

How Can Weak Insurgent Groups Grow? Insights from Nepal

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Abstract

How can insurgent groups that are militarily far weaker than the state survive and grow? Influential accounts drawing on Kalyvas' "control-collaboration" model argue that limited state reach can make this possible by allowing rebel groups to carve out pockets of control where they can elicit collaboration. I suggest that this account is inadequate. Even states with limited reach are likely to transfer sufficient forces to rebel-affected areas to establish at least partial control. Weak rebels therefore often face the challenge of building capacity without local control to begin with. I identify two broad factors that can make this feasible. First, strong pre-existing rebel networks, which facilitate collaboration through solidarity, norms of reciprocity, and social incentives; and second, counterinsurgency policies and practices that fail to exploit the opportunities that control offers for incentivizing collaboration and shaping political preferences. These arguments are grounded in a fieldwork-based case study of insurgency processes in a hamlet of Rolpa, Nepal.

Introduction

Local control is commonly seen as a key resource for political actors during internal armed conflict. According to Kalyvas' "control-collaboration" theory, control yields collaboration by noncombatants through making coercion effective.¹ Collaboration, in turn, is vital for belligerents, and particularly for weak rebel groups that are vulnerable to denunciation. How, then, can rebel groups that are militarily far weaker than the government survive and gain strength? One influential account points to limited state reach, which leaves open politico-military spaces that the rebels can turn into base areas.² But in the nascent phase of insurgency, a stronger state would plausibly be able to reassume control over rebel strongholds by projecting its power. Weak rebel groups are therefore likely to face also a *locally* stronger state to begin with. Following control-collaboration theory, groups should in this context fail to gain local collaboration and be defeated. How, then, can we explain that weak insurgent groups sometimes survive and prosper?

This article posits that weak rebel groups may survive and grow even in the face of local dominant state control, and identifies two broad conditions making this possible: First, pre-existing rebel networks and support, which can contribute to rebel collaboration and recruitment through solidarity, norms of reciprocity, and social incentives. Second, incompetent government forces and misguided counterinsurgency policies, which fail to make use of the opportunities that control offers for incentivizing collaboration and shaping political preferences.

Previous studies have also argued that rebel networks and inept counterinsurgency can facilitate rebellion.³ However, they leave open the question of whether these factors may help rebels overcome local power inferiority, since they have not systematically measured control and collaboration over time. To help fill this gap, I use fine-grained data to trace processes of control and collaboration over time in a hamlet of Rolpa in Mid-Western Nepal, the epicenter of the country's Maoist insurgency. On the face of it, this case looks like a strong candidate for a state weakness explanation of civil war, with the country's largely rural population and weak state penetration of the rugged hills. Yet, even here this account falls short. While the government had scant presence in Maoist strongholds before the insurgency, police forces were soon transferred there and assumed dominant control in most of the villages after insurgency began. In spite of this state dominance in the initial three to four years, the rebellion survived and slowly gained strength.

The hamlet also provides temporal variation useful for grasping the limitations of the control-collaboration model. After about four years, the police were forced out and the rebels gained control

in the area. Interestingly, mobilization then became more in line with control-collaboration theory: opposition to the new rulers faded, everyone contributed in cash or kind, and many became full-time cadres. I explore why government control did not give widespread collaboration while rebel control did through process-tracing based on interviews from Rolpa.

The analysis supports Kalyvas' claim that control can be a powerful resource for belligerents, but it also points out that collaboration is not determined by control alone. With the help of strong pre-existing networks and adept personnel, a locally weaker actor may obtain more collaboration than its opponent.⁴ It also challenges state weakness accounts of civil war onset by showing that local state strength is not a static condition, since governments can move their forces. Overall, the analysis suggests that the fate of insurgencies depends not only on military power and control, but also on pre-existing networks, competence, and policies.

The article first reviews theories emphasizing state weakness and control in insurgency processes. Next, I theorize how pre-existing rebel networks and inept counterinsurgency can help account for what these theories leave unexplained. The article then lays out the logic of case selection and the methods and data used. The empirical section begins with an overview of the path to civil war in Nepal. Next, it describes the processes leading up to civil war in the field site, and analyzes what caused the outcomes. In the conclusion I discuss the theoretical implications and possible scope conditions of the findings.

Control and Collaboration in Civil War

Weak insurgent groups are commonly perceived to face a “territorial imperative”: in order to survive and grow, they must carve out pockets of control, or base areas, within a country.⁵ Mao argued that “guerilla warfare could not last long or grow without base areas” in which the old regime had been destroyed.⁶ Counterinsurgency theorists also highlight the role of control. Galula, for instance, held that if the insurgent manages to “dissociate the population from the counterinsurgent, to control it physically, to get its active support, he will win the war [...]”.⁷

Influential academic accounts of civil war onset similarly emphasize that state weakness and difficult terrains facilitate insurgency by allowing weak rebels to establish local control. Fearon and Laitin argue that “[w]here states are relatively weak and capricious, both fears and opportunities encourage the rise of would-be rulers who supply a rough local justice while arrogating the power to

“tax” for themselves and, often, for a larger cause”.⁸ According to Kocher, insurgency by rebels facing militarily stronger states “is possible only where irregular forces can exert control over fairly significant population without directly fighting against regular military forces.”⁹ Control is vital to weak rebels, according to these scholars, because it spawns local collaboration and hinders denunciations that could lead to their capture.¹⁰

These accounts build on Kalyvas’ more detailed “control-collaboration” theory of violence *during* civil war.¹¹ In this theory, violence is determined by military control, and local collaboration is the causal link between the two (Figure 1). Kalyvas starts from the assumption that most people are self-regarding and have weak political preferences. During civil war they learn to prioritize security, which makes threats of punishing defectors and promises to protect collaborators effective in generating collaboration. Control leads to collaboration primarily by rendering these threats and promises more credible. Collaboration, especially voluntary denunciation of defectors, in turn leads to the selective use of violence against the alleged defectors.¹² While Kalyvas and most related studies focus on violence, I mainly look at the first part of his causal chain: the link between control and collaboration.

Kalyvas divides areas into five control zones, ranging from full government control (zone 1) to full rebel control (zone 5). Full control entails that the actor completely inhibits the enemy from operating in the area. In zones 2 and 4 one actor has “dominant control”: its forces are stationed in the area and operate freely, while the opponent’s organizers operate clandestinely and its combatants only sporadically enter. In zone 3, there is power parity.¹³ Active collaboration with either actor is predicted to be a linear function of this actor’s level of control.¹⁴ Under full control, there should be no collaboration with the weaker actor; under dominant control, a minority of committed persons is predicted to collaborate with the weaker actor, whereas the majority collaborates with the dominant actor; and under parity, the same level of collaboration with each side is expected.¹⁵

Control is initially determined by military resources rather than by pre-existing popular pref-



Figure 1. Kalyvas’ control-collaboration model

erences, according to Kalyvas.¹⁶ But after one actor gains dominant control, a positive feedback loop tends to ensure full control given no externally imposed military change. Dominance fosters collaboration, including the provision of information, which enables the actor to use coercion selectively against defectors. This process leads to full control as defection is deterred and opponents switch sides, are killed or forced out. Places of dominant control are therefore simply “areas in transition” to full control in the control-collaboration theory.¹⁷ Without an exogenous shift in military resources, we should not see dominant control by one actor giving way to dominant control by its rival.

The Limitations of Control

There are reasons to believe, however, that the control-collaboration theory cannot fully account for the growth of weak rebel groups. If military resources determine control, control spawns collaboration, and collaboration is vital to rebel survival and growth, it follows that a militarily stronger state should normally be able to impede the growth of very weak rebels. This is plausibly the case also when state reach is limited before insurgency begins. Since a very weak rebel group cannot spread its activities widely, the state may not need to fully control its entire territory; it can deny the rebels of base areas by transferring forces to the insurgency-affected zones.¹⁸ Weak rebels are therefore rather unlikely to carve out control over significant settlements in the initial phase.

How, then, can weak rebellions grow? I suggest two broad factors that can help account for the growth of rebellion in spite of dominant state control: Pre-existing local rebel networks and inept counterinsurgency.

Pre-existing Networks and Support

Kalyvas argues that networks and political support tend to be endogenous to wartime processes, since control enables belligerents to shape people’s preferences and social ties.¹⁹ However, shaping preferences and social structures is a difficult and time-demanding process.²⁰ In the early stages of insurgency, pre-existing networks and preferences may therefore play important roles.

Several previous studies have explored the roles of networks and political support in rebel collective action.²¹ One insight from this literature is that *strong communities* with a high degree of face-to-face contact tend to be conducive to rebel collective action.²² Such communities tend to have powerful norms of reciprocity, which can produce tipping processes in which “first actions” by a

minority lead people who would otherwise have remained inactive to contribute to a collective good. Strong ties also help reinforce such norms by facilitating monitoring and social sanctions.

The initiation of a tipping process, however, depends on the presence of rebel political entrepreneurs, or “first actors,” with strong political preferences and high risk acceptance. Their ability to set in motion tipping processes is enhanced if they are *centrally located in the community structure*, in the sense that they have many direct ties to other members, according to Petersen.²³ This ensures that many are influenced by the first actions through norms of reciprocity.

An important limitation to previous networks-oriented studies, however, is that they tend to focus exclusively on rebel collective action, thereby ignoring pro-government collective action. Clearly, the local evolution of insurgency depends not only on mobilization on the rebel side, but also on the government side. And as for the rebels, entrepreneurs or first actors are likely to be important for collective action on the pro-government side. I therefore suggest that the *number and location of pro-government entrepreneurs* in the community will also matter for local collaboration outcomes.

Taking this into account, I suggest that the most favorable social structure for rebellion is characterized by: (i) a moderate or high level of face-to-face contact, (ii) a pro-rebel majority; (iii) pro-rebel entrepreneurs centrally located in the community structure; and (iv) peripherally located (or no) pro-government entrepreneurs. In such communities, several mechanisms, including norms of reciprocity, social incentives, and solidarity, can blunt the effect of coercive power on collaboration, and help rebellion grow in spite of dominant state control.

Belligerents' Abilities and Policies

When the resources to establish *full* control are lacking, how effectively belligerents use coercion and other means for obtaining collaboration is likely to become decisive. While dominant control brings the opportunity for using several tools to elicit collaboration, there is no guarantee that belligerents are able to make full use of it. This will depend on the competence, morale, and local knowledge of the personnel on the ground.

One central task is to identify local informers or covert forces of the rival. While dominant control helps attract voluntary informers, it does not guarantee it, especially if the rival enjoys stronger networks and political support. In this situation, forces with deep *local knowledge* are likely to be better able to obtain information and make targeted threats.²⁴ Further, *well trained and equipped*

forces are more likely to successfully apply selective violence, and thereby issue more credible threats.²⁵

Other useful skills are *framing* and *persuasion*, which Marxist rebels have tended to emphasize.²⁶ Politically skillful activists may manage to convince people that collaborating is both morally right and personally rewarding. *Organizational* abilities can also be a great resource, as routine collaboration is greatly facilitated within organized groups. Further, as Popkin has explained, belligerent activists may help solve people's local problems by providing organizational resources, which also gives incentives for collaboration.²⁷

Belligerents' ability to obtain local collaboration also depends on their overall strategies. While this topic cannot be fully discussed here, I will highlight the weakness of *inconsistent* policies. In particular, in the early phase of an insurgency, governments sometimes opt for a form of "coercive governance," combining military or police operations with continued normal governance.²⁸ Insurgency is under this policy framed as a law-and-order issue. While this strategy need not fail, it requires a highly skilled and law-abiding police force that can provide enough evidence for sentencing arrested rebels in regular courts. It also requires a well-developed legal system in order to avoid lengthy detentions before cases are settled, which erodes trust in the government. Such capacities, however, are quite likely to be lacking in countries that see emerging insurgencies.

Overall, these arguments suggest that the unicausal control-collaboration model is incomplete: local collaboration is not determined by control alone, but also by pre-existing networks and

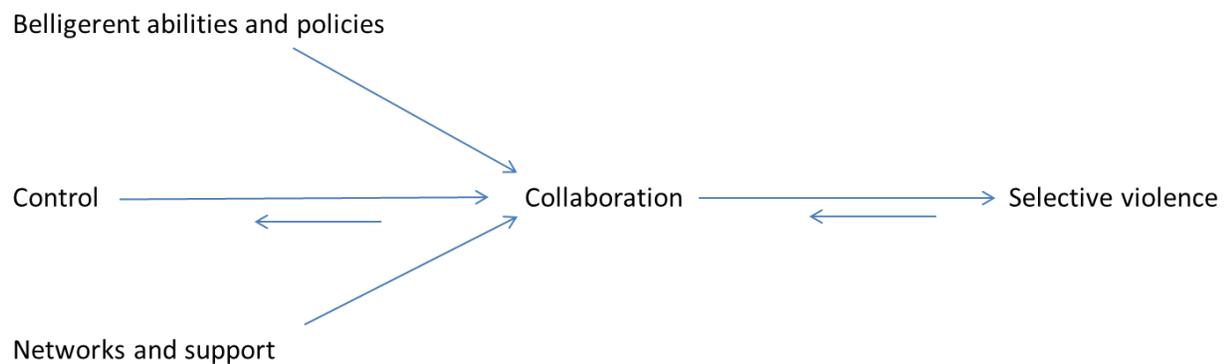


Figure 2. Expanded collaboration model

Table 1. State Weakness Indicators, Nepal vs. the World Average, 1996

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Nepal</i>	<i>World mean</i>
GDP per capita (PPP 2005 US\$)	822	8512
Roads per km ²	0.05	0.50
Telephone lines per 1,000 inhabitants	0.51	14.91
% Urban population	11.4	51.4
% Mountainous terrain	73.7	17.6
Army and police personnel per 1,000 inhabitants	3.2	8.5

Data: World Bank, *World Development Indicators* (2011).

support as well as by belligerents' abilities and policies (Figure 2). Unlike the control-collaboration model, the expanded model opens up the possibility for locally weaker rebels to obtain considerable collaboration if other factors are to their benefit. It thereby removes the puzzle of how initially weak insurgent groups can grow.

Case Selection

I substantiate the arguments through an in-depth analysis of the growth of Maoist insurgency in a hamlet of Rolpa, Nepal. Judging by the country's initial conditions, this case would seem to be a highly plausible, or perhaps even a "most-likely" candidate for a state weakness explanation of insurgency and civil war onset.²⁹ Nepal had both a weak state and social and natural terrains conducive to guerilla warfare (Table 1). At the time insurgency began in 1996, much of the population lived in scattered settlements without drivable roads and with limited state presence. The army had a mainly ceremonial role as protector of the palace, and internal security was left to a police force of 28,000 officers which was poorly trained and equipped for counterinsurgency, viewed as corrupt and with strong partisan ties.³⁰ The insurgency also arose in a time of great political instability, caused by the country's recent democratic revolution. The "most-likely" character of the case makes it well suited for critically assessing the micro-level mechanisms of the state weakness account, since when initial conditions adhere to a theory there is more reason to expect that its suggested mechanisms would be in operation.

Since tracing micro-level processes of collaboration places high demands on data, I focus on one hamlet, Madichaur, and its near surroundings, in the district of Rolpa in the Mid-Western Hills (Figure 3). The area was chosen mainly because it was part of the epicenter of the insurgency from

its initiation. In the districts of Rolpa and Rukum, the Maoists developed their tactics of mobilization and warfare and first established local rule. Insurgents from the area were also instrumental in spreading insurgency to other parts of the country.³¹ Understanding the growth of insurgency here is therefore important to understanding the growth of the insurgency as a whole.

Methods, Measures, and Data

I use several approaches to analyze the processes in this area. First, I use the *congruence* approach to establish whether the predictions from Kalyvas' control-collaboration theory hold in this case.³² Second, I draw on *comparisons* over time, focusing on the period from insurgency began to a state of war from late 2001. The shift in control from the government to the Maoists gives some leverage for analyzing whether the links between control and collaboration depend on the resources and approach of the actor in control. These two approaches help assess the impact of control on collaboration, but are of limited value for discerning *how* this and other factors affect collaboration. To identify mechanisms of collaboration, I employ *process-tracing*.³³ I draw upon interviews and secondary sources to assess how people came to collaborate with the different actors and what tools the armed actors used

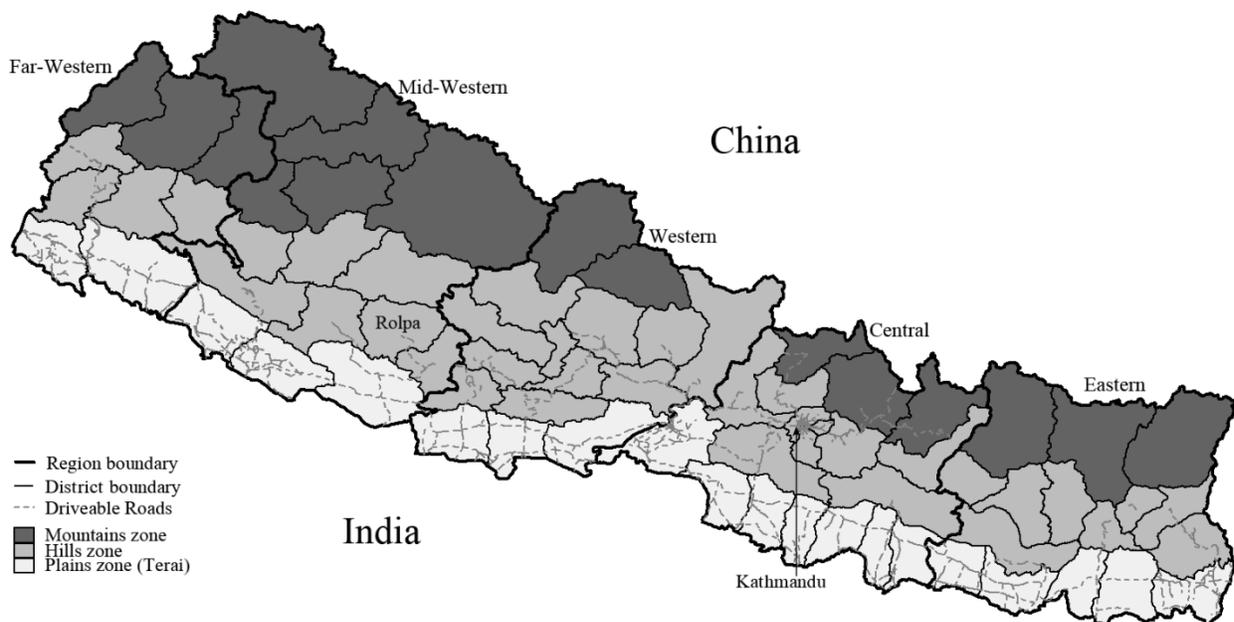


Figure 3. Map of Nepal

to elicit collaboration over time.

I follow Kalyvas' definition of control (see above) and his coding protocol.³⁴ The key outcomes of interest are *collaboration* with either party, which includes the provision of material resources as well as part-time and full-time participation.³⁵

The primary data source is 33 in-depth interviews from Rolpa, carried out between March 2010 and January 2012.³⁶ Clearly, relying on oral accounts given years after the episode in question entails challenges. Not only can memory be impaired with the passage of time, it may also be distorted by social or personal processes of memory reconstruction. An additional concern is that information may be presented in a biased or selective way.³⁷ My main strategy for meeting these challenges was to get facts confirmed by several people, and to talk to people of different political orientations. I interviewed district-level leaders of all the major political parties, as well as 19 non-combatants with diverging political loyalties from Madichaur and the nearby hamlets of Kotgaun and Jankot. Four Maoist ex-combatants from Madichaur were also interviewed.³⁸ Some of the interviewees, such as political leaders and teachers, were purposively selected.³⁹ Most Maoist ex-combatants were selected through snowball sampling, in which the first Maoist referred us to other Maoists from the area. The remaining interviewees were selected through more or less random visits of households in the hamlets. The interviews were carried out with the aid of a Nepalese research assistant acting as an interpreter.⁴⁰

One conceivably important problem in this case could be a biased reconstruction or presentation of events in favor of the Maoists, since they have remained the strongest political force in the area after the war. However, this concern was at least alleviated by the fact that several Maoist supporters expressed points of dissatisfaction with Maoist rule both during and after the conflict. In addition to cross-checking facts with different interviewees, I consulted human rights reports as well as previous studies of wartime processes in Rolpa whenever possible.

The Path to Civil War in Nepal

The Maoists rebellion emerged in a period of great political change. In 1990, a swift popular uprising brought down the 30-year old *Panchayat* monarchic regime. A new constitution was forged that vested sovereignty in the people, but, to the dismay of the far left and minority organizations, Nepal remained a centralized Hindu state and the King kept considerable powers, especially over the army.

Some far left parties still participated in the first parliamentary election in 1991 through the United People's Front Nepal (UPF), and gained nine seats in parliament. The front soon split over the question of armed revolution, however. In 1994, the revolutionary faction led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal ("Prachanda") took the name CPN-Maoist and went underground to prepare for insurgency. The struggle was officially launched 13 February 1996 with attacks in various parts of the country.⁴¹

The Maoists adopted a policy of "protracted people's war based upon the strategy of surrounding the city from the countryside."⁴² Mobilization efforts were spread across different regions from the beginning, but the insurgency had a clear epicenter in the Mid-Western hill districts of Rolpa and Rukum, the main pre-insurgency political strongholds of the party. These areas had weak state presence, but around the time insurgency was launched, the government transferred considerable police forces to the area and set up police posts in most Village Development Committees (VDCs).⁴³ Although the police outnumbered and outgunned the Maoists in the area, the insurgents slowly built up strength. From 1998 they began spreading their activities to nearby districts and stepped up attacks on police forces. Even as the Maoists increasingly overran police posts, reinforcements from the army were not forthcoming, much due to rivalry between the king and the army on one side and the governing parties on the other.⁴⁴ By early 2000, the rebels had pushed the police out of the villages and established dominant control in their stronghold areas.

By 2001, the Maoists had become a considerable military and political force. Moreover, in June, Kathmandu was thrown into a crisis as King Birendra and most of the royal family were massacred by the crown prince. Soon after, a new soft-liner government called for ceasefire and peace negotiations with the Maoists. The rebels returned to arms in November, however, because the government refused to concede to key demands. For the first time, they directly attacked the army, which made the government declare a state of emergency and employ the army against the rebels. This brought the country into full-blown civil war. With fighting in most parts of the country, more than 4,600 people were killed in 2002 alone.⁴⁵ The war went on for four years and ended with a peace agreement in November 2006 that included provisions for the key Maoist demand of elections to a constituent assembly.

Providing a full account of Nepal's civil war is beyond the scope of this study. I rather focus on one important element for explaining the war: how the insurgency could grow in the core Maoist areas in the initial years in spite of dominant state control.

Insurgency Processes in Madichaur, Rolpa

Rolpa, along with Rukum to its north, is often considered the basin of the Maoist rebellion.⁴⁶ In no other areas of Nepal did communism have stronger roots. The movement arose in Thawang in north-eastern Rolpa already in the 1950s, and by the 1970s that village was almost completely red. Notably, the evolution of communism was not uniform across Rolpa. Other areas of the district, like the field site, Madichaur, saw communist mobilization much later, and were not politically homogenous when multiparty democracy was restored in 1990.⁴⁷ Still, in the initial years after restoration of democracy Rolpa and Rukum became the strongest political bastions of the UPF. This was amply demonstrated in the 1991 parliamentary election, when the party got 5 percent of national votes, but 41 percent of votes in Rolpa and 54 percent in Rukum.

Maoist mobilization and scattered violence began in Rolpa years before the official launch of insurgency. After the local election in 1992, the contest between Nepali Congress and UPF activists turned increasingly violent. In parallel with these local dynamics, the central Maoist organization sent political entrepreneurs and military trainers to the area, and began a year-long mobilization and training campaign (“SIJA”) in 1994.⁴⁸ Several brawls and a few murders eventually resulted in a relatively large police operation in November 1995, “Operation Romeo”. Reportedly, no one was killed, but more than 300 UPF supporters were arrested, most without warrants, and some of them tortured.⁴⁹ The ruthlessness of the operation has sometimes been blamed for the insurgency that followed,⁵⁰ but its role was probably more modest. By that time, the Maoist party had already opted for armed rebellion and started preparing for it.

The Hamlet of Madichaur

Madichaur is a hamlet of about 65 households situated in a valley on both sides of the Madi River, separating Kotgaun and Jankot VDC. It is relatively remote, but considerably more accessible than the far north of Rolpa. When the insurgency began, Madichaur was not connected by road, and the district headquarters, Liwang, was three to four hours walk away. The fertile river valley made economic conditions better than in most of Rolpa. Land plots were small and quite equally distributed, with no big landlords employing many wage laborers.

The majority of people belonged to the Kham Magar indigenous group, which predominates in the higher altitudes of the Mid-Western Hills, and most of them to the Gharti or Pun clans. Neigh-

bors were therefore often relatives to some extent. The hamlet was not as ethno-culturally homogeneous as villages in northern Rolpa, however.⁵¹ There were sizeable minorities of Chhetris (Nepali-speaking, higher Hindu caste) and Dalits (“untouchables”). In spite of some diversity, Madichaur and the nearby hamlets were relatively strong communities, in Taylor’s sense.⁵² As a small, densely settled farming community, people interacted frequently and social relations were highly transparent. “You easily know who support whom,” a Congress Politician in Kotgaun explained.⁵³

Politically, the hamlet split into two main camps after 1990. Most of the local elite switched to the Congress party when democracy was restored, making it the main party of the establishment. UPF soon became the main contending party, and won both of the local VDC chairs in the 1992 election. Despite local UPF dominance, the Congress party was highly influential. Not only did the wealthiest locals belong to the party; it largely controlled the state apparatus, especially the police, through its position in central government for most of the 1990s.

Congress and UPF had markedly different social roots. The most prominent UPF leader in Madichaur was a Kham Magar farmer’s son, Barsha Man Pun (“Ananta”), who had returned to Rolpa after studying law. The most prominent Congress leaders, on the other hand, were recent immigrants and not Kham Magars. First among them was the Rana family, which did not speak Kham and had immigrated from another part of Rolpa. Another important Congress family, the Acharyas, was farther culturally removed from the majority, since its head, Shiva Kumar Acharya, was the only Brahmin (the highest Hindu caste) in the hamlet. Although there were a few Kham Magars among the Congress leaders, the party’s leadership was less integrated in the community than the Maoists.

The conflict intensified in Madichaur after UPF activists attacked and wounded two Congress activists, one being the son of Shiva Kumar Acharya, in June 1995. Following the event, two police posts were established for the first time in the area, one in Madichaur and one in the nearby hamlet of Kotgaun, with 10–15 policemen in each. Although no formidable force, the police were considerably stronger than the Maoists. There were only about 50 full-time guerillas in the entire district when the insurgency was launched, and six or seven of them hailed from Madichaur.⁵⁴ The police were also better armed. Most policemen carried single-shot rifles, whereas the rebels to begin with had only one rifle for the entire district, in addition to knives and homemade explosives.⁵⁵

1996-1999: Dominant Government Control

The new police stations placed the hamlet under dominant government control (zone 2). The main traits of this control zone are that villagers have unequal access to the rival organizations and the dominant party can operate openly while its rival must operate clandestinely. Under parity (zone 3), in contrast, the government typically rules by day and the rebels by night.⁵⁶ The latter was not case in Madichaur during the first four years. The police operated freely in Madichaur as long as they were garrisoned there, although from 1998 they only ventured outside the hamlet in larger groups. Insurgents quite often entered the village during night, but usually only in covert, small groups staying with trusted supporters. Most rebel activity was carried out clandestinely by part-timers organized in civilian “front organizations” formed before the insurgency. Front organization members were also sometimes invited to politico-cultural meetings, so-called “programs,” but they had to be held in secret locations a distance from the hamlet.

The administrative power distribution was less clear. At the initiation, the elected VDC chairmen were from the UPF. This did not matter much in practice, however. The police were controlled by the Congress government and collaborated closely with local Congress notables, and the VDC budget was administered by the VDC secretaries, who were on the government’s payroll. Further, in May 1997, new local elections were held. As the Maoists boycotted the election, non-Maoist representatives were elected. From around 1998, however, local government officials increasingly began staying in the district headquarters, probably out of fear of Maoist attacks.⁵⁷ This indicates that government control was on the wane. Still, as long as the police post was there, officials came relatively often to Madichaur and stayed a few days at a time.

Maoist use of coercion in this period was limited, and they did not kill any civilians in Madichaur. The police applied considerably more force. Two weeks after the insurgency was launched, ten men from Madichaur were arrested, accused of involvement in a Maoist police post raid. They were tortured and six of them received long sentences, even if none of them were involved according to Maoist sources. Two months later, an elected UPF representative was taken away by the police and Congress activists and brutally slain.⁵⁸ The police did not kill more people in Madichaur, although several alleged rebels were killed in more remote surrounding areas. Threats, beatings, and arrests continued, however. Not only insurgent suspects were harassed. In areas outside Madichaur peasants told of the police coming with local informers to snatch their hens and beat them to get

information. According to a politically unaligned peasant in Jankot, “[t]he police would just beat everybody. ‘Where are the Maoists?’, they would say”.⁵⁹

This coercive information gathering did not bear much fruit. Very few informed on the rebels, at least when they could get away with not doing so. In practice, the mostly non-local policemen relied on information from a handful of local anti-rebel activists. Several villagers claimed that some of these informers falsely denounced people for personal reasons.⁶⁰ The police were also to blame for arresting people on faulty grounds, however. A Congress supporter in Kotgaun gave the following example: “The Maoists would fit a bomb in a shop owned by NC people. The police comes and arrests everyone nearby”.⁶¹

In disagreement with the prediction from control-collaboration theory, active collaboration with the rebels was widespread in this period. Much of the collaboration was coordinated by the front organizations, in which roughly three-fourths of the population participated. Youth in the Maoist student wing were especially active in the initial few years. They acted, among other things, as local militias, threatening and retaliating against opposing Congress activist. Other groups, like the Maoist front organizations for women and for children, contributed in different ways. The women were particularly useful for preventing rebel arrests. Because touching women was taboo, women several times helped rebels, including “Ananta,” escape arrest. Children were mainly used to carry messages and inform about the movement of government forces. The front organizations were also tasked with collecting donations, which were not regularized at the time.⁶²

The Maoists outperformed the government also in terms of recruitment. On the government side, the police was the only organization of full-timers combating the insurgents in this period.⁶³ Very few, probably four or five, people from Madichaur joined the police force. Most of them belonged to families supporting the Congress party. The Maoists recruited more full-timers in this period, although their numbers were relatively modest. According to Maoist leaders, there was a wave of new recruits in the months after the initiation, but they had to ask many of them to return due to a shortage of guns and food supplies. Most of the willing recruits were young Maoist student activists who had received arrest warrants.⁶⁴ After a couple of years, many of the activists arrested in the early days of the insurgency were released by the courts due to lack of evidence, and several of them also volunteered as full-timers.

The Maoists expanded their armed forces towards the end of this period, mainly by capturing armaments from the police.⁶⁵ The limited manpower and weaponry of the police, and their dispersion

across the area's rugged hills, made them very vulnerable to ambush.⁶⁶ As the Maoists stepped up their attacks in 1999 and reinforcements were not forthcoming, the police started withdrawing from the villages and concentrating their forces in fewer posts.

2000-2001: Maoist Control

The police withdrew from Madichaur and Kotgaun in February 2000, following a Maoist raid in nearby Ghartigaun in which 17 police officers were killed. After this, the Maoists dominated the hamlet. Uniformed militias, and sometimes guerilla squads, openly patrolled the streets. A village "people's government" taxed villagers, enforced Maoist regulations, and controlled movement in and out of the hamlet. Monetary taxes were levied to small business owners and government employees, while peasants contributed with food and shelter for guerillas.⁶⁷ Alcohol, gambling, and polygamy were outlawed and punished by the "people's court". Nearly all anti-Maoist activity in the hamlet seized. Some Congress activists left the hamlet, and those who stayed were coerced into obedience. One of them, Hasta Mani Pun, when interviewed by a journalist in Madichaur in early 2001, stated: "I don't want to die, so I do as they say".⁶⁸ In Kalyvas' scheme, the hamlet was now under dominant rebel control (zone 4). The rebels did not have full control (zone 5), since they did not hinder the security forces from entering the hamlet from time to time. The "people's government" offices were mobile, and the cadres went into hiding when the security forces came about once a month.

Patterns of violence clearly shifted with control. Whereas the police stopped arresting and torturing, the Maoists stepped up coercion. Maoist violence differed from the earlier police violence, however. Whereas involvement in the rebellion would almost certainly lead to punishment in the form of torture, jailing, or death upon capture, the Maoists often made personal threats or warnings before carrying out sanctions. Voluntary denunciation to the government was the most frequently punished behavior. Denunciators would receive two warnings, and if they continued informing, they would be executed, usually with knives. Only two such executions were carried out in Madichaur and its vicinity, both of alleged informers. Two of the most active government collaborators in the village were not killed, but put in Maoist arrest for several months. After being released, they stayed quietly in the village.⁶⁹

Collaboration with the Maoists in this phase was universal and extended beyond support in cash or kind. Most able-bodied persons had to participate in Maoist "campaigns", in which big groups of mostly civilians went around the district to organize meetings and engage in house-to-

house recruitment. Many noncombatants also had to work on Maoist road projects for about two weeks without pay. Further, most young persons in the hamlet were pressured to join the guerillas as “volunteers” in big attacks, like the one on the headquarters of Dang south of Rolpa in November 2001.

Recruitment of full-time guerillas and political cadres also took off in this period. Many of the young militia members were transferred to guerilla forces as the organization acquired more arms and food supplies. By the end of the conflict, about 20-25 full-time combatants and 10-12 full-time cadres had been recruited from Madichaur, which constitutes about one full-timer for every two households, and several times the number of police recruits from the hamlet.

When the Maoists left the peace talks in November 2001, their successful mobilization in villages like Madichaur had made them strong enough to provide considerable armed resistance to the army, and fighting rapidly spread and escalated to the level of civil war.

Making Sense of the Growth of Rebellion in Madichaur

Overall, the predictions from control-collaboration theory do not hold for the initial phase of dominant government control, but they are more accurate for the latter period of dominant rebel control. I now turn to the factors and mechanisms that may explain this.

Pre-Existing Networks

UPF activists had forged strong networks before the insurgency began. These networks were strongest in the schools. According to Ogura,⁷⁰ the Nepal National teacher’s Union (Communist) organized almost 80 percent of all teachers in Rolpa up to 1990, and most of them became UPF supporters. Many Maoist leaders from the district, including Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Nanda Kishor Pun (“Pasang”) and “Ananta,” worked as teachers before the war. The majority of the party’s activists and militants, however, came from the Maoist student union (ANNISU-R). Bleak prospects for higher education and employment were probably important reasons for many rural students to join the movement. In particular, failure to pass the final exam (SLC) in 10th grade frustrated many.

Maoist party networks also extended to peasants in the villages. While few peasants were initially very active, many participated in Maoist public meetings, which served as devices for revealing political loyalties as well as for leaders to mobilize people for action.⁷¹ Importantly, party networks

strongly overlapped with social networks. Many were clearly influenced by family and friends in their political choices. Some young people were introduced to the movement by older siblings whom they had been taught to follow.⁷² Others used the stands of people near them as a heuristic for identifying the party best promoting their interests. A shopkeeper and Maoist supporter said that “simple people like me just think that if so many of my friends are with them, they are probably for people like me.”⁷³ When the Maoist party got a foothold within the Kham Magar community in Rolpa, these mechanisms led to a spiral of increased support.

Maoist support would also arise from opposition to a few detested persons within the local Congress elite. When asked why he supported the Maoists, a laborer emphasized the situation before the insurgency: “It was the time when Congress was all in all. A bad person would suppress us, and UPF was the enemy of Congress. The enemy’s enemy is our friend”.⁷⁴ As explained above, several Congress supporters actively opposing the Maoists were not Kham Magars, and therefore peripherally positioned in the society. Equally important, two Congress activists’ behavior caused anger and resentment. One allegedly used to lend money to drunken men during card games and demand huge interests on their loans. The other was known as a sly bully who often tricked people and got into brawls. Both were widely referred to as “bad” persons, or as *jali* (swindler) and *fatah* (liar).

The pre-existing organizational and social networks became vital to the Maoists after the insurgency began. The rebels were given food and shelter by “well-wishers” who had attended Maoist meetings before the insurgency and usually had close ties to insurgents. Many “well-wishers” seem to have found such support an obvious course of action not requiring much deliberation. When asked whether he provided rebels with food and shelter, the above-mentioned shopkeeper answered, “yes, it was part of our support to the party,” seemingly taking such contributions for granted.⁷⁵ This seems to be consistent with at least two of the mechanisms suggested in the theory. Solidarity may have made villagers concerned with the local rebels’ welfare. Norms of reciprocity may also have played a role: if the rebels’ efforts were considered a contribution to a public good, reciprocity could have made villagers feel obliged to contribute something as well. Social incentives, like concerns with being shamed or frozen out of their social network, could also have played a role, although people’s statements did not directly attest to this.

Social and organizational ties played an important role also in rebel recruitment. Most of the recruits during dominant government control joined only after a lengthy process, starting with Maoist student activism before the insurgency. Since such activity was open and relatively safe at the time,

having some political inclinations and friends or siblings in the movement could be sufficient reasons to join. However, after the brawls in 1995 and particularly with the initiation of insurgency, many student activists received criminal charges, and several were tortured and jailed. Some rebels and relatives of rebels said they were left with no choice but to join. This is probably an overstatement; while the fear of arrest and torture was well founded, flight was often a possibility, especially since labor migration from the area is common. An anonymous full-timer for instance said he considered that option since his brother was working abroad. But he “had no plan for that.”⁷⁶ Moreover, recruits are likely to have expected that becoming a guerilla in this period involved considerable risk of death.⁷⁷ When considering whether to stay, flee, or go underground, links to guerillas seem to have been important for many. The anonymous guerilla joined after receiving a letter from “Ananta” to meet him in Jankot. Another guerilla emphasized that he was “already involved in the party”, and “[t]o fight for the change in Nepal was far better for me than to hide in India or elsewhere.”⁷⁸

In sum, Maoist networks were essential to the growth of the rebel movement during the time of dominant government control. They provided important reasons for many to become active Maoist supporters before the insurgency, which often led to a spiral of increasing involvement. Further, after insurgency began, the rebels were sheltered by villagers already tied to the movement. And finally, established links to insurgents made the choice of going underground more attractive to young activists facing criminal prosecution.

The Belligerents' Approaches

People's reasons for collaborating with one or the other actor were also related to conflict processes and the belligerents' behavior. The belligerents adjusted their approaches to eliciting support over time, not the least due to changes in the local power distribution. However, there were also considerable differences between the actors' behavior when each of them enjoyed dominant control.

One important difference lay in the use of coercion. First, the Maoists used violence more selectively than the police.⁷⁹ The police, probably due to the shortage of voluntary informers, used beating and arrests quite indiscriminately.⁸⁰ Having some link to the Maoist party before the insurgency was often sufficient to get in trouble. This not only created resentment against the police and their informants, but also gave incentives for joining the guerillas to escape harassment. “Saddam”, a farmer and Maoist “well-wisher,” joined the guerillas in 1999, giving the reason that “[t]he police

were creating a state of terror in the village. [...] Eventually I thought I might get arrested as well because many others were being arrested.”⁸¹ The Maoists, in contrast, initially engaged in beatings of only a few very unpopular Congress activists. Also after gaining control, Maoist violence was selectively targeted at government collaborators and security forces. They thereby avoided the adverse byproducts of indiscriminate violence.

The *form* of coercion also differed. Initially, the government approached the insurgency chiefly as a law-and-order problem. The centerpiece of the strategy was to arrest and convict the rebels. This proved difficult for several reasons. While the government and the police wanted to introduce terrorist legislation giving the police more leeway to use force and imprison suspects without evidence, this was dropped after protests from civil society and leftist parties.⁸² The police therefore had to provide sufficient evidence to convict the rebels in ordinary trials, which rarely occurred due to lack of informants and limited police capacity. Most suspected rebels arrested early on were therefore eventually released by the courts.⁸³ In addition, warrants were often made known while the accused were free, which in effect lowered their opportunity cost of going underground. Finally, the law-and-order approach was inconsistently applied. The police often used torture during interrogations, sometimes executed suspected rebels, and gave public statements suggesting that they did not care about due process.⁸⁴ This further undermined the government’s credibility in the eyes of the public.

The Maoists used violence more strategically. Rather than following a rigid crime-punishment logic, they often made punishment of wrongdoers explicitly contingent on future behavior. Even the most notorious government collaborators in the initial phase were not severely punished for their past misdeeds when the Maoists gained control. As long as they refrained from denunciation and political activism, they could usually stay unharmed in the village. In this way, Maoist coercion effectively shaped security incentives for collaboration.

Although the Maoists restrained their violence in this area after gaining control, their mobilization did involve coercion. Entire school classes from the lower secondary schools were taken away several times for indoctrination, lasting from one day up to a week.⁸⁵ Further, the rebels introduced a “rule” that at least one person from each household should become a full-timer. The rule was not strictly enforced, however.⁸⁶ Rebel taxation also involved coercion. The taxes were not universally accepted and were only viable through a threat of sanctions. One farmer complained that whereas the police used to buy his vegetables, the Maoists simply “took” them after assuming control.⁸⁷

Maoist coercion was so effective much due to their extensive monitoring system. In every school, teachers in the Maoist teacher's union would monitor the schoolyards. A militia was also constantly present in the villages. The Maoists were therefore extremely well informed, and unlike the police, did not need to rely on a few informers with their own agendas. The shortage of anti-rebel volunteers might help explain why the police did not use such mass organizations for monitoring. However, they also did little to encourage such organizations or to protect anti-rebel activists. In a well-known case, the rebels massacred eight villagers involved in forming a pro-government volunteer committee in eastern Rolpa.⁸⁸ Only in late 2003 did the government suggest forming armed civilian defense committees, but it was officially, though perhaps not in practice, dropped after public outcry.⁸⁹

The Maoists' efforts in *framing* and *persuasion* were also far more comprehensive and culturally resonant than those of its counterpart. The police and their collaborators hardly tried winning people's "hearts and minds," and rather repelled people who did not take a clear anti-Maoist stance in their chase of rebels. The Maoists, in contrast, put most of their efforts in the initial years into persuading and organizing people. A key element in this strategy was the "programs," which were not only political meetings, but cultural events usually involving music, dance, and theater. The cultural performances were very popular in the rural areas and also attracted people who were not politically engaged. A shopkeeper in Madichaur said he would go "just for fun" to experience the dance and songs. The speeches, he said, were "too difficult".⁹⁰ Still, people seemed to have understood the core message. Another villager said that "[m]ost of the things were beyond our understanding, but we understood that they asked us to support them, and if people's government came, it would bring development to this place".⁹¹

Conclusion

This article has taken a deep look at insurgency processes in a hamlet of Nepal to build theory on how rebel groups can grow in spite of military inferiority to the state. Prominent accounts of civil war onset suggest that limited state reach makes this possible by allowing rebels to carve out pockets of control. Building on Kalyvas' control-collaboration theory, these accounts emphasize that local control spawns collaboration because it renders coercion effective. However, very weak insurgent groups are not likely to control significant settlements since the state can move enough forces into

core rebel areas to establish at least partial control. In such cases, like in Nepal, we must explain how the rebel group can gain strength in spite of a locally more powerful state. I identify two broad factors that help make this feasible: First, strong pre-existing rebel networks and support, which can spur collaboration and recruitment through several mechanisms, including solidarity, norms of reciprocity, and social incentives. Second, inept counterinsurgency, which in this case involved widespread coercive intelligence gathering and a poorly implemented law-and-order approach that led to the release of most captured rebels.

The article makes three main contributions. First, it points out that local state strength is not static, as implicitly assumed in influential state weakness theories of civil war onset. Second, it shows that Kalyvas' uncausal control-collaboration model is incomplete. While control makes it easier to obtain local collaboration, it does not override all other factors. I add two factors to the model, pre-existing networks and belligerents' abilities and policies, which help account for the puzzling growth of insurgency in the face of a militarily far stronger state. Finally, the article contributes to network-oriented theories of insurgency. While several studies have shed light on the role of networks for insurgent collective action, the role of local networks for *pro-government* collective action during insurgency has largely been ignored. This article helps fill this gap by taking into account how pro-government networks and political entrepreneurs matter for local collaboration patterns.

The article's empirical contribution lies in the careful process-tracing of control and collaboration over time, which makes it possible to determine whether and how pre-existing networks and other factors helped rebels overcome local inferiority in power. Since process-tracing places high demands on data, the spatial scope of the study is limited. Still, there are reasons to believe that these factors were generally important for the early growth of Nepal's insurgency: First, the military power balance seems to have been roughly similar in much of the Mid-Western Hills, the initial epicenter of insurgency, where there were police posts in most larger settlements until at least 1999.⁹² Second, the fact that insurgency tended to first arise in locations with high pre-existing support for the Maoist party suggests that pre-existing networks played an important role initially.⁹³ The Maoists themselves also highlight the importance of support for gaining local influence to begin with. According to the Rolpa district chairman, it was "the main thing."⁹⁴ Police brutality is also well documented elsewhere, and the public tend to give it much of the blame for the insurgency.⁹⁵

Nonetheless, the scope of the arguments may have certain limits. One possibility is that the determinates of collaboration depends on the phase or mode of the armed conflict: control might

matter less in the initial phase than later on in an insurgency, since governments may initially tend to restrain their use of force in order to signal that it can handle the situation. If this is the case, perhaps a key advantage of control, the possibility of selective killings, may not fully apply until governments become more ruthless. A second plausible scope condition is that the rebel group lacks large-scale foreign support, since such support may invalidate a central premise of my arguments: that the rebels depend on local collaboration to survive and prosper. Comparative micro-level studies are needed to test these and other possible scope conditions.

Notes

¹ Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Micro-Level Studies of Violence in Civil War: Refining and Extending the Control-Collaboration Model," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 4 (2012): 658-668.

² James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75-90; Matthew A. Kocher, *Human Ecology and Civil War* (PhD dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago, 2004).

³ Roger V. Gould, "Multiple Networks and Mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871." *American Sociological Review* 56(6): 716-729 (1991); Roger D. Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Paul Staniland, "Cities on Fire: Social Mobilization, State Policy, and Urban Insurgency," *Comparative Political Studies* 43, no. 12 (2010): 1623-1649; Elisabeth Jean Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁴ This adds to the insights from previous studies exploring Kalyvas' theory, which have focused on its ability to explain patterns of violence, rather than collaboration (e.g., Gonzalo Vargas, "Urban Irregular Warfare and Violence Against Civilians: Evidence From a Colombian City," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21, no. 1 (2009): 110-132; Ravi Bhavnani, Dan Miodownik and Hyun Jin Choi, "Violence and Control in Civil Conflict: Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza," *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 1 (2011): 61-80.)

⁵ Robert W. McColl, "The Insurgent State: Territorial Bases of Revolution," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 59, no. 4 (1969): 613-631.

⁶ Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung: Volume II* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), 94.

⁷ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 2006), 4.

⁸ Fearon and Laitin (see note 2 above), 76.

⁹ Kocher (see note 2 above), 3.

¹⁰ Fearon and Laitin (see note 2 above), 80.

¹¹ Although accounts of civil war onset draw upon the theory, it is not certain that it was intended for this question. Kalyvas restricts it to *ongoing civil war*. Yet, he defines civil war broadly, as "armed combat within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of the hostilities". Since thresholds of violence or degree of organization are unspecified, an emerging insurgency with limited direct fighting, like that in the early years of Nepal's conflict, could be said to meet the definition.

¹² Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence* (see note 1 above), 124.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 210-213.

¹⁴ Kalyvas mostly uses the term “defection,” defined as active collaboration with the rival. He considers three types of defection: noncompliance, informing, and switching sides.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 197, 205. These predictions are not formulated as explicit hypotheses, since Kalyvas’ empirical analysis focuses on violence.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 111.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 217-218.

¹⁸ Kalyvas makes the same point, arguing that since the state’s resources are less strained in peacetime than during war, “the emergence of insurgencies cannot be simply accounted for by low levels of state control” (*Ibid*, 139). Yet, he does not explain why control is not so decisive in the early phase of insurgency.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 124-129, 389.

²⁰ Bruce Fireman and William Gamson, “Utilitarian Logic in the Resource Mobilization Perspective,” in Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy (eds.) *The Dynamics of Social Movements* (Cambridge, MA: Winthrop, 1979), 8–44.

²¹ E.g., Gould (see note 3 above); Sarah Elizabeth Parkinson, “Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War,” *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 3 (2013): 418-432; Petersen (see note 3 above); Paul Staniland, “Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia,” *International Security* 37 no.1 (2012): 142-177 (and see note X above); Michael Taylor, “Rationality and Revolutionary Collective Action,” in Michael Taylor (ed.) *Rationality and Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 63–97; Wood (see note 3 above).

²² Petersen (see note 3 above), 61-66; Taylor (see note 21 above).

²³ Petersen (see note 3 above), 67-71.

²⁴ Jason Lyall, “Are Coethnics More Effective Counterinsurgents? Evidence from the Second Chechen War,” *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 1 (2010): 1–20.

²⁵ Joseph H. Felter, “Taking Guns to a Knife Fight: Effective Military Support to COIN,” USAWC Civilian Research Paper (2009).

²⁶ Stathis N. Kalyvas and Laia Balcells, “International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict,” *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (2010): 415–429.

²⁷ Samuel L. Popkin, “Political Entrepreneurs and Peasant Movements in Vietnam,” in Michael Taylor (ed.) *Rationality and Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 9–62.

²⁸ Staniland (see note 3 above), 1631.

²⁹ Harry Eckstein, “Case Study and Theory in Political Science,” in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby (eds.) *Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 7: Strategies of Inquiry* (London: Addison-Wesley, 1975), 79–138.

³⁰ IISS (International Institute for Strategic Studies), *The Military Balance*. Annual report (London: Oxford University Press, 1996/1997); Prakash Nepali and Phanindra Subba, “Civil-Military Relations and the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 16, no. 1 (2005): 83–110.

³¹ Li Onesto, *Dispatches from the People’s War in Nepal* (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 94-95; Robert Gersony, *Sowing the Wind: History and Dynamics of the Maoist Revolt in Nepal’s Rapti Hills* (Report, Mercy Corps International, 2003), 71.

³² Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 181.

³³ *Ibid*, 205-213.

³⁴ Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence* (see note 1 above), 421; reproduced in the Appendix.

³⁵ Full-time participation is captured in one of Kalyvas’ defection categories, “switching sides.”

³⁶ See Appendix Table A1. Names are only used for interviewees who gave permission to do so.

³⁷ See Wood (note 3 above), 33-40, for a more extensive discussion.

³⁸ Police officers in the area during the conflict were not interviewed mainly due to the difficulty of finding them, since the police continuously move its personnel around the country.

³⁹ Teachers were selected because they tend to have much local knowledge and because many of them played important roles during the conflict as political entrepreneurs on either side.

⁴⁰ Most interviews were not tape-recorded, but the author took extensive notes that were later checked by the interpreter. As such, most quotes are not word-by-word transcriptions. Three interviews were made by phone after questions in need of elaboration had been identified.

⁴¹ Deepak Thapa, *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996 to 2003* (New York: Zed, 2004), 30-35, 53, 85.

⁴² CPN-Maoist, "Strategy & Tactics of Armed Struggle in Nepal," Document adopted by the CPN-Maoist Central Committee, March 1995 (<http://www.bannedthought.net/Nepal/UCPNM-Docs/index.htm>).

⁴³ Thomas A. Marks, *Insurgency in Nepal* (Report, Strategic Studies Institute, December 2003), 14-15, 36. Each VDC usually consists of a few hamlets.

⁴⁴ Nepali and Subba (see note 30 above).

⁴⁵ INSEC (Informal Sector Service), *Events Data of Victims of Violence during the Maoist Conflict, 1996-2006* (Based on *Nepal Human Rights Yearbooks*, 2010).

⁴⁶ Philippe Ramirez, "Maoism in Nepal: Towards a Comparative Perspective," in Michael Hutt (ed.) *Himalayan 'People's War': Nepal's Maoist Rebellion* (London: Hurst, 2004), 225-242.

⁴⁷ de Sales, Anne, "From Ancestral Conflicts to Local Empowerment: Two Narratives from a Nepalese Community," *Dialectical Anthropology* 33, no. 3-4 (2009): 365-381.

⁴⁸ Gersony (see note 31), 37.

⁴⁹ INSEC, *Nepal Human Rights Yearbooks* (Kathmandu: INSEC, 1995-2006).

⁵⁰ Pasang, *Red Strides of the History* (Kathmandu: Paru Offset Press, 2008), preface.

⁵¹ de Sales, Anne, "The Kham Magar Country, Nepal: Between Ethnic Claims and Maoism," *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 19 (2000): 41-71.

⁵² Taylor (see note 21 above).

⁵³ Interview 15 (see Appendix Table A1).

⁵⁴ Interviews 32 and 33.

⁵⁵ Pasang (see note 50 above), 6; Interviews 4 and 33.

⁵⁶ Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence* (see note 1 above), 211-212.

⁵⁷ While no VDC secretaries were reportedly attacked in this village, the secretary of Jelbang VDC was killed in March 1998 according to Deepak Thapa, Kiyoko Ogura and Judith Pettigrew, "The Social Fabric of the Jelbang Killings, Nepal," *Dialectical Anthropology* 33, no. 3/4 (2009): 461-478.

⁵⁸ INSEC (see note 49 above), 94.

⁵⁹ Interview 25.

⁶⁰ Even a royalist and anti-Maoist farmer said that Congress supporters falsely denounced people (Interview 22).

⁶¹ Interview 15.

⁶² Interviews 31 and 32.

⁶³ There were Congress youth activists, but they were only part-timers often belonging to the party's student wing, the Nepal Student Union. The party's youth wing, the Tarun Dal, only started forming in Liwang around 1998, and they did not form a local organization in Madichaur during the conflict (Interview 34).

⁶⁴ Interviews 31 and 32.

⁶⁵ Pasang (see note 50 above).

⁶⁶ Marks (see note 43 above).

⁶⁷ Tax rates for teachers were between 5 and 10 percent (Interviews 12 and 16).

⁶⁸ Ramyata Limbu, "Dateline: Rolpa," *Nepali Times*, no. 33, 9-15 March.

⁶⁹ Interviews 31 and 33.

⁷⁰ Kiyoko Ogura, "Maoists, People and the State as Seen from Rolpa and Rukum," in Hiroshi Ishii, David N. Gellner and Katsuo Nawa (eds.) *Political and Social Transformations in North India and Nepal* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2007), 435-475.

⁷¹ Kristine Eck, “Recruiting Rebels: Indoctrination and Political Education in Nepal,” in Mahendra Lawoti and Anup K. Pahari (eds.) *The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Revolution in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 33–51.

⁷² Interviews 4 and 12.

⁷³ Interview 21.

⁷⁴ Interview 23.

⁷⁵ Interview 21.

⁷⁶ Interview 4.

⁷⁷ One of the interviewed guerillas, for instance, had seven friends who became guerillas, and four of them were killed.

⁷⁸ Interview 31.

⁷⁹ This is also found in Thapa, Ogura and Pettigrew (see note 57 above).

⁸⁰ Notably, indiscriminate *homicides* by the police seemed relatively rare in Rolpa. Most of those killed by the police were individually targeted, even if they may not actually have been active rebels, and many were killed under arrest. See INSEC 1996 (note 49 above), 93-98.

⁸¹ Interview 33.

⁸² Thapa (see note 41 above), 89.

⁸³ Gopal Sharma, “Police Want Tougher Laws to Fight Insurgency,” *Reuters News*, 13 March (1998).

⁸⁴ Amnesty International, “Nepal: Human rights violations in the context of a Maoist ‘people’s war’” Report, 10 March (1997).

⁸⁵ Interview 12.

⁸⁶ Interviews 23 and 30.

⁸⁷ Interview 20.

⁸⁸ Marie Lecomte-Tilouine, “Terror in a Maoist Model Village, Mid-Western Nepal,” *Dialectical Anthropology* 33, no. 3-4 (2009): 383–401.

⁸⁹ ICG (International Crisis Group), *Nepal’s Maoists: Their Aims, Structure and Strategy* (ICG Asia Report No. 104, Kathmandu/Brussels, 2005).

⁹⁰ Interview 21.

⁹¹ Interview 17.

⁹² Marks (see note 43 above); Thapa, Ogura and Pettigrew (see note 57 above).

⁹³ Author, [Title removed to ensure anonymity.] Working paper (2013).

⁹⁴ Interview 5.

⁹⁵ Thapa (see note 41 above), 92-93.