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How They Fight:
Accountability, Ideology, Organization and Rebel Strategy

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**How They Fight:
Accountability, Ideology, Organization and Rebel Strategy**

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Abstract

How They Fight: Accountability, Ideology, Organization and Rebel Strategy

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Why do rebel strategies vary? In this master's report, I provide evidence that strategy as a whole—rather than individual aspects of insurgent behavior such as military doctrine, negotiating behavior, and civilian administration—is the appropriate level of analysis. In doing so, I discuss competing theories and address their successes and failures in explaining certain aspects of rebel behavior. Next, I present evidence of three factors—ideology, organization, and accountability—that I have identified as having interactive but distinguishable effects on rebel doctrine and negotiations. Finally, I close with a research plan that delineates a more detailed course of study for this project.

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A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

I avoid the term “terrorist group” here, referring solely to insurgents or rebels. First, the groups I primarily discuss are more frequently political actors motivated by concerns within a single state, rather than the more famous international terrorist groups like the Red Army Faction, al Qaeda, or Aum Shinrikyo. My focus is on those organizations which work within the confines of the international state system, primarily seeking either to change the regime under which they live or enable internationally-sanctioned secession. Second, following Bruce Hoffman (2006), I define terrorism as the creation of fear by the use or threat of violence with psychological repercussions beyond the targeted population, often perpetrated by groups with little territorial control. It thus represents a tactic—an aspect of military doctrine—that seeks political ends given a set of material and human resources. I reject the term “terrorist group” in that organizations which use terrorism may combine it with other strategies (e.g. the Tamil Tigers, which organized suicide bombers and conventional armed forces) or alter their doctrine over time (e.g. Hezbollah, which utilized suicide bombers in the 80s but is now much closer to a conventional army). “Terrorism” will be used, but “terrorist group” is too restricted.

Further, I define strategy as the combination of all tools utilized by insurgents in rebellion. It takes the outcome (defined by ideology) as given, and attempts to find the best way of reaching that goal, encompassing military behavior (doctrine), control and mobilization of civilian resources (administration), and interaction with the state

(negotiation). It changes over time as ideology, accountability, rebel organization, technology of rebellion, and external environment shift. I operationalize rebel strategy on a scale of risk-acceptance and coherence, prioritizing how rebels succeed at changing their strategy over time (adaptation) and whether actions follow a common purpose across the rebel group (cohesion).

CIVIL WAR

War is merely the continuation of politics by other means. We see, therefore, that war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse carried on with other means. What remains peculiar to war is simply the peculiar nature of its means.

Carl von Clausewitz, 1832

As noted by Clausewitz, war is a continuation of politics rather than its replacement. This statement provides a particularly apt description of civil war, a contest that is fundamentally about the nature of a political unit or, in the cases of wars of secession, the creation of two new units and the transformation of vertical politics (state-region) to horizontal (state-state). Civil wars thus do not begin where “normal” politics ends; rather, just as coercion provides the backdrop to normal politics (in the sense of a legitimate monopoly on the use of violence), they represent the open use of another tool in domestic contestation over power. The means, as Clausewitz notes, may be different, but the fundamental questions of power are not.

Yet within this grand scope there exists substantial diversity of means of achieving political ends. For the purposes of this report, I distinguish three distinct aspects: doctrine, negotiations, and administration. However, just as I argue that doctrine is properly studied as a unified whole (building on those who focus on one aspect, such as suicide bombings), there exists a clear relationship between combat, peace-making, and relations with civilians. Rebels’ choice on each dimension (even if that means no action, such as refusing negotiations) is the manifestation of the broader category of

“rebel strategy.” This link is evident in case studies (Dingley 2012, Lintner 1999, Connable and Libicki 2009) as well as game theoretic and large-n empirical research (Hultquist 2013, Thomas, Reed, and Wolford 2016, Heger and Jung 2015). Thus, while combat, peace-making, and administration are at times distinct and vary independently, my core contention is that they can substitute for or complement each other, contingent on background variables.

Doctrine concerns the where, when, how, and why of the use of force. This can include, but is not limited to, suicide bombings, recruitment, violence against civilian, a preference for the strategic or tactical offensive (including initiation of combat), prohibition of certain weapons or tactics, and formation size. I discuss why these are all properly combined under the single concept of doctrine, a discussion which anticipates my treatment of doctrine, negotiation, and administration as a unified whole of “strategy.”

Strategy thus comprises a set of goals for the insurgency along with defined means of achieving them, with attention to whether these goals are reassessed over time (e.g. updating based on information about state repressive capacity or true popularity) and whether there is some effort to link the types of violence used to the political aims of the movement (e.g. ostensible ethnic secessionist rebels prioritizing survival of the movement). Several strategies were common at certain points in time (e.g. the Maoist people’s war or Che’s *foco*), but some movements have had to substantially modify or

create theirs *de novo*. There is an evolutionary aspect to this process, with fitter strategies surviving and inspiring imitators, which in turn adapt to local conditions.

To further clarify the scope conditions, civil wars comprise up to four components—an initial spark, conflagration into full conflict, change within insurgent institution during prolonged war, and finally resolution. Different variables the literature has identified (grievances, ethnicity, greed, development, and political uncertainty) play distinct roles in each stage. The social movement literature speaks best to first and second phases, the second reflects Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Buhaug (2013) as well as much of the literature on civil war occurrence,¹ but my focus in this report is on the third stage, when neither the state nor insurgency fall immediately. Note that in defining civil wars in this manner, I don't mean to imply a teleological course. Wars can stop at any point, and change and adaptation is far from inevitable in insurgency.

In this work, I follow the arguments of Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Buhaug in arguing that there is a distinct role for group-level grievances in the outbreak of civil war. They find that political inequality, particularly when combined with economic inequality, promotes the outbreak of violence by ethnic populations. Leaving aside questions of how these ethnicity is created and defined (Chandra 2006), they treat “horizontal inequality” (between groups) rather than “vertical inequality” (among individuals) as a psychological

¹ See Blattman and Miguel 2010 for a review of the role of ethnicity, resources, information, commitment problems, and institutional failure.

impulse to rebellion. As such, they find civil war emerges where groups have both reason for distrusting dominant political actors and no means of addressing their disenfranchisement. This often leads to civil wars being cast in defensive terms by both sides, with the rebels portraying themselves as backed into a corner from which no legitimate escape avenue is offered. Whether this is objectively true (and Hoffman notes that many terrorist groups, even in democratic societies, use similar language), this language of defensive war has powerful legitimization effects, and influences recruitment and the willingness of rebels to end a war.

In this project, I shall avoid overemphasizing combat, and keep the focus away from decisive battles during the insurgency. While in some insurgencies certain battles may have been decisive (e.g. Insein in Burma, Lintner 1999) because they prompted quick state collapse, helped the rebels achieve publicity, or shifted the terrain of combat, these are few and far between. Government offensives often bog down as lack of logistics and capacity undercuts the projection of power, or the temporary defeat of insurgent forces isn't finalized when the state is unable to provide governance and remove the insurgent networks. I follow Nolan (2017) in arguing that "victory must usher in political permanence;" where it does not, and where potential insurgents hope for a better political settlement, the war is not over.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

This research will provide a deeper knowledge of multiple aspects of insurgent behavior, both in linking choices by the insurgency and understanding the factors that change insurgent strategy over time. Conceptually, this report will find where rebels exhibit a coherent strategy, demonstrate that choice of strategy can be inferred from congruent behavior, and predict how rebels will respond to unexpected developments while following the same strategy. In terms of measurement, it will define an appropriate scale, from more to less risk-seeking, of insurgent strategy. In terms of causal relationships, it will show how these more aggressive groups respond to changes in resources, and will also determine the factors that lead to shifts in strategy over time.

This project will also contribute to the civil war literature by linking insurgent strategy to the prevailing trends in domestic politics. Contra the “new war” theory (Kaldor 1999), I will argue that changes in the nature of politics are responsible for the emergence of insurgents seemingly more focused on money than ideology. Shifting constraints, resources, routines, and objectives outside the sphere of conflict are primarily responsible for the normative condemnation to which new civil wars are subject. Where politics is about the patrimonial distribution of resources, it is no surprise civil wars come to serve the same function. Similarly, where politics becomes identity-based, it is no surprise when civil wars serve to reify the group and seek to transform the political terrain by changing the *polis* or targeting civilian populations.

Thus, we should not dismiss claims around language and cultural rights as cover for economic grievances, nor dismiss economic claims as abnormal, but rather respect them as legitimate components of normal, non-violent politics. I further argue that not only do political debates in civil wars mirror those of normal politics, but that the organizations of insurgency mirror those of their host states (or whatever networks they emerge from). I suggest this has two principal causes: first, that just as states are subject to contextual pressures that shape their institutions, so are insurgencies (subject to differing historical context and sequences); and second, that insurgents will mimic those organizations they are most familiar with. Thus, we should expect more variation among transnational insurgencies such as ISIS, Chechen rebels, or Afghan fighters, while those in localized conflicts, drawing on local networks, should be similar to their opponents.

These suggest connections to historical institutionalism and theories of institutional persistence, which this project will shed light on. In this organizational research, I will use literature on political parties, testing the extent to which armed bodies face similar organizational challenges and play comparable roles in society. I will follow the institutionalist literature in seeing sequence and timing as critical.

Further, this research will break down the traditional dichotomy between wars of secession and wars of governance. It will challenge this dichotomy on three grounds: first, that rebellions that seek to secede are inherently about the nature of the state that remains; second, that there exists a range in between these that prevents a bright line; and third, that such goals are endogenous to the conflict. To the first point, the opposition of

the Turkish, Pakistani, Indonesian, and Burmese militaries to their ethnic secessionist movements is explicable in terms of the perceived harm to a national identity and the dominant nation-building project such a change would bring. To the second, there exist a range of regional changes short of outright independence, including cultural rights, federalism, and autonomy. Taking place in the shadow of the future, these changes prevent us from distinguishing between regional and national political changes, or full secession vs. more limited forms of sovereignty. Some options (such as federalism) necessitate changes to the whole governing structure, while others are initially confined to a single territory. Yet both pose questions about future political shifts they may justify, both for the ethnic group or region making the deal and for other restive organizations that may use one territory's privilege to claim their own communal rights. To the third point, desired outcomes are endogenous to the course of the conflict, and it makes little sense to distinguish secessionist (or, as Fearon 2004 would argue, sons of the soil) from governmental civil wars (contra Collier and Hoeffler 1998 and Mason, Weingarten, and Fett 1999) when the rebels' preferences shift during the conflict. This changing language is clear in the debate between McKearney (2011) and Dingley (2013) over the secessionist nature of IRA.

Looking to the future and to a public policy impact, this paper will argue that we will see higher levels of hybrid insurgencies, those that span two or even three tactics (terrorism, insurgency, conventional warfare, and cyber). Hybrid insurgencies use terrorism on a regular basis, both within their country of occurrence and its allies, but

also seek to control territory or at least deny it to the state. Examples include the Tamil Tigers, modern-day Taliban, and ISIS. Maoist people's war was suited for a time and place, when peasant inequality in predominantly rural societies could fuel slow-burn insurgencies. Similarly, the post-Cold War insurgencies took place in a rapidly globalizing world in which free flows of money and starving states radically shifted the balance between organized groups and nations. Today, political cleavages rest along two lines, with some states' politics dominated economic grievances and the demands for survival, and others' marked by identity claims. While the former lends itself to traditional civil war, the latter underpins many of the terrorist campaigns today; along with the growing resources available to non-state actors, these may portend a shift in civil wars to hybrid or multi-level conflict. While cyber operations have not yet played a significant role in insurgencies, their increasing ease and the costs they can inflict on developed countries make them viable weapons in the near future.

DOCTRINE

There is already substantial literature on levels and changes in suicide bombings, varieties of conflict, and violence against civilians. There is less about operational and tactical offensive, use or prohibition of weapons, formation size, spectacular vs methodical, insurgent adaptation, and coherence or use of strategy. Some of this literature is based on practitioners' accounts—often in the form of prescriptive advice for would-be counterinsurgents—while others are provided by academics who focus on both counterinsurgency (COIN) and insurgency. Below, I review the literature on doctrine, highlighting several prominent schools, including the “new war” theorists, greed vs grievance, ethnic conflict, ideology-based understandings, and organizational theories, before arguing that treating them as independent variables ignores relationships between them.

Suicide Bombings

The literature on suicide bombings emphasizes two different approaches, one ideological/religious, and the other strategic. The former does a better job addressing individual motivations for suicide terrorism, while the latter explains why a group would emphasize the tactic originally. My research is oriented around the second question, as I seek to understand organizational behavior.

Berman and Laitin (2008) reject what they term “theological” explanations, instead suggesting that suicide terrorism is a rational response to “hard” targets.² Embedding their actors in a club goods framework of insurgents seeking popular support (requiring costly commitments to maintain membership and access to club goods), they find that as the difficulty of destroying targets increases, and the costs of captured attackers providing information increases due to improving state capacity, insurgent groups become increasingly likely to turn to suicide bombing. Their model incorporates the rational suicide bomber, motivated by the afterlife, altruism, or social solidarity.

Horowitz (2010) provides another rationalist explanation, grounded in organizational adoption capacity theory. He suggests that suicide bombing represents a special case of tactical diffusion, with younger and better-resourced insurgent groups more willing to utilize this type of combat. Perceived successful use by early groups inspired emulators, who quickly found that their opposing governments were only weakly capable of stopping the tactic. Gilli and Gilli (2014) counter Horowitz using Berman and Laitin’s logic, arguing that the diffusion of suicide bombings is instead contingent on tactical considerations, specifically the conventional capacity of counterinsurgents. They find that strong states preferentially select for suicide terrorism by eliminating other means of combat.

² “Hard” targets are those that are difficult to attack through conventional means, such as guard posts or well-fortified structures.

In terms of ideology, Bloom (2011) suggests groups specifically generate a “culture of martyrdom” to encourage self-sacrifice. They target vulnerable members of the population, highlighting the act’s role within the community along with the status and merit increase that comes along with it. The logic is transformative, suggesting that the suicide bombing both supports the continuous community and, in religious suicide bombings, ensures the actor a place in the afterlife. This ideological perspective alters the calculus from a traditional rational choice model, building both other-regarding preferences and a longer time horizon. Sanin and Wood (2014) build on Bloom’s work to address ideology as prohibiting suicide bombings. Responding to Horowitz, Berman and Laitin, and Gilli and Gilli’s logic, they contend that group beliefs exercise a veto over tactical choice. In their strong program of normative commitments, some groups “engage in restraint, declining to use violence though it would have strategic benefit.”

Pedahzur (2005) views suicide terrorism as one additional component in a sustained campaign of political violence, an approach I incorporate into the overall thrust of my work. He finds that types of suicide terrorism are linked to the external environment and end goals, with vehicle, individual, and other types of suicide attacks settling on stable proportions by group. As these conditions change, attackers either use different bombing mechanisms or stop suicide bombing entirely. Suicide bombing thus represents another tactic used by these groups, one subject to evolutionary pressure (as has happened in Somalia as well, according to McCormick 2015). He also finds that early attacks signify a critical juncture, with early success making or breaking the wave

of bombings. The diffusion of suicide tactics meant new organizations, states, and civilian populations were suddenly exposed, and the response to those first few attacks determined whether more were tried.

For those interested in personal motivations behind suicide bombing, Pedahzur provides a more exhaustive review. For the purposes of this project, it is sufficient to note that a permissive or supportive culture is necessary, and that specific triggers—generally a personal crisis or revenge—motivate the act. His work helps demystify bombings, showing that from an organizational standpoint they are no more puzzling than other tactics, and from a personal standpoint hardly less surprising than the willingness of soldiers to charge machine gun nests in battle. He does note, though, that suicide bombings against civilians vs soldiers does have different weight, both among would-be bombers and civilian populations, and that targeting civilians for death generally requires a belief in clashing civilizations and deep-seated grievances.

In sharp contrast to Berman and Laitin, Pedahzur's account suggests that standard rational models of suicide bombers may not apply to all instances. His discussion of the waves of suicide bombings in the Second Intifada, in which individuals were motivated by personal anger and dispatched on missions within hours, bears a strong resemblance to the bounded rationality and emotional literature addressing participation in the Arab Spring (Weyland 2012, Pearlman 2013, Lawrence 2016). While the Second Intifada was a unique instance of a suicide bombing campaign, it suggests that pure rational choice models may falter in describing individual behavior in combat. While this research

emphasizes groups rather than individuals, this partly informs my decision not to build group theorizing on a rational actor framework.

Varieties of conflict

Kalyvas and Balcells (2010) contend that three “technologies of rebellion”—symmetric conventional, irregular, and symmetric nonconventional—represent variations in state and rebel capacity and strategy, with symmetric wars waged by equally matched opponents (conventional when they are strong, unconventional when they are weak), and irregular wars waged by weak rebels against strong states. They suggest that the international climate changes the balance among these three contests, with material support, ideology, and doctrine enabling more insurgencies during the Cold War. Since 1989, declining aid for rebels and states from superpower patrons has led to weaker combatants on both sides, changing the dynamics of the conflict.

De Mesquita (2013) pushes a similar line of thinking, suggesting that insurgencies choose the type of conflict based on their troop strength. Although he proposes a continuous spectrum of terrorism, guerilla warfare, insurgency, conventional war, etc. (as opposed to distinct models for each), his model is restricted to conventional vs. irregular warfare. Notably, he finds that irregular tactics are optimal for insurgencies facing shocks to their external environment, or when successful counterinsurgent campaigns

reduce public support. Further, conflict breeds conflict by reducing the opportunities beyond warfare.

These technologies of rebellion are also likely subject to diffusion. Maoist people's war was actively propagated during the Cold War to new terrain, providing a template for how to wage war, and improvements in communication technology should only have heightened that spread over the last two decades. Kalyvas and Balcells treat the variety of conflict as deterministic, ignoring rebels' capacity to fight the "wrong" war and not addressing variation within each technology of rebellion. Note that the term "technologies of rebellion" is slightly misleading. While certain weapons systems have altered the death toll in insurgencies—the Stinger in 1980s Afghanistan and the IED in 2000s Iraq are prime examples—in neither case did they substantively alter the outcome of the war (Moran in Farrell et al. 2013). While technology does matter in each battle (and in the decision of whether to fight at all), I will deemphasize technology relative to the standard American attitudes toward war (Farrell in Farrell et al. 2013).

Violence against civilians

The study of violence against civilians shifted from state-level and economic variables analyzed from a rationalist perspective (Azam and Hoeffler 2002) to a new emphasis on microfoundations of violence following Kalyvas (2006). Kalyvas's fieldwork-derived research saw violence against civilians as a process within the larger

civil war framework, one informed by instrumental calculations. He described discriminating violence as the ideal type, in which only civilians who sympathize with the opposing side are targeted, with indiscriminate violence too costly for the insurgent in terms of antipathy and rebellion. Instead, in a manner similar to that of US COIN doctrine (FM 3-24; Berman, Shapiro, and Felter 2011), he identifies information as the sine qua non of counterinsurgent warfare. Violence against civilians is used to ensure their loyalty, and in turn requires information from other civilians, giving non-combatants agency over soldiers (which they may use to address old feuds). His logic sees territorial control as the goal, suggesting that violence should follow an M-shaped path—low when control is total or evenly split, but high when one side has the edge and needs to remove partisans of the other.

Wood (2010) makes a related organizational argument, finding that weak rebels are most likely to engage in indiscriminate violence. He argues that weak rebels lack the capacity to provide public services, rendering indiscriminate violence their only tool, while strong rebels can mix selective incentives and selective violence to secure popular support. These findings are contingent on the levels of state violence, which requires rebels to demonstrate sufficient capacity to protect their supporters, but also increases public support for rebels.

In its structural and deterministic approach, Wood bears some resemblance to Weinstein's (2007) *Inside Rebellion*, which offers a resource-driven argument that emphasizes the interplay between recruits and rebel behavior. Weinstein contends that

rebel movements are shaped by the type of insurgents they recruit. Those dependent on resource wealth (either local minerals or external aid) are likely to attract opportunists and greedy soldiers, while those that rely on “social endowments” obtain committed rebels. Under the lax discipline of insurgency, the former extract resources from the population, while the latter develop cooperative relations and eliminate or minimize violence. Violence against civilians thus becomes a product of economic factors.

Notably, while Weinstein’s approach is often criticized for its resource-centric nature (Kalyvas 2007, Metelits 2009, Haer 2015), a careful reading suggests that the driving factor behind treatment of civilians is the motivation of the rebels themselves. It leaves space for ideas and ideology as key variables in analyzing civilian experiences, with material endowments one of many contributors to rebel attitudes. While the work provides insufficient detail on how these motivations change over time, or how rebel organizations might consciously shape their soldiers’ beliefs, it provides a valuable starting point for such works.

Downes (2011) makes and discards three arguments before raising his own two points concerning targeting civilians in interstate and internal conflict. I mention all five, as two of the three he discards are worth considering in detail. The first is that democracies are more likely to target civilians as a method of quickly winning wars, despite the inherent conflict with democratic values, due to pressure from constituents. The second is that certain wars are framed as taking place against barbaric enemies (notably, Kalyvas 2006 makes and dismisses a similar argument), whose depravity

justifies any kind of violence. The third holds that organizational culture or the parochial concerns of a service branch can prompt violence against civilians. Downes argues that these are unsupported by evidence, and instead violence against civilians stems from a desire to avoid protracted, attritive warfare, following the logic of punishment or denial; or else in wars of conquest, to create facts on the ground. While Downes discards them, I will return to the logic of democratic accountability and organizational culture.

Another approach follows the “new war” dynamic (Kaldor 1999; see also Metelits 2009 and Haer 2015) in emphasizing the combination of criminal and political actors within the conflict zone. This synthesis highlights the economic dynamics within the conflict, and privileges material explanations (primarily resource extraction by criminal elements within the insurgency) for violence. Civilians may be targeted directly for looting, or as a labor pool for extraction. Additionally, this view emphasizes context and environment as determinative factors; as Haer notes, “armed groups are treated as a constant factor and differences between them are glossed over.” This view is implicit in Weinstein’s depiction of opportunistic, resource-oriented rebel groups, and reflects a political economy turn in the conflict literature.

Note that this political economy lens is not restricted to material concerns. Haer argues that violence against civilians stems from principal-agent problems within the insurgency, which leaders can address by counteracting moral hazard and adverse selection. In this framework, civilian victimization is a strategic choice by the leadership, with the effects of that decision conditioned by the “processes governing internal

operation as well as the similarity and insularity of members.” However, the political economy approach has little to say about the emotional or ideological aspects of violence against civilians; the fieldwork impressions of catharsis or the transformative nature of violence for repressed populations (e.g., see Metelits, Staniland, Mampilly, and Kalyvas) go unmentioned in this literature.

Finally, Balcells (2011) makes two key points in her discussion of violence against civilians in the Spanish Civil War. First, she contends that bombings and executions belong under the same category, suggesting that aspects of violence are functions of the same political behavior. Second, she argues that the type of warfare determines the nature of violence. She argues that direct violence (personal, face-to-face) requires a dynamic relationship between insurgents and civilians, while indirect violence is unilateral. The result is that such violence will be primarily directed against strong supporters of the opposing side in the conflict-defining cleavage, with direct violence applied to territories under a group’s control and indirect violence to territories outside its control. Notably, Balcells ignores what leads insurgents to choose one over the other, reducing context to exogenous factors.

Why doctrine?

My argument for treating suicide bombings, institutional questions, varieties of conflict, violence against civilians, choice of operational and tactical offensive, use or

prohibition of weapons, and formation size is inherent but underdeveloped in Wood, Balcells, and Staniland. Each focuses on a particular outcome of interest, exploring the production of violence against civilians, technologies of rebellion, or insurgent survival as a phenomenon in its own right rather than an output of a deeper logic. I argue that no single aspect of these topics can be disassociated from others, and that this dynamic operates endogenously. While Balcells and others treat all factors save the dependent variable and explanatory variable as exogenous, all of the above can more accurately be viewed as manifestations of rebel doctrine, whether it is explicit or implicit, with individual tactics representing context-dependent tradeoffs.

For the purposes of this paper, I use RAND's definition of doctrine as "the fundamental set of principles that guides military forces as they pursue national security objectives" (RAND, 2017). It "provides a military organization with a common philosophy, a common language, a common purpose, and a unity of effort" (Decker, quoted in *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, 2013). Insurgencies face greater demands for unity of purpose and common philosophy, because the physical constraints of command and control are likely to diverge markedly from those of state armies. Insurgent forces may be more spread out than their state counterparts, particularly relative to the communications technology available to insurgent leaders.

Under such circumstances, doctrine provides commanders ex post control, substituting a vision of warfare for direct orders and ex ante control. It further provides greater tactical flexibility, in line with the shift in decision-making toward junior officers

in counterinsurgency (Long 2016) and among mobile armies such as Israel's (Franz 1981). In fluid combat situations, doctrine allows local commanders to take the initiative with some knowledge that their behavior will further the army's overall strategy. While some insurgencies can provide ex ante control for wayward commanders, including Burma's Communist Party (Lintner 1999) and the IRA (Dingley 2012), many insurgencies can ill-afford to chastise disobedience. Doing so often spurs splits and factionalism that serve to undermine the insurgency (Woldemariam 2011).

As Long (2016) points out, doctrine is sturdy, even in the face of attempted written and unwritten change by upper-echelon officers. In his study of US and British 20th century counterinsurgency, he finds both that upper-level leadership is resistant to change (constrained upward-directed information) and, when new leadership arrives, it faces challenges in compelling lower-level leaders to adopt new doctrine (constrained downward-directed orders). At its most extreme, doctrine suffices to provide militaries a false sense of success (e.g. "body counts") that belie failure. Much of this resiliency stems from the military education system, which proved resistant to newer ways of viewing war propagated by officers in the field. This stickiness is also visible in attitudes towards doctrine among French officers who fought in the Algerian War. Even after defeat and the manifest need to reconcile military tactics with civilian demands on the home front, it took decades—if ever—for them to reject the use of torture.

Although the dynamics of doctrinal formulation and transmission are likely to differ in insurgencies, doctrine can still be stable and reproduced. In the case of coherent

insurgencies, such as Maoist organizations (Marks 2012; Smith 1999) or the IRA (Dingley 2012), this is done through ideological indoctrination, exchange of commanders, and ex ante punishment. In other cases, such as Bo Mya's KNU (Karen National Union) in Burma, it is the product of evolutionary processes combined with insurgent fragmentation (Smith 1999). Groups with coherent doctrines are more likely to survive pressure from the state, and variations in doctrine tend to prompt rebel splits, which in turn leave at least one faction vulnerable to defeat by the counterinsurgent. More positively, Staniland (2014) and Sanin and Giustozzi (2010) identify ideology's contribution to aligning incentives among insurgents and contributing to uniformity in aspects of warfighting. This ideology can be religious or ethnic, but the networks inherent in either enable commanders to better communicate to and punish their subordinates.

Treating doctrine as a unified field helps address changes in tactical behavior. When rebels respond to hardening targets and greater security screenings by using fewer suicide bombings and more roadside IEDs and anti-tank missiles, their overall approach to combat has not changed. They still seek to attack enemy forces (perhaps with a similar focus on where attacks take place) using small units, trading spectacular strikes and increased visibility for the opportunity to take and hold territory. Doctrine, in the sense of a common philosophy of violence, has not shifted, even if possible measures of insurgent activity have. Changes in tactics are interesting, but do not signify a broader

shift in the shape of the conflict. If our goal is to understand when the war will end or on what terms, these shifts do not necessarily change the analysis.

Understanding these changes, and seeing where rebellions are more or less adaptable, provides another chance to examine the overall strategy of insurgencies. Adaptation can be risk-averse or risk-acceptant, depending on the context: adaptation to avoid defeat (as the KNU did in eastern Burma when its headquarters was under attack; Lintner 1999) may be risk-averse, while building a terrorism wing to the insurgency to break a stalemate by attacking the state's population centers is risk-seeking. The broken geography in which civil wars occur tends to produce or at least condone adaptation (Russell in Farrell et al. 2013) by reducing control by insurgent commanders and increasing the value of local knowledge and adapting to local conditions.

Insurgent adaptation is often treated as axiomatic, with the smaller and flatter organizations better able to adjust their tactics than tradition-bound and complex state actors. I will argue that this may be true for certain aspects of civil war (e.g. when faced with the declining effectiveness of a tactic), but insurgencies face similar-magnitude challenges to changing their doctrine as state militaries. Insurgent leaders may lack both information and control—the former necessary to know what is going wrong, and the latter to compel their agents to change. Further, for some insurgencies battlefield defeat may not signal ideological defeat; for religious or ethnic movements, adaptation may be constrained by the damage it might do to “the cause.”

As doctrine comprises a set of principles, it is not necessarily amenable to interval scales in traditional political science technique. For now, I will measure in terms of adaptability and risk-acceptance, recognizing that such an approach masks considerable variation among insurgencies. For example, I argue that violence against civilians is a component of a risk-acceptant strategy, in that it trades stable support for short-term benefits (wealth, control over soldiers, terror). However, this designation is empirically testable, and will be fully addressed in the dissertation.

ADMINISTRATION

The second component of insurgent strategy is administration. Along with obtaining recruits and resources, rebel administration reflects intelligence demands. It needs to simultaneously deny counterinsurgents information about rebel operations (Berman, Shapiron, and Felter 2011; Kalyvas 2006) and obtain intelligence about state forces. Further, for secessionist insurgencies, public goods provision serves as an international legitimating tool (Stewart 2015). The most commonly-identified public good is security and justice, followed by health and education, with infrastructure hardly addressed. As Kevlihan (2013) and Mampilly (2011) note, one major tool of administration is not rebel-generated goods, but the prevention or facilitation of goods provision by external parties (NGOs, international actors, or the state itself).

Recruitment and service provision to the population are closely linked. In addition to the direct relationship between better services and more voluntary recruits via gratitude effects (Flanigan 2008), the organization-building of service provision increases the visibility and legitimacy of rebel groups and allows them to supplant alternative draws for young men (such as village-specific militias). A more integrated insurgency is not only harder to disembed via COIN, but strikes against it will generate more community antipathy (Mampilly 2011, Staniland 2014) and will regenerate more swiftly after defeats (Connable and Libicki 2009). This may even be a deliberate rebel tactic, consciously putting community members at risk and then encouraging surviving family members to join (as Hoffman suggests the Tamil Tigers do).

Mampilly suggests the two dominant factors in insurgent service provision are the pre-war provision of public goods and the degree to which insurgent control over the region is uncontested. The former conditions the public to anticipate a level of “state” support, which if the insurgency fails to provide it will lose public support (see section on accountability). The latter represents an upper bound on insurgency-generated public goods; if an insurgency is pressed by other rebel groups or the state, it will reduce service provision to concentrate resources on the existential threat. The resulting argument is heavily path-dependent; although insurgents can improve provision on the margins, both state-creation (in the Olson 1993, stationary bandit, sense) and state-destruction are constrained. The second part of Mampilly’s argument concords with that of Eck (2014), who contends that forced recruitment occurs around military and economic shocks, which reduce the time horizon of insurgents. Eck argues that long-term forced recruitment is viable only insofar as low-cost compliance is an option for the rebels.

Weinstein sees rebel governance as important both for its decision-making potential and taxation, with governance measured along power-sharing and inclusiveness. He draws on North and Weingast’s (1989) commitment argument by suggesting insurgencies constrain themselves through joint governance, subject to their stake in civilians’ success, time horizon, and capacity to credibly commit. As referenced above, Weinstein sees these as heavily influenced by the resource endowments of the group in question—particularly whether those resources rely on corvee labor—and the type of

recruits these resources attract. Weinstein thus follows a line of argument similar to that of “new war” theorists, in which resources displace relations with civilians.

Finally, as Stewart (2015) contends, public goods provision may reflect strategic goals. Stewart finds that secessionist insurgencies that control territory are more likely to provide education and health care than secessionist movements without territory or non-secessionist insurgencies. She thus connects public goods provision to international factors, explaining their variation in terms of differential pressures on insurgent groups to demonstrate their state-like qualities to the international community.

More generally, rebel administration can be profitably compared to state capacity. According to Cingolani (2013), capacity consists of “a) coercive/ military; b) fiscal; c) administrative / implementation; d) transformative or industrializing; e) relational/territorial coverage; f) legal; g) political” measures aimed at the civilian population. As Berliner et al. (2015) note, capacity is an amorphous concept, representing both the potential for providing goods and services as well as their actual provision. The two are endogenous, with provision dependent on capacity, but capacity streamlined and strengthened through provision. As a dependent variable, both are relevant; that is, it matters both how much insurgents invest in their ability to provide as well as the provision itself. The former signifies a long-term component to their overall strategy, one that anticipates either an extended campaign or future political control over the region in question, while the former alters their present power.

Pedahzur notes a final, often-ignored aspect of insurgent administration, that of hope in hopeless place. Along with physical goods provision, rebels can create a community and provide catharsis, returning efficacy to a previously-downtrodden population. This moral uplift can be a deliberate component of insurgent strategy, and its value to the community can help sustain the rebellion (by providing recruits and supplanting traditional authority and sources of legitimacy).

NEGOTIATIONS

The term “state-insurgent negotiations” omits as much as it describes. It presupposes the existence of a unified insurgency, a fact that must be proven rather than assumed. (It also presupposes a unified state; as the October 2016 vote in Colombia demonstrates, state acquiescence to a deal cannot be taken for granted.) However, negotiations provide some of the most direct evidence on the strategic aims of the rebellion, as well as limits on the state’s bargaining space. In the bargaining model of war (Reiter 2003), negotiations provide the best estimate of the space between the warring sides (and also treat war and politics as a unified whole). Similarly, the bargaining model of war sets us a puzzle of why states and rebels cannot come to a peaceful settlement that reduces the waste of war and divides the slightly larger pie between them.

Hultquist (2013) suggests that state-insurgent negotiations depend on the power parity between the two actors. When the state and rebels are roughly matched (as measured by troop strength), he finds that both sides are willing to accept a deal, while disparity prompts ongoing conflict. The results suggest that negotiations are fruitful only when both sides have accepted the futility of further violence.

Cunningham (2011) addresses this from the state’s perspective, finding that states are more likely to bargain with divided self-determination movements because, in doing so, they can strategically split the movement further, bolstering moderates, and identify the most hardline factions. Given this dynamic, concessions to such divided groups

rarely end conflicts. Yet this logic ignores why members of the fractured movements are willing to accept them, as they are aware that accepting such deals and splitting a movement weakens their bargaining power in the long run.

The negotiations are often tacit, as Staniland (2012) and Mampilly (2011) suggest. Combatants reach a *modus vivendi* that reduces the pace of conflict, putting pressure on neither side while allowing a titular state of war to continue. Further, negotiations take place at the strategic level, between rebel leaders and heads of state, but also exist at the tactical level, allowing for reduced violence in certain provinces. These tactical ceasefires may be strategic, derived from the “new war” focus on economic gain, or an outgrowth of the dominance of local commanders in both the rebel and state armies against their titular principals. As such, negotiation can be fruitfully measured along two dimensions: the degree of concessions rebel desire (from autonomy or state control to a few additional rights or economic privileges) and the scope of those concessions (local, regional, or national). For the purposes of this research, I then collapse those two dimensions into a single one, of the aggressiveness (distance from the status quo) of the insurgent negotiating position.

Note that success or failure of a negotiation is not directly under insurgent control. The state can accept or reject a deal, making this a dyadic game in which the insurgency may have limited control over its opposite’s negotiating position. Instead, I treat the bargaining space the insurgency publicly presents as its degree of risk-tolerance, with a wider range of acceptable deals indicating a more risk-averse rebellion.

STRATEGY

My core argument is that these three aspects of civil war—doctrine, administration, and negotiations—can only be effectively analyzed as a single concept: strategy. Rebel strategy can be assessed on several measures, although the easiest is risk-acceptance. This research aims to assess variations in rebel strategy, and in so doing, better explain variation in indicators such as suicide bombings, violence against civilians, provision of public goods, and agreement to ceasefires.

The necessity of a single concept rests on similar grounds to my argument about doctrine, that rebels use these three manifestations of policy as supplements and complements in predictable ways. Patterns of administration influence possible doctrine, while doctrine shapes negotiating space. Preferred negotiating outcome influences doctrine and administration. What the rebels see as victory, how the rebels can fight, and how they can amass resources are all endogenous, reflecting the rebels' understanding of the conflict. The trio of relationships—insurgent-state, insurgent-civilian, and insurgent-insurgent (and insurgent-other potential insurgent from same network)—change throughout the conflict through endogenous institutional evolution and external shocks (battlefield success, economics, and new technology and weapons).

A clear example comes from suicide bombing. The use of suicide bombers is first predicated on an administration that is able to recruit individuals willing to sacrifice their lives. The literature on suicide bombing (Zedalis 2004; Soibelman 2004; Kruglanski et al. 2009, Pedahzur 2005) stresses differing motivations for these attacks, but all

emphasize the extent to which the insurgents must prepare their population for the use of this tactic. Often, insurgent groups utilizing suicide bombers pay family members of their bombers, meaning they require a sufficient bureaucracy and flow of resources to credibly reassure bombers that such support will forthcoming (Pedahzur; Harmony database). Suicide bombing also requires the group to either dominate local power brokers, or else be able to recruit despite their opposition; as demonstrated by Catholic leaders in Northern Ireland (Dingley 2012) and village elders in Afghanistan (personal discussion with American official), a dense network of local leaders who oppose suicide bombing on moral grounds or who fear losing local manpower can prevent an insurgency from using this tactic. Finally, suicide bombers require an innate motivation that keeps them on target until the moment they detonate, meaning recruits cannot be repeatedly and meaningfully exposed to contrary messages that urge them not to become suicide bombers. This internal requirement was demonstrated by the Tamil Tigers who, even as the insurgency switched to coercive methods for its conventional forces, still recruited its suicide bombers from among volunteers (Hoffman 2006).

Suicide bombing also has consequences for conflict termination. Where civilians view it as breaking the bounds of normal war, it risks contravening a would-be government's social contract with the population. This particularly holds for suicide bombings against civilians and when the war is along ethnic lines; in either case the would-be governed may have a harder time accepting commanders who countenanced suicide bombings as normal political leaders in the aftermath of the conflict. Suicide

bombing thus represents not only a commitment to a doctrine, but may signify a rejection of integration by its parent movement into national politics, leaving only total victory, secession, or defeat as the remaining options. One research question is whether rebels bring this uncertain shadow of the future into their decision making when starting suicide bombings.

Logistics represents another area in which doctrine and administration overlap. Combatants in less developed countries face strains on moving men and supplies, particularly during up-tempo operations. This challenge can apply to state and insurgent combatants equally, as evidence from Burma (Smith 1999) suggests. When motorized transport is insufficient or ruled out by the terrain, both sides can be forced to rely on porters to keep their troops armed, fed, watered, and medically fit. While some rebel organizations do so by forced recruitment (Mike Findley, lecture), others provide incentives for civilians to bear their burdens. Either way, the demands of combat impinge on groups' relationship with their civilian population. Building roads can economically benefit regions under their control, but is a double-edged sword, allowing them to reinforce their forces but also simplifying invasion by conventional state armies.

Toft and Zhukov (2015) similarly provide evidence for a strategic approach to insurgency. In their study of insurgent behavior and counterinsurgency in Chechnya, they note that Islamist and Chechen nationalist rebels draw on mutually exclusive symbolism and networks; among their key findings is the imperviousness of Islamist rebels to selective counterinsurgent tactics. What they term rebel support networks—and

what I would call the rebel administration, in the sense that it provides recruits and material—differ markedly between the two groups, with nationalists reliant on local allies and Islamists drawing from transnational communities. Nationalist attacks are more geographically concentrated, reflecting their need for local support bases. Thus, in this conflict, both offensive planning and resilience in the face of counterinsurgency (doctrinal concerns) depends on administration.

Violence against civilians shows the challenges of treating any issue purely in terms of its military or administrative value. Wood (2010) contends that stronger rebels can offer better selective incentives, while weaker rebels rely on indiscriminate violence. Violence and public safety thus become linked, making the withholding of one and the provision of the other aspects of rallying public support. Azam and Hoeffler (2002) emphasize violence against civilians as integral to gaining resources, with loot motivating recruits. Yet Berman, Shapiron, and Felter as well as Kalyvas argue that treatment of civilians fundamentally relates to information, providing intelligence to support offensives and consolidate territory.

Risk-tolerance is essential for understanding two divergent approaches to negotiation. Some rebels (e.g. the IRA and LTTE) are known for pressuring the state during negotiations, increasing violence right up until a deal is signed, while others (e.g. most Burmese insurgents) reduce violence in the run-up to a deal. The former corresponds to a risk-seeking, maximalist strategy, while the latter is risk-averse. Similarly, a risk-based approach helps understand certain kinds of violence. Suicide

bombings against civilians may “poison the well,” rendering future amicable cooperation in a political framework more difficult. After a suicide bombing campaign, either secession or total defeat may be the only options, making it a risk-seeking strategy. In contrast, restricting civilian deaths to assassinations of key figures, or only targeting the military, forecloses fewer options down the line and is less risk-acceptant.

The challenge of determining strategy is pertinent in part because of the civil-military unity that often accompanies insurgencies. As Shah (2014) and Callahan (2003) note regarding the Pakistani and Burmese armies, military intervention in politics is predicated on the military first coming to believe that it has a right or duty to intervene in affairs normally reserved for “regular” politics such as representation, ethnic relations, institutional frameworks, taxation, or what constitutes democracy. Absent this military ideology, the army per se (as compared to disaffected generals or soldiers as individuals) refrains from political intervention.

Yet for most insurgencies, the army and the political movement are tightly united. With the exception of communist parties and their armed forces or powerful ethnic and religious groups which retain control of their armies (Staniland 2014 suggests the Afghan Taliban as one example), the balance of power within the insurgency lies predominantly among the soldiers. They thus have an outsized role in determining strategy for the movement as a whole; even if “civilian” leadership prefer a power-sharing deal, as I argue above, doctrinal choices by commanders can greatly enhance or restrict the possibility of such an amicable peace deal. If titular ideological leaders of the insurgency

lack the means to enforce their will—either by convincing commanders or by retaining sufficient influence among necessary constituencies (civilians rebels rely on or soldiers)—then the strategic initiative lies with the commanders.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

I identify three primary independent variables that influence insurgent strategy: accountability, ideology, and organization. Each may be manipulated by the insurgents, although change may be slow and costly. The three are to some extent endogenous, but change caused by the other two is slow relative to what concerted action by the insurgency itself can achieve. Below, I discuss each in turn.

Ideology

If doctrine is the answer to the question of “how do I as an insurgent win this war?”, ideology not only helps provide an answer (mobilize peasants, target non-believers, achieve rapid mobilization), but also helps actors define “win.” Sanin and Wood (2014) propose ideology as serving to “identify a constituency, the challenges the group confronts, the objectives to pursue on behalf of that group, and a (perhaps vague) program of action.” For the insurgency’s leaders, this decision is difficult to change once set, with initial choices constrained by ideologies in popular circulation at the start of the conflict. Ideology diffuses within and between insurgencies, and is the entry point into conflict for new ideas about the key actors in society and their proper relationship (e.g. the role of capital). It provides power within insurgencies by defining problems and omitting would-be issues from discussion (e.g. Communist discourse in South Asia avoiding ethnic terminology).

Following Gerring (1997), ideology refers to a coherent set of beliefs about the world. For this work it is divided into normative and objective components. First, it is a set of beliefs about how the world ought to be (the end goal of any political action), and second it is an attempt to highlight the actors and battlefields in political contention (to carve nature at the joints). Ideologies often prescribe a set of behaviors that follow naturally from their ought-is assumptions, although a relatively simple set of maxims can generate a wide range of approaches (e.g. see Carnoy 1984 for a review of the range of Marxist thought). It translates facts into grievances, building a “deep story” (Hochschild 2015) that gives its adherents an emotional connection to the insurgency. Ideology tends to be sticky, particularly early in the conflict, as most rebel groups initially lack the capacity to propagandize and explain their beliefs to the whole population. Instead, they must draw on pre-existing strands of ideology in crafting beliefs that draw recruits.

To be meaningful, an ideology must be shared, first among the insurgency, and then with the broader population. Ideological space between insurgents and civilians lead to isolation, while ideological splits within the insurgency prompt fragmentation. Thus, my primary measure of ideology is its cohesion—the extent to which the relevant actors share the same beliefs.

An effective ideology plays three roles in the insurgency. First, it mobilizes fighters and supporters by aligning their preferences with those of the insurgent organization. It is in this sense we can discuss resonant ideologies (Staniland 2014), as competing rebel groups proffer analyses and solutions that “make sense” to more or less

of the target audience. Ideologies that are immediately applicable, defining grievances the population already experiences and proffering solutions that “fit,” are more likely to gain supporters. This is most effective for those groups that focus on local concerns (Kalyvas 2006), although as Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Buhaug (2013) note, when group-level identity is politicized and individuals are aware of power and wealth disparities, ideologies that focus on aggregate problems and solutions can also prove successful in mobilizing rebellions. Either way, ideology is particularly important in the initial stages of the insurgency, when it is expanding, and in the face of defeat.

Initially, ideology is the only thing a rebellion can provide; if its ideas are unpopular, without fighters it doesn't have the option of conscripting new combatants. In expansion, ideology smooths access to new territory. Groups espousing purely ethnic or religious ideas are often limited, while rebels inspired by universalist ideologies can cross such divides (see Lintner 1999 and Smith 1999 for a discussion of ethnic vs communist rebels in Burma). Yet ethnic identity can serve to build cleavages where none exist, and provide a relatively cheap (in the sense of being cognitively easy to process) ideology for gathering recruits (Wilkinson 2006). Finally, ideology provides for the regeneration of a group facing battlefield defeat. The powerful sense of a cause that will not die, allied with the anticipation that a resonant ideology might yet bring more support, helps keep a group from fracturing. The independent force of ideology is well illustrated by the example of a Hezbollah fighter who, despite pressure from his commanders, sought to

(and eventually did) become a suicide bomber (Pedahzur). Ideology can defeat rationalist organizational goals.

Second, ideology solves principal-agent problems among units. The often-lowered technology available to insurgents, combined with the frequently asymmetric style of fighting and dispersed nature of combat, reduces direct control by commanders over their fighters. Lacking an external means of control, coherent strategy is achieved by aligning agents' preferences with principals'. Ideology thus used is intentional, and can reflect a measure of indoctrination that ensures congruent interpretation of orders across units.

The Tamil Tigers provide an instance of this deliberate usage of ideology. According to Hoffman, Prabhakaran always advocated a disciplined force, correctly seeing this discipline—and the attendant increase in capacity for violence—as essential for distinguishing the Tigers from other Tamil groups in the 70s and 80s. This ideology enabled the Tigers to quickly launch a suicide bombing campaign in 1987, with the self-sacrificing ideology and complete obedience to Prabhakaran smoothing the introduction of a new tactic.

Third, ideology generates transparent end goals actors can coordinate on. Note that, by my definition, anger against a ruling class can be an ideology; opposition without articulating a positive vision has prompted successful (or at least stable) revolutionary movements over history. Yet a positive ideology is more effective in building allies among those who don't necessarily oppose a regime (depoliticized actors at home or

international agents), and also better supports a negotiated end to conflict. An ideology of opposition provides no clear space for deals, nor does it give marginal populations without strong grievances cause for involvement.

Ideology impacts strategy through a few different channels. More popular ideologies, which can attract additional and more committed recruits, *ceteris paribus*, are able to support larger insurgencies. This may allow the insurgency to grow more quickly in new areas, or field a proportionally larger army than its organizational capacity would suggest. Popular ideology also enables the group to sustain higher-tempo operations, since lost soldiers can be more quickly replaced with willing fighters.

Coherent ideology enables an expansion of the battlefield, as rebels can coordinate their attacks without risk of damaging their brand via rogue commanders. Particularly against states in which the guiding ideology is seen as weak or undercut by state policy, it can provide a powerful draw for disaffected members of the regime. By creating a belief in the historical inevitability or fragility of the cause, it can impact the risk-tolerance of insurgents. Finally, ideology can directly prescribe more or less aggressive measures by valorizing violence, diminishing the individual in favor of the *ethos*, or requiring certain kinds of public goods provision (land reform, religious law, treatment of minorities, etc.).

This power of ideology can help explain the occasional lack of variation in strategy, even when we would expect it. The rigidity with which South Asian communist parties stuck to Maoist people's war, or the perseverance of *foco* in Latin America despite

its failures, suggests that ideology can overcome the “rational” calculations of doctrine. As mentioned above in the case of the Hezbollah suicide bomber, this influence operates at the individual level. This individual-level effect contributes to the stickiness of ideology, as actors perceive outcomes and trends in light of their preferred ideology. Ideology informs civilians whether violence is proportionate, who legitimate targets are, what public goods to expect from the state, and what level of accountability is appropriate. It ascribes blame for the conflict, and determines which side was fighting defensively. It provides a mental framework for how the conflict, and incidents linked to it, are to be remembered.

More generally, ideology becomes the discourse of the conflict, with all the connotations of power that implies (Lukes 1986). Through it, actors define the relevant collectives (class, ethos, religion, clan, or region), their grievances, and appropriate remedies. It thus determines whether a war is fought over political rights for a minority within a nation, or self-determination for a downtrodden, victimized, and/or colonized people. An insurgency that creates a cohesive worldview around one of these two options, and propagates that at the popular level, has shifted the conceptual terrain on which battle, administration, and negotiation are contested. Further, such an ideology sets the agenda and privileges policy responses; a discourse of individual rights vs. ethnic rights vs. economic rights alters what concessions are likely to be acceptable to insurgents. Ideology thus creates self-reinforcing behavior that can further lengthen civil

wars and reduce incentives to negotiate by highlighting the cleavages between combatants.

Accountability

I use rebel accountability to refer to the extent to which insurgents are responsive to the demands of civilian populations. Most commonly this means those in the territory in which they are fighting, although for transnational groups or ethno-religious movements with strong diasporas, they can include possible supporters anywhere in the world. Accountability may exist through formal means—via elections or written deals between the insurgents and existing power brokers—but more commonly manifests itself in informal, tacit, or private agreements.

My use of the term draws heavily from literature on regime types. While I do not claim inclusion and contestation (Dahl 1971) can be measured the same way as in states, I do find an analogous relationship. Some rebels are reliant on their populations for the voluntary provision of the engines of war, either through formal channels (e.g. elected local leaders whose power base is independent of the insurgents) or informal channels (e.g. local chiefs, religious leaders, elders, or other figures endowed with charismatic and/or traditional authority). This argument draws from Weinstein, who finds that resource-dependent insurgencies are more likely to engage in violence against civilians. Following the state literature, I suggest that resource-reliant insurgencies are more likely

to resemble autocracies facing a resource curse, and that regime type, rather than revenue stream, is relevant for civilian treatment. In the same way that some autocracies are not rent-reliant and some democracies export oil, we should view rebel access to rents as relevant for but not deterministic of behavior. Resource-reliant rebels should be more violent when they are able to recruit combatants without accountability, which is particularly likely under general poverty and weakened civilian networks.

I do not argue that any particular aspect of the insurgency is subject to immediate public participation; it would make little sense to speak of a vote on whether a suicide bombing should go forward, just as it is odd to suggest all citizens in the US decide whether to bomb this or that ISIS site. Rather, I focus on the population's capacity to impact strategy—the goals of the movement and the aggressiveness (risk-acceptance) by which it pursues them—by withdrawing support. Thus, like the early Afghan insurgencies or the IRA, some insurgencies face dense local networks that can gatekeep the flow of money and resources to insurgents, and provide intelligence to counter-insurgents if the rebels are too transgressive. In other instances, such as the RUF in Sierra Leone or Tamil Tigers, the insurgency brushed aside any local actors and fought with total unaccountability. In the classic Aristotelian sense, accountability is about who rules—the one (autocracy—here, the insurgency and its leader), the few (oligarchy—community gatekeepers), or the many (democracy—the community writ large).

As such, accountability provides both advantages and disadvantages to insurgencies. In the Olson (1993) telling, in making themselves accountable insurgencies

should be able to unlock greater resources from their subject population. Accepting formal limits, informally respecting traditional leaders, or following an ideology promulgated by figures outside the insurgency ensures—insofar as is possible with a body of armed men in rebellion—that they will respect something beyond pure force. Doing so might inspire greater normative commitment from civilians, and potentially increases economic activity in their territory. Yet at the same time, war imposes demands that may put dramatically varying demands on the insurgency, demands that an accountable organization might struggle to meet. Insurgency is often in a state of total war, a concept that stretches civil-military relations in states to the breaking point; without norms or pre-existing institutions to fall back on, the exigencies of conflict may push insurgencies to ignore deals and, citing military necessity, obtain resources by force. The result may be a steady erosion in accountability, as the insurgency uses violence to remove gatekeepers.

This variation influences rebel strategy outcomes by raising the costs of battlefield mistakes and ongoing conflict. Accountable insurgents cannot afford to lose fighters with nothing to show, nor can they demand continual sacrifice on the home front unless motivated by deep ideology or immediate prospects of success. Put another way, much of the literature on democracies in interstate conflict applies to them. We should see them behave in a much more risk-averse manner.

Instances of accountability include stopping IRA car bombs, the fractures in the Communist Party of Burma (CPB), and the inability of al Qaeda in Iraq to continue its

ideology-driven suicide bombing campaign. In all cases, the host networks (Catholic communities, ethnic groups, and Sunni tribes) were pushed too far and rejected their erstwhile allies. In contrast, Colombia's FARC and the Tamil Tigers were excellent at building unaccountable organizations. The absence of strong local leadership (which had been eroded over decades of insurgency) and deep indoctrination, including those born into the organization or in territory under its control, meant that no collective could challenge insurgent control.

Accountability can be manipulated and is expected to shift over the course of the conflict. Insurgents can both attempt to change both social preferences and channels by which the public can influence insurgents. One example, mentioned above, is the various insurgencies in Afghanistan. Early in the Afghan Civil Wars (1979-present) tribal leaders had substantial control over their men, and village leaders could influence which side (if any) their fighters would ally with (Staniland). While this has not entirely faded (CIA analyst, personal communication), the social dislocation around the war has profoundly undermined the earlier system of manpower control. Accountability is fundamentally reliant on other leaders, networks, and institutions to check the power of the insurgency and deny or supply limiting factors. As those networks vanish, either through insurgent action or exogenous shocks, accountability declines. Refugees, whether in Kabul or across the border in Pakistan, are more amenable to blandishments from insurgents. It has become a buyer's market (with combatants selling their labor),

and substantial rhetorical and ideological tools to mobilize these fighters. This last point brings me to the final major independent variable, organization.

Organization

Insurgent organization concerns the institutional framework of the rebellion—who is in command, how their orders are transmitted, the relationship between rebel combatants and non-combatants, and how responsibilities are allocated. It operates at both a formal and informal level (Staniland 2014), with the relative balance between them determined by the actors. Insurgencies which developed from strong pre-war networks are likely to be dominated by these informal organizations, regardless of the formal titles (Staniland 2014), while others (e.g. the Communist Party of Burma; see Smith 1999) prioritize state-like formal roles.

While accountability is about ex post control over the insurgency, organization concerns ex ante control by commanders. This includes how orders are transmitted, logistics, intra-army discipline, training, and promotion. It covers the connections and behavior within the insurgency (both horizontal and vertical), rather than between it and outsiders. It consists of the bureaucratic avenues within the insurgency that generate and transmit orders, and how the armed body enforces its will on subordinates. Without organization, a strategy decided by upper echelons is not transmitted to, or relevant for,

fighters and local commanders. One of the key concerns here is whether the insurgency operates as a network, hierarchy, or combines elements of both.

Sanin and Giustozzi (2010) argue that there exists a spectrum of organization between pure networks and pure hierarchies. Using Colombia and Afghanistan as cases, they find that networks provide less discipline and oversight, but are better able to adapt to local concerns and incorporate multiple constituencies into the insurgency. Networks and hierarchies possess distinct recruitment and management structures, which they suggest derive from path-dependent processes, based on pre-conflict resources and within-conflict pressures. Implied in their analysis is that networked insurgencies tend to survive longer, because their structure makes both surrender and total military defeat more challenging (a conclusion in line with Connable and Libicki 2009 as well).

Staniland (2014) argues that variations within pre-war networks play a prominent role in insurgent survival. He differentiates between vertical and horizontal networks (links between leaders and communities, and links among leaders, respectively), with the presence of both allowing insurgencies to regenerate soldiers and commanders in the face of counterinsurgency. Although he suggests these networks change over time, he sees them as strongly correlated with pre-conflict organization. Staniland contends that insurgencies attempt to evolve toward “integrated” status (with strong horizontal and vertical links), as this comprises the most stable and effective type of insurgent network. He does not argue that doing so guarantees victory—as in the case of the Tamil Tigers—but rather signifies greater resilience to internally- or externally-induced fragmentation.

In discussing organization, I draw on two distinct strands in the political science literature. First, I will use works on the internal dynamics of state militaries, which discuss the dynamics of institution building in combat. In particular, I will use case studies on armies that have a significant political role, such as Pakistan (Shah 2014), Burma (Callahan 2003), and Indonesia (McGregor 2007), that reflect the dual role of armed body as fighters and armed body as state-builders (or myth-makers). Second, I will draw on the parties literature, to reflect the political nature of the insurgency and then utilize the challenges to collective action that parties research discusses (Lichbach 1996, 1998).

Adding to this, I argue that, along with a sliding scale from hierarchy to network, we must also assess how power is distributed within these bodies. Following Feaver (2003), both rebel commanders and civilians must fear shirking by their agents. Leaving aside challenges of outright rebellion within the insurgency, effective organization ensures that rebels are restrained or aggressive as it suits the overall insurgency's purpose.

I anticipate organization will be particularly path-dependent, with early choices setting the stage for institutional development that hardens over time. Thus, understanding the sequencing—and how context changes over that sequence—will be essential to determining how rebel organizations evolve (Fenno 1986). This is particularly true early in the rebellion, when before pre-war constraints and norms have been eroded by violence.

Note that accountability also exists within insurgencies, albeit to a lesser extent, and comprises an aspect of organization. Some insurgent leaders are fairly insulated from their combatants, thanks to strong ideological indoctrination that lionizes (or in some cases deifies) the commander, generating a charismatic style of leadership. In such circumstances, the insurgent leader cannot be held accountable by their own troops, and their capacity to command depends on personal authority. Examples of this include the LRA, PKK, Tamil Tigers, and at times Bo Mya's KNU. In contrast, other insurgencies are more bureaucratic, with replaceable leaders or effective control by a committee of commanders. Power here resides below the titular commander, and their authority is constrained by the bureaucracy of the insurgency.

Synthesis of independent variables

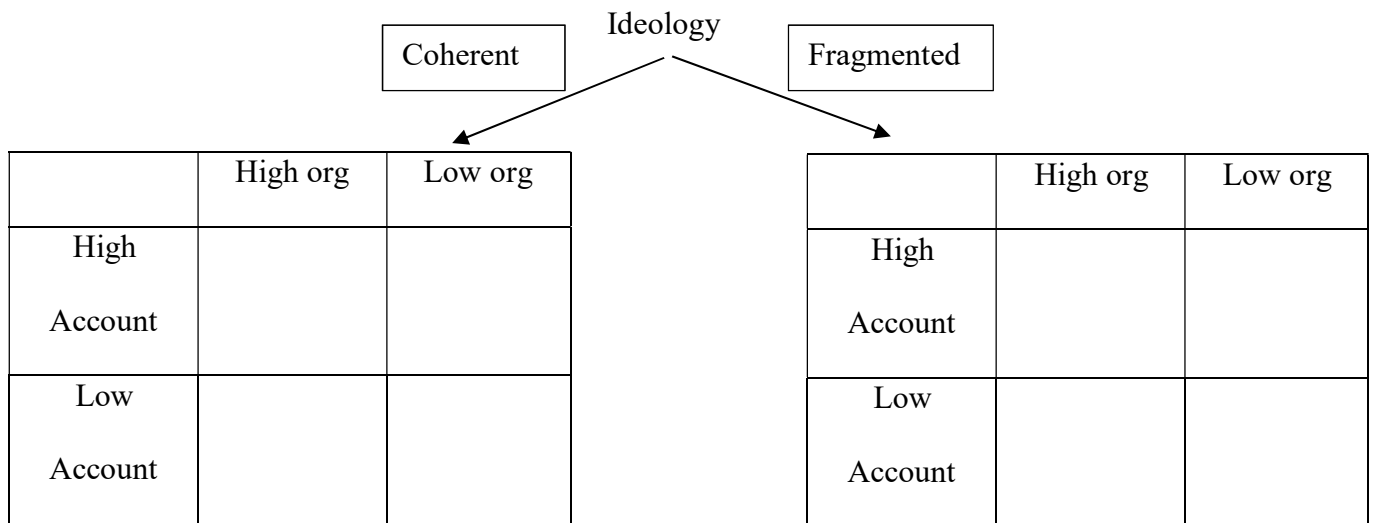
Bringing together accountability, ideology, and organization, we can identify a few distinct patterns among insurgencies. Of the three, ideology is the slowest-changing, at its peak reflecting shared commitments among rebel leaders, rebel combatants, and civilians. Accountability is next, deriving from the strength of civil society, while organization is most under the control of the insurgents.

Each of these variables is multidimensional, meaning that a true typology would be overwhelmingly complex. Instead, I shall highlight one aspect of each that case studies have identified as key indicators. For ideology, it is the unit by which success is

measured. This could be the individual, an ascriptive community, an open population (e.g. class), or monetary outcomes. For accountability, it is the extent to which civilian members of the community can influence the insurgency. This can be through provision of intelligence, supply of recruits (which could be affected by unwillingness to join or, in the face of forced recruitment, flight), and logistical support. Finally, organization ranges from hierarchical to network. The key question here is where power is centered—in top-level commanders, in leaders of the cell, or co-distributed (what I call a hybrid insurgency).

Figure1: Independent variable breakdown

Here is a simplified graphical form:



ARGUMENT

I contend that insurgencies follow a strategy that reflects their preferred end state to the conflict. Options include regional secession, regional autonomy (communal rights), individual rights, addressing economic grievances, political system reforms, and state power. The first and last are the most aggressive outcomes: regional secession entails breaking the original structure of the polity, while obtaining state power entails overthrowing the existing power structure. All other outcomes represent less aggressive rebel goals, and are likely to provoke less opposition from existing power holders.

In this sense, I argue that rebel strategy proceeds from the desired civil war outcome. An insurgency with unclear or constantly shifting aims, or one in which members of the same movement fundamentally disagree about the preferred end state, will face constant tension in determining and holding to a single strategy. Based on my above discussion of the supremacy of field commanders, if this disagreement exists between military and civilian actors within the insurgency, I hypothesize that the military leaders will dominate. However, if the disagreement exists between factions within the military wing of the insurgency, resolving the resulting tension will be severely constrained by the lack of a neutral mediator. The result will be shifting doctrine or doctrine that varies by region that prompt fractures.

These fractures can be conceptualized as vertical or horizontal. A vertical fracture cuts between commanders and soldiers, or insurgent leaders and commanders, while a horizontal fracture divides leaders of the same stature. Both are damaging, but in

separate ways; a vertical fracture can prompt disintegration of the group as soldiers or small bands follow their own self-interest (as happened to the CPB), while horizontal fractures can generate civil war between rebel factions (as happened in the left-right split of the KNU). I hypothesize that these splits are most likely when negotiations begin or are proffered for insurgencies that recruit from multiple social networks yet remain poorly integrated. In such instance ideological differences first become apparent in negotiations, but are likely to spread and infect doctrine and administration as well, reducing fighting capacity if not prompting outright splits. This can also happen via contagion; if other ideologically or geographically proximate groups begin negotiations, it can force internal divisions into the open. They may also emerge during conflicts over administration or doctrine when the ideological stakes are high enough, as occurred with al Qaeda in Iraq during the 2000s.

Negotiations reveal fundamental disagreement over preferred ends, suggesting that current allies would have little reason to continue cooperation after a deal is signed. Doctrinal and administrative disputes concern the means of insurgency, but the costs of variation within the group are often minimal compared to negotiation. Disagreements over means may stand in for disagreements over ends, but may also signify simple dispute over the best way to wage war in an uncertain and dynamic environment. Negotiation disputes bring to bear fundamental political disagreements that, in a context where the means of politics is violence, can readily turn into violent disputes.

Another observable implication is that stronger insurgencies—that is, those that in the Staniland sense draw on vertical and horizontal pre-war networks—will possess a more coherent overall doctrine. They are better positioned to avoid vertical and horizontal ideological fractionalization, and by drawing on pre-war networks are more likely to have recourse to neutral mediators to resolve such splits. That means their doctrine will be in line with their stated goals (as expressed in any negotiations), patterns of civilian administration will be close to uniform, and recruit and resource gathering will reflect their beliefs about the duration and intensity of conflict. In my language, this means accountable rebels will be less prone to factionalism.

Drawing on Kalyvas and Balcells (2010), I hypothesize that international factors will influence the direction of insurgencies, but that the impact will derive partly from shifts in global norms. Such changes are most relevant for better organized insurgencies, those with coherent goals and organizations. For such groups, global factors are transmitted via ideology to alter the acceptable endpoint to a conflict, in addition to the diffusion of technologies of rebellion. Coherent groups reshape their war aims around a worker's paradise, free market system, caliphate, or other such teleological goal, and then adapt their doctrine, administration, and negotiation to fit these ends. Thus, the diffusion of new tactics such as suicide bombing should not be seen purely in the context of technological change, but also in light of the diffusion of new war aims that such strategies presuppose. Similarly, this helps explain the rise of the “new wars” in which violence apparently takes place solely for economic gain; as globalized capitalism has

uprooted traditional belief systems rooted in communal or religious needs, war for the sake of material wealth has become acceptable. Greed wars represent a change in the face of politics, not a change in the essence of warfare.

Another implication is that, where insurgencies cannot implement their preferred doctrine under local constraints, they will actively seek transnational resources to continue the fight. Thus, following Berman and Laitin (2008) and Gilli and Gilli (2014), if the contours of the war give suicide bombings an edge, insurgents will attempt to use it as a tactic. Where local leaders retain an independent power base with distinct political goals and a need for manpower, rebels will be unable to use locals for suicide bombings. Instead, they will be compelled to rely on foreign actors, meaning they will have to adapt their ideology and seek integration into global networks that enables access to these types of recruits. If, however, the insurgency is able to overthrow or coopt local leaders, they will be able to utilize locals for suicide bombings.

I anticipate that strategy will be highly path-dependent, with insurgencies only deviating from established patterns in the face of significant external shocks. This path-dependency stems from recruitment, socialization, and the endogeneity of each component of strategy. In terms of recruitment, insurgencies are more likely to recruit through established networks, those that gave them the current ideological and ethnic makeup, and if they have the luxury of choice will preferentially recruit from those that share their values. There will thus be little internal pressure for change. For socialization, new insurgents are likely to over time adopt the ideological preferences of

rebels around them. This may be due to direct socialization (attempts by the insurgency to reeducate its members), but also the diffusion of ideas. Finally, the endogeneity of strategy contributes to its stability. If the insurgency uses forced recruitment to sustain a guerilla war aimed at gathering material resources, it is likely that substantial change in any one of those components will alter the other two, forcing a greater initial investment before change occurs. This is particular pertinent in administration, where civilians may take considerable time to believe any shifts are genuine and will last beyond the next shock.

This stickiness can be clearly seen in the puzzling instance of the Karen National Union's (KNU) negotiating stance. For decades, its participation in a ceasefire was contingent on a nation-wide ceasefire, a demand no other Burmese insurgency, ethnic or communist, required. This is especially unusual because the period of its stark refusal, 1988-2012 witnessed numerous other Burmese groups, both new and decades old, agree to their own separate peace. This demand was dropped in the 2010s, a change in negotiation strategy that demands explanation, as does the initial cascade of peace deals from 1989-1996. My logic—which follows Pedahzur's argument—is that insurgencies will adopt tactics which come with sufficient public support. Thus, in trying to explain both the cascade of deals and the KNU's reluctance and eventual acceptance, we can examine four possibilities: ideological shifts (a new definition of victory), accountability shifts (increased power of civilians under KNU control vis a vis the insurgents),

organizational shifts (changing structure of the KNU or new leadership), or changing external environment (national or international pressure).

I close this section with several open questions. First, how do insurgents choose their preferred desired endpoint in a civil war, and what prompts switching among these different goals? Once an outcome is selected, what prompts insurgents to change goals? The answer likely includes some external (counterinsurgents, technology, economics) and internal (ideology, new leaders) components, but which is more important?

Second, within the three aspects of strategy, which tends to change first and most? The answer likely differs by insurgency, but where does the impetus for change originate? Do doctrinal shifts lead or lag changes in negotiating position?

Third, do insurgencies with low accountability, and in which power is concentrated in the upper echelons of military commanders, suffer from more factionalism? This argument analogizes to Geddes (1999), in which she argues that military autocratic regimes are more likely to suffer from factional disputes. For insurgencies, low accountability suggests less-democratic institutions, while centralized power is more analogous to military government. Similarly, to further the analogy, do sultanistic (low accountability insurgencies in which power is concentrated in a single person's hands) lose wars more frequently (Weeks 2014)?

Fourth, are larger and more differentiated insurgencies better able to recruit combatants? Those that provide a range of public goods, and also those that have a set of

stepping-stone jobs (porter, medic, radio operator, clerk, etc.), can use these jobs to bring in peripheral actors and then socialize them into the insurgency.

Fifth, are strong insurgencies (those with low accountability and unifying ideologies) less likely to provide public goods and more likely to pursue aggressive policies? By the same token, are more accountable insurgencies more likely to provide public goods?

Sixth, to what extent does counterinsurgent capacity impact ideology, accountability, and organization? More generally, is strategy a deterministic response to a complex of variables, or can rebels choose (even if their choice is restricted within a range)?

Seventh, do vertical or horizontal splits suggest an insurgency that is more likely to revive following defeat? While each provides counterinsurgents an opening to repress or negotiate these smaller rebellions more effectively, vertical splits suggest that there exists a strong network at the lower level that can be mobilized in later rebellions.

Eighth, does accountability influence each aspect of strategy equally? Are civilians more capable of changing doctrine, administration, or negotiation?

Ninth, does lack of accountability generate repeat civil wars? Might the first civil war eliminate the social gatekeepers, paving the way for a more destructive and less organized second war?

Tenth, does investment in ideology replace investment in public goods? In particular, this may explain instances in which insurgencies with persistent control over a region do not provide security, health, education, subsidized goods, or infrastructure.

Eleventh, are accountable insurgencies less likely to hold to a strategy? If they are responsive to public demands, that may produce oscillation between risk-averse and risk-tolerant strategies. It also may lead them to steadily become more risk-tolerant as public pressure to win mounts.

I will answer all of these questions within the dissertation; for now, they guide my research.

ANSWERS

This section addresses what we will learn from the full dissertation, and previews some of my tentative conclusions from the project.

First, I find that absence of accountability is a necessary condition for decision making. Where the insurgency is heavily reliant on its civilian population, ideology and organization will play only a marginal role in strategy, primarily by influencing available information and perceptions among rebel leadership. Where accountability is low, ideology and organization will play a more prominent role. Ideology will lower the likelihood of a peace deal, not just by reducing the available bargaining space, but also by lionizing or prohibiting tactics that alter public willingness to accept a deal. Organization is likely to play a significant role in insurgent adaptability, with network insurgencies facing information problems, hierarchical insurgencies challenged by institutional inertia, and both challenged by principal-agent problems heightened by the absence of accepted formal rules.

Recall that accountability is multifaceted, as it relates to the relationship between the insurgency and other armed actors (including other insurgents, paramilitaries, the state, and external actors). In mid-2000s Iraq (Berman et al. 2011), North Ireland during the Troubles (Sanders 2011), or Intifada Israel (Pedahzur 2005) the population could hold rebels accountable by supplying intelligence as well as not providing recruits, while in Burma (Lintner 1999, Smith 1999), pre-2001 Afghanistan (Staniland 2014), or the DRC (Williams 2011) the state lacked the capacity to utilize civilian intelligence. There,

civilians could generate accountability via exit, refusal to supply monetary resources, refusal to supply labor, or not joining the insurgency. In this context, accountability was a function of lootable monetary resources and the level of organization among civilians.

Where civilians are well-organized and hence accountability is high, insurgencies may end up with a gap between their preferred methods for achieving strategic goals and what their supporters will permit. In Ireland, popular dissatisfaction with the use of suicide bombers led to the tactic's disappearance. In Iraq, insurgents didn't respond, and so created space for the state and the American-led coalition to counterattack. In Israel, Hamas and other groups remade the narrative and built a culture of martyrdom. Note that the difference between Iraq and Israel was *not* intention; AQI/ISI (al-Qaeda in Iraq/Islamic State in Iraq) had an engaged media arm and actively sought to reshape the narrative to enable suicide bombings (including those targeting Sunnis).

This evidence is strengthened by the over-time variation in accountability for insurgencies. The Tamil Tigers provide one such instance, where their ideology of a Tamil Elam—a Tamil homeland—remained constant, but their level of violence directed at Sinhalese targets rose as other Tamil organizations declined. Their violence, though, was limited by the need for external support, and prevented them from claiming any or launching many suicide attacks against Sinhalese civilians (Hoffman). Afghan insurgent groups have seen a similar shift towards more aggressive tactics as traditional governance structures have eroded and accountability declined, just as AQI/ISI sought to eliminate community leaders to improve their maneuvering room. Similarly, the decline in

Somalia's clan structure has reduced communities' capacity to control al Shabaab.

Although the IRA sought to become more independent of Catholic communal organizations, it never declared war on in-group religious leaders or other gatekeepers, and never broke free of communal influence.

Accountability best explains the difference between the IRA and LTTE or AQI/ISI. All faced hard targets and capable counter-insurgent forces, yet only the latter was able to make the shift to suicide terrorism (contra Berman and Laitin or Gilli and Gilli). Contra Sanin and Wood, there is no evidence that group ideology exercised a veto, given that both groups used suicide attackers. An explanation that accounts for the insurgent's relationship with other important actors improves explanations of why some groups began using suicide bombings.

Sri Lanka and Iraq bring up adaptability, which links to organization and ideology. My second finding is that groups with a more cohesive ideology and more hierarchical organization are better able to adapt. This argument rests on two points: first, that stronger internal communications enable insurgents to more quickly realize when old strategies are failing; and second, that organization and ideology mitigate principal-agent problems that otherwise militate against adaptation. The LTTE demonstrated this with its switch to suicide bombing and successive ceasefire accords. The intense devotion shown to Prabhakaran eased the introduction of first suicide capsules and later suicide bombings, while the centralized organization allowed them to be deployed for tactical and strategic effect (Hoffman). Similarly, ideological

indoctrination and close control over agents meant the LTTE could credibly commit to ceasefires, yet also be sure (except for Karuna; see Staniland) that its agents would follow directives. The PKK shows even stronger evidence of this ideological power, when the imprisoned Ocalan was able to compel a ceasefire despite his complete isolation from the group and the risk a ceasefire posed to the PKK's military survival.

Iraq shows the limits of adaptability. While the Harmony database suggests AQI/ISI was less networked than Reed (2007) would suggest, its organization was constrained by the effective counterinsurgency waged by the US and Iraqi state. While I can't yet determine the relative weight exerted by ideological blinders and impaired communications, together they prevented AQI/ISI leadership from recognizing the failure of their aggressive strategy. Similarly, Burmese ethnic insurgencies were unable to adapt when negotiations were proffered due to weak organization (undercut by geography that limited communication and inhibited central control) and ideological disunity (limited by poor socialization and intra-ethnic fault lines). When the opportunity for negotiations arrive, several ethnic insurgencies fragmented into pro- and anti-ceasefire groups.

This last instance raises my third finding, that organization increases risk-acceptance. Cohesive, hierarchical (those with clear lines of command) insurgencies take more aggressive actions because they have the remove to weigh the advantages of an aggressive strategy and the resources with which to carry it out. In disorganized insurgencies, the responsibility for an aggressive policy rests with lower-echelon commanders. While some of them may be willing to ignore risks and seek battle, ignore

negotiation, or forcibly recruit (particularly if doing so helps in competition with other members of the group or competing community organizations), their capacity to do is limited by a shallow resource base. For the commander of a platoon, a single tactical defeat might be fatal, while for a several-thousand strong insurgency, such a loss is sustainable. We see evidence of this in the more frequent offensives launched by the CPB and KNU when they were the most cohesive and best organized Burmese insurgencies. Note that I do not suggest the groups must be large to pursue an aggressive strategy; smaller insurgencies may have lower accountability and need extreme aggressiveness to obtain publicity. Instead, there are two distinct trends at work—smaller insurgencies need aggressiveness to receive attention and support, while better organized insurgencies can sustain the higher loss-win ratio of an aggressive strategy by drawing on a stronger resource base.

My fourth finding is that ideology plays an independent role in producing strategic violence. By strategic violence, I am referring to the targeting of military forces or civilians away from the frontlines, with the intent to produce fear, inflict more harm than is possible on the battlefield, or both. As such, it is an aggressive strategy, one that risks fueling anger and calls for revenge by the state. This finding builds on my prior arguments, in that low accountability and strong organization are both necessary for strategic violence. I also find that a cohesive, stable ideology is a prerequisite.

This is because strategic violence requires the rebels to delegate considerable power and autonomy to low-ranking commanders, under circumstances in which

mistakes can be costly. This is especially true when the strategic violence is aimed at military targets; while Hamas or Islamic Jihad cared little about collateral damage, the PKK and LTTE sought to avoid killing foreigners and, at times in their campaigns, civilians near military installations. While organization and ideology can supplement each other on the frontline, organization breaks down when units are dispatched on longer missions. Units may be tempted to not attack at all, preserving their own lives (such missions, far from home bases, make survival less likely) or attack soft targets (again, for self-preservation), regardless of the value of such attacks to the broader organization. This can be seen in the LTTE's indoctrination of its reconnaissance, intelligence, and suicide bomber units, all of which operated with maximal flexibility, as well as the adaptation of suicide bombing by groups with coherent ideologies (in the case of Palestinian movements, having often spread that ideology of martyrdom among the civilian population, ensuring a supply of recruits).

My fifth and final finding is that ideology—specifically, ideological coherence among rank-and-file and elite—produces risk-taking behavior for two reasons. The first is founded in prospect theory and loss aversion, and derives from the greater costs of doing nothing, and the ability of subordinates to hold leaders to account. In an insurgency unified by ideology there are more palpable costs to not acting aggressively, in that a clear goal held by the group cannot be met. In prospect theory terms, the status quo itself becomes a loss; since humans tend to be loss-averse (Kahneman and Tversky 1979), the result is a stronger impetus to upset the status quo. Since the ideology is

common to group, leaders cannot play factions against each other or lay internal blame for the passivity. Instead, common ideology means the group itself is better able to hold leaders accountable by simplifying intra-group collective action.

The second reason is that ideological coherence makes aggressiveness less costly, *ceteris paribus*, especially when risk-tolerant behavior fails. Failure can be contextualized and explained with reference to common goals, and the dead lionized as part of an ongoing movement. While ideology can enable strategic patience, as was the case with the CPB, it provides resilience in the face of defeat that permits long-term risk taking. This is evident in groups like the LTTE, Taliban, and IRA, which over time became more ideologically cohesive and concomitantly pursued more aggressive strategies.

The importance of ideology is evident in varying insurgent strategies within the same state. While the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and KNU had similar troops levels in 1990, the KIO signed a ceasefire in 1994 during the cascade of post-CPB deals, but the KNU would not follow until 2012. Both groups had very low accountability, due to several decades of conflict and the totalizing political landscape in Burma that prevented political parties from advancing ethnic aspirations. Due to its early leading role in the Burmese civil wars, the KNU viewed itself as the voice of the insurgency, and uniquely positioned to represent all ethnic groups. It also reflects the pre-war hierarchies, in which the Karen, particularly during the colonial era, were seen as a more civilized and enlightened minority. The Kachins, in contrast, had joined the

ethnic insurgency late, and did not have the same perspective on the other ethnic rebels. As a result, when the ceasefire cascade began, the KIO first split, with the 4th brigade signing its own ceasefire in 1990, before the main organization joined in 1994 (Smith).

The extant literature would say face challenges explaining these cases. For the KIO-KNU distinction, the groups are matched on state capacity, terrain, and ethnic nature (Karl and Sobek 2004) and the groups were roughly equal in strength (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009). The Karen homeland is closer to the Burman core, which directly contradicts the findings of Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala (2009). Here, an explanation that accounts for factors internal to the group provides a better explanation.

Data I would like to gather:

1. Balance of power between insurgency and local pre-war actors
2. Balance of power and differentiation between civilian and military aspects of insurgency
3. Regime type of each rebel group (which may be seen as sum of prior two, with (1) a measure of federalism and (2) of governance type); may require VDEM like approach to all insurgent groups
4. Intelligence gathering by insurgent groups (suggests high degree of organization)
5. Make list of specific indicators under strategy (forget doctrine, negotiation, administration), and then see how many neat bins they fit into. Might be three, might be many, might not fit at all. Start at lowest level, and build larger containers from that. If new bins, great; if not, showing how interlock. Can accept blurry edges.

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