The Narrowing Path: Rebel Leader Exile in the Age of Accountability

Myung Jung Kim

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Word Count: 9,851 Words

Abstract

This paper examines an overlooked yet important outcome of the international justice regime on civil war: rebel leaders going into exile. Utilizing an original dataset detailing the exile trajectories of rebel leaders (1989-2017), including when and where they flee, the study reveals two key findings. First, as a rebel's home government becomes more susceptible to the international legal regime, rebel leaders implicated in serious human rights violations are more likely to seek exile. Second, the international justice regime shrinks the options for exile for these culpable rebel leaders: unlike in previous eras, now, when pursuing asylum, rebel leaders strategically select destinations with a lower likelihood of legal repercussions—leaving fewer options for their safe haven. These findings have critical implications for the literature on civil war, international law, and how law enforcement affects the migration patterns of implicated political leaders.

1

1 Introduction

The contemporary human rights movement is defined by combating impunity, ensuring that perpetrators of severe human rights violations are held accountable. This imperative has become a cornerstone of global justice, epitomized by the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the recent expansion of universal jurisdiction (Langer 2015; Langer and Eason 2019)[1]. Nevertheless, this shift has exacted a price on the prospects for peace, increasingly restricting the option of amnesty—a controversial yet sometimes necessary compromise for conflict settlement. This paper examines the consequences of these international legal developments, focusing on an underexplored yet significant phenomenon in civil conflicts: the exile of rebel leaders.

While there has been a growing body of research on the exile of *state* leaders and its impact on political violence and stability (Krcmaric 2018; Escribà-Folch and Krcmaric 2017; Krcmaric and Escribà-Folch 2022), the exile of *rebel* leaders yet remains an underexplored phenomenon.[2] Such oversight is critical as the exile of rebel leaders is prevalent and often carries serious, and perhaps even broader, implications for peace. For instance, the exile of Foday Sankoh, leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) from Sierra Leone, in Liberia during the 1990s significantly strained diplomatic relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia. His presence also contributed to the conditions leading to the Second Liberian Civil War (1999-2003). Given the profound implications of rebel leader exile on civil wars and regional stability, this paper seeks to address the following questions: How does international law influence which rebel leaders opt for exile, and where do they choose to go?

My argument begins with an observation about contemporary global politics: rebel leaders now face increased challenges in evading punishment for serious human rights

---

[1]Universal jurisdiction is an international legal principle that allows any country to investigate and prosecute the most egregious human rights violators, regardless of where the crimes were committed or the nationality of the perpetrators. It emerged as a critical mechanism to bridge the impunity gap.

[2]ROLE dataset Acosta et al. (2023) is the first effort in the literature that examines rebel leaders' exile but it focuses on rebel leaders' exile before the conflict.

violations, both within their own countries and internationally. Domestically, culpable rebel leaders have become more vulnerable as international norms against impunity increasingly challenge the provision of domestic amnesty for serious crimes. This constrains warlords' options for negotiating amnesty, thereby making exile a more appealing option. Internationally, these leaders also face greater risks as foreign courts and the ICC have expanded their capacities for cross-border justice. This results in rebel leaders prioritizing locations with a reduced risk of arrest and prosecution by international and foreign courts exercising universal jurisdiction, leading to a narrower array of countries as potential safe havens in today's era. In sum, the theory posits that stricter enforcement of the international justice regime within a rebel leader's home country incentivizes the search for exile, and stricter enforcement of potential host countries makes it a less appealing destination for exile.

I test these claims using an original dataset on rebel leaders' exile (1989-2017). To examine the extent to which states are constrained by international legal principles designed to prosecute egregious violations of international law, I focus on two pivotal mechanisms through which international justice exerts influence: 1) the degree to which a state adheres to international legal mandates to eliminate impunity for international crimes, and 2) the direct intervention of the ICC. The results from the statistical analysis provide robust evidence supporting the theoretical expectations.

This paper offers novel theoretical and empirical contributions to various strands of literature in International Relations, primarily addressing studies on states' international legal commitments, the deterrence effects of international legal institutions, and their impact on civil conflict (Prorok 2017; Krcmaric 2020; Ginsburg 2009). Additionally, it contributes to the literature on transborder civil wars (Salehyan 2009; Christia 2012; Salehyan 2008; 2010; Stewart and Liou 2017), and it engages with the emerging body of work concerning the role of leaders—particularly rebel leaders (Huang et al. 2022; Huang and Sullivan 2021; Prorok 2016).

2 Literature Review

Although the exile of rebel leaders has not been extensively examined in existing literature, it remains a prevalent phenomenon in the history of civil wars. Indeed, this topic closely aligns with two distinct yet growing research agendas: the debate on peace vs. justice and the study of rebels' transborder operations in foreign sanctuaries.

Building upon the foundational research on the impact of international treaties on human rights practices (Donnelly 1986; Hathaway 2002; Dai 2007; Simmons 2009a; Sikkink 2011), more recent studies have expanded the scope of inquiry to explore how these international legal developments influence the behavior of armed actors, affect conflict processes, and ultimately shape war outcomes (Goldsmith and Krasner 2003; Snyder and Vinjamuri 2003; Ginsburg 2009; Prorok 2017; Krcmaric 2018; 2020).

The main theme of this strand of literature has been centered around the "peace versus justice" debate.[3] This debate centers around whether international criminal justice norms and legal practices hinder the pursuit of peace by tying states' hands.

Many studies examine how states' ratification of the ICC Rome Statute binds their hands and affects civil war dynamics. Although some scholars argue that international justice deters atrocities (Akhavan 2001; Simmons 2009b; Helfer et al. 2011; Kim and Sikkink 2010; Jo and Simmons 2016), others contend that legal accountability complicates peace bargaining process with rebel groups (Snyder and Vinjamuri 2003; Ginsburg 2009; Prorok 2017). By making the ICC capable of prosecuting war criminals on their behalf or by promising to cooperate with the Court in pursuing justice, they argue that it makes rebel leaders reluctant to come to the negotiating table or complicates bargaining by making amnesty promises less credible. As a result, it hinders the interest of peace by prolonging conflict and worsening human rights conditions. Beyond simply extending the duration of conflicts, Prorok (2017) finds that it complicates peace bargaining because international

---

[3]This debate is rooted in the binding-hands theory from human rights treaties literature, which suggests that states, by ratifying human rights treaties, voluntarily restrict their behavior to conform to international norms and expectations (Hathaway 2007; Dai 2006).

criminal justice changes war dynamics by incentivizing rebel leaders to fight harder to "gamble of resurrection."

Despite the extensive literature on the peace versus justice debate, there remains a significant gap: when faced with the risk of punishment, rebel leaders have another option besides intensifying their fight—going into exile. In fact, rebel groups are usually significantly weaker than state forces, making it reasonable to suspect that rebels may choose to flee rather than take the risk to fight harder. Nonetheless, the peace versus justice literature has long neglected this scenario, leading to insufficient explanations for some of the phenomena we witness in today's civil wars, such as why some rebel leaders choose to flee abroad.

This overlooked aspect of rebel leader exile has been indirectly addressed within a related, but seemingly disconnected area of research: rebels' transborder operations in civil wars (Salehyan 2007; 2009) and relatedly, the external sponsorship literature (Salehyan 2010; San-Akca 2016; Salehyan et al. 2011; Stein 2022; Qiu 2022; Meier et al. 2023). Prior studies indicate that approximately 35 to 55 percent of rebel activities are cross-border, often with external sponsors providing safe havens (Cunningham et al. 2013). The exile of such leaders often functions as a critical mechanism within these operations, extending conflicts beyond national borders.

Documented instances indicate that the exile of rebel leaders can influence the leadership structures of rebel groups, their operational spheres, outcomes of civil wars, and the dynamics between the rebels' home and host states. For example, Laurent Nkunda, the former leader of the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) in the Congo, fled to Rwanda after failed negotiations, resulting in a leadership change within the CNDP and a significant reduction in its activities. Conversely, exiled rebel leaders often continue to direct their organizations from afar, which enables them to prolong conflict with lower costs and reduced risks. For example, Afghan rebel leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Chadian rebel leader Erdimi both maintained prolonged remote leadership during their

respective exiles, lasting for 22 and 17 years. In extreme cases, the presence of exiled rebel leaders can incite violence in host countries, as exemplified by Yasser Arafat's tenure in Jordan and Lebanon, which triggered military conflicts with the Jordanian government and prompted Israel's invasion of Lebanon. These instances illustrate that the exile of rebel leaders is not merely an isolated phenomenon but a crucial factor that profoundly influences the dynamics of civil wars and interstate violence.

3   Exile of Rebel Leaders

Exile is defined as a period of forced or voluntary absence from one's country of birth (Binningsbø et al. 2012). Exile has historically served as a strategic tool for political actors seeking to evade punitive measures. The limited reach of state legal jurisdictions across borders complicates a home state's ability to prosecute or punish individuals once they have crossed into another country. Consequently, exile allows political actors to circumvent domestic reprisal or buy time until the threats from the home country subside (Krcmaric 2018).

Rebel leaders, subject to severe potential state repercussions including torture, legal prosecution, and extrajudicial executions, consistently seek to avoid such dire outcomes (Prorok 2016; 2017). Consequently, numerous rebel leaders have resorted to exile through-out history [4] Although research on rebel leader exile is scant, existing studies on *state leader* exile provide valuable insights. These studies reveal that international criminal tribunals now pose a significant threat of prosecution abroad for state leaders implicated in mass atrocities, thereby restricting their exile options. (Krcmaric 2018). As secure retirement becomes uncertain, such leaders may increasingly cling to power (Krcmaric 2020). Given that international criminal justice more aggressively targets rebel leaders (Ginsburg 2009), it is likely that their exile decisions are similarly influenced by international law.

---

[4]My data indicates that approximately 23%, or 101 out of 439 rebel leaders, have experienced exile at least once (for more details, see Appendix).

Nevertheless, a critical distinction exists between the exile experiences of rebel and state leaders: whereas incumbent state leaders are primarily concerned with international prosecution, rebel leaders also face significant legal risks domestically. For state leaders, the decision of 'should I stay or should I go' is mainly influenced by the risk of prosecution abroad. In contrast, for rebel leaders, this decision predominantly hinges on the domestic threat level. While external risks are relevant, the overwhelming internal dangers sometimes necessitate fleeing abroad. This distinction highlights the necessity of assessing how international law affects the domestic legal risks faced by rebel leaders when studying their exile decisions.

4 Should I Stay or Should I Go?

4.1 Culpable Rebel Leaders: Room to Negotiate Impunity and Exile

Interestingly, the impetus for exile hinges on the probability of facing domestic punishment; without this threat, the rationale for fleeing diminishes.

Amnesty often serves as a mechanism for rebels to avoid domestic repercussions. These legal provisions are specifically tailored to nullify the threat and consequences of criminal liability for designated individuals or groups (Freeman 2009). By mitigating rebels' fears of arrest and prosecution, amnesties facilitate peaceful negotiations and encourage disarmament and demobilization (Mason et al. 1999; Daniels 2020a). As such, the availability of amnesty significantly reduces the likelihood of domestic punishment, diminishing the incentive to flee abroad.

Over the last two decades, there has been a growing consensus against impunity for serious crimes against international law, imposing stronger obligations on states to prosecute international crimes and resulting in a global increase in human rights trials (Kim and Sikkink 2010).[5] This development has also curtailed states' discretionary power

---

[5]These crimes, also called as international crimes are grave offenses that significantly impact the interna-

to grant amnesty for serious crimes (Freeman 2009; Goldsmith and Krasner 2003; Snyder and Vinjamuri 2003; Ginsburg 2009).

While it may seem logically evident, international legal restrictions on amnesty specifically target individuals culpable for serious crimes. In this context, 'culpable individuals' refers to those alleged to have committed such offenses, even if they have not been formally adjudicated as guilty. Not all rebel groups engage in the same kinds of actions or are equally culpable for atrocities. Although some rebel groups and their leaders are implicated in human rights abuses, others may have focused more on legitimate political or national liberation goals. As Jo (2015) documents, some rebel groups even consciously adhere to international legal standards, avoiding actions such as intentional civilian killings, kidnappings, child recruitment, or sexual violence during conflicts. Consequently, rebel groups with clean records of human rights violations would not face restrictions under international legal provisions for amnesty.

Conversely, notorious rebel groups that were engaged in widespread, systematic human rights abuses, even if they have not yet faced trial, may face significant barriers in obtaining amnesty to absolve them of the serious crimes with which they are implicated. In this context, I argue that today's evolving international legal landscape increasingly complicates the negotiation of amnesty for serious crimes for culpable rebel leaders thereby increasing the incentives for rebel leaders to seek exile.

4.2 (Uneven) State's Susceptibility to the International Justice Regime

The impact of international law on state discretion in granting amnesty varies significantly by country. Some states are more susceptible to international norms, while others are less influenced by them. As the home state becomes increasingly susceptible to the international

---

tional community including genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Governed by the ICC Rome Statute, the Geneva Conventions, and customary international law, these crimes are typically prosecuted by international courts such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) or national courts under universal jurisdiction.

justice regime, its discretionary power to negotiate impunity options with rebels is expected to be undermined. This compels rebel leaders responsible for international crimes to seek exile more frequently.

I propose two distinct mechanisms that increase states' susceptibility to international justice regimes, complicating the amnesty options for their rebels: (1) a state's voluntary legal commitment to international justice, assessed through the domestic incorporation of international laws and the extent of international treaty ratification that obligates countries to prosecute serious crimes; and (2) intervention by the International Criminal Court (ICC), which is known to undermine the effectiveness of amnesty provisions (Ginsburg 2009; Prorok 2017). These mechanisms reflect contrasting national characteristics: the first indicates a state's adherence to international law, while the second signals a failure to comply, resulting in ICC intervention. Existing research often examines these factors in isolation but they collectively influence a state's practices regarding impunity.

4.2.1   State's Voluntary Commitment to International Justice

The international justice regime's impact can first be exerted through a voluntary legal commitment to international justice by a given state. This mechanism hinges on a state's compliance with international justice norms and laws, which decreases the likelihood of impunity for serious crimes. A state's legal commitment to international justice can be largely demonstrated by 1) domestic law that incorporates anti-impunity principles for serious crimes and 2) ratifying international treaties that mandate the punishment of international crimes.[6]

These institutional commitments pose significant challenges for state actors attempting to facilitate amnesty or other forms of impunity for serious crimes. Even if amnesty is initially promised, its implementation may be impeded when the state is legally obligated

---

[6]Another method includes exercising universal jurisdiction to prosecute international crimes that occurred elsewhere. Nevertheless, as this study focuses on the granting of amnesty to rebel actors who committed crimes within the country, the first two mechanisms—domestic law and international treaty ratification—are most relevant in assessing the state's capacity to negotiate impunity with rebel groups.

to adhere to its commitments. For example, the Supreme Court in Nepal struck down a request for amnesty by Maoist rebels in 2015, citing alignment with international legal standards to which Nepal is bound. Similarly, domestic courts in Sierra Leone and Argentina have invalidated previously granted amnesties for those responsible for serious human rights abuses. In addition, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has overturned amnesty laws that obstructed human rights trials in Peru and elsewhere. Such legal constraints, which respect international legal norms, diminish the leverage that rebel leaders can negotiate for impunity and consequently increase their likelihood of considering exile. Although fleeing does not guarantee safety, the heightened risk of prosecution within their home country drives rebels to seek alternatives abroad.

Hypothesis 1a: As domestic law mandates punishment for international crimes, rebel leaders responsible for international crimes are more likely to go into exile.

Hypothesis 1b: As states ratify more international treaties mandating punishment for international crimes, rebel leaders responsible for international crimes are more likely to go into exile.

4.2.2 ICC Intervention

The second mechanism through which the international justice regime influences a country is ICC intervention. The Rome Statute, the treaty establishing the ICC, for the first time in the history of international law, explicitly states that "immunities" or special procedural rules, such as amnesties, do not impede the pursuit of justice (International Criminal Court 1998; Jeffery 2014, Article 27(2)).

Under this provision, the ICC may initiate investigations into crimes in countries deemed "unwilling" or "incapable" of independently administering justice, even in the presence of an amnesty agreement. Such involvement by the ICC influences peace processes (Ginsburg 2009; Goldsmith and Krasner 2003; Simmons and Danner 2010; Prorok 2017). For example, during peace negotiations between the Ugandan government and

10

the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in 2006, the ICC issued arrest warrants targeting the commanders of LRA, and it complicated the peace deal and ultimately led to the failure of the talks. Joseph Kony, the leader of the LRA, is known to have fled the country and still remains at large.[7]

The scope of ICC activities extends from preliminary examinations to comprehensive investigations, issuance of arrest warrants, conduct of hearings, and completion of trials, culminating in verdicts and sentencing. In the preliminary examinations, the ICC assesses information and allegations to determine whether a situation meets the criteria to justify an investigation. Once it suggests that crimes within the jurisdiction of the ICC have occurred, its Prosecutor formally gathers evidence. Investigations encompass entire situations within a territory, addressing not only specific individuals or factions but all crimes committed therein. Early actions by the ICC may appear less intimidating to rebel actors than later stages, as the likelihood and immediacy of punishment increase as proceedings progress (Prorok 2017).

During these processes, governments may intervene to reduce ICC involvement through various measures such as initiating domestic investigations against targeted individuals. Therefore, intensified ICC activity may indicate a government's unwillingness or inability to address these issues, possibly because of overwhelming international pressure as the stakes rise. Consequently, rebels in such contexts are less likely to receive amnesty for serious crimes. Kony's case exemplifies this scenario again. Reports indicate that Kony consulted his lawyers to understand the risks associated with the ICC, ultimately abandoning negotiation talks upon realizing that an amnesty would not shield him from ICC prosecutions.

When the ICC issues an arrest warrant and it becomes publicly unsealed, the designated target becomes apparent. Even though one might assume that those not specifically targeted would feel secure, this is often not the reality. The ICC's rigorous pursuit of one

---

[7]According to the statements from former child soldiers of the LRA, Joseph Kony is currently hiding in the Darfur region of Sudan (Deutsche Welle 2022)

rebel leader suggests an elevated threat of prosecution for other leaders, as it indicates a broader investigative focus.

Such a dynamic is exemplified by the situation involving Nkunda, leader of the Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In April 2008, following the disclosure of an ICC arrest warrant against Bosco Ntaganda of another Congolese group, the Forces Patriotiques pour la Libération du Congo (FPLC), Nkunda expressed his distrust in President Joseph Kabila's government and its amnesty promises. His declaration highlighted the rebels' concerns that amnesty offers no reliable protection against future arrests. The subsequent collapse of the peace accord in July and December 2008 led to Nkunda's flight to Rwanda in January 2009.[8]

As it shows, when the international justice regime impacts a rebel group's home country through proactive ICC intervention, a culpable rebel leader is more likely to anticipate a heightened risk of prosecution and see diminished opportunities to negotiate impunity.

Hypothesis 2: As the ICC intervention increases in a home state, rebel leaders responsible for international crimes are more likely to go into exile.

5   Where Should I (not) Go?

The heightened risk of domestic prosecution likely compels rebel leaders to seek exile. Nevertheless, those responsible for serious crimes remain vulnerable to foreign courts that exercise universal jurisdiction (UJ) as well as to the ICC. Indeed, an increasing number of rebel leaders are facing investigation and prosecution in both foreign and international courts. As a result, with the emergence of the ICC and UJ, I argue that rebel leaders intent on evading prosecution are meticulously choosing exile destinations that present minimal risks of prosecution.

---

[8]Rwanda's support for the Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP) is well-documented. Because of international pressure and United Nations accusations of severe human rights abuses committed by the CNDP, however, Rwanda detained Nkunda. Despite his arrest, Nkunda remains in a state of legal uncertainty, living under house arrest at this writing.

UJ Country	Leader Name (Group; Home Country)	Outcome	Year of Arrest
France	Kunti Kamara (ULIMO; Liberia)	Arrested and trialed in Switzerland	2018
	Mahamat Nouri (UFDD; Chad)	Arrested and detained	2019
	Islam Alloush (Jaysh al-Islam; Syria)	Arrested and detained	2020
Germany	Ignace Murwanashyaka (FDLR; DRC)	Arrested and in custody	2009
	Ibrahim AI F. (Ghurabaa al-Sham; Syria)	Arrested, trialed, acquitted	2016
Switzerland	Alieu Kosiah (ULIMO; Liberia)	Arrested and trialed	2014
Belgium	Martina Johnson (NPFL; Liberia)	Arrested and detained	2014
USA	Mohammed Jabbateh (ULIMO; DRC)	Arrested and trialed	2016
The Netherlands	Abu Khuder (Ghuraba'a Mohassan; Syria)	Arrested and trialed	2019

Table 1: Examples of Rebel Leaders Targeted by Foreign Courts (Universal Jurisdiction

For culpable rebel leaders in exile, two primary avenues exist for facing prosecution risk in the host country. The first involves the host country's exercise of universal jurisdiction. This principle allows states to investigate and prosecute foreign nationals for grave international crimes, regardless of where the crime occurred. Since the substantial influx of migrants and refugees from conflict zones into Europe beginning in 2002, the application of universal jurisdiction has expanded to identify and prosecute potential war criminals within these populations (Boaz and Schoenberg 2002; Johns et al. 2022; Langer and Eason 2019). For instance, between 2005 and 2012, UK immigration officials identified over 700 suspected war criminals among asylum seekers. This evolving legal landscape introduces novel risks for rebel actors abroad. Over the past two decades, more than twenty rebel commanders have faced trials under universal jurisdiction during their exile or asylum-seeking periods. Table 1 presents selected examples of this unprecedented trend in international justice.

As Table 1 illustrates, the majority of Universal Jurisdiction prosecutions targeting rebel leaders occur in European countries. Notably, France has historically been a preferred destination for numerous rebel leaders, especially those from Africa, due to shared linguistic and cultural ties stemming from colonialism. Moreover, Western states have often

attracted insurgents due to their generally robust human rights records, making them appealing havens for those escaping domestic reprisals. The recent expansion of universal jurisdiction practices in these countries, however, may render them less attractive to rebel leaders implicated in human rights abuses, as they face heightened prosecution risks.

States that have not yet exercised universal jurisdiction often incorporate universal jurisdiction provisions into their domestic legal frameworks or ratify relevant international treaties. Nations demonstrating a stronger commitment to universal jurisdiction through either domestic legislation or treaty ratification may become less appealing as exile destinations for culpable rebels, posing a heightened risk of prosecution or extradition in response to requests from international criminal tribunals or foreign courts.

A second avenue of prosecution risk for culpable rebel leaders in exile is extradition to jurisdictions capable of conducting trials, including the individual's home country, the ICC, or a third state exercising universal jurisdiction. A state's willingness to cooperate in extradition is shaped by numerous political and diplomatic factors, including bilateral extradition treaties, the nature of relations between the home and host countries, and strategic interests, such as the sponsorship of rebel groups. As a result, countries with a high likelihood of cooperating in extradition processes may be less attractive as exile destinations.

Studying extradition through bilateral agreements presents empirical challenges due to the lack of an exhaustive database covering a broad spectrum of countries; currently, only a dataset focused on the United States' extradition agreements is available. Another indicator of a country's readiness to cooperate in extradition is membership in the ICC. ICC State Parties are obligated to comply with requests for assistance regarding the voluntary appearance of persons, temporary transfers, and the execution of searches and seizures as stipulated in Article 86 of the Rome Statute. This commitment makes these states less welcoming to rebel leaders at risk of ICC investigations. For instance, Jean-Pierre Bemba, leader of the Movement for the Liberation of Congo, accused of war crimes and

crimes against humanity, was arrested in Belgium in 2008. As an ICC member, Belgium cooperated by extraditing Bemba to The Hague for trial.

In summary, the theory posits that international justice has altered the calculus of culpable rebel leaders in selecting their exile destinations. Given the diverse array of potential prosecution risks abroad, such leaders now tend to favor countries with low risks of universal jurisdiction prosecution, limited commitment to international legal norms, and non-ICC membership. This marks a distinct contrast to the patterns observed among non-culpable rebel leaders and those active prior to the advent of the international justice regime.

5.1 Existing Models of Migration Without Risk of Prosecution Abroad

To determine whether the observed patterns in rebel leader exile destinations are driven by the advent of international justice mechanisms or by pre-existing factors, it is essential to investigate the determinants of exile choices before these mechanisms were established. This section draws from the migration literature to explore the factors that can influence rebel leader exile destinations prior to the international justice regime. Although rebel leaders and regular migrants differ significantly, this approach is useful for understanding which factors should be theoretically considered when individuals face domestic risks of punishment or other threats. This approach also sheds light on how subsequent legal developments might have altered these patterns.

Individuals facing domestic threats often feel compelled to flee, despite the potential challenges of finding safe havens (Davenport et al. 2003). Choices regarding exile are not made arbitrarily; extensive literature on forced migration shows that migrants selectively choose their destinations based on key factors such as proximity, economic and social opportunities, colonial ties, language, and respect for human rights (Weiner 1996; Fischer et al. 1997; Stalker 2000; Moore and Shellman 2004; Engel and Ibáñez 2007).

Proximity often dictates that geographic closeness makes nearby countries more acces-

sible and therefore likely destinations (Moore and Shellman 2004; Engel and Ibáñez 2007). Economic and social opportunities also play a crucial role; employment prospects and opportunities for economic stability are significant pull factors. These are complemented by access to social welfare, healthcare, and education, all of which significantly influence destination choice (Stalker 2000; Fischer et al. 1997).

Cultural and linguistic compatibility also guides the selection of exile destinations. Familiarity with the language and colonial history can enhance the attractiveness of certain countries, while shared cultural or religious backgrounds facilitate easier integration and render some destinations more appealing (Moore and Shellman 2004).

In terms of political freedom and the rule of law, countries with strong human rights records and fair treatment of asylum seekers are often preferred (Weiner 1996). Compliance with international treaties protecting refugees also influences these choices (Moore and Shellman 2004).

Traditionally, jurisdiction for criminal prosecution primarily rested with national governments for cases within their territories or involving their nationals. Consequently, before the advent of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and universal jurisdiction, fleeing abroad often allowed individuals guilty of crimes at home to enjoy greater impunity, limited by their home government's reach and traditional constraints on foreign jurisdictions. This lack of stringent international legal mechanisms provided rebel leaders who committed atrocities with greater freedom in choosing exile destinations that offered safe havens.

Thus, the factors that traditionally influenced the choice of exile for refugees and other migrants—such as proximity, economic and social opportunities, and cultural ties—likely played a significant role for these culpable leaders prior to the rise of the ICC and universal jurisdiction. Ample evidence supports this, showing that warlords implicated in serious crimes lived luxuriously in exile. For instance, during the 1980s, Sabri al-Banna, leader of the Abu Nidal Organization, resided in various European countries, maintaining a

16

luxurious lifestyle despite his notoriety for human rights violations. Similarly, Radovan Karadzic, though living discreetly, managed a comfortable lifestyle under a false identity in Serbia before his capture.

Given these observations, if the establishment of the ICC and the expansion of universal jurisdiction are indeed reshaping how culpable rebel leaders select their exile destinations and reducing their safe haven options, we should see a discernible change in the patterns of exile chosen by these leaders compared to non-culpable leaders and those active before the international justice regime's rise.

Hypothesis 3: Culpable rebel leaders will systematically select exile destinations with significantly lower risks of international prosecution, whereas non-culpable rebel leaders and those from earlier periods will exhibit no significant preferences in their exile destinations.

5.2   Non-Judicial Punishment and Rebel Leader Exile

So far, I have emphasized judicial punishment and how amnesty influences exile patterns by increasing the likelihood of avoiding such punishment. However, another critical pathway through which rebel leaders may opt for exile is the threat of military action by the government. During civil conflict, rebel leaders consistently face the risk of capture and domestic punishment, including extrajudicial killings or death in combat. This type of military punishment is common in civil wars.

There are, however, two key theoretical distinctions in exile patterns arising from these two sources of punishment. First, military punishment applies universally to all rebel actors, regardless of their culpability for serious crimes, and should not generate differing patterns of exile decisions based on culpability. For instance, Ahmed Nasser, a leader of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), fought for Eritrea's democratic independence without being accused of serious human rights violations. Nonetheless, he was forced to flee as the Eritrean government sought to eliminate political rivals after Eritrea's independence

in 1991. Culpable rebel leaders also experience similar threats. Therefore, if military punishment is the sole reason for exile, we should not expect significant differences in exile patterns between culpable and non-culpable rebel leaders.

Second, extrajudicial killings and other informal punishments are likely to be less prevalent in states that adhere to international norms. Thus, contrary to my theory—which predicts that a home state's adherence to international law increases the likelihood of exile—the logic of military punishment suggests the opposite. As a state becomes more bound by international law, rebel actors may perceive a reduced threat of extrajudicial killings or similar forms of punishment, making them less likely to seek exile.

6   Research Design

6.1   The Rebel Leader's Exile (RLE) Dataset

Testing the proposed hypotheses necessitates detailed information on the exile events of rebel leaders, specifically focusing on the timing and destinations of their exiles. Currently, there are limited data available on this subject. The Rebel Organization Leaders Dataset (ROLE) (Acosta et al. 2023) is a pioneering contribution to the literature that explores the pre-conflict exile experiences of rebel leaders. It does not, however, align with the objectives of this paper, which seeks to understand how international legal complexities surrounding amnesty influence exile decisions during conflict.

The During-Conflict Justice (DCJ) dataset (Loyle and Binningsbø 2018), extensively documents exile as a part of broader during-conflict justice processes. Despite its scope, the DCJ dataset focuses on conflict episodes and country-years without disaggregating the identities of exiled individuals, whether they are rebel or government actors. This general approach poses challenges for testing the specific theory proposed in this paper, which requires a more granular analysis.

To bridge existing research gaps, I developed the Rebel Leader's Exile (RLE) Dataset.

This dataset draws on identified rebel leaders from the Non-State Actor Dataset (Cunningham et al. 2013), including those who rose to power between 1945 and 2011 across all civil conflict dyads recorded from 1980 to 2011 (Prorok 2016). Utilizing the list of rebel leaders, I coded two key dimensions: 1) whether these leaders decided to go into exile, and 2) their eventual destinations. The dataset covers exile events spanning from 1945 to 2023, providing detailed information on the dates and destinations of the exiles, as well as any subsequent relocations to third countries or returns to their home countries.

To compile these exile events, I utilized a variety of sources, including news articles from Lexis Nexis and secondary sources such as international organizations, governmental, and rebel documents when available. The dataset includes observations of 434 rebel leaders from 238 unique rebel groups, of which 93 leaders (approximately 21.4%) experienced exile at least once following the onset of conflict. Due to data limitations for some independent variables, the analyses in this paper were conducted for the periods 1989 to 2017 (for testing Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 2) and 2002 to 2017 (for models testing Hypothesis 3). This dataset allows for a nuanced analysis of the factors influencing rebel leaders' decisions to seek exile and the implications of these movements on conflict dynamics.

6.2 Modeling Strategy

In all models presented in this paper, I employ the propensity score weighting method to adjust for potential confounders that might otherwise introduce bias. The primary independent variable—state vulnerability to the international justice regime—is influenced by a complex set of factors, including geopolitical alignments, economic stability, and human rights records. These factors contribute to a non-random distribution, complicating the direct attribution of rebel leader exile to a state's commitment to international law or ICC involvement. This complexity necessitates addressing endogeneity. The propensity score weighting approach is particularly suited for this study as it effectively handles models with both continuous and binary independent variables, which characterize the

independent variables in this analysis.[9] I derive weights from these scores, inversely proportional to the estimated propensity, to balance covariate distributions across treatment levels, thereby reducing potential bias. These weights are subsequently applied in generalized linear models, which adjust for differences in covariate distributions across treatment levels. Following Bang and Robins (2005), I apply double robust estimation, using weights from propensity scores and incorporating covariates in the outcome model to address potential model misspecifications effectively. The improved balance achieved with the weighted data is documented in Appendix A1. As a robustness check, I have also conducted the entire set of analyses using logistic regression models.

6.3   Conditioning Variable: Leader Culpability for Serious Crimes

One commonly employed variable across both sets of analyses (exile onset and exile destination) is *Leader Culpability*. My theory posits that international legal institutions that enforce punishing international crimes affect patterns of rebel leaders' exile. This theory applies specifically to rebel leaders who committed serious crimes against international law. In other words, my theory expects an interaction effect between a state's susceptibility to international justice and a leader's culpability for serious crimes on the likelihood of exile.

The primary objective of this variable is to assess the likelihood of punitive actions against rebel leaders responsible for serious offenses. The underlying assumption is that individuals implicated in severe crimes are subject to punishment, even if they cease such activities in later periods. Notably, neither a decrease in the extent of targeting civilians nor a cessation of criminal activities in subsequent years exempts a leader from responsibility

---

[9]More specifically, I utilize Inverse Probability of Treatment Weighting (IPTW) with propensity scores estimated through boosted models (Zhu et al. 2015). The boosted algorithm for estimating propensity scores effectively addresses the curse of dimensionality, a prevalent challenge in traditional nonparametric density estimation methods. For binary treatments, I estimate standard propensity scores, while for continuous treatments, I estimate generalized propensity scores, reflecting the conditional densities of treatment levels given observed covariates (Fong et al. 2018; Hirano and Imbens 2004).

for previous violations.

To operationalize *Leader Culpability*, I utilize the Rebel Human Rights Violation (RHRV) Dataset (Walsh et al. 2024). This dataset documents occurrences and severity of specific human rights violations committed by rebel groups during civil wars, as identified by the UCDP Dyadic Conflict Dataset, for the years between 1990 and 2018. The dataset sources its information from the US State Department Country Reports on Human Rights and Amnesty International's Annual Reports. For this analysis, I define the *Leader Culpability* variable as dichotomous, recognizing any documented human rights violation in the Amnesty International Reports. A value of '1' is assigned from the first year a rebel group commits such violations during the leader's tenure, with a value of '0' assigned otherwise. This coding approach reflects principles of criminal justice, wherein an actor can be prosecuted for serious crimes regardless of subsequent behavior. Out of 434 leaders, 245 (56%) were deemed culpable for serious crimes.

As a robustness check, I also examine a rebel's culpability specifically for targeting civilians under *Massive Civilian Killing*, which is included within the broader *Leader Culpability* variable. This is operationalized as a dummy variable if a rebel is responsible for the deaths of more than 50 civilians in a given year; approximately 24% of the leaders, or 105 out of 434, fall into this category. Additionally, I assess leader culpability for sexual violations (*Sexual Violations*). Of all rebel leaders, 20%, or 87 leaders, are found culpable of sex crimes. In the following, I delineate the analytical approaches and variables specific to each set of analyses.

6.4 Exile Onset Analysis

The dependent variable for the first set of analyses examining exile onset (Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 2) is a binary indicator denoting whether a rebel leader went into exile in a given year. For these models, the unit of analysis is leader-year. This unit of analysis was selected to better understand the timing of exile decisions, which can be influenced by

various group and leader characteristics, particularly those related to the leader's home country. The dataset comprises 13,330 leader-year observations.

6.5   Independent Variables: State's Susceptibility to International Justice

a) Domestic Law To investigate how countries integrate international justice norms aimed at punishing serious crimes into their domestic legal frameworks—and consequently, how this integration influences negotiations over impunity and the likelihood of exile—I utilize two distinct measures.

The first measure assesses the status of international law in countries' constitutions. The Comparative Constitutions Project Dataset (Elkins and Ginsburg 2022) details the presence of international customary law within national constitutions. This data identifies whether constitutions reference "customary international law" or the "law of nations," and categorizes the status of such law—whether it is not specified or uncertain; mentioned but requiring incorporation; directly binding; or directly binding and superior to ordinary law. Although discrepancies may exist between the law as written and its actual practice, this measure reflects a country's legal commitment to enforcing international legal standards domestically. Such commitment influences the likelihood of providing amnesty for serious crimes, which are typically frowned upon by international legal norms. Figure 1 visualizes this variable by depicting the variation in customary law status across different countries' constitutions. Notably, many countries categorized as "not applicable" do not possess a single, consolidated written constitution, such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia.
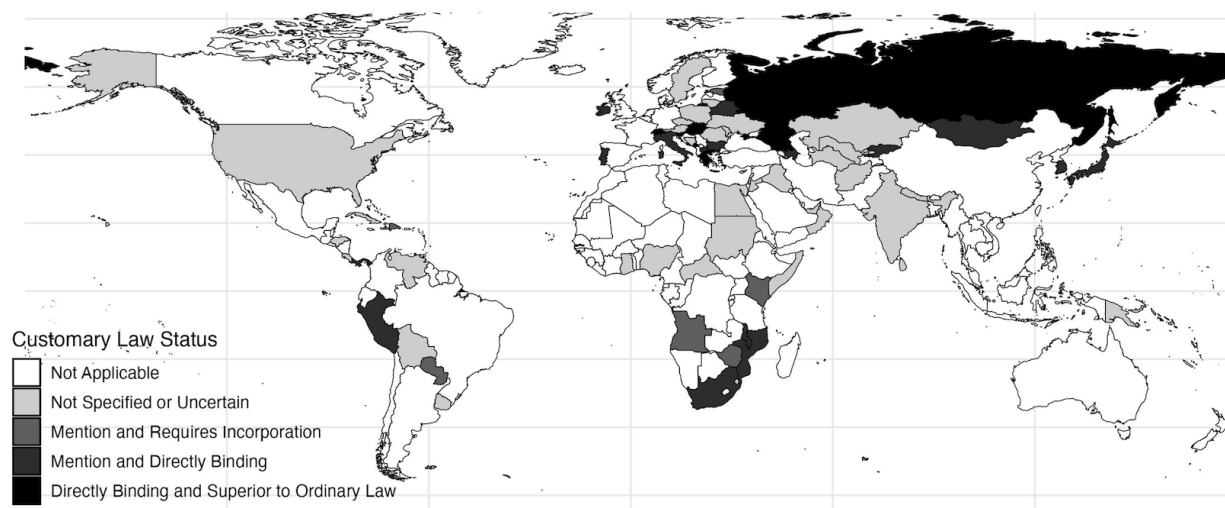
Figure 1: Status of International Customary Law in Constitution

Acknowledging the limitation posed by missing data on uncodified constitutions, I introduce a second measure: the adoption of Universal Jurisdiction (UJ) in domestic law, derived from another original dataset. This measure is derived from state laws that mandate the prosecution of war crimes under Universal Jurisdiction, which requires states to prosecute war crimes beyond traditional bases of criminal jurisdiction. This legal framework mandates the prosecution of war criminals regardless of their nationality, the location of the crime, whether the victims were nationals, or if the state's national interests were directly affected. Although rebel groups are typically comprised of a state's own nationals, a state's commitment to punishing war crimes under this framework serves as a proxy for its adherence to international legal norms aimed at curbing impunity, likely correlating with its willingness to negotiate impunity options with rebel factions. This variable is originally sourced from the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Databases curated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The text-based database was digitized to capture the variation in national legal adoption of UJ.[10]

Universal jurisdiction is incorporated into the domestic legal system in two ways: on

---

[10]I digitized the text-based International Humanitarian Law (IHL) database, as detailed in my working paper, "Introducing State Commitment to Universal Jurisdiction Dataset" by author.

domestic ordinary law or military manual. By reading each text of domestic law that incorporates the UJ (identified by the IHL database), UJ incorporation in each source was further disaggregated in coding to determine whether the law applies to individuals not currently residing within the state's territory—a critical factor in defining the scope of Universal Jurisdiction. A law is considered to have extensive application if it can be applied to individuals outside the state's territory. This results in five distinct scales of variation in the domestic legal adoption of Universal Jurisdiction for war crimes across states, as outlined below and illustrated in Figure 6.5 for the period post-1998:

- Extensive: UJ is extensively applied in both national law and military manuals.

- Substantial: UJ is adopted in both, but only one applies it extensively.

- Moderate: UJ is adopted in both, but neither applies it extensively.

- Minimal: UJ is adopted in one but without extensive application.

- None: UJ is not adopted.

Since the detailed scale proved too granular for analysis, I simplified the variation into a binary measure: the UJ domestic Law variable is coded as '1' for years when a state has laws mandating punishment for war crimes and '0' otherwise.
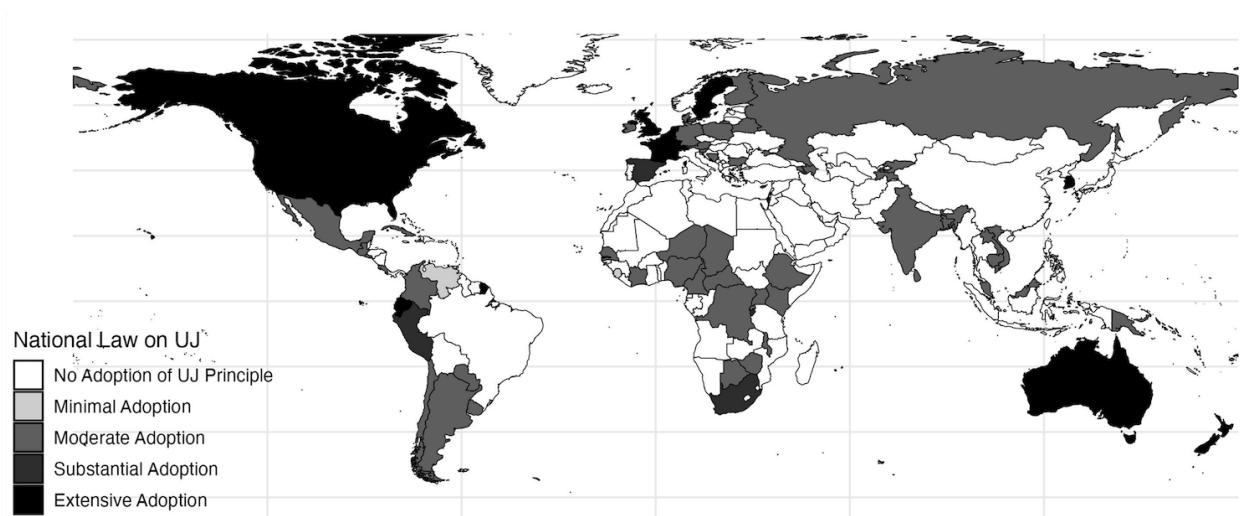

Figure 2: Adoption of Universal Jurisdiction in National Laws Since 1998

International Treaty Ratification The second independent variable pertains to a state's Ratification of International Treaties mandating prosecution for international crimes. These treaties encompass twelve international agreements specified by International Humanitarian Law (IHL) as those related to the right of states to vest universal jurisdiction in their national courts over war crimes. They include the Genocide Convention (1948), the Geneva Conventions (1949), the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property (1954), the Convention on Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity (1968), the Convention against Torture (1984), The Inter-American Convention on Torture (1984), The Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons (1987), Convention on the Safety of UN Personnel (1994), Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (1996), Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines (1997), the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998), and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (2010). Each treaty ratification year is assigned an interval value from 0 to 1, reflecting the ratio of international treaty ratifications to the total number of treaties that could be ratified by the country in the given year.[11] Figure 3 illustrates the degree of treaty ratification by states after 1998, showing that countries in South America, Europe, and Canada exhibit the highest commitment to international justice, as proxied by their treaty ratification.

---

[11]The number of treaties available for ratification by countries varies slightly due to the presence of regional agreements, such as the Inter-American Convention on the Forced Disappearance of Persons.
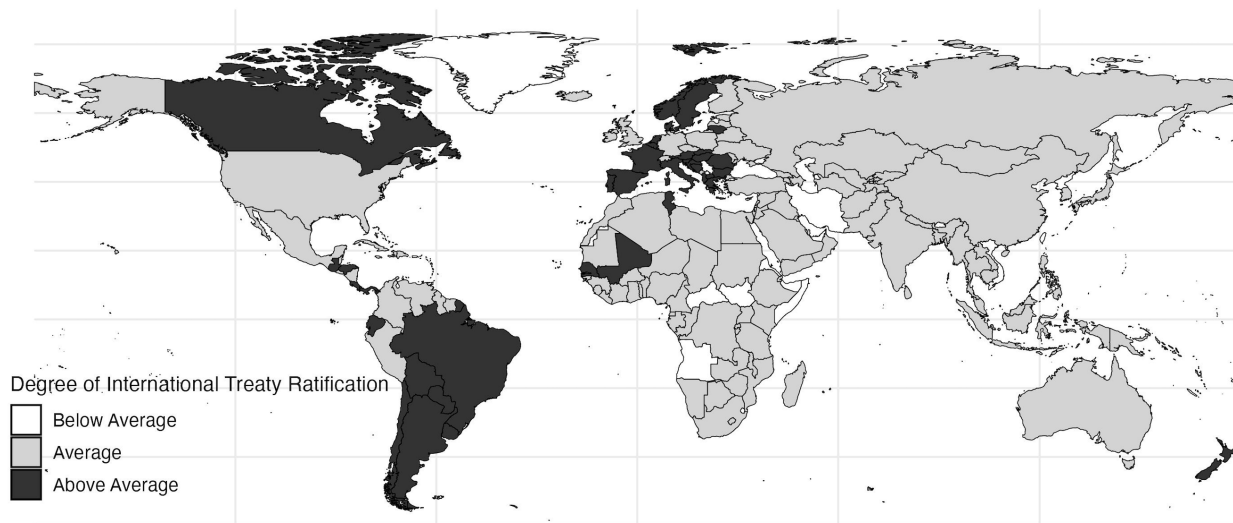
Figure 3: Degree of International Treaties Ratifications Obligating Punishment for War Crimes Since 1998

b) ICC Intervention

The theory posits that ICC interventions may serve as a mechanism that inhibits a country's amnesty provisions for serious crimes, thereby influencing rebel leader exile. This analysis utilizes an existing dataset (Prorok 2017) to examine ICC involvement. When the ICC initiates a case, it typically undertakes a comprehensive investigation into crimes committed within the concerned country. Early actions by the ICC are perceived as less threatening to state leaders than later-stage proceedings, in which the likelihood and immediacy of punishment escalate as the cases progress. The variable representing ICC involvement is coded from 0, indicating no involvement, to 14, with each increment reflecting a subsequent action by the Court, such as initiating a preliminary examination or investigation, issuing arrest warrants, and conducting hearings or trials. For analytical purposes, this variable is transformed using the natural logarithm. Figure 4 visually depicts the various stages of ICC interventions in different countries.

Figure 4: ICC Intervention Stages (2002-2014)

6.5.1 Confounders

I adjust for several variables expected to influence a leader's decision to go into exile, which may also contribute to the key treatment variables. I include control variables that can influence a leader's decision to exile and the state's incentive to make a peace deal.

First, I account for the State's One-sided Violence (State OSV) to address the assertion that a government's culpability for serious crimes might incentivize state officials to forgive crimes committed by the opposition (Nalepa and Powell 2016; Prorok 2017). This is a log-transformed count of OSV by the government in the given year. I also include a dummy variable indicating the rebel's Territorial Control, derived from the NSA dataset (Cunningham et al. 2013). If a rebel group controls territory, the leader is less likely to seek asylum abroad, preferring instead to remain within the controlled domestic area.

Furthermore, I control for Conflict Duration (ln), leader tenure (in months), Rebel Strength (from the NSA dataset), and Incompatibility (whether the conflict is to attain territory or/and government control from UCDP) to address the conflict intensity and the military vulnerability of rebel groups, which can affect the likelihood of rebel exile.

I also control the External Support rebels receive. Rebel groups with external backing

are more likely to find refuge, thus facilitating exile. Also, studies show that rebel groups who receive external support are more or less prone to attack civilians (Salehyan 2010; Huang and Sullivan 2021; Stein 2022; Fortna et al. 2018).

Lastly, I control for the home state's Regime Type, as democracies may have built-in mechanisms for incorporating international law into domestic systems, so their interconnectivity might be deeper than the state's susceptibility to international justice. I use V-Dem's liberal democracy index which includes a rule of law component (Coppedge et al. 2021).

6.6 Exile Destination Analysis

For the second set of analyses on exile destination (Hypothesis 3), the focus narrows to the countries where rebel leaders settled. This analysis retains only observations of rebel leaders who experienced exile. The dataset includes 80 unique rebel leaders who have gone into exile in at least one country. Some of these leaders subsequently relocate to a third host country after their initial flight abroad. Including such cases, there are 119 unique relocation events among the rebel leaders. To understand the decision-making process of rebel leaders in choosing exile destinations based on the risk posed in the host country, I include all relocation events, encompassing both the initial and subsequent exiles. I exclude transit countries where rebel leaders stayed for less than a week.

Given that a leader could potentially relocate to any country in the year of their flight, each case of exile is paired with every other country in the state system, creating an exhaustive set of potential exile destinations. The potential exile destinations include 187 unique countries—utilizing the `cepiigeodist` R package (Mayer and Zignago 2011).

The unit of analysis is leader-year-(potential) host country. This dataset configuration enables the examination of characteristics from the leader's country of origin (State A), all potential destinations (State B), and the interactions between States A and B during the

year of exile. The dependent variable for models testing Hypothesis 3 is a binary indicator for whether a rebel leader from state A went into exile in state B in a given year. Using the weighted data, the models are estimated using logistic regression with standard errors clustered on the country of origin.

6.6.1   Independent Variables

The theory posits two mechanisms through which rebel leaders face the risk of prosecution in host countries: the exercise of Universal Jurisdiction (UJ) and the host country's status as a member of the ICC. To estimate the level of risk from the UJ, I utilize the variable 'UJ incorporation in domestic law' as discussed previously. Regarding the risk from the ICC, I employ a dummy variable that indicates whether the host country ratified the Rome Statute in the given year. ICC ratification is used as a proxy rather than measuring the degree of ICC involvement in the host country—a variable that is employed to analyze the onset of exile in the rebel's home country. This adjustment is made because the degree of ICC involvement does not correlate with the likelihood of facing international prosecution. ICC jurisdiction is contingent upon certain conditions: (a) the criminal conduct must occur within the territory of the state party (territorial state), or (b) the accused must be nationals of the state (nationality state), with the exception of cases referred by the UN Security Council. Thus, if a criminal from State A has not committed crimes in State B, the ICC would technically lack jurisdiction over the individual. Therefore, the ICC membership of the host state, which obligates cooperation in extradition and legal proceedings, serves as a more suitable proxy for assessing potential international prosecution risks in this model.

Additionally, I employ a post-1998 dummy variable, recognized in the literature as marking the advent of the global justice cascade (Krcmaric 2018; Dancy 2018; Daniels 2020b). This cutoff year is pivotal as it signals a shift in the international legal landscape, when Universal Jurisdiction (UJ), despite its longstanding existence, began to be actively applied. Consequently, the analysis investigates the interaction between the post-1998

variable and the adoption of UJ in domestic law. This approach determines whether the heightened risk of UJ prosecution, associated with the shift in the legal landscape, has influenced changes in how rebel leaders decide on their exile destinations.

6.6.2 Confounders

To examine the factors influencing the choice of exile destination for rebel leaders, this study incorporates multiple variables identified by the migration literature. These factors are categorized into two primary groups: the relationship between the home country (state A) and the potential host country (state B), and the characteristics of the host country.

The first set of variables is about the relationship between state A and state B. This category includes the distance between the capitals of State A and State B (DISTANCE). The distance is calculated using a formula developed by Head and Mayer (2002), which is a generalized mean of city-to-city bilateral distances, incorporating both the arithmetic mean and the harmonic means. This category also considers whether the countries share an official language (COMMON LANGUAGE) and historical colonial ties, specifically whether either the home or host country was a colony of the other (COLONY). These variables are operationalized using data from the `cepiigeodist` R package.

The second set of variables pertains to the characteristics of potential host countries. This category includes the Liberal Democracy Index and the Rule of Law Index, both of which are sourced from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) database (Coppedge et al. 2021). Additionally, the analysis incorporates the host country's GDP, adjusted to constant 2010 U.S. dollars to account for inflation, ensuring a consistent comparison across time. The GDP data are logged and derived from the World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI) database. Lastly, the analysis examines the relationship between the host country and the rebel group through a sponsorship variable, which indicates whether the host country has historically sponsored the rebel group. This measure is obtained from San Akca's Nonstate Armed Group (NAG) Dataset, which tracks the support relationships

30

between states and non-state armed groups (San-Akca 2016).

7 Results

7.1 Exile Onset

I begin by reporting the findings about rebel leaders' exile onset. Utilizing the weighted dataset, Figure 5 presents coefficient estimates from a series of logistic regression models assessing the impact of key independent variables (IVs) conditioned by rebel leaders' culpability for serious crimes. Standard errors are clustered by the rebel leader, and covariate balances and full regression results are detailed in the Appendix 7.2.
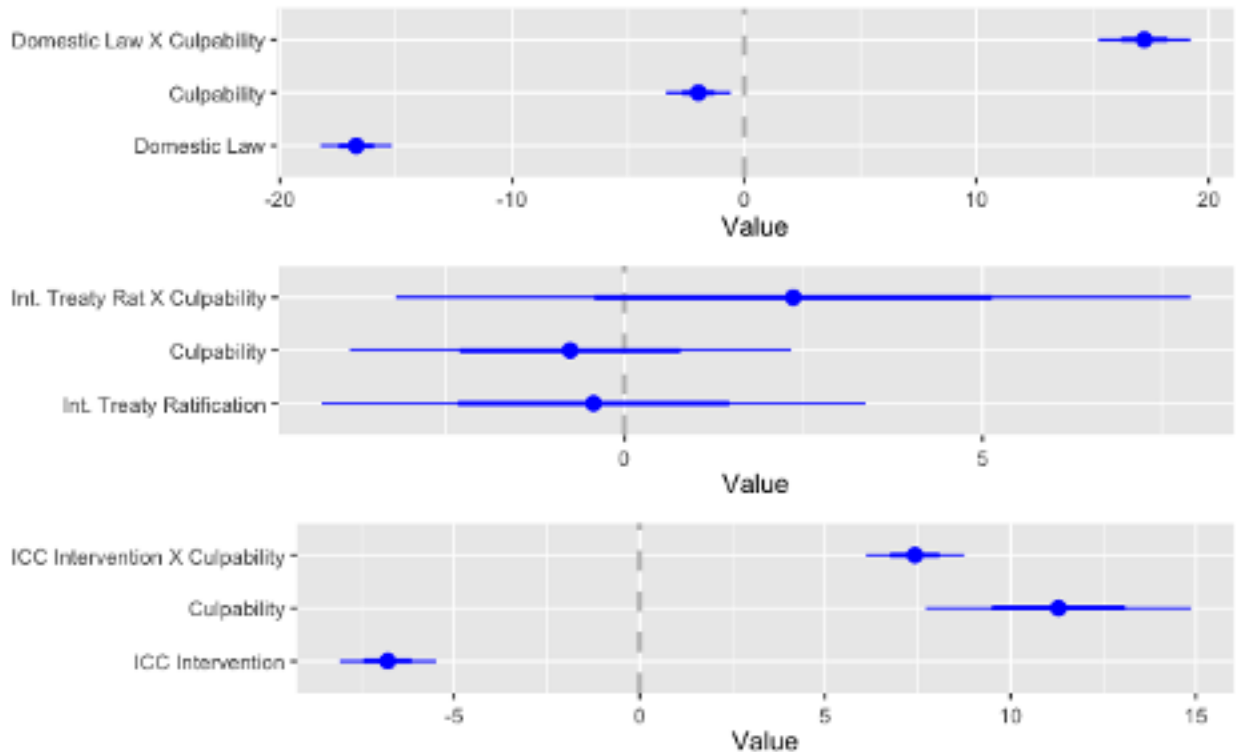

Figure 5: Effects of International Justice Regime on Rebel Leader Exile Onset (90 and 95% CIs)

Figure 5 illustrates the coefficient plots for key independent variables and their in-

teraction with leaders' culpability. The result in the top pane shows that domestic legal adoption and leader culpability alone do not lead to more leader exile and may even result in less exile. When the leader is culpable and domestic law adopts active punishment for war crimes, however, leaders are more likely to be exiled.

The middle pane indicates that a state's international treaty ratification is not a significant predictor of rebel leader exile. Nevertheless, while ratification and culpability are negatively associated with leader exile, their interaction is *positively* associated with more leader exile. Moving to the bottom pane, the result shows, that ICC intervention itself is negatively associated with leader exile. When the leader is culpable for war crimes, however, increased ICC intervention leads to a higher likelihood of rebel leader exile.

Overall, the results consistently support the theoretical expectation: As a country's vulnerability to the international justice regime increases, so does the probability of a culpable rebel leader seeking exile. This effect is most pronounced with the state's incorporation of international legal norms into domestic law and ICC intervention. The full regression table for these results is reported in the Appendix 7.2.
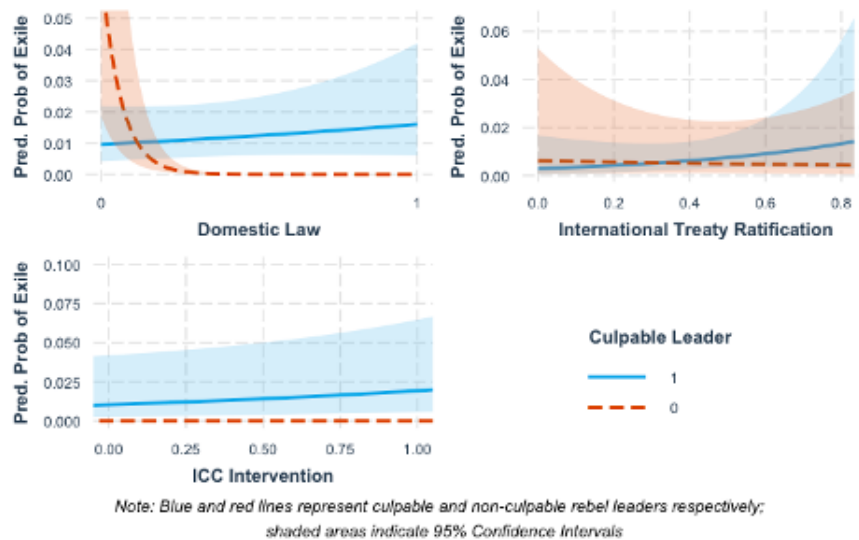

Figure 6: Predicted Probability of Rebel Leader Exile Onset

Figure 6 presents the predicted probabilities derived from the same models as above. Consistent with the findings from the coefficient plots in Figure 5, culpable leaders are

more likely to go into exile as the susceptibility to international legal measures increases within the home state. Specifically, as a home state's domestic law mandates punishment for serious crimes, a rebel leader is about 1% more likely to go into exile in a given year. Similarly, with increasing ICC intervention in a home country, the likelihood of a rebel leader going into exile rises by approximately 1.5%. Given that the unit of analysis is granular (on a yearly level), these effects are noteworthy. No similar effect is observed for the exile patterns of non-culpable rebel leaders. The results are consistent with different measures of leader culpability –Civilian Targeting and Sexual Violations A5, A5.

Addressing an Alternative Explanation

This analysis explains another pathway through which rebel leaders may choose exile: the threat of military action by the government. Such threats, including the risk of capture and execution, apply universally to all rebel actors, regardless of their involvement in serious crimes. Although these threats are constant during active civil conflicts, the findings suggest they are not the sole factor driving rebel leaders to flee. This conclusion is supported by two observations: Firstly, one might intuitively expect that a state's strong adherence to international law would alleviate fears of extrajudicial killings among rebels, potentially deterring them from seeking exile. However, the data indicates a counterintuitive effect: as states enforce international law more rigorously, the likelihood of judicial punishment increases, prompting rebel leaders to flee. Thus, while the risk of military retaliation remains a significant pathway to exile, it does not completely account for the decision-making process of rebels who also consider judicial risks in their calculations.

7.2   Exile Destination

Next, I report findings on the exile destinations of rebel leaders. Before examining the impact of international justice on the exile destinations of rebel leaders, I first analyze the factors associated with these destinations without considering the international justice

dimension. Figure 7 presents coefficient plots that illustrate the relationships between various characteristics of potential host countries and the exile destinations chosen by rebel leaders. This analysis covers the entire period under study and does not account for the culpability of rebel leaders or the influence of the international justice regime. The results indicate that host country sponsorship, colonial history, and a shared official language are significantly and positively associated with rebel leaders' selection of exile destinations. Specifically, rebel leaders are more likely to choose countries that sponsor their rebel groups, share a colonial history with their home country, or have a common official language.
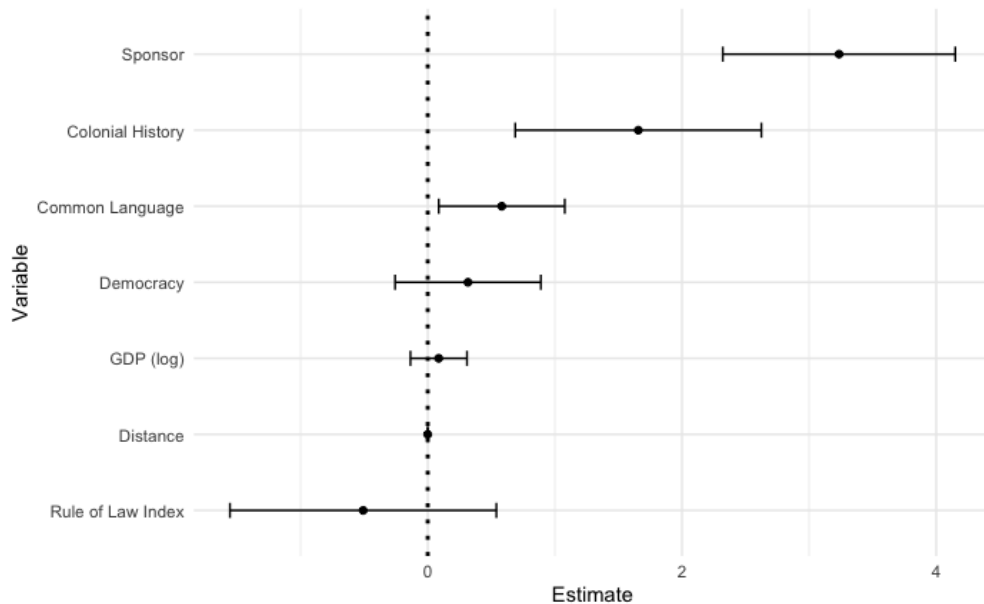
Figure 7: Factors Influencing Rebel Leaders' Choice of Exile Destination (All Periods)

Other factors, such as democracy, GDP (ln), and distance, exhibit somewhat positive correlations with the choice of exile destination, but these relationships are not statistically significant. The Rule of Law Index appears to be the least likely factor to influence exile destinations, showing a slightly negative correlation, though this relationship is also statistically insignificant. This figure provides a baseline understanding of the factors influencing exile destinations in the absence of the international justice regime effect, which

34

is the primary focus of this study.

Now, Table 2 report exile destinations incorporating rebel leader culpability and risk of universal jurisdiction into consideration. The results are differentiated between culpable and non-culpable leaders in the first and second models, respectively. For culpable leaders, the interaction term (*UJ in Domestic Law X Post-1998*) is both negative and statistically significant, suggesting that countries with UJ incorporated into their domestic law are less likely to be chosen as exile destinations by culpable leaders in the post-1998 period –which is again when the Universal Jurisdiction began to be meaningfully used. Conversely, for non-culpable leaders, this interaction term is positive and statistically significant, suggesting that these leaders are more likely to choose such countries. While this finding was not initially anticipated, it may be explained by existing studies in migration literature which suggest that forced migrants generally prefer countries with liberal policies and a strong adherence to human rights (Blair et al. 2022).

When integrating both groups of leaders into a single model, the results remain consistent and robust: the interaction terms for *UJ in Domestic Law X Post-1998* and *UJ Domestic Law X Culpability* show positive relationships with the choice of exile destination. The introduction of a three-term interaction (*UJ in Domestic Law X Post-1998 X Culpability*) yields a significantly negative coefficient (-23.757), highlighting a nuanced dynamic. This result substantiates the hypothesis that culpable rebel leaders are significantly deterred from seeking exile in countries with strong UJ commitments in their domestic law, especially after the 1998 shift toward greater accountability.

Next, I present results concerning the impact of a host country's ICC ratification on the choice of exile destination. Table 3 reveals that countries that have ratified the ICC Rome Statute are significantly less likely to be selected as exile destinations by rebel leaders implicated in extensive, targeted civilian killings. Even though the individual effects of ICC ratification and involvement in civilian targeting do not show a meaningful correlation with exile destination choice, their interaction displays a robust, negative correlation with

Table 2: Exile Destination: UJ Domestic Law X Post98 X Culpability

	Culpable	Non-culpable	All
UJ Domestic Law	3.677*	−19.207***	−19.532***
	(1.527)	(0.725)	(1.575)
Post-1998	1.912+	−0.063	−0.576
	(1.072)	(0.601)	(0.770)
UJ Domestic Law × Post-1998	−3.567*	19.870***	20.061***
	(1.645)	(1.688)	(2.102)
Culpability			−2.206*
			(1.092)
UJ Domestic Law × Culpability			23.135***
			(2.510)
Post-1998 × Culpability			2.599*
			(1.275)
UJ Domestic Law × Post-1998 × Culpability			−23.757***
			(2.830)
Common Language	−0.836	0.514	−0.443
	(0.980)	(0.849)	(0.732)
Colony	0.687	−15.825***	0.434
	(1.355)	(0.711)	(1.175)
Distance to Capital	−0.001***	−0.002***	−0.001***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
External Sponsor	3.767***	−18.985***	3.085***
	(0.622)	(0.727)	(0.682)
Rule of Law	−1.352	−1.198	−1.398*
	(0.949)	(1.080)	(0.701)
Constant	−4.503**	−0.834	−1.865**
	(1.471)	(0.630)	(0.621)
Num.Obs.	4142	1815	5957

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 3: Exile Destination: ICC Ratification X Culpability

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
ICC Rome Ratification	−0.120	0.226	0.420
	(1.015)	(1.206)	(0.992)
Culpability	0.814	1.112	1.016
	(0.530)	(0.678)	(0.696)
ICC Rome Ratification × Culpability	−15.952***	−16.814***	−16.952***
	(1.541)	(1.701)	(1.635)
Common Language		−1.799	−1.770
		(1.180)	(1.144)
Colony		−16.282***	−15.965***
		(0.874)	(0.910)
Distance to Capital		−0.001***	−0.001***
		(0.000)	(0.000)
External Sponsor			−16.357***
			(0.940)
Rule of Law			−1.348
			(1.484)
Constant	−5.308***	−1.197*	−0.924
	(0.529)	(0.533)	(0.752)
Num.Obs.	1665	1665	1494
AIC	106.4	84.2	87.0
BIC	128.1	122.1	134.8
Log.Lik.	−49.222	−35.094	−34.494
RMSE	0.07	0.06	0.07

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

the likelihood of a country being chosen as an exile destination.[12].

---

[12]When employing a general culpability dummy variable, the results indicate a similar direction, yet they are not statistically significant. Both ICC ratification and culpability show positive correlations individually; however, their interaction term is negatively correlated with the likelihood of a leader choosing the host country as an exile destination. The regression table for this analysis is included in the Appendix 3

Non-culpable Rebel Leaders

Culpable Rebel Leaders

Frequency of Exile
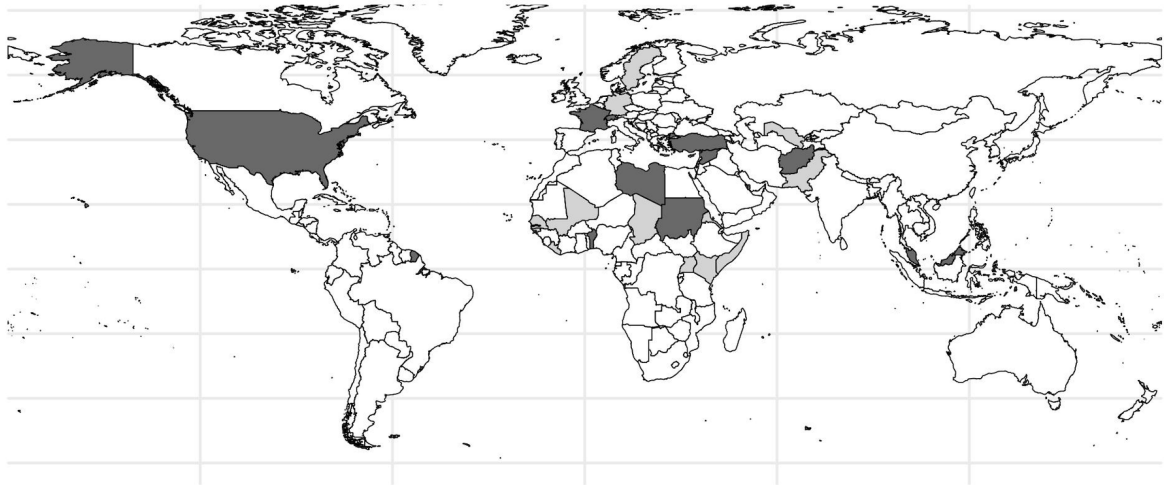
☐ No Rebel Leader
☐ One Rebel Leader
☐ 2-4 Rebel Leaders
■ 5+ Rebel Leaders
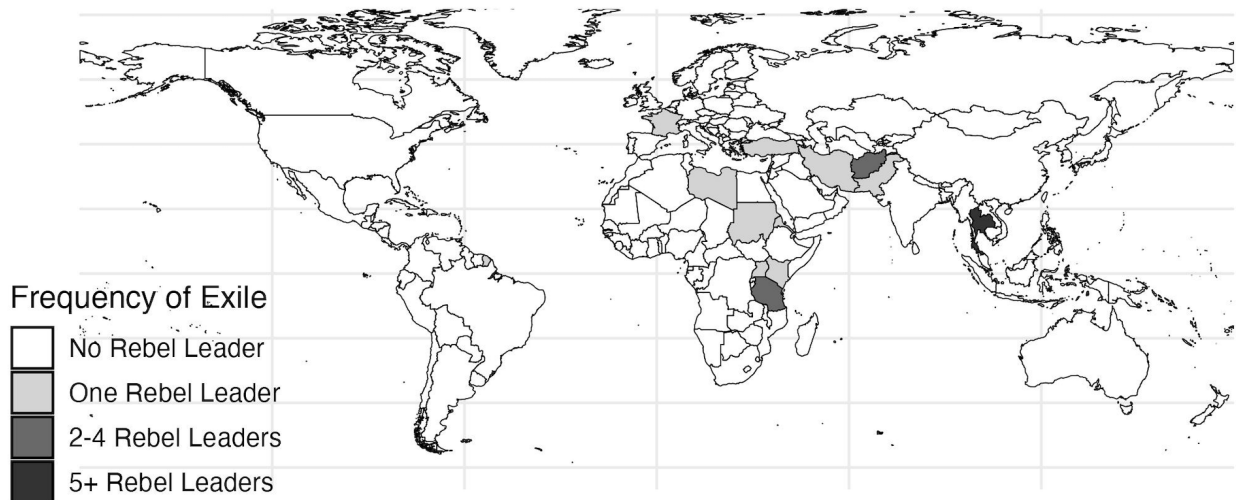
Figure 8: The Exile Destinations of Rebel Leaders Since 1998

Finally, I provide a descriptive analysis to support my claim that the international justice regime is shrinking the option of exile destinations for culpable rebel leaders. Figure 8 delineates the post-1998 exile destinations of rebel leaders, categorized by culpability. The upper map displays the countries that have hosted non-culpable rebel leaders, those not implicated in serious human rights crimes, while the lower map details destinations for culpable rebel leaders. These maps employ varying shades to denote the number of rebel leaders each country has hosted; darker shades indicate a higher concentration. Anchored by the pivotal year of 1998, which the literature identifies as the onset of the

38

justice cascade ([Krcmaric 2018](); [Dancy 2018](); [Daniels 2020a]()), this visualization elucidates a distinct pattern: non-culpable rebel leaders find refuge across a diverse range of countries, including Western nations like the United States, whereas culpable leaders are confined to fewer, often less democratic, options. This pattern visually corroborates the theory that culpable rebel leaders now face increasingly restricted exile options.[13]

Conclusion

I have demonstrated how the international justice regime influences rebel leaders' decisions to seek exile. Contrary to existing studies that show that the international justice regime undermines the options for state leaders' exile, this study shows that its impact on rebel leaders might differ. Rebel leaders, unlike incumbent state leaders, must confront the risk of prosecution both domestically and internationally. This research has demonstrated that as a rebel's home country's adherence to the international legal regime strengthens, rebel leaders increasingly consider exile, particularly as the prospect of negotiating impunity and evading punishment becomes more challenging. More specifically, the paper reveals that a state's incorporation of international norms into domestic law and the ICC's involvement enhances the likelihood of rebel leaders opting for exile, suggesting that the international justice regime diminishes the prospects for negotiated settlements. In terms of justice, this indicates that the international justice regime exerts a positive impact by restricting the options available to criminals.

Furthermore, this analysis has examined how exile does not guarantee safety for culpable rebel leaders, who remain vulnerable to prosecutions under the ICC and Universal Jurisdiction. The findings indicate that these leaders have become more discerning in their

---

[13]In the appendix, I also present the over-time trend patterns of exile destinations. The results indicate that, starting in 2003, the exile destinations for culpable rebel leaders exhibit lower risk scores compared to those for non-culpable leaders, whereas the trends for both groups were similar prior to that year. This finding suggests that while non-culpable leaders might select destinations with higher prosecutorial risks, culpable leaders are increasingly confined to locales that offer lower risks of prosecution.

choice of exile destinations, influenced by the heightened prosecutorial threat posed by many countries. Specifically, I find that countries which have ratified the ICC Rome Statute and adopted Universal Jurisdiction in domestic law are now less appealing destinations for rebel leaders culpable of human rights violations. Considering that the UJ practice has been growing rapidly in recent years, this trend is expected to grow more salient.

These findings open numerous avenues for future research in the literature on civil conflict, international legal organizations, and migration. First, previous studies indicate that rebels' access to safe havens escalates interstate violence between the rebels' home country and the host country, as well as increases civilian killings by rebels. Future research should empirically assess how these dynamics are evolving in the current context, in which rebels' access to safe havens is increasingly limited. Moreover, further investigation is warranted into how this changing landscape broadly affects the transborder operations and external support of rebel groups.

In addition, this study contributes to the rich literature that examines how political leaders, their characteristics, and their decision-making processes influence the onset, duration, and resolution of conflicts (Prorok 2016; 2018; Prorok and Cil 2022; Sudduth 2017; Kokkonen and Sundell 2020; Huang et al. 2022; Acosta et al. 2023; Silverman et al. 2024; Krcmaric 2018; 2020).

Third, this study sheds light on the nuanced impact of international legal norms and institutions. Contrary to the growing skepticism towards the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the international justice regime more broadly, my findings suggest that international justice institutions are effectively narrowing the operational scope for those responsible for human rights violations, supporting Krcmaric's (2018) assertion.

Lastly, this study enhances the refugee and immigration literature by delineating overall trends in the refugee flows of individuals accused or convicted of war crimes, alongside significant policy implications. It posits that when a country vigorously enforces international legal norms against impunity and proactively seeks justice—such as by exercising

Universal Jurisdiction—it can deter war criminals from entering its territory. This proactive stance against impunity not only demonstrates a commitment to international law but also influences the composition of refugee and immigrant inflows, effectively signaling to those implicated in serious crimes that their presence is fraught with significant legal peril.

APPENDICES

Figure A2 displays the mean score of host states' commitment to international justice for non-culpable and culpable rebel leaders, represented in red and blue respectively, from 1989 to 2017. This score reflects host state characteristics by integrating actual practices of universal jurisdiction (UJ), domestic laws for UJ, and treaty ratifications, with respective weights of 0.5, 0.3, and 0.2. Over time, the risk index has systematically increased across all states, driven by a rising number of international treaty ratifications and a recent uptick in UJ practices. Despite this trend, Figure A2 demonstrates that starting in 2003, the exile destinations for culpable rebel leaders consistently show lower mean risk scores compared to those for non-culpable leaders. This suggests that while non-culpable leaders might choose destinations with higher prosecutorial risks, culpable leaders are confined to locales offering lower risks of prosecution. The emergence of the justice cascade in the late 1990s and the International Criminal Court's first indictment of a rebel leader in 2003 likely heightened perceptions among rebel leaders of the threats posed by international prosecution, subsequently influencing their decisions on where to seek exile, favoring countries with diminished prosecutorial risks.
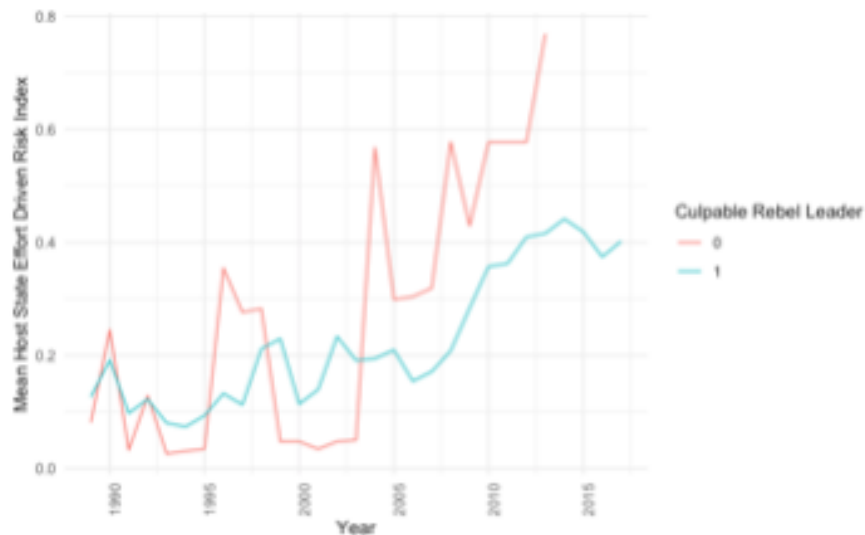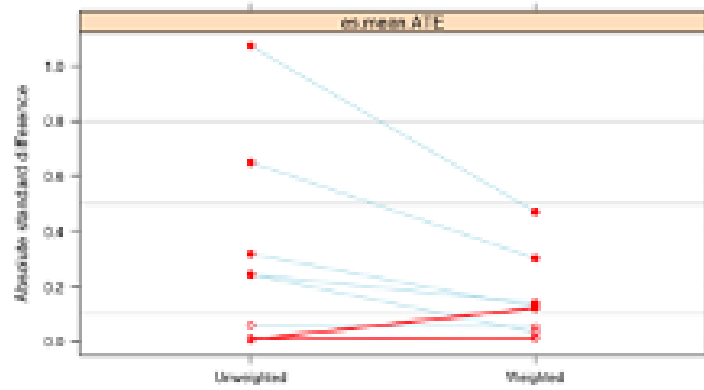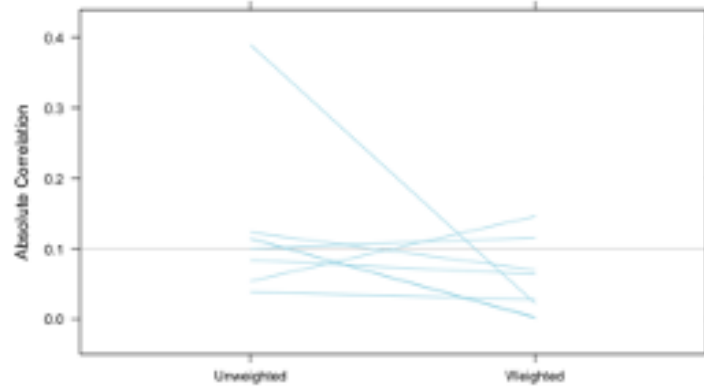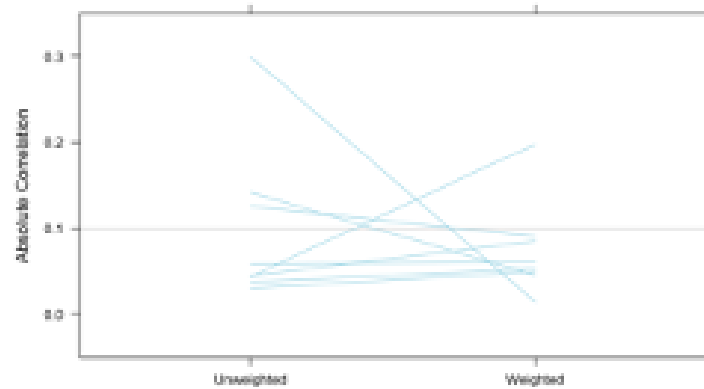

Figure A2: Mean State Commitment Index of Rebel Exile Destination

(a) For Model 1

(b) For Model 2

(c) For Model 3

Figure A1: Covariate Balance Before and After Propensity Score Weighting

	M1 Domestic Law	M2 Treaty Ratification	M3 ICC Intervention
Domestic Law	−16.70***		
	(0.77)		
Culpability	−1.98**	−0.76	11.29***
	(0.70)	(1.54)	(1.79)
Domestic Law X Culpability	17.22***		
	(0.99)		
Treaty Ratification		−0.43	
		(1.90)	
Treaty Ratification X Culpability		2.36	
		(2.77)	
ICC Intervention			−6.79***
			(0.65)
ICC Intervention X Culpability			7.42***
			(0.66)
Government OSV	−0.00	−0.00	−0.00
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Leader Tenure (ln)	−0.00	−0.01**	0.01
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Territory Control	−0.78†	0.12	−2.33
	(0.45)	(0.45)	(2.06)
External Rebel Sponsorship	0.13	−0.79†	1.54
	(0.54)	(0.47)	(1.04)
Incompatibility	0.84	0.00	1.89*
	(0.53)	(0.41)	(0.93)
Conflict Duration (ln)	−0.36*	−0.40*	−0.05
	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.21)
Rebel Strength	−0.13	−0.17	0.05
	(0.31)	(0.26)	(0.60)
Regime Type	−0.54	−2.49	−3.06
	(2.06)	(1.60)	(2.89)
(Intercept)	−1.80†	−1.51	−18.50***
	(1.04)	(1.46)	(2.83)
Deviance	326.18	240.78	84.14
Dispersion	0.86	0.88	4.63
Num. obs.	1502	1502	619

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$; †$p < 0.1$

Table A1: Regression Table for Exile Leaders (M1-M3)

Table A2: Exile Destination: In all periods: Liberal Democracy Index (vdem) X Civilian Killing (OSV)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Liberal Democracy Index	−0.929	−0.550	1.208
	(0.897)	(1.079)	(1.890)
Civilian Killing (OSV)	1.262*	0.899	1.110+
	(0.540)	(0.554)	(0.578)
Liberal Democracy Index × Civilian Killing (OSV)	−4.913	−4.201	−5.356
	(3.249)	(3.498)	(3.710)
Common Language		−0.537	−0.534
		(0.625)	(0.704)
Colony		0.482	0.799
		(0.970)	(1.117)
Distance to Capital		−0.001***	−0.001***
		(0.000)	(0.000)
External Sponsor			3.249***
			(0.745)
Rule of Law			−1.444
			(1.196)
Constant	−4.944***	−2.100***	−2.599***
	(0.294)	(0.566)	(0.757)
Num.Obs.	6090	5924	5924
AIC	399.2	312.0	286.3
BIC	426.1	358.8	346.5
Log.Lik.	−195.623	−149.002	−134.136
RMSE	0.07	0.07	0.07
Std.Errors	Custom	Custom	Custom

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

As a robustness check, I also estimated a model to examine the effect of the Liberal Democracy Index of potential host country on rebel leaders' exile destination Table A2. The interaction between the Liberal Democracy Index and Civilian Killing (culpability) is negative but statistically insignificant. However, in the period after 2002, the interaction terms remain negative and become statistically significant.

Table A3: Exile Destination: post2002 Liberal Democracy Index (vdem) X Culpability

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Liberal Democracy Index	−2.197	−0.684	−0.045
	(2.373)	(2.708)	(2.754)
Civilian Killing (OSV)	2.959*	3.414***	3.388**
	(1.412)	(1.008)	(1.037)
Liberal Democracy Index × Civilian Killing (OSV)	−32.062	−34.214***	−33.778**
	(23.708)	(10.389)	(10.712)
Common Language		−1.798	−1.744
		(1.183)	(1.198)
Colony		−12.997***	−13.951***
		(0.874)	(0.994)
Distance to Capital		−0.001***	−0.001***
		(0.000)	(0.000)
External Sponsor			−14.449***
			(1.520)
Rule of Law			−0.543
			(1.670)
Constant	−4.514***	−1.109	−1.078
	(0.653)	(0.740)	(0.783)
Num.Obs.	1494	1494	1494
AIC	97.3	80.4	84.3
BIC	118.6	117.6	132.1
Log.Lik.	−44.665	−33.224	−33.152
RMSE	0.07	0.07	0.07
Std.Errors	Custom	Custom	Custom

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

	Human Rights Violation	OSV (50+)	Sex Crimes
Domestic UJ Law (Home)	−15.86***	−16.60***	−18.35***
	(1.34)	(0.65)	(0.83)
Culpability (Human Rights Violation)	−0.45		
	(1.32)		
Domestic UJ Law X Culpability (HR)	13.99***		
	(2.05)		
Culpability (OSV)		2.77*	
		(1.11)	
Domestic Law X Culpability (OSV)		14.71***	
		(2.24)	
Culpability (Sex Crimes)			1.26†
			(0.76)
Domestic Law X Culpability (Sex Crimes)			17.95***
			(1.84)
State Culpability	3.81**	2.74*	3.86**
	(1.21)	(1.11)	(1.26)
Rebel External Support	−0.74	−1.31	−0.65
	(0.90)	(0.91)	(0.83)
Territorial Control	0.73	2.01†	0.87
	(0.92)	(1.09)	(0.89)
Leader Tenure Duration (ln)	1.49*	0.94	1.49*
	(0.69)	(0.63)	(0.70)
Conflict Duration (ln)	−1.05*	−1.90*	−1.30*
	(0.50)	(0.86)	(0.65)
Rebel Strength	1.32†	0.59	0.54
	(0.68)	(0.73)	(0.68)
Rule of Law (Home)	4.43	5.15	5.81*
	(2.80)	(3.62)	(2.87)
Constant	−3.74†	−1.91	−5.15*
	(2.21)	(2.29)	(2.41)
Num.Obs.	202	202	202
AIC	86.25	77.029	80.129
Null Deviance	106.86	106.864	106.864
Residual Deviance	64.25	55.029	58.129

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{\dagger}p < 0.1$

Table A4: Logistic Models of Exile Onset: Domestic Universal Jurisdiction Law and Rebel Leader Culpability

Table A5: Logistic Models of Exile Onset: Domestic Constitutional Incorporation of International Law and Rebel Leader Culpability

	Human Rights Violation	OSV (50+)	Sex Crimes
IL in Constitution	−16.34***	−16.73***	−18.46***
	(1.35)	(0.65)	(0.82)
Culpability (HRV)	−0.45		
	(1.33)		
IL in Constitution X Culpability (HRV)	14.46***		
	(2.05)		
Culpability (OSV)		2.77*	
		(1.11)	
IL in Constitution X Culpability (OSV)		14.84***	
		(2.24)	
Culpability (Sex Crimes)			1.26†
			(0.76)
IL in Constitution X Culpability (Sex Crimes)			18.06***
			(1.84)
State Culpability	3.82**	2.75*	3.86**
	(1.21)	(1.11)	(1.26)
Rebel External Support	−0.74	−1.31	−0.65
	(0.91)	(0.91)	(0.83)
Territorial Control	0.73	2.02†	0.87
	(0.92)	(1.09)	(0.89)
Leader Tenure Duration (ln)	1.49*	0.94	1.49*
	(0.69)	(0.63)	(0.70)
Conflict Duration (ln)	−1.05*	−1.90*	−1.30*
	(0.50)	(0.86)	(0.65)
Rebel Strength	1.33†	0.59	0.54
	(0.68)	(0.73)	(0.68)
Rule of Law (Home)	4.44	5.16	5.82*
	(2.80)	(3.63)	(2.87)
Constant	−3.75†	−1.92	−5.16*
	(2.20)	(2.28)	(2.40)

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{\dagger}p < 0.1$

Table A6: Logistic Models of Exile Onset: ICC Involvement in Home Country and Rebel Leader Culpability

	Human Rights Violation	OSV (50+)	Sex Crimes
ICC Involvement (Home)	−6.91***	−6.93***	−7.47***
	(0.99)	(0.96)	(1.48)
Culpability (Human Rights Violation)	15.97***		
	(1.43)		
ICC Involvement X Culpability (HR)	7.07***		
	(1.10)		
Culpability (OSV)		18.98***	
		(1.80)	
ICC Involvement X Culpability (OSV)		7.00***	
		(0.87)	
Culpability (Sex Crimes)			20.51***
			(3.52)
ICC Involvement X Culpability (Sex Crimes)			7.67***
			(1.63)
State Culpability	1.05	0.44	0.39
	(0.99)	(1.36)	(2.32)
Rebel External Support	−2.38*	−2.81	−4.44
	(1.18)	(2.01)	(2.97)
Territorial Control	1.64†	2.06*	3.41†
	(0.99)	(0.95)	(2.07)
Leader Tenure Duration (ln)	2.45†	1.82*	1.97
	(1.28)	(0.87)	(1.21)
Conflict Duration (ln)	−2.64**	−2.39**	−2.57**
	(0.82)	(0.83)	(0.83)
Rebel Strength	1.92	−0.82	−1.17
	(1.95)	(1.10)	(1.88)
Rule of Law (Home)	0.99	−0.48	−1.70
	(2.03)	(3.92)	(5.66)
Constant	−16.79***	−20.51***	−22.12***
	(1.59)	(3.37)	(5.08)

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$; †$p < 0.1$

References

Acosta, B., R. Huang, and D. Silverman (2023). Introducing role: A database of rebel leader attributes in armed conflict. *Journal of Peace Research 60*(2), 352–361.

Akhavan, P. (2001). Beyond impunity: Can international criminal justice prevent future atrocities? *American Journal of International Law 95*(1), 7–31.

Bang, H. and J. M. Robins (2005). Doubly robust estimation in missing data and causal inference models. *Biometrics 61*(4), 962–973.

Binningsbø, H. M., C. E. Loyle, S. Gates, and J. Elster (2012). Armed conflict and post-conflict justice, 1946-2006: A dataset. *Journal of Peace Research 49*(5), 731–740.

Blair, C. W., G. Grossman, and J. M. Weinstein (2022). Liberal displacement policies attract forced migrants in the global south. *American Political Science Review 116*(1), 351–358. Published on behalf of the American Political Science Association.

Boaz, C. and C. Schoenberg (2002, June). Refugees, War Criminals, and International Law. *Peace Review 14*(2), 199–205. Publisher: Routledge _eprint: https://doi.org/10.1080/10402650220140238.

Christia, F. (2012). *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Coppedge, M., J. Gerring, C. H. Knutsen, S. I. Lindberg, J. Teorell, D. Altman, M. Bernhard, A. Cornell, M. S. Fish, L. Gastaldi, H. Gjerløw, A. Glynn, A. Hicken, A. Lührmann, S. F. Maerz, K. L. Marquardt, K. McMann, V. Mechkova, P. Paxton, D. Pemstein, J. von Römer, B. Seim, R. Sigman, S.-E. Skaaning, J. Staton, A. Sundtröm, E. Tzelgov, L. Uberti, Y.-t. Wang, T. Wig, and D. Ziblatt (2021). V-dem codebook v11.1. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project.

Cunningham, D. E., K. S. Gleditsch, and I. Salehyan (2013). Non-state actors in civil wars: A new dataset. *Conflict Management and Peace Science 30*(5), 516–531. Publisher: Sage Publications, Ltd.

Dai, X. (2006, October). The Conditional Nature of Democratic Compliance. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 50*(5), 690–713. Publisher: SAGE Publications Inc.

Dai, X. (2007). *International Institutions and National Policies*. Cambridge University Press.

Dancy, G. (2018). Deals with the Devil? Conflict Amnesties, Civil War, and Sustainable Peace. *International Organization 72*(2), 387–421.

Daniels, L.-A. (2020a, October). How and When Amnesty during Conflict Affects Conflict Termination. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 64*(9), 1612–1637.

Daniels, L.-A. (2020b, October). How and When Amnesty during Conflict Affects Conflict Termination. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 64*(9), 1612–1637.

Davenport, C., W. H. Moore, and S. C. Poe (2003). Sometimes you just have to leave: Domestic threats and forced migration, 1964-1989. *International Interactions 29*(1), 27–55.

Deutsche Welle (2022, April). Is lra rebel leader joseph kony hiding in darfur? https://www.dw.com/en/is-lra-rebel-leader-joseph-kony-hiding-in-darfur/a-61478125. Accessed: 2023-08-07.

Donnelly, J. (1986). International human rights: A regime analysis. *International Organization 40*(3), 599–642.

Elkins, Z. and T. Ginsburg (2022). Characteristics of national constitutions, version 4.0. https://www.comparativeconstitutionsproject.org/. Comparative Constitutions Project. Last modified: October 24, 2022. Available at comparativeconstitutionsproject.org.

Engel, S. and A. M. Ibáñez (2007, January). Displacement Due to Violence in Colombia: A Household-Level Analysis. *Economic Development and Cultural Change 55*(2), 335–365. Publisher: The University of Chicago Press.

Escribà-Folch, A. and D. Krcmaric (2017). Dictators in exile: Explaining the destinations of ex-rulers. *The Journal of Politics 79*(2), 560–575.

Fischer, P. A., P. Martin, and T. Straubhaar (1997). *Should I Stay or Should I Go? International Migration, Immobility, and Development: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Oxford: Berg.

Fong, C., C. Hazlett, and K. Imai (2018, March). Covariate balancing propensity score for a continuous treatment: Application to the efficacy of political advertisements. *The Annals of Applied Statistics 12*(1).

Fortna, V. P., N. J. Lotito, and M. A. Rubin (2018). Don't bite the hand that feeds: Rebel funding sources and the use of terrorism in civil wars. *International Studies Quarterly 62*(4), 782–794.

Freeman, M. (2009). *Necessary Evils: Amnesties and the Search for Justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ginsburg, T. (2009). The clash of commitments at the international criminal court. *Chicago Journal of International Law 9*, 499.

Goldsmith, J. and S. D. Krasner (2003). The Limits of Idealism. *Daedalus 132*(1), 47–63. Publisher: The MIT Press.

Hathaway, O. A. (2002). Do human rights treaties make a difference? *Yale Law Journal 111*(8), 1935–2042.

Hathaway, O. A. (2007). Why do countries commit to human rights treaties? *The Journal of Conflict Resolution 51*(4), 588–621.

Helfer, L. R., E. Voeten, and K. J. Alter (2011). Emergency and escape: Explaining derogations from human rights treaties. *International Organization 65*, 673–707.

Hirano, K. and G. W. Imbens (2004). The propensity score with continuous treatments. In A. Gelman and X.-L. Meng (Eds.), *Wiley Series in Probability and Statistics*, Wiley Series in Probability and Statistics, Chapter 7. Wiley. First published: 23 July 2004.

Huang, R., D. Silverman, and B. Acosta (2022). Friends in the profession: Rebel leaders, international social networks, and external support for rebellion. *International Studies Quarterly 66*(1), sqab085.

Huang, R. and P. L. Sullivan (2021). Arms for education? external support and rebel social services. *Journal of Peace Research 58*(4), 794–808.

International Criminal Court (1998). Article 27-2 of the rome statute. Done at Rome on 17 July 1998, in force on 1 July 2002, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 2187, No. 38544, Depositary: Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Jeffery, R. (2014). The Persistence of Amnesties. In *Amnesties, Accountability, and Human Rights*, pp. 170–197. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Jo, H. (2015). *Compliant Rebels: Rebel Groups and International Law in World Politics*. Problems of International Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jo, H. and B. A. Simmons (2016). Can the International Criminal Court Deter Atrocity? *International Organization 70*(3), 443–475. Publisher: Cambridge University Press.

Johns, L., M. Langer, and M. E. Peters (2022, November). Migration and the Demand for Transnational Justice. *American Political Science Review 116*(4), 1184–1207.

Kim, H. and K. Sikkink (2010). Explaining the Deterrence Effect of Human Rights Prosecutions for Transitional Countries. *International Studies Quarterly 54*(4), 939–963. Publisher: [International Studies Association, Wiley].

Kokkonen, A. and A. Sundell (2020, March). Leader Succession and Civil War. *Comparative Political Studies 53*(3-4), 434–468. Publisher: SAGE Publications Inc.

Krcmaric, D. (2018). Should I Stay or Should I Go? Leaders, Exile, and the Dilemmas of International Justice. *American Journal of Political Science 62*(2), 486–498. _eprint: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/ajps.12352.

Krcmaric, D. (2020, September). *The Justice Dilemma: Leaders and Exile in an Era of Accountability*. Cornell University Press.

Krcmaric, D. and A. Escribà-Folch (2022). I'll be back? exiled leaders and political instability. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 67*(2-3), 402–427.

Langer, M. (2015). Universal jurisdiction is not disappearing: The shift from 'global enforcer' to 'no safe haven' universal jurisdiction. *Journal of International Criminal Justice 13*(2), 245–256.

Langer, M. and M. Eason (2019, December). The Quiet Expansion of Universal Jurisdiction. *European Journal of International Law 30*(3), 779–817.

Loyle, C. E. and H. M. Binningsbø (2018, February). Justice during Armed Conflict: A New Dataset on Government and Rebel Strategies. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 62*(2), 442–466.

Mason, T. D., J. P. Weingarten, and P. J. Fett (1999). Win, Lose, or Draw: Predicting the Outcome of Civil Wars. *Political Research Quarterly 52*(2), 239–268. Publisher: [University of Utah, Sage Publications, Inc.].

Mayer, T. and S. Zignago (2011, 11). Notes on cepii's distances measures: The geodist database. Working Paper 2011-25, CEPII.

Meier, V., N. Karlén, T. Pettersson, and M. Croicu (2023, May). External support in armed conflicts: Introducing the UCDP external support dataset (ESD), 1975–2017. *Journal of Peace Research 60*(3), 545–554. Publisher: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Moore, W. H. and S. M. Shellman (2004). Fear of Persecution: Forced Migration, 1952-1995. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution 48*(5), 723–745.

Nalepa, M. and E. J. Powell (2016, October). The Role of Domestic Opposition and International Justice Regimes in Peaceful Transitions of Power. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 60*(7), 1191–1218. Publisher: SAGE Publications Inc.

Prorok, A. K. (2016, January). Leader Incentives and Civil War Outcomes. *American Journal of Political Science 60*(1), 70–84.

Prorok, A. K. (2017). The (In)compatibility of Peace and Justice? The International Criminal Court and Civil Conflict Termination. *International Organization 71*(2), 213–243.

Prorok, A. K. (2018). Led Astray: Leaders and the Duration of Civil War. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution 62*(6), 1179–1204. Publisher: Sage Publications, Inc.

Prorok, A. K. and D. Cil (2022). Cheap talk or costly commitment? leader statements and the implementation of civil war peace agreements. *Journal of Peace Research 59*(3), 409–424.

Qiu, X. (2022). State Support for Rebels and Interstate Bargaining. *American Journal of Political Science 66*(4), 993–1007. _eprint: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/ajps.12694.

Salehyan, I. (2007). Transnational rebels: Neighboring states as sanctuary for rebel groups. *World Politics 59*(2), 217–242.

Salehyan, I. (2008). No shelter here: Rebel sanctuaries and international conflict. *The Journal of Politics 70*(1), 54–66.

Salehyan, I. (2009). *Rebels without Borders: Transnational Insurgencies in World Politics* (1 ed.). Cornell University Press.

Salehyan, I. (2010). The Delegation of War to Rebel Organizations. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution 54*(3), 493–515. Publisher: Sage Publications, Inc.

Salehyan, I., K. S. Gleditsch, and D. E. Cunningham (2011). Explaining external support for insurgent groups. *International Organization 65*(4), 709–744.

San-Akca, B. (2016). *States in Disguise: Causes of External State Support for Rebel Groups*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sikkink, K. (2011). *The Justice Cascade: How Human Rights Prosecutions Are Changing World Politics*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Silverman, D., B. Acosta, and R. Huang (2024). Rebel leader age and the outcomes of civil wars. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 68*(2-3), 431–455.

Simmons, B. A. (2009a). *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Simmons, B. A. (2009b). *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Simmons, B. A. and A. Danner (2010, April). Credible Commitments and the International Criminal Court. *International Organization 64*(2), 225–256.

Snyder, J. and L. Vinjamuri (2003). Trials and Errors: Principle and Pragmatism in Strategies of International Justice. *International Security 28*(3), 5–44. Publisher: The MIT Press.

Stalker, P. (2000). *Workers without Frontiers: The Impact of Globalization on International Migration*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Stein, A. (2022, June). Committed sponsors: external support overtness and civilian targeting in civil wars. *European Journal of International Relations 28*(2), 386–416. Publisher: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Stewart, M. A. and Y.-M. Liou (2017, January). Do Good Borders Make Good Rebels? Territorial Control and Civilian Casualties. *The Journal of Politics 79*(1), 284–301. Publisher: The University of Chicago Press.

Sudduth, J. K. (2017, January). Coup risk, coup-proofing and leader survival. *Journal of Peace Research 54*(1), 3–15. Publisher: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Walsh, J. I., J. M. Conrad, and B. E. Whitaker (2024). Rebel human rights abuses during civil wars: Introducing the rebel human rights violations dataset. *Journal of Peace Research 61*(3), 477–488.

Weiner, M. (1996). Bad Neighbors, Bad Neighborhoods: An Inquiry into the Causes of Refugee Flows. *International Security 21*(1), 5–42. Publisher: The MIT Press.

Zhu, Y., D. L. Coffman, and D. Ghosh (2015, March). A Boosting Algorithm for Estimating Generalized Propensity Scores with Continuous Treatments. *Journal of Causal Inference 3*(1), 25–40. Publisher: De Gruyter.