TRACING THE SECURITY DILEMMA IN CIVIL WARS: *HOW FEAR AND INSECURITY CAN LEAD TO INTRA-STATE VIOLENCE*

by

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Abstract

The security dilemma mechanism has been widely used to explain interstate conflict since its original conceptualisation in the 1950s, but it has been applied to the study of civil wars only since the early 1990s. Despite valiant attempts, major theoretical gaps remain unaddressed in the literature, the most important of which is the missing link between the security dilemma and the outbreak of armed violence. This thesis intends to fill this gap, employing process tracing methodology on the post-independence civil wars that erupted in Angola and Mozambique after the collapse of the Portuguese empire. The research engages alternative explanations for the causes of civil war, assesses the role of the security dilemma in this context, and demonstrates that mutual insecurity was instrumental to the outcome of violence in the studied cases. Hence, this research dispels concerns about the concept's fundamental incompatibility with civil wars and advances the literature discussing several issues related to the intrastate application of an originally interstate concept. The application of the model to two novel cases enhances the theoretical and empirical relevance of the concept for the study of civil wars and reinforces claims of its potential generalisability.

'Ho sceso milioni di scale dandoti il braccio

non già perché con quattr'occhi forse si vede di più'.

To F.,

the fake ginger old women

who pretends to be a teenager.

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List of Abbreviations

ALCORA	Aliança Contra as Rebeliões em Africa/Alliance Against Revolutions in Africa
BOSS	Bureau of State Security (South Africa)
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation (Rhodesia)
COREMO	Comitê Revolucionário de Moçambique / Revolutionary Committee of Mozambique (Mozambique)
DGS	Direção-Geral de Segurança / General Directorate for Security (Portugal)
ELNA	Exército de Libertação Nacional de Angola / National Liberation Army of Angola (Angola)
FALA	Forças Armadas para Libertação de Angola / Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (Angola)
FNLA	Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola / Popular Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (Angola)
FRELIMO	Frente de Liberação de Mozambique / Mozambique Liberation Front (Mozambique)
MFA	Movimento das Forças Armadas / Movement of the Armed Forces (Portugal)
MML	Movimento Mozambique Livre / Free Mozambique Movement (Mozambique)
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola / Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Angola)
NSSM	National Security Study Memoranda (USA)
PCN	Partido de Coligação Nacional / National Coalition Party (Mozambique)
PIDE	Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado / International and State Defence Police (Portugal)
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana / Mozambican National Resistance
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAS	Special Air Service (Rhodesia)
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence (Rhodesia)
UN	United Nations
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola - National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Angola)
ZANLA	Zimbabwean National Liberation Army (Rhodesia/Zimbabwe)
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union (Rhodesia)
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union (Rhodesia)

'Back at the castle, the commanding officer mustered the troops. He did not give a long speech, but in it he said everything that needed to be said. Firstly, that under no circumstances were the austrians to be allowed into the castle, even if they, the portuguese, had to resort to violence to keep them out. That would be war, he went on, and I hope we don't have to go that far, but the more quickly we can convince the austrians that we mean business, the more quickly we will achieve our aims. We will await their arrival outside the castle walls, and we won't move from there even if they attempt to force their way in. As your commanding officer, I will do all the talking, and initially I require just one thing of you, I want each man's face to be like a book open at the page on which these words are written, No entry. If we succeed, and whatever it takes, we must succeed, the austrians will be obliged to camp outside the walls, which will place them, right from the start, in a position of inferiority. It may be that things will not go as smoothly as my words seem to promise, but I guarantee that I will do all I can to say nothing to the austrians that might offend against the honour of the cavalry unit to which we have devoted our lives. Even if there is no fighting, even if not a single shot is fired, victory will be ours, as it will be if they force us to use weapons. These austrians have, in principle, come to figueira de castelo rodrigo solely to welcome us and accompany us to valladolid, but we have reason to suspect that their real aim is to take solomon with them and leave us here looking like fools. If they think that, though, they have another think coming. Tomorrow, by ten o'clock, I want two look-outs posted on the tallest of the castle's towers, just in case the austrians have simply put it about that they'll be arriving at midday in order to catch us out still watering our horses. You never can tell with austrians, added the commanding officer, forgetting that these would be the first and probably the only austrians he would ever meet'.

- José Saramago, *in* The Elephant's Journey

Introduction

'Nas perguntas que fazes é que mentes, se já sabias antes a resposta'[1].

'(…) quem julgue que isso é o mais fácil está muito enganado, não tem conta o número de respostas que só está à espera das perguntas'[2].

- José Saramago, *in* A Jangada de Pedra

'In theory, theory and practice are the same. In practice, they are not'.

- Albert Einstein

I.1 - Research Puzzle

The debate on the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars has advanced the theory, but the question of the more direct effects of anarchy within the borders of a state persists. More specifically, the role of the security dilemma and other dynamics of security competition remains underexplored in the literature on armed conflict. Detractors of the security dilemma in civil wars tend to dismiss its application to explain the outbreak of armed conflict in civil wars on the grounds of the presence of malign motives on the part of the actors (Visser and Duyvesteyn, 2014). This rejection has two main problems: first, it relies on a misunderstanding of the existing conceptual inner workings of the security dilemma, the *conflation of motives and intentions* (Glaser, 2010); second, it builds upon an assumed preponderance of other approaches to armed conflict in intrastate settings. These approaches are inherently premised on the presence of

[1] '*Your questions are false if you already know the answer*'.

[2] '*(…) anyone who thinks this is easy is much mistaken, there are endless answers just waiting for questions*'.

malign motives, and thus rely on ascertaining motivations in the context of feasible conditions for rebellion. The *Greed and Grievance* thesis (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004) provided the debate with a simple, yet reductionist model of explanations for the causes of conflict. Since then, students of armed conflict have gravitated towards the idea that, while in interstate conflict actors are interested in survival above all, intrastate conflict actors are motivated by something else, often at the expense of security. Here, the dichotomy between intrastate and interstate conflict is understood in terms of the main actors concerned in the conflict, but does include a transnational dimension of domestic conflict.[3]

The most basic — yet myopic — conceptualisation of rebellion tends to reinforce this feeling: all too commonly conflated with civil unrest and strife, in rebellion actors challenge some existing order with some intention, which could lead even careful analysts to assume that this intention must contain some sort of 'external' interest other than security. Indeed, the complexity of contentious politics demands complex models to explain their functioning. However, building a model capable of satisfactorily explaining every aspect that leads to domestic armed violence would be an unlikely achievement; instead, social science should strive to find models that explain different aspects of conflict but that can be understood and deployed complementarily.

At large, the puzzle of the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars reclaims the premises outlined in the original scholarship on international relations theory; if we are looking at the interaction between political actors capable to mobilise the *power-to-hurt*

[3] This issue is discussed in different sections of the thesis, but the distinction between intra and interstate adopted is the one advanced by Kristian Gleditsch (2007) and Jeffrey Checkel (2013).

(Schelling, 1976), and which are thus potentially able to explore bellicose means of action towards political goals, why would the security dilemma be a far-fetched tool inside the borders of a state as some might argue? Apparently, another important assumption is made here, with regards to the possibility to 'import' the security dilemma concept from the interstate to the intrastate conflict. Can a theoretical concept devised to explain security competition between sovereign national states of the international system be relevant in a non-Westphalian context such as civil wars? Does it require any adaptation or particular provisions? The authors who have so far debated the applicability of the concept to civil wars have not tested whether the characteristic differences between the interstate and intrastate realms pose any sort of impediment to the translation of the model from the former to the latter. Instead they have assumed its viability. In light of this, this thesis approaches the theoretical puzzle with the background of the use of violence with political purposes, and translates the security dilemma concept to intrastate conflict while at the same time querying potential adjustments implicated by the non-Westphalian context of civil wars.

An additional problem is the lack of conceptualisation of anarchy emergence. Anarchy is generally seen as a necessary condition for the development of motivations leading to the escalation of conflict and, more incidentally, the actual outbreak of violence. However, the process through which anarchy emerges in an originally hierarchical environment also requires further understanding and remains neglected. Studies that consider instruments stemming from International Relations Theory for the study of civil wars are usually reliant on the concept of anarchy, as this is a constitutive characteristic of the international system. When these instruments are deployed to study civil wars, they are addressing a type of anarchy that is not fundamentally different from the one

they were designed to address, yet, such anarchy is temporary and abnormal, as the normal state inside the borders characterised by hierarchy. The literature fails to problematise this, assuming a relationship between state failure and anarchy (Carment, 2003, Newman, 2009).

Conceptualising and comprehending the process through which anarchy emerges in intrastate settings is a significant gap in the civil wars literature.[4] Understanding the emergence of anarchy is directly relevant to increasing our knowledge about how security competition unfolds in the absence of state authority, which theoretically creates a prime environment for where a security dilemma could be born and evolve, leading to armed violence.

Moreover, despite the careful work of a valiant scholarship on the security dilemma, one of the main issues still to be addressed is that of the link between the security dilemma mechanism and the actual outbreak of armed violence. Since the inauguration of the concept in the late 1950s, its students have demonstrated the importance of the mechanism to explain the process through which insecurity and mutual fears generate a process of conflict escalation, without, however, making the final step of linking it to war. It seems to be assumed instead that, over the course of the continuous escalation process, war is the inevitable by-product.

However, since this particular link has never been corroborated by strong evidence, this assumption requires further interrogation. Moreover, it has to be considered that, since

[4] As it will be discussed in Chapter 2, innovative work in this direction has been undertaken by Anthony Vinci (2008, 2009), but it is still a fledgling research agenda.

the factor of time has been a fundamental feature to the understanding of organised armed violence since Clausewitz (1832), any analysis on the topic should account for the process through which war actually starts. However, this aspect has been largely overlooked and unproblematised by traditional conceptualisations of the security dilemma, in both their applications across and within borders.

Finally, the issue of the *shadow of the future* and of future uncertainties (Axelrod, 1984, Taliaferro, 2000, Mearsheimer, 2001, Booth and Wheeler, 2008a) still present a gap in the security dilemma literature, both at the interstate and intrastate levels. This challenge is particularly salient in the study of the applicability of the concept to civil wars, where authors have concentrated on a history of hatred between the actors (Horowitz, 1985, Kaufmann, 1996b, Kaufman, 2001) or on fears about the immediate vulnerability under anarchy (Posen, 1993, Melander, 1999, 2009, Roe, 2005), but overlook the effect of the expectation of extreme, unpreventable insecurity due to the possibility that the other actors will achieve statehood and exercise hierarchical (and potentially largely unbound) power. In not addressing the effect of the ever-approaching horizon of events where the restoration of hierarchy happens, the literature fails to account for the pressure that actors in civil wars are subject to.

In conclusion, notwithstanding the theoretical imprecisions and shortcomings of the security dilemma concept, the model has been dismissed too soon as a possible explanation of the outbreak of armed violence both in interstate and intrastate conflicts.

I.2 - Research Questions

The overarching research question leading this thesis is:

Can the security dilemma (and security dilemma dynamics) explain the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings?

From this question, this research addresses the following sub-questions:

A. *Are there any inherent incompatibilities impeding the security dilemma to trigger the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings?*
B. *Can the security dilemma perform a central role in explaining the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings?*
C. *Is the security dilemma fundamentally incompatible with other explanations for the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings?*

I.3 - Hypotheses

Following from its research question, this thesis attempts to test the following hypothesis:

The security dilemma (and security dilemma dynamics) can be a valid explanation for the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings.

Additional hypotheses are also posited for the sub-questions addressed by the research:

A. *There are there no inherent incompatibilities indicating that the security dilemma cannot trigger the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings.*
B. *The security dilemma can perform a central role in explaining the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings.*
C. *There is no fundamental permanent incompatibility between the security dilemma other explanations for the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings.*[5]

I.4 - Argument

The central argument of this thesis is built through demonstrating that the security dilemma is a valid explanation of the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings. While this research does not seek to establish or support claims that the security dilemma is the only or the most accurate explanation of the outbreak of armed violence, it intends

[5] This hypothesis does not rule out all potential incompatibilities, but affirms that there is no permanent *a priori* incompatibility.

to ascertain that the application of this model to the study of civil war is sound and relevant, validating it both in terms of its internal and external coherence, as well as in its empirical value. It further demonstrates that the security dilemma can be a useful theoretical tool to enlighten our understanding of internal armed conflict by qualitatively tracing the mechanisms linking cause and effect, with a focus on the outcome of actual violence.

The debate on the security dilemma has been permeated by some issues that have particular relevance in hindering its application to civil wars. It will be argued here that some existing limitations derive from problematics present in its original conceptualisation. Nonetheless, the concept's utility persists, requiring the exploration of these issues and of potential solutions for them. It will be argued that while the security dilemma mechanism can be profitably applied to explain civil wars, there are several issues that need to be considered to clarify its validity and dispel claims by detractors. These are: two internal theoretical shortcomings (with reflections both across and within borders), one shortcoming stemming from the process of translating the security dilemma from the interstate to the intrastate realm, and a few complications deriving from limitations of previous tests of the mechanism.

The *conflation of motives and intentions* (Glaser, 2010) represents the first theoretical shortcoming. Students of security studies have conflated the motives and the behaviours of the actors in conflicts they are analysing. By locating aggression or expansionism on the part of one or more of the actors, they assume that this behaviour accounts for malign motivations on their part. While it can be that the motivation behind the behaviour is indeed malign, it might be that the aggressive behaviour is asserted in pursuit of security:

the actors believe that behaving aggressively is the only way to achieve security. The security dilemma is often defined and understood around the requirement of benign motives on the part of the actors. Thus, a simplistic analysis could lead to a dismissal of the security dilemma, by assuming that the aggressive behaviour is the consequence of a malign motivation. The language of motives/intentions itself can be complicating to the practical understanding of the phenomenon. In other words, it is argued that this conflation reduces the analytical capability to identify a security dilemma (which requires benign motives but not necessarily peaceful behaviour) only in situations where the motivation is benign and the behaviour is defensive, but leaving out all situations of security dilemmas where, for diverse reasons, benign motives generates aggressive behaviour. This research builds upon contributions towards disentangling motives and intentions, and supports the theoretical argument with two cases of violence linked to the mechanism of the security dilemma, determined by defensive motives that were accompanied by aggressive behaviour, demonstrating that the problem is meaningful. I also offer an explanation as to how the presence of *incompatible security requirements* (Boulding, 1959, Glaser, 2010) imposed a situation where aggressive behaviour was the outcome of defensive motives in the two case studies, with potential generalisable claims.

Another issue affecting the security dilemma conceptualisation is a conflation of the definition and the outcomes of the mechanism, which also relates to the possibility of *incompatible security requirements*. The security dilemma is commonly mistaken for one of its possible outcomes: its mitigation or transcendence (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a). An analyst that makes this mistake would only identify a security dilemma in situations where the awareness of the actors could have potentially defused or solved it. In other

words, by conflating definitions and outcomes, the security dilemma is not the process of security competition between two security seekers, but rather the perception that actors have about being in it and the actions they implement to counter it. Consequently, the interaction between two security-seekers that are unaware of being in a spiral, or even aware of being in a spiral but unable to mitigate it, would be seen as a *strategic challenge*[6], rather than a security dilemma. In some cases, this definition can be sufficient to correctly identify security dilemmas, but it will potentially exclude a significant number of instances of the phenomenon: particularly the ones where incompatible security requirements — *real or perceived* — are present. This thesis theoretically argues and empirically demonstrates that this conflation can be limiting, reinforcing the notion that its problematisation within the study of civil wars is important.

This thesis also argues that the particularity of intrastate conflict poses an extra layer of complication leading to failure in recognising that the security dilemma (and security-seeking motives) could manifest itself through the presence of aggressive behaviour. This translation from Westphalian to non-Westphalian contexts requires specific considerations: in intrastate conflict actors strategise considering the abnormality and exceptionality of the state of anarchy (which is normal and characteristic in the international system), as hierarchy is the norm and constitutive characteristic of the state. This research will argue that this *anticipation of the restoration of hierarchy* has a significant impact in fostering intractability: it increases the considerations uncertainty about the future, rather than that about the past and present, reinforcing a sense of

[6] As posited by Booth and Wheeler (2008b, p.9), a strategic challenge is a situation in which one of the actors identifies the other state as a real threat (whether correctly or not) and acts accordingly. This no longer constitutes a dilemma about what are the motives of the other actor, the only remaining question is the one of how to respond.

urgency. By this, the thesis suggests that studies of the security dilemma in civil wars should not to overlook the effect of the expectation of extreme, unpreventable insecurity due to the possibility that the other actors will achieve statehood and exercise hierarchical (and potentially largely unbound) power.

Moreover, other specific complications arise in existing scholarly attempts to test the validity of the security dilemma in its application to internal conflict. Both Kalyvas' (2008b) and Visser and Duyvesteyn's (2014) rely on two different approaches subject to criticism. The first author relies on a quantitative *large-n* methodology and recognises that '*this test can only be preliminary given the nature of the data*' and that '*the security dilemma can be observed directly only with great difficulty, if at all*' (Kalyvas, 2008b, p.20). The latter focuses on the case of the former Yugoslavia, the most repeatedly studied case in the evaluation of the role of the security dilemma in civil wars. Although the findings and conclusions of various studies have varied wildly, it is questionable that there has been such concentration on one single case. This study contributes to the existing literature with alternative empirical cases, Angola and Mozambique. This is important to generate more knowledge about the security dilemma mechanism, excluding the possibility that the case of former Yugoslavia creates any distortion in the studies.

The literature on civil wars has tended to attribute one single sufficient cause that explains the dynamics leading to the outbreak of violence, hindering the understanding of civil wars as multi-layered and multi causal phenomena. This often causes theories to offer simplifications that contradict the empirics and provide explanations that are potentially sound, but often incomplete and out of touch with the empirics. The centrality of the

debate on *greed-and-grievance* (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004) as an explanation for armed violence is a testimony to this logic: by achieving a simple framework, proponents of greed-and-grievance established a system of simple problems with simple solutions, but such simplification left out a significant dimension of persisting problems that went on unaddressed, and that would be importantly flagged up in empirical appreciations of civil war. This research deliberately approaches internal armed conflict through a multi-causal perspective, even if concerned only with the role of the security dilemma. It is difficult to pinpoint and single out one sufficient cause for any given civil war, and it is usually a conjunction of causes composed by multiple mechanisms that leads to conflict. Some mechanisms within this multi-causal environment can have more relevance than others, and we thus assign them the idea of being the *driving* causal force or *the engine pulling the causal train*. It is argued here that, in the studied cases, the security dilemma indeed *represents the engine of the causal train* (Gerring, 2005, 2008).

This thesis traces the path through which the security dilemma leads to the outbreak of armed violence in civil wars, illustrating it through two actual instances of the phenomenon: the outbreaks of armed violence following the independence of Angola and Mozambique in 1975. However, arguing for the possibility that the security dilemma caused internal armed violence and showing its validity in two cases does not imply that it represents the only existing causal path to this outcome. This thesis provides a problematisation of the process of translating a concept from International Relations theory and applying it to the realm of intrastate conflict, without deeming it as unusable. Finally, it also invites further investigation on the role the security dilemma can play alongside other dynamics described by the wider literature on the causes of conflict.

I.5 - Contributions

This research contributes to the field of International Relations in a number of both theoretical and empirical ways; the project is based on the discussion of two understudied cases of the outbreak of armed violence and the reflections of these case studies on the security dilemma and civil wars literature.

I.5.1 - Theoretical Contribution

This thesis provides three overarching theoretical contributions to the security dilemma literature (both interstate and intrastate) but also to the broader literature about the causes of armed conflict. Being part of a multi-causal approach to civil wars, this research ascertains, at the first stage, the potentiality of the security dilemma, by defending the idea that there is no *a priori* constitutive theoretical limitation that precludes the application of this explanation to civil wars. In other words, none of the premises, elements or characteristics of the security dilemma nor of internal armed conflict are necessarily in mutual direct contradiction.

This research traces the connection between the security dilemma and the outbreak of armed violence, demonstrating that the security dilemma is a relevant theoretical tool to explain internal armed violence, dispelling previous claims about its irrelevance (Visser and Duyvesteyn, 2014). This project further claims that anarchy is not only permissive but actually causal to dynamics related to the onset of civil wars, including (but potentially not limited to) the security dilemma, which ushers in the further import of other anarchy-centric concepts from International Relations theory to the study of civil

wars. Previous studies of the security dilemma and civil war[7] discuss the relationship between the mechanism and the establishment, maintenance and exacerbation of conflictual relationships between actors in domestic environments, stopping short of linking it to the actual outbreak of violence, which represents an expansion of the efforts of the literature. Finally, this research allowed me to trace two significantly different pathways under which the security dilemma mechanism has led to armed violence.

Discussing the issue of the conflation of motives and intentions is also a crucial contribution. Incorrectly inferring motives from behaviour/intentions is an analytical problem affecting the study of the security dilemma beyond its application to civil wars (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.30-34, Glaser, 2010, p.37-40). The conflation's most obvious implication is the incorrect dismissal of security-seeking motivation at the mere sight of hostile or aggressive behaviour, leading to the dismissal of the security dilemma. Motives and behaviour are often in pulling in opposite directions (Glaser, 1997, 2010), and a failure to appreciate this limits the capability that analysts have to directly make inferences and to determine what 'type' of actor they are observing. This problem has been overlooked with significant loss in the application of the security dilemma to intrastate conflict. The literature on the security dilemma and civil wars (Horowitz, 1985, Kaufmann, 1996b, Kaufman, 2001, Roe, 2005) does not problematise this and attempts to work on the basis of the direct inferences, referring to examples of actors' rhetoric to determine motivation. In doing so, they fall into the trap of conflating the observed behaviour with the motives behind them. By problematising this, I have conducted my

[7] As I have discussed in more detail on my theoretical chapters, it is curious that, Posen's (1993) contribution is the one that gets closer to explaining the outbreak of violence, despite being the seminal one.

empirical research questioning the rhetoric with lenses of doubt, contextualising it within other examples of the strategic interactions and contrasting attitudes (such as self-restraint), to interrogate and test the easy assumption that a rhetoric of hate necessarily equated aggressive motives.

This thesis' final overarching theoretical contribution is to highlight and address the conflation of the definition of the security dilemma and one of its possible outcomes, a further reason leading to an incorrect dismissal of the phenomena. Students of the security dilemma often define it in terms of one of its possible outcomes, its mitigation or transcendence.[8] As a consequence of this shortcoming, a strategic interaction between two security-seekers, which is the most basic form of the security dilemma, could be identified as something else in case one could not find a potential solution to it (in the form of mitigation or transcendence of the dilemma), taking a security-seeker for a greedy actor. It is argued that particular relevance must be given to this problem in the context of civil wars, where *incompatible security requirements* are often present, and even if they might end up forcefully leading actors to the tragic outcome of war, if actors were guided by security-seeking and benign motives, they are still in a security dilemma.

This relates to the problem of *future uncertainty* and the *expectation of the restoration of hierarchy*, as in civil wars controlling the state apparatus (or at least crucial parts of it) plays a central role in the strategic considerations of the actors due to the relationship between statehood and security. As actors perceive the abnormality of anarchy in their domestic environment, they should account for an ever-approaching horizon where

[8] Booth and Wheeler (2008a, p.10-11) define mitigation and transcendence.

hierarchy (in the form of the Leviathan) will be restored. This perspective gradually but exponentially increases their insecurity, whether or not they can be aware of possible solutions and act upon them, or simply to exercise empathy towards their counterparts.

I.5.2 - Empirical Contribution

The main empirical contribution provided by this thesis consists in the novel analysis of the cases of post-independence violence in both Angola and Mozambique, following the 1974 Carnation Revolution. These two cases have been studied from the historical (for example, Marcum, 1978, Henderson, 1979, Hanlon, 1984, Hoile, 1994, Minter, 1994, Hall and Young, 1997, Gleijeses, 2002, George, 2005) and socio-anthropological (for example, Chabal, 1983, Geffray, 1990, Brittain, 1998, Cabrita, 2000, Alden, 2001, Birmingham, 2002, Cahen, 2006, Emerson, 2013) perspectives, but continue to be under-interrogated in the subfields of conflict studies and international security. In particular, the performance of the security dilemma has never been tested against those cases, and this thesis is the first detailed study examining the role of uncertainty and insecurity in generating the first wave of post-colonial armed violence in Angola and Mozambique. This contribution is relevant beyond historical purpose when contextualised in the theoretical debate: previous studies of the security dilemma have, with few exceptions, concentrated their efforts on the study of the internal violence in ex-Yugoslavia, creating a potentially restrictive case bias in the literature. The novelty of the cases studied in this thesis further helps to counter this case bias. Exceeding their original intended purpose as a laboratory for the evaluation of the security dilemma in civil wars, the empirical work conducted in this research advances the knowledge about the cases, highlighting the connection between the outcome of armed violence and the security competition during the transition process (following Portugal's colonial retreat

in 1975) in Angola and Mozambique. The predominant narrative about the violence in Angola and Mozambique points towards the *greed and grievance* mechanism (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004, Paul Collier *et al.*, 2009), in the form of the fight to secure and exploit natural resources for economic gains. The empirical work conducted as part of this research demonstrated that even if grievances were present and elements of ethnopolitics could be relevant, the cases of post-decolonisation violence in Angola and Mozambique demonstrate two situations of mutual insecurity spiralling into violence, reinforcing the importance of the security dilemma.

Moreover, the case study of Mozambique offered an analytical challenge that allowed on another issue in the literature about the security dilemma: while the security dilemma in Angola unfolded entirely at the domestic level, in Mozambique the relevant dynamics were located at the regional level. A simplistic analysis would dismiss the latter as not pertaining to the discussion on civil wars, but this research uncovered the connection between the outbreak of internal armed violence inside Mozambique (between FRELIMO and RENAMO) and the security competition between the recently independent Mozambique and Rhodesia. This reinforces the importance of the agenda on transnational causes of conflict (Gleditsch, 2007, Checkel, 2013), demonstrating and contextualising the potential role of the security dilemma at the transnational level.

I.6 - Structure of the Thesis

The rest of this thesis is divided into five substantive chapters. Chapter 1 addresses the methodological approach adopted in this thesis. Chapter 2 and 3 comprise the theoretical discussion. Chapters 4 and 5 contain the empirical analysis developed across two case studies. A Conclusion is presented at the end. The two initial chapters address the

theoretical contribution of this thesis, and the two subsequent ones comprise the empirical one.

The theoretical discussion is presented as follows. Chapter 2 discusses the existing literature on the security dilemma and outlines various definitions of the theory, both in their application to inter- and intra-state conflict. The chapter contextualises the contribution of relevant works and the concepts that are key to the argument presented, recognising the gaps in the literature and problematising them. Chapter 3 focuses on alternative explanations (other than the security dilemma) for conflict, or, in other words, puts the security dilemma in the context of the wider debates about the causes of the outbreak of armed violence. In this process, this research contrasts the security dilemma with other theoretical constructs. In doing so, it analyses the shortcomings of the alternative possibilities but, more importantly, delineates the compatibilities and incompatibilities between the security dilemma and other studied mechanisms, leading to the outbreak of armed violence in civil wars. The overall theoretical discussion intends to contextualise the security dilemma literature in the wider debate about armed violence and civil war. In recalling the literature's most recent contributions concerning interstate conflict to the intrastate realm, this research intends to update the existing translations of the security dilemma's application from across to inside the borders of the state, and to demonstrate that the validity this mechanism does not necessarily imply the invalidity of other possible causal mechanisms.

An empirical application of the theory is then introduced, considering the cases of the outbreak of armed violence in post-colonial Angola and Mozambique that followed the 1974 Carnation Revolution. The theory presented in Chapters 2 and 3 is discussed in the

context of both cases; they are thus used as a laboratory to assess the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars. By employing process tracing techniques, this research looks at the developments that followed the independence of both countries and identifies the necessary conditions for a security dilemma to unfold, the way in which it unfolds, and finally linking the security dilemma and the outbreak of violence in the cases. In its fourth and fifth chapters, this thesis reviews the existing narratives about the Angolan and Mozambican independences respectively. Each chapter revisits the relevant preconditions for conflict (the events of the anti-colonial war, the Carnation Revolution and the transition period itself) and the brief period after the transition leading to outbreak of violence. The analysis of the Angolan case will demonstrate the existence of a *typical* domestic security dilemma (Posen, 1993), between domestic actors, and where a spiral of mutual fears and uncertainty led to the initial outbreak of violence. In an interesting contrast, in Mozambique, the outbreak of internal armed violence can be linked to the regional dimension, with immediate transnational effects, mapping a more nuanced facet that the security dilemma can assume.

Chapter 1 – Methodological Approach: *using mechanistic causality to trace the security dilemma in Angola and Mozambique*

'Science is not everything, but science is very beautiful'.

- Robert Oppenheimer

'L'action violente laisse peu de traces'.[1]

- Antoine de Saint Exupéry, in Vol de Nuit

1.1 - Theory Testing in Qualitative Research

In this study, a theory testing approach is employed on two case studies to reflect on the strengths and limitations of existing theoretical frameworks,[2] and as a result provide insights into how to improve and refine those frameworks (Van Evera, 1997, George and Bennett, 2005, Bennett and Elman, 2006, 2007, Bennett, 2013). This approach is consistent with the process tracing premise of *casting the net widely*.[3] The theory improvements proposed remain generalisable, *standing outside of the cases* (Gerring, 2008, Bennett, 2013, Bennett and Checkel, 2015b, Lyall, 2015, Mahoney, 2015, Waldner, 2015).

[1] 'Violent action leaves few traces'.

[2] Here, particularly, the security dilemma.

[3] One brilliant example of this deductive-inductive approach to theory testing and development through the use of process tracing is Elisabeth Jean Wood's (2003) book on the insurgency in El Salvador. Notably, Wood achieves a myriad of generalisable causal inferences by investigating the processes in play in a single case.

Social phenomena are not only inherently complex, they are also usually multicausal and indeterminate. Civil wars, as other political outcomes, can result from a variety of processes; as can civil peace. Therefore, it is hard to produce theories that identify factors that are either sufficient or strictly necessary for the onset of civil wars. This thesis argues, among other things, that previous works on the relationship between security dilemmas and civil war (or lack thereof) are right in pointing out that security dilemmas are not necessary conditions for civil war, but that they are wrong to conclude that security dilemmas can never be factors that lead to civil war. In other words, this research shows that malign motives are not a strictly necessary condition for the onset (and escalation) of armed violence.

Instead of trying to produce a law-like statement connecting anarchy, uncertainty, insecurity and civil war, the argument developed here is probabilistic in nature. Security dilemmas are one possible pathway to civil war. Sometimes they are present, but sometimes they are not. Whether any given case of civil war was preceded by malign motives or by spirals driven by uncertainty and fear is ultimately an empirical question. While other authors are quick to infer malign motives from violent outcomes, this thesis shows how when anarchy emerges, security dilemmas can follow, which in turn can lead to armed violence. The case-study methodology cannot uncover *how much* more likely civil war becomes when anarchy and security dilemmas occur, but it can help explain *how* this happens. The case studies used here therefore focus on identifying the causal mechanisms, or causal processes, that connect anarchy and civil war.

For the purposes of this research, causal mechanisms are defined as:

> ultimately unobservable physical, social, or psychological processes through which agents with causal capacities operate, but only in specific contexts or conditions, to transfer energy, information, or matter to other entities. In doing so, the causal agent changes the affected entities' characteristics, capacities, or propensities in ways that persist until subsequent causal mechanisms act upon them. If we are able to measure changes in the entity being acted upon after the intervention of the causal mechanism and in temporal or spatial isolation from other mechanisms, then the causal mechanism may be said to have generated the observed change in the entity (Alexander George and Bennett, 2005, p. 137).

In this sense, this thesis cements the plausibility of the security dilemma as an explanation for armed violence in civil wars (and thus refuting claims that it is irrelevant), demonstrates its centrality in the studied cases, and supports claims of potential generalisability (at various levels) across the universe of cases (Gerring, 2005, 2008, Jackson, 2011).

1.2 - Process Tracing: *a refined method to infer mechanistic causality*

The concept of *process tracing* dates to the late 1960s or early 1970s, and originated in the field of cognitive psychology. In its original form, process tracing refers to '*techniques for examining the intermediate steps in cognitive mental processes to understand the better heuristics through which humans make decisions*' (Bennett and Checkel, 2015a, p.5). It was first appropriated for use in political science by Alexander L. George in 1979.[4] The concept's use in psychology relates to the individual conceptual level of analysis, but it can be (and has been) used to make inferences about structural or macro-level

[4] Unsurprisingly, George was conducting research in political psychology, at Stanford University back then.

explanations (Alexander George and Bennett, 2005, p.142), in line with the traditional scope of political science. Importantly, the '*essential meaning retained by the term process tracing (…) refers to the examination of intermediate steps in a process to make inferences about hypotheses on how that process took place and whether and how it generated the outcome of interest*' (Bennett and Checkel, 2015a, p.6).

This lead to the definition posited by Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, for whom process tracing involves:

> the use of histories, archival documents, interview transcripts, and other sources to see whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes or implies in a case is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables in that case (Alexander George and Bennett, 2005, p.6),

and for whom:

> the process-tracing method attempts to identify the intervening causal process — the causal chain and causal mechanism — between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable (Alexander George and Bennett, 2005, p.206).

In other words, process tracing constitutes a way of ascertaining causal relationships in *single* or *small-n* case study approaches, linking outcomes (dependent variables) to explanations (independent variables) through the illustration of causal mechanisms (intervening variables), accounting for the complexity of social reality and embracing multiple causality (David Collier, 2011). A practical visualisation of the most important elements of the process tracing approach can also be achieved with the use of the *domino metaphor*. Imagine that some individual walks into a room and sees a row of dominos lying on a table. Being aware that they were standing earlier, this individual attempt to

make inferences about what happened, and more specifically, try to understand if the first domino of the row caused the last to fall. Obviously, a domino effect could have been triggered, causally connecting the first and the last domino, and explaining the row of lying dominos in between. However, other elements could have participated in the causal process, and be just as important to explain the occurred then the domino effect itself. By looking at the intervening processes through the use of diagnostic evidence, one should be able to understand — for example — whether wind or a movement of the table was part of the causal chain of events. Just as importantly, examining the diagnostic evidence (any particularity in the position of the dominos, any significant changes in the position of the table, any external forces acting on the dominos, any noise heard indicating the succession of the dominos falling, and so on) allow us to tell a better story of what happened, allowing us to obtain a richer causal story about the connection between the two dominos.

The focus of the metaphor is on the role of intervening variables, but the problem lies exactly in the fact that the mechanistic understanding of the causal relationships opens the possibility to identify that, in the case of the dominos, it was the one in the middle of the row that caused the event analysed. This is problematic because social scientists think of variables as cause (independent) or caused (dependent), but only see intervening variables as something that transmit *'causal force, without adding to it, subtracting from it, or altering it, to subsequent intervening variables and ultimately through them to the dependent variable'* (Bennett and Checkel, 2015a, pp. 6-7). To solve this, one can replace the terminology of *intervening variable*, and, as Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel suggest, '*define process tracing as the analysis of evidence on processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a case for the purposes of either developing*

or testing hypotheses about causal mechanisms that might causally explain the case'. This analysis can be done in three ways (Bennett and Checkel, 2015a, p.8): deductively (by examining '*the observable implications of hypothesized causal mechanisms within a case to test whether a theory on these mechanisms explains the case*'); inductively (by using '*evidence from within a case to develop hypotheses that might explain the case*'), or; both deductively and inductively (where '*the latter hypotheses may, in turn, generate additional testable implications in the case or in other cases*'). By focusing on causal process rather than on covariation, process tracing constitutes a desired improvement from approaches based on John Stuart Mill's Methods of Induction, especially desirable in the case of social science.

Alongside, and in support of, the process tracing approach, this research also takes a broadly Bayesian standpoint; evidence is used to affirm some explanations and cast doubt upon others, using *eliminative induction*. That is, if alternative explanations are rendered less likely, more confidence can be attained about that are remaining or hypothesised. Nonetheless, it is an understood shortcoming of this approach that, due to the limits on observational evidence, it is impossible to be irrefutably certain about any theory or explanation. Moreover, Karl Popper's caveats also apply here, warning of the unavoidable possibility that newly developed theories will be superior to the current ones (Gerring, 2005, Waldner, 2015).

1.3 - Case Studies: *the social scientist's laboratory!*

The proposed research design will incorporate two case studies. The case study method is the most appropriate methodology for this project as it allows for the detailed investigation of the security dilemma mechanism. The purpose of this methodology is to

produce an in-depth analysis consistent with the task of understanding the inner workings of causal processes, allowing to better ascertain not only *if* but more importantly *how* hypothesised causes led to observed outcomes in historical cases.

As will be discussed, one of the most complicated issues with studying the security dilemma is the extreme difficulty (or even impossibility) to observe this mechanism directly. The case study approach is particularly well suited to assess cause and effect relationships between variables that are difficult to define and/or measure, and to contextualise them in the space where they happen. Thus, the case study path embraces the inherent complexity of the phenomena of multidimensional domestic armed violence and brings clear benefits to the understanding of relative effects and interactions between the various studied elements, both those that are directly relevant and those that are only indirectly or contextually relevant.

This thesis intends to demonstrate the general plausibility of the security dilemma as one explanation for the outbreak of armed violence in the context of civil wars. It does this by showing that security dilemmas following the emergence of anarchy were at the heart of the civil wars in Angola and Mozambique.

In methodological terms, we can identify two tasks for causal inference. The most efficient way to demonstrate the security dilemma's relevance is to show whether and how it *causally connects* anarchy to violence. First, this research will approach its cases from the perspective of the *congruence procedure*, as developed by Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005). A congruence procedure is a within case method of causal interpretation where the predicted values of the analysed variables are compared with

their observed values. Congruence tests are important to establish the preponderance and plausibility of hypothesised causal models, but are not aimed at disconfirming competing theses. This confirms the plausibility of the security dilemma explanation in the context of civil wars, but more evidence as to its presence must be sought in the studied cases. Thus, this research further employs *within case process tracing* in two cases to demonstrate more precisely the role of the hypothesised mechanism in generating armed violence in the cases. In this regard, and as part of the process tracing approach, this research interrogates the role of potential alternative explanations and their compatibility with the model proposed. Furthermore, the process tracing approach allows the researcher to show how the security dilemma develops by identifying causal mechanisms and intervening variables between the independent and the dependent variables (Bennett and Checkel, 2015b). Finally, this thesis seeks to be '(…) *deeply engaged with both theory and with the close analysis of cases, giving them an unusual capacity to see the general in the particular*' (Bennett and Elman, 2007, p.178) — the Conceptual Innovation approach — by exploring process tracing in both inductive and deductive mutually reinforcing settings. The exploration of motives, intentions, actor behaviour, patterns of violence, and the consequences of state failure and state contestation are more richly understandable with the use of case studies. In sum, case studies allow for rigorous engagement with theory testing and development, focusing on the broad range of complex factors that influence the thesis' object of study.

The universe of potential cases for the present study include all instances of internal armed violence that are preceded by the experience of state collapse and the ensuing

emergent anarchy.[5] Within this population, two cases are selected for study: those of the outbreak of armed violence in Angola (1975) and Mozambique (1978), following Portugal's Carnation Revolution in 1974, which led to the countries' decolonisation. The two chosen cases studies were selected purposely, as they share several preconditions that would allow me to single out different dynamics in each case through process tracing. Furthermore, both cases are part of Lusophone Africa and thus former Portuguese colonies. Both are in Southern Africa and share a geographical and regional background, with a similar population size, economy (at the time), climate, etc. Both countries came to independence through very similar processes and the time frame studied in this thesis is also similar for both.

The case selection strategies satisfies five out of the eleven possible reasons for case-selection[6] posited by Stephen Van Evera (1997, pp.77-78): a predicted/expected *large within-case variance* in values for the independent, dependent or condition [intervening] variables (3); *divergence of predictions made of the case by competing theories* (4); *cases with prototypical background characteristics* (6); selection of *outlier cases* (8) and, *appropriateness for performing a previously omitted type of test* (11). Due to the strongly theoretical component of the research question posed in this study, satisfying Van Evera's fourth reason automatically satisfies his eighth reason, as the stronger are the claims made by competing theories, the more of an outlier will the selected case be in terms of the tested theory. This dynamic is also corroborated by the largely Bayesian approach to

[5] As will be discussed in the first two chapters, the conceptualisation of anarchy emergence used here relies heavily on the work of Barry Posen (1993) and Anthony Vinci (2008, 2009).

[6] Van Evera's eleven possible reasons for case selection are not always mutually exclusive, nor required in their entirety. The case selection employed is justified if it satisfies one or more nominated reasons. Satisfying more or less reasons does not necessarily increase or decrease the validity or the strength of the claims made.

process tracing adopted in this thesis. Finally, and also due to the highly theoretical nature of this inquiry, the case selection strategy can be simultaneously associated with both to the *confirmatory/most-likely* and the *disconfirmatory/least-likely* strategies (Gerring, 2007b, Beach and Pedersen, 2016, Rohlfing, 2016); on the one hand, both cases had prototypical conditions and would be expected to display favourable conditions to the development of the security dilemma (confirmatory hypothesis), but on the other hand the previous analysis of the cases make strong claims based on existing alternative theoretical frameworks, imposing a *tough test* to the security dilemma thesis (disconfirmatory hypothesis). This mutually reinforcing, almost *feedback-effect* like interaction between confirmatory and disconfirmatory tests testifies to the quality of mechanistic approaches to causality in the social sciences.

Finally, it must be noted that process tracing driven by mechanistic approaches to causality usually lead to an appreciation of the cases which is profitably delivered in form of a narrative or story. Rather than focusing on compartmentalising potential causes and seeing how each of them play a role in the case, the focus is in telling the story of the case and demonstrating how the hypothesised factors and/or diagnostic evidence are present in the case. This is a departure from traditional forms of academic writing, which often impose a more structured form of argumentation based in linear cause-effect relationships, but one that embraces the complexity and open-minded approach to complex causality in the study of social reality (Wood, 2003, Bennett, 2013, Bennett and Checkel, 2015a). This thesis adopts this approach and thus the way the information about the cases are presented reflect the preoccupation with telling the story of the cases, and linking the elements researched while the story unfolds, rather than logically sectioning causes and consequences and analysing them separately.

1.4 - Data Sources

As John Gerring (2007a, p.173) has argued with reference to the process tracing method, '*multiple types of evidence are employed for the verification of a single inference – bits and pieces of evidence that embody different units of analysis*'. This research relies on two main types of data sources. Several secondary sources from various disciplines from the realm of humanities were used to obtain information about the history of Angola and Mozambique of the period studied, mostly in the form of academic and non-academic books, and journal articles. Primary sources are also investigated: this research relies on archival sources collected in Portugal, the United States and the United Kingdom, and semi-structured elite interviews conducted with key actors involved in the cases studied.

1.4.1 – Interviews

In the original conception of this research, I endeavoured to use semi-structured elite interviews to revisit the perceptions the actors involved in the Angolan and Mozambican civil wars experienced *vis-à-vis* their strategic environment. Unfortunately, this approach proved very difficult, in part by reasons previously anticipated, but also for unexpected reasons. While conducting a survey of potential interviewees, it was expected that there would be difficulties in locating available members of the elites within the parties to conflict. Since the intent was to uncover perceptions leading to action in the context of strategic decision making, and given the organised structures of the actors studied, the relevant actors were senior military and governmental officers. As the period studied in this thesis focusses only on a few years between 1974 and 1978, most of the potential interviewees would be expected to be currently very old or deceased. Within the restricted group of potential interviewees, an additional layer of complication also

emerged; most of these potential interviewees that were still alive are politically engaged and thus not willing to participate in the research. The very few individuals that I managed to locate and contact did not want to be interviewed.

It is my understanding that, given the importance of the period studied to the political construct of the ruling parties in both countries, attempts at its investigation are often rebuked in favour of emphasising the official narrative. This was reinforced in discussions with other researchers working on these two countries but looking at different time frames or topics[7]; key party figures, or other figures that were politically relevant seem keener to discuss issues that are not directly related to the existing discourse of the legitimacy to power. For example, FRELIMO's politicians would accept to sit down and discuss the process leading to the adoption of determined development policies in the 1990s Mozambique, or about their cooperation with extra-regional actors to that effect.[8] The same would be true of interviewing Angolan MPLA officers about the post 1990 phase of the Civil War on that country. Moreover, when they are willing to discuss it, their accounts are very astringent to the officially sanctioned stories. Indeed, the official narrative on the process of decolonisation is integral to a justification of the continuity of both the MPLA (in Angola) and FRELIMO (in Mozambique) and their legitimacy in power since 1974, and, as such, are almost seen as part of the national interest.

[7] In this regard, I've spoken to many researchers who studied or have studied Angola and Mozambique, but I am particularly grateful to the insights provided by, Filipe Calvão, Jennifer Dresden, Manuel Ennes Ferreira and Alexandra Marques.

[8] Even if such interviews were marked by a strict adherence to the official party discourse, at least they would happen.

Considering these difficulties, I decided to take an indirect approach, interviewing Portuguese officers that had been involved in the decolonization and transition process, and that, in many cases, had significant contact with the Angolans and Mozambicans whom I would have liked to interview in-person. A list of interviewees is available as an appendix to this thesis. For several reasons, the Portuguese officers were easier to track down and contact, and while some of them still preferred not to go on the record or give formal interviews all together, it was possible to interview number of key actors that held relevant positions and had knowledge of detailed information about the strategic panorama in both countries.

Despite their detailed knowledge about the cases, most interviewees were hesitant to categorically confirm or disconfirm their understanding of actors' perceptions, always highlighting the multi-layered and complex conflict dynamics operating in the post-decolonisation moment. Most of the data obtained through interviews helped me shape a narrative about the moments needed to the outbreak of violence, but very few bits of this data offer insight into actors' motivations and perceptions. While this is, of course, less than ideal, given the restrictions of access it was the best approximation possible to gaining direct insight on the actors' thinking, and this is a common issue with studying the security dilemma: often, only the very senior officials that were sitting in the 'decision-making site' can be unequivocal about what was the operating mind-set with which they engaged the situation. And even when we have access to those individuals, this information can often be contradictory with other pieces of evidence we may find, and personal recollections of events that happened thirty years ago are always limited by the capability of memory as well as by the effect of history.

1.4.2 – Archival Sources

In addition to interviews, I also used archival research to obtain primary data used to study the two cases. Here, again, there were difficulties in gaining access to Angolan and Mozambican archives relating to period. In conversation wither other researchers interested in the two countries, I was assured that if I had I attempted to to investigate archives in Angola and Mozambique I would have struggled to find useful material. Local archives with resources relating to the studied period are not available, and the reasons behind this limitation are probably the same as the ones raised in the previous section. During the prospective phase of data collection, I attempted to contact potential archival sources in the two countries, but this effort proved futile. In certain cases, responses received indicated uncertainty about the presence and availability of such files. On the other hand, I was aware of the presence of potentially interesting archival sources in Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States, which led me to visit those sources. Nonetheless, I was surprised to discover that even in the Portuguese archives there are certain files that are still uncatalogued, inaccessible or have — ostensibly or otherwise — only limited access. There is potential for uncovering more detailed and possibly game-changing evidence in local archives (if they are to be made available) as well as in other archives in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Russia and Cuba and future research can draw on these sources if they are ever made public available. A list of the archives visited is available as an appendix to this thesis.

While very detailed, most of the material available and consulted lacked analytical content, and was mostly concerned with reports of the facts on the ground. While this was useful in reconstructing the strategic panorama and confirming valuable trends that help identify dynamics pertaining to the security dilemma, the material lacks direct

indication of the existence of spirals. While this is a common limitation in research looking at the security dilemma, it is better accommodated by the Bayesian-informed process tracing approach previously described; the diagnostic evidence collected helps to build a narrative that is presented in the form of a case study, focusing on demonstrating the complexity of the case and interaction between various elements at play.

1.5 - Limitations of the Research

It must be stated here that there are several limitations which have affected the thesis. Practical concerns, such as time restrictions, and the lack of availability of resources have constrained the reach of the proposals and claims made here. The two chosen case studies were selected purposely, as they share many preconditions that would allow pinpointing different dynamics in each case through process tracing. However, while this is methodologically beneficial, it also constrains the generalisability of the claims. Both cases are part of lusophone Africa and thus former Portuguese colonies. Both are in Southern Africa and share a geographical and regional background, with a fairly similar population size, economy, and climate. Both countries came to independence through very similar processes. Finally, the period covered in this thesis reflects the same era. In this sense, a series of background dynamics could be in place, potentially limiting the findings presented and constraining their generalisability.

For these reasons, further expansion of the pool of cases evaluated through the lenses of the security dilemma would be very welcome, in the spirit of what has been argued here *vis-à-vis* the centrality of studies of the ex-Yugoslavia. In that sense, a mixed methods approach to the study of the security dilemma is suggested as the way forward. The

combination of rigorous, carefully designed *large-n* statistical analysis deployed to identify trends, particular interactions and interesting cases, coupled with detailed qualitative case study to identify trends and interactions, would allow for multiple verifications of the quality of the security dilemma as a tool to explain armed violence in civil wars.

The complex environment of social and political life also puts constraints on what can be claimed in causal terms. It has been argued that the centrality of the security dilemma explanation in the cited cases is central, but it is acknowledged that a more detailed evaluation of the cases would allow for a more complete assessment of the extent to which the security dilemma was central relative to other dynamics in place. This would also apply in ascertaining if there were any interactions between the security dilemma and other dynamics that make the former more salient or amenable to identification. The interplay of the security dilemma and other causal elements already mapped out by specialists of internal armed violence could be approached in a more systematic way, with benefits to both theoretical bodies. The role of the transition from colonies to independent countries and the role of the revolutionary intent requires further investigation on its interaction with the security dilemma, mainly as a reason for the perception of incompatible security requirements.

A final limitation of this research is the lack of a consistent conceptualisation of the emergence of anarchy, and further research on this particular element would add value to several approaches in the study of conflict. The abnormality of anarchy in the domestic environment demands more thorough analysis on its aetiology. Currently, the existing research does not problematise this issue, and a systematic approach to understand the

possible ways in which anarchy can emerge, as well as any specific conditional effect they can have on dynamics that are dependent, such as the security dilemma.

Chapter 2 – The Security Dilemma: when Defensive Motives lead to Aggressive Behaviours

> ***'I will have no man in my boat, said Starbuck, who is not afraid of a whale. By this, he seemed to mean, not only that the most reliable and useful courage was that which arises from the fair estimation of the encountered peril, but that an utterly fearless man is a far more dangerous comrade than a coward'.***
>
> - Herman Melville*, in* Moby Dick

> ***'Hate is an automatic response to fear, for fear humiliates'.***
>
> - Graham Greene*, in* The Human Factor

2.1 - Introduction

The security dilemma is arguably one of the most important theoretical constructs in the field of International Relations. It has been theorised by realists, institutionalists and constructivists alike as an important analytical construct to understand the seeming intractability of security competition and conflict in international politics. Crucially, the security dilemma illustrates how two actors can find themselves embroiled in a conflict, even in the absence of fundamentally incompatible security requirements, merely as a product of their uncertainty about the other's intentions. As discussed in the introduction to this study, the various authors who pioneered the concept were mainly concerned with conflict *between* states, and not violence that occurs within the borders of the state. It is only until recently that scholars have attempted to apply the concept of the security

dilemma to the study of conflict between armed, politically motivated actors in civil wars. Since international politics is qualitatively different from politics within the state, it is reasonable to expect that the security dilemma would operate differently in a different context, requiring some adaptation and/or re-conceptualisation.

War is a complex phenomenon that cannot be entirely understood through any single explanatory framework alone. Thus, proponents of the use of the security dilemma explanation in civil wars should not try and claim that this is a final explanation to all instances of the outbreak of violence, nor that such mechanism is always entirely sufficient to explain that phenomenon. Rather, my attempt here is to highlight one potential mechanism through which domestic political struggles can become violent. This mechanism can have different levels of importance in each case, varying from having very little relevance to being completely crucial. In the same fashion, this mechanism can function as part of a larger machinery, and alternative mechanisms can be concomitantly in place.

To understand the role the security dilemma plays in explaining the outbreak of violence in civil wars, current views should be accorded candid consideration. Various definitions of the security dilemma exist, and some of these will be discussed according to their relevance to the argument put forward in this thesis. As will be demonstrated, the debate about the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars branched out from the ongoing and longstanding debates about the security dilemma in general; such branching out created some distance between both sides of the debate. When reflecting about the security dilemma, both across and within borders, it is beneficial to relate and problematise findings in a holistic way. I will begin by discussing the security dilemma

as a general concept and will then review its particular applications to civil wars. In this process, I will appraise the issues that are more relevant to my argument: the lack of clarification about the security dilemma's role in the outbreak of violence, the conflation of motives and intentions (or behaviours), the conflation of definitions and outcomes, and the relevance of the security dilemma in the context of incompatible security requirements.

2.2 - The Elements of the Security Dilemma

As Ken Booth and Nicholas J. Wheeler have argued, a security dilemma is a '*two level strategic predicament*' (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.4) between political actors, where: 1) '*the first and basic level consists of a dilemma of interpretation about the motives, intentions and capabilities of others*'; and 2) the second (and conditional to the first) is a *dilemma of response*, consisting of a decision on how to respond to the prior interpretation made in the first stage.

Uncertainty permeates the concept of the security dilemma and, as such, strategic predicaments would not exist if actors could know with certainty what goes on in the mind of their counterparts, nor if their counterparts could communicate, unequivocally and beyond doubt, what their real intentions are. While motivations could be malign, and thus a case of voluntary deception, the scenario that is more interesting from the point of view of the security dilemma is that of actors with security seeking motivations. Historians of war contend that the strategic interactions between politically motivated actors are often shrouded in secrecy and deception; asymmetric information is more

advantageous than transparency[1] as a tool of the statesman and the warrior in the pursuit of victory (Clausewitz, 1832, Sun-Tzu, 2008).

The discussion, then, takes as its point of departure uncertainty about what is happening in the mind of 'others' and about the *ambiguous nature of weapons* (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, ch.2), both of which are ultimately unavoidable and are a quintessential characteristic of the security dilemma. Another necessary feature is at least some level of unbound interaction, which is undisputedly defined[2] in international relations theory through the concept of anarchy (for example in Morgenthau, 1948, Waltz, 1959, 1979).

Booth and Wheeler (2008a, pp. 10-11) argue that there are three possible ideal-typical logics to approach those issues: the *fatalist, mitigator and transcender* logics. In a nutshell, the *fatalist* logic assumes that '*insecurity can never be escaped in international politics*'; the *mitigator* logic determines that '*insecurity can be temporarily ameliorated but not eliminated*'; and the *transcender* logic proposes solutions for human society to '*replace*' insecurity (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.10). It is important to note that Booth and Wheeler understand these as ideal types for categorisation and development of ideas pertaining to the theory, but that they are not completely discrete, exclusive and nor can they be understood as *traditions* or *schools*.

[1] Expressed by Sun-Tzu's (2008) dictum, at verse 18 of the first chapter: '*all warfare is based on deception*'.

[2] The definition of anarchy is mostly undisputed as it is core to the understanding of international relations. Its effects, however, have been the topic of extensive debate. For the purpose of this thesis, I adhere to the conceptualisation of anarchy used in the realist tradition of international relations theory.

In situations of internal armed violence and civil war, the systemic pressure generated by specific factors favours Barry Posen's definition of the security dilemma, or, at least, the effects that stem from it. His approach defines the security dilemma as a situation in which '*what one does to enhance one's own security causes reactions that, in the end, can make one less secure*' (Posen, 1993, p.28)[3]. Posen's work was directed to the study of civil wars, but it is interesting to note that its definition is not restricted to domestic violence. In fact, Posen's formulation is perfectly in line with Robert Jervis' conception of the security dilemma ('*these unintended and undesired consequences of actions meant to be defensive*'), aimed at international conflict (Jervis, 1976, p.66).

They do, however, epitomise the *fatalist* logic:

> Often statesmen do not recognise that this problem exists: they do not empathise with their neighbours: they are unaware that their own actions can seem threatening. Often it does not matter if they know of this problem. The nature of their situation compels them to take the steps they do (Posen, 1993, p.28).

Thus, a security dilemma may be in place even if the parties involved do not realise they are in one, and it is only the informed sight of an *ex-post facto* analyst that will uncover the misperception (Butterfield, 1951). Even then, in light of the most detailed and accurate historical sources about the case studied, it might be impossible to unequivocally conclude what were the true motives and intentions of actors, and as Posen reminds us, even if we could, it is often irrelevant to whether a security dilemma

[3] While there is dispute that this definition would amount to what Booth and Wheeler (2008a) call the 'Security Paradox'. Later on in this chapter, I will argue that the idea of the 'Security Paradox' depends on assumptions that relate to a conflation of definitions and outcomes, which requires more development.

has taken place or not[4]. In this situation, the lack of empathy between the actors drives the spiral of fears, making actors believe that the motives behind the other's behaviours are essentially malign.

This classic, tragic elaboration of the security dilemma, known as the *Butterfieldian Tragedy*, paying homage to Herbert Butterfield's (1951) work, is the purest form of the security dilemma: two actors that are entirely motivated by security concerns (what is often described as benign motives), with assumed compatible security requirements end up in a tragic, unavoidable war, because they can only see each other's action as threatening, as a fruit of the lack of capability to unequivocally communicate the true nature of their motivations:

> For you know that you yourself mean him no harm, and that you want nothing from him save guarantees for your own safety; and it is never possible for you to realise or remember properly that since he cannot see the inside of your mind, he can never have the same assurance of your intentions that you have (…) and neither party sees the nature of the predicament he is in, for each only imagines that the other party is being hostile and unreasonable. It is even possible for each to feel that the other is wilfully withholding the guarantees that would have enabled him to have a sense of security (Butterfield, 1951, p.21).

Thus, the *other minds problem* (Hollis and Smith, 1990, pp.171-176) is salient and fundamental for the security dilemma, through what Butterfield (1951, p.21) called *Hobbesian fear*: '*you yourself may vividly feel the terrible fear that you have of the other party, but you cannot enter into the other man's counter-fear or even understand why he*

[4] This ontological problem is pervasive to the discussion about the validity of the security dilemma, and will be discussed later in more detail, as it pertains to the conflation between definitions and outcomes.

should be particularly nervous'. John Herz (1950, 1951, 1962), the other founding scholar of the security dilemma, also espoused the view that there was a state of fundamental, unresolvable uncertainty that led decision-makers to be constantly fearful of others intentions and lead to the dynamic of *kill or perish*, where the expectation and preparation for the worst possible scenario led to tragic consequences.

Fifty years later, John J. Mearsheimer (2001) would theorise that the dominant and only viable strategy for the security is a broadening of the power gap between an actor and its opponents, ultimately leading to a struggle for hegemony. This view split the debate into two strands: offensive and defensive realists. Ironically, both strands base themselves on similar premises and often get to similar results, the main difference leading to this differentiation lies in the normative dimensions; one school is seen as an advocate of restraint and the other is seen as an advocate of expansion to the aim of security, but neither of these views is entirely accurate and, moreover, the focus on the outcomes takes away from the importance of the mechanisms they describe (Waltz, 2004, Hamilton and Rathbun, 2013). As we will see, the focus on mechanisms rather than the outcomes is fundamental to unleash the explanatory power of the security dilemma, and also to ascertain its validity as a tool in international relations and in civil wars, in particular.

While Booth and Wheeler (2008a) recognise that security dilemmas should not be defined by their effects, it is important to keep in mind that the predominance of the *fatalist* logic does not eliminates the security-seeking process that generates unexpected and usually unfavourable outcomes. In other words, it is paramount to separate the possibility of mitigation or transcendence of the security dilemma from the security dilemma itself. Many analysts of conflict and violence seem to discard the presence of

the security dilemma mechanism due to the fact that they could not see a potential to mitigate or transcend it. In fact, they tend to separate the *fatalist* logic from the security dilemma, refer the former to malign motives and thus reject security dilemma explanations for the specific cases where the fatalist logic is in place. Against this reductionism, Jeffrey Taliaferro (2000) argues that '*a security dilemma that is impossible to mitigate or transcend still is a security dilemma*'. Indeed, to conduct this analytical differentiation can be complicated. For example, Booth and Wheeler's formulation of *strategic challenge* falls prey to a similar conflation:

> Unlike a security dilemma, a strategic challenge is a situation in which the dilemma of interpretation has been settled. It occurs when one government identifies another state as a real threat (whether it is or not) and acts accordingly. There is no longer a dilemma of interpretation (what is the other government planning to do?). The challenge now is: what is to be done? (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.9).

If we consider, like Booth and Wheeler (2008a, pp.4-5), that the security dilemma is the uncertainty itself — materialised in the *dilemmas of interpretation and response* that form a *two-level strategic predicament* — we are moving away from Butterfield, Herz and also from Robert Jervis (1976, 1978, 1988), all of whom understood the security dilemma as an effect of uncertainty. For them, the security dilemma is a spiral of fears and actions that occurs as a result of the uncertainty.

Crucial to the argument intended here is the possibility that actors that are essentially security seekers[5] can be induced into conflict due to a competition for security under

[5] A security seeker is an actor that values its security and status quo more than expansion. However, security seekers can value expansion if they believe that it is a requirement of their security (Glaser, 2010, ch.1). I will expand on this topic later in this chapter.

uncertainty. This competition is independent of whether they are correct or incorrect in the appraisal they make about their opponents' intentions. Indeed, if actors are clearly identifiable as being essentially (or purely) greedy,[6] that is, they are seeking expansion in disregard of their security, we can easily dismiss the security dilemma for their malign motivation. However, the contrary is not possible: we cannot assume malign motives out of expansionist or aggressive behaviour because, in many cases, and for many reasons, a security-seeker may believe that displaying aggressive behaviour or expanding is fundamental for their security.

In this situation, aggressive behaviour on the part of an actor would not necessarily reveal malign motives: the reason behind the aggressive stance could come from the belief (correct or incorrect) that such a stance is necessary to guarantee security.[7] In an even more acute situation, two security seekers could rationally pursue aggressive yet defensively motivated behaviour, ultimately leading them to believe (correctly or not) that they could never be secure unless the other is made insecure, which, taken to the limit, could lead to the situation in which one of the actors believe that they can only be secure if the other actor is eliminated. While this ultimate level of aggression represented by elimination — security in the context of Clausewitzian *Total War* (Clausewitz, 1832, Waldman, 2012) — is severe in nature, it does not necessarily have to reflect malign motives on the part of the actors. Because actors may have (real or perceived) *incompatible security requirements* (Boulding, 1959, Taliaferro, 2000) they can be security seekers even if they display aggressive behaviour.

[6] '*Purely greedy'* is Glaser's (2010, ch.1) terminology I will equally explore later.

[7] This discussion is well developed in Robert Jervis' review, published in Security Studies (Jervis, 2011) of Charles Glaser work (namely his book '*Rational Theory of International Politics*').

Finally, it might also be the case that an actor believes that his security requires an aggressive stance (for any or all the reasons stated above) and yet fails to see that such stance creates or exacerbates the insecurity of his counterparts. This develops into a situation that was described by Butterfield as the *Hobbesian fear*, and what Nicholas J. Wheeler (2008) describes as *peaceful/defensive self-images*; in the eyes of a fundamentally insecure actor (A), its actions are always understood and communicable as purely defensive and non-threatening. Its counterparts (B and C), however, might not understand such actions in the same way, and feeling uncertain or certain about whether such actions represent a threat, and respond to deal with them. This, in turn, triggers an increase in Actor (A)'s insecurity, which is additionally exacerbated by the feeling that (A)'s purely defensive move was reciprocated with aggression. Over time, these repeated strategic interactions lead to a spiral of increasing fears and insecurity, in what Jervis (1976) has called the *spiral model*, which ultimately would, in theory, lead to the outbreak of war. In Jervis' view, the spiral model and the security dilemma are the same (Robert Jervis in interview to Nicholas J. Wheeler, 2014, p.496), and this would also seem to be in agreement with Herz's, Butterfield's and Posen's definition of the security dilemma.

Following this conceptualisation, Shiping Tang develops the *BHJ Formulation* of the security dilemma (after Butterfield, Herz and Jervis) which is, in his opinion, the most precise way of understanding it. Accordingly, the *BHJ Formulation* is defined in terms of 'eight major aspects' which need to be present and identifiable so as that one can have a security dilemma (Tang, 2009 pp.594-595):

> 1. The ultimate source of the security dilemma is the anarchic nature of international politics;
> 2. Under anarchy, states cannot be certain about each other's present and future intentions. As a result, states tend to fear each other (or the possibility that the other side may be a predator);
> 3. The security dilemma is unintentional in origin: a genuine security dilemma can exist only between two defensive realist states (that is, states that merely want security without intending to threaten the other);
> 4. Because of the uncertainty about each other's intentions (hereafter, uncertainty) and fear, states resort to the accumulation of power or capabilities as a means of defence, and these capabilities inevitably contain some offensive capabilities;
> 5. The dynamics of the security dilemma are self-reinforcing and often lead to (unintended and bad) spirals such as the worsening of relationships and arms races;
> 6. The dynamics of the security dilemma tends to make some measures for increasing security — for example, accumulating unnecessary offensive capabilities — self-defeating: more power but less security;
> 7. The vicious cycle derived from the security dilemma can lead to tragic results, such as unnecessary or avoidable wars;
> 8. The severity of the security dilemma can be regulated by both material factors and psychological factors.

While Tang provides a good summarisation of the elements of the security dilemma in his *eight aspects*, he still overlooks the fine-grained nuances of intentionality and ostensibly assumes a requirement for *ex post facto* analysis. As we have established, an actor seeking to increase its security through aggressive measures does not necessarily hold malign motives (Jervis, 1978, 1988; Booth and Wheeler, 2008; Glaser, 2010). In other words, analysts often misunderstand the *fatalist logic* as a situation where malign motives are present by not differentiating between the existence of potential mitigation or transcendence and the presence of predation. In this myopic view, analysts looking

for a security dilemma may find evidence of a spiral, but not of mitigating measures potentially exercised by the actors. Consequently, they will favour alternative explanations (that usually presuppose malign motives) to the security dilemma for conflict. As we can see, a conflation between outcomes and definitions can substantially hinder the applicability of the security dilemma to both inter- and intra-state conflicts, leaving potentially critical causal mechanisms unexplored.

One symptomatic testimony of the conflation between outcomes and definitions is the debate over whether the security dilemma exists in an offensive realist world. Tang (among others) argues that in the logic of security competition described by John J. Mearsheimer (2001), there could never be security dilemmas, due to a lack of uncertainty regarding other's actions in his theory (all actors would seek to maximise relative power at the expense of others)[8]. This, however, is incorrect: the uncertainty about actors' motives and intentions is still there, and the mechanisms of spiralling insecurity leading to tragic results are still is in place. The difference however, is that there is no doubt about what course of action is required — given the constraints of an offensive realist worldview — to guarantee one's own security under those spirals.

Indeed, *contra* Tang's normative reading of defensive realism[9], in an offensive realist world the most essential dynamics of the security dilemma would still be behind the tragic nature of international politics. To that effect, Mearsheimer (2001, pp.35-36) argues that Herz's security dilemma '*is a synoptic statement*' of offensive realism. Thus,

[8] Randall Schweller (1996, 2008) would be another example of scholar rejecting the security dilemma for similar reasons, even if not a scholar of the security dilemma itself.

[9] As part of his argument, Tang espouses the rather normative view that defensive realism should be the informative basis of security policy-making.

underlying the discussion about the validity of the security dilemma in such cases is an even more fundamental issue about what we understand to be the *status quo* in international politics; in traditional terminology, actors may display behaviour consistent with revisionism if they understand that this is required for their ultimate quest for survival (Glaser, 1997, Mearsheimer, 2001, Jervis, 2011). In this respect, Glaser argues '*a status quo state may in fact be unwilling to accept the status quo — it is satisfied with existing international borders and thus uninterested in expansion, except if necessary to protect its security in the status quo*' (Glaser, 2010, p.38). This begs the even more complicated question of whether the distinction between offensive and defensive realism is valid or relevant (Jervis, 2003, Elman, 2007, Hamilton and Rathbun, 2013).

In an attempt to offer a more thorough understanding of the differentiation between motives and intentions, which is also consequential to the conflation between definitions and outcomes, Charles Glaser (2010, pp.35-40) provides a framework intended to more precisely parse out the habitual conflation of these elements. He argues that actors fall into one of four possible categories (derived from combinations of motivational variables): *pure security seeker*, *greedy security seekers*, *greedy non–security seekers*, and *non-greedy non–security seekers (or unmotivated)*.

		Greedy: Yes	Greedy: No
Security-seeking	Yes	Greedy	Security seeker
	No	Purely greedy	Unmotivated

Figure 2.1. Types of States

(Glaser, 2010, p.37)

A *pure security seeker* is motivated solely by security. A *greedy security seeker* (or simply *greedy*) is a '*state that is motivated by both greed and security*' (Glaser, 2010, p.37), as actors (with very rare exceptions) are motivated by security at all times, and what varies is whether they are greedy or not, given that security is a precondition for pursuing other interests (Waltz, 1979, pp.90-91, Glaser, 2010, p.37). Thus, it is typical that greedy actors are both greedy *and* security seeking, whereas the more abnormal situation is a state that seeks expansion but does not seek security; he categorises such states as *purely greedy states*.

When a state is not motivated by security, it can either be *purely greedy* (*greedy non-security seeker*) or *non-greedy non-security seeker (unmotivated)*. While necessary parts of Glaser's sound articulation, however, they rarely occur in reality[10] and, in fact, the only two examples he provides are those of Nazi Germany, that could be identified as a *purely greedy state*, (since it can be argued that it clearly valued expansionism to the detriment of security) and France in the 1930s as a *non-greedy non-security seeker* (for neither valuing its own security nor trying to expand). A focus on motives is proposed, mainly because it does capture the nature of the actor's true motivation (Glaser's *why*), rather than its immediate policy objective (Glaser's *how*), and equally importantly, accounts for the environment of which the actors are part: its strategic environment. By using this reading, we can see that spirals can take place between all types of actors except those that are *purely greedy*. In the case of *unmotivated* states, the security

[10] On this matter, Glaser relies on work by Robert Jervis (1988, pp.50–51).

dilemma can only take place if the other state is motivated and not *purely greedy*. As Glaser puts it:

> The value that a security seeker places on expansion varies with the (…) environment it faces.[11] The more insecure the state is, the larger the potential benefits and therefore the larger the costs — in arming and fighting — that it will be willing to pay to expand. A security seeker that is very secure will see little or no value in expansion; in this situation, the security seeker would accept the status quo, even if the costs of changing it were quite small. Consequently, changes in the (…) environment, some of which its adversary may be able to influence, can affect the benefits the state sees in expansion. Specifically, a state that wants to expand to increase its security could be induced to forgo policies necessary for expansion if its adversary pursues policies that increase its security. In contrast to security seekers, a greedy state is willing to run risks and incur costs to expand, even if it is entirely secure. A purely greedy state would not respond positively to strategies designed to increase its security (Glaser, 2010, p.38).

Following this argument, under the *conflation of motives and intentions*, it would only be possible to see security dilemmas between actors that are *very secure security seekers*, which are, indeed, where the purest form of the spiral could unfold; the tragic outcome takes place despite the possibility of achieving a different one. However, it would be an unnecessary limit to the explanatory power of the security dilemma to restrict it to situations where we do not see aggressive behaviour at all, and in situations where there is (or was) a recognised potential way of unwinding the spiral. Relating Glaser's argument to Booth and Wheeler's *logics*, this would be tantamount to saying that most security

[11] It is important to note that where Glaser uses the word 'expansion', I would suggest the use of 'aggressive behaviour', since not all aggressive behaviour is necessarily expansionist, and the idea of expansionism in the context of International Relations usually refer to geographical factors (*i.e.* expansionism generating change of borders).

dilemmas are more likely observable when linked to the *mitigator* or the *transcender logics*, whereas the criterion would be harder to pass under the *fatalist logic*.

Of equal importance is the fact that the literature, in particular that on domestic armed conflict, fails to address the distinction between past, present and future uncertainty and subsequent fear. This thesis revisits this lacuna (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, pp.39-41). Authors addressing the effects of the security dilemma in generating armed conflict frequently concentrate on construing histories of conflictive interaction or aggressive discourse as a generator of current fear and often overlook present reasons for fear (for example, Roe, 2005). In addition, while past and present reasons are still important, there is a deficit in the literature addressing the stimuli of future uncertainty towards generating fears and generating or exacerbating security dilemmas: The notable exception is Posen's (1993) seminal paper inaugurating the debate on the security dilemma and civil wars; his focus on the effects of international anarchy is less orientated towards historical interaction between actors and more concerned with how present and future uncertainty shapes present action.[12]

Even though future uncertainty is deemed as the '*most intractable one*' (Copeland in Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.40), its absence from the literature has had major repercussions on our understanding of the security dilemma, since it is one of the reasons behind the primacy of the *malign motives presence test*. More specifically, as the existence of malign motives is seen as the fundamental gatekeeper of the security dilemma, analysts automatically dismissed the mechanism at the slightest hint of the

[12] As Friedrich Nietzsche notes: '*the future influences the present just as much as the past*'.

presence of aggressive behaviour, failing to effectively problematise the dimension of motivations.

Analyses based on the *malign motives test* demonstrated that a history of declaratory hatred or instances of past conflict between actors are instrumental in the formation of fearful spirals ('*we must fear them because of who they are*'[13]). However, this link has been interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, some analysts argue that those fears are a testimony of a spiral of insecurity, as they are unrelated to actual reasons for insecurity in the present, that is to say, such history of hatreds is a spoiler. However, while describing current fears that stem from actual past episodes of aggression (with malign motives), confusion arises as to whether the source of fear is predation or not (Tang, 2011). On the other hand, violence is seen as displaying malign motives, as the declarations of intentionality give a reason to others to be fearful.

The point of the security dilemma is not, however, whether actors were fearful (correctly or not), but whether their security-seeking motives led to conflict. Only an analysis that takes into account the bigger picture, avoiding the *conflation of motives and intentions* and considering the importance of past, present and future fears can produce a true depiction of whether a security dilemma was present or not. The idea of the *bad faith model* (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.67),[14] where actors assume that their counterparts have malign motivations — the converse and complementary situation to the one in which actors operate with *peaceful self-images* — is very useful to understand the how

[13] As in Booth and Wheeler (2008a, pp.65-70).

[14] The idea of the bad faith model is originally found in Ole Holsti's unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Stanford, 1962), and it was further developed by Holsti in a co-authored volume (Finlay *et al.*, 1967). A detailed appreciation of the concept was achieved by Douglas Stuart and Harvey Starr (1981).

actors operate, but has also to be taken into account and relativised when we dig for evidence is sought with regard to the security dilemma using the logic of the malign motives presence test.

Having discussed the general problems of the security dilemma that apply to the discussion intended in this thesis, I will now briefly address the issues related to the translation of the concept from its original application, from the interstate realm to the intrastate realm. I will present the issue of *emerging anarchy* and contextualise the security dilemma as it relates to civil wars.

2.3 - Anarchy across and within borders: 'translating' the security dilemma from the international to the domestic?

Deriving from the traditional applications of the security dilemma, anarchy is a central element of this theoretical model, and indeed, its importance lies at the core of the development of realist explanations of war and conflict (Herz, 1950, Waltz, 1959, 1979, Mearsheimer, 2001, Booth and Wheeler, 2008a). As I have discussed in the previous section, the realist tradition of International Relations bases its core assumptions on the axiom that anarchy begets uncertainty, which, in the context of insecurity, is a driver of *self-interested behaviour*, usually referred to as *self-help*. From this point on, accounts have their origin and seem inevitably to view conflict as unavoidable calamity or as a by-product of sheer circumstances that might reasonably have been managed differently. Scholars that have explored the security dilemma in domestic environments generally remain faithful to the idea of uncertainty. They thus maintain that anarchy is a necessary condition for the development of armed violence, when that violence develops from

security concerns. In other words, it is only under the conditions of no assurance that security will be maintained, that the mechanics of security dilemma will develop.

Thomas Hobbes (1651, ch. XIII) highlighted the important link between anarchy, uncertainty and conflict. He did so by stating that '*during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war*' and that such a condition is not constituted only by the exercise of violence itself. The state of war is defined not as the fight itself, but rather as the '*known disposition thereto during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary*'. In opposition, hierarchy, or the time in which men are kept under the auspices (and awe) of a common power, falls into *all other time*, which he calls *peace*.

It is worth noting that Hobbes wrote his theory of social contract — articulated in his book *The Leviathan* — after experiencing the 1642-1651 civil war between the English parliamentarians and royalists to define the nature of the government in the England.[15] It is often forgotten that, in the history of political thought, the consideration of civil wars and fratricidal violence has been equally, if not more, important than the study of interstate war to disciplinary development (Tilly, 1978, 2003, David E. Cunningham and Lemke, 2013). In the context of civil war, our understanding of anarchy depends on the breakdown of the state, either in the form of state failure or imperial dissolution (Posen, 1993, p.27), and as such is directly bound to Max Weber's definition of the state

[15] Reinforcing Hobbes' *authority* on civil wars (and the relation between anarchy and violence), it is also necessary to highlight that the English Civil War was the precedent that enabled the 1688 Glorious Revolution, which has defined the longstanding parliamentary/constitutional monarchy and the Westminster system in the United Kingdom that exists to this day. As in contemporary civil wars, the matter of *rule* — which can embody security concerns but indeed requires anarchy — was the leveraging issue.

illustrated in his essay *Politics as a Vocation* (1919). Accordingly, the state is an entity characterised by the power to exercise the *gewaltmonopol*, or the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence within a defined territory.

Weber and Hobbes agree that the foremost and constituting characteristic of the state (or commonwealth) is security, here seen as hierarchy; it mitigates the effects of uncertainty by minimising the chance that actors will deviate from certain established norms of the system, through a mix of incentives and constraints aimed at compelling, deterring and dissuading. Its relevance and widespread application has not gone without debate (for example: Onuf and Klink, 1989) but nevertheless still retains great traction. From the *gewaltmonopol*, the discipline has derived definitions and tests that allow us to understand whether a political space is anarchical or hierarchical, and thus to recognise specific dynamics. Continuing to draw upon a Hobbesian-Weberian definition of anarchy, authors like Reinhold Niebuhr (1932), Raymond Aron (1962), Hans Morgenthau (1948) and Kenneth Waltz (1959, 1979) have shown that in the realm of politics, anarchy creates unavoidable uncertainty. Moving from these theories, authors like John Herz (1950, 1951) and Herbert Butterfield (1951), imported the same view into the security dilemma conceptualisation. For all these authors, uncertainty underlines the fear of the worst possible outcomes, which in uncertainty, are always possible, and from such fear, self-interested action stems (Waltz, 1979, pp.105-107). Here, it is important to note that, even if Waltz's definition of Anarchy is foundational to the concept application in International Relations, it derives and is completely compatible with the Weberian definition for the purposes intended here. The stated adoption of a Weberian definition comes from the will to deploy a framework that is more relatable with the domestic environment and across disciplines, without, however, precluding or diminishing the

compatibility with the larger theoretical premises adopted in the thesis. Where the Weberian definition is adopted here, for all purposes and effects here intended it could be used interchangeably with Waltz's definition, since the latter relies on the former, and can be seen a particular application of it.

For the study of intra-state conflict along the lines of the realist tradition in International Relations theory, it is paramount to translate the meaning of anarchy outside the state to inside the state. International relations theorists have based their studies on a definition of anarchy as the absence of a powerful and capable sovereign in the *commonwealth* of states (Morgenthau, 1948, Waltz, 1959, 1979, Aron, 1962). Consequently, in order to import this theory to the intrastate realm, we firstly have to assess, to what extent anarchy exists, inside the border.

Barry Posen (1993, pp.27-28) argues that an *emerging anarchy* can occur following the *collapse of imperial regimes* since, when *sovereigns* disappear, they '*leave in their wake a host of groups (…) of greater or lesser cohesion*'. These groups are compelled, then, by the very same structures of incentives that motivate states in the international system: first and foremost, the issue of security. Even if they are not formally states, the extent to which they are able to exercise the *gewaltmonopol* inform how much power they command, *vis-à-vis* their own constituencies and towards contending groups (Duyvesteyn and Ångström, 2005, Vinci, 2009, Christia, 2012, Wimmer, 2013). Usually, the *power to hurt*[16] is seen as the most important enabler of authority and recognition because it allows

[16] *Power to hurt* is the general sum of offensive capabilities over which an actor is capable of bargaining over a political goal. As Schelling puts it: '*The threat of pain tries to structure someone's motives, while brute force tries to overcome his strength. (…) Unhappily, the power to hurt is 'often communicated by*

a player to bargain over a political goal in a domestic domain where anarchy has emerged. Consequently, the capability to exercise force and '*compel (…) to our will*' (Clausewitz, 1832, p.83) is understood as a basic requirement for the security dilemma (Tang, 2011).

Recently, Anthony Vinci (2006, 2008, 2009) has discussed the role of anarchy specifically in relation to the applicability of the neorealist tradition of International Relations to internal conflicts and the politics of armed groups. Vinci's work supports the claim that in an anarchical system political actors behave as like-units. While neorealist scholars have concentrated on exploring the effects of these systemic pressures across juridically-defined borders,[17] Vinci expands the analysis and identifies *de facto* sovereignty as the most important structural feature to constrain political action also within a sub-system.

Specifically, this thesis posits that in cases of collapsed and fragmented states, the hierarchical system breaks down and *domestic anarchy* ensues. Domestic anarchy thus arises when the state apparatus loses authority — in Weberian terms, loses *gewaltmonopol* — relative to non-state armed groups, which are enabled to become the highest authority over internal and external relations. In such cases, multiple autonomous actors exist within a defined territory and relate with each other as equal units (Vinci, 2006, p.269). Vinci's argument encapsulates two important concepts that need to be clarified: what is understood by anarchy and what is a non-state armed group. Anarchy

some performance of it (…) It is the expectation of more violence that gets the wanted behaviour if the power to hurt can get it at all.' (Schelling, 1976, p.21-22).

[17] Vinci (2008, p.296) brands this as a '*major failing of the theory*', as the significance of events of emerging anarchy within the formal borders of states have been overlooked.

inside the border is characterised by a situation in which the state fails to control territory and *de facto* exert state-related functions, which are situated inside the '*granted juridical (…) territorial area demarcated as a separate unit in the international system*' in what he calls '*the state shell*' (Vinci, 2006, p.303). Therefore, the area within the state shell, in a normal situation, corresponds to the totality of the area controlled by the state. In a situation of anarchy, on the contrary, there are challenges to the central state control of the territory (Waltz, 1979, Posen, 1993, Kaufmann, 1996a, Vinci, 2008, Balcells and Kalyvas, 2012): armed groups defy the monopoly on the use of force by the sovereign state. In this case, one or more *pockets* of territory controlled by armed actors are constituted within the state shell. Whereas juridical sovereignty has been left unchanged, practical sovereignty is now disputed or divided, and an armed group can exercise it over a part of the formal territory. In this scenario, '*a microcosm of the international system replicated within the state*' interacts with the actual international system, and the line between domestic and international is blurred. Additionally, '*anarchy does not necessarily mean the presence of "chaos" and violence*' (Vinci, 2008, p.306) but can manifest itself even in conditions of apparent everyday life normality. According to the author, a simple test can be used to identify situations in which hierarchy is not maintained:

> An area is fragmented if an official of the state government (in the guise of an official acting in an official manner) cannot enter the area due to the presence of an autonomous armed group, which is in control of the area and has the ability to overpower any force the government can muster, in the sense that it can completely defeat it or simply force it to leave the area. This is not necessarily a one-time event but a maintainable state of affairs (Vinci, 2008, p.304).

He further posits that '*the state must not only be weak, but there must also be a stronger rival able to confront and overpower it*' (Vinci, 2008, p.304). His proposition focuses on the dialectic character of war (Clausewitz, 1832, Strachan and Herberg-Rothe, 2007, Waldman, 2012), but at the same time leaves the effects of Hobbesian anarchy unaddressed.

It is not only the relationship between a contender and an incumbent that creates anarchy and consequent uncertainty. In fact, as Posen (1993) argues, the absence of a threshold of hierarchy provided by the ruling incumbent is enough to generate the uncertainty that unleashes survival and power mobilisation concerns amongst the actors. State weakness, however, may be enough to provoke the resort to violence (Fearon, 1995, Fearon and Laitin, 2003, Autesserre, 2009), as it creates conditions for triggering a spiral of insecurity and the feeling that self-reliance (at the individual level or along identity kinship) is necessary. In other words, it is the breakdown of the social contract — its security dimension, at the very least — that ultimately imposes the resort to violence a means to survival (Addison and Murshed, 2001, 2003). Vinci's work supports Posen's interpretation that, in an anarchical environment, actors are compelled to take matters in their own hands, feeling obliged to have the means of producing and delivering violent coercion. Following another of the neorealist core features in international relations theory, this happens because they must struggle to guarantee their survival as a political group (Waltz, 1959, 1979), and the ultimate way to do so is through violence.

Further sustaining wider claims of the applicability of realist theories of conflict to civil wars, such as those put forward by Jan Ångström and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (2001, 2005), one important difference is widely overlooked and has yet to be problematised by

analysts who consider the emergence of anarchy within the borders. That is, its inherent perceived abnormality and its effects. Since 1648, the Peace of Westphalia coded the legal basis for concepts that are considered constitutive features of the international system, such as the principles of non-intervention and self-determination, and the overarching idea of sovereignty which introduced an understanding of states as peer actors with no relationship of hierarchy among them.

The lack of a Leviathan, in Hobbesian terms, makes the international system an essentially anarchical one (Morgenthau, 1948, Waltz, 1959, Bull, 1977, Kissinger, 1994). In this sense, the interactions between political actors of the international system are constrained by anarchy, which affects the perception, calculations and evaluations they make in their strategic appraisals: states see anarchy as a perennial state of the system where they interact, and do not calculate based on the consideration that they will be ever bound to a supra-national authority. In the worst-case scenario, states deal with total defeat and annexation (ultimately ceasing to be a sovereign state of their own and becoming part of another one), which, however severe and significant, does not represent a change in the character of the system. When analysing instances of the emergence of anarchy in domestic environments, however, anarchy is seen by actors as an abnormal and temporary state of affairs, rather than a constitutive characteristic of their environment. This deeply affects the actors' calculations, as they see the restoration of hierarchy as an ever-approaching event.

But why should the abnormality of anarchy and the expectation of the restoration of hierarchy so significantly shape the calculations of the actors? When anarchy emerges, actors assert control and acquire capabilities to guarantee their own security, and

ultimately, even self-govern. The goal of this process, in the context of the security dilemma, is to be self-reliant under uncertainty, and to assure one's own survival in an ambience where it is unlikely to receive guarantees from any other source. By being self-reliant, actors are also in control of their own choices and free to act politically (including with the use of force) to achieve their goals. In the context of interaction among competing actors, however, their insecurity about each other's motives and intentions increase, in accordance with the spiral dynamics discussed in the previous section. In the interaction between states, decisions are made on the basis that, even in the long run, this relation of antagonism will be managed by two distinct actors that will always have the capacity to make their own decisions given the constraints imposed on them.

Conversely, in the context of domestic armed violence, actors compete with each other to ultimately restore the order in the territory. Incidentally, these actors expect that at some point they will transfer or forgo the capabilities they rely on to an institution that will, by definition, exercise the *gewaltmonopol* over the concerned territory. If the actors do not perceive this institution as a representation of their interests and protective of their rights — whether those interests and rights are legitimate or not — they will be afraid to commit to entrusting it with their security. Even more challenging, the perception that their antagonist might gain control or substantial leveraging capabilities over the future state and restore hierarchy, begets the perception of extreme and unavoidable insecurity. By letting an antagonist control the institution with the legitimate monopoly of the use of violence, one is not only conceding a disproportionate amount of power to the other, but it is also deliberately limiting its own capability to respond to any potential threats. This might seem to be a paradox: the state is the provider of security, and its breakdown leads to anarchy and insecurity which, in turn, are augmented by the perspective that the

restoration of the state rule might generate more insecurity to a particular group, rather than decrease it. As can be seen, the temporary character of anarchy in intrastate conflict adds another layer of constraints affecting actors' calculations, pressing them to feel more fundamentally uncertain about their capability to survive in the future, as they see the inevitability of giving up their means to guarantee it. In interstate conflict, however, states calculate under the consideration that, even in their future conditions they will still be able to retain some of their means of survival, which decreases the pressure imposed by having to completely relinquish self-reliance. It is the nature of the state itself (and that of hierarchy) that imposes specific effects of the anarchical nature in the two contexts, difference that needs to be acknowledged when translating the security dilemma from the interstate to the intrastate realm.

Having established that following a moment of emerging anarchy – to Posen's terminology – groups tend to pursue their security by adopting self-help behaviour, it is necessary to look at the diverse motivations of groups and their influence on the mechanisms of security seeking. Traditionally, most scholars investigated the intrastate security dilemma concentrating on ethnic conflict, due to the significant history of post-cold war ethnic violence (Wucherpfennig *et al.*, 2011, David E. Cunningham and Lemke, 2013, Wimmer, 2013). Although this is not the only meaningful manifestation of political violence in the domestic sphere — groups can form around religion, ideology, culture and even a particular political preference — its study has been central to the theoretical development of the debate on the security dilemma in civil wars, which is the subject of the following section.

2.4 - Uncertainty and Domestic Conflict: *the Security Dilemma within the Borders*

In multi-ethnic countries, state shattering can generate important security seeking behaviours. Tensions between groups start to build up in an environment of uncertainty and, being undeterred by a reliable state apparatus, a case of *emerging anarchy* ensues. During the period when the intentions of other ethnic groups are unknown, and in the absence of a guarantor of order, domestic politics starts to more and more reflect international politics. In most situations, actors '*do not empathise with their neighbours*' and disregard the threat that their actions may convey. Whether they account for such lack of empathy and thus do not perceive how others may see the situation as threatening, or whether they actually do empathise with their neighbours is of little importance, as the condition of uncertainty constrains actors to a self-helping attitude (Posen, 1993, p.28)[18]. Ethnic groups abstain from cooperation because cheating and betrayal is seen as possible, exploitation seems to be the likely strategy adopted by opponents. According to Posen, three central elements explain the unfolding of this scenario: *the indistinguishability of offence and defence*, *the cult of offensive action* (at the expense of defensive preparations) and *windows of vulnerability and opportunity* (Posen, 1993, Roe, 2005, p.29).

The *indistinguishability of offence* and defence dictates that while one party may perceive their actions as defensive, others might see the same actions as offensive. In any case, acknowledging that there could be a misperception does not necessarily prevent actors from responding by escalating (Posen, 1993, p.28). Uncertainty about the intentions of

[18] As previously discussed, Posen's (1993) reading of the security dilemma belongs entirely within Booth and Wheeler's (2008a) fatalist paradigm. For the argument intended in this thesis, this is of no consequence.

others means that groups will examine each other in an attempt to assess to what extent they are threatening. These threat evaluations usually focus on *power to hurt* aspects, as frequently neighbours have inherited some sort of military capabilities, or obtained some organically. Except for a few types of military equipment, distinguishing their purpose effectively is almost impossible: a man carrying an AK-47 assault rifle can either use it to defend himself (by deterring prospective attackers, or by the actual fending off of an attack) or for attacking others. In an *emerging anarchy* environment, the available (and desired) military capabilities to individuals and groups will usually amount to small arms and light weapons (Holsti, 1996, Kalyvas, 2009, Kalyvas and Balcells, 2010), which can be used either for offensive or defensive action. After a state collapses, weapons belonging to its security and military forces become available. This easy accessibility can trigger an escalation dynamic: pre-emption, in which the weaponised source of coercion is controlled exclusively and thereby blocks all possible adversarial obtention of *power to hurt*. The consequent dynamic determines that upon seeing this centralisation (or its attempt) by one of the parties, others will feel compelled to arm, as they fear for the worst (Posen, 1993, Kaufmann, 1996b).

When one or more parties possess weapons and see each other as militarily capable, groups will derive purpose for arsenals based on a myriad of historical accounts regarding their counterparts. Intentionality is extracted from myths and past interactions that are not always entirely correct or completely precise. In some cases, such historical accounts can be purposefully manipulated to mislead the general populace (Kaufman, 2001, ch.2) within the area controlled by the group or composed by demographic groupings that see themselves as part of the larger identity group. Through resorting to folklore and historical narratives that are passed through generations by oral accounts (frequently lacking

verification standards), these people perceive the reality through lenses that may intentionally or unintentionally magnify and distort others' policies as threatening. As a consequence, '*they will all simultaneously "arm" — militarily and ideologically — against each other*' (Posen, 1993, p.31). Under the constraint of uncertainty, '*one group is likely to assume that another group's sense of identity, and the cohesion it produces, it's a danger*' (Posen, 1993, p.31). Because of such fears, distortions of the reality imprinted on the discourse might not only be unpremeditated and unintentional, but often are intentionally bent.

Thus, past interactions can be (and often are) purposely portrayed in a way that imputes a malign character to other groups. This is a way to increase group cohesion and consequent identification to a political institution that represents this group (Wright, 1967, ch.XXVII, Posen, 1993, Kaufman, 2001, ch.2, Wimmer, 2013). As obvious consequences, two dynamics emerge: first, groups will have different and frequently competing sets of historical affirmations (of themselves and of others); and second, politicians will rely on those same competing sets (and in the competition itself) to deliver '*their versions of story in political speeches*', which will invariably be '*emotionally charged*' (Roe, 2005, p.30).

The perception of cohesion as an offensive asset itself produces a positive feedback dynamic, where groups fear others' cohesion as offensive and threatening, and where they will attempt to build up even more cohesion and rally around the flag, both of which include improving one's own military capabilities and displays of identity. This supports the case for expecting the worst from others. Whilst expecting the worst, and under pressure of arms imbalances (real or perceived) and also of the varied ideological enmity,

the expectation that others' behaviour will be offensive and predatory informs a necessity to display resolve and mobilise measures which (even if devised as entirely defensive), can contain threatening elements. Fearing betrayal, all will remain alert and exercise resolve, because it is perceived as a way of dissuading violence towards them. As a result, capable, self-reliant autonomy takes a prime place in ethnic groups' goals, and the desire for self-reliance and autonomy triggers dismay in others, as they fear having their autonomy taken away. War is likely to ensue, as a result of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The second of the elements highlighted by Posen is the *cult of offensive action*. In addition to the mix of uncertainty and historical imprecision, which leads to offensive potential being '*stronger the more cohesive their sponsoring group appears to be*' and of '*ground forces with strong group solidarity*', conveying offensive behaviour (Posen, 1993, p.30), other elements can also exasperate the perception of an imminent attack in the minds of neighbours. Topography, demographic distribution and poverty frequently accompany the occurrence of civil violence (Fearon and Laitin, 2003, Fearon, 2004) and, in ethnic wars, the anticipation or awareness that certain portions of a group might be indefensible and engulfed by larger numbers of other groups will generate incentives for pre-emptively '*rescuing these islands before the other is able to take advantage of their relative vulnerability*' (Roe, 2005, p.30).

Moreover, small groups of hooligans or fanatics engaging in indiscriminate violence can generate terror, further changing the balance between offence and defence. Mueller (2000) argues that *under the hood* of ethnic wars, lies the action of a statistically small number of groups of thugs that engage in violence. He rejects the idea of the war of all against all and advocates that most individuals on both sides live normal lives while

episodes of violence occur. However, groups of thugs might grow as the conflict intensifies, including for security reasons. Armed with machine guns, explosives and mortars, a band of fighters can *wreak havoc* against defenceless civilian populations, and even if such actions are not under the umbrella of the group's political leadership, they can have unforeseeable and disproportionate consequences for the conflict, since they exacerbate the ideological field between the groups, leading to the perception of war as unavoidable and favouring the offensive (Posen, 1993, pp.33-34).

Under prevailing uncertainty, the geographical distribution of the former state can favour the offence because it provides additional conditions for the perception of the need to wage war against other groups; this would be done for security concerns or because of a perception that war is imminent and even necessary.

Another important source of imbalance towards offence is, as Posen notes, the particular way in which intervening international organisations affect the choices of the actors. Organisations engaging in peace operations frequently fail to provide objective guarantees to mitigate the development of security dilemmas prior to the outbreak of violence. Subsequent to that outbreak, they are usually unable or unwilling to deploy capabilities that might enforce peace. Taking the United Nations as an example, it was only very recently that it expanded its role beyond negotiating and auditing peace-agreements. Existing research on the subject shows that groups engaging in armed conflict will only negotiate such agreements if they are either satisfied with their gains or if they have reached a mutually hurting stalemate (Zartman, 1985, Walter, 1999, 2003, Toft, 2007, Howard, 2008, Walter, 2009b, Toft, 2010b). After the shattering of the state, the anticipation that an intervening international organisation would protect the gains

obtained by military action prior to this intervention would be a strong incentive to rush into offensive action before any intervention takes place.[19] In addition, the more interspersed the group populations are within the former state territory, the more significant the advantage is to offensive action, as the incentive for one of the groups to try to seize control of the entire territory increases. Conversely, more clearly divided populations allow for a defensive-dominant situation, and a secession or reinforced agreement between the parties is more likely to happen along the border. Both of these dynamics are reinforced by the prospects of external intervention. It is important to evaluate the simultaneous effect of geographical distribution, political goals and available military capabilities to determine whether the situation favours defensive or offensive behaviour in the shattered state. This latter choice has been examined, but lacks sufficient development in the internal security dilemma literature. The theory developments covered over the course of this thesis intend to contribute to addressing this gap in the literature by looking at anarchy emergence.

The last of the three central elements isolated by Posen is the existence of *windows of vulnerability and opportunity*. While evaluating the scenario in which they are acting, groups probe their counterparts' capabilities and predict the expected interactions. While developing these elaborations, actors rely on intelligence assessments, which can be more or less rudimentary, and try to develop this information to gain advantage in order to secure relative gains.[20] Using the security dilemma framework, these relative gains can

[19] For more extensive analysis on the relationship between the United Nations and civil wars, see the volume by Lise Morjè Howard (2008).

[20] Political groups usually choose strategies that increase the gap between them and other groups, against those getting them better off independently. As Randall Schweller (1999, p.29) notes in his discussion about positional goods and relative gains: '*If everyone has high status, no one does*'.

be seen as an attempt to increase one's own security — a priority for the actors. When their assessment of actions and following outcomes includes the time factor, windows of opportunity materialise: the fear that other groups might move first towards attaining relative gains at the expense of one's own security tends to favour pre-emptive action. Time plays an important role, and a sense of urgency reigns as a function of uncertainty and the seemingly necessary attainment of material objectives, such as weapons, raw materials and core infrastructures. As a central state collapses, Posen (1993, p.34) notes, its remnants will be '*unevenly distributed across the territories*' and some groups might benefit more than others from such distribution. The perception of urgency drives pre-emptive action in seizing paramount material objectives, and secures advantageous positioning, before others move towards it.

However, unevenly distributed material capabilities are not the sole determinant of pre-emption. Two other interconnected elements precipitate actors towards urgency: demographic distribution within specific geographical settings and the prediction of military action by others. When opposing political groups are not organised along clear borders in the territory, pockets of one's population can be found amongst other populations. When this happens, the engulfed is seen as defenceless, and with violence being anticipated, a massacre is foreseeable. To deter or preclude a massacre, the engulfed group or its kin in other parts of the territory feel the need to pre-empt war and protect its *irredenta* (Posen, 1993, Fearon, 1994, Toft, 2002, Fearon and Laitin, 2003, Walter, 2003). Moreover, even without the presence of such unsecured *irredenta* (which is, however, a stronger catalyst), when groups believe that military actions will be initiated by possibly stronger opponents, they could take prior action so as to pre-empt the enemy's military superiority. This dynamic usually depends on the presence of

foreign assistance or the help of allies, as well as on the time and material constraints of mobilising forces (Toft, 2002, Walter, 2003, Christia, 2012).

In addition to Posen's (1993) argument of the centrality of ethnic kin as one of the most likely proxies for group organisation, Andreas Wimmer (2013) concurs that ethnicity is a very strong mean of political mobilisation. Such political mobilisation leads to a desire for self-government and the development of a state-like apparatus (Holsti, 1996, Abdulbari, 2011) which, besides its typical day-to-day elements, inherently include the acquisition of some level of *power to hurt*, both for maintaining external autonomy and internal rule.

Beyond the three points highlighted by Posen, Barbara Walter (2003, 2009) and William Zartman (1985) explore the credible commitments problem, arguing that the existence of a *power to hurt* and the following sense of *de facto* autonomy (Vinci, 2009) create a commitment problem: violence-capable political groups in domestic environments can rarely communicate commitment credibly to each other,[21] and in the absence of a trusted guarantor, agreements rarely stand. As Zartman demonstrates, once both parties attain a minimal level of *power to hurt* that allows them to challenge each other, fighting is likely to continue until a *mutually hurting stalemate* occurs. This specific type of stalemate happens when both parties cannot continue fighting against each other without suffering unacceptable consequences and, being mutual, it breaks the communication barrier that impeded agreement.

[21] This lack of communication is further explored by Stephen Saideman and Marie-Joëlle Zahar (2008a), Christian Davenport (2009) and Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan (2010), as they look at how governments reassure their responsible use of the *gewaltmonopol* towards protesting or contesting groups of citizens.

Walter further explains that, despite facilitating the perception that the impetus of conflict has decreased, such stalemate does not reassure groups about the future; in addition, the expectation that fighting will rise again, persists. Then, *mutually hurting stalemates* constitute an opportunity for a pause in the resource to violence, but does not guarantee it. To ensure that conflict will not erupt again, an external guarantor with pivotal power should intervene, stand by the agreements made and credibly threaten to punish defectors. While this discussion is directed at conflict termination, it clarifies future expectations of groups at the onset of conflict and furthers the understanding of why actors choose to go to war. Thus, more complex conflict dynamics may be highlighted at the onset and termination than those commonly mentioned in the literature.

The literature looking at the security dilemma and internal conflict has also addressed the issue of identity, particularly to understand how it informs the establishment of opposing relationships. Crucially, Stuart Kaufman (1996b, 2001), looks at an important issue overlooked by Posen: intentionality. Although Posen tackled the relationship between decision making and material constraints and achieving peace after imperial breakdown, he is frequently accused of not delving into the specifics of actors, to uncover whether they were moved by malign motivations. Indeed, as Paul Roe (2005, p.31) points out, Posen '*seems to only assume that the scenario is being driven by the spiral model*', and departing from the possibility of exploitation as the driver of conflict, he does not ascertain whether actors were security seekers or if they were aggressive and wanted to exploit others. Despite failing to explore motives, he is not oblivious to the dynamics,

nor does he simply advocate — as many do[22] — that war is an automatic response to ancient, irreparable hatred or the product of an unstoppable desire to obtain something that others possess. As posited by Susan Woodward (1999, p.86), authors dismissing security dilemma explanations on the basis of its lack of accounting for agency '*miss the point of the security dilemma: that it is perceptions that matter, and that it is a relational dynamic between two or more actors that leads to violence*'.

Moreover, intentionality remains at the centre of the discussion for authors looking at the interaction between identity and the security dilemma in domestic environments. The uncovering of the relation between symbolisms used and the identities of actors helps explain why intentions are misperceived. Contrary to Posen's arguments regarding geographical and military distribution, authors such as Stuart Kaufman (1996b, 2001, 2006) concentrate on looking at how actors build their national identities in reference to others and how that process influences the perception of intentions under uncertainty.

Kaufman (1996b, 2001), following the work by Jack Snyder (1985), divides security dilemma in the context of internal conflicts into two types: *structural* and *perceptual*. A *structural* security dilemma refers to Posen's conceptualisation: an effect of security competition under anarchy, which is triggered by assessments of military capabilities and other material conditions (*i.e.* geography). A *perceptual* security dilemma, on the other hand, is less linked to the objective evaluation of the referred assessments and more to the perceptions that decision-makers deploy regarding those capabilities which can, by

[22] The next chapter will deal with concurring explanations to civil war and discuss to what extent some of those ignore the understanding of the phenomena, in favour of a *catch-all* depiction of civil war as a plainly criminal affair.

themselves, create a security dilemma.[23] For ethnic violence, and according to Kaufman's argument, such distinction is important, as elites and decision makers are specifically prone to manipulating objective assessments and developing stories of conflict which serve the purpose of creating or bolstering enmity. In fact, Kaufman argues that certain elites within the state can start mobilising fear prior to anarchy and deploy narratives of enmity towards other ethnic groups, to support interests of their own. Violence can begin prior to state-breakdown and can even be the actual cause of the emergence of anarchy. These narratives increase general awareness and a collective fear that, deliberately or not, turns into violence.

The triggering violent event is usually comparably small in nature, for example a hate crime performed by a single person or a small band of hooligans that are not directly linked to any government or official organisation, but that can be identified as of a specific ethnicity. As such episodes of violence gain publicity, collective fear between ethnicities increases, and violent engagements increase, starting a spiral of fear and escalating violence. Such process reifies ethnic self-identification in opposition to other ethnic groups, and ethnic based nationalism (Holsti, 1996, Wimmer, 2013) emerges, with ensuing demands for autonomy and self-government. The following step is to pursue state-like capability; it begins with acquiring some *power to hurt,* the organisation of violence-capable, self-identified ethnic group structures, and challenging the existing state structure until its breakdown. Therefore, for Kaufman, fear and ethnic security competition cause state breakdown and anarchy, which, in turn, further increases the

[23] Snyder (1985) refers to the First World War and how the offensive behaviour was privileged by decision-makers when the more objective reading of trench warfare and machine guns usage would favour defensive behaviour.

spiral effect. In other words, while for Posen anarchy leaves groups to their own devices and creates violence, Kaufman believes that violence generates state breakdown that reinforces the need for violent action. Despite differentiating a *structural* from a *perceptual* security dilemma, once the state breaks down, the dynamics of escalation and violence are essentially the same as those described by Posen (Kaufman, 2001, Roe, 2005).

Another point made by Kaufman pertains to the role of political elites. Since the perceptual security dilemma operates prior to state breakdown — namely, when anarchy has not yet emerged — it supposedly exists only in the actors' minds, in the realm of beliefs and narratives, even if they can be collectively owned and shared. These narratives make actors believe that there are no possible arrangements that would promote both sides security, Kaufman argues that beliefs of this kind are mainly driven by interested elites that want to gain power from ethnic politics and national mobilisation (Kaufman, 2001, pp.29-30). To create such narratives, elites empower symbols, and these eventually detach from their original ideas and control. Parallel to the rational dimension of decision-making by elites and groups, there is a symbolic element that drives the choices of actors, that once set in motion, is nearly uncontrollable. Kaufman (2001, ch.2) argues that the problem with ethnic wars is modern, rather than ancient, hatreds. Instead of locating the identity on immutable, bygone traditions of fear among the populace, he proposes that the actual catalyst of violence is instrumental symbolism. Kaufman (2001) looks at four cases and discovers that this symbolism can be developed and infused by specific parties or individuals: minorities (Nagorno-Karabagh), majorities (Georgia), elites (Moldova) and fanatic local elites (Yugoslavia).

Related to this point is another difference between Posen and Kaufman. While Posen only marginally engages the issue of intentionality,[24] Kaufman affirms the absence of malign motives and puts forward a structural explanation for the escalation of the conflict into violence. He posits that the *perceptual* dilemma can be triggered either by mass or elite action (Kaufman, 2001, pp.34-38), while its manipulation is always elite-based, as argued above. A second level of intentionality is emphasised: while in mass-led hatred the collective perceptions about structural factors are the catalysts of escalation into actual armed violence, in elite-led hatred an artificial and intended mobilisation of ideas under uncertainty leads to mutual fear.

Following this account of two possible drivers of hatred, the process leading to the transformation of a *perceptual* security dilemma into a *structural* security dilemma can be modelled differently according to the type of driver in the *perceptual phase* (Kaufman, 2001, p.35). In mass-led violence, myths and fears are self-reinforcing and inform a goal of domination over the counterpart. Once this goal is established among the masses, it gives place to a chauvinist popular mobilisation under opportune conditions. Mobilisation usually leads to confrontation and reinforces mutual fears, which spirals into a fully-fledged security dilemma and the outbreak of mass violence. When the violence is elite-led, these groups opportunely use or build myths and fears to mobilise its target group into chauvinism and then engage in sporadic, but deliberate acts of violence which, interacting with the counterparts' actions, lead to a security dilemma, thus increasing the sense of insecurity. As the group members start to embody the elite-

[24] The quest for security is noticeable throughout Posen's account of the security dilemma in internal conflict, despite his cautiousness in ostensibly arguing that all actors must have benign intent at all time. The detachment from benign intent requirements to security driven gives some elegance to his work, as it allow for a broader understanding of dynamics without dismissing the theory he draws upon.

infused chauvinism, the process feeds back into a spiral where the goal of domination arises from the insecurity itself.

Unfortunately, Kaufman does not theorise about the conditions for elites and masses to seize the modelled opportunities, but treats them specifically in the empirical part of his study. In elite-led violence, however, Kaufman's claims benign motives can hardly hold. As argued, premeditated and utilitarian antipathy is infused into an ethnic group with the purpose of national chauvinistic mobilisation. Such mobilisation creates a desired *rally around the flag*, on which the elites capitalise,[25] propelling themselves into leadership and reaping the benefit from it. Therefore, one can evidently notice an expansionist concern in the intent of the agent, whose preoccupation is not security. By analysing elite-led violence in the former Yugoslavia, the author clearly '*demonstrates the malign nature of the Serbian president*' and that Jervis' deterrence model explains correct 'countervailing measures taken by the Croats' (Roe, 2005, p.32).

Consequently, Kaufman's claimed main theoretical innovation — applying Snyder's (1985) differentiation between *perceptual* and *structural* security dilemmas to the study of civil wars — does not have enough consistency to be considered a powerful explanation of conflict in itself.[26] While his model clarifies the specific case of Yugoslavia, the *perceptual* phase of his model markedly fails the intentionality test of the security dilemma. The dynamics of how elites infuse fear into their target to create steered mobilisation, however, is interestingly modelled and it entails a contribution in itself, as

[25] Andreas Wimmer (2013) explores the process in which nationalism becomes an all-encompassing narrative and creates conditions for war.

[26] This is also explored in more detail by Shiping Tang (2009, p.610, 2011, pp.521-522).

well as the finding that elites deliberately and knowingly deploy security dilemmas to infuse hatred and fears in the population, generating the *rally around the flag* mentality from which they are able to impose their leadership.

On the other hand, if one looks at mass-led violence, the model clearly resembles the traditional description of security dilemmas, like those adopted by Posen. Indeed, as Kaufman (2001, p.34) himself notes, ethnic security dilemmas fit Snyder's (1985, p.155-156) concept of the *imperialist's dilemma,* or what Jervis has called a '*deep' security dilemma*:

> In what can be called a 'deep' security dilemma, both sides may be willing to give up the chance of expansion if they can be made secure, but a number of other factors — the fear that the other's relative power is dangerously increasing, technology, events outside their control, and their subjective security requirements — put such a solution out of reach (Jervis, 2001, pp.40-41).

As I have explored earlier, these readings of the security dilemma are more careful to differentiate between the inevitability of conflict and malign intent, which, in analytical terms, also avoids the *conflation between definitions and outcomes*. Shiping Tang (2010, pp.55-57), for example, argues that the *imperialist security dilemma* or the '*deep' security dilemma* are security dilemmas because they violate the *BHJ Formulation*. However, Tang conflates motives and intentions. By holding on to benign behaviour, Tang's underlying proposition is that the conflict generated by the security dilemma is always potentially avoidable or mitigable if uncertainty can be made less intense. Such interpretation goes against Posen's description of the security dilemma and also with Jervis' conception of the '*deep' security dilemma*. In those latter interpretations, even

though the actors are security seekers, they understand bellicosity as the only way to achieve security (Glaser, 2010), and thus willingly engage in violent action.

Erik Melander (1999, 2009) defines the domestic security dilemma in an elegant way. He states that, '*it can be convincingly demonstrated that the escalating side was a basically defensively motivated, non-revisionist actor is the only rationalistic mechanism which can explain an outcome entailing war*' (Melander, 1999, p.179). Similarly to Kaufman, his argument originates from and widely resembles Posen's (1993) formulation, but he is also explicit about intentionality. Therefore, Melander recognises the actors' security motivation, the *inherent ambiguity of weapons* (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a) and the existence of *windows of opportunity,* all of which materialise in pre-emptive action. By looking specifically at the 1991 Karadjordjevo Agreement, he argues that Serbs and Croats could reach a mutual security agreement involving their disputes in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the *status quo* satisfied both parties' security requirements. Yet, he finds that the following conflict in the same year complies with all the necessary conditions which might be ascribed to a security dilemma. The inability to fully trust their opponents or to know their intentions locks the actors into a situation where they cannot credibly commit (Walter, 2009a); even having agreed to a *status quo* solution that served both sides' best interests, the fear and the uncertainty about the future and possible defection[27] make escalation inevitable.

[27] In this specific case, Melander (1999, p.161) argues, the main source of fear of defection was on the Bosnian Serbs, who misinterpreted Bosnian Croats intentions and believed that they had incentives to forsake and exploit the Karadjordjevo Agreement.

Barbara Walter (2003, 2009a) explains that belligerents in civil wars are only able to credibly commit to the agreement when a willing and able guarantor can assure that defection will be punished. Walter's understanding of the role of the guarantor as a mitigator of the uncertainty effects of anarchy is consistent with the defensive realist theory. The security dilemma tradition is perfectly compatible (and complemented) by Walter's (1999, pp.38-72) findings. Indeed, she has described some of her findings as a security dilemma *in reverse*, but this should be qualified as it is not a reversal of the mechanisms of the security dilemma. Nevertheless, the author seems to (crucially) understand that the most intense dilemma which actors face is about the future, and not only about the present or the past.

Finally, aiming to make sense of intentionality without losing sight of the security dilemma's explanatory power, Paul Roe (1999, 2005) developed a categorisation of the intra-state security dilemma that could capture to what extent intentions are present and how they play into the domestic security dilemma. Deliberately or not, Roe does it by tracing the 'distance' between an ideal conception of the security dilemma and its domestic application. His treatment of the security dilemmas as *tight*, *regular* or *loose* implicitly categorises the observed situation in terms of the amount of intention in play and therefore, if there's less intention, one is closer to the more traditional definitions of the security dilemma than if there is more intention. Such an approach, however internally valid, does not develop the theory substantially. The main contribution in his argument, however, is the idea of a societal security dilemma building on criticisms to structural explanations.

A *tight security dilemma* is a Butterfieldian tragedy (Butterfield, 1951) since it occurs when '*two or more actors with compatible security requirements misperceive the nature of their relationship and thus employ countermeasures based on an illusory incompatibility*', as posited by Kenneth Boulding (1959). These actors, then, can technically reach an accommodation point between them, as their '*needs to be secure does not, in fact, conflict with what is required by its neighbours*' (Roe, 2005, p.16).

In other words, in a tight security dilemma, actors ignore that it is possible to attain mutual security because of the 'other minds problem' (Butterfield, 1951) and end up fighting what would be an unnecessary war. This very restrictive way of seeing the security dilemma deals not only with a very specific scenario, but is also very hard to assess; in addition, most conceptions of the security dilemma fail to account for the level of compatibility and largely assume that security requirements are compatible. In this unexplored case, it is mutual fear that drives a misinterpretation of others' actions and narratives and result in unintended consequences: an uncontrollable, tragic and agency-free outcome.

A *regular security dilemma* is the most usual form that the security dilemma takes in the real world; hence, its name. In this appraisal of the phenomena, not all actors have to be peaceful at all times, because they can — still from within a dilemma — recognise that security requirements are incompatible, and despite preferring to avoid war (their actions do not purport predation towards opponents) they see it as an unavoidable way to attain security. Because of incomplete information, uncertainty, *windows of opportunity* and the effects of the offence-defence balance, belligerents will frequently find themselves in a situation where action is required. Snyder (1985, p.155) notes that, in its most essential

and common form, a security dilemma depends on the belief that each (or at least one) of the parties has to make others less secure in order to be more secure[28], not restricting it to readings that forfeit all expansionism as predation, and locate it out of the security dilemma.[29] As it has been argued elsewhere in this chapter, the same idea can be seen in Jervis' (1978, p.316) work: '*The security dilemma is at its most vicious when (…) the only route to security lies through expansion. Status quo powers must then act like aggressors*'. While this might be seen by some as not describing a security dilemma, it only fails to do so in the context of the two conflations delineated in the first section of this chapter (between motives and intentions and between outcomes and definitions), and, in fact, represent the most basic forms of the security dilemma in terms of its applicability.

Finally, a *loose security dilemma* is a situation where actors are power seekers. If one or more actors are predators and want to gain something from others, rather than only attaining the security of the *status quo*, the formal security dilemma does not take place, and instead, a *security challenge* materialises (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a). However, the explanatory capability of the security dilemma does not entirely vanish as soon as one identifies predation. Glaser refutes Schweller's (1996) critique that any level of power-seeking voids the theory as '*somewhat exaggerated, because he believes incorrectly that greedy states rob the security dilemma from all of its explanatory value*'. Most importantly,

[28] Even if one actor believes (but is not certain that) the other is a security seeker and would like to be able to reassure the latter (increasing its security), the former cannot act in such way (even if it is hypothetically possible), because doing so would decrease its own security (Glaser, 1997, 2010).

[29] This critique is present in Schweller (1996, p.117), Tang (2011) and Visser and Duyvesteyn (2014). They are all keen to reject the security dilemma explanation in cases where they argue that if aggression is present there's no dilemma. Furthermore, Visser and Duyvesteyn, addressing civil wars specifically, claim that there's always predation involved in internal violence. The latter will be thoroughly discussed in the next chapter.

Glaser reminds us that the '*security dilemma does not become unimportant in a world with greedy states, however, because greedy states can also be insecure*', even if '*the importance of the security dilemma both for explaining and to avoiding international conflict depends on how greedy one's adversary is: all being equal, the security dilemma is of less significance when the state's adversary is greedier*' (Glaser, 1997, p.190). Thus, even in the presence of intentionality, various dynamics are still central to the understanding of the reasons behind actors' decision to engage in violence. An actor engaging in expansion might nonetheless be constrained by elements of the offence-defence balance and other ones that, by interplay, will affect the propensity towards war.

In tackling the issue of intentionality Roe notes a similarity[30] between his *loose security dilemma* and what Jan Angstrom and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (2001) call the *declining-prize dilemma*. Making the appropriate analogies between security and requirements, in both studies, actors are understood as chiefly seeking to maximise power and are compelled to engage in violence at huge costs and ever decreasing pay-offs, because otherwise they may end up with nothing to benefit from. In any case, the *loose* formulation presented by Roe still fails to avoid the *conflation of motives and intentions*.

2.5 - Conclusion

In the first section of this chapter, I have revisited the core texts of the security dilemma scholarship, giving particular attention to its constitutive elements, showing the absence of fundamental incompatibilities with domestic armed violence. I argued that four

[30] Angstrom and Duyvesteyn (2001; 2005) describe dynamics very similar to the security dilemma (as does Barbara Walter), and use very familiar concepts in defining it, without, however, making the relationship explicit.

general problems of the theorisation of the security dilemma underlie the misunderstandings that limit existing theories, depriving the concept of its main advantage, namely, allowing us to understand the inadvertent effects of security competition, whether those may be mitigated or not.

By uncovering two fundamental conflations present in the literature — the *conflation of motives and intentions* and the conflation of definitions and outcomes — it was possible to demonstrate that certain issues recognised by those who question the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars stem from problems that belong to the general security dilemma literature. In addition, it was thereby intended to open the possibility of reappraising specific limitations considering those difficulties. Explicitly, the question of intentionality was deemed as limiting the existing work on the security dilemma, and in this writer's view leaving such work vulnerable to certain strains of criticism (those centred on the lack of benign intent). Intentionality, however, needs to be considered entirely differently under the recognition of the two conflations: extreme insecurity can prevent the security dilemma from being solved or mitigated, without, however, voiding its ability to explain conflict.

I then moved on to address the translatability of the concept to the domestic environment. Even if the security dilemma is not incompatible with intrastate environments, it is important to problematise and assess those differences more likely to impact the deployment of a theory devised for the interstate realm to the intrastate realm. The main contribution, in this sense, was to contextualise anarchy and uncertainty inside the borders, which has remained largely unproblematised by previous students of the security dilemma. The *emergence of anarchy* is neither static nor immutable, and even

if it yields similar constraints across and within borders, it is temporary and exceptional in domestic environments. Conscious of these characteristics, actors calculate based on the expectation that hierarchy will be restored, mutually increasing insecurity. Moreover, the nature of the state itself — *gewaltmonopol* — creates pressing incentives for the perception of the indivisibility of goals and the irreconcilability of security requirements, leading to expressions of the security dilemma that are more prone to being rejected under the lenses of the conflations described in the first section.

Finally, I proceeded to discuss the existing literature of the security dilemma in its application to civil wars considering the problems presented in previous sections. I reinforced the idea that there is no fundamental incompatibility impeding the application of the security dilemma to civil wars, and that none of the main scholars applying the concept seems to fail to understand the nature of the security dilemma, dispelling counter-arguments based on this. I also demonstrated that in several cases, the applicability of formulations of the security dilemma to civil wars was criticised for not taking intentionality into account, or providing an incorrect reading of it. Nonetheless, I have argued that it would be a mistake to dismiss the entire debate on these grounds, as the core of the debate remains relevant and potentially fruitful for future studies of civil war.

In the following chapter, I will move on to discuss the core criticism of the security dilemma's applicability to civil wars, and contextualise the security dilemma alongside other explanations of domestic armed conflict.

Chapter 3 – The Security Dilemma in the Context of Competing Explanations: *Inequality, Grievances, Greed, Power and Security*

'Calling someone a monster does not make him more guilty; it makes him less so by classing him with beasts and devils.'

- Mary Therese McCarthy, *in* The Writing on the Wall

'The real war will never get in the books.'

- Walt Whitman

3.1 - Introduction

Following the discussion in the previous chapter on the relevance and limitations of the security dilemma as a theoretical tool to explain conflict — both inside and outside the borders — I will now focus my attention on discussing some of the existing alternative explanations for the outbreak of armed conflict in domestic environments. As this thesis is concerned with assessing the performance of the security dilemma as a tool to explain the outbreak of armed violence, I will use the recent work of Esther Visser and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (2014) as an entry point to explore the main line of criticisms to its application, and to contextualise it within the existing alternative explanations.

These authors' approach to the applicability of the security dilemma relies heavily on the *problem of intentionality*, and as such it is significantly constrained by the *conflation of motives and intentions*. The outcome of such hindsight is to generate a bias towards explanations that fail to unpack intentionality, or rather assume intentionality not only as

a given, but as an undisputed necessity. The reason why I will start reviewing the competing theories *vis-à-vis* the security dilemma considering Visser and Duyvesteyn's criticisms is precisely because it gives leverage and context to understanding the complementarity and non-exclusivity of explanations, one that arises from the complexity and multiplicity of causes and dynamics that are in play in generating the outbreak of armed violence in civil wars.

Charles Tilly (1978, 1993, 2003) examines the occurrence of violence and argues that it has been the means of choice for *state making* (and more broadly for *contentious politics*), since the 12th century, contributing to the establishment of the international system as we know it today. Studies have suggested that conflict, in general, is on the decline, but the ratio of inter to intrastate armed conflict gives increasing relevance to the latter, especially if we consider that the average duration of conflicts is still stable (Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009, pp.2-12, Pinker, 2011, Cederman *et al.*, 2013b, ch.1).

After discussing the content of the critique to the security dilemma to provide context to competing explanations for the outbreak of armed violence in civil wars, I will turn my attention to selected theories that address the origins of armed conflict in civil wars. These are (1) greed; (2) grievance; and (3) survival (Cramer, 2006, Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009, Cederman *et al.*, 2013b). Other trends in conflict research also focus on disaggregation — for example, studying individual motivations and processes of recruitment (Gates, 2002, Buhaug *et al.*, 2009, Andvig and Gates, 2010) or by looking at the micro dynamics/microfoundations of conflict (Kalyvas, 2006, 2008a, Kalyvas and Balcells, 2010, Balcells and Kalyvas, 2014). It is important to note that the three above-mentioned explanations belong to the broad tradition of 'rational choice' theories, and

this is compatible with the paradigm adopted in this work, as discussed in the Introduction. In order to show that these explanations are not always mutually exclusive or necessarily competing, and are, rather, frequently complementary (Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009, p.63), I will frame them in a mechanistic approach.

Favouring a bird's eye view in this way will aid complementary theorisation and avoid a compartmentalised analysis. Completely rejecting one possible explanation in order to justify the use of a different one usually produces a myopic analysis, and precludes better evaluations of the studied phenomena (Theuerkauf, 2010, p.124), where the quest should be to embrace appreciations of complex social phenomena that are usually multi-causal, rather than mutually excluding. In fact, they are in many occasions reinforcing (Alexander George and Bennett, 2005, Bennett, 2013). This, in itself, challenges some of the claims made by critics of the security dilemma theory, especially in relation to civil wars.

Questioning an assumed mutual exclusivity of explanations gains even more relevance as we attempt to grasp the reason why one approach better explains some cases and not others. As we focus on the idea of either proving or disproving the all-encompassing effect of a mechanism as an explanation for armed violence, we forget to study the factors creating variation in the effectiveness of such accounts (Kurki, 2008, Jackson, 2011, Bennett and Checkel, 2015a). This research takes greed and grievance as the epitome of theories representing malign intent in civil wars, and the basis for the arguments for its prevalence, and engages thus engages this theory in opposition to *(in)*security based explanations, like the security dilemma. This simplification is intended at theoretical clarity and to expose the particular debate intended here, and it should not be read as an

attempt to diminish the complexity of the scholarship on greed and grievance, nor the importance of other theoretical developments in the study of civil wars and of political violence. By looking at the causes of conflict in light of uncertainty and fear, we will be able to better understand how fighting unfolds. For example, greed can indeed be present within a single individual or within one's small entourage, but it is unlikely to apply plainly to a whole population. The intentions of a warlord can be easily singled out as greed and malign motives, however, the mobilisation of a fighting force will usually have to rely on more intricate mechanisms — usually related to fear of the government or a challenger — which enables greedy warlords to amass manpower for fighting (Horowitz, 1985, Kaufman, 2001, Saideman and Zahar, 2008a, Paul Collier *et al.*, 2009).

Thus, exploring this process can tighten the links in causal explanations between greed and security. The same can be said for grievances: almost all societies harbour aggrieved groups, but not all of them experience violence. As I have shown in the previous chapter, the absence of order (represented by anarchy) is a triggering factor for various dynamics, all of which should matter in seeking to understand what motivates aggrieved people to resort to arms. Fear can have many roots in civil wars — economic inequality, government repression, existing ethnic hatreds and even as the purest effect of uncertainty, to identify a few — but in every case some form of anarchy (provided by an 'ordering' entity) lies at the heart of the causal puzzle linking conflict, fear and violence. For conflict, and more specifically armed violence to break out, the above-mentioned roots of fear have then to become widespread, and the emergence of anarchy is likely to be an effective stimulator of this process: the dynamics of the security dilemma may or may not take place as an enabler of the escalation into armed violence, in consonance with the conditions experienced in the referred case.

In this chapter, the literature on the causes of the outbreak of armed violence leading to civil war will be discussed. It will be argued that: the three schools of thought do not produce claims that are mutually exclusive; that they can be seen under a paradigm of complementarity (Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009, pp.63-64, Theuerkauf, 2010); and that this approach can increase our understanding of the mechanisms leading to armed violence and civil war. By framing them in that way, it will be also possible to better explore the importance of security dynamics as a catalyst for a translation of other motivations into armed violence, and how the security dilemma can be a useful tool to explain the outbreak of armed violence in civil wars.

3.2 - Critics of the Security Dilemma and Civil Wars: *pointing out to competing explanations?*

As I have shown in the previous chapter, the literature on the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars has been prolific since Donald L. Horowitz's (1985) and Barry Posen's (1993) contributions to the debate. While many alternative mechanisms have also been explored in the study of the causes of civil wars, not many contributions have been made towards disproving the security dilemma's relevance in the field. This, however, is not entirely surprising: the exercise of showing the validity of a theory does not have to necessarily disprove or exclude the entire range of other possible explanations; multiple explanations can work concurrently or complementarily, and do not have to be always entirely opposite, and thus mutually exclusive.

In this section, I intend to discuss two direct critiques of the security dilemma's validity as a causal mechanism present in causing civil wars. First, I will examine Stathis N.

Kalyvas (2008b) chapter in Stephen M. Saideman and Marie-Joëlle Zahar's (2008b), followed by Esther Visser and Isabelle Duyvesteyn's (2014) article, arguing that whilst both critiques bring useful insights to the debate, they are limited in their scope and fail to engage the concept of the security dilemma in light of the wider debate about its theorisation, especially leaving the *conflation of motives and intentions* unproblematised. Moreover, I will show that whilst both studies propose to test the validity of the security dilemma, neither actually does this; Kalyvas neither proves nor disproves the existence of the security dilemma, whereas Visser and Duyvesteyn proffer alternative explanations which contest the validity of the security dilemma explanation.

Kalyvas' chapter uses a quantitative approach to '*empirically evaluate the security dilemma using micro-level evidence (…) assess[ing] the extent to which the security dilemma is a good predictor of the dynamics of violence in the context of an irregular war*'. He states, that his analysis tests '*the observable implications of the security dilemma*' since the mechanism '*can be observed directly only with great difficulty, if at all*' (Kalyvas, 2008b, p.20). Whilst his observations about the difficulty to assess the presence of the security dilemma are generally correct, he fails to recognise that these are particularly salient in *large-n* statistical studies, akin to the one conducted. This reinforces the need for qualitative studies of the security dilemma in civil wars, particularly the ones focused on clarifying the mechanisms in play *under-the-hood*, and the employment of process tracing techniques which can be extremely profitable for uncovering the actual causal mechanisms in place. When it comes to his methodological approach, Kalyvas claims to use *fine-grained micro-level data* collected as part of his research on the Greek Civil War (particularly the Argolid region) and the Vietnam War. It is important to note that this data was obtained in the context of his research on micro-

dynamics of civil war, which culminated with his celebrated book *The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars* (2006). They are intentionally geared towards the study of the micro level and, as a consequence, these data privileged perceptions and incentives operating at the individual or very small group level, rather than the those of the kinds of larger political bodies studied in this thesis.

Whilst the disaggregation trend in the study of civil wars has produced a series of very useful contributions, analysts must be wary that it does not and cannot tell the complete story. Kalyvas goes on to test three *observable implications* that he deems as indicators of the presence of the security dilemma:

> first, violence is most likely where populations are most intermixed — ideologically, religiously, or ethnically; second, violence should be launched by substantial minorities that are weak enough to feel threatened, yet strong enough to be able to launch an attack; and, third, violence is the only possible outcome under conditions of anarchy — as opposed to peaceful arrangements, such as local peace deals (Kalyvas, 2008b, p.20).

Kalyvas discovers that '*although this test can only be preliminary given the nature of the data, I do not find compelling evidence in favor of the security dilemma*'. In his findings, demographic intermixing as a measure of insecurity failed to predict the outbreak and escalation of armed violence, but revealed itself as an indicator of a trend where the majority groups seek to consolidate advantage *vis-à-vis* minority groups. This suggests that the escalation of violence '*may be related to the retrospective logic of revenge rather than the prospective logic of the security dilemma*' (2008b, pp.20-21). He further recognises that, due to the nature of his data and the appreciation given to it, his conclusions are more relevant when explaining the dynamics of violence in civil wars rather than the outbreak of violence.

This concurs with the core element analysed in my thesis. Kalyvas recognises that fear and uncertainty are likely to be more relevant at the outbreak of violence than during the continuation phase, even if only for the reason that they are more easily isolated in the former, and this isolating factor affects both the actor and the analyst. When deploying his tests, Kalyvas makes various assumptions that limit his analysis. Firstly, his declared focus on the micro-level represents a caveat in itself: as he later clarifies, the observable implication the author is looking for is a situation where individuals feel that they need to kill their neighbours before they are killed or, in other words, preemption at the individual level. While this has happened in number of cases, it would be unfair to expect that such behaviour is constitutive and necessary for the presence of the security dilemma. Such behaviour can be relevant also in more organised and institutionalised forms of deploying violence and *power-to-hurt*.[47] Kalyvas seems to overlook the problem of mobilisation and feasibility in civil wars (which will be addressed in a later section of this chapter) and seems to equate it to a critique of the security dilemma; i.e. if one cannot mobilise rebellion, the security dilemma will not be present. This is another form of conflation of the security dilemma with its outcomes (but a converse of the one previously discussed). To summarise, Kalyvas dismisses the security dilemma as an explanation for the outbreak of armed violence when he does not find one particular potential outcome of it, as his chosen *observable implication* accounts only for particularly fierce developments of the mechanism.

[47] As I will demonstrate in my two case studies, the security dilemma mechanism played a significant role in causing the outbreak of violence at the higher politically-organised group levels.

Esther Visser and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (2014) provide a more detailed criticism of the applicability of the security dilemma, relying on a qualitative approach to analyse the case of the 1991 conflict in Yugoslavia. They devote a section of their article (2014, pp.74-76) to the discussion of the methodological challenges of studying the security dilemma, possibly in recognition of the problems encountered by Kalyvas and others, but they fail to provide a solution. In part, this is understandable if one considers that an unequivocal *proof of intentions* is ultimately impossible. However, as I argued extensively in the previous chapter, proving intentions is not necessary to assess the presence of the security dilemma mechanism, as understanding actors' motivations is crucial for the security dilemma to be present. Incidentally, throughout their article, Visser and Duyvesteyn suggest (following Shiping Tang's BHJ Formulation) that analysts mistake the conceptualisation of the security dilemma and the spiral model, which are understood by them as two different concepts. This assumption, however, deviates from the original formulation of the security dilemma: for Robert Jervis, the spiral and the security dilemma are the same thing (Nicholas J. Wheeler, 2014, p.496). As argued in the previous chapter, Jervis' view is also consistent with most interpretations of the concept used by major analysts of the relevance of the security dilemma in civil wars. This, in turn, leads to the central problem of Visser and Duyvesteyn's critique: the conflation of motives and intentions and the assumption of malign motives.

Visser and Duyvesteyn recognise the lack of a methodology capable of ascertaining motives, and account for the fact that analysts infer (often incorrectly) motives from intentions. However, they mistakenly conclude the necessity of malign motives in civil

wars. This is clearly visible in their appreciation of the Yugoslavian case study[48] (2014, pp.76-80), where the entire narrative about the case is geared towards demonstrating that Slobodan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman exhibited malign motives. The authors start by depicting the leaders as power-hungry nationalists, reinforcing the story about manipulation of the public opinion and the forging of fears,[49] further asserting the presence of a discourse of hatred in the form of a nationalist rhetoric. From there, they conclude that '*hostilities were already widespread, and both sides had developed malign intentions. The events took up such a pace that the security dilemma dynamics did not have time to develop*' (Visser and Duyvesteyn, 2014, p.80). Yet, in their entire analysis, they never consider whether these aggressive policies stemmed from security seeking motives. Instead, they assume the existence of malign motives on the Serb side and contemplate the possibility of defensive motivations on the part of the Croats at the outset of the conflict (but also reject it in the long run). Thus, they claim that Tudjman correctly assessed (under the effect of no misperception) that Milosevic harboured expansionist motives, presenting a genuine threat, and therefore a security challenge. From this point on, they claim the escalation is explained by the spiral model, but not by the security dilemma.

Even if they might be correct in their analysis of this particular case,[50] their model is hardly generalisable, as it would indicate the irrelevance of the security dilemma in strategic interactions where there is potential dissonance between motives and

[48] In particular, the 1991 tensions between Serbs and Croats.

[49] Which is explained in the context of the same case study by Stuart Kaufman's (2001) '*Modern Hatreds*' thesis.

[50] Several authors have studied the security dilemma on the particular case of Yugoslavia and came to different conclusions.

behaviour. In other words, by reducing motives to their *observable implications*, Visser and Duyvesteyn are unable to produce a model that can assess if the relationship between the actors was driven by fundamental mutual insecurity, which is a major limitation of their test of (and their claims about) the security dilemma. The last paragraph of their article testifies to the *conflation of motives and intentions*, as well as the consequent bias towards assuming aggressive motives from the *observable implications* of hostile behaviour:

> The real or acquired and internalized memories of this past will exacerbate contemporary tensions and each group will consequently assume the hostility of the other. As a result, spiral dynamics accelerate and the security dilemma will not have enough time to develop. If misperceptions exist, and in such a situation there is plenty of room for misperceptions to appear, they become truthful because of a self-fulfilling prophecy so that a beginning security dilemma quickly develops into a real security threat. Also, when the leaders of groups opt for political mobilization, misperception and uncertainty often cease to play an important role. This mobilization is often unambiguous, and malign intentions are signalled to the other group. At this point the situation turns into a security threat. A violent mutual past also makes it difficult to determine when a conflict actually starts. (…) Another characteristic of civil conflicts is the rapid development of malign intentions. Sometimes they are already present, at other times they evolve quickly before the outbreak of conflict, and turn the situation into a genuine security threat. Therefore, the security dilemma is not applicable to explain the conflict in Yugoslavia or any other intrastate conflict (Visser and Duyvesteyn, 2014, p.81).

As can be seen, in their narrative, the real motives of the actors are not addressed. Even if Visser and Duyvesteyn do formally recognise the difference between motives and intentions (2014, p.68) when discussing Charles L. Glaser's (2010) contribution, they singularly fail to operationalise it. To see how the authors oversimplify the problem by

conflating motives and intentions, one can consider their justifications for how intentionality should be understood: '*it can be assumed that, for example, when someone pushes another person in front of a speeding train, he wants that person to die. Intentionality of such an action is already embedded within the action itself*' (Visser and Duyvesteyn, 2014, p.76). This, however seemingly obvious demonstration presented — leaves no leeway for a situation where defensive motives lead to hostile behaviour. These motives are often the most interesting and intense cases of the security dilemma. While they are right to recognise that it can be complicated to separate motives from intentions and to read into actors' behaviours (both for the actors in strategic interaction and in the eyes of the analyst), this does not justify the assumption of malign motives, nor the categorical rejection of the relevance of the security dilemma mechanism as a whole, for the entirety of civil war cases.

Having explored criticisms of the security dilemma's applicability to internal armed violence, the focus will now turn to reviewing the alternative explanations for armed violence, as well as contextualising them in the wider discussion about uncertainty, fear and the spirals of insecurity in civil wars.

3.3 - Inequality, grievances, hatred and outbreak of armed violence

Inequality as a cause of conflict can be traced back to the far-reaching concept of 'revolution' and how societies endure radical and pervasive changes, changes that often involve some degree of violence to produce a shift in unequal or exploitative social norms and structures (Brinton, 1952, Tilly, 1978, 1993, Goodwin, 2001). If one accepts that the power and wealth imbalances within a system is an obvious source of conflict, it is not unreasonable to relate it to the outbreak of violence in domestic systems. The

most prominent advocate of such an approach is Ted Robert Gurr (1970), whose theory of *relative deprivation* relates collective violence to a manifestation of unfulfilled group aspirations, most likely related to levels of material well-being. It is not, however, the absolute level of material well-being that can drive conflict, but the disparity between groups that have different levels of material well-being across 'identifiable' and contrastable groups. Thus, the positional element takes on an important role in Gurr's work: it gives meaning to inequality by putting grievances in the context of a frustration experienced by the relationship between the position of actors given a comparable variable. Indeed, while the theory's branding of *greed and grievance* may be an appealing *soundbite*, the accuracy of *inequality* better withstands rigorous analysis (Horowitz, 1985, Cederman *et al.*, 2013a, Wimmer, 2013), capturing the crucial importance of positional relationships.

Relative deprivation, as defined by Gurr, draws on the sense of the perceived just distribution of available power and wealth within a society and among different groups. As he notes: *'the principal cause of revolution is the aspiration for economic or political equality on the part of the common people that lack it'* (Gurr, 1970, p.37). Furthering this point, the author goes on to state that '*a discrepancy in both instances between what people have of political and economic goods relative to what they think it is justly theirs*' embodies a sensation of repression of elemental desires, which in turn develops into frustration with the prevailing situation. Broadly, there are minimum needs for liberty and security that build the core of *realisation* (individual or collective), and the lack of such elements *frustrates* by denying *expectations*, which produces a feeling of *deprivation*.

While unrealised aspirations generate disappointment, and may be coped with, denied expectations generate deprivation, which is very much intolerable: '*the deprived individual feels impelled to remedy, by whatever means are available, the material and psychic frustrations produced in him*' (Gurr, 1970, p.39). Gurr calls this process the *frustration-aggression thesis,*[51] and '*whereas disappointment may breed the seeds for incipient revolution, deprivation serves as a catalyst for revolutionary action*' (Hoselitz and Willner in Gurr, 1970, p.39). His account of inequality is sound because it draws upon the perception that individuals have about their status *vis-à-vis* their counterparts, instead of focusing on the quantifiable element of inequality (usually measured in stricter economical terms), and thus has greater depth and greater relevance with other topics in armed conflict onset research (Cederman *et al.*, 2013a). In fact, the *relative deprivation* approach can be used as toolbox for understanding different stances of conflict motivation in relational and positional perspectives: rather than interpreting grievances as a static variable, it gives deeper context to how the aggrieved becomes unsatisfied.

This is more consistent with mechanistic approaches, further leveraging potential compatibility with security-based explanations. Furthermore, Gurr's proposition of relative deprivation is that relevant grievances emerge from inequality, not from absolute deprivation, and thus Gurr's *relative deprivation* and Murshed's *inequality* are very similar. If inequality is not present, deprivation could still cause *survivalist* behaviour, but this would pertain to non-political violence, not rebellion/political violence. For example, a deprived individual is capable of killing to obtain food if necessary, but his

[51] The frustration-aggression thesis is rooted on psychology, and was first hypothesised by John Dollard *et al.* (1939), and developed by Neal E. Miller (1941) and Leonard Berkowitz (1962, 1989). Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M. Weinstein (2008) also refer to the process in their study of rebel recruitment.

violent solution is not directed at a political goal of employing violence as a way to transform a situation rooted in political grievances. In other words, Gurr's view of motivation is centred on the perceived disparity between any set of elements one wants to analyse. Instead of focusing on one specific element (like rents from public goods or access to parliament seats), it sets the tone for larger applicability of his theory. By stressing the positional aspect to the detriment of the nature of the specific elements, his theory provides a wide-casting net. This, however, is not without issues.

Such encompassing flexibility, in fact, lends itself to a conceptual problem that undermines *relative deprivation* as an explanation in itself, since the concept can also be understood as *mimicking* conflict rather than explaining it. For example, more general readings, for instance that given by Johan Galtung, define conflict as a condition or state: '*an action-system is said to be in conflict if the system has two or more incompatible goal-states*' (Galtung, 1965, p.1). Because of its simplicity, it is compatible with a large spectrum of conflict theories.

Another valuable definition is that provided by Lewis A. Coser, which provides that conflict is '*a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralise, injure or eliminate their rivals*' (Coser, 1956, p.8). It is thus seen as a process. Both capture the essence of conflictual relationships, while explicitly characterising the Clausewitzian (1832) dialectic inherent to them. Either by looking at conflict as a condition or process, *relative deprivation* is a descriptor matching both definitions, and begs the question of whether such a construct represents a more in-depth description of the phenomena rather than a process that causes conflict and, ultimately, armed violence. Is *relative deprivation* answering or

restating the question of *why men rebel*, by informing that rebellion and conflict are almost interchangeable at the societal level (Gurr, 1970, Brush, 1996, Cederman *et al.*, 2013a)?

The empirical contribution of the literature shows many cases where conflicts do not beget rebellion or armed violence, and that two approaches are possible. The first is to follow theoretical prescriptions and understand the lack of rebellion as a situation where commitment to compatible goal-states is feasible and (consciously or unconsciously) attained. Even if the said situation seems conflictual at first, this approach to a failing empirical record keeps *relative deprivation* predictions intact. The second is to understand the concept as a redressing, and thus to ask the question as to what turns conflict into armed violence. One of the early criticisms of the *frustration-aggression thesis* is that, when tested against empirical data, it is, at best, inconclusive (Brush, 1996). Moreover, while the theory can uncover how frustration determines a potential will for the use of violence to change the *status quo*, it does not, in itself, explain the variation in the occurrence of violence among the totality of cases.[52] This flaw suggests that there should be some element of opportunity that would allow and incentivise people to take up on arms and violently rebel, and that while grievances in societies may be widespread, opportunity to rebel is not. More than aggrieved groups and individuals (even if by the force of inequality and frustration), what is necessary is a minimum level of resources and organisation (David Snyder and Tilly, 1972, Tilly, 1973, 1978), that would flow

[52] The mixed empirical record has not prevented major theoretical progress to be made concerning the relationship between inequality and conflict, as it can be seen in work based in Marxist conflict theory, cultural modernity/division of labour and resource scarcity (Cederman *et al.*, 2013a).

directly out of a population's central political processes, with the crucial objective of attaining established places within the structure of power.

While Gurr produced one of the most significant works on political violence and rebellion of his time, he has often been fairly charged with having inconsistent empirical evidence. Tilly's (1971) review of Gurr's seminal work is particularly critical of the quality of its quantitative evidence: '*bits of this evidence simply bob up in the course of the discussion. The book does not contain a presentation of the rationale, technique, or sources of the quantitative analysis*'. Another word of caution, he points out that while '*Why Men Rebel?*' then claimed to be '*the most careful and comprehensive cross-national study of its kind*', it only contained data from '*1,100 strife events occurring in 114 polities from 1961 through 1965*', which raises concerns regarding the quality of case study criteria applied. Although the work is populated with punctual references to various historical cases throughout the text, no detailed qualitative empirical work is present (Tilly, 1971, pp.416-417).

Indeed, even in more recently developed models,[53] the proxies used to find evidence for grievances are relatively straightforward to measure and quantify. While this is good for econometrical approaches, it represents an inconsistent simplification with the complexity of the dynamics in play within aggrieved groups and their interactions with peers. For example, grievance is usually measured through the Gini coefficient[54], in

[53] Usually variations of the model posited by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler (2004).

[54] The Gini coefficient accounts for economic inequality, mostly by measuring variation in income distribution.

combination with the ethno-linguistic fractionalisation index (ELF)[55]. Cramer (2006, pp.129-130) posits that the ELF is more useful as a general indicator of the likelihood of groups being able to coordinate costs of rebellion (focus on polarisation) instead of variety and ostracisation of small groups (focus on fractionalisation). While in Gurr's model, there is a correlation between higher values of the ELF index and the likelihood of civil war, in Cramer's reading, the closer the ELF index is to the mid-point (i.e. a 50 per cent of chance of difference in ethnic group between two randomly selected individuals), the more likely it is that mobilisation of violence will occur. Cramer's interpretation is more prone to being linked to security-based explanations, and it compliments Posen's (1993) theory; ethno-political identity is important as it binds individuals around a sense of loyalty and belonging, which enables them to try and adopt measures to increase their own security *vis-à-vis* outsiders who do not share the same loyalty ideal. As Kaufman (2001) also notes, this level of group-loyalty can, and often does, undermine previous feelings of shared nationality that could exist, replacing it with an equally emotionally significant, but ethnic-based one.

Another more frequently noticed issue is that of measuring grievances and of bridging the gap between the existence of grievances and the outbreak of violence. As previously discussed, the lack of accurate measures of grievances and the relative flexibility to what can be framed as grievances can be as enabling as it can be deceiving. All societies have some level of grievances, but not all societies experience armed violence. Moreover, the reversibility of the argument shows some internal weakness, as it rules out very little. The argument for *relative deprivation* follows that if an individual senses a large gap between

[55] The ethno-linguistic fractionalisation index essentially '*measures the probability that two random individuals in a determined population are from different ethnic groups*' (Cramer, 2006, pp.104-106).

what one gets and what one deserves (at least believes so), that same individual will likely become angry. Given the opportunity, this individual will rebel, and when such sense of a gap is simultaneously felt by many in a society, full-scale rebellions occur.

If this argument is reversed, it can hardly be disproved, as it is hard to imagine situations of political violence in which there is no collective dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs, and such collective dissatisfaction cannot exist unless it is the sum of individual dissatisfactions (because of disagreements between expectations and reality). Tilly recognises that Gurr's argument is relevant, but finds that its deployment can be a red herring, and that while it describes the phenomena of rebellion, it also does very little '*to refute the alternative explanations which his analysis might challenge: Marxist theories, theories of collective behaviour and theories of political mobilisation. He prefers to sponge them up*' (Tilly, 1971, p.417).

In an attempt to bridge the gap discussed above, Lars-Erik Cederman, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Halvard Buhaug (2013a) have attempted to demonstrate how *relative deprivation* captures a process that is part of the causal chain linking inequality to civil wars, through the establishment of grievance-based relationships. Gurr's unquestionable contribution, however, is to map how psychological, social and material elements develop into a perception of inequality that leads to frustration and the will for revolutionary action. In the specific context of socio-political rebellion,[56] revolutionary action usually develops into a resort to violence against the ruling force.

[56] Gurr builds on vast literature about psycho-social elements of rebellion and frustration in varied aspects of life and try to translate them to the realities of rebelling groups within societies. He discusses the work of philosophers, sociologists and psychologists such as Emile Durkheim, Robert K. Merton, Sigmund Freud and Leon Festinger, for example.

Complementary to the group approaches to inequality as a cause of civil wars is another refinement proposed by Donald L. Horowitz (1985), with which he explores the link between inequality, frustration and grievances, by using elements of social and cognitive psychology.[57] Adding to the broad *relative deprivation* theory, his approach maps out how *groupness* emerges through processes of solidarity and the construction of intense emotions of belonging, helping to address the gap of how positional struggle unfolds into hatred and violence. Feelings of *groupness* are easily constructed along ethnic lines, because ethnicity serves as a metaphorical *family* that justifies solidarity among individuals and the perception of a common identity that can be easily mobilised into political struggle (which also links the idea back to Tilly's criticisms discussed above). The crucial enabling element that turns identity and *groupness* into active conflict is in-group favouritism, or in-group bias. This is also supported by cognitive psychology findings that groups are always constructed in relation to others, and that there is a correlation between feelings of *groupness* and active differentiation, meaning that larger in-group integration and cohesion is attained in terms of increased and purported differentiation towards others (Gurr, 1970, Horowitz, 1985, Brown, 1993, Kaufman, 1996a, Kaufmann, 1996a, Brown, 2001, Kaufman, 2001, Wimmer, 2013).

The obvious consequence, pointed out by Horowitz, is that creating strong identities also creates a sense of *group entitlement*, manifested in material terms easily measured by economic indicators, but also in other more *symbolically charged* areas such as language, religion, culture and political representation (Horowitz, 1985, Holsti, 1996, Cederman

[57] Namely the contribution of social identity theory by Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner (1979).

et al., 2013a, Wimmer, 2013). As these interactions progress, rooted feelings grow among societies, usually with the build-up of a sense of sovereignty *vis-à-vis* others, here understood as a capability to secure means — across a wide range of areas — for the agreeable lifestyle of the said group. Group entitlement as a dialectic process is then ultimately materialised as a perceived existential threat. Indeed, Horowitz's (1985) main contribution is suggestively titled *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* where he seems to reinforce the importance of the security dimension of identity, almost in recognition of a *turning point*. Thus, collective claims, associated and identifiable to identity groupness can shift the concern from the original grievance to a wider sense of general insecurity between opposing groups.

As has been argued, the literature on inequality and grievances has created a compelling case to understand a potential set of motivations leading to the use of violence for political purposes. These explanations are sound on their own, but have also the potential to be complemented by the security dilemma. At the abstract level, Gurr's work conceptualises *relative deprivation* in a way that, under uncertainty, there is no fundamental opposition between the struggle to challenge inequality and the feeling of insecurity that leads to the development of security dilemmas (Horowitz, 1985, Kaufmann, 1996a, Stewart, 2016). This reinforces the potential complementarity of the security dilemma explanation and the importance of grievances in civil wars, which is made possible through a conceptualisation of the role of grievances that is closer to Gurr's frustration-aggression thesis then Collier and Hoeffler's (2004) model. But what about *greed*?

3.4 - Greed: economic gains as a motivation for armed violence?

Some academics have challenged grievance-based explanations, whilst still broadly following the early footsteps of *relative deprivation* theory. One of the long-lasting criticisms to grievance-based explanations is that *resentments* are almost impossible to adequately measure. These critics appreciated inequality with a focus on measurability, by setting out a theory grounded on easily attainable indicators. Paul Collier is the exponent scholar in this tradition, having led a team of World Bank economists in examining the causes of civil war. He published an influential article with Anke Hoeffler (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004) in which they favour the conceptualisation of greedy behaviour by actors as a cause for armed violence in civil wars. Their claim is based on the proposal that wars are opportune occasions to obtain personal or group gains, at a very low cost. The widespread havoc and confusion of internal violence welcomes the mobilisation of warfare by self-interested individuals that engage in rent-seeking (Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009, p.65). This engagement can either be criminal behaviour (mainly in the form of looting) or by a more sophisticated state-replacement *racketeering system*, in which networks of power and services controlled by these individuals — frequently associated to the image of the warlord — substitute the state. Their objective in doing so, is to profit from levying often extortionate taxes in exchange for protection and services upon the inhabitants of their controlled territory (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004, Vinci, 2006, 2008, Reno, 2011). David Keen (2000, p.27) provides a rather simplistic yet illustrative simplification of the theory: '*war may be a continuation of economics by other means*'. Indeed, if war is perceived as profitable business, actors will create *enterprises* seeking to explore this market. Although seemingly contradictory, this gives meaning to canons like *investment in violence* and *enterprise of coercion*, where personal or group profit is the driver of the will to mobilise violence across the perpetrator

spectrum, ranging from the top-rank warlord to the militiaman thug (Cramer, 2006, pp.124-129).

Later works by greed advocates, however, favour a more balanced stance for the *greed-for-profit*, by introducing the notion of *opportunity*. Opposed to the plain greedy-actor argument, those advocates look at the dynamics of profitability in the conduct of violence, and argue that while the prospect of personal gain is a factor, it '*does not necessarily mean that the wars are caused by economic shortcomings, but rather that the conduct, and continuation, of the war is determined by economic incentives*' (Duyvesteyn and Ångström, 2005, p.11). This approach accounts for a more mechanistic reading of the effect of economics, and the opportunity-mobilisation nexus also relates positively to Tilly's (1978, 2003) arguments about mobilisation conditions and revolution. Tilly's arguments are further developed by authors such as Stathis N. Kalyvas (Kalyvas, 2003, 2006, Kalyvas and Kocher, 2007, Balcells and Kalyvas, 2014), clarifying the relationship between the various dynamics and creating spaces where the role of *(in)*security is meaningful.

In its most simplistic form, the 'greed approach' posits three empirical proxies for greed: dependence of the economy on primary commodity exports,[58] the proportion of young males to the total population, and the average years of school attendance (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004, Cramer, 2006, p.129). Other proxies have also been proposed, accounting mainly for exploitable natural resources (usually focusing on oil or mineral resources, such as diamonds), and while they refine Collier's model for econometric

[58] Measured as the ratio of such primary commodity export revenues to the total gross domestic product (GDP).

purposes, what they address is contained within the original first proxy: dependence on commodity exports. Commodity exports account for an entire category of civil wars often referred to as *resource wars*, and these are understood as a direct function of the competition for the rents of available natural resources and are *inherently greed-based*, by definition (Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009, p.70). Agricultural commodities like timber, mineral resources such as diamonds or rare-earth minerals and non-renewable fuel sources, such as oil, are the usual suspects being considered *lootable resources*.

The detailed study of the effect of each of those resources has produced a wealth of information: for example, the presence of on-shore (but not off-shore) oil production increases the risk of civil war (especially if oil accounts for more than one-third of the country's total export revenues), as on-shore oil production facilities are an easily controlled and attainable target for natural resource rent seekers. The existence of alluvial and shallow mine shaft diamond reserves are highly correlated with the outbreak of armed violence and civil war, as they represent a high-value, high-liquidity and easily *lootable* resource, and the correlation becomes even stronger with the end of the Cold War. Conversely, the presence of deep mine shaft diamond reserves has a negative correlation to the outbreak of violence, as it requires high levels of entrepreneurial organisation and technology to extract, and thus is more easily exploitable under peaceful conditions (Fearon, 2005, Humphreys, 2005, Lujala *et al.*, 2005, Ross, 2006, Lujala *et al.*, 2007). Other resources have been less studied, but the usually unaccounted illegal drug production market (opium poppy and coca crops, for example) has been demonstrated to influence the duration of civil wars, as it produces means to finance the fighting, but does not affect civil war outset (as drug activities find better conditions to

flourish after central authority has eroded), notably in the case of Afghanistan or Colombia (Fearon, 2004, 2005).

These largely statistical analyses have not been entirely supported by qualitative studies, producing mixed records when it comes to their empirical coherence. While the authors cited claim a *significant and robust* evidence of a causal relationship between violence and resources, others question their significance, both for the outbreak and duration of civil armed conflict (Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009, p.72). They converge mainly on two points: reverse causality, where civil wars are actually the cause of resource dependence by reducing the likelihood of success in other sectors (*e.g.* manufacturing); and spurious correlation, by noticing that both civil war and resource dependence can be caused by an unaccounted variable such as weak rule of law (Addison and Murshed, 2003, Fearon and Laitin, 2003, Brunnschweiler and Bulte, 2008, Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009).

In many cases, resource abundance appeals for the participation of external actors in influencing and/or supporting violence if they see it as favourable to their interests and, however obvious, constitutes a different mechanism, by assuming a greedy behaviour from the external actors. In addition, this could still be broadly characterised more as a greed-driven cause of conflict than the one originally described by proponents of *resource wars*. Additionally, Christa N. Brunnschweiler and Erwin H. Bulte (2008) have shown that reverse causality poses a problem to the internal coherence of the claims, by unpacking the assumed exogenous character of resource dependence in previous studies. In their account, resource abundance does not necessarily result in resource dependence and has even less causal relationship with the outbreak of armed violence when studies

are controlled for other endogenous variables such as trade openness, access to means of exportation and a good record of political freedom.

In many cases resource abundance improved average levels of income, negatively influencing armed violence mobilisation, and even promoting human development. Additionally, Macartan Humphreys (2005) highlights that grievances, and not greed, might be at the heart of the problem, as economies and societies that are heavily reliant on resource exports for revenue may experience high levels of inequality and income concentration, generating a perception of unfair distribution amongst an aggrieved populace. Some actors can also feel aggrieved by geographical displacement occurring in the wake of resource extraction projects. Finally, resource abundance may aggravate state weakness, as governments, less dependent on public taxation than on resource rents can afford to be less accountable to their citizens, maintaining weak bureaucratic structures associated with corruption and cleptocracies. The state weakness produced, rather than the resources themselves, favour the outbreak of violence, which also reinforces the relevance of the grievance mechanism, without excluding insecurity (Humphreys, 2005, Ross, 2006).

Another element of the explanation is that the proportion of young males to population ratio is the apparently obvious factor, as these young males are the typical *manpower* for waging civil wars (massive young male recruitment is characteristic of low-tech armies, because of their reliance on infantry) but the relevance of such an indicator is challenged by the increasing employment of children and women in combat military roles (Gates, 2002, Andvig and Gates, 2010). Moreover, as most mass armed mobilisation requires such manpower, it is hardly discrete enough to account for a cause, but it does indeed

suggest a condition for armed conflict. Collier (in Cramer, 2006, p.129) justifies the choice by highlighting a relationship between two of the variables. Together with a low average level of schooling, a high number of young males in a society can indicate the presence of a substantial reserve work force, and thus a need for exploring alternative means of living. He argues that the combination of such factors, with available means for using violence being present, favours the mobilisation of armed groups interested in obtaining personal gains from the use of force (Mueller, 2000, Cramer, 2006, Vinci, 2008). This approach, however, accounts for the opportunity for the exercise of the greed motive, and such opportunity can be available as a consequence of state weakness or a previous manifestation of armed violence that precludes the rule of law in the territory.

The greed hypothesis advanced by Collier and Hoeffler *'is basically an interpretation of their empirical finding that resource dependence increases the risk of civil war'* (Syed Mansoob Murshed, 2009, p.75). Their hypothesis lack of robustness and empirical shortcomings but has warranted an entire thematic issue of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.[59] Conceding to the contrasting findings of the above mentioned studies, Collier and Hoeffler recognised that other elements must play a more central role. As greed is more consistent as an accessory in a civil war outbreak model than a core cause for armed conflict, the authors proposed a rebranding of the theory, still based on a similar appreciation of its empirical evidence, calling their hypothesis one of feasibility rather than of motivation: *'the feasibility hypothesis proposes that where rebellion is feasible, it will occur: motivation is indeterminate, being supplied by whatever agenda happens to be adopted by the first social entrepreneur to occupy the viable niche'* (Paul

[59] *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49 (4), 2005. The issue is entitled '*Paradigm in Distress*'.

Collier *et al.*, 2009, p.21). Further building on the idea of feasibility, John Mueller (2000, 2003) examines the behaviour of opportunistic bands of thugs and bandits in fragile states, arguing that they are central rather than accessories to explaining armed violence and civil war. He argues that the surge of *hooligans* (and warlords) motivated by immediate profit (with none, or very little political ideals) is the driver behind the spread of violence, and not the other way around. This argument reduces the importance of grievances and favours greed dynamics, however dislocated from the more pervasive socio-political group context.

Mueller also argues that while these groups are frequently motivated by the benefits of looting, other motivations can be simultaneously present. In some cases, groups and individuals will take on weapons as *vigilantes* (driven by insecurity and the need to provide security) or to engage in hate crimes (as a way to challenge opposing groups). In Mueller's account, these relatively disorganised group actions trigger dynamics leading to a more general adoption of armed violence in a more organised fashion, as the lack of security imposes itself. It is important, however, to note that locating warlordism purely under the greed-motivation paradigm would render it indistinguishable from non-political violence. For example, the violence employed by drug cartels whose main motivation does not challenge any structural order, but gains from exploring its fringes[60] (Holsti, 1996, Tilly, 2003, ch.2).

[60] This offers conceptual and empirical challenges: would drug cartel violence in Brazil or Mexico, for example, be considered civil war or criminality? And how does it differ from drug related violence in Colombia or Guinea-Bissau?

In order to overcome some of the discussed shortcomings of the greed proposition, later models try to explore greed and grievance as concomitant factors causing civil war, and predict that actors greedily explore opportunities when grievances are present, mainly in the form of political and economic exclusion. Murshed (2002, 2009) links exclusion and economic inequality to the mobilisation of armed violence, indicating that the resort to violence depend more on perceived inequality, generating the rationale of exploring possibilities of solving this through the use of force. The discussion then moves to another *locus*, in order to clarify whether the targets of violence are the elements which are perceived as a cause of inequality, or if the employment of force is otherwise haphazard. The more selective the use of force is, the more grievance-driven it will be, and conversely, the more indiscriminate it is, the more greed-driven. A possible application of the concept of *wars of the third kind* (Holsti, 1996) is that the conceptual distinction between greed and grievance loses relevance over time, and after the outset, as civil conflict suffers from attrition, both socially and militarily. As the conflict evolves, the fighting imposes itself over the population and the perceived need to employ violence in daily life increases. The developing reality of a Hobbesian state of nature (Hobbes, 1651) puts a premium on security, to be guaranteed by one's own means (Autesserre, 2009), which leads us to the dimension of insecurity and survival. This scenario subsumes an important trend in the literature on domestic armed violence and civil wars, namely that there is an emerging consensus about the complementarity of the arguments based on motivation and feasibility aspects, leading to a more complex yet more accurate explanation of armed conflict, carving a particular space for the role of domestic anarchy.

3.5 - Domestic Anarchy: Uncertainty, Power and Survival

Beyond greed and grievance, two other important elements influence the debate about alternative explanations of the causes of armed conflict than that of the security dilemma. As expected, acquiring, keeping and using power that can be leveraged *vis-à-vis* challengers subsidises the dynamics of contentious relations, and ultimately, relative power is what guarantees the imposition of one's will (Mearsheimer, 2001). Power is desired not only because it compels others to the power holder's will, but also because it deters unwanted behaviours by challengers.[61]

Power is, then, a means to achieve security. Under anarchy, actors seek power at different levels, both individually (for personal protection) as well as collectively (for political leveraging and broader security guarantees). In the first situation, individuals do so because they believe that they will be able to individually protect themselves and their families against violence, or to join self-defence militias. The contrary can also occur; ordinary citizens can join militias in order to obtain weapons that they can hold on to while off-duty (Gates, 2002, 2011)[62]. In a study of group affiliation, many variables are important to understand the process of organised political violence (as the literature discusses). However, the underlying power-to-security relationship still is a marked reason for mobilisation. Additionally, the convertibility of power is another valuable feature linking the two related elements. Not only is power constituted by various different instances (military, economic, political, legitimacy), but it also allows actors to obtain more of it. The old adage *power begets power* elucidates that, for example,

[61] In the context of the applicability of the Security Dilemma to internal armed conflict, this reinforces the importance of seeking mechanistic explanations for the outbreak of violence, disfavouring simplistic catch-all approaches.

[62] The acquisition of small arms and light weapons (SALW) by ordinary citizens is common in conflict situations, especially in those identified with state failure and *wars of the third kind* (Holsti, 1996).

'*economic wealth, is used to establish and maintain control of forces; military power, can be used to directly control territory and people; and public legitimacy, which can be used to, among other things, pressure enemies*' (Vinci, 2006, p.32). To reduce the multiplicity of power as a means to economic gain only is to ignore a significant range of interactions that are fundamental for a mechanistic understanding of the outbreak of armed conflict.

Despite the complexity of the many interests that can be attained with power, they can be grouped into *needs* and *creeds*: the former refer to the more tangible requirements, while the latter relate to intangible issues (Zartman, 1985). Cederman, Gleditsch and Buhaug (2013a) address this problem by trying to develop the link between aspirations and armed violence, following the political exclusion route. In general, the nature of interest will be contingent and depend on the period of history in question and the political and cultural context under which policy is created. These interests may also include economic gain. However, in all cases, power can be a route to such interests due to its fungibility, or the characteristic of being apt to be used for multiple aims. The notion of fungibility means that one type of power can be used for multiple types of interests. For example, a gain in the number of fighters versus more money can be in commutable relation, because money can be used to build a fighting force and more fighters can be used to obtain money or resources (Vinci, 2006, p.32). While there are some restrictions on the fungibility of power, within the boundaries of a discussion of armed groups, where power tends to be military or economic in nature, we can assume that most types of power can be fungible for most types of interests, as it is the most basic requirement for political actors. Thus, leaders of armed groups '*think and act in terms of*

interest defined as power' (Morgenthau, 1948, p.5), as they do not differ from other political leaders in their elaborations on the uses that can be attributed to power.

Power is approached as the ultimate tool for politics under anarchy, not only because of what it can achieve (by using it to compel others and obtain gains from it) but also because of the deterrent it produces (Brodie, 1973, Schelling, 1976, Waltz, 1979). Power is centrally important for survival, as an enabler: '*the minimum goal of any political unity, as its leaders must assure survival if they are to pursue any other less vital goals*' (Vinci, 2006, p.33). Autonomy of decision, in the face of force wielded by others, is a requirement for the fulfilment of other political aspirations. While the preponderance of power as a means for security does not invalidate the basic constructs of Gurr's theory of the inequality-grievance-rebellion nexus, it does produce a hierarchical way of understanding causes, motivations and constraints in the choice for the use of violence as a political means in internal affairs. As such, it can translate into conditions for intra-state violence.

As with insurgency, the use of violence against the state is the way to assure survival in a hostile environment; as with state repression, the use of violence against the general population is the way to assure political continuity of a group and avoid overthrow; or as with war of the third kind, where the '*war of all against all*' reaches its closest to the Hobbesian ideal type, and the use of violence between individuals or groups of individuals that may or may not share common goals, identities are a requirement of the overwhelming uncertainty of the system. The employment of crude force yields power, which in turn guarantees survival. Even though actors might perceive war as costly, they also see it as the most effective way of holding on to what is vitally important to them.

Kenneth N. Waltz's (1959, 1979) work reminds us of the overarching importance of survival; it is the ultimate driver of human interaction. Under the insecurity produced by uncertainty (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, pp.34-38), self-reliance as a means to guarantee survival is the utmost objective of states and other types of political organisations that are constrained by anarchy. Effectively, the attempts to secure this objective result in different available instrumental means towards increasing one's own security. Whilst grievance and greed motives can be present among the motivations of conflict, it is their unfolding into survivability concerns that begets the rational attempt to mobilise violence.

As highlighted in several critiques of the greed and grievance hypotheses, both among economists and comparativists, there is a lack of sufficiency in both propositions, and while it is important to recognise that these dynamics are part of the conflict, they are not the most accurate description of the process that leads to armed violence. Indeed, states holding on to the monopoly of the use of violence and strong institutions are generally able to enforce the social contract in a manageable (even if imperfect) way. That is, they are able to keep violence at bay, while groups within their societies deal with their greedy and their aggrieved, by using institutionalised means of conflict resolution that are fostered and enforced. Addison and Murshed (2003) note that greed and grievances may exist today in countries even if they do not require the employment of violence to manage them. And, to some extent, this can be said of most countries: while the majority do not experience continuous civil war, almost all of them have some expression of both greed and grievances in their internal politics. However seemingly distant it is to compare Germany to Sierra Leone (for example) the comparison is analytically resonant in supporting the relevance of institutions (Fearon and Laitin, 2003).

3.6 - Conclusion

By analysing the contribution of three important strains of theory addressing the outbreak of armed violence in domestic environments, it is evident that the literature is marked with pitfalls and shortcomings, falling into a '*number of conceptual and empirical fallacies when generalising about the causes of violent conflict*' (Cramer, 2006, p.135). Similar to what happens in the field of International Relations theory, hypothesis testing and empirical work have dominated the academic production in the study of civil wars, yielding little progress in theory-development. This is precisely why it is fundamental to explore the theory for the progress of the discipline (Bennett, 2013, ch.1, Mearsheimer and Walt, 2013, Bennett and Checkel, 2015b). Astonishingly refined econometrics provide acumen about the decision-making process and the reasoning of actors in civil wars, without, however, questioning the core assumptions of established theories, or actually addressing key gaps present in those theories.

Whilst both greed and grievance based explanations of civil war have been very important in the development of civil war theorising, pure versions of both hypotheses, as traditionally posited, lack range and are unsatisfactory explanations for the outbreak of armed violence. Greed and grievance suffer from a serious problem of discreteness; civil wars usually have self-reinforcing dynamics that generate greed and grievance motives. For example, to remedy some inequality, aggrieved rebels can fight to control the country's resource production, and in the process fighting, the toll on the economy and population grows, reinforcing pre-existing grievances and creating new ones. As Murshed (2009, p.89) puts it, '*the competing greed versus grievance hypothesis may, after all, be complementary explanations for conflict*'. Moreover, these different explanations can perform variably to explain different moments of conflict. The

economic incentives play a great role in understanding dynamics of civil war duration, but do not address the outbreak of armed violence with great success. Grievances, conversely, have a good performance in explaining the difficulties of termination, as well as post-war tensions, but offer little insight into the duration of violence. Security based explanations, however, perform best at explaining the outbreak of violence and also succeed in incorporating other mechanisms in play. Both Posen (1993) and Vinci (2006, 2008, 2009) recognise that systemic pressures imposed by situations of domestic anarchy condition the expression of greed and grievance, but are also influenced by them. The field faces a process in which theoretical models improve by combining the developments of previous models taking into account their strengths and weaknesses, and bridging the gaps between those theories (Bennett, 2013). Collier *et al*'s (2009) concession to the fact that greed and grievances could not be dissociated as part of a model was symptomatic to corroborate the claims that the explanations were complementary rather than competitive. Any explanation of war must account for the multiplicity of factors in play during armed conflict, diverse causes and motivations affect the behaviour of individuals and organisations in the process of rebellion. While some pessimists suggest that there's no place for a theory of war, optimists accept that theoretical explanations are possible if the expectations of theory are scaled back to match the diversity of conflicts, warranting some tolerance in predictability and 'prescriptibility' (Cramer, 2006, p.136).

In the following chapter, I will look at the case of the outbreak of violence in Angola following the 1974 Carnation Revolution and the country's decolonisation. I will demonstrate the presence of the security dilemma as a driver of not only conflict, but as

instrumental to the outbreak of armed violence in 1975, originating the Angolan Civil War.

Chapter 4 – Security Dilemmas in Angola's 'first' civil war: *state collapse and the outbreak of armed violence*

Que outra saída temos nós dessa guerra que nunca quisemos?[1]

- Commander David Moisés Ndozi (MPLA), in late 1975, according to the account by Ryszard Kapuscinski (1976, p.56).

4.1 - Introduction

Having addressed the theoretical debate on the relevance of the security dilemma as an explanation for internal conflict and the outbreak of armed violence, I now apply this theoretical debate to explore the outbreak of armed conflict in civil wars. In the previous chapters, I have deliberated over whether the security dilemma is a trigger of armed violence in internal conflicts. In the next two chapters, I examine the instances of the outbreak of armed conflict in post-colonial Lusophone Africa, specifically, Angola and Mozambique. I evaluate how far the security dilemma can explain the outbreak of armed conflict[2] following the independence of Angola and Mozambique in 1974-75.[3] The chapter starts with a historical overview of Angola in the late colonial period and

[1] '*What other end can we have for this war that we never wanted?*' Even though Kapuscinski does not provide the transcription of the interview, the context of his account suggests this was MPLA's Commander Ndozi's reply to a question on whether there could be a different outcome to the tensions that triggered the unfolding conflict.

[2] The definition of armed conflict adopted is that provided by the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme (UCDP): '*a contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths*' (Wallensteen and Sollenberg, 2001).

[3] The independence followed a nearly fifteen-year anti-colonial struggle against the Portuguese, which created the conditions that ultimately culminated in the Carnation Revolution of the 25 of April of 1974, in Lisbon.

describes the rise of a number of actors participating in the anti-colonial struggles against the Portuguese Empire. Understanding the actors' motives and intentions is of paramount importance; the political differences between these actors were neglected during the anti-colonial war in the face of a greater concern to undermine the presence of the colonising power. It was one of the most drawn out and brutal of colonial wars, causing a build-up not only of weapons, but allowing for the sowing of seeds of tensions for future conflicts. Initially, these groups were primarily concerned with winning an anti-colonial war. However, immediately after independence was achieved, this goal was replaced by an alternative set of aspirations changing the political scenario in the country, and subsequently the drivers of conflict. Starting immediately after independence, Angola experienced significant levels of politically motivated armed violence relating to issues other than the colonial struggle. The armed *liberation movements* (the nomenclature was even adopted in Portugal after the Carnation Revolution) in the country were formed with the purpose of fighting for independence from Portugal, and would have been expected to stop engaging in violence once their goal was achieved.

Instead of laying down their arms after achieving their declared goal of independence, why did the liberation movements in Angola continue fighting against each other? Different authors have pointed to different elements: acquisitive leadership and the prospect of access to the dividends of power (Cramer, 2006); ethnic fault lines (Douglas L. Wheeler and Pélissier, 1971, Martin III, 2011); a *new war* in a failing new state (Messiant, 2001b, 2002, 2008, Koné, 2013b); a by-product of the process of state formation (Guimarães, 1998, Birmingham, 2002, Chabal, 2002a) and the projection of Cold War systemic pressures (Chabal, 2002a, pp.8-18, Cramer, 2006, pp.10-13, Westad, 2007, Messiant, 2008, Martin III, 2011, Koné, 2013b). Explanations based on the

assumption of *bad faith* on the part of these groups are readily accepted, as reading their motives as aggressive is facile in retrospect, especially in the light of the gruesome and extremely violent characteristic of civil wars. However, as the preceding chapters on the security dilemma make clear, violent behaviour does not always require malign motives.[4]

The conditions under which the transition to independence happened, and the sudden emergence of anarchy that ensued, provides a laboratory for testing whether the security dilemma was present in Angola. Case studies scrutinising the former Yugoslavia have been probed to exhaustion – at the expense of other worthy cases. Yet the Angolan Civil War has not been used as a case study to study the security dilemma. The chapter argues that it should be considered a prime case, given that Angola presents a case of impending anarchy imposed by exogenous factors, neatly fitting the definition of imperial collapse (Posen, 1993). The absence of a history of ethnic hatred or significant ethnopolitics in the country, even though they were a secondary factor, is beneficial in so much as it allows us to focus on future uncertainties and present fears, rather than solely on a memory of past episodes of aggression (which are all too common in the case of Yugoslavia, for example).

This case study examines the evidence to identify the extent to which the rival actors were drawn into armed conflict not because they had deeply incompatible security

[4] As in a quote frequently attributed to Mary Therese McCarthy: '*calling someone a monster does not make him more guilty; it makes him less so by classing him with beasts and devils*'; as well as how it is put by Clausewitz (1832, p.28): '*it is to no purpose, it is even against one's best interest, to turn away from the consideration of the affair because the horror of its elements excites repugnance*'.

requirements or harboured malign motivations towards each other,[5] but because of the development of security dilemma dynamics in the Angolan domestic environment after Portuguese withdrawal. The chapter will show that whilst some of the actors may have exhibited hostile behaviour, this is insufficient in itself to explain the outbreak of armed conflict in Angola.

Instead, it will be argued that security dilemma dynamics must be part of any convincing explanation of the outbreak of armed conflict in the early stages of the Angolan civil war. Interviews and archival evidence will be employed, as well as secondary sources, to illustrate the process through which these initial conditions led to the outbreak of the civil war. Firstly, the shortcomings of the existing literature on the causes of the Angolan Civil War will be addressed in the context of their relationship to the theoretical framework explored on the previous chapters. A brief section on the particular conditions and characteristics of Angola will follow, giving context for the following sections, which are more directly concerned with tracing the process through which the security dilemma contributed to the triggering of violent conflict.

4.2 - How does the current literature fail to understand the outbreak of violence in Angola?

The Carnation Revolution, as it became known, involved the overthrow of the Salazarist regime in Lisbon. On 25 April 1974, a group of military officers rebelled against the government and a *coup d'état* took place, which saw the leadership in Portugal replaced.

[5] *Contra* scholars (Ångström and Duyvesteyn, 2001, Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004, Visser and Duyvesteyn, 2014) that have argued that the existence of hostile or aggressive behaviour means that the security dilemma explanation is not helpful.

One of the first decisions by the new government was that all Portuguese overseas territories would be granted independence, which fundamentally changed the political and military landscape in Angola, where guerrilla liberation groups had been fighting against the Portuguese Governmental authority. Competition between the liberation movements had been constant throughout the anti-colonial struggle, but it was always secondary to the effort to drive the Portuguese out.

Not surprisingly, the imminence of independence suddenly triggered a change in the strategic atmosphere within the country; the absence of a common enemy created doubts and fears regarding the uncertain future of the country and the role that each group would play, thus exacerbating existing rivalries. The anti-colonial movements suddenly turned their existing capabilities away from the Portuguese and towards each other. Thus, the anti-colonial struggle soon turned into a civil war.

Three anti-colonial liberation movements contended for power: the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA)[6]; the *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (FNLA)[7]; and *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA)[8]. Both the MPLA and FNLA were among the early liberation forces, led since 1960 by Agostinho Neto and Holden Roberto, respectively. The last of these, UNITA was formed in 1965 by Jonas Savimbi in an effort to renounce his original allegiance to the FNLA by creating a third column. Since from the pre-independence period, these liberation movements, though

[6] '*People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola*'.

[7] '*National Front for the Liberation of Angola*'.

[8] '*National Union for the Total Independence of Angola*'. Notice the '*total*' in '*total independence*' reflected a claim that the socialist ideology boasted by MPLA would never entirely make the country independent, but rather an '*African socialist republic*' under Moscow.

not ideologically committed at the outset, embraced Cold War ideological and political banners to secure international support, which further fuelled the conflict between them.

Any explanation of the Angolan Civil War, as in any other civil war, is by necessity complex and multi-causal. More than that, as Adam Lockyer writes,

> Angola defies the neat distinction frequently made in academic circles between "political", "ethnic", and "social" conflicts. Because of the belligerents' respective "Socialist" and "Western" leanings, most studies portray the Angola Civil War as a political conflict. However, as the belligerents drew their recruits primarily from one ethnic population the "ethnic" title has also been applied. (…) Finally, Angola is also often categorized as a "social" conflict because, it has been claimed that in essence Angola was a conflict between an "urban capitalist society (MPLA) and rural peasant societies (FNLA, UNITA)" and therefore "a center-periphery conflict" (Lockyer, 2008, p.132).

While it is important to understand the potential fault lines and sources of disagreement between the different groups, neither political, ethnic or social cleavages seem sufficient to explain how and why these groups failed to resolve their differences peacefully and instead decided to engage in decades of violent conflict.

It will be argued here that growing military capabilities resulting from their anti-colonial mobilisation, and uncertainty about motives and intentions caused by a power vacuum, both complicated peaceful cooperation and created incentives for the reliance on military power to secure their objectives (and also that it was the constant prospect of violence that stimulated fears of pre-emptive attacks) ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, pp. 21-25, Chabal, 1983, Posen, 1993, Koné, 2013a, Marques, 2013, pp.64-70).

In short, the Angolan case corresponds to Barry Posen's (1993, p.27) idea that the security dilemma can develop under conditions of *emerging anarchy*. After the Carnation Revolution and throughout the post-independence period, anarchy makes security the first concern in Angola, considering that '*it can be otherwise only if [these] political organisation[s] do not care about their survival as independent entities*' (*ibid.*, p.28). Evidence for this can be found in a consultation on the context of the failed peace proposal in 1975 between Mário Soares, the then Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the leaders of the independence movements, which has become known as the Alvor Agreement. Soares declared that '*(…) the Movements rejected the idea of [committing to] a cease-fire without a previous political agreement'*, which he found *'perfectly understandable, as [the Movements] did not want to risk disarming and demobilising their troops before having obtained strong guarantees*' (as reported by Marques, 2013, p.27)[9].

As Portugal was preparing to leave the country, the leadership of the liberation movements suddenly had to deal with uncertainty over the motives and intentions not only of other groups, but also of foreign actors. These included the Portuguese themselves —there was no guarantee that they would refrain from intervening — but also regional actors, such as the then Republic of Zaire,[10] the Republic of the Congo,[11] the Republic of

[9] This perception was also shared by the intelligence community in the US, as can be noticed throughout the text of the document '*Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola*', dated 13/JUN/1975, and prepared by the National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for Africa. The document is a compilation of the *state-of-the-art* intelligence available on Angola at that time.

[10] Now called the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it was also referred to as Congo-Kinshasa or Congo-Zaire, mainly because the Portuguese name given to the Congo River – *Zaire*. Previously, it was also referred to as the Belgian Congo.

[11] Often referred to as Congo-Brazzaville. Previously, it was also referred to as French Congo.

Zambia and the Republic of South Africa. These may have once respected Angola, whether out of lack of capabilities, fear, or deference *vis-à-vis* the Portuguese Empire, but now Angola was left to its own devices and fears of potential changes in the regional context exacerbated systemic pressure (Kornprobst, 2002, Lockyer, 2008). Furthermore, being embedded in the global dynamics of the Cold War, domestic actors were, quite rightly, concerned about the mounting potential for intervention by the United States, the Soviet Union and China on behalf of their domestic rivals or in pursuit of their own national interest (Westad, 1996, Gleijeses, 2002, Shubin and Tokarev, 2011). For the liberation movements, the stakes were as high as ever; now that coveted independence seemed to materialise, they felt pressured to secure themselves against new potential enemies, whether foreign or domestic.[12]

4.3 - Angola's history of violence: Portuguese colonialism and the armed struggle for independence

The Portuguese presence in Angola dates to 1483, when the Portuguese crown established relations with the Kingdom of Kongo[13] and founded a *feitoria* (a trading outpost) in the current Angolan City of Soyo. It was not until 1822, when Brazil (the then most important colony of the Portuguese empire)[14] gained its independence from

[12] Also because of the *declining-prize dilemma* (Ångström and Duyvesteyn, 2001, p.199, among others). In this case, all the effort of now accomplished decolonisation weighs on opting out of significant political participation in the country.

[13] The Kingdom of Kongo stretched from the Congo River on the North and Cuanza River on the South, and by the Kwango River on the East and the Atlantic Ocean on the West. It included parts of the current territories of Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Congo and Gabon, and existed between 1390 and 1857 as a sovereign kingdom and then between 1857 and 1914 as a Vassal Kingdom to the Kingdom of Portugal. Around 1711, the current territory of Angola was controlled by the Kingdoms of Kongo, Ndola-Ndongo and Benguela (Douglas L. Wheeler and Pélissier, 1971, Thornton, 1977).

[14] Brazil was a *sui-generis* colony of the Portuguese empire. Its importance was due to its abundance of natural resources (mainly gold) and arable land, but it became even more so in 1807 when the Portuguese

Portugal, that Angola emerged as the jewel in the Portuguese Empire, in part because it provided compensation for the lost wealth and potential of Brazil and could satisfy the almost delusional grandeur of the Portuguese (Douglas L. Wheeler and Pélissier, 1971, Guimarães, 1998). For the Portuguese, Angola was a symbol of the strong grip they had over their Empire, when other European peers (some of which were more powerful) saw their own overseas territories claiming independence. As remarked by Fernando Andresen Guimarães (1998, p.1), '*attempts to conceal the reality of what was going on in Portugal's somewhat disproportionate share of African territory did not simply reflect grandiose delusions of a declining colonial empire, but were an intrinsic part of an astute diplomatic policy aimed at defending Portugal's diminished role in a world of rapacious politics*'. For as much as Portugal was overlooked by its most powerful neighbours, it was able to retain control of its overseas territories.[15]

The short-lived *first republic* ended with a financial crisis that lead to the rise of António de Oliveira Salazar, a populist and right-wing academic[16] who in 1933 imposed a constitution that was the basis for a regime that would be named after him. This was known as *Salazarismo* and also as *Estado Novo* (New State). The *Estado Novo* was marked by very strict enforcement of economic directives and an empowered

crown fled Lisbon for Rio de Janeiro to escape the Napoleonic offensive of the Peninsular War of 1807-1814. About fifteen thousand members of the crown transferred the capital of the Kingdom of Portugal to Rio de Janeiro until the Liberal Revolution of 1820. The transfer led to the establishment of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and *Algarves*, which turned Brazil into a 'colonial metropole'.

[15] Beyond Brazil and its African colonies (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Principe), Portugal (by 1900) claimed colonial ownership of territories in India (Goa, Diu and Daman), Timor-Leste and Macau.

[16] Ironically, António Oliveira Salazar first pursued priesthood, and then decided to attend the University of Coimbra as a student of law, where he graduated in 1914 with high honours. He immediately followed on to teach economic policy at the Law School and in 1918 was awarded a doctorate. He held different positions in the government between 1926 and 1951.

bureaucracy,[17] which, in turn, was enabled by a formidable propaganda and security apparatus.[18] Although Salazar's colonial model preached 'apparent equality and unity' between Portugal and the colonies, it also sought to extend the tight grip of its regime overseas, both to more systemically exploit resources (Shillington, 2012, p.422) but, most importantly, to 'reaffirm Portugal's ability to run an empire' (Guimarães, 1998, p.9) while others were failing.

In 1961, however, the tide had changed and Salazar's *Estado Novo* encountered a handful of events that challenged its legitimacy and capability. In January of that year, the Portuguese ocean liner *TN Santa Maria*[19] was hijacked by a group of Portuguese and Spanish[20] opposition movement members led by a former Portuguese military officer Captain Henrique Galvão, catalysing discontent and opposition against the dictatorship (Galvão, 1961, Guimarães, 1998, p.13). The Santa Maria hijacking was followed by an attempt by a section of the armed forces to overthrow Salazar in the same year, which turned out to be unsuccessful but which hurt the dictator's legitimacy (both internally and externally).

[17] Following the ideas of catholic social doctrine and corporatism espoused by Austria's Engelbert Dollfuß.

[18] Inevitably represented by its foremost instrument: Salazar's brutal and very effective secret police, the *Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado – PIDE* (International and State Defence Police).

[19] The *TN Santa Maria* was one of the largest luxury ocean liners under the Portuguese flag, being (together with its sister ship) the second largest in the country's merchant navy (displacing 20,900 tons and 609 feet long). The ship belonged to state-owned *Companhia Colonial de Navegação*, a maritime transport company tasked with connecting the Portuguese empire (Galvão, 1961, p.19).

[20] The hijack operation, called *Operação Dulcinea*, was a joint attempt by leftists in both countries to draw attention to the authoritarianism of the regimes of Salazar in Portugal and Francisco Franco in Spain (Galvão, 1961).

Nonetheless, a further and more significant threat to the *Estado Novo* was soon to take place as new uprisings and revolts took place in Angola that year, marking what is regarded as the beginning of the Angolan War of Independence (Douglas L. Wheeler and Pélissier, 1971, Guimarães, 1998, Messiant, 2008, Shillington, 2012). During previous years, a few outlaw organised anti-colonial movements had appeared in Angola, mainly along two lines: either embodying a modernising approach, largely based on Marxist ideals (mainly fathered by the then-illegal Portuguese Communist Party); under a ethno-nationalist flag[21]; or following traditionalist beliefs, which claimed Angola should be an '*African nation*' (Douglas L. Wheeler and Pélissier, 1971, pp.161-172, Chabal, 2002a). This divide was the root of the formation of the main actors of Angolan politics following decolonisation: MPLA, FNLA and UNITA.

The effect was threefold. First, in Angola, a growing effort to oppose the Portuguese colonial state apparatus gained momentum and, for the first time, offered a significant threat to colonial rule. As the challengers managed to increase their capability to disrupt, their struggle became better known and recruited more followers and resources, which further increased their capabilities to counter the Portuguese colonial machine. This strengthened the groups politically and laid the groundwork for what would become future independence movements, all under the flag of very well defined agendas for the country. Second, in Portugal, Salazar's regime was under growing threat. The revolts in Angola represented a significant pressure on it as the 'image' of a healthy Portuguese

[21] The ethno-nationalists are usually described as such even if their claims amounted more significantly to nationalistic then ethnic claims *per se*, and have themselves strongly opposed such description. Even though they built their support basis among native peoples, mostly in rural areas, and frequently relating to the pre-colonial history of Angola, there was little or none ethnic or tribal leveraging on the ethno-nationalists discourse. It is important to remark that the independence movements (and later on the parties), throughout their existence, dismissed political mobilisation along ethnic lines.

Empire was the cornerstone of the continuation of the dictatorship in Lisbon. Third, for the international community, this situation constituted an unequivocal demonstration that the Portuguese Empire did not have the 'legitimacy' that Lisbon's diplomats frequently claimed at the United Nations and elsewhere, and that Portugal had no right to keep its colonies at a time when the thrust for decolonisation processes thrived globally.

Consequently, Salazar's diplomatic 'house of cards' started to crumble from 1961 onwards, which also had an effect on the international support (or tolerance) for the continuation of the dictatorial regime (Guimarães, 1998, Birmingham, 2002, Chabal, 2002a, Robinson, 2003). However, Guimarães argues that these incidents in 1961 were also what allowed Salazar to strengthen his grip over the country and the empire. He posits that if the armed independence struggle in the colonies had not emerged in the 1960s, the regime would have hardly been able to continue to justify its existence in the metropole. His uses counterfactual analysis to argue that the situation in the colonies '*prolonged the life of the regime for another 13 years*' through the establishment of a '*jingoistic campaign to defend the colonies*' further providing leverage for '*a crusade for Salazar that may have salvaged his tottering regime and led the Portuguese to rally around a nationalistic cause*' (Guimarães, 1998, pp.14-15). From this observation also stems the understanding that the existence of *Estado Novo* depended directly on the integrity of the Empire.

Another important game changer occurred in 1961. On 18 December, the then Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, decided to move militarily to end the Portuguese rule in the enclaves of Goa, Diu, and Daman. Following tense diplomatic confrontations with

Portugal, Nehru sent over seventy-thousand soldiers to ensure that the territories would be controlled by India, to which Salazar responded by ordering the four thousand Portuguese troops stationed in the territory not to surrender under any conditions and to fight until the very last individual was standing. There was very little fighting and the territories were surrendered informally,[22] but that event was important for independence movements throughout the Portuguese Empire: it signalled that Salazar was indeed unable to politically manage his empire and increased the expectation that independence would come soon. His main arm of colonial coercion and the enabler of the continued imperial imposition, the Portuguese armed forces, were (now evidently) growing tired of supporting what was seen as a worthless effort, and at a very high price to the nation (Guimarães, 1998, Robinson, 2003).

It follows that from the early stages of the anti-colonial struggle, the Angolan liberation movements had both different ideas for the country and growing military and political capabilities (Douglas L. Wheeler and Pélissier, 1971, Beck, 2009). Such a scenario favoured the uncertainty imposed by an impending vacuum of power that would ensue from the withdrawal of the Portuguese following the collapse of *Estado Novo*. Amadeu José de Freitas (a Portuguese journalist reporting from Luanda) described the general feeling among the population: '*all of this is confusing, mixed up, anarchic in its ideas and attitudes — there is a tremendous climate of instability in which we live the today without knowing what will happen tomorrow*' (Freitas, 1975, p.202).

[22] Salazar never entirely acknowledged or recognised the Indian sovereignty over the territories, considering it as occupied Portuguese territory. A posing representative of that territory continued to sit at the National Assembly until 1974.

A more expert account of the pervasiveness of uncertainty and self-help in post-colonial Angola is provided by the United States National Security Council Interdepartmental Group for Africa which reported in response to United States' National Security Study Memoranda 224[23] ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, p.26), and which stated that the liberation movements were seeking to assert their positions in order to '*stake out and defend its territory now*', with an increasingly '*aggressive use of military force*'. Their interpretation assumed that the Alvor Agreement could not succeed and that the failure to establish a transitional regime created '*constraints [that] will continue given the new tensions and the now greatly increased potential for conflict in Angola*' ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, p.30). While all three elements (political disarray, power-to-hurt capabilities, and the shadow of the future) are important conditions that push security seekers into competition, the latter two have significant effects in the generation of security dilemmas. This is because they may have major effects on triggering responses to a challenging *offence-defence balance*, and also by exacerbating the need to move first towards substantially increasing the control over means to assure their own security in the future. There was a feeling of '*uncertainty of all three [liberation] movements about their chances of emerging victorious in a no-holds-barred military struggle*', and while there was a '*façade of cooperation*' ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, p.29), a growing lack of trust developed among all the players involved as they were suspicious that the others might try to exploit the situation and attempt a decisive move prior to independence (Martin III, 2011, pp.75-77). This

[23] The National Security Study Memoranda (from here on NSSM) Is the reference name given to documents requested by the US president and/or vice-president to the various agencies of the intelligence establishment, providing a state-of-the-art report on topics of interest.

perception of growing insecurity has been corroborated in interviews conducted for this research.

The dynamics of escalation related to a *fatalist* logic of the security dilemma account for the process of incentivising pre-emptive action; actors continue to engage more in processes seeking to increase their military advantage rather than trying to find feasible political solutions. By the end of the colonial era, the conditions in Angola were ideal for the unfolding of security dilemma dynamics; the anti-colonial struggle was a fundamental driver of the failure of the regime in Lisbon and it created the conditions for a swift colonial retreat, quickly eliminating any sense of security provided by the colonial state. The attrition war that was fought by – and ultimately won by – the liberation movements against the Portuguese colonial authority led to significant material political differences between the movements after independence was gained. Portugal was in an unfavourable position [24] to mediate a peaceful transition from colonial rule to a democratic post-independence self-ruled society, especially given that it also suffered from acute mission creep. Thus, the liberation movements were pressed to take matters into their own hands to assure their position, autonomy, and continuing capabilities after independence (Douglas L. Wheeler and Pélissier, 1971, "Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, "Angola: A Handbook", 1984, Guimarães, 1998, Messiant, 2001b, Birmingham, 2002, Messiant, 2002, 2008, Marques, 2013).

[24] Portugal's objective at the outset of Carnation Revolution was to dismember the Empire and leave all of its colonies as swiftly as possible, even if that implied not overseeing the transition process. Attempts to minimise disruption were conducted, but only to the extent that they would not compromise the quickest possible disengagement ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, Messiant, 2008).

4.4 - Angola's 'first' civil war: *the struggle for security through power*

Following the actual end of the Portuguese rule, announced in April 1974, anticipated anarchy escalated into actual anarchy, and a lack of certainty about the rules of the game in Angola settled in quickly. The Portuguese garrisons stationed all over the country received the order to disengage and avoid the liberation movements and to quarter and defend positions while an exit strategy was being defined. As the leadership in Lisbon itself knew there was no possibility of winning the colonial war, or even to assert Portuguese will in the colonies, the then President António de Spínola (1974, p.22) recognised that anything resembling victory on the battlefield was unachievable. This idea was echoed during an interview given by the then Overseas Minister Adriano Moreira[25], who said that, '*no true military victory was possible during the Overseas War, and the same was true during the* [post-colonial] *transition* [period]'.

A unilateral truce was declared by the colonial authority in Luanda, and the revolutionary *Movimento das Forças Armadas* (that declared the April coup in Lisbon) immediately established its political representation in the Angolan capital. This group now worked closely with the colonial administrations, mirroring, in the colonies, what was happening in Lisbon (Guimarães, 1998, Marques, 2013). The Portuguese had signalled that they intended to participate in negotiations leading to a transition of power. They invited the leaders of the liberation movements, their former foes, for talks on how to proceed with the transition. The underlying message, however, signalled widely and clearly, was that Lisbon ordered all of its colonial apparatus to leave the country as quickly and as cheaply

[25] For Minister Adriano Moreira's profile and relevance, see the Interviewee List (Appendix A). Certain sectors of the society still prefer to use the official *Estado Novo* terminology of 'Overseas War' (*Guerra do Ultramar)* to refer to the counter-insurgency practices against the liberation movements in the colonies.

as possible, and even though they would prefer to achieve some sort of orderly transfer of power in a peaceful manner, their main '*objective in Angola [was] to get out — with honour if possible, but in any case to get out'*. The prospects of the diminishing enforcing capabilities meant that '*Lisbon could not impose a settlement that was not acceptable to the parties*' ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, p.20, Marques, 2013, ch.1).

Moreover, even if the Portuguese had the will to impose a solution, they would not have been allowed to. Henry Kissinger (United States' National Security Advisor under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford) appreciated that the Angolan stalemate was too deep, and that it wasn't just Lisbon who had its hands tied but the Liberation Movements themselves would also fail to impose themselves on each other militarily (US NSSM 39, cited in Martin III, 2011, p.41). At that stage, no single Liberation Movement was seen as a proper representative of all sectors of the Angolan society, or the legitimate successor of the Angolan state in the eyes of the international community. Each had its own aspirations to participate in national politics and believed that they should have a predominant position in it following their efforts in fighting the Portuguese. Even though they did not defeat the colonial forces entirely, they had played a significant role (through degrading the Portuguese colonial apparatus) in bringing about the Carnation Revolution, which in turn led to the shock of the decolonisation process (Marcum, 1978, Guimarães, 1998, Martin III, 2011, pp.52-53, Marques, 2013, pp.33-34).

Thus, both the Portuguese and the Americans recognised, in their own assessments, that the Liberation Movements saw themselves and acted as self-contained political units that were capable of running the country (both as a whole and regionally), mobilising military

capabilities, and providing services. They collected taxes and even established their own foreign relations, without the need for proxies. By 1975, all the liberation groups had managed to amass military power and had their own organised army units. In some cases they even acquired planes for rudimentary Air Forces (Weigert, 2011). Furthermore, all relied on foreign policy channels, and leaders of those movements had visited most of the region and even travelled as far as Washington, Moscow, and Beijing, seeking to forge diplomatic ties that could support them in the post-colonial period.

Their like-unit nature[26] *vis-à-vis* each other, but also towards the other major actors involved, was clearly delineated and actively pursued by the MPLA, the UNITA and FNLA in a marked attempt to constitute themselves as self-sufficient and autonomous political units and in opposition to activist groups or bandit hordes ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, p.6, Clapham, 1996, Malaquias, 2007, Messiant, 2008, Vinci, 2009, Martin III, 2011, p.52).

Moreover, the Liberation Movements in Angola, unlike many of their counterparts in other African countries, were not organised around ethnic fault lines. Ethnicity may have played a role in generating feelings of *groupness* in the Angolan society, but ethnic hatred is not the reason they fought. As an early example of a phenomenon that was significant throughout Angolan history, revolts that took place in the early 1960s victimised some ethnic Ovimbundu who were working in coffee plantations alongside ethnic Mbundu

[26] Here, this like-unit nature refer to the preconditions of structural realism (and realism itself, to a larger extent), as posited by Kenneth N. Waltz (1959, 1979).

(and Bakongo)[27] in the northern provinces. Douglas L. Wheeler and René Pélissier (1971) show that this was due to the fact that the Mbundu and Bakongo were revolting against the colonial rule and that they perceived the southern Ovimbundu (which migrated from the south to work in the booming northern coffee industry) to be benefiting from colonial rule, and thus came to be associated with the coloniser, rather than deriving from *ancient ethnic hatreds* (Horowitz, 1985, Kaufman, 2001).

The Liberation Movements' respect for ethnic backgrounds and specificities serves as further evidence that while multiple ethnic groups co-existed on the territory, this was not mobilised as fuel for hatred. While the approach to ethnicity varied – UNITA embraced and catered for different ethnic customs and the MPLA and FNLA downplayed the importance of ethnicity, all of them reinforcing the *Angolan Nation* – the groups did not use ethnicity as a primer for identity based mobilisation, contradicting expectations from within the literature on ethnic conflict (Kaufman, 2001). The ethnic lines coincided with certain regional areas where the Liberation Movement established bases and recruited from, which in turn had been more linked to economic practices (coffee crops, diamond mines, timber extraction, etc.) and other social aspects that pre-dated 1974 (Beck, 2009, Martin III, 2011, pp.9-11).

While it would be bold to argue that ethnicity played no role whatsoever in mobilising identity and conflictual relationships, it is safe to say that this was not the main driver of the outbreak of the violent conflict in the Angolan Civil War (Douglas L. Wheeler and

[27] Ethnic Ovimbundu are predominant in the Southern provinces while ethnic Mbundu and Bakongo are predominant on the northern parts of Angola. This distribution still derives from the organisation of pre-colonial African kingdoms in the region.

Pélissier, 1971, Chabal, 1983, Guimarães, 1998, Birmingham, 2002, Chabal, 2002b, Messiant, 2008, Beck, 2009).

Research by Patrick Chabal (1983, 2002b) and also by David Birmingham (2002) trace the process of post-colonial state formation as a consequence of the anti-colonial strife and the establishment of the Liberation Movements as political movements aspiring for participation in the country's politics, rather than only trying to drive the coloniser out. This reinforces the idea that there was no role – or at least very little role – for the mobilisation of *ancient hatreds* or any genocidal intent of eliminating the 'Other'. The formation of the various groups in the wake of the nationalist, anti-colonial fight harboured the crystallisation and expansion of different identities, mustered around the division between the three groups emerging from the anti-colonisation endeavour. The local anti-colonial hatred was directed at the whites that represented the Portuguese domination, which would be expected in most examples of anti-colonial struggle.

However, as an effect of the Portuguese colonial practice of assimilation,[28] two distinct groups were created amongst the locals: the *mestiço* and the blacks. Both *mestiços* and blacks were natives, but the *Mestiços* were considered to be more assimilated and indigenous (Douglas L. Wheeler and Pélissier, 1971, Birmingham, 2002), displaying adherence to Portuguese lusotropicalist culture and a similarity to the whites. The blacks,

[28] The '*assimilation policy*' referred to an attempt to produce culturally assimilated natives at the colonies, in order to break racial or ethnic identification and create an emerging identity of the Portuguese as the culturally lusophile rather than the racially white from Portugal mainland. This was in line with the policy of depicting the empire as an entire and single extension of the Portuguese territory, where all inhabitants were Portuguese, rather than a picture of controlled territories, more akin to the traditional colonial idea. As discussed, the reason was multifaceted, and intended to reassure the colonies as well as to appease the growing feelings of anti-colonialism in the international community.

meanwhile, were considered indigenous and were though to not entirely share the lusophile cultural traits.[29] Furthermore, *mestiços* were generally amongst the better educated and were closer to the metropolitan Portuguese whites, and enjoyed relatively higher levels of wealth and benefits.[30]

While white-black tension is expected in the context of decolonisation, the power of the grievances between *mestiços* and the rest of the population — regardless of ethnic background — had an effect in shaping post-decolonisation politics in the country, not because of ethnic differences, but because it highlighted Portugal's inability to participate more intensely in the transition process. In the context of such white-black tension, there was a mass exodus of Portuguese settlers and second-generation white Angolans to Portugal and other African countries, especially from the urban areas. The Liberation Movements believed that this would leave the country with a lack of skilled workers and other necessary economic resources; they also had to deal with minimising the perception that the Portuguese (and the whites, more broadly) were a privileged category. A consultation between the liberation movements led to the agreement of a policy in which the Portuguese nationals willing to stay in independent Angola would have to be eligible for, and accept, Angolan nationality. FNLA's Holden Roberto, for example, responded to this conundrum by stating his desire for '*an independent country, without external interventions but open to all, where the Portuguese settlers will be considered Angolans*' (Freitas, 1975, p.208). Furthermore, this increased pressure on the Portuguese

[29] For more on lusotropicalism in the colonial context, see Lloyd-Jones and Pinto (2003), Chabal (2002b) and Wheeler and Pélissier (1971).

[30] *Mestiço* literally means *half-breed*. It was not considered a derogative term until the tension arising from the identity creation process during the anti-colonial struggle. It is similar to Spanish term *mestizo*, though the precise meaning of the term – in terms of the implied colonial policy – is not exactly the same (Lloyd-Jones and Pinto, 2003).

to avoid compromising neutrality, which limited their ability to engage with the situation, where even the declaration of accepting returnees was interpreted as an attempt to undermine post-independence Angola. Subsequent knowledge now shows that this was a materialisation of the fear that the Portuguese government, then run by the leftist *Movimento das Forças Armadas*, would favour the MPLA for its ideological leaning (some elements of the government indeed proposed such an approach, but it ultimately failed) (Freitas, 1975, pp.210-211, Marques, 2013, pp.48-51).

In the absence of ancient hatreds or a declaratory ethnic inflamed discourse, another theoretical claim that is yet to be tested in the case of the outbreak of violence in Angola is that of *modern hatreds* (Kaufman, 2001). Outside of the domain of ethnic motivations for violence, it could be claimed that ideology played a role in motivating the conflict in Angola. The conflict happened during the Cold War, making it prone to becoming affected by super power competition. The civil war in Angola was certainly affected by the Cold War (Westad, 1996, Guimarães, 1998, Westad, 2007, Lockyer, 2008, 2011), although it played a role more in prolonging it, rather than starting it. However important, the ideological alignment of the anti-colonial groups to either the Soviet Union or the Western block was shaped *post-facto*, mostly after independence (or when it was very obvious). This was reasons less obvious than usually accounted for: ideological alignment in the context of Cold War proxies was not prominent in shaping the outbreak of violence (Lockyer, 2008)[31], but rather embraced as a marriage of convenience by the parties involved. Guimarães (1998) notes that in the beginning, all groups were somehow

[31] Adam Lockyer (2008, 2010) refutes the claim that alignment drove the country into war, but rather that it produced the military means for war to be conducted the way it was. His counterfactual assumption is that, had the alignment and support been different, conflict and war would have happened anyway, in line with my argument in this chapter.

connected to the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), then clandestine under Salazar's government, since it advanced anti-colonialism at home. At that time, all of the groups flirted with communist ideologies, as this was the main anti-colonial and anti-Salazarist establishment with leverage in Lisbon.

An example of this is Jonas Savimbi himself. Though frequently depicted as a staunch anti-communist,[32] he had met and befriended several members of the Portuguese Communist Party and left-leaning anti-colonial spearheads like Agostinho Neto (who fronted the MPLA) during his time as a student in Portugal, and long before becoming leader of the Western-backed UNITA. Ultimately, it was his connection to the Portuguese Communist Party that led him to be persecuted by Salazar's secret police, PIDE. This culminated in his transfer, with the help of exiled Portuguese communists, to the University of Fribourg, in Lausanne, Switzerland, where he completed a degree in Political Science in the University of Fribourg, before returning to Angola and joining the anti-colonial struggle (Bridgland, 1987).

All of the liberation movements that fought against the colonial power in Angola sought external support, and the Angolan Civil War is paradigmatic for its complex scheme of external participation through direct and indirect support. After 1974, the MPLA declared its Marxist leaning, and aligned with the Soviet Union and Cuba, but even before 1974, Moscow supported the movement, in the expectation that inevitable independence would create the conditions for the establishment of a socialist bastion in southern Africa,

[32] His past was certainly overlooked when he hosted, with American support, the so called '*Democratic International*' in his headquarters in Jamba, Angola, with the attendance of Nicaraguan *Contras*, Afghan Mujahedeen, American businessman and lobbyists, among others.

thus allowing the expansion of Soviet influence in the region. Meanwhile, the FNLA liaised with neighbours in Zaire in order to assure support, and President Mobutu Sese Seke managed to articulate support for FNLA leader Holden Roberto[33] by fronting the anti-MPLA coalition (UNITA also received support through that network). Through its base in Leopoldville (and later Kinshasa), the FNLA received support from countries willing to counter soviet advances in Angola, including improbable partners such as China, North Korea, Israel, France, the United States, and South Africa (Guimarães, 1998, Gleijeses, 2002, Malaquias, 2007, Lockyer, 2008). After the creation of UNITA, following Savimbi's break with the FNLA, the organisation also continued to benefit from that structure of support, exactly because they were seen as opponents to a self-declared Marxist movement trying to seize power in the country. It is important to note that just as the MPLA declared its Marxist 'nature' as an attempt to increase the profile of its new-born relationship with the Soviet Union and secure more engagement from the latter, FNLA and UNITA had not openly declared Western-leaning policies until they saw fitting to boast anti-communism as a way to attract the attention of their benefactors (Marques, 2013). As violence escalated, securing external support became paramount for sustaining a military effort that included heavy weapons, aircraft, and full-scale conventional army forces (Lockyer, 2008).

Ethnicity and ideology, then, are inappropriate explanations for why these groups – originally formed to drive out the Portuguese coloniser – turned on each other and

[33] Mobutu and Roberto established a strong political bond, mainly because both shared a traditionalist view for post-colonial Africa, one that 'returned' the great kingdoms of the continent. Furthermore, Mobutu's engagement in Angola was part of a perception that Kinshasa could carve its hegemony over southern Africa by allying with South Africa and controlling other 'choke points' of regional politics (Guimarães, 1998, pp.114-116).

embarked on one of the longest civil wars in the continent. To understand how the actors behaved after the Portuguese left, the remaining power vacuum left by their departure and the resulting uncertain anarchic environment that fuelled security competition must be examined.

At the outset, all three liberation movements subscribed to the Alvor Agreement of early 1975, which was supposed to organise a process of peaceful transition from the anti-colonial struggle to a multi-party democratic government — one in which violence would not be required to settle differences between the parties.

As determined by the agreement, the liberation movements would be able to retain their armed forces and command structures integrated in the framework of the National Armed forces, with different barracks. Likewise, the transition force would be composed of 24,000 Portuguese troops (comprising fifty per cent of the total) and 8,000 troops from each of the three liberation movements (totalling the other fifty per cent). The country's executive office was to be held by a High Commissioner that represented the Portuguese, and a triumvirate composed by one representative of each of the liberation movements. All executive decisions were to be taken by a two-thirds majority, and all decisions regarding the military forces had to be unanimously accepted by all of the military chiefs in a joint military command structure. The transition period would end later that year when general elections would take place with candidates appointed by the three main parties (Guimarães, 1998, Malaquias, 2007).

However, the 1975 Alvor Agreement did not hold. Ironically, though the transition period was supposed to create stability and reassure the parties, it instead blocked any political

action in the country, as there was very little agreement among the triumvirate. Moreover, the military forces were still mobilised, and even if under some level of control imposed by a joint military command, ultimately all fighters still reported to the military commanders of one of the three movements. However, there was no monitoring or enforcement mechanism in place to assure that the provisions of the agreement were to be respected. Each group feared that the others were trying to achieve a military advantage and that they would resort to force in case the election results did not go their way ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, Marques, 2013).

An interview conducted with Professor Manuel Ennes Ferreira,[34] currently an Economics professor in Lisbon who worked for the MPLA immediately after Angolan independence, confirmed this interpretation. He remembers that, at the time, the MPLA high ranks were positively and actively concerned with their existential security in case elections were held and one of the other parties won. They were concerned that the MPLA and its members would be completely relegated from any political participation, and even legally prosecuted or physically harmed. Professor Ennes Ferreira suggested that the parties '*simply assumed that their counterparts were going to seek unrestricted power*' and that this '*led the leaderships to feel cornered*', and to believe that a '*winner-takes-all outcome was the only truly safe outcome*'. He also believes (even if he was careful to stress that '*this was his appreciation only, and that he had no unquestionable evidence to that effect*') that the MPLA (and the other parties) instrumentally and intentionally stalled the elections (to the detriment of Portugal's position in the transition process) in

[34] For Professor Manuel Ennes Ferreira's profile and relevance, see the Interviewee List (Appendix I).

order to be in a better position to dispute power by means other than the elections, as well as to assure that they were better positioned to win the elections when they took place. At the same time, all of the parties claimed to have peaceful intentions, explicitly stating that they desired to move towards democracy and peace in the country; Professor Ennes Ferreira also confirms this, when he says that '*we were never made to believe, as members of the MPLA, that the peaceful and democratic intent the party had claimed was a facade*' and that '*the discourse from the leadership* [claimed] *use of force to guarantee stability*'.

The understanding of democracy in Angola, however, seems to be one in which each Party had a substantial majority role in the post-colonial government, because they did not trust the other parties sufficiently to be comfortable with a minority stake, and thus were at risk. Christine Messiant (2008) argues compellingly that Angola is a case where no victory and no democratisation occurred, because while all groups claimed to seek a peaceful, orderly and democratic Angola, the predicated outcome was that they were compelled to attempt, instead, an unachievable — almost *pyrrhic* — victory.[35]

A US intelligence assessment corroborated such a perception, and expected that, despite the declared lack of aggressive behaviour towards one another and the rhetorical acceptance of an inclusive and democratic society, it was unlikely that the parties could move from armed conflict to solving political disputes democratically and lawfully, mainly because they lacked confidence about each other's real motives ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, pp.21-26).

[35] Christine Messiant wrote an article (2001a) articulating those ideas prior to her book. The article was aptly titled '*Angola: un "victoire" sans fin*' ('Angola: a never ending "victory"').

4.5 - Bad faith and peaceful self-images: *the aggravation of the Angolan domestic security dilemma?*

The Angolan case is also marked by two distinctive dynamics that exasperate the uncertainty and insecurity produced by anarchy: inherent bad faith models (Finlay *et al.*, 1967) and peaceful self-images (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, pp.67-70). These the mechanisms that lead to armed violence in Angola. Amadeu José de Freitas (1975, pp.264-269) transcribes (in whole) declarations given by leaders of MPLA, UNITA and FNLA in 1975. From those, we see that the leaderships responded to the level of tensions arising from military mobilisations in Luanda prior to an attempted summit meeting, and claimed that such tensions were the fruit of provocations and offensive behaviour by the others.

When explaining their own reasons for mobilising, however, all leaders claimed they were merely trying to maintain the order and stability necessary to assure an orderly transition to democracy. The three declarations are strikingly similar in content and argument, only shuffling the names of the 'culprit' and the signatory. For example, the MPLA declaration, given by Agostinho Neto, reads: '*Violence should not be used as a political instrument. (…) The FAPLA*[36] *should remain vigilant and acting in the interest of avoiding aggression (…)*' (Freitas, 1975, p.264). UNITA's declaration, signed by Jonas Savimbi, and addressing the same events, read: '*Even though UNITA is not part of the confrontations or contributes to the destabilisation occurring in Luanda (…), but stands*

[36] FAPLA is the Portuguese acronym for *Popular Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola*, the MPLA's armed wing.

disciplined and ready, having instructed the FALA[37] to maintain the order (…)' (Freitas, 1975, p.265). Finally, N'Gola Kabangu, then Political High Commissioner of FNLA, delivered an extensive communiqué that read: '*(…) confrontation between the FAPLA and the ELNA[38] in Luanda and elsewhere (…) motivated as a result a generalised offensive by FAPLA units trying to seize control of strategic chokepoints*', and also that '*the episodes of confrontation (…) have been invariably triggered by the MPLA against the FNLA*' with '*profound effect to the climate of understanding (…) essential to the realisation of the summit*' (Freitas, 1975, pp.266-267).

The accounts of the interaction between the Liberation Movements in Angola (and also with the Portuguese elements of the transitional authority) are also permeated with testimonies of suspicion and mistrust regarding the signals sent by the parties, leading to a fundamental belief that the others were being cunning and were plotting against them. The Portuguese were seen by the MPLA to be trying to impose a puppet government, and by the FNLA and the UNITA as favouring the MPLA rule. The MPLA was seen by both the FNLA and UNITA as a foe trying to force a power grab that would alienate and make them insignificant in the Angolan political scenario. The FNLA, in turn, was seen as a proxy for Mobutu Sese Seko's[39] aspirations in the country, and as a sell-out attempting to pave the way for annexation. UNITA was seen as an instrument of its leader Jonas

[37] FALA is the Portuguese acronym for *Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola*, UNITA's armed wing.

[38] ENLA is the Portuguese acronym for *National Liberation Army of Angola*, FNLA's armed wing.

[39] Mobutu had different interests in Angola. He worked personally with Holden Roberto, who spent most of his time in Zaire, and aided the FNLA consistently. This proximity was usually taken for an unbarred servitude of the FNLA to Zairian interests, however, this is not entirely true: while Roberto and Mobutu converged on being wary of what they saw as hardliner communists like Agostinho Neto in the MPLA (they supported internal challengers of Neto within the organisation), they had differences regarding the Cabindan question and a possible annexation of parts of Angola by Zaire (Martin III, 2011, pp.42-45, Sá, 2011, Marques, 2013, pp.64-70).

Savimbi, who was always depicted as a self-aggrandising crony attempting to turn Angola into his own personal feud (Martin III, 2011, Marques, 2013).

A *security dilemma sensibility* (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.7), a potential antidote to these entrenched perceptions, was hardly present: there was no understanding that reassurance and security needs were the drivers behind the conflictual relationship unfolding, nor that increasing tensions might be a product of security competition rather than malign motives by their opponents. The few exceptions were individuals in the Portuguese government, who recognised the importance of designing security reassurances during the attempted transition (Marques, 2013, pp.25-28). Invariably, military actions were seen as justified and necessary responses to increasing threat and provocation by counterparts, and fundamental to keep the order and even the *status quo*, whereas an understanding that a dilemma of interpretation (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.4) could be behind the escalation of hostilities hardly existed.

The fighting in Luanda in March and April of 1975, marking the start of the civil war in Angola, illustrates the role of security dilemma in the outbreak of armed violence. Retrospectively, we can read the military encounters resulting in open hostilities in Angola as being motivated by uncertainty regarding others' intentions, and intensified by inherent bad faith models. As a result of the anti-colonial struggle, and also due to their urban basis of support, the MPLA was better positioned in the Luanda region then other Liberation Movements, and controlling the capital translated as an obvious strategic advantage (Luttwak, 1979) for them. Holden Roberto of FNLA and Jonas Savimbi of UNITA saw the MPLA's strategic advantage through the lens of their fears of a possible

power grab and the violation of the previously established Alvor Agreement[40] of 15 January 1975 (which produced terms for a cease-fire, but lacked provisions for implementation).

In particular, the FNLA, which had recently imported heavy military equipment into the country through Zaire, believed that a response to the MPLA's unchecked presence in Luanda was necessary, and decided to occupy outposts near and inside the city. It's declared intention was to equalise MPLA predominance. Agostinho Neto and Daniel Chipenda, however, interpreted FNLA's move as an offensive attempt by Roberto to gain the upper hand in the capital and destabilise the balance of forces in the country, since they themselves believed that their position in the capital was not a unilateral attempt to seize power, but a matter of defensive positioning.

It is still not clear, and it may never be, who fired the first rounds, but it is accepted that several pockets of confrontation arose throughout the city between the FAPLA (MPLA) and ELNA (FNLA) forces and also some civilians, in part due to the ELNA's targeting of non-combatants and in part due to the fact that the MPLA had intentionally armed some civilians with small arms and light weapons in Luanda ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975) (Martin III, 2011, Weigert, 2011, Marques, 2013). US Intelligence believed (in 1975) that the MPLA had '*deliberately provoked*

[40] The Alvor Agreement was signed in Portugal and determined a road-map for the demobilisation of the Liberation Movements armed wings and the constitution of a combined National Army with equal numbers coming from each Liberation Movement. It also paved the way for elections in early 1976, and even though the agreement was reached, it was only partly implemented. One of the main spoilers of implementation, incidentally, was the lack of demobilisation by the armed wings of the Liberation Movements following the composition of the National Army, a move that was expected by the Portuguese and by the Americans ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, Marques, 2013).

confrontations with the FNLA in Luanda' ("Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy Toward Angola", 1975, p.26), though they recognised that the high level of tensions was attributable to the behaviour of all actors. More recent accounts highlight the spontaneity of some of the engagements and the impossibility to know for sure who started the provocations. It was not rare that — due to elevated tensions and poorly trained military forces — fireworks or other explosions were mistakenly taken as offensive firepower (artillery salvos, for example), triggering fire exchanges between military garrisons (Edward George, 2005, Weigert, 2011).

The time period from March to November 1975 is fundamental to understanding how mutual distrust and fears fuelled a spiral that eventually led to the outbreak of what became known as the Angolan Civil War. As previously shown, after the Carnation Revolution, a vacuum of power settled in and no strong transitional process took hold. Before the Luanda skirmishes in 1975, which culminated in the Battle of Quifangondo on the 10 of November of that year, many minor altercations between the military forces of the Liberation Movements took place.

In ten months, the Angolan society spiralled into full-blown civil war; it had witnessed a shift from a transitional peace agreement that included a cease-fire and plan for demobilisation in January, to the open warfare of one of the largest conventional battles

of the African continent,[41] ultimately leading to the FNLA's complete military defeat[42] in various minor engagements in the course of the following weeks (Weigert, 2011, Marques, 2013). After Quifangondo, the parties had already declared war on each other and buried Alvor. No election took place and the MPLA unilaterally declared itself to be the legitimate government of Angola, leading to a declaration of formal independence of the *República Popular de Angola* (People's Republic of Angola). The FNLA and UNITA opposed the move, stating that the MPLA could not claim to be a government of national unity, maintaining that they would not accept an MPLA government. At the same time, the anti-MPLA coalition started organising militarily to retake control of Luanda, culminating in an offensive campaign headed north.

South Africa and Cuba were monitoring the situation, in conjunction with the United States and the Soviet Union, and were aware that it was unlikely that the agreements could sustain peace. Both countries were prepared to mobilise their forces to intervene in favour of their allies, while simultaneously claiming to be interested in peace, stability and the rule of law. The Portuguese forces and authorities left the country in haste as the agreement failed, leaving whatever was planned to be transferred behind (Guimarães, 1998, Gleijeses, 2002, Westad, 2007, Sá, 2011).

[41] The list is spearheaded by the Battle of Al-Alamein, during World War II. The second is the Battle of Cuito-Cuanavale, happening later in 1987, also in Angola. There is dispute whether the Battle of Afabet (Eritrea 1988) was second or third largest (Edward George, 2005, Shubin and Tokarev, 2011, Weigert, 2011).

[42] The FNLA eventually became a political party in 1992, with Roberto running for a presidential election but being defeated in a landslide by MPLA's candidate, José Eduardo dos Santos. Despite being able to secure a meagre number of seats in the national assembly, FNLA decided not to participate in the government, amid accusations of electoral fraud. The 1992 presidential elections triggered the 'second' civil war.

By the end of 1975, more than 23,000 South African forces, aided by countless international mercenaries and Zairian forces arrived in the country, fighting alongside UNITA and what remained of the FNLA. In the same period, roughly ten thousand Cuban troops landed on the country to aid MPLA fighters, a number that would increase to around 33,000 by February of the following year. This was one of the largest interventions ever executed in favour of a communist government, second only to the Afghan War (Guimarães, 1998, ch.6, Gleijeses, 2002, Marques, 2013).

4.6 - Offence-Defence *(in)*Differentiation and the Angolan Security Dilemma

Military technology plays an important role in characterising the international system (Jervis, 1978), and the dynamics of acquisition of military capabilities played an important role in reinforcing a security dilemma in Angola. In arming to fight a *guerrilla* war against the Portuguese, the independence movements attained military capabilities that were essentially composed of hand-carried small arms and light weapons (Lockyer, 2008, ch.5). Those weapons, first aimed at the Portuguese, could easily be redirected at other targets, and could hardly be differentiated in terms of their defensive or offensive nature. This *inherent ambiguity* (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, pp.42-45), is an important characteristic of the security dilemma facing domestic actors, creating pressure to seize advantage over opponents in terms of power positioning during the post-decolonisation period. Posen describes the first practical reaction to domestic anarchy by the groups as being an attempt to seize control of the state's weapon caches to arm for protection, as well as to preclude access of other groups to those same resources (Posen, 1993, pp.31-

35). These *preventive actions* to secure *highly cumulative* gains are tightly connected to the idea of *windows of vulnerability and opportunity*.[43]

The military equipment deployed by all sides in 1975 was prone to favouring offensive action, as well as being perceived as offensive by counterparts; the material available to the groups, as well as the matching tactics and operational rationale, demanded its application in ways that could not be entirely defensive, or at least could not be communicated or displayed as such. The forces were again composed extensively by regular troops (footmen) armed with automatic rifles, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. In addition to that, armoured cars (particularly armed personnel carriers and tanks) were available, as well as short and medium-range artillery.

The forces themselves often behaved like occupying armies, seizing villages and towns and the enforcement of law and order, but also engaged in direct confrontation with other movements armies. Technology and geography did not favour the adoption of defensive postures and it was impossible to confidently infer actors' motives from the accumulation of weapons. As is frequent in civil wars (Batchelor, 1998), the workhorse of combat is the assault rifle, which can be acquired for defensive purposes, yet immediately converted in a formidable offensive tool.[44] In that sense, security presupposed — among other things — a material advantage, which created the perfect conditions for a small-scale arms race, where the Liberation Movement armed wings

[43] Posen's argument is discussed in detail on the first chapter of this thesis.

[44] Small arms and light weapons (SALW) are particularly prone to being perceived and actually used defensively and offensively at the same time. Their flexibility (multi-purpose application) guarantee quick convertibility in terms of mission employment.

attempted to obtain increasingly sophisticated equipment and techniques to supersede its counterparts (Edward George, 2005, Weigert, 2011).

Unlike in interstate war, intelligence does not usually play a significant role in civil wars (Kalyvas, 2006). The Angolan case was no exception (even though some intelligence was shared by respective sponsors). Instead of trying to assess the motives and purpose of the military capabilities of their opponents (Glaser, 2010), the dominant strategy of the belligerents was to assume the worst and hedge by increasing their military capabilities, often leading to mischievous encounters of indiscriminate violence.[45] In the case of an encounter they hoped that the opponent would stand off and retreat after suffering losses or be defeated (Gleijeses, 2002). This reliance on worst-case assumptions and bad-faith models and the problem of offence-defence differentiation was a recipe for an arms race, and ultimately violent conflict.

4.7 - Conclusion

By analysing the period between 1974 and 1976 and the effects of the collapse of the colonial state in Angola, the emergence of a security dilemma and its role in the escalation of conflict can be traced. The absence of elements usually associated with malign motives (such as a central ethnic or religious motivation, for example, or the fight for the control of resources) make Angola a good case to test competing claims about the applicability of security dilemma theorising, yet, it is an understudied and largely neglected case.

[45] Kalyvas (2006) finds a strong relationship between the lack of intelligence knowledge in civil wars with the use of indiscriminate violence. The logic is straightforward: the less one knows about his enemy, more likely one is to employ wrong tactics and incorrectly recognise targets.

After fighting alongside each other and sharing a common interest in independence, the anticipation of the lack of central authority that would ensue from Portugal's colonial retreat triggered fears of mutual aggression and a high level of disagreement and distrust. This, in turn, led to the failure of the proposed transitional agreement, which might have succeeded in the presence of a strong guarantor that could enforce the peace and punish defection. Though factors such as ideology, ethnicity and Cold War politics affected the course of the civil war, present and future uncertainties were the main concern of the Liberation Movements at the outset. Fears of confrontation and political annihilation drove spirals, hedging behaviour, and worst-case scenario responses. This, then, caused counteractions in kind. An arms race ensued, and tensions escalated. In Angola, a struggle to control the capital, seen as a strategic asset, as well as an ill-devised ceasefire and peace agreement, turned occasional skirmishes into open warfare, thus starting a civil war.

The reigning uncertainty at the moment of decolonisation, together with the need to consolidate a final thrust against the Portuguese, thereby guaranteeing that independence would be effective regardless of the fate of Salazarism, led groups to seek international support and financing. This support in turn produced marriages of convenience that committed the groups to alliances with strong ideological stances, but which were not central to the groups' motivations. The MPLA's alignment with the Eastern bloc and the FNLA and UNITA's move toward the Western bloc were essentially instrumental in securing support in the face of uncertainty. Amassing military resources and committing to irreducibly opposing ideologies, further fuelled the security competition and complicated attempts at producing peaceful coexistence. However, it was the anarchic

and deeply uncertain domestic environment that produced the initial conditions for armed conflict. The duress imposed by these conditions only served to heighten the tensions and inevitably created settings for an encounter that would finally mark the outbreak of open violence.

After the Carnation Revolution, it was evident that independence was to be achieved, which indeed was the very goal of the liberation movements. Yet, these groups found themselves in a moment of uncertainty regarding the future of the country: how would the government be organised, what would be the composition of the armed forces, the parliament, and every other practical aspect of inheriting statehood instantly, without a proper transition process? In this scenario, and when all actors were capable of mobilising the *power-to-hurt*, the consequences of failing to anticipate or to respond to an eventual threat were enormous, as would be failing to resolve the central issue of contention – the resultant state and an end to the temporary state of *emergent anarchy*.

MPLA Commander Moisés Ndozi saw the horrors of 1975 in his country, and had no idea how to navigate the labyrinth of an unwanted war:

> The rookie fears everything. When he is taken to the front, he thinks Death pries on him wherever he goes. Each round fired is for him. (…) For that reason, he fires aimlessly, he needs to fire vigorously and continuously. He's not attempting to hit the enemy, but to kill his own terror. He's suffocating the fear that paralyses a man and hinders his thinking. Or better, the fear that hinders him from elaborating about what is happening around him, or how to win the battle in which his unit is fighting, because in that moment he has a more important battle to win: he has to be victorious in his combat against his own fear (Kapuściński, 1976, p.52).

In this labyrinth, he asked himself, probably rhetorically: '*what other end can we have for this war that we never wanted?*' A war that was waged '*in a territory in need of a country, but with peoples that needed to wean themselves off hate*'. Hatred not of one another, as might be expected, but of '*going through so much suffering to achieve freedom, generation after generation (…) only then to live in mutual fear*' (Kapuściński, 1976, pp.54-56).

Chapter 5 – *Trick or Threat?* Southern Africa's 'Deep' Security Dilemma and Mozambique's Post-Independence Armed Violence

FRELIMO, comrade, has a long arm and wherever you are we will always get you.

- *Unnamed* FRELIMO party official cited *in* Cabrita (2000, p.84).

***Dou muitos tiros*[1].**

- Aníbal São José Lopes, former PIDE/DGS Provincial Director, asked by P. J. Venter (former head of South Africa's Security Police) about how to deal with unrest among the native population, cited *in* Meneses and McNamara (2014b, p.369).

5.1 - Introduction

This chapter seeks to evaluate the performance of the security dilemma as an explanation for internal conflict and the outbreak of armed violence following the independence of Mozambique in 1975. In order to support my argument, I will trace the process through which the security dilemma evolved and deteriorated into armed violence. Conditions particular to Mozambique determined an atypical situation that prevented the slide into anarchy and thus hindered the emergence of an internal, domestic security dilemma. Nonetheless, the involvement of external actors triggered a regional security dilemma.

[1] *'I shoot a lot'*.

This, in turn, led to the external creation of a domestic force to counter the perceived threat, consequently precipitating the actual fight.

The argument in this chapter will start by highlighting the post-colonial rise of the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*[2] (FRELIMO). The emergence of FRELIMO prevented a situation of domestic anarchy in the territory following the 1974 Carnation Revolution. However, it created the conditions for the existence of a regional security dilemma. It will be argued that FRELIMO's rise increased regional tensions, which produced dilemmas of interpretation and response (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, pp.4-5) in Rhodesia, which had chiefly defensive motivations. Third, it will be argued that Rhodesia solved the dilemma of response by creating and supporting a disruptive element: the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*[3] (RENAMO). The complexity of this claim is to recognize that RENAMO had malign motives towards the government of FRELIMO, while making a core contention that the Rhodesian sponsors of RENAMO in Salisbury and Pretoria – crucially prime ministers Ian Smith and B. J. Vorster – did not seek the military overthrow of the government in Mozambique, but instead sought to achieve security. I contend that greedy motives (Glaser, 2010, ch.2) were not the main drivers of this armed conflict, leading to a *'deep' security dilemma* (Jervis, 2001, p.40). Additionally, competing explanations of this conflict will be dispelled; special attention will be devoted to those accounts suggesting the primacy of malign intentions on the part of Mozambicans and Rhodesians, which would automatically disqualify security seeking motivations and which thus challenge the security dilemma explanation.

[2] '*Mozambican Liberation Front*'.

[3] '*Mozambican National Resistance*'.

Highlighting the importance of the regional dimension provides both a challenge and an opportunity. On the one hand, it increases the complexity of the analysis by adding another layer of interaction requiring attention. On the other hand, it provides a better informed and more comprehensive investigation of the mechanisms and dynamics behind the development of security dilemmas in domestic environments. Supported by archival evidence, interviews as well as secondary sources, this analysis corroborates the hypothesis that the security dilemma plays a role in the outbreak of armed violence in civil wars, and that its theoretical toolkit can be beneficial to understanding the process by which violence may erupt. Even in the absence of an anarchical environment within the borders of a country, as happened in Mozambique, the transnational dimension may harbour fearful interactions that create incentives for pre-emptive action (Posen, 1993, Melander, 1999, pp.22-23). Bringing the regional dimension into the analysis extends the explanatory reach of the security dilemma theory, in line with the literature on transnational dynamics of civil war. By itself this innovation does not automatically eliminate the possibility of malign motivations on the part of the actors at the regional level, nor does it render the security dilemma contingent on the possibility of a peace agreement between the parties. Its value rests in showing the role that uncertainty and fear can have as drivers of insecurity behind the outbreak of domestic armed violence, even if its roots lie beyond the domestic borders of a state.

5.2 - FRELIMO and the MFA: power transfer and a case of no-anarchy in Inter-War Years (1974-1977)?

In 1974, the Carnation Revolution marked a paradigmatic change in the Portuguese African Colonies. The fall of Portuguese rule in Mozambique reconfigured the strategic panorama in South-eastern Africa. FRELIMO ceased to be a domestic insurgent and

became the incumbent state and government of Mozambique. This was achieved through a *de facto* transfer of power from Portugal, coupled with the suppression of any alternative political forces in the country. Generally, this situation reduces the likelihood of outbreak of civil war due to the absence of domestic anarchy given that the presence of a hegemonic actor during the decolonisation moment mitigates the effects of the impending power vacuum. In the absence of such an anarchical environment, the security dilemma would not have the necessary conditions to develop: most crucially, uncertainty stemming from anarchy.

Nonetheless, armed violence between FRELIMO and RENAMO erupted three years later. In order to understand this apparent inconsistency, it is necessary to widen the scope of the analysis to include regional considerations. It is argued that the entrenchment of FRELIMO triggered fears among some of its neighbours, specifically Rhodesia and South Africa. Both countries needed to adapt to the loss of a faithful ally that previously had helped secure the preponderance of white minority regimes in the region. Moreover, Portuguese sympathy to Rhodesia guaranteed the latter access to the sea (which is important, given that it is landlocked country), which was fundamental to the broader security of the regime. This chapter retraces the process leading to FRELIMO's ascension to power in Mozambique, as it is relevant to the broader understanding of the regional security dynamics that ensued.

First though, it is necessary to review the domestic situation in the colonial power at that time. The Movement of the Armed Forces (MFA) overthrew the *Estado Novo* regime in Lisbon and, with this, decided unilaterally to withdraw from all colonies. Immediately the Portuguese colonial authority, then *de facto* directed from Lisbon by General António

de Spínola,[4] tried to reach out to FRELIMO to arrange for a cease-fire, but was met with rejection (Cabrita, 2000, ch.2). It is clear that the Liberation Movement was not ready to negotiate the terms of independence with Portugal, as FRELIMO leaders Samora Machel and Joaquim Chissano believed that this was a great opportunity for the party to step up the offensive, pressing the *status quo* in an attempt to achieve an agreement that would reflect the Mozambican (and thus the Party's) terms (Munslow, 1983, p.126, Almeida Santos, 2006b, p.59).

General Spínola's immediate response, however, was to escalate the conflict, to order the cantonment of the Portuguese troops in strategic areas of the country's south and to arm the civilian population in northern rural areas, despite being unsure about their affiliation (Almeida Santos, 2006b). He sought to challenge FRELIMO's control over liberated areas, and to diminish their bargaining power (Almeida Santos, 2006a, Cann, 2015). The initial spike in violence by the military forces on both sides was soon replaced by a general feeling of disenchantment and mission creep by the Portuguese forces,[5] which led to increasingly frequent disobedience episodes. Eventually, Portuguese troops decided to stop fighting, many openly supported FRELIMO, and refused to take on any missions that were not strictly defensive of their own positions, leading ultimately to an undeclared truce (Amado Couto, 2011, Ramos *et al.*, 2012, Venter, 2013).

[4] General António de Spínola led the government during the transitional period that took place immediately after the Carnation Revolution and oversaw the institutional changes that took place following the peaceful removal of then President Rear Admiral Américo Thomaz and then Prime-Minister Marcello Caetano (who was the actual ruling force in the country). Spínola was previously Governor-General of Guinea-Bissau and also headed the General-Staff of the Portuguese Armed Forces (as the Vice-Chief).

[5] The troops believed that they should not continue fighting for something that was already lost: while in Salazar's days the troops were told they fought for Portuguese territory, under the MFA and Spínola they fought for something as abstract as a better position at the negotiation table and for '*doing the right thing*' (meaning supporting the transition process).

By 7 September 1974, six months after the Carnation Revolution, the truce became official, and the then Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mário Soares met with Samora Machel in Lusaka. An agreement with FRELIMO was achieved, providing for a comprehensive cease-fire and the undertaking of measures allowing for a power transfer process that would give independence to the country and institute FRELIMO as its governing body.

The liberation movement was not ready to accept anything but total independence and self-rule. Minister Antonio Moreira highlighted in an interview that total independence from Portugal and self-rule seemed to be an entirely non-negotiable goal of FRELIMO all throughout its existence. The Minister believed that the regime in Salisbury feared a FRELIMO government and that this was Rhodesia's one of the state's main security concerns, second only to its own domestic insurgency. Minister António de Almeida Santos (2006b, pp.125-130) corroborates this view in his memoirs. Moreover, FRELIMO made peace deal a condition to any preceding (or concurrent) formal independence agreement. Minister Almeida Santos (2006b, pp.61-62) considered this requirement *impossible to understand by people who can't put themselves in* [the Liberation Movements] *leaders position*'.[6] The costs of fighting a ten year insurgency against the Portuguese made it easy to dismiss considerations of any minimalist offers (Almeida Santos, 2006b, Magalhães, 2015). Several accounts from interviewees support this claim. Colonel Matos Gomes believes that after the failure of the Gordian Knot operation, Portugal had to acknowledge that FRELIMO would be a key player in Mozambique's

[6] Almeida Santos (2006a) claims that this was the case of every Liberation Movements in all Portuguese colonies, FRELIMO included.

future, and Rhodesia and South Africa had to accept that they would have to manage rather than eliminate the perceived threat posed by Mozambican nationalism. Ken Flower's (1987) memoirs (about his time as Rhodesia's chief of Intelligence, Head of the CIO) also support this view.

As the unchallenged military force in the territory, apart from the remaining Portuguese forces stationed in Mozambique, FRELIMO enjoyed unprecedented freedom of action in the territory, free from any significant political or military constraints. Such concentration of military power at the moment of the Carnation Revolution not only meant that FRELIMO could be the obvious heir to power in the post-colonial Mozambican State, but reinforced the proposal of the party leadership to install a single-party government based on Marxist doctrines, and capable of fulfilling Mondlane's project of a socialist country (Mondlane, 1969, Munslow, 1983).

However, even though FRELIMO's intentions of freeing the country from Portuguese rule were almost unanimously accepted by the locals (particularly among the black population and the urban, locally born whites), their socialist ideals and plans for the country were not so well-received. Consequently, some movements demanding political participation with different ideas started to flourish. Under a scenario of extreme power concentration in the hands of a single actor, FRELIMO was not keen to demonstrate flexibility in their plan for the now independent country. This led to a proportional growth in the process of curbing political dissidence on the part of FRELIMO (Munslow, 1983, Cabrita, 2000).

Party discipline, and political and ideological education had always been part of FRELIMO's *repertoire* since its inception, but these components increased significantly after the Carnation Revolution, as the focus of military might morphed into a focus on political might (Dresden, 2015). João Cabrita (2000, ch.3) argues that FRELIMO's repression of political dissidence, both from inside and outside the party, was particularly effective, given that it was under the banner of suppressing any neo-colonialist counter power-grabs. The case of *Movimento Moçambique Livre* (MML)[7] is a good example of this method; composed mainly of Portuguese settlers and other white Mozambicans, '*to all intents and purposes*', the group was '*opposed to independence and perceived by the majority of the population as wishing to maintain the colonial links intact*' (Cabrita, 2000, p.80). FRELIMO moved in to crush the MML with Lisbon's acquiescence, and did the same with other challengers, such as with now-disenchanted long-time FRELIMO member Uria Simango, who had to flee the country and saw his wife and children arrested by the party's security forces. Heads of other opposition movements, such as PCN's[8] Joana Semião and Coremo's[9] Judas Honwana, were also arrested and taken to FRELIMO's military camps for '*internment and re-education*', leading to the infamous Nachingwea[10] trials, where more than three hundred political prisoners were found guilty of neo-colonial attempts against the Mozambican state (Machava, 2011).

Cabrita (2000, p.83) describes the proceedings:

> Reminiscent of the Stalinist era, the detainees were then instructed to make public confessions of guilt, portraying themselves as enemies of the people,

[7] Literally translates as Free Mozambique Movement.

[8] PCN – *Partido de Coligação Nacional* (National Colligated Party).

[9] Coremo – *Comitê Revolucionário de Moçambique* (Revolutionary Committee of Mozambique).

[10] In Tanzania.

> not by any ideology but by foreign interests. They all pleaded with FRELIMO to show them the way…Individually or in groups, the detainees were paraded before a tribune of honor presided over by Machel who acted as both prosecutor and judge. FRELIMO's military personnel stood by in a deliberately intimidatory presence…[and] cronies working as foreign correspondents in Dar es Salaam were on hand to report on the event in a manner that suited first and foremost the purpose of the exercise…For example, throughout his confession Simango clearly indicated that he had been well rehearsed for the parody at Nachingwea. Concurring in verbatim with the FRELIMO Executive Committee communiqué issued in the wake of the publication of his paper, Simango said he had written it because he was 'blinded with ambition' and wanted to 'denigrate the FRELIMO leaders' (Cabrita, 2000, p.83).

FRELIMO blazed a path to independence from the outset. Moreover, it never had any external or internal challengers. This is an important factor to consider in relation to the absence of an emerging security dilemma in Mozambique after the Carnation Revolution. By its nature, a strategic interaction creates the expectation that a security dilemma requires opposing actors (Clausewitz, 1832, Jervis, 1976). However, in intrastate conflict actors can emerge and disappear in a way not possible in interstate conflict; intrastate armed groups are far more fluid then states and interstate alliances (Vinci, 2009).

Barry Posen (1993) posited that under the duress of extreme uncertainty (cradled in emerging anarchy), new violence-capable actors will flourish as an outcome of mutual fears, leading, in turn, to an escalation of tensions and hostility. In Mozambique, even in the absence of opposing peers, the political movements that questioned FRELIMO's authority to rule did not manage to mobilise militarily, due to FRELIMO's effective repression of dissidence and opposition.

FRELIMO's sway as the unchallenged ruler of the new one-party state confirms the expectation that under an hegemonic actor with no viable peers within the territory (Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, 2013), a security dilemma should not unfold. FRELIMO's hegemonic status mitigates Posen's expectations of the effects of emerging anarchy but, at the same time, begs us to question our understanding of what anarchy means in this context. If we understand that the case of decolonisation in Mozambique was a case of *no-anarchy*, it would fit both the expectation of *no security dilemma*, due to the existence of a hegemonic actor, and the lack of emergent anarchy.

In other words, the reason a typical security dilemma is absent in the post-decolonisation moment in Mozambique is precisely because there is a *de facto* power transition. This was less due to the formalities of the transfer of responsibilities and obligations between the colonial power and the newly independent administration in a legally prescribed and correct manner, and more because FRELIMO was powerful enough to rapidly assume hegemonic status in the gap left during political transition, thus precluding the emergence of potential challengers. Virtually all of the interviewees that I spoke to were confident that the main difference between the cases of Angola and Mozambique in terms of the decolonisation process is that in the former an orderly transition was impossible, whereas in the latter it was almost inevitable.[11]

This specific process of transition from Portuguese rule (represented ultimately by the MFA in Mozambique) to FRELIMO ensured that the party inherited the state and its

[11] This was more due to the actions of FRELIMO and the situation on the ground than due to a Portuguese good management of the situation. Also corroborated by Almeida Santos' (2006b) memoirs.

capabilities. An illustration of the reach of this power transfer can be taken from the events described in Nachingwea: whereas in the Angolan case the Portuguese authority acted politically and militarily to counter undesirable behaviour by the liberation movements (even after independence), these sanctions were not applied in Mozambique. Portugal failed to assert its position in the case of Nachingwea and, even more significantly, when FRELIMO repressed the political organisation of European white settlers and other white Mozambicans of the *Movimento Mozambique Livre* (MML) (Cabrita, 2000). While Portugal claimed to be negotiating terms of independence with FRELIMO, the reality was closer to issuing the party a *carte blanche* to rule (Almeida Santos, 2006a). Patrick Chabal (2002b) argues that Portugal was keen to guarantee a feasible controlled exit, one in which it could avoid responsibilities for further issues in the ex-colonies, and that the first priority of decision-makers in Lisbon was to avoid the fast-paced Angolan imbroglio from unfolding in the other colonies.[12]

The power transfer in Mozambique represents a scenario of *no-anarchy*, which would, theoretically, prevent a security dilemma in Posen's (1993) terms. In addition, FRELIMO's hegemony should have suppressed uncertainty about the possibility for other groups to menace its security. Indeed, by looking at the situation in 1974, it could be expected that the power transition might take place peacefully and that one would not see war in Mozambique. However, in order to understand the outbreak of violence that occurred three years after the Carnation Revolution, the regional context needs to be considered as it is essential to deciphering the rise of RENAMO (Vines, 1991, Cabrita, 2000).

[12] Several other analysts (Lloyd-Jones and Pinto, 2003, Robinson, 2003, Alexandre, 2006, Messiant, 2008, Ramos *et al.*, 2012, Marques, 2013) concur with this reading. Various interviewees concur that by mid 1975 the Portuguese policy was to provide a minimally acceptable exit strategy that would allow a loyal retreat.

Therefore, the next sections are devoted to exploring the extent to which the independence of Mozambique had an effect in generating extreme insecurity between the newly created country and its white-ruled neighbours. Had FRELIMO's hegemony triggered an unsustainable spiral of mutual fears between Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) under Ian Smith's rule and the apartheid governments in South Africa, and the new regime in Mozambique?

5.3 - Rhodesia and the rise of RENAMO: *enabling 'henchmen' as a response to a 'deep' security dilemma?*

In this section, it will be argued that the rise of FRELIMO created the conditions for the development of a regional security dilemma, notwithstanding the fact that it was seen in Salisbury as a significant strategic challenge (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a). FRELIMO's rise represented a significant change at the regional level, posing dilemmas of interpretation and response in Rhodesia. It is argued that the creation of RENAMO was born out of Rhodesian anxiety and insecurity and in an attempt to counterbalance the perceived threat posed by the newly independent state of Mozambique. This, in turn, led to the emergence of a *'deep' security dilemma* (Jervis, 2001, p.40), i.e. one in which '*both sides may be willing to give up the chance of expansion if they can be made secure, but a number of other factors — the fear that the other's relative power is dangerously increasing, technology, events outside their control, and their subjective security requirements — put such a solution out of reach*'.

To this end, it will be argued that Rhodesia's aggressive response to FRELIMO's rise was motivated by security-seeking and that their entangled security requirements led to

hostile behaviours. This entanglement owed its origin to the clash between ideological beliefs: FRELIMO's revolutionary, anti-colonial nature *versus* the apartheid regime of Rhodesia. This argument will be supported by exploring the elements within the Rhodesian strategic environment that point towards the preponderance of security seeking motives on their part, which will support claims of the presence of a *'deep' security dilemma* and dispel claims of purely expansionist motives.

It goes on to argue that while the interaction leading to the outbreak of armed violence in Mozambique might have looked aggressive in nature, such hostile behaviour was taken in the pursuit of security rather than expansion. This will be exemplified and discussed in the context of: the loss of Portuguese Mozambique as a buffer state between them and the frontline states; the presence of external support for domestic destabilising forces; the deprivation of its access to the sea via the Beira Corridor; and — more importantly — the undermining of its alliance with South Africa (with the related consequences for Rhodesian national security). The strong single party state which emerged under FRELIMO's aegis was achieved in part with Portuguese acquiescence and partly through repression of opposition groups, both armed and political. In the same year, however, the tide changed in the country as a result of transnational, rather than domestic, dynamics (Vines, 1991, pp.14-15, Ciment, 1997, Amado Couto, 2011).

Mozambique's regional geo-political position means that it is buttressed by four countries (Malawi, Zambia, Rhodesia[13] and South Africa) on its western border and by the Mozambique Channel on its eastern side. On the northern border, Mozambique is bordered by Tanzania. During the 1970s, both Dar-es-Salaam and Lusaka were already independent capitals and ruled by black majority governments. The former, independent since 1962, was led by Julius Nyerere, whereas the latter saw independence in 1964 under the leadership of Kenneth Kaunda.

Both regimes openly supported FRELIMO throughout the colonial fight against Portugal, and loathed the idea that Portugal could keep its colonial footprint in Africa.[14] On the other side of the Mozambican regional fault line were Ian Smith's Rhodesia and B. J. Vorster's South Africa, governments of white minority rule, who had supported Portugal's colonial claims and who acted politically and militarily to curb FRELIMO's influence in Mozambique (Venter, 2013). The last neighbouring country, Hastings Banda's regime in Lilongwe, did not relevantly engage the situation, maintaining strategic neutrality that left them out of the dispute and free to pursue other goals (Barber and Barratt, 1990, Emerson, 2013). There was a strong bipolar pull between black majority and white minority governments throughout the development of the events in Mozambique, so that actors had to position themselves on either side of the fence (Hoile, 1994, Amado Couto, 2011, Emerson, 2013).

[13] Now known as Zimbabwe, Rhodesia changed its name in 1980 after the fall of the White Rule regime. For consistency, I am referring the geographical denominations according to how they were used during the period studied.

[14] Kaunda supported both Angolan and Mozambican independence, as his country bordered both.

The support that FRELIMO received from Nyerere and Kaunda was invaluable in enabling the movement's actions against Portugal. This support included Nyerere's welcoming of Mondlane and Machel in Southern Tanzania, providing financial and military aid, as well as harbouring bases and training camps for FRELIMO forces, even after 1974 (Henriksen, 1983, Munslow, 1983, Hanlon, 1984, Amado Couto, 2011, Venter, 2013). Without this support, argues Venter, it would be unlikely that FRELIMO would have survived the Portuguese bouts of search and destroy activities,[15] and especially Portuguese Operation Gordian Knot (Venter, 2013, Cann, 2015). Both Nyerere and Kaunda believed that colonialism had no place on the continent, and strongly believed that black Africans should be entitled to self-rule. For that reason, they strongly opposed the regimes mandated by Smith in Rhodesia and Vorster in South Africa (Munslow, 1983). This highlights the depth of the ideological divide between the conflicting parties.

Conversely, the governments in both Pretoria and Salisbury (now Harare) knew that they could not reverse the wave of decolonisation, but wanted instead to mitigate and if possible preclude its effects within their own territories (Geldenhuys, 1984, Jaster, 1989, Ciment, 1997, Smith, 2001, Almeida Santos, 2006a, Amado Couto, 2011). Vorster ruled over a regime of institutionalised racism that was designed to offer privileges to the whites to the detriment of the blacks. Ian Smith presided over a country in which a white minority was the *de facto* elite of the country, and even though apartheid was not

[15] Often supported by South African and Rhodesian forces, namely the Rhodesian Special Air Service (SAS) and the Rhodesian Selous Scouts (Venter, 2013, Balaam, 2014).

institutionalised, the white minority rule[16] over the country gave Rhodesian blacks little political participation. This attempt to secure regime integrity was conveyed in different forms and using different pretexts. Vorster's government stood by apartheid as a justifiable policy, while Smith's government did not overtly use this language and claimed that Rhodesia was a country where whites and '*responsible blacks*'[17] could live in peace, reaping the benefits of '*western civilisation*', development and peace (Smith, 2001, Schorr, 2015).

Pretoria was committed to the apartheid system and indeed seemed to believe that South Africa should work under an institutionalised framework, allowing for the subjugation of its black population in favour of the white one. As such, their foreign policy concentrated on protecting this *status quo* from international pressure, based on the international principle – prevalent since the Treaties of Westphalia of 1648 – of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of states. Through this discourse, the South African leadership claimed to be completely uninterested in influencing the course of the affairs of any other state in Africa or beyond, as this would directly contradict their own claim that Apartheid concerned South Africans solely, and external actors should not interfere. A complicated web of legal justification was exercised, and the most notable exception to this policy was the intervention in Angola through Southwest Africa (now Namibia), against the

[16] Even though segregation was not institutionalised, a restriction on the number of parliament seats to which the black population was entitled to vote created a situation in which black Rhodesians could not have political participation. Moreover, in every practical sense, the segregation produced by Rhodesian apartheid was similar to the one of South Africa.

[17] By '*responsible blacks*' he meant the ones that abided by the law and worked within the framework offered by his government, in opposition to the 'irresponsible' ones, that were the terrorists and insurgents trying to challenge the regime from outside its framework.

MPLA and the Cubans (Wolfers and Bergerol, 1983, Barber and Barratt, 1990, Minter, 1994, Martin III, 2011).

In Ian Smith's (2001, pp.162-164) own account,[18] the constitution of Rhodesia following the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) provided grounds for a transition to a system of '*one-man-one-vote*', with free and fair elections to all citizens (black and white alike) protected by the rule of law. According to Smith's understanding though, it was not possible to advance to this stage until the problem of 'terrorism' was fended off. He depicted Zimbabwe African National Union's (ZANU) and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) supporters as '*irresponsible blacks*' who were supporting a campaign of terror against the rule of law and the Rhodesian State, instead of helping the evolving political process. In his autobiography, he acknowledges that '*we* [he and his cabinet] *knew, since the UDI, that our new constitution would eventually lead to a black-majority government in the future*' (Smith, 2001, p.166). This, however, did not stop them from pursuing apartheid tactics, on the basis that it was unacceptable that the whites of Rhodesia were being targeted by a '*terror campaign envisaging to distort the rule of law*', with high costs in lives for white and black Rhodesians alike (Smith, 2001, p.167).

Both Smith and Vorster were staunch anti-communists, and several accounts (Cockram, 1970, Minter, 1972, Geldenhuys, 1984, Minter, 1994, Smith, 2001, Amado Couto, 2011) highlight the importance of this on the way that they decided to behave *vis-à-vis* their neighbours. Smith claims that his interactions with Vorster regarding the frontline states

[18] In his autobiographical work, named *Bitter Harvest: Zimbabwe and the Aftermath of its Independence*, Ian Smith delivers a detailed presentation of his perspective on the main problems concerning Rhodesian politics during his years serving as a Rhodesian politician, from 1948 to 1987.

were not founded on the concept of racial differences, but rather on the importance of the containment of communism (Smith, 2001). On several occasions, he claimed to have admonished Vorster that they both knew that the Zambezi was a far better barrier for communism than the Limpopo,[19] that Rhodesia needed to survive if '*western Christian civilisation*' was to survive in Southern Africa, and it needed to protect itself from communism (Smith, 2001, p.164).

However, both Smith and Vorster knew that it was impossible (at least in the foreseeable future) to counter and eradicate communism from Africa, just as they knew it was impossible to swim against the tide of majority rule and decolonisation on the continent (Smith, 2001, p.188). It is widely accepted (Cockram, 1970, Geldenhuys, 1984, Jaster, 1989, Barber and Barratt, 1990, Smith, 2001, Almeida Santos, 2006a, Amado Couto, 2011, Schorr, 2015) that Smith and Vorster were far more concerned about securing their own territories against black majority rule and communism, rather than 'exporting' apartheid and the free-market[20]. While this was not enough to create a peaceful outcome, it indicates security-seeking motives (Glaser, 2010, pp.37-39) on behalf of Smith and Vorster. That remains true even if both leaders were deemed aggressive anti-communists, racists, and against the right to self-determination and self-rule, as we cannot necessarily infer motivations by equating them only to discourse or declaratory policy.

[19] This is a reference to the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers. The Zambezi determines the northern border between Rhodesia and Zambia, and the Limpopo determines the Southern border between Rhodesia and South Africa. It is curious to notice that both rivers flow into the Indian Ocean within Mozambican territory.

[20] My interviews with General Pezarat Correia and Colonel Matos Gomes (both of whom liaised constantly with high rank Rhodesian military officers) corroborate this view, as do the interviews with Prof. Dr. Ennes Ferreira and Minister Adriano Moreira. In his memoirs, Minister Almeida Santos also suggests the same.

This case invites the use of the *bad faith model* (Finlay *et al.*, 1967, Stuart and Starr, 1981, Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, pp.65-66) to explain not only the perception that the black leaders had towards Ian Smith and B. J. Vorster, but also in showing how analysts can be affected by emotionally charged accusations and precipitate the assumption of malign motives. As has been previously discussed in this thesis, such oversimplification is frequently the centrepiece to an incorrect rejection of the security dilemma. The black leaders from the recently independent frontline states conversely saw Smith and Vorster as the heads of racist, non-progressive regimes; Samora Machel himself called[21] the white majority rule an aberration in both Rhodesia and South Africa (Portela, 1977). Conversely, Smith is clear in his memoirs[22] that he respects and cherishes '*responsible blacks*', but that Africa's demise was due to the scourge of communism, that led to unreasonable nationalism (Smith, 2001, Schorr, 2015).

The clear ideological incompatibility between a FRELIMO-led Mozambique and Apartheid's Rhodesia ultimately constrained the possibility of providing mutual security reassurances. The ideological dimension (important to Robert Jervis' conception of the *'deep' security dilemma*) acts beyond the usual potentially reconcilable (material and immaterial) elements that prevent actors from solving the dilemma of interpretation. Even if a fundamental will to eliminate the other, or to expand territorially, is missing, the ideological incompatibility leads actors to fail to see any possibility of offering and being offered mutual security reassurances. In other words, even if all the concerns at the core of an actor's decision making pertain to guaranteeing one's own security, the

[21] In an interview given in 1977 to Artur Portela, for the magazine Opção.

[22] Whether this is entirely rhetorical or has any real value will hardly ever be as clear. Smith's words could have been carefully and intentionally chosen to disguise his racist beliefs.

consideration of the fundamental incompatibility between revolutionary and reactionary ideologies on each side of the political divide force actors into the misperception of mutually exclusive, and thus incompatible, security requirements.

In any case, this does not exclude[23] the presence of the security dilemma, but rather strengthens analyses that a spiral is in place (Kissinger, 1957, p.2, Jervis, 2001, p.40, Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.67). It is important to note that the effect of the concept of the *'deep' security dilemma* in perceptions is twofold: for the actors on the ground, the pressure of incompatible security requirements favour the view that they are facing a security challenge (and not a security dilemma), leading them to act in ways that produce tragic violent outcomes. However, for informed *post-facto* analysts, the presence of incompatible security requirements will usually indicate that a spiral was in place. These dynamics testify to the importance of analysing motives and intentions in the context of the possibility of incompatible security requirements: an actor's hostile behaviour may suggest that an actor has greedy motives, while in fact it is a security motivated actor that feels that the only way to feel secure is to make its opponent insecure. Ultimately, in the case of the impossibility to mutually assure security, actors will tend to fall into the trap of a downward spiral. Having tackled the fundamental clash of ideologies between FRELIMO and Smith's government in Rhodesia and its connection to the rise of a regional *'deep' security dilemma* (which as it will be shown in the following section is unequivocally connected to the outbreak of domestic armed violence between RENAMO and FRELIMO), it is necessary to examine the other elements in the mutual insecurity that followed FRELIMO's rise to power.

[23] The exclusion would derive from the assumption of malign motives from the incompatibility of security requirements, which, as I have explored on chapters 1 and 2, is an incorrect assumption.

The dynamics of protecting the integrity of the two white rule regimes took different courses, but in both cases navigated a complicated regional stability setting, to which a Lisbon-ruled Mozambique acted as a convenient buffer between them and the majority-rule states. In an interview with Ambassador António Monteiro,[24] who served as the Secretary of Embassy in the Portuguese Embassy in Kinshasa (1974-1977), he recalled the institutionalised political proximity that Portugal, South Africa and Rhodesia always had in containing nationalism in Southern Africa, with the foremost purpose of countering activities that had direct effects in their internal affairs. My interview with Colonel Matos Gomes[25] also supports this view and he referred to the importance of the ALCORA alliance,[26] which *'had been established to "investigate ways and means of achieving a co-ordinated tripartite effort among Portugal, Rhodesia, and the RSA (Republic of South Africa) with a view to countering the mutual threat against their territories in Southern Africa"* (Meneses and McNamara, 2013, p.1113). Indeed, the constitution of ALCORA further reinforces the idea that the extreme insecurity felt by South Africans and Rhodesians alike was behind their actions, rather than an attempt to change the *status quo*. Meneses and McNamara (Meneses and McNamara, 2013,

[24] Ambassador António Monteiro was born in Angola during the colonial period and has served the Portuguese diplomacy for over 30 years, in several African posts, as well as the Portuguese Representative to the United Nations. He retired from diplomacy and is currently the director of a foundation in Lisbon. For more on his profile, see the Interviewee List (Appendix A).

[25] For Colonel Matos Gomes's and relevance, see the Interviewee List (Appendix A).

[26] ALCORA is an acronym for '*Aliança Contra as Revoluções em África*' (Alliance against the Revolutions in Africa, in English). For more on the Alcora alliance refer to the comprehensive volume by Aniceto Afonso and Carlos de Matos Gomes named '*Alcora: o acordo secreto do colonialismo: Portugal, África do Sul e Rodésia na última fase da guerra colonial*' (2013), as well as two journal articles by Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses and Robert McNamara (2013, 2014a).

p.1113, 2014a, p.89) show that[27] the ALCORA alliance was a response to a scenario of '*total threat*' posed by the decolonisation and the emergence of black majority governments in Africa *vis-à-vis* the white minority regimes.

This shows how Rhodesians (and South Africans) assumed — embedded in the combination of uncertainty and fears about the change in their environment — that black majority regimes were threatening and that a response was necessary to guarantee their own security. Such a scenario is compatible with the presence of security dilemma dynamics.

For South Africa, FRELIMO's Mozambique represented the only neighbouring state that could easily facilitate rebellion against the apartheid regime inside South Africa and act as a feasible port of entry for resources and harbour for ANC's rebels[28] (Minter, 1994, Cabrita, 2000). During the period of anti-colonial struggle, Pretoria's concerns converged with those of Salisbury. They exerted great efforts to restrict the liberty that the instability in Mozambique gave to their own insurgents, so to, firstly, decrease the threat they posed and, secondly, to guarantee the viability of existing economic interests in the country.[29]

[27] This was particularly salient on the strategy of then South Africa's Minister of Defence Pik W. Botha and by South African General Charles Allan Fraser.

[28] South Africa always pursued a strong policy of protecting their interests on what they called the Frontline States: Angola, South West Africa (now Namibia), Botswana, Rhodesia and Mozambique. They fought in Angola and Namibia directly and conducted some operations in Mozambique during the years of the colonial war, and controlled the situation in Botswana and the former protectorates that now correspond to Lesotho and Swaziland.

[29] Since the beginning of the 20th Century, South African (and British Imperial) economical presence in Mozambique was significant, first through the concessions system and after through business networks.

After independence, however, Vorster started to seek appeasement with the frontline states, including Mozambique, to achieve a series of political goals, both internationally, regionally and internally. Rhodesia and Mozambique shared a long border and, most importantly, the latter guaranteed the landlocked country access to the sea, via the so called Beira Corridor. The Beira Corridor was a set of road, railroad and pipelines connecting the Rhodesian City of Umtali (now Mutare) with the Mozambican port of Beira, the preferred route for Salisbury's supra-regional trade. Vines (1991, p.61) estimates that since the start, Rhodesian involvement in the Mozambican affairs was largely motivated over concerns that the Beira Corridor[30] — which was Rhodesia's '*economic life-line*' — would be disrupted, first due to collateral damage in the fight between the rebels challenging the Portuguese and the Beira Blockade; and then by FRELIMO's attempts to counter the threat posed by the white minority regime and empower the ZANU and ZAPU rebel forces (Vines, 1991, Minter, 1994, Mobley, 2002, Venter, 2013).

Between 1966 and 1975, the United Kingdom used its naval forces to enact a blockade of the Beira Port in what became known as the Beira Blockade, to put pressure on the Rhodesian regime after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (in November 1965). The blockade restricted the transhipment of oil via the Beira Corridor, and alternatives had to be found at higher costs. During the time of Portuguese rule, tankers could still ship oil to Rhodesia via other Mozambican ports, or otherwise via rail and road tankers provided by South Africa. Richard Mobley (2002, pp.64-65) argues that while the full effectiveness of the blockade is debatable, it had a very immediate effect in creating fear

[30] The Beira Corridor represented, by far, the easiest and quickest Rhodesian access to the sea.

and insecurity in Salisbury, as London had expected. The United Kingdom believed that this would deter Smith and force him into a Home Agreement '*in a matter of weeks*', while the Rhodesian regime persisted in trying to guarantee logistical security by different means. The expected outcome came after several years, rather than a few weeks. The Beira Blockade lasted until after the independence of Mozambique, when FRELIMO agreed with the British Government not to allow oil transhipment to Rhodesia via any of its ports (Gregory, 1969, Wharam, 1970, Mobley, 2002).

Unsurprisingly, the importance of the Beira Corridor was noticeable during almost the entire duration of Mozambique's Civil Wars; even after the end of Smith's regime, the Zimbabwean black-majority rule government helped FRELIMO by channelling resources and even military forces to counter the attempt by RENAMO[31] to seize control of the corridor. The ultimate importance of the corridor, in the context of the wider geopolitical implications of Mozambique's independence, led to an ever increasing survivalist concern by South Africans and Rhodesians, exacerbating the perceptions that weakening power was fundamental to assuring their own security. This further justifies the perception that they were facing a threat while in fact they were limited in being able to reassure and being reassured about security commitments, supporting the claims of the presence of Jervis' spiral model.

[31] During the entire duration of the conflict in Mozambique, and even over the course of the tensions between FRELIMO and RENAMO in 2013/14, the strategic importance of the Beira Corridor (along 'National Road 6') and the 'National Road 1' (that connects Maputo and Beira) was notable. The control of these roads or the actions of sabotage held along them were always fundamental to exercising political and military pressure on the relationship between the Mozambican political actors.

Another essential strategic dynamic that conditioned Rhodesia's pursuit of security was a major change in South African Foreign Policy. The end of Portuguese rule in Mozambique in 1974-75 changed within B. J. Vorster's cabinet the understanding of how to deal with African nationalism. The South African prime minister understood that, faced with the expansion of self-rule in the Frontline States, his country would have to change the way he engaged these states, moving from a proactive role to one of accommodation. The government in Pretoria decided that its primary goal was to ensure the security of the state, inclusively understood in terms of the ability to pursue the policies that the National Party believed in, such as the apartheid regime. These attacks against it came from all directions. Internationally, global pressure against South Africa at the United Nations General Assembly urged the end of the apartheid regime, a move strongly supported by the leaders of the frontline states. Regionally, the frontline states were pressuring South Africa, and using this leverage to obtain a variety of concessions from Pretoria. A policy of détente ensued, and Vorster started to actively engage the interests of nationalist African leaders and international actors in exchange for promises of non-intervention in South African internal affairs (and in particular the apartheid policy).

South Africa was committed on the Angolan front, supporting the actions of UNITA, as they were afraid that the consequences of Angolan Independence could challenge their position in South West Africa (now Namibia). To avoid creating another contentious issue in the Southeast, Vorster decided to appease Kaunda, Nyerere and Machel by pursuing accommodative policies (Cockram, 1970, Cabrita, 2000, Smith, 2001, Amado Couto, 2011). In response, the leaders of the Frontline States decided to adopt a more lenient position towards the South African regime, and reduced their support for the African National Council.

However, they required that South Africa contained their northern ally, Rhodesia. Particularly, Kaunda and Machel shared significant borders with Rhodesia and were more susceptible to any threats that could come from Smith's regime, and their countries, in their own histories of independence have had important relationships with ZANU/ZAPU. In an interview (Portela, 1977, p.6), Machel gives his view of Smith: *'Yes, Yes. Ian Smith is a madman, a smoker, isn't it true? An enraged dog. We are requesting doctors to treat him'*.[32] Indeed, Kaunda and Machel felt threatened by the Rhodesian regime, not because they felt that a comprehensive attack was imminent,[33] but because they believed that Smith was unreasonable, unpredictable, and untrustworthy (Portela, 1977, Minter, 1994, Ciment, 1997, Emerson, 2013).

Kaunda and Machel requested assurances from Vorster that Smith would order a stop to the hot pursuit operations into Mozambican territory, and would entirely respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Rhodesia's neighbours. Even though Vorster was ultimately not able to impose policies in Rhodesia, Kaunda, Nyerere, and Machel realised the importance of the South African life-line to Rhodesia, and the pressure that could be exercised this way.

[32] The previous question in the interview makes clear that Machel is referring to the United Nations when he mentions 'doctors' in his reply. Mozambique had requested, via the usual diplomatic channels, the intervention of the United Nations, reporting the issue of the Mozambique-Rhodesia border to the UN Security Council. It is also noteworthy to see how Machel refers to Smith's smoking habits as a display of his vices and bad character.

[33] The problem of *hot pursuit operations* by Rhodesian forces in Mozambique continued after 1975 until the 1980s (Balaam, 2014), but even though this was undesirable, it did not equate the idea of an extensive conquest war waged by Smith's regime in order to expand into Mozambican territory.

The South African government started to slowly but effectively restrict their support to Ian Smith's regime on three fronts: political, military and logistical. On the political front, Vorster and his ministers liaised frequently with their Rhodesian counterparts, and started indicating their preference for a more restrained position in Salisbury *vis-à-vis* Maputo, trying to drag Smith into accepting that ZANU and ZAPU were using the Mozambican hinterland as bases for training recruits and launching attacks into Rhodesia, with the known acquiescence of FRELIMO. In his biography, Smith (2001) claims this was unacceptable and that he had communicated this to Vorster. He claimed that it was a Rhodesian right to take measures to ensure the safety of the white population (particularly in Matabeland and Mashonaland) being subject to attacks by the ZANU/ZAPU terrorists, and the right to *hot pursuit* and the neutralisation of insurgent targets inside Mozambique was non-negotiable, since it was a basic right of states to defend themselves. Vorster then proceeded to put pressure on Smith through material means.

Historically, Pretoria offered military support to Rhodesia, mostly in the form of supplies and logistical support. Military material produced in South Africa (from vehicles to ammunition) was employed in the Rhodesian 'anti-terrorist' struggle. Helicopters and crews were fundamental for the Special Air Service (SAS), and the Selous Scouts airborne operations inside Mozambique were provided by the South African Armed Forces. This operational support was cut to put pressure on Smith to accept and accommodate the frontline states, but also increased the perceived insecurity in Salisbury, as they felt that they were more and more hopelessly vulnerable to the 'terrorist' threat. Additionally, Vorster determined a 'choking' of Rhodesia's southbound supply lines via the Beitbridge crossing. Even if South Africans were always careful in managing how overt this support

was,[34] the logistical lifeline worked fairly well for the Rhodesians and allowed them to have the resources they needed to survive.

In Vorster's *détente* effort, one of the ways he used to signal his will to appease was to slowly reduce the amount of support given to Rhodesia, restricting first their military supplies and then even the amount of goods and oil sent through the southbound logistical lifeline. The possibility that the country itself would be completely isolated and 'starved' also helped once more to increase Smith's insecurity and led the regime to hedge, by exploring other ways of dealing with its insurgency problem.

The situation was increasingly constrained by both the political advance of the frontline states and the cornering of Ian Smith's regime as an effect of Vorster's détente exercise. Consequently, this exacerbated the feeling of insecurity and uncertainty in Salisbury, leading to the consideration of other solutions to its military problem. Reducing the Rhodesian footprint inside Mozambique, yet avoiding a loss of capabilities, would eventually allow them to maintain or increase their security. This rationale behind the need to constantly counter the presence of ZANU/ZAPU in the Mozambican territory is argued both by Smith (2001) and Flower (1987) in their memoirs, and neither admits to expansionist motives. Both concur that, even though regime change in Maputo (and in Dodoma and Lusaka as well) could potentially have been a maximalist, definitive solution to the insecurity issue, it was highly unlikely, if not impossible.

[34] In order not to damage their relationship with other countries sanctioning Rhodesia.

While this is indicative of the incapability of the actors to pursue expansionist motives, this could also signal a concern with strategic self-restraint on their part.[35] With effect, the Rhodesian strategy never pursued conquest, annexation or regime change, having preferred a low-footprint strategy of de-stabilisation, using a proxy actor to relieve the amount of direct action required by Rhodesian forces. From this positioning, it can be inferred that the hostile nature of their strategy *vis-à-vis* Mozambique was not motivated by pure expansionism (a *purely greedy* actor, in Glaser's terminology), but rather by a set of security concerns that led Smith and his key policy-makers to believe that an aggressive stance was important (and eventually the only way) to achieve security.

It is well documented (Flower, 1987, Vines, 1991, Finnegan, 1992, Minter, 1994, Cabrita, 2000, Oliveira, 2006, Hultman, 2009, Amado Couto, 2011, Vines, 2013) that RENAMO's origins are tightly linked to the actions of the Rhodesian security forces, in particular its Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO). As early as 1973, the leadership of CIO believed that there was an opportunity to form an alternative rebel group that would help to challenge FRELIMO's position as the sole anti-colonial actor. Ken Flower's (1987) *Memoir*, titled *Serving Secretly,* has Rhodesia's CIO Chief on record and provides an extensive account of Rhodesia's participation in establishing and supporting RENAMO. The Portuguese documents about this period are not yet declassified, but some documents further supporting this view can be found in the United Kingdom's National

[35] While this is not entirely conclusive evidence, it suggests the possibility of self-restraint, and thus is interesting to be reflected upon (especially considering the Bayesian logic particular to the process tracing approach taken in this research). It is worth reminding that the counterfactual proposition of incapability is always possible in the study of strategic interactions, as it is hard to ascertain what estimate the actors made of their own capabilities. Bringing this to more palpable International Relations theory discussion, we are reminded by realists that states would ideally pursue hegemony at all times, but we take for granted that even if they do they are constrained by other aspects of their policies (Waltz, 1979, Mearsheimer, 2001).

Archives, in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) files ("ADN 3/20/44/12 - Gabinete do CEMGFA - Assunto: Rodésia", 1970, "FCO 36/1750 - Political Relations between Mozambique and Rhodesia", 1975, "FCO 36/1415 - Political Relations Between Mozambique and Rhodesia", 1978). Furthermore, there is further support available to substantiate arguments from my interviewees, all of whom recognise the very close relationship between the CIO and the RENAMO. The CIO acted, with the acquiescence and support of the Portuguese Direcção-Geral de Segurança (DGS)[36], to create a movement that would covertly work for Rhodesian and Portuguese interests from inside the territory. The DGS avoided being directly involved in this process due to the expectation of a public relations backlash and the complications that could follow at the United Nations and other *fora* where Portugal was trying to hold a pro-colonial position through a rhetoric of national unity.

The rationale behind *offering* an insurgent force in post-colonial Mozambique was complex: not only would a challenging rebel group be able to conduct military operations against FRELIMO, but it could present an alternative for Mozambicans that believed in anti-colonial ideals and had no one other than FRELIMO to turn to. Moreover, having some degree of legitimacy within Mozambican society would facilitate the gathering of intelligence on FRELIMO's activities and on the actions of the Zimbabwean National Liberation Army (ZANLA), which particularly concerned the CIO. The plan required a huge effort from the intelligence services, especially because they lacked knowledge about whom to support; there was no group that could be readily employed (such as in other cases of Intelligence Services covertly supporting the opposition) and

[36] 'Directorate-General for Security' was the new name of the infamous 'Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado' (PIDE), after 1969. PIDE was the brutal secret police that supported the dictatorial regime.

while the plan was alive, its implementation was stalled until 1975 (Flower, 1987, Johnson and Martin, 1989, ch.1, Vines, 1991, pp.15-16).

At the outset, in 1975, the CIO managed to gather no more than a group of disgruntled Portuguese individuals that were unsatisfied with the regime and more broadly with independence, harbouring grievances because they had been ostracised due to connections with the DGS, or for having lost their property to the government. The attempt to form an armed resistance was once again delayed due to the ineffectiveness of this group, but a rebel radio station, called Voz da Africa Livre,[37] was established and ran anti-FRELIMO messages, as well as recruitment calls for armed fight (Oliveira, 2006).

By early 1977, a significant flow of recruits joined the CIO training camps, mainly from the black and white Mozambican diasporas in Portugal and in South Africa. Among those was André Matsangaissa, a former disenchanted FRELIMO commander who had been charged with theft, disavowed and sent to re-education camps, from where he escaped to join the rebels. Being a seasoned military commander and having a character deemed appropriate for the position, Matsangaissa was given the formal leadership of the organisation. By mid-1977, the name RENAMO was already known in Mozambique and the first operations of the group were taking place, mainly along the area of the Beira Corridor and the Gorongosa. These attacks were launched from Rhodesia or from forward operating bases inside Mozambique, and were mainly coordinated with actions by the CIO and the Selous Scouts.

[37] The Voice of Free Africa, in English.

Back then, '*to all intents and purposes*', RENAMO was no more than a '*Rhodesian, anti-FRELIMO fifth column operating in Mozambique*', relying entirely on Salisbury's aid for survival (Vines, 1991, p.16, Oliveira, 2006). Its activities became increasingly effective and were continuously expanded to the purpose of '*sabotage, disrupt the population and the economy*' in the country (Johnson and Martin, 1989, p.11). For example, RENAMO carried out operations such as burning villages, sacking agricultural co-operatives, shops and clinics, attacks on railroad and road traffic, as well as the disruption of FRELIMO's re-education camps. Between late 1977 and early 1978, RENAMO was already officially recognised as an opponent by FRELIMO, who called them *armed bandits*, in what would soon turn into the Mozambican Civil War.

5.4 - 'The Struggle Continues': *the outbreak of a post-independence civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO*

By taking into consideration the peculiar aspects behind the creation of RENAMO, a puzzle emerges in trying to explain the motivations underlying the hostility between RENAMO and FRELIMO. In the following section, I will focus on FRELIMO's perspective on the strategic interaction, revealing that mutual insecurity was at the core of a spiral of fears (Jervis, 1976) that led to the outbreak of armed violence in Mozambique. As a conclusion to this section, I will reinforce my hypothesis on the necessity of malign motives for the outbreak of armed violence in civil war (Visser and Duyvesteyn, 2014). This simple yet myopic perspective fails to address the more complex web of interests and constraints that led to the outbreak of violence in post-independence Mozambique, thereby overlooking the role and impact of regional actors. Analysts who look at RENAMO as a typical insurgent motivated by ideological differences with FRELIMO will find a similar yet limited explanation for the conflict and the consequent outbreak of

violence, and immediately reject the role of security competition and the dynamics of the security dilemma in favour of a simplistic, purely grievance-based approach (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004, Paul Collier *et al.*, 2009).

When thinking about proxy conflicts or those with the external support of domestic actors in Civil Wars, it tends to be expected that an actor that is fighting on the ground and receiving support in exchange either for affiliation, or because its goals are instrumental to the supporter, or both, will be found. In many cases, the evolution of the assistance relationship dictates an increase or decrease in the level of proximity between the supported and the supporter (Christia, 2012). Ultimately, the supporting party evaluates the utility of aiding the group on the ground in terms of their own interests around the situation in which such group is involved.

In most cases, it will be found that the existence and genesis of such actors precedes, and is initially independent, from the supporting relationship itself. Examples of this would be: the American support for the Taliban during the Afghan War; the Soviet support to the Vietcong during the Vietnam War; the American support of the *contras* both in Iran and Nicaragua; and indeed the financial, military, technical and political support that both the Western and Eastern blocs gave to the respective warring parties in Angola, both before and after its independence (Christia, 2012).

Another less common possibility, however, is that the supporting party was behind the creation of the group from its beginning, and in this case, the entire existence of the proxy element is contingent on the supporter. In the latter case, the motivations and preferences of the proxy are completely dependent upon the desires of the supporting party, and even

though both can be demonstrated to be different actors, the former acts as an extension of the latter. Therefore, the analysis of their motives and intentions must take that condition into account. In expecting a typical proxy relationship, we overlook the possibility of a larger strategic dynamic that is more likely motivated by security concerns than by predation. Once again, it is a crucial step to understand the causal chain that connects Rhodesia, RENAMO and the newly FRELIMO-led independent Mozambique.

In the previous section of this chapter, it was argued that the government in Salisbury was concerned about its own security when anticipating the possibility of having an independent majority-rule regime in Lourenço Marques,[38] and it was also demonstrated that this view was reciprocated by FRELIMO. Mutual fears of disruptive attacks aimed at overthrowing each other were at the centre of the security concerns of both FRELIMO and Rhodesia: documents analysed, mostly in the form of letters sent to the Portuguese, frequently refer (with different formulas) to the idea of a '*complicated and hostile neighbourhood*' ("ADN 3/20/44/12 - Gabinete do CEMGFA - Assunto: Rodésia", 1970).

The Mozambicans, for their part, feared that the white rule regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia would attempt to counter any African nationalist regimes in the region, and their suspicion was not unfounded. It is well documented (Burchett, 1978, Flower, 1987, Afonso and Matos Gomes, 2013, Barroso, 2014) that both South Africans and Rhodesians were very active (politically and militarily) in trying to counter the actions of African nationalists in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and Botswana. Samora Machel mentioned

[38] Lourenço Marques was the original name of Mozambique's capital, and would later be renamed Maputo in February of 1976.

— even if *en passant*, for political reasons[39] — the perceived threat in his Policy Statement in Lusaka:

> At the same time the People's Forces for the Liberation of Mozambique must remain actively vigilant, and in a state of constant preparedness, so as to put down any attempt at external aggression as well as any attempt by reactionaries aimed at jeopardising independence, sabotaging national reconstruction and destroying the Revolution ("The Lusaka Agreement", 1974, p.14).

The Rhodesian CIO and the South African BOSS[40] also acted (before and after independence) to destabilise anti-colonial and nationalist movements and parties in Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi and Congo (Flower, 1987, Minter, 1994). Ambassador Monteiro provided a description of the climate of the exchanges between the Portuguese Embassy in Kinshasa through diplomatic channels to Salisbury and Pretoria,[41] which indicates that they felt threatened by the regime changes in Angola and Mozambique. This is in line with the documentation accessed at the National Defence Archive in Portugal and was conversely echoed in the contacts with FRELIMO's leadership who were aware of Rhodesian and South African security concerns and seemed to understand that there was a growing tension that could potentially lead to open warfare. Moreover, FRELIMO always gave all the support it could muster to other nationalist movements, including those trying to advance against the white rule regimes in both South Africa and Rhodesia. During the colonial period, FRELIMO worked together with both the ANC and

[39] Even if the Transitional Government was led by FRELIMO, elements of the Portuguese colonial government were part of it and a certain parsimony was observed so as not to connect Portugal to anti-Rhodesian or South African policies in an overt way.

[40] Bureau of State Security (BOSS), South Africa's apartheid regime intelligence organization.

[41] A few of the diplomatic cables signed by Ambassador Monteiro himself were available at the Arquivo Histórico Militar in Lisbon and was it particularly interesting to refer to them during the interview.

the ZANU/ZAPU, and there was no indication that they would cease such partnership when the independence was achieved (Henriksen, 1983, Ciment, 1997, Amado Couto, 2011). It is hard to determine whether FRELIMO would have accepted having to stop supporting the insurgents in South Africa and Rhodesia[42] in exchange for a non-aggression pact or some other provision of security assurance, but it is certain that such situation was never contemplated during the period of white rule in Rhodesia.

On the other side of the divide, Rhodesia and South Africa had their reasons to feel threatened. They understood that the departure of the Portuguese would increase their vulnerability to the nationalists in their own homelands, challenging their regime security. Such perception was built upon years of interaction (Kaufman, 2001) between nationalist and liberation movements in bordering countries, and the liberation movements within their own countries. As argued above, FRELIMO indeed supported the ANC and ZANU/ZAPU in their fights against white minority rule, and did not signal a willingness to stop such support post-independence. The expectation that FRELIMO's actions would no longer be limited by Portuguese military action opened a window of vulnerability (Posen, 1993), where Rhodesia in particular anticipated the possibility of increased Mozambican support to ZANU/ZAPU, which could mean an increase in the insurgent's military operations inside the Rhodesian border.

Evidence of the threat perception was given by Colonel Matos Gomes in his interview with me, where he referred to Portuguese military cooperation with Rhodesia and South

[42] Indeed, in 1984, Maputo and Pretoria reached an agreement at the Nkomati Accord, in which South Africa and Mozambique mutually committed to stop their support to insurgents, respectively RENAMO and the ANC. At that point, Rhodesia had already become Zimbabwe and ZANU was in power.

Africa before independence on the framework of the ALCORA alliance; he remembers that his counterparts communicated a clear commitment to helping Portugal fight the FRELIMO insurgency, not only because they believed colonial white rule in Mozambique was a right (just as they defended in their own homeland) but also because they believed that it was fundamental to have the allies of their enemies contained. Another crucial issue for Salisbury was the Beira Corridor: the obvious expectation was that an independent Mozambique led by FRELIMO would stop the transit of goods through the Corridor, severing Rhodesian access to the sea, and creating a strategic dilemma: i.e. a question over who would initiate hostilities? FRELIMO expected Rhodesia to start a war to secure access to the sea and Rhodesians expected FRELIMO to act to secure the capability of denying such access[43] (Vines, 1991, Ciment, 1997, Oliveira, 2006).

Considering the interaction between threat perceptions of both sides, a spiral of mutual fears can be elucidated. It was caused by Mozambican independence and the change of regime from the Portuguese colonial power to a FRELIMO-led, Lourenço Marques/Maputo seated government. This affected the Southern African region, and particularly Rhodesia.

As would be expected, such a spiral led to an increase in attempts at becoming more secure. In the case of Mozambique, the main political outcome was a plan to increase the military capability of the country and the potential defences from regional assailants, undertaken with Soviet help[44] (Burchett, 1978, Ciment, 1997, Shubin and Tokarev, 2011,

[43] General Pezarat Correia highlighted the importance of this strategic dynamic in his interview.

[44] FRELIMO was still committed to an alignment with the soviet bloc and sowed the benefits of such relationship.

Ch.1), to continue to support African nationalism. A trend among the first wave of post-colonial nationalist African leaders was the idea of the inevitability of the tide of nationalism and decolonisation, and the argument that the best way to fight colonial regimes was to foster nationalism and anti-colonial initiatives (Clapham, 1996). The Rhodesians and the South Africans, on the other hand, could not sustain a fully-fledged attack on Mozambique to remove FRELIMO from power and eventually occupy Mozambique, both for political and operational reasons.[45] Rhodesia and South Africa were suffering several attacks, at the political level, against their regimes' practices, and a sizeable proportion of their military efforts were directed at combating the insurgents in their own countries.

The strategists of FRELIMO in Maputo probably concluded that they were in a position of strength *vis-à-vis* their counterparts in Salisbury and Pretoria, protected by the advantage of defensive positions. However, the creativity of the CIO had not been anticipated, supporting the idea that the rise of RENAMO was not expected by FRELIMO. The latter did not foresee that the Rhodesian response would come in the form of creating an insurgency inside Mozambique, and predicted direct operations by their armed forces. FRELIMO was also trying to ensure they were suppressing internal dissidence and maintaining a very strong party discipline, as they expected challengers to rise from within[46] rather than from outside the country, favouring the CIO's strategy (Flower, 1987, Ciment, 1997).

[45] Again, I owe this insight to my interviews with General Pezarat Correia and Colonel Matos Gomes.

[46] They were well aware of factionalism, as by then they knew well what happened with the MPLA in Angola.

Examining the interaction between FRELIMO's and RENAMO's forces on the Mozambican ground, it is difficult to trace a security dilemma. RENAMO's discourse had always been one of opposing FRELIMO — for alleged ideological reasons — and liberate the country from communist oppression. This straightforward approach accounts for the expansionist behaviour on the part of RENAMO towards FRELIMO, but fails to appreciate the wider strategic scenario and to give the case its correct framing. By viewing RENAMO as an agent of Rhodesia, rather than a sponsored actor or an ally (and one that is a direct product of Rhodesian fears and intentions), the wider picture emerges and it is then possible to trace the outbreak of the civil war in Mozambique in 1977 back to security seeking rather than purely malign motives. The outbreak of armed violence between RENAMO and FRELIMO is only possible because RENAMO becomes a force on the ground, and this can be directly linked to a Rhodesian attempt to counter and check FRELIMO, due to its security concerns.

5.5 - Feasibility of Competing Explanations for the Outbreak of Violence in Mozambique

Some accounts (Chan and Venâncio, 1998, Cahen, 2006) refer to the importance of ethnicity in the conflict. While ethnicity certainly played a role in the intricate micro dynamics of the country, these explanations suffer from a shortcoming common in African case studies (Clapham, 1996, Kalyvas, 2006, Christia, 2012): the use of ethnic differentiation or tribal affiliation as a frame for every possible outcome of domestic politics and conflict. In this section, a brief attempt will be made to dispel the suggestion of malign motives as the main driver of the outbreak of armed violence in the Mozambican case. More specifically, evidence will be provided to assess the extent to which elements usually associated with the presence of predation play a role in this case.

As it is the most relevant to this case I will look at ethnicity, although ideology will also be considered.

Mozambique harbours a myriad of different ethnic groups and tribes, namely the Makua, the Shona, the Makonde, the Swahili and the Chopa, amongst others (Girardin *et al.*, 2015, pp. 987–993).[47] Even though different leaders and groups may have, in various moments, mobilised ethnic and tribal identity for different purposes,[48] ethnic motivation has never been central to the goals driving FRELIMO's struggle. Even if there had been a history of eventual disagreements between tribes and peoples, these were put aside under the banner of independence and socialism in Mondlane's view of the anti-capitalist and anti-colonial struggle. For example, that is not to say that FRELIMO was always entirely undivided, but although episodes of internal fragmentation and challenges to the Movement happened, they were not central to the narrative explored here (Mondlane, 1969, Munslow, 1983, Newitt, 1995). It is hard to know whether Mondlane (and later Machel) really believed that ethnic unity was a goal of FRELIMO[49] or if this was only seen as a necessity of the immediate desire for Independence. The national unity narrative transpires from the borderline pamphletary and borderline national mythology[50] within

[47] ETHZ GROW^{up} EPR Atlas, section on Mozambique. Data made available by the ETHZ GROW^{up} project: Luc Girardin, Philipp Hunziker, Lars-Erik Cederman, Nils-Christian Bormann, and Manuel Vogt. 2015. *GROW^{up}* - Geographical Research On War, Unified Platform. ETH Zurich. http://growup.ethz.ch/

[48] This happens in many different occasions throughout Mozambican history. For more, see Chapters 9 and 10 of Barry Munslow's (1983) work, where he discusses the formation of FRELIMO and map out the broad panorama of composing groups and their eventual ethnic and tribal affiliations.

[49] Throughout the years of FRELIMO rule, from 1975 to the present date, Mozambique was a case of significant ethnopolitical fragmentation. Allegiance to FRELIMO or RENAMO has been more on the basis of ideological preference or historical affiliation than anything else (Seibert, 2003, Thaler, 2012).

[50] The writings of Mondlane are manifestos of the Mozambican anti-colonial struggle, but are done in a very careful way. The historical richness, theoretical grounding, and a presence of a well-devised argument tied up with some level of methodological rigour reflect Mondlane's doctoral training in Sociology.

oeuvres by Mondlane (1969) and Mondlane and Machel (1975), as well as from authors like Barry Munslow (1983) and Joseph Hanlon (1984), who agree that national unity was at the core of FRELIMO's values.

Additional evidence supporting this view is found in interviews conducted with two key actors to the process. First, Minister Antonio Moreira[51] recalls that the Portuguese government believed FRELIMO was indeed trying to mobilise the entire local population (across ethnicities and tribal affiliations).[52] Second, Colonel Matos Gomes[53] argued that FRELIMO was driven by multi-ethnic nationalist desires, which could include white populations. The Colonel's interview referred to the difficulty that the Portuguese forces experienced in trying to create ethnic tensions in order to weaken FRELIMO, as a form of counter-insurgency.

However, contrary this narrative is the work by João M. Cabrita (2000), who introduces a nuanced view by uncovering certain critical power struggles within FRELIMO, arguing that the vision of proclaimed unity 'won' in the early days due to a perception that this was a momentary necessity of the anti-colonial effort. Whilst economic factors were core to FRELIMO's ideological stance, it was believed that once the colonial power was ousted, the structural factors allowing the exploration of African labour by international

[51] Minister Adriano Moreira served as the Portuguese Minister of the Overseas Provinces (*Ministro do Ultramar*) between 1961 and 1963, during the Salazarist regime.

[52] Ironically relying on a discourse of unity and nationality that was rhetorically fostered by the Portuguese themselves in order to pursue the argument of a single multi-ethnic nation during the colonial days.

[53] Colonel Carlos Matos Gomes is a retired Portuguese Army officer that served several tours in the Colonial Wars (Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique) and participated in the political settlement process in Mozambique after 1974. After retiring he became a military historian and writes about the Colonial Wars.

capitalism would cease. Then, the liberation movement would have a clean slate to implement a socialist, egalitarian state based on cooperatives and collective ownership of the means of production. FRELIMO eventually changed its slogan from '*Independência ou Morte*'[54] to '*A Luta Continua*'[55] in the post-colonial era, and indeed had to counter the interests of what they called the Mozambican *petite bourgeoisie*. However, the socialist-capitalist fault line was not central to the banners articulated by both FRELIMO and RENAMO when fighting the country's Civil War, even if present in their propaganda element (Vines, 1991, Oliveira, 2006, Emerson, 2013).[56] The successful amalgamation of diverse local and regional groups into one major alliance, forming one united movement concentrated the independence struggle, aligns strongly with Fotini Christia's theory of alliance formation in civil wars (2012, ch.2).

In analysing FRELIMO's formation process, we are thus able to dispel claims that ethnicity was a driver of the movement's struggle, or that racial hate was behind their actions. This opposes the argument of direct malign motives as presented, for example, by Esther Visser and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (2014). Their study does not look at Mozambique in particular, but the findings in this chapter challenge their claim of overarching irrelevance of the security dilemma to civil wars. As argued, FRELIMO was a conscientious political creation opposed to colonisation, and with the aim of freeing the country from imposed Portuguese rule, with a secondary goal of implementing a

[54] '*Independence or Death*'.

[55] '*The Struggle Continues*'.

[56] My interview with Professor Manuel Ennes Ferreira supports the idea that the ideological affiliation of the liberation movements in the pre- and post-colonial Lusophone Africa was more malleable and instrumental then the existing literature on both Angola and Mozambique usually suggests, thus weakening the argument of ideological grievances.

socialist state. Mondlane was adamant that independence from Portugal was essential to achieving a socialist state, and relied on an idealised view of Mozambicans as exploited workers. At any rate, the liberation movement leadership recognised from its early days that the main aim was to achieve total independence and self-rule first, with all other possible outcomes being subordinate to it. As Samora Machel himself put it during the Lusaka Agreement meeting, '*peace is inseparable from independence*'[57] (Almeida Santos, 2006a, p.61).

5.6 - Conclusion

This case study of outbreak of violence in Mozambique in the post-independence context allows for a reflection on the various strengths and shortcomings of the security dilemma and civil wars literature. Initially, it is important to dispel the argument of the primacy of malign motives in this case study, countering the impossibility of security seeking behaviour in Mozambique's Civil War. For the security dilemma to be a possible explanation of the outbreak of violent conflict, it is necessary to demonstrate that expansionism was not a core motivation of the contending actors' behaviour. The Mozambican Civil War that erupted in 1977 cannot be covered by conventional accounts of the security dilemma as a mechanism explaining hostile behaviour. Instead, it is necessary to widen the frame that usually restricts the analysis of the security dilemma to the parties directly fighting in the civil war to encompass regional security dynamics.

[57] Cited by Almeida Santos (2006b, p.61), originally: '*a paz é inseparável da independência*'.

Approaching the FRELIMO-RENAMO conflict through the framework of grievances, we can explain it in terms of the openly aggressive discourse of RENAMO as an insurgency. Since its appearance in Mozambique it clearly stated its goal of fighting against and replacing FRELIMO as the ruling authority in Mozambique (Vines, 1991, 2013). Hence, it appears obvious that RENAMO's intentions towards FRELIMO were malign and expansionist (Jervis, 1978, Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, Glaser, 2010), and thus incompatible with a security dilemma explanation. However, this discounts the important transnational element that is crucial for the outbreak of conflict itself. As I have argued above, the depiction of the relationship between RENAMO and Rhodesia as one of support is an incorrect simplification. There is widespread evidence that RENAMO acted on behalf of and was mandated by Rhodesia, and that, at its inception and initial stage of existence, it was more of an arm of Rhodesia than simply supported by it.

As it has been demonstrated, the usual suspects for grievance-based violence are not crucial in the case of Mozambique: neither ethnic, religious or ideological grievances explain the conflict between RENAMO and FRELIMO, and when these grievances have any real significance they are merely rhetorical devices employed to create allegiance, and they are not the main drivers behind the conflict. By dispelling those potential causes of conflict, it is possible to narrow down the role of security competition in the Mozambican case, and thus improve the understanding of the mechanism of the security dilemma itself. In the context of this thesis, it shows the process how the security dilemma unfolded in Mozambique, in a way that is not the one commonly described in the literature.

The use of the post-independence violence in Mozambique as a laboratory to evaluate the performance of the security dilemma as an explanation for the outbreak of violence in civil wars has provided interesting insights about the role of the concentration of power, of the agency of transnational actors, and the limitations of a framework that does not see beyond the actors engaging in the actual armed violence. In particular, the case of Mozambique illustrated a situation where a *'deep' security dilemma* located at the regional level was the core driver of the outbreak of armed violence, opening a new avenue of investigation for the role of this mechanism in the study of civil wars.

Conclusion: *How does the security dilemma inform us about the outbreak of armed violence in civil wars?*

(…) de facto, não há nada que mais canse uma pessoa que ter de lutar, não com o seu próprio espírito, mas com uma abstração[1].

- José Saramago, *in* Todos os Nomes

(...) quando eu nasci, as frases que hão-de salvar a humanidade já estavam todas escritas, só faltava uma coisa – salvarem a humanidade[2].

- José de Almada Negreiros, *in* A Invenção do Dia Claro

C.1 - Research Puzzle and Argument

This thesis has demonstrated the role of security competition in the outbreak of intrastate armed violence. It has done so by importing and applying the security dilemma, a concept that was devised to explain interstate conflict, to the intrastate realm. While the application of the concept itself is not novel, the debate on the security dilemma has been permeated by some issues that have particular relevance in hindering its application to civil wars, as has been shown, part of these limitations derive from problematics present in its original conceptualisation. Nonetheless, the concept's utility endures,

[1] Translation: '(...) in fact, nothing so tires a person as having to struggle, not with himself [with his own spirit], but with an abstraction'. The original version literally translates to 'with one's own spirit' rather than 'with himself,' but the meaning intended seems to refer to the entirety of one's own existence.

[2] Translation: '(…) when I was born, all the sentences that were supposed to save humanity were already written, there was only one thing missing — to save humanity'.

requiring us to explore those issues and potential solutions. This research has aimed to illuminate some of the questions present in the debate on the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars, with a focus on showing the link between the security dilemma mechanism and the outbreak of armed violence. In doing so, it has sought to dispel the claims of those who reject the validity and relevance of this theoretical tool to explain civil wars, while addressing their concerns regarding its limitations. This clarification offers two main benefits: on the one hand, it allows for the application of a conceptual element that increases our understanding of the processes leading to civil war as a multi-causal phenomenon. On the other, the exercise of exploring the theoretical issues of the security dilemma itself provides for a better comprehension of its own flaws and shortcomings, both in its application to intrastate and interstate conflict.

Building on the literature of the security dilemma applied both within and across borders, a number of theoretical problems have been investigated. The first pertains to the more general dimension of the security dilemma. Despite valiant attempts, students of the security dilemma tend to stop short of linking it to the outbreak of war, leaving unanswered the insistent question of '*naming a war caused by the security dilemma*', thus mechanistically connecting the theoretical construct to instances of the outbreak of armed violence. This research joins these efforts by tracing the path through which the security dilemma leads to the outbreak of armed violence in civil wars, illustrating it through two actual instances of the phenomenon. It relies on a long tradition of thought about war, attributing importance to the chronological dimension: foundations, onset, continuation, termination and aftermath of conflict and violence. The quote '*only the*

dead have seen the end of war', often attributed to Plato,[3] discusses the perpetuity of war as state of affairs in a similar way as Thomas Hobbes (1651) intended when he posited that '(…) *war consists not in battle only, or the act of fighting, but in a tract of time, wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known*'.

However, the perpetuity of the state of war is marked by events of actual *contention by battle* — the *strictu sensu* war — with a start and an end; this is thus why Carl von Clausewitz (1832)[4] reminds us of the importance of understanding the battle when attempting to understand war as a philosophical concept. Organised armed violence, as conceptualised since Clausewitz, is characterised by a starting moment, in chronological terms. Exploring this starting point is, thus, of utmost importance in understanding war, and the literature on the security dilemma (as it has been applied both within and between borders), provides an enlightening look at the mechanisms behind the exacerbation of tensions and the constitution of spirals of fear that generate conflict — among individuals, peoples, and ultimately states — potentially leading to war. However, this latter dimension has been largely overlooked and unproblematised by traditional conceptualisations of the security dilemma. By demonstrating the link between the mechanisms and the actual outbreak of armed violence in intrastate conflict, this research produces an additional layer of meaning to the security dilemma, contributing not only to its application in civil wars, but in general.

[3] This phrase is often attributed to Plato, but isn't found in any of his *Dialogues*. Contenders claim it was written by (and not attributed to anyone else at that time) George Santayana, in his 1924 book '*Soliloquies in England*'.

[4] These ideas also developed and discussed by Quincy Wright (1967), Martin Van Creveld (1991), Edward N. Luttwak (2001), Hew Strachan and Andreas Herbert-Rothe (2007) and Thomas Waldner (2012).

A second major problem in the conceptualisation of the security dilemma is the *conflation of motives and intentions*. Since the security dilemma is associated with the requirement of benign motives, and since hostile behaviours are often read as indicative of malign motives, the conflation of motives and intentions does not account for situations where the motives behind hostile behaviour are chiefly peaceful (or defensive). The language of motives/intentions complicates — due to their similarity — the practical understanding of the phenomenon which is why the language of motives and behaviour is favoured here.

In other words, this conflation problem reduces the capability to locate the security dilemma (which requires benign motives but not necessarily peaceful behaviour) to situations where the intent is benign and the behaviour is defensive, leaving out all situations of security dilemmas where, for diverse reasons, benign intent generates hostile behaviour. Analysts will, therefore, potentially discard the presence of the security dilemma when it is still potentially present. In this research, contributions towards disentangling motives and intentions are built upon, and two cases of violence linked to the mechanism of the security dilemma are demonstrated; the cases show that defensive motives can be accompanied by hostile behaviour. An explanation is also offered as to why aggressive behaviour was the outcome of defensive motives: the presence of *incompatible security requirements*.

A third issue that is central to the security dilemma's conceptualisation is a conflation of the definition itself and the outcomes of the mechanism, which relates to a particular scenario which is the possibility of *incompatible security requirements* (Boulding, 1959, Glaser, 2010). A common mistake of security dilemma theorists is to equate the security

dilemma to one of its possible outcomes, which is its transcendence, or mitigation. By doing so, an analyst would only find a security dilemma where this dilemma is potentially or actually solved by the understanding of it. That is to say that, in this perspective, the security dilemma becomes the perception that actors have about being in a security dilemma and thus the actions they implement to counter it. Consequently, the interaction between two security-seekers that are unaware of being in a spiral, or even aware of being in a spiral but unable to mitigate it, would be seen as a strategic challenge, rather than a security dilemma. While, at times, this conceptualisation might yield correct results, it will potentially leave out a significant number of instances of the security dilemma where incompatible security requirements are present, whether real or perceived. As it has been argued in this thesis, this is particularly significant in leading to the incorrect dismissal of the viability of the security dilemma. By empirically demonstrating that this issue can be limiting, this research supports the problematisation of this conflation within the study of civil wars and its impact on the wider security dilemma literature.

Another order of problems pertains to the translation of the security dilemma concept from the interstate to the intrastate realms. Given that anarchy is one of its premises, theorisations about the presence of the security dilemma in intrastate settings need to account for at least similar conditions. According to Kalevi J. Holsti (1991, 1996), James Fearon (1994, 1995) and William Reno (2005)[5] the phenomenon of state failure creates anarchy and this plays a critically important role in generating civil wars. However, in some of its forms, their arguments are limited to permissibility; anarchy is seen as a

[5] Among several others.

necessary condition under which other elements develop, further leading to violence. While this is a welcome improvement of the theory, the question of the more direct effects of anarchy within the borders of a state[6] still persists, and more specifically, the security dilemma and other dynamics of security competition remains under-investigated.[7]

Broadly speaking, the puzzle of the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars reclaims the premises set by the original theorists in International Relations; if we are looking at the interaction between political actors capable of mobilising the *power-to-hurt* (Schelling, 1976) and are thus potentially able to explore bellicose means of action towards political goals, why would the security dilemma be such a far-fetched tool as some might argue? From this perspective, the theoretical puzzle has been approached and the use of violence with political purposes inside borders explained. Moreover, in this light, the application of the concept to intrastate conflict has been conducted with the due adjustments related to the implications that stem from the non-Westphalian context.

Another complication from the particular application of the security dilemma to civil wars in many ways derives from the issues exposed in relation to the first order. As discussed in the first chapter, the contribution provided by Barry Posen (1993) in his seminal article remains the centrepiece of the debate. Even if his article has enduring relevance, he stopped short of ascertaining and tracing the relationship between the mechanisms of the security dilemma and the actual outbreak of armed violence. In this,

[6] The work of Anthony Vinci (2006, 2008, 2009) is a fruitful attempt at exploring these.

[7] Mostly contributions from the International Relations Theory and War Studies field.

he imported the first of the aforementioned general problems of the security dilemma conceptualisation to the civil war dimension. Consequently, Posen (and subsequent scholars of the security dilemma in civil wars) explain the role spirals of insecurity play in increasing tensions and creating and/or reinforcing conflictual relations. However, they do so without demonstrating that this insecurity was fundamental or central to the actual moment of the outbreak of violence. This thesis has filled this gap by investigating and demonstrating that the security dilemma had a role in triggering the outbreak of armed violence in, at least, two instances: the post-decolonisation period in Angola and Mozambique.

Furthermore, the general problem of the two conflations in the security dilemma is reflected in some arguments regarding its applicability to civil wars. For example, Visser and Duyvesteyn (2014) oversimplify the problem of conflating motives and intentions (while recognising it), by determining (almost tautologically) that if war occurs it is because of malign intent, and, as such, they conclude that the security dilemma has no role.

Contra their view, it has been argued that to fathom the utility of the security dilemma *vis-à-vis* the outbreak of armed violence, it is necessary to explore and problematise the issue of motives and intentions,[8] rather than assuming the relationship between offensive action and/or discourse and malign intent.[9] In the two case studies, such problematisation has been explored, as both provide cases of the presence of the security

[8] As it has been done in the interstate applications of the security dilemma, notably, in Glaser (2010).

[9] Lee Ann Fujii (2013) has argued that actors in civil war often employ *extra-lethal* violence with purposes that follow a different logic from strategic calculation, yet can have reasons other than pure hatred.

dilemma concealed under apparent aggressive behaviour, underlining the importance of decoupling evidence of aggressive behaviour from the automatic assumption that malign motives are present. As a consequence of this, Visser and Duyvesteyn (2014) also incorporate the third of the general problems present in the security dilemma literature. They do not recognise that the security dilemma (and security-seeking motives) could manifest itself through the presence of hostile behaviour. Instead, this thesis has shown that the particularity of intrastate conflict poses an extra layer of complication to this dynamic. Although the application of the security dilemma to internal armed conflict is not *a priori* precluded, this translation from Westphalian to non-Westphalian contexts requires specific considerations. In fact, while in the interstate application of the security dilemma actors expect the state of anarchy they experience to be normal and continued (as it is the normal state of the international system), in intrastate conflict actors strategise considering the abnormality and exceptionality of the state of anarchy because hierarchy is the norm and the constitutive characteristic of the state.[10] This dynamic was called the *anticipation of the restoration of hierarchy,* which, despite having been considered from the point of view of the conflict termination literature,[11] is taken for granted by scholars who study the outbreak of violent intrastate conflicts. What I have called *the restoration of hierarchy* problem implicates the uncertainty about the future[12] rather than that about the past and present: previous studies of the security dilemma and civil war focus on the idea of *ancient hatreds* (Horowitz, 1985, Kaufmann, 1996b, Kaufman, 2001) or on fears

[10] Following a Weberian approach, statehood itself is a function of hierarchy, materialised in the form of the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence. Holsti (1996) provides a sound discussion of the implications of the Weberian logic to civil conflict, as does Charles Tilly (1978, 1993, 2003).

[11] Namely the works on credible commitments and bargaining applied to political settlements, good examples being Barbara F. Walter (2002, 2009a) and Monica Duffy Toft (2010a, 2010b).

[12] Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (2000) considers that the uncertainty about the future is the most extreme and affecting.

about the immediate vulnerability under anarchy (Posen, 1993, Melander, 1999, 2009, Roe, 2005). However, they overlook the effect of the expectation of extreme, unpreventable insecurity due to the possibility that the other actors will achieve statehood and exercise hierarchical and potentially largely unbound power.

Moreover, other specific complications arise in existing tests of the security dilemma in its application to internal conflict. Both Kalyvas' (2008b) and Visser and Duyvesteyn's (2014) rely on two different equally problematic methodologies. In the first case, Kalyvas employs a quantitative *large-n* methodology and recognises that '*this test can only be preliminary given the nature of the data*' and that '*the security dilemma can be observed directly only with great difficulty, if at all*' (Kalyvas, 2008b, p.20). Visser and Duyvesteyn focus on the case of the former Yugoslavia, which is the most regularly studied case in the evaluation of the role of the security dilemma in civil wars. Although the findings and conclusions of various studies have varied wildly, it is regrettable that there has been such a concentration on one single case. This study has focused on two alternative non-European cases, and in so doing has contributed to an empirical expansion of the universe of cases.

The literature on civil wars shows a tendency to attribute one single sufficient cause that explains the totality of the dynamics leading to the outbreak of violence. As a consequence, each of the accounts for the use of violence in the intrastate context are portrayed as the sole underlying motivation, hindering the understanding of civil wars as multi-layered and multi-causal phenomena. This often leads theories to offer facile answers that contradict the empirical evidence and generate explanations that are potentially sound, but often blinkered. The centrality of the debate on greed-and-

grievance (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004) as an explanation for armed violence is a testimony to this logic: by achieving a simple, prototype framework, proponents of greed-and-grievance established a system of simple problems with simple solutions, but such simplification excludes a significant number of problems that have gone unaddressed and which need to be highlighted in empirical work on the outbreak of civil wars. Grievances (and greed) are universal characteristics present in almost every instance of human and political relations, but wars are not, leaving a major gap in the deterministic logic of this model.[13] Forcefully, diverse strands of literature have emerged from the debate, questioning this mainstream narrative. This explanation to internal armed conflict has been approached through a multi-causal perspective. In the analysis, the multiplicity of explanations mimics the complexity of *real* civil wars: as a norm, it is difficult to pinpoint one completely sufficient cause for any given civil war. There is usually a *causal package* composed of multiple mechanisms that leads to conflict. Some mechanisms within these causal packages can have more relevance than others, and they are thus assigned the idea of being the *driving* causal force or *the engine pulling the causal train*. Within this framework, I have problematised the links between preconditions and outcomes and shown that the security dilemma had a leading causal role in Angola and Mozambique, despite the possible presence of other causal elements, such as ethnicity or ideology.

This thesis has demonstrated that the security dilemma can be a useful theoretical tool to enlighten our understanding of internal armed conflict. It has done so by qualitatively

[13] The original proponents of the *greed-and-grievance* model have recognised that one of their theory's major flaw was its determinism (Paul Collier *et al.*, 2009), making their argument one of feasibility, permissibility and/or conditionality rather than one of determinism.

tracing the mechanisms linking cause and effect, with a focus on the outcome of actual violence. In the two case studies, the security dilemma was pivotally causal to the outbreak of internal armed violence.

However, arguing for the possibility that the security dilemma causes internal armed violence and illustrating its validity with two cases does not imply that it represents the only existing causal path to this outcome. Additionally, this thesis provides a problematisation of the process of translating a concept from International Relations theory and applying it in the realm of intrastate conflict, without deeming it as impracticable. Finally, it also invites further investigation of the particular role that the security dilemma can have alongside other dynamics described by the wider literature on the causes of conflict.

C.2 - Contributions

This research presented two complementary contributions to the field, standing upon the analysis of two understudied cases of the outbreak of armed violence and the reflections of these case studies on the security dilemma and civil wars literature.

C.2.1 - Theoretical Contribution

This thesis provides three overarching theoretical contributions to the security dilemma literature (both interstate and intrastate), and to the broader literature about the causes of armed conflict.

The main goal of this thesis, expressed in the research question,[14] was to evaluate the suitability of the security dilemma to explain the outbreak of armed violence in domestic contexts. This research was able to trace the connection between the security dilemma and the actual onset of violence in the two studied cases, exposing the relevance of the mechanism and its evolution. This research further demonstrated that the security dilemma is a relevant theoretical tool to explain internal armed violence, dispelling previous claims about its irrelevance. This research is part of a multi-causal approach to civil wars, it therefore ascertains the potentiality of the security dilemma; it further asserts that there is no *a priori* constitutive theoretical limitation that precludes the application of this explanation to civil wars. It posits that none of the premises, elements or characteristics of the security dilemma nor of internal armed conflict are in mutual direct contradiction. This is an important first *step* in ascertaining the validity of the security dilemma as an explanation: it contextualises the conflation of definitions and outcomes of the security dilemma. Additionally, by demonstrating the causal link between the security dilemma dynamics and the outbreak of violence, this connection adds meaning to the debate on the role of the concept of anarchy in civil wars, as different arguments about its relevance give them different meaning.

Thus, for instance, some experts have argued that anarchy was not more than a permissive condition[15] for the development of other dynamics (Cederman *et al.*, 2013a, Wimmer, 2013), whereas others will give a more causal role to it. By tracing the link between the security dilemma mechanism and the outcome of armed violence, the claim

[14] Research Question: '*Does the security dilemma (and security dilemma dynamics) explain the outbreak of armed violence in intrastate settings?*'

[15] Often not even a necessary condition.

that anarchy is not only permissive but actually causal to the dynamics related to the onset of civil wars is supported. This has been demonstrated with reference to the security dilemma, but is potentially not limited to it, and is a contribution that ushers in the further import of other anarchy-centric concepts from International Relations theory to the study of civil wars. Previous studies of the security dilemma and civil war[16] have discussed the relationship between the mechanism and the establishment, maintenance and exacerbation of conflictual relationships between actors in domestic environments, stopping short of linking it to the actual outbreak of violence. This treatment represents an expansion of the efforts of the literature.

In addition, this research traced two significantly different pathways under which the security dilemma mechanism may lead to armed conflict. In the case of Angola, it has been shown that an entirely domestic security dilemma is more in line with expectations derived from previous studies. This security dilemma arose between non-state actors who became embroiled in the episode of armed violence, with the result that the entire dynamic — even if while still subject to regional and global processes — occurred within the borders of the state. In Mozambique, however, a dissimilar occurrence ensued. This resulted in the security dilemma unfolding between two state actors (Mozambique and Rhodesia), with very specific consequences for the outbreak of domestic armed violence. To the author's knowledge, this study is the first to relate a regional security dilemma to the outcome of a civil war, and to conduct this analysis in the case of Mozambique.

[16] As has been discussed in more detail in the theoretical chapters, it is curious that, Posen's (1993) contribution is the one that gets closer to explaining the outbreak of violence, despite being the seminal one.

This inferred link problematises the way the security dilemma mechanism in civil wars are viewed, thus identifying an additional dimension for its development, but corroborating the findings of the literature on transnational dimensions of civil wars (Gleditsch, 2007, Salehyan *et al.*, 2011, Cederman *et al.*, 2013b, Checkel, 2013). Moreover, the particular way in which the security dilemma occurred in Mozambique elicits a question about the lack of emerging challengers to FRELIMO following Portugal's withdrawal. The primacy of FRELIMO in Mozambique at the moment of the Carnation Revolution[17] led to a *de facto* transfer of power from Portugal, distinct from the events in Angola and in other cases explored using the lens of the security dilemma. This could be expected, in accordance with Posen's (1993) model, as a case of no-anarchy and thus of no security competition. However, FRELIMO's hegemony was a de-stabilising force at the regional level, and its effects could not be dismissed. This illustrates that, although the importance of the regional dimension has been overlooked by the security dilemma literature, a reflection focused on transnational dynamics of civil wars seems to be a highly promising research avenue.

The second main contribution relates to the issue of the *conflation of motives and intentions*. Incorrectly referring to the direct inference of motives from intentions is an analytical problem which has plagued the study of the security dilemma, both in its inter and intrastate variants (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.30-34, Glaser, 2010, p.37-40). This problem has many implications (Tang, 2009), the most obvious of which is the quick dismissal of the presence of security-seeking behaviour (and thus of the security dilemma) by the existence of hostile or aggressive behaviour. As has been argued (Glaser, 1997,

[17] For the reasons thoroughly discussed on chapter 4.

2010), motives and intentions (or behaviour) rarely match, especially in the realm of security-related affairs. The conduct of conflict and war is marked by the lack of transparency and the fog of war (Clausewitz, 1832, Wright, 1967, Luttwak, 2001). This increases the distance between the gestures and their actual motivations, and limits the capability that analysts have to directly make inferences and to determine what type of actor they are observing. This problem has been addressed and discussed by many students of the security dilemma in interstate conflict, but has been overlooked with significant loss in its intrastate application. The literature on the security dilemma and civil wars does not problematise motives and intentions and attempts to work on the basis of direct inferences about motives. With effect, a number of scholars (Horowitz, 1985, Kaufmann, 1996b, Kaufman, 2001, Roe, 2005) refer to examples of actors' rhetoric to punctuate and interpret actions, falling into the trap of conflating the observed behaviour with the motives behind them. By problematising this, the empirical research has been conducted with scepticism, questioning of the expectation that a rhetoric of hate equated to aggressive motives. It was also achieved via contextualising the evidence collected into the larger picture the strategic interactions and contrasting attitudes on the part of the actors (such as self-restraint).

Finally, the third main contribution refers to overcoming the way in which the literature deals with the conflation between the definition of the security dilemma and one of its possible outcomes, a problem closely linked to the conflation of motives and intentions. In other words, some analysts tend to infer the security dilemma from one of its possible outcomes, in particular its mitigation or transcendence (Booth and Wheeler, 2008a, p.10-11). This represents a shortcoming because it might lead scholars to fail to recognise a strategic interaction as a security dilemma in situations where a solution cannot be

achieved.[18] This would also lead the analyst to assume a security-seeker for a greedy actor, and acquire particular importance when dealing with internal armed violence, where *perceived incompatible security requirements* are often present. In such situations, even if security-seeking actors would eventually be led to the tragic outcome of war, they would still be in a security dilemma.

This study has employed a conceptualisation of the security dilemma able to overcome such shortcomings. By differentiating between the observed outcome of war and the motives leading actors to engage in such armed violence, it has proposed a valuable approach for not dismissing the security dilemma explanation from cases in which security-seeking actors cannot avoid war. Consequently, it allows for a more thorough understanding of the causes of armed violence and its outbreak. I have sustained that, particularly in one of my cases, but also generally in civil wars, controlling the state apparatus (or at least crucial parts of it) plays a central role in the strategic consideration of the actors due to the relationship between statehood and security. In the heat of the moment and among the tensions build up leading to conflict, the possibility that another actor might try to seize control of the state and take a hegemonic position can create an intense element of insecurity, due to the uncertainty about the future.

This element was introduced as the *expectation of the restoration of Hierarchy*, as actors perceive the abnormality of anarchy in their domestic environment and understand that they are constrained by an ever-approaching horizon where hierarchy (in the form of the Leviathan) will be restored. This gradually, but exponentially, increases their insecurity

[18] The potential solution generally refers to a form mitigation or transcendence of the dilemma, usually started through the mechanism that Booth and Wheeler (2008a, p.7) call *security dilemma sensibility*.

and their capability to be sensible to possible solutions or simply exercise empathy. As described above and argued throughout the thesis, the import of the security dilemma from a Westphalian context to a non-Westphalian context requires a consideration that the constitutive and perennial anarchy of the international system is only temporary and exceptional within the borders of a state.

A final, minor theoretical contribution of this research derives directly from the case selection. It is a matter of record that the majority of scholarly attention has been devoted to studying the security dilemma in the particular case of ex-Yugoslavia, and consequently in the light of ethnopolitics. While this is not a weakness *per se*, it can limit the generalisability of their claims, both due to the particularities of the case or the particular effects of ethnicity on *(in)*security[19]. This research offers two contributions to the literature, namely: it expands the universe of cases studied by bringing two novel case studies from a different region and with a different set of preconditions than those of ex-Yugoslavia, but also two cases where ethnicity was not central to the interactions between the actors. Through these, it was possible to dispel the hypothesis that the security dilemma in civil wars could be dependent on geographical specificities (and thus particular to one or a few cases) or that it could be necessarily linked to ethnic insecurity — two relevant conclusions that contribute to our understanding of the security dilemma.

[19] Even with multiple studies employing similar methods on the same cases, the results have varied wildly, with a premium on replicability.

C.2.2 - Empirical Contribution

The cases of post-independence violence in both Angola and Mozambique following the 1974 Carnation Revolution have been consistently studied from historical[20] and socio-anthropological[21] perspectives, but continue to be under-interrogated in the subfield of conflict studies and international security.[22] This is particularly the case with reference to the causes of civil wars. Furthermore, previous analyses of my selected case studies extensively favoured the latter waves of armed violence in the two countries, looking at the long-term failure of state-building after decolonisation and mainly concentrating on the dynamics unfolding between 1980 and the first half of 1990.

Chiefly, this thesis is the first study of the post-decolonisation violence in Angola and Mozambique that concentrates on evaluating the performance of the security dilemma, and more broadly, that offers an in-depth examination of mechanisms of uncertainty and insecurity in the two selected cases. This novelty acquires a special meaning in the context of the study of the security dilemma and civil wars, as the previous studies have, with few exceptions, concentrated their efforts on the study of the internal violence in ex-Yugoslavia, creating a potentially restrictive case bias in the literature. Thus, beyond the originally designed role as a laboratory for my study of the security dilemma in civil wars, the empirical work conducted in this research advances the knowledge about the cases, in addition to highlighting the connection between the outcome of armed violence

[20] Marcum (1978), Henderson (1979), Hanlon (1984), Hoile (1994), Minter (1994), Hall and Young (1997), Gleijeses (2002), Edward George (2005).

[21] Chabal (1983), Geffray (1990), Brittain (1998), Cabrita (2000), Alden (2001), Birmingham (2002), Cahen (2006), Emerson (2013).

[22] Examples of exceptions are Lockyer (2008), Cramer (2006, 2009), Kornprobst (2002), Thaler (2012), Chan and Venâncio (1998) and Funada-Classen (2013).

and the security competition during the transition processes (following Portugal's colonial retreat in 1975). By adopting a qualitative, process-tracing approach, I collected evidence from secondary sources from across disciplines, intending to obtain fine grained data. In addition to that, I have also conducted archival research[23] in government archives in Portugal, the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as elite interviews in Portugal with key figures in different capacities connected to the governmental, military and security establishment.[24]

This research does not achieve, nor does it intends to, an absolute refutation of all other dynamics identified in previous studies of the cases. However, it provides a twofold expansion of the empirical knowledge: firstly, it demonstrates that fundamental insecurity was among the main drivers of conflict and de-stabilisation leading to armed violence; secondly, that such insecurity and uncertainty was at the core of the inability to reach enforceable and trustworthy mutual reassurance, both at the internal and at the regional levels. As was argued in the previous sub-section, these findings not only expand the knowledge about the cases, but also provide sound examples of defensive motivations behind internal armed conflict. These, in turn, serve as a basis for further interrogation and questioning of the literature that suggests that benign intent is largely irrelevant to the study of civil wars.[25]

Analysts who overlooked or rejected the security competition explanation have made various claims as to the reasons for the outbreak of post-decolonisation violence in

[23] A list of the archives consulted is provided as Appendix B to this thesis.

[24] A list of interviewees is provided as Appendix A to this thesis.

[25] The most recent and prominent example being Esther Visser and Isabelle Duyvesteyn's (2014) paper.

Angola and Mozambique. In both cases, the predominant narrative points towards the greed and grievance mechanism (Paul Collier and Hoeffler, 2004, Paul Collier *et al.*, 2009), especially in the form of a fight to secure and exploit natural resources for economic gains. The capability of exploiting these resources is usually represented as a function of power (or statehood) over a productive area (the concept of *rents of power*), and thus the clash for the power to control and exploit sources of economic gain generates the incentive to engage in violence. In this narrative, violence is simply a function of economic inequality between groups.

Other readings bind the 'story' about economic inequality to the 'story' about ethnicity: by deploying some of the literature on mobilisation in civil wars (for example, Gates, 2002). Here it has been argued that ethnic affiliation was connected to movement affiliation, and from this correlation it has been assumed that ethnic differences *completed* the greed and grievance story.[26] Others still have also explored the role of religion in materialising grievances.

As the empirics have been developed, despite the presence of grievances, as well as elements of ethnopolitics being relevant, the cases of post-decolonisation violence in Angola and Mozambique demonstrate two situations of mutual insecurity (either entirely domestic or regional/transnational) spiralling into violence. Furthermore, I trace the dynamics leading to violence and the process of escalation under uncertainty and mutual insecurity, establishing a novel account of the outbreak of violence. This adds another

[26] Works on *micro dynamics* of civil war such as Kalyvas' (2006), and Christia's (2012) work on alliance formation in civil wars highlight the fallacy of arguing that the correlation between ethnicity and affiliation should demonstrate causality. My empirical research provides further support to their claims.

layer of probable causal factors to explain the outbreak of armed violence. It includes potentially generalisable claims, and offers a plausibility probe examination that enables a challenge to the findings of previous research which rejects the security dilemma as a valuable tool to explain armed violence.

Moreover, the particularities of the two studied cases afford an empirical insight that translates into the theoretical contribution. While in Angola the security dilemma dynamics that unfolded pertained mostly to the traditionally understood domestic level, in Mozambique, it is suggested that these relevant dynamics be located at the regional level. A simplistic analysis would dismiss the second as a case of inter-state security competition, and thus not pertaining to the discussion on civil wars. A careful look, however, has uncovered the connection between the outbreak of internal armed violence inside Mozambique (between the state embodied by FRELIMO and the insurgency embodied by RENAMO) and the security competition between the recently independent Mozambique (also embodied by FRELIMO as the state and by Ian Smith's leadership in Rhodesia). This reading brings together the discussion about the applicability of the security dilemma to civil wars and the increasingly important transnational approach to the understanding of the causes of conflict.[27] By illustrating the relevance of the regional dimension for interrogating the presence of security dilemma dynamics in civil wars, the conducted cases study of Mozambique opens the door for the widening of our conception of the security dilemma as a cause of civil wars.

[27] The article by Kristian S. Gleditsch (2007) and the volume edited by Jeffrey T. Checkel (2013) are two good primers for the discussion on the transnational dimensions of civil wars. Also relevant are the articles by Salehyan *et al.* (2011) and Cederman *et al.* (2013b).

C.3 - Final Considerations

This research has demonstrated that the security dilemma continues to be a relevant concept for study, both inside and outside the borders of states. Its particular role in triggering armed violence was highlighted based in the experiences of two understudied cases, setting out some lessons and new issues to be problematised in future studies. It also restates the necessity to continuously interrogate a concept that, despite its age, does not lose its central importance to the study of world politics.

Appendix A: List of Interviewees

1) **Manuel ENNES FERREIRA (Professor)**

Interviewed: August 2015, Lisbon (PT)

- Member of the MPLA;
- Commissioned at the Liaison Office of the MPLA to Maputo, Mozambique;
- Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics at ISEG / ULisbon;
- Expert in Angola's history and economic development.

2) Jaime GAMA (Minister, Retired)

Interviewed: September 2015, Lisbon (PT)

- Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs between 1995-2002;
- Main promoter of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP);
- President of the Parliamentary Commission on Foreign Affairs 1976-1978.

3) Rui Rolando Xavier de Castro GUIMARÃES (Colonel, Retired)

Interviewed: August 2015, Póvoa de Varzim (PT)

- Infantry Colonel, Portuguese Army;
- Participant to the Acordos de Bicesse;
- Member of the Movement of the Armed Forces (MFA).

4) Carlos de MATOS GOMES (Colonel, Retired)

Interviewed: August 2015, Paço d'Arcos – Oeiras (PT)

- Colonel, Portuguese Army;
- Military Historian specialised in the Overseas Provinces;
- Army Officer posted to Mozambique and Angola during the colonial war.

5) António MONTEIRO (Ambassador, Retired)

Interviewed: August 2015, Lisbon (PT)

- Ambassador for Portugal in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the 1970s;
- Coordinator of the committee for permanent coordination of the community of Portuguese-Speaking countries between 1994 and 1996;
- Head of the temporary mission for the peace process structures in Angola;

6) Adriano MOREIRA (Minister, Retired)

Interviewed: September 2015, Lisbon (PT)

- Overseas Minister between 1961-1963.

7) Pedro PEZARAT CORREIA (Major-General, Retired)

Interviewed: September 2015, Queluz – Sintra (PT)

- Major General, Portuguese Army;
- Member of the Movement of the Armed Forces;
- Commission Service in Angola and Guinea.

Appendix B: List of Archival Sources

1) **CIA Records Research Tool (CREST)**
   National Archives and Records Administration
   Washington, D.C. (USA)
   November 2014 / February 2015

2) **National Security Archives**
   George Washington University (GWU)
   Washington, D.C. (USA)
   November 2014

3) **Foreign Relations of the United States Series (FRUS)**
   US Department of State (DoS)
   Online
   January 2015 – March 2015

4) **Wilson Center Digital Archive**
   Online
   January 2015 – March 2015

5) **Arquivo da Defesa Nacional**
   Ministério da Defesa Nacional
   Paço d'Arcos, Oeiras (PT)
   August 2015 – September 2015

6) **Arquivo Histórico Militar (AHM)**
   Exército Português
   Lisboa (PT)
   July 2014 / August to September 2015

7) **National Archives**
   Kew Gardens, London (UK)
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