1 | *Pathways to Revolution*

Calcutta, West Bengal, India, 1950

On April 8, 1950, 200 Nepali exiles met in secret in Calcutta's Tiger Cinema Hall. Many had lived in India their entire lives as their families had fled the rule of Nepal's autocratic regime. And several had been active participants in Gandhi's nonviolent campaigns for Indian independence from Britain.

The link to Gandhi was a cornerstone of the Nepalis' movement. They named their organization the "Nepali National Congress," an imitation of Gandhi's "Indian National Congress" party. And their founding charter expressed a commitment to achieving political change in Nepal through exclusively nonviolent means.

But the Gandhian disciples were meeting that day in Calcutta to make a momentous decision. The time had finally come to launch a campaign to overthrow the autocratic Rana family dynasty in Nepal and to replace it with a democratic system. And while Gandhi's techniques may have worked in India, some members argued, nonviolent tactics alone would be insufficient to achieve their goals in Nepal.

Party members first ferociously debated a change in the party's name (it would become simply the "Nepali Congress") and the design of the party flag. Having resolved these issues, they then turned their attention to the question of strategy. B. P. Koirala, who had spent two years in jail for his participation in the "Quit India" movement, put forward a motion to remove the clause of the party's charter calling for adherence to "constitutional and peaceful" methods and replace it with "all possible means." The implication of the amendment to those in attendance was unambiguous: it was a call to arms.

Koirala's amendment passed with an eighty-vote majority. Soon after the meeting, the Nepali Congress began stockpiling weapons,

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and in December, the former acolytes of Gandhi launched a guerrilla insurgency to overthrow the Nepali government.[1]

Chunbang, Rolpa, Nepal, 2005

In the fall of 2005, the senior leadership of Nepal's Maoist rebels gathered in the village of Chunbang in the country's hilly western Rolpa district. Over the previous decade, these leaders had achieved a remarkable feat. At a time when Marxist rebellions were considered a historic relic, the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) had transformed itself from a small, rural political party considered irrelevant by ruling urban elites into arguably the most powerful actor in the country. They had built an army of between 18,000 and 30,000 soldiers, established local governing councils and courts, controlled an estimated 25 percent of Nepal's territory, and limited the regime's effective authority to the capital city of Kathmandu and its immediate environs.

Despite this dramatic battlefield success, by 2005, the Maoists had come to a critical point in their revolutionary effort. The conflict had reached a military stalemate. India and the United States were increasing their supply of arms to the ruling monarchy. And it was increasingly clear that the Maoists would not be able to capture Kathmandu and achieve a total military victory. Meanwhile, negotiations between the Maoists and the king had been fruitless.

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

The Maoists gathered at Chunbang had dabbled in nonviolent methods in the past. But they had previously rejected the strategy of civil resistance in favor of armed insurgency, concluding that

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[1] Details of the meeting were gathered from Bhola Chatterji, *A Study of Recent Nepalese Politics* (Calcutta: World Press, 1967); M. P. Koirala, *A Role in Revolution* (Lalitpur, Nepal: Jagadamba Prakashan, 2008); Kiran Mishra, *B.P. Koirala: Life and Times* (New Delhi: Wishwa Prakashan, 1994); Parmanand, *The Nepali Congress Since Its Inception* (Delhi: B. R. Publishing Corporation, 1982); Prem R. Uprety, *Political Awakening in Nepal* (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 1992).

nonviolent strategies were suited only to the "bourgeoisie" and would be ineffective when used by the marginalized and the oppressed. After a decade of war, their perspective on their own capabilities had begun to change. While armed conflict had reached a stalemate, they now had an extensive network of supporters across the country that they could mobilize for massive street protests. Furthermore, coalition with the "elitist" political parties would make it more difficult for the regime to engage in repression and might even cause key actors to flip sides and join the opposition. Craftily reframing the language of revolutionary communist ideologies, Maoist leaders argued that a turn to nonviolent tactics was not the end of the revolution, but rather the beginning of the "strategic offensive" that would allow the movement to achieve its revolutionary goals.

For nineteen days in March and April of 2006, the Maoists and the political parties combined their efforts to launch a wave of protests, demonstrations, and strikes. Seeing no other way out of the political crisis, the king stepped down. Elections were held two years later, and the Maoists, competing as a fully legitimized political party, achieved an overwhelming victory. Pushpa Kamal Dahal, the erstwhile guerrilla leader more commonly known by his nom de guerre "Comrade Prachanda," took on a new title: prime minister.

Challengers and Strategies

Nepal is a particularly illustrative case in point, but its political movements' variation in resistance strategies is not unique. From Eastern Europe to South Africa to the Arab Spring, campaigns of civil resistance have proven capable of overthrowing regimes and bringing about revolutionary political change using primarily nonviolent tactics. But while most of the 1989 anti-Soviet movements were unarmed, those in Romania and the former Yugoslavia devolved to widespread violence and even genocide. At the height of the anti-Apartheid campaign in South Africa, uMkhonto we Sizwe, the violent flank of the African National Congress, led a bombing campaign against civilian targets. And the initial euphoria of the Arab Spring protests quickly passed as armed conflicts in Libya, Syria, and Yemen killed hundreds of thousands.

What explains this variation in strategy among movements challenging the state? Why are some groups able to adopt and sustain a

strategy of unarmed civil resistance while others are either unwilling or unable to do so? Recent research has suggested that nonviolent campaigns are more likely to achieve their self-stated goals, to further democratization, and to yield an enduring peace.[2] If nonviolent strategies appear to produce better outcomes, why do so many groups still choose to take up arms? Despite a new wave of attention to the effectiveness and global impact of civil resistance movements, our understanding of their origins and early trajectories remains limited.

The literature on contentious politics has placed great emphasis on the role of the state in shaping – and often limiting – the set of political opportunities that are available to would-be challengers.[3] While regime structures and institutions are undoubtedly important, this state-centric approach is unable to explain variation we often see in the behavior among challengers within the same state, nor does it take sufficiently seriously the ways in which challengers can forge their own political opportunities.

By contrast, civil resistance scholars emphasize the agency of challengers, pointing out the historical frequency of opposition mobilization even in highly repressive, authoritarian regimes.[4] As even the nuclear strategist Thomas Schelling argued, civilian challengers may have as much leverage over authoritarian leaders as those leaders do over civilians:

They can deny him most of what he wants — they can that is if they have the disciplined organization to refuse collaboration. ... It is a bargaining

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

[3] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945–1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Charles Tilly, *Regimes and Repertoires* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

[4] Erica Chenoweth and Orion A. Lewis, "Unpacking Nonviolent Campaigns: Introducing the NAVCO 2.0 Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (2013): 415–23; Erica Chenoweth and Jay Ulfelder, "Can Structural Conditions Explain the Onset of Nonviolent Uprisings?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 2 (2017): 298–324.

situation in which either side, if adequately disciplined and organized, can deny most of what the other wants; and it remains to see who wins.[5]

It is right to see contentious politics in terms of this type of strategic game. But what the civil resistance field has largely overlooked to date is that many of the important "moves" occur before civil resistance begins and actually condition whether or not challengers ever get to the point of initiating a nonviolent campaign.

This book aims to explain these crucial early-stage strategic choices made by challengers to state power seeking the political goal of regime change. Drawing on multiple cases each from Nepal and Syria, as well as global cross-national data, it details the processes through which revolutionary organizations come to attempt or reject civil resistance as a means of capturing state power. The book illustrates how the social ties that link a challenger organization with broader society inform the challenger's expectations about the likely outcomes of the early moves of a potential civil resistance campaign: its ability to generate mass mobilization, the regime's repressive response, and its own resilience to that repression. Challengers whose lack of social connections leads them to believe that an exclusively unarmed strategy will be ineffective must instead choose an alternative, sometimes choosing to delay contentious mobilization and temporarily accept the status quo, and at other times choosing to take up arms. Given the demonstrated impact of unarmed uprisings on international politics – both when they succeed in toppling regimes as well as when they devolve into bloody civil wars – the question of movement origins and strategic decision-making has important policy implications. Global actors, including US policymakers, need better tools to anticipate the conditions under which civil uprisings are most likely to occur, or to escalate to violence. Activists, meanwhile, may be interested in finding ways to encourage movements to adopt nonviolent resistance over armed insurgency or in helping civil resistance campaigns maintain nonviolent discipline.

[5] Thomas C. Schelling, "Some Questions on Civilian Defense," in *Civilian Resistance as a National Defense: Nonviolent Action Against Aggression*, ed. Adam Roberts (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole, 1967), 351–52.

Finally, civil resistance campaigns often have important geopolitical implications. The revolutionary events of 1989 and the Arab Spring were two of the most profound international political events of the last half-century. Their consequences are still unfolding. Even tiny Nepal sits along the contentious border between the two rising powers China and India.[6] Both of these countries as well as Western powers and the United Nations have been drawn into Nepal's internal conflicts. The transnational implications of the conflict in Syria have been even larger. What started as a civil resistance campaign has devolved into a civil war that has killed over half a million people, created a refugee crisis that destabilized the European Union, triggered military intervention by several external actors, and escalated tensions between Russia and the United States.[7] Improving our knowledge of challenger organizations' strategic decision-making is important in efforts to assess when, where, and in what form civil resistance campaigns are likely to occur.

The Strategy of Civil Resistance

Civil resistance refers to a conflict strategy based on the primarily nonviolent use of social, psychological, economic, and political pressure to exert coercive power on an adversary.[8] The same concept has been called by many names, from Gandhi's preferred term *satyagraha* ("truth force") to more recent variants such as nonviolent direct action, nonviolent struggle, strategic nonviolence, unarmed uprising, or even "civilian jihad."[9] While there may be some subtle differences between the terms, for the purposes of this book, they are largely interchangeable. I may sometimes use alternatives for semantic variation, but in general I follow an emerging preference in the field for

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[6] Nepali foreign policy commentators often refer to their country as being "the yam between two boulders."

[7] Reuters, "Syrian Observatory Says War Has Killed More Than Half a Million," March 12, 2018.

[8] Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1973); Kurt Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

[9] Maria J. Stephan, ed., *Civilian Jihad: Nonviolent Struggle, Democratization, and Governance in the Middle East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

the term "civil resistance" in order to distinguish it from philosophical or normative understandings of "nonviolence."

Civil resistance can be distinguished from other forms of collective action in two key ways. First, it differs from other forms of political mobilization that are "not violent" in that it occurs outside the channels of normal political activity. This definition excludes relatively routine and institutionalized nonviolent activities such as electoral politics, lobbying, and labor union strikes. Second, it differs from "political violence" in that the tactics used must not involve the widespread infliction of bodily harm or the physical destruction of property.

Civil resistance campaigns have been catalogued through a rich canon of individual case studies as well as more formal collections, such as the Swarthmore Global Nonviolent Action Database and a set of over 200 case studies compiled by the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict.[10] As part of their 2011 book *Why Civil Resistance Works,* Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan released what was to that point the most systematic effort at creating a comprehensive dataset of civil resistance campaigns. The Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) dataset compiled over 100 cases of civil resistance campaigns over the course of the twentieth century that pursued "maximalist" political goals: regime change, colonial independence, or national self-determination. They paired these with 200 armed campaigns over the same period with similar goals. The NAVCO dataset has been updated several times since then, with new cases added as well as more fine-grained variables for each year of the campaign.

Figure 1.1 shows the frequency of civil resistance campaigns seeking regime change for the years 1945 through 2013, from a recent release of the NAVCO data.[11] During this period, 141 distinct civil resistance campaigns were launched with the goal of regime change, producing a total of 342 campaign years.

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[10] George Lakey and Dale Bryan, "Global Nonviolent Action Database" (Swarthmore College, 2011); International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, "Nonviolent Conflict Summaries." https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/nonviolent-conflict-summaries/

[11] Erica Chenoweth and Christopher Wiley Shay, "NAVCO 1.2 Dataset" (Harvard Dataverse, 2019).
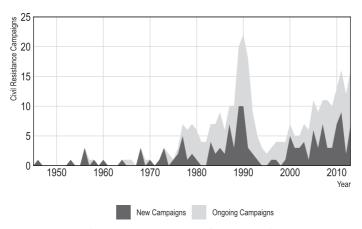
Figure 1.1 Civil resistance campaigns for regime change, 1945–2013

The occurrence of civil resistance campaigns in pursuit of regime change has increased over time, with an uptick beginning in the late 1970s and continuing through the 1980s. The wave of anti-communist campaigns that surrounded the collapse of the Soviet Union created a spike between 1989 and 1991. The frequency of civil resistance then dropped back down to levels more similar to those of the 1980s, before increasing again in the mid-2000s. Overall, the years 1945–1975 witnessed an average of 0.7 civil resistance campaigns per year, while from 1976 to 2013 that average rose to 8.4 campaigns per year.[12]

Scholars of civil resistance typically posit it as an "ideal type," often juxtaposing it with armed strategies, such as guerrilla insurgency or terrorism.[13] Of course, many civil resistance campaigns involve some types of violence, especially when maximalist political goals are involved. An alternative approach, frequently preferred by social movement scholars, is to conceptualize contention as a spectrum of nonviolent to violent repertoires. This framework rightly acknowledges a mix of violent and nonviolent tactics that are frequently present in a conflict environment. But it still ignores qualitative differences in the ways these tactics interact that suggest distinct strategic logics and demand separate theoretical explanations.

[12] Recent research suggests that this trend may be accelerating in the years since 2013. See Erica Chenoweth, "The Future of Nonviolent Resistance," *Journal of Democracy* 31, no. 3 (2020): 69–84.

[13] Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*.

For example, disparate organizations might be challenging the state contemporaneously using different means and without direct coordination. The "People Power" movement in the Philippines, one of the most studied successful cases of civil resistance, took place while a communist guerrilla insurgency was ongoing. Alternatively, a challenger might attempt a "hybrid strategy" in which it uses primarily nonviolent tactics but coordinates with an armed flank, either in an attempt to inflict greater costs or to provide protection from regime repression. A string of bombings by the African National Congress's armed uMkhonto we Sizwe front in the 1980s falls into this category. A challenger might attempt a strategy of exclusively unarmed civil resistance but fail to maintain discipline, allowing participants to turn to violent tactics, as happened during Kyrgyzstan's 2005 "Tulip Revolution."[14] Finally, a challenger might change strategies over time, as did the three Nepali organizations discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Figure 1.2 shows the relative breakdowns of each of several types of interactions of nonviolent and violent methods within civil resistance campaigns for regime change.[15] Of the 141 campaigns, 49 (35%) involved a violent flank that used lethal force. Ten campaigns (7%)
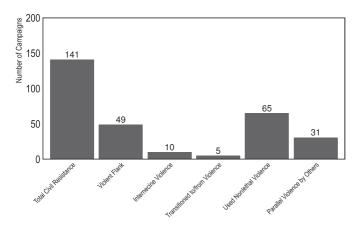

Figure 1.2 Violence within civil resistance campaigns for regime change

[14] Jonathan Pinckney, *Making or Breaking Nonviolent Discipline in Civil Resistance Movements* (Washington, DC: ICNC Press, 2016).

[15] Author's analysis based on campaigns coded as "nonviolent" in the NAVCO 1.2 dataset, using supplemental year-level data from NAVCO 2.1. See Erica Chenoweth and Christopher Wiley Shay, "NAVCO 2.1 Dataset" (Harvard Dataverse, 2019); Chenoweth and Shay, "NAVCO 1.2 Dataset."

featured internecine violence among factions within the campaign. And in five cases (4%), campaigns transitioned between strategies, employing primarily violent methods for at least one year within the "civil resistance" campaign.[16] Broadening the conceptualization of violence, sixty-five additional campaigns (46%) employed nonlethal methods such as destruction of property. Finally, thirty-one civil resistance campaigns (22%) occurred contemporaneously to violent campaigns being waged by other challengers to the same state.

The observation that nonviolent and violent methods are often intertwined in conflict does not necessarily undermine the concept of civil resistance as a strategy that relies on the use of primarily unarmed tactics. Rather, it presents variation in need of explanation. Beyond simply treating civil resistance as either present or absent in a state at a given time, this book will examine the conditions under which these complex patterns of interaction, substitution, and transition between armed and unarmed strategies are most likely to occur. It will explain why some groups seeking state power will attempt to do so via civil resistance, while others targeting the same regime turn to alternative strategies, such as violent insurgency. It will also explore what might cause a group to change its strategy of opposition over time, and it will predict which groups might be most at risk of fragmentation that could cause civil resistance to unravel and violence to occur instead.

The analysis presented in this book is limited, however, to an examination of the behavior of challenger organizations with the political goal of wholesale regime change. Of course, civil resistance has historically been used for a much broader array of goals, from civil rights reforms to campaigns against public corruption. The aim of focusing the analysis on this more limited set of cases is to compare groups with similar political goals and to examine those cases where the risks posed to those considering civil resistance are the highest due to the existential threat their claims pose to the regime. These are also the cases where the option of violence is most likely to be on the table as well. This book attempts to isolate the question of why it is, when the stakes are highest and the challenger is explicitly attempting to overthrow the regime, some challengers believe that they can do so using exclusively nonviolent means, while others decide that the repertoire

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[16] Note that this is a narrow definition, not including organizations that initiate distinct campaigns at different points in time using different strategies.

of civil resistance will not work and seek an alternative, sometimes choosing to take up arms instead.

The Role of Social Ties

The central argument of this book is that the social underpinnings of challenger organizations shape their assessments of the viability of civil resistance as a strategy to overthrow the state. Unlike guerrilla insurgency, where research has shown material factors, such as access to resources, favorable terrain, and a weak state to be of greatest importance, the strategic logic of nonviolent action emphasizes the central role of relationships.

One of the strongest findings in the literature on civil resistance is the importance of mass participation to the effectiveness of campaigns. In order to generate mass mobilization, however, a movement must have what I term "grassroots ties": social connections that link members of the movement to other civilians within the polity. These ties provide the channels through which ideas are spread and sympathizers are turned into mobilizers. A movement whose initial supporters have numerous bridging connections with other segments of society will be better able to generate these high levels of participation.

Even when there are a large number of supporters, victory through civil resistance may be difficult if there are few "regime ties" linking members of the movement to key pillars of regime support, most notably, the security forces. A lack of social ties with members of the regime makes it harder to win over defectors – a key source of nonviolent movement success. Second, a lack of regime ties makes it easier for security force personnel to engage in brutal repression against populations they perceive as more socially distant.

Challenger organizations with different combinations of these ties will follow different trajectories of contention, as presented in Table 1.1. "Integrated" challengers, with strong ties both to broader society as well as to the regime, will be best positioned and most likely to attempt civil resistance. They can leverage their ties to generate power in numbers, win over defections, and make repression costly to the regime. By contrast, "insular" challengers that lack both types of social ties will be unlikely to even attempt civil resistance, knowing they will quickly fail. They will instead be forced to consider an alternative.

Table 1.1 *Social ties and strategies of resistance*

	Regime Ties	
	High	*Low*
Grassroots Ties		
High	**Integrated**	**Marginalized Majority**
	Civil resistance	Possible civil resistance
		Violent flanks, hybrid strategies
Low	**Insider Clique**	**Insular**
	No civil resistance	No civil resistance
	Possible coups, assassinations	Possible insurgency

A challenger that emerges from a "marginalized majority" has extensive ties to civilian populations, but few to regime elites.[17] These groups may be able to generate mass mobilization, but will be vulnerable to brutal repression by the regime. They are the most likely to experience fragmentation and the emergence of armed flanks, either as a result of a failure to maintain nonviolent discipline or as a deliberate hybrid strategy. Finally, "insider cliques" refers to challengers that are closely linked to state power, but have few ties to the broader population. They may occasionally engage in forms of contention such as coups or assassinations, but are generally the least likely to initiate collective action due to their privileged status and limited ability to generate mass mobilization. For this reason they do not feature prominently in this book.

Three alternative strategies – organization-building, coalition, and internationalization – may allow challengers lacking social ties to overcome barriers to civil resistance. Groups may be able to forge new social ties, appropriate the ties of other challengers, or leverage support from external actors. Each alternative however, has high costs. Movement-building takes years, if not decades. Coalition requires the availability of other actors who are willing to share your political goals. And internationalization often backfires by allowing the regime to trigger nationalist sentiment. The book will analyze the

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[17] I thank Kathryn Willmore for suggesting this term.

circumstances under which each alternative might be most promising, as well as tactics movements take to try to minimize the costs. Nevertheless, none of these offers a surefire solution for a group that lacks social ties, making another alternative – violent insurgency – a distinct possibility.

Contributions of the Argument

This book seeks to build on scholarship on civil resistance, conflict processes, and contentious politics. It advances the civil resistance literature by moving the analytic lens away from campaign outcomes and toward campaign origins. Meanwhile, it challenges state-centric paradigms of contention by highlighting within-state variation and showing how organization-level characteristics can improve our understanding of challenger–regime interactions.

From Outcomes to Origins

The study of civil resistance has historically focused primarily on the question of its effectiveness. From the writings of practitioners of non-violent action, such as Gandhi, King, and Mandela, to the prolific theoretical work of Gene Sharp, the field emerged out of the claim that carefully planned nonviolent tactics could be more successful than their violent alternatives, even in incredibly oppressive contexts.[18]

Recent waves of civil resistance campaigns, such as the "color" revolutions of former communist states in the early 2000s and the initially nonviolent uprisings of the Arab Spring, have sparked a renewed scholarly interest in how challengers are able to overthrow seemingly powerful regimes without using armed force. Explanations have highlighted the importance of mass participation, tactical innovation, elite defection, international support, and high costs of repression.[19]

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[18] Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*; Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1994); Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

[19] Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections*; Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*; Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011);

But this wave of research has largely taken for granted the question of how and why groups come to attempt or reject civil resistance in the first place.[20] This book shifts the analysis to what happens before the campaign begins and how this conditions where and when civil resistance campaigns ever get off the ground.

State-Centric Approaches

Scholars of contentious politics have focused on how large-scale processes and specific state structures shape opportunities for various forms of contention.[21] Modernization theory attempts to explain revolutionary upheavals as a product of forces of change that disrupt class relations, state structures, and societal expectations.[22] While early work focused primarily on armed revolutions, recent efforts have applied similar modernization insights to argue that processes of industrialization and globalization have created structural conditions more conducive to nonviolent mass mobilization.[23] Modernization arguments appear to be buttressed by the fact that civil resistance campaigns have increased in frequency over the course of the later

Daniel P. Ritter, *The Iron Cage of Liberalism: International Politics and Unarmed Revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[20] An important exception is Veronique Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (2013): 401–13. Dudouet provides an inductive analysis of factors precipitating transitions from violent to nonviolent strategies across a set of prominent cases.

[21] Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Jack A. Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Goodwin, *No Other Way Out*.

[22] Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1966).

[23] Charles Butcher and Isak Svensson, "Manufacturing Dissent: Modernization and the Onset of Major Nonviolent Resistance Campaigns," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60, no. 2 (2016): 311–39; Suveyda Karakaya, "Globalization and Contentious Politics: A Comparative Analysis of Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 35, no. 4 (2018): 315–35.

twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.[24] But it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what processes are linking modernization to nonviolent contention. The main mechanism advanced by one leading study is actually an increase in social connections driven by labor organization.[25]

Grievance-based theories, meanwhile, highlight sources of popular dissatisfaction that lead citizens to rebel.[26] But while grievances may be able to explain when populations have a desire to take on their state, they do not consider whether they have the ability to do so, or what particular form that uprising will take.[27] Indeed, the possibility of nonviolent revolution is almost completely ignored by this literature.

Attempting to respond to shortcomings of the grievance-based approach, political opportunity theory emphasizes structural factors that enable or prevent the emergence of mass dissent.[28] Jeff Goodwin places particularly strong emphasis on the role of the state, arguing that highly repressive regimes leave populations with "No Other Way Out" than through armed revolution.[29] And while Charles Tilly theorizes contention as emerging out of the interactive dynamics between challengers and regimes, it is the state that almost always has the upper hand.[30] For example, he maps dissident trajectories over time as a direct function of state capabilities and democratization in a way very similar to Goodwin.[31] Studies in the political opportunity tradition arrive at the common conclusion that nonviolent dissent is not likely to be possible against strong, repressive states.

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[24] Chenoweth, "The Future of Nonviolent Resistance."

[25] Butcher and Svensson, "Manufacturing Dissent."

[26] Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970); Lars-Erik Cederman, Halvard Buhaug, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, *Inequalities, Grievance, and Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[27] Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*; James D. Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer Than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 275–301.

[28] Tarrow, *Power in Movement*.

[29] Goodwin, *No Other Way Out*.

[30] Tilly, *Regimes and Repertoires*; Charles Tilly, *Contentious Performances* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[31] Tilly, *Contentious Performances*, 151.

The state-centric approach has both theoretical and empirical limitations. Theoretically, it is divorced from the logic of nonviolent strategy which emphasizes the importance of organizationally specific requisites for success. Empirically, it overlooks variation that occurs between organizations operating in the same state: it cannot explain why the 8888 Movement in Burma thought it could challenge the regime with nonviolent protests while numerous other organizations, such as the Karen National Liberation Army and the Kachin Independence Army, had been engaged in armed insurgency for decades, or why Nepal's Maoists launched a civil war only six years after other political parties had toppled the regime through a successful civil resistance campaign.

Furthermore, some of its central predictions do not appear to hold. Recent studies have found civil resistance to be in fact more likely in nondemocratic states, a finding that is confirmed in Chapter 7.[32] In an exhaustive cross-national test of state-level structural theories, Erica Chenoweth and Jay Ulfelder find some evidence in support of the theories described earlier, but note that none perform particularly well in predicting the occurrence of civil resistance campaigns in out-of-sample tests. The problem, they conclude, is that "existing structural theories tend to take an algebraic view of movement formation, whereas mass nonviolent episodes are manifestations of complex systems dynamics that traditional theories and extant data poorly represent."[33]

Explanations of challenger behavior therefore need to consider the attributes of the actors themselves.

Organizational Approaches

Recent years have seen an "analytical pivot" in the study of conflict toward the organization as the unit of analysis.[34] In the civil

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[32] David E. Cunningham et al., "Words and Deeds: From Incompatibilities to Outcomes in Anti-Government Disputes," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 4 (2017): 468–83; Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, "Understanding Strategic Choice," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (2013): 291–304.

[33] Chenoweth and Ulfelder, "Can Structural Conditions Explain the Onset of Nonviolent Uprisings?" 21.

[34] Sarah Elizabeth Parkinson and Sherry Zaks, "Militant and Rebel Organization(s)," *Comparative Politics* 50, no. 2 (2018): 271–93.

war literature, a wave of studies has linked rebel group cohesion to conflict behavior.[35] Wendy Pearlman applies similar insights to groups attempting nonviolent strategies in pursuit of national self-determination.[36] She argues that only highly cohesive organizations are capable of engaging in the tactical repertoire of civil resistance, while fragmentation creates incentives to take up arms. Margherita Belgioioso similarly finds that fragmentation increases the likelihood of both primarily nonviolent and violent campaigns to use terrorism.[37] And Rikhil Bhavnani and Saumitra Jha illustrate how organizational changes to India's Congress party in the early 1920s were crucial to Gandhi's ability to maintain nonviolent discipline.[38]

Looking only at challenger organizations through the lens of cohesion and fragmentation, however, has its limits as well. Organizational unity amounts to a necessary but not sufficient condition for civil resistance: plenty of cohesive challenger organizations, from Uganda's National Resistance Army to Afghanistan's Taliban, have never adopted civil resistance and have waged armed insurgencies instead. Furthermore, it demands an explanation for what makes some challengers more vulnerable to fragmentation than others.

Transnational Approaches

The global impact of revolutionary "waves" has rightly prompted scholars to focus on the international dimensions of civil resistance campaigns, from processes of emulation and learning that can drive

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[35] Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Kristin M. Bakke, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee J. M. Seymour, "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (2012): 265–83; Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, *Inside the Politics of Self-Determination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[36] Wendy Pearlman, *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[37] Margherita Belgioioso, "Going Underground: Resort to Terrorism in Mass Mobilization Dissident Campaigns," *Journal of Peace Research* 55, no. 5 (2018): 641–55.

[38] Rikhil Bhavnani and Saumitra Jha, "Gandhi's Gift: Lessons for Peaceful Reform from India's Struggle for Democracy," *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal* 9, no. 1 (2014): 76–88.

the regional spread of protest movements to the hidden (or often visible) hand of great power actors meddling in conflicts abroad.[39] But diffusion approaches are limited to the set of cases that take place within regional waves. Furthermore, they struggle to explain the variation we often see within these waves, as was evidenced most strikingly in the Arab Spring. Scholarship on external interventions in civil resistance, meanwhile, has produced mixed findings. Daniel Ritter argues that ties to the West restrain the behavior of regimes, giving challengers using nonviolent methods a strategic advantage.[40] But Chenoweth and Stephan find no evidence of a correlation between external support and campaign outcome.[41] And Sharon Nepstad shows that foreign support for civil resistance campaigns frequently backfires by enabling regimes to rally nationalist sentiments in its defense.[42] A recent study on the role of Western media broadcasts on protests in East Germany found they had little effect and concludes that social ties might instead offer a better explanation.[43] This book picks up on that suggestion, using social ties to help explain variation in strategies used by challengers within revolutionary waves and to identify when foreign support might be most helpful and when it is more likely to backfire.

The Relational Alternative

In contrast to the approaches discussed earlier, this book finds its theoretical foundation in a relational paradigm of collective action. Building off of Mark Granovetter's early analyses of social networks, a wave of scholarship in the field of sociology in the late 1980s and early 1990s highlighted the importance of interpersonal ties in explaining

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[39] Mark R. Beissinger, "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions," *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 2 (2007): 259–76; Ritter, *The Iron Cage of Liberalism*; Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Mauricio Rivera, "The Diffusion of Nonviolent Campaigns," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 5 (2017): 1120–45.

[40] Ritter, *The Iron Cage of Liberalism*.

[41] Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*.

[42] Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions*.

[43] Charles Crabtree, Holger L. Kern, and Steven Pfaff, "Mass Media and the Diffusion of Collective Action in Authoritarian Regimes: The June 1953 East German Uprising," *International Studies Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (2018): 301–14.

political mobilization.[44] More recently, research in this tradition has turned to the formal use of social network analysis and agent-based modeling to assess the implications of relational structures on contentious politics.[45] While I do not use such techniques in this book due to the difficulty in obtaining sufficient data for the range of cases being analyzed, my theory draws heavily on some of the insights that have emerged from these studies.

Instead, I follow work by scholars such as Paul Staniland, Sarah Elizabeth Parkinson, Anoop Sarbahi, and Alec Worsnop that distinguish challenger groups on the basis of qualitative differences in their network structures.[46] Whereas those studies all focus on groups that

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[44] Mark S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (1973): 1360–80; Doug McAdam, "Recruitment to High-Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer," *American Journal of Sociology* 92, no. 1 (July 1, 1986): 64–90; Roger V. Gould, "Multiple Networks and Mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871," *American Sociological Review* 56, no. 6 (1991): 716; John F. Padgett and Christopher K. Ansell, "Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici, 1400–1434," *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 6 (1993): 1259–1319; Thomas Ohlemacher, "Bridging People and Protest: Social Relays of Protest Groups Against Low-Flying Military Jets in West Germany," *Social Problems* 43, no. 2 (1996): 197–218; James Kitts, "Mobilizing in Black Boxes: Social Networks and Participation in Social Movement Organizations," *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (2000): 241–57.

[45] David A. Siegel, "Social Networks and Collective Action," *American Journal of Political Science* 53, no. 1 (2009): 122–38; David A Siegel, "When Does Repression Work? Collective Action in Social Networks," *The Journal of Politics* 73, no. 4 (2011): 993–1010; Nils W Metternich et al., "Antigovernment Networks in Civil Conflicts: How Network Structures Affect Conflictual Behavior," *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 4 (2013): 892–911; Jennifer M. Larson and Janet I. Lewis, "Ethnic Networks," *American Journal of Political Science* 61, no. 2 (2017): 350–64; Cassy Dorff, "Violence, Kinship Networks, and Political Resilience: Evidence from Mexico," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 4 (2017): 558–73; Cassy Dorff, Max Gallop, and Shahryar Minhas, "Networks of Violence: Predicting Conflict in Nigeria," *The Journal of Politics* 82, no. 2 (2020): 476–93.

[46] Paul Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources and Rebellion in South Asia," International Security 37, no. 1 (2012): 142–177. Sarah Elizabeth Parkinson, "Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 3 (2013): 418–32; Paul Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); Anoop K. Sarbahi, "Insurgent-Population Ties and the Variation in the Trajectory of Peripheral Civil Wars," *Comparative Political Studies* 47, no. 10 (2014): 1470–1500; Alec Worsnop, "Who Can Keep the Peace? Insurgent

have already made the decision to take up arms against the state, this book examines how social networks influence challenger strategy and specifically the feasibility of a primarily unarmed strategy of civil resistance.

A related strand of literature, emerging primarily from the field of economics, focuses on the diffusion of information regarding individuals' preferences and intentions as a key criterion in determining whether protests meet critical tipping point thresholds.[47] The argument in this book links these findings with the sociological research on social ties to articulate how social networks inform when and why information about preferences and intentions are more easily passed among a population of potential participants.

Finally, the role of social media in protests since the Arab Spring has brought new attention to the role of technology in facilitating political mobilization.[48] The theoretical and empirical focus in this book is on direct interpersonal connections, rather than virtual ones. Its arguments and evidence bolster findings that while social media technologies might make mass protests easier to launch, it might also make them more fragile.[49]

The theory of social ties presented in this book therefore offers several unique contributions. First, it can explain why and how challengers change strategies over time, even coming to reject strong prior

Organizational Control of Collective Violence," *Security Studies* 26, no. 3 (2017): 482–516.

[47] James DeNardo, *Power in Numbers: The Political Strategy of Protest and Rebellion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Timur Kuran, "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989," *World Politics* 44, no. 1 (1991): 7–48; Davide Cantoni et al., "Protests as Strategic Games: Experimental Evidence from Hong Kong's Antiauthoritarian Movement," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 134, no. 2 (2019): 1021–77.

[48] Zeynep Tufekci and Christopher Wilson, "Social Media and the Decision to Participate in Political Protest: Observations from Tahrir Square," *Journal of Communication* 62, no. 2 (2012): 363–79; Sebastián Valenzuela, Arturo Arriagada, and Andrés Scherman, "The Social Media Basis of Youth Protest Behavior: The Case of Chile," *Journal of Communication* 62, no. 2 (2012): 299–314; Ruben Enikolopov, Alexey Makarin, and Maria Petrova, "Social Media and Protest Participation: Evidence from Russia," *Econometrica* 88, no. 4 (2020): 1479–1514.

[49] Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

ideological beliefs. Second, it illuminates why different challengers within the same state might choose different strategies in pursuit of similar goals. It identifies which organizations are most likely to adopt civil resistance and which are not. Third, the theory enhances our understanding of the role of coalitions in nonviolent conflict by showing why some types of alliances are more likely to enhance the prospects for civil resistance than others and why some might be more vulnerable to fragmentation than others. Finally, it moves beyond the study of campaign outcomes by showing how, long before a campaign begins, regimes and challengers are already engaged in an interactive struggle to build their own networks and coalitions of support while attempting to undermine and crack those of their opponents.

Research Design

My argument's organization-level focus and attention to social ties favors a qualitative approach. This allows for the identification of challenger organizations and an analysis of the social connections of their core members that simply would not be possible to do at a broader (large-n) scale. Longitudinal case studies of challengers in two countries, Nepal and Syria, therefore form the empirical core of the book. These cases were selected due to the presence of multiple actors in each that have varied in their strategies of resistance. Examining multiple groups from within each country allows for fine-grained intergroup and over-time comparisons within the controlled context of single states. It also provides evidence of the processes by which challenger organizations consider, test, and make decisions about strategic options. By demonstrating similar dynamics in two very different countries across a broad span of time, the cases illustrate that the theory is not limited to a specific region or historical context. Toward the end of the book, I supplement the case studies with cross-national quantitative analyses as well as a pair of shorter case studies from South Africa and India. These analyses provide broader context and a preliminary assessment of the generalizability of the theory beyond Nepal and Syria.

In the first series of case studies, I examine the strategic behavior of three challenger organizations in Nepal: the Nepali Congress, the Marxist–Leninists, and the Maoists. These cases are particularly useful for close examination for several reasons. Selecting multiple

cases from within the same country of Nepal controls for several potentially confounding variables such as geography, culture, and transnational influences. Lying between China and India, literally between the countries where Mao and Gandhi practiced their respective strategies, Nepal was exposed to both ideologies and its political movements made deliberate choices between these alternatives. Interestingly, Nepali movements affiliated with both ideologies proved willing to change their strategies over time. Thus, Nepal provides an opportunity to examine both variation in strategy between different political movements as well as longitudinal changes within each movement. Finally, Nepal offers several practical advantages for research. Three of the four campaigns occurred relatively recently, since 1990, and were ultimately resolved pacifically. This makes it possible to collect data about these conflicts that is often not possible in other contexts.

In developing the case studies from Nepal, I draw upon six months of field research in Nepal, including interviews with former combatants and movement participants, political party leaders, military commanders, foreign observers, and journalists. Interviews were crucial in understanding how actors perceived the viability of various strategic alternatives and in establishing when, where, and how important strategic decisions were made. I also rely heavily on secondary sources, especially the work of Nepali historians and journalists documenting their country's political history. The accounts of foreign anthropologists, embedded in local villages across the country at the time of key events, also served as a valuable evidentiary source. Additionally, I consult some primary texts such as the memoirs of political leaders and newspaper reports. These sources provide information on the organizational cores of each challenger and the linkages they had to different elements of Nepali society prior to the initiation of conflict.[50]

I pair the Nepali cases with cases from Syria. I first examine the case of Syrian resistance in the Arab Spring in which an initial civil resistance campaign devolved into a brutal civil war. I then turn back in time to the period of the French-controlled mandate to examine variation in strategies among groups seeking national self-determination

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[50] Additional information on the Nepal field research methods can be found in the Appendix.

from colonial rule. While once again benefiting from the ability to trace variation both within and among challenger organizations in a single country, the cases from Syria also allow me to examine contexts in which challenger organizations have substantial grassroots ties, but few regime ties. The colonial period cases also offer a test of the applicability of the theory to contexts when the goal being sought is liberation from colonial rule rather than regime change.

For the case studies from Syria, I rely on secondary sources. In the Arab Spring case, my sources are frequently scholars who conducted interviews among refugees who fled Syria and in some cases were in Syria during the early stages of the conflict conducting interviews among activists. While I did not interview key actors myself, I benefit from the high level of attention the Syrian conflict has received from journalists and scholars as well as the extraordinary efforts of scholars who have done the difficult work of conducting interviews and piecing together information while a deadly war is raging. For the cases from the French mandate period, I draw on the work of numerous historians who have studied this period, usually through archival research at French and British archives, and in some cases conducting interviews as well or consulting the personal archives of prominent Syrian families. I thus do not offer any new historical information about these cases, but rather hope to present them in a new theoretical light.

Throughout the case studies, I evaluate the qualitative empirical support for the theory in two ways. First, I assess whether variation in the use of civil resistance is congruent with variation in their social networks. While developing a complete social network map of these clandestine organizations would be impossible, consistent with the theory, I gather information on the group of individuals who constitute the organization's core and evaluate the degree to which these core members offer the organization bridging links to diverse segments of society as well as to members of the regime. My theory is falsified if a challenger with an insular organizational core – one whose members have ties only to each other or a single social group – attempts a civil resistance campaign with the stated goal of regime change. It is strengthened when challengers with integrated organizational cores – ones whose members have ties to multiple social groups as well as to the regime – do so.

Beyond this general congruency between social ties and challenger strategy, I also evaluate whether the historical evidence is consistent

with the proposed mechanisms of the theory. I examine whether efforts at lower levels of contention produced outcomes in terms of participation and repression that are consistent with the organizations' social ties as well as how those experiences affected actors' expectations about the likely consequences of launching a civil resistance campaign for regime change. Furthermore, I analyze organizations' internal debates as they played out in secret meetings and even votes to assess if and how these expectations translated into strategic decisions.

Finally, I evaluate whether the empirical evidence is similarly supportive of alternative theories. I pay particular attention to movement ideology, transnational dynamics, the role of state repression, and the organizational cohesion of the movement. In contrast to these alternative theories, I predict that challengers will be willing to deviate from ideological preferences, past behavior, and patterns of regional emulation when their unique social networks make those strategies nonviable. I anticipate that the severity and effects of state repression on challenger behavior will not be uniform, but rather conditional on the social ties of specific challenger organizations. And I expect that increased challenger cohesion will only increase the likelihood of civil resistance when that coalition augments the social ties available to the challengers.

After the case studies, I turn to cross-national quantitative analysis in an effort to provide evidence of the generalizability of my theory. Specifically, I explore the implications of my theory for the relationship between ethnicity and civil resistance. Collecting data on the ethnic composition of civil resistance campaigns and using ethnic groups as the unit of analysis, I show that ethnic groups that are smaller and excluded from power are less likely to initiate a civil resistance campaign than those that are larger or included in the institutions of the state.

I then turn to a brief pair of cases from South Africa and India to further assess the theory beyond Nepal and Syria as well as to derive lessons for how civil resistance might still be possible even under conditions when my theory predicts it might be especially difficult.

Ultimately, my argument is therefore required to pass three tests: it must be consistent with the overall variation seen across the case studies; it must be consistent with the detailed historical record from

within cases; and it must be consistent with worldwide statistical patterns.

The Path Forward

In Chapter 2, I present in greater detail a theory of challenger strategy that emphasizes the networks of social ties that underpin a movement. I articulate the ways in which grassroots and regime ties shape a challenger's perceptions about the relative viability of a violent versus nonviolent strategy, the processes through which social ties impact organization decision-making and behavior, and the potential for organization-building, coalition, and internationalization as strategies for organizations to grow their social connections.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine the strategies employed over time by three different challenger organizations in Nepal. As described earlier, Nepal's unique history allows for close comparison between movements that have employed opposite strategies within the controlled context of a single state and relatively narrow span of time. Chapter 3 traces the evolution of the Nepali Congress party, from its decision to abandon its commitment to Gandhian nonviolence and launch an insurgency in 1950, to its return to civil resistance forty years later with the 1990 Jana Andolan. It also examines a similar evolution within the Marxist–Leninists who join the Nepali Congress in that campaign. Chapter 4 analyzes why Nepal's Maoists, just six years later, felt compelled to launch an armed insurgency, before turning to civil resistance in 2006. Despite very different ideological origins, all three groups were unwilling to attempt civil resistance when they had only insular networks, but willing to do so once they had established both grassroots and regime ties.[51]

Chapters 5 and 6 examine resistance movements in Syria at two different times: during the regional wave of "Arab Spring" uprisings in 2011 and, earlier, during the period of French colonial rule between the two World Wars. The "Arab Spring" case presented in Chapter 5 first provides a brief overview of how the theory can explain variation in challenger strategy between Egypt and Libya,

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[51] Elements of the theory and Nepali cases presented in Chapters 2 through 4 have previously been published in Ches Thurber, "Social Ties and the Strategy of Civil Resistance," *International Studies Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (2019): 974–86.

before turning to the case of Syria. The Syrian case highlights the dynamics of a "marginalized majority," where the challenger enjoyed relatively strong grassroots ties, enabling it to generate large numbers of protesters in the streets, but a sectarian cleavage separated it from the regime. Consistent with the theory, the movement initially attempted civil resistance, encountered significant repression, and consequently experienced fragmentation. Different factions opted for different strategies, with intense violence eventually crowding out space for continued civil resistance. Chapter 6 illustrates how sectarian divisions, exacerbated by colonial policies of "divide and rule," largely prevented the creation of the cross-cutting social ties necessary to get a civil resistance campaign off the ground during the early years of the French mandate. This led many groups, especially ethnic minorities in rural mountainous areas, to turn instead to arms, culminating in the Great Revolt of 1925–1927. One group, the National Bloc, however, was able to build a network of prominent urban notables across the country. The business ties and patronage networks of the National Bloc's organizational core put it in a position to mobilize large numbers of Syrians, especially urban Sunnis. Its efforts culminated in the General Strike of 1936.

Chapter 7 examines the dynamics of challenger strategy on a broader scale using global data on civil resistance campaigns from the NAVCO 2.1 dataset.[52] It assesses the strengths and limitations of using the state as a level of analysis, showing that while the onset of civil resistance campaigns is correlated with regime type, contrary to what state-centric theories predict, civil resistance is actually more likely in authoritarian regimes. Only at the most extreme levels of autocracy does the likelihood of civil resistance decrease. The second half of the chapter evaluates an implication of the theory of social ties by using ethnic groups as a lens through which to understand the impact of social dynamics on challenger strategy. Its findings reveal an "ethnic barrier" to nonviolent action in which excluded minority groups are relatively less likely to initiate campaigns of civil resistance.[53]

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[52] Chenoweth and Shay, "NAVCO 2.1 Dataset."

[53] An earlier version of this analysis was published in Ches Thurber, "Ethnic Barriers to Civil Resistance," *Journal of Global Security Studies* 3, no. 3 (2018): 255–70.

Having established the ways in which ethnic cleavages present particular challenges for civil resistance, Chapter 8 examines two cases, South Africa and India, where challengers were nevertheless able to launch civil resistance campaigns. As expected, these proved to be very difficult environments in which to conduct civil resistance, as the campaigns were met with especially high levels of repression by the state and frequently involved violent tactics from within the movement as well. Nevertheless, the challengers' attention to building organizational infrastructure, judiciously selecting tactics, and lobbying for international support provide lessons for how challengers may be able to overcome barriers to civil resistance in difficult structural contexts.

Chapter 9 builds upon the findings presented in the book to suggest pathways forward for movements who face social barriers to civil resistance as well as for external actors seeking to promote nonviolent action as an alternative to violent conflict. It places more emphasis on the alternative strategies of movement-building, coalition, and internationalization, offering lessons for under what contexts each might be most fruitful, and for what steps international actors, from IOs to state governments to NGOs, might be able to take to assist movements in these efforts and consequently reduce the likelihood that they turn instead to arms.