Between Mao and Gandhi: Strategies of Violence and Nonviolence in Revolutionary Movements

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Ches Thurber

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Dissertation Committee:
Richard Shultz, Chair
H. Zeynep Bulutgil
Erica Chenoweth

CHES THURBER

104 E. Main St. #2, Gloucester, MA 02155
richard.thurber@tufts.edu | (617) 710-2617
DOB: September 21, 1982 in New York, NY, USA

EDUCATION

Tufts University, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy

PH.D. | International Relations (2015)

Dissertation: "Between Mao and Gandhi: Strategies of Violence and Nonviolence in Revolutionary Movements"
Committee: Richard Shultz, Zeynep Bulutgil, Erica Chenoweth

M.A.L.D. | International Relations (2010)

Middlebury College

B.A. | International Studies (summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, 2004)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

University of Chicago

Postdoctoral Fellow, Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (Beginning Aug. 1, 2015)
Program on Political Violence

Harvard University

Research Fellow, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (2014-2015)
International Security Program

PUBLICATIONS

"Militias as Sociopolitical Movements: Lessons from Iraq's Armed Shia Groups" in *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 25, nos. 5-6 (October 2014): 900-923.

Review of *The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Revolution in the Twenty-First Century,* edited by Mahendra Lawoti and Anuk K. Pahari, in *Himalaya* 34, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 148-150.

"A Step Short of the Bomb: Explaining the Strategy of Nuclear Hedging" in *Journal of Public and International Affairs* (2011).

"From Coexistence to Cleansing: The Rise of Sectarian Violence in Baghdad, 2003-2006" in *al-Nakhlah: Journal of Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization* (March 2011).

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & AWARDS

Mahindra Humanities Center Mellon Seminar Associate, Harvard University (2014-2015)
Smith Richardson Foundation World Politics and Statecraft Fellowship (2014-2015)
Tobin Project National Security Fellowship (2014)
Scaife Foundation Scholarship (2011-2014)
International Security Studies Program Dissertation Fellowship (2010-2014)
The Fletcher School Doctoral Summer Research Grant (2013-2014)
Program on Negotiation Next Generation Grant, Harvard Law School (2013)
Eisenhower Foundation Clifford Roberts Fellowship (2012-2013)
Bradley Foundation Dissertation Fellowship (2010-2011)
John Moors Cabot Scholar, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (2009-2010)
American Academy of Diplomacy Leonard Marks Essay Contest Winner (2009)

Southwest Asia Program Summer Work and Research Fellowship (2009)
Kathryn Davis Fellowship for Peace, Middlebury College (Declined 2009)
General Scholarship, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (2008-2009)

Teaching Experience

Lecturer, Tufts University, School of Arts and Sciences

Theory and Practice of Nonviolent Resistance (Fall 2014)

Lecturer, University of Alaska, Department of Political Science
Recognized by College of Liberal Arts for Excellence in Teaching for Fall 2012

Political Economy (Winter 2013, Fall 2012)
International Politics (Fall 2012, Fall 2011)
Political Science Research Methods (Fall 2012, Fall 2011)
Peace, War and Security (Spring 2012)

Teaching Assistant, Tufts University, Department of Political Science

Introduction to Comparative Politics (Spring 2015)
Introduction to International Relations (Spring 2014, Spring 2011, Fall 2010)
Introduction to American Politics (Fall 2013)

Teaching Assistant, Tufts University, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy

Processes of International Negotiation (2010-2012)
Proliferation, Counter-proliferation, and Homeland Security (Spring 2010)
Crisis Management and Complex Emergencies (Fall 2009)
International Relations: Theory and Practice (Fall 2009)

Conference Presentations

"Resistance Networks and the Ethnic Limits of Nonviolent Action," *Paper Presenter*
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (April 2015)
Harvard-Yale-MIT Political Violence Conference, Cambridge, MA (April 2015)
International Studies Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA (February 2015)
Fletcher Doctoral Conference, Medford, MA (September 2014)
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (April 2014)

"Stacking to Repress: The Effect of Ethnic Manipulation in the Military on State Violence," *Paper Presenter, with Paul Lorenzo Johnson*
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (April 2015)
International Studies Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA (February 2015)

"Who Guards the Guardians? Leveraging New Data in Civil-Military Relations and Conflict," *Invited Workshop Participant*
Peace Science Society Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA (October 2014)

"The One Who Must Not Be Named: The Leverage of External Powers on Armed Group Strategy," *Paper Presenter*
International Studies Association Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON (March 2014)

"The Ethnic Composition of State Security Forces: Introducing a New Dataset"
Paper Presenter, with Paul Lorenzo Johnson
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (April 2014)
International Studies Association Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON (March 2014)

"Violence and Nonviolence in Revolutionary Movements," *Paper Presenter*
International Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA (April 2013)
Western Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Hollywood, CA (March 2013)

"Transatlantic Perspectives on Immigration," *Discussant*
Western Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Hollywood, CA (March 2013).

"Alternative Governance in Afghanistan," *Panel Organizer*
Fletcher Doctoral Annual Conference, Medford, MA (September, 2012)

Invited Talks

"Between Mao and Gandhi: Violence and Nonviolence in Revolutionary Movements," Belfer Center International Security Program Seminar, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (December 2014).

"Imperfect Calculus: Ideology, Organization, and Strategy in Revolutionary Movements," Fletcher School Doctoral Research Colloquium, Medford, MA (November 2013).

"Strategies of Violence and Nonviolence in Nepal's Political Movements," Martin Chautari Invited Speaker Series, Kathmandu, Nepal (July 2013).

"Investigating the Correlates of Civil Resistance Campaigns Using Logistic Regression," UAF Seminar on Applied Multivariate Statistics, Fairbanks, AK (April 2012).

"Legitimate Rebels: Insurgent-Civilian Relations and Armed Group Behavior," Fletcher School Doctoral Research Colloquium, Medford, MA (April 2011).

"Sadr, SCIRI, Scary? Iraq's Armed Shia Groups," Women in International Security, Fletcher Chapter, Medford, MA (February, 2010).

Media Appearances

Australian Broadcast Corporation, "Big Ideas," February 18, 2015 (Radio).

Research Assistance

Space Policy Working Group
The Fletcher School/MIT Lincoln Laboratories, Dr. William Martel (2010-2011)

Berkman Center for Internet and Society
Harvard Law School, Dr. Corinna di Gennaro (2008)

Policy Experience

Public Affairs Intern, U.S. Embassy Doha, Qatar (2009)
Legislative Assistant, Office of Rep. Peter Welch, Washington, DC (2007-2008)
Aide to the President Pro Temp., Vermont State Senate, Montpelier, VT (2006)
Policy Analyst, Vermont Medical Society, Montpelier, VT (2005)
Legislative Assistant, United Parcel Service, Washington, DC (2004-2005)

Professional Service

Reviewer, *International Security, Conflict Management and Peace Science*
Convener, Fletcher Doctoral Research Colloquium (2010-2011)
Interviewer, Fletcher Ph.D. Admissions Committee (2010-2011)
Editor, *Proceedings of the 2010 Fletcher Doctoral Conference* (2010)
Managing Editor, *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* (2008-2010)

Training

Institute for Qualitative and Multi-method Research, Syracuse, NY (2012)
iTeach Workshop, eLearning and Distance Education, Fairbanks, AK (2012)

GLOBAL RESEARCH & STUDY	India	(July 2014)
	Italy	(Sep. 2002-June 2003)
	Nepal	(May-July 2013, May-June 2014)
	Qatar	(May-July 2009)
	Sri Lanka	(July 2014)

SKILLS

Languages: Arabic (int.), Italian (adv.), French (adv.), Nepali (beg.)

Software: R, ArcGIS, NVIVO, LaTex

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association
APSA - Section on Qualitative and Multimethod Research
International Studies Association
Peace Science Society (International)

Abstract

From Eastern Europe to South Africa to the Arab Spring, nonviolent action has proven capable of overthrowing autocratic regimes and bringing about revolutionary political change. In fact, recent research suggests that nonviolent movements are more than twice as effective in achieving their goals than violent ones. So why do some political movements nevertheless believe it necessary to take up arms? Can they be convinced otherwise?

This dissertation examines why political movements that seek to overthrow the state come to embrace a strategy of either armed insurgency or civil resistance. I argue that characteristics of a movement's base of popular support—its size, organization, and networked structure—influence the movement's perceptions of the relative effectiveness of violent versus nonviolent tactics and consequently shape its strategic behavior.

To test the theory, I employ a mixed-method research design. Statistical analysis of a cross-national dataset of revolutionary movements allows me to test competing theories and locate new empirical puzzles. Based on these quantitative findings, I select four cases of revolutionary campaigns from Nepal for a more fine-grained qualitative study. Drawing on six months of fieldwork in Nepal and India, including archival research as well as over 60 interviews with ex-combatants, movement leaders, and local experts, I use cross-case comparisons and within-case process-tracing tests to further elucidate the theoretical mechanisms, check for measurement error, and search for alternative explanations not previously considered.

The study promises several important contributions both to the study of conflict dynamics as well as to the broader fields of international relations and comparative politics. The project highlights the role of nonviolent resistance as both an important geopolitical phenomenon in need of greater understanding in its own right, and as an alternative to armed conflict that influences when, where, and why we see violence occur. It thus challenges prevailing theories of civil war that presume armed force as the only means to achieve maximalist political goals. Furthermore, by analyzing the social institutions that underpin revolutionary movements, the study presents evidence that intergroup dynamics and organizational structures merit serious attention as key determinants of rebel strategy, contributing to an emerging literature on the institutional and organizational foundations of conflict processes. Finally, the findings have real-world implications for policymakers and global activists who have an interest in better predicting where conflicts are more likely to turn violent or in encouraging groups to embrace nonviolent methods.

Contents

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This project represents my first serious attempt at scholarly research in the field as well as my first encounter with the beautiful, inspiring, and resilient country of Nepal. I was thus in need of substantial guidance in learning about the country. I was fortunate to establish a relationship with an amazing organization in Kathmandu, the Southasia Institute for Advanced Studies, which provided me with an affiliation, office space, and extraordinary expertise during my time in Kathmandu. I am especially grateful to Hari Dunghana and Kamal Devkota for their counsel and support.

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During a trip to Pilgims' bookshop, I stumbled across a guidebook for "The Guerilla Trek" co-authored by Surendra Rana. This chance encounter yielded a unique research opportunity, and more importantly, an enduring friendship. Surendra became my "Himalayan Mentor," guiding me through the rural districts of Rukum and Rolpa that were the heartland of the Maoist insurgency, introducing me to local leaders, serving as my interpreter, and caring for me as I quickly learned that my experience hiking the hills of New England in no way prepared me for the mountains of Nepal. His commitment to bringing attention to the local experiences of those who experienced the civil war was an inspiration for my own research. I am also grateful to Prakash Roka (Magar), whose local expertise was invaluable in the region, and whose detailed notes have saved me on more than one occasion when recording devices failed and my own writings were illegible.

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Chapter 1

Two Paths to Revolution

In the fall of 2005, the senior leadership of Nepal's Maoist insurgency gathered in the village of Chunbang in Nepal's hilly western Rolpa district. Over the previous decade, these leaders had achieved a remarkable feat. At a time when Marxist rebellions were considered a historic relic, the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) transformed itself from a small, rural political party considered irrelevant by ruling urban elites to arguably the most powerful actor in the country. They controlled an estimated 25 percent of Nepal's territory,[1] had built an army of between 18,000 and 30,000 soldiers,[2] established local governing councils and courts, and limited the control of the regime to the capital city of Kathmandu and its immediate environs. The Maoists had garnered international attention as well, not

1. Ganga B Thapa and Jan Sharma, "From Insurgency to Democracy: The Challenges of Peace and Democracy-Building in Nepal," *International Political Science Review* 30, no. 2 (March 2009): 208.

2. Kristine Eck, "Recruiting Rebels: Indoctrination and Political Education in Nepal," in *The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Revolution in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Mahendra Lawoti and Anup K Pahari (London: Routledge, 2010), 47.

just as a quaint throwback to an age of leftist rebellion, but as a serious geopolitical threat. The United States government designated the CPN-M as a terrorist organization in 2003.

Despite this dramatic battlefield success, by 2005, the CPN-M had come to a critical point in its revolutionary effort. The Maoists and the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) were at a stalemate. India and the United States were increasing their supply of arms to the RNA and it was clear that the international community would not allow the Maoists to capture Kathmandu and achieve a total victory. Meanwhile, negotiations between the Maoists and king had been fruitless. Ending the monarchy had been a central tenet of Nepali Maoist doctrine for decades, thus leaving little room for agreement between the two sides.

But into this deadlock came an intriguing offer. Nepal's political parties, who had been sidelined by an increasingly dictatorial monarch, would agree to partner with the Maoists in a nonviolent campaign of civil resistance against the king. If the campaign were successful, Maoists would have to end their fighting and join a competitive democratic system as a formal political party.

The Maoist leaders at Chunbang had spent decades telling themselves and indoctrinating their cadres with the idea that civil resistance and parliamentary politics were mere tools of the bourgeoisie and that true social reform could only be realized through force. But practically speaking, they knew they had reached the limits of what they could achieve politically through guerrilla warfare. After days of heated debate, they decided that joining the political parties in a campaign of civil resistance that would take place largely in Nepal's cities could be reconciled ideologically with Mao's doctrine of taking the revolu-

tion to the "urban centers." Turning to nonviolence was not the end of the revolution, but rather the beginning of the "strategic offensive" that would allow the movement to achieve its revolutionary goals through alternative means.

For 19 days in March and April of 2006, the Maoists and the political parties combined their efforts to launch a wave of protests, demonstrations, and strikes. The political parties drew on their experience of having coordinated a similar nonviolent effort in 1990, while the Maoists buttressed the parties' efforts by bussing thousands of villagers from the countryside into the capital city. After little more than a month, the king stepped down. Elections were held two years later and the Maoists, competing as a fully legitimized political party, achieved an overwhelming victory. Pushpa Kamal Dahal, the erstwhile guerilla leader more commonly known my his nom de guerre "Comrade Prachanda," became the first prime minister of republican Nepal.

1.1 PUZZLE

The Maoists are not the only group in Nepal that has attempted to overthrow the regime, nor the only one to have alternated between violent and nonviolent means of achieving this end. In fact, Nepal has seen four major revolutionary efforts since the British withdrawal from South Asia.[3] Two of these campaigns–the anti-Rana uprising of 1950 and the

3. The British never formally conquered and colonized Nepal, as they did India, however their considerable military presence along Nepal's borders allowed them to exert considerable political pressure on the ruling Rana family dictators.

Maoist insurgency of 1996–2006– have taken the form of armed insurgency, while the other two–the Jana Andolans, or People's Movements of 1990 and 2006–relied on primarily nonviolent civil resistance. And all three of Nepal's major political factions have engaged in both violent and nonviolent tactics at different points in time.

Nepal is a particularly illustrative case in point, but its political movements' variation in revolutionary strategies is not unique. In fact, it is indicative of a much broader phenomenon. In the late 1980's, social movements in Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Estonia all used a strategy of nonviolent civil resistance, often in the face of severe repression, to topple Soviet-backed regimes. However, in Romania, what started as a similar nonviolent protest devolved into armed conflict that killed more than 1,100 people. More recently, revolutionary movements in the Arab world from Tunisia to Bahrain took to the streets to demand political change. But while movements in Tunisia and Egypt engaged in protests, marches, strikes, and sit-ins, seeking to compel their states' respective leaders to step down, in Libya, Syria, and Yemen the revolutionary movements turned to a strategy of armed confrontation.

Cases of movements with the same revolutionary goals using different strategies in adjacent states, such as seen in Eastern Europe and the Arab Spring, as well as movements that have transitioned between strategies over time, such as the three major political parties in Nepal, suggest that 1) nonviolence and violence are plausible alternatives in pursuit of revolutionary goals, and 2) political movements seeking revolution therefore face a choice in what strategy they wish to pursue. So how do movements that seek revolution come to

embrace one strategy over the other?

Given the enormous humanitarian cost of civil wars, the question is not just academically interesting, but has important normative and policy implications. Recent research has suggested that civil resistance campaigns are more likely to achieve their self-stated goals, to produce a democratic outcome, and to yield and enduring peace.[4] If this is the case, global actors–from state governments to non-governmental organizations to movement activists–may wish to find ways to encourage the adoption of civil resistance over armed insurgency. Understanding how and why revolutionary movements make these strategic decisions is a key first step in this endeavor.

Meanwhile, both campaigns of armed insurgency as well as civil resistance have important geopolitical implications. The revolutionary events of 1989 and the Arab Spring were two of the most profound international political events of the past 25 years. Their consequences are still unfolding. Even tiny Nepal, while by no means a geopolitical heavyweight in and of itself, sits along the contentious border between the two rising powers China and India.[5] Both of these countries as well as Western powers and the United Nations have been drawn into and have played active roles in Nepal's violent and nonviolent conflicts. Improving our knowledge of non-state group's strategic decision-making is important in efforts to assess when, where, and in what form revolutionary campaigns may be more or less likely to occur.

4. Erica Chenoweth and Maria J Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

5. Nepalese often refer to their country as "the yam between two boulders."

1.2 Theories of Violent and Nonviolent Revolution

Despite the obvious real-world importance of both armed insurgencies and civil resistance campaigns and despite their clear relationship as alternative strategies to the similar end of revolutionary change, scholarly analysis has rarely addressed them in tandem. The academic literatures on civil war and civil resistance have evolved largely separately, thus leaving some important questions unaddressed. As Veronique Dudouet describes, "scholars and prac- titioners or activists in the fields of social movements, nonviolent action, political violence and conflict resolution seem to be largely evolving in parallel, often in relative isolation from each other. For instance, most security studies and conflict resolution experts are unfamiliar with the rich scholarship and empirics on civil resistance, given their narrow focus on armed conflicts and their termination through military means or negotiated settlements. In turn, most nonviolent scholars tend to hold oversimplified views on the dynamics and nature of armed struggle and warfare."[6]

More specifically, the literature on civil wars has focused on variables affecting the onset of civil violence,[7] conflict duration,[8] and prospects for resolution.[9] However, while scholars of civil war have certainly been interested in identifying factors that make the

6. Veronique Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (May 2013): 401.

7. Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563–595 and ibid.

8. James D Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (May 2004): 275–301, Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Måns Söderbom, "On the Duration of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 253–273, and Håvard Hegre, "The Duration and Termination of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 243–252.

9. Barbara F Walter, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement," *International Organization* 51, no. 3 (July 1997): 335–364 and Roy Licklider, ed., *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End* (New York: New York University Press, 1993).

initiation of large-scale violence more likely, they conflate the entire range of contention short of violence, ignoring the enormous political and social implications of the difference between a polity actively engaged in civil insurrection versus one in which little or no extra-institutional conflict occurs.

In his classic 1964 work Internal War: Problems and Approaches, Harry Eckstein lays out a series of preconditions that he proposes makes internal warfare more likely. He focuses on intellectual divisions among elites, economic disparities, social cleavages such as ethnic, tribal and religious differences, political exclusion, geography, and the military capabilities of the regime.[10] Numerous sociologists and political scientists have used Eckstein's preconditions as a starting point to develop more complex theories of revolution, leading to a debate between grievance and opportunity-based approaches.

Davies, Johnson, Huntington, and Gurr all articulated versions of what became known as "relative deprivation" theory, postulating that processes of modernization lead to divergences between aspirations and reality that trigger social frustration and consequently conflict.[11] In contrast, scholars such as Charles Tilly argued that such frustrations are ubiquitious. Understanding where and when political violence occurs therefore requires an examination of the opportunity structures–access to resources, weakness of the regime, and organizational capacity of the challenging movement–that make taking up arms against the

10. Harry Eckstein, *Internal War: Problems and Approaches* (New York: Free Press, 1964).

11. James C Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *American Sociological Review* 27 (1962): 5–19, Chalmers A Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (New York: Little, Brown / Company, 1966) , Samuel P Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), and Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

state practically feasible.[12]

The debate reemerged in the late 1990s and early 2000s as scholars employed larger cross-national quantitative analyses. In the two preeminent studies conducted by Collier and Hoeffler and by Fearon and Laitin, both teams of scholars find no significant relationships between the onset of civil war and potential sources of grievance such as economic disparity, ethnic and religious cleavages, or political exclusion. Instead, they find strong correlations for variables that they believe represent the "opportunity" to rebel against the state such as advantageous terrain, access to arms and commodity resources, and low per capita GDP.[13] But other scholars have found that the use of more fine-grained and theoretically driven measures provides evidence of the link between horizontal inequalities, group grievances, and violent conflict originally postulated by the relative deprivation theorists.[14]

All of these studies, however, are focused only on the set of revolutionary movements that employ violence. They are therefore unable to shed any light on the causes on nonviolent revolutions. But more than that, because they fail to distinguish nonviolent revolutionary action from simple inaction, it is impossible to disentangle which correlates represent

12. Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" *Comparative Politics* 5, no. 3 (April 1973): 425 and Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (1977).

13. James D Fearon and David D Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (February 2003): 75–90 and Collier and Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." It should be noted that while the findings are generally similar, the two teams of scholars offer slightly different explanations. While Fearon and Laitin interpret the statistically significant variables to represent structural conditions that favor the "technology of insurgency," Collier and Hoeffler employ a labor market paradigm, surmising that civil wars occur when economic conditions make violent loot-seeking worth the risk.

14. See, for example, A Wimmer, Lars-Erik Cederman, and B Min, "Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of a New Global Data Set," *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 2 (April 2009): 316–337, Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min, "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel?: New Data and Analysis," *World Politics* 62, no. 1 (2010): 87–119, and Lars-Erik Cederman, Halvard Buhaug, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, *Inequality, Grievances, and Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

an increased likelihood of revolution generally and which are specific to the strategy of violent insurgency.

The scholarly literature on nonviolent conflict is far smaller and generally younger than that on civil wars. Through most of its development, it has focused primarily on theorizing the strategic underpinnings of nonviolent coercion and and on deriving principles of effective practice through the examination of successful cases.[15] Gene Sharp has written most prolifically on the topic of nonviolence for nearly five decades. Sometimes referred to as the "Clausewitz" of nonviolent resistance, Sharp's work focuses on the nature of power and on the tactics and mechanisms through which a nonviolent movement can pressure a regime to meet its demands.[16]

Ackerman and Kruegler employ a more empirical approach, using case studies of both successful and unsuccessful nonviolent campaigns to derive 12 "principles" of strategic action that influence whether or not a campaign will be successful.[17] The principles focus almost exclusively around a movement's ability to effectively plan, organize, and strategize, thus supporting an assertion originally made by Sharp regarding the primacy of strategic planning in nonviolent resistance.[18] Schock and Nepstad have more recently published sim-

15. Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Non-Violent Conflict* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash, eds., *Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-violent Action from Gandhi to the Present* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009), Stephen Zunes, "Unarmed Resistance in the Middle East and North Africa," in *Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective*, ed. Stephen Zunes, Lester Kurtz, and Sarah Beth Asher (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1999)

16. Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1973)

17. Peter Ackerman and Peter Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the 21st Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994).

18. Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*.

ilar comparative analyses of nonviolent movements in an effort to identify determinants of success. Schock finds that tactical factors, such as a movement's ability to innovate new methods, to shift between methods, and to withstand repression, are most important.[19] For Nepstad, it is a movement's ability to generate defections from the regime's forces.[20] All of these works, however, are concerned primarily with the question of effectiveness and all limit the scope of the research to the study of exclusively nonviolent movements. An important point of distinction between it and the civil war literature, however, is the emphasis on agency over structure: that the determinants of nonviolent movement success lie in the capabilities and choices of the movement itself, independent of the nature of the target regime or other aspects of the conflict enviornment.

Chenoweth and Stephan are the first to employ a cross-case quantitative analysis in their study of civil resistance as well as the first to compare directly violent and nonviolent campaigns.[21] They find that nonviolent campaigns are dramatically more successful than their violent counterparts, and that the number of participants is the most important factor in explaining the success of nonviolent movements. In short, nonviolent campaigns are more effective because they are able to attract more supporters.

The strength of recent empirical findings on the effectiveness of civil resistance has brought new attention to the question of how movements come to embrace nonviolence

19. Kurt Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

20. Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011).

21. M J Stephan and E Chenoweth, "Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict," *International Security* 33, no. 1 (2008): 7–44 and Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*.

versus violence in the first place. After all, if nonviolence really is more effective, why would any group choose to take up arms?

Veronique Dudouet offers a broad theoretical overview of factors that may influence a movements strategic decisionmaking, focusing specifically on groups that transition from violence to nonviolence.[22] She classifies a wide variety of potential explanations under a "levels of analysis" framework, ranging from the role of individual leadership to intra-and inter-group dynamics, to state behavior, to transnational influences. However, Dudouet herself notes that her approach is largely heuristic and leaves a "need for more systematic enquiry on these cases through in-depth comparative empirical analysis."[23]

But empirical research on the determinants of movement strategy has produced few strong findings. Echoing the civil war literature, Chenoweth and Lewis find that armed campaigns are more likely when environmental conditions make fighting easier. But their findings are less clear when it comes to what affects the onset of civil resistance. In their analysis of a revised dataset of violent and nonviolent campaigns, "the only significant correlates of nonviolent campaigns are flat terrain and older, more durable, authoritarian regimes."[24] They cite this as evidence of the robustness of civil resistance as a strategy, but offer little theory as to why these correlations exist.

Cunningham examines the subset of self-determination movements. Unlike previous studies, she moves beyond state-level macro variables and uses group-level data on the size

22. Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance."
23. ibid., 401.
24. Erica Chenoweth and Orion A Lewis, "Unpacking Nonviolent Campaigns: Introducing the NAVCO 2.0 Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (2013): 421.

and concentration of ethnic groups. She finds that groups are more likely to rebel using either strategy when they are politically excluded, but that armed insurgency is more likely the larger and more concentrated the group while smaller more diffuse groups are more likely to opt for nonviolence. This result runs contrary to Cunningham's own theoretical predictions and the intuitive logic that a larger group size would make a movement more likely to embrace nonviolence given that strategy's reliance on mass support. More research is therefore necessary on the relationship between movement support and strategy.

Finally, Wendy Pearlman has authored the most complete study specifically addressing the issue of movement choice between violent and nonviolent strategies.[25] Tracing tracing over 80 years of Palestinian independence movements, she argues that a cohesive, well-disciplined organization is an essential prerequisite for nonviolence, while internecine fragmentation creates multiple incentives for violence. It is likely true that a certain level of organizational discipline is necessary for a nonviolent movement to even get off the ground. However, this amounts to a necessary but not sufficient condition for civil resistance: plenty of violent insurgent movements are highly disciplined, organized, and cohesive. The Maoist revolutionaries discussed in this study are one such example, and in fact there is a rapidly growing literature examining precisely the variation in organization cohesion within exclusively armed non-state groups.[26]

25. Wendy Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, October 2011).

26. For explanations of variation in organizational cohesion and discipline among non-state armed groups, see Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), Paul Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia," *International Security* 37, no. 1 (July 2012): 142–177, and Kristin M Bakke, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee J M Seymour, "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil

These studies have all pushed forward the scholarly analysis of nonviolence with increased rigor and empirical analysis. However, they offer only partial explanations for why and how movements come to embrace either armed insurgency or civil resistance. Furthermore, in the cases of Cunningham and Pearlman, they focus specifically on struggles for secession, setting aside those movements seeking total state capture. This study seeks to fill these gaps.

1.3 Concepts and Assumptions

This study focuses specifically on groups seeking the common goal of regime overthrow. Borrowing from the social movement literature, I use the term revolutionary movements to refer to this subset of social movements with maximalist political goals.[27] It includes movements seeking the complete elimination and replacement of the principle organs of state power. It does not include groups seeking changes in law or other political or economic reforms. Admittedly, this distinction may be fuzzy in some cases. At one point are reforms so significant that they constitute a change in regime? The standard used in this study is that to be considered a revolutionary movement, the group must be calling for a fundamental restructuring of the processes through which power is distributed and state

Wars," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (May 2012): 265–283.

27. Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 10, Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions: 1492-1992* (Cambridge, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1993), 10

institutions are governed. Usually this takes the form of a demand for a complete rewrite of the state constitution.

A potentially useful example to examine this distinction is to compare the civil rights movement in the United States with the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa. Certainly the reforms demanded and achieved by the American civil rights movement profoundly transformed the country's political landscape. Through the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, and the 24th Amendment, African-Americans secured new legal protections, began to vote in far higher numbers, and subsequently held positions of political power from municipal councils to the Presidency. However, this political change, while dramatic, likely falls short of the threshold of regime change. The same electoral processes continued to be used to appoint national leaders and those leaders largely remained the same through the period of reform. In South Africa, the removal of Apartheid restrictions on black South Africans could in some sense be considered a mere "change in law," but doing so trivializes the enormity of its political consequence. Unlike in the United States, ending Apartheid in South Africa meant a wholesale reversal of power relations between the country's black and white communities as well as a complete replacement of the national leadership. The distinction is not just semantic: it meant that the political demands placed on the South African regime were existential while those placed on the American regime were not. The strategic logic of conflict under the two conditions is therefore likely to be quite different.

The definition of revolutionary movement employed in this study also excludes those

groups pursuing territorial ambitions such as secession or autonomy. The intent of this limited scope is to be able to more directly compare like-groups so that the analysis can focus on variation in strategy among groups with equivalent political objectives. While groups with territorial goals are certainly worthy of study, it is possible that the strategic logic and considerations facing a movement seeking secession are different than those facing a movement attempting state capture. As Jeremy Weinstein writes, "the imperative of capturing a national territory creates a unique set of opportunities and constraints that may or may not hold in other types of warfare."[28] In disaggregating movements by their political goal, I am thus consistent with much of the most recent conflict scholarship. Furthermore, a study of specifically center-seeking movements may provide a particular contribution to the literature as the two studies to date that address the question of revolutionary choice between violent and nonviolent strategies most directly have both limited their scope to self-determination movements.[29]

I assume that revolutionary movements must choose between two fundamentally different strategies in pursuit of their goals. Civil resistance describes a strategy based on the primarily nonviolent use of social, psychological, economic, and/or political pressure in order to exert coercive power on an adversary.[30] It is different from spontaneous demon-

28. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*, 17.

29. See Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, "Understanding Strategic Choice: The Determinants of Civil War and Nonviolent Campaign in Self-Determination Disputes," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (May 2013): 291–304 and Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement*. Both studies will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter.

30. Based on definitions established by Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* and Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*, 6. The literature on nonviolence additionally uses the terms nonviolent direct action, nonviolent struggle, strategic nonviolence, or unarmed insurrection. For the purposes of this research, the terms are interchangeable. Some scholars and advocates have questioned the

stration in that it is employed in the form of a campaign by a movement with identifiable leaders and an organizational structure.[31] It is also different from institutionalized protest in that it occurs outside the channels of normal political activity, and often outside of the law.[32] In short, it is the most intensive and coercive form of political contention short of taking up arms. Armed insurgency, by contrast, is a strategy of confronting the security apparatus of the state directly with armed force. This encompasses both strategies that seek to capture and control territory, as well as strategies that employ violence to break the political will of an adversary. Armed insurgency may include the use of non-violent tactics, but the actors are dependent upon the use of violence in order to achieve their goals.

I treat these concepts as "ideal types" of strategy that are mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive. This assumption may be problematic: certainly some groups engage in behavior that encompasses a spectrum of violent and nonviolent forms of contention. However, this binary classification, while simplistic, is nevertheless both useful and realistic. Even when violent groups engage in some of the tactics of civil resistance, the primary logic of their strategy still follows that of armed insurgency in that it relies on directly confronting the state's security forces on the battlefield. Scholars of civil resistance have gone

degree to which civil resistance campaigns can truly be considered "nonviolent," and they raise a fair point. Civil resistance campaigns can quickly become violent when regimes employ brutal repression, when movement leaders resort to violence to coerce participation in nominally nonviolent activities, or when tactics generally considered to be nonviolent, such as strikes, have severe economic consequences that can be considered "violent" in a more loosely defined sense of the word. I use the term nonviolence along with with civil resistance for stylistic variation and because the relative absence of violence vis a vis armed insurgency is nevertheless the defining characteristic of civil resistance. However, I do so recognizing the imperfections of this term.

31. Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, 14.

32. Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*, 6.

to great lengths to point out that when a group attempting civil resistance engages in even a a low level of violent activity, it undermines the strategy and the conflict quickly takes on the dynamic of insurgency.

1.4 Argument and Method

The behavior of revolutionary movements is a multi-faceted phenomenon, influenced by rational strategic calculations as well as by socio-pyschological dynamics and organizational constraints. This study does not claim to provide a "silver-bullet" explanation or to generate a comprehensive general theory. Instead, it demonstrates that the common theories in the literatures on civil conflict and contentious politics fall short when applied to the question of how movements choose between civil resistance and armed insurgency. However, I argue that one often-overlooked factor is actually extremely important: the unique characteristics of a movement's structures of social support. By this I mean the overall size, both actual and anticipated, of the base of supporters that a movement believes it will be able to mobilize in a campaign, as well as the relational structure of those supporters to other groups within the larger society, and most importantly, to the membership of the regime. A movement with the ability to generate mass mobilization including participants that share social ties with members of the state security forces and bureaucracy will be more likely to embrace civil resistance while one whose base of support is limited and segmented from the rest of

society and the regime along ethnic, religious, or other social cleavages will feel compelled to turn to armed force.

The study presents a largely rationalist approach to the decision-making of revolutionary movements in order to develop a theory of the strategic behavior of these movements. I argue that movements have information about their own strengths and weaknesses that allows them to make a priori assessments of the relative viability of violent and nonviolent strategies. I assume that movements embrace the strategy that they believe will bring the greater likelihood of achieving their political goal, while acknowledging that numerous non-rational factors are likely at play as well.

The differing requisites of success for civil resistance versus armed insurgency provide a basis for anticipating the comparative efficacy the two strategies in a given context. One of the strongest findings in the literature on civil resistance is the importance of mass popular support to the effectiveness of campaigns. The logic behind this is straightforward: more people engaging in nonviolent anti-regime mobilizations–from street protests to strikes to boycotts–increases the effectiveness of those tactics, raises the costs imposed on the regime, and heightens the threat to regime power.

While popular support can be helpful for armed insurgency, it is not as central a requirement of success as in the strategy of nonviolence. Research on insurgency has shown how small groups of rebels can defeat the most powerful regime adversaries[33] and that the number of participants is far less important in predicting the outcome of violent cam-

33. Ivan Arreguin-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Security* 26, no. 1 (2001): 93–128.

paigns.[34] Movements that are pessimistic about their abilities to generate mass mobilization, whether it be because spreading the message is difficult in an underdeveloped, illiterate society, or because that message simply is not popular, are more likely to conclude that taking up arms provides a more viable path to victory.[35]

The dynamics of popular support go beyond numbers: who participates may be as important as how many participate. Even when there are a large number of supporters, victory through civil resistance may be difficult if there is little social overlap–ties of kinship, caste, religion, or ethnicity–between movement and regime. A lack of social ties with members of the regime makes it harder to transmit the movement's ideals, goals, and values within the regime and hence more difficult to win over defectors—a key source of nonviolent movement success. Secondly, a lack of social overlap makes it easier to for the regime to engage in brutal repression as security force personnel are more willing to engage in brutal repression against populations they perceive as more socially distant. Conversely, a movement with limited ability to generate mass mobilization may still see a path to victory if its members have close social ties with members of the regime. These ties can help increase pressures for defection make the member less willing to engage in repression.

This study will draw on both qualitative and quantitative evidence to explore the strategic decision-making and behavior of revolutionary movements. I test my proposed the-

34. Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*.

35. This does not necessarily mean that they are correct in this assessment. In fact, the odds of success for any insurgent group, especially a small one, are extremely low. But we should nevertheless expect variation in conditions that affect the relative efficacy of violent and nonviolent methods to parallel variation in observed movement behavior.

ory of social endowments against potential alternatives using a cross-national dataset of revolutionary campaigns between 1945 and 2005. Nonviolent campaigns are drawn from Chenoweth and Stephan's Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) dataset while armed insurgency campaigns come from the widely used UCDP dataset of intra-state conflicts. Using a logit regression, I assess which theories best match the historical behavior of revolutionary movements around the world.

I supplement the large-n analysis with four cases of revolutionary campaigns in Nepal, two violent and two nonviolent.[36] These cases are particularly useful for closer examination for several reasons. Nepal's unique history allows for close comparison between movements that have employed opposite strategies within the controlled context of a single state and relatively narrow span of time. Lying between China and India, literally between the countries where Mao and Gandhi practiced their respective strategies, Nepal was exposed to both ideologies and its political movements truly faced a choice between these alternatives. Interestingly, Nepali movements affiliated with both ideologies proved willing to change their strategies over time. Thus, Nepal provides an opportunity to examine both variation in strategy between different political movements as well as longitudinal changes within each movement. Finally, Nepal offers several practical advantages for research. Three of the four campaigns occurred relatively recently, since 1990, and were ultimately resolved pacifically. This makes it possible to collect data about these conflicts that is often not

36. This mixed methodology follows the tradition of "nested anlaysis." See Evan S Lieberman, "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research," *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 3 (August 2005): 435–452.

possible in other contexts.

In developing the case studies, I draw upon six months of field research in Nepal, including interviews with former combatants and movement participants, political party leaders, military commanders, foreign observers, and journalists. Whenever possible, I triangulate my own findings with publicly available evidence published in scholarly works or newspapers. Methodologically, I analyze the cases using a combination of two techniques. I employ cross-case comparison to evaluate the predictions of competing theories against the observed outcomes in the Nepali cases. This supplements the quantitative analysis by allowing me to examine variables that simply could not be measured quantitatively as well as to assess the validity of the quantitative measures used. I also employ within-case "process-tracing," an examination of the fine-grained sequences of events within each case, to explore the causal mechanisms at work.

Ultimately, each argument is therefore required to pass three tests: it must be consistent with the overall variation seen between Nepal's four cases, it must be consistent with the detailed historical record from within cases for which such evidence is available, and it must be consistent with world-wide statistical patterns.

1.5 The Path Forward

In the chapters that follow, I present first an overall theoretical framework and then empirically test competing theories using first quantitative then qualitative evidence. Chapter two introduces in greater detail a theory of revolutionary strategy that emphasizes the particular social characteristics of a movement. I articulate the ways in which both the absolute size as well as the particular nature of a movement's network of supporters shapes the strategy that it is likely to employ. Furthermore, I argue that the type of supporters is as important as the overall quantity. Movements whose members exhibit little "social overlap"—ties of kinship, caste, religion, or ethnicity, with the regime or other elements of society—may be more pessimistic about their ability to win over defectors and greater repression, making them also more likely to opt for a strategy of violence. This chapter also presents and evaluates on theoretical grounds several alternative explanations. I articulate areas where the theory of social endowments offers complementary explanations to existing theories, filling in gaps or offering predictions under different scope conditions, as well as areas where it makes competing predictions. In doing so, I set the stage for subsequent empirical analysis.

Chapter three evaluates the theory of social endowments against alternatives through a large-n study of revolutionary campaigns between 1945 and 2005. It highlights a strong correlation between social overlap and revolutionary strategy and moves on to explore the relevant mechanisms, assessing the relationship between overlap and the likelihood of regime repression and loyalty shifts. Finally, it analyzes a counterintuitive puzzle in the

data: a positive relationship between democracy and the adoption of violence by revolutionary movements. I argue that democracy's affect on the social structure of resistance movements may in part explain their increased likelihood of turning to arms.

Chapters four through seven present four cases of revolutionary campaigns in Nepal. Drawing upon original field research, I analyze the strategic decision-making of two major political movements in Nepal that have sought revolutionary political change: the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal - Maoist. These groups are particularly interesting because the each had close ties with the archetypal movements of each strategy: Gandhians in India and Maoists in China. However, as I show over the course of the case studies, Nepal's movements proved willing to change strategies when faced with social endowments that were ill-suited for the requisites of their initial ideological preference. Each group employed at different times both armed insurgency and civil resistance making it possible both to compare the two groups as well as to trace the evolution of each group's decisionmaking and behavior over time.

The dissertation concludes with some implications for policymakers and presents avenues for future scholarly research.

Chapter 2

The Social Bases of Revolutionary Strategy

Scholars of nonviolent conflict generally agree that movements that engage in civil resistance do so not out of normative commitment but rather a pragmatic calculation that nonviolent tactics offer a more likely path to achieving their political goals.[1] If this is the case, then what factors influence the calculus?

The argument presented in this chapter is that movements' strategy in conflict is shaped by characteristics of their own bases of popular support. Specifically, I argue that it is the size of a movement's base of supporters as well as their relational position within the larger society, and especially vis a vis the regime that informs their behavior.

Movements may have the ability to transform their mobilization capabilities over time,

1. Ackerman and DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Non-Violent Conflict* and Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*, 11.

either through deliberate efforts at organization-building or as the result of changes in political opportunities. But such changes are usually either gradual or unpredictable. As Paul Staniland writes. "Social bases tend to be contingently and historically determined, and not subject to rapid or easy change. . . Militants go to war with the networks they have."[2] The same can be said of nonviolent movements. A movement's social endowment shapes and constrains the opportunities it faces, including its relative abilities to carry out the tactical repertoires of violent versus nonviolent contention.

2.1 More People, More Problems

For a movement considering civil resistance, mass mobilization is the crucial requisite to campaign success as it heightens the effectiveness of many of the mechanisms at the core of nonviolent strategy. It increases the disruptive capability of the movement, the costs of repression to the regime, the likelihood of regime members to defect, and the pressure on international actors to intervene.

Simply put, the more people that are involved in carrying out the nonviolent repertoire of tactics, the greater the disruption those tactics cause and the greater the coercive leverage upon the regime. Nearly all nonviolent tactics benefit from greater participation, whether they be acts of commission such as protests and demonstrations or acts of omission such as strikes and boycotts. In fact, as DeNardo points out, "it is nearly impossible to imagine

2. Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia," 150.

political circumstances where the disruptiveness of dissident activity would diminish as its scope increased."[3]

As disruption escalates, it becomes increasingly difficult for the regime to maintain the status quo. The regime must choose between granting concessions or repressing the movement. But as the size of the movement increases, so do the costs of repression. Simple police enforcement becomes too difficult and the regime must consider more brutal measures. These measures cost greater resources in manpower, arms and money, put a strain on relations between the regime and the security forces being ordered to carry out violent acts against fellow citizens, and draw the opprobrium of the international community.

Scholars of nonviolence have cited winning over defections from the regime, particularly from the security forces, as an important correlate of movement success.[4] Greater movement participation increases number of direct kinship, professional, associational, or other social ties between members of the regime and participants in the challenging movement.[5] These overlapping social networks provide pathways for spreading the movement's message and increase the moral obstacles to violent repression of the movement. Greater numbers of participants can also help win over opportunistic defectors who simply want to

3. James DeNardo, *Power in Numbers: The Political Strategy of Protest and Rebellion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 35.

4. See, for example, Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century* and Annika Locke Binnendijk, "Holding Fire: Security Force Allegiance During Nonviolent Uprisings" (PhD diss., 2009).

5. For case examples of this dynamic at play, see Annika Locke Binnendijk and Ivan Marovic, "Power and Persuasion: Nonviolent Strategies to Influence State Security Forces in Serbia (2000) and Ukraine (2004)," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 39, no. 3 (September 2009): 411–429 and Rudy Jaafar and Maria J Stephan, "Lebanon's Independence Intifada: How Unarmed Insurrection Expelled Syrian Forces," in *Civilian Jihad: Nonviolent Struggle, Democratization, and Governance in the Middle East*, ed. Maria J Stephan (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

be on the winning side and see mass participation as a positive indicator of the challenger's strength. Consistent with these arguments, Chenoweth and Stephan find a significant, positive correlation between a movement's size (as measured by peak recorded participation) and the likelihood of regime defections.[6]

International support for a nonviolent movement, most often in the form of denying aid or sanctioning the regime, can also play an important role in movement success.[7] More movement participants increase the number of potential connections to external groups, whether they be media, NGOs, or governmental entities. The greater disruption caused by larger movements also increases the movements' ability to garner international attention. The spectacle of violent repression of large numbers of unarmed protesters can generate moral outrage that compels foreign governments to action. Again, quantitative empirical studies have found that greater numbers of supporters increase the likelihood of international sanctions against the target regime.[8]

Finally, mass mobilization has a snowballing effect: more people engaging in acts of nonviolent action encourages those on the sidelines to join as well. When movement sympathizers see others participate in the movement, it increases their expectations that the movement will succeed. Greater numbers also provide greater protection from repression, both on the macro level, as regimes must face the higher costs of engaging in repression,

6. Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, 48.

7. Nonviolent scholars are somewhat agnostic as to the importance of international sanctions to the efficacy of a nonviolent movement. Nepstad (2011), for example, finds it to have played a crucial role in some cases, but to backfire in others by offering the regime an opportunity to appeal to nationalism. See Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century*.

8. Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, 49.

as well as on the micro-level, as the probability of any one individual being targeted for repression decreases as the number of participants increases. Scholars have thus modeled movement participation as a rational "assurance game" where the individual's calculus of whether to participate or not is directly affected by the number of other participants.[9] Others have focused on the social group pressures toward participation[10] as well as the feelings of citizenship that come from taking part in a large group movement.[11]

Some scholars have gone so far as to theorize a mobilization "tipping point," or threshold of participation at which victory for the movement becomes almost assured. Lichbach coined what has come to be known as the "Five Percent Rule,"[12] while Chenoweth notes that every nonviolent movement that has been able to mobilize 3.5 percent of the country's population has succeeded in achieving its political goals.[13] Whether or not these specific levels have some qualitative significance, the quantity of movement participation is a crucial variable affecting the efficacy of the nonviolent strategic arsenal. Moreover, mass participation sparks a positive feedback loop encouraging even greater mobilization.

Some revolutionary movements likely know from the outset that they will not be able

9. For example, see Rasma Karklins and Roger Petersen, "Decision Calculus of Protesters and Regimes: Eastern Europe 1989," *The Journal of Politics* 55, no. 03 (1993): 588.

10. James A Kitts, "Mobilizing in Black Boxes: Social Networks and Participation in Social Movement Organizations," *Mobilization An International Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (2000): 241–257.

11. E J Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, August 2003).

12. Mark Irving Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1998) and Mark Irving Lichbach, "The 5 Percent Rule," *Rationality and Society* 7, no. 1 (January 1995): 126–128. Lichbach's postulate is to some degree misinterpreted. His primary point is that only a small minority of movement sympathizers will ever be willing to take on the costs of actual mobilization. However, he emphasizes that this "five percent" faction is nevertheless sufficient to challenge a regime.

13. Erica Chenoweth, *The Dissident's Toolkit*, October 2013, `http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/10/24/the_dissidents_toolkit`.

to muster the levels of popular mobilization necessary for a strategy of civil resistance to be successful. It may be that the substance of their message does not resonate: they espouse an extreme ideology, they promise benefits only to a narrow subset of the population, other members of society do not share their grievances, or other members of society share their grievances but believe that these grievances can be addressed through institutional means short of revolution.

For other movements, the problem may not be so much the message as the means of transmitting it. Barriers to communication can prevent the core leadership of a movement from being able to turn isolated would-be sympathizers into participants in coordinated collective action. A great deal of attention has been paid in recent years to the role of cellphones, social media, or "liberation technologies" in enabling nonviolent resistors to communicate effectively.[14] There is reason to be skeptical of exaggerated argument about the impact of technology on revolutionary campaigns. For example, the Iranian leadership was able to stifle protests in 2009 by shutting down internet access whereas the lower tech network of audio tape distribution during the 1979 revolution proved far more resilient. Nevertheless, large structural barriers to communication sharing, such as low literacy rates, can make it difficult for a movement to mobilize large numbers of participants even if its message would otherwise have broad appeal.

Some movements may have mass appeal but lack the ability to generate mass mobiliza-

14. See, for example, Clay Shirky, "The Political Power of Social Media: Technology, the Public Sphere Sphere, and Political Change," *Foreign Affairs* 28 (2011), Patrick Meier, "Do Liberation Technologies Change the Balance of Power Between States and Societies" (PhD diss., 2011), and Christopher R Tunnard, "Defeating Milosevic: The Role of Networked Organizations and the Internet in Serbia in the 1990s" (PhD diss., 2010).

tion due to the economic and social circumstances of their supporters. These supporters may share a movement's revolutionary goals, but are so dependent upon local elites for their day to day material survival that they are unable to engage in contentions political action. Doing so would result in their losing their jobs or land or facing some other type of retribution. As Skocpol describes, these supporters are unable to become participants because they are "not in a structural position to revolt collectively and autonomously."[15]

More supporters should be helpful for movements engaged in a strategy of armed insurgency as well. More fighters makes an insurgent group stronger in its kinetic confrontations with the regime and better able to endure a war of attrition.[16] Even supporters who are not willing to engage as actual combatants (what Petersen coins "+2" supporters)[17] play an essential role in offering resources, providing housing and cover, transmitting intelligence, or even just refusing to share information with the regime.

But the relative importance of popular participation in the strategies of civil resistance and armed insurgency is not equal. By substituting arms for numbers, the insurgent can often create an equal degree of disruption with fewer numbers.[18] This does not necessarily confer any overall strategic advantage to the use of armed force; it simply suggests that insurgency is less dependent on large numbers of participants. In fact, the literature on guerrilla warfare emphasizes the ability of small groups to wreak havoc upon the state. As Fearon

15. Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge University Press, February 1979), 239.

16. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*, 37.

17. Roger Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons From Eastern Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 9.

18. DeNardo, *Power in Numbers: The Political Strategy of Protest and Rebellion*, 36.

and Laitin write, "Given the right environmental conditions, insurgencies can thrive on the basis of small numbers of rebels without strong, widespread, popular support."[19] Instead, scholars of insurgency have emphasized other factors, such as access to natural resources, foreign sponsors, the availability of arms, and the select use of asymmetric tactics as the keys to rebel victory.[20]

Furthermore, if a movement believes it has the potential to win popular sympathy but is stifled by a limited ability to spread its message, the strategy of armed insurgency can help a movement overcome some of the barriers to mass mobilization. With only a few initial combatants, an insurgent movement may be able to use a surprise, symbolic attack to garner attention and make its existence known to potential sympathizers. By seizing and controlling territory, it can spread its message more freely through propaganda. When faced with a sympathetic population that is otherwise too poor or too beholden to local elites to engage in collective action, an armed insurgency can not only provide monetary incentives for those sympathizers to join the movement, it can also provide protection from vengeful elites, or even kill elites, simultaneously winning more sympathizers and freeing those sympathizers to join the rebellion. Nepal's Maoists did this with great effect, as will be described in later chapters. Finally, a movement engaged in a strategy of armed force can simply coerce participation, or at least a minimal level of compliance, through the use and threat of violence. Coerced "supporters" may not make for loyal or reliable combatants,

19. Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," 81.

20. For example, see Daniel Byman, "Understanding Proto-Insurgencies," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no. 2 (April 2008): 165–200; Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia," and Arreguin-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict."

but they may be useful as sources of funding or intelligence.

This is not to say that fighting an armed insurgency with a small number of participants is a very attractive option. Empirical evidence suggests that the vast majority of such campaigns fail, with horrific consequences for movement participants and non-aligned civilians. But movements committed to revolution who have limited initial capability to generate mass mobilization are more likely to arrive at the conclusion that armed insurgency offers a pathway to victory that civil resistance does not.

2.2 Social Overlap

It is not just the gross size of popular support that matters in terms of matching a movement's social endowment to a revolutionary strategy, but also who those participants are and their relationships to other members of society. Some scholars have noted the importance of breadth or diversity in a movement's base of popular support. For example, Chenoweth and Stephan write that movements are more effective "when participants reflect diverse members of society."[21] But the qualitative nature of movement support has yet to be rigorously examined,[22] perhaps because of the difficulty in conceptualizing and

21. Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, 30.

22. In the literature on insurgency, Weinstein distinguishes between participants who are driven by short term (monetary) versus long-term (political) motivations. (See Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*.) This is an important conceptual distinction in the study of movement participation, though it measures a different dimension than what is being discussed here. In fact, it matches more closely to the concept of economic motivations and solutions to the collective action problem discussed in the last section.

measuring movement "breadth." What kinds of diversity are necessary for a movement and why is it important?

I argue that it is not diversity for diversity's sake that shapes a movement's strategic calculus as much as a movement's degree of what I term "social overlap"–ties of kinship, caste, religion, ethnicity, class, or association–both with other sections of society as well as the regime.

Scholars of political party formation and democratization have long argued that the alignment of political attitudinal and institutional division along pre-existing social structures, such as religion, ethnicity, region, and class, increases the risk of conflict within a society.[23] Harry Eckstein defines a "segmental cleavage" as existing "where political divisions follow very closely, and especially concern lines of objective social differentiation, especially those particularly salient within a society."[24]

These cleavages have been linked to both rational as well as socio-psychological pathways to violence. Rabushka and Shepsle demonstrate through formal models how congruent political and social cleavages create an incentive structure that encourages political actors to appeal to the extremes rather than a moderate center, inciting a cycle of outbidding that leads to instability and often violence.[25] Gurr, by contrast, argues that eco-

23. The quintessential work on the subject is Seymour Martin Lipsett and Stein Rokkan, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour Martin Lipsett and Stein Rokkan (New York: The Free Press, 1967).

24. Harry Eckstein, *Division and Cohesion In Democracy: A Study of Norway* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966).

25. Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth A. Shepsle, *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability* (Colombus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1972). For a countervailing perspective see Kanchan Chandra, "Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability," *Perspectives on Politics* 3, no. 2 (June 2005).

nomic disparities that parallel social divisions, what scholars have since termed "horizontal inequalities," generate group-level frustrations which in turn trigger collective violence.[26] Horowitz, in a way, combines the two, to illustrate how social-psychological concepts such as collective self-esteem and group worth can create the kind of extreme preferences that leads to increasingly polarized politics and eventually violence.[27]

The existence and alignment of social, economic, and political cleavages is not always clear. Scholars have gradually rejected the concept of social cleavages as being fixed, rigid, and primordial, instead arguing that they are fluid, fragmented, multidimensional, and often partly shaped by political institutions and processes.[28] Furthermore, as Arend Lijphart notes, societies can have multiple cleavages with varying degrees of fragmentation, those cleavages can be congruent or cross-cutting, they can be of varying degrees of intensity, and they can be moderated by over-arching or intergroup ties.[29]

Embracing this complexity, scholars have identified mechanisms through which different configurational relationships between salient identities, social groups, and the state affect dynamics of political behavior ranging from partisan polarity to economic devel-

26. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*. Petersen makes a similar argument that the emotion of intergroup "resentment" sparked violent conflict in Eastern Europe, while Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug present cross-national evidence that horizontal inequalities generate grievances that increase the likelihood of civil war. See Roger Petersen, *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002) and Cederman, Buhaug, and Gleditsch, *Inequality, Grievances, and Civil War*.

27. Donald L Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985).

28. Nelson Kasfir, "Explaining Ethnic Political Participation," *World Politics* 31, no. 3 (April 1979): 365–388, Mary C. Waters, *Ethnic Options* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), (David D Laitin, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998]), and Daniel N. Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

29. Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

opment, and from public goods provision to civil conflict.[30] Applied to the question of violent versus nonviolent strategies, the nature of a movement's social relationships within a society may affect the comparative advantages of civil resistance: mobilization, defection, dynamics of repression, and popular support.

First, the shape of a movement's social network informs its potential size. Overlapping ties with other segments of society is in most cases a likely antecedent to mass mobilization. Interpersonal connections provide pathways for the diffusion of ideas. In the case of revolutionary movements, they provide channels through which grievances are shared, frames are aligned,[31] and sympathizers are turned into mobilizers. Butler et al. describe revolutionary mobilization as a process of linking together groups with shared grievances.[32] Overlapping ties between social groups, what we might call its degree of horizontal overlap—are the mechanism through which this linking occurs. A movement whose initial supporters have numerous bridging connections with other segments of society will be better able to grow their movement. But a movement whose base of supporters have few of these ties will struggle to grow. In this case, the size of the movement's immediate social cluster presents a ceiling to potential mobilization.

But social overlap impacts movement strategy beyond simply informing the size of po-

30. See, for example, Chandra, "Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability," Joshua R Gubler and Joel Sawat Selway, "Horizontal Inequality, Crosscutting Cleavages, and Civil War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 2 (April 2012): 206–232, and Lindsay Heger and Idean Salehyan, "Ruthless Rulers: Coalition Size and the Severity of Civil Conflict," *International Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (June 2007): 385–403.

31. Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, September 2001), 16.

32. Christopher K. Butler, Scott Gates, and Michele Leiby, "Social Networks and Rebellion," in *Conference on Disaggregating the Study of Civil War and Transnational Violence* (San Diego, CA: University of California, San Diego, March 2005), 7.

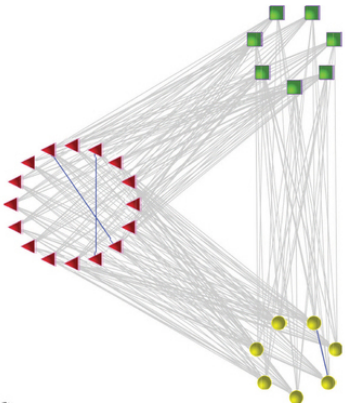

Figure 2.1: *High Social Overlap: If even a small movement (yellow) has many social ties with other segments of society (red) and especially the regime (green), it has a greater potential to spread its message, win loyalty shifts, and avoid repression. This should make the movement more likely to embrace a strategy of civil resistance. Above image of a theoretical model of a homophilic network from Feng Fu et al., "The Evolution of Homophily,"* Scientific Reports *2 (November 2012).*

tential popular support. The same social ties that activate mobilization are important in activating another dynamic central to the strategy of civil resistance: defection. Scholars of nonviolent action have highlighted the importance of direct personal ties with movement members in encouraging regime members to change sides from Ukraine to Lebanon.[33] Even when a movement has a large base of supporters, if there is little vertical social overlap between that base of support and members of the regime—that is if members of the regime are less likely to have friends, family members, and associates involved in the movement—the less likely they are to defect. Movements that see little chance in winning over defectors will be discouraged from embracing civil resistance and more likely to take up arms.

Social overlap between movement and regime also influences a regime's ability to employ repression. Even if social ties between the movement and regime are not sufficient to

33. Jaafar and Stephan, "Lebanon's Independence Intifada: How Unarmed Insurrection Expelled Syrian Forces" and Binnendijk, "Holding Fire: Security Force Allegiance During Nonviolent Uprisings."

convince a regime member to all-out defect, members of regime security forces will be less willing to stomach opening fire on a crowd that includes friends and family. The greater the number of bridging ties, the more difficult it will be for the regime to compel its security forces to engage in brutal and indiscriminate repression.

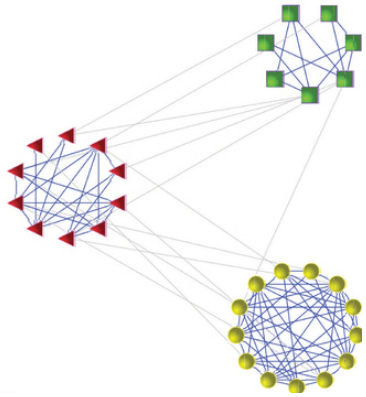

Figure 2.2: *Low Social Overlap: A movement (yellow) that has few common ties of ethnicity, kin, religion, class, or other forms of assiciation with other segments of society (red) and the regime (green) will likely struggle to activate the mechanisms that make nonviolent strategies successful. They may be more inclined to turn to arms. Above image of a theoretical model of a heterophilic network from Feng Fu et al., "The Evolution of Homophily,"* Scientific Reports *2 (November 2012)*

Social psychology suggests that this connection between movement and regime may not need to be literal. Simply seeing movement members as more socially proximate is sufficient to raise inhibitions against repression even if the security force member does not have a direct connection with the target. For example, in numerous follow-ups to Milgram's infamous shock experiments,[34] scholars have consistently found human subjects to be more reticent to harm another individual when that individual is more socially differ-

34. In these experiments, subjects were pressured to push a button that they were told would inflict an electric shock on a human in an adjacent room. While the shock recipients were in fact actors faking sounds of pain, the subjects believed the situation to be real and were willing to apply the electric shock. Milgram himself pointed out the study's implications for loyalty and command in the context of state repression. See Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York: Harper / Row, 1974).

ent in terms of race, clothing, and linguistic dialect or accent.[35] In the context of actual protests, Davenport et al. found that police officers in the United States were more likely to make arrests in demonstrations in which a majority of participants were black than ones in which the participants were of the same race[36].

From these studies, it is fair to extrapolate that we might expect a lack of close social connections between a movement and security forces to make it easier for the regime to engage in brutal, indiscriminate repression. But the logic can work in reverse as well: movement participants who share few social ties with members of the regime may be more easily convinced to take up arms against them.

Finally, a lack of social overlap between movement and regime alters the narrative of a conflict. Rather than being a movement pitting the people at large against a tyrannical regime, the conflict is seen as one between adversarial social group. This alternative framing can reduce the legitimacy of the revolutionary movement, making it even more difficult for the movement to draw support from beyond its immediate social cluster. Moreover, it may make it more difficult for the movement to build sympathy abroad and to receive assistance from the international community. Already a difficult obstacle, global actors are likely even less willing to intervene in a conflict when it is seen as an intergroup conflict.

Social overlap is a characteristic of a movement's base of support that, in addition to

35. See William D Brant, "The Effects of Race and Social Distance on Obedience," *Journal of Social Psychology* 112 (December 1980): 229–235 and C. Daniel Batson et al., "Is Empathic Emotion a Source of Altruistic Motivation?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 40, no. 2 (February 1981): 290–302.

36. Christian Davenport, David A Armstrong II, and Sarah A Soule, "Protesting While Black? The Differential Policing of American Activism, 1960 to 1990," *American Sociological Review* 76, no. 1 (February 2011): 152–178.

the overall level of popular support, affects a movement's calculations about the relative viability of a violent versus nonviolent strategy. It is distinct from state-level structural measures of social composition, such as ethnic fractionalization or cross-cuttingness, in that it is specific to the unique ways in which the institutions of the movement and of the regime "map" onto underlying social divisions. For example, in a homogenous society with no salient social cleavages, any movement would necessarily possess the characteristic of social overlap (both vertical and horizontal). However, it is also possible for a movement within a highly fragmented society to achieve social overlap if it is able to build a membership that is inclusive of multiple social groups. For this reason, the effect of cross-cuttingness as a structural variable on social overlap is also indeterminate: a second social cleavage that cross-cuts the first could either create an opportunity for bridging ties across cleavages, or it could simply further partition the society into smaller social groups.

A group with little social overlap is more likely to struggle to generate large popular support to begin with due to its lack of bridging connections with other elements of society. But even if it succeeds in overcoming the hurdle of mass mobilization, it will struggle to achieve some of the key strategic mechanisms of civil resistance: winning over defections will be difficult, the regime may be more willing to engage in brutal repression, and the international community will be less likely to intervene. In such a situation, we should expect a revolutionary movement to be more likely to consider violence.

2.3 Strategic Revolutionaries?

The theory of revolutionary strategy presented in this chapter could be criticized for its assumption of rational behavior by revolutionary movements: that they engage in a process of strategic calculation, evaluate the relative efficacy of civil resistance versus armed insurgency, and are able to choose the strategy that that provides the greatest likelihood of achieving their political goals.

For the assumption of rationally calculated behavior to be plausible, movements need first to have information about their own current and potential social bases of support and whether this endowment better fits the model or armed insurgency or civil resistance. Some scholars who have argued in favor of insurgent rationality exclude the initial adoption of a strategy from their theory, effectively assuming it to be random or shaped by non-rational factors as the revolutionaries do not yet have adequate information about their conflict environment.[37]

I argue that such an exclusion is unnecessary. Rarely, if ever, is a movement operating in totally uncharted waters. Even prior to conflict onset, movements have a wealth of information available that allows them to attempt to predict the relative efficacy of alternative strategies. By looking back at precedents from previous movement activities, from the efforts of other movements in the same state, or even from revolutionary campaigns abroad, movements are able to draw lessons that inform their calculations about the present. In some cases, a movement may have previously launched a campaign and can take lessons

37. DeNardo, *Power in Numbers: The Political Strategy of Protest and Rebellion*.

from that campaign's success or failure. Even if it has not launched an all out revolutionary campaign before, it may have engaged in lesser acts of political contestation, from party politics, to protests, to one-off violent attacks. All of these experiences yield crucial information about the movement's ability to generate mass mobilization, the willingness of different social groups to join the campaign, and the availability of potential allies. The past behavior of rival movements can also offer important clues about mobilization potential within the society and likely regime responses. And examples from other countries, while probably less useful, can still offer potentially useful analogies.

Finally, a movement can engage in deliberate acts of experimentation. Without declaring an intent to remove the regime, it can initiate one-time rallies or strikes to test its ability to mass mobilize, to observe how the regime responds, and to tease out the inclinations of external actors.[38] It can similarly do the same with lesser acts of violence–an assassination, an attack on a specific target such as a police station or a bank–though this is less likely given the more severe regime response it is likely to generate.

With this information available, the movement still needs to engage in some process of evaluating that information and arriving at a decision about future strategy. In its ideal form, this can be thought of as a grand meeting of movement elites sitting around a table, analyzing the expected efficacy of various options, and referring to historical examples to

38. Some scholars of nonviolent conflict point out that efforts at experimentation, such as IRA-supported rallies in Northern Ireland, can sometimes be disingenuous, employed half-heartedly in a deliberate effort to undermine support for a strategy they oppose. But even such efforts serve the functional purpose of revealing information and suggest that movement leaders are engaged in an effort to convince others of the merit of a given strategy based on the grounds of relative efficacy.

substantiate their assessments. And in fact, in some cases such as the example of the Maoist meeting at Chunbang that opened this dissertation, a single strategy meeting where both civil resistance and armed insurgency are explicitly considered does occur. But more often, evidence of such a clean strategic deliberation is more difficult to find or is difficult to identify as such. Often, groups may make a series of smaller decisions over time that gradually moves it in the direction of one strategy or the other. By the eve of the campaign, there is no longer a need to have a grand debate on civil resistance versus armed insurgency because previous deliberations and decisions have already ruled out certain sets of tactics.

This is not to say that movements will always be able to engage in a perfectly rational decision-making process: assessments of strategic efficacy may be skewed by the ideological blinders of movement leaders or the actual behavior may be transmuted by a movement's organizational (in)ability to execute or maintain adherence to the strategic decision. But the deadly consequences of miscalculation in the context of revolution provides a powerful incentive to put pragmatism before ideology.

Along with strategic assessments, there are certainly a number of ideological as well as sociopsychological factors that can influence a group's decision. It is theoretically possible to conceive of a movement with such a strong moral or ideological preference for either violence or nonviolence that pragmatism does not fit into the picture at all. But when it comes to movements with ambitions to overthrow a regime and take over a state, such cases seem to be rare. Most non-rational preferences lie somewhere in the middle: even Gandhi argued that violence would be permissible if there were no alternative path to liberation.

Actors may have a "default option" – a strategy that they would revert to in the hypothetical absence of any strategic information. This default option may be conditioned by personal moral beliefs, social norms, or ideologies. Some social movement scholars, for example, have argued that the shared culture, ideology, values, and understandings of a movement's members serve both to unify the group and to inform the "repertoire" of tactics that it employs.[39] Tilly argues that societies develop unique "scripts" for how to engage in contentious politics and that new waves of dissent and resistance typically begin with a revival of old tactics.[40]

Some have taken this further, arguing that certain cultures and religions, especially Islam, place value on violence.[41] But this argument falls short it the light of critical scrutiny and empirical fact. Within Islam, there is a long tradition of civil resistance[42] and the assertion that Islamic cultures are more prone to violence has been shown to be empirically unfounded when other structural factors are accounted for.[43] As Pearlman eloquently states, "Most cultures are sufficiently rich and complex to legitimate either violent or nonviolent protest."[44]

Even Tilly's argument about revolutionary scripts overlooks the fact that the return to

39. Doug McAdam, "Culture and Social Movements," in *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, ed. Enrique Larana, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R Gusfield (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1994).

40. Charles Tilly, *Contentious Performances* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

41. The most famous academic example of this argument being Samuel Huntington's assertion that Islam has "bloody borders." See Samuel P Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, NY: Simon / Schuster, 1996).

42. Maria J Stephan, ed., *Civilian Jihad: Nonviolent Struggle, Democratization, and Governance in the Middle East* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

43. Jonathan Fox, "Is Islam More Conflict Prone than Other Religions? A Cross-sectional Study of Ethnoreligious Conflict," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 6, no. 2 (June 2000): 1–24.

44. Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement*, 5.

familiar tactics may largely be the result of their previous success and is therefore a strategic decision in its own right. Tilly allows that scripts may change over time, possibly as a result of movements learning and adapting to changes in their environment.

Non-rational preferences can also be formed by psychological dynamics that trigger specific responses (usually violent) to certain types of injustices. For example, Roger Petersen argues that the different emotions of fear, hate, resentment, and rage each spark different degrees and patterns of violence between ethnic groups.[45] Jason Seawright has explored how corruption fuels a particular type of anger that while not a catalyst for violence necessarily, has resulted in the collapse of political party systems in Latin America.[46]

Psychological and emotional dimensions of conflict offers a promising avenue for future research and such theories can inform and expand the explanatory power of rationally-based explanations. For example, in cases where strategic conditions are ambiguous, ideology may push a movement to one side or the other. Psychological and emotional factors may also introduce a bias in the decisionmaking process: for example, emotional desires to exact revenge may cause actors to overestimate the likelihood of success through armed insurgency.

Another limit on the strategic rationality approach to revolutionary behavior is the constraint that lack of cohesion and discipline may place on a movement. The organizational structure of rebel movements has received considerable scholarly attention in recent

45. Petersen, *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe*.

46. Jason Seawright, *Party-System Collapse: The Roots of Crisis in Peru and Venezuela* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012).

years.[47] Weinstein, for example, argues that different degrees of movement cohesion and discipline explain variation in violence between movements.[48] Pearlman takes this a step further to argue that organizational cohesion cohesion can best explain whether a movement pursues a violent or nonviolent strategy.[49] Tracing over 80 years of Palestinian independence movements, she argues that when the movements were united with strong, cohesive institutions, they were able to employ a strategy of civil insurrection, but when they broke apart into factionalism, they pivoted towards violent insurgency and terrorism.

It should also be noted that organizational mediation theory presents a necessary but not sufficient condition for civil resistance: it explains why fragmented movements turn to violence, but not why many well-organized movements nevertheless choose to take up arms. From the original Maoists in China to Ho Chi Minh's Vietnamese revolutionaries to the Nepalese Maoists, plenty of highly disciplined, organized, and cohesive movements have rejected nonviolent methods in favor of armed insurgency. Alternative explanations are required for such cases.

Organizational theories do however present compelling mechanisms for how a lack of cohesion can lead toward violence. This is not, however, inconsistent with the logic of movements adopting a given strategy based upon their social endowments: a movement that is fractured realizes its inability to generate mass mobilization and is compelled to turn

47. For example, see Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour, "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars" and Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia."

48. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*.

49. Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement*.

to violent tactics.

Furthermore, disagreements over the effectiveness of violent versus nonviolent tactics are likely to be a major cause of group fragmentation. This is most likely to occur when either 1) the strategic conditions are ambiguous and members disagree on the comparative effectiveness of violence versus nonviolence, and 2) when there is extreme tension between ideational predispositions and strategic conditions. This creates the possibility of a scenario in which members of a movement disagree over which strategy to employ, they split into two movements and in doing so divide their bases of support making each more narrow and consequently recasting the strategic calculus in a way that favors violence. The group that initially favored civil resistance may now be forced either to take up arms or to abandon its revolutionary ambitions.

Chapter 3

The Movement, Repression, and the Regime: A Cross National Analysis

The previous chapter articulated a theory of revolutionary strategy based characteristics of a movement's social base of support that informs its ability to generate mass mobilization and trigger the mechanisms of disruption and defection that are key to nonviolent movement success. This chapter seeks to test that proposition against cross-national quantitative data on revolutionary movement behavior. the data will also be used to test alternative theories focusing on the opportunity to rebel and the regime's patterns of repression.

The analysis shows strong support for correlations between revolutionary strategy measures of mobilization potential (measured through literacy) and ethnic overlap. I also seek to specify the mechanisms through which social overlap affects the viability of civil resistance. I show that, in fact, movements that lack overlap with the regime struggle to gen-

erate defections even when practicing nonviolent civil resistance. Somewhat surprisingly, however, social overlap seems to have little effect on regime repression: regimes engage in violent repression of revolutionary movements in the vast majority of cases, regardless of strategy employed or the social composition of the revolutionaries. I also examine the effect of a regime's previous patterns of repression on movement strategy and find no correlation across a number of different measurement strategies. Finally, I present evidence of a curvilinear relationship between regime type and movement strategy: movements are significantly more likely to take up arms under either highly autocratic or highly democratic regimes.

3.1 Testing the Theory: Support, Overlap, and Strategy

To conduct cross-national statistical tests, I assembled a dataset of both armed insurgency and civil resistance campaigns seeking to overthrow a regime from 1946 through 2006. Nonviolent campaigns were drawn from Chenoweth and Stephan's Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) dataset. Using previous datasets, case study literature, and consultation with experts, the NAVCO dataset includes 323 campaigns between 1900 and 2006 categorized by campaign goal and strategy. I use only those campaigns from 1946 onward with the goal of regime change and a strategy of civil resistance. The restriction of the goal to regime change is to ensure consistency with the bounds of the arguments

presented in this book[1] while campaigns prior to 1946 were removed to ensure consistency with other data sources.

Armed insurgency campaigns were drawn from the widely used UCDP dataset of intrastate conflicts. The UCDP uses a low threshold of 25 battle-related deaths for inclusion in the dataset. By including these smaller insurgencies, it allows for the analysis of revolutionary movements that adopt a strategy of armed insurgency, even if the insurgency was quickly defeated or if the revolutionary movement changed strategies at a relatively early point in time. In other words, by using this threshold as opposed to the 1,000 death threshold used in other datasets, I am better able to disentangle a movements' decision to embrace armed insurgency from the insurgency's "effectiveness" in producing mass casualties. Similar to NAVCO, the UCDP dataset categorizes campaigns by goal, either political or territorial. Again, I extract only the insurgencies with political goals (the closest approximation of regime-change) and within the 1946–2006 timeframe.

The resulting dataset includes 243 campaigns of which 72 are civil resistance and 171 are armed insurgencies. The unit of analysis, it should be noted, is the campaign and not the movement. This is because the initiation of a campaign provides the best, and really the only feasible way to measure a political movement's revolutionary intentions as well as its strategic choice.

Geographically, the ratio of violent to nonviolent campaigns is roughly consistent across the Americas, East and South Asia, and Sub-saharan Africa. The Middle East and

1. See Chapter 1 for further elaboration on the scope conditions.

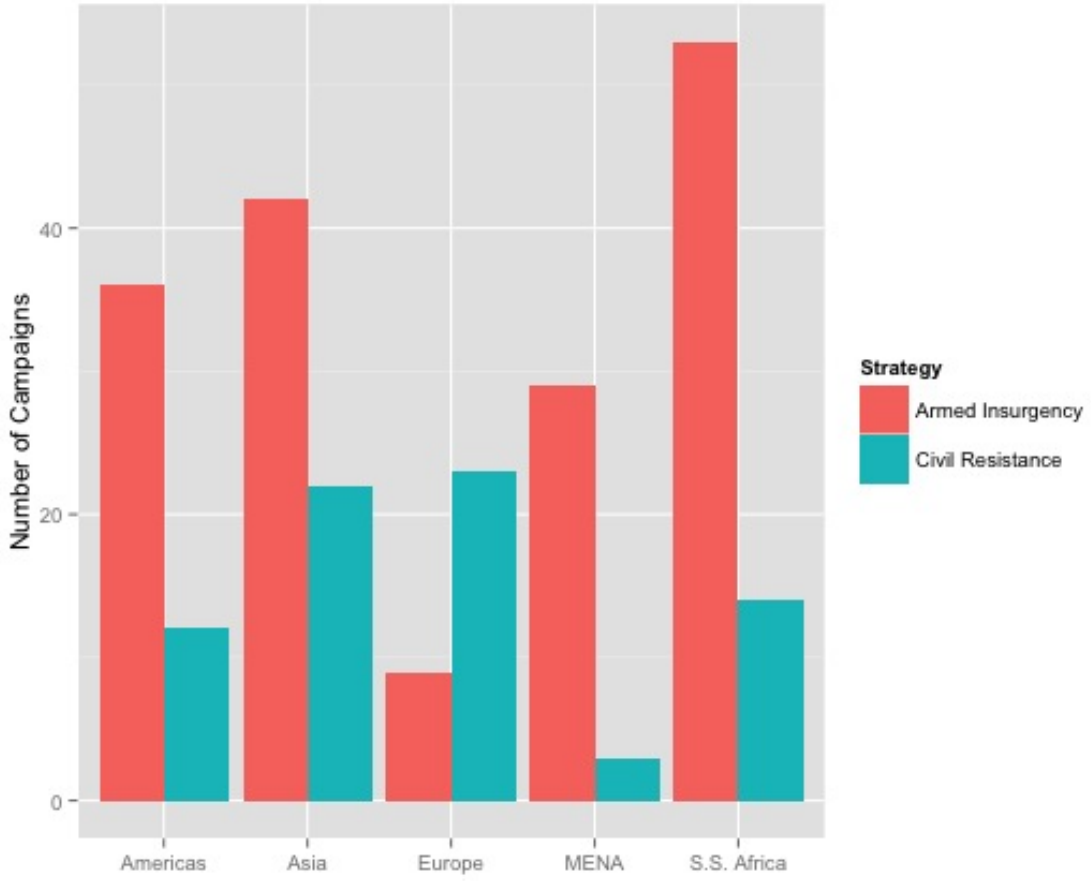

Figure 3.1: Revolutionary Campaigns by Region

North Africa stands out for a particularly high ratio of violent to nonviolent campaigns, while Europe is the one region where civil resistance campaigns outnumber insurgencies.

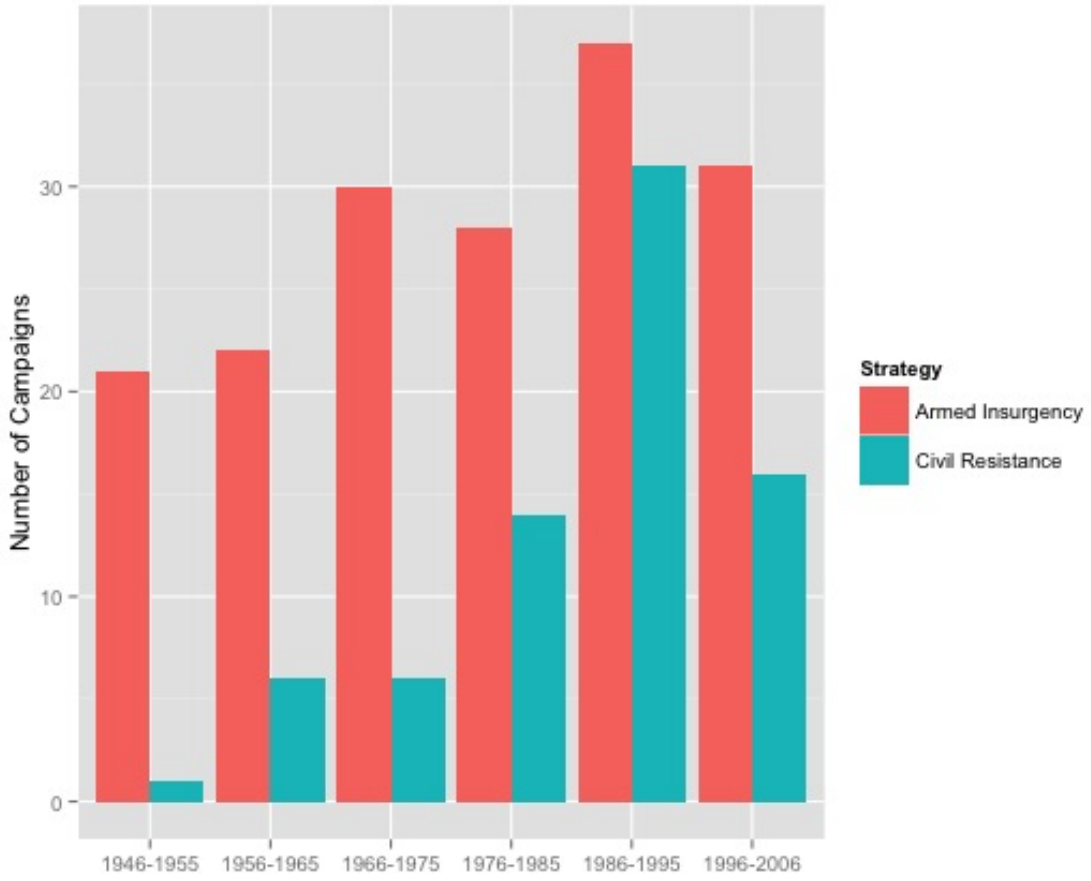

Figure 3.2: Revolutionary Campaigns by Decade

Temporally, the ratio of civil resistance campaigns increases over time, peaking in the period from 1986 to 1995 largely due to the Eastern European movements of 1989, before returning to levels in the 1996–2006 period that reflect a more moderate overall rate of increase.

To operationalize the concept of social overlap I create a dichotomous coding of whether

the revolutionary movement has "ethnic overlap" with the regime. While ethnicity is only one of many types of social ties such kinship, religious, caste, or class ties, that constitute the concept of "social overlap," it is the easiest measure due to significant scholarly attention to ethnic conflict. Furthermore, there are theoretical reasons to believe that ethnic ties should have the strongest effect on the mechanisms related to revolutionary strategy given ethnicity's linguistic and often ascriptive traits. As Heger and Salehyan (2007) write, "Changing conceptions of ethnicity require a broad social consensus, and historical attachments to ethnic symbols and narratives ensure a certain stability of ethnic identities, which makes classifying a collectivity as an ethnic group meaningful."[2]

I code a movement as having no ethnic overlap (coded as 0) if a movement recruits its members primarily from a single ethnic group that is not well represented in government or in state security forces. If the movement recruits broadly from multiple ethnic groups or it recruits from a single ethnic group that is well-represented in government and state security forces, I consider it to have ethnic overlap (coded as 1).

To code movements as possessing or not possessing ethnic overlap, I drew upon data from other published datasets on violent and nonviolent campaigns. For violent conflicts, I used Wimmer, Cederman and Min's Ethnic Armed Conflict (EAC) dataset. Specifically, I used the EAC coding of whether an armed conflict followed ethnic recruitment patterns as this, more than ethnonationalist political objectives, better matches with the concept of social overlap as presented in the previous chapter . EAC defines its coding protocol of

2. Heger and Salehyan, "Ruthless Rulers: Coalition Size and the Severity of Civil Conflict."

ethnic recruiting as consisting of cases in which the armed organizations "recruit fighters predominantly among their own ethnic group and who forge alliances on the basis of ethnic affiliation."[3]

For a comparable measure of ethnic recruitment in movements that employed civil resistance, I relied on a coding of ethnic diversity from the NAVCO 2.0 dataset.[4] A campaign is coded as ethnically diverse "when there is evidence that the campaign spans the socio-demographic" category of ethnicity.[5] While the terms "predominantly" in the EAC definition and "span" in the NAVCO definition leave a lot of ambiguity, it presents the most viable way to develop a common measure of overlap covering the full range of units in the dataset being analyzed in this study.

A movement was coded "0" (i.e. "no overlap") if: a) it recruited on the basis of ethnicity according to the EAC or NAVCO 2.0 datasets, and b) that ethnic group was did not enjoy access to power in the year prior to campaign onset according to the related Ethnic Power Relations dataset.[6] If the movement either recruited across ethnic groups or recruited from the same ethnic group as the regime, it was considered to have overlap and was coded as a "1". Of the 243 campaigns in the dataset, 165 were coded as having ethnic overlap, while the remaining 78 had no ethnic overlap. I expect that movements with ethnic overlap will

3. Wimmer, Cederman, and Min, "Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of a New Global Data Set," Online Appendix, available at: http://www.princeton.edu/~awimmer/AppendixEthnicPolitics.pdf.

4. Chenoweth and Lewis, "Unpacking Nonviolent Campaigns: Introducing the NAVCO 2.0 Dataset."

5. Erica Chenoweth and Orion Lewis, "Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) Data Project, Version 2.0, Codebook," University of Denver, May 1, 2013, p. 11.

6. Wimmer, Cederman, and Min, "Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of a New Global Data Set."

be more likely to employ a strategy of civil resistance.

A potential problem with using this measure as a test of the theory of social overlap is that a movement's choice of strategy could in fact condition its ability to draw diverse membership. In other words, it may be because certain movements choose violence that they are unable garner support from across social cleavages. However, two elements of the ethnic overlap measure used in this study guard against this. While no dataset exists of the ethnic composition of revolutionary movements prior to the onset of a campaign, when annual data of ethnic participation in a campaign is available (such as with the NAVCO 2.0 data), only the measure from the first year is used. This presents data from the earliest point available in the conflict. Secondly, the composition of the movement is compared to that of the regime, for which data is available prior to campaign onset. Therefore, a coding of "no overlap" requires the state to have been excluding an ethnic group from access to political power before members of that group initiated a revolutionary campaign.

As an additional measure of a movement's potential to generate wide social support, I use literacy rates published by the World Bank. This is intended to capture a movement's potential to spread its message around the country and build popular support from amongst varied social groups.[7] I expect that in countries with low literacy rates, movements will be less likely to be able to build popular support and thus be less likely to embrace a strategy

7. To the degree that literacy rates capture many aspects of a country's overall level of economic and social development, this may be a crude proxy for a movement's social endowment. However, many of the other factors associated with development should be controlled for with the inclusion of per capita GDP as described below. Furthermore, case studies offer anecdotal evidence of movements struggling to spread their message because potential participants cannot read written messages.

of civil resistance.

I compare these predictions based on a movement's social endowments with hypotheses derived from alternative "technology of insurgency" and state-centric theories. The literature on civil wars, as discussed previously, finds strong correlations between the onset of violent conflict and variables that measure the "opportunity" for rebellion, particularly weak state capacity and terrain that favors the tactics of guerrilla warfare. While the literature does not consider the possibility of rebels engaging in nonviolent civil resistance, theoretically, these factors should influence a revolutionary movement's assessments of the relative efficacy of armed insurgency. I therefore collect several measures that are commonly used in the civil war literature as a proxy for the relative ease of launching a violent campaign.

I use per capita Gross Domestic Product figures published in the Penn World Tables to measure state strength in terms of overall economic productivity, penetration of the state through roads and other infrastructure, and potential for tax revenue generation.[8] The per capita GDP data is lagged one year and the natural log is used. The civil war literature would expect lower state capacity, as measured by per capita GDP, to increase the likelihood of a movement embracing armed insurgency.

I also utilize a logged percentage of a country's mountainous terrain that is commonly used in the civil war literature. Again, because mountainous terrain makes it easier to carry out the tactics of guerrilla warfare, the literature would predict that movements would

8. See Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War."

more likely to take up arms in the context of a more mountainous environment.

To measure characteristics of the regime type, I include the Polity2 score as a measure of regime type. State-centric theories would expect that movements would be more likely to opt for violence against autocratic regimes that provide fewer channels for nonviolent dissent and may be perceived as more likely to respond to protest with repression.

Finally, I include codings for past and concurrent revolutionary behavior. A bivariate coding of ongoing violence measures whether an existing campaign against the regime is employing a strategy of armed insurgency at the time another movement launches a separate campaign. The outbidding literature would predict that the new campaign would feel compelled to also employ violence. Similar bivariate measures are used to indicate if the most immediate prior or concurrent campaign against the regime employed armed insurgency or civil resistance. Because in several cases there is no prior history of a revolutionary campaign within the period of study, separate codings of prior violence and prior nonviolence are used. The theory of "contentious scripts" would suggest that social groups are more likely to return to previously employed repertoires of contention.

I assess the relationship between these covariates and revolutionary strategy using logistic regression. Results are displayed in table 3.1. The outcomes show strong correlations between measures of movements' social support structures and the strategy they employ. Consistent with the predictions, the results show a strong positive correlation between the strategy of civil resistance and both ethnic overlap and literacy rates. In fact, the model predicts that when other factors are held at their means, movements that enjoy ethnic over-

lap with the regime have a 31 percent greater likelihood of employing civil resistance than those that do not.

The analysis shows only weak evidence in support of technology of insurgency predictions. While the model shows the anticipated positive relationship between per capita GDP and the likelihood that a movement will opt for civil resistance over armed insurgency, the relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant. Similarly, there is a negative relationship between mountainous terrain and civil resistance, but it too is not significant.

An interesting and unanticipated finding is a statistically significant negative relationship between a state's polity score and the likelihood and that revolutionary movement in that state adopts a strategy of civil resistance. The finding stands in stark contrast to state-centric theories that predict revolutionary movements will attempt nonviolent tactics first, but will turn to arms when autocratic regimes ignore their demands and respond only with repression, leaving the movement with "no other way out" than through violence.[9] This statistical result does not imply that insurgencies are more likely in democracies, it may well be that revolutionary movements generally are rarer in democracies because of the existence of institutionalized mechanisms for dissent. But perhaps counterintuitively, when a movement does feel compelled to seek regime change in a democracy, it is more likely to feel compelled to take up arms to do so. The relationship between regime type, repression, and movement strategy will be explored in greater detail later in the chapter.

Finally, none of the bivariate measures of prior or ongoing campaigns yielded statis-

9. Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991.*

tically meaningful correlations with movement strategy. Thus, to the degree that existing "repertoires of contention" may inform a movement's initial preference for violence versus nonviolence, these preferences are outweighed by other factors before movement's mount efforts serious enough to constitute a campaign under the parameters of this study. Similarly, the existence of an armed insurgency does not appear to compel rival movements to also take up arms in an effort at outbidding: in fact, movements may be able to differentiate themselves by choosing nonviolence instead.

To test the robustness of the findings, I run several additional models. The first two utilize the same underlying dataset and correlates, but include dummy variables for different decades and and for different geographic regions respectively.

In the third model, I add a number of measures of ethnic and identity structures in an effort to demonstrate that my concept of ethnic overlap captures a unique characteristic of movement-regime social relationships that has specific implications for revolutionary behavior. I include an index of ethnolinguistic fractionalization that is widely used in the civil war literature. In addition, I use Gubler and Selway's (2012) measures of social "cross-cuttingness."[10]. Derived from country-level surveys, the indices measure the degree to which religious, geographic, and income divisions create either reinforcing or cross-cutting cleavages with ethnicity. In other words, they measure the degree to which ethnicity within a given country correlates with each of the other three social dimensions.

Finally, I run the original model on a more limited dataset that includes only the subset

10. Gubler and Selway, "Horizontal Inequality, Crosscutting Cleavages, and Civil War"

Table 3.1: Covariates of Revolutionary Strategy

	Dependent variable:	
	Strategy of Civil Resistance	
	Coefficients (Std. Error)	Marginal Effects
Ethnic Overlap	1.513***	31%
	(0.429)	
Literacy	2.018**	29%
	(0.811)	
GDP per capita (ln)	0.059	
	(0.055)	
Mountains	−0.030	
	(0.132)	
Polity Score	−0.068**	−1%
	(0.029)	
Ongoing Insurgency	0.720	
	(0.681)	
Prior Violence	0.081	
	(0.374)	
Prior Nonviolence	0.545	
	(0.473)	
Observations	220	

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

of armed insurgencies which resulted in at least 1,000 battle-related deaths. This is more comparable to the set of armed conflicts used in most civil war studies and allows for an evaluation of whether the findings from the initial model are sensitive to the intensity of armed insurgency compared to the civil resistance campaigns.

The findings for ethnic overlap are consistent through all four alternative models. The correlation between literacy and nonviolence holds for the temporal controls, but falls below the threshold for significance once the geographic controls are added and in the set of cases where only major armed insurgencies are included. Per capita GDP becomes significant in the geographically controlled model, and polity scores loses significance in the major insurgency model. Neither mountainous terrain nor any of the bivariate measures of prior or ongoing campaigns yielded statistically meaningful correlations with movement strategy.

In the model including additional measures of ethnic structure, ethnic fractionalization had a statistically significant positive relationship with the likelihood of civil resistance, but did not alter the positive correlation between ethnic overlap and nonviolence. None of the measures of cross-cuttingness demonstrated a significant correlation with revolutionary strategy.

Across all models, the strongest correlation remains that between ethnic overlap and revolutionary strategy, making this relationship worthy of further examination.

Table 3.2: Covariates of Revolutionary Strategy

	Dependent variable:			
	Strategy of Civil Resistance			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Ethnic Overlap	1.862***	1.869***	1.467***	1.724***
	(0.492)	(0.463)	(0.486)	(0.553)
Literacy	0.831	2.515***	2.695***	0.878
	(0.942)	(0.873)	(0.986)	(1.250)
GDP per capita (ln)	0.107*	0.021	0.093	0.168
	(0.065)	(0.057)	(0.069)	(0.114)
Mountains	−0.051	−0.060	−0.160	−0.268
	(0.147)	(0.140)	(0.157)	(0.199)
Polity Score	−0.082***	−0.082**	−0.107***	−0.037
	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.046)
Ongoing Insurgency	0.396	0.579	0.530	0.696
	(0.698)	(0.754)	(0.726)	(1.084)
Prior Violence	0.392	−0.092	0.215	0.335
	(0.404)	(0.430)	(0.443)	(0.570)
Prior Nonviolence	0.649	0.153	0.160	0.854
	(0.533)	(0.530)	(0.526)	(0.791)
Ethnic Fractionalization			2.599**	
			(1.269)	
Ethno-Religious X-Cut			1.980	
			(1.351)	
Ethno-Geographic X-Cut			1.749	
			(1.434)	
Ethno-Income X-Cut			−0.156	
			(3.489)	
Regional Controls	*Included*			
Temporal Controls		*Included*		
Observations	221	221	166	101
Log likelihood	−104.776	−103.950	−88.151	−50.952

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

3.2 Testing the Mechanisms: Defection and Repression

While the previous cross-national analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between ethnic overlap and the adoption of a civil resistance strategy, it is not able to provide evidence as to whether ethnic overlap works through the mechanisms predicted by the theory. The following analyses are intended to provide some evidence to this effect. The theory predicts that movements without overlap will turn to armed insurgency because 1) without overlap, they will be unable to win over defectors from the regime, which is a key element for nonviolent success, and 2) without overlap, the regime will have few qualms about engaging in violent repression even of nonviolent protesters, thus negating a crucial comparative advantage of civil resistance. So is there any evidence that overlap has an effect on defection or repression?

To answer this question, I conduct further cross-national statistical analyses. This time, I rely exclusively on the NAVCO dataset for both the units of analysis as well as the dependent variable as NAVCO codes each campaign for the presence of regime "loyalty shifts" as well as for the presence of violent repression by the regime. Each are simple dichotomous codings that measure the presence, but not the degree, of defection and repression. Relying on this dataset also changes the set of campaigns under study to only those that were used in the fourth model of the previous section: while the set of civil resistance campaigns are the same, NAVCO includes only armed insurgencies that result in 1,000 or more battle-related deaths. Since strategic decison-making is not the dependent variable of interest in

this analysis, capturing the cases of lesser armed insurgencies (those that kill between 25 and 1,000 people) is less important. As before, I limited the scope of inquiry to campaigns between 1946 and 2006 with the goal of regime change. The resulting dataset includes 105 campaigns, of which 72 are civil resistance and 33 are armed insurgencies. The challenging movement was coded as having ethnic overlap with the regime in 84 of those campaigns and as having no overlap in 21 cases.

Using this data, I first ran a logistic regression model for defection as the dependent variables. Building off of Chenoweth and Stephan's framework,[11] I include three covariates that have been shown to have a relationship with the dependent variables: the population of the country, an estimate of the membership of the movement (both logged), the movement's choice of strategy, and an interaction term combining membership and strategy. Civil resistance theory predicts, and Chenoweth and Stephan demonstrate empirically using largely the same data, that the likelihood of regime loyalty shifts should increase with higher rates of participation combined with the use of a nonviolent strategy. I add to this model the variable of ethnic overlap. I predict that the presence of ethnic overlap should have a positive effect on the probability of defections.

The results support these predictions as the resulting model shows positive relationships between regime defections and both the interaction term and the ethnic overlap variable. The relationships pass significance tests, but only at the $p < .1$ threshold. This may be due to the relatively small size of the data set and further measurement and testing would

11. Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*.

Table 3.3: *Social Overlap, Defection, and Repression*

	Dependent variable:	
	Probability of Defections	Probability of Violent Repression
	(1)	(2)
Country Population (ln)	−0.005	0.130*
	(0.061)	(0.073)
Membership (ln)	−0.134	0.334*
	(0.092)	(0.170)
Civil Resistance Strategy	−1.680*	0.291
	(0.908)	(0.941)
Ethnic Overlap	1.107*	−0.488
	(0.663)	(0.885)
Membership * CR Strategy	0.197*	−0.285
	(0.108)	(0.179)
Constant	−0.562	0.003
	(0.923)	(1.107)
Observations	105	105
Log likelihood	−63.533	−44.222
Akaike Inf. Crit.	139.067	100.445
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

be helpful. Nevertheless, the analysis provides some tentative support for the argument that movements without overlap are more inclined to turn to violence because their odds of winning over regime defections are low compared to a movement with overlap.

I analyze the same set of covariates against the violent regime repression dependent variable. In this case, the theory predicts a negative relationship between ethnic overlap and the likelihood of repression. I expect that state security forces will be less willing to open fire on opposition movement members with whom they share social ties.

In this case, the results are not sufficient to support the prediction. While the relationship between overlap and repression is negative as predicted, the result is far from statistical significance. It may be that a regime's willingness to repress is unaffected by ethnic overlap, or it could be that the simple dichotomous coding of regime repression is too broad to reveal important variation in the degree of repression.

	No Overlap	**Overlap**	**Total**
Civil Resistance	100% (7/7)	77% (50/65)	80% (57/72)
Armed Insurgency	86% (12/14)	89% (17/19)	88% (29/33)
Total	90% (19/21)	80% (67/84)	82% (86/105)

Figure 3.3: Rate of Violent Regime Repression by Movement Strategy and Existence of Ethnic Overlap

In fact, regimes engage in violent repression in the vast majority of cases of revolu-

tionary movements regardless of strategy and regardless of overlap. The following table breaks down rates of repression (the percentage of campaigns that were met with violent repression) by strategy and by overlap. This table shows that overall, 82 percent of campaigns are violently repressed (86 out of 105). Armed insurgency campaigns are repressed 88 percent of the time compared to only 80 percent for civil resistance campaigns. And for armed insurgencies, overlap appears to matter little, they are repressed between 86 and 89 percent of the time regardless. But for civil resistance campaigns, there is a larger difference in repression based on overlap: nonviolent campaigns with no overlap were met with violent repression in seven out of seven cases, while those with overlap were only repressed 77 percent of the time. Viewed differently, a movement with no overlap might observe that there is decrease in its likelihood of being repressed by employing a nonviolent rather than a violent strategy (100 percent versus 86 percent respectively). But for a movement with overlap, nonviolent movements are repressed "only" 77 percent of the time compared to an 89 percent repression rate for armed insurgency. In other words, there is a slight repression advantage for civil resistance among movements that have overlap, but that comparative advantage does not hold when the movement has no overlap.

The Chi squared value for the above table is 17.94 ($p < .01$) meaning that the overall variation in repression between strategy and overlap is significant. However, the small sample sizes in some of the cross-sections means that this evidence should be treated as tentative at best, especially when paired with the insignificant results from the regression analysis. Furthermore, repression by the regime may also cause a movement to change its

strategy mid-course. A deeper investigation of the relationship between movement strategy and regime repression will be provided in the next section.

3.3 The Puzzle of Democracy

One puzzle emerging form the previous cross-national analysis of revolutionary campaigns is the strong, negative correlation between democracy and the employment of nonviolent strategies. While scholarship on the subject is mixed, there is an argument in the terrorism and insurgency literature that democracies may be more vulnerable to violent coercion.[12] Different researchers have highlighted different rationales for why this might be the case. Some argue that democratic political institutions make it more difficult to eliminate violent actors,[13] while others note that domestic politics may increase pressures on democratic regimes to grant concessions.[14]

While this theory might help explain an absolute increase in the number of armed insurgencies against democratic as opposed to authoritarian regime (though it should be noted that the argument has found more traction with regard to terrorism than civil war), it fails to explain the relative difference as compared to civil resistance. Democratic institutions and legal protections should give as much of an advantage to civil resistance as it does

12. Gil Merom, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars*, State, Society, and the Failures of France in Algeria, Israel in Lebanon, and the United States in Vietnam (New York: Cambridge University Press, August 2003).

13. William Lee Eubank and Leonard Weinberg, "Does Democracy Encourage Terrorism?" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 6, no. 4 (December 1994): 417–435.

14. Robert Pape, *Dying to Win*, The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism (New York: Random House, 2005).

to armed insurgency, and domestic political incentives would be likely put more pressure on a government to grant concessions to nonviolent resistors than armed rebels.

Attention to the possible affects of regime type on revolutionary movements' mobilization structures provides an alternative explanation for the observed relationship. In a democracy, popular support for a movement seeking to overthrow the regime is likely to be limited. A large segment of the population will be satisfied with the status quo, while even those who are not are more likely to believe that their grievances can be addressed through the institutionalized processes of democratic governance. Support for revolution will be limited to a small group of committed individuals who believe that change through majoritarian political processes is not possible exactly because so few others share their views.

However, if revolutionary movements struggle to build popular support in democracies, they are also likely to do so in extreme autocracies. In this case, the barrier to mass mobilization is not the lack of appeal of the movement's goals, but rather the movement's restricted ability to spark collective action in an environment that prohibits political communication or assembly.[15]

If this were the case, we would expect to see a more curvilinear relationship between regime type and revolutionary strategy. A quick look at the distribution of the revolutionary campaigns over the range of Polity scores from –10 to 10 reveals that this may in fact be the case. While armed insurgencies are distributed relatively evenly across the spectrum,

15. This impact of violent regime repression is bracketed for now and will be addressed more comprehensively in the next session.

civil resistance campaigns cluster between the levels of –7 and –2.

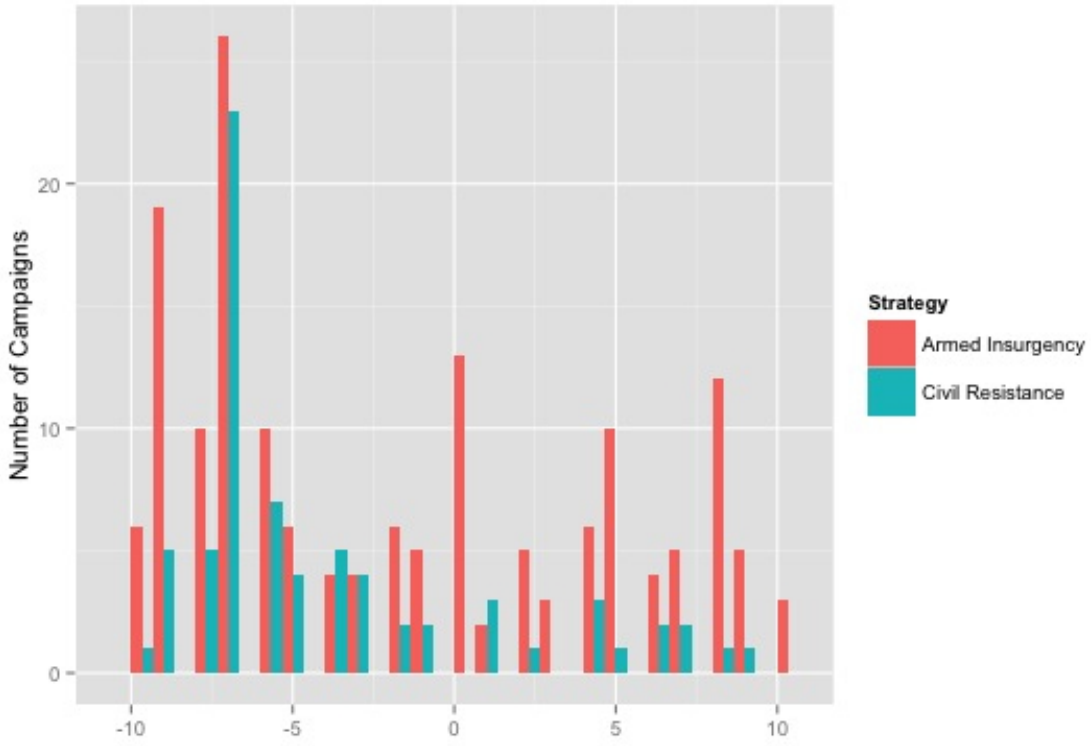

Figure 3.4: Revolutionary Campaigns by Regime Polity Score

Returning to the regression analysis, I run a new logit model that is identical to the original baseline model used in this chapter, but that fits a U-shaped curve to regime type by squaring the value of the Polity score. Extreme values on either side of zero thus become high values in the new metric. So, for example, a Polity score of 7 becomes 49, but a score of –7 becomes 49 as well. Consistent with what we see visually in the plotted distribution, the logit analysis finds this squared Polity score to have a negative correlation with the strategy of civil resistance (significant only at the $p<.1$ level), meaning that civil resistance

campaigns are less likely relative to armed insurgencies at either end of the spectrum.

Table 3.4: Regime and Revolutionary Strategy

	Dependent variable:			
	Strategy of Civil Resistance			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
GDP	0.032	0.047	0.052	0.045
	(0.053)	(0.053)	(0.054)	(0.059)
Mountainous Terrain	−0.088	−0.077	−0.113	−0.096
	(0.137)	(0.138)	(0.137)	(0.167)
Literacy Rate	1.836**	1.698**	1.628**	1.561
	(0.812)	(0.814)	(0.822)	(0.963)
Ethnic Overlap	2.083***	2.128***	2.277***	1.993***
	(0.555)	(0.560)	(0.562)	(0.670)
Polity Score	−0.055*	−0.074**		−0.210***
	(0.029)	(0.034)		(0.075)
Polity Squared		−0.012*		−0.028**
		(0.007)		(0.011)
Strong Democracy			−1.757**	
			(0.794)	
Strong Authoritarian			−0.859*	
			(0.441)	
Instability				−1.690***
				(0.641)
Constant	−3.966***	−3.569***	−3.570***	−3.164***
	(0.784)	(0.810)	(0.791)	(1.011)
Observations	219	219	219	186
Log likelihood	−108.583	−106.965	−105.769	−77.818
Akaike Inf. Crit.	231.166	229.931	227.538	173.635
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I run an additional model in which instead of using the squared numeric Polity mea-

sure, I use 2 dichotomous codings for "strong democracies" (where the Polity score is 8 or higher) and for "strong autocracies" (where the Polity score is –8 or lower). The results are consistent, showing negative correlations between civil resistance and both strong democracy and strong autocracy, though the correlation between strong democracy and revolutionary strategy is stronger.

Finally, in a fourth model, I test for any effect that changes in regime type may have independent from overall level of democracy or autocracy. The civil war literature has found that "political instability," defines as changes in Polity score of 3 or more within the previous three years, is positively correlated with the onset of armed conflict. This model shows a similar relationship, with instability increasing the likelihood of armed insurgency relative to civil resistance. However, the relationship between static Polity levels and revolutionary strategy remains.

These results therefore provides strong evidence of a relationship between regime type and revolutionary strategy, with some evidence for both theoretical logics. The curvilinear relationship is consistent with the hypothesis that movement's seeking to overthrow the regime will struggle to build popular support (albeit for different reasons) in both highly autocratic and highly democracy regimes. However, higher likelihood of insurgency in democracies combines with the higher likelihood after regime transitions also suggests that movement's may see taking up arms as more advantageous when institutional constraints (due to either political turbulence or strong civil liberty rights) hamper a state's ability to suppress an insurgency.

3.4 The Indeterminacy of Repression

To test the hypothesis that revolutionary movements choose their strategy, at least in part, based on the target regime's past history of repression, I will turn again to the cross-national dataset of regime-change campaigns employed in the previous chapter. I expect that when a regime has exhibited a demonstrated willingness to violently repress unarmed civilians, future revolutionary movements will see little hope in embracing civil resistance and will be more likely instead to turned to insurgency.

I use data from the Political Terrorism Scale (PTS) dataset to create a lagged measure of regime repression.[16] PTS draws upon human rights reporting from Amnesty International and the U.S. Department of State to create ordinal measures of regime repression on a scale from 1 (least repressive) to 5 (most repressive).

Political Terror Scale Levels[17]
Level 5 : Terror has expanded to the whole population. The leaders of these societies place no limits on the means or thoroughness with which they pursue personal or ideological goals.

Level 4 : Civil and political rights violations have expanded to large numbers of the population. Murders, disappearances, and torture are a common part of life. In spite of its generality, on this level terror affects those who interest themselves in politics or ideas.

Level 3 : There is extensive political imprisonment, or a recent history of such imprisonment. Execution or other political murders and brutality may be common. Unlimited detention, with or without a trial, for political views is accepted.

16. Gibney, M., Cornett, L., Wood, R., & Haschke, P., (2012) Political Terror Scale 1976–2012. http://www.politicalterrorscale.org. Retrieved April 24, 2014.
17. Coding definitions transcribed directly from Reed M Wood and Mark Gibney, "The Political Terror Scale (PTS): A Re-introduction and a Comparison to CIRI," *Human Rights Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2010): 373.

Level 2 : There is a limited amount of imprisonment for nonviolent political activity. However, few persons are affected, torture and beatings are exceptional. Political murder is rare.

Level 1 : Countries under a secure rule of law, people are not imprisoned for their views, and torture is rare or exceptional. Political murders are extremely rare.

The use of the PTS data imposes a few limitations on the analysis. While PTS uses country-year as the unit of analysis, it creates separate codings based on its two distinct sources: Amnesty International and U.S. Department of State. While largely congruent, these values are not the same for each unit and consequently the researcher must choose which to use in the cases where they differ.

Furthermore, there is substantial variation from year to year in codings for a given country. While jumps between 1 and 5 are rare, movement in the 3 to 5 range is quite common. This does not undermine the validity or reliability of the measure itself, but it raises questions about how the measure relates to relevant hypotheses about the impact of previous repression on movement strategy. How do movements assess the likelihood of a regime to repress in the future if its past behavior is varied? Because the revolutionary movements in question pose, by definition, an existential threat to the regime, I assume that these movements should expect the highest level of repression that a regime has proven willing to use in the recent past.

Based on this assumption, I operationalize the repression variable as the highest coded level for a given country in the five years prior to the onset of the revolutionary campaign. In other words, for a movement that launches a campaign in 1989, I take the highest PTS

score during the period 1984 to 1988, from either Amnesty or State Department sources, as the best proxy measure for the information that the movement is likely to have had about the regime's willingness and ability to engage in repression of nonviolent protesters.

Finally, the PTS data only goes back as far as 1976. Therefore, I am am only able to analyze the campaigns that begin in 1981 or later, for which at least five years of PTS repression data exist. This leaves 116 campaigns, of which 68 are armed insurgencies and 47 employ civil resistance. The table below breaks down the campaigns by the maximum PTS score assigned to the state in the five years prior to campaign onset. In no cases did a campaign of either type occur in a state that consistently received the lowest PTS score of 1. For states whose highest score was either a 2 or 3, armed insurgencies were roughly evenly split. But for states who had received a score of a 4 or 5 in the previous five years, there were more cases of armed insurgencies than civil resistance campaigns. A Chi-squared test reveals that the difference is not great enough to be statistically significant.

PTS LEVEL	ARMED INSURGENCY	CIVIL RESISTANCE
1	0	0
2	3	3
3	21	22
4	21	13
5	23	9

Figure 3.5: Repression and Revolutionary Strategy

Next, I employ a logit regression analysis to assess the relationship between the inde-

pendent variable of interest, in this case, regime repression, and the likelihood of a revolutionary movement embracing a strategy of civil resistance versus armed insurgency. I create four models, all of which include the variables studied previously in this chapter. The first model incorporates the ordinal PTS repression scores as numeric data, that is, using it directly as a number from one to five. The second instead treats the PTS scores as categorical levels of repression (continuing to use the highest value from the five years prior to campaign onset).A PTS level of 2 serves as the reference as no units correspond with level 1. The third model simplifies the PTS repression measure, exchanging the multi-level categorization with a dichotomous variable for "high repression" that corresponds with PTS scores of either 4 or 5. Finally, the fourth model includes an interaction term for ethnic overlap and high repression to test the hypothesis of whether the effect of previous repression on movement strategy is condition upon whether the existence of social overlap between the movement and the regime. All three models show a negative correlation between higher levels of repression, but the relationship is weak and falls far below the threshold of statistical significance.

This non-finding of a relationship between repression and revolutionary strategy could be the result of limitation of the data. Aggregating the complex processes and patterns of regime repression into a single ordinal scale for a year compiled from only two human rights reporting sources, each with potential agendas and biases, creates a high risk of measurement error. The particulars of who was repressed, what kind of repression was em-

Table 3.5: Repression and Revolutionary Strategy

	Dependent variable:			
	Strategy of Civil Resistance			
	Numeric	Categorical	Dichotomous	Overlap Interaction
GDP	0.102	0.075	0.115	0.121
	(0.175)	(0.182)	(0.171)	(0.176)
Mountainous Terrain	−0.116	−0.081	−0.123	−0.115
	(0.255)	(0.258)	(0.254)	(0.259)
Literacy Rate	1.258	1.221	1.246	1.220
	(1.628)	(1.620)	(1.625)	(1.640)
Ethnic Overlap	2.585***	2.581***	2.576***	2.437*
	(0.869)	(0.870)	(0.870)	(1.269)
Polity Score	−0.312**	−0.330**	−0.308**	−0.305**
	(0.138)	(0.142)	(0.136)	(0.136)
Polity Squared	−0.037*	−0.039*	−0.037*	−0.037*
	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Instability	−1.630	−1.728	−1.671	−1.685
	(1.074)	(1.102)	(1.055)	(1.062)
PTS Score (Numeric)	−0.196			
	(0.404)			
PTS Level 2		*Reference*		
PTS Level 3		−2.319		
		(3.051)		
PTS Level 4		−2.587		
		(3.109)		
PTS Level 5		−2.531		
		(3.153)		
High Repression (PTS 4 or 5)			−0.306	−0.524
			(0.717)	(1.650)
High Repression * Ethnic Overlap				0.259
				(1.772)
Observations	82	82	82	82
Log likelihood	−31.114	−30.759	−31.140	−31.129

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

ployed, and whether that repression was "discriminant" matter a great deal[18] and may be washed over by the PTS dataset. Nevertheless, it is likely a good ballpark measure of a regime's general demonstrated willingness and capability to employ repressive measures and the weakness of the correlation between this measure and the strategy employed by revolutionary movements is noteworthy.

Another potential problem is that the previous regime repression might not be independent. If revolutionary movements are engaging in some type of "testing the waters" prior to to a full campaign onset that is measured by the dataset (i.e. demonstrations of less than 1,000 people or armed attacks that kill less than 25 people), it could be the movement's own behavior that is triggering the measured level of repression. This would be a major obstacle to making causal claims if in fact there were a correlation between repression and movement strategy, but in the absence of such a relationship, the problem is largely moot.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has used cross-national data on revolutionary campaigns to evaluate three alternative theoretical explanations for variation in movement strategy. The civil war literature predicts that insurgencies are most likely to occur when structural conditions, particularly state capabilities and geography, are most favorable to the "technology" of guerrilla

18. See Christian Davenport and Molly Inman, "The State of State Repression Research Since the 1990s," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 4 (September 2012): 619–634.

warfare. The statistical evidence lent some support to this argument as the relationships followed the general direction of the predictions, however in most cases they fell short of statistical significance and were sensitive to changes in models.

The literature on the nexus of repression on dissent is far more conflicted and leads to few clear and applicable predictions to the problem of revolutionary choice between violent and nonviolent methods. Nevertheless, if part of the strategic logic of civil resistance relies on the belief that such campaigns are less likely to face repression (a debatable assertion in itself), it might be reasonable to predict that when a regime has already shown a demonstrated willingness and ability to repress nonviolent dissidents, future revolutionary movements will be more likely to eschew civil resistance in favor of armed revolt. Again, the quantitative analyses provide only very weak evidence for this hypothesis as the resulting models show the anticipated direction of relationship but do not register a statistically significant effect.

Instead, it is the measures that relate to the movements' social endowments and their ability to generate massive, overlapping popular mobilization that show the strongest statistical correlations with strategic behavior. In countries where literacy rates are high, where, theoretically, it is easier to communicate, disseminate ideas, and consequently build broader support, movements are more likely to embrace civil resistance. But the most powerful statistical relationship is that between ethnic overlap and movement strategy: when the members of a revolutionary movement and members of the regime come primarily from different ethnic groups, the movement is far more likely to take up arms.

Introduction to Case Studies

The second part of this study uses qualitative case studies to gain further insights into the processes through which revolutionary movements come to employ a strategy of either armed insurgency or civil resistance in their efforts to overthrow a regime. I investigate four cases of revolutionary campaigns, two violent and two nonviolent, all of which occurred in the country of Nepal between the middle of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century. Each of the subsequent four chapters is dedicated to a specific case.

Selecting multiple cases from within the same country of Nepal confers several advantages for the purposes of this study. The common context controls for several potentially confounding variables such as geography, culture, and transnational ties. Yet despite this common backdrop, we see variation in the dependent variable as revolutionary movements have employed both armed insurgency and civil resistance in different cases. Furthermore, there is variation even within movements as both the Nepali Congress (NC) and the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) have utilized each strategy in different campaigns. The result is a set of cases that enables comparative analysis approximating Mills' ideal of

the "method of difference."[19] By keeping so many external conditions constant, the analysis can be focused on the factors that precipitated variation within each movement's strategic behavior.

Nepal offers several practical advantages as a site of inquiry as well. As the revolutionary conflicts have been largely resolved, it is possible to conduct research and obtain crucial information. Leaders of erstwhile rebel groups are now key figures in institutionalized politics and have been willingly to speak openly to journalists, historians, and other scholars about their decisions and actions during conflict. In addition, Nepal has long been a site of particular interest to anthropologists due to its cultural and linguistic diversity as well as relative isolation. Consequently, many anthropologists were embedded in local communities prior to and during the revolutionary campaigns. They have produced several rich accounts of conflict dynamics from the perspective of local communities in many villages across the country. Consequently, there is a sufficient and credible, if not vast, scholarly literature on the cases in question.

	1950 Anti-Rana Revolt	1990 Jana Andolan	1996 People's War	2006 Jana Andolan II
Movements	Nepali Congress	Nepali Congress, UML	Maoists	Maoists, Nepali Congress, UML
Strategy	Armed Insurgency	Civil Resistance	Armed Insurgency	Civil Resistance

Figure 3.6: The four cases of revolutionary campaigns in Nepal to be examined in this study.

This study will draw primarily from these secondary sources to reconstruct the se-

19. John Stuart Mills, *A System of Logic: Ratiocinative and Inductive* (New York: Harper / Brothers, 1882).

quences and timing of events that resulted in the adoption of a given revolutionary strategy. In addition, the author conducted six months of original field work in the country, interviewing key actors. These included over sixty interviews with leaders of the political movements in question, as well as civil society activists, leaders of rival movements, members of the state security forces, journalists, and scholars who had access to crucial information.[20]

Collecting credible evidence from key actors concerning the motivations behind past behavior presents several obstacles. Actors may have difficulty in accurately remembering and reconstructing events, discussion, and thought processes that occurred many years ago. In some circumstances, they may have incentives to present biased narratives that serve their own personal or political interests. Finally, even when memory is accurate and intentions are honest, it can be difficult for individuals to pinpoint the true motivations for their own behavior.

Due to these challenges, this study will focus less on actor-based explanations of their own motivations and behavior. Instead, personal accounts are used to reconstruct series of events to assess the congruence of conditions leading into the beginning of a revolutionary campaign with the outcome of the strategy employed in that campaign. Whenever possible, individual testimonies are triangulated with the accounts of others, especially when secondary sources are available.

The methodology employed follows the tradition of "nested analysis" whereby case

20. Detailed information about interview subjects can be found in an appendix to this volume.

selection is informed by the outcome of initial quantitative analysis and the cases are used to address issues endemic to large-n observational research design,[21] In this study, the cases will be used with several specific purposes to supplement the statistical analysis presented in the prior chapter. First, they will be used to better measure the dimensions of movements' social endowments, both the size as well as the composition and degree of overlap with the regime. The case studies will also help evaluate alternative explanations such as ideology and organizational cohesion that could not be assessed quantitatively. Even for explanations that were tested in the large-n study, such as the dynamics of regime repression, the case studies will allow for the observation of more subtle elements such as who was targeted and through exactly what means. The case studies will also allow for assessment of causal direction, whether in fact social endowments shape movement strategy, or whether it is actually the choice of strategy that informs who mobilizes in a campaign. Finally, the case studies will be used to search for alternative explanations not previously considered in the theoretical or quantitative chapters.

Based on the theoretical underpinnings of the competing explanations, several questions will be asked of each case. First, what information did the movement have prior to the launch of the campaign about levels of popular support? Were their previous mobilization efforts or electoral results that gave the movement an indication of it potential ability to generate mass mobilization? Was the population literate and did communicative infrastructure exist that could help the movement spread its message and coordinate action? The

21. Lieberman, "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research."

theory predicts that movements who have reason to be pessimistic about their potential to generate mass participation will feel compelled to turn to armed insurgency, a strategy that is relatively less dependent upon mass mobilization.

Second, how is the movement's network of supporters connected to other segments of society? Is the movement's network highly clustered, or is it connected to other elements of society via bridging ties? Are there divisions of language, race, ethnicity, or class that separate the regime from the larger network of society? The theory predicts that the more highly connected a movement's network of support is, the more optimistic it will be about the potential to generate mass mobilization and the more likely it will be to embrace a strategy of civil resistance.

Third, does the movement's network of supporters overlap with that of the regime? In other words, do the movement and the regime draw from similar segments of the population? Are members of the movement and the regime likely to share common familial, linguistic, ethnic, religious, class, or other associational ties? If not, even a movement with significant mobilization potential may believe that it will be unable encourage defections and to deter repression and consequently will be more likely to employ armed force.

A final observable implication of the theory of bases of social support presented in this study is that movements engage in some type of strategic assessment and deliberative process in which they attempt to anticipate the relative efficacy of violent versus nonviolent strategies. Consequently, the case studies will attempt to identify key deliberative moments, including time, location, participants, and outcomes.

The case studies will also be used to evaluate competing explanations. Did the movement have a prior ideological doctrine, and was its behavior consistent with that doctrine? Was the movement cohesive or fragmented? Did fragmentation precipitate a turn to violence by one or more factions? Regarding regime repression, the case studies will examine the state's past pattern of using force in response to violent and nonviolent protest. How severe was the repression? Did the regime respond differently to violent versus nonviolent challengers? Had the regime proven willing to use deadly force against nonviolent resisters? Did external actors offer financial support to the movement or the regime?

Each case study chapter will proceed in five parts. After an initial introduction to the case, a historical summary will describe the movement and the series of events leading up to the onset of the revolutionary campaign employing a strategy of either armed insurgency or civil resistance. Next, the case will be examined against the observable implications of the theory of social bases of support. Alternative explanations will then be tested for their congruency with the case at hand. A conclusion will then assess how the competing explanations stack up against the case study evidence. Following the individual case studies, a mini-chapter will revisit the evaluation of the contending theories across the four cases.

THEORY	PREDICTED CONDITIONS	
	Armed Insurgency	***Civil Resistance***
Social Structures	• small base of support • few ties to other social groups • few ties to membership of regime	• large base of support • ties to other social groups • ties to members of regime
Ideology	• ideological doctrine calling for violence	• doctrine that prohibits use of violence
Cohesion	• no prediction	• cohesive organizational structure
Repression	• high levels of repression • demonstrated willingness to use lethal force against nonviolent actors	• low levels of repression • demonstrated unwillingness to use lethal force against nonviolent actors
External Support	• foreign sponsor willing to support insurgency • no foreign power willing/able to sanction regime	• foreign power willing to sanction regime

Figure 3.7: A comparative examination of the evidence competing theories expect to be present prior to civil resistance versus armed insurgency campaigns.

Chapter 4

The 1950 Anti-Rana Revolt

In 1950, a group of armed revolutionaries effectively used guerrilla warfare tactics to compel the ruling autocratic regime in Nepal to relinquish power and establish a constitutional monarchy. What makes the 1950 anti-Rana revolt particularly surprising is who these armed revolutionaries were: Nepali exiles living in India who had become disciples of Gandhi and had actively participated in the "Quit India" movement. Yet when these former Gandhians set their sites on achieving democratic political change in their home country, they came to the conclusion that a nonviolent strategy would not be successful and instead it would be necessary to take up arms. This chapter traces the transition of the Nepali Congress from its initial ideological preference for nonviolence to its ultimate decision, made through a vote of party leaders in Calcutta in 1950, to take up arms. It illustrates that the movement's lack of social ties with other groups within Nepal limited its ability to generate mass mobilization, causing leaders to sour on the prospects of being

able to achieve victory through civil resistance.

4.1 BACKGROUND

Nepal is unique amongst its South Asian neighbors in that it was never a colony of the British empire and therefore did not experience the type of political and economic development that came from incorporation in the empire. Instead, its mountainous topography and the policies of the royal dynasties that ruled the kingdom since 1769 kept Nepal exceedingly isolated from the rest of the world. Travel in and out of Nepal was not permitted until the middle of the 20th century and education was actually prohibited by royal dictat.[1]

The country is made up of a complex patchwork of ethnicities, tribes, religions, and castes that form over 100 distinct social groups.[2] Identity-based differences between groups are exacerbated by a rigid political and social hierarchy and extreme economic inequalities. Hindus generally enjoy a position of greater privilege than non-Hindus, Indo-Nepali ethnic groups dominate indigenous, Tibetan, and Mongoloid peoples, and hill-based tribes have greater access to political power and economic prosperity than tribes that come from the southern plains.[3] And caste-based divisions create an additional hierarchy beyond all of the aforementioned ethnic, linguistic, and tribal relations. For much of the 19th and 20th

1. Thapa and Sharma, "From Insurgency to Democracy: The Challenges of Peace and Democracy-Building in Nepal," 206

2. R Manchanda, "Making of a'New Nepal'," *Economic and Political Weekly* (2006): 5036

3. Paul Routledge, "Nineteen Days in April: Urban Protest and Democracy in Nepal," *Urban Studies* 47, no. 6 (May 2010): 1283

centuries, even non-Hindu faiths were subjected to the state's official caste-based policies.[4]

This complex amalgamation of peoples was united into the single political entity of Nepal through the conquests of the Gorkha dynasty in 1769 and was ruled more or less as a hereditary monarchy until 1990. While the king maintained sovereign rule by law, a noble family, the Ranas, achieved de facto control of the administrative apparatus of the state, including the army, for over a century from 1846 to 1951. The Ranas maintained their rule through a combination of brutal repression and extreme isolation from the outside world. Schools were banned, illiteracy was high, and travel was tightly controlled. Political activity was limited to the confines of the palace and "took the form of behind-the-scene efforts to persuade the rulers to adopt certain courses of action or, alternatively, of participation in sub rosa intrigues and conspiracies aimed at the ruling group."[5]

As a result of this stifling political and intellectual environment, many higher class families moved to India, particularly Benares, Calcutta, and Darjeeling, where they enrolled their children in Indian secondary schools and universities. In India, these families, and particularly the young students, were exposed to Indian nationalist and anti-colonial fervor, especially the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.

The anti-imperial movement in India sparked new ambition for political change among Nepali political elites excluded from the Rana family's grip on government. Nepali exiles in India began publishing political newsletters such as the Gorkhali, Janmabhumi, Gorkha

4. Routledge, "Nineteen Days in April: Urban Protest and Democracy in Nepal," 1284

5. Bhuwan Lal Joshi and Leo E Rose, *Democratic Innovations in Nepal* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966), 14.

Sansar, and Tarun Gorkha which were smuggled across the border and into Nepal's larger cities.[6]

A few political movements, such as the Prachanda Gorkha and the Praja Parishad, organized within Nepal's borders with the goal of overthrowing the regime by assassinating the members of the Rana family. The historian Prem R. Uprety writes that the leaders of these movements were "convinced that the moderate agitation (both constitutional and non-violent type) of the Indian National Congress. . . was unsuited to Nepal," and thus looked to 19th century Russian anarchists and Indian terrorist groups in Bengal and Punjab as sources of inspiration.[7] In October 1940, the regime found out about a Praja Parishad plot to massacre the Rana family. It responded by arresting three hundred movement members and executing four of the most senior leaders.[8]

With the failure of the Praja Parishad and their attempt at overthrowing the regime with arms, the locus of opposition activity returned to India and to the use of nonviolent tactics. In 1947, a group of exiles,under the leadership of B.P. Koirala and Ganesh Man Singh founded a new political party, the Nepali National Congress, modeled after India's own National Congress party. In one of the initial resolutions passed at the party convention, it was declared that the party would engage in strictly "non-violent people's movement" in an effort to bring democratic governance to Nepal.[9]

6. Lok Raj Baral, *Oppositional Politics in Nepal* (Lalitpur, Nepal: Himal Books, 2006), 17.
7. Prem R Uprety, *Political Awakening in Nepal* (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 1992), 59.
8. A fifth, and arguably the movement's most senior leader, Tanka Prasad Acharya, was spared due to his high-caste status. He participated again in later revolutionary efforts and briefly served as prime minister in the 1950s. See (John Whelpton, *A History of Nepal* [Cambridge University Press, February 2005], 67).
9. Rajesh Gautam, *Nepali Congress* (New Delhi, India: Adroit Publishers, 2005), 54

Only a few months after the founding party convention, the Nepali National Congress engaged in its first nonviolent action: a strike at a jute mill in the city of Biratnagar, Nepal, just across the border from India. The immediate goals of the strike were not revolutionary; the strikers sought simply the right to unionize, a higher wage, and a shorter work week.[10] Party leaders, meanwhile, saw it as an opportunity to raise awareness of the party and its goals within Nepal. Additionally, the historian Bhola Chatterji writes that the leadership felt the need "to test the organizational strength of the party, and to ascertain what mass support it enjoyed."[11]

Nevertheless, the regime quickly arrested party leaders involved in organizing the strike, including B.P. Koirala. The movement used these arrests to spark further protests demanding the release of the political prisoners. While the campaign was an unprecedented public challenge to the Rana regime, it came nowhere close to presenting an existential challenge. Between April 13th and May 6th demonstrations occurred in Biratnagar, Birgunj, Janakpur, Ilam, and the Kathmandu valley, but local police were largely able to quell the protests. In May, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru intervened to mediate a resolution to the conflict, calling on the movement to end the protests and the government to release the prisoners and grant political reforms.[12]

The regime, however, waited months before releasing Koirala and other party leaders. Koirala was finally freed in August of 1947 after additional Indian intervention by Mahatma

10. Gautam, *Nepali Congress*, 54
11. Bhola Chatterji, *A Study of Recent Nepalese Politics* (Calcutta, India: World Press, 1967), 39.
12. Shashi Misra, *B.P. Koirala: A Case Study in Third World Democratic Leadership* (Varanasi, India: Konark Publishing House, 1985), 47

Gandhi.[13] In terms of political reforms, the Prime Minister, Padma Shamsher Rana, promulgated a "Government of Nepal Act" in January of 1948 that was drafted with the advice of Indian constitutional experts. In April of the very same year, Padma Shamsher was removed from office and replaced by another member of the Rana family, Mohan Shamsher, who immediately repealed the reforms instituted by his predecessor and banned the Nepali National Congress party.[14]

In the wake of the Jute Mill strike, a group of dissident members of the Nepali National Congress and a group of disenchanted members of the Rana family came together to form a rival movement, the Nepal Democratic Congress. While the Nepal Democratic Congress and the Nepali National Congress shared the same revolutionary goal, it was the tactics they believed necessary to achieve that goal that differentiated the two. As Rajesh Gautam writes in his history of the Nepali Congress party, "The ambition of the [Nepal Democratic Congress] was also to establish Constitutional Monarchy and a responsible democratic government in Nepal. But the means to get that objective was violence instead of nonviolence."[15]

Even B.P. Koirala and the Nepali National Congress began to question the efficacy of civil resistance in Nepal after seeing the failure of the Jute Mill strike and subsequent satyagraha to achieve even modest political goals. According to Prem R. Uprety, B.P. Koirala was already beginning preparations for armed insurgency in the fall of 1948.[16] According

13. M P Koirala, *A Role in Revolution* (Lalitpur, Nepal: Jagadamba Prakashan, 2008), 96.
14. Misra, *B.P. Koirala: A Case Study in Third World Democratic Leadership*, 57
15. Gautam, *Nepali Congress*, 175
16. Uprety, *Political Awakening in Nepal*, 131.

to another historian, Bhola Chatterji: ""By the time 1949 rolled out, the top leadership of the Nepali National Congress had admitted the necessity of a reorientation of the party's basic struggle through non-violent methods. The conviction was now firmly rooted that the ultimate overthrow of the Rana regime could not be effected except by force."[17]

But B.P. Koirala was arrested again by the regime, and during his incarceration the NNC and affiliated groups continued to engage in nonviolent techniques to pressure the regime into granting political reforms. As Uprety describes, "the period between October 1948 to April 1950 was a period of utter confusion in choosing the methods of operations among the Nepali opposition leaders in India."[18]

Following his second release from prison, B.P. Koirala decided to merge his Nepali National Congress with the Nepal Democratic Congress. In April 1950, members of the two movements met covertly in a movie theater owned by NDC leader Mahabir Shamsher to formally unite under the name "Nepali Congress," and to decide upon a strategy to through which to overthrow Nepal's Rana regime.[19]

M.P. Koirala, brother of B.P. Koirala describes the debate over strategy in his autobiography:

"The main hitch, however, was on the point of policy, in which the party was divided from top to bottom. The National Congress from its very inception was wedded to non-violence and it was an open secret that the [NDC members] were for violent methods

17. Chatterji, *A Study of Recent Nepalese Politics*, 48.
18. Uprety, *Political Awakening in Nepal*, 131.
19. Parmanand, *The Nepali Congress Since Its Inception* (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1982), 31.

although the objectives in their party constitution did subscribe to nonviolent means. The knowledge did disturb a strong segment in our party. There was another group among our midst, who was openly for violence, led by B.P. Koirala. I was certainly not for violence, if the same could be avoided and therefore belonged to the first group."[20]

The initial language of the Nepali Congress charter called for political change in Nepal "through constitutional and peaceful means." However, an amendment was put forth to replace the language to "through all possible means." Again, according to M.P. Koirala, "this amendment, of course, was meant to include violence," and it passed by a vote margin of roughly 140 to 60, with support coming from almost all of the former members of the NDC and a "strong section" of former NNC members.[21]

M.P. Koirala summarizes the group's decision, despite his own personal misgivings, citing the inability of the prior nonviolent efforts to achieve even moderate political reforms:

"It was true most of us believed in the peaceful and non-violent methods, nonetheless previous experience had proved the same having been lost before the stubborn and obstinate Ranarchy."[22]

Following the convention in Calcutta, members of the new Nepali Congress began communicating with potential dissidents within the Royal Nepal Army and stockpiling munitions both across the border in India and in safe havens within Nepal.[23] At midnight on the 11th of November, Nepali Congress armed guerrilla units launched attacks in areas

20. Koirala, *A Role in Revolution*, 110.
21. ibid., 111.
22. ibid.
23. Gautam, *Nepali Congress*, 288

along the India-Nepal border. They succeed in capturing several border territories and, with India's help, forced a negotiated settlement that brought an end to the Rana dictatorship, a restoration of the monarch's political powers, and a promise to begin drafting a democratic constitution.[24]

4.2 Social Structures

As the Nepali National Congress utilized nonviolent tactics in its pre-revolutionary efforts in the late 1940s, it became clear that the movement lacked the social base of support necessary to generate sufficient mobilization to coerce the Rana autocracy into granting lasting political reforms, much less topple the regime altogether through a strategy of civil resistance. According to Chatterji:

"The peculiar character of Nepalese society precluded the possibility of the emergence of any large-scale mass movement... What began therefore as the first popular effort at organizing a movement for the overthrow of the Rana regime was bound to be secretive and restricted to a small group of men."[25]

The problem was not necessarily that the political goal of regime change lacked appeal; unlike the king who remained the titular head of state, the de facto Rana rulers held little popular legitimacy. Rather, the movement lacked the means to spread its message and

24. Pancha N Maharjan, "The Nepali Congress: Party Agency and Nation Building," in *Political Parties in South Asia*, ed. Subatra Mitra, Mike Enskat, and Clemens Spiess (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 280
25. Chatterji, *A Study of Recent Nepalese Politics*, 29.

coordinate action. The regime prohibited any dissemination of political writing, routinely shut down printing presses, and confiscated literature that made even oblique challenges to its ruling authority.[26] Publications could only be distributed covertly, thus requiring pre-existing social connection to facilitate their dissemination.

Low literacy and linguistic barriers created further impediments to the transmission of revolutionary messaging. By 1950, Nepal's literacy rate was only five percent and only 25 phone lines existed in the entire country.[27] Mountainous terrain and a patchwork of 93 different spoken languages made spreading political ideas even more difficult.[28]

As a result, support for these early revolutionary movements was largely confined to a small network of Nepali-speaking, high caste, Hindu elites based in major urban centers such as Kathmandu and Biratnagar or in exile in India. While these members had similar social backgrounds to those of members of the regime (and some even served in bureaucratic posts at various points), the movement had few bridging ties to other segments of Nepali society, limiting the base of support that it could mobilize toward nonviolent contentious action.

As Chatterji describes: "The organization the Nepali National Congress had inside Nepal was of extremely limited growth. The party no doubt had sizable pockets of passive supporters in the country; but the Rana reign of terror made it impossible to forge them into an effective organization. The conditions under which the Nepali National Congress

26. For a description of the lengths to which dissidents went to keep their writings literally under lock and key, see Uprety, *Political Awakening in Nepal*, 33–34.
27. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 128.
28. Manchanda, "Making of a'New Nepal'," 5036.

was compelled to function had certain inherent limiting factors which in turn severely restricted the scope for organizing the people of Nepal."[29]

Upon its founding, the Nepali Congress party claimed to have 100,000 members (out of a total Nepali population of eight million).[30] But this number was likely inflated for the purpose of propaganda and includes many exiles living in India. Furthermore, only a small fraction of registered party "members" were willing to take the risk of actually participating in contentious political action. Estimates for the number of participants in the Jute Mill strike range from 3,000 to 10,000 while accounts of the 1947 satyagraha demonstrations in Kathmandu place the peak number of demonstrators in the streets at between 20,000 and 30,000 Nepalis.[31]

This was, relative to Nepal's prior political history, an extraordinary outpouring of support for an opposition movement. Yet compared to the levels of support garnered by civil resistance movements that succeed in toppling regimes, it falls far short. Nepal's national population at the time was about 8 million, meaning that the Nepali National Congress had only been able to mobilize less than four-tenths of a percent of the population, under even the most generous estimates. To put this in perspective, scholars of civil resistance point out that nonviolent movements are generally successful when they mo-

29. Chatterji, *A Study of Recent Nepalese Politics*, 49.

30. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision.

31. Estimates of demonstration size come from Uprety, *Political Awakening in Nepal*, 124, 127 and Koirala, *A Role in Revolution*, 74, 87. It is hard to verify the accuracy of participation estimates, and given the sympathies of both writers to the Nepali Congress party, it is likely that they overestimate the actual number of participants.

bilize 3.5 percent of the population,[32] nearly ten times the mobilization level of the 1947 movement.

The social base of the Nepali Congress movement did, at least, largely overlap with that of the regime as both drew from the Nepali speaking, high-caste Hindu population.[33] M.P. Koirala, one of the most senior leaders of the movement, had previously been appointed by the Rana family to serve as a government functionary within the Agricultural Board and Forest Department.[34] There is some evidence that these social connections enabled the opposition movement to win loyalty shifts. Two members of the Rana family, Subarna Shamsher and Mahabir Shamsher, turned against the government in 1948 after being relegated from the line of succession and formed the Nepal Democratic Congress.[35] NNC leaders with connections to the regime, such as M.P. Koirala, reached out to the dissident Ranas and eventually facilitated the merger of the two parties into the unified Nepali Congress.[36]

While these overlapping ties between movement and regime brought some advantages, they were not sufficient to compensate for the movement's lack of similar ties to groups outside of their own narrow-band of high-caste elites. Exceptionally low literacy rates compounded this problem by making it even more difficult for the Nepali National Congress to spread their revolutionary message. The barriers of education and literacy diminished

32. Chenoweth, *The Dissident's Toolkit*.

33. Nepalis of Newar ethnicity, a group indigenous to the Kathmandu valley, were also highly represented in both the resistance movements and in the ranks of the state bureaucracy. See Gautam, *Nepali Congress*, 609.

34. Koirala, *A Role in Revolution*, 64.

35. Maharjan, "The Nepali Congress: Party Agency and Nation Building," 279.

36. Koirala, *A Role in Revolution*, 103.

the NNC leaders' belief in the viability of revolution through civil resistance in Nepal. Summarizing B.P. Koirala's personal writings on the subject, his biographer Shashi Misra notes:

"The other point emphasized against peaceful and nonviolent means by BP was the absence of the revolution of expectations in Nepal. He elaborated that the society where grave social and political problems exist, higher education acts as a powerful stimulus towards revolution or provokes a revolution of expectations. Unfortunately, it was also stalled by the non-democratic forces by keeping the society illiterate. That is why no peaceful movement or people's movement could get off the ground in Nepal."[37]

Another biographer, Kiran Mishra, similarly observes that the failure of the pre-revolutionary nonviolent protests to generate sufficient mass mobilization drove B.P. Koirala to the conclusion that civil resistance would not be effective in Nepal:

"During his hunger strike, BP came to realize that the path of nonviolent mass movement must be amended. In Kathmandu, he found that people were not responding to their call for nonviolent satyagraha."[38]

Less than a year later, it was B.P. Koirala who led the effort at the Calcutta conference to amend the Nepali Congress charter so as to permit the use of armed force.

37. Misra, *B.P. Koirala: A Case Study in Third World Democratic Leadership*, 47.
38. Kiran Mishra, *B.P. Koirala: Life and Times* (New Delhi: Wishwa Prakashan, 1994), 26.

4.3 Alternative Explanations

Alternative theories offer less convincing explanations of the Nepali Congress' decision to embrace armed insurgency in 1950. The case provides a particularly strong rebuttal of the role of ideology in movement behavior. With the Nepali Congress movement's strong connections to Gandhian philosophy and practice, this is a case where we might expect ideology to play a particularly powerful role. Many of the most senior movement leaders had been living in India and were active participants in the Quit India movement.

This experience may have led the movement to have an initial preference for a strategy of civil resistance. However, that preference was based not on moral commitment to nonviolence but on the success it had achieved in India's struggle for independence. As the biographer of party president B.P. Koirala writes: "Initial political socialization of Koirala in India made him a believer in non-violent method for achieving social and political objectives. India owed her freedom, to a very large extent, to non-violent technique of action and Koirala had full faith in that technique." However, he continues later, "BP's philosophy of non-violence was not a spiritual and moral concept of resistance based on Gandhian philosophy and sociology... BP's approach to politics was pragmatic."[39]

Thus, when the strikes and satyagrahas of the late 1940s failed to achieve sustained political reforms, Nepali Congress leaders grew pessimistic about the ability of civil resistance to succeed in the context of Nepal, opening the door to the use of "all possible means" in the Calcutta conference, and subsequently declaring at a conference in Bairgania, India,

39. Misra, *B.P. Koirala: A Case Study in Third World Democratic Leadership*, 45–47.

that "The form of the movement and struggle could not be confined only to nonviolent activities as the situations required so."[40]

Organizational cohesion provides a similarly unsatisfying explanation of Nepali Congress strategy in 1950. At the time the party resolved to abandon civil resistance in favor of armed insurgency, it was more unified than at any point in its history. In the years just prior to the Calcutta conference, frustration over the lack of success of the initial nonviolent efforts and a leadership vacuum created by the incarceration of senior party members had led to a proliferation of factions and alternative resistance movements. The Nepali National Congress was divided between those who supported Dillan Raman Regmi and those who supported the Koirala brothers.[41] Meanwhile, a new organization, the Prajapanchayat, formed in Kathmandu as an alternative to the exile-led Nepali National Congress and engaged in elections and nonviolent protests.[42] Meanwhile, the Nepali Democratic Congress established itself as a rival movement to the NNC that implicitly espoused armed insurgency.[43]

The timing of the formation of these splinter movements–specifically after the failure of the 1947 and 1948 NNC-led nonviolent efforts–suggests that it was the lack of success that caused fragmentation and not the other way around. Furthermore, all of these groups reunited prior to or coincident with the 1950 decision to take up arms. While organizational theories make no predictions about the strategic behavior of highly cohesive groups (positing only that cohesion is a necessary, though not necessarily sufficient condition for

40. Gautam, *Nepali Congress*, 326.
41. ibid., 148.
42. Uprety, *Political Awakening in Nepal*, 129–131.
43. Gautam, *Nepali Congress*, 172.

nonviolence)[44], the high degree of unity within the NC throughout 1950 makes clear that organizational fragmentation cannot explain the turn to violence in this case.

The repression employed by the Rana regime against the nonviolent movements provides a more compelling alternative explanation. The regime had arrested movement leaders and in some cases fired live rounds on demonstrators.[45] However, these incidents produced relatively few casualties, and in most cases demonstrators were able to take to the streets with only moderate risk of injury or death.

The effect of repression seemed to have a more powerful effect on the psyches and will of the movement leaders who, unlike their prior violent counterparts in the Praja Parishad, were not executed, but nevertheless had to endure prolonged periods of incarceration under very harsh conditions. Nepali National Congress leader B.P. Koirala seems to have been particularly affected by his time in prison. He described that:

"…I was kept there for six months. In that period I could not see the face of anybody ever. I started to forget the date also. In the beginning in order to count my days of stay there I used to draw a line on the wall but I became confused after some time.„I was shackled and there was a handcuff around my hand. The chain which was around my waist was tied to the grill of the window."[46]

In fact, it was during his period of repeated incarcerations, between 1947 and 1950, that B.P. Koirala appears to have personally changed his views toward the use of violence.[47]

44. Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement*.
45. Uprety, *Political Awakening in Nepal*, 125.
46. Gautam, *Nepali Congress*, 218.
47. Mishra, *B.P. Koirala: Life and Times*, 31.

While this timing sequence suggests that the regime's repression in the form of brutal incarceration may have influenced movement decisionmaking and strategy, the evidence is still not fully consistent with theories of repression and dissent that posit that actors will turn to violence if the repression of nonviolent activity is as severe as that of violent behavior. As bad as detention might have been, it was still not lethal punishment. In fact, the regime proved willing to release B.P. Koirala every time there was a significant risk that he might die in prison, whereas it had previously executed those who had conspired to topple the regime through arms. For the repression theory to logically hold, we must believe that B.P. Koirala and other movement leaders had come to consider the risk of death in battle or at the hands of the regime to be preferable to further incarceration. This is certainly plausible, but slightly different than the formulation in the extant literature on repression and dissent.

Furthermore, the evidence of the role of repression weakens when analyzed across cases. As will be discussed in the next chapters, movements proved willing to embrace civil resistance in contexts that were similarly repressive to the Rana regime.

Repression offers perhaps a more viable explanation when combined with an analysis of mobilization. What was demoralizing to B.P. Koirala and his fellow opposition leaders was not just that they were enduring brutal incarceration, but that there suffering was having no productive strategic effect. A key tenet of civil resistance is that the repression of nonviolent dissent will be perceived as illegitimate and should "backfire," yielding greater support for the opposition movement. But the same limitations on communication that

caused the Nepali National Congress to struggle to generate initial mass mobilization–both the lack of literacy as well as lack of cross-group interpersonal ties–also caused it to struggle to activate the mechanisms of backfire against the regime's repression. Movement leaders attempted to send letters and even distribute photos depicting Koirala's decrepit condition. But while these accounts circulated amongst South Asian elites, they did not make it to the Nepali masses.[48] If Koirala suffered in prison and few people knew or cared, it could not have the desired mobilizing effect.

The case of the 1950 anti-Rana revolt also illustrates the role of external actors in shaping a movement's revolutionary strategy. For the Nepali Congress, the viability of armed insurgency was made possible only through the support of India. While India had been somewhat supportive of the Nepali National Congress' nonviolent efforts in the late 1940s, they had little leverage over the Rana regime as the Nepali state was highly isolated and autarkic.

Moreover, some historical records even indicate that the Indian government may have worked to encourage Nepali Congress leaders to turn to arms. In a 1947 meeting with Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, M.P. Koirala recounts that Nehru advised the NNC to abandon nonviolence, saying "What nonsense is this Gandhism? Do some clandestine activity in which there will be invisible support from us."[49]

According to other accounts, Indian support was more tentative, and it was the NNC leaders who approached the Indian government about support for an armed campaign.

48. Gautam, *Nepali Congress*, 157–162.
49. Koirala, *A Role in Revolution*, 187-193.

Nevertheless, it is clear that India's position was key to the movement's own decision-making:

"What was of basic concern to the Nepali Congress was the attitude of the Indian Government to the question of armed struggle. It was readily admitted that unless the Indian Government could be persuaded to support it, failing which to adopt an attitude of benevolent neutrality at least, any thinking along this line would be of little consequence."[50]

Indian support was ultimately forthcoming and essential to the success of the armed campaign as India helped coordinate the flight and defection of the monarch, King Tribhuvan, allowed the rebels to operate from within its borders, and negotiated the terms of the final agreement that ended Rana rule.[51]

While there was no change in policy from India that can explain on its own the change in strategy by the Nepali Congress, India's willingness to support an armed insurgency was essential to the potential success of such a campaign. It is unlikely that the Nepali Congress leaders would have been willing to take up arms had it not been for the knowledge that Indian support would be forthcoming.

50. Chatterji, *A Study of Recent Nepalese Politics*, 56.
51. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 71–72.

4.4 Conclusion

The case of Nepal's 1950 Anti-Rana revolt serves as an example of a movement reversing on an initial ideological preference based on an evolving assessment of its strategic environment, and in particular, new information about its (in)ability to generate mass mobilization. Movement leaders like B.P. Koirala had studied and practiced Gandhian civil resistance in India and hoped to be able to duplicate its success in their home country of Nepal. However, through a series of initial acts of political contestation, movement leaders came to doubt whether civil resistance alone could achieve regime change within the context of Nepal.

The movement did not have a large base of support as low literacy rates and a lack of education made it difficult for the movement to spread its message to the masses. Attempts at nonviolent action, such as strikes and demonstrations, suffered from small numbers and consequently achieved only minimal and ephemeral reforms. Linguistic and ethnic divides prevented the Nepali Congress movement from expanding its base of supporters to other social groups within the country. Meanwhile, the movement's common social background with regime elites was weakened by a generation of living in exile and was insufficient to compensate for its weakness in numbers.

Repression of the movement by the regime also made nonviolent organization difficult, as senior leaders were detained under brutal conditions. In some cases protesters were met with live fire from security forces. But generally the regime did not respond with lethal

force against the movement's leadership or rank and file–as compared with leaders of prior violent movements who had been hanged. Furthermore, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, other Nepali movements proved willing to use nonviolence when faced with similar levels of repression. This suggests that it was not the repression itself so much as the Nepali Congress' inability to overcome that repression through power in numbers that forced the movement to consider a change in strategy.

Support from Nepal's powerful neighbor opened up the possibility for revolution via an alternative means. Discussions between Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru show active encouragement for the Nepali Congress movement to take up arms. India was willing to provide a safe refuge in which the revolutionaries could organize and stockpile arms, and to which it could retreat from combat if necessary.

In a series of party conventions in India, movement leaders debated strategy and ultimately voted to discard civil resistance in favor of armed insurgency. While resistance movements in Nepal had dealt with some fragmentation in the late 1940s, they were able to unite into a single cohesive movement that embraced armed insurgency based on their shared assessment that it was the only viable strategy to topple the Rana regime.

Factor	Value	Explanation	Prediction
Social Structures			
Mobilization Potential	Low	•Lack of literacy, means of communication, make it difficult for NC to spread message and rally support. • Despite rallying an estimated 20k supporters in Kathmandu, NC leadership expresses disappointment in ability to generate sufficient mass mobilization	Armed Insurgency
Horizontal Overlap	Low	• Movement drew primarily from high-caste, hill Hindu and Newar elites. • Most lived in exile in India, often with weak connections to those still living in Nepal. • Movement presence within Nepal was highly concentrated in Kathmandu and Biratnagar.	Armed Insurgency
Vertical Overlap	Moderate	• Movement drew primarily from same high-caste, hill Hindu elites as did apparatus of regime. • Movement comprised largely of exiles	Indeterminate
Alternative Explanations			
Ideology	Nonviolent	• NC leaders studied Gandhian philosophy and participated in Indian Home Rule movement	Civil Resistance
Cohesion	Cohesive	• Opposition movements that had been fragmented over course of 1940s united for the purpose of waging an armed struggle.	Indeterminate
Repression	Moderate	• Regime arrested movement leaders during previous nonviolent efforts and detained under harsh conditions. But leaders were often released and not executed as leaders of prior insurgencies had bee. • Some reports of live fire against nonviolent protesters.	Indeterminate
External Support	Permissive of Violence	• India permitted use of territory for organization of armed rebellion, may have even encouraged leaders to take up arms.	Armed Insurgency

Figure 4.1: Congruency of competing theories against evidence from the 1950 case. Predictions are marked in green when consistent with the observed outcome of the case, red when inconsistent, and orange when indeterminate.

Chapter 5

The 1990 Jana Andolan

In 1990, the Nepali Congress once again led a revolutionary campaign to try to bring democracy to the country. But after having rejected nonviolent action as an impossible path to regime change in 1950, in 1990 it employed exactly that strategy in pursuit of the very same goal. What caused movement leaders to change their strategic thinking? This chapter will argue that during the intervening 40-year period, the Nepali Congress party had been able to substantially augment its social endowments in ways that made it far better suited for a strategy of civil resistance. By focus on party-building and organization in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, they built the social connections amongst Nepal's diverse and fragmented social groups that they had lacked in 1950.

Over this same period of time, several communist parties in Nepal underwent a similar transition, investing energies and resources into building networks of professionals across the country–new associational ties that transcended historic geographic and ethnic barri-

ers. A series of mergers between several of the most prominent parties allowed for further consolidation of their varied bases of support around the country. While the communist parties retained adherence to the ideological doctrine of Leninist armed revolution, as they merged, they engaged in fewer acts of "red terror" and even began participating in electoral politics.

By building institutional structures that spanned ethnic, religious, caste, and class groups, both the NC and the communists greatly increased their capacity to generate mass mobilization. Deliberate acts of tactical experimentation along the way, such as protests for political reform and participation in even fraudulent elections, gave the movement new information about its mobilization capacities that changed its expectations about the prospective viability of nonviolent action against the regime. Meanwhile, alumni from the newly developed student wings who matriculated to the civil service, combined with the NC's longstanding base of support among high-caste Parbatiya and Newar groups that made up the majority of regime elites, provided the movement with close ties to members of the regime that would allow them to win over defectors.

The process of mergers and organization-building culminated in a unity agreement between the Nepali Congress and these leading leftist groups to participate in a joint Campaign for the Restoration of Democracy. At a three day summit in Thamel, Kathmandu, political party leaders–who had all embraced the use of violence in the past–formally declared their commitment to employing a strategy of civil resistance in their revolutionary effort to overturn the Panchayat regime and replace it with multiparty democracy.

5.1 BACKGROUND

While the 1950 movement succeeded in removing the Rana autocracy and securing a commitment from the monarch to move toward the establishment of a parliament, Nepal's initial democratic experiment was short lived. The king, who had regained formal political powers as part of a compromise to create a constitutional monarchy, delayed the drafting of a constitution and the implementation of parliamentary politics. Elections were finally held in 1959, but only a year later, the palace disbanded parliament and took full effective political control of the state. Over the next 30 years, Nepal was governed through what was termed the panchayat system, which presented a veneer of electoral politics to a process that in actuality gave the king absolute power that he exercised through a hierarchy of landowning nobility.[1]

In response to King Mahendra's autocratic consolidation, B.P. Koirala and some members of the Nepali Congress party responded by turning once again to armed force. They built an insurgent force in India consisting of approximately 3,000 guerrilla fighters and launched raids across the border that resulted in 130 deaths between 1961 and 1962.[2]

However, the conflict environment had changed since 1950. India was no longer willing to tacitly abet revolution in Nepal as its conflict with China intensified. After the 1962 Sino-Indian war, India prioritized stability over democracy in Nepal, and in 1965 it signed

1. For an extensive treatment of the political dynamics under the panchayat system, see Joshi and Rose, *Democratic Innovations in Nepal*.

2. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 99.

an arms treaty with the palace[3]. Without the ability to stockpile and seek refuge across the border, and with the Royal Nepal Army now better armed and able to crush a rebellion, armed insurgency was no longer a viable option for Nepali Congress. For the next two decades, Nepali Congress put their revolutionary efforts on hold, believing that neither armed insurgency nor civil resistance were possible.

In the meantime, another political movement had emerged in Nepal: the communists. The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) was officially formed in Calcutta in 1949. Like the Nepali Congress, it was comprised primarily of exiles seeking to overthrow the Rana regime. But unlike Congress, the CPN from the outset believed in the doctrine of Mao that power grows from the barrel of a gun. Their founding documents declared their conviction that revolution could only be achieved through force.[4]

While the CPN did not join Nepali Congress in their 1950 campaign against the Ranas, they used the instability caused by the uprising and the subsequent political transition to engage in a series of violent acts against "class enemies." These typically involved targeting wealthy landlords and redistributing their assets amongst the poor.[5] However, the new regime was able to effectively suppress the violence by 1952.

The CPN participated in Nepal's brief democratic period, running candidates in the 1959 parliamentary elections and garnering seven percent of the national vote.[6] But when

3. Maharjan, "The Nepali Congress: Party Agency and Nation Building," 153.

4. Text of the First Pamphlet of the CPN 4/49; Text of the First Manifesto of the CPN 9/49

5. Krishna Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, A Comparative Study of the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (Kathmandu, Nepal: Mandala Book Point, 2002), 34

6. Ganga B Thapa and Heinz Kramer, "The Communist Party of Nepal (UML): Ideology at the Crossroads," in *Political Parties of South Asia*, ed. Subatra Mitra, Mike Enskat, and Clemens Spiess (Westport, CT:

the king disbanded parliament in 1960, the CPN, like Nepali Congress, entered a quiet phase in which it did little to challenge the regime through either violent or nonviolent means. The Beijing/Moscow split in communist politics globally led to a series of fractures within the party in the 1960s. But common to all of the splinter parties was a rhetorical commitment to armed force combined with a pragmatic judgement that conditions on the ground meant the time was not yet right for revolution.[7]

In the early 1970s, a group of young communists in Nepal's eastern district of Jhapa decided that they were tired of the communist factions' bold talk but inaction. Inspired by Mao's cultural revolution in China and the early successes of Naxalite rebels in India,[8] these "Jhapalis" attempted to renew the class-based violence of the early 1950s. Between 1971 and 1973, they beheaded eight local landlords and attempted to reallocate their property amongst the peasants.[9] But in the process, seven of their own comrades were killed and many others arrested. The movement was quickly suppressed.

The experience of the Jhapalis also confirmed the line that had been taken by the other communist factions: that the so-called "objective conditions" were not yet present for an effective armed insurgency in Nepal. In fact, over the next two decades, the majority of Nepal's communists, with one enormous exception, would formally abandon violence in favor of nonviolence. Even those directly involved in the Jhapa uprising learned the les-

Praeger, 2004), 304

7. Deepak Thapa and Bandita Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004* (Kathmandu, Nepal: The Printhouse, 2003), 23–25

8. Thapa and Kramer, "The Communist Party of Nepal (UML): Ideology at the Crossroads," 307

9. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 37

son quickly and began forming the core of what would become the dominant, nonviolent communist party in Nepal.

Through the 1970s, the former Jhapalis became the most energetic faction in their efforts to raise awareness and build popular support amongst the population. They developed an underground network of cadres and sent teachers to work in rural villages, educating the youth on communist principles as well as basic reading and math. By 1978, the movement had expanded into 35 districts across the country.[10] It merged with several of the other communist factions, and formally organized itself as the Communist Party of Nepal–Marxist-Leninist (CPN-ML) in 1978. While some branches of the organization continued to engage in violent attacks on landlords, most notably in 1975 and 1979,[11] by the early 1980s, CPN-ML had abandoned even its rhetorical commitment to the doctrine of "annihilation of the class enemy" in favor of pursuing nonviolent means.

Thus, by the early 1980s, both of the two strongest anti-regime movements in Nepal, the NC and CPN-ML had abandoned violence after coming to the conclusion that armed insurgency was not a viable strategy given the lack of foreign support and the regime's ability to quickly repress violent acts. Instead, they temporarily set aside plans to launch revolutionary campaigns and focused on building infrastructure and popular support for their movement, efforts that would in fact help change their own strategic environment by increasing the viability of another strategy of contention: civil resistance.

In the meantime, the nonviolent activities of the movements' public front organiza-

10. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 48
11. ibid., 59

tions provided new information that these tactics could lead to tangible political gains from the regime. In 1979, King Mahendra executed two NC cadres, Yagya Bahadur Thapa and Bhim Narayan Shrestha for their participation in armed attacks earlier in the decade.[12] While protesting directly against these executions would have been too dangerous, university student movements used the pretext of the execution of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in Pakistan to stage demonstrations outside of the Pakistani Embassy in Kathmandu. The real message of the protests, however, were quite clear: the students were demanding changes to Nepal's political system.[13]

The protests were met with severe repression. Students were beaten in front of the Pakistani embassy and thrown off the roof of the university science campus in Lainchaur, Kathmandu[14], and eventually the army had to be called into the streets to quiet the protests.[15] But the king (now Birendra, who had succeeded his father Mahendra upon his death in 1972) responded to the protests by announcing that there would be a national referendum on whether to adopt multiparty democracy or to retain a "reformed" panchayat system that included universal suffrage.[16] Retention of the panchayat system won by a 55 percent to 45 percent margin in what regime opponents believed to be "a massively rigged election."[17] But despite the possible electoral fraud and the brutal repression employed by the regime, the protests of 1979 revealed that changes in regime behavior could be coerced through

12. Maharjan, "The Nepali Congress: Party Agency and Nation Building," 284
13. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 107
14. Maharjan, "The Nepali Congress: Party Agency and Nation Building," 284
15. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 108
16. ibid.
17. Author interview with Ram Sharan Mahat, a former Finance Minister and senior Nepali Congress leader. Interview conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, July 8, 2013.

nonviolent means.

CPN-ML in particular used the aftermath of the referendum to experiment with additional nonviolent tactics. While still banned as a political party, CPN-ML ran technically "non-partisan" but sympathetic candidates in the elections for the reformed national Panchayat assembly. They chose candidates who did not have formal ties with the party and who framed opposition to the regime in cultural rather than overtly political terms. For example, one such candidate, Padma Ratna Tuladhar, had long been an advocate for the linguistic rights of the Newar indigenous group. But as a candidate, he pushed his message further, calling for an end to the panchayat system:

"I fought the election, and I made hundreds of speeches in Kathmandu and in all different villages…I made so many speeches against the partyless system and supporting multiparty democracy and also raising the issue of human rights of all Nepalese people: human rights for the language groups, ethnic groups, education in the mother tongue, etc… I spoke for the peasants and for the laborers. And my speech was recorded on cassettes and was redistributed and became so popular among the people because they found one candidate at least fighting against the partyless system from within the partyless system itself."[18]

Observing the success of the CPN-ML in nonviolent tactics, NC leader Ganesh Man Singh[19] launched a nonviolent demonstration demanding that political parties be formally allowed to participate in elections. It was not truly a revolutionary campaign, but "only a pressure tactic designed in consideration of the party's quest for participation in the 1986

18. Author interview with Padma Ratna Tuladhar, conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, June 21, 2013.
19. B.P. Koirala died in 1982.

general elections."[20] The movement however, was not able to muster mass support in the streets and the protests were called off when a few rogue members engaged in bombing attacks. Movement leaders feared that the acts of renegade violence would provide the regime with the pretext necessary to engage in brutal repression.[21]

Nevertheless, the experience of 1985 provided movement leaders with valuable information. It revealed a key weakness in the NC movement: acting alone, NC did not have sufficient popular support to amount an effective civil resistance campaign. But it also confirmed the regime's newfound willingness to allow some expression of dissent as long as it remains nonviolent. In sum, it drove movement leaders to conclude that with additional planning and organization, civil resistance could be used effectively against the regime and it encouraged them to increase their goals from simple reforms within the existing system to demand revolutionary change.[22]

In January 1990, leaders of Nepal's various political movements engaged in a series of meetings to form a unified "Movement for the Restoration of Democracy" that could generate the mass support necessary to defeat the King. Ganesh Man Singh knew that the NC would need to join with the communist groups in order for a civil resistance movement to be successful. But that would first require consensus among the many communist factions, including but not limited to CPN-ML, to join in the movement and maintain a commitment to nonviolence. Through Indian diplomats, he conveyed a message to the various

20. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 56
21. Author interview with P.L. Singh, former mayor of Kathmandu and relative and confidant of Ganesh Man Singh. Interview conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, July 4, 2013.
22. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 57

communist leaders that "As long as you are divided, we don't know who to talk to. Come united as one force and only then will we be able to work together."[23]

On January 14th, twelve communist leaders met at the house of Padma Ratna Tuladhar. Of them, seven agreed to join together to form a United Left Front (ULF) that would join with NC in launching the movement. The remaining five groups, committed to the idea of a radical social revolution along the lines of Mao's China, refused to join the movement directly, but agreed to form a separate organization, the United National People's Movement, that would participate "separately but alongside" the other movements.[24]

With unity amongst the majority of communist groups, Ganesh Man Singh then hosted a series of planning meetings at his house in Thamel, Kathmandu from the 18th through the 20th of January. By bringing together both the NC and the communists, the movement was able to vastly increase its capability to generate mass popular support. Not only did it bring together the combined organizational and mobilization capabilities of multiple political parties, but it actually created a potential for mass participation that exceeded the sum of its parts. As Tuladhar describes, "when the communist parties and the NC came together to fight the communist system, the general people were convinced that our leaders and our parties are seriously going to fight against the partyless system and are going to restore multiparty democracy. So the movement, when it was started, it was supported by

23. Kiyoko Ogura, *Kathmandu Spring: The People's Movement of 1990* (Lalitpur, Nepal: Himal Books, 2001), 3 and confirmed in interview with Tuladhar.

24. T Louise Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History* (London: Burns / Oates, 1996), 115

the masses and it was a big success within a few days, not months."[25]

The Jana Andolan, or "People's Movement," began with public demonstrations on February 4th, 1990 and a general strike that began on February 19th. In addition to party cadres, university students, intellectuals, lawyers, and other professionals played particularly active roles, often forming "solidarity groups" amongst their peers to help maintain the pace of protest activity.[26]

Over the course of the campaign, the regime engaged in some repression. Movement leaders were arrested and deadly force was even used in response to mass demonstrations on Febuary 25th, March 31, and April 6th.[27] But in total, only 63 Nepalis were killed over the course of the campaign[28].

By April, government employees began to defect and support the revolutionary movement. Foreign Minister Upadhyay resigned on April 2nd, citing the King's mishandling of relations with India.[29] Meanwhile, international pressure against the regime began to build. By late April, these donor nations, including the United States, Germany, and Switzerland, were not just urging restraint, but actively pressing the King to pursue a negotiated settlement.[30]

With members of his own cabinet defecting and his international allies withdrawing their support, King Birendra's options became limited. As Brown describes: "He could

25. Author interview with Padma Ratna Tuladhar, conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, June 21, 2013.
26. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 121
27. Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*, 124
28. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 115
29. Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*, 136
30. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 139

either press on with repression of the movement and risk becoming an international pariah, or he could reach an accommodation with the Jana Andolan."[31] On April 9th, the King agreed to lift the ban on political parties, beginning a process of negotiations with more conservative elements of the Jana Andolan that led to parliamentary elections the following year.

5.2 Social Structures

While far from democratic, the panchayat system was a period of relative opening for Nepal, a period in which opposition movements were able to substantially build and expand their bases of popular support. Increasing education and communicative infrastructure allowed for political ideas to spread more readily and for Nepalis to learn from the examples of other political systems around the globe. Political movements were able to organize, though often clandestinely. And occasional elections gave these movement the opportunity to take stock and gather information about their levels of popular support and ability to organize and mobilize their members. Finally, the emergence of a nascent civil society in the mid to late 1980s created a platform for bridging ties between political movements and their respective networks of supporters.

These developments fundamentally altered the ability of opposition movements in Nepal to mobilize large numbers of participants in acts of political contention. It is there-

31. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 139.

fore consistent with the theory of social endowments that over this period of time the two major movements in Nepal, the Nepali Congress and the Marxist-Leninists,[32] both transformed their strategies from armed insurgency to civil resistance.

Between 1950 and 1990, Nepal saw tremendous increases in education, communications, and infrastructure. Literacy rates climbed from five percent in the early 1950s to 40 percent by 1991. The number of students enrolled in school grew from 200,000 in 1960 to 3.6 million in 1990 and the number of university students increased from 5,000 to 123,000.[33] Postal service was expanded to cover most of the country and the number of telephone lines shot up from 25 to 63,000. A national radio broadcast, Radio Nepal, began in 1951 and by 1980 its transmissions could reach 90 percent of the country. National television began in 1985, reaching about 25 percent of the country's population, while satellite dishes provided the opportunity to receive international broadcasts, for the few wealthy enough to afford them.[34]

Broadcasting on the national television and radio channels were largely propagandistic. But they nevertheless served as a conduit of political information and ham-handed efforts by the government to spin the news in a favorable light often backfired. The historian John Whelpton observes that clearly biased government media "often served only to heighten cynicism about the whole panchayat system."[35]

32. I use the term "Marxist-Leninists" to refer loosely to the group of communist parties that eventually form the Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist) in the late 1970s or who merge into that group later in the 1980s.
33. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 64.
34. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 139.
35. ibid., 170.

Beyond government communications, increased literacy and communicative technology allowed for the emergence of underground information sources. Even as early as the 1960s, the Nepali Congress created a pirate radio station, "Democratic Radio," that was widely listened to in Kathmandu.[36] Opposition political movements also published and disseminated newsletters that "highlighted frustrations with and opposition to the regime."[37]

With the availability of greater communicative technologies, opposition movements in Nepal were able to engage in a process of intensive organization building. After its formation in India in the late 1940s, the Nepali Congress party was able to use the period of democratic experimentation in the 1950s to expand its network of popular support. It did this largely by building relationships with local elites in the belief that their support would trickle down to others in their communities. With this strategy, Nepali Congress was able to assemble relatively quickly "an effective, nationwide machine."[38] When elections finally took place in 1959, the party won a plurality with 37.2 percent of the vote.[39] This gave the movement a strong indicator of its ability to mobilize popular support across the country.

Student and professional organizations were permitted under the panchayat system as long as they were not officially tied to a political party (as political parties were illegal). The Nepali Congress therefore focused its energies on building such organizations which while nominally unaffiliated, in reality maintained close ties with the underground political party. They established a student organization, the Nepal Vidyarthi Sangh, which formed

36. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 170.
37. Baral, *Oppositional Politics in Nepal*, 134.
38. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 94.
39. Maharjan, "The Nepali Congress: Party Agency and Nation Building," 153.

local associations at all campuses and in all districts. The party also launched organizations of school teachers and professors. Students who were introduced to the movement as members of the student association or from sympathetic teachers often continued to stay involved with the party after they graduated and entered the workforce. Through this process Nepali Congress was able to extend its reach into additional professional fields, especially the bureaucracy.[40]

Communist parties similarly focused on organization building during the panchayat era. Unlike Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal captured only 7.2 percent of the vote in the 1959 elections, indicating their limited ability to mobilize mass support. Over the next decade, the communists split into multiple factions, divided over the Sino-Soviet split, relations with India, and whether to cooperate with either Nepali Congress or the monarchy.

The divisions among communist groups made it impossible for any one of them to garner substantial popular support. As such, their strategic options were limited. Declaring that the "material conditions" for revolution were not yet present in Nepal, most focused their efforts instead on recruitment and organization. The major exception to this were the Jhapalis who, frustrated by the other communists' lack of action, launched a campaign of "red terrorism" in Nepal's eastern hills in the early 1970s. But after a quick and decisive defeat, the remaining members of this faction became the most aggressive in organizational efforts. From the mid 1970s through the mid 1980s, the Jhapalis spearheaded a transfor-

40. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 65.

mation of the communist movement that involved moderating their ideology, building a recruitment and organizational network, and forging alliances and mergers with other communist factions.

The Jhapalis realized that their stringent ideology was a barrier to recruitment. Potential members were required to undergo a period of evaluation that ranged from four to 18 months and were forced to renounce all property. The party's boycott of the educational system deprived it of tapping into one of the most effective recruitment and organizational systems and its radical Naxalite stance made building alliances with other parties difficult.[41] By abandoning these tenets of its ideology, the Jhapalis were able to improve their prospects for building a broad network of popular support. Between 1974 and the mid 1980s, they merged with 20 other communist groups to form the united Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist).[42] Through this process of internal and external organization building, the Jhapalis evolved from being confined to one district in 1971 to eight in 1975 to becoming a national (albeit underground) political party as the Marxist-Leninists in the mid 1980s with organizational branches in all 14 zones and 56 out of 75 districts.[43]

The student protest movement of 1979 revealed the strength of the student movements built by both Nepali Congress and the Marxist Leninists over the previous decade. While no estimates are available of the number of protesters in the street, the demonstrations were large enough to have reportedly overwhelmed the ability of local police to subdue

41. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 49.
42. ibid., 51.
43. ibid., 48.

them. The journalist Louise Brown writes, "The size and timing of the movement took the government by surprise and stretched its law enforcement capabilities to the limit. The situation was so volatile that, in order to quell the disorder outside the Kathmandu Valley, the capital was left woefully short of police."[44]

To quiet the protests, the king felt compelled to grant modest concessions over the admissions process to the university system and to schedule a public referendum over whether to retain the panchayat system or instate a multiparty political system.

The referendum provided another opportunity for the parties to assess their mobilization ability. While they lost the referendum by a 55 to 45 percent margin, their ability to generate two million votes despite heavy efforts by the regime to manipulate the results[45] provided a powerful indication of their organizational strength. Buoyed by this performance (although disappointed in the outcome) the parties continued with their electoral experimentation by running sympathetic candidates in panchayat elections in the 1980s.[46] While candidates were not legally allowed to be members of a political party, individuals known to have strong ties to Nepali Congress won two seats in the 1981 elections while Marxist-Leninist-allied candidates won three seats. In 1984, the Marxist Leninists won between four and nine seats,[47] and earned 20 percent of the vote in local elections in 1987. While these electoral performances may not have been overwhelming, they nevertheless

44. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 90.

45. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 109.

46. The Marxist-Leninists were far more active on this front while Nepali Congress leadership was often divided over whether to participate in or boycott the elections in protest of the non-democratic nature of the system.

47. Estimates vary due to the informality of the relationship between the candidates and the technically outlawed political parties.

provided a signal of the parties' mobilizational strength in the context of an unlevel playing field.

The process of preparing for and competing in the elections also served as an organizational tool for the resistance movements. The parties were able to establish offices, post signs, and hold public meetings as long as they maintained the pretense that they were not actually political parties.[48] The movements also established associational groups that, like the electoral candidates, maintained informal ties with the political parties. They built occupational organizations among teachers, professors, doctors, nurses, and engineers, as well as issue-based forums around human and civic rights. Hachhethu describes, "Through the activation of such groups by addressing the problems related to their respective professions, the [Marxist Leninists were] successful in bringing thousands of professionals under its fold and they had been directly or indirectly mobilized for the party's political activities."[49]

The processes of organization-building served not only to increase the gross size of the political parties bases of support, they also increased their diversity by building ties that crossed groups that had traditionally been separated by geography, language, and ethnicity. Each movement was stronger with different social segments of Nepali society. Nepali Congress, held the advantage in organizations among elite professions such as professors, doctors, and lawyers, while the communists focused on lower-middle-class professions such as grade school teachers, service employees, and nurses.[50]

48. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 111.
49. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 51
50. ibid., 68.

Even among the communist factions, each was strongest within different social groups in different areas of the country. The Jhapalis were based in the eastern hill region, the Fourth Convention was strongest in the mid-western hills, and the Workers' and Peasants' Party organized most heavily in the southern plains.[51] Some parties developed grassroots support among farmers and workers, while other parties (particularly the parties of the leading communist intellectuals) drew members primarily from the "petit bourgeoisie."[52]

The unification of the communist factions along with the formation of associational groups by both the NC and the communists created new horizontal social ties. Student, professional, and class-based organizations brought together individuals with common interests from across varied ethnic, geographic, and caste backgrounds. For example, the communists would train cadres to be teachers and then send teachers to village schools around the country where they supplemented the standard curriculum with doses of "class consciousness." Similarly, university student organizations provided a platform to indoctrinate new cadres at the central campuses who could then become party organizers when they returned to their home villages.

In an interview with political scientist Krishna Hachhethu, Tuk Rah Sigdel describes how he and several of his friends were recruited into the Marxist Leninist student association at the university in Pokhara, and then helped to expand the party network by taking jobs as teachers in their home villages:

51. For a detailed comparison of the communist factions, see Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 50–51.
52. Baral, *Oppositional Politics in Nepal*, 101.

"Until 1980, the ML did not exist in this district. But the enrollment in Prithvi Narayan Campus in 1977 by a group of students including myself from the western parts of the district proved significant in introducing the ML to this district. We were in frequent contact with the ML's student leaders, particularly with Khaga Raj Adhikari, during our campus life. After getting the bachelor degree, all of us went back to our home villages, and we soon successfully followed the party's instructions and joined the teaching profession. And so, our underground organizational activities started, and we soon succeeded in developing the ML as the most influential party in the western parts of the district"[53]

While Nepali Congress and the Marxist Leninists had demonstrated remarkable success in building and expanding their popular support networks over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, their efforts were still limited by their inability to coordinate together. While the sum of all members and supporters of resistance movements may have been sufficient to challenge the regime, each on its own was too small and, as described above, concentrated in certain segments of Nepal's social structure. Nepali Congress had been unwilling to coordinate action with the communists, and the communists, even despite the unification of the Marxist Leninists, still remained divided. As Brown writes, "Two main obstacles hindered the anti-panchayat forces during the 1980s. The first was Congress's belief that it could single-handedly bring democracy to Nepal. While this belief persisted, the Congress leadership was unwilling to wholeheartedly commit itself to united action with other groups. The second obstacle was division within the Leftist camp."[54]

53. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 68.
54. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 99.

In August 1989, Nepali Congress leader G.P. Koirala and Marxist-Leninist leader Radha Krishna Mainali met in Kathmandu and agreed "to direct identical activities against the system on the basis of functional unity."[55]

The Marxist-Leninist movement then worked with other factions on the left who had remained independent to form a "United Leftist Front." Other more radical factions were not willing to join the same titular group, but nevertheless created a parallel "United National People's Movement" that would support ULF efforts to oppose the regime even though their long-term visions for the country differed.

These alliances finally allowed for the creation of a unified revolutionary movement that had the base of popular support necessary for a strategy of civil resistance to be effective. As Schock describes, "Without their usual fractiousness, the opposition forces were able to temporarily set aside their differences to support the NC's call for a people power movement, as they realized that a more broad based popular movement had to be developed in order to generate a sufficient amount of pressure to promote political change."[56]

A few days later, leaders from all of the political faction as well as non-affiliated civil society organizations convened at the house of Nepali Congress leader Ganesh Man Singh in Kathmandu where they declared their intention to launch a joint "Movement for the Restoration of Democracy" to begin on February 18, 1990.

55. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 104.
56. Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*, 130.

5.3 Alternative Explanations

Examining alternative explanations, the embrace of nonviolence by opposition movements in Nepal prior to the 1990 Jana Andolan is likely overdetermined. A change in India's willingness to support armed insurgency convinced most Nepali Congress leaders that violent efforts were no longer viable, while increasing cohesion and organizational unity between political parties helped make a transition to civil resistance possible. The 1990 case does, however, further refute explanations based on ideology or other ideational priors as the Marxist-Leninist groups, founded on the premise that social change could only be achieved through violence, rejected that approach in favor of nonviolent efforts. Furthermore, the case sheds doubt on the explanatory power of regime repression, as the monarch's demonstrated willingness to use lethal force against protesters in 1979 was not sufficient to make the opposition movements believe that nonviolent civil resistance could not work.

The ideological predisposition of the Nepali Congress regarding the use of violence during the panchayat era is unclear. The party still had its roots in the Gandhian movement, but had proved willing to use arms for the purpose of bringing democracy to Nepal. After the consolidation of autocratic rule in the hands of the monarch in 1960, different Nepali Congress leaders responded differently. Moderates led by Subarna Shamsher initially declared that the Nepali Congress's intentions were to use nonviolent means, including protest and civil disobedience, to secure the release of political prisoners and restore the elected government.[57] But by late 1961, a more radical wing, led by Bharat Shamsher,

57. Parmanand, *The Nepali Congress Since Its Inception*, 302.

began a series of guerrilla raids around the country, burning government buildings and destroying roads and bridges.[58] While these efforts died down by the end of 1962, they flared again after B.P. Koirala's release from prison in 1968. He declared in an interview with the Himalchuli weekly newspaper: "We have fought in the past and we shall do it again. I personally have no faith in nonviolent struggle."[59]

Koirala led a raid of the village of Haripur in August of 1972, attacking a police station and killing an officer. His faction is widely considered responsible for a wave of attacks over the course of the 1970s, including the hijacking of an airplane in June 1973, an attempted assassination of the king in June 1973, and an attack on police forces in Okhaldhunga in December 1974. B.P. Koirala eventually renounced the use of arms in 1976 in exchange for leniency from the king.[60] However, as late as 1985, Ramraja Prasad Singh, an anti-royalist that had been associated with the Nepali Congress detonated four bombs in Kathmandu. In sum, significant elements of the Nepali Congress party had proven willing to use violent tactics in the decades prior to the 1990 civil resistance movement. While the failure of these efforts to produce tangible political gains may have led party leaders to increasingly prefer nonviolent means by the late 1980s, there is no evidence of a strong ideological basis for the selection of a strategy of civil resistance in 1990.

The evidence against ideology as a determinant factor is particularly strong in the case of the communists. The Jhapali faction had an especially strong ideological preference

58. Parmanand, *The Nepali Congress Since Its Inception*, 313.
59. ibid., 358.
60. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 107.

for violence, fashioning themselves in the mold of India's Naxalite groups. As Thapa and Kramer write, when the Jhapalis first started their campaign beheading landlords, "they never thought about whether change was possible without violence or not."[61]

However, their experience makes clear why groups that do not consider the pragmatic realities of conflict rarely rise to the level of revolutionary movements: they are stomped out before they really begin. As a result of this experience, the Jhapalis gradually turned away from violence, leading the efforts to coordinate and merge the fractious communist groups into the Marxist-Leninist (ML) party. As the political scientist Krishna Hachhethu writes, "It was indeed realized by the party's central leaders that expansion and strengthening of the party organization was a prerequisite for the attainment of its ideological goal. Thus the party's original Naxalite line of armed revolution was replaced by a strategy of building the party's front organizations in several areas and mobilizing such organizations in open and peaceful struggles."[62]

These accounts of group merger lend support to the theory of organizational cohesion. Movement fragmentation had likely made the execution of nonviolent civil resistance impossible. In fact, the Nepali Congress had been forced to call off its 1985 satyagraha when a faction detonated four bombs in Kathmandu. According to P.L. Singh, he and other movement leaders worried that the initiation of violent tactics would enable the regime to respond with greater force.[63]

61. Thapa and Kramer, "The Communist Party of Nepal (UML): Ideology at the Crossroads," 307
62. Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People*, 61
63. Author interview with P.L. Singh, former mayor of Kathmandu and relative and confidant of Ganesh Man Singh. Interview conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, July 4, 2013.

However, much of the logic of organizational unity is related to mechanisms of popular support. In fact, the evidence suggests that the perceived need to be able to generate mass support was the driving force behind the coalitions, overriding ideological disputes and personal rivalries that had previously been intractable. Some NC leaders, such as G.P. Koirala (brother of the now late B.P. Koirala) opposed alliance with the communists, seeing them as the greater threat to democracy than the monarchy. But the Nepali Congress's ability to generate only moderate mass mobilization, as demonstrated through their 1985 satyagraha attempt and participation in 1987 local elections, ultimately convinced leaders that a) reaching out to the communists was necessary to mount effective resistance to the regime, and b) such a coalition would make it possible to demand the maximalist goal of multiparty democracy through the strategy of civil resistance. As scholar of Nepali political history Louise Brown writes:

"Congress's dismal performance in the 1987 local elections was followed by a series of lesser disappointments. This included a poor public response to the party's call for general strike in Kathmandu in 1988 and the overwhelming victory of the left in student elections of the same year. Simultaneously, there were vociferous demands from the dispirited grass-roots of the party for meaningful changes in strategy and tactics. The cumulative effects of this pressure, together with the party's political disasters, were to push Congress towards decisive action and a compromise with the communists. In order to increase the odds in favour of a democracy movement, Congress had to swallow its pride and acknowledge that

it could not mobilise a mass movement without the help of the Left."[64]

Similarly, cohesion among the communist groups came out of the observed failure of any of them to make any meaningful impact with either violent or nonviolent means while fragmented over the 1960s and 1970s. However, the success of the newly unified Marxist-Leninist faction in getting a few members elected to national assembly positions in the 1980s, and even winning 20 percent of seats in the 1987 municipal elections,[65] showed that some success could be achieved through unity. In 1989, the party held its "Fourth Congress" in which it dropped its platform that had previously prohibited coordination with "bourgeois" actors such as the Nepali Congress, thus paving the way for a unified front.

Coalition not only brought together the combined organizational and mobilization capabilities of multiple political parties, but also created further incentive for participation among those not yet active with any organized party. As a communist leader Padma Ratna Tuladhar describes, "when the communist parties and the NC came together to fight the communist system, the general people were convinced that our leaders and our parties are seriously going to fight against the partyless system and are going to restore multiparty democracy. So the movement, when it was started, it was supported by the masses and it was a big success within a few days, not months."[66]

Thus, while cohesion appears to have been a necessary condition for the adoption and

64. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 103.
65. ibid., 100.
66. Author interview with Padma Ratna Tuladhar, conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, June 21, 2013.

adherence to civil resistance, expectations about popular mobilization were both the impetus for unity as well as the mechanism through which cohesion enhanced the perceived viability of a strategy of civil resistance.

Meanwhile, the regime's demonstrated willingness to use lethal force against nonviolent demonstrators during the 1979 student protests undermines repression-based explanations that predict movements will feel compelled to take up arms under such circumstances. Regime security forces reportedly threw students out of windows at the science campus in Lainchaur, Kathmandu. In total 11 were killed and 164 wounded.[67] While these numbers are not enormous when compared to cases of repression in other contexts and countries, they indicate a level of repression similar to that experienced by the Nepali National Congress in the late 1940s. If that level of repression was sufficient to make movement leaders believe that nonviolence was impossible, we would expect them to draw the same conclusion after 1979. But instead, opposition movements continued with nonviolent tactics, attempting satyagraha in 1985 and 1987, and ultimately embracing civil resistance as a strategy to overthrow the regime in 1990.

It is possible that movements believed that conditions had changed between 1979 and 1990 such that the regime would no longer be willing to use lethal force against unarmed protesters. However, it is unclear what would have signaled this change. The monarch, King Birendra, was still the ruler. Moreover, according to a some former leaders of student wings who participated in the movement, participants had heard about and even

67. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 90.

seen footage of the repression of nonviolent campaigns in Burma and Tianenmen Square. While they believed King Birendra would not order massacres on such a large scale, they accepted that violent repression was a possible eventuality.[68] Finally, the actual behavior of the regime during the campaign was strikingly similar to 1979–any perceived signs that the regime had become less repressive would have been false. In the Jana Andolan, the Nepalese Army opened fire on unarmed protesters on at least two occasions killing 63.[69]

Again, this level of repression is still relatively low in comparison to other cases in the region such as China and Burma. However, it indicates that a demonstrated prior willingness to use lethal force against nonviolent protesters is not on its own sufficient to drive a movement to armed insurgency. It could be that repression only has this effect when carried out at much higher levels. But in that case, the moderate levels of repression experienced prior to 1950 would not have been enough to explain the turn to armed insurgency in that case. Simply put, the degree of prior repression against nonviolent protest was roughly the same in both cases and thus fails to explain the variation in strategy employed by the revolutionary movement.

Finally, there is once again strong evidence of the crucial role of India in shaping movement strategies. In particular, the change in Indian policy vis-a-vis Nepal following the outbreak of the Sino-Indian war played a major role in pushing the violent factions of the Nepali Congress to conclude that waging another armed insurgency from across the border

68. Author interview with Rajan Bhattarai, a student leader and participant in the 1990 movement, currently a scholar at the Nepal Institute for Policy Studies. Interview conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, June 18, 2013.

69. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 115.

would not be possible. India began strengthening its relationship with the ruling monarchy, signing an arms agreement in 1965. Meanwhile, it arrested NC operatives in India who were known to be involved with violent attacks. With no safe space within which to operate, B.P. Koirala felt compelled to reconcile with the King in 1976.[70]

India was, however, willing to help support nonviolent resistance against the Nepali regime in the late 1980s. Seeking to broaden Nepal's base of international support, King Birendra began importing arms from China in 1985, a move that India believed violated their 1965 arms agreement with Nepal. Additional disputes over trade relations in 1989 led India to halt transborder shipments, especially of oil, and sparked an economic crisis.[71] The Nepali Congress took advantage of these relations and sought to build support from Indian leadership for their democratic movement. Nine Indian MPs attended the planning meetings at Ganesh Man Singh's house as well as observers from the United States and West Germany.[72] Together, these foreign actors represented states upon which the monarchy was extremely dependent for trade, development assistance, and military arms. Singh and other movement leaders believed that their support could restrain the King's ability to employ brutal repression against nonviolent protesters.[73]

It is not clear that this external support was strictly necessary for the movement leaders to embrace a strategy of civil resistance. Both the NC and the Marxist-Leninist communists had abstained from the use of arms since well prior to the souring of relations between

70. Mishra, *B.P. Koirala: Life and Times*, 88.
71. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 113
72. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 115
73. Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*, 137

Nepal and India. However, India's refusal to allow Nepali groups to stage armed campaigns from its territory combined with the failure of all attempts at organizing insurgency within Nepal's borders appears to have convinced leaders of both major opposition movements that armed insurgency was no longer a viable option.

5.4 Conclusion

Over the 40 year period from 1950 to 1990, both Nepali Congress as well as most of the communist left transitioned from armed insurgency to civil resistance as their strategy of choice to overthrow the monarchy and bring revolutionary change to Nepal. As has been shown in the preceding sections, a major factor in this decisionmaking was their assessments of their ability to generate mass mobilization. Changes in technology, literacy, and education made it easier for revolutionary movements to spread their message to the people and attract sympathizers. Meanwhile, through deliberate efforts at organization-building through student unions and professional associations, the movements were able to link sympathizers into a network of supporters. Finally, alliances between the movements allowed them to harness their joint mobilization potential toward the common political goal of overthrowing the panchayat regime.

The resulting revolutionary campaign, employing the strategy of civil resistance, revealed the movements' mobilization strength as well as overlap with the membership of

the regime. While the communists brought power in numbers that Nepali Congress lacked on its own, Congress's strong support among high-caste Hindus and Newars provided high levels of overlap with the regime whose police forces and public servants drew largely from these classes. Many alumni of the Nepali Congress student organizations, for example, went on to careers in government.

This overlap produced the effects of defection and limited repression that the theory predicts. Most dramatically, on April 2, foreign minister Shailendra Kumar Upadhyay resigned sparking a collapse of the cabinet the next day. By May, many senior leaders of the government had begun to openly express support for the opposition movement.[74]

While there were limited cases of security forces opening fire on protesters, repression overall was fairly limited. Only 63 Nepalis were killed in the course of the campaign.[75] Social ties between security force members and movement participants may have played a role in keeping the level of violence low. For example, Whelpton describes that in Patan, a key city centre adjacent to the capital, "the city centre was almost entirely Newar with a tight network of kinship and caste connections helping ensure that police violence against local demonstrators would be taken as a challenge to the community as a whole."[76]

Unlike in earlier decades, by 1990, leaders of Nepal's revolutionary movements knew that they had the ability to generate sufficient popular mobilization to present a credible challenge to the regime. This change in their own movement's capabilities made possible

74. Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*, 136.
75. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 115.
76. ibid., 114.

a strategy of civil resistance that they previously believed to be ineffective in Nepal and sparked a change in the strategic thinking of both the Nepali Congress and Marxist-Leninist movements. The events of the 1990 Jana Andolan proved their strategic assessments to be correct.

Factor	Value	Explanation	Theoretical Prediction
Social Structures			
Mobilization Potential	High	• Advances in literacy and communicative technology improved ability to spread ideas and organize. • Parties grew in size over 60s, 70s, and 80s. • Participation in referendum of 1979 and elections in 80s provided evidence of their mobilization potential. • Unity between parties gave high expectations about mobilization potential.	Civil Resistance
Horizontal Overlap	High	• Intense organizational efforts of 60s, 70s, and 80s allowed parties to create bridging ties to new elements of Nepali society. • Formation of interest-based groups created cross-cutting cleavages. • Unity of political parties brough together different geographic and class networks under single organization.	Civil Resistance
Vertical Overlap	Moderate/High	• While more diverse, movement leaders still drew primarily from same high-caste, hill Hindu elites as did apparatus of regime.	Civil Resistance
Alternative Explanations			
Ideology	Accepting of Violence	• Both NC and UML had history of using armed force. • Leaders cite change in conditions rather than change in ideology as impetus for embrace of civil resistance.	Armed Insurgency
Cohesion	Cohesive	• Opposition movements that had been fragmented over course of 1970s and 80s united for the purpose of launching a civil resistance campaign.	Indeterminate
Repression	Moderate	• Regime regularly arrested dissident leaders, but usually for short periods of time. Used deadly force against student protests in 1979.	Indeterminate
External Support	Permissive of Nonviolence Only	• End of Indian support for NC insurgents pushed NC to abandon violence. • Indian politicians played key role in supporting nonviolent movement, using trade sanctions to undermine regime.	Civil Resistance

Figure 5.1: Congruency of competing theories against evidence from the 1990 case. Predictions are marked in green when consistent with the observed outcome of the case, red when inconsistent, and orange when indeterminate.

Chapter 6

The 1996–2006 Maoist Insurgency

The success of the Jana Andolan movement and the subsequent return of parliamentary politics to Nepal did not meet the aspirations of all political movements. The king remained in his palace with the power to dismiss parliament and as the commander of the armed forces. Nepal was constitutionally named a Hindu state and minorities had little representation in parliament or the bureaucracy. And leaders failed to take aggressive action on land reform that would address the nation's sharp inequalities.

Within six years of the success of the nonviolent Jana Andolan, a Maoist political party, one that had even participated in the United National People's Movement, initiated an armed insurgency. The civil war that ensued lasted 10 years and killed an estimated 16,000 Nepalis.

If conditions had been suitable for civil resistance in 1990, why could the Maoists not turn once again to nonviolent means to address their political grievances? While the struc-

ture of Nepali society had not changed dramatically in the intervening six years–if anything there were far greater opportunities for political communication and associational life that would seemingly further benefit civil resistance–what was different from the Jana Andolan was the position of the revolutionary movement, in this case the Maoists, within Nepali society.

While the Nepali Congress and Marxist Leninist supporters that had served as the core of the 1990 movement were largely educated, urban, middle class, high caste Hindus and Newars, the Maoists base of supporters were poor, rural, uneducated, and largely from the Magar indigenous group.

The Maoists therefore struggled to generate mass mobilization. Their ideas of agrarian social revolution did not appeal to urban elites (even at a time when those urban elites were largely casting votes for the communist Marxist Leninist party) and the natural supporters of the Maoist political platform were unconnected from centralized communication networks and locked in restrictive tenant relationships that made hearing of, much less participating in, contentions political action difficult.

After some experimentation with nonviolent methods in the early years of the parliamentary system, including formal politics as well as more disruptive direct action techniques, the Maoists abandoned the strategy of peoples' movement in favor of launching a People's War. Through armed insurgency, the Maoists were able to build a larger and broader support network by capturing territory, killing landlords, and spreading their ideological doctrine among the now "liberated" peasants.

6.1 BACKGROUND

While the Jana Andolan resulted in free elections and a parliamentary government, it fell far short of meeting the hopes of all who took to the streets to demand change. In an effort to consolidate power and reduce the risk of a counter-revolution, Congress worked closely with Panchayat nobles, even allowing some to run as candidates for parliament on the party ticket.[1] The result of this centrist-conservative partnership was that the new democratically elected government did little to change the deeper political, economic, and social structures of Nepali society.

In particular, no reforms were made to the country's land tenure system and the nobility retained control of the extensive land holdings they had acquired over decades of the Panchayat system. The same ethnic and caste groups that had dominated Nepal under the monarchy continued to do so in the new democracy. As late as 1999, the three most powerful groups–the Bahuns, the Chetris, and the Newars–comprised just over a third of Nepal's population but held over 80 percent of high-level positions in government, the bureaucracy, and the judiciary. Only 6 percent of those elected to parliament were women and only one single representative of the lowest Dalit caste was elected during during the "democratic" period from 1990–2002.[2] While Nepal had in theory undergone a dramatic political transformation, according to some, "all that had changed were the names on the ministers' doors."[3]

1. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 156
2. Routledge, "Nineteen Days in April: Urban Protest and Democracy in Nepal," 1283
3. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 177

The rising disenchantment with parliamentary politics, especially among the lower classes and castes, played to the benefit of the political faction that had historically courted the support of these groups: the Maoists. Nepal's Maoist movement started in 1949 with the assistance of Indian groups. Seeing a parallel between Nepal's feudal land relations and those of pre-revolutionary China, Nepal's Maoists saw an opportunity to import Mao's model of revolution to the Himalayan kingdom.[4] Mohan Bikram Singh began organizing Maoist political activity in the rural district of Rolpa during the period of electoral politics in the 1950s. Singh maintained a commitment to revolution in Nepal through a "People's War", however, he was willing to engage in institutionalized politics as well. In the 1959 parliamentary elections, 700 out of 703 voters in Rolpa supported the Maoist party.[5]

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Maoists operated as a minority communist faction in Nepal, often in the shadow of the larger CPN-ML. The Maoists were one of the five communist groups who had refused to join the Unified Leftist Front in the 1990 Jana Andolan. In rhetoric, they maintained that true revolution in Nepal could only be achieved through violence, yet in practice they participated in some of the demonstrations through the United National People's Movement, arguing that parliamentary politics would be a step in the right direction toward true social revolution.[6]

Faced with a new era of party politics after the Jana Andolan, the Maoists were split on how to proceed. While Singh opposed participation in parliamentary politics, a new

4. B C Upreti, "The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Nature, Growth and Impact," *South Asian Survey* 13, no. 1 (March 2006): 36

5. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 203

6. Thapa and Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004*, 35

generation of Maoists, led by Pushpa Kumar Dahal (usually referred to by his nom de guerre "Prachanda"), Baboram Bhattarai, and Nirmal Lama formed an underground political party, Unity Centre, as well as an above ground "front" party, the United People's Front (UPF), to compete in the elections. The party won only 9 seats in the 1991 elections, showing its limited popular appeal.

The UPF's stated goal was not to participate in governance and policymaking, but rather to use the campaign and seats in parliament as a platform to highlight the inadequacy of the political process. In fact, they spend little time in parliament trying to press for legislative initiatives. According to Daman Nath Danghana, the parliamentary speaker at the time, the Maoist parliamentarians "did not believe in the work of parliamentary democracy, of liberal democracy, to which the majority of us were very much committed."[7]

Instead, they supplemented their institutional participation with organized nonviolent action in Kathmandu. According to historian John Whelpton: ""The theory was that, as in 1990, enough disorder could be created on the streets of the capital to pressure the government into concessions."[8] But even these nonviolent efforts drew little mass support, and the Maoists were compelled to resort to goon squad violence, throwing Malotov cocktails at busses and taxi cabs in order to coerce compliance with movement-sponsored strikes.[9]

As the government continued to be unresponsive to Maoist demands, the leadership began to fragment again over whether to to employ violent or nonviolent strategies going

7. Daman Nath Dunghana, interview with author, conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, July 9, 2013.
8. Whelpton, *A History of Nepal*, 203
9. "Bandh: Sajha Bus Stoned," *The Rising Nepal* (May 1994): 8.

forward. At a meeting in the spring of 1994, Unity Centre leaders met to debate the next course of action.[10] Inspired by the successes of Sendero Luminoso in Peru and with the encouragement of the Revolutionary International Movement, a transnational organization of communist groups, Prachanda argued that the conditions were ripe in Nepal for a Maoist peasants' revolution. While the Maoists did not command broad national support, they had built a small, concentrated base of devout supporters in Nepal's hilly midwestern district of Rolpa.

The district was comprised primarily of people of Mongoloid ethnicity, yet most of the land was held by absentee landlords from the upper hill castes.[11] The district of Rolpa had sent Maoist representatives to parliament in both the 1959 and 1991 elections, and Maoists took control of local government after municipal elections in 1992. Finally, Prachanda sensed that as the King and the political parties jockeyed for power in the new parliamentary system, the state would be too weak and indecisive to effectively repress a guerilla insurgency.[12]

Nirval Lama and his followers, however, felt differently. Noting the success of other communist groups after the Jhapa uprising as well as the success of the 1990 Jana Andolan movement, they argued in favor of continuing to organize the party and raise awareness through nonviolent means.[13]

10. Shyam Shrestha, a leader within Nirval Lama's faction of Unity Centre. Interview with author, conducted in Kirtipur, Nepal, July 6, 2013.

11. Upreti, "The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Nature, Growth and Impact," 44

12. Deepak Thapa, "The Making of the Maoist Insurgency," in *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to Fragile Peace*, ed. Sebastian von Einsiedel, David M Malone, and Suman Pradhan (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 49

13. Shyam Shrestha, interview with author, conducted in Kirtipur, Nepal, July 6, 2013.

The Lama faction, however, was a minority within the Unity Centre coalition and were outvoted.[14] Ash Bahadur Pun, a Maoist cadre and current member of the Constituent Assembly, described:

"We had two options. Samyukta Janamorcha [the Maoist political front] had nine seats in Parliament. Although the government did not listen our voices, we tried in a peaceful way, but the government suppressed us. So then we chose People's War. Most of the thought was on the people's revolution side, it had the majority, so we decided to go in war. We discussed in a group, in a circle, and we concluded that we had to fight for our rights and for development. There is Nepalese culture; they didn't listen without action, so we moved in war."[15]

Lama and his followers left Unity Centre and purged Baburam Bhattarai and other followers of Prachanda from the UPF parliamentary front. The following year Prachanda changed the name of his party to the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) and made explicit the party's intent to launch an armed insurgency.[16] On February 13th, 2006, the Maoists launched their first guerrilla attacks on police stations and government offices, beginning what would be a decade-long civil war. Prachanda proved to be correct in his assessment of the strategic conditions and the insurgency achieved incredible early success. By the end of the decade, nearly 25 percent of the county's population was living under

14. Shyam Shrestha, interview with author, conducted in Kirtipur, Nepal, July 6, 2013.

15. Ash Bahadur Pun, interview with author, conducted in Sulichaur, Rolpa, Nepal on May 20, 2014. Members of both factions interviewed for this study remember the events of this meeting similarly.

16. Deepak Thapa, "Radicalism and the Emergence of the Maoists," in *Himalayan People's War: Nepal's Maoist Rebellion*, ed. Michael J Hutt (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 36

Maoist control. Spatially, their territory represented an even larger percentage as the regime exerted little authority outside of the Kathmandu Valley.[17]

6.2 Social Structures

Before the Jana Andolan, the Maoists had refused to join the United Leftist Front, opting to form a parallel organization instead, because they believed that parliamentary democracy was insufficient and would keep power in the hands of the elite classes.[18] But after the Jana Andolan, they chose to participate in the 1991 parliamentary elections anyway. They won a meagre nine seats, showing their narrow base of support, especially when compared to Nepali Congress and the Marxist Leninists.

The sincerity of the Maoists' commitment to democratic politics was questionable. While some viewed it as an honest attempt at "gradual social, political, and economic transformation" through legal, institutional means,[19] others saw it as a cynical attempt by leaders already committed to violence to demonstrate the inefficacy of nonviolent politics. Maoist members of parliament were relatively uninvolved in legislative activities[20] and

17. Thapa and Sharma, "From Insurgency to Democracy: The Challenges of Peace and Democracy-Building in Nepal," 209

18. Padma Ratna Tuladhar, mediator between leftist groups in effort to form United Leftist Front. Interview with author conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, June 21, 2013.

19. Chaitanya Subba, "The Ethnic Dimensions of the Maoist Conflict: Dreams and Designs of Liberation of Oppressed Nationalities," in *Nepal: Facets of Maoist Insurgency*, ed. Lok Raj Baral (New Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2006), 31.

20. Daman Nath Dunghana, former Speaker of the Nepali Parliament. Interview with author conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, July 9, 2013.

openly stated their intent to"lay bare the contradictions and limits of the parliamentary system."[21] In reality, different members of the Maoist party may have had varying hopes and expectations for their participation in formal politics, but there was at least consensus that the attempt had to be made, even if only to subsequently justify a turn to arms.

Regardless of the Maoists' intent, political participation served as an opportunity to draw national attention to their platform and to assess their ability to mobilize mass popular support. Beyond the elections, the Maoists engaged in extra-institutional acts of political contention, such as launching demonstrations and strikes when parliament acted contrary to their wishes. To the degree these activities were successful, it was largely because the Maoists backed them with violence, looting shops and throwing Malotov cocktails at buses and taxis that failed to obey their strike orders.[22] Both the party's electoral and resistance activities offered clear signals about the limited nature of the Maoist's mobilization capacity.

Furthermore, the Maoists had few potential political allies in their effort to seek dramatic constitutional-level changes to the country's governing structure. Nepali Congress had played an active role in negotiating the language of the constitution with the king only a few years earlier and was largely satisfied with the status quo. The Marxist Leninists shared many of the political goals with the Maoists in terms of social inclusion and land reform, but they had come to the conclusion that they could achieve their political objec-

21. Chaitanya Mishra, "Locating the 'Causes' of the Maoist Struggle," *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 9, no. 1 (June 2004): 6.
22. "Bandh: Sajha Bus Stoned"

tives through the political process.[23] This left the Maoist as the only group believing that revolution was necessary and with only a small base of support for such a revolutionary effort.

Nevertheless, the Maoists message of social equality should have resonated with Nepal's large rural population who were not only economically disadvantaged but largely excluded from political processes. In Nepal's highly unequal society, the top ten percent earned 54 percent of the income. The wealthiest six percent owned 33 percent of agricultural land while the bottom 40 percent owned only nine percent.[24]

But structural barriers prevented the Maoists from being able to effectively mobilize the rural poor. Rural areas were those least penetrated by technological advancements. Lack of access to radio, television, telephones, or newspapers in exactly the regions where the population would be most sympathetic to their platform made it difficult for the Maoists to spread their message of social change.

Furthermore, even if the Maoists were able to disseminate their ideology and win over the hearts and minds of the peasantry, mobilizing collective action was nearly impossible given the population's dependency on relations with the landowning elite. Rural workers feared losing access to workable land and even those who owned their own land were usually indebted with large loans from local elites. Baburam Bhattarai, the leader of the Maoist political front, describes this predicament in his writings: "The rights of the tenants are not

23. K.P. Oli, former Jhapali leader who later joined the Unified Marxist Leninist political party. Interview with author conducted in Balkot, Nepal, June 18, 2013.
24. Mishra, "Locating the 'Causes' of the Maoist Struggle," 24.

secure, the rate of rent is high and the tenants are often 'bonded' to the landlord through high interest rates charged on loans and other labour-service conditions, apart from the rent of land."[25]

These relations of unequal economic power translated into political leverage as well. Indeed, the electoral strategy of Nepali Congress hinged on winning the allegiance of rural elites in the belief that they could deliver the votes of their tenants and loan recipients on election day. After the 1990 revolution, Nepali Congress actively sought out the membership of former panchas (lanholding elites who help political power in the old panchayat system) in order to build their base of support in the rural areas.[26]

This political leverage that wealthy landowners held over the peasantry helps explain why the Maoists struggled to mobilize mass support in the rural areas even though their political platform should have been far more appealing to the local population than that of Nepali Congress. As political scientists Madhav Joshi and T. David Mason describe:

"Why did peasants not vote in large numbers for parties that were most likely to enact significant land reform? As long as land remained in the hands of the same landed elites as before the transition to democracy, peasants remained bound to them in various forms of clientelist dependency. Despite the fact that voting is secret, voting for a reformist party meant risking the wrath of one's landlord and perhaps jeopardizing one's access to land. During the election campaign, local elites and landlords would often invite their favored

25. Baburam Bhattarai, as transcribed in Aditya Adhikari, "The Ideological Evolution of Nepali Maoists," *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 15, no. 2 (December 2010): 219–220.
26. Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*, 156.

candidate to local feasts and make it clear to villagers in attendance whom they were expected to vote for. Rather than jeopardize their subsistence security, peasants tended to be allegiant to the landlord when they cast their votes."[27]

Not only was the Maoists network of popular supporters limited in terms of its reach and overall size, it lacked overlap with the regime. Previous revolutionary movements discussed in this chapter drew largely from middle-class, high-caste Hindu and Newar social groups. These groups comprised the bulk of the population in the capital city and its environs and were disproportionately represented in governmental power structures.

The larger network of Nepali society is incredibly diverse with, according to one scholar, 21 caste groups, 59 indigenous nationalities, and 93 spoken languages.[28] But multiparty politics did not lead to widespread political inclusion. High-caste Hindus (Bahuns and Chhetris) and Newars make up 16 percent of Nepal's population yet accounted for 93 percent of high-level bureaucratic posts. Twenty-six out of 30 commanders of the Royal Nepal Army have come from the Rana and Shah families alone.[29] And parliament consisted of only 6 percent women and a single Dalit (lowest caste) member. No Dalit ever held a cabinet position during the constitutional monarchy of the 1990s.[30]

The most senior Maoist leaders were also predominantly high-caste Hindus (both Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Baburam Bhattarai are Bahuns). But their message of social revolution,

27. Madhav Joshi and T David Mason, "Land Tenure, Democracy, and Insurgency in Nepal: Peasant Support for Insurgency Versus Democracy," *Asian Survey* 47, no. 3 (2007): 411.
28. Manchanda, "Making of a'New Nepal'," 5036.
29. Mishra, "Locating the 'Causes' of the Maoist Struggle," 7.
30. Routledge, "Nineteen Days in April: Urban Protest and Democracy in Nepal," 1283.

unsurprisingly, did not appeal to many other members of their social group who benefited from the privileges of the existing system.

From early in the party's history, the Maoists had focused their recruitment efforts among the lower castes and indigenous groups in Nepal's rural areas. Mohan Bikram Singh, the "father" of what would become the Maoist movement, began organizing in the 1950s among the Magar group in Pyuthan, Rokum, and Rolpa provinces.[31] The rise of the Maoist movement in these areas in fact paralleled a rise in Magar nationalism that included the creation of cultural, research, and professional organizations dedicated to the advancement of indigenous identity and opportunities.[32] The two movements may have been mutually reinforcing not only in their identification of class and ethnic discrimination as the driver of social and economic deprivation but also in their prescribed solution. As the anthropologist Marie Lecompte-Tilouine writes, "…in the ideological side, there are common aspects in both movements, including the belief that violence is the only possible means of liberation for oppressed groups."[33]

Thus by the mid–1990s, both the rank-and-file as well as the mid-level leadership of the Maoists differed significantly in terms of its social, caste, and ethnic composition. Forty-six percent of the members of the United Revolutionary People's Council (a mid-level orga-

31. For a detailed description of Maoist organization building in the 1950s, see Benoit Cailmail, "A History of Nepalese Maoism Since Its Foundation by Mohan Bikram Singh," *European Bulletin Of Himalayan Research* 33-34 (2008): 11–38.

32. Pratyoush Onta, "The Growth of the Adivasi Janajati Movement in Nepal after 1990: The Non-Political Institutional Agents," *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 11, no. 2 (2006): 323–324

33. Marie Lecomte-Tilouine, "Ethnic Demands Within Maoism: Magar Territorial Autonomy, Nationality, and Class," in *Himalayan People's War: Nepal's Maoist Rebellion*, ed. Michael J Hutt (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 120.

nizational body within the Maoist organization) came from indigenous groups and 5.6 percent were Dalit. Of 23 Maoist district chairs, 17 were indigenous, one was Dalit, and seven were from upper castes.[34]

6.3 Alternative Explanations

At first glance it should not be surprising that a group claiming a devout commitment to Maoist revolutionary ideology would choose a path of armed insurgency. The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) had been founded in 1949 explicitly on the premise that, in contrast to the then nonviolent activities of the Nepali Congress, it would be necessary to take up arms to overthrow the Rana regime. Even after the fall of the Ranas, the CPN denounced the peace agreement as a "betrayal of the revolution" and the new alliance between the NC and the monarchy as a "stooge government."[35] It called for a continuation of armed struggle against the new regime.

Among the myriad splits within the CPN over the ensuing decades, the Maoists' lineage runs consistently through those factions that took the hardest ideological line on the issue of violence. In 1979, the called for "training guerrillas, proletarianising party cadres, creating separate base areas, taking action against local cheats, and initiating an agrarian

34. Mukta Lama, "Culture, Caste, and Ethnicity in the Maoist Movement," *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 11, no. 2 (2006): 286.
35. Thapa and Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004*, 21.

uprising."[36]

The party would split twice more in the 1980s, with the faction that would eventually launch the People's War attempting to distinguish itself each time as that most committed to actually waging war. The fissures culminated in the final 1994 split, which the Maoists described as a deliberate effort to purge their ranks of those who questioned the necessity of violence:

"The Unity Congress of the reconstituted CPN (Unity Centre)—which was later rechristened as the CPN (Maoist)—adopted for the first time in December 1991, a clear-cut political line of protracted People's War to carry out the New Democratic Revolution in Nepal with a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideological perspective. However, when the question of implementation of the political line within the party came up, there ensued a vicious two-line struggle against a right liquidationist clique, which was finally defeated and expelled from the party in May 1994."[37]

However, the Maoists' supposed ideological commitment to violence overlooks the inconsistencies in their actual practice. For 45 years, the Maoists and their ancestor groups had championed the idea of armed revolt in theory, but stood on the sidelines as other groups such as the NC and the Jhapalis took up arms in practice. Each time, they argued, the "objective conditions" were not yet present for revolt. Instead, the Maoists participated in elections in the 1950s and again in 1991. They participated in the 1990 Jana Andolan

36. Thapa and Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004*, 25.

37. Pushpa Kamal Dahal, "One Year of the People's War in Nepal," as published in Arjun Karki and David Seddon, "The People's War in Historical Context," in *The People's War in Nepal: Left Perspectives*, ed. Arjun Karki and David Seddon (Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2003), 202.

civil resistance campaign, albeit under the auspices of the separate "United People's Front." And, most strikingly, they eventually prove willing to abandon armed insurgency in favor of civil resistance in 2006. While the Maoists held the ideological belief that insurgency was necessary to achieve their political goals, they proved willing time and again to employ nonviolent means.

The factional split ust two years before the beginning of the insurgency suggests that inter-group competition may have played a role in driving the Maoists to take up arms. But accounts from both factions reveal that Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal had been pushing for insurgency prior to the split, and that in fact it was opposition to violence by Nirval Lama and his followers that caused them to leave the group.

In a 1994 plenum of Maoist party members (then formally called "Unity Centre"), movement leaders debated what strategy to embrace going forward. Nirval Lama and his followers called for what they termed a "Leninist" urban-based mass uprising. But when pressed on the details of what this strategy involved, it was far more similar to the Jana Andolan than the Russian Revolution. Lama wanted to continue the process of organization and network building until they reached the point that a nonviolent people's movement based in the cities could be as successful for the Maoists as it had been for Nepali Congress and the Marxist-Leninists in 1990.[38]

Pushpa Kamal Dahal, however, argued that the events of the previous four years had

38. Shyam Shrestha, senior member of Nirval Lama's faction within Unity Centre. Interview with author conducted in Kirtipur, Nepal, July 6, 2013. A similar account of the motivations behind the split can be found in [43} Thapa and Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004*.

demonstrated the ineffectiveness of such a strategy and that the only way to achieve true social change in Nepal would be through a peasant-based rural, armed insurrection following the line of Mao. The members of the central committee held a vote and those supporting Dahal and the strategy of armed insurgency won a majority. Eleven of the 23 members of the central committee who supported Lama were then ousted from the party.[39] They formed a new organization and continued to participate in formal politics. The followers of Dahal meanwhile renamed their party the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). According to party documents, the final decision to launch the war was made at a central committee meeting of the new party in March 1995.[40] This sequence of events indicates that it was the decision to launch an armed insurgency that caused the split within the party, not fragmentation causing violence as a result of inter-group competition.

When asked why armed force was necessary in order for the Maoists to achieve their political objectives, the most common response among Maoists interviewed for this study was that the violent repression of the regime made nonviolent action impossible.

As one village leader who joined the Maoist movement described:

"The district administration, they were engaging in torture here, they kept us in prison. We were accused with false rumors. They filed cases in court against us. They killed the farmers who were working in the field; they killed the students who were going to school, teachers when they were going to schools; they were caught and killed… So we

39. Mishra, "Locating the 'Causes' of the Maoist Struggle," 6.
40. Pushpa Kamal Dahal, "One Year of the People's War in Nepal," as published in Karki and Seddon, "The People's War in Historical Context," 202.

were compelled to support the Maoists because they were raising issues against this kind of torture, imbalances, untouchability, and nationality and many other issues. We thought, if we are tolerating [the government], they will kill us, and we didn't have another option; that's why we supported the people's war."[41]

And in fact there are numerous reports of violent clashes between police and citizens in the heavily Magar provinces of Rolpa and Rukum in the years leading into the armed insurgency. After the localized success of the Maoist political front in the Rolpa area in 1991 and 1992, ruling Nepali Congress leaders in Kathmandu deployed national police to the area to crack down on the communist upstarts. According to the Human Rights Yearbook: 1992, published by the Kathmandu-based NGO, Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC), "political workers, employees, and teachers have been the victims of arrest and torture because of political revenge."[42]

The Maoists themselves were guilty of provocative acts and were believed to have used threats and acts of violent force to coerce votes for their political front. But as Thapa and Sijapati describe, "the state's responses against the former were always out of proportion to their so-called crimes such as in the indiscriminate manner in which it arrested scores of people, tortured them, and even executed some of them."[43]

Violence in Rolpa and Rukum escalated further in November 1995 when the government deployed additional security forces to the region. In a campaign named "Operation

41. Berman Buda, interview with author, conducted in Thabang, Rolpa, Nepal, May 22, 2014.
42. As referenced in Thapa and Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004*, 69.
43. ibid., 70.

Romeo," state forces descended upon 11 villages arresting 132 citizens and causing 6,000 more to flee the area. According to the INSEC report for that year, "all the detained were subjected to torture."[44]

For many analyst of the Maoist movement, Operation Romeo represents "the crucial precipitating factor behind the Maoists eventual commitment to the launching of a People's War."[45] And this narrative was confirmed with many locals in the area interviewed for this study who cite Operation Romeo as a key turning point when members of the village decided to support the Maoists' call to arms. A teacher and community leader in the village of Jelbang in Rolpa recounted:

"After Romeo operation, whole people supported the Maoist. That was before the revolution, but after this event, some of the NC and RPP supporter also shifted into Maoist. More than 250 people joined into revolution."[46]

Another told a similar story:

"When the military operation happened for the first time in Rolpa, five people [in our village] were killed. They spread false accusations and blamed it on the [local] people. … This was the initial phase that has pushed them towards the armed revolution."[47]

Emphasizing the role of Operation Romeo in driving the Maoists to violence, however, overlooks the fact that the Maoist central committee had already passed its resolution to launch an insurgency in March of 1995, seven months before the heightened police activity.

44. As referenced in Thapa and Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004*, 72.
45. Karki and Seddon, "The People's War in Historical Context," 20.
46. Chandra Bahadur Budha, interview with author, conducted in Jelbang, Rolpa, Nepal, May 20, 2014.
47. Ash Bahadur Pun, interview with author, conducted in Sulichaur, Rolpa, Nepal, May 20, 2014.

In September 1995, still two months before the policing operation, the party issued its "Plan for the Historic Initiation of the People's War."[48]

In fact, it is more likely that the government's decision to deploy national police was an attempt to preempt and disrupt Maoist preparations for war. Thus the heavy-handed repression by the regime against the civilians of Rolpa likely had the effect of motivating individual actors to join the Maoist insurgency, but fails to explain the Maoist leadership decision to choose violence over nonviolence.

Finally, there is little evidence that international support played significant role in the Maoist decision to launch an insurgency. By most accounts, the Maoists did not receive significant support from any foreign actor.[49] Instead, they relied on raiding barracks and banks to obtain arms and funds. The Maoist leaders participated in an international communist organization, the Revolutionary International Movement (RIM), but received few if any tangible benefits from the relationship.[50]

They may have hoped to eventually obtain some assistance from China, who could potentially have viewed the movement as an opportunity to curtail Indian influence in Nepal by replacing the Hindu monarchy with an ideologically compatible communist regime. But such hopes, if they existed, would have been far-fetched. China had a strong relationship with the king, did not believe that the Maoists would be trustworthy political allies,

48. Thapa and Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004*, 70.

49. For a period of time during the middle of the conflict, Maoist leaders were frequently traveling to and staying in India. According to some accounts, this occurred with the tacit consent of India's intelligence service, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW). See, for example, S D Muni, "Bringing the Maoists Down from the Hills: India's Role," in *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to Fragile Peace* (Cambridge, 2012).

50. Thapa and Sijapati, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996-2004*, 29.

and "even expressed dismay at the use of the name of Chairman Mao."[51] Foreign sponsorship is therefore not likely to have played a major role in the Maoists' decision to take up arms.

6.4 Conclusion

Nepal's Maoist insurgents emerged from the most ideologically extreme wing of the country's communist movement. And while they held a clear commitment to replicating the strategy of Mao, ideology alone is insufficient to explain their behavior. After all, Nepal's Maoists had embraced the doctrine of violent revolution for 40 years without actually taking up arms. They were quiet during the 60s and 70s even while factions of the NC and CPN-ML were engaging in violent attacks. They joined in nonviolent efforts during the 1990 Jana Andolan, even if they insisted on participating as a distinct organization. And they engaged in a host of most nonviolent tactics between 1990 and 1996, running candidates and winning seats in parliament, and attempting to lead protests and boycotts in Kathmandu.

Moreover, when Prachanda decided in 1994 that it was time for armed insurgency, other groups with the same ideological commitment to Maoism did not join him. As discussed above, Nirval Lama and his supporters split from the party over this decision. Mo-

51. Bishnu Raj Upreti, "External Engagement in Nepal's Armed Conflict," in *The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Revolution in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Mahendra Lawoti and Anup K Pahari (London: Routledge, 2010), 225.

han Bikram Singh, long considered Nepal's most ideological communist and the godfather of the Maoist movement, who had actually split from the movement because he opposed the efforts to participate in the Jana Andolan and compete in elections as too compromising, strongly rejected Prachanda's call to arms, deriding it as "ultra-left adventurism."[52]

Meanwhile, as the organizational theory predicts, the outbreak of insurgency was preceded by fragmentation amongst the left, first the refusal of the Maoists to join in the ULF coalition in 1990 and subsequently in the split between the Lama and Prachanda factions of Unity Centre. But the process history detailed above shows that the theory has the causal relationship backwards. Factional competition did not drive both sides to violence. Rather, disagreements over which strategy would be most effective caused the movement divisions.

Instead, strategic calculation provides the best explanation for the Maoist turn to violence. Prachanda and his followers witnessed how the 1990 movement led only to a partial vicotry, one that left Nepal a Hindu state, with the king controlling the armed forces, and with ethnic hierarchies still in place. However, the period from 1991–1994 proved that their movement was too small to be able to effect change through either institutional/parliamentary or nonviolent revolutionary means. He saw the political discord in Kathmandu between the parliament and the king as creating a window of opportunity through which armed revolution might be possible.

Other actors in Nepal arrived at different decisions based on their different goals, different strategic circumstances, or simply different assessments of the strategic environment

52. Thapa, "The Making of the Maoist Insurgency," 49

given the fact that information was poor in a period of rapid political change. For Nepali Congress, almost all of their political goals were achieved via the 1990 campaign. CPN-ML shared some of the Maoists desires for greater social and economic equality, but believed these changes could be achieved through the institutional political process. Other communist factions, such as those of Nirval Lama and Mohan Bikram Singh, believed that some type of revolution was necessary, but interpreted the strategic environment differently than did Prachanda and argued that either nonviolent means would be more effective (Lama) or that the situation was not yet ripe for revolution at all (Singh).

Factor	Value	Explanation	Prediction
Social Structures			
Mobilization Potential	Low	• 1991 election shows limited support for Maoists (around 7% of vote) • efforts at mass protest and strikes in Kathmandu flounder due to lack of participation	Armed Insurgency
Horizontal Overlap	Low	• Movement drew primarily from Magar ethnic group in mid-Western Nepal • separated geographically and linguistically from other social groups	Armed Insurgency
Vertical Overlap	Low	• Movement drew primarily from groups that were excluded from state institutions	Armed Insurgency
Alternative Explanations			
Ideology	Violent	• Maoist ideology theorizes armed insurgecy as only possible means of empowering the working and peasant classes	Armed Insurgency
Cohesion	Violence -> Fragmentation	• Maoist party splits prior to waging armed insurgency • BUT split was a consequence of decision to take up arms	Indeterminate
Repression	Moderate	• Evidence of harsh repression in districts where insurgency started • BUT repression occurs largely after Maoist decision to launch insurgency	Indeterminate
External Support	Not Available	• Little evidence of international support for Maoists • Both China and India largely support regime	Civil Resistance

Figure 6.1: Congruency of competing theories against evidence from the 1996 case. Predictions are marked in green when consistent with the observed outcome of the case, red when inconsistent, and orange when indeterminate.

Chapter 7

The 2006 Jana Andolan II

The case of Nepal's Maoists is particularly fascinating for the way in which the conflict ended: with their decision to put down their arms and join with other political parties in a campaign of civil resistance to end the monarchy and draft a new constitution. This chapter will make the argument that the Maoist change in strategy was the result of changes in their base of social support that came about as a result of territorial gain through war and coalition with other political parties. These changes caused the Maoists to reassess the relative viability of armed and unarmed strategies of rebellion.

International intervention also seems to have played a major role in shaping the trajectory of conflict in Nepal. After 2001, the United States and India significantly increased their provision of military aid to the Royal Nepal Army, allowing the army to finally stem Maoist territorial gains. The Maoists began to see that a military victory would not be possible. But foreign military aid to the regime cannot alone account for the Maoists' change in

strategy as they continued to fight the army to a stalemate through 2005. It was only when the political parties, disenchanted with the autocratic retrenchment of a new king, proved willing to switch sides in the conflict and support the Maoist goal of ending the monarchy, that the Maoists came to believe that a nonviolent movement could be successful.

7.1 BACKGROUND

While Nepal's Maoists had made impressive territorial gains over nine years of guerilla warfare, by 2005 the conflict had reached a stalemate. Their control of the countryside was strong enough that even the King's efforts to deploy the Royal Nepalese Army were insufficient to roll back the insurgency. But the Maoists faced considerable obstacles if they attempted to press their campaign further. They had essentially succeeded in achieving the first two stages of Mao's "playbook" for insurgency: they had successfully weakened regime forces through guerilla warfare and had achieved a strategic stalemate whereby they controlled the rural areas and had essentially surrounded the major cities. The final phase of "strategic offensive"–entering the Kathmandu valley and overthrowing the regime–would be far more difficult. It would involve confronting the state security forces in their own area of strength and where popular support for the Maoists was weakest.

Moreover, there were international obstacles to achieving victory through force. Outside actors, most notably the United States and India, had begun provided substantial mil-

itary aid to the regime to assist their counterinsurgency efforts. The U.S. Ambassador to Nepal even declared it American policy to ensure that the Maoists would not capture Kathmandu.[1] And even if an urban campaign were successful in toppling the regime, governing after the revolution would likely be difficult in the face of international isolation.[2]

In the meantime, a royal coup changed the alignment of political interests within Nepal. Following a massacre of King Birendra and other members of the royal family that was unrelated to the insurgency, the new monarch, King Gyanendra, seized complete power, dismissing parliament and banning political parties in 2005. The parties that had once been content to keep the Maoists excluded from the political process now found themselves powerless as well. As had been the case in 1990, the Nepali Congress and the moderate leftist parties shared a common cause in their desire to overthrow the monarchy. And as in 1990, they united their efforts to form the Seven Party Alliance (SPA).

And now, unlike 1990, the Maoists believed that the success of their insurgency gave them both the negotiation leverage as well as the organizational strength necessary to ensure themselves a dominant role in an electoral system. In the fall of 2005, India invited the Maoist leaders to come to New Delhi to negotiate a deal with SPA that would pave the way for a unified civil resistance campaign to remove the King and bring an end to the civil war.[3] This invitation sparked the Maoist conference in Chunbang that was described at the beginning of this book. With international actors unwilling to offer support to the Maoists

1. Mishra, "Locating the 'Causes' of the Maoist Struggle," 44
2. Kanak Mani Dixit, "The Spring of Dissent: People's Movement in Nepal," *India International Centre Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (2006): 116
3. ibid., 116–117

and instead offering military aid to the regime, the prospects of further success through armed insurgency were dim.

Meanwhile, the Maoists had significantly grown their base of support since 1996 and developed a highly effective organizational structure capable of mobilizing the masses. The additional prospect of being able to align with other political parties and for India to constrain the regime's ability to engage in repression changed the calculus from what it had been earlier. Adopting what became known as "Prachandapath" or the "democratic republic" path, the Maoists came to believe that they could end the monarchy through civil resistance, dominate parliamentary politics with their superior popular support, and enact their Maoist revolutionary goals through the vehicle of democratic governance.[4]

Following Chunbang, the Maoists and the SPA entered into a series of negotiations in New Delhi and on November 22nd, both sides issued a 12 Point Understanding that called for an end to the monarchy, the creation of an electoral system with a constituent assembly, and the integration of Maoist fighters into the Royal Nepal Army under the watch of the United Nations.[5] They further agreed to engage in a second "People's Movement" to coerce the regime into meeting their demands. As in 1990, strong international involvement gave the movement confidence that the King, despite his autocratic tendencies, would have to be restrained in his use of repressive force against nonviolent protests.

In April of 2006, the political parties organized a series of demonstrations on the 30km

4. Author interview with Khim Lal Devkota, a senior leader within the CPN-Maoist (now the UCPN-Maoist). Interview conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, July 7, 2013.

5. Dixit, "The Spring of Dissent: People's Movement in Nepal," 116–117

"ring road" that surrounds downtown Kathmandu.[6] In addition, the SPA initiated a "tax strike" on April 9th, constructed road blocks, and even blockaded entire towns. The Maoists participated as well, organizing strikes, road blockages, and shutting down local and regional government agencies.[7] They also helped mobilize and transport their rural supporters to Kathmandu to participate in demonstrations in the capital city. Middle class professionals participated acively in the second Jana Andolan just as they had in the first, but the later movement was supplemented by a high level of involvement from the rural peasant class that had not been a part of the 1990 efforts, reflecting even broader popular support.[8]

While there were incidents of violence, suppression of the movement was limited. Over the course of 19 days of protests, and estimated 25 Nepalis were killed.[9] On April 21, the King announced that he would be willing to form a new government to be led by a Prime Minister selected by the SPA. According to Nepali journalist Kanak Mani Dixit, the political leaders themselves were unsure whether or not to accept the King's offer.[10] However, the activists in the streets were only more inflamed by what they viewed as inadequate concessions and protests escalated further. This was accompanied by increase diplomatic pressure from foreign embassies in Kathmandu. Two days later, the Royal Nepal Army informed the King that it would no longer follow his orders.[11] The King was forced to read

6. Dixit, "The Spring of Dissent: People's Movement in Nepal," 119
7. Routledge, "Nineteen Days in April: Urban Protest and Democracy in Nepal," 1286
8. ibid., 1290
9. ibid.
10. Dixit, "The Spring of Dissent: People's Movement in Nepal," 120
11. ibid.

a statement of concession drafted by SPA leaders that called for an end to the monarchy and the creation of a new democratic system. In elections held in 2008, the Maoists routed their political rivals, earning 30 percent of the overall vote and 220 assembly seats–double the number of the Nepali Congress party, their nearest competitor.[12] On August 18, 2008, the Maoists' revolutionary leader, Comrade Prachanda became prime minister of Nepal.

7.2 Social Structures

While the weakness of the Maoists' network of popular support led them to believe that the use of armed force was necessary, violence became a means through which the Maoists were in fact able to expand that network. They started by targeting police stations where they could capture guns and munitions necessary for further attacks. They then captured villages where they would evict or kill landlords and destroy land deeds and loan documents. As Joshi and Mason describe:

"When Maoist insurgents moved into a district, they first targeted landlords and their allies in the local government. Once they had eliminated the landlords, they redistributed their land, destroyed bondage papers, canceled debts, compelled local government officials to resign, and con- stituted "people's governments" in the villages. By driving out landlords, the rebels effectively released peasants from the clientelist obligations that had bound them,

12. Thapa and Sharma, "From Insurgency to Democracy: The Challenges of Peace and Democracy-Building in Nepal," 210

allowing them to more freely support the insurgent communists."[13]

In so doing, the Maoists both won over the sympathy of many of the villagers and in severing the ties of economic dependency freed them to engage in contentious political action. They also implemented institutions of governance that were often superior to what the state previously provided. They built infrastructure, such as roads and bridges and established "People's Courts" that could resolve local disputes more quickly and often in the eyes of local inhabitants more justly than the state justice system that was often distant and corrupt.[14]

The Maoists were not shy about articulating to the villagers in gruesome detail the means that they employed and that that they believed necessary to bring revolutionary change. In fact, they used their embrace of brutal violence to help further win the support of the people. Maoist cadres would often stage ceremonies or plays in which they would re-enact the killing of the local landlords. Anthropologist Tatsuro Fujikaro describes that after killing a "class enemy" in Salyan district, "the Maoists summoned the local people to a cultural program in which they re-enacted how they dragged him outside of his house and cut off his limbs, little by little. They repeated this program in several different villages."[15]

Fujikaro surmises that "The purpose of these 'propaganda activities' … was to convince the villagers of the necessity and efficacy of revolutionary violence. What the Maoists

13. Joshi and Mason, "Land Tenure, Democracy, and Insurgency in Nepal: Peasant Support for Insurgency Versus Democracy," 411.

14. Mahendra Lawoti, "Evolution and Growth of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal," in *The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Revolution in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Mahendra Lawoti and Anup K Pahari (London: Routledge, 2010), 16.

15. Tatsuro Fujikura, "The Role of Collective Imagination in the Maoist Conflict in Nepal," *Himalaya* 23, no. 1 (2003): 24.

aimed to convey was that it was only Maoist violence that could eliminate the local 'exploiter' whose power derived in part from his close connection with state power."[16]

Anthropologists working in different areas of Nepal observed similar performances and noted the seemingly positive impact they had on local inhabitants: "We heard that Maoists were starting to break into the houses of wealthy people, tax collectors and moneylenders, stealing their money and property and distributing it to the poor. What amazing news, we had never heard anything like that before!. . . we heard that the Maoists were breaking the arms and legs of moneylenders and tax collectors in the west of the country and were taking control of the villages. How amazing!"[17]

The Maoists deliberately used ethnic and religious cleavages between their potential supporters and the elites of Nepali society in order to win loyalty and mobilize action. They initiated boycotts of the Hindu holiday of Dasain, decrying it as a celebration of the high-caste Hindu's conquest of the indigenous communisites of Nepal.[18] Additionally, they hosted village-wide "beef feasts" in which cows, considered sacred in the Hindu faith, were slaughtered, cooked, and served.[19] These activities were obviously highly symbolic but served a utilitarian purpose in exploiting social cleavages to justify the use of violence on both moral and utilitarian grounds.

16. Fujikura, "The Role of Collective Imagination in the Maoist Conflict in Nepal," 27 as cited in Eck, "Recruiting Rebels: Indoctrination and Political Education in Nepal," 40.

17. Sara Schneiderman and Mark Turin, "The Path to Jan Starker in Dolakha District: Towards an Ethnography of the Maoist Movement," in *Himalayan People's War: Nepal's Maoist Rebellion*, ed. Michael J Hutt (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 89.

18. Susan Hangen, "Boycotting Dasain: History, Memory, and Ethnic Politics in Nepal," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nepal*, ed. Mahendra Lawoti and Susan Hangen (London: Routledge, 2013), 121–144.

19. David Holmberg, "Violence, Nonviolence, Sacrifice, Rebellion, and the State," *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 11, no. 1 (June 2006): 31–64.

The Maoists were not always welcomed with open arms, nor could they rely entirely on the good will of the local population in order to build and sustain their movement. Unsettled by the Maoists' calls for violence or fearful of becoming victimized, many villagers fled to other districts.[20] The Maoists also recruited child soldiers, demanding that families provide a teenage son to join the "People's Army."[21] A young Nepali man recounted to the author how he fled his village in eastern Nepal in the middle of the night when the Maoists made clear to his family that they expected him to join the movement the next day.[22]

Nevertheless, the Maoists' activities in the villages show that the use of violence was not just an alternative when nonviolent means were ineffective, but was actually a mechanism through which they were able to build greater popular support and generate mobilization. By physically controlling territory, they could turn those on the sidelines into sympathizers and sympathizers into participants. It gave them a previously unavailable opportunity to win hearts and minds or, failing in that, to mobilize via coercion and intimidation.

Increased mobilization capabilities allowed the Maoists to supplement their guerrilla operations with nonviolent tactics. When launching new attacks was not feasible, the Maoists used their student organizations, trade unions, and ethnic fronts to start street protests, strikes, or blockades. "These activities filled gaps when the party and PLA were facing setbacks and generated huge psychological dividends by bewildering the state and

20. Lecomte-Tilouine, "Ethnic Demands Within Maoism: Magar Territorial Autonomy, Nationality, and Class," 114–115.

21. Human Rights Watch, *Children in the Ranks: The Maoists Use of Child Soldiers in Nepal* (February 2007)

22. Author interview with 18 year old Nepali man. Interview conducted May 2013 in Kathmandu Nepal. The interview subject wishes to remain anonymous.

boosting the morale of cadres."[23]

The Maoists' utilization of nonviolent tactics should not be misinterpreted as the strategy of civil resistance or even an attempt at a hybridized or mixed strategy. Armed confrontation was still the means through which the movement would defeat the regime and demonstrations were simply intended to supplement the use of force. Nevertheless, the Maoists' ability to employ these techniques served as a strong indicator of their improved mobilizational capabilities and made it possible for Maoist leadership to begin to reconsider their assessment of the relative utility of armed insurgency versus civil resistance.

By the early 2000s, the civil war had reached a stalemate. Roughly 25 percent of the country's population lived in Maoist controlled territory and the state was unable to maintain a consistent presence anywhere outside of the Kathmandu valley.[24] But significant obstacles made the prospects of outright military victory bleak for the Maoists. The regime was now getting significant arms and financial assistance from international allies to help fight the Maoists. The United States even added the the Maoist political party to its list of terrorist organizations. And the Maoists had begun to suffer some significant defeats on the battlefield. Invading the Kathmandu Valley and capturing the capital city along the lines of Mao's "Strategic Offensive" would be next to impossible. The conflict was stuck in a stalemate.

Consequently, the Maoists began making subtle changes to their ideological doctrine

23. Lawoti, "Evolution and Growth of the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal," 13.
24. Thapa and Sharma, "From Insurgency to Democracy: The Challenges of Peace and Democracy-Building in Nepal," 209.

in their annual conferences. Rather than rely exclusively on the line of Mao, in 2001 the party embraced a new doctrine that became known as "Prachandapath" (named after the leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal's nom de guerre "Comrade Prachanda"). Cloaked in ideological language, Prachandapath claimed to mix Maoist and Leninist strategy, calling for the rural-based People's War to be supplemented by a mass uprising from within the cities. But it was unclear at the concrete level exactly what form this urban insurrection would take. Historically, urban movements in Nepal had predominantly taken the form of nonviolent civil resistance, from the 1990 Jana Andolan to Nirval Lama's argument in 1994, using the same Lenininst language, that the Maoists should maintain adherence to nonviolent tactics. In fact, the very text of the documents of the Maoist conference emphasizes the need to dedicate resources to propaganda, demonstrations, and strikes.[25]

The Maoists' expansion in their network of popular support since the beginning of the war made the employment of the nonviolent action repertoire more feasible. Their ranks had grown considerable and they had successfully patched together numerous networks of different ethnic, caste, and geographical groups. Meanwhile, they had changed the structural conditions in the areas that they had conquered. Citizens were no longer beholden to landlords and moneylenders and had the freedom to participate in contentious political acts. The Maoists could even coerce participation through intimidation and force. Through an analysis of land holding patterns, areas of Maoist control, and election participation and outcomes over the course of the 1990s, Madhav Joshi and T. David Mason find that the

25. For greater detail see Arjun Karki and David Seddon, eds., *The People's War in Nepal: Left Perspectives* (Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2003), 257–260.

Maoists were successful in breaking clientelist bonds between landholders and peasants and convincing (or perhaps coercing) electoral behavior consistent with the party's views.[26]

While the Maoist base of support was incredibly diverse, it still had only marginal overlap with that of the regime. The Maoists drew primarily from lower castes, indigenous nationalities, and the "Madhesis" who lived in the plains along the border with India. The regime, in contrast, drew from the high Hindu castes and Newar population of the Kathmandu valley. But the opportunity to form an alliance with the Nepali Congress and Marxist Leninists provided potential for an even broader movement that did have overlap with the regime. This ended up being the final factor in convincing the Maoists to change their strategy and join in a multiparty civil resistance campaign to end the monarchy.

On November 22, 2005, the legal political parties (represented in a group called the Seven Party Alliance and including both the Nepali Congress and the Unified Marxist Leninists) signed an agreement to engage in a mutual campaign of civil resistance with the goal of overthrowing the regime and creating a Constituent Assembly that would draft a new constitution for Nepal.

The alliance between the Maoists and the political parties allowed the movements not only to combine forces, but to build popular support for the campaign that exceeded the sum of support for the respective parts. Nepalis who were not passionate about any of the political parties in particular were persuaded to take part in the campaign out of the belief that victory for the movement would lead not just to political changes but to a peaceful

26. Madhav Joshi and T David Mason, "Between Democracy and Revolution: Peasant Support for Insurgency versus Democracy in Nepal," *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no. 6 (November 2008): 765–782

resolution of the civil war. As a trade union activist described to Paul Routledge, "Immediately after the 12-point agreement, the mass meetings of the political parties took on a different flavour, because with the Maoists brought in, the hope could be for democracy and peace."[27]

Maoist support for the movement also gave Nepali Congress and Marxist-Leninist outside of the Kathmandu valley confidence that they could travel safely to participate in demonstrations. Another activist told Routledge, "When the Maoists stated publicly that they supported the movement, they would participate and they would not restrict people from participating in the agitation, it gave a great boost to the movement as it removed the fear from the villagers."[28]

The varied bases of support of the Maoists and the political parties created a base of support for the movement that was numerous, diverse, and overlapping with the regime. The Maoists had the strength of large numbers of supporters in their base areas in the rural hills. In fact, the Maoists sent busses from villages into Kathmandu filled with their supporters that provided a significant boost to the number of demonstrators in the capital. According to Routledge, these Maoist supporters provided "the major force of the Jana Andolan."[29]

The political parties meanwhile had strong links with professional organizations such as professors, doctors, teachers, engineers and nurses. They provided value not only in

27. Routledge, "Nineteen Days in April: Urban Protest and Democracy in Nepal," 1287.
28. ibid., 1288.
29. ibid., 1290.

their added numbers but in the specialized skills they brought to the movement (medical professionals and lawyers being particularly valuable) and in the close ties they often shared with members of the regime.

Perhaps as a consequence of this high degree of overlap the death toll of the 2006 Jana Andolan was extremely small with only 22 fatalities.[30] Moreover, the defection of the military leadership played a decisive role in the conclusion and ultimate victory of the campaign as the commander of the armed forces advised the king that repression of the movement would be impossible and that he should concede the movement's demands.[31]

7.3 Alternative Explanations

The Maoists' conversion to nonviolence substantially refutes explanations based on movement ideology. The defining characteristic of Maoist revolutionary strategy is the belief that power "flows from the barrel of a gun." Perhaps surprisingly, many of the Maoists interviewed for this study, from senior leaders to rank and file cadres and fighters, expressed a belief that the movement's transition to nonviolent means did not run counter to the party's ideology. Instead, they claimed that it was understood from the beginning of the conflict that at some point it would be necessary to transition from armed insurgency to nonviolent forms of political contestation.

30. Dixit, "The Spring of Dissent: People's Movement in Nepal," 114.
31. ibid., 120 and confirmed in interview with Gen. Balananda Sharma, conducted in Kathmandu, June 2013.

For example, a former Maoist militia member recounted:

"When we started the revolution, we had a clear vision that the armed revolution would not last forever, just for some time… We had a clear idea that for some period of time we would wage war and, after a period of time, we would have to join a peace process, elections, etc…"[32]

But this idea of a non-violent "endgame" to the revolution is not present in any of the party's written ideological documents from the early stages in the conflict. All available documents indicate a more strict adherence to the Maoist doctrine of a three-stage revolution in which the revolutionaries surround the major cities and ultimately capture the capital with military force.[33] This begins to change in the early 2000s as the Maoist leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal ("Prachanda"), introduced a revised party doctrine known as "Prachandapath" that called for adapting Maoist doctrine to better fit the local dynamics of Nepal. According to "Prachandapath," the party would not seek to attack the major cities from the outside as called for by Mao, but instead seek to foment revolution within them, as called for by Lenin. It is difficult to assess exactly what tactical means were intended with the call for Lenin-style urban revolt, but as was described in the preceding chapter, communist groups frequently used the term "Lenin-style" revolution to refer to nonviolent urban protest, even though Lenin's means were in actuality explicitly violent. This conceptual stretching allowed communist groups in Nepal to justify Gandhian tactics

32. Ash Bahadur Pun, interview with author, conducted in Sulichaur, Rolpa, Nepal on May 20, 2014.
33. See for example, "Strategy and Tactics of Armed Struggle in Nepal," in Karki and Seddon, "The People's War in Historical Context."

within the ideological discourse of revolutionary communism.

Thus even if nonviolent action was not explicitly antithetical to Nepalese Maoist doctrine, ideology alone is nevertheless an insufficient explanation for the change in Maoist behavior. In fact, the Maoist's reinterpretation of communist ideology and development of so-called Prachandapath, illustrates a central argument of this study: that the vast majority of ideologies make room for both violent and nonviolent forms of contention, and that movements are able and willing to transform or reinterpret ideological doctrine in order to provide justification for strategies that are better suited to the strategic conditions in which they find themselves.

The coalition between the Maoists and the legal political parties just prior to the beginning of the civil resistance movement is consistent with the prediction of organizational theories that only cohesive movements are likely to be able to engage in nonviolent campaigns. However, the Maoist movement had been internally cohesive throughout its period of insurgency. As argued in the last chapter, its decision to take up arms was the outcome of a deliberative process in which the majority of the membership believed that only violence would be effective in allowing the movement to achieve its political goals. This decision caused a fissure within the movement, but was not a consequence of it.

Over the next ten years there were occasional feuds between two of the most senior Maoist leaders, Dahal and Baburam Bhattarai, with Bhattarai even being placed under house arrest at one point. But this disagreement lasted for only one out of ten years of the struggle. Overall, the Maoist insurgents showed high levels of cohesion, maintained

a formal hierarchy of leadership, demonstrated the capability to coordinate complex military and political operations across multiple units, and avoid acts of renegade and wanton violence.[34]

The coalition between the Maoists and political parties did create broader unity among the actors resisting the monarchy, but as argued in the previous section of this chapter, the specific advantages this brought to the strategy of nonviolent resistance came in the way that it broadened the social base of support for the movement, giving the Maoists and political parties the vertical and horizontal overlap respectively that they had previously lacked.

The effect of repression is difficult to gage in the context of the ongoing civil war. There is ample evidence that regime security forces engaged in brutal repression, even of civilian populations and those whose connection to the Maoists was questionable.[35] But as this all occurred in a situation where the regime is fighting a counterinsurgency, these examples do not necessarily provide much insight into how the regime might have responded to nonviolent protest at that particular time. However, the timing of the transition to nonviolence after the ascension of Gyanendra to the throne undermines repression-based explanations of the Maoist conversion. Gyanendra had a reputation for being more brutal than Dipendra, who had met the 1990 nonviolent movement with relatively low levels of repression and ultimately conceded to its demands. Soon after assuming office, Gyanendra instituted

34. There were a few notable cases of violence against civilians for which Dahal attempted to deny responsibility by placing blame on rogue commanders. However, there are no known cases of senior or mid-level commanders overtly challenging Dahal's leadership of the movement.

35. For an overview of civilian human rights abuses during the conflict, see **HumanRightsWatch:2004tj**

new laws limiting the activities of political parties and responded to the resulting protests with the imprisonment of party leaders. In fact, it was Gyanendra's repression that drove the political parties into alliance with the Maoists, making possible the 2006 civil resistance campaign.[36]

The Maoist turn to nonviolence does illustrate an important role played by international actors. The Maoists had hoped that early battlefield victories might lead to foreign support, especially from China. When such support never materialized, it made the prospects of an outright military victory less likely. Instead, the early Maoist success brought large flows of funds from the United States and India to the side of the regime. These made a material difference in the regime's ability to effectively fight the Maoists, especially in the use of helicopters to overcome the obstacles presented by mountainous terrain. Indian policy was somewhat mixed toward the Maoists, with Indian intelligence services reportedly allowing Maoist leaders to seek refuge across the border, while the Ministry of Defence fully supported the regime. The result was a military stalemate, but one in which it became clear to the Maoists that capturing Kathmandu through force would be impossible.

But the aid to the Nepal army alone was not sufficient to cause a change in strategy by the Maoists. Even once the military stalemate became evident in 2002 and 2003, the Maoists continued to wage armed conflict, hoping that even a stalemate would coerce the king into some type of negotiated settlement. It was only after the possibility of coali-

36. Thapa and Sharma, "From Insurgency to Democracy: The Challenges of Peace and Democracy-Building in Nepal," 208.

tion with the political parties came about that the Maoists came to embrace the idea that they could achieve their primary political goal–end of the monarchy and creation of a new constitution–through a strategy of civil resistance. But India played a key role in this as well as it helped mediate the 12-point agreement between the Maoists and the political parties that made the transition to nonviolence possible.

7.4 Conclusion

As much as the Maoists were ideologically predisposed to insurgency, they proved willing to be pragmatic in their strategic choices. They had participated nonviolently in the first Jana Andolan of 1990, they then competed in parliamentary politics during the early 1990s, and attempted to use the repertoire of nonviolent direct action to further their political clout. However, these efforts led the Maoists to conclude that they did not have sufficient popular support to enable a strategy of civil resistance to be effective.

Ironically, it was through the process of fighting an armed insurgency that the Maoists were able to expand their own base of support. By using power out of the barrel of a gun, they were able to capture territory, spread their message, and free sympathizers from the clientelist bonds that prevented their participation in contentious action.

As the obstacles to the continuation of armed insurgency rose over the course of the early 2000s, their expanding mobilization potential made a change in strategy possible.

Joining forces with Nepali Congress and the Marxist-Leninists further boosted the base of support for a combined civil resistance campaign. More importantly, the formal political parties brought in participants from other segments of society, providing greater overlap with the regime's base of support. The consequence was a campaign that was short, quick, and decisive with minimal casualties.

Furthermore, the Maoists proved capable of harnessing their newly developed mobilization capabilities for use in institutionalized politics following the 2006 Jana Andolan. In the 2008 elections for the Constituent Assembly, they garnered 30 percent of the overall vote and won 220 seats, double that of their nearest rival, the Nepali Congress. Their leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, went from guerilla commander to becoming Prime Minister of a democratic country.

Factor	Value	Explanation	Prediction
Social Structures			
Mobilization Potential	High	• Maoists build national network of supporters through territorial gain • Coalition with political parties creates even larger base of support	Civil Resistance
Horizontal Overlap	High	• Maoists use territorial gains and class-based narrative to build coalition among other disadvantaged groups within Nepali society	Civil Resistance
Vertical Overlap	High	• Coalition with politicl parties increases movement membership of high-caste elites that are highly represented within governmental institutions	Civil Resistance
Alternative Explanations			
Ideology	Mixed	• Coalition includes factions with both violent and nonviolent ideologies	Indeterminate
Cohesion	Cohesive	• Movement result of coalition between Maoists, political parties, and civil society organizations	Indeterminate
Repression	Moderate	• Regime had just escalated arrests of nonviolent political leaders in Kathmandu • Regime escalating brutality of counterinsurgency efforts against Maoists	Indeterminate
External Support	Conditional on Nonviolence	• US and India increase military support to regime • India facilitates agreement between Maoists and political parties for purposes of nonviolent campaign	Civil Resistance

Figure 7.1: Congruency of competing theories against evidence from the 2006 case. Predictions are marked in green when consistent with the observed outcome of the case, red when inconsistent, and orange when indeterminate.

Conclusion to Case Studies

The previous chapters have allowed for a more detailed examination of how revolutionary movements come to adopt either a strategy of civil resistance or armed insurgency in their efforts to topple a regime. This has allowed for a deeper inquiry into the role of factors like ideology and movement cohesion that are difficult to measure quantitatively. It also helped to reveal the specific processes through which movements come to arrive at a given strategy.

In all four cases, there is evidence that the movements engaged in a process of assessment and deliberation about which strategy would be more effective. In each case, the meetings where strategy was discussed can even be pinpointed to a specific time and place. In the 1950 anti-Rana revolt, an actual vote as taken. In the two nonviolent cases, a series of negotiations between previously rival parties produced a consensus over civil resistance as the most appropriate and effective means. Finally, in the case of the Maoist insurgency, the deliberations created a fissure within the group, with one faction returning to electoral politics and the other unanimous in its intent to start a war.

Variation in the strategies embraced by each revolutionary movement is largely con-

sistent with variation in their respective bases of social support. Both movements that resorted to arms had previously engaged in some level of nonviolent protest and strike tactics. From these experiences they gained information about the nature of their bases of popular support. Specifically, they came to believe that they did not have the mobilizational strength to present an existential threat to the regime via a strategy of civil resistance. Furthermore, both the Nepali Congress in 1950 and the Maoists in 1996 lacked horizontal social overlap: their support networks were concentrated within specific social groups with few ties to broader Nepali society. The membership of the Nepali Congress was comprised almost exclusively of exiles whose families had been living in India for at least one generation. The Maoists rank and file support came primarily from the Magar ethnic group living in Nepal's Mid-Western hill region.

Nepal's Magar population was also largely excluded from the bureaucracy and other positions of governance in Nepal. This meant that the Maoists also lacked vertical social overlap with the regime. Consequently, they were pessimistic about the idea that could win sympathy from members of the regime and win over defections that are key to nonviolent success. Additionally, they believed, fairly or not, that the high-caste Hindu leaders in Kathmandu would not hesitate to use violent force to prevent them from achieving their political objectives.

The Nepali Congress in 1950 did have some social ties between its membership and the regime as both groups drew from the ranks of the high-caste Hindu elites. However these ties were still fairly weak due to social division between the Kathmandu-based bureaucracy

and the exile community that made up the Nepali Congress. What social ties existed between these two groups were insufficient to compensate for the Nepali Congress' inability to generate sufficient mass mobilization.

When the social endowments of the Nepali Congress and the Maoists changed over time, so too did their strategies. The Nepali Congress was able to expand its base of support as an underground party in the 1960s and 1970s. Through this process of organization building as well as the formation of a coalition with leftist parties in the late 1980s, the movement was able to develop nation-wide reach, connecting diverse social groups at the grass-roots level while maintaining ties with regime elites. Thus it became optimistic about its ability to coerce concessions from the king through massive street protests and loyalty shifts from key state leaders.

The Maoists were also able to build ties with other social groups, but through the process of territorial gain and class-based propaganda. They were able to build a large and broad base of supporters from across ethnic groups who shared common grievances of class exploitation. While this increased the Maoists ability to generate mass mobilization, they still did not have close social ties with regime elites. It was only through alliance with the formal political parties that the Maoists were able to become part of a movement that enjoyed vertical as well as horizontal overlap. Consequently, they agreed to lay down their arms, concluding that nonviolence now offered a more efficacious path to achieve their political goals.

Alternative theories of revolutionary movement behavior provide less satisfying ex-

planations of the strategic variation observed in Nepal. For example, while ideology may have imbued the movements with an initial preference or sense of appropriateness about the use of violent and nonviolent tactics, both the Nepali Congress and the Maoists proved willing to contravene their ideologies when they came to believe that conditions necessitated the use of an alternative strategy. Nepali Congress leaders had been educated in India, worked closely with the nonviolent Indian resistance movement, and absorbed the lessons of Gandhian nonviolence. Meanwhile, both the Maoists and the Marxist-Leninist communist groups took their cues from Lenin's and Mao's calls to arms. But in three out of the four cases, the movement chose to adopt a strategy contrary to their initial preferences. Nepali Congress gave up on nonviolence in 1950 after failing to generate sufficient mobilization against the Rana regime in Kathmandu. In the 1970s and 1980s, both NC and the CPN-UML abandoned their earlier efforts at armed insurgency and focused instead on building organizational structures that eventually proved capable of bringing thousands into the street to force the creation of a new constitution. The Maoists were the one actor who initially acted in accordance with their ideological commitment to armed struggle. But the decision was the result of intense debate within the Unity Centre coalition and disagreements over strategy drove the coalition to split into violent and nonviolent factions. A decade letter, when Maoist leaders decided the conditions no longer favored continuation of the insurgency, they abandoned violence and joined the other political parties in a civil resistance campaign.

The case study evidence does not directly contradict organizational cohesion theories

of rebel strategy, though it does highlight some of their limits. Both movements that adopted nonviolence were highly cohesive, but so was the 1950 movement that took up arms against the Rana regime. Meanwhile, the Maoist movement fragmented just two years before launching its insurgency. However, the causal order is reversed from what organizational theories predict: it was the decision to take up arms that drove Nirval Lama and his supporters to leave the movement. The use of violence was not, as the outbidding hypothesis suggests, a response to fragmentation.

The role of regime repression in affecting movement calculus is more difficult to assess through the case studies. Many of those involved in the armed movements, from 1950 Nepali Congress leader B.P. Koirala to former Maoist guerrillas interviewed for this study cited brutal regime repression as one of the reasons for which they believed armed insurgency as the only viable strategic option. However, when comparing across cases, there do not seem to be significant differences in the levels of prior regime repression between the violent and nonviolent campaigns. Regime security forces had used lethal force against nonviolent student protesters in 1979, just prior to the intensification of nonviolent efforts by the NC and UML over the course of the 1980s that culminated in the 1990 civil resistance movement. Meanwhile, the 2006 Jana Andolan occurred after the palace massacre that brought Gyanendra to the throne, who was perceived as far more brutal and repressive than his predecessor, Dipendra.

Meanwhile, the regime had shown some leniency to those engaged in nonviolent action prior to the two armed insurgencies. Nepali Congress leaders involved in nonviolent

action against the Rana regime in the 1940s were imprisoned under brutal conditions, but they were eventually released in most cases. By contrast, the Praja Parishad conspirators who had attempted to assassinate the Rana family were executed. And while there were numerous incidents of lethal force used against Maoist political organizers and sympathizers in Rolpa leading up to the 1996 insurgency, the majority of these occurred in the period after the May 1994 decision to begin preparing for war. Furthermore, the Maoists had been able to organize nonviolent demonstrations in Kathmandu between 1991 and 1994 without significant regime repression.

Finally, the case studies have illustrated the possible importance of international factors in movement decision-making, though the specific variables of interest appear to be different for the strategic logics of armed insurgency an civil resistance. Support from India was absolutely essential for the viability of the armed 1950 anti-Rana revolt. The Nepali Congress needed the ability to organize, collect weapons, and operate outside the territorial borders of Nepal. For the Maoists, it is still unclear what level of international support, if any, they had in the early years of the war. However, writings from Maoist leaders prior to the start of the war indicate a belief that a few initial victories would encourage China as well as international communist organizations to provide material assistance. This belief, however erroneous, appears essential in the Maoist narrative for how an armed insurgency could eventually be victorious.

In the civil resistance campaigns, India played an important role in forging the coalitions that gave the movements the broad, overlapping bases of support necessary to be

effective. Furthermore, the strong ties between India and the Nepali government, especially between the two states' militaries, led the movements to believe that India could help prevent violent repression.

Nepal may be a unique case when it comes to the role of external actors given its unique geographical position of being wedged between two regional superpowers. This high degree of power asymmetry may require revolutionary movements to be more attentive and responsive to the larger geopolitical environment than they might in other cases. Nevertheless, the influence of external actors on revolutionary movement behavior should be investigated in future research, especially given the potential relevance for policy.

FACTOR	1950 Anti-Rana Revolt	1990 Jana Andolan	1996 People's War	2006 Jana Andolan II
Social Structures				
Mobilization Potential	Low	High	Low	High
Horizontal Overlap	Low	High	Low	High
Vertical Overlap	Moderate	Moderate/High	Low	High
Alternative Explanations				
Ideology	Nonviolent	Accepts Violence	Violent	Mixed
Cohesion	Cohesive	Cohesive	Violence -> Fragmentation	Cohesive
Repression	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
External Support	Permissive of Violence	Conditional on Nonviolence	No Support	Conditional on Nonviolence
OUTCOME	*Armed Insurgency*	*Civil Resistance*	*Armed Insurgency*	*Civil Resistance*

Figure 7.2: A comparative assessment of the competing theories' predictions across all four cases. Predictions are marked in green when consistent with the observed outcome of the case, red when inconsistent, and orange when indeterminate.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

In numerous contexts around the globe, nonviolent civil resistance campaigns have proven to be an important phenomenon in contemporary international relations. They have proven an effective alternative to violence in the pursuit of maximalist political goals. In other contexts, they have been a precipitant to armed civil wars, and in others still they have been a catalyst of great power rivalry and intervention.

Despite this clear real-world importance, social scientific explanations for where, when, and why civil resistance campaigns occur remain under-theorized. This study has sought to fill this gap by investigating how movements with the specific political aim of regime change come to embrace wither civil resistance or armed insurgency as alternative means in pursuit of that goal. The question is a broad one and no single deterministic theory is likely to explain all cases. Nevertheless, this study has advanced our knowledge of the subject in several ways.

First, this study has presented critical argument and empirical evidence that casts doubt on several existing theories in the extant literature that could be applied to the question of revolutionary strategy. It has shown, most explicitly in the case of Gandhians and Maoists in Nepal, that even groups with the highest a priori ideological commitments to either violence or nonviolence are in fact willing to turn to the other strategy when they believe that strategic conditions require them to do so.

Furthermore, while organizational cohesion may be a prerequisite for effective civil resistance, it is not a sufficient condition as many highly cohesive movements still take up arms. Additionally, as the case of Nepal's Maoists illustrates, debates over strategy, and especially decisions to use violent force, are often the cause, not the consequence, of movement fragmentation. And the presence of an ongoing campaign employing armed insurgence did not increase the likelihood of another movement resorting to arms as the "outbidding" mechanism would predict.

Finally, there is little evidence of a regime's prior use of repression being systematically or uniformly correlated with the strategies revolutionary movements subsequently use in attempts to take over the state. This is not to say that repression does not matter–in fact leaders and participants in movements almost universally cite regime repression as an important dynamic–but rather that its effects are highly contingent and, in the aggregate, indeterminate.

In contrast, theories from the literature on civil wars that argue that civil wars are more prevalent when structural environmental factors favor the tactics of guerilla warfare

seem to carry over when applied to decisions between violent and nonviolent strategies. State weakness, mountainous terrain, and the availability of external sources of support (as proxied through the Cold War) were all positively correlated with the likelihood of armed insurgency as compared to civil resistance, though the statistical significance of these relationships was often not robust to alternative model specifications.

The major contribution of this study, however, has been to argue that the social structures of revolutionary movements matter. Extant literature on civil resistance had emphasized the primacy of mass participation in the success of nonviolent campaigns. Through process-tracing of four revolutionary campaigns in Nepal, this study has illustrated that movements have information about their abilities to generate mass mobilization, such as prior mobilization efforts or electoral participation, and use that information to make anticipatory judgements about the relative efficacy of civil resistance versus armed insurgency.

Furthermore, this study has shown that while absolute size of participation matters, whom a movement is able to mobilize is equally if not more important. It has presented a theoretical argument of how the presence or absence of "social overlap" between a movement and the regime informs a movement's expectations about the relative efficacy of violent and nonviolent tactics, and it has presented empirical evidence of a statistically significant correlation between social overlap and the likelihood of a movement embracing nonviolent civil resistance.

Finally, the investigation of revolutionary strategy has raised new puzzles about movement, state, and international actor behavior. The remainder of this chapter assess the

contributions of this study to the social science literature on inter- and intrastate conflict, elaborate on those new puzzles and the possible avenues they present for future research, and explore the implications of the findings presented in this study for policymakers, advocates, and social movements.

8.1 Implications for Scholarship

In analyzing the strategic behavior of revolutionary movements, this study has made several contributions to our understanding of conflict processes and dynamics. It has also raised new questions in need of further investigation and research.

Explanations for the causes of civil wars have developed largely within two traditions. On has focused on the types of grievances that motivate individuals and groups to seek to overthrow their governments and has included theories of relative deprivation, horizontal inequality, and inter-group inequalities. Another has assumed grievances to be functionally ubiquitous and focused instead on the the structural conditions that create opportunities for armed rebellion.

Both of these schools of thought have ignored civil resistance as an alternative means to achieve revolutionary ends. As such, they presuppose a false choice between either accepting the status quo (or at least limiting efforts at political change to the institutionalized means sanctioned by the state) or violent insurgency. Grievance-based theories of civil war

consequently over-predict the onset of civil war as they fail to account for those movements that seek regime change but opt to pursue it through the extra-institutional but nonviolent strategy of civil resistance.

In focusing their attention on environmental factors that favor the "technology" of guerrilla warfare, opportunity theories of rebellion do not follow the same trap. However, they still miss part of the story in that they ignore potential factors that affect the viability of alternatives to insurgency. this study has sought to demonstrate that a movement's decision to take up arms is informed not only by an assessment of the viability of insurgency, but by expectations about the relative effectiveness of violent and nonviolent means.

In short, this study has aimed to improve our understanding of where and when civil war occurs by disaggregating the question into two parts: first, when do groups attempt to overthrow the political order, and second, how do they decide between violent and nonviolent strategies of achieving this end. Grievance theories of civil war can still help us answer the former, while the theoretical mechanisms explored through this study are intended to address the latter.

This study also seeks to advance the emerging literature on nonviolent civil resistance as an important political phenomenon in its own right. Extant work that addresses the choice between violence and nonviolence have either limited the scope of analysis to secessionist or anti-occupation campaigns, or have focused their analysis on state-level macro variables and consequently found few statistically significant patterns.[1] This study has instead inves-

1. Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement*, Cunningham, "Understanding Strategic Choice: The Determinants of Civil War and Nonviolent Campaign in Self-Determination Disputes,"

tigated the larger set of movements that seek regime change and has found evidence that characteristics of the movements themselves have a generalizable impact on the strategies that they choose.

Understanding how movements choose between nonviolent and violent strategies is also a prerequisite to improving our understanding of when and why nonviolent campaigns succeed. If movements anticipate the conditions under which nonviolence may be more or less effective and alter their strategic behavior accordingly, it could potentially bias analyses of the relative effectiveness of civil resistance and armed insurgency. Extant work has harnessed models from the technology of insurgency literature that predict the likelihood of insurgency via variables that proxy conditions favorable to guerrilla tactics to control for these potential "selection effects."[2] By examining the other half of the equation—factors that are favorable to civil resistance—this study provides an opportunity to better control for these anticipatory decisions in future analyses of what makes nonviolence work.

Finally, this study produces new knowledge about the importance of participation, membership, and mobilization in civil resistance campaign. The literature has long understood the power of numbers. But this study suggests that who participates may be as important as how many. Direct social ties between members of a revolutionary movement, other segments of society, and members of the regime are crucial for activating the mechanisms of defection and backfire that are at the center of nonviolent strategy.

and Chenoweth and Lewis, "Unpacking Nonviolent Campaigns: Introducing the NAVCO 2.0 Dataset."

2. ibid., 79–82.

8.2 FUTURE PUZZLES

In addition to its contributions to extant scholarship, this study has raised several new questions that should be explored in future research. The concept of social overlap has been central to the theory and empirics presented in this study. Yet problems of data availability have limited the extent to which this concept could be fully measured and explored. The measure of "vertical ethnic overlap" used in the quantitative analyses presented captures only one dimension of social relations. Movements that have ethnic overlap with a regime could be divided from it along other dimensions of individual identity or social structure. Alternatively, other forms of social ties or association could bridge a movement to a regime or other social groups with which it does not share a common ethnic background. New and better measures of social networks will make possible a deeper inquiry into the effects of social structures on revolutionary behavior.

This study also found an interesting and unresolved puzzle regarding the relationship between democracy and revolutionary strategy. While regime measures were included as a proxy for the likelihood of repression and with the expectation that civil resistance would occur less frequently in autocratic regimes, the findings showed an opposite pattern. Further analysis revealed an inverted-U relationship whereby civil resistance was more likely in moderately autocratic regimes, but less likely in highly autocratic and democratic states. This pattern could be consistent with the theory of social structures of support: in democratic regimes, actors who have concluded that revolution is necessary struggle to find allies

as most elements of society are either satisfied with the status quo or believe that institutional mechanisms are sufficient to achieve political change. Meanwhile, highly autocratic states create strong barriers to any kind of large-scale collective action. In either case, revolutionary movements may be likely to conclude that generating the type of mass mobilization necessary for civil resistance to be successful will be impossible. However, there may be other explanations for the observed correlation and future research is needed to better elucidate the dynamics between regime type and opposition strategy.

Meanwhile, the case study of Nepal presented evidence of the potential effect of international factors on movement strategy. India's willingness to harbor rebels was essential in the Nepali Congress decision to take up arms against the Rana regime, while its efforts in the early 2000's were crucial in the Maoist turn from violence to nonviolence. But Nepal may be a unique case in this regard given the extraordinarily high power asymmetry between itself and its neighbor, India. Cross-national analysis is necessary to assess the generalizability of these dynamics, but measuring to the impact of international actors is difficult. This study used the Cold War as a proxy for the availability of external financing for insurgency, but this is an incredibly rough proxy that could correlate with many underlying changes in the international system over time. Measures of a country's dependence n international trade and foreign military support may indicate the degree it would be vulnerable to foreign pressures in the case of a revolutionary uprising, but vulnerability and leverage are only half the story. The external power still has choice in how it wishes to use such leverage. The variation in how the U.S. chose to wield such leverage in the Arab

Spring—from warning Egypt against repression to keeping silent about the brutality of the Bahraini regime—shows that the effects of foreign actors are likely to be highly contingent. Nevertheless, these dynamics are important and in need of further study.

Finally, this study restricted its analysis within a narrow set of scope conditions, examining only movements seeking regime change and positing the strategic "menu" as a simplified dichotomous choice between ideal types of civil resistance and armed insurgency. The same dynamics of the social structures of revolutionary movements should be at play in cases where the political goals of movements are more diverse. Secessionist and anti-occupation movements are unlikely to have social overlap with their opponents, possibly explaining the relatively higher incidence of insurgencies vis a vis civil resistance in these cases. Movements seeking political reforms may also perceive their chances of success as being less likely when they are more socially distant from members of the regime and security forces. However, when the goals are not maximalist, norms about the appropriateness of violence may play a greater role than they do in revolutionary contexts. Future studies should broaden the inquiry both in terms of the types of movements to be examines as well as to possible mixed uses of violent and nonviolent repertoires of contention.

8.3 Implications for Policy

This findings of this study not only fill gaps in the scholarly literature on conflict processes, it may also have implications that are relevant for global policymakers and activists. The analysis presented in this study may be of use to actors who have a predictive interest in anticipating when and where popular mobilizations are more likely to turn violent. Alternatively, it should also be of interest to those with a normative interest in encouraging movements to embrace and maintain a strategy of nonviolent rather than violent resistance.

At first glance, however, the findings of this study suggest that external parties have only a limited ability to influence the behavior of revolutionary movements. Instead, it appears to be primarily local, movement-level dynamics that shape a movement's decision to embrace a nonviolent versus violent strategy. However, the availability of material support from foreign actors is one factor that pushes some movements to take up arms. Since the end of the Cold War, when the two largest sponsors of insurgent movements around the world, the United States and the Soviet Union, began withdrawing their support, we have seen a dramatic relative shift away from armed insurgency and in favor of civil resistance. Meanwhile, recent cases such as Syria have shown how a dramatic influx of foreign financial support can give armed movements a critical boost in the early phases of a conflict that crowds out groups pursuing nonviolent strategies. Efforts to stem the flow of funds and arms into politically unstable states could play a significant role in promoting the use of nonviolent over violent strategies.

Furthermore, we have seen the United States and other great powers begin to take seriously the importance of organization and cohesion in rebel movements. Western states have taken active roles in intervening to try to help form alliances between fractious rebel groups. However, to date this has largely been done after movements have already fragments and already turned to violence. The findings of this study suggest that such efforts could be targeted earlier, helping opposition movements unite prior to taking up arms, especially when doing so allows the movement to cross important social cleavages. The role of India in bringing together Maoists and political parties in Nepal serves as a potential guiding example for the role outside actors can play on this front.

Taking a more long-term view, the existence of the type of social divides that leads to revolutionary movements being more likely to resort to arms is the result of some type of political exclusion from the regime. Thus an alternative strategy for third-party actors wishing to promote the use of nonviolent strategies of resistance might be to pressure regimes to build more inclusive political institutions. Conditioning military aid upon efforts to increase representation in the state security forces could be one potentially effective instrument with which to apply such pressure. Of course, regimes are often excluding groups from state institutions exactly because they are trying to limit opportunities for mobilized resistance and to ensure the loyalty of of their pillars of support. The regimes themselves may prefer to face opposition by arms. Nevertheless, third-parties can may be able to apply pressure in ways that at least somewhat alter regime's incentives to engage in targeted exclusion.

Findings from this study may be of interest to movements themselves who wish to adhere to a strategy of nonviolent resistance. This study highlights the importance of not just building a large and diverse movement, but of focusing specifically on building a movement whose membership crosses salient identity cleavages within a society. Building these cross-cleavage ties, especially with members of the security forces and the regime, will be important to maintaining nonviolent discipline.

Finally, this study offers lessons for activists who are interested in convincing others to choose nonviolence. To date, these groups have largely focused their efforts on making the case for the superior efficacy of nonviolent methods under all structural conditions. This study, however, has identified a situation in which groups are particularly unlikely to be convinced that nonviolence can work. Advocates of nonviolence should therefore focus efforts on exploring how nonviolence can be effective in cases where no social overlap exists. This may include either developing strategies whereby movements can expand their network of supporters such as to develop greater overlap, or may focus on alternative nonviolent strategies that can lead to movement victory even when social overlap is not possible.

Nonviolent revolution has proven to be an enduring force in contemporary international security, capable of toppling autocracies and fostering democracy, but also of sparking civil wars and inciting geopolitical conflict. Despite its tremendous importance as well as its close relationship with armed conflict (as both an alternative and occasionally a precipitant), it remains relatively understudied in comparison to violent forms of political con-

testation. This study seeks to provide a small step into the exploration of how movements that have already embraced the political goal of regime change decide between a strategy of nonviolent civil resistance versus armed insurgency. Further inquiry is needed to help more fully understand generally when, where, why, and how nonviolent campaigns occur.

Appendix: List of Interviewees

Aditya Adhikari, freelance journalist and author. Patan, Nepal, June 2013.

Srijana Adhikari, President, Women Act Nepal. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Suresh Ale (Magar), politician, Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Kathmandu, Nepal, July 2013.

Dabbar Singh B.K., Dalit rights activist. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Man Bahdur Badhi, Dalit rights activist, party member, Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Lok Raj Baral, Director, Nepal Center for Contemporary Studies. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Sarun Batha (Magar), party member, Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Binod Bhattarai, consultant, Asian Development Bank; party activist, Nepali Congress. Patan, Nepal, June 2013.

Rajan Bhattarai, Chairperson, Nepal Institute for Policy Studies. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Barman Bahadur Budha (Magar), community leader, former Member of Parliament, United People's Front. Rolpa, Nepal, May 2014.

Chandra Bahadur Budha (Magar), community leader, Maoist activist. Rolpa, Nepal, May 2014.

Dev Bahadur Budha, community Maoist party leader. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014)

Ramsur Budha, former Maoist militia leader. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Shyam Kumar Budha (Magar), Maoist political wing leader. Dhang, Nepal, May 2014.

Devraj Dahal, Nepal Country Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Khim Lal Devkota, politician and lawyer, Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Kathmandu, Nepal, July 2013.

Daman Nath Dunghana, former Speaker of House of Representatives, Nepali Congress, national facilitator to peace negotiations. Kathmandu, Nepal, July 2013.

Mandir Gharti (Magar), disctrict vice president, Nepal Magar Association. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Dev Gurung, politician, Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Kathmandu, Nepal, July 2013.

Friso Hecker, Research Officer, The Carter Center. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Dipendra Jha, Chairperson, Terai Human Rights Defenders Alliance. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Chandra Bahadur, K.C., district representative. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Dharma K.C., former member of Maoist People's Liberation Army. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Gopal K.C., district representatitve. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Sher Bahadur K.C., party member, Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist). Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Khali Bahadur Khadka, party member, Nepal Workers and Peansants Party. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Prem Bahadur Khadka, community leader, Maoist activist. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Sumitra Khadka, women's rights activist. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Mukta S. Lama (Tamang), Professor, Nepa School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Pancha Maharjan, Professor of Political Science, Tribhuvan University. Kirtipur, Nepal, July 2013.

Ram Sharan Mahat, former Finance Minister, senior party leader, Nepali Congress. Bansbari, Nepal, July 2013.

Chaitanya Mishra, Professor of Sociology, Tribhuvan University. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Birendra Prasad Mishra, Professor of Philosophy, Electoral Commission Member, Peace Negotiation Committee Member. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

S.D. Muni, Distinguished Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. Delhi, India, July 2014.

Bir Bahadur Oli, party member, Nepali Congress. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Bir Bhan Oli, community leader, Maoist activist. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

K.P. Oli, senior leader, Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist-Leninist. Balkot, Nepal, June 2013.

Devendra Raj Pandey, former Finance Minister, convener, Citizen's Movement for Democracy and Peace. Kathmandu, Nepal, July 2013.

Mahabir Poudyal, columnist and editor, *Republica*. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Ash Bahadur Pun (Magar), Maoist militia member and student wing leader. Rolpa, Nepal, May 2014.

Ganesh Man Pun, Maoist Constituent Assembly member. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2014.

Ratokami Radi, Dalit rights activist. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Usha Kala Rai, Constituent Assembly member, Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist-Leninist. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Jaya Prakash Roka (Magar), community Maoist party leader. Rolpa, Nepal, May 2014.

Balananda Sharma, General (ret.), Nepalese Army. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Bharat Kumar Sharma, Chief Development Officer, Rukum District. Rukum, Nepal, May 2014.

Sudheer Sharma, Editor-in-Chief, *Kantipur*. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Chauyen Lai Shrestha, former leader of Nepali Students Union at Tribhuvan University. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Shobha Pradhan Shrestha, Executive Chair, Women for Peace and Democracy-Nepal. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Syam Shrestha, politician, Communisty Party of Nepal (Unity Centre). Kirtipur, Nepal, July 2013.

Mohan Bikram Singh, founder Communist Party of Nepal (Masal). Bhaktapur, Nepal, July 2013.

Prem Lal Singh, former mayor of Kathmandu, senior party leader, Nepali Congress. Kathmandu, Nepal, July 2013.

Janardan Subedi, Professor of Sociology, Miami University. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Deepak Thapa, Director, Social Science Baha. Kathmandu, Nepal, May 2013.

Ganga Thapa, Professor of Political Science, Tribhuvan University. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

Manish Thapa, Assistant Professor of Peace Studies, Tribhuvan University. Kathmandu, Nepal, May 2013.

Padma Ratna Tuladhar, leftist member of Rastriya Panchayat, Newar rights activist, mediator. Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2013.

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