Organizational Capacity and Constituency Dominance: Why Some Militant Groups Wage Sustained Insurgencies

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Abstract

Why do some militant groups wage sustained insurgencies while other groups do not? To address this puzzle, this study uses a resource mobilization framework and quantitative regression analyses of 246 prominent militant groups featured in the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) from 1970–2007. Findings show that proxies for organizational capacity and constituency dominance are better predictors of sustained insurgencies than traditional measures of group capabilities, diverging from current explanations of insurgency onset and outcomes. An insurrection led by a single group is the strongest determinant of a sustained insurgency, suggesting that rival consolidation plays a key role in the nascent stages of an armed conflict. While rarely achieving ultimate objectives, this study finds that religious militant organizations are associated with a higher likelihood of waging sustained insurgencies. Hub-spoke structured groups, with relatively decentralized command and control, are similarly as likely to sustain insurgencies as hierarchically structured groups. There is no single model that can explain particular militant group trajectories and counterinsurgency campaigns require context-specific analysis. However, this study presents generalizable empirical associations across diverse militant groups to examine an underexplored outcome of interest.

Keywords: militant group; terrorism; insurgency; civil war; armed conflict; organizational structure; resource mobilization

Introduction

Why do some militant groups wage sustained insurgencies while others do not? It is puzzling why some militant groups, who face immense difficulties in garnering material resources and support, are able to eventually fight more powerful militaries. Prominent insurgent groups like Hezbollah and the PKK faced uphill battles to consolidate more established rivals and develop robust organizational structures before launching sustained insurgencies against their target states. Most militant groups, however, fail to survive beyond their first year, let alone wage a full-fledged insurgency. Some groups, like the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood or the Egypt's al-Jamm'a al-Islamiya, engaged in armed insurrections but failed to sustain military operations against their respective target regimes beyond a few years. Among 246 of the most prominent militant groups (groups that have survived beyond their first year and have committed at least 10 attacks during their lifespan) featured in the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) from 1970–2007, this study identifies 77 (~31%) groups that have waged a sustained insurgency with their target state.

Why do some prominent militant groups engage in sustained armed conflicts, while others fail to get an insurgency off the ground or face defeat early on? Using a resource mobilization framework, this study tests key theories from the scholarly literature via quantitative regression analyses and finds that organizational capacity and constituency dominance are key drivers of this puzzle.[1] Overall, findings show that these factors are better predictors of sustained insurgencies than traditional measures of group capabilities (i.e. group size, state sponsorship, multipronged attacks), diverging from current explanations of insurgency onset or outcomes. Posing a serious challenge to a regime is not necessarily a function of how powerful or capable a group may seem—it is also about the competitive environment and capacity to effectively mobilize resources and sustain armed hostilities against government forces.

This study contributes to an emerging research program centered around the militant group-level of analysis. Recent work has been devoted to understanding the terrorism-insurgency nexus, mainly explaining why some insurgent organizations engage in terrorism or civilian victimization.[2] Other research focuses on explaining why some rebel or militant groups control territory or ultimately defeat the states they fight. However, this study

is one of the first to empirically assess why some militant or terrorist groups wage full-fledged insurgencies.

This study also addresses a selection bias in previous research which tends to explore the evolution of full-fledged insurgent groups.[3] Like most large-n research, case studies of insurgency or rebellion tend to look at the most lethal and enduring militant groups. But policymakers and researchers can learn a great deal about armed conflict by comparing militant groups that emerge under similar conditions yet fail to wage sustained campaigns of attrition.

The purpose of this study is to present a generalizable framework identifying indicators for scholars to explore in future work and for practitioners to incorporate in their assessments of potential insurgent threats. Understanding this phenomenon is critical since groups that are capable of launching sustained guerrilla or military operations gain more influence, recruitment, and fundraising capabilities while further weakening the target state.[4] It is far more difficult for states to defeat a full-fledged insurgency than prevent a nascent insurrection from flourishing.

The first two sections of this article offer a brief review of the literature, present this study's theoretical framework, and derive testable hypotheses from scholarly debates on terrorism, insurgency development, and civil war onset. The third section presents the research design and regression results. Subsequent sections discuss the findings, concluding with implications for scholarship. While this study does not identify detailed causal sequences, the quantitative analysis offers empirical associations which differentiate among militant groups that wage sustained insurgencies and those that do not.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

The broader scholarly literature tends to treat civil war, terrorism, and insurgency as analytically distinct phenomenon, despite representing interrelated forms of political violence. Early quantitative literature laid the groundwork for a better understanding of why some countries were more prone to civil war.[5] However, country-level indicators are limited in explaining why some militant groups wage sustained armed conflicts while other similar groups do not. At an aggregate level of analysis, there appears to be strategic logic behind the militant activity preceding sustained armed conflict that warrants further investigation.[6] It is therefore important to assess which types of militant groups are more likely to escalate violence to a full-fledged insurgency.

A separate research program based on the militant group-level of analysis assesses armed organizations largely based on capability indicators such as group strength or control of territory to help determine civil war dynamics and outcomes.[7] Most of this literature evaluates militant groups based on attaining ultimate objectives or maintaining longevity. Previous studies of insurgencies mainly examine militant group dynamics during civil wars or armed conflicts, overlooking militant groups that do not wage insurgencies in the first place.[8] Few scholarly attempts focus on why some militant groups evolve into viable insurgent threats—mainly by explaining group size, organizational cohesion, or territorial control.[9] This study's analytic pursuit, however, centers on a key marker of armed conflict based on battle-related deaths.

Further, this study relies on a resource mobilization theoretical framework and insights from previous research to help identify factors that differentiate among militant groups that are more likely to wage sustained insurgencies and those that do not. Research on social movements stresses that successful organizations need capacity to generate resources, develop robust organizational structures, and mobilize people toward achieving the group's objectives.[10] Daniel Byman (2008) incorporates similar themes to identify key factors that help clandestine militant groups evolve into full-blown insurgent organizations. To facilitate this transition, a group must first establish a salient identity related to a popular cause that resonates with constituents beyond the founding group members.[11] Groups seeking to challenge the target regime also need to consolidate a safe haven to effectively train, evade counterinsurgents, and build a robust organizational capacity to sustain military operations. While preparing for insurgency, militant groups often focus on achieving dominance over rival organizations competing for resources and members.

Motivation: Group Ideology and Objectives

The social movement literature describes the role of entrepreneurs (or militant group leaders in this context) in the strategic framing of a particular ideology, leading a process that promotes allegiance and ideological congruence among the rest of the organization. Exploiting or fueling grievances among a particular population is critical for groups to mobilize for an insurgency.[12] Some militant groups should be more capable of capitalizing on grievances and facilitating collective action than others—particularly religious and ethno-nationalist groups that can draw on support from a well-defined constituency.[13] These types of groups should be more likely to achieve strategic objectives than groups based on specific social or economic agenda, like left-wing or right-wing militant organizations. Regions that host sympathetic ethnic or religious communities also offer important comparative advantages for militant groups seeking opportunities for expansion and refuge from counterinsurgent forces.[14]

Ideology and culture also play a central role in determining varying levels of organizational capacities.[15] Religious groups in particular usually have access to more robust social networks which help them screen recruits more effectively and better address principal-agent problems to ensure compliance among the rank-and-file.[16] Religiously motivated groups also tend to be more lethal and maintain indivisible objectives, making negotiated settlements improbable and armed conflict more likely.[17]

Related to ideology, a group's stated ultimate objectives should also influence its willingness and capacity to mobilize resources for sustained campaigns of attrition. When it comes to group objectives, previous research suggests that groups seeking narrow goals, like secession or territorial independence, are more capable of achieving their ultimate objectives than groups seeking maximalist goals like toppling a regime or taking over the state.[18] Secessionist groups also tend to extract support from a more concentrated constituency that often share similar political and territorial goals.[19] These types of organizations are mainly looking to cultivate support from a more well defined region, making it easier to mobilize resources for insurgency than groups seeking to change a specific policy or make inroads across an entire state.

Hypothesis 1: Militant groups motivated primarily by religious ideologies are more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than other ideologically oriented groups.

Hypothesis 2: Militant groups with territorial objectives, like secession, are more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than groups seeking regime change. Militant groups with either territorial or regime change objectives are more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than other goal-oriented groups.

Organizational Structure

Research on social movements and militant group structures suggests that centralized and formally structured groups should be more effective at mobilizing resources and achieving broader objectives than more decentralized groups.[20] Most militant groups generally maintain poor resource profiles and tend to secure critical sources of resources after solidifying coercive and organizational capacity.[21] Insurgent groups adopt different types of organizational structure depending on their goals and the environment they operate in.[22] Preexisting social networks can help explain the formation of durable institutions that determine whether an insurgent organization is likely to remain cohesive over the course of an armed conflict or fragment.[23] For Staniland (2012), integrated militant organizations based on robust social ties are more capable of allocating resources effectively, keeping lower-ranking members in line with the group's broader objectives, and withstanding government counterinsurgency efforts. Militant groups with hierarchical structures are also associated with increased lethality and a higher likelihood of ultimately defeating the states they fight.[24] On the other hand, decentralized organizations, with relatively autonomous regional commanders, may be more resistant to state infiltrations and could be more flexible when facing rapidly evolving battlefield dynamics. On average, however, hierarchical organizations should be better suited to wage sustained insurgencies than more decentralized groups.

Hypothesis 3: The more hierarchical a militant group is organized, the more likely it will engage in a sustained

armed conflict.

Competitive Environment

Competitive dynamics among constituent and rival organizations play an important role in the trajectory of social movements. Recent work highlights the importance of rival relations and internal movement structure to assess militant dynamics.[25] Different types of militant group splits may also influence the duration of insurgencies or group longevity.[26] Competition for resources and manpower among militant groups is particularly crucial in the early phases of a violent conflict. Violence serves as an important signal of capabilities and resolve among rival groups—similar to the outbidding logic outlined in terrorism literature.[27] Militant groups also seek to consolidate rivals—whether by destructive campaigns or alliance formation—to emerge as the dominant organization.[28]

Young and Dugan (2014) find that higher levels of militant group competition (based on the number of terrorist groups in a country) reduce the likelihood of group survival.[29] The authors also show that the most active militant group in a country—referred to as the "Top Dog" group—was far less likely to cease existing than its competitors. Top Dog status, however, could also proxy for groups that have overshadowed their rivals as the most dominant organization among a wider movement. For a general assessment of competitive environments, the following hypotheses are derived given that a militant group's trajectory can be a function of rival militant groups operating in the host state.

Hypothesis 4a: The more militant groups operating in a state, the less likely a particular militant group will engage in a sustained armed conflict.

Hypothesis 4b: Top Dog militant groups are more likely to engage in a sustained armed conflict than non-Top Dog militant groups.

Research Design

Unit of Analysis: Militant Group

This study's unit of analysis is the militant group, defined as a collective, non-state organization with a designated name that engages in the use of illegal violence to achieve a "political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation."[30] It is important to clarify that this GTD definition of *terrorism* encompasses incidents that some view as civil war–related violence or traditional guerrilla hit-and-run attacks targeting military convoys.[31] The GTD's broader inclusion criteria may exclude certain insurgent or rebel organizations that do not purposefully target civilians in terrorist attacks throughout their lifespan. However, since many prominent militant groups tend to include both civilian and military targets within their attack profiles, this broad conception of a militant group is appropriate for analyzing why some prominent militant or terrorist organizations wage sustained insurgencies.[32]

Data

To test these hypotheses, this study primarily relies on Joshua Kilberg's (2011) dataset featuring militant groups identified in the GTD that committed at least 10 attacks and survived a minimum of one year, between 1970 and 2007. The number of observations (militant groups) for the base model is 228—down from 246 after including control variables to the base model.[33] Roughly 70% of all terrorist groups in the GTD do not survive longer than one year, yet the remaining number of groups account for 94% of attributed attacks.[34] This study focuses on viable militant groups that have already survived their most vulnerable phase and demonstrate the capacity to conduct more than a few attacks.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is *Sustained Armed Conflict* and is coded 1 if a group is identified in the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Armed Conflict Dataset, featuring conflicts characterized by a minimum of

25 battle-related deaths in a given year for at least five consecutive years.[35] The UCDP Armed Conflict Dataset is the most fine-grained global dataset in civil war research, but some conflicts in the data feature broad labels for non-state belligerents, such as *Kashmiri insurgents,* due to coding and data limitations. Secondary academic sources and other prominent datasets on civil war and insurgency were consulted to corroborate and complement initial coding efforts. Of the original 246 militant groups under study, 77 (~31%) are classified as groups that engage in sustained armed conflicts.

Failing to sustain an armed conflict is conceptualized broadly to encompass groups that do not get an insurgency off the ground or are defeated within the first few years after armed conflict onset. Both militant groups and states would prefer to fight and win early, as opposed to sustaining operations for a long time. This study does not explicitly distinguish between the myriad of ways that militant groups cease to exist as violent threats or fail to launch a sustained insurgency. Some groups may achieve their political objectives through negotiations or concessions from the state before widespread hostilities erupt. Other groups could ultimately defeat the target state within a few years and avoid a drawn-out conflict—although this outcome is extremely rare in this study's sample.[36] Many other militant groups fragment and splinter into smaller organizations, merge with other groups, or are swallowed by more powerful groups representing the same constituency.[37] Since the dependent variable is binary, a probit estimating technique is used to test the main independent variables.

Independent Variables

Motivation: Group Ideology and Objectives

Militant group ideology is delineated according to four categories: religious, nationalist, left-wing, and right-wing. While overlapping beliefs often motivate prominent groups, the primary ideology is used for this study. [38] Related to ideology, a group's stated ultimate objectives should also influence its willingness and capacity to mobilize resources for sustained campaigns of attrition. Group objectives are divided according to five types: whether a group has goals focused on territorial control, regime change, social revolution, policy change, or maintaining the status quo. Previous analyses of insurgencies focus only on groups seeking territorial control (i.e. secession) or regime change, but some groups without these overt objectives can still attempt to spark armed conflicts and should not be dismissed.[39]

Organizational Structure

Kilberg (2012) codes four different types of organizational structures: bureaucracy, hub-spoke, all-channel, and market (in descending order of centralization).[40] Bureaucratic structures are the most hierarchical, with clear command-and-control mechanisms emanating from a well-defined leadership to lower-level units, and distinct divisions with particular specializations. Hezbollah's organizational structure is a well-known example of a bureaucracy with centralized command and specialized units, including a political and media wing, a division focused on guerrilla/conventional military operations, and an external terrorist operations unit devoted to striking Jewish and Israeli targets abroad.[41] Like bureaucratic structures, hub-spoke structures have a leader and various units or cells with particular roles or functions, but lack centralized command and control. Without a clear hierarchy, each node of the hub-spoke structure usually needs to report to the central leader to coordinate operations. Examples include Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in Peru and Lashkar-e-Taiba, where units or cells associated with this type of structure tend to have more independence and discretion to prepare and conduct attacks. All-channel structures have a leader but maintain minimal hierarchy, if any, and no explicit functional differentiation among the group's constituent parts. The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood operating in the late 1970s is an example of a militant group with an all-channel structure. Finally, market structures are the most decentralized, with virtually no clear leadership or command and control.

Competitive Environment

To assess the competitive environment hypothesis, this study uses Young and Dugan's (2014) data featuring the "total number of primary terrorist groups that operated in an organisation's primary country in a given year."[42] Less prominent groups that remain outside this study's sample are included in this count, since

active militant groups that fall short of 10 attacks still influence the competitive environment. Since the data is cross-sectional (as opposed to a group-year panel structure), this study uses the average number of groups operating for the entire lifespan of a particular group that never reaches the threshold of sustained armed conflict. For groups that engage in sustained armed conflicts, this study relies on the precise number of active groups operating during the year a particular militant group reaches the threshold of armed conflict, where possible.[43] This distinction should help better explain whether more competitive environments influence the probability that a group engages in a sustained armed conflict.

Young and Dugan (2014) also code a group as Top Dog in a given year if that group committed the most attacks compared to other groups.[44] Incorporating Top Dog status in this study can be viewed as potentially tautological cause since elements of the outcome of interest (sustained armed conflict) may include attributes of the cause. The Top Dog proxy is a function of a particular militant group's attack profile, including civilian and military targets. However, the outcome of interest, sustained armed conflict engagement, is derived from a threshold based on annual battle-related deaths (among all belligerents) during an insurgency. In an effort to address endogeneity, this study classifies a militant group that engaged in sustained insurgencies as Top Dog if it was the most active militant group the year before and/or at the time it challenged the state in an armed conflict. But for groups that never cross my dependent variable threshold, this study codes groups as Top Dog if they held that status for at least half the duration of their lifespan, consecutively or not.[45]

Control Variables

Group Capabilities

Several proxies for militant group capabilities are included here to account for rival plausible explanations. One measure of strength is reflected in the percentage of multiple and coordinated attacks a group conducts out of total attacks in its first year, based on GTD data. Dummy variables are used to denote whether a militant group has a state sponsor (whether a foreign country provides finances, capabilities, weapons, or safe haven) and if a group conducts at least one attack in more than one country.[46] Groups that strike a higher proportion of hard targets, such as military installations or convoys, in their first year should also reflects higher capabilities than groups primarily or solely attacking soft targets (i.e. civilians, public places).

Data Limitations

It is important to note that many notable militant groups are often first identified in the GTD around the time they also begin engaging in sustained armed conflicts. These data limitations are understandable, given the difficulties in tracking a group's early attack profile immediately after their emergence or first violent attack. For example, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was founded in 1976 and civil war in Sri Lanka began in 1983. Virtually none of LTTE's attacks were explicitly registered in the GTD from 1976–1983, though qualitative literature on the organization's history point to significant violent activity against various targets during this early period. Similar issues arise when this study analyzes early attack profiles of prominent insurgent groups including the main Basque militant group, ETA, in Spain and the PKK in Turkey. Nevertheless, relying on these group capability indicators from a group's "first year" helps alleviate issues related to endogeneity and standardizes a baseline for the analysis of factors that may impact a group's willingness and/or ability to engage in a sustained armed conflict.

State-level Attributes

Numerous country-level variables from civil war literature are included as controls. Scholars often use measures of GDP to proxy for state capacity, counter-terrorism capabilities, or societal development. While the negative relationship between GDP per capita and civil war onset is well established, there is an emerging consensus that economic conditions are poor predictors of terrorist activity outside of armed conflict. This study uses GDP per capita figures from the Penn World Table. Various measures of democracy and regime durability are also included as controls (Freedom House, Polity IV) given ongoing debates concerning the role of regime type on terrorism and insurgency. Following previous research, a measure of ethnic fractionalization—the probability

that two people randomly selected from society are members of different ethnic groups—is taken from Fearon and Laitin (2003) data.[47] This study uses averages of these control variables throughout the entire lifespan for militant groups that never cross the sustained insurgency threshold. For militant groups that cross the dependent variable threshold, this study uses state-level variables from the year immediately prior to when a group launched a sustained armed conflict.

Regression Analysis: Militant Group Determinants of Sustained Insurgency

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Group Objectives					
Territorial Control	1.391**	1.653**	1.469**	1.422**	1.806**
	(3.06)	(2.90)	(3.18)	(2.98)	(3.02)
Regime Change / Social Revolution	0.801*	1.184**	0.908**	0.745	1.127*
	(2.02)	(2.29)	(2.26)	(1.75)	(2.07)
Group Ideology					
Religious	0.906*	0.966**	0.786**	0.783*	0.890*
	(2.72)	(2.86)	(2.39)	(2.28)	(2.55)
Nationalist	-0.226	-0.164	-0.222	-0.210	-0.238
	(-0.69)	(-0.47)	(-0.67)	(-0.62)	(-0.66)
Competitive Environment					
Number of Groups	-0.063***				
	(-3.18)				
Single Group		2.140***			1.694***
		(4.74)			(3.54)
> Five Groups			-0.858***		
			(-3.66)		
Top Dog				1.196***	0.849**
				(5.02)	(3.25)
Organizational Structure					
Bureaucracy	1.402**	1.215**	1.257**	1.336**	1.225*
	(3.09)	(2.67)	(2.86)	(2.84)	(2.50)
Hub-Spoke	1.422**	1.260*	1.353**	1.416**	1.318*
	(2.95)	(2.57)	(2.88)	(2.80)	(2.51)
All-Channel	0.852	0.852	0.740	0.877	0.908
	(1.79)	(1.79)	(1.61)	(1.79)	(1.79)
Group Capabilities					
State Sponsorship	0.088	-0.0008	0.024	0.083	0.073
	(0.36)	(-0.00)	(0.10)	(0.33)	(0.27)
Transnational Targets	0.190	0.279	0.162	0.236	0.395
	(0.69)	(0.96)	(0.59)	(0.82)	(1.29)
Hard Targets	-0.025	-0.025	-0.025	-0.018	-0.022
	(-1.50)	(-1.32)	(-1.51)	(-0.96)	(-1.03)
Multiple Attacks	-0.034	-0.024	-0.036	-0.029	-0.022
	(-1.69)	(-1.49)	(-1.67)	(-1.28)	(-1.11)
State-Level Controls					
Ethnic Fractionalization	1.774***	1.650***	1.657***	1.675***	1.646***
	(4.34)	(3.78)	(4.05)	(3.90)	(3.61)
Democracy	-0.065**	-0.065*	-0.065*	-0.070*	-0.055
	(-2.19)	(-2.11)	(-2.17)	(-2.24)	(-1.68)
Pseudo R2	0.3476	0.4278	0.3632	0.4054	0.4620
N	222	228	228	225	225

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001; The dependent variable is Sustained Armed Conflict.
A Probit estimating technique is used. Numbers in parentheses are Z-values.

Findings

Motivation: Group Ideology and Objectives

Supporting the first hypothesis, results show that groups with primarily religious ideologies are about 34% more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than the base case (militant groups with primarily leftist or rightist ideologies), holding other variables constant at their means.[48] This result is particularly interesting considering previous quantitative work finds that religious groups never achieve their ultimate objectives, given their tendency toward maximalist goals and nonnegotiable demands.[49] But religious groups tend to fare better than others in garnering the necessary resources to launch campaigns of sustained attrition. It is important to note that all but one of the religious groups that waged sustained insurgencies in this study are Islamic militant organizations.[50] Surprisingly, the *Nationalist* measure lacks statistical significance across all model specifications. However, this unexpected result could be reflected in findings concerning group objectives.

This study shows that groups seeking territorial control and groups fighting for regime change or social revolution are about 53% and 34%, respectively, more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than other goal-oriented groups.[51] For the regression analysis, groups fighting for regime change or social revolution are collapsed into one category since both types of organizations generally seek a maximalist goal to replace an existing government. While the results support hypothesis 2, they seem to contradict findings on group ideology, considering that nationalist groups tend to have territorial objectives like secession, while religious groups tend to have broader goals like social revolution or regime change. Group objectives likely follow ideological orientations and therefore both factors, to some extent, reinforce a group's ability to mobilize resources and challenge the state. A more nuanced story emerges when looking beyond motivations and analyzing the role of organizational structure.

Organizational Structure

Results concerning organizational structure do not fully support hypothesis 3. Using market structure as the base case and holding other variables constant, model 2 shows that hub-spoke groups and the most hierarchical groups (*Bureaucracy*) are 44% and about 38%, respectively, more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts than the most decentralized organizational structures (*Market*). Even hub-spoke groups without a centralized command and control apparatus can pose a serious challenge to target states, as long as they have a leader and functional differentiation within the organization. Challenging conventional wisdom on organizational structures, groups with well defined specializations and relatively more autonomy among lower-level cells or units could pose a similar threat to the states they fight as groups with highly centralized commands. It could be the case that hub-spoke structured groups, lacking strict centralization, are less likely to credibly commit themselves to negotiations or enforce an agreement with the state prior to full-fledged armed conflict. States may also find it more difficult to infiltrate and disrupt an organization structured in a hub-spoke manner. It is important to note that most religious groups—the ideological category most associated with engagement in sustained insurgencies—tend to also adopt a hub-spoke structure.

Competitive Environment

Previous research shows that in a full-fledged war, governments are more likely to defeat a single-group insurgency compared to a multi-group insurgency.[52] But a nascent insurrection characterized by one primary militant group is a strong predictor for whether that group engages in a sustained campaign of attrition in the first place. Supporting hypothesis 4a, findings show that the more militant groups there are operating in a state, the less likely a particular militant group will engage in a sustained armed conflict. When disaggregating the *Number of Groups* variable, results show that insurrections featuring one prominent militant group are most likely to experience a sustained insurgency between a particular militant group and the state. The *Single Group* variable is the most statistically significant and the largest positive association across all models. Results suggest that a nascent insurrection featuring one primary militant group is about 72% more likely to engage in a sustained campaign of attrition than militant groups operating in more competitive environments. Results

from Model 3 suggest that a militant group operating in an environment with five or more primary militant groups is 24% less likely to engage in sustained armed conflict, holding all other variables constant at their means.

This study finds that the overwhelming majority (85%) of groups that engage in sustained armed conflicts are also the Top Dog militant group in their host state around the time that group successfully challenges the target regime. Models 4 and 5 show that the *Top Dog* coefficient is positive and highly statistically significant. In Model 4, the *Top Dog* coefficient suggests that if a militant group is identified as the most active militant group in its environment, it has a 36% greater likelihood of waging a sustained insurgency than less active militant groups—supporting hypothesis 4b.

In reality, the most active group does not necessarily mean it is the most powerful. However, being the most active militant group in a particular environment is a crude, yet intuitive, proxy for groups that dominate their constituencies before going on to challenge the regime. This proxy for constituency dominance further approximates reality when a particular militant group maintains its Top Dog status throughout the initial stages of the armed conflict. For example, the PKK and LTTE emerged in the mid-1970s and dedicated most of their attacks against rival Kurdish and Tamil groups, respectively, until challenging regime forces in an armed conflict in the mid-1980s. Both groups were the Top Dog groups in their respective countries throughout the early years of their armed conflicts.

With or without the *Top Dog* variable, *Single Group* remains the strongest predictor of sustained insurgency onset. Being the Top Dog considerably improves a militant group's chances of waging a sustained insurgency—but being the only active militant organization remains the most preferable situation for militant groups seeking to fight a target state in an armed conflict. This observation suggests that militant groups in competitive environments often engage in some form of rival consolidation prior to waging a sustained insurgency against the target state.[53] Achieving hegemony over a wider movement is a common organizational objective for militant groups seeking to pursue other strategic goals. For example, Hezbollah first defeated its primary Shi'a rivals in armed confrontations during the late 1980s, before shifting its attention to fighting Israel in a war of attrition throughout the 1990s.

Rival Explanations (Control Variables)

Group Capabilities

Results for proxies of group capabilities suggest that, on aggregate, seemingly more capable groups are not necessarily associated with an increased likelihood of engagement in sustained insurgencies. *State sponsorship*, for example, lacks statistical significance across all model specifications. This does not mean support from an external patron is not important. Though state sponsorship is often cited as a critical factor explaining a militant group's ultimate success against the state they fight, it is likely less important than organizational factors in explaining engagements in armed conflicts. External patrons may also derail their client's trajectories or support a rival group to punish a proxy for deviating from the sponsor's goals. In terms of operational targets, variables *Hard Targets* and *Transnational* lack statistical significance across both models. In the first and third models, *Multiple Attacks* actually has a negative association, but weak statistical significance.

Groups that have conducted attacks outside their primary state are no more likely to engage in sustained armed conflicts with their host regime. It may be the case that some nascent groups seeking to launch domestic insurgencies are less inclined to divert resources to strike targets outside the primary state and attract unnecessary interventions. Militant groups seeking to pose a serious challenge may be focused on internal challenges in their early stages, such as building organizational capacity and targeting constituent rivals for dominance before facing the regime in a sustained armed conflict. Groups that seek to provoke state reactions—in the form of ambitious attacks or strikes on fortified targets—before developing the capacity to withstand government responses will likely fail.[54] Irrespective of the precise logics underpinning these broader findings, this study shows that organizational characteristics and constituency dominance are better predictors of armed conflict engagement than traditional proxies of group capabilities.[55]

State-Level Attributes

Across all model specifications, GDP per capita as a proxy for state capacity maintains a negative and statistically significant association with the dependent variable: the higher the level of state capacity (or counter-terrorism effectiveness or level of economic development—however one chooses to primarily interpret the proxy) the less likely a particular militant group will engage in a sustained armed conflict. Since GDP per capita and regime type tend to be closely related, some models (not shown here) relied on only one control at a time. Across several model specifications, coefficients associated with all key measures of democracy and regime durability scores are negative and statistically significant. More democratic, politically free, and stable regimes are more likely to reduce a militant group's willingness and/or ability to engage in a sustained armed conflict. It may be the case that democracies also tend to be more capable and inclusive states that prevent or deter the emergence of sustained armed conflicts, forcing groups to remain clandestine and engage in low-level terrorist attacks.

These results are consistent with similar findings in the literature. Much of the cross-national quantitative literature argues that *greed*-based indicators tend to better explain civil war onset than variables that traditionally proxy *grievance*.[56] This study, however, finds that countries with higher levels of ethnic fractionalization are associated with an increased likelihood of sustained armed conflict. While this study does not code for ethnic fractionalization scores of particular regions where prominent militant groups emerge or escalate violent operations, results suggest that analyzing conflict from a group-level of analysis may challenge findings from some previous cross-national studies.[57] State and regime-level attributes are important controls, but cannot explain variation among different militant groups operating in the same state.

Conclusion

This study has important implications for theory and scholarship, by examining an underexplored outcome of interest from the militant group-level of analysis and addressing a selection bias prevalent across literatures on political violence. Violent intra-state conflicts characterized by lower levels of violence tend to remain dormant and should not be dismissed from analysis.[58] Overall findings show that key variables explaining civil war onset or insurgency outcomes are not necessarily important factors in helping to explain which militant groups engage in insurgencies while other groups do not. Therefore, scholars should continue to study analytically distinct phases of armed conflict and differentiate among various militant group objectives (i.e. organizational vs. strategic) when evaluating outcomes.

It is important to stress that the interpretation of large-n quantitative analysis relies on a variance-based ontological understanding of causation, which focuses on the average mean effects of certain factors over a large set of highly diverse cases. Overcoming selection bias is an important and understandable goal for most variance-based scholars—a goal that motivated the exploration of all prominent militant groups in this study, not just those groups already waging insurgency. Case-based researchers, on the other hand, understandably find limited value in this approach, placing a high value on context including similar temporal or spatial scope. Factors driving militant mobilization and success in 1970s Latin America, for example, likely differ considerably from post-9/11 Islamist insurgencies. However, this study offers generalizable empirical associations across diverse militant groups and highlights interesting factors worth unpacking in subsequent theory-building and case study work.

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Notes

[1] The prominent militant groups under study and most of their characteristics are identified in Joshua Kilberg, "Organizing for Destruction: How Organizational Structure Affects Terrorist Group Behaviour," (PhD dissertation, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, 2011).

[2] Jessica A. Stanton, "Terrorism in the Context of Civil War," *The Journal of Politics* 75, no. 4 (2013): 1009–1022; "Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes," *International Organization* 69, no. 3 (2015): 519–556; Sara M. T. Polo and Belen Gonzalez, "The Power to Resist: Mobilization and the Logic of Terrorist Attacks in Civil War," *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 13 (2020): 2029–2060.

[3] Seth G. Jones, *Waging Insurgent Warfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Charles W. Mahoney, "More Data, New Problems: Audiences, Ahistoricity, and Selection Bias in Terrorism and Insurgency Research," *International Studies Review* 20, no. 4 (2018): 589–614.

[4] Will McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015), 80–81. By launching a sustained armed conflict, organizations also improve their coercive bargaining power vis-à-vis the state.

[5] Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563–595; James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90; Havard Hegre and Nicholas Sambanis, "Sensitivity Analysis of Empirical Results on Civil War Onset," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 4 (2006): 508–535.

[6] Using geo-spatial techniques, Findley and Young (2012) show that there is considerable temporal and spatial overlap between coded terrorist attacks and civil war. The observed concentrations of terrorist attacks occurring during the pre-civil war phase are likely to be concentrated in the same geographic areas later characterized by civil war. Michael G. Findley and Joseph K. Young, "Terrorism and Civil War: A Spatial and Temporal Approach to a Conceptual Problem," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (2012): 285–305, 286.

[7] Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2010); David E. Cunningham, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4 (2009): 570–597; Luis De la Calle and Ignacio Sanchez-Cuenca, "Rebels without a Territory: An Analysis of Nonterritorial Conflicts in the World, 1970–1997," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 4 (2012): 580–603.

[8] Terrorism literature largely overlooks relationships between terrorist attacks and other forms of political violence—mainly insurgency or full-fledged civil war. For example, Cronin (2006) outlines how terrorist groups might end, including transformation toward insurgency, but stops short of analyzing these transitions. Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 7–48. Research on civil war and insurgency also overlooks the transition from lower-levels of political violence to higher-intensity armed conflicts. See Sidney Tarrow, "Inside Insurgencies: Politics and Violence in an Age of Civil War," *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 3 (2007): 587–600, 589.

[9] Charles W. Mahoney, "Hearts and Minds or Blood and Guts? Strategy, Terrorism, and the Growth of Proto-Insurgencies" (PhD diss., University of California, 2011); Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); Jennifer M. Larson and Janet I. Lewis, "Rumors, Kinship Networks, and Rebel Group Formation," *International Organization* 72, no. 4 (2018): 871–903; Janet I. Lewis, "How Rebellion Begins: Insurgent Group Formation and Viability in Uganda" (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2012).

[10] Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1978; J. Craig Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 9 (1983): 527–553. Critics rightly point out that resource mobilization frameworks overlook micro-level decision-making processes and alliance formations. But this type of framework is appropriate for a large-n analysis of militant groups at the organizational-level of analysis.

[11] Daniel Byman, "Understanding Proto-Insurgencies," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no. 2 (2008): 165–200.

[12] Both terrorism and civil war literature point to the role of grievances and relative deprivation arguments. Ted R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970). Crenshaw (1981) argues that militant groups often form and engage in violence after social movements fail to achieve their objectives through peaceful means and discrimination is unaddressed. See Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (1981): 379–399.

[13] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008).

[14] Rem Korteweg, "Black Holes: On Terrorist Sanctuaries and Governmental Weakness," *Civil War* 10, no. 1 (2008): 60–71.

[15] Kate Cox, Stephen Jolly, Simon Van Der Staaij, and Christian Van Stolk, "Understanding the Drivers of Organisational Capacity," *RAND* (2018).

[16] Jacob N. Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma: Managing Violent Covert Organizations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

[17] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Eli Berman, *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009); Monica Duffy Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War," *International Security* 31, no. 4 (2007): 97–131.

[18] Max Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," *International Security* 31, no. 2 (2006): 42–78; Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends"; Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End.*

[19] Toft (2005) demonstrates that concentrated ethnically homogenous regions are more likely to mobilize for conflict than less concentrated, heterogeneous regions. See Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests, and the Indivisibility of Territory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[20] John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *The American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977): 1212–1241.

[21] Lewis, "How Rebellion Begins."

[22] Joshua Kilberg, "A Basic Model Explaining Terrorist Group Organizational Structure," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35, no. 11 (2012): 810–830.

[23] Paul Staniland, *Networks of* Rebellion; Larson and Lewis, "Rumors, Kinship Networks, and Rebel Group Formation."

[24] Lindsay Heger, Danielle Jung, and Wendy H. Wong, "Organizing for Resistance: How Group Structure Impacts the Character of Violence," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 5 (2012): 743–768; Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End;* Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "The Nature of the Beast: Organizational Structures and the Lethality of Terrorist Attacks, *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 2 (2008): 437–449; Joshua Kilberg, "Organizing for Destruction"; Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion.*

[25] Tricia Bacon, "Hurdles to International Terrorist Alliances: Lessons From Al Qaeda's Experience," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 1 (2017): 79–101; Navin Bapat and Kanisha D. Bond, "Alliances Amongst Militant Groups," *British Journal of Political Science* 4, no. 42 (2012): 793–824; Seden Akcinaroglu, "Rebel Interdependencies and Civil War Outcomes," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 5 (2012): 879–903; Hanne Fjelde and Desirée Nilsson, "Rebels Against Rebels: Explaining Violence Between Rebel Groups," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 4 (2012): 604–628; Brian J. Phillips, "Terrorist Group Cooperation and Longevity," *International Studies Quarterly* 2, no. 58 (2014): 336–347; Peter Krause, *Rebel Power: Why National Movements Compete, Fight, and Win* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017).

[26] Charles W. Mahoney, "Splinters and Schisms: Rebel Group Fragmentation and the Durability of Insurgencies," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2017): 1–20.

[27] Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Stephen Nemeth, "The Effect of Competition on Terrorist Group Operations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 2 (2014): 336–362; Kydd and Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism."

[28] Costantino Pischedda, "Wars Within Wars: Why Windows of Opportunity and Vulnerability Cause Inter-rebel Fighting in Internal Conflicts," *International Security* 43, no. 1 (2018): 138–176; Jannie Lilja and Lisa Hultman, "Intraethnic Dominance and Control: Violence Against Co-Ethnics in the Early Sri Lankan Civil War," *Security Studies,* 20, no. 2 (2011): 171–197; Peter Krause, "The Structure of Success: How the Internal Distribution of Power Drives Armed Group Behavior and National Movement Effectiveness," *International Security* 38, no. 3 (2013/14): 72–116.

[29] Joseph K. Young and Laura Dugan, "Survival of the Fittest: Why Terrorist Groups Endure," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8, no. 2 (2014); URL: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/binaries/content/assets/customsites/perspectives-on-terrorism/2014/issue-2/survival-of-the-fittest-why-terrorist-groups-endure--joseph-k.-young-and-laura-dugan.pdf; Philips (2015), on the other hand, argues that competition among militant groups with divergent ideologies or objectives ("*inter-field rivals*"*)* actually enhances militant group longevity. See Brian J. Phillips, "Enemies with Benefits? Violent Rivalry and Terrorist Group Longevity," *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 1 (2015): 62–75.

[30] National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), Global Terrorism Database (GTD) "Codebook: Inclusion Criteria and Variables" (START, University of Maryland, 2016); URL: https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/downloads/Codebook.pdf, at p. 9. Most prominent militant groups rely on nonviolent methods as well; however, my baseline definition binds my unit of analysis to organized groups that engage in political violence in an effort to achieve their objectives.

[31] Some definitions consider incidents an act of terrorism if it was intended to send a psychological message to a wider audience beyond the immediate victim of the violence. Alex P. Schmid, "Frameworks for Conceptualizing Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 2 (2004): 197–221.

[32] Byman, "Understanding Proto-Insurgencies; Ariel Merari, "Terrorism as Strategy of Insurgency," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5, no. 4 (1993): 213–251.

[33] While many quantitative studies use group-year or country-year panel data, most data on group characteristics and state-level variables are largely time invariant (i.e. group ideology, mountainous terrain) or exhibit very gradual temporal variation (i.e. GDP per capita or regime type) and therefore limited in explaining variation year to year. Group ideologies or structures may evolve over the lifespan of a particular group, but much of the existing data relies on coding these variables in a particular snapshot in time. Relying on a group-level unit of analysis is appropriate for this study, which seeks to differentiate between militant groups based on engagement in sustained insurgencies.

[34] Gary LaFree, Laura Dugan, and Erin Miller, *Putting Terrorism in Context: Lessons from the Global Terrorism Database* (New York: Routledge, 2015). This observation is based on the GTD's data from 1970 to the end of 2012.

[35] Therese Pettersson and Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, 1946–2014," *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 4 (2015): 536–550.; UCDP Dataset 2016. The average length of an insurgency is approximately 10 years. See Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*, 27. After presenting my quantitative analysis at various scholarly conferences, the discussants agreed that the five-year mark is an appropriate threshold for this research puzzle. Additional thresholds and extensions can be explored in future iterations of this research.

[36] Only 13 (5%) of the militant groups in my universe of cases ended by achieving victory.

[37] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End;* Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End.*

[38] Data on group ideology and objectives are collected from Kilberg (2011) and Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End.*

[39] For example, the Weather Underground, a 1970s-era terrorist group seeking to battle the US government from within, published a manifesto that clearly suggests it employs targeted violence in a bid to mobilize society against the state. According to its strategy: "At this early state in the armed and clandestine struggle, our forms of combat and confrontation are few and precise…By beginning the armed struggle, the awareness of its necessity will be furthered… Bernardine Dohrn, Billy Ayers, Jeff Jones, and Celia Sojourn "Prairie Fire: The Politics of Revolutionary Anti-Imperialism: Political Statement of the Weather Underground," 1974, 1–153, at p. 3. Quoted in Findley and Young, "Terrorism and Civil War," 285.

[40] Joshua Kilberg, "A Basic Model Explaining Terrorist Group Organizational Structure."

[41] Matthew Levitt, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2013).

[42] Young and Dugan, "Survival of the Fittest."

[43] Results hold for estimations including the average number of militant groups in the lifespan of militant groups engaged in sustained armed conflicts as well.

[44] Young and Dugan, "Survival of the Fittest."

[45] For example, the Turkish leftist militant group Devrimci Sol has been active since 1978, yet never crossed my sustained armed conflict threshold. During its initial militant lifespan (1978–mid 1990s), it was classified as the *Top Dog* for only three years. As a result, I assigned the group a 0 in the *Top Dog* category overall. On the other hand, the Turkish People's Liberation Army (TPLA) is assigned a 1 for the overall *Top Dog* category since it was the most active group in its environment for the majority of its militant lifespan (1970–1980), despite never crossing my threshold for engagement in sustained armed conflict.

[46] Data on state sponsorship is coded by Kilberg (2012).

[47] Other state-level controls from civil war literature include whether the host state's territory is contiguous, the extent to which a state relies on oil exports and other primary commodities, country-level religious fractionalization, population size, and the size of a state's Muslim population. Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Dominic Rohner, "Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War"; Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War,"; Young and Dugan, "Survival of the Fittest." None of these controls are statistically significant in any model specification and are omitted here.

[48] Since there are only two right-wing groups that wage sustained insurgencies in my sample, I combine this type of organization with leftist militant groups in the regression analysis. I also collapse left-wing and right-wing groups into one category as the base case, given that both types of groups are largely motivated to facilitate some type of social and/or economic change in society, as opposed to primarily representing a particular ethnic or religious constituency.

[49] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End.*

[50] The non-Islamic religious group that engaged in armed conflict in my sample is Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army. Over the last few decades, religious militant groups—mostly of Islamic persuasion—are responsible for far more attacks and casualties than other types of militant groups worldwide. Berman, *Radical, Religious, and Violent.* Most religious civil wars since 1940 involve belligerents that identify with Islam and religious civil wars are characterized by far higher rates of lethality than other types of civil wars. See Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism,* and Eli Berman, *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism,* Toft, "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War."

[51] Most definitions of insurgency refer to armed groups that seek partial territorial control, like secessionist groups, or groups trying to take over an entire state or replace a government. I therefore collapse the remaining group objectives (status quo and policy change-seeking groups) into one category as the base case.

[52] Seth G. Jones, Waging Insurgent Warfare.

[53] A positive-on-outcome (also known as Mill's method-of-agreement) comparative analysis of all militant groups that engaged in sustained armed conflicts in my universe of cases suggests that no single theoretically relevant causal factor can be deemed an individually necessary condition. But compared to other factors, these results suggest that being the *Top Dog* is a key factor explaining engagement in sustained armed conflict. This finding highlights the limits of large-n research, motivating subsequent theory-building and detailed case studies in subsequent work to complement this quantitative analysis.

[54] See Stathis N. Kalyvas and Matthew Adam Kocher*,* "How "Free" Is Free Riding in Civil Wars? Violence, Insurgency, and the Collective Action Problem," *World Politics* 59, no. 2 (2007): 177–216, at p. 190.

[55] A group's peak size should also reflect strength and capabilities. A group's maximum membership levels (*Peak Size)* are based on Jones and Libicki (2008) data, coded as 1 if a group's peak size features 0–99 operatives, 2 (100–999), 3 (1000–9999), and 4 (10000+). Peak size may be one of the most important variables explaining why some militant groups ultimately defeat the states they fight. However, it was omitted from this model for reasons of endogeneity since a group most likely reaches its maximum membership after its first year. Nevertheless, models including a measure of peak size (not reported here) show that a militant group's engagement in sustained armed conflict does not depend on a group's size. As Fearon and Laitin (2003) note, it may only require a few hundred committed fighters to launch an insurgency.

[56] Christian Davenport, David A. Armstrong II, and Mark I. Lichbach, "From Mountains to Movements: Dissent, Repression and Escalation to Civil War" (Paper presented at the *International Studies Association* annual conference, San Diego, 2006).

[57] Janet Lewis finds that Ugandan rebel groups emerging in ethnically homogenous areas of the country are more likely to become viable organizations than groups emerging in relatively diverse areas. See Lewis, "How Rebellion Begins."

[58] Shivaji Mukherjee, "Why are the Longest Insurgencies Low Violence? Politician Motivations, Sons of the Soil, and Civil War Duration," *Civil Wars* 16, no. 2 (2014): 172–207.