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## **Foreign Interventions And Civil War Casualties: The Case of Greece**

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# Foreign Interventions And Civil War Casualties: The Case of Greece



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## Introduction

In the realm of politics, organised violence in the form of conflict has often been utilised in pursuit of power maximisation. In its timeless characterisation of “politics by other means”, interstate war is the subject of extensive academic focus (Cajic, 2016, p. 73). However, besides transnational tensions, recent history points at a more frequent kind of conflict whose specific dynamics and processes still remain largely obscure. Civil wars occur, not directly among sovereign nations, but rather among factions within state borders (Sambanis & Elbadawi, 2000 p. 2). Since the end of WW2, they have been responsible for the vast majority of conflict-related deaths and at the centre of extensive geostrategic tensions (Lacina, 2006 p. 279).

Attempts to study and progressively mitigate the severe effects of civil wars, have seen researchers focusing on “large-n” studies to unveil main causes and dynamics (Lacina, 2006 p. 276). However, in their pursuit of absolute answers, these vast, comprehensive efforts fail to account for the individual mechanisms that apply within context-specific cases of civil wars. Studying them allows for building a more versatile understanding of the phenomenon “from the ground up”.

Relevant studies therefore require a deeper analysis that transcends standard, internal “power-centric” approaches which, however useful, do not seem to paint a full picture (Lacina, 2006 p. 276). It is crucial to also consider external factors and influences that play a role within intrastate conflicts and, most importantly, the mechanisms through which they generate that effect. Those external influences are best illustrated through foreign interventions. The significance of studying the effect of interventions lies on two key factors. First, academically, most studies in the past have neglected the intensity of their effect, rather attributing the duration and severity of civil wars on largely internal factors, such as ethnic

polarization (Sambanis & Elbadawi, 2000, p. 14). Additionally, the majority of those works aim to establish correlation between interventions and civil war characteristics, rather than explore causation. Second, practically, with civil-war outbreaks doubling since 1991 in an increasingly globalized setting, it is crucial to deconstruct the impact of third-party actors to enhance contemporary peace-building efforts (Anderson, 2019, p. 692).

The effect of those interventions on the severity of civil wars, can be applicably operationalized through combat-related deaths. Notably, it is optimal to go beyond a mere correlation of the variables, to study and investigate the mechanisms that systemically affect them. Hence, the following research question emerges.

Research Question: How do foreign interventions affect conflict-related casualties in civil wars?

Conceptualizing the question, the paper is going to explore the mechanisms through which the active involvement of an external actor can influence the severity of an intrastate conflict in terms of human deaths. This consequently pinpoints that the existence of a correlation constitutes a main assumption of the paper, with the presence of foreign assistance on any side being linked to the casualties of the war (Lockyer, 2011, p. 2337). This assumption will be relevantly solidified in the “Literature Review” section. In this context, foreign interventions constitute the dependent variable or “cause” of the interaction and are defined as initiatives that aim to influence the balance of power between the belligerents (Kathman, 2011, p. 849). Casualties, constituting the dependent variable or “effect” of the interaction, constitute a widely accepted predictor of the intensity of the conflict (Kathman, 2011, p. 860).

The lens through which the research question will be analyzed is a single case-study. The empirical focus of the paper will revolve around the Greek civil war. The war lasted between 1946 and 1949 and claimed the lives of more than 150,000 people (Lengel, 2020). Over 1,000,000 were relocated due to the conflict and the political remnants of the cleavage are experienced to this day. The elements that make the Greek civil war a case of high explanatory value are related to its unique historical and political characteristics. First, in the immediate aftermath of WW2, the confrontation has been reported as the first act of the Cold War (Marantzidis, 2013, p. 30). This means that the clash constitutes a proxy war between the United States and the Soviet Union, with allied powers like Great Britain and Yugoslavia also being involved. In this complex diplomatic setting, the belligerents inside the country conducted a form of warfare that encompasses multiple tactical profiles. Characteristically, guerrilla warfare was initially employed until western involvement transitioned the setting into conventional war (Lockyer, 2011, p. 2337). Crucially to this paper, the Greek civil war constitutes a case to be studied independently due to the puzzling outcome of high casualties and political polarization, despite the initial aim of the foreign intervention being to avoid specifically those events (Nachmani, 1990, p. 500). This internal and external diversity of the conflict provides a process-based analysis with the potential to transcend case-study boundaries and generate generalizable results that can be employed onto other conflicts and provide more than a strictly unilateral answer to the research question.

Methodologically, in order to uncover the mechanisms between cause (X) and effect, the analysis will use explaining outcome process-tracing (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p.63). This approach is most applicable as it is empirically oriented towards connecting events in a particular case-study as convincingly as possible. Its aim to create a “minimally sufficient explanation” that will assist in shedding light in the elaborate dynamics within the complex

case of Greece while promoting a single mechanism that can be most useful in explaining similar events.

This paper will continue by conducting a general, comprehensive “literature review” of relevant academic entries on foreign interventions which will provide insight on potentially relevant indicators and mechanisms. This background section will be followed by the “methodology”, illustrating the way in which the data will be processed. The “analysis” will then lead to the minimally sufficient explanation. Finally, the “conclusion” will review the findings of the paper before underlining the impact of the study and providing recommendations for future research. Overall, the paper is going to argue that despite theories promoting diplomatically-oriented explanations, it was a combination of balance-of-power dynamics and internal perceptions that detrimentally affected human losses.

## **Literature Review**

Exploring the external dynamics of specific case-studies requires particular focus on broader literature that can assist in conceptualizing foreign interventions as well as in identifying indicators of causality around them. David Cunningham, in his article “Blocking resolution: How external states can prolong civil wars”, sets out to explore the impact of foreign interventions on the duration of intrastate conflict (Cunningham, 2010 p.115). He finds that those interventions prolong war especially when they are motivated by individual foreign-policy goals and not by the desire to assist a specific side towards an end to the war. This effect occurs due to two main reasons. First, when a new actor engages, a peace settlement has to be approved by an extra self-interested party, vastly complicating the process (Cunningham, 2010 p.117). Second, external powers are less incentivized to

negotiate before achieving their full objectives as they face lower risks in the conflict and can at any moment limit their involvement. The vast policy-making implications of the paper constitutes one of its stronger elements. Extrapolating on those points can assist in real world scenarios and contribute to faster conflict resolutions. Regarding its utility to this paper, Cunningham's analysis provides two functions. First, it is a clear basis for the assumption that interventions lead to further casualties. Academically establishing the fact allows for exploring the mechanisms behind that effect. Second, on the explanatory side, his conclusion reveals war-prolonging processes that are relevant to the Greek civil war and can therefore be used as indicators during the methodology section.

Equivalently, in her 2006 article "Explaining the severity of civil wars". Bethany Lacina studies different types of civil wars to explain variations in casualties (Lacina, 2006, p. 276). She uses quantitative entries to evaluate various indicators of conflict severity such as regime type, military strength, ethnicity and religion through regression analyses. She concludes that political characteristics constitute much stronger indicators of intensity, with democratic states presenting much lower conflict-related deaths (Lacina, 2006, p. 287). As a sidenote, it is worth observing how these political factors outperform the effect of the Cold War as an independent variable, allowing for the study of conflicts in that period, such as the Greek civil war, to provide more generalizable, timeless conclusions. Additionally, it is important to note that the independent variables of population, military strength, GDP and religion are all insignificant predictors, with a p-value far exceeding the maximum 0.05 threshold (Lacina, 2006, p. 286). Rather, ethnic homogeneity and polarization are more significant predictors of deaths. Considering Lacina's arguments, it seems that her input is significant to the current study. This is because her conclusions underline the analytical difference between conflict onset and conflict severity (Lacina, 2006, p. 287). Differentiating why wars start and how severe they are, enhances the analytical potential of studying the

second, especially under the author's establishment of political indicators as most applicable. This approach departs from traditional, military-based and geostrategic explanations of conflict onset that this regression has rejected, exposing a clear gap in the literature for this paper's analysis to focus on. Regarding the specific element of foreign interventions, Lacina clearly states how foreign interventions tend to prolong conflict, irrespectively of the side that is receiving aid (Lacina, 2006, p. 281). This is because foreign assistance to the combatants tips the balance of power and adds another actor to an already polarized geostrategic picture. This observation constitutes a strong link to Cunningham's article, which further supports the notion that interventions lead to deaths, further solidifying this paper's assumptions. On the weaker points of Lacina's paper, the effects of certain factors such as regime type should be further studied in more detail across different regimes and contexts to generate more convincing results (Lacina, 2006, p. 282).

Similarly, in his 2019 article, "Competitive Intervention, Protracted Conflict, and the Global Prevalence of Civil War", Noel Anderson studies competitive interventions to interpret pattern changes in the outbreaks of civil wars (Anderson, 2019, p.692). His main contribution is dissecting key assumptions around foreign interventions, such as their supposed ability to end a civil war simply by tipping the balance of power on one side or the other (Anderson, 2019, p.704). He alternatively finds that intervening powers are engaged in strategic dilemmas, such as the will to intervene versus the fear of escalation, which restrict their movement. This effect largely prohibits third powers to act in any direction due to the deviations between high-command plans and local conditions. In turn, this restricts the operational scope of the intervention into direct support on one side, which prolongs the conflict. This is why Anderson argues that policy-makers need to anticipate the opponent's objectives and not fixate solely on their own foreign policy goals (Anderson, 2019, p.704). The main strength of the paper is its ability to capture larger



trends in the direction of civil wars as a global phenomenon. Particularly, the inherent issues that intervening powers face are of major importance to this paper. On the other hand, even though Anderson's time-frame is large, the dynamics studied within it are limited. For example, diplomatic processes are left largely unaccounted for.

Continuing the study on the effect of foreign interventions on the protraction and by extension the casualties of civil wars, Ibrahim Elbadawi and Nicholas Sambanis go beyond the common analysis of the belligerents' military capabilities to examine external interventions and ethnic fragmentation as variables on the duration of intrastate conflicts (Sambanis & Elbadawi, 2000, p. 1). They expand on the notion that foreign interventions through material aid can alter the effect of ethnic fractionalization. This occurs by providing smaller groups with the ability to bear the costs of a prolonged rebellion which they would have otherwise not been able to (Sambanis & Elbadawi, 2000, p. 14). Following their empirical quantitative study, they conclude that interventions are in fact an endogenous factor in civil wars and a major indicator of its duration (Sambanis & Elbadawi, 2000, p. 16). Notably, the authors corroborate Lacina's argument for a conceptual differentiation between "conflict initiation", and "conflict duration" (Sambanis & Elbadawi, 2000, p. 12). This provides further evidence that structural changes after the start of a war can alter its direction and impact on its duration. Hence, non-local conditions that are largely disconnected from the socio-political cleavages that can spark a conflict emerge as relevant indicators of its casualties, notably underlining foreign interventions as a prime example. Overall, the paper lacks adequate depth into the particularities of the civil wars in the studied time-period but this area for improvement does not diminish the unique insight of its empirical model.

Proceeding to an alternative view of interventions, Regan and Aydin suggest that interventions possess a unique capacity to mediate, potentially limiting the duration of a

conflict (Regan & Aydin, 2006, p. 736). They operationally differentiate interventions between those that aim to structurally affect a conflict and those that aim to control the belligerents' access to information. This approach is accompanied by a quantitative analysis that encompasses the type of intervention, its timing and the local conditions including material strength of the belligerents and cause of conflict (Regan & Aydin, 2006, p. 748). They conclude that the motivations behind an intervention are crucial since, when oriented towards conflict management, and with the right timing, they can have a positive impact, effectively ending the conflict (Regan & Aydin, 2006, p. 754). These findings by Regan and Aydin represent an interesting deviation from the bulk of academic entries that characterise interventions as bound to prolong civil wars. By broadening their analysis to include foreign powers' motivations and means of intervention, they allow for insight into what makes external influences hinder peaceful resolutions. Extrapolating on those findings for the case of Greece, a possible indicator of a mechanism or part of it, would look at the US and Soviet post-WW2 interests in the country. For example, did the US aim to control and stop the conflict, or catholically defeat the communist side? Such concepts and questions constitute important entries for the process-tracing method.

On a more practical study, Adam Lockyer sets out to establish the processes through which foreign interventions affect the dynamics of civil wars (Lockyer, 2011, p. 2337). His unique insight revolves around the tactical implications of foreign interventions. He characteristically argues that the type of warfare, namely conventional, guerrilla or irregular, largely depends upon the type and degree of foreign interventions with extensive potential of protracting the conflict. He then applies those theoretical points on the case of the Angolan Civil War of 1975 (Lockyer, 2011, p. 2347). The complex political setting following Angola's independence from Portugal, allows for an insightful study of the causal mechanisms of the foreign interventions which transpired, that can generate conclusions of

unique explanatory value for this paper. Specifically, Lockyer tracks the progression of the war along the involvement of foreign powers, breaking the war in three phases. In the first phase of limited foreign involvement, street battles and skirmishes mostly shaped the conflict into the tactical picture of irregular warfare. However, the arrival of external forces, specifically Cuba, the Soviet Union, and South Africa, along with the introduction of advanced cold-war weaponry, spiralled the conflict into the conventional warfare phase, leading up to the battle of Quifangondo in 1975 (Lockyer, 2011, p. 2359). Following the victory of the MPLA group over the less supported FNLA faction, its members fled to the east and adopted guerrilla tactics, protracting the hostilities and casualties for decades (Lockyer, 2011, p. 2360). Such concentration of war material affects the local population to this day, with tens of thousands of amputees due to the remaining landmines. The introduction of additional weaponry therefore constitutes a key indicator of casualties generated by foreign involvement, transcending the borders of material support and playing a key role in the external effect which, as Lacina's article has underlined, appears to be the strongest indicator of conflict severity (Lacina, 2006, p. 286). This element is especially relevant in the Greek civil war, as among others, the introduction of the napalm bomb by the United States brought devastating results, increasing the death-toll. It is worth noting that Lockyer's single-case results lack the broader impact of a large-n study but, as the current paper aims, provides generalizable conclusions out of a complex internal conflict that would have otherwise been lost to theoretical obscurity, along with its explanatory power and potential to inform policy.

Expanding upon reviews of case-specific academic works, Morgan Kaplan focuses on the Iraqi Kurdish self-determination effort to illustrate how calculations on foreign support made by non-state actors can intensify and prolong conflicts (Kaplan, 2020, p. 29). The author points out that "gain" and "loss" miscalculations in terms of foreign support are

equally damaging to peace and stability as they motivate actors to overlook the current geostrategic picture in hopes of securing, or in fear of losing, foreign support (Kaplan, 2020, P. 32). When they have secured the support of foreign powers, as the Iraqi Kurds had during their battle against the Islamic State, they might over-rely on that support to secure further, overly ambitious goals, like the independence which the Kurds pursued with the 2017 referendum (Kaplan, 2020, p. 29). This is a term that Kaplan terms as “gambling” with foreign support (Kaplan, 2020, p. 33). He concludes that this is a common phenomenon across different non-state actors around the world which is hard to mitigate since drawing the boundaries of foreign support can be difficult (Kaplan, 2020, p. 40). This difficulty lies on shifting alliances and the foreign powers’ fixation on their own foreign policy goals rather than objectively assisting the local group, a concept that is becoming even more obscure when the local group is being provided with high amounts of continuous aid. Finally, the author provides a relevant policy suggestion that underscores the importance of clearly defining the “upper and lower bounds” of support that a foreign power is willing to provide (Kaplan, 2020, p. 40). This clarification has the potential to limit regional ambiguity and tensions while avoiding the risk of appearing as an unreliable ally. Notably, on a weaker point of the article, the author could have also worked backwards to account for instances where non-state actors’ gambling did in fact generate additional foreign support, a move which would have secured a more versatile and generalizable conclusion. Nonetheless, Kaplan’s work is an important reference for this paper, being specifically applicable to the Greek civil war, where the communist guerrilla fighters dedicated their committed efforts on the hope of securing direct Soviet support (Iatrides & Rizopoulos, 2000, p. 97).

## Summary

The “Literature Review” section has shed sufficient light on the concept of interventions as well as the way they affect local conflict-related conditions. Recurring themes revolve around foreign interventions as conflict-protractors through material influence and limited scope. Overall, these entries allow for the formulation of an early conceptual mechanical hypothesis.

<b>X -Cause</b>	<b>Event 1</b>	<b>Event 2</b>	<b>Event 3</b>	<b>Event 4</b>	<b>Y- Effect</b>
Foreign intervention within civil war.	Foreign power attempts to structurally influence the war.  <b>(Regan &amp; Aydin)</b> <b>(Anderson)</b>	Belligerents are now able to sustain a prolonged conflict due to external support.  <b>(Sambanis &amp; Elbadawi)</b>	Foreign power’s presence in this now more complex setting hinders a quick resolution.  <b>(Cunningham)</b> <b>(Lacina)</b>	Introduction of further military equipment to achieve a quicker victory.  <b>(Lockyer)</b>	Higher level of human casualties due the civil war.

Table 1: Theoretical causal mechanism for foreign interventions and casualties

This table constitutes a sample mechanism based on the indications of the literature. It is not going to be treated by itself as a benchmark against the Greek civil war, as this would transform the method from “explaining-outcome” to “theory-testing” process-tracing” (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 11). Such a methodological shift would have the potential to omit special characteristics of this particular civil war that would contribute to a more versatile conclusion, reducing the value of the analysis. Rather, it will be used as a purely theoretical comparative tool with the mechanism deriving from Greek case-study during the “analysis” section. This will allow for a cumulative academic input into the conclusion, generating applicable, generalizable results.

## Methodology

### Design Background

Exploring the causal dynamics of a particular case requires a thorough methodological structure that can support a convincing analysis and yield valuable results. In the study of the Greek civil war (1946-1949), this paper will use the method of “process-tracing” (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 1). It constitutes the most appropriate analytical tool due to its particular focus on causal mechanisms. It is also distinctly applicable for a single-case study (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 2). The academic basis for this research design will be the book “Process- Tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines” by Derek Beach and Rasmus Pedersen (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 1). Their work constitutes a tenet in the modern application of the method, encompassing a multitude of sub-categories to be applied in different contexts and for different purposes. Despite the explanatory value of “theory-building” and “theory-testing” as the two alternative approaches to process tracing, this paper will utilise the method of “explaining-outcome process-tracing” (p. 21).

As a research method, process-tracing aims at looking beyond mere correlations between variables, to incorporate the mechanisms that allow this correlation to take effect (p. 1). Its unique ability to draw “within-case inferences” is only comparable to George and Bennet’s “congruence method” of historical narrative which has not been chosen here due to its less process-oriented nature (p. 6). Within Beach and Pedersen’s approach, the independent variable, labelled “X”, constitutes the “cause” that sets the mechanism in motion and the dependent variable, labelled “Y” constitutes the “effect” that transpires as a result of that mechanism (p. 34). “Mechanism”, is defined as a theoretical approximation of a system of interrelated aspects that generates “causal forces” leading from X to Y (p. 29). The authors propose a series of specific “events” or “activities” that act as cogwheels among each

other, leading to the outcome (p. 38). When applicable, these parts of the mechanism can be conceptually expanded to create a broader theoretical mechanism.

Practically applying this approach, process-tracing is divided in three distinct variants. First, “theory-testing” aims to prove or disprove causal linkages in a known correlation of events through an empirical case-study analysis (p. 21). Second, “theory-building” investigates the existence or absence of a causal mechanism between X and Y. Finally, “explaining-outcome” focuses on a single case-study to explain a particular effect through a “minimally sufficient explanation” (p. 160). Explaining-outcome process-tracing is the most appropriate method here as it contains “systematic” elements, meaning broader theoretical parts, and “non-systematic” elements, meaning case-specific parts (p. 156). This allows the analysis to uncover the case-based conclusions emerging from the Greek civil war while retaining a broader academic relevance.

### Research Design

The methodological requirements of conducting explaining-outcome process-tracing depend on the choice of a deductive or an inductive approach (p. 20). The deductive approach tests an already existing theory on the empirical facets of the case. In this variant, the resulting research design strongly resembles theory-testing, an approach that would potentially miss important particularities of the case in pursuit of a forcibly general answer. On the other hand, the inductive approach focuses on case-specific aspects to determine the events that led to the outcome. Therefore, it seems most useful to account for the explanation that fits the particular case of Greece before attempting to generate

broader conclusions. This dissection between the theoretical and the empirical level of the analysis is best illustrated in Table 2.

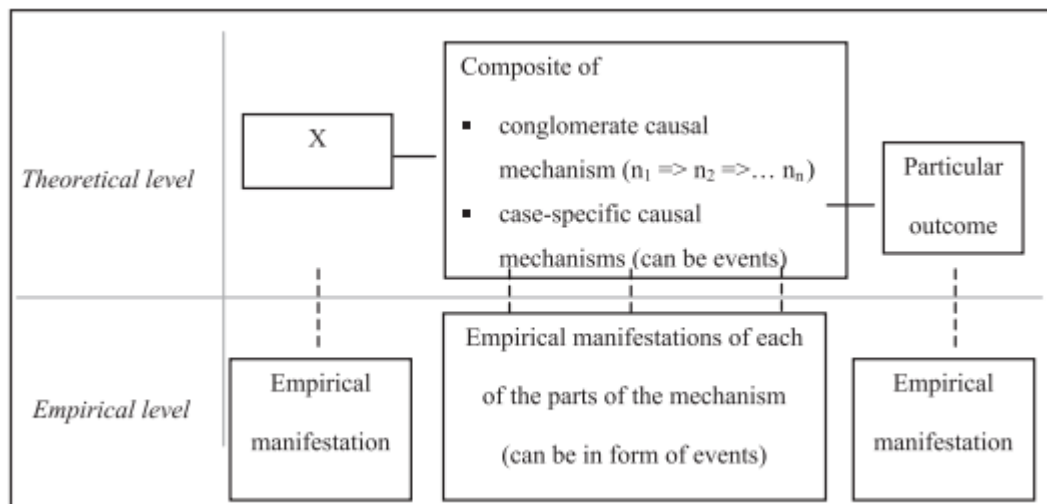


Table 2: “Mechanisms in explaining-outcome process-tracing” (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 34)

With reference to Table 2, the inductive approach will use the empirical analysis of the Greek civil war to supply information for the creation of a theoretical mechanism of causally connected events. “Events” are not to be understood here as specific historical occurrences, such as “operation Pyloros” in 1949, but rather as more generalizable key instances, such as “introduction of additional weaponry” that the US introduced and might have affected that battle.

Specifically, when using the inductive method, the selected research design for the Greek civil war is based upon its primary focus on the outcome, which is high battle-related casualties. The main task is to reverse-engineer this outcome to identify the most convincing set of causal events that led up to it (p. 169). Therefore, after mapping out the



empirical data, the paper will focus on tracking the emerging parts of a mechanism that can be observed in action within the case. At this instance, following table 2, those emerging parts will be arranged into a sequence, forming a “plausible causal mechanism” (p. 168). The remainder of the analysis will be dedicated to evaluating the proposed mechanism through its parts, specifically on their respective collective sufficiency, redundancy and systematic status.

### Data

The data that will be used for the analysis are derived from a multitude of academic entries which focus both on providing factual evidence on the Greek civil war but also in analysing this information to gain insight into the conflict. In a landmark study, Marantzidis and Antoniou take account of a large collection of literature to pinpoint the importance of ethnic identities in the study of post-WW2 Greece that has been largely overlooked (Marantzidis & Antoniou, 2004, p. 223). On his later individual study, Marantzidis focuses specifically on the strong impact of external actors in the conflict, providing quantitative data on the precise support given to both sides of the conflict, namely the communist “Democratic Army” and the “internationally recognized Greek government” (Marantzidis, 2013, p. 50). Following this strongly evaluative analytical posture, Sakkas juxtaposes old and new interpretations of the war to illustrate the importance of missing indicators of conflict intensity such as class and ideology (Sakkas, 2013, p. 8). Pappa’s article’s contribution also targets the causes of the conflict and presents alternative explanations revolving around not only the foreign involvement but also the local elites (Pappas, 2012, p. 1). Iatrides, on a more focused study, reports and deconstructs the communist goals and tactics to conclude that their miscalculations, relating

to misplaced trust on external communist patrons, played a key role in the intensity of the war (Iatrides, 2005). Notably, this “foreign support gambling” crucially links back to Kaplan’s article on the Iraqi-Kurdish struggle, showcasing the academic relevance and timeless conclusions that can be drawn from the Greek civil war (Kaplan, 2020). In his later study with Rizopoulos, Iatrides takes a step back to account for the international dimensions of the war as a whole. They underline the effect of Western involvement both through its devastating war-time influence but also through the post-war stability that they arguably generated (Iatrides & Rizopoulos, 2000, p. 100). Siani-Davies and Katsikas look closer into the aftermath of the war to show the internal grievances that amplified the conflict beyond the influence of foreign powers (Siani-Davies & Katsikas, 2009, p. 560). Nachmani too, presents a similarly broad historiographic account of the foreign interventions of the war to also account for the diplomatic forces behind Moscow and Washington’s involvement (Nachmani, 1990, p. 560). Finally, regarding the impact and protraction of the war that characterizes the focus of this paper, two particular works bear substantial explanatory value. First, Plakoudas conducts a diplomatic analysis based on the collapsed peace negotiations and the impact of external actors (Plakoudas, 2016, p. 135). Second, Christodoulakis presents the casualties of the war in a more pragmatic quantitative study, also with reference to other wars of that period, allowing this paper to track more closely the effect of foreign involvement in those deaths (Christodoulakis, 2015, p. 33). This plethora of multivariate factual and analytical sources will constitute the bulk of the empirical data to be deconstructed in the analysis. Studying them closely will contribute to tracking the empirical manifestations of the parts that will eventually make up the most convincing or “minimally sufficient” causal mechanism connecting foreign interventions and war-related casualties in the Greek civil war of 1946.

## **Analysis**

### Empirical Narrative

The Greek civil war officially began in 1946, in the immediate aftermath of WW2, for political control over the now free Greek state (Plakoudas, 2016, p. 136). On one side, the re-instated, internationally acknowledged Greek government, based in Athens, aimed to stabilize its rule over the country while on the other, the communist partisans, labelled the “Democratic Army”, refused to give up the control they had secured through their war-time activity. Lasting until 1949, the conflict claimed the lives of 150,000 people through brutal warfare and atrocities (Lengel, 2020).

International influence over the political setting of the conflict can be traced back to the very beginning of the hostilities. The new official Greek government under Prime Minister George Papandreou was placed in power with the full support of the United Kingdom, which was fanatically opposing the spread of communism and Soviet influence (Iatrides & Rizopoulos, 2000, p. 88). The formation of this government was immediately followed by a demand for disarmament of the “ELAS” communist resistance (Sakkas, 2013, p. 2). ELAS and its supporters responded with an extensive demonstration in the streets of Athens in December 1944 which was brutally suppressed by national and British troops through gunfire, leaving many dead. During those historically titled “December events”, British troops were reportedly ordered to treat Athens as a “city under siege”, referring to the protesters that were opposing Churchill’s agenda (Pappas, 2012, p. 6). Stalin was officially neutral to the matter (Iatrides & Rizopoulos, 2000, p. 97). Later, through the Yalta Conference, the Soviet Union recognized Greece as being under the British sphere of influence. They had been already directly restructuring the local political scene. At the same time, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) agreed to surrender its

weapons through the Treaty of Varkiza. It is crucial to note that the United States, until that point in time, were not supportive of British involvement, viewing it as intrusive and destabilizing, contrary to its foreign policy that was in favour of anti-Nazi military groups such as ELAS (Iatrides & Rizopoulos, 2000, p. 94). Simultaneously, Stalin was cautious following the arrangements made at Yalta and publicly discouraged a communist uprising in Greece, which other communist leaders such as Tito could not fully resonate with (p. 94). The British were essentially alone, acting largely free from US-Soviet direct influence. The political scene was still unstable yet, following the Varkiza agreement, showing faint prospects of appeasement.

This situation changed with the start of the Cold War, which permanently characterised the practical manifestations and legacy of the conflict (Siani-Davies & Katsikas, 2009). From the very beginning, Harry S. Truman's presidency saw Roosevelt's policy of "accommodation" towards the Soviet Union give ground to suspicion, geopolitical rifts and later aggression. Once it was clear that the ideological gap between the US and the Soviet Union would bear practical consequences to the cause, a suppressed and contained ELAS turned once again to Stalin for help (Iatrides, 2005, p. 11). They resumed fighting with the national army (GNA) in 1946, under the direction of the communist party leader Zachariades, by attacking the police station of Lithoro the night before the March elections, marking the official start of the "main civil war" (Nachmani, 1990, p. 494). Stalin was still reluctant to provide direct support but, importantly, neighbouring communist regimes were not. Most notably, Yugoslavia under President Tito accommodated the re-organization of Greek communists in Belgrade. With funding and weapons, they were able to officially announce the creation of the "Democratic Army" (DSE) in October 1946 (Marantzidis, 2013, p. 30). By 1947, DSE had the capacity to alter its initial guerrilla tactics and conduct conventional warfare in an attempt to fulfil its

ambition of controlling Northern Greece. On the GNA's side, 1947 saw the UK largely reduce its support due to its unsustainable financial commitment in the war. That role was overtaken by the United States with the newly active "Truman Doctrine" (Christodoulakis, 2015, p. 9). Extensive financial and military support, both of an advisory and material nature, was offered by the US, with the technologically advanced "napalm" bomb, being used to devastating effect (Nachmani, 1990, p. 509). This empowerment of the GNA, coupled with the end of Yugoslavian support towards the DSE, led to the ending phase of the war (p. 512). In August 1949, general Papagos launched the operation "Pyrros", which was a major success, with the battle of Grammos effectively marking the end of the civil war through the defeat of the DSE and its retreat out of the country.

### Empirical Manifestations

Reflecting on the empirical narrative that encompasses relevant key events of the war, reaching an answer to the research question requires first to identify the empirical manifestations of potential "parts" of a mechanism. Linking back to the outcome of the causal process, high conflict-related casualties can be operationalized, first, through protraction of the war and, second, through its severity.

With those two indicators in mind, the British involvement and active intervention, from the December Incidents through the rest of the war, is proven to have contributed significantly to the resulting death-toll (Iatrides & Rizopoulos, 2000 p. 87.). Their initial interference was motivated by their desire to actively control and shape the composition of the government in service of their regional policy (p. 95). This aspect relates most notably to the indicator of "severity" and is going to be labelled "structural interference" while

being treated as a potential part of the mechanism. An academic link can also be observed here in connection to Lacina's conceptual differentiation between conflict onset and its duration (Lacina, p. 2006). Specifically, despite the internal power struggle, the deaths at the 1944 protests were instrumental in creating initiative for ELAS to mobilize, characterising the British as de-facto conflict-escalators.

Taking a step back, it can also be observed that, despite the local character of the conflict, tensions appear to have taken place within the context of the political divisions of the broader civil war (Iatrides & Rizopoulos, 2000, p. 96). Namely, the DSE leaders were acting in service to the international communist system, securing external support. Similarly, the GNA was opposing that initiative through British and US support to contain this "threat". Therefore, the political division between the belligerents spanned along the lines of a broader geopolitical clash, fuelling both sides' efforts and preventing them from making concessions. This part will be labelled as "ideological cleavage".

Beyond the tensions brought upon the conflict by that cleavage, the attitude of the United States caused particular distrust and suspicion to the communists who were unable to envision any lower-risk strategies besides open war (Plakoudas, 2016, p. 135). Through Roosevelt's policy of accommodation and with the Varkiza agreement in effect, it seemed that an open military uprising was not mandatory. With Truman's shift in foreign policy however, communism was openly portrayed as a threat, a move that was followed with an assurance of getting involved in Greece and subsequent military support. This shift in strategic objectives by the US showed the DSE that the government and its allies cannot be trusted or bargained with, leading to a de-facto "self-defence" battle for survival (Iatrides, 2005, p. 20). This polarizing event can be labelled as "strategic inconsistency", intensifying diplomatic relations and causing distrust to the opposing side.

Regarding the Soviet Union, Stalin's lack of a clear answer to DSE's pledges for help significantly contributed to the ferocity of the conflict. Moscow refused direct support, regarding their efforts as "undisciplined adventures" (Sakkas, 2013, p. 3). KKE interpreted this as an indication that if the tactical picture in the country changes, the Soviet Union would be more willing to assist in hopes of benefiting from a winning cause. This logic significantly contributed to the DSE's ambitious move to switch from guerrilla tactics to conventional warfare. This "foreign support gambling" as well as the effect of unclear Soviet intentions can be labelled as "ambiguity". The existence of a part of a mechanism here can be traced to Kaplan's article on how the hopes of international support fuelled Iraqi Kurds' ambitious initiatives for independence (Kaplan, 2020).

On a more practical side, the advanced weaponry provided by the government's allies clearly changed the tactical picture of the war. Heavy machine-guns, air-support and bombs were deployed to defeat the DSE. However, when ideological drive and total mistrust for the opposing side was in full effect, the communist fighters chose to fight to the death instead of surrendering (Plakoudas, 2016, p. 140). This way, even if they contributed to ending the war sooner, such hardware certainly increased casualties, leading to the studied outcome. The label on this event is "material commitment".

Finally, when studying foreign interventions, it is important to consider the objective of the external actors. The UK, and later the US, did not intervene in support of a politically stable Greece but in peril of a potential communist regime. This directed their efforts towards eradicating the DSE instead of reconciliation and sustainability (Plakoudas, 2016, p. 159). This part can be labelled as "war-prone intent".

## Causal Mechanism

This section proposes the minimally sufficient mechanism which explains the outcome of high conflict-related casualties due to foreign interventions in the Greek civil war. Evaluating the indicators provided by the studied empirical manifestations, “structural interference” constitutes an evidently crucial first part of the mechanism. The UK’s pre-WW2 allied stance towards Greece gave way to direct British involvement in establishing a government that would facilitate its foreign policy goals in the Mediterranean (Iatrides & Rizopoulos, 2000, p. 87). This involvement, fuels the already-existing “ideological cleavage” that divided the country, leading to its acceptance as a relevant part. However, even though “strategic inconsistency” in terms of the unsynchronized allied response manifests itself clearly in the KKE’s mistrust towards the West, there is little evidence that it played a significant causal role in an already terminally tense political situation (Iatrides, 2005, p. 5). The same can be argued for “ambiguity”. The KKE did seem to pursue large strategic goals and costly campaigns in hope of securing direct Soviet assistance but, according to recent historical evidence, they were fully aware that such a scenario was unlikely (Iatrides, 2005, p. 22). This part also seems largely irrelevant to any mechanism. Therefore, causal linkages need to be traced back to the second part of “ideological cleavage”. Its increased implications, led to the involvement of Yugoslavia and most importantly, the United States that entered the war fully prepared to counter the opposition rather than mitigate the war’s destructive effects. With “war-prone intent” accepted as part of the mechanism, the part of “material commitment” follows suit and provides a plausible link to high casualties. Table 3 provides an illustration of the resulting mechanism in both its empirical and theoretical spectrum.



	<b>X</b>	<b>CAUSAL MECHANISM</b>				<b>OUTCOME</b>
<b>NON-SYSTEMATIC</b> <b>(Empirical)</b>	UK intervention in the Greek Civil War (1946-1949)	UK provides significant support to the government . Balance of power changes.	Communist guerrillas turn to allies for help, believing this is a war for survival. The DSE is formed, with ambitious plans.	The US joins the war in the context of the Truman Doctrine. The goal is to prevent the spread of communism at any cost. The DSE fights for survival.	The DSE with the support of Yugoslavia and the government with the support of the US, engage in conventional warfare.	Casualties amounting to 150,000. Deadliest manifestation of the Cold War in Europe (Marantzidis, 2013, p. 25).
<b>SYSTEMATIC</b> <b>(Theoretical)</b>	Foreign Intervention	Structural Interference	Ideological Cleavage	War-prone intent	Material commitment	High conflict-related casualties

Table 3: Systemic and non-systemic causal mechanism of foreign interventions and casualties of the Greek civil war

Describing the mechanism, the initial intent to become actively involved in the conflict and control its outcome, shapes the nature of the intervention from the start. Then, the socio-political polarization that the British generated within the country led the communist party to turn for help to its external sympathizers. This development secured material gains for the communist effort but simultaneously guaranteed an American response. The United States were given clear incentives to get involved, seeing its foreign policy being threatened by a potentially communist Greece. The two sides were pinned down against each other, with external forces relying on the outcome. In this battle for political survival, both sides decided to engage in direct warfare without any concessions. Death-toll therefore rose.

## Evaluation

Having identified a minimally sufficient explanation for the relevant outcome, it is important to evaluate the strength of the elements that produce that explanation. As indicated in the “methodology” section, this process can be conducted through the lenses of collective sufficiency, potential redundancy and systematic status (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 168). Replicability in research will also be assessed.

In terms of collective sufficiency, this indicator evaluates whether the parts that constitute the process, only work together as a mechanism and not individually. First, structural interference is a factor whose impact depends on intent and foreign-policy goals. As Regan and Aydin underline, with the goal of mitigation at the centre, interventions can achieve a quicker resolution to the conflict (Regan & Aydin, 2006, p. 754). In the case of Greece however, the political nature of the rivalry between belligerents caused the initial British intervention to intensify the effect of the ideological cleavage, leading both sides to develop high-risk competitive tendencies, marked as “war-prone intent”. That intent cannot manifest itself without the capacity to exercise it through material means, which at the time were available to both sides through their external patrons. This demonstrates how all parts of the mechanism create a convincing process only by interacting with each other. Such a straight-forward sequence of events strictly controls for redundant elements. As demonstrated by the rejection of “strategic inconsistency” and “ambiguity” as reliable theoretical parts, one could argue that the high casualties of the Greek civil war were a result of changes in the power equilibrium. Therefore, in short, the intervention of the UK, caused the communist mobilization, which led to US involvement and then to open war. By extension, it can therefore be argued that no additional casualties could have been produced without the interaction of all those factors.

Systematic mechanisms are more appropriate for more theory-centric approaches to process-tracing such as theory-testing and theory-building. Yet, since this paper aims to produce broader conclusions, it is a factor to be accounted for. Structural interference is a necessary pre-condition for the majority of conventional interventions to lead to observable results in the battlefield, solidifying its systematic status. The same however cannot be argued about “ideological cleavage”. This is because the way in which political dichotomies unfolded in the war are largely unique to the Greek case and the time period following WW2 (Pappas, 2012, p. 2). Hence, when applying the mechanism in further empirical research, this paper proposes that the “ideological cleavage” part should be fitted to the particular dichotomy that divides the belligerents and is intensified by foreign involvement. For example, a civil war cleavage could alternatively be territorial, economic, social or ethnic. War-prone intent is a necessary element that decides the direction of the conflict. Finally, conceptualising “material involvement” as a multilateral effort that can include military, financial and diplomatic effects towards a win on the battlefield, also suggest a systematic factor. Treating the resulting mechanism under the aforementioned guidelines make it replicable and worthy of application in further civil-war research since the balance-of-power dynamics it encompasses are present in most conflict (Findley & Marineau, 2014, p. 467).

Finally, when comparing the proposed mechanism to the one emerging from the literature review, illustrated in Table 1, it can be noted that the first and last parts are similar. This indicates that in most cases, the direct aftermath of most interventions is that the external force surpasses its diplomatic role to attempt to unilaterally alter events. Simultaneously, the direct precursor of deaths is material investment. However, table 1 and table 3 differ on how those factors are connected. The academic model features war duration and diplomatic complications as connecting pieces. However, the Greek case

demonstrates that war protraction in itself is not a sufficient part as it does not explain internal dynamics. Intensity of cleavages, which in the Greek case were ideological, do account for the cause of escalation. Then, instead of looking at why wars do not stop, such as Lockyer's diplomatic complexity factor, the new model accounts for why they do continue, meaning war-prone intent. Applied at the macro-level, the new model would therefore combine traditional realist approaches with constructivist theories of perception.

## **Conclusion**

Today, civil wars constitute the most common form of warfare. Their rigorous study is crucial to understanding the dynamics that encompass them so that their destructive effects can be mitigated. This paper has focused on the connection between foreign interventions and conflict-related casualties. Following a broad academic account of the existing literature, and the empirical narrative around the studied case of the Greek civil war, a convincing causal connection is being proposed.

This paper concludes that foreign interventions lead to casualties through a combination of realist power-centric and constructivist perception-centric dynamics at constant interplay. Directly answering the research question, foreign interventions affect conflict-related casualties through structural involvement, intensified socio-political cleavages, war-prone intent and material means. This amount of tension and additional military hardware, utilised with non-mitigating goals, leads to increased casualties.

Implications of the paper revolve around its main strength of versatility. First, the explanation encompasses both diplomatic elements as well as realist, power-centric ones before arriving at the conclusion. This means that the paper has controlled for a multitude

of influences that could have skewed the analysis towards a wrong direction. Second, as shown in table 3, the resulting mechanism includes both systematic and non-systematic factors. This means that the results are potentially accurate both for Greece and for broader academic endeavours. Additionally, despite the aim of this paper to escape power-centric approaches to conflict and explore deeper dynamics, it seems that they are in fact useful in explaining war-related outcomes. They can be rather expanded upon through the use of alternative indicators such as intent, which the mechanism promotes.

On areas of potential improvement, this analysis of the Greek civil war does not account for exact allied allocation of resources towards any side. More specifically, the degree of financial impact of the intervening powers requires more analytical depth. This is important because being aware of the material capacities of both sides in key instances would have allowed for a clearer picture behind the incentives of the relevant actors. Therefore, the first recommendation for further research would include conducting an investigation on the logistical capacity of both sides. The second recommendation, given that explaining-outcome process-tracing is overall case-specific, suggests testing the proposed mechanism on other cases of civil war. Researching the degree to which the resulting mechanism of table 3 is applicable to interpret similar outcomes in other civil wars is crucial to establishing its broader academic implications and potential to inform policy. With the rise of globalisation and increasing technological innovations, the global political scene is being rapidly changed to unpredictable effect. However, understanding the processes which describe politics at its darkest hour, ensures that we can reliably control for it in the future.

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