Class 5: Causes, Radicalisation, Mobilisation

Radical subcultures and mobilisation

Dr. Michael C. Zeller

Agenda for the day

- Opening notes
- Klausur preview follow-up
- Subculture
- Bosi and Porta (2012) - Micro-mobilization into Armed Groups
- Meier (2022) - Armed Group Recruitment of the LTTE
- Any questions, concerns, feedback for this class?

Opening notes

Follow-up from last week

- factors shaping politically violent groups' strategy

    - multiple simultaneously

    - some more based around 'rational' calculation (e.g., available resources, state posture); others less so (e.g., ideology, emotional dynamics)

- reminder: cases discussed in course are meant to help clarify theory and concepts

> a great deal of charged politics behind many of these cases—but the justifiability of causes in these cases is not part of this course

Presentation groups

Presentations line-up

Date	Presenters	Method
4 Dec:	Shahadaan, Kristine, Daichi	TBD
11 Dec:	Bérénice, Zorka, Victoria, Katharina	TBD
18 Dec:	Shoam, Aidan, Tara, Sebastian	TBD

Klausur preview follow-up

- structure of an essay

  1. Broad introductory response

  2. Elaborate in (sufficient) detail to answer the questions

  3. Describe examples

  4. Concluding summary

any follow-up questions on this?
(full review in late January)

Subculture

- definition

- example: from ska to skinhead

- other subculture examples

- explanatory power: IS foreign fighters

Ah, I just love culture!

Subculture defined

subculture - a cultural group within a larger culture with its own traits, beliefs, and interests, typically distinct from and sometimes at odds with the larger culture

- So this evolution has created a subculture: music, clothing (, shoelaces), political beliefs and orientation

- 1960s: 'mod' subculture in UK (working class youth with upward social mobility, stylish clothes, American soul & Jamaican ska)
  - 'hard mods': short haircuts, jeans and boots—worker aesthetic
    - skinheads: Jamaican 'rude boys' opposed to authority

- 1970s: skinhead aesthetic, 'street punk'/*Oi!* music
  - right-wing skins: rejection of black/Jamaican roots
    - 'Nazi rock': pioneering bands like *Screwdriver* (Ian Stuart Donaldson) and *Böhse Onkelz* (Brown 2004; Dych 2016)
    - British-German connections
  - left-wing skins: 'unpolitical' and clinging to Jamaican roots
    - S.H.A.R.P. (Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice)

For those interested in a more recent example...

A short documentary about the Rechtsrock concert in Ostritz in 2019:
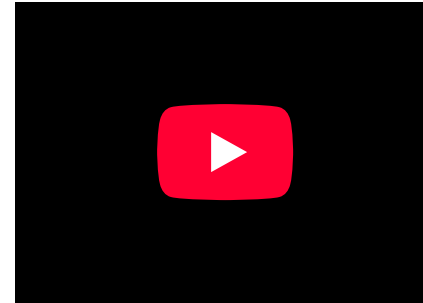
But no alcohol allowed... (see further in Spiegel article)

| translated | Deutsch (original) |

> Given the context of the other events and the resulting encounter between the various political camps, as well as the obviously combative and aggressive nature of the event, alcohol consumption would undoubtedly further increase the risk of violent clashes.

Other subculture examples?

Any subculture examples you know? Any overlap with extremist groups? What are the distinguishing characteristics? Certain clothing, music, symbols, practices?

- From the right-wing extremist scene: Skinheads and Rechtsrock, football hooligans, Incels, sovereign citizens and Reichsbürger, neo-pagan, occultists, military veterans (and active service personnel), biker gangs

    - *Der NSU war nicht zu dritt*

- What is the explanatory power of the subculture concept? Why is it important?

Subculture, radical milieu, and mobilisation - an emp[...] puzzle

> More than **1000 people** from the Balkan region travelled between 2012 and 2016 to become foreign fighters (Azinović & Bećirević 2017), a disproportionately high number.

- Why might the Balkans account for a disproportionate (compared to western Europe and to the U.S.) number of ISIS foreign fighters? Let's hear some hypotheses!

- Metodieva (2022) argues that the **post-conflict radical milieu** is the key factor (cf. Metodieva and Zeller 2023)

Bosi and Porta (2012) - Micro-mobilization into Armed Groups

- levels schema

- cases and case design
  - Provos/PIRA and Brigate Rosse

- paths: ideological, instrumental, solidaristic

Bosi and Porta (2012, 364) levels schema

Bosi and Porta (2012, 364) levels schema

- aiming to identify "some of the central paths followed by those individuals who join armed groups" (Bosi and Porta 2012, 361)

- paired comparison of most-different cases of micro-mobilizations into armed activism with the aim of singling out some similarities

> Our cases represent two of the most influential armed groups in Europe, among the few who lasted for more than 10 years, with a broad territorial coverage and a relatively high number of members and sympathizers. They differ however in their main ideological roots: ethnonationalist for the PIRA, socio-revolutionary for the BR.

Cases and case design (Bosi and Porta 2012, 365–6)

some methodological points: scope for generalisation

- population?

- scope conditions?

Cases and case design (Bosi and Porta 2012, 365–6)

some methodological points: scope for generalisation

- population?
    - armed groups (in Europe?)
- scope conditions?
    - groups that lasted more than 10 years
    - broad territorial coverage
    - high number of members and sympathizers

Cases and case design: generalisation (Bosi and Por… 365–66)

Although our empirical testing concerns PIRA and BR armed activists, we believe that similar micromobilization paths can be found in other armed groups. This is true if we think of the works of Jocelyan Viterna (2006) on the **women's mobilization into the FMLN in El Savador**, that of Fernando Reinares (2001) with **ETA militants**, Olivier Roy's(2004) work with **Islamic militants mobilization into Al Qaeda** in the Middle East, or the work of Gilda Zwerman and Patricia Steinhoff (2005) regarding **left-wing armed groups in the US and Japan in the post 1960s**.

Paths of radicalisation (Bosi and Porta 2012)

Path	Dominant motivations (micro level)	Recruitment-relevant networks (meso level)	Perception of context (macro level)
Ideological	Ideological, identity	Family and territorial traditions	Potential revolutionary situation
Instrumental	Aspiration to change	Political groups	Closed opportunities
Solidaristic	Experiential cognition	Peer group	Escalation of political conflict

Paths of radicalisation (Bosi and Porta 2012)

(*generalizability*): Are the described pathways fitting for less violent groups with more limited goals which never included an attack on the state or the status quo? Can the 3 types be used to analyse counterrevolutionary terrorism?

Path	Dominant motivations	Recruitment-relevant networks	Perception of context
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Ideological path – Bosi and Porta (2012, 372)

"We were all trusted comrades: we had known each other for a long time and were very good friends" (Alberto Franceschini, quoted in Fasanella and Franceschini 2004, 44). In other words, in their initial phases both armed groups exploited **pre-existing social and affective ties** in recruitment processes in order to **avoid possible infiltrations**. While in the Northern Ireland case the **family** was also relevant in recruitment to the armed group (e.g. interviewees 1, 6, 11 and 17), **in the Italian case the family remained more important as a cultural symbol, and joining the BR was perceived as a rupture with the family environment**

examples of this path from extremist group cases?

Instrumental path - Bosi and Porta (2012, 374)

many activists joined armed groups **after a long search for effective strategies to achieve their political aims** (Interviewees 2, 5, 18, 19, 20 for the PIRA and Balzerani, Fiore, Peci, Ronconi and Interviewees 26 and 27 for the BR). They usually joined armed groups later in life **following dissatisfaction with the "ordinary" politics** in which they were involved. They judged armed groups according to whether or not they had the capacity to stage successful campaigns and lead to concrete results.

**examples of this path from extremist group cases?**

Solidarity path – Bosi and Porta (2012, 380)

The **context** in which these individuals mobilized was in fact one **of escalation**. For many individuals the armed struggle was a way to cope with societies which seemed to them in turmoil. **High repression and counter-movement violence in collaboration with the establishment** worked for young individuals as a loss of innocence, which further delegitimized the regimes and justified their mobilization in the PIRA and the BR. … The leadership of the PIRA had, for example, planned to **provoke street disturbances with the deliberate intention of producing an outward spiral of violence**, knowing full well the benefits the British Army repression would reap in terms of support and recruits from the nationalist community.

examples of this path from extremist group cases?

Meier (2022) - Armed Group Recruitment of the LTTE

- (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam)

- Sri Lankan Civil War background
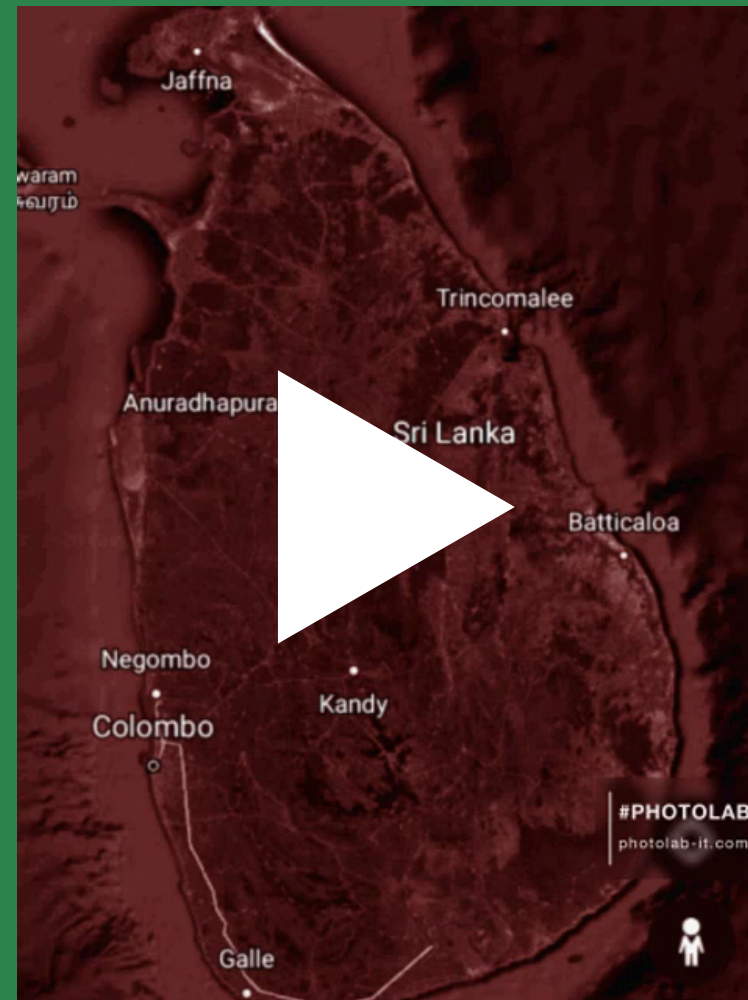
Meier (2022) – The Sri Lankan Civil War: Background

- Sri Lankan independence from British Colonial Rule 1948

  - → Sinhalese 74%, Tamil 18%

- Inter-generational conflicts within the Tamil Movement

- 1983 anti-Tamil riots as transformative event

- From guerrilla to conventional war

- The LTTE as de facto state

- 2008 military defeat of the LTTE

Table 2 – Territorial Control during the Sri Lankan Civil War
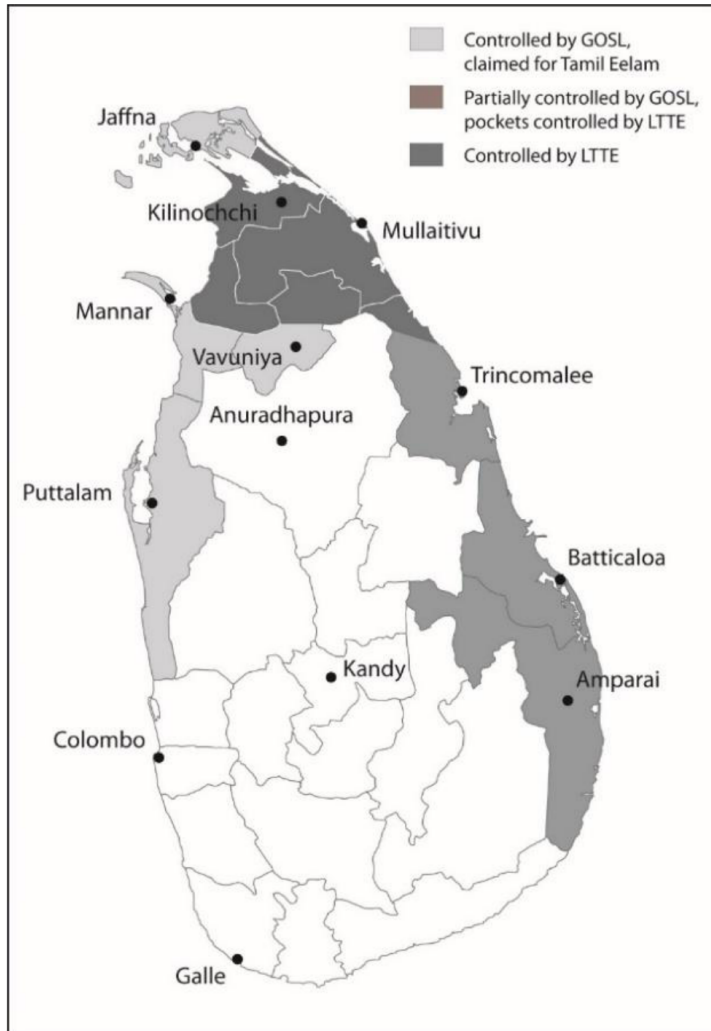
Source: Map published in Stokke 2006, reprinted with permission of the author

Meier (2022) - Research interest

- Differential participation in armed groups during civil wars

  - → Variation at the sub-national level

  - → Temporal and/or spatial variation

- Building on Kalyvas (2006) three different mobilization areas can be distinguished according to the actors in control of the area and the degree to which they exert control

  - Rebel controlled areas

  - Government controlled areas

  - Contested areas

- → Different pathways to militancy within the three mobilization areas?

Meier (2022) - Research Process and Methodology

- Selection of research sites

- Interviewing former militants and "similarly placed" civilians

  - $\longrightarrow$ Snowball sampling

- Life history interviews

  - issues with this approach?

- Argument:

  - Depending on the area where individuals live during civil wars, they are exposed to different political orders and thus experience the conflict in different ways.

  - Variation in conflict experience influences people's decision to take up arms, resulting in different individual pathways to militancy across spatio-temporal contexts

- Explanatory factors:

  1. actors in control of the area

  2. intensity and form of violence

  3. LTTE recruitment strategy

Armed Group Recruitment

Table I. Ideal-Typical Variation In Recruitment Trajectories

	Path I Political resentment	Path II Personal victimization	Path IIII Military socialization
Territorial control	Government controlled area (increasingly contested)	Contested area	LTTE controlled area
Form of indiscriminate violence	Escalatory state counterinsurgency campaign	Repeated military clashes and attacks	Periods of stability and periods of heavy bombardments
Military strategy recruitment process	Guerilla war; clandestine, exclusive recruitment with probation period	Conventional war; presence armed group in area, little relevance of active recruitment	Conventional war; inclusive, open recruitment and socialization within militant networks

Any questions, concerns, feedback for this class?

Anonymous feedback here:
https://forms.gle/NfF1pCfYMbkAT3WP6

Alternatively, please send me an email: m.zeller@lmu.de

References

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