# DEFINING SCAVENGER-ACTORS: UNDERSTANDING A GLOBAL MENACE

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*Abstract:* This article introduces a new international actor, the 'scavenger-actor', as a replacement for warlords and pirate gangs. The article first reviews literature on both piracy and warlordism in historical and modern contexts in order to provide a basis for its argument of a new definitional term encompassing both groups. A negative binomial regression model is then applied to data on pirate attacks and measurements of state health to show that piracy is as closely tied to state failure as is warlordism. Finally, the article presents its argument for the new term, 'scavenger-actor', as a needed reform to political science discourse, and urges that greater measures be taken to acquire useful data on the activities of scavenger-actors.

Old modes of inter-state and intra-state conflict are evolving in response to the profound impacts of globalization and worldwide instantaneous communication. Large-scale wars no longer loom on the horizon (Kalyvas 2001), and the international community is capable of bringing such attention and pressure on combatants that small-scale wars are becoming a costly, embarrassing episode to many nations. Yet far from ushering in an age of peace, weapons proliferation and warfare continue to be pervasive global concerns as new forms of conflict replace the old. Modern wars are small, quiet, and frequently carried out within or between failed states, indicative of broken systems and rampant opportunism.

Two international actors, warlord-organizations and pirates, are repeatedly found at the heart or near the edges of conflicts around the world. Yet current international policy does not take into account their existence as a general cause or aggravator of modern conflicts. This reveals a troubling gap in our practical and scholarly understanding of these actors. While authors like Waldron have studied the effects of warlordism on internal conflicts (Waldron 1990), and other political scientists like Liss have studied the similar impacts of piracy (Liss 2003), rarely have the two actors been considered in the same work. Exceptions to this rule include the work of political scientists like Bowden, who study the economic and political impacts of these actors from a practical, policy-oriented perspective (Bowden 2011). This is a dearth of knowledge which this paper intends to counter through a review of current literature, empirical study, and argument.

The central argument of this paper is that warlord-organizations and pirate gangs

should be considered a single type of violent and opportunistic international actor called a scavenger-actor, especially for the purposes of studying conflict around the globe and making policy to defuse it.

In support of this argument, a review the research of political scientists on warlords and pirates will be presented, which shows that both actors are primarily motivated by profit and self-preservation. A binomial regression model will then be applied to statistical data gathered from sources including the State Fragility Index and Matrix (Marshall and Cole 2011) to show that pirates are most successful in countries with low military and economic power. Finally, this paper will argue that recent history reveals pirates to exhibit the same behavior as warlords – but their proclivity for boats, the different treatment that they receive from the international community, and the present inscrutability of their leaders prevents us from seeing them as little more than aquatic warlord bands.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Warlords: The great challenge in studying non-state actors is the search for definition. It can be argued that this search is pointless – non-state actors can be individuals and small groups as well as global networks, and they can transform along that spectrum frequently and with little warning. They are the most fluid actors on the international stage: potentially having access to all the resources of a small nation-state or country, with unpredictable numbers of participants, shifting purpose, sometimes displaying reactive and erratic behavior. The purpose of this review of available literature on warlordism and piracy is ultimately to show that concurrent arguments and

observations in the two areas of research (which are currently markedly divided) reveal the great similarities between the two actors. The review will first point out prominent behaviors of each actor, and then close with an argument that the similarities between them are evident and significant enough that the two areas of research should be merged into an investigation of the behaviors of a single type of aggressive international actor who appears both on land and sea.

Discussion of non-state actors tends to focus on their behavior and actions, for by describing their behavior and agreeing upon patterns we can come to a *fait accompli* definition of sorts, which is the best we can hope for. Some groups are easy to define by their behavior: the Red Cross will reliably engage in activities like rescue operations, charity, fundraising, and resource coordination; al Qaeda will reliably seek opportunities to carry out its political and fundamental objectives; and the Catholic Church will reliably support its member churches, promote its agenda through coordinated events and/or statements, and donate to favored causes.

However, with some breeds of non-state actor, even the term 'behavior' becomes cumbersome. 'Warlord' is a term that has been used for decades as a catch-all for a wide spectrum of actors who share a range of basic behavioral features. Political science as a field has so far not been able to define simple, necessary terms like 'militarization' or to typify different kinds of violent political action beyond general catch-all terms like 'riot', 'warlord', and 'brushfire war' (Charlton and May 1989). These terms are non-descriptive and too loosely applied for proper understanding of the phenomena they describe. There has been a steady, patient pursuit by scholars to define 'warlords' more definitely that has

lasted for centuries and circled the globe. The fruits of those efforts have significantly narrowed the margins of inquiry, but within those margins the depths being plumbed are murkier than ever. Beyond a few important guidelines that are repeated across the warlord inquiry, little can be said definitely about these actors – even tried-and-true aphorisms concerning a warlord's brutality, ruthlessness, and relentlessly destructive nature can be found wanting.

This state of affairs – the uncertainty, the cyclical discussion over what *is* and *is not* a warlord, is no longer helping the field or those who rely upon political scientists for insight. As the world grows more interconnected and mass warfare becomes less likely, as relationships based upon power structures are replaced by economic ties, interdependence, and cultural blend, we find warlords taking a more prominent place on the international stage. They are capable of turning weak regions and countries into black holes – pits of violence and strife into which neighboring countries and international organizations can pour millions of dollars in aid and resources and see no improvement. These black holes are sheltering spaces for extremist groups and illegal trades. Warlords are fast becoming a prime threat to international stability, and we must know who they are and what actions make them a warlord.

There have been some encouraging efforts in the field to come to a satisfactory definition of warlordism, and that work is certainly ongoing. Angstrom pointed out that scholarly investigation of a topic is often stymied by conceptual confusion – a debate without a point is one that no one can learn from (Angstrom 2001). Political scientists have been working valiantly to steer the study of warlordism out of its early confusion

and into clearer, more orderly waters with the ultimate goal of a working definition of their subjects. While that goal remains elusive there is certainly a great profusion of knowledge which the field can operate off of and consensus is forming around a few important points. Thanks to better research tools, a widening base of information, and sheer diligence, political scientists have managed to combine holistic, behavioral, and historical observation into a working understanding of warlordism, and the goal of a solid definition has never been closer.

The term 'warlord' itself has a long history, first brought from Japan to China centuries ago to help describe the power struggles that took place as dynasty after dynasty weakened and shattered over the centuries and widespread warfare inevitably followed. Waldron observed that the term was originally used in China to describe those who rose up and fought for succession when the dynasty fell, and they usually faded after a new dynasty was established (Waldron 1990). Chinese scholars argued about what to do with the warlords and how to get rid of them, but agreed that they were a symbol of China's instability and generally made things worse when they became active, harming the state as a whole and dividing it when their power grew. These early attempts to define warlordism focused on the chaotic natures of warlords and their armies, but did not explore how these entities operated in great detail. Early scholars did break ground, however, in recognizing the intrinsic link between warlordism and state collapse.

The definition discussion has come a long way since its inception. Vinci defined warlords as heading self-perpetuating political communities based on membership and inclusion rather than territorial attachment; autonomous from the state, independent of all

other actors, and using economic, military, and other forms of exploitation to perpetuate the organization and maintain autonomy (Vinci, 2007). This definition touches strongly on a warlord's goals of being independent and self-sustaining, but the assertion that warlords do not have a territorial attachment is an idea without much support.

Overall, Vinci's definition is powerful, even groundbreaking, particularly for establishing the importance of recognizing that warlords are the heads of communities who do not act alone. His work is also important for arguing that thinking of warlords as individuals is unhelpful: Vinci maintained that the singular 'warlord' should be replaced with 'warlord-organizations' as the subject of the discussion, expect in the case of referring to actual individuals (Vinci 2007). Warlord-leaders, the author maintained, rely on an organization of followers to carry out their orders, and so we should look not for singular individuals, but for large groups under the sway of charismatic leaders. This contribution brought about acknowledgment of the existence of a type of international actor which, like charities and nations, can directly and indirectly impact other international actors by its actions – it was an important step forward in that we had to stop thinking of warlords as unruly individuals and begin thinking of them as leaders on par with political or military figures whose words and actions reached a broad audience and had serious consequences.

Marten argued that there are four key characteristics which must be included in a warlordism definition: 1) Fighters take territorial control away from weak regional governments, 2) actions are self-interested, 3) warlord authority is based on charisma and patronage ties to followers, 4) warlord rule fragments local economies, making

investment unattractive (Marten 2006-07). He based these characteristics on studies of warlords in post-Manchu China, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Medieval Europe, wherein their rises, falls, behavior, and impact on the territories they controlled and bordered were examined. Marten's work, except for his re-assertion of the importance of territory, agrees with Vinci and also focuses on the economic impacts of warlord behavior, an important and tricky aspect of warlordism that will be discussed in greater detail later. Other authors also asserted the importance of territory to warlord organizations, and without anything resembling a serious debate of the subject, it has become a generally accepted facet of warlordism.

Menkhaus went further than either Vince or Marten, arguing that warlords are capable, alone, of sabotaging regional trade and regional political agreements; they foster a state of perpetual lawlessness to expand territory and harvest loot from civilians (Menkhaus 2003). Menkhaus's contribution is important because the author drives at the heart of the political obstacles that warlords present – they are the rare non-state actor in international politics which, not by focused intent but by dint of successful enterprise, can disrupt regional organizations and state cohesion. Anti-government factions, terrorist groups, and civil war factions can all achieve similar ends, but warlords simply do it as a by-product in creating a favorable environment for themselves and their followers. Marten and Vinci emphasized the inner workings of warlord groups, studying how warlords maintain large followings and interact with other actors; meanwhile Menkhaus focused on what it is warlord organizations do to the international system.

Charlton and May concern themselves with the plethora of unhelpful and

undefined words pervading political science, and discuss how this problem has made the study of African conflicts a confusing and frustrating enterprise. They argue for a basic distinction between militarization and militarism, with the former describing the proliferation of military things like weapons, funding for war-making, and fighters, while the latter describes a rise in military attitudes among actors (Charlton and May 1989). The authors advocate a 'warlord model'; they observe that the breakdown of government in Chad followed patterns of overall organizational decay, an increasing reliance on force of arms to settle conflicts and disagreements, and a marked increase in regionalism.

These processes are marked by the authors as similar to the pattern followed by China in 1916-1928 when the decaying empire was gripped by 'warlord politics'; they observed that these developments coalesced in Chad into a country-wide warlord rise, where regional strongmen took control and sought to use a combination of political and military prowess to control their chosen territory and expand it (Charlton and May 1989). Based on the striking similarities between Chad and China's experiences that their studies reviealed, the authors praised the usefulness of a warlord model that searches for factionalism and conflicts between the center and the periphery, and rates state control over physical territory and population (Charlton and May 1989). The authors want to re-examine the collapses of states that have puzzled political scientists under the lens of a warlord environment, where the state is collapsing, regions are turning against each other, and armed conflict is becoming the norm. To further clarify the model, the authors sample the definition work of Jerome Che'en, who argues that warlords need to have 'a private army and areas under their control'; James Sheridan, who says they must 'exercise

control over a region by means of a military organization that has the warlord as its highest authority'; and David Yost, who argues that Chadian warlords had autonomous control over defined regions (Charlton and May, 1989).

Charlton and May's approach is far more holistic than other authors in that their goal is not a definition per se, but a new analytical tool to help political scientists understand the violent course of African political histories. The warlord model they advocate is a striking idea, as important to understanding current conflicts as any other method of analysis, and their efforts brought forth a useful definition of warlordism. Their work resonates with Menkhaus's in their focus on the impact of a warlord organization its territory, and also accepts the contributions of Vince and Marten to our understanding of a warlord organization's composition – Charlton and May's work, while not definitive, is certainly indispensable as a summary for a working knowledge of warlordism.

Authors who worked off of a strong understanding of the composition and function of warlord organizations were able to make more sense of these actors' behavior. Their efforts have produced a new field of study that discusses behavioral patterns of warlord organizations – these patterns are important clues to predicting warlord's actions.

The first of these patterns is a strong steak of individuality and self-direction. A warlord decides his or her own goals and agenda and does not take orders from any higher authority – he or she frequently is a political or military figure who rebels against former leaders, or a tribal or religious leader with great authority. Warlord organizations are not nearly as reliable in their activities as armies. Their behavior is dictated by self-

interest and the urge to self-sustain by acquiring territory, supplies, fighters, and wealth. Vinci and Womack have both observed that warlords are reliably self-interested actors, acting primarily to advance their own well-being and that of their organization/army no matter what higher principles or objectives they claim to espouse (Vinci 2007, Womack 1993). A warlord organization is not single-minded, but its nature largely dictates its actions – warriors need to be replaced, housed, paid, and armed; leaders need to rewarded for loyalty and leadership; territory and power relations need to be maintained through violence and politics, and the head of the organization will act to satisfy his or her own personal aims. It is simple to create a rough projection of a warlord organization's behavior: looting, ransom-taking, protection rackets and minor to moderate warfare will ensue. But saying *who* will be killed, robbed, kidnapped, protected, or warred against is nearly impossible to predict without an intricate understanding of the individual leading the army.

Vinci perceived warlords as “businessmen of war” who use warfare as their main source of economic income (Vinci 2007). This is an appealing line of reasoning, and much literary discussion has been devoted to the economic mechanisms driving warlordism, which will be discussed below, but simple income is not enough to explain a warlord's behavior. There is more than blind market forces or an invisible hand leading to the reigns of terror perpetrated by men like Joseph Kony. There are plenty of other careers that combine warfare with personal profit - successful professional soldiers in an army, mercenary companies, military instructors and arms dealers all have a profound relationship with and talent for war, but warlords stand apart due to their massive

personalities. Vinci's argument is useful to a point, but there is an urge not just for fortune, but for power, that is an integral part of a warlord's character. Warlord organizations reach for territorial or national control and tend to favor public, international displays of personal power and dominance. These reflect a very human desire for personal mastery over others. The economic argument for warlords being 'businessmen of war' is inadequate because it does not take into account this universal warlord urge for dominance. Personality, not economics, guides warlords.

Womack pointed out that the warlords who tore apart China in the early 1900s all professed adherence to high moral standards, publicly espousing deep regard for Confucian philosophy, concern for those living in their territories, and hopes that they could use their armies to help build a new, strong empire – yet all acted in the interests of their personal and regional security (Womack 1993). Che'en noted that the political and military alliances these men did make were solely for some sort of mutual gain, and the warlords otherwise publicly despised and denounced each other (Che'en 1968). Che'en and Womack both supported this argument for self-interest as a quality found in warlords, and demonstrated how it had shaped the course of wars and alliances. This selfishness may be the main obstacle to an easy policy approach towards warlords for the international community – each warlord will base their behavior on their own self-interest, so each time the international community endeavors to alter a warlord organization's objectives, let alone bring them to a table for peace talks, the leader must be researched, studied, and deeply understood by diplomats if there is to be any hope for long-term progress or a lasting peace.

History demonstrates how the individual quirks and personalities of warlords profoundly impacted their behavior – each defined self-interest according to personal standards. It even makes rational-actor methodology a risky approach, since some warlords simply do not act in a rational manner. Some, like Joseph Kony, are clearly driven by irrational fervor to the point of madness: From Logan's article we learn that Kony is a religious fanatic who recruits child soldiers into his forces by the dozens, and his methods are deranged: His supporters believe that his mission is given to him by God, and he sometimes has child soldiers maul perceived traitors to death using bare hands and teeth (Lara Logan. "Hunting the World's Most Wanted Warlord: Joseph Koney." *CBS News* 14 04 2013, n. pag. Web. <http://tinyurl.com/dxqqcmc>. Last access 6/18/13.) Recent history is replete with examples of warlords acting out insane schemes of war involving mass murder, cannibalism, and mutilation. Hence, one of the few reliable elements of a warlord organization is that they will be dominated by an unpredictable and singular force of personality and self-interest.

Another defining behavior of warlord organizations is the great amount of effort that warlords must invest in maintaining power structures, both within their own armies and across their territories. Within their personal armies, warlords must constantly monitor manpower, shore up their fighting forces, and juggle the ambitions and abilities of their lieutenants. Furthermore, a warlord's organization does not consist just of his warriors and commanders. In order to be successful, he must also have control over the political units of organization in his territory, making those units part of his framework of power. Investigation by political scientists indicates that a successful warlord-

organization is a complex mix of warriors, civilians, leaders, and political power brokers with the warlord at the center pulling all the strings. Unfortunately, little is known about any patterns in the internal structures of warlord organizations beyond the high turnover rates that their dangerous line of work naturally engenders, and that older forms of advancement like favoritism and nepotism are common within warlord armies (Womack 1993).

Marten, Vinci, and Womack have all put forth the argument that one of a warlord's biggest challenges is maintaining legitimacy before the eyes of those living in their region of influence. How warlords go about gaining that local respect seems to be critical to their organizational integrity and overall success. Womack argued that the warlord is defined by 'constrant struggle', frequently resorting to ransacking and violent raids on their own towns due to their tenuous grips on their supposed subjects (Womack 1993). Warlords face all the challenges of generals of an invading army – they must find a way to subdue or co-opt those who live and work in the territory they claim or else cow them through threats and violence. The respect and fear of their followers may be the most important power structure that warlords seek to maintain.

However, not all warlords rule by fear alone. Marten found that in both European and Chinese warlord periods, warlords would not re-organize local political power structures but instead insert themselves at their head, demanding loyalty from local barons, merchants, and other wealthy or powerful figures, taxing the rest, and rewarding those who served them well (Marten 2006-07). She argued that successful warlords must also be good politicians, able to schmooze local elites into letting them in on land

revenues and taking over tax collection, and further argued that many warlords sought the loyalty and favor of conflicting allies (Marten 2006-07). A warlord might find himself collecting local taxes from farmers and leading raids on large villages on behalf of starving farmers, for instance. A warlord's success isn't measured by their moral consistency or even economic prowess (though this is a very important factor), but by their ability to maintain the loyalty of their followers, as well as how easily they can extract resources from their territory. Marten's argument for the warlord as a political animal is a compelling one, and dovetails nicely with Vinci's analysis of sources of legitimacy warlords regularly turn to.

Vinci's summary of warlord organization focuses more on the methods by which warlords can directly influence the behavior of others (Vinci 2007). He argued that the best way to describe warlord rule is praetorism, where the military intervenes totally into the civilian and all borders between the two break down. This argument does shed some light onto more recent warlords like Charles Taylor or Joseph Kony, who were active in countries that had weak economies and high unemployment rates; this leads to many young men being out of work, prime material for warlord armies. If war-making becomes a main occupation, then a culture can certainly be said to be approaching praetorism.

However, this summation does not quite gel with the more intricate warlord-civilian relations outlined by Marten. Overall, it seems that to be a successful warlord instead of merely leading an exceptionally violent gang of bandits with machine guns, a warlord must be able to manage both civilian and military resources. In this respect they are little different from successful kings and emperors during times of war or conquest -

cities with open shops, functioning farms, and a working economy are more lucrative engines of fortune and war. Combining economic practicality, territorial dominance, personal style and multiple layers of control into a working system is a sure mark of a successful warlord.

Political scientists can largely agree on the basics of warlord organization. These are political entities at heart, with a warlord at the center carefully orchestrating a functioning military-economic apparatus, and historically relying on nepotism, promotion, and violence to maintain order. Already-existing political bodies like towns, baronies, and communities are drawn in as cohesive wholes, and their representatives and most powerful members are co-opted to deliver obedience and help secure revenue. Internally, a warlord organization is much more complex, organized almost entirely based on the designs of the warlord leading it, but that organization must be maintained through personal charisma, wit, and favoritism. Different warlords will find different methods of control and organization, but all are designed to maximize the warlord's control and power.

Analyzing the goals of warlords can be a frustrating experience. Given their proclivity for adapting their rhetoric to the religious, ethnic, or nationalist sentiment of their followers, it is pointless to try and determine their goals or course of action from words alone. What political scientists can agree on is that warlords are territorial creatures, and that a definite priority for any serious, successful warlord will be to control and exploit a region as their own.

Vinci wrote that warlords exert themselves to first control and then exploit their

territories – the basic tenets of warlordism are acquiring a private army and using it to control territory (Vinci 2007). Marten, Menkhaus, Ch'en, and Womack have all established warlords' territorial habits. Marten argued that Afghani warlords behaved basically the same as past warlords in medieval Europe, China, and Somalia – warlords established a military force, secured their territory, and began extracting revenue from their territories (Marten 2007). In Afghanistan, for example, warlords ordered farmers to plant poppy fields and set up 'checkpoints' along the few roads in the country to collect taxes (Marten 2007). Menkhaus observed that clans in Somalia often fueled chosen warlords with men, guns, and wealth in exchange for keeping their territories safe, though warlords usually used these funds for a multitude of activities beyond simply securing borders (Menkhaus 2003). Ch'en argued that a warlord's sensitivity to the political mood of his territory must be an important consideration in a definition of warlordism, since a warlord's territory is his number-one source of fighters, wealth, and security; Chinese warlords dividing up the country after the Manchu dynasty fell stuck largely to areas that they were familiar with, using knowledge of local politics to gain support (Che'en 1968). Womack argued that the vast majority of the behavior of Chinese warlords was based on regional security, no matter what they promised (Womack 1993). Territory clearly plays a central role in warlordism – warlord organizations need territory to acquire supplies, fighters, and power. A warlord without territory is simply a bandit.

However, as Vinci would undoubtedly argue, acquiring territory is always a means, never an end. Warlord organizations are constantly enmeshed in a struggle for power, and another central element of that struggle is wealth. Warlords in Africa and the

Middle East have ugly reputations for power, barbarism, and wealth, particularly in countries that are rich in particular natural resources like Afghanistan (opium) and Liberia (diamonds). Political scientists have established that countries with certain kinds of resources are much more susceptible to conflict than others. Ross pointed out that "Recent studies have found that natural resources and civil war are highly correlated. According to Collier and Hoffler, states that rely heavily on the export of primary commodities face a higher risk of civil war than resource-poor states...(Ross 2004)" The author goes on to cite findings that resources can ignite and even lengthen conflicts (Ross 2004). Resources like diamonds and timber play right into the hands of warlords – they are easy to loot, easy to transport, and hold their value across borders. Warlord organizations are more constrained by their pocketbooks that other types of military apparatus – they don't have the massive support of a willing public like armies do, or the clientele of mercenary forces. Hence warlord armies are more likely to find success in regions with easy-to-loot resources and for policy-makers and political scientists, the type of natural resources within a warlord-organization's territory is an important clue in predicting that organization's capabilities and behavior.

Furthermore, warlords are willing and able to enter into political agreements with many different actors for mutual profit. Watts pointed to a convoluted history of efforts by oil and petrol companies to set up agreements with local strongmen that guarantee access to local oil and other natural resource reserves and assistance with maintaining security and clearing out indigent populations, in return for a cut of the profits and sometimes even weapons deals (Watts 2003). Marten and Lin both observed that warlords

seek to control local economies, and warlords will even invest in rebuilding communities or re-starting local agriculture in order to have more successful communities to 'tax' or be able to export cash crops like opium. (Marten 2006-07, Lin 2002).

However, one cannot simply say that warlords are motivated by profit. Vinci has made strong arguments against this position; the author argued that it remains unclear why warlords are so concerned with profit – warlords do seem to make profit an integral part of their plans, but trying to ascribe greed to warlords as a central motive is inaccurate (Vinci 2007). In his article "Greed and Grievance Reconsidered" Vinci also explored this issue, pointing out that arguments focused on economic motivations tend to place too much value on the role of material gain, and other goals which are *fueled* by economic gain go ignored – gaining territory requires being able to arm and equip fighters and expend the resources necessary to control new turf, while nearly all warlords use a patronage system of rewards in their organizations that requires a constant influx of wealth to reward supporters and successful fighters (Vinci 2006).

Warlord organizations seem largely unwilling to accept the self-deprivation sometimes seen in insurgencies or extremist organizations like Sendero Luminoso, nor can they accept a regular and relatively limited wage-system like professional armies. They are akin to mercenary groups in that fighters are often rewarded based on performance, and akin to feudalist organizations in that warlords will spend lavishly to gain and retain supporters. Vinci observed that individual fighters in a warlord organization are often motivated by the guarantee that after a successful battle will come looting and plunder (Vinci 2006). Womack pointed out that most fighters recruited by the

Chinese warlords mentioned above were illiterate, short-term volunteers, and that poorer warlords regularly resorted to ransacking and pillaging to maintain their forces (Womack 1993).

Given the ingenuity warlords typically display in acquiring wealth (activities range from encouraging cash crops to human trafficking), and the myriad ends that wealth is put to (everything from improving local infrastructure to localized genocide), it seems prudent to conclude from these observations that wealth collection is undoubtedly an integral consideration when studying warlords, but that collection is a means to some other end, which is not necessarily identified by the method of collection.

In closing, the literature on warlordism is flourishing around an analysis of the behavior and goals of warlord organizations. The strengths of the current literature lie in helping us understand what effects a warlord organization has on a country, and how warlord organizations have changed little over time. Unfortunately, great gaps in our understanding still exist. There is very little study of individual warlords to be found, nor are there studies of how the international community has responded to warlords in specific instances. More work needs to be done to bring to light the individuals that start up these organizations, and to extol any situations where nations were able to successfully neutralize a warlord's army and harmful effects on his territory.

Piracy: The literature discussing the global occurrence of modern piracy is more far-flung than that of warlordism, with topics as diverse as international law, economics, and historical trend-spotting being called upon quite heavily. There is still a great effort to come to terms with the nature of modern piracy, to understand what it is and where it

comes from and where it may be going. Until this is accomplished, however, we continue to confront a vein of literature that is distinctly patchwork in nature. The literature on piracy can be constructively analyzed by breaking it down into thematic questions and the attempts to answer them: what is piracy, what causes piracy, and what impact, if any, does modern piracy have on the world?

The first question is the most difficult. Piracy has been as constant a companion to history as war or innovation, and it has taken many forms throughout the centuries; sometimes it has manifested as a regional scourge, and other times it has been little more than an annoyance to mighty empires. It has been declared dead and wiped out on multiple occasions, only to resurface again and again. Efforts of the modern international community to come to grips with the tenacity and menace of piracy have been halting, unfocused, and ruined by other good intentions. Given piracy's apparently roach-like nature, it is tempting to throw up one's hands and retreat into relativism, arguing that piracy is simply a label applied to some violent actions and not others; that the very term 'pirate' is ultimately a pejorative of victims. Authors like Murphy, Geiss and Petrig, De Souza, and Bradford have joined a long line of historians and political scientists in refusing to give piracy a free epistemological pass. They and others see piracy as a distinct phenomenon and have endeavored to help us view it as such.

Murphy has contributed to our understanding of the international community's efforts to understand and assess piracy, looking through historical accounts of piracy and comparing their actions to those of modern so-called pirates. He found commonalities in both their behavior and the reaction of their victims, symptoms of a long malady in

humanity's history. In his book “Small Boats, Weak States, Dirty Money” he argued that piracy is an international problem which flourishes in areas where corrupt governments rule (Murphy 2009). He condemned the international community's attempts to legislate piracy as weak and full of loopholes, guided either by efforts to ignore the problem or to turn it into a war on terror (Murphy 2009). Murphy believed that piracy is best viewed as an international scourge with alarming geo-political and economic implications (Murphy 2009). Given the near-impossibility of tracking individual pirates and their tendency for group action, this is a useful framework to view them with.

In understanding the causes of piracy, we have to look at both historical and modern trends. Bradford's work is an impressive compendium of different pirates, pirate-kings, and pirate-cultures that have wreaked havoc and reaped fortunes in past eras. Collections like this give researchers a very good understanding of the extent to which piracy has remained unchanged throughout history, reacting to the same basic cultural and economic forces across the centuries. Bradford recounted the Roman triumphs over Ilyrian pirates, achieved by conquering three major Ilyrian cities and capturing Ilyrian coastal cities until the pirates no longer had safe havens (Bradford 2007); he reviewed the pirate-warlord Tryphon who was the first of the notorious Cicilian pirates of the Roman era, who was so successful a brigand and leader that even after his death, Cicilians held fast to the way of life he built for them (Bradford 2007); and he made particular note of how the infamous Viking raids were generated by a population boom that generated boatloads of young men driven from their homeland by war, seeking their fortune by looting foreign cities (Bradford 2007).

Bradford's main argument was that the causes of piracy – lax law enforcement, lack of central authority in a given region, lack of political will to control piracy, war-bred chaos and instability, and economic disruptions – have remained constant through history (Bradford 2007). Advances in technology, new systems of farming and production, the growth of the current international system have all done nothing to effectively remedy these problems, and so they continue to surface and leave men with few options as lucrative as piracy.

Geiss and Petrig focused on the modern incarnation of piratical activity by studying piracy in and around the Gulf of Aden. They found that many pirate bands are in fact members of a sophisticated, organized industry of pirates (Geiss and Petrig 2011). The ongoing conflict and perpetual flow of arms and war fortune into Somalia mean that there are ample resources and virtually no local law enforcement groups, a potent mix that has helped some Somalian bands become the leading professionals in modern piracy; some bands are capable of highly coordinated attacks and use land-based support networks to move stolen goods and support crews. Their analysis encourages one to think of piracy as being fairly similar to any other economic activity. Under the right conditions, it will flourish, and it will respond to market forces like booms, busts, law enforcement, and political tides. Piracy is more than just seaborne acts of raiding, looting, and killing; it is a historical constant and a threat to global order.

Geiss and Petrig analyzed the U.N.'s legal definition of piracy: Any act of violence or violence or depredation committed for private ends by the crew/passengers of a ship or aircraft, on the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, outside the jurisdiction

of any state (Geiss and Petrig 2011). The authors argued that this definition, while getting the essentials of piracy, is part of a weak international anti-piracy effort that reflects the difficult challenges of prosecuting pirates and the international game of 'hot potato' that ensues when pirates are caught, since no nation wants to be burdened with the cost of housing, sentencing, and jailing them (Geiss and Petrig 2011). Still, the definition is useful in providing clarification as to what piracy is: Acts of crime and/or violence on the seas against boats or airplanes or other transports in international waters. With this definition we can begin to grasp the complexity of the piracy issue, and finally move on to asking 'who are pirates?'

Since, as Murphy, Geiss, and Petrig would agree, an essential element of piracy is its international nature, the identity and origins of pirates themselves is an important question. Why do so many men, from all corners of the world, choose to engage in the same brutal, primitive, violent enterprise, century after century, in defiance of the incredible changes science and technology and law have wrought on the rest of mankind?

Again, there are records throughout history of the identity of those called pirates that can aid our understanding. De Souza noted that among ancient coastal communities, the term 'pirates' was not a self-appointed one; pirates were called such by their victims, and the term was distinct from a different term for 'plunderers.' (de Souza 1999). Ancient narratives show that 'pirates' and 'heroes' used to be roughly the same thing – armed bands with strong leaders who sailed off, sacked enemy cities or waged brief wars, and sailed home with loot and glory – but state warfare evolved past simple raiding parties and became a more orchestrated, complex interaction, leaving the glory raiders to become

simply pirates (de Souza 1999). De Souza's observation is important because piracy and warfare are not that far apart if we turn the clock back to pre-Roman times. Populations were so small that a well-armed raiding group could be a significant war-making investment for a nation. But the urge to war is a pervasive one, and as nations grew into large, complex, and resourceful entities, wars became correspondingly bigger, more complex, and much more expensive. Yet the phenomenon of comparatively small parties of aggressive raiders remained, men continued to plunder victims in order to gain riches, glory, or even to survive, and they were called pirates because they fit no other category.

Bradford, as mentioned above, analyzed different groups throughout history that have earned the title of pirate. His analysis of the buccaneers is particularly telling: Among the first settlers of the Caribbean islands, these French and English settlers moved onto lands that the Spanish coveted, and the Spanish navy was sent, intermittently, to wipe out their settlements and force the settlers from their homes; in retaliation, the settlers took to the seas in their own boats and began preying on Spanish merchant ships, stealing their wealth out of revenge and to survive and prosper (Bradford 2007). Most buccaneers considered the Spanish to be enemies, and a great part of their collective manpower during their height of activity was wrapped up in attacking the Spanish, with a few leaders earning great fame and fortune (Bradford 2007). In this case, predations by a more powerful enemy caused settlers to come together against a common trouble, and they and their descendants made a point of maintaining that enmity, until their piracy became indiscriminate in the pursuit of plunder.

Modern pirates have much in common with their forebears. Murphy explores the

cultural forces behind Somalia's terrifyingly successful pirate industry. He began with the observation that Somalian culture is arranged along essentially tribal lines that have not been supplanted by a long line of governmental institutions supported by foreign powers – now, the modern Somalian attitude towards outsiders is one of suspicion and contempt (Murphy 2009). This leads Somalians to see the merchant ships of a hundred different nations passing close to their ancient shores as unwelcome intruders (Murphy 2009). Somalians are among the elite in the world of piracy, an unprecedented phenomenon, yet their tale of piracy holds powerful historical echoes. In Somalia, piracy has become a socially uplifting and attractive vocation, rewarding its practitioners with lavish lifestyles, expensive Western goods, and an ability to single-handedly support one's family (Murphy 2009). There is nothing in this combination that is unattractive to young Somali men, who, by risking life and limb, can get themselves their pick of women to wed, cellphones, nice cars, and big houses. This is the latest iteration of a historical pattern – destitute people turning to robbery in order to improve their lives.

Murphy's work allows us to appreciate a general pirate identity. Though he focused specifically on Somalian pirates, there is little reason that Murphy's findings cannot lead to conclusions about pirates in other parts of the world. They are men who are driven primarily by the search for material wealth and social success, fired, perhaps, by the loss of their own jobs or by seeing an international market destroy the economy that their culture has built for itself. The risks of piracy are undoubtedly breath-taking – going out in small, fragile boats on the sea to chase down and rob complete strangers, members of wealthy nations with powerful navies. But in return, an afternoon's work can

net them thousands of dollars in loot, or even the more precious cargo of merchant ships from half the world over. Pirates are strongly influenced by the opportunity for material gain in order to better provide for themselves and protect their perceived territories.

So we walk away from this discussion with a rough idea of who pirates are. They are greedy men, motivated by poverty or rapacity, interested in accumulating wealth at the expense of any who might wander into their territory presenting a tempting target. They find success in states with weak or failed governments, ineffectual police forces, and a tendency towards conflict. They profit in the grey areas of international law, exploiting the international community's endless squabbles over territory and sovereignty by striking the weak in areas where no sanctioned police force can protect them. Their leaders use their influence and wealth to secure territory and move stolen goods. Pirate leaders, Murphy reported, are potent political and economic actors; the pirate-lords of Somalia are virtually immune to prosecution and are able to engineer economic and political agreements among Somalia's fractious territorial-political elements for their bands to operate (Murphy 2009). Beyond their occupational preference for boats, there is little to distinguish pirates or their pirate-kings from warlords and warlord-organizations. And as we move into a discussion of the impact that piracy may have on the international community, we see that those differences become insignificant.

The international community has good reason to fear the growing predations of pirates. According to Crist, it is estimated that 5.8 billion tons of trade items were moved to their destinations by boat in 2001 – this represents roughly 80% of world trade in 2001, by volume (Crist 2003). Marine shipping has been heavily standardized and trends

towards large bulk cargo carriers, many of which are poorly maintained and could not outrun a fast-moving boat even in top shape. Crist's research revealed that pirate vessels have attacked nearly every class of trading ship, from chemical carriers to general cargo vessels – and pirates are encouraged by the fact that many such vessels carry large sums of cash for fees or salaries, as well as crews that can be ransomed (Crist 2003). Bowden further outlined the vast wealth that must be considered in modern piracy – they estimated that the 2010 cost of piracy to the international community was between $4.9 and $8.3 *billion,*and they project that this amount is likely to increase to $13-$15 billion by 2015 due to increases in piracy and maritime trade (Bowden 2011).

Clearly there are tremendous financial incentives for pirates, and they are experiencing considerable success in their efforts. Conversely, the international community has encountered enormous difficulty in putting together the legal tools necessary for many nations to come together and fight piracy, which is another cause for global concern. Geiss and Petrig discussed the current shambles of international anti-piracy legislation, noting that the 'Right of Visit' provision in the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) Article 110 allows warships the right to board a foreign ship only if there are reasonable grounds to suspect piracy, but doesn't specify what 'reasonable grounds' are (Geiss and Petrig 2011). UNCLOS piracy laws allow for actions to be taken against pirate ships, including enforcement of laws and capture, only if the ships are 'identified' as pirate ships by Articles 103 and 105, and Article 107 likewise allows for the seizure of a pirate ships only if it is first identified as being used in previous or ongoing act of piracy (Geiss and Petrig 2011).

Why is there so much difficulty surrounding new laws to prosecute piracy? Geiss and Petrig point out that any laws which might impact a nation's sovereignty are fiercely contested, resulting in convolution, loopholes, and delays (Geiss and Petrig 2011). Furthermore, there is a burdensome expense to prosecuting and jailing pirates that many nations prefer to avoid. Pirates are an inherently difficult group to track, detain, and prosecute, and with a world full of courts reluctant to see them in trial and law enforcement agencies who don't want to take on the danger and unusual challenge of detaining them, pirates have yet to be exposed to a consistent, coordinated response by international law and national law enforcement agencies (Geiss and Petrig 2011). In this uncoordinated and fractious political climate, there is little reason for pirates not to expand their operations.

The goal of this analysis has been to present a general understanding of the state of the literature on piracy and warlordism. With warlordism, this is a fairly straightforward effort, since there is a rich and wonderfully growing analysis of warlords around the world, and many strong shoulders have stepped forward for future political scientists to stand upon. In the case of piracy, the literature is not so rich, remains quite scattered amongst ostensibly separate areas of study, and is much better at pointing out what we do not know and do not have than building upon a bedrock of facts and observation. Both facts and observation are present, and some have been presented here, but pirates are difficult (and occasionally dangerous) to study and we have taken only the first few steps on what will surely be a long road of inquiry.

Still, these analyses allow us to draw some important conclusions which will be

carried forward in this study. Both pirates and warlords are among the carrion-eaters of the international jungle. They thrive best in collapsing states, and their success will further weaken such institutions, while setting up institutions and organizations that better suit their own purposes. Both are violent actors, using force, murder, and physical threats to achieve their ends while protecting and expanding their territories and amassing bloody fortunes. Finally, both are a threat to international stability. Their territories – Somalia, Columbia, and Afghanistan to name but a few – are all havens for violent organizations that strike out at countries around the globe.

**Data and Methods**

The information used for these tests must be taken with a grain of salt. It is based on the best available data, reports of pirate attacks which are received and archived by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB). It is suspected, however, that many attacks are not reported, either because the victims are frightened into silence, or do not have the means to report their misfortune, or for myriad other reasons. Piracy is still only poorly understood and hopefully, in the near future, better methods of collecting data on pirate attacks are put in practice, so that we can gain a fuller understanding of trends in this deadly international phenomenon.

The hypothesis which is tested by these data and by the variables which will be introduced next is as follows: “There is a demonstrable connection between modern piracy and weak states, as measured by their economic, military, and political health.” The objective of this thesis is to establish empirically that piracy is 'fueled' by the same sort of state collapse which warlordism feeds off of.

This experiment springs from the discussion of the causes of piracy above. It was noted by several authors that weak government, weak economies, and a weak military were symptomatic of an environment in which piracy could flourish. This study is intended to provide empirical evidence which supports that claim and later claims of this paper.

The Maritime Piracy Dataset (MPD) was compiled by Dr. Bridget Coggins at Dartmouth University (http://www.dartmouth.edu/~govt/faculty/coggins.html) and made available upon request (Coggins 2012). The MPD covers years 2000-2009 and presents information relevant to understanding the nature and context of pirate attacks, including the value of items and monies taken, ransoms paid, the type of vessel used in the attack, who the victim(s) were, and information on each pirate group's suspected country of origin (Coggins 2012, Marshall and Cole 2011). There are over a dozen variables in the MPD which are applied to 146 countries around the world, based on any and all information included in reports of pirate attacks. Of those countries, 122 were used in this study. Those not used were excluded based on a lack of available data. The MPD gives users a glimpse of how tightly the issues of state failure and piracy are linked – the country with the highest rate of pirate production is Somalia, and the United States, Great Britain, and other western powers all rank among the lowest producers.

Before discussing the methods being used explore this study's hypothesis, some operational and conceptual terms will be defined. Coggins's dataset uses the definition of piracy laid down by the UN in Article 101 of its 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea: Piracy is “any illegal act of violence or detention or depredation committed for private

ends by crew of a private craft or persons/property on board such a craft, or any voluntary act of participation or facilitation of such an act" (Coggins 2012). Hence, a pirate is any person who engages in such an act, or aids others in such acts of piracy.

State failure and state fragility are both operational terms reflected in the findings of the State Fragility Index and Matrix 2010, variables of which are a part of this dataset (Marshall and Cole 2011). States are rated in four different areas: Security, Political, Economic, and Social stability. Each area is given its own rating of stability or strength. The term "state failure" is included instead of simply using "state fragility" to account for a small number of countries, like Somalia, which have no practical functioning government. This is a distinction which must be drawn, since piracy can display itself quite differently in a *failed* state as opposed to a *fragile* state, for example Indonesia, which has a functioning (though deeply corrupt) government.

Variables: Table A lists the summary statistics for the dependent and independent variables.

**Table A. Summary Statistics**

| *Pirate Production* | | *Security Effectiveness* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Minimum | 0.00. | Minimum | 0.00 |
| 1st Quartile | 0.00. | 1st Quartile | 0.00 |
| Median | 0.00. | Median | 0.00 |
| Mean | 2.75 | Mean | 0.64 |
| 3rd Quartile | 1.00 | 3rd Quartile | 1.00 |
| Maximum | 211.00. | Maximum | 3.00 |

| *Political Effectiveness* | | *Economic Effectiveness* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Minimum | 0.00 | Minimum | 0.00 |
| 1st Quartile | 0.00 | 1st Quartile | 0.00 |
| Median | 1.00 | Median | 2.0 |
| Mean | 1.03 | Mean | 1.64 |
| 3rd Quartile | 2.00 | 3rd Quartile | 3.00 |
| Maximum | 3.00 | Maximum | 4.00 |

(Source: Coggins 2011)

Piracy itself is measured by the dependent variable *pirateprod*, a variable from Dr. Coggins's dataset which measures the number of pirate attacks attributed to nationals of a given country during a given calendar year, thus giving us an idea of how significant an enterprise piracy is becoming in each country (Coggins 2012). In other words, the variable is a measurement of how many acts of piracy can be attributed to a given country, making it an attractive way to measure the size of the pirate industry in a given country.

]Since the goal of this study is to measure the level of piracy in various countries in relation to these political and social measurements, a  regression test was seen as the most effective method, and so each test is a negative binomial regression. Negative binomial regression was chosen to account for the large amount of 'zero-values' in the dataset, with countries like the United States or Germany experiencing virtually no piracy.

The relative strength of piracy is measured in relation to three key variables from the State Fragility Matrix: *security effectiveness, political effectiveness,* and *economic effectiveness*. Piracy's relationship to these variables will illustrate how effective or ineffective these areas of governmental strength are at stopping or controlling piracy in a given country. The weaker each variable is, the stronger that piracy is in that country.

*Economic effectiveness* is a measurement of the economic strength of a country. Based on the description provided by the State Fragility Index (S.F.I.), *economic effectiveness* measures a country's economic strength, using a 7-year monitoring formula to account for sharp changes in economic fortune and granting the country measured a

numerical ranking, with 4 being the most fragile and 0 being the least fragile economic strength rating (Marshall and Cole 2011).

*Security effectiveness* is a measure of the security of the state and its vulnerability to political violence, again from the State Fragility Index. Following the S.F.I.'s description, *security effectiveness* measures the vulnerability of a state to conflict, taking into account the state's experiences with short or low-level wars and with serious or long-term war; as above, a four-point fragility scale is employed, which represents the state's vulnerability to conflict after the war-effects described above are calculated, and again 0 represents the smallest level of fragility and 4 represents the greatest (Marshall and Cole 2011).

*Political effectiveness* is a measurement of a regime's governance, or political stability. P*olitical effectiveness* is also taken from the State Fragility Matrix, and it is a measurement of a political system's stability: The variable takes into account the durability of the current regime, the number of years the current leader has served, and the total number of coups or attempted coups between 1995-2010. Again a four-point ranking system is used, and again a rank of 0 represents greatest stability and a rank of 4 represents least stability (Marshall and Cole 2011).

Tests for heteroskedasticity and collinearity have been run in order to test the validity of the findings below; a Vuong test has also been run on each variable test, which compares the regular negative binomial test with a zero-inflated model, and tells us which may be preferable. The model betrayed no major signs of collinearity or heteroskedasticity. Though the Vuong test preferred the zero-inflated model, this has been

discounted since the conclusions of the zero-inflated model were consistently far outside the bounds of reasonable expectation. Two variables in particular, *security effectiveness* and *economic effectiveness*, showed results in the zero-inflated model that were nonsensical. Both the zero-inflated and the regular negative binomial tests are outlined in greater detail below to show the disparity between the two models.

**STATISTICAL RESULTS**

In this section the findings of this paper's statistical investigation are outlined and explained, with charts of each model and its descriptive statistics.

Model 1 – Negative Binomial Regression with log link: *seceff, poleff, ecoeff*

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.21745 | 0.19282 | 1.128 | 0.2954 | |
| *seceff* | 0.60138 | 0.08085 | 7.439 | 1.20E-013 | *** |
| *poleff* | -0.13878 | 0.09098 | -1.525 | 0.1272 | |
| *ecoeff* | 0.21076 | 0.08313 | 2.535 | 0.0112 | * |
| Log(theta) | -1.61574 | 0.07599 | -21.261 | <2e-16 | *** |

Descriptives

| Min. | 1st Quartile | Median | 3rd Quartile | Max. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -0.4429 | -0.4202 | -0.2391 | -0.1943 | 19.227 |

*Table 1A*

Model 1 – Zero-inflation Model Coefficients (binomial with logit link)

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 1.1053 | 0.2873 | 3.847 | 0.00012 | *** |
| *seceff* | 0.6579 | 0.4578 | 1.437 | 0.15069 | |
| *poleff* | -0.5993 | 0.3582 | -1.673 | 0.09432 | . |
| *ecoeff* | -3.0177 | 0.9602 | -3.143 | 0.00167 | *** |

*Table 1B*

Table 1A displays the initial findings of the study's first and largest negative binomial test, in which the variables *security effectiveness, political effectiveness,* and *economic effectiveness* were all tested against each other. The intent was to determine if any single variable was proving dominant before looking for close relationships between any pairs, which were suspected to exist based on literary research. It was a straightforward expectation that *security effectiveness* and *economic effectiveness* would be in some way related, given the bottomless well of research linking military and economic strength, but through this first test the nature of those relationships may first be discerned. *security effectiveness* proved to be strongly significant, *economic effectiveness* was significant but not nearly as much of a bomb shell as *security effectiveness,* while *political effectiveness*, in what would prove to be a constant trend, proved insignificant. Table 1B shows the zero-inflated test which was conducted on all negative binomial models in order to apply the Vuong test; the findings of the zero-inflated test stand in direct contrast to those of the negative binomial model and stood in opposition to preliminary expectations. The biggest surprise was the weak significance of *security effectiveness* in the zero-inflated model, which so dominated the negative binomial model. *economic effectiveness* was also weaker, but *political effectiveness* proved to be infinitesimally stronger in the zero-inflated model than its negative binomial counterpart. The findings of the negative binomial test suggested that a country's ability to effectively produce and wield an internal security force was the most important factor in determining its propensity to produce pirates. Economic health was also a significant factor, while the effectiveness of the political order seemed to matter little. The sheer weakness of

*politi* ies

migh to

undermine that assumption.

Model 2 – Zero-inflation Model Coefficients (binomial with logit link)

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -0.8834 | 0.3299 | -2.678 | 0.00741 | ** |
| *seceff* | -13.635 | 483.2625 | -0.028 | 0.97749 | |

*Table 2B*

Table 2A displays the results of the second negative binomial test, in which *security effectiveness* was tested alone to get an idea of its individual significance, granting a better understanding of its behavior and a basis for comparison in other tests. Again, *security effectiveness* performed strongly in this tests, with a strong significance that was not remarkably different from its performance in figure 1A. This test can be considered an important marker of the study – *security effectiveness*'s persistent significance is on display just comparing 2A and 1A. Table 2B was the application of the zero-inflated model for the purposes of the Vuong test, and *security effectiveness* was even less significant here than with the other variables in 1B. The contrast between the

negative binomial and the zero-inflated model is especially remarkable given that *security effectiveness* is the strongest-performing variable in the former but is very nearly as weak as its counterparts in the latter.

Model 3 – Negative Binomial Regression with log link: *poleff*

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.9719 | 0.1831 | 5.307 | 1.12E-007 | *** |
| *poleff* | 0.21 | 0.0941 | 2.232 | 0.0256 | * |
| Log(theta) | -1.9115 | 0.1119 | -17.089 | <2e-16 | *** |

Descriptives

| Min. | 1st Quartile | Median | 3rd Quartile | Max. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -0.3772 | -0.3459 | -0.2781 | -0.2229 | 16.3831 |

*Table 3A*

Model 3 – Zero-inflation Model Coefficients (binomial with logit link)

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -0.3413 | 0.3119 | -1.094 | 0.2739 | |
| *poleff* | -1.4951 | 0.6242 | -2.395 | 0.0166 | * |

*Table 3B*

Table 3A shows the test of *political effectiveness* by itself. This test was spurred by the need to explore *political effectiveness*'s lackluster behavior when in the presence of *security effectiveness* and *economic effectiveness*. Isolation, as can be seen, did the variable few favors. Even by itself, *political effectiveness* was still barely significant, and that weakness was cause to seriously question the impact that the style of government can have on the production of piracy. This is a ripe avenue for further research, especially as the Arab Spring phenomenon continues to rock the governments of many countries that

are notorious for piracy. Table 3B was the zero-inflated model necessary for the Vuong test, and this was the only time in which the negative binomial and zero-inflated models agreed. Both found *political effectiveness* to be weakly significant. Given the zero-

Model 2 - Negative Binomial Regression with log link: *seceff*

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.37258 | 0.12878 | 2.893 | 0.00381 | ** |
| *seceff* | 0.67026 | 0.07966 | 8.414 | <2e-16 | *** |
| Log(theta) | -1.77847 | 0.08605 | -20.669 | <2e-16 | *** |

Descriptives

| Min. | 1st Quartile | Median | 3rd Quartile | Max. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -0.4078 | -0.3202 | -0.3202 | -0.2585 | 18.6974 |

*Table 2A*

inflated model's otherwise total unreliability and general inconsistency, this result is not considered indicative of a positive performance by the zero-inflated regression test.

Model 4 – Negative Binomial Regression with log link: *ecoeff*

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | -0.01465 | 0.21191 | -0.069 | 0.945 | |
| *ecoeff* | 0.51497 | 0.07804 | 6.599 | 4.14E-011 | *** |
| Log(theta) | -1.78074 | 0.07535 | -23.632 | <2e-16 | *** |

Descriptives

| Min. | 1st Quartile | Median | 3rd Quartile | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -0.4061 | -0.3984 | -0.2081 | -0.2081 | 14.512 |

*Table 4A*

Model 4 – Zero-inflation Model Coefficients (binomial with logit link)

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.7084 | 0.268 | 2.643 | 0.00822 | ** |
| *ecoeff* | -4.1164 | 5.0075 | -0.822 | 0.41106 | |

*Table 4B*

Table 4A shows the performance of the negative binomial test with only *economic*

*effectiveness* present – this was a further effort to better describe and understand the relationship between *economic effectiveness* and *security effectiveness*, which was assumed to be in some way significant given their performances in figure 1A and *security effectiveness*'s slight performance variation in figure 2A. Indeed, it is clear from figure 4A that *economic effectiveness* had experienced some sort of compression while *security effectiveness* was present – its significance in this solo test is much stronger. It is possible that the effects of an effective security force simply outweigh those of an economy in the countries present in the Coggins dataset. Table 4B was the zero-inflated model with *economic effectiveness*. *A*gain the findings were nothing like those of the negative binomial model, with *economic effectiveness* nowhere near achieving significance, compared to the strong significance found in the negative binomial model.

Model 6 – Negative Binomial Regression with log link: *poleff, ecoeff*

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.07608 | 0.21379 | 0.356 | 0.722 | |
| *poleff* | -0.12543 | 0.0982 | -1.277 | 0.202 | |
| *ecoeff* | 0.55225 | 0.08502 | 6.495 | 8.29E-011 | *** |
| Log(theta) | -1.75878 | 0.07709 | -22.815 | <2e-16 | *** |

Descriptives

| Min. | 1st Quartile | Median | 3rd Quartile | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -0.4114 | -0.4008 | -0.2346 | -0.1909 | 14.7774 |

*Table 5A*

Model 6 – Zero-inflation Model Coefficients (binomial with logit link)

| | Estimate | Std. Error | *Z*-value | *P*-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.9853 | 0.2955 | 3.334 | 0.0000856 | *** |
| *poleff* | -0.6207 | 0.3841 | -1.616 | 0.106073 | |
| *ecoeff* | -2.7063 | 1.4164 | -1.911 | 0.056038 | . |

*Table 5B*

In the final test *political effectiveness* and *economic effectiveness* were tested together to better understand their behavior without their weighty counterpart *security effectiveness* present. Based on *economic effectiveness*'s behavior with vs. without *security effectiveness*, it was believed that *security effectiveness* might be having a similar repressive effect upon *political effectiveness*. Table 5A shows the negative binomial model results, with *economic effectiveness* roughly as significant as it was in Table 4a. *political effectiveness* shows little change from Table 3A, though it is slightly less significant with *economic effectiveness* alongside than it was alone. Table 5B shows the results of the zero-inflated model, which grant neither variable significance. With this test the zero-inflated model best demonstrated its inability to help accurately explain the relationships in the dataset, a conclusion to be explained further below. This test reinforced perceptions of both *economic effectiveness*'s own robustness and *political effectiveness*'s comparative weakness, given their relatively unchanged performances tested together compared to being tested apart.

These models give us a pattern. *security effectiveness* is consistently the most significant variable when it is present, *economic effectiveness* consistently takes a strong second place, while *political effectiveness* consistently has little or no significance. Given

these results, the ability of a country to muster military force in order to maintain its internal stability seems to have a powerful effect on whether or not it will face serious piracy issues. The comparatively weaker presence of *economic effectiveness* was somewhat surprising, given that many of the nations most notorious for producing pirates and suffering from piracy have weak economies. The biggest surprise is, of course, the apparently ineffectual *political effectiveness,* especially when, as in Table3A, it was tested with both economic and military considerations removed. Time and time again political scientists have pointed to a failure of the political process as a key element in the fall of a country. It has been shown conclusively that countries with orderly, robust political mechanisms are much less likely to fall into chaos than those with dysfunctional power arrangements. Yet *political effectiveness* invariably was non-significant, which would seem to challenge those earlier findings.

Another interesting challenge in this dataset was the behavior of the zero-inflated model. Zero-inflation is a method that has gained ground recently as a way to examine datasets while filtering out zero counts. Given the lack of data and the number of 'question marks' in the data collection process for pirate attacks (as mentioned above, it is highly likely that most pirate attacks are never reported), zero-inflation appeared to be an exciting opportunity to separate out those question marks and get at the hard data beneath. Instead, the zero-inflated model disagreed with the negative binomial model on every test. This also reduced the usefulness of the Vuong test, which was meant to calculate a preference for either the negative binomial or zero-inflated model based on an estimation of their accuracy. Given how spurious and inconsistent the zero-inflated model

was, the Vuong test's findings are cast into doubt. In the future, there will hopefully be even greater resources of data to draw upon then are currently available, which can have zero-inflation and other methods of filtering out zero-counts applied to them. Due to the spotty nature of data collection in this area, zero counts, question marks, and other measurements of uncertainty are an inevitable challenge to scientists undertaking quantitative studies of piracy. Currently, however, efforts to lend this investigation context and weight by contrasting the zero-inflated and negative binomial models were foiled by the zero-inflated test's odd behavior.

## Closing Observations

From these findings we may draw an important conclusion: Piracy and warlordism have a great deal in common and tend to have similar origins. The definition of warlordism used earlier, "Warlords are opportunistic actors that are motivated by political and economic gain, who typically use violent tactics to achieve their aims, and who are the product of dysfunctional states that present them with opportunities to strike out on their own by extracting resources from their state," can very easily be applied to pirates.

Economic Motivation: Pirates, like warlords, are motivated by economic gain. *economic effectiveness*'s steady significance shows that states with weaker economies tend to have more problems with piracy, which is to be expected given that most pirates are not highly skilled laborers. Geiss, Petrig, and Murphy discussed the links between over-fishing, illegal fishing, and piracy in fishing communities, and there is a growing recognition in the global community that unskilled laborers who lose their jobs to

international economic tides do not just fade away. Those working-age men and women will seek other opportunities to support themselves, and piracy is a profession of last resort that requires little skill or equipment beyond resourcefulness, guns, and cheap boats.

Murphy pointed out that piracy is not, in its most basic form, very complicated – small speedboats can easily run down slow-moving or inattentive merchant ships (Murphy 2011). It is relatively easy for anyone to obtain a pistol or rifle, hop in an outboard motor-boat, and hold terrified sailors at gunpoint to demand money...and this is piracy. For farmers, fishermen, and other laborers around the world who have seen their world upended by the growth of new and unfamiliar industries in their lands, piracy may not be an act of malice, but of desperation, and the learning curve to professional piracy is not as challenging as the learning curve that leads to being a professional mechanic, factory worker, or businessperson. One example of this is provided by Liss in 'Maritime Piracy in Southeast Asia': Liss writes of entire villages in islands around Indonesia will sometimes come together and attack passing ships in order to take supplies like food, medicine, and cigarettes – a phenomenon that has occurred with increasing frequency ever since the Asian financial bust of the late '90s and since rampant over-fishing finally began wiping out local fish stocks (Liss 2003). There are millions of people all over the world in similar circumstances, living in relatively uncivilized conditions under the rule of governments plagued by corruption and poverty. The close passage of ships known to be full of food and other important supplies and luxuries is a constant lure, and when economic practices that have sustained communities for generations become impractical

or are sent elsewhere by a fickle economy, piracy becomes a matter of survival.

Warlord organizations are also often full of those with few other options. These organizations tend to be strongest in countries with shattered economies, where work is not constant and agriculture is mainly for subsistence. Womack, as stated above, observed that many soldiers conscripted into the armies of Chinese warlords were illiterate, with no education or military training, and they tended to stay only for a short time – hoping to survive the next battle or sack, take their share of the loot, and head home (Womack 2003). Warlord organizations cannot afford to spend their revenue on salaries that could hope to retain professional ranks of officers, let alone soldiers. Also, since most warlords select their lieutenants through nepotism or sheer leadership ability (Womack 2003), it is unnecessary to spend their fortunes on extensive training. Instead, warlords can reward their soldiers and lieutenants through chunks of loot taken from the battlefield, and their recruits tend to join up for a share of easy fortune, not out of ideological commitment.

In fact, the economic reasoning of these two violent professions are basically indistinguishable. Both tend to recruit from among the poor and uneducated, virtually exclusively favoring males, and rewarding their foot soldiers with loot from successful operations. Warlords simply behave like economical creatures, showing risk-aversion and a calculating financial sensitivity that helps the most successful maintain control over complex organizations of warriors, merchants, political allies, and swathes of territory. This study's data shows that piracy and economic health are inextricably linked, and a wealth of historical data is enough to establish the same where warlordism is concerned.

Capacity for Violence: Warlords rightfully hold a fearsome reputation for

violence. As discussed above, warlord organizations have been accused of some of the most depraved acts of war imaginable, and some commit them with horrifying regularity. Pirates, while not sharing in this reputation for extreme violence, still use physical force and its threat as their main method for capturing loot. All piracy centers around the act of forcibly boarding a vessel and using threats or force to steal valuables and cargo. What makes piracy such a threat is the amount of organization and professionalism that can be brought to this action, as well as the utter helplessness of the usually-small crews of most merchant ships in the face of this organization. On a boat, they literally have nowhere to run.

The use of violence is one of the main ways in which more experienced, successful, and 'professional' piratical organizations distinguish themselves from the far more numerous and much smaller bands of part-time, occasional, or one-time maritime raiders. The pirate gangs of Somalia in particular are renowned for their preference for kidnapping and their use of more powerful assault weapons as well as RPGs and even rockets, though such equipment can be found in the hands of well-organized and well-funded pirate gangs around the world. Pirate gangs become more dangerous with success, using dangerous weapons, faster boats, and GPS and cell phones to transform a raiding rabble into a group of organized hunters.

The most demanding and rewarding act of piracy, that of stealing and re-using a captured ship, also seems to bring the most danger to the crew. According to Liss, pirate gangs capable of the act will board a ship and either force the crew to bring it into a friendly port (at which point they are held for ransom or killed) or kill the crew outright,

though sometimes they are merely forced into lifeboats and left behind (Liss 2003). Liss further reported that pirates are resorting to violence more often, with more assaults and murders being reported by the Piracy Reporting Center (Liss 2003). Simply killing the crew is usually the easiest solution if the pirates feel they can avoid persecution by law enforcement. Ransoming crew members requires that a pirate group have considerable resources, including a place to house, feed, and restrain crew members, access to communications technology allowing them to contact the crew's family members or employers while concealing themselves, and manpower enough to arrange an exchange.

Violence is an integral part of the exercise of power by both pirates and warlords. Their propensity for violence should be seen as the strongest link between the two actors – without violence, they would be something completely different. It is also what makes these actors such a major threat to the international system. Countries with violent behavior patterns can now expect to be curbed by their neighbors and the community at large, as North Korea has learned. Pirates and warlords who exert violent force on those around them have, under the present system of international law enforcement, every reason to expect that they will be rewarded with obedience and loot.

State Collapse: Finally, both warlord organizations and pirates can be linked to state collapse. Menkhaus, Levnez, and Womack have all pointed to the strong ties between the success of warlord organizations and the failure of a state to govern itself or control rebellious elements. All three authors have outlined how warlord organizations can only be strengthened by weakening the state within which they operate – usually, warlord organizations find themselves in direct competition with failing states for control

over land, especially land containing resources like farms, forests, and so forth, thus every victory for the warlord is a loss for the state.

The same logic can be applied to piracy operations. Pirates prey upon the same resources that states utilize to increase their own fortunes. Many pirate victims are fishermen or small-time merchantman boats, but as pirate bands become more successful, wealthy, and organized, they begin to set their sights on more lucrative prey: larger bulk and liquid tankers, for example. Such huge targets come with correspondingly huge risks and huge rewards. Bowden found that a pirate operating off the coast of Somalia can expect to make between $170,000 and $400,000 US in the course of an estimated 5-year career – this opposed to the meager $14,500 GeoPolicity estimates a normal Somali worker in the best available jobs could make over the course of his lifetime (Bowden 2011).

These rewards are more than enough to make pirates try to be as resourceful, ingenious, and daring as possible – and their successes are beginning to show. Bowden pointed out that the costs that merchants and states face from piracy go far beyond the value of the cargo stolen: there are also costs associated with repairing the ship, paying any ransoms, and the delays other boats face in edging around suspected pirate activity, causing delays and pile-ups in port (Bowden 2011). Furthermore, shipping industries, port authorities, and governments respond to these attacks in myriad ways, which bring about even more costs: Naval presences must be paid for, other deterrents like increased police presence or arming sailors funded, insurance premiums on boats and cargo skyrocket (Bowden 2011). Beyond these up-front costs, no country would want to have a

reputation for pirate-infested waters, or the corresponding slowdown in port trade, if it can be avoided. Indeed, the data used in this study shows that most economically successful countries have, as a rule, some of the lowest piracy rates measured.

Pirates are incredibly similar to warlords in that they are both symptoms of state failure and a cause of them. It is beyond this study's scope of inquiry to seriously investigate the causes of piracy, but it is evident that once pirates began to operate out of a country, they make things worse. Somalia's experience shows that pirates are not above approaching corrupt or corruptible government officials (port authorities, policemen, politicians, and so forth) and offering them a cut of the proceeds from their activities in return for assistance in expediting their raids and their efforts to fence or otherwise sell their captured goods. A successful relationship here can only make problems worse – as a pirate band grows more successful it is likely to need more blind eyes from authorities in order to leverage its wealth into more manpower and equipment, and in return corrupted officials get a bigger score with each successful raid. Like so many other relationships between actors involved in state failure, this one is a series of mutually reinforcing factors which gradually causes a country to spiral into lawlessness.

Finally, the line between warlord organization and pirate band is one that has been drawn in shifting sands. Even now, out of Somalia operates one of the most feared pirate groups in the world: the Somali Marines of Puntland are headed by 'warlord' Abdi Mohamed Afweyne – according to Bowden, the Somali Marines have over a thousand members, a military organizational structure, and a dozen distinct financial sponsors (Bowden, 2013). There are several other 'piracy gangs' operating in the Mediterranean –

Suez route, including two with identifiable individual leaders. Overall, pirate bands are seen to follow a very similar structure to warlord organizations – lots of low-ranking fighters who do not regularly participate in piratical operations, a few lieutenants, and a single leader (Bowden 2011). Similar rewards are also meted out, with leaders and their financiers taking the lion's share of the booty while foot soldiers get much more modest amounts - though still enough to finance lifestyles well beyond what normal occupations could afford them (Bowden 2011). The results of this study show that certain countries and economic conditions are more favorable to these organizations than others, those conditions being a weak security presence and a weak economy. The only difference between warlords and pirates is that one group may form in a land-locked country and the other may form near an abundance of shoreline.

## Conclusion

These findings suggest that it is time for the global community to do away with outmoded concepts like warlord and pirate. These words evoke two distinct images, which in turn provoke different policy responses from members of the international peacekeeping community. Warlords are seen as an enemy, pirates as a nuisance. Warlords are seen as single individuals, while their armies are usually ignored or underestimated, while pirates are seen as packs of faceless, roving miscreants – little to no serious scholarly examination of the structure of pirate bands exists, and the term 'pirate lord' is so under-utilized it made little sense to use it even in this study. Yet if we ignore popular conception and examine only the impacts that these actors have upon the world – its markets, its stability, and its degree of human suffering – we see that there is virtually no

difference between the two beyond their conventional means of transport. They are organized similarly, radically alike in their operations, react to similar stimuli, and have comparatively deleterious effects on the health and cohesion of states unlucky enough to let them rise.

Peacekeepers, law enforcement organizations, and countries around the world should implement a policy of re-definition and re-targeting. Warlords and pirates should be seen as symptoms of the same problems, those being state failure and the breakdown of civil society, and deserving of the same policy remedies. History shows us that strong displays of military force can discourage and frighten away both pirates and warlords. Efforts to improve job growth and the economy will mean that there are fewer jobless young men and women to feed the great manpower demands of the most successful of these predatory groups, and more social momentum towards a calm and predictable economy instead of one based on the great risks of warring upon, raiding, and looting neighbors and merchants.

Both pirates and warlord organizations are scavengers. They are non-state aggressors intent on realizing economic, political, and power gain by destabilizing state control and taking advantage of an absence of state forces/political cohesion. The best term to describe these behaviors is 'scavenger-actors.' These are not actors who are intent upon bringing about a new order in their states, nor do they wish to fully confront and defeat the forces of the state they prey upon – they intend to use what force and resources they have to seize control of some territory and extract resources from it. Herein lies the difficulty in confronting such actors. Many standing military forces were shaped by the

experiences of World War II – they feature components of land, air, and sea-bound forces, and are intended to secure their borders, quell armed internal unrest, and counter and repel the conventional armies of other states. Scavenger-actors are often too small, decentralized, and adept at hiding within the population for the comparatively massive but cumbersome might of a conventional military force to be brought to bear against them, just as a big cat of the jungle cannot always defend its kill from the attentions of scavengers who can flee into the underbrush and worry at the edges of the carcass from any direction.

The global community must begin transforming and re-purposing its collective military might. The template that the United States began constructing after 9/11 holds great promise, using human intelligence, electronic surveillance, unmanned devices and projectiles (both ballistic and guided) equipped with cutting-edge technology to kill specific targets from a distance instead of wielding large armies to both bash an area into submission and hunt top-priority enemy leaders. More work needs to be done in the legal and policy-making worlds as well. Laws of the sea and of warfare must be re-written to acknowledge the existence of scavenger-actors, for whom war is a part-time occupation and not a policy-driven pursuit. Actors who use force against non-combatants and police forces instead of conventional military targets for non-political reasons, attacking the innocent for economic and power gains, should be harshly pursued and courts everywhere should be empowered by international treaties to prosecute them for crimes in multiple countries. The legal and law enforcement communities would do well to come together and work together to find ways around respective road-blocks that hamper the

prosecution of an unrelenting worldwide anti-scavenger campaign.

The key in that last sentence is "unrelenting." Man will forever seek dominance, and pirates and warlords are ancient counterparts to statehood and national power structures. There will always be agitators who are more interested in increasing their own wealth and power than any creed, obligation, or law. There will always be predators who simply wish to take from the weak and unprotected. New commitments to stability should not only come soon but also be welcomed with dedication and resolve, or they will crumble and be more harm than help to those that should be protected.

There is so much more we need to know about scavenger-actors. This study and others like it face a serious lack of quantitative data – warlord organizations are difficult to study, pirate bands even more so, and it is challenging to track how much they steal, how much damage they cause, how large and active their organizations are, and what factors lead to their success or dissolution. Furthermore, little is understood about their internal structure: how different or alike is each organization? What styles of leadership, reward, and power-sharing are most common? Can power be transferred from one leader to another? Do certain elements of internal structuring repeat across organizations? There are few studies that attempt to answer these questions, and we can only hope that more will attempt to do so in the future. Finally, it must be acknowledged that there is a great deal of important local and regional history that can have an impact on the formation, evolution, and success of these scavenger-actor bands. Purely qualitative studies will not be able to give us a useful understanding of the inner workings of these groups. Comparative political scientists are badly needed in this pursuit, as studies of the

similarities and differences between various groups could hold important clues to broaden our understanding.

Given these conclusions, it is apparent that researchers must step up their data collection efforts by an order of magnitude. It is clear that looking to international organizations for information on piracy attacks is not enough. Political scientists should actively seek out law enforcement and military officials tasked with anti-piracy operations around the world and engage them in regional data-collection efforts. Contacting local, regional, and international businesses for their data on goods and revenue lost to the predations of scavenger-actors will also be a positive step forward.

Furthermore, pirates and warlord fighters must be the subject of holistic studies, using whatever means are available. The scant information on what factors in one's culture, region, and personal life that lead to a career of piracy is wholly inadequate, and coming to a better understanding of why pirates and fighters chose their paths may well point scientists towards new theories and sources of information.

Finally, political scientists should orient their research on piracy and warlordism towards policy-makers and law enforcement. The international community simply does not have time for political scientists to internally come to a collective understanding of these issues and for that knowledge to work its way out of scholarly circles informally. These problems are real and present, and they demand solutions.

In conclusion, an operational understanding of how scavenger-actors form and operate is still elusive and badly needed, but doing away with unhelpful distinctions like warlord vs. pirate will go a long way towards helping scholars and policy-makers

recognize the global, regional, and local patterns of dysfunction and state failure that create the kinds of opportunities which these scavenger-actors find irresistible.

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