

# Violent Origins and Authoritarian Order: Divergent Trajectories after Successful Rebellions

Killian Clarke\*

Anne Meng<sup>†</sup>

Jack Paine<sup>‡</sup>

December 6, 2023

## Abstract

What types of political order emerge from successful armed rebellions? Recent research argues that regimes with origins in violent rebellion are exceptionally durable and autocratic. However, scholarship on civil wars emphasizes the difficulty of reestablishing order and building regimes following rebel victory. Using original data on all 81 regimes founded by successful rebellion worldwide between 1900 and 2020, we demonstrate that rebel regimes follow divergent trajectories: many are either very long-lived (20+ years) or very short-lived (<5 years). These divergent trajectories can be explained by prospects for effective power-sharing following different types of rebellions. Unified rebellions (involving a single rebel group) produce durable regimes because they must share power only among their own loyal members. By contrast, fractured rebellions (involving multiple groups) must attempt to share power across rivals, generating short-lived regimes that often succumb to subsequent rebellions or state collapse. Other common explanations in the literature (e.g., ideology, social revolution, war duration, deaths) are not associated with these divergent trajectories.

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\* Assistant Professor, Georgetown University, [Killian.Clarke@georgetown.edu](mailto:Killian.Clarke@georgetown.edu)

<sup>†</sup> Associate Professor, University of Virginia, [ameng@virginia.edu](mailto:ameng@virginia.edu)

<sup>‡</sup> Associate Professor, Emory University, [jackpaine@emory.edu](mailto:jackpaine@emory.edu)