we will not operationalize this component of cultural influence although it is still worth mentioning how we would proceed. Ideally, it would be interesting to analyse at least two components: measure universities which attract international students and the outreach of TV channels.

All in all, cultural is an important component taken into account by states to intervene in a foreign civil conflict following a neorealist logic. Indeed, when a state shares strong cultural values with another state, it might feel more legitimate to intervene and the conflict has thus more incentive to be subject to foreign intervention and potentially internationalization. In short, cultural influence remains a crucial component which influences the internationalization of a conflict following neorealist theoretical logics. Nevertheless, although cultural influence relies on components of soft power as well, our quantitative will focus on the cultural dimension as legacy from the periods of colonialism or the Cold War to verify if indeed, the more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized.

3.2.4 Sectarian Fractionalization

After having conceptualized the notion of sectarian fractionalization we suggested that the more the state in which the civil war unfolds has sectarian fractionalization and an overall heterogeneous population; divided along ethnic, cultural, or religious lines— regardless of the conflict being an ethnic one at its core, the more the civil war will be likely to become internationalized. That relies mainly on the assumption that ethno-sectarian affinity can be a significant contributor to foreign intervention in a civil conflict. More specifically, we suggested, in our fourth hypothesis, the more a state that experiences civil strife is fractionalized along sectarian lines, the more the civil war will be likely to become internationalized. Furthermore, to operationalize this variable we believe that the most interesting indicator to analyze is the ethnic factor within the sectarian fractionalization.

Therefore, we have extracted data for the timeframe ranging from 1975 to 2009 from the Historical Index of Ethnic Fractionalization (HIEF) dataset. This index measures the probability that two individuals within the same country – drawn randomly – are not coming from the same ethnic group for a given year. The way this is operationalized is that the index ranges from 0, when there is no ethnic fractionalization and all individuals are members of the same ethnic group to 1, where each individual belongs to his or her own ethnic group. These values were added to our dataset with the indicator called *ethnic_frac*.

3.2.5 Political Alliances

Throughout history, inter-state alliances have been shown to be an effective tool for countries to maximize their security, especially in case of conflict between one or more sovereign states. However, as theorized, we believe that inter-state alliances can also be as important in the case of a civil war imploding in one of the countries part of that alliance. In order to operationalize this variable, it is important to choose which types of alliance we believe are the most suitable to justify our conceptualization of this notion as well as to explain the phenomenon of internationalization and the incentive of some civil conflicts to be more incline to it. The first thing to mention is that we have decided to look exclusively at bilateral interstate alliances. In addition, alliance scan be categorized in different categories. This is what Douglas Gibler has done in his

Formal Alliance Dataset (Version 4.1) dividing alliances in four different categories: defense, neutrality, non-aggression, and entente pacts. To conciliate both our understanding and conceptualization of the role of alliances with the internationalization of civil wars, the alliances we believe are pertinent to use are defense and entente pacts. On the one hand, defense pacts are considered the highest form of military cooperation as the alliance entails that its members are required to each other's aid militarily if attacked by a third party. On the other hand, ententes – although they suggest the least commitment – requires members to consult with one another if a crisis or armed attack occurred. Both of these types of pacts, although generally triggered by a conflict between states rather than intra-state conflicts, can justify foreign intervention in civil wars. As seen in our theoretical understanding of alliance, following realist principles, going beyond the simple respect of a pact between states, the security impact at stakes will increase the chances of an intervention.

Consequently, only these two forms of pacts extracted from the dataset and filtered to fit in our own dataset. In addition, the original dataset considers who initiated each of the pacts but we organized the data created two variables for each type of alliances chosen. First of all, the two indicators *def_all* and *ent_all* contain respectively for each country in which there was a civil war unfolding for a given year, the name of the states with which it either had a defense or/and an entente pact. Additionally, two columns were added to verify if those countries having pacts with the state under civil strife did intervene in the conflict: *def_int* and *ent_int*. These indicators will take the value of 1 if alliance states, either by defense or by entente did intervene in the civil war and 0 if no intervention or alleged involvement was noted. By choosing these indicators we will be able to verify, for defense and entente pacts, our fifth hypothesis which states that alliances increase the probability of the internationalization of civil wars as allies are more likely to intervene.

3.3 Unit of Analysis and Models

After having explained the methodology used to operationalize our dependent variable as well as our independent variables, this section will focus on reviewing our unit of analysis as well as building up the models we will run to verify our five hypotheses and reply to the research question of why some civil wars are prone to a deeper internationalization than others. This study is conducted for all civil wars happening from 1975 to 2009 worldwide. According to the elaborated hypotheses, we expect:

1. The more a country experiencing a civil conflict is geographically strategic and/or proximate to other states, the more likely it will become internationalized.
2. The more a country under civil strife is economically integrated, the less likely will the conflict become internationalized.
3. The more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized.
4. The more a state that experiences civil strife is fractionalized along sectarian lines, the more the civil war will be likely to become internationalized.
5. Alliances – specifically defense and entente pacts - increase the probability of the internationalization of civil wars as allies are more likely to intervene.

As stated by our hypotheses, we will be looking focusing on civil wars and most specifically in which country they are unfolding in order to understand and explain the phenomenon of internationalization as well as its scope based on the independent variables defined. Therefore, our unit of analysis is the various civil wars happening in a given state at a specific time. However, as our raw dataset separates each civil conflict by year, meaning that several rows are dedicated for each conflict, we needed to harmonize it to avoid having several lines for one single conflict.

Consequently, we summarized the dataset by turning the several rows of each civil war into a variable focused on the duration of the whole civil war. Accordingly, all the data of our independent variables was also summarized – not affecting our methodology - to cover the whole period of the conflict regardless of each specific year. We are aware that this change – not differentiating each year of a given civil strife - might impact our results as, during certain conflicts, third parties intervene at different times, or certain states create political alliances during the conflict especially when it has been going on for a few years. Nevertheless, for our study, the unfolding of the civil war is not the main focus as we are looking at foreign intervention in the whole duration of a civil conflict rather than yearly.

Consequently, all third-party states intervening in the conflict – regardless of the specific year – have been taken into consideration to understand the scope of internationalization, namely our dependent variable. On the one hand, for what concerns our independent variables, for numeric values (*res%GDP*, *trade%GDP*, *FDI_in%GDP* and *ethnic_frac*), the data was summarized as the average of the values of all years in which the conflict is taking place. On the other hand, all dichotomic values for other variables simply took the value of 1 if a 1 was present at least once throughout the unfolding of the conflict (interventions linked to colonies, Cold War, defence and entente pacts, external type) and 0 otherwise.

The different models will be tested with ordinary least square model (OLS) regression which are best suited for cross sectional data. As a type of linear regression, the OLS type of regression relies on the least squares method to estimate the potential relationship between the dependent and independent variables by predicting the behaviour of dependent variables. In other words, this model minimizes the sum of squares of the errors (variance) that is the vertical distance between the data points and the regression line – respectively the observed and predicted values. In addition, it is important to keep in mind the multiple assumptions of the OLS method of regression – which as we will see, have been taken into consideration and satisfied to avoid potential errors – such as the assumption of linearity, homoscedasticity, independence/no autocorrelation, normality of errors and no multicollinearity.

CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS

In this chapter, we will expose the statistical results of our analysis before analyzing if our hypotheses coming from the theory do indeed reveal correlations between the established variables. Most importantly, we will reply to the research question and determine why some civil wars are subject to a wider scope of internationalization. As a first observation from the civil wars which unfolded between 1975 and 2009, it is interesting to note from the raw data that out of 146 conflicts, 98 of them were subject to some type of external intervention. In other words, about 67% of civil wars were subject to a certain degree of internationalization without taking non-state actors into account, thus confirming the trend towards an increase of foreign involvement in civil conflicts, trend which we believe would be further confirmed by analyzing civil wars taking place after 2009 taking into consideration intervention by non-state actors.

The first thing to understand about the different models run for this study is that the dependent variable was thought to reflect the different dimensions of internationalization. In other words, three different dependent variables were used to reflect the four dimensions described in the theoretical conceptualization of what internationalization is. First, *external_number* to reflect if there was indeed a foreign intervention in a conflict and how many third-party states intervened. Second, *cat_weight* to analyze the scope of internationalization based on the category of states intervening (neighboring, regional, great powers). The last dependent variable, *external_type_tot* reflects the number of the different types of external support provided for a specific conflict. However, before we expose the results of our regression, it is important to look at the descriptive statistics as well as the correlation matrix of our different variables.

Prior to getting to the results, as you can see on the table of descriptive statistics (Table1) – which provides an overview of each variable's dispersion with respect to the mean - not all independent variables conceptualized and operationalized in previous chapters have been included.

As a matter of fact, among the most important explanatory variables conceptualized, the income of foreign direct investment (FDI_in%GDP), the income generated from natural resources (res%GDP) as well as the Cold War legacy variable (CW_int) were excluded as they were all heavily biasing our different models. Not only did were these variables insignificant but they also were subject to the issue of multicollinearity, therefore compromising the relationship and correlations between our variables, leading to misinterpretation of the coefficients. Consequently, only the variables present in the descriptive statistics have been used to run the different models. All these variables satisfy the assumptions of the OLS method: the data is normal, the data is homoscedastic, there is no issue of multicollinearity and, finally, no issue of auto correlation has been detected.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
ext numdv1	145.0000	3.2550	6.2380	0.0000	55.0000
cat weightdv2	99.0000	4.2530	2.3530	1.0000	7.0000
ext totdv3	127.0000	4.7870	2.7270	0.0000	10.0000
g borders t	143.0000	4.6010	2.5650	0.0000	14.0000
g borders tot	145.0000	6.6550	3.7520	1.0000	20.0000
c former colonyinter	78.0000	0.1920	0.3970	0.0000	1.0000
ethnic frac	97.0000	0.5800	0.1850	0.0380	0.8840
p def int	145.0000	0.4480	0.4990	0.0000	1.0000
p ent int	145.0000	0.4830	0.5010	0.0000	1.0000
e tradegdp	129.0000	48.8640	19.9690	2.1100	135.4600

The second important step before running the OLS regression is to look at the correlation matrix in Table 2, which simply displays the coefficients of correlation between all different possible

pairs of variables. This is useful, on the one hand, to summarize a large amount of data, but also to measure the degree of linear relationship between variables.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

	ext_numdv1	cat_weightdv2	ext_totdv3	g_borders_t	g_borders_tot	c_former_colonyinter	ethnic_frac	p_def_int	p_ent_int	e_tradegdp
ext_numdv1	1.00									
cat_weightdv2	0.58***	1.00								
ext_totdv3	0.32*	0.28*	1.00							
g_borders_t	0.22	-0.04	0.06	1.00						
g_borders_tot	-0.12	-0.27*	-0.17	0.44***	1.00					
c_former_colonyinter	0.46***	0.43**	0.22	0.16	-0.10	1.00				
ethnic_frac	-0.04	-0.08	0.10	-0.07	0.04	-0.04	1.00			
p_def_int	-0.18	-0.34*	-0.10	-0.04	0.17	-0.40**	0.28*	1.00		
p_ent_int	-0.16	-0.12	-0.03	-0.13	-0.32*	-0.10	0.13	0.50***	1.00	
e_tradegdp	0.07	0.08	-0.08	0.21	-0.13	0.16	-0.36**	-0.05	0.20	1.00

The highlighted correlations, regardless of the direction of the correlation – positive or negative – were singled out according to the following table:

Size of Correlation	Interpretation
.90 to 1.00 (–.90 to –1.00)	Very high positive (negative) correlation
.70 to .90 (–.70 to –.90)	High positive (negative) correlation
.50 to .70 (–.50 to –.70)	Moderate positive (negative) correlation
.30 to .50 (–.30 to –.50)	Low positive (negative) correlation
.00 to .30 (.00 to –.30)	negligible correlation

According to this tables and the highlighted values, we can see – prior to running the OLS regression – that some results show low to moderate correlation, either positive or negative with with $|\rho| > 0.3$ being the chosen cutoff. The most interesting results to consider in this correlation matrix, are when looking at the variable of former colony intervention. Indeed, it seems like the cultural influence left by the historical times of colonies has both an influence on the incentive of the former colonizer to intervene but also on the number of third-party states intervening in general. In addition, the scope of internationalization of the civil conflict (*cat_weight*) also seems to be positively correlated and influenced by the cultural legacy of colonial times. That would mean that a former colony has more incentive to witness a civil conflict within its borders becoming prone to internationalization not only by neighboring countries but also regional ones or even countries lying far away from its territory. This first observation could be a good foreshadowing in line with the third hypothesis theorized by the paper – although only looking at the former colony indicator - namely that the more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized.

In regards to the highest correlation – apart from the correlations equal to 1 which are unnecessary for interpretation because this result simply reflects that any variables will be correlated to itself - in this table between two of our defined dependent variables (0.58 positive correlation between *ext_num* and *cat_weight*) because it seems obvious that when the number of third-party states intervening in a civil war increases, it also increases the range of countries intervening from neighboring states (or the other way around), to a broader scope with regional involvement and at times, expand even beyond that with the involvement of great powers or far-away countries.

Another thing to take into consideration is the moderate correlations between some of the independent variables. This is observable between variables which are both indicators for the same hypothesis. As you can see in Table 2, there is a positive correlation of 0.44 between the territorial borders and the variable of total borders which can be explained as the two variables are simply very similar and the total of borders includes the territorial borders while also taking maritime borders into consideration. In addition, the political variables (defense and entente alliances) also seem to share a moderate positive correlation of 0.50 which suggests that the likelihood of intervention of a third-party state sharing a defense pact with the state under civil strife increases the likelihood of intervention following an entente pact as well (and vice versa).

Further, when looking at the direction of some coefficients it seems that some these first results are contradictory to the established hypotheses. For instance, the total of borders (*borders_tot*), ethnic fractionalization (*ethnic_frac*) as well as political alliances (*def_int* and *ent_int*) are all negatively correlated to most of the three aspects of internationalization (the three dependent variables). This suggests that the expected direction of the correlation laid out by our theoretical arguments might be errored and that these variables cannot explain the effect of internationalization, or at least its intensity. However, these observations are only the results of a correlation matrix giving a first overview of the variables, but the results of the regressions and models might offer other more detailed outcomes which will prevail over this.

The multilinear regression was conducted in three main steps for a full and comprehensive analysis. The first models (Table 4 to 6) were run with all three dimension of internationalization – three dependent variables – but with only one category of independent variables to analyze the effects of each concept on the internationalization of civil wars. Further (Table 7 to 9), are combined models with all explanatory variables but only the presence of one dependent variables, that is one of the defined dimensions of the phenomenon of internationalization. Finally, Table 10, includes the impact of all independent variables on the fully defined concept of internationalization. All of these models use the economic explanatory variable of trade percentage of GDP as a control variable.

Table 3: Impact of Geography on Internationalized Civil Conflict

VARIABLES	ext_numdv1	cat_weightdv2	ext_totdv3
g_borders_t	0.592* (0.314)	0.122 (0.146)	0.209 (0.132)
g_borders_tot	-0.501** (0.224)	-0.211** (0.0963)	-0.0377 (0.0937)
e_tradegdp	-0.000836 (0.0294)	0.0156 (0.0144)	-0.00888 (0.0123)
Constant	4.195** (1.878)	4.490*** (0.913)	4.754*** (0.795)
F-Stats(P Value)	0.000	0.000	0.000
R-squared	0.041	0.067	0.032
Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1			

In this table focusing on the impact of geography, more specifically the assumptions that the more borders a country subject to a civil conflict within territory has, the more likely will the conflict become internationalize. Out of both indicators, the results of territorial borders in relation to the number of intervenors has the strongest influence according to what has been said. Indeed, with a positive coefficient of 0.592, the positive relationship means that as the number of territorial borders increases, the number of intervenors in a civil conflict tends to increase as well, while other variable are controlled for. What is more, this result is statistically significant at the $p<0.1$ level, allowing us to reject the null hypothesis and thus confirming that an increasing number of territorial borders translates into an increasing number of intervenors. The other dimension of internationalization also tends to increase as there are more borders, however these results are not statistically significant. The results of the other variable taking all borders including maritime ones has been included to compare results with the use of territorial borders only. The results are significant but totally contradicting the hypothesis as the relationship is negative. This direction of the coefficient is confirming that the impact of territorial borders is way more direct on the phenomenon of internationalization of a conflict.

Table 4: Impact of Culture on Internationalized Civil Conflict

VARIABLES	ext_numdv1	cat_weightdv2	ext_totdv3
c_former_colonyinter	5.705*** (1.487)	2.616*** (0.602)	1.332 (0.799)
e_tradegdp	0.00222 (0.0349)	0.000675 (0.0149)	-0.0183 (0.0177)
Constant	3.349* (1.809)	4.217*** (0.786)	6.111*** (0.910)
F-Stats(P Value)	0.000	0.000	0.000
R-squared	0.177	0.228	0.054

Standard errors in parentheses, *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

The impact of cultural influence exerted by the history of colonialism, as it can be observed in Table 4, has a significant impact. This means that former colonies have more incentive to see the former colonizer intervene in a civil war but also to be overall subject to the involvement of multiple sovereign states. What is more, the range of actors – neighboring, regional, great powers - also seems to increase when the civil war is unfolding in a former colony. Both coefficients are very high and significant at a $p < 0.01$ level, allowing us to firmly reject the null hypothesis and affirm our third hypothesis according to which cultural influence does indeed increase the probability of internationalization.

Table 5: Impact of Ethnic Fractionalization on Internationalized Civil Conflict

VARIABLES	ext_numdv1	cat_weightdv2	ext_totdv3
ethnic_frac	0.595 (3.984)	0.0910 (1.609)	-0.347 (1.547)
e_tradegdp		0.0176 (0.0198)	-0.00504 (0.0151)
Constant	3.495 (2.423)	3.588** (1.486)	5.618*** (1.298)
F-Stats(P Value)	0.000	0.000	0.000
R-squared	0.000	0.012	0.002

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

For what regards the impact of ethnic fractionalization on the probability of a civil conflict to become internationalized, according to the defined fourth hypothesis, the more a country is divided along ethnic and sectarian lines, the more likely it is to face deeper internationalization. Nevertheless, as shown by Table 5, although the coefficient shows a positive relationship for two of the three aspects of internationalization, the results are not significant, and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected with certainty as the statistical relationship is too weak.

Table 6: Impact of Political Alliance on Internationalized Civil Conflict

VARIABLES	ext_numdv1	cat_weightdv2	ext_totdv3
p_def_int	0.700 (1.178)	-0.831 (0.532)	0.867 (0.564)
p_ent_int	-1.215 (1.172)	-0.539 (0.534)	-0.902 (0.561)
Constant	3.528*** (0.770)	4.901*** (0.342)	4.824*** (0.346)
F-Stats(P Value)	0.000	0.000	0.000

R-squared	0.008	0.065	0.026
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Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

According to Table 6, we can see that political alliances do not have a significant impact on the internationalization of a conflict. On the one hand, the fact that the third-party state and the country with a civil war share a defense pact does have a positive impact both on the number of actors intervening and the variety of support provided. However, both these coefficients are too weak to statistically confirm hypothesis and the statistical relationship between both. On the other hand, the presence of an entente pact is negatively related to the three dimensions of internationalization, thus infirming our hypothesis. Overall, political alliances in the shape of entente and defense pacts cannot be established as explanatory variable for this phenomenon.

In this first part of the statistical analysis, we have found that. Only two out of our explanatory variables, territorial borders and former colonies, do have an influence that is statistically significant on the internationalization of civil wars. In addition, the economic variable, used as a control variable in the models, fluctuates by depicting sometimes a positive or a negative one. The results are not significant, the relationship too weak and the argument of high economic integration does not seem to be accurate to explain a lesser degree of internationalization as defined by hypothesis number two. In the second set of tables presented, we will look more thoroughly at each of the features of internationalization separately - number of intervenors, types of actors intervening, and scope of support provided – with all independent variables to better analyze the scope of internationalization and the aspects which are more likely to be affected.

Combined model with first dependent variable (external_number)

Table 7 : Impact of Geography, Culture, Ethnic Fractionalization and Political Alliance on internationalized civil conflict

VARIABLES	ext_numdv1	ext_numdv1	ext_numdv1	ext_numdv1
g_borders_t	0.592*	0.283	0.623	0.708*
	(0.314)	(0.368)	(0.396)	(0.391)
g_borders_tot	-0.501**	-0.272	-0.358	-0.689**
	(0.224)	(0.277)	(0.291)	(0.329)
c_former_colonyinter		5.321***	6.583***	7.122***

		(1.546)	(1.921)	(2.040)
ethnic_frac			-0.242	-1.087
			(4.012)	(4.211)
p_def_int				2.597
				(1.784)
p_ent_int				-3.265*
				(1.688)
e_tradegdp	-0.000836	-0.00346	0.00142	-0.00156
	(0.0294)	(0.0361)	(0.0479)	(0.0486)
Constant	4.195**	4.126*	3.404	5.701
	(1.878)	(2.343)	(4.068)	(4.171)
F-Stats(P Value)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
R-squared	0.041	0.190	0.268	0.323

Standard errors in parentheses,*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The model presented in Table 7 exposes similar results than previous tables about the coefficients and more specifically their nature – positive or negative – as well as their statistical significance. The only difference in this model is structural and focusing solely on one of the defined aspects of internationalization, namely the number of external intervenors in a given civil war. As you can see with the results, both the variable of territorial borders and the one about former colony have a significant impact on the internationalization of a civil conflict but to be more specific on the number of third-party states intervening. Indeed, both variables show a positive relationship between the two explanatory variables and the number of intervenors, regardless of the group of variable it was taken with (columns in the table). In this analysis, the trade GDP, which can be interpreted as the integration within international trade, is kept as a

control variable in all. Accross all regressions, *borders_tot* persistently shows a negative coefficient while *borders_t* shows a positive coefficient. It is interesting to note that the results are opposed for these variables, as in the previous tables, and whose magnitude changes at the same time new variables are being introduced in the model. However, perhaps the most interesting result in this table is the remarkable relation between a colonial relationship and the internationalization of the conflict. The coefficients are persistently higher, both in magnitude and significance level. This suggests an interesting relationship to be further

explored (take historical context and colonial history of the country into account). Also interesting to note is the negative relation of internationalization and ethnic fracture and the weak impact it shows to have on the number of external intervenors.

Combined model with second dependent variable (cat_weight)

Table 8: Impact of Geography, Culture, Ethnic Fractionalization and Political Alliance on internationalized civil conflict

VARIABLES	cat_weightdv2	cat_weightdv2	cat_weightdv2	cat_weightdv2
g_borders_t	0.122 (0.146)	0.0200 (0.156)	-0.00413 (0.183)	-0.0125 (0.184)
g_borders_tot	-0.211** (0.0963)	-0.197* (0.113)	-0.208 (0.133)	-0.227 (0.149)
c_former_colonyinter		2.475*** (0.617)	2.631*** (0.841)	2.261** (0.921)
ethnic_frac			-0.894 (1.814)	-0.104 (1.921)
p_def_int				-0.472 (0.861)
p_ent_int				-0.586 (0.829)
e_tradegdp	0.0156 (0.0144)	0.000129 (0.0151)	-0.00688 (0.0233)	0.00103 (0.0242)
Constant	4.490*** (0.913)	5.375*** (0.996)	6.412*** (1.972)	6.314*** (1.986)
F-Stats(P Value)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
R-squared	0.067	0.272	0.239	0.268

Standard errors in parentheses,*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

This model (Table 8) focuses on another aspect of internationalization, namely the nature given to actors intervening. In other words, it takes into consideration what type of actors intervened ranging from neighboring countries, regional states, or broader international involvement. The first interesting thing to note is that the trend opposing the two variables about borders seems to have narrowed down with *border_t* tending towards a negative

coefficient. This means that although territorial borders do have a significant impact on the number of intervenors, the scope of actors intervening can be considered as lower, suggesting that the internationalization mainly relies on involvement from neighboring states or regional ones in line with the theory of geographical proximity to explain intervention. Further, former colony is still a variable which shows its importance for this aspect of internationalization, perhaps less in magnitude than when put in relationship with the number of external intervenors, but still highly statistically significant. This means that former colonies are not only subject to more third-party intervention but that the scope of actors intervening is also broader, including neighboring states, regional ones but also international attention. For what regards the variable about ethnic fractionalization, the results are still in favor of a negative relationship with that aspect of internationalization, as it was the case in the previous table.

Combined model with third dependent variable (external_type_tot)

Table 9: Impact of Geography, Culture, Ethnic Fractionalization and Political Alliance on internationalized civil conflict

VARIABLES	ext_totdv3	ext_totdv3	ext_totdv3	ext_totdv3
g_borders_t	0.209 (0.132)	0.168 (0.187)	0.193 (0.190)	0.215 (0.193)
g_borders_tot	-0.0377 (0.0937)	-0.101 (0.136)	-0.182 (0.140)	-0.269 (0.163)
c_former_colonyinter		1.154 (0.827)	1.366 (0.923)	1.490 (1.007)
ethnic_frac			1.737 (1.927)	1.550 (2.078)
p_def_int				0.655 (0.881)
p_ent_int				-0.876 (0.833)
e_tradegdp	-0.00888 (0.0123)	-0.0213 (0.0182)	-0.00971 (0.0230)	-0.0102 (0.0240)
Constant	4.754***	6.189***	5.257***	5.854***

	(0.795)	(1.182)	(1.953)	(2.059)
F-Stats(P Value)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
R-squared	0.032	0.068	0.102	0.122

Standard errors in parentheses,*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The results of the model depicted above focuses on the third defined aspect of internationalization, namely the range of the different types of support provided by external intervenors. The most important thing to notice in this table, is the fact that this aspect of internationalization is the one that is the less statistically relevant in comparison to the two previously analyzed. Indeed, the variable of former colonies dropped significantly in its significance and the value of the coefficient has become quasi similar to the variable of ethnic fractionalization. The reasons behind this model being overall less interesting for our study could be that the types of support provided does not represent a crucial component to determine the scope of internationalization. In other words, the type of support provided is not relevant in the models because there might as well be only one intervenor in a civil war providing eight out of the ten types of support provided which does not say anything relevant about the scope of internationalization. Therefore, from this analysis on the three aspects of internationalization, we can firmly say that the range of support provided does not constitute a crucial element to take into consideration for our work, statement that can be confirmed when all dependent and independent variables are all put together in a single model, as shown in the final Table below.

Table 10: Impact of Geography, Culture, Ethnic Fractionalization and Political Alliance on internationalized civil conflict.

VARIABLES	ext_numdv1	cat_weightdv2	ext_totdv3
g_borders_t	0.708*	-0.0125	0.215
	(0.391)	(0.184)	(0.193)
g_borders_tot	-0.689**	-0.227	-0.269
	(0.329)	(0.149)	(0.163)
c_former_colonyinter	7.122***	2.261**	1.490
	(2.040)	(0.921)	(1.007)
ethnic_frac	-1.087	-0.104	1.550
	(4.211)	(1.921)	(2.078)
p_def_int	2.597	-0.472	0.655
	(1.784)	(0.861)	(0.881)
p_ent_int	-3.265*	-0.586	-0.876
	(1.688)	(0.829)	(0.833)
e_tradegdp	-0.00156	0.00103	-0.0102
	(0.0486)	(0.0242)	(0.0240)
Constant	5.701	6.314***	5.854***
	(4.171)	(1.986)	(2.059)
F-Stats(P Value)	0.000	0.000	0.000
R-squared	0.323	0.268	0.122

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The model in Table 10 summarizes most of what has been said in the analysis of the previous models analyzed. Indeed, the most important results, once again, concern the variable about territorial borders and former colonies. Through this model, we can confirm that the number of territorial borders of a state with a civil war happening within its borders does indeed have an influence on the number of third-party states intervening in the conflict. However, only this aspect of internationalization is statistically significant for this specific variable. This relies on the same explanation provided in the other models, namely that the influence of borders mainly translates in more intervention by neighboring states – geographical proximity – and that is why the second dependent variable focusing on the type of actors intervening is not

significant. Furthermore, regarding the variable about former colonies, the results suggest a very high positive relation to both the number of external states intervening as well as the category of these actors.

To sum up, all of the different models suggest that both our first and third hypothesis can, at least partially, be confirmed. To be more specific, on the one hand, we found that the more a country experiencing a civil conflict shares territorial border, the more it will see multiple neighboring states intervening. This is in line with the theory of geographical proximity which suggests that neighboring states are more likely to intervene to maximize their interests but most importantly to ensure their security. This means that, indeed, territorial borders do have an influence on the phenomenon of internationalization although this internationalization might stay 'local' with mainly neighboring and regional states getting involved. On the other hand, our results suggest the importance of former colonies and that the legacy which has transformed into cultural influence does have a positive relationship to the internationalization of civil wars. Thus, the third hypothesis suggesting that, the more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized can be partially confirmed although solely for cultural legacy linked to colonies. The internationalization is both influenced in the number of states intervening and the type of actors, expanding the scope of internationalization when former colonies are concerned.

It is interesting to note that although the variable of trade is not significant nor constant in terms of the direction of its coefficients the relationship might be statistically stronger in supporting our second hypothesis - the more a country under civil strife is economically integrated, the less likely will the conflict become internationalized – if other indicators were to be including in the concept of economic integration. What is more, overall, we have seen by running the different models that the third layer of internationalization dedicated to the type of support provided by the sovereign states intervening this model reinforces previous statements about the very weak statistical significance to any of the explanatory variables conceptualized.

CONCLUSION

All in all, this paper aims to help scholars understand the phenomenon of internationalization of civil wars which has been a growing tendency over the years. Not only have civil wars been more subject to foreign intervention, but very few scholars have tried to understand why some civil wars tend to get more attention and action from third-party states. As a matter of fact, although foreign intervention in civil conflicts has been touched upon by the academia, most works tend to focus on the side of the foreign intervenor, that is, their incentive to intervene or not to get involved. Our work aimed to shed light of the phenomenon of internationalization independently from the cost-benefit calculus of the third-party states, but solely relying on factors and characteristics of the country in which the civil war unfolds. Indeed, basing our views on a neo-realist perspective of international relations, we have theorized different concepts which we believe could explain why some civil wars are more subject to being internationalized. Geography, economic integration, cultural influence, ethnic fractionalization, and political alliances are all factors that we suggested could have an influence on the phenomenon of internationalization and the scope of foreign involvement.

After anchoring these concepts in a theoretical framework, operationalizing them in the methodology section of the paper and playing with the data through different configurations of Ordinary Least Square Regressions, some variables have been excluded to satisfy the OLS model assumptions. Once all potential biases were excluded, the results exposed partially confirm some of the defined hypothesis. Indeed, the most important findings suggest that a civil war which unfolds in a country that used to be under colonial ruling or shares a lot of territorial borders with other states, is more likely to become internationalized. To be more precise, on the one hand, being a former colony increases the likelihood of an intervention from multiple actors but also from diverse ones ranging from neighboring, regional or further lying countries (two first aspects of internationalization). On the other hand, the state exercising civil unrest has territorial borders to other countries, the more likely it is to experience foreign involvement. However, this only affects the number of third-party states intervening, whereas the range of actors is not as broad as with former colonies, with mainly neighboring countries – which share direct borders – intervening in the civil war. These findings suggest that two out of the five defined hypotheses can be partially confirmed. Indeed, positive coefficients and

statistically significant results verify, in part, that the more a country experiencing a civil conflict is geographically strategic and/or proximate to other states, the more likely it will become internationalized and that the more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized. Both of these can only be verified in part- respectively for a part of the geographical and cultural factor - as only the aspect of territorial borders and former colonies were analyzed and therefore cannot be considered as the only components of the defined hypotheses.

While our study brings a new perspective to the study of civil wars and the phenomenon of internationalization, it also revealed weaknesses and limitations which need to be addressed by further research on the topic. The first thing that might seem like a limitation to the academia is the time frame chosen for this study, namely 1975-2009. Indeed, the influence of the Cold War and the fight between the two superpowers to increase their respective sphere of influence cannot be ignored in respect to the impact on intervention in civil conflicts around the globe. This is not a significant issue when it comes to examining the number of external involvements, however it would be interesting to analyze the legacy left by the Cold War – cultural influence - as theorized in Chapters 2 and 3. Moreover, setting another time frame starting from 1991 until now would simply be relevant as intra-state conflicts do not cease to lengthen and have become, for some, subject to more intensified foreign interference (we are thinking of the Middle East in particular but also the case of Afghanistan among others).

Further, another problem lies in the conceptualization of geography as a strategic factor explaining the incentive of a civil war to expand beyond its borders. As a matter of fact, although our theoretical explanation of geography as a strategic factor takes a lot of components into account, such as the region, the borders and the availability of natural resources, the exploitation of these concepts in the diverse models of regressions was very limited. Indeed, the number of borders of a country undergoing civil strife as well as the fact that neighboring countries are more likely to intervene does not seem to encompass the whole concept of geostrategic importance. Further research should include other components in the geographical argument and find a way to operationalize natural resources effectively. Geographical proximity should also be further investigated, by, for instance, more closely look at distance in kilometers between the country in which the conflict unfolds and the third-party which provides some kind of external support.

What is more, two other important points would be interesting to take into consideration for further works on civil wars and the phenomenon of internationalization. Our study focused solely on foreign intervention by foreign sovereign states but did not take into account external support by non-state actors. Therefore, the first suggestion would be to replicate a similar study with the involvement of such groups in addition to sovereign states. This would respond to a real lack of focus on non-state actors intervening in civil wars although their role is deemed as crucial in the unfolding of the conflict and the military support provided to the direct parties of the conflict. The other interesting hint for further research relies on the structure of the quantitative analysis. The idea is that it would be relevant to the research topic to analyze third-party intervention in civil wars through time-series. In other words, instead of taking a specific civil war as a single event and consequently analyzing all third-party involvement in that given conflict, further studies ought to focus on yearly analysis of the civil war. This would enable researchers to have a more comprehensive approach to the unfolding and evolution of a given conflict as well as the specific time frames within the conflict in which a certain third-party provided a kind of support especially given the main trend of modern civil wars tending to last longer which influences the influx of foreign involvement, the types of support provided and the range of actors intervening.

To sum up, this paper offers an innovative insight into the internationalization of civil wars through quantitative methods of analysis which fills a void in the existing literature and ought to be further exploited by scholars. As a matter of fact, although civil wars are a long-acknowledge type of conflict, its changing nature and tendency to lead to international involvement is worth investigating further into. Indeed, the increasing human and economic costs associated with the extensive length of intra-state conflicts poses a serious challenge to international security. Consequently, a better understanding of civil conflicts and their tendency to involve non-domestic actors could be a significant step to strive towards new innovative ways to manage and eventually terminate them. Nevertheless, more realistically, can national interests and historical legacy simply be set aside by third-party states for the sake of civil war resolution or are these conflicts doomed to be at the mercy of foreign involvement?

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My thesis in short

This summary contains the most important background, theoretical aspects as well as the results of the statistical analysis of my work. For more details, specifically on the methodology used, please refer to the full version of the thesis.

Since the end of World War II, conflicts have been shifting from the traditional interstate structure to a significant rise and persistence in intra-state conflicts, specifically civil wars. Not only do we witness this significant shift towards intra state conflicts, but our contemporary world is also subject to a rise in those kinds of conflicts, further challenging the international system. Both the spread and prevalence of civil wars is a clear reflection of the quick pace at which civil wars broke out, while settling them has become more of an issue from 1945 onwards. In addition, in the recent decade, these conflicts have tended to extend beyond national borders with the involvement and intervention of external actors. In fact, almost half of all civil wars since World War II have been subject to foreign involvement. Consequently, scholars have continued to study civil wars from their causes to their termination while introducing the phenomenon of foreign interventions. Nevertheless, most of the academic papers related to this third-party intervention, whose number has grown over the years, mainly focus on the effects of such foreign involvement on the different phases of civil conflicts: outbreak, duration, termination and aftermath. Thus, very few scholars have come up with theoretical explanations and empirical results to analyze the phenomenon of

internationalization itself. In other words, they fail to address what the reasons behind the internationalization are, as it seems to be obvious that most civil wars have to some degree been subject to some form of foreign intervention since 1945. In other words, there is a lack of analysis on why some civil wars seem to be more ‘targeted’ than others, more prone to internationalization and as a result facing deeper foreign interventions from an array of different actors. Consequently, as a means to understand this phenomenon, we will analyze why some civil wars are facing a deeper internationalization than others.

After shortly reviewing the existing literature on civil wars in Chapter 1 – divided in the three most studied phases of civil wars: the outbreak, the duration and mediation process, the termination and aftermath – we demonstrate both the lack of analysis on the phenomenon of internationalization itself and highlight the importance of studying and understanding why some civil wars are more predisposed to foreign involvement in general. At the end of the chapter, we will clearly state our research question, namely why some civil wars are subject to more internationalization than others. Chapter 2 introduces the chosen theoretical framework relying on neo-realist assumptions of, partially, theory of security and underlining the importance of national interests, which lay at the core of motivations for third-party interventions in civil conflicts. We then proceed to analyze the concept of internationalization when defining its scope as our dependent variable and explaining the different layers which are part of this concept. It is also in this chapter that we will conceptualize our independent variables which we believe can clarify the phenomenon of internationalization of civil wars. We theorize that geography, cultural influence, economic integration, sectarian fractionalization, and political alliances all have an impact on the incentive of a civil war to become more internationalized. Finally, the chapter concludes by putting forward five hypotheses. In Chapter 3, we operationalize both our dependent and independent variables of our hypotheses. Further, we share our quantitative model of testing based on an analysis of civil wars which have occurred over the timeframe between 1975 and 2009, and explain the different variables used in our model of testing as well as the unit of analysis chosen. The different models used to test our hypotheses rely on the use of multilinear regressions with the Ordinary Least Square method, best suited for cross-sectional data. Finally, Chapter 4 describes the empirical results of our testing and their compatibility with our hypotheses.

This thesis underlines that, overall, the existing academic literature on civil wars addresses many different aspects such as the causes, the duration, mediation process and termination. However, it is important to keep in mind that civil wars are international events. In other words, civil wars are a central issue to the field of international relations and although some scholars touched upon the issues of internationalization, the focus has either been on the influence of external parties on the duration of the conflict, their role in the termination and aftermath of civil wars, which type of civil wars are more likely to motivated third parties to intervene or the calculus behind a decision to intervene. Consequently, this paper aims at filling in the lack of direct explanations by encompassing both theoretical predictions and empirical results in one quantitative study analyzing all civil wars between 1975 and 2009, in order to understand the mechanisms which could explain why some civil wars are more prone to face a deeper internationalization independently from the decision of a third-party state to intervene.

It is important to understand that the concept of internationalization is a complex multi-layered one to grasp and in order to reply to our research question, a clear definition of our dependent variable was necessary. To put it shortly, to measure the degree of internationalization of civil wars, four elements need to be looked at, namely if an intervention exists, how many external intervenors are involved, what kind of actors are intervening and finally, which kind of intervention the civil conflict is subject too. The weights of each of these elements are further developed in the third chapter dedicated to methodology. Furthermore, in order to define our explanatory variables, our paper needs to be anchored in a specific vision of International Relations, which we chose to be neorealism. As a matter of fact, the choice of neorealism for our framework relies on the fact that it is a structural theory and thus does not consider intentions but only pressures of states. Although, we will not study the *ratione*, motivations and decision making calculus behind a foreign intervention, it is important to keep in mind that there are of course the national interests of intervening states at stake, either material or ideational, in making the decision to intervene in a foreign civil war. Instead, what is important to understand here, is that neorealism can explain why states decide to intervene in one specific civil wars and not in another which indirectly explains why some civil wars are subject to a higher level of internationalization. Indeed, not only is Waltz' theory of defensive neorealism relevant to understand the emergence of conflicts and the phenomenon of internationalization, but another sub-category of neo-realism as theorized by John J. Mearsheimer is as important, namely offensive neorealism. The main difference with the defensive branch of neorealism is that the offensive view rather believes in states looking for

“power maximization” and the search for hegemony rather than a simple balance of power. Nevertheless, whether the goal of states is either defence or expansion, the central idea behind these behaviours is that states need to provide for their own security. In other words, no matter the driver of state behaviour to increase their security – stabilization or lust for power - both approaches can explain the phenomenon of internationalization of a civil conflict.

All in all, they both reflect the exacerbation of the so-called security dilemma and increase the importance of the neorealist theory of International Relations to explain neighbourhood effects. However, as mentioned several times already, we are not trying to theorize and explain why third-party states decide to intervene, their cost-benefit considerations, the internal decision-making reasoning, nor the personal gains they could obtain by getting involved in a foreign civil war. Nevertheless, the independent factors present in the country in which the civil conflict unfolds will ultimately impact whether a foreign state will intervene or not and, consequently, the degree of internationalization. In other words, the relationship between the factors related to a specific country in which a civil conflict is taking place and a foreign intervention are closely intertwined as it is the former that will trigger foreign interventions and determine the level of internationalisation of a conflict. Thus, basing our argument on neorealist assumptions and the crucial role of strategic importance, we have decided to look at the following independent variables as potential explanations of the strategic importance of states and the incentive of a civil conflict to be more internationalized than other ones: geography, the level of sectarian fractionalization, political alliances, cultural influence, and economic ties.

First, strategic importance relies on what we defined as material factors represented by elements related to geography. These factors are characterized as material because they are given advantages, independent from states’ decision to develop strategic potential. In other words, these elements can also be understood because of the geographical location of the state whose power was partly defined by the physical nature of the world and thus embody its level of geostrategic importance. Indeed, the most important geographical considerations include location on the globe – in which region does it lay, does it have any access to sea (and maybe strategic maritime Chokepoints) and how many countries does it share borders with. It is important to keep in mind the importance of the geographical factor in International Relations, as, in political theory, the second aspect of the state relies on the spatial demarcation of the territory in which the state can exercise its power – geography and power are closely

intertwined. In addition, geographical significance is important to measure the looming possibilities of conflict. These benefits - or potential sources of conflict - can range from the importance of maritime chokepoints such as the Strait of Hormuz, the Strait of Malacca, or the crucial hub of the South China Sea or even the access to oil and gas fields in different regions of the world. Indeed, access to sea and especially chokepoints are both critical for states to, on the one hand, develop infrastructure and ports but mainly, on the other hand, open a window of trade – both of which will influence their strategic importance in the international arena. Furthermore, another element that stems out from the random geographical distribution, and which increases the strategic potential of a state, is the availability of natural resources. Indeed, some regions are more known for a high level of natural resources such as for instance the Middle East, more specifically the Persian Gulf, or Northern Asia.

The role of energy in contemporary politics has always been a crucial matter of strategic importance, especially more so recently as resources are getting scarce. As a matter of fact, the scarcity of natural resources such as oil and gas fuels has gone to the extent of generating a power competition between states for unclaimed territories, most famous of which is the race for Antarctica. However, most importantly, natural resources are often used as leverage tool by some states in order to coerce other states to comply with their demands. Therefore, they can offer significant strategic potential to states but while this might seem like a considerable advantage, these states also expose themselves to a higher risk of foreign intervention in case of a civil war unfolding within their borders. The reason behind this exposition to a higher risk of third party intervention if a resource-rich country going through a civil conflict is that the intervenors decide to get involved to either secure their own interests or see an opportunity in increasing their power by whether having access to those resources or supporting a faction in the civil conflict which, in case of the latter ends up at the head of the state will facilitate the access to natural resources. In addition, we have to look at geographic proximity and the significance of borders. Geographic location and proximity highly influence the intervention of a third-party state - most likely contiguous or in the same region - in a foreign civil war. Thus, borders are particularly important when we look at a foreign intervention into a civil conflict from a regional perspective. At times, to avoid the impact of conflict unfolding in a country, states choose to act preventively and intervene in the conflict to refrain the latter from spreading within their own borders. Indeed, one must not forget that, following neorealist principles, states are to always ensure their survival, maximize their security in a world in which the structure of the international order is anarchical. Whether the motives behind an

intervention are preemptive at their core or if the involvement purely reflects natural interests - or is most likely even the result of a mix of both aspects - the influence of borders remains unchanged. Therefore, we believe that the more a country – in which a civil conflict unfolds – shares borders, the more likely it is to be subject to foreign intervention by neighboring states and experience a regional type of involvement and a diffusion of the conflict. Consequently, we expect to find that countries - experiencing civil conflicts – are more likely to become internationalized either because of a geographical proximity logic, their location on the globe or/and the availability of natural resources.

The second important set of explanations relies on interactive factors - factors which, on the one hand, go beyond geographical scrutiny and, on the other hand, reflect the concrete and deliberate, added value and efforts of a state to develop its strategic potential - such as economic integration and cultural influence. For what regards the relationship between economy and civil wars at the international level, it has been argued that international trade affected the risk of civil wars, however, barely any works have focused on the role that economic ties play in civil conflicts in relation to foreign states and a probability of internationalization. Consequently, we believe that the concepts of leverage and vulnerability – who define economic ties – can be used to determine the incentive of a civil conflict to become internationalized. Indeed, a state can be said to be vulnerable – and thus sensible to the leverage of other states – if it is highly dependent on some trading partners whereas the latter's' economic survival do not rely a lot on this particular economic tie. Moreover, vulnerability also entails that a state has only a few trading partners and a low connectedness to the rest of the world, namely it is not highly integrated in the world economy.

The reason behind this reasoning and link to internationalization of a civil war, is that the state(s) who will potentially intervene won't suffer too badly from an interruption of economic relations and will be able to compensate its lost benefits by redirecting to alternate markets and other economic partners in case the intervention in the civil conflict triggers such a reaction by the state. Keep in mind that, states being rational actors, foreign intervention will only happen if the benefits outweigh the costs. Therefore, a state which has little importance – vulnerable - in the overall world economy and in which a civil war unfolds has more incentive to see its domestic conflict internationalize. In simple terms, the more economically integrated and less economically vulnerable is a state, the less chances that a civil conflict becomes internationalized.

Beyond economic integration, the cultural dimension is also an important factor when it comes to determining the incentive of a civil war to spill over and become internationalized. When one thinks about cultural influence, history most often is the starting point. Indeed, it has been studied by scholars that historical colonial ties could be a driver of internationalization of a civil war. The *ratione* behind this correlation is that, as a consequence of the declaration of independence of many colonies, colonial ties remained rooted in the newly formed states. Whether these political, social and/or economic ties are still sustained in a post-imperialist context, highly determines if the phenomenon of internationalization through foreign intervention(s) will indeed take place. As a matter of fact, whether cultural influence constitutes the result of history - which has persisted throughout the years as a result of soft power maintenance - or whether soft power creation entailed the attraction of values independently of the unfolding of history, we believe that cultural influence strongly impacts the probability of internationalization of a civil war. Indeed, when a state has strong cultural influence on a state, it might feel more legitimate to intervene and the conflict has thus more incentive to be subject to foreign intervention and potentially internationalization. In short, cultural influence remains a crucial component which influences the internationalization of a conflict following a neorealist perspective as soft power is only the means through which cultural influence is brought to a country. On the one hand, cultural influence can be due the persistence of historic legacy such as the periods of colonialism or the Cold War. On the other hand, soft power – as defined by Joseph Nye - remains an important element to consider as culture is an integral part of it.

In addition to these elements contributing the strategic importance of a state, we believe that sectarian fractionalization and political alliances can also, to some extent, explain the phenomenon of internationalization of civil wars. Ethnic polarization within a state has been positively correlated to the initiations of domestic conflicts, namely civil wars. In other words, at the domestic level, the more a country is heterogeneous and fractionalized along cultural, ethnic, or religious lines, the more likely it is to experience a civil war. Nevertheless, not only are cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity a source of internal conflict nor a source of a type of ‘copycat syndrome’ in neighboring states, but they also largely contribute to the internationalization of a civil war. Indeed, in the name of the protection of ethnic kin, states with ethnic ties to one of the parties fighting in the civil conflict will be more likely to intervene to protect this group while ensuring that they will win the war – pushed by affective

motivations. In other words, it is the power of a shared identity, religious affinity, similar ideological principles, or racial-cultural affinity which will favor third party intervention in an ethnic conflict. For what regards political alliances as a potential explanatory variable, they can be seen as the expression of pure neo-realist logic. As a matter of fact, the formation of alliances reflects states' behavior to, on one side, protect itself from external threats and thus maximizing its own security while, on the other side, benefit from potential opportunities. As a consequence, in case of a civil conflict unfolding in an allied state, states will favor a quick victory of their allies in the civil conflict to ensure their own security towards external threats – which is indirectly impacted by the non-availability of the ally busy with dealing with the civil conflict - and not to lose the exploitation of benefits. Therefore, most third-party states tied by an alliance will chose to intervene in the early stages of the conflict and probabilities of states intervention as the conflict unfolds sharply decreases. Through the mechanism of alliances, some third-party state interventions also, at times, results from a direct request to intervene by the state in which the conflict is taking place. As a matter of fact, civil wars especially long-term ones, undergo both the formation and disintegration of alliances as the conflict unfolds, at the domestic level - that is within the country and the different groups taking part in the conflict. We will nevertheless not differentiate pre-war alliances (of entente and defence type) and the ones created or dissolved during the unfolding of the war. In other words, this means we won't analyze internal networks of alliances within the civil war and between the different factions. Consequently, we will be able to determine if international alliances do indeed influence a foreign state intervention and confirms our argument that allies are more likely to intervene and come to each other's defense in the context of civil wars.

Subsequent to the theoretical conceptualization of elements we believe could explain, the following five hypotheses can be defined:

1. The more a country experiencing a civil conflict is geographically strategic and/or proximate to other states, the more likely it will become internationalized.
2. The more a country under civil strife is economically integrated, the less likely will the conflict become internationalized.
3. The more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized.

4. The more a state that experiences civil strife is fractionalized along sectarian lines, the more the civil war will be likely to become internationalized.
5. Alliances – specifically defense and entente pacts - increase the probability of the internationalization of civil wars as allies are more likely to intervene.

The results obtained after operationalizing our variables and running several models of Ordinary Least Regressions suggest that both the first and third hypothesis can, at least partially, be confirmed. The most important findings suggest that a civil war which unfolds in a country that used to be under colonial ruling or shares a lot of territorial borders with other states, is more likely to become internationalized. To be more precise, on the one hand, being a former colony increases the likelihood of an intervention from multiple actors but also from diverse ones ranging from neighboring, regional or further lying countries (two first aspects of internationalization - the number of states intervening and the type of actors). On the other hand, the more a state undergoing civil unrest has territorial borders to other countries, the more likely it is to experience foreign involvement. However, this only affects the number of third-party states intervening, whereas the range of actors is not as broad as with former colonies, with mainly neighboring countries – which share direct borders – intervening in the civil war. This is in line with the theory of geographical proximity which suggests that neighboring states are more likely to intervene to maximize their interests but most importantly to ensure their security. This means that, indeed, territorial borders do have an influence on the phenomenon of internationalization although this internationalization might stay ‘local’ with mainly neighboring and regional states getting involved. These findings suggest that two out of the five defined hypotheses can be partially confirmed. Indeed, positive coefficients and statistically significant results verify, in part, that the more a country experiencing a civil conflict is geographically strategic and/or proximate to other states, the more likely it will become internationalized and that the more a country shares part of its culture another state, the more likely will a civil conflict within its borders become internationalized. Both of these can only be verified in part- respectively for a part of the geographical and cultural factor - as only the aspect of territorial borders and former colonies were analyzed and therefore cannot be considered as the only components of the defined hypotheses.

While our study brings a new perspective to the study of civil wars and the phenomenon of internationalization, it also unveils weaknesses and limitations, which need to be addressed by further research on the topic. The first thing that might seem like a limitation to the academia is the time frame chosen for this study, namely 1975-2009. Indeed, the influence of the Cold War and the fight between the two superpowers to increase their respective sphere of influence cannot be ignored in respect to the impact on intervention in civil conflicts around the globe. This is not a significant issue when it comes to examining the number of external involvements, however it would be interesting to analyze the legacy left by the Cold War – cultural influence - as theorized in the second and third chapters. Moreover, setting another time frame starting from 1991 until now would simply be relevant as intra-state conflicts do not cease to lengthen and have become, for some, subject to more intensified foreign interference (we are thinking of the Middle East in particular but also the case of Afghanistan among others).

What is more, two other important points would be interesting to take into consideration for further works on civil wars and the phenomenon of internationalization. Our study focused solely on foreign intervention by foreign sovereign states but did not take into account external support by non-state actors. Therefore, the first suggestion would be to replicate a similar study with the involvement of such groups in addition to sovereign states. This would respond to a real lack of focus on non-state actors intervening in civil wars although their role is deemed as crucial in the unfolding of the conflict and the military support provided to the direct parties of the conflict. The other interesting hint for further research relies on the structure of the quantitative analysis. The idea is that it would be relevant to the research topic to analyze third-party intervention in civil wars through time-series. In other words, instead of taking a specific civil war as a single event and consequently analyzing all third-party involvement in that given conflict, further studies ought to focus on yearly analysis of the civil war. This would enable researchers to have a more comprehensive approach to the unfolding and evolution of a given conflict as well as the specific time frames within the conflict in which a certain third-party provided a kind of support especially given the main trend of modern civil wars tending to last longer which influences the influx of foreign involvement, the types of support provided and the range of actors intervening.

To sum up, this paper offers an innovative insight into the internationalization of civil wars through quantitative methods of analysis which fills a void in the existing literature and

ought to be further exploited by scholars. As a matter of fact, although civil wars are a long-acknowledge type of conflict, its changing nature and tendency to lead to international involvement is worth investigating further into. Indeed, the increasing human and economic costs associated with the extensive length of intra-state conflicts poses a serious challenge to international security. Consequently, a better understanding of civil conflicts and their tendency to involve non-domestic actors could be a significant step to strive towards new innovative ways to manage and eventually terminate them. Nevertheless, more realistically, can national interests and historical legacy simply be set aside by third-party states for the sake of civil war resolution or are these conflicts doomed to be at the mercy of foreign involvement?