

Disaggregating Dissent

The Challenges of Intra-Party Consolidation
in Civil War and Peace Negotiations

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Abstract

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Contemporary civil wars are often characterized not only by fighting between rebels and governments, but also by rebel violence against their own community members. In spite of repeated peace negotiations, many of these conflicts seem to go on endlessly. Such instances may reflect attempts or failures on the part of the non-state side to consolidate. To confront the government on the battle field or at the negotiation table, rebels need to become an effective fighting force as well as effective negotiators. So, what do rebels do to consolidate to wage war and negotiate peace? The dissertation approaches the question of rebel capacity by disaggregating the non-state side in civil war and in connection with peace talks. The dissertation offers a set of original case studies from three ethno-separatist conflicts: Sri Lanka, Indonesian Aceh, and Senegal. It combines qualitative methods with one study also containing basic regression analysis. The empirical analysis reveals that the risk perceptions, information asymmetries, and commitment issues that often mark the relationship between the state and non-state parties are also prevalent within the non-state party. The overall argument is that rebels' consolidation of their capacity to fight and negotiate entails different processes. More specifically, it first specifies conditions under which rebels use violence against members of their own ethnic community as part of the war against the government by emphasizing the importance of timing, territorial control, and ethnic demographic concentration. Second, it explores and highlights the importance of the rich repertoire of non-violent methods which rebels employ to enhance their fighting capacity. Third, it draws attention to the significant role of social network structures on the non-state side by empirically examining these structures, and their relationship to civil war dynamics and peace negotiations. Fourth, it sheds new light on pre-negotiation and ripeness theory by specifying the elements on the non-state side that need to be mobilized for a peace settlement, and what mobilization measures are used at what time. By furthering an understanding of the non-state side in civil war and peace processes, the dissertation helps third parties to engage more constructively in peacemaking, and humanitarian and development assistance.

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Till min älskade familj

List of Papers

- I “Trapping Constituents or Winning Hearts and Minds? Rebel Strategies to Attain Constituent Support in Sri Lanka,” 2009, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 21 (2):306-326. Reprinted with the kind permission of the Taylor & Francis Group.
- II ”Intra-Ethnic Dominance and Control: Violence against Co-Ethnics in the Early Sri Lankan Civil War” (co-authored with Lisa Hultman). Under review. Previously presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting in Toronto, September 3-6 2009, and at the Eurasian Peace Science Conference, Istanbul, January 8-9 2010.
- III “Ripening Within? Mobilization Strategies Used by Rebel Negotiators to End Ethnic War.” Unpublished manuscript, presented in an earlier version at the conference on External Efforts to Promote Negotiation in Internal Identity Conflicts at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), Laxenburg, June 2008.
- IV “Trust and Treason: Rebels’ Social Network Structure as a Source of (In)Flexibility in Peace Negotiations.” Unpublished manuscript, previously presented at the Center for the Study of Civil War, International Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), April 2009.

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Acknowledgements

I thought I was going to change the world with this dissertation. In the end, I guess that the only person that changed was myself. Doing research in armed conflict and in post-conflict environments is a significant challenge at times. Having to deal not only with the theoretical and methodological problems of a ‘regular’ dissertation project, but also putting oneself in more or less life-threatening situations added another dimension to this effort. My father would have preferred me to study botany.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the 100 or so interviewees who not only gave of their time to talk to me, but also sometimes took personal risks in doing so. I have tried to do justice to their accounts.

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*“Ultimately, life is a seamless web, and analysis, indeed knowledge, is basically a matter of making order and distinctions out of it.”**

If this dissertation can help to make order of things – it has achieved something.

Jannie Lilja
Uppsala, March 2010

* Zartman, I William (1989: 241) “Prenegotiation: Phases and Functions” *International Journal* 44: 237-253.

Introduction: Disaggregating Dissent

Fighting a rebellion is challenging. Ending it may be even more so. To confront the government on the battle field or at the negotiation table, rebels need to become an effective fighting force as well as effective negotiators. So, what do rebels do to consolidate to wage war and negotiate peace? This question can be framed as a collective action challenge. Collective action refers to activities that require the coordination of efforts by two or more individuals with the objective to further the interest, or the well being, of the members of the collective (Olson 1965; Sandler 1992).

Previous research has only to a limited extent focused on issues of consolidation of the non-state side when it comes to fighting and negotiating. While pointing to its overall relevance, prevailing research has not systematically examined the ‘what,’ ‘how,’ and ‘why’ aspects of consolidation. What we know is that the need for unified action is particularly acute in the early phases of armed rebellion and in connection to peace talks (Zartman 2005: 267-268). These are instances when rebels face the highest risks. If collective action is impeded, resources will be deflected to in-fighting and the war against the government will be lost. Yet, the possibility for peace will also be lost as factionalization will make compromises at the negotiation table, or the implementation of a peace treaty, more difficult (Gurr 2000: 74-78). Failed collective action in relation to peace talks might ultimately result in a muddle-on, ‘no-peace-no-war’ situation marked by violence, poverty, and underdevelopment. In other words, rebels’ ability to consolidate for war and peace is not only important for the rebels themselves, but may also have a major impact on society at large. Evidence of this can be found in contemporary cases of protracted conflicts, such as in the Middle East and Sudan.

This composite dissertation explores the capacity of the non-state side to fight and to negotiate peace – and what rebels do to enhance this capacity. It consists of four essays, which – explicitly or implicitly – examine these collective action challenges. The dissertation offers a set of original case studies of ethno-separatist conflicts from Sri Lanka, Indonesian Aceh, and Senegal, but its main contribution is not empirical. The value of the new primary data lies in the way it builds and develops theory.

In doing so, the dissertation disaggregates the non-state – dissent – side in civil war and in peace processes to end civil war. The study takes the rebel leadership as its starting point and investigates the strategies rebel leaders

use in relation to competitor groups, constituents, and fellow rebels – employing a top-down perspective. This work makes up a stream in a contemporary disaggregation wave in civil war research, aimed at breaking down units of study into smaller building blocs to enhance the level of analytical precision.

This is an introduction to the dissertation as a whole. The following section spells out the key concepts for the study of the non-state party. Section 3 briefly outlines how existing literature has addressed rebels' collective action challenges in relation to armed struggle and peace negotiation, and identifies what remains to be explored and analyzed. Section 4 describes the methodological approach used. Section 5 presents the four essays and summarizes their main findings. Section 6 draws out the overall conclusions. Section 7 points to possible avenues for future research and offers policy recommendations.

The Non-State Side in Civil War and Peace Processes: The Terminology Used

Putnam (1988) disaggregates bargaining into two different levels. The first level is between the main adversaries to the conflict, here the non-state and state sides. The second level is internal to each side and concerns the relationship between leaders and constituents. Later work highlights a third level of analysis – that within a political or politico-militant group, which could be viewed as a coalition of factions or individuals (cf. Hazan 2000; Stedman 1991: 12-14). Although it may be fruitful to treat the non-state side as a unitary actor for analytical purposes, it obviously consists of a large number of actors. This dissertation focuses on the non-state side on the second and third levels of analysis.² That is, the relationships between aspiring leaders and constituent populations on the non-state side, and between members belonging to the same rebel group, as illustrated in Figure 1 below. The conflicts studied here are 'ethnic' or 'ethno-nationalist,' which implies a sub-set of civil war where political cleavages and violence largely follow ethnic identity lines. Within this set of conflicts the focus is more specifically on ethno-separatist conflict where rebels claim an independent ethnic state. Although this operational delimitation is made in the essays, the terminological framework as such is applicable for the wider study of ethnic conflict. The concept of 'group' here denotes a rebel group, which is a politico-militant opposition group with a distinct name and a reasonable degree of organizational structure. A rebel group may be further sub-divided

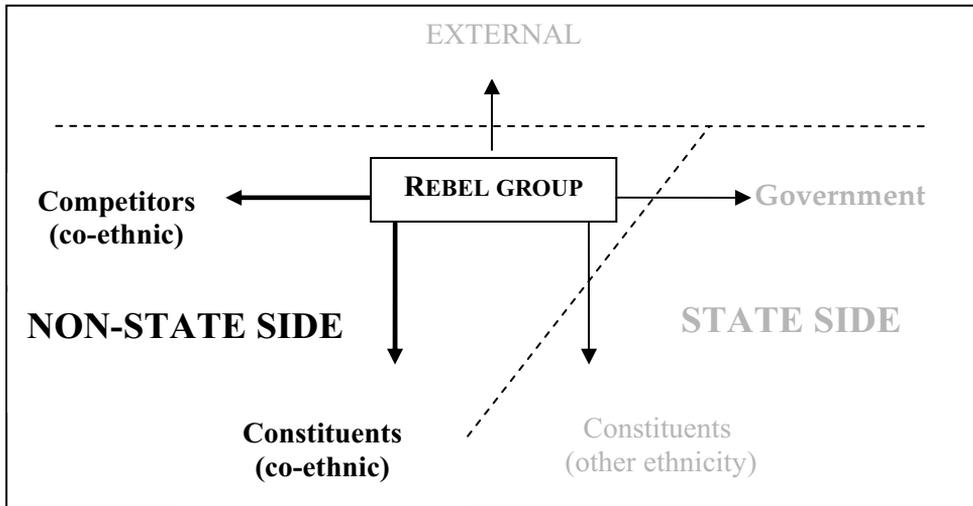
² The terms non-state side and non-state party are used interchangeably, and are here treated as synonymous with an 'ethnic'- or 'ethno-national' minority (cf. Gurr 2000).

into ‘factions.’ Factions may be defined on functional grounds. An initial distinction may be between military or civilian functions. Several factions may also exist within a function, implying that a rebel group may be composed of various military factions. Alternatively, factions may be geographically defined and divided into ‘homeland’ or ‘diaspora’ contingents.

This dissertation places the leaders of the rebel group at the centre, and explores their strategies against actors on the non-state side: constituents, competitors, and fellow rebels. The constituents studied here are co-ethnic civilians. Competitors are co-ethnic members of organized politico-militant groups. Competitors might also be individuals, such as religious leaders or community elders, who command the loyalty of broader constituent segments. Fellow rebels may be second-tier leaders, or rebel soldiers.

The different essays that make up this dissertation place shifting emphases on the different actors. Essay I focuses mostly on co-ethnic constituents, Essay IV largely emphasizes fellow rebels. Essays II and III address co-ethnic constituents and competitors, and to some extent fellow rebels. The dissertation also distinguishes between different phases of conflict, primarily in functional, but sometimes also in temporal terms. The ‘build up’ phase denotes the period before which a rebel group has acquired territorial control (Essays I and II). The ‘pre-negotiation’ phase refers to the period between a key event or change in conditions that leads the non-state party to (in a manifest – although not necessarily public – fashion) consider negotiation as a desirable alternative, and the start of formal negotiations. The pre-negotiation period thus entails the generation of valid spokespersons, the building of coalitions and the harnessing of support. ‘Negotiation’ denotes the period of formal talks aimed at resolving the inter-party ‘conflict’ issues through distributive (zero-sum) or integrative (problem solving) bargaining (Essays III and IV) (cf. Zartman 1989; Gross-Stein 1989; Rothman: 1991).

Figure 1. Disaggregating the Non-State Side



Rebels' Collective Action Challenges of War and Peace

This dissertation examines rebels' collective action challenges, first, in the early phase of conflict when rebels attempt to develop a fighting force to carry out an armed struggle against the government, and also during conflict.³ The challenge of war is how people can be induced to provide their support to the rebels in spite of the high risks involved (cf. Lichbach 1995; Wood 2003). The second collective action challenge pertains to rebels' shift from an armed strategy to peace through negotiation. Rebels' peace challenge is how to attain a sufficient consensus by which people passively or actively support the rebel negotiator's entering into talks and the negotiation positions taken on the part of the ethnic community (cf. Mitchell 1981).

There are several suggestions for how rebels may deal with the challenge of armed rebellion and thus enhance their fighting capacity. Rebels may, roughly speaking, use two different strategies: coercion or non-coercion. As suggested by Olson (1965), a first possible measure is that of coercion.

³ Collective action theory as originally formulated by Mancur Olson (1965) tells of the impossibility of equating individuals' rational self-interest towards a common objective with individuals' actions towards that objective. Collective action, according to Olson, is only possible if the number of people is small enough, if there is coercion, or if selective economic or social incentives are used. After Olson's initial work collective action research has developed in different directions, and also been applied on the domain of armed rebellion (Popkin 1979; Gurr 1970; Lichbach 1995). Collective action theory has, however, made fewer inroads into the area of peace making (see Lejano 2006 for an exception).

Evidence of rebels' use of violence and coercive practices are found in studies on forced recruitment, exploitation of civilians etc. (cf. Kandeh 2005). Coercive practices may range from active coercion to passive coercion, i.e. acts short of open violence such as harassments or subtle threats. Rebels, however, also have a multitude of non-coercive methods to draw upon. One non-violent option is to provide selective material incentives contingent on participation in the rebellion (cf. Popkin 1979; Weinstein 2007). The provision of collective incentives is another non-coercive possibility, which may include granting protection from government violence, or offering other types of public goods to constituents (cf. Goodwin & Scopcol 1982; Wickham-Crowley 1991). Yet, collective incentives may also work 'in the negative' as a motivational force for ethnic-minority members who are induced by collective losses, fears of future collective losses, or hopes for collective relative gains, to support the rebels (cf. Gurr 1970).

The literature also brings up the need for rebels to overcome factionalization, forge coalitions, and signal authenticity, while remaining unclear on whether these measures would be coercive or non-coercive in nature. Ethnic leaders need to overcome factionalization and forge coalitions over narrower loyalties within the ethnic minority. Signaling authenticity of leadership is also critical. Authenticity can be lost by wrong words or deeds as aspiring competitor leaders capitalize on errors by established leaders (Gurr 2000: 74-79). Authenticity and commitment signaling may take violent form (cf. Bloom 2004; Kydd & Walter 2006).

There are also factors beyond rebels' immediate or short-term control, which may still affect the non-state side's capacity to rebel. The relevance of a strong collective identity is often highlighted. The salience of ethnic identity may depend on physical attributes, language, and religion. The importance of ethnicity may also depend on its socialization, i.e. how much it influences people's daily lives, and the degree to which it is politicized (Gurr 2007; cf. Hale 2008; Horowitz 1985). Emotional and moral motives beyond bonds of solidarity with the identity collective may assist in this process (Wood 2003). Ethnic territorial concentration of the ethnic minority is another relevant component. Ethnic concentration facilitates coordination and helps overcoming the collective action problem of rebellion (Lichbach 1995; Gurr 2000, 2007; Toft 2003; Weidmann 2009). However, even when ethnic minority members are not territorially concentrated, pre-existing social networks will enhance collective action capacity. Cohesive pre-war social networks with dense and frequent connections, facilitated for instance by common language, or joint religious practices, will enhance rebels' ability to mobilize. Political opportunity is another factor related to changes in external conditions – such as the occurrence of a catastrophe, or a reform of legislation (cf. Gurr 2007).

The problem of collective action does not only pertain to armed rebellion but also to peace negotiations. Intra-party factionalization is commonly viewed as a major obstacle to success in peace talks (cf. Mitchell 1981). The need to resolve internal differences has been related to the concept of ripeness (Stedman 1991). The conflict resolution literature brings up collective action capacity components in relation to peace negotiation – similar to those identified for rebellion – but conceptualizes them differently. For example, some of the most important aspects of pre-negotiation are a party's capacity to produce valid spokespersons, to harness domestic support, to manage domestic politics, and to build coalitions (Saunders 1978; Gross Stein 1989: 488-497; Zartman 1989: 244-250; Zartman 2005: 268, 284-256; Rothman 1991). Cooperation and negotiation with a distrusted adversary may be risky at the backdrop of leadership competition between groups on the non-state side. When inter-party trust is low and continued conflict is costly, cooperation is likely to be initiated and sustained by a leader from a hawkish, or hardline, group with moderate preferences for the reason that hawkish leaders have more credibility with their constituents (Schultz 2005). There appears to be interdependence between party cohesion and successful peace processes. Intra-party factionalization needs to be overcome for the negotiator to undertake strategic shifts vis-à-vis the adversary and to sell a peace process to the constituents (Hazan 2000). To conclude, dimensions identified by conflict resolution theorists as necessary for peace negotiation bear close resemblance to the collective action components of 'authentic leadership', 'pre-existing social networks', 'collective incentives', and 'overcoming factionalization and forging coalitions,' considered relevant for rebellion.

Research Gaps: Rebels' Capacity for War and Peace

The following individual components can together be seen to make up the non-state side's collective action capacity: Coercion (passive and active), selective incentives, collective incentives, overcoming factionalization and forging coalitions, leadership authenticity, a salient collective identity, emotions, ethnic territorial concentration, pre-existing social networks, and political opportunity. Interestingly, components identified as relevant for rebels' fighting capacity also recur in the literature on their negotiation capacity. What is worth noting is that most studies tend to focus on single components of collective action capacity. Few contributions take a more holistic grip with the exception of Gurr (2000; 2007) who clusters individual components together and labels them the 'capacity for collective action.'

However, having identified various components for rebels' collective action capacity, two research gaps may be discerned. First, we still do not sufficiently understand what individual components that matter, or are required, under what circumstances. The dissertation addresses this gap by

asking the question of when, or under what conditions, rebels choose coercive methods (Essays I, II, and III). Also, the literature mostly focuses on rebels' capacity for armed struggle, but pays relatively little attention to their capacity for peace making. Therefore, another question explored in Essays III and IV is what collective action components are most important for peace negotiations. The second research gap is that we still do not know enough about the relationship, and interplay, between individual components of collective action capacity. Hence, Essays I and II broadly address the relationship between social networks and whether particular structures are more or less associated with coercive practices. Essays III and IV investigate the link between rebels' social network structure and their ability to form coalitions and mobilize internally in connection to peace talks.

Methodological Approach

As mentioned previously the focus is on rebel groups, particularly rebel leaders, and the measures they use to enhance the non-state side's collective action capacity to fight and negotiate in the context of ethnic war. The dissertation thus takes a pronounced top-down perspective.

A qualitative method has been used for all the essays in this dissertation, although one also contains descriptive quantitative data and basic regression analysis. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate as some of the phenomena had not previously been studied or understood at the level of disaggregation aimed for. For example, in Essays I and III, different types of rebel methods were systematically mapped across time and space. Moreover, the functioning of the so called 'trust mechanism' in Essay IV could only be explored through the use of qualitative method. The selection of cases was underpinned by a rationale to develop theories and concepts.

Working with a small sub-class of general phenomena may be an effective 'building block' approach to theory development (George & Bennett 2005: 77-78, 83). Broadly speaking, the armed conflicts covered in this dissertation – being ethno-separatist and protracted – represent a subset of civil war. This implies that the 'non-state side' is not only self-identifying and that 'constituents' are relatively well distinguishable, compared for instance to the case of ideological conflicts. A second consideration was to delineate the study to certain temporal or geographic conditions. For instance, rebels' peace mobilization methods were examined pre-negotiation and during negotiation. War mobilization measures were investigated before and after the assumption of territorial control. When it came to differing geographic conditions, rebels' use of violence was analyzed for ethnically homogenous, as opposed to ethnically heterogeneous, areas.

The single-case method was used for "Trapping Constituents" (Essay I) and "Intra-Ethnic Dominance and Control" (Essay II). The need for

disaggregated data, while ensuring its reliability and validity, was a reason for focussing on the one case of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka for the study of war dynamics. For Essay II, news events data was used to construct the dataset on Tamil casualties. In terms of substance, the LTTE and the Sri Lankan conflict was selected for reasons of saliency and richness, being marked by extensive coercive practices on the non-state side, but also in the LTTE's assumption of territorial and social control, which allowed for valuable in-case comparisons over time and space (cf. Gerring 2007: 101-104). The LTTE was, furthermore, a rebel group with a strong hierarchy, making it possible to attribute violent and non-violent behavior to strategic decision-making by its leadership.

A comparative case-study approach was used for the two remaining essays "Ripening Within" (Essay III) and "Trust and Treason" (Essay IV). The comparative approach was used to build and explore theories and concepts (George & Bennett 2005). Essay III includes two groups in addition to the LTTE: Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) in Indonesia and Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance (MFDC) in Senegal. The three cases are analytically equivalent, and comparable on relevant dimensions in that they represent negotiations to end ethnicity-based, separatist, and protracted wars, which started at approximately the same time. In all cases, the rebel negotiator had repeatedly negotiated on behalf of the ethnic community. The cases were selected on different outcome variables to make possible the identification of conditions, or independent variables, that could help explain the variation. Three cases from different parts of the world were used to generate more observations and to create richness in the data, to make it possible to detect common patterns (George & Bennett 2005: 80).

For Essay IV, a fine-grained analysis of the rebel group as a social network of interconnected individuals was necessary on theoretical grounds. However, the working of the trust mechanism was highlighted more clearly by contrasting two cases with different negotiation flexibility outcomes: the GAM-Indonesian government negotiation in 2005 and the LTTE-Sri Lankan government negotiation in 2002-2003. This made it possible to identify specific aspects of the network structure that could account for the difference.

The primary data in the form of around 100 interviews were collected through field work in Sri Lanka, Indonesian-Aceh, Senegal, the United Kingdom, Norway, and Sweden in 2005-2009. Telephone interviews were conducted when face-to-face meetings were not possible. Sources are rebels, civilian constituents currently or formerly residing in rebel areas, government representatives, and third parties (governmental and non-governmental actors). The majority of interviews were tape-recorded by agreement with the informant. Given the sensitivity of the topics under study, precautions were taken to protect the sources by anonymity with some exceptions where subjects consented to disclose their identities. Practical

constraints in terms of security, budget, and logistics underlay some of the considerations made with regard to method. For the comparative case studies, variation in access to the empirical data was encountered for reasons beyond the author's control. Whereas access to virtually every key actor in GAM was given, for LTTE and MFDC some of the main actors were either unavailable, or dead. Attempts to mitigate this were, first, to interview fellow rebels, third parties, or individuals – including family members – who had been interacting closely with the main actors over time. Second, the questions asked were to a large extent factual in nature – in terms of ‘what happened,’ or ‘how it happened.’ This meant that accounts could be compared against those of other respondents, or against secondary sources. No indications suggest that variation in data access had any important influence on the empirical patterns emerging from the cases. These issues are addressed in further detail in the individual essays.

Presenting the Essays

The requirement for effective collective action is expected to be particularly pronounced in the initial phase of ethno-separatist rebellion: to fight effectively – and at the end of rebellion: to negotiate effectively. The former phenomenon is addressed in Essays I and II, and the latter in Essays III and IV.

Essay I: Trapping Constituents or Winning Hearts and Minds? Rebel Methods to Attain Constituent Support in Sri Lanka

This essay explores a rebel group's coercive and non-coercive measures against their own constituents in the early and later stages of armed conflict. The study focuses upon the relevance of rebels' dependency on constituent behavioral support to fight the government militarily. The methods used by the LTTE *vis-à-vis* co-ethnic Tamil constituents to induce their cooperation are examined across the conflict-affected districts of Sri Lanka in the period between 1983 and 2007. The study is based on primary interview- and secondary data. Dependency on constituent cooperation in the form of information, labor, and finances appears to impact coercive and non-coercive measures used by the rebels. Interestingly, it turns out that more subtle passive coercive methods by far outnumber the violent ones. Active coercion is not necessary once rebels have established a reputation of violence. Therefore, violence is mostly used when there is urgent time pressure. The essay also highlights that the supply of behavioral support by constituents changes over time. Behavioral cooperation on the part of an individual constituent seems to be driven by changes in the social structure surrounding

him or her. For instance, the less mobile an individual is, and the more people in his or her immediate environment who join the rebels, the more sense it makes for the person to step up collaboration with the rebels. The essay thus suggests rebels' use of different forms of 'entrapments,' which are social and territorial in nature. One contribution of the study is to show that there is no necessary path-dependency in the relationship between rebels and constituents in the course of war. Another is to demonstrate that constituents' internal motivations, or genuine hearts and minds in favor of the rebels, are not necessary for them to cooperate with the rebels at later stages of conflict. Policy wise, the findings caution against measures aimed at confining populations.

Essay II: Intra-Ethnic Dominance and Control

Violence against Co-Ethnics in the Early Sri Lankan Civil War

This essay focuses on rebels' violence against members of their own ethnic minority – competitors and constituents – in the build-up phase of ethno-separatist war. Asking the question of why rebels target their co-ethnics, the aim is to provide ingredients for a conceptual framework, which is assessed using unique disaggregated casualty data on violence committed by the LTTE against co-ethnic Tamils in 1985-1988 in territories claimed for the Tamil Eelam state. The essay proposes the existence of two partly separate processes: rebel violence against co-ethnic competitors, and rebel violence against co-ethnic constituents. While the former aims at eliminating competition for leadership over the ethnic minority, the latter aims at socially controlling the population in areas contested by the government and the rebels. The intensity of violence directed against the two types of targets largely depends on the degree of ethnic homogeneity in a given area. The greater the ethnic homogeneity in favor of the ethnic minority, the more violence against competitors and the less violence against constituents. The empirical findings largely conform with the theoretical expectations. LTTE primarily targets competitor groups in districts where the ethnic composition is overwhelmingly ethnic Tamil. LTTE targets more Tamil constituents in ethnically mixed areas. By suggesting that intra-ethnic violence is used for instrumental purposes in the inter-ethnic conflict, one contribution of the study is to open up for the possibility of thinking about violence both in terms of instrumental rationality and emotive symbolism. Another contribution is to shed light on the under-studied and under-theorized dynamics of consolidation of the non-state side in civil war. Policy implications of the findings suggest a political approach in the form of inclusive power-sharing arrangements in areas dominated by violence between competitor groups, and the upholding of human security in areas where violence is directed against co-ethnic constituents.

Essay III: Ripening Within?

Mobilization Strategies Used by Rebel Negotiators to End Ethnic War

This essay explores how rebel negotiators mobilize their own ethnic community, i.e. the non-state side, for peace talks to end ethnic war. Proposed mobilization strategies are distilled from relevant bodies of theory, and systematically investigated for peace negotiations in Sri Lanka, Indonesian Aceh, and Senegal. The empirical findings show that whereas a coercive military capacity underpinned the claim to ethnic representation, coercive mobilization did not predominate the pre-negotiation phase. During negotiations, non-coercive persuasion, and collective and selective incentives predominated clearly. Moreover, much mobilization was internal to the negotiating rebel group. The successful rebel negotiator appeared to ‘mobilize in reverse’ by initially targeting the core of military leaders within their own group, and thereafter competitor groups and co-ethnic constituents. By examining *what* mobilization measures are undertaken to bolster legitimacy to act as the ethnic-community representative, to build coalitions, and to generate constituent support, *how* these measures are sequenced, and against *whom*, the findings have important implications for the concepts and requirements of ripeness and pre-negotiation. The study underscores in particular the relevance of rebels’ non-violent commitment signals, which largely tend to be overlooked in research on non-state armed actors. The policy implications suggest possible benefits of third-party assistance to communication, public outreach, and procedural transparency to the non-state side in connection with peace talks.

Essay IV: Trust and Treason

Rebels’ Social Network Structure as a Source of (In)Flexibility in Peace Negotiations

This essay builds on the finding in Essay III on the importance of the dynamics internal to the negotiating rebel group. This study thus focuses even closer on individual rebels’ behavior in relation to fellow rebels – notably military leaders within the group. To reach a negotiated peace settlement, the parties to the conflict have to show flexibility in their negotiation positions. Yet, peace negotiations entail risk-taking for rebels with separatist objectives. The essay examines why some rebel groups participating in peace negotiations, are flexible on the main issue of contention, whereas others are not. Using a social network approach, the study proposes that a group structured as a ‘trust network’ will be better equipped to manage the risks of peace making. Rebels’ social network structure is analyzed empirically in the context of peace negotiations

between LTTE and the Sri Lankan government, and GAM and the Indonesian government. The empirical findings support the proposition that when negotiators and non-negotiating leaders are organized in a structure of non-dyadic reciprocal relationships, resembling that of a trust network, a calculated type of risk-taking is possible through a ‘trust mechanism’ of information-sharing, verification, and mutual influence. While social network analysis has previously been applied to the study of organized crime and terrorism, the essay demonstrates its great significance for the understanding of peacemaking. Policy wise, the evolution of network structure implies that the likelihood of success for peace talks may vary over time.

Contributions

By offering a disaggregated analysis of the non-state side, this dissertation suggests that rebels’ consolidation of the capacity to fight and negotiate entails different processes. This finding both challenges and complements the traditional bargaining and negotiation approach (cf. Fearon 1995; Reiter 2003). Reverting back to Putnam’s multi-level bargaining games, the dynamics internal to the non-state side has implications for rebels’ interaction with the government on the battle field and in the negotiation room. Although the strategic options of ‘fighting’ or ‘negotiating’ may be viewed as comparable from a ‘level one’ bargaining perspective, the dissertation shows that on the non-state side, the consolidation for war and peace constitute different processes. Hence, even when the intention to negotiate peace exists, rebels face new risks, which may prevent the shift in strategy (cf. Stanley & Sawyer 2009). Underlying these risks is the presence of information asymmetries and commitment issues at the intra-party level. Rebels good at waging war, are not necessarily good at negotiating peace.

More specifically, this dissertation makes four main contributions to the understanding of rebels’ capacity to fight war and negotiate peace. *First, it specifies conditions under which rebels use violence against their co-ethnics as part of the war against the government by highlighting the importance of timing, territorial control, and demographic concentration.* Rebels seem to use violence against co-ethnic constituents, first, when there is time pressure, and, second, in ethnically mixed areas, i.e. where the ethnic minority is not territorially concentrated. The purpose is to secure constituents’ cooperation in the fight against the government. Rebels use violence against co-ethnic competitor groups in areas where the ethnic minority is territorially concentrated. The reason for such violence could be to overcome factionalization, helping the non-state side to develop into an effective unified fighting force. However, violence against competitors could also reflect a mere preference for power. Ethnic territorial concentration thus

appears to play a significant role for rebels' military consolidation, especially in the early phases of war. Violence is used to signal ethnic commitment and authenticity of leadership as well. The findings confirm that a reputation for militancy underpinned rebel claims to represent their ethnic community in peace talks, in line with Schultz (2005).

Second, the dissertation underscores the rich repertoire of frequently used non-violent methods that rebels employ to enhance their capacity to fight. When there is less time pressure it turns out that rebels use more sophisticated types of passive coercive methods to make constituents contribute to the military effort. These methods take the form of social and territorial entrapments. The findings here suggest that pre-war social networks, stipulated as relevant by existing literature, are less relevant than the social networks that evolve in the course of war (cf. Weinstein 2007). This is especially the case when it comes to the social ties between the rebels and the constituent population. The finding that non-coercive methods appear to predominate in range and use during armed conflict and in connection to peace talks, indicates the importance of rebels' concern not to alienate the ethnic-community members they aspire to represent before the government and that violence is costly. However, these considerations are not mirrored in prevailing research paradigms, focused largely on rebels' coercive behavior (cf. Bloom 2004; Kydd & Walter 2006).

Third, the dissertation draws attention to the important – but poorly understood – role of social network structures on the non-state side. It does so by empirically exploring these structures and their relationship to civil war dynamics and peace negotiations. The essays suggest that social network structures matter both for rebels' capacity to wage armed struggle, and for their capacity to make peace. Whereas consolidation for war involves the mobilization of constituents in large numbers to assist in militarily related activities, the consolidation for peace appears to concern largely the social ties between leaders within the negotiating rebel group. Rebels' social network structures may help to explain why, or why not, intentions on the part of individual rebels are translated into collective action for negotiated peace. Disconnects between individual rebels' intentions and collective action outcomes do, therefore, not necessarily imply deception or self-deception on the part of the rebels (cf. Collier 2000).

Fourth, the dissertation sheds new light on pre-negotiation and ripeness theory by specifying what elements on the non-state side that need to be mobilized for a peace settlement, and what mobilization measures are used at what time. It does so through comparative empirical analyses at a high level of detail. Previous research on ripeness has largely focused on changes in leadership (Stedman 1991; cf. Stanley & Sawyer 2009). This dissertation instead shows what existing leaders do to promote a peace process. Consolidating for peace seems to revolve around coalition formation in a particular sequence. The coalition building starts within the rebel group, and

extends outwards to competitors, and to the constituency at large. Whereas leadership authenticity based on military credentials may suffice to initiate negotiation, in order to conclude peace talks, the findings suggest that persuasive communication along with collective and selective incentives are crucial. The utility of detailed empirical analysis for understanding ripeness, and the process of ripening, through changes in the perceptions of individual leaders, comes forward with great clarity in the study on trust networks.

Implications for Research and Policy

The findings underline the fruitfulness of a disaggregated approach for future research of the non-state side in civil war. First, although the consequences of the methodological delineations described above are to produce ‘contingent generalizations’, there is a potential for further applications and extensions. For instance, the different processes of intra-ethnic violence found in ethnically mixed and homogenous areas in Sri Lanka may be explored in other conflict locations. The processes of intra-ethnic violence revealed in this study may also be examined in connection to the dynamics of inter-ethnic violence. Social network analysis is a second area of interest for future research on civil war and conflict resolution, as it allows for the simultaneous exploration of individuals and the social structures they find themselves in at particular points in time. For instance, the variable room for civilian agency over time and space calls for further study, and is likely to be further illuminated through social network analysis. During war, it may also be fruitful to focus on the interaction between competing rebel groups, and on the internal workings of these groups. Of specific relevance seems to be the concern of rebel leaders about combatants’ fighting morale. A third promising avenue of further study is that of rebels’ non-coercive practices. In fact, an enhanced understanding of their non-coercive capacity to mobilize and act collectively in the course of war, may indicate rebels’ capacity for peace.

A number of policy implications follow. By disaggregating the non-state party in civil war over time and space, this dissertation helps to inform third-party diplomatic or peacekeeping interventions, but also contribute to a nuanced general understanding of the non-state side. Depicting the non-state side – the ‘Palestinians’, ‘Tamils’, or ‘Sunnis’ – as a unitary actor may be unhelpful for the constructive management and resolution of ethnic conflict, but also for the promotion of human security. Rebels’ use of violence, as well as subtler forms of coercion against their own civilians and against competitors aspiring for ethnic leadership, needs to be taken into account.

An informed third-party approach is needed to deal constructively with the non-state side. Different interventions may be appropriate at different phases and in different locations of conflict (cf. Fischer and Keashly’s

contingency approach, 1991). During armed conflict, third parties need to understand how to disentangle the complex nature of intra-ethnic violence on the non-state side. The findings suggest that to prevent destructive inter-group rivalry – which may be more likely in areas where the ethnic minority is concentrated – third parties could, for instance, facilitate inter-group dialogue on different political power-sharing arrangements. In order to promote human security, peace keepers may want to prioritize ethnically mixed areas where civilians may be particularly vulnerable. The evolving social network ties between civilians and rebels need to be factored into humanitarian interventions by, for instance, informing the ways that humanitarian relief is distributed to ensure that it reaches populations most in need. In connection to peace negotiations, a third party may want to gain an initial understanding of rebels' social network structure. A peace facilitator could also assist the non-state party with communication and outreach through logistical support, and by guaranteeing procedural transparency throughout the peace process. In sum, there are important complementary roles to be played by different third parties – governments, IGOs, NGOs, and individuals – in relation to the non-state side during civil war and in peace processes to put an end to it.

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