Online Appendix for Costantino Pischedda, "Wars within Wars: How Windows of Opportunity and Vulnerability Cause Inter-rebel Fighting," *International Security* (Summer 2018)

1. Interview method

This section briefly discusses the interview method adopted in the article. In research on particular policy decisions, there is typically a narrow population of relevant actors and thus random sampling is not the most appropriate approach.[1] The population of interest for testing window theory of inter-rebel war consists primarily of former members of rebel organizations who may have participated in relevant decision-making processes or may have reliable information about them. Thus I strove to interview individuals who were in positions of political leadership or military command in the relevant organizations at the time of the events.

Before embarking on my fieldwork in Ethiopia, I compiled a list of possible interviewees, based on the secondary literature and the advice of country experts. I tried to get in touch by being introduced to them, thus avoiding cold calls whenever possible. I then asked interviewees to suggest other individuals that they thought I should talk to, and to introduce me to them, if possible. I mitigated the perils of being trapped in a network of interlinked respondents with the same worldview by starting multiple "snowballs" of interview subjects, corresponding to different organizations and factions within them.[2] I conducted all interviews in person (in English or in my native Italian), except for one interview via Skype.

The outcomes of the anti-government struggle and inter-rebel wars as well as the vagaries of rebel groups' internecine power struggles inevitably affected my samples for both cases. The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) crushed its Tigray-based rivals and eventually went on to take over the government in Addis Ababa in 1991; as a result, it proved much easier to access former and current TPLF leaders than former members of rival organizations and pre-1991 era government officials. Importantly, the inclusion in my sample of some prominent former TPLF figures expelled from the organization (and typically living abroad) reduces the risk of exclusive reliance on informants with very similar world-views, biases, and incentive structures.[3] Similar

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[1] Oisin Tansey, "Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-Probability Sampling," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 40 (4), 2007: 765-772.; Eric Bleich and Robert Pekkanen, "How to Report Interview Research," in Layna Mosley, ed., *Interview Research in Political Science* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), p. 90; Julia F. Lynch "Aligning Sampling Strategies with Analytic Goals," in Mosley, ed., 2013, pp. 40-4.

[2] Bleich and Pekkanen 2013, p.87.

[3] These individuals are: Aregawi Berhe, founding member of the TPLF, chairman of the organization in the years 1976-1979, and head of its military committee until his ousting in 1986 (interviewed by the author on August 7, 2013, in The Hague, Netherlands); Fantahun "Ghidey" Zeratsion, founding member of the TPLF and vice-chairman from 1978 until his expulsion from the organization in 1985 (interviewed by the author on August 23, 2013, in Oslo); Tesfay Atsbeha, TPLF member since 1976, he was a military commander until his expulsion around the same time as Aregawi Berhe's and Ghidey Zeratsion's ousting (interviewed by the author on August 11, 2013, in Cologne, Germany); Gebru Asrat, TPLF member from 1975, key figure in the organization during the insurgency, politburo member and President of Tigray at the time of his expulsion in 2001 (interviewed by the author on July 30, 2013, in Addis Ababa); Mokonnen Mokonnen, TPLF member from 1975 until 1988 (interviewed by the author on September 6, 2013, in Silver Spring, MD).

dynamics characterized the Eritrean case but with different implications for access to interviewees. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) crushed and expelled the rival Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) to Sudan and, having defeated the Ethiopian army on the battlefield, gained a solid grip on power in newly independent Eritrea. Important former ELF figures (typically involved in Eritrean opposition politics) currently reside outside of Eritrea and are more easily accessible than EPLF figures in the country, given the prevailing highly authoritarian conditions. However, I obtained access to three high-ranking former EPLF members who escaped as they were abroad during a purge of the ruling party in 2001.[4] The fact that many of the former ELF and EPLF members I interviewed joined various rival opposition organizations mitigates the perils of relying on a sample of like-minded individuals reciting a single, "official" narrative.

I interviewed 20 former political leaders, military commanders and senior cadres (a few multiple times) of insurgent organizations active in Ethiopia in the years 1961-1991 and a handful of lower–rank members as well as one official in the Derg-era Ethiopian army, for a total of 35 semi-structured interviews.[5]

Interview transcripts are available upon request to the author for researchers interested in replicating the findings or investigating inter-rebel relations more generally.

Interviewee list (28 subjects, 35 interviews total)

- Adhanom Gebremariam – 2 interviews in New York City. He was an EPLF member from 1972, held senior military command positions during the war as well as executive and diplomatic posts in its aftermath.

- Ahmed Nasser – 1 interview in Stockholm. He was member of the ELF from 1963, held leadership positions from 1971, including the chairmanship of the organization from 1975 to 1983.

- Asmeron Menghesteab – 1 interview in Frankfurt. ELF member from 1974, senior cadre subsequently.

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[4] The three individuals are: Mesfin Hagos, founding member of the EPLF, military commander during the liberation struggle and Eritrea's Minister of Defense after independence (interviewed by the author on July 17-18 and August 6, 2013, in Frankfurt, Germany); Haile Menkerios, EPLF member from 1973, Eritrea's Ambassador to Ethiopia and the Organization of African Unity after independence and United Nations envoy at the African Union at the time of the interview (21 July, 2013, Addis Ababa); Adhanom Gebremariam, EPLF member from 1972, he held senior military command positions during the war as well as executive and diplomatic posts in its aftermath (interviewed by the author on April 24 and June 29, 2014, in New York). These three people were part of the so-called G-15, a group of 15 high-ranking members of Eritrea's ruling party that issued a public letter criticizing the country's President for his authoritarian tendencies; the other members of the group were arrested and are still held incommunicado without charges (except for one, who subsequently repented).

[5] For biographical sketches of several of my interviewees, see Dan Connell and Tom Killion, *Historical Dictionary of Eritrea* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2011) and David H. Shinn and Thomas P. Ofcansky, *Historical Dictionary of Ethiopia* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013).

- Gherezgheher Tewelde – 1 interview via Skype. He was an ELF member from 1965 and senior cadre subsequently.

- Gime Ahmed – 2 interviews Addis Ababa. He was an early ELM member, in the ELF from 1962, held several leadership and military positions in the organization, including in the counterintelligence office.

- Haile Menkerios – 1 interview in Addis Ababa. He was EPLF member from 1973, Eritrea's Ambassador to Ethiopia and to the Organization of African Unity subsequently, and United Nations Ambassador at the African Union after Eritrea's independence at the time of the interview.

- Mesfin Hagos – 3 interviews in Frankfurt. He was a founding member of the EPLF, military commander during the liberation struggle and Eritrea's Minister of Defense after independence.

- Tesfay Woldemichael "Degiga" – 1 interview in Frankfurt. He was an ELF member from 1973 and in the group's leadership from 1975.

- Tewolde Gebrselassie – 2 interviews in Addis Ababa. He was an ELF member from 1974 and senior cadre subsequently.

- Wolde-Yesus Ammar – 1 interview in Frankfurt. He was a member of an ELF underground cell from 1965, subsequently became the head of the ELF's Foreign Office.

- Yusuf Berhanu (Dr.) – 1 interview in Addis Ababa. He was in ELF leadership positions from 1975.

- Anonymous interviewee – 1 interview in Addis Ababa. He was an ELF member from 1974 and senior cadre subsequently.

- Aregawi Berhe – 1 interview in The Hague. He was a founding member of the TPLF, then chairman of the organization in the years 1976-1979, and head of its military committee until his ousting in 1986.

- Begasho Gurmo "Ashenafi" – 1 interview in Frankfurt, Germany. He was an EPRP foot soldier in Tigray from 1977.

- Berhanu Berhe – 1 interview in Mekele, Ethiopia. He was a TPLF rank-and-file from 1977.

- Fantahun "Ghidey" Zeratsion – 1 interview in Oslo. He was a founding member of the TPLF, then vice-chairman from 1978 until his expulsion from the organization in 1985.

- Gebreab Barnabas (Dr.) – 1 interview in Addis Ababa. He has been a TPLF member since 1983.

- Gebru Asrat – 1 interview in Addis Ababa. He was a TPLF member from 1975 and a key figure in the organization during the civil war, then politburo member and President of Tigray at the time of his expulsion in 2001.

- Mokonnen Mokonnen – 1 interview in Silver Spring, MD. He was a TPLF member from 1975, then a senior figure in the organization until 1988.

- Mulugeta Gebrehiwot – 1 in Addis Ababa. He was an early TPLF member, a rank-and file at the time of the TPLF's fights with other groups in Tigray, then he occupied more senior positions.

- Negasso Gidada – 1 interview in Addis Ababa. He was originally affiliated with the OLF, then joined the OPDM in 1991; he served as President of Ethiopia from 1995 to 2001.

- Nigatu Teferi – 1 interview in Lancaster, PA. He was a major in the Ethiopian Army until 1991 and took part in the Lash and the Red Star offensives.

- Sibhat Nega – 2 interviews in Addis Ababa. He has been in the TPLF leadership since 1975.

- Tedros Hagos – 1 interview in Mekele, Ethiopia. He was a TPLF member from 1976, then member of the group's leadership committee from 1983.

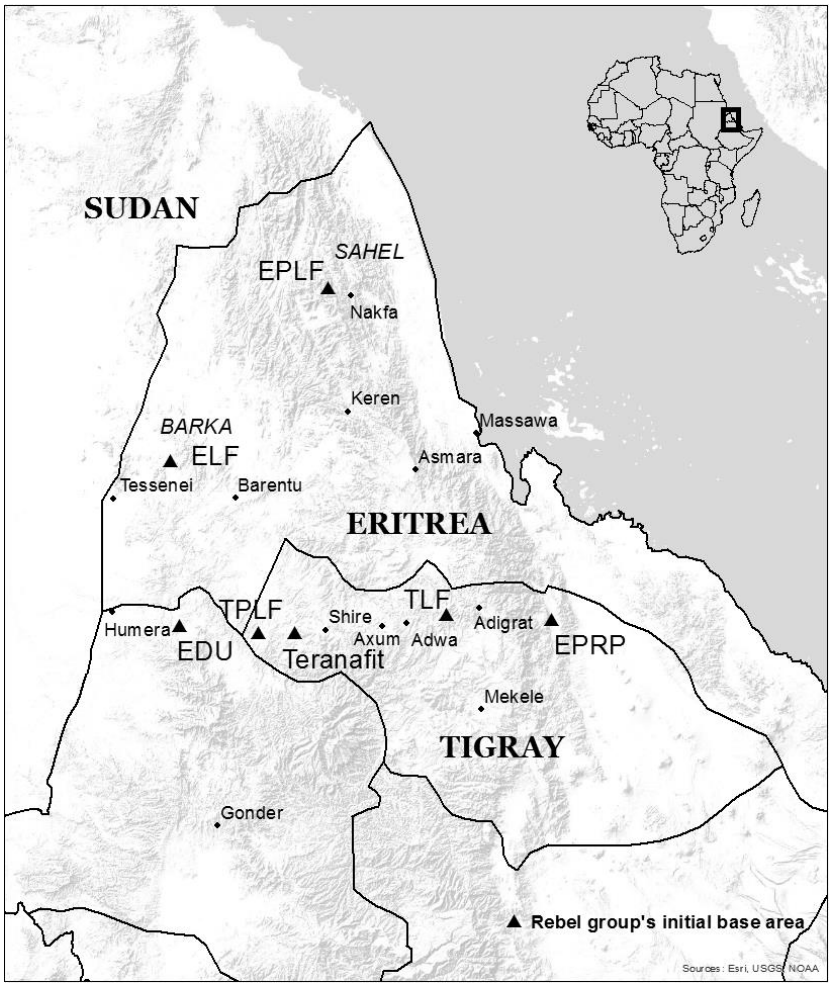
- Tekleweini Assefa – 1 interview in Addis Ababa. He was an early TPLF member, then senior member of the organization and head of the TPLF's Relief Society of Tigray (REST) during the war.

- Tesfay Atsbeha – 1 interview in Cologne, Germany. He was a TPLF military commander from 1976.

- Yosef Tesfai – 1 interview in Addis Ababa. He was an EPRP member based in the United States during the war.

- Anonymous interviewee – 2 interviews in Addis Ababa. He was an EPRP rank-and-file in Tigray.

2. Map: Initial base areas of the main rebel groups in northern Ethiopia



Sources: Secondary literature on northern Ethiopia's insurgencies and author's interviews. Thanks to Joan Ricart for help with GIS software.