NONVIOLENCE AS A WEAPON OF THE RESOURCEFUL:
FROM CLAIMS TO TACTICS IN MOBILIZATION*

Peter B. White, Dragana Vidovic, Belén González, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and David E. Cunningham†

Recent world events have renewed interest among social movement scholars in strategies and associated outcomes in campaigns against nondemocratic regimes. Most comparative work is limited to large-scale mobilization and takes violent/nonviolent tactics as given, thereby overlooking prior group mobilization and initial tactic choice. While a chosen tactic is plausibly related to group characteristics and resources, we argue that the mobilization process underlying large-scale campaigns begins when groups stake claims and assess those claims’ potential. The proposed framework can help to explain both the specific tactics chosen and whether campaigns take on violent or nonviolent forms. We focus on grievances and the origins of mobilization through formulation of claims-making disputes over regime type, government composition, and electoral legitimacy— independent of mobilization—and consider how resources provide a comparative advantage for violence or nonviolence. An application to states in the former Soviet Union demonstrates the framework’s utility for understanding when claims evolve to violent and nonviolent mobilization.

Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.
(Mao Zedong, 1938, “Problems of War and Strategy” Selected Works, Volume 2, p. 224.)

Nonviolence is a weapon of the strong.
(Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, 1931, Young India, Volume 13-14, Issue 2, p. 287)

Recent violent and nonviolent protest campaigns against nondemocratic regimes have sparked renewed interest in differences in dissident strategies and their outcomes. The antigovernment mobilizations that swept across North Africa and the Middle East from 2011 were generally seen as motivated by frustration over economic stagnation and repressive autocratic rule (Anderson 2011; Goldstone 2011; Lynch 2012). But despite similar motives, antiregime mobilization in Tunisia and Egypt was nonviolent while Libya and Syria saw violent civil war. Government responses also varied with leaders stepping down in countries such as Yemen and offers of political reform—if not full democratization—in Egypt and Tunisia, while other countries, such as Bahrain, responded with massive repression. In other countries, including Saudi Arabia and Mauritania, there was no sustained mass mobilization, while states such as Qatar and the U.A.E. saw no clear articulation of grievances or even small-scale mobilization.

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Although there is increasing recognition of variation in dissident tactics, most comparative studies of tactics focus only on large-scale mobilization. We argue that restricting our focus to mass mobilization bypasses important questions on prior organization-formation and initial mobilization that are essential to understanding when grievances can lead to specific tactics and when collective action efforts are more likely to fail. Existing research has considered how various individual and social resources may be related to protest or conflict potential, and particular features that make regimes more sensitive to challenges. However, mobilization does not emerge automatically when structural conditions are favorable. We would not, for example, expect to see violent insurgency in Scotland simply because of conducive topography.

We argue that dissident mobilization—both violent and nonviolent—requires a combination of active dissident claims and resources for mobilization. Resources alone are unlikely to matter unless dissidents organize around clear grievances. The choice of dissident tactics in large-scale confrontations is shaped by their expected efficacy for groups, based on the evolution of organizations in disputes and their ability to mobilize for different forms of coercion.

We propose a simple conceptual approach to identify potential opportunities for mobilization and specific tactics by distinguishing between (1) the initial claims or articulation of incompatibilities by dissident organizations, and (2) subsequent mobilization using a particular tactic. With this approach, we can identify cases of both violent and nonviolent mobilization, and distinguish them from each other, as well as cases where there are profound political grievances articulated by organizations, but no large-scale mobilization. We identify contexts conducive to violent and nonviolent mass mobilization. We provide a proof of concept for how different manifestations of disputes over government can be identified and examine its applicability to cases in the former Soviet Union.

IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MOBILIZATION

Research on interstate conflict has benefitted from studying the risk of disputes among a well-defined population of states by focusing on factors shaping prospects for interaction, such as geographic distance, as well as the incompatibilities shaping the motivation for conflict, such as territorial claims (Huth and Allee 2002; Lemke and Reed 2001). Research on civil war has made much progress on applying a similar dyadic perspective to ethnic or self-determination conflicts, noting the high frequency of separatist civil wars and its close relationship to ethnic exclusion and group size (Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013; Cunningham 2014). Some efforts have broadened this perspective to include both violent and nonviolent interactions (Cunningham 2013). However, there has been less progress on identifying potential actors for nonviolent and violent disputes over the government. Although this raises many challenges, identifying potential actors is ultimately necessary for understanding mass mobilization and disputes over the government.

Simply looking at onset and absence of nonviolent mobilization in existing data treats cases with no grievances against the government as equivalent to disputes short of high-level mobilization, since neither entails mass mobilization. Egypt and Denmark in 2010 become equivalent “nonevents” without nonviolent mass mobilization. However, whereas Egypt in 2010 is clearly a relevant case to examine in addressing whether disputes over the government escalate to violent or nonviolent mass movements, Denmark in 2010 is probably less informative, given the absence of an underlying motivation. As such, we need a different approach to identify potential actors that may engage in both nonviolent and violent tactics, or in neither, and, in turn, to separate these from cases where antigovernment mass mobilization is implausible.

Our approach to identifying potential opportunities for mass mobilization in governmental disputes focuses on cases where organized actors articulate maximalist claims related to regime change, governmental composition, and electoral legitimacy, independent of mass mobilization. Focusing on potential disputants allows us to consider factors influencing the likelihood of initial claims as well as when these give rise to violent actions.
Nonviolence as a Weapon of the Resourceful

Claims

There has been a growing interest in when dissidents choose violent or nonviolent tactics in campaigns to redress their grievances against the state. Much of this focuses on campaign outcomes rather than onset, and highlights the effectiveness of nonviolent direct action and better prospects for future democratization (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Rivera and Gleditsch 2013). Some recent research suggests that group characteristics shape the likelihood of nonviolent or violent tactics. Dahl, Gates, Gleditsch, and González (2014) argue that groups with a mobilization advantage can more effectively coerce the government through nonviolent direct action, while small groups with a limited mobilization potential may have better prospects to sustain campaigns and impose costs through violent insurgencies, taking advantage of the relative security afforded by covert action. Pearlman (2011) argues that cohesive social movements are more likely to use nonviolence, and that fragmentation and competition among factions generates incentives for the movement to use violence.

To focus on observed group characteristics in mass mobilization is potentially misleading, since large-scale direct action is the last stage in a longer process, starting with low-level collective action in the initial group formation and articulation of demands on the government. Most existing studies disregard this crucial first step, often justified by the foundational assumption in the resource mobilization literature that grievances are ubiquitous and that structural, ideational, and resource factors are more important for mobilization (Tilly 1978; McCarthy and Zald 1977; McAdam 1982). But even if all groups may have some grievances—believing that what they have is less than what they ought to have (Gurr 1970)—maximalist political claims that call for fundamental change in the political system or government, or seek to remove dictators outside regular institutional mechanisms, are clearly much less frequent.

We focus on organizational manifestations of maximalist claims. Most countries probably include at least one person that harbors grievances against the government that could be considered “maximalist” by our definition, and he or she is also likely to have articulated them in some public setting, either on the street, in print, or in online media. However, although individual claims in this sense are likely ubiquitous, not all grievances motivate collective action or the public articulation of maximalist claims against the government by an organized group. Put differently, organizations articulating maximalist political grievances (what we term “claims” or “incompatibilities”) are not ubiquitous or constant, rather, they vary considerably across time and place.

Nonviolent direct action and violent rebellion differ in that they rely on different forms of coercion and possibly different resources for mobilization, but they are in our view motivated by similar incompatibilities and claims, i.e., territorial secession or replacing the government. This notion that incompatibilities are necessary for mobilization appears to be substantiated in existing work, for example, the absence of democratic rule and ethnic exclusion appear to make both civil war and nonviolent direct action more likely (Cederman et al. 2013; Dahl et al. 2014).

Resources

Claims are necessary but not sufficient for violent or nonviolent mobilization. Moreover, the existence of a claim by itself does not account for the specific tactics or methods used (i.e., whether violent or nonviolent) and when mass mobilization succeeds or not. In line with the resource mobilization literature, we expect that the resources that make possible collective action around claims also facilitate large-scale mobilization. Resource mobilization theory was initially developed as a response to the puzzle of how movements achieve collective action in the absence of selective incentives and the rather restrictive solutions to collective actions problems identified by Olson (1958). McCarthy and Zald (1973) argued that organizational skills and entrepreneurs can facilitate mobilization under conditions of greater affluence and individual resources. The political process theory (PPT) approach expanded these claims, and related the trajectory of social movements to the interaction of organi-
zational strength, the political opportunity structure the movement faced, and cognitive liberation/framing (Tilly 1978; McAdam 1982; McAdam et al. 1996, Tarrow 1994).

Table 1 summarizes our basic expectations regarding the relationship between claims, resources, and mobilization. In essence, claims and resources together can lead to large-scale mobilization. Similar objectives can motivate nonviolent or violent activities by a dissident group, but different resources make nonviolent action or violent direct action relatively more effective. Nonviolent direct action relies on coercion through noncooperation, which imposes governance costs, and can make the central government unable to rule (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Dahl et al. 2014; DeNardo 1985; Sharp 1973). However, campaigns require large active participation to engender effective noncooperation.

Table 1: Claims, Resources, and Mobilization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No mobilization</td>
<td>No mobilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low mobilization</td>
<td>High mobilization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Violent coercion, by contrast, relies on direct violent attacks against government targets or indirect coercion through targeting civilians. Imposing costs on governments to force concessions through violence requires focused militarily capability. Although greater numbers and equipment should translate into greater military power, violent action does not require widespread participation to sustain a movement and to be able to survive initial confrontations with the government. This is because violent action can be covert, and benefit from roaming and operating from areas with limited penetration by the government (Bapat 2005; Beardsley and Gleditsch 2015). Disorganized rebels with little ability to carry out attacks may have difficulty putting effective pressure on governments, whereas much smaller, better organized, and more effective fighting forces can generate significant costs, even if the numbers mobilized are relatively low.

We assume that dissidents are rational and choose strategies that maximize their pressure on the regime to fully or partially redress their grievances. The theoretical framework we have developed here leads to three main expectations. First, maximalist claims will not be ubiquitous; rather, there will be variation across cases and across time in the occurrence of these claims. Second, mass mobilization will only occur where organizations have articulated maximalist claims and when there are resources available for acting on these claims. Third, the specific type of mobilization (violent vs. nonviolent) will depend on the type of resources available to the organizations. In short, dissidents should be more likely to engage in nonviolent direct action when they anticipate being able to mobilize large numbers of supporters, but be more likely to engage in violent rebellion if they perceive focused military capacity for direct or indirect attacks as their best bet given their resources. Figure 1 illustrates the steps in our argument.

We evaluate each of these elements of our theoretical framework by examining claims and mobilization in the fourteen Soviet successor states that emerged after the fall of the USSR (excluding Russia). We discuss trends in the articulation of maximalist claims by organizations across countries over time, and develop more specific propositions on the resource factors that account for mass mobilization capacity and focused military capacity. We then examine the plausibility of the theorized role that each factor played in patterns of mobilization in our sample.
Figure 1: The Path from Claims to Mobilization

Measuring Claims

We focus on the articulation of claims by organizations outside the government but entailing more than isolated dissidents. In our data collection, claims can be deemed to have an organizational basis in two ways. First, claims can be made through an official outlet or the leadership of a nonstate organization. This includes explicitly named organizations (e.g., the Belarusian Popular Front) as well as more general terms for an organized political opposition (e.g., opposition parties or Islamist militants) that exist in some form outside of the government. Secondly, claims can be made by a broader group such as university students, priests, or trade unionists that can be regarded as having organization by virtue of their a priori networks. Although it is often difficult to establish precise number of participants, we focus on organizations and collective claims, and do not include any effort clearly involving fewer than twenty-five individuals.

Building on the definition of a government incompatibility used in the Uppsala Conflict Data Project/Peace Research Institute Oslo Armed Conflict Dataset (ACD), claims must involve electoral legitimacy, government composition, or regime change. Electoral legitimacy claims pertain to the conduct of or circumstances under which voting took place, and challenge the legitimacy of elections or referendums. Government composition claims call for the removal of high-ranking government officials, such as the state leader and cabinet-level officials, excluding calls for removal by no confidence motions, or other institutional means. Regime change claims call for fundamental changes to the political system, such as establishing democracy, establishing a communist regime, or instituting a theocracy. Our focus on maximalist government claims exclude claims limited to policy, such as protest over the environment or austerity measures, which may generate unconventional direct political action, but typically do not challenge the political system per se.

Claims are identified through observable, public events that demonstrate that the claim was intended for public dissemination and consumption. These may include more high-profile public events, such as protests, rallies, and marches, but also lower-profile public activity such as public statements, press releases, or interviews with the media. Secondary accounts that there is a clandestine opposition or that there is a dissident community—often the case during the communist era—do not count. For example, Alexander Solzhenitsyn publishing *Gulag Archipelago* in 1973 would not, in and of itself, count in our data collection as an incompatibility over government, given its individual—not organizational—basis. The dissidents have to coalesce into an organization or public movement and articulate their claim for public consumption. Insurgent activity in support of a claim is also considered sufficient evidence that a claim remains active. So, if a violent organization calls for the overthrow of the government in a given year and begins a campaign of attacks on government targets, the continuation of those attacks into the following year—with or without an explicit restatement of the claim—is considered sufficient evidence that the claim is still active. However, if a group launches attacks without ever stating its claims against the government, the attacks are not considered sufficient evidence of an incompatibility.

We examined fourteen post-Soviet countries—all the countries in the former Soviet Union except for Russia—for yearly evidence of incompatibilities over government from 1991 to 2012. Our post-Soviet sample is sufficiently large to provide extensive variation in resources.
and paths from claims to mobilization, and holds constant their common pre-independence history. There are limitations to this approach. The special longevity and institutional strength of the Soviet Union may undermine generalizations to other cases. However, we believe that the insights can “travel” more broadly, as many other dictatorships and states emerging from foreign domination display similar characteristics. The broad range of states encompassed within the former Soviet Union can make comparison within the sample difficult, but these differences in historical experiences yield variation in the structural resources for mobilization at independence, which in turn affects the prospects for mass mobilization by dissidents making claims. We are interested in their different starting points at independence and how they affect the way dissidents mobilize in the different countries of the sample, given claims.

In our sample, claims are relatively common, but far from ubiquitous—with 62.66% of country-years in the sample seeing an organization making maximalist claims. There was also some notable regional variation in the distribution of incompatibilities (table 2) with Western Caucasus (Belorussia, Moldova, and Ukraine), and Central Asian republics driving incompatibilities in the sample. The relative absence of claims in the Baltic states is striking. The Baltic states may be distinct among the post-Soviet republics due to their prior independence (1918-1940) and resultant pre-Soviet institutional heritage at independence in 1991. However, we believe that this is not especially problematic for our resource-mobilization perspective because our expectation is that claims are a necessary condition for mobilization. As discussed in more detail later, the Baltics have resources, but few claims, and accordingly do not see mobilization. The other regions have comparably high rates of claims making, and each region sees multiple instances of mobilization. Indeed, the unique pre-Soviet history of the Baltics, rather than undermining the comparison, provides a useful explanation for the absence of claims in those states, and hence, their lack of large-scale mobilization.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Claims by Region (1991-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Claims</th>
<th>No claims</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasus</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**No claims**

**Claims**

**Figure 2:** Number of Years with an Incompatibility (1991-2012—22 years)
Figure 2 provides more detail on the distribution of incompatibilities, with the number of years we observe an incompatibility for each country. Substantial within-region variation is evident—e.g., incompatibilities are twice as common in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan as in Turkmenistan. However, elsewhere, regional consistency is clearly evident, such as with the Baltic and Caucasus states.

Our examination of organizational claims on government in the fourteen post-Soviet countries, then, supports the first expectation of our theoretical framework—that maximalist claims making is not ubiquitous. To evaluate the second and third expectations, that claims are a necessary precursor to mass mobilization and that the resources available to dissidents determine the specific form of mobilization (violent, nonviolent, or none), we examine nonviolent and violent mass mobilization in these countries. We measure nonviolent and violent mass mobilization using the NAVCO data on nonviolent campaigns with more than 1000 participants (Chenoweth 2011) and the ACD data on intrastate armed conflict with more than twenty-five deaths, respectively (Gleditsch et al 2002; Themnér and Wallensteen 2013). We consider only campaigns and armed conflicts with incompatibilities over the government. 9

Table 3 describes the number of civil wars and nonviolent campaigns in the post-Soviet states. Importantly, while mobilization requires claims, claims do not necessarily lead to mobilization. We find claims in 54% of country-years in these data, but mobilization is limited to 19 of those country-years. Interestingly, the countries with the greatest frequency of claims are not necessarily those that see mass mobilization: Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Moldova. 10 Among the fourteen states, Belarus (2006 antigovernment protests), Georgia (the 2003 “Rose Revolution”), Kyrgyzstan (the 2005 “Tulip Revolution”), and Ukraine (the 2001-2004 “Orange Revolution”) see nonviolent campaigns in the NAVCO data. In terms of violent mobilization, Georgia (1991-1993), Tajikistan (1992-1996, 1998, 2010-2011), and Uzbekistan (1999-2000, 2004) see internal armed conflicts stemming from a government incompatibility. Only Georgia has seen both violent and nonviolent mass mobilization. These features of the data are consistent with our argument that mass mobilization stems from an interaction of claims and resources, and that specific resources make nonviolent or violent mobilization more likely, given an incompatibility.

Table 3: Yearly Incompatibilities and Mobilization in the Post-Soviet Sample (1991-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Mobilization</th>
<th>Mobilization</th>
<th>Nonviolent</th>
<th>Violent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claims</strong></td>
<td>113</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53.57%</td>
<td>8.48%</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>5.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No claims</strong></td>
<td>85</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.95%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To examine more directly why claims lead to civil war, nonviolent campaign, or no mass mobilization, we examine social structure and individual and network resources.

**Resources and Tactical Choice: Population and The Economy**

Given an incompatibility over government articulated by some organized opposition, structural social characteristics play an important role in mobilization tactic choice. By structural social characteristics, we mean features of the environment that are largely predetermined and outside the dissidents’ control. One very important feature of social structure shaping the feasibility of different ways to challenge the state is the population distribution. In order to challenge the government, dissidents need to be able to generate costly sanctions. The distribution of population shapes the relative ability to do this through different methods.
It is often claimed that nonviolent direct action is primarily an urban method, and efforts to challenge the ruling coalition’s control over the government are unlikely to be successful unless there is some presence in a country’s capital city, and ideally also in other important urban centers (Dahl et al. 2014). This implies a greater challenge to mounting nonviolent direct action in largely rural countries, where the government can more easily control the capital and nonviolent dissidents are forced primarily to mobilize in the unconducive peripheral settings.

By contrast, insurgent guerrilla warfare can work well in challenging the government in the periphery, even with relatively limited numbers of individuals under arms, especially in countries where the periphery is more inaccessible and difficult to monitor or control militarily by the government (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Butler and Gates 2009). Urban guerrilla movements have historically not been very successful (Oppenheimer 1970). We measure the urban/rural distribution of the state population at independence with United Nations statistics on the percentage of population in urban areas.

Beyond demography and geography, the economic structure of a state is also important for the feasibility of violent versus nonviolent methods of coercion. Studies of guerrilla warfare have found that movements have been more successful in conducting sustained campaigns in rural societies with largely self-sufficient agricultural communities (Buhaug and Gates 2002; Oppenheimer 1970). One possible interpretation is that the relative isolation and sufficiency helps provide resources for the movement and makes the supportive community less vulnerable to attacks from the government. By contrast, urban guerrilla movements in societies with an advanced workforce—and implicitly, a more advanced economy—have tended to fare poorly, because the state has much greater sanctions at its disposal to undermine the viability of the movement, and generally has much greater resources to detect significant military activity.

By contrast, although greater state penetration and an advanced distribution of labor make violent insurgencies more difficult, it can actually enhance the feasibility of nonviolent direct action. An advanced distribution of labor makes individual citizens more dependent on the state, thereby increasing the ability of the state to sanction. But this dependence also works the other way. In an advanced economy, the state is increasingly vulnerable to noncooperation and withdrawal of consent from citizens. Consider the example of tax boycotts. A tax boycott is unlikely to have much effect in a rentier state relying on revenue from natural resources, but widespread noncooperation is potentially much more damaging to a government that relies on extracting taxes from citizens. We approximate greater economic complexity and a more advanced distribution of labor with Vanhanen’s (2003) data on the percentage of the state population that is not involved in agriculture.11

Resources and Tactical Choice: Individual and Social Resources

We now examine individual resources and social relations between individuals. Obviously, violent political action requires access to weapons, but most violent movements tend to be organized in a hierarchical fashion, and it is not obvious that groups engaging in violent political action require much by way of resources at the individual level. Violent political action often entails high recruitment costs through training. But the barriers to exit are also large once individuals are part of an organization, and the leadership often has ample means at their disposal to sanction defection and ensure compliance. In extreme cases, violent political organizations can rely on forced recruitment or child soldiers.

By contrast, nonviolent mobilization tends to be voluntary, and is rarely organized in a strongly hierarchical fashion. Although barriers to participation tend to be low, barriers to exit are also low. Participation also tends to be much more fluid, where people move between active participation and general political life. As such, individual resources likely play a much more important role for participation. Education can facilitate individual mobilization through a number of important mechanisms. Greater education is more likely to raise awareness over grievances and possible ways to respond to this, including knowledge of previous contentious behavior. Education can also facilitate mobilization, as individuals will find it easier to
communicate with other people and plan for more effective forms of responses, such as mass nonviolent protest. While we expect education to be important for nonviolent mass mobilization in many cases, it is unlikely to tell a clear story throughout the post-Soviet sample, given that basic education in the Soviet Union was nearly universal with adult literacy at or near independence among the cases examined never falling below 90 percent (Vanhanen 2003). Some basic level of education can thus be regarded as a constant across these cases, although it is possible that differences in scope for universities to serve as a breeding ground for nonviolent mobilization may have more explanatory power.

Beyond individual resources, social capital in the form of social networks, or ties between people, is likely to play an important role. The existence of a civil society and a greater density of organizations provide a larger set of existing bases and ties from which mobilization can occur. Greater press freedom will provide better opportunities for generating awareness of events. This awareness is important, as individuals choose whether to participate in mass mobilization based on the expectation of what others will do (Granovetter 1978; Lohmann 1994). A freer press can facilitate information flows among the public, and basic education such as literacy allows more members of the public to access these information flows. We approximate this through Warren’s (2014) media-density index that captures the number of television and radio broadcasters as well as newspaper publishers relative to population.

Resources and Tactical Choice: International Factors

Finally, both violent and nonviolent direct action can benefit from resources and support available through neighboring countries. Research on civil war has shown a tendency for contagion, with violent mobilization being more likely when groups can rely on resources from kin in neighboring states or other governments, and when rebels have access to bases or operate out of neighboring countries (Gleditsch 2007, Salehyan 2009). Accordingly, we would expect civil war to be more likely in violent regional neighborhoods.

Transnational factors are also likely to influence nonviolent movements. Although state repression and media censorship can undermine the ability to mobilize within a country, these features can be partly compensated by operating out of other countries that are more open (Gleditsch and Rivera 2015). For example, the Serb dissidents mobilizing against Milosevic benefitted from organizing training camps in neighboring countries such as Hungary. A government may try to suppress information about events in the hope of keeping protest out of sight and out of mind, but this is much more difficult to do if individuals have access to media outlets in other countries. Access to outside allies can be an important avenue for dissidents to apply nonviolent pressure to their governments (Keck and Sikkink 1998). To capture this kind of international connectivity, we generated a country-year count of INGO chapters in a country using Smith and Weist’s (2012) data on INGO chapters. In addition to the organizational advantages provided by operating abroad, nonviolent campaigns cluster in space and time, likely as a result of demonstration effects (Gleditsch and Rivera 2015). Beissinger (2007) argues that the democratic revolutions in the former communist states cannot be treated as independent, and that both dissidents and governments were influenced by previous campaigns in the region.

Table 4 on the next page describes the distribution of these measures of resources across the post-Soviet sample. We see significant differences among them, with quite urban countries like Estonia and Latvia and more rural societies such as Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The penetration of INGOs and media density also vary widely across these states. The data on the percentage of the population not engaged in agriculture is more similar, but still ranges from only 74% in Turkmenistan to 91% in Estonia and Latvia.

In the next section, we examine these fourteen cases more directly. We divide the cases into four groups. First, we examine Ukraine, Tajikistan, Belarus and Tajikistan, countries that have experienced large-scale mobilization (either violent or nonviolent), and where the paths to mobilization have been consistent with the theoretical framework developed here. We then examine six countries that have not experienced mass mobilization (the Baltic states, Moldova
Table 4: Resources in Post-Soviet States at or Near Independence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>46.67%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>87.053</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>70.87%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>102.984</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>69.20%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>96.872</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>67.52%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>94.868</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>136.807</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>66.37%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>81.153</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>67.15%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>52.26</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>54.80%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>missing</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>53.44%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.757</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>44.99%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>missing</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
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<td>missing</td>
<td>14.138</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>12.902</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>39.83%</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>61.035</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>56.17%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>70.052</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For Media Density, the data for Moldova and Uzbekistan comes from 1992; the data for Estonia and Armenia come from 1993; the data for Azerbaijan comes from 1994, and the data for Kazakhstan comes from 1997. For all other countries, the data comes from 1991 (independence).

Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan) and argue that, in these cases, either the absence of organizations making maximalist claims or the presence of claims but absence of resources conducive to either violent or nonviolent mobilization can explain the relative stability there. Finally, we examine four countries (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan) that have experienced mass mobilization where the paths appear to be somewhat different than those developed here.

Paths to Large-Scale Mobilization

Among the cases of mass mobilization in the post-Soviet states, Ukraine and Belarus largely reflect our expectations regarding the path from claims to nonviolent mobilization, while Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are consistent with the resource profiles that should lead to violent mobilization (figure 3). Among the mass mobilization cases, Ukraine and Tajikistan saw the most significant nonviolent and violent campaigns, and we first turn to these.

In Ukraine, maximalist claims making is relatively frequent (observed in seventeen out of twenty-two years). Ukraine’s politics have been characterized by an East-West divide, with the Western portion generally preferring increased reform from the Soviet-style economics and politics of the past, along with closer ties to Europe and the West, and the Eastern portion preferring less reform and closer ties to Russia. This underlying dispute has manifested itself
in a number of incompatibilities over the government. The first observed claim came from the Western side and occurred less than a year after independence in October 1992, when the nationalist Rukh Party called for a national referendum on new, unscheduled elections to rid the parliament of communist holdovers. There are sixteen more claims through 2012, with the Eastern faction also making claims when out of power following the 2004 Orange Revolution.

In terms of resources for mobilization, at independence, Ukraine had more than two-thirds of its population living in cities (table 4). Accordingly, it is not surprising that the large-scale nonviolent mobilization in 2000, 2004, and 2013 was largely carried out in the urban centers and the capital Kiev. Ukraine did experience a violent insurgency after World War II, but it is instructive that this was largely confined to the Western Parts and operated out of rural areas with geographic features suited to insurgent warfare such as mountains and swampland (Zhukov 2007).

As can be seen in table 2, Ukraine after independence enjoys the highest media density in our post-Soviet sample. Historically, there has been substantial government pressure on media outlets in Ukraine to restrict their coverage of unfavorable topics. However, at times the press has broken free of these restrictions. In the lead-up to the 2004 Orange Revolution, there was a “journalists’ rebellion” where a prominent newscaster accused the government of electoral fraud on the air in the early stages of the protests. Witnessed by thousands of viewers, this accusation contributed to increased mobilization and protests in Kiev against the government, demonstrating how a relatively free press can facilitate mass mobilization.

Ukraine also clearly enjoys substantial international linkages in the post-Soviet period. Less than two years after its independence, it had 36 local INGO chapters (table 2), a level of international connectivity comparable to the Baltic republics rather than the Central Asian states. During the Orange Revolution, prodemocracy activists from Azerbaijan and Georgia came to Ukraine to offer rhetorical and training support to Ukrainian dissidents. Further, the U.S. government and U.S.-based NGOs, such as the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House, provided training, funding, and electoral monitoring support to the main dissident group in Ukraine, Pora! (It’s Time!), building on previous lessons learned from the nonviolent overthrow of the Milosevic regime in Serbia and the Otpor! (Resistance!) movement there.

Ukraine does not provide an immediately clear example of the anticipated relationship between economic structure and mobilization, given that 25 percent of the population is involved in agriculture in 1998. However, Ukraine has large-scale industrialized production of agricultural surplus for export, rather than a primitive, subsistence economy, and its agricultural sector could likely be described as “advanced” in the post-Soviet context.

In contrast to Ukraine, Tajikistan reflects our expectations regarding the path to violent mobilization. The opposition-government struggle in Tajikistan can be generally characterized as a similar contest between Soviet holdovers and reform-minded groups, and claims are also near constant. The political opposition challenges the rule of a former Soviet strongman, Emomali Rakhmonov. Three main opposition parties—the Democratic Party, Islamic Revival/Renaissance, and Rastokhez—were behind the majority of claims beginning in 1991 and formed the umbrella group, United Tajik Opposition (UTO). UTO began a protest campaign in September 1991, which by May 1992 had transitioned into large-scale insurgency against the Rakhmonov government. Armed conflict persisted from May 1992 through 2011. While the mainstream opposition ceased its insurgency in 1998, beginning in late 2001, following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, the regional militant groups Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan set up affiliates inside Tajikistan with the goal of establishing a “global Islamic caliphate,” defying the Tajik government. However, aside from this fringe activity, after 1998, there was little in the way of subsequent violent or nonviolent mobilization. The numerous electoral legitimacy claims made by the Tajik opposition (1994, 1995, 1999, 2000, 2003-2006, 2009, and 2010) against the Rakhmonov government did not themselves manifest large-scale violent or nonviolent mobilization.
While there is a similar frequency of incompatibility-years in both Tajikistan and Ukraine, there are stark differences between the two countries with regards to resources for mobilization. Unlike Ukraine, less than a third of Tajikistan’s population resided in cities around independence. Tajikistan also had markedly lower levels of media access. Also, unlike Ukraine, the claims put forward by the reformist faction escalated quickly to an armed conflict with the government as early as May 1992, and these persisted until 1998. The Tajik civil war did see substantial violence in and around the capital. However, peripheral provinces in the mountainous south, such as Gorno-Badakhshan, served an integral role as bases for the armed opposition, where the government was unable to fully assert control.

In Tajikistan, international factors contributed clearly to the onset of violent mobilization rather than nonviolent protest. While their exact role is unclear, there were substantial Russian troops inside Tajikistan at the behest of the Tajik government both before, during, and after the civil war, and Uzbekistan also offered extensive training and material support to the government. On the dissident side, Tajik opposition fighters from the UTO received weapons and training from co-ethnic rebels fighting the Taliban in northern Afghanistan and were able to find sanctuary across the border (Akiner and Barnes 2001). Further, the activity of Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) inside Tajikistan following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, demonstrates a contagion of conflict from neighboring countries.

Belarus and Uzbekistan also broadly support our expectations regarding the paths to nonviolent and violent mobilization, respectively. Like Ukraine, Belarus has a high frequency of incompatibilities and also has very similar levels of urbanization at independence. Belarus’s international connectivity is at low levels at independence but increases substantially by 1993. Similarly, Belarus’s media density is comparatively high. International connectivity played a crucial role in the claims in Belarus escalating to mass nonviolent mobilization in 2006, albeit unsuccessful, as electoral observers from international organizations accused the government of fraud in the 2006 presidential elections. In line with Fox’s (2014) expectation, disputed elections can serve as focal points for opposition, and the condemnation of the Belarus elections as fraudulent by international observers may have provided a way for opposition organizations to transition from claims-making to mass mobilization.

Similarly to Tajikistan, Uzbekistan also experiences violent—but not nonviolent—mobilization. However, while Tajikistan experiences ten years of civil war between 1991 and 2012 in the UCDP data, Uzbekistan only sees violence at civil war levels in 1999-2000 and 2004. This is mostly through the violent campaign of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), seeking to impose an Islamic theocracy on the country. Like Tajikistan, Uzbekistan has resources that favor violent over nonviolent mobilization: in particular, each country’s relatively low urbanization at independence (table 4) and adjacency to the long-running armed conflict in Afghanistan are favorable to violent mobilization. Indeed, as in Tajikistan, the adjacency to the Afghan conflict appears to have been a critical factor, with the IMU finding sanctuary inside Afghanistan during the civil war and launching attacks into Uzbekistan (Stein, nd).

**Paths to Low Mobilization**

A number of cases in our sample do not see either violent or nonviolent large-scale mobilization. The Baltic states, for example, from a purely structural perspective should be fertile grounds for substantial nonviolent mobilization, but do not see sustained nonviolent campaigns after independence. There are instances of short-lived mobilization stemming from claims. In Lithuania, for example, we identify one instance of low-level nonviolent mobilization related to a maximalist claim on government. In 2004, there were calls by the Liberal and Centrist Union and the Homeland Union for the president, Rolandas Paksas, to resign or to be impeached. This eventually led to a protest campaign involving at least 5,000 participants, but not mobilization on the scale or multiyear duration of the campaign observed in Ukraine.
Why does Ukraine see substantial nonviolent mobilization, with large-scale campaigns observed in 2001-4 (and 2013), while there is no such mobilization in the Baltic states. This is clearly a function of grievance and the relative absence of maximalist claims on government in the Baltic states (figure 2). More specifically, we find no claims in Latvia, observe claims in only four out of twenty-two years in Lithuania, and only in three years in Estonia. This may be because, as some have argued, democratic consolidation has progressed rapidly in the Baltic states, given their pre-Soviet heritage and relatively higher development, combined with the pull from the West to keep nationalism in check (McFaul 2006). Claims in the Baltic states are relatively short-lived and infrequent, reflecting low “demand,” and therefore few opportunities, for mass mobilization.

Moldova, and the Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan provide additional cases where we do not observe high levels of either violent or nonviolent mobilization. Kazakh politics have been characterized by the dominance of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, a former communist party boss who became the country’s first and only leader after independence. While there have been legislative and presidential elections in Kazakhstan since 1991, these have generated claims of electoral illegitimacy in 1994, 1999, 2004, 2007, 2010, and 2012, with opposition parties led by Ak Zhol and the post-Soviet communist party claiming that elections have been “unfair” and “flawed” and to have systematically favored Nazarbayev and his supporters. In 2004, this led to Ak Zhol refusing to appoint MPs to seats that it had won and in 2007, the communist party preemptively boycotted the legislative election.30 Electoral fraud claims escalated in 2001 with the opposition forming a broad coalition front, the United Democratic Party, and expanding their claims to not only include the removal of Nazarbayev—with the slogan “Kazakhstan without Nazarbayev”—but also the “establishment of democracy” (Bowyer 2008).

Turkmenistan provides an interesting contrast with the other Central Asian countries in the sample with substantially fewer years with observed incompatibilities from 1991-2012 (figure 2). Similar to Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, Turkmen politics was dominated by a post-Soviet strongman, Saparmurat Niyazov. While there is a demonstration of several hundred in the capital city of Ashgabad in 1995 calling for his resignation, in the subsequent eight years where claims are observed (2000-2003, 2006-2008, and 2011), the claims are largely limited to statements condemning fraudulent elections and calls for Niyazov to be deposed by opposition organizations forced into exile.

Low levels of mobilization were observed in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. In Turkmenistan, the only observed instance of substantial mobilization was a one-day protest calling for the resignation of President Niyazov that had between 20 and 1000 attendees.31 There was no other substantial violent or nonviolent mobilization in Turkmenistan, with activity being limited to (mostly) exiled opposition figures condemning electoral fraud or calling for Niyazov’s ouster. Kazakhstan saw small-scale protests in 1992 and 1996 (never rising beyond 5,000 participants) organized by the Zheltoksan and Azamat parties, respectively.32 However, beyond these two protests opposition activity around maximalist claims was limited to statements of condemnation, though from opposition organizations largely operating inside the country, unlike Turkmenistan.

Both Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have relatively low urbanization and very low international connectivity near independence as compared with the European countries in the sample (table 4). Kazakhstan has a moderate proportion of its population (20%) involved in agriculture, while Turkmenistan has the largest proportion in the entire sample (36%). Given the low urbanization and weak international connectivity and less advanced labor division, Turkmenistan seems an unlikely case for nonviolent mobilization. Kazakhstan has moderately high levels of urbanization and nonagricultural labor force, but also similarly low international connectivity, making it unlikely to see high levels of nonviolent mobilization, though it is not as clearly a negative case as Turkmenistan. This is seemingly reflected in the records for each country, which only see small-scale protest activity.
The resources for nonviolent mobilization seem to be relatively sparse in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and so the low level of nonviolent mobilization, despite the presence of claims, is not surprising. However, violent mobilization is also possible. The absence of violent mobilization in Kazakhstan is as anticipated by the resource mobilization perspective. Compared to the other cases, the sizes of the rural and agricultural populations are not particularly large. Kazakhstan also does not border substantial inter- or intrastate armed conflict until 1999, when a low-level Islamist insurgency begins in neighboring Uzbekistan. However, the absence of violent mobilization in Turkmenistan is more puzzling. Antiregime and electoral legitimacy claims are observed in nine years, and the resources for violent mobilization are there. The rural and agricultural population is large, and Turkmenistan borders a significant ongoing intrastate armed conflict in Afghanistan. Further, Turkmenistan has co-ethnics across the Afghan border, which we might expect to aid in the contagion of violence (Cederman et al. 2009). This is all the more more puzzling since the transfer of arms from Tajik Afghan insurgents to insurgents inside Tajikistan is believed to have contributed to the civil war there (Akiner and Barnes 2001). Moreover, Turkmenistan relies on natural resource extraction for a large proportion of its GDP—84 percent in 1992, which has been shown to be strongly associated with civil war (Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Ross 2004; Humphreys 2005).

Turkmenistan demonstrates how the path from claims to mobilization shown in figure 1 is not deterministic. Resources, given claims, will not always lead to mobilization, and other factors such as opportunity structure and state repression can play an important role. Turkmenistan certainly has a closed opportunity structure. In the context of a very effective repressive apparatus, the causal chain between claims, resources, and mobilization shown in figure 1 may be blocked. Indeed, although neighboring armed conflict should make violent mobilization easier, the government in Turkmenistan has pursued an isolationist policy that effectively has closed its borders, blocking the potential Afghan contagion—something that the struggling Tajik government is clearly unable to do. Thus, while Turkmenistan has many of the resources that we would anticipate as facilitating violent mobilization, the government is able to intervene, closing the opportunity structure and blocking potential dissidents’ access to a critical resource for mobilization. Figure 4 modifies figure one’s path from claims to mobilization to show how strong government intervention, as in the case of Turkmenistan, can block the dissidents’ access to resources, preventing the interaction of claims and mobilization.

Moldova is similar to Kazakhstan in lacking the resources for mobilization, despite a relatively high frequency of incompatibility years. Like Kazakhstan, Moldova’s levels of urbanization, economic advancement, international connectivity, and media density are not so great as to likely create opportunities for mass nonviolent mobilization by dissidents, yet its rural and agricultural populations are not so large as to create a fertile ground for insurgency. Accordingly, while there are low-level protests and rallies, we do not see mobilization of the scale required for entry into the NAVCO data as a sustained, nonviolent campaign. Further, Moldova does not neighbor a country undergoing civil war during the sample period, but has experienced its own—at times violent—self-determination dispute with Trans-Dniestran separatists. However, this does not promote escalation to violence in claims over the government, as Moldovan opposition organizations are often calling for a firmer hand in dealing with the separatists and closer union with Romania.

Figure 4: Paths to Low Mobilization
Nonviolence as a Weapon of the Resourceful

Other Paths to Mobilization?

Our sample of fourteen post-Soviet cases presents some pathways from claims to mobilization that do not clearly map onto our framework. Georgia has both types of mobilization in the 1991-2012 period. There is an internal armed conflict over the presidency between supporters of the deposed Zviad Gamsakhurdia and the government of the former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze from 1991-93, followed by the ultimately successful nonviolent Rose Revolution against the Shevardnadze government in 2003. However, in Georgia, the resources for mobilization change notably from independence to the nonviolent campaign in 2003. Table 4 shows that at independence, Georgia had moderate levels of urbanization, a moderate level of its population involved in agriculture, and poor international connectivity. This suggests that nonviolent mobilization would be unlikely. In terms of violent mobilization, nearby armed conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh and Kurdish areas of Turkey, as well as a region awash in military matériel after the collapse of the Soviet Union may have made violent mobilization relatively easier for the Zviadists in 1991. In contrast, the Georgian economy seems to have changed substantially by 2003—with agriculture’s share of the economy dropping to around twenty percent in 2003, from a share of more than fifty percent at independence, according to World Bank data (World Bank 2014). Further, INGO chapters in Georgia had risen to 100 by 2003—as compared to 70 in Armenia and 66 in Azerbaijan, the other Caucasian states. Indeed, even looking at 1993 (table 4), we see the number of INGO chapters more than quintupling in Georgia from 1991—a pace of growth more on par with the Baltic and Western Republics than with much of the Caucasus and Central Asia. And at this time, neighboring armed conflicts were generally at a lower level—with the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh subdued at this time and the Kurdish-Turkey conflict active at a much lower level of violence, according to UCDP.

In Georgia, the structural factors changed rapidly, so that while the immediate post-independence structure favors violent mobilization, by the early 2000s, the structural conditions are more favorable to nonviolent mobilization. Given that maximalist claims calling for the toppling of the president are present in both cases, the different structural resources available for mobilization at different times provides a plausible explanation for the variation in the mobilization outcomes. In this way, the Georgian case still reflects the general logic of our resource mobilization perspective: given claims, the availability of resources for violent and nonviolent mobilization explains variation in what tactics dissidents choose. Future research should look more closely at changes in resources for mobilization over time as well as place.

Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan also seemingly diverge from the paths laid out by the resource mobilization perspective. Azerbaijan and Armenia resemble Moldova and Kazakhstan as both experience relatively high levels of claims making (figure 2) but not significant violent or nonviolent mass mobilization against the government. Neither enjoys particularly high international connectivity at independence, and Azerbaijan’s media density in particular is quite low. Both states’ economies appear to be of middling advancement. These factors alone do not suggest a strong advantage for either violent or nonviolent mobilization, suggesting that the four pathway of high-claims and low-resources leading to no mobilization is an appropriate fit. Azerbaijan and Armenia are close geographically to substantial intrastate armed conflict from 1991 to 2012, including their own interstate armed conflict in the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan from 1991 to 1994, in addition to other conflicts in the Caucasus. Given the general prevalence of claims against the government in both states (figure 2), the near-constant proximity to armed conflict should facilitate violent mobilization by antigovernment dissidents in each country during the sample period.

However, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict may actually have impeded mobilization. It is clear from our coding of incompatibilities in these two cases that some claims stem directly from that conflict. In 1992, there are small-scale protests in both countries where opposition figures call for the respective presidents to resign because of their failures to achieve victory.
in Nagorno-Karabakh.\textsuperscript{38} And in 2001, Azeri opposition leaders call for the president’s resignation for not “liberating” Nagorno-Karabakh, despite the ceasefire in effect since 1994. In some years, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has led the Azeri and Armenian oppositions to rally around their governments’ perceived incompetence in addressing an international or secessionist conflict, and the opposition focus on pursuing victory in the external conflict would make it difficult for them to support internal violent mobilization that could undermine state efforts in the external conflict.

Kyrgyzstan’s 2005 Tulip Revolution presents a puzzle of mass nonviolent mobilization given the absence of many of the structural conducive conditions. Indeed, some of the conditions in Kyrgyzstan seem to favor violent mobilization, with initially low levels of urbanization, international connectivity, and media density, as well as adjacency to the wars in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. However, despite large-scale ethnic violence in 2010 between ethnic Kyrgyz and the Uzbek minority, there has been no large-scale violent mobilization around an antigovernment incompatibility. A potential insight into the success of nonviolent over violent mobilization could be found in the relatively large increase in INGO chapters in Kyrgyzstan between 1993 and 2003—from three to forty-two. However, both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan experience a similar growth in international connectivity in the same period, according to the Smith and Wiest data, yet do not see nonviolent protest campaigns.

What may have been a critical factor in the Kyrgyz case is the arrival of a series of “emissaries” from Georgia in 2005, who disseminated tactics and best practices learned during the successful Georgian Rose Revolution. Georgian activists also aided in the Ukrainian Orange Revolution of 2004, and had in turn learned these from the earlier Serbian Otpor\textsuperscript{1} movement and the fall of Milosevic (Anjaparidze 2005). These groups are not traditional INGOs as reflected in the Smith and Wiest measure of international connectivity, but suggest a pathway of international contagion for nonviolent mobilization that jumps from Serbia, to Georgia, to Ukraine, and then to Kyrgyzstan in the space of four years. Future analysis should take into account collaboration and sharing of tactics between dissident organizations beyond explicitly transnational organizations, and the role of these exchanges in pathways of diffusion.

**CONCLUSION**

This article develops an expanded theory of resource mobilization and claims making in order to explain both the onset of mobilization and of specific tactics by mobilized dissidents—i.e., violent or nonviolent mobilization. We argue that mobilization is conditional on the presence of claims on the government, even with substantial resources for mobilization. We build on the existing literature to propose that whether or not mobilization takes primarily violent or nonviolent forms is driven by the resources available to potential dissidents. Although similar grievances arising from autocratic rule and limited political space for dissent motivate both violent and nonviolent mobilization, the opportunity structures in countries with large rural populations, low individual resources, backward economies, and poorly developed state penetration are more likely to encourage violent challenges. Dissent is more likely to take on nonviolent forms in more urban and developed states, which have better prospects for mass mobilization and poor prospects for covert action. Finally, the absence of mobilization is more likely in both cases without significant grievances and abundant resources, and in cases where individuals have plausible grievances but lack significant resources for mobilization. Our arguments are informed by an analysis of a subsample of claims making and mobilization in post-Soviet states, and our analysis suggests that this framework helps unify disparate trends in the literature and clarify the causal pathway between grievances and mass mobilization.

Put differently, given that claims are not constant, future research should first identify when and where there are organizations making maximalist claims on their governments. From there, research should focus on actors and on explaining why some of these nascent disputes lead to large-scale mobilization, and why this sometimes takes violent and at other
times nonviolent forms. The role of the state also deserves closer attention, as our brief discussion of Turkmenistan suggests that closed political opportunity structure and state repression can block dissident access to the resources for mobilization.

Combining extant data on violent and nonviolent mobilization with similarly expansive data on the presence (and absence) of articulated grievances by extragovernmental political organizations presents a way forward. We have presented here our data collection strategy for an ongoing project that seeks to identify all maximalist claims on government in states other than consolidated democracies from 1960-2012. We anticipate that this will allow us to rigorously test the theoretical framework presented here in future work.

NOTES

1 The onset analysis in Chenoweth and Lewis (2013) is primarily intended as illustrative.
2 See Jenkins (1983) for an excellent review of the resource mobilization literature.
3 See Lichtbacht (1995) for an extended review.
4 Much of this body of research focuses on U.S. experiences, in particular the civil rights movement, and there is less attention to how resources can influence nonviolent versus violent mobilization and the comparative advantages for one tactic over the other. Dahl et al. (2014) examine the technology of violent versus nonviolent coercion, but the empirical analysis of resources in onset is relatively limited.
5 When a source presents the organization itself as the actor making the claim—for example, “Opposition parties call for the president’s resignation”—rather than its leadership, we also treat this as a claim having an organizational basis.
6 This is distinct from NAVCO data, which requires a minimum of 1,000 participants in a violent or nonviolent campaign.
7 We only focus on incompatibilities over government here. There can also be incompatibilities over territory, which primarily comprise self-determination disputes. Cunningham (2013) provides near-comprehensive data on territorial incompatibilities and examines whether these disputes experience nonviolent campaign or civil war.
8 Maximalist claims were identified by consulting extant qualitative and quantitative data projects, including NAVCO (Chenoweth 2011), the ACD (Gleditsch et al 2002), the Global Nonviolent Action Database (Swarthmore 2014), the Dynamic Analysis of Intra-State Disputes project (Mullenbach 2013), Keesing’s Record of World Events, and Minorities at Risk (2007), as well as extensive searches of news stories by human coders.
9 We exclude the 1993 and 1995 coup attempts in Azerbaijan, since these arise from intraelite conflicts without extragovernmental organizations with maximalist claims on the government.
10 Of course, these countries may see lower-level mobilization that does not rise to the level of 1000 participants in a sustained nonviolent campaign (NAVCO) or 25-battle deaths in an armed conflict over government (ACD).
11 These data are available by decade, and our sample considers the 1998 figures.
12 The data is only available in two-to-three year increments, and we considered the counts at 1991 and 1993 to assess each state’s international connectivity at or around independence.
21 Data on INGO chapters for Tajikistan is missing for 1991 and 1993, likely due to the civil war at that time.

25. See the campaign narratives listed in the NAVCO codebook. (Chenoweth 2011)

26. The levels of violence in the two countries are very different, with the conflict in Uzbekistan not seeing many more than 300 battle-deaths and the Tajik conflict approaching 10,000 battle-deaths by conservative estimates from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset. However, both countries do see dissidents coalescing into claims-making groups that then engage in large-scale violence against state targets in a campaign to overthrow the current political system.


28. The current version of NAVCO extends only to 2006, and hence does not cover the 2013 Maidan protests.

29. There are of course substantial ethnic grievances by the Russian minority population in the Baltic states. These could give rise to self-determination disputes (Cunningham 2013), but are unlikely to motivate maximalist anti-government claims or calls for regime change.


37. For example, the “Hyde Park” movement in 2003 declares its opposition to Trans-Dniester autonomy and calls for the Moldovan government to create a union with Romania.


REFERENCES


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