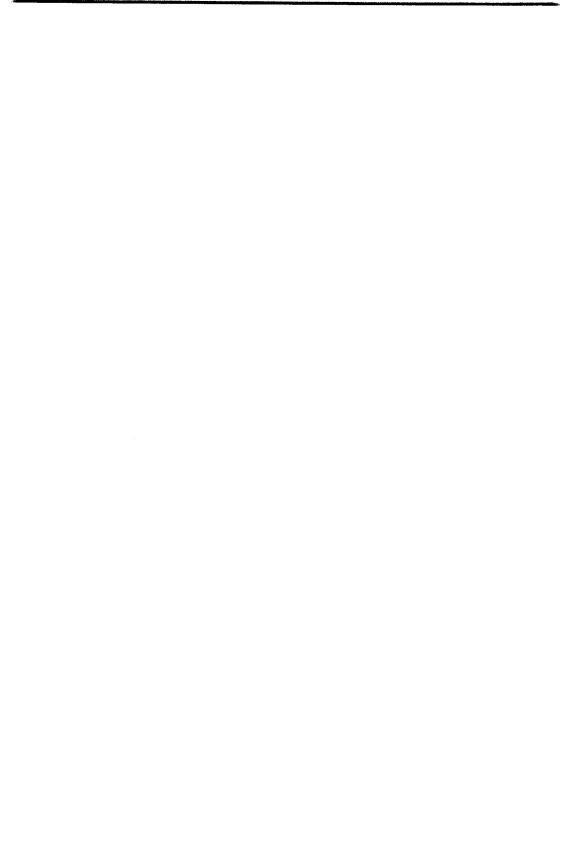# 1

The Analysis of Protracted Foreign Military Intervention

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Foreign military intervention (as with so much else in international politics) goes all the way back to the Pelopponesian Wars, when Athens and Sparta intervened in the civil wars and other internal political conflicts between democrats and oligarchs in other city-states. "It became a natural thing," according to Thucydides, "for anyone who wanted a change of government to call in help from outside."[1] And, of course, as Hans Morgenthau characteristically points out, those being "called in" were motivated by more than just altruism. "From the time of the ancient Greeks to this day," writes Morgenthau, "some states have found it advantageous to intervene in the affairs of other states on behalf of their own interests."[2]

Foreign military interventions, in fact, have not always turned out to be so helpful or advantageous. Consider some salient cases from recent years: *Vietnam*, the quagmire from which the United States could not extricate itself for more than a decade; *Afghanistan*, which became a "bleeding wound" (the term was Mikhail Gorbachev's) for the Soviet Union; *Lebanon*, where Israel suffered its first military defeat, and where Syria only now, after more than fifteen years of civil war, has been able to begin to consolidate political control; *Angola*, where both Cuba and South Africa sent troops, with aid and support from the Soviet Union and the United States, respectively, in what was one of Africa's longest and most destructive wars; and *Sri Lanka*, where India sent its peacekeeping forces, only to have them become another party to a brutal war.

Many of the differences among these six cases are readily evident. The intervenors include superpowers and regional powers, democracies and non-democracies. The target countries have been both distant ones and neighboring ones. The local allies have been both incumbent regimes and insurgent movements. But their key commonality is that each involved a *protracted* foreign military intervention—longer, more costly, and less successful than anticipated. This study originated, as noted in the Preface, out of an interest in exploring the similarities that such otherwise diverse cases might have. Our implicit hypothesis is that such common patterns do exist, and while we do not deny uniqueness, through this comparative analysis we can gain insights about not only the individual cases themselves but also foreign military intervention in general.

In designing this study, we have sought to be self-conscious about

both its scope and its limits. The universe from which we draw our case set of protracted foreign military interventions is a much larger one indeed. There are other cases in which military force has been used but for different goals and according to different strategies; others in which similar objectives were pursued but through different forms of intervention; others in which the foreign military interventions were quicker, more decisive, and more successful. Each of these suggests its own research design, with insights and conclusions to be drawn with their own scope and limits. However, our primary interest in this study is to determine the extent to which common patterns exist among cases in which the interventions did become protracted military ones.

We also have sought to distinguish between the similarities of process and any imputing of a single causal path; i.e., the "equifinality problem," as identified in general systems theory, of automatically taking common outcomes as evidence of common causes. Accordingly, distinct from the aggregate data analyses, macrohistorical approaches, or single-case studies that are more common in the intervention literature, our research design follows what Alexander George has called a "structured, focused comparison." [3] The structuring is in terms of three analytic stages: "getting in," from the initial political commitments to the threshold shift to a major involvement of troops in hostilities within the target state; "staying in," the duration of the military involvement; and "getting out," the military, albeit not necessarily political, disengagement. Within each of these stages we focus on three clusters of factors: the international (strategic, regional), the domestic (intervening state) and the indigenous (target state).

In this initial chapter we have three principal objectives. First, we clarify key concepts and definitions to establish the basis for the comparative analysis. Second, we discuss the significance of the study. Third, we introduce the three-stage analytic framework that provides the comparative structure.

Conceptualization and Criteria for Selection

Part of the problem inherent to the study of any type of intervention is the difficulty in defining the concept. In its most abstract form, intervention is, as noted by Stanley Hoffmann, "practically the same thing as international politics, from the beginning of time to the present." [4] We offer three initial observations to focus our study:

- Foreign military interventions represent only one type of use of military force.
- Only some foreign interventions become military ones.
- Not all foreign interventions end up being protracted ones.

Using these distinctions we then delineate the criteria that define our case set.

Foreign Military Intervention and Classical War

When in January 1991 the Bush administration launched Operation Desert Storm in retaliation for Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, protesters in Lafayette Park across from the White House carried signs saying "Stop the U.S. *Intervention* in the Middle East: No More Vietnams." But as more than a semantical point, this equating of these two most recent major U.S. uses of military force blurs the distinction between classical wars and foreign military interventions. This distinction is based on three factors: the principal domain of conflict, the central objective being pursued and the basic strategy by which military force is being used (figure 1.1).

The difference in the principal domains of conflict can be seen in the essential dictionary definitions of the key terms. War is defined as "armed hostile conflict *between* states or nations," intervention as "to interfere usually by force or the threat of force in another nation's *internal* affairs" (emphases added). The one is an interstate conflict intended to transform the international order. The other is an attempt, as Hoffmann puts it, to "try to affect, not the external activities, but the domestic affairs of a state."[5] Both have consequences and reverberations beyond their principal domains—from the outside in and the inside out, respectively—but the point is not to define their limits so much as differentiate their epicenters.

Figure 1.1
Classical Wars and Foreign Military Interventions

	Classical Wars	Foreign Mil. Interventions
Principal Domain	Interstate	Intrastate
Central Objective	Territorial Conquest	Political authority structure
Basic Strategy	Military-Political	Political-Military

All military conflict, as Clausewitz has so often been paraphrased, is continuation of politics by other means. But classical wars and foreign military interventions also differ in the particular type of politics that constitute the central objective being pursued through these other means. Wars generally seek conquest: direct physical control over territory, destruction of military capabilities, often also destruction of the adversary's economic infrastructure. In foreign military interventions the objective is less to control the territory than shape what Oran Young calls "the political authority structure" of the target state.[6] This is to be done in large part coercively, but nevertheless indirectly, through a local ally who is to be assisted in gaining or maintaining power.

With respect to strategy, all wars are not politics by the same "other means." Classical wars tend to be fought with strategies that are primarily military and secondarily political. The armed forces of the attacking state seek to defeat the armed forces of the target. Military forces vs. military forces, decided on the battlefield by the capacity of one side to prevail militarily over the other. Special operations, psychological warfare, counter-terrorism and other unconventional and more political strategies have roles to play, but these are largely supplementary and supportive ones. In foreign military interventions the relative balance is reversed, becoming what can be analytically characterized as a political-military strategy: the goals being pursued are much less readily translatable into operational military objectives, while prevailing militarily is less of a sufficient basis for achieving these objectives. The intervenor thus must seek not only to defeat the adversary on the battlefield, but also to build political support for his local ally. Moreover, although conventional military capabilities have some utility, the fighting goes more to the unconventional, particularly counterinsurgency guerrilla warfare and anti-terrorism.

Thus, the U.S. uses of military force in the Persian Gulf and in Vietnam constitute fundamentally different uses of military force, classical war and foreign military intervention, respectively. The war with Iraq was, in the tradition of World War I and II, fundamentally an interstate war. It began with a naked act of aggression, an attempt by one state (Iraq) to conquer another (Kuwait). The central (albeit not the only) objective pursued by the U.S.-led multinational coalition was to reverse this conquest and to restore internationally recognized territorial boundaries. The principal strategy for achieving this objective was a military one: to directly engage the enemy in combat, and to defeat him by prevailing on the battlefield. In fact,

Operation Desert Storm was consciously stopped short of assuming the role of remaking the internal political order in Iraq (although this objective was at least partially pursued by other means).

In Vietnam, as Larry Berman shows in his chapter, the U.S. strategy was, in contrast, principally a political one: less to directly defeat the adversary than, in Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's memorable phrase, to win "the hearts and minds" of the people. The central objective had more to do with politically shaping the internal order and less to do with militarily altering the international order. Prevailing on the battlefield thus was both less central in and of itself and more contingent on the other and more political aspects of the overall intervention strategy. As one noted Vietnam veteran (namely General H. Norman Schwarzkopf) later reflected,

> When you commit military forces, you ought to know what you want that force to do. You can't kind of say, "Go out and pacify the entire countryside." There has got to be a more specific definition of exactly what you want that force to accomplish. . . . But when I harken back to Vietnam, I have never been able to find anywhere where we have been able to clearly define in precise terms what the ultimate objectives of our military were.[7]

It also is in this sense that the Syrian and Israeli interventions in Lebanon have something in common with each other and with India's intervention in Sri Lanka that they don't have with the 1948, 1956, 1967 or 1973 Arab–Israeli interstate wars, or that the India–Sri Lanka case doesn't have with India's 1965 and 1971 wars with Pakistan. The other Arab–Israeli wars and the India–Pakistan wars were interstate ones. The objectives were direct military defeat of the adversary, and the strategies largely conventional military ones. But for both Syria and Israel in Lebanon, and for India in Sri Lanka, as our case studies will show, the objectives were much more political and the strategies much more unconventional—in effect, very different uses of military force than either country had ever before attempted.

A related distinction can be made between the Angolan case, with its stakes of political control, and other recent African cases that have involved attempts at territorial conquest, such as the Libyan–French conflicts in the 1970s and 1980s over the Aouzou Strip in Chad. While there was some intermeshing of the internal and interstate conflicts, as Libya and France each sided with already warring factions in the ethnically driven Chadian civil war, Dominique Moisi points out that the defining characteristic of French military involvements in Africa

over the past twenty years has been a shift from its earlier immediate post-colonial efforts "aimed at stabilizing leaders of regimes" to defending francophone African states from "external threats."[8] France thus withdrew its troops once an accord was reached with Libya, even though the Chadian government remained embattled from within as the internal political conflict persisted.

Military and Other Forms of Intervention

Military interventions are neither the only nor even the most frequent strategy of intervention. According to Richard Little, they represent "only a small segment of the intervention field."[9] In one study, for example, of thirty-two cases of superpower intervention between 1945 and 1987, only eight involved direct commitments of combat troops.[10] Other possible alternative interventionary strategies range from what Little calls the "verbal intervention" of demarches and other declaratory diplomacy, to economic carrots and sticks of aid and sanctions, to intelligence activities and covert actions, to military strategies short of full-fledged direct intervention (aid, training, advisers, even sporadic incursions).[11] All of these constitute efforts to coercively influence the internal political order of another state. And any or all may be pursued prior to or in addition to crossing the threshold of the direct, continuous, and massive involvement of national military forces.

There are two distinct analytic advantages, methodological and qualitative, to positing this threshold and focusing on cases which cross it. The methodological advantage is that the conceptual boundaries problem, which has plagued more general and inclusive studies of intervention, is mitigated. There never has been agreement—as a matter of analysis, let alone of international law—as to where the lines of state sovereignty are to be drawn. Therefore, it is difficult to determine which actions cross those lines as to become interventionary, or whether particular circumstances (e.g., emergencies, crises, wars) or espoused justifications (ideological, moral, humanitarian) matter.[12] Consequently, as James Rosenau laments, "so many diverse activities, motives, and consequences are considered to constitute intervention that the key terms of most definitions are ambiguous and fail to discriminate empirical phenomena."[13] It even has been argued that nonintervention, or what Hoffmann terms "non-acts," if assessed in terms of effects rather than processes, can be considered

intervention. This, according to Rosenau, "is the height of definitional vagueness."[14]

With the military intervention subset, however, the empirical referents are much more reliable. "It is relatively easy," as Frederic Pearson points out, "to identify troop or force movements, and this definition avoids the ambiguities of others." Pearson further distinguishes between cases in which "troops undertook some direct military action, as opposed to longer term relatively inactive encampment on bases," focusing in his studies only on the former.[15] In a somewhat similar manner, Melvin Small and J. David Singer use the commitment of one thousand troops to the battle zone as one of their criteria for "internationalized civil wars."[16] There is some range to the levels of troop commitments in our cases, ranging as high as the 550,000 troops the United States committed in Vietnam, but little ambiguity to the fact that significant numbers of combat troops were committed in all six cases.[17]

The qualitative advantage is that of the inherently greater importance, in terms of both salience and impact, of military interventions. "Issues which are present" in other types of intervention, as Little notes, "become critical" when troops are directly involved.[18] As is quite evident in our six cases, there is a difference of kind, not just degree, when the intervenor sends his own troops in. It reverberates globally and regionally in an entirely different way than other forms of intervention. It also poses particularly sharp issues within the domestic politics of the intervening state, with riskier potential costs that may be imposed and constraints that may be activated. It also interacts within the target state in ways, and with the potential for a negative synergy, that are much less likely with other types of intervention.

Protracted and Quick-Decisive Foreign Military Interventions

As acknowledged at the outset, not all foreign military interventions become protracted ones. Other cases, such as the U.S. interventions in the Dominican Republic (1965), Grenada (1983) and Panama (1989), and the Soviet interventions in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968), are more aptly characterized as "quick-decisive" foreign military interventions.[19]

The question of why some military interventions become protracted and others do not cannot be conclusively answered based on

this study, although in our final chapter we do offer some proposi-
tions for further testing. As a matter of conceptualization, the distinc-
tion between protracted and quick-decisive military interventions can
be operationalized in terms of three descriptive factors: (a) the dura-
tion of the military intervention, as measured from the introduction
of combat troops to their final withdrawal or draw-down to pre-
intervention levels of noncombat stationed forces; (b) the severity of
the intervention, as measured by casualties suffered by the inter-
venor; and (c) the net outcome, in terms both of the intervenor's
intended vs. realized objectives, and of the costs he incurred.

The patterns are striking ones indeed. The differences in the dura-
tion of the military interventions are between years and even de-
cades, vs. matters of months, weeks, and even days. The shortest of
our cases were the 1982–85 Israeli intervention in Lebanon and the
1987–90 Indian intervention in Sri Lanka. The other four cases (U.S.
in Vietnam, Soviet Union in Afghanistan, Syria in Lebanon, Cuba
and South Africa in Angola) were all of 10 years duration or more.
On the other hand, in Panama, for example, the U.S. forces landed
in the middle of the night on December 21, 1989 and had achieved
most of their objectives by the time the American public woke up the
next morning (although it did take about another week to actually
capture Manuel Noriega). Similarly, in the Dominican Republic, within
five days of the April 28, 1965 invasion, U.S. troops had achieved
their objectives. Troop withdrawals from the Dominican Republic
began by late May; by mid-June, all Marines had been withdrawn;
by mid-November, only one airborne brigade remained.[20] And in
Hungary, according to Condoleeza Rice and Michael Fry, the "out-
come was secured within 24 hours" of the November 4 invasion.[21]
Some strikes, demonstrations, and violent resistance continued, but
the situation was sufficiently stabilized four months later for the
Soviets to begin to draw down their troops. In Czechoslovakia the
first Soviet troops were withdrawn within four months, and within
eight months the "decisive result" of Gustav Husak's election as
party secretary had been achieved.[22]

The intervenor casualty levels also strike a strong contrast.[23] Com-
pare the 23 casualties the U.S. suffered in Panama, and the 230,398 it
suffered in Vietnam; or the 0 Soviet casualties in Czechoslovakia and
an estimated 75,000 in Afghanistan. In the other four protracted
cases, casualties also were considerable. The Israeli absolute number
was lower than the others, but both on a per capita basis and in
comparison to Israel's 1967 and 1973 interstate wars, it takes on much
greater significance.

While less strictly quantifiable, the differences in net outcomes also strike a strong and discernible pattern. This is *not* to make a simple dichotomy of successes and failures. In one of the protracted cases, Cuba in Angola, the intervenor paid a stiff price but did achieve some of its objectives. In another case, Syria in Lebanon, while at a substantially higher cost and much larger duration, political control eventually was imposed. Nor were there absolutely no gains for India in Sri Lanka, or even arguably for the Soviets in Afghanistan and the U.S. in Vietnam. And on the other side, the successes achieved by the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and the United States in Latin America were less than total: a "Prague Autumn" ultimately came, some twenty-one years later; even without Noriega Panama is far from stable. The overriding point, however, is to assess the relative gains weighed against the relative costs on an intra-case basis, and to draw cross-case comparisons accordingly.

Summary: Criteria for Case Selection

These three conceptual delimitations yield three key criteria that define and delimit our case set. Our focus is on cases in which (a) political influence was pursued by one state within another by attempting to install or maintain in power a local ally, (b) through a variety of strategies culminating in the direct use of military troops, (c) in an intervention that proved to be protracted. This set of cases, of which the six included herein are representative, can be distinguished from classical wars, other strategies of intervention and quick-decisive military interventions.

Why Study Foreign Military Interventions

The rationale for studying foreign military intervention is essentially twofold. First is the salience of the phenomenon. When foreign military interventions become protracted, as our cases show, they tend to be seminal events. They come to involve considerable investment of human and material resources and affect the fate of individual leaders as well as the political, social, and economic fortunes of both the intervening and the target countries as a whole. Moreover, quite often their consequences transcend the bilateral context and reverberate throughout the regional and even the international system. In many cases the process, let alone the outcome of the inter-

vention continues to affect policies and destinies long after the intervention itself has ended. In this respect, as noted, protracted foreign military interventions have much in common with major interstate wars.

Second is its persistence over time. It is true, as numerous studies have shown, that foreign military interventions were undertaken with particular frequency during the Cold War, and that this could at least be partially attributed to certain system specific factors characteristic of the Cold War era. First, to use Morton Kaplan's term, the "loose bipolar structure" made for zero sum calculations in which each bloc had interests both in "preventing internal changes within the political systems of its members that would move the state out of the bloc or, what is worse, into the other bloc . . . [and in] attempting to bring about changes in the political life of the members of the other bloc that would remove them from that bloc and that might possibly produce a switch in bloc affiliation."[24]

Second, the nuclear balance for its part is also frequently cited as a facilitator if not instigator of military interventions, although there is some disagreement as to whether its instability or stability best explains the link between strategic nuclear deterrence and foreign military interventions in the Third World. Thomas Schelling, among others, has argued that because perceptions of resolve are such a crucial component of the credibility of nuclear deterrence and since you can never be sure when an adversary is taking your measure, the avoidance of nuclear war often required the use of military force at lower levels of violence. Stanley Hoffmann sees it more as "compensation," that it was the very stability of strategic nuclear deterrence that left "ample room for interventions aimed at changing the international milieu by affecting the domestic political make-up of other countries."[25] Either way, a link is postulated.

A third factor was ideology. Even Hans Morgenthau acknowledged that for all the need for realpolitik, the Cold War was "a revolutionary age," in which not just power but also fundamentally conflicting views of the social order were at stake.[26] While ideological arguments have never held up as a sufficient basis for explaining either U.S. or Soviet interventions, the pronouncements of American doctrines (Truman, Eisenhower, Reagan) and of Soviet Marxist-Leninist solidarity were not to be discounted totally. Nor did ideology only come into play for the great powers. It clearly was a key motivation for Cuban intervention in Africa. French interventions in ex-colonies also had their ideological dimensions, although less about

communism-anticommunism than about fulfilling this next stage of what in colonial days was considered the national "mission civilia-trice."[27]

There are, however, alternative explanations for the recurrence of foreign military interventions in the Cold War era. These largely center around other factors which came into play during this period that interacted with but were not attributes per se of the Cold War system. The most ubiquitous such factor was the end of colonialism and the creation of many new nation-states. With more nations the opportunities for military intervention, of course, increased. In addition, the difficulties of the early stages of nation-building, especially when combined with economic development and overcoming poverty, meant that many of these new nations also were highly unstable. This is evident in the data collected by J. David Singer and Melvin Small, who identify only 62 civil wars from 1816 to 1945, but 43 from 1945 to 1980; by Luigi Sensi, who puts the number of civil wars at 59 for 1945–1987; by Evan Luard, who characterizes 73 of the 127 wars since 1945 as "internal"; and by Istvan Kende, who finds an increase in the percentage of "not frontier wars" from 73 (1900–1940) to 85 percent.[28]

Moreover, even if these alternatives to the Cold War explanation of the frequency of foreign military intervention in recent decades did not exist, one could validly argue that foreign military intervention is neither a uniquely modern phenomenon, *nor necessarily one that may be a matter of the past now that the Cold War is behind us.* As Oran Young stresses, intervention in the domestic affairs of other states "has been a recurrent fear of the history of international politics." Young cites some of the examples noted earlier from the Pelop-ponesian era, as well as imperial Rome, which "occupied a position of such dominance in the international system that it could intervene in the affairs of most of the lesser actors in the system with virtual impunity"; from Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries and especially in the Napoleonic and post-Napoleonic periods, in which "the continuing ideological appeal of the French Revolution combined with the power of Napoleonic France to produce a state of ferment in Europe in which intervention and counterintervention became the order of the day."[29] Military interventions were a crucial component in Metternich's design for maintaining the stability of the multipolar Concert of Europe, the way to make compatible a renunciation of conquest with the need to maintain ancien regimes against internal revolution.[30] Also, in the late nineteenth century, even when the

balance of power was operating effectively, it was able to "dampen" interventions but not to stop them. In fact, Hoffmann argues that military interventions were inherent in the very logic of the balance:

> The very indifference of the balance towards domestic regimes made it perfectly possible at times for one particular country to intervene in the domestic affairs of a state without being stopped by the others . . . [Thus] when the Russians came in to help the Austrians crush revolutions in Austria or in Hungary, and when the Russians again intervened to crush revolutions in Poland, nobody did anything about it.[31]

Additional examples also can be cited from the early twentieth century, such as the Spanish Civil War, in which Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy intervened (including with elite military units) on the side of Franco.

A further point is that foreign military interventions have not been uniquely characteristic of any particular type of state. The Kantian link between democracy and war proneness does not hold for foreign military interventions.[32] The range of domestic political systems among the intervenors in this study, for example, is quite broad. There are democracies (the United States, Israel, India), partial democracies (South Africa), totalitarian political systems (the Soviet Union) and highly personalized dictatorships (Cuba, Syria). When one also considers that historically the United States has undertaken more military interventions than any other single country, the agnostic nature of the relationship between the type of domestic political system and a propensity for military intervention is further reinforced. And it surely is not the case, late 1980s Soviet behavior toward Eastern Europe notwithstanding, that there is something about non-democracies that disposes them not to be intervenors.

Rather foreign military intervention is one of those phenomena endemic in the quasi-anarchic nature of the international system, irrespective of its particular structure and the particular types of domestic political systems of its major actors. Thus there is no international system structure known in the past or imaginable in the future which is either reassuringly preventive or comfortably non-conducive. Foreign military interventions are even consistent with idealist, realist, and Marxist interpretations of state behavior, which only differ in the attribution of the relative weights to the specific incentives driving the intervention. And while no definitive answer can be given to the question of the frequency at which foreign military interventions might recur now that the Cold War is finally over, there does not appear to be sufficient reason to believe that the future

will be any different from the past. They have more to do with the capabilities to intervene, which always have been there and are likely to increase in the future, and with the opportunities to do so. Both have been present within all past system structures—and as we will discuss in the concluding chapter, are likely to be so within any future system structure.

Taken together, the persistence and the salience of the foreign military intervention phenomenon, thus provide a rather solid rationale for studying it. This rationale is further reinforced by certain limitations of earlier studies in this area, which have looked at foreign military intervention using different perspectives and research strategies.

Design of the Study

"Scholarly writings on the problem of intervention," James Rosenau observed more than twenty years ago, "are singularly devoid of efforts to develop systematic knowledge on the conditions under which interventionary behavior is initiated, sustained and abandoned."[33] Our study seeks to contribute to this broader theoretical development through its "bounded generalizability." Previous sections of this chapter have sought to be explicit about the boundedness; i.e., about what our cases are not. The generalizability has three bases.

First, as a comparative study, we are able to identify patterns rather than just single-case phenomenon. The existing body of empirical research is rich in single-case studies. These have considerable virtues, notably depth and richness of detail; but for purposes of theory building single-case studies also suffer from profound limitations, most prominently in overemphasizing the unique features of each case.[34] Thus, while past case studies of intervention have provided rich insights into individual historical instances of intervention, their overall contribution to the study of the intervention phenomenon has been circumscribed by their limited generalizability. Our study takes a broadly based comparative perspective, similar to the one adopted by George and Smoke for the study of deterrence, and by Katzenstein and his collaborators for the study of foreign economic policy.[35]

Second, while limited in their "type" to protracted military interventions, our cases are inclusive of substantial variations among the who, what, when, where, why, and how. The intervenors included

superpowers (the United States, Soviet Union), regional powers (Syria, Israel, South Africa, India) and revolutionary powers (Cuba). They were both democracies (United States, Israel, India, South Africa at least partially) and non-democracies (Soviet Union, Syria, Cuba). The target countries were both distant countries (Vietnam, Angola for Cuba) and neighboring ones (Afghanistan, Lebanon for both Israel and Syria, Angola for South Africa, Sri Lanka). The local allies were incumbent regimes in need of buttressing (Ky-Diem in Vietnam, Karmal-Najibullah in Afghanistan, MPLA in Angola), insurgents seeking power (the Lebanese Maronite Phalange for Israel, the Angolan MPLA initially and UNITA throughout), and in some cases the intervenor switched local allies over the course of the intervention (Syria in Lebanon, India in Sri Lanka).

Third, adapting Alexander George's comparative case methodology, there is both a "structuring" and a "focusing" to the design of our study. The three analytic stages—getting in, staying in and getting out—provide the structuring. The focusing is in terms of a common set of questions asked of each case at each stage of three levels of analysis: the international system, the domestic context of the intervening state, and the "indigenous terrain" of the target state. This three-stage analytic framework gives the study depth and richness. Much of the existing literature, as noted by Rosenau, principally focuses on the initiation of military interventions, with much less attention to the staying in and getting out stages. Yet the dynamics cannot be fully understood and the dilemmas revealed without this more systematic analytic approach. In fact, our three stages correspond rather well to Rosenau's initiation, sustaining, and abandoning. It is thus the very "protractedness" of our cases that gives them the multidimensionality necessary for such a comprehensive approach.

The "Getting In" Stage

Taking stock of what we know about why and when states initiate military interventions reveals, in fact, how little we know. It has been said to be "implicit in the logic of the situation. . . . that every internal war creates a demand for foreign intervention." [36] Yet, as noted, states do not always intervene in internal wars, and when they do, military intervention is not the most frequent form. Nor do we get much further via the concept of "vital interests," as in the proposition that states intervene when "vital interests are unmistakably and

imminently threatened."[37] Perceptions may then be introduced, as in Morgenthau's even more general proposition that statesmen are "guided in their decisions . . . by what they regard as their respective national interests."[38] There is, however, circularity here in that intervention is said to occur when a vital interest is at stake, and that we know an interest is vital when intervention occurs. Moreover, one of the points that is clear from the historical literature is that decisions to intervene militarily tend to be arrived at gradually and reluctantly. Even in cases which turned out quick and decisive, decision makers opted for military intervention only after other options had been attempted and, seemingly at least, exhausted as well.[39] Yet ultimately some rationale was accepted as compelling, and the decision to "get in" was made.

We thus have posed a number of key questions about the getting in stage of all of our cases: What alternative strategies for exerting political influence were attempted prior to the commitment of combat troops? Why, how, and when was the decision taken to escalate to military intervention? In particular, to what extent was it prompted by an inability to attain the objectives through alternative strategies, a change in the assessment of the threats being posed, and/or a change in the objectives being pursued? Which other considerations (domestic, international) other than the immediate problem posed by the civil strife in the foreign country influenced the decision how and when to intervene? Finally, what were the key tenets of the initial military intervention strategy, in terms of the translation of political goals into military objectives, risk assessments, and the relationships with the local ally?

In answering these questions for each case and then drawing the cross-case comparison, as Charles Kupchan does in his chapter, we are interested in understanding the dynamics of the process by which the critical threshold is crossed from other forms of intervention to the direct and massive commitment of combat troops. We approach this not as a single decision but as a process—as a series of small steps and as the result of a complex interaction of forces. Moreover, as George Downs also discusses in his chapter, it is a process in which uncertainties are inherent .

It is especially the similarities but also the differences, among the cases which interests us both with respect to the paths by which they moved to a direct massive military involvement and in the relative importance of international, domestic, and indigenous factors. What was the relative importance of such international factors as broader global and/or regional interests? What were the key alignments in the