

COUSINS IN ARMS: SOCIAL STRUCTURE  
AND CIVIL WAR MOBILIZATION IN MONTENEGRO

By

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## Abstract

Many contemporary civil wars occur in segmentary societies, in which social structure rests on cohesive social groups. These wars tend to produce fast, extensive mobilizations of civilians, yet this reoccurring connection has mostly evaded a systematic analysis. This thesis explains why and how such social structure affects the dynamics of civil war mobilization. Unlike most existing civil war mobilization literature, the theory identifies both prewar and wartime factors, as well as both social groups and armed actors, as the determinants of mobilization.

The theory proposes that civil war mobilization is determined primarily by the pre-war social structure and the wartime armed actors' effects on social structure. The more pre-war social structure rests on cohesive social groups, the more it enables individuals to mobilize in insurgencies effectively. However, the pre-war structure is necessary but not a sufficient explanation for civil war mobilization. When a war starts, armed actors gain a crucial role. Mobilization dynamics during wartime depends on armed actors' behavior, especially military and political decisions that affect social group cohesion. The horizontal ties of solidarity between group members enable fast and extensive collective action. However, if the armed actors disturb the vertical group status relations, this can change the extent and direction of civilian participation in the war.

To test these propositions, the empirical part of the thesis conducts a micro-comparative historical analysis of the civil war in Montenegro during the Second World War. Empirical analysis shows that the cohesive kinship-based social groups effectively mobilized against the Italian occupation in the early phase of the war. In the second phase, the insurgents' military and political decisions had disrupted group cohesion, and led to the civil war mobilization that pitted local armed actors against one another.

The mechanisms of participation and recruitment are further explored on a micro-level, in a single county. This analysis presents qualitative and quantitative evidence collected from historical and ethnographic sources, used for the first time in a systematic comparative analysis. It shows that during the 1941 insurgency, tribal groups in Montenegro could mobilize fast and extensively against the outside military force, relying on strong ties between individuals, which existed before the war. The mobilization in the civil war between the local armed actors is attributed to the conflict generated by insurgents reversing the status of cohesive social groups.

The alternative explanations of civil war mobilization are evaluated using several statistical tests, including multivariate regression and survival analysis. The analysis of municipal-level data collected from primary and secondary sources gives additional support to the social structure explanation of civil war mobilization, when pre-war economic, political, and wartime military factors are accounted for.

The evidence presented in the thesis indicates that social structure has a high explanatory potential for what appears as endless civil wars. It offers insights for the study of behavior of insurgent groups during wars, and their relations with civilians. It also invites further research and more comprehensive testing of the theory, in different contexts and with novel data.

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Being an outsider to Montenegro meant I had to start from the basics, but it also helped in trying to approach a divisive period of its history objectively. In dealing with the topic of the war, I intended to treat it in a way that would be worthy of the gravity of suffering it caused. I hope I succeeded. I intended to collect more data from archives and interviews, do more analyses, better analyses, and refine the theory. However, for this dissertation to exist, it had to be submitted at some point. I see this thesis as a semicolon, not a full stop.

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that no parts of this thesis have been accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions. This thesis contains no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where acknowledgement is made in the form of bibliographic reference.

Vujo Ilić  
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# CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Empirical puzzle and research question

During the writing of this thesis, Syria and Iraq went through a sharp rise and equally sudden decline of the armed actor known as the Islamic State. The Islamic State had success in mobilizing the local population and capturing a territory larger than that of Hungary.<sup>1</sup> Its archaic religious justice system and the use of violence drew public attention, but many pointed to its elaborate and ambitious state-building process.<sup>2</sup> The IS eventually fell, and its leader Baghdadi died. Observers pointed to a repeating pattern of similar groups filling the gaps left by governance failures in Syria, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. What is not understood is how and why these groups that shake up existing orders repeatedly emerge and expand.

The emergence of radical armed actors “in particular places at particular times” during instabilities and civil wars is not driven by chance.<sup>3</sup> These groups use the opportunity of collapsed political order to take control of territory and build new government structures that become the basis of their appeal to legitimate rule. However, this opening usually appears in places with a historical weakness or absence of effective state government. Moreover, state weakness, in turn, does not exist due to chance either. The area that Islamic State came to control in the first year of its rise is different from other areas of both Syria and Iraq. These were sparsely populated desert areas with cities and towns scattered along communication lines that had connected the other, primarily agricultural, densely populated areas for centuries.

The specific types of geography that had affected state capacity also influenced the way societies were organized. The tribe-based society in the areas of northeastern Syria and northwestern Iraq differ from the remaining parts of these two countries. Therefore, neither the spread of the radical armed actor, nor its persistence and decline, can be explained without considering the structure of the society where these events occurred. Having been organized in cohesive social groups, and with developed mechanisms for resistance to outside military forces, the population could be effectively mobilized when order broke down. However, these same structures that enable mobilization against state forces can be turned against insurgent groups when the traditional order of the society clashes with an insurgent state-building project.

Comparable events occurred more than half a century earlier in a different setting. The Second World War in Yugoslavia is primarily known for its insurgent Partisan army. These communist rebels fought against the Axis occupation and liberated the country, while its rebel leader, Josip Broz Tito, continued to rule Yugoslavia until his death in 1980. However, things did not develop in the same way for the Partisans in different parts of Yugoslavia. In some places, civil war among local factions was as impactful, or even more so, than the war against the occupation.

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1 Jones et al. 2017.

2 Revkin 2016.

3 Hamid 2019.

The dynamics of the war in Montenegro stands out among the accounts of the Second World War in the rest of Yugoslavia. The July 1941 insurgency against the Italian occupation started soon after the occupation, after a proclamation of independence of Montenegro as an Italian satellite state. After three months of what Italy promoted as a “benign occupation,” the relative calm shattered to pieces when, on July 13, 1941, insurgents took control of almost the whole country. Only half a year later, the insurgents were at war with each other.

The insurgency came as a shock to the Italian authorities but surprised many Montenegrins as well. The surprise encompassed even the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, which was at that point preparing for a small scale, protracted guerrilla warfare against the occupying forces. Nowhere else in Yugoslavia could the communist organizers claim such an early success of the insurgency.

As much as the Communists could claim to have led Montenegro in the unique July insurgency, soon enough, their emerging local rivals were as expeditiously defeating them. The war between the communist Partisans and the anti-communist Nationalists started at the beginning of 1942. The severe wartime violence still has strong political reverberations, which especially gained in gravity during the dissolution of socialist Yugoslavia. Even though in the 1990s, new civil wars in Yugoslavia came to the forefront, the civil wars of the 1940s still resonate after eighty years.

In the Yugoslav context, Montenegro experienced a surprisingly successful insurgency, in a relative absence of repression and without substantial preparation. It was followed by an unusually harsh ideological conflict between local armed factions, which resulted in the communist rebels' defeat in Montenegro and their retreat to Bosnia. This was not the case in the whole country. Insurgencies were starting as a response to indiscriminate violence, such as in the Independent State of Croatia. In other parts of the country, there was no mass insurgency of a similar scale, despite the repression, such as in Macedonia. In Serbia, insurgents were defeated, not in combat with local rivals but by overwhelming Axis forces. Yet in Bosnia, Partisan insurgent forces could consolidate and even defeat their rivals. *Why was Montenegro different from the rest of Yugoslavia, both in the dynamics of the insurgency against the occupation and in the intensity and of the civil war that ensued?* This was the empirical puzzle that motivated this research. Explanations suggested by the literature, from the use of indiscriminate violence to the insurgent pre-war organization, or pre-war political relations could not help explain the unique dynamics in Montenegro.

The answer might lie with another reason that differentiated Montenegro from the rest of the country – its social structure. After it emerged from the Ottoman suzerainty, Montenegro was effectively a confederation of tribes. Even though it modernized in the late 19th and early 20th century, during the interwar period, Montenegro remained an agricultural, mostly pastoralist society. Tribes, large segmentary lineage groups, still functioned as politically relevant socio-economic units. Tribes, in turn, consisted of many smaller kin-based groups called

brotherhoods. This kind of social structure was unique in Yugoslavia, and with a couple of exceptions in the Mediterranean and the Caucasus, in Europe too.<sup>4</sup>

This social structure was highly relevant for the course of the war. Montenegro was a society built on cohesive social groups. Due to the strong horizontal ties between individuals, these groups can mobilize and participate in violent collective action. Their hierarchies are, however, as crucial, because the power relations in and between these groups become incorporated in the military organization. When armed actors make political and military decisions that enhance the social group cohesion, they enable effective mobilization. But when armed actors corrode these ties, social groups likely turn to desertion or defection. Such dynamics were observed empirically in numerous wars but until now were not theorized.

Events involving tribal groups are often unpredictable to political actors and run contrary to the dominant understanding of how civilians behave in a civil war. The combination of unlikely outcomes of civil war mobilization in an environment of segmentary society has led to the central question that had so far eluded the civil war theory: *Why do tribal societies mobilize in civil wars differently than non-tribal societies?*

This thesis puts forward social structure and group cohesion as missing factors in the explanation of the dynamics of mobilization in civil wars. *The more that the pre-war social structure rests on cohesive social groups, the more it enables individuals to mobilize in insurgencies effectively. However, during the war, armed actors' behavior affects the cohesion of social groups. Mobilization becomes an outcome of the interaction between armed actors and social groups.*

This theory points to both pre-war conditions and war-time behavior of actors for an explanation of civil war mobilization. It also treats mobilization as a process that results from the joint participation of civilians and recruitment by armed actors. It argues that in order to explain different outcomes across civil wars in different societies, a social structure that rests on social group cohesion is a better explanation for mobilization than competing theories. The remaining part of this chapter makes a case that such a theory was needed to explain civil wars in segmentary societies. The following chapter unpacks the central elements of this theory – social group cohesion, armed actor behavior, and mechanisms that guide participation and recruitment in civil wars.

The under-researched historical case of Montenegro was well suited for both theory-building and for the analysis. The absence of data is a common problem with both civil wars and segmentary societies. Typically the only sources about civil wars are government records, firmly focused on incumbent organization and vaguer about internal insurgent dynamics.<sup>5</sup>

A specific feature of Yugoslavia was that the insurgents were victorious. After the war, many resources went to collect and process documents from the 1941-1945 war. There are not many

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4 Boehm 1983, 1987.

5 Kalyvas 2006, 43.

cases of socialist rebels who won wars and ruled countries afterward, even less of those who dedicated enormous efforts to systematize historical data over decades, in hundreds, if not thousands of volumes of primary documents, oral histories, memoirs, and data.

On the other hand, in decades preceding WWII, ethnographers were doing pioneering fieldwork in Montenegro, researching its tribes and settlement patterns. These volumes have remained a very timely and useful account of the social structure of Montenegro, without which this study would not be possible. Montenegro was modernizing at the time, and many of its traditional forms of social and political organization were rapidly transforming, but as this analysis will show, in much respect, the essential functions of a tribal society, especially the provision of security, actually found new purpose when the war started.

The analysis in this thesis was possible only due to the availability of data that rarely accompany each other. In a way, Montenegro's swift modernization in these couple of decades made it possible for an unlikely combination of data to be accessible. This thesis uses this new data, collected from bodies of ethnographic works about the tribes of Montenegro, published in the first half of the twentieth century, and the collected documents about the war from the dominant perspective of insurgents, published during the second half of the century.

The empirical part of this thesis is organized into four parts. The first part discusses the behavior of armed actors and tribes in Montenegro during the war, based on rich historical documentation. It shows that social structure was indeed what enabled effective mobilization in the insurgency, but also the desertions and the war between two rival local forces. The second part of the thesis, consisting of two chapters, lowers the level of analysis to a single county of Danilovgrad. Using ethnographic data and individual accounts of the war, it shows how the social mechanisms of reciprocity and conformity led to the effective mobilization of cohesive social groups. However, by analyzing patterns of recruitment and targeting during the war, it shows how status reversal and revenge had split the brotherhoods and had pushed them towards opposing sides in the war.

While the first part shows the behavior of actors at the macro level, and the second part behavior at the micro-level, the third part moves to the meso level and conducts several statistical tests at the level of the smallest administrative units – municipalities. This chapter offers tentative support for the findings at the other levels of analysis and shows that social structure has more explanatory power than other most relevant explanations suggested in civil war literature.

Finally, an argument could be made that because of this uniqueness, Montenegro was an outlier and that not much could be learned from it to understand other cases of civil war. However, it could also be argued that the type of social structure that made Montenegro stand out from the rest of Yugoslavia in the early twentieth century was comparable to contemporary societies outside of Europe. Even though this thesis does not demonstrate generalizability outside of Montenegro, it opens the possibility of further in-depth analyzes, which would use ethnographic and wartime data and test the external validity of these findings.

## 1.2 The literature gap

### *Civil wars literature and weak states*

The second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by deadly interstate wars. However, from the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there was a pronounced lack of large-scale interstate conflicts.<sup>6</sup> Interstate conflicts became rare events - only two out of the 52 conflicts in 2018 were between sovereign states.<sup>7</sup> This empirical shift in the occurrence of intrastate wars drove the literature of Political Science and International Relations to focus on civil wars.<sup>8</sup>

The last decades have brought an expansion of civil war scholarship, dealing with a large number of dimensions of conflict and violence. The primary interests of civil war literature were onset, duration, termination, and aftermath of civil wars.<sup>9</sup> It also dealt with its dynamics, relation between armed actors, and between armed actors and civilians.<sup>10</sup> Finally, a highly productive strand in the literature engaged in group-level research, asking how armed actors organize, how they actors wage war, establish territorial control, form institutions, or create patterns of relations with civilians at a micro-level.<sup>11</sup>

This thesis argues that the empirical patterns of civil wars in recent decades indicate that there was an insufficient focus on the social context in which civil wars take place. Literature shows that civil wars tend to take place in developing countries<sup>12</sup> where democracies are nonexistent or nonconsolidated.<sup>13</sup> Inside these countries, civil wars are usually associated with rough terrains, such as deserts, forests, hills, and mountains, and are fought in rural areas by predominantly peasant armies.<sup>14</sup> Waging wars in such areas affects the war dynamics, not only because of the geography but also because of different relations between state and society determined by geography.

In the recent wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, rebels encountered overwhelming third-party military power, which time after time failed to deliver victory.<sup>15</sup> Observers were puzzled with this. How does civilian population, supposedly unprepared for a disproportionate military force, transform into an armed actor capable of retaining its fighters, and even achieving military success, against vastly superior military forces?<sup>16</sup>

The inquiry should start at the lowest level of analysis. In civil wars, territorially based armed challenge leads to a breakdown of the monopoly of violence and fundamentally changes the

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6 Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015.

7 Pettersson, Högladh, and Öberg 2019.

8 Civil war is "armed combat within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of the hostilities." (Kalyvas 2006, 17.) The combat taking place within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity excludes combat that takes place across borders – international wars. However, the understanding of the incumbent authority that parties are subject to at the outset of hostilities is not in international legal terms, and the authority does not have to be recognized.

9 For example, Fearon and Laitin 2003, Hegre 2004, or Hartzell and Hoddie 2003.

10 For example, Weinstein 2007, Wood 2010, Christia 2012, or Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour 2012.

11 For example, Kalyvas and Balcells 2010, Mampilly 2012, Staniland 2014, or Steele 2017.

12 Colier and Hoeffler 2004.

13 Mansfield and Snyder 1995, Hegre 2001.

14 Kalyvas 2006, 38.

15 Käihkö 2018a.

16 Arreguin-Toft 2001.

nature of sovereignty.<sup>17</sup> Even though many outside observers may find such circumstances akin to Hobbesian conditions, the territorial fragmentation of sovereignty does not produce “anarchy.” Instead, what happens at ground level is that a prewar order is usually replaced with a new form of order.<sup>18</sup> The potential of social structure to influence the form of wartime order has been underestimated in our explanation of modern civil wars, even though it could have significant consequences on war’s dynamics.

### *Weak states or strong societies?*

Authors that took a broader view of the different ways societies are organized *vis a vis* the state have also pointed to parts of the world where state-society relations are fundamentally different from the Western model.<sup>19</sup> In one of the more recent examples, James C. Scott described the origins of the social and political organization of Zomia, a vast mountainous region in Southeast Asia. For centuries this was an area of refuge from the early expansion of states and empires. People fleeing the coercive states had developed an organization that was designed to keep states away and to preserve these as non-state spaces. Areas in which the social organization was designed to evade both state capture and state formation are not limited to Southeast Asia. They are also found in Amazonia, highland Latin America, Africa, and parts of Europe, the Caucasus and the Balkans.<sup>20</sup>

In these refuge areas around the world, local resistance against encroaching states was common, as well as the states’ craving for control over these areas. Nevertheless, the high costs of maintaining them meant that state actors also approached them differently than “central” state territories. Indirect rule was an attempt to avoid the perpetuation of conflicts between the center and the periphery.<sup>21</sup> Instead of directly assimilating these areas, states allowed the social and political structures to persevere. In the process, they also strengthened them, gave them autonomy under the shallow sovereignty of the central government, and in this way, enabled them to adapt to the new state system.

As much as these “ungovernable” territories, hills, mountains, and deserts, and “tribal” identities that developed around them were thought of as an exception in the Westphalian world, historically, they were widespread and proved exceptionally persistent to this day. Non-state peoples adapted politically to a world of states and empires through the development of principles of social cohesion, based on kinship, genealogy, and lineage.<sup>22</sup> Armed conflicts in these areas activate local structures that often cut across master cleavages of war and sometimes lead to unpredictable outcomes.<sup>23</sup>

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17 Kalyvas 2006, 88.

18 Arjona 2016.

19 Clastres 1987, Migdal 1988, Gellner 1995, Fukuyama 2011.

20 Scott 2011, 8.

21 Gerring et al. 2011, Siroky, Dzutsev, and Hechter 2013, Lawrence 2013, Mukherjee 2018.

22 Scott 2011, 9, 265.

23 Kalyvas 2003, Atzili 2007.

### *The literature paradox*

Accounts of civil wars often point to the dynamics of civil wars in specific areas that stand out from the rest of the country. Kalyvas notes in passing the clustering pattern that violence follows in many civil wars.<sup>24</sup> Kalyvas cites several examples of infamous highly contested geographic areas during insurgencies and civil wars, such as the Jenin-Nablus-Tulkarm district during the 1930s Palestinian rebellion against the British. Similar areas often called “triangles of death” were described in literature and journalist accounts in Somalia, Algeria, and Iraq.<sup>25</sup>

What these areas had in common were not only high mobilization levels, high intensity of violence, or fragmentation of armed actors. When seen in a comparative context, these areas stand out because of their pronounced tribal or clan structure. Yet accounts of these conflicts have consistently lacked an explicit acknowledgment of the underlying social structure.

There are several reasons why the connection between social structure and wartime outcomes has mostly been overlooked in the literature. On the one hand is the lack of attentiveness about social structure in civil war literature, which was preoccupied for a while with the focus on ethnic wars. On the other hand, there are reasons specific for tribal societies that have to do with concepts, data, and values.

For one, the type of societies that produce knowledge about the wars is diametrically different from the societies where civil wars occur the most.<sup>26</sup> This paradox has affected the social science literature on civil wars. The empirical cases used in the theoretically foundational texts of Political Science civil war literature are based on primarily Western wars of the first half of the 20th century. Yet, after the Second World War, the geographic locus of civil wars has moved to Africa and Asia. Only a few civil wars were waged on Western soil, and the majority of the wars waged in the contemporary world happened elsewhere.

This is not specific for Political Science. Military Studies of cohesion that explain the nature of ties between combatants have similarly evolved through studies of Western state militaries during the 20th and 21st centuries.<sup>27</sup> The most recent debates in this field still assumed the existence of societies and states similar to those in Western nation-states.<sup>28</sup> Only recently was there a challenge to its applicability to the majority of armed conflicts, including historical cases, non-state cases, and non-Western state contexts.<sup>29</sup>

When the study of civil war dealt with social groups, it was primarily ethnic groups. Driven by the sharp rise in the number of ethnic conflicts after the end of the Cold War, the literature on the

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24 Kalyvas 2006, 240.

25 Swedenburg 1995, Gardner and El Bushra 1995, Kalyvas 1999, Shadid 2004. More recently, highly contested areas similarly called “triangles of death” by the locals were also in the north of the Katanga region of DR Congo (Hogg and Ferreira-Marques 2013), and in the areas between the southern Syrian city of Daraa, Damascus, and Quneitra, where some of the first clashes of the Syrian civil war had started (Ersan 2018).

26 Lewis 2017.

27 Siebold et al. 2016.

28 King 2006, Siebold 2007.

29 Kaihko 2018a, 3.

role of ethnicity in conflicts and civil war grew in the past three decades.<sup>30</sup> Even though this literature made significant advances, it usually treated ethnic groups as homogenous units of analysis. It analyzed ethnic groups' size, political position, or level of relative deprivation and rarely engaged with the social structure of ethnic groups. Only if ethnic groups were disaggregated at lower levels of analysis, could the dynamics of sub-ethnic segmentary groups be observed.

In addition to these reasons, there were additional obstacles specific to the research of segmentary societies. Segmentary societies are types of societies in which social structure rests on segments of a population (tribes or clans). Segments or tribes are informal groups consisting of networks of individuals linked by kin or fictive kin identities, often centered on lineages.<sup>31</sup> Since the rise of modernization theory in the 1950s and 1960s, scholars have increasingly expected that modernizing societies will experience the broadening of loyalties, from those at the family, village, and tribal level, to that of a nation.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, decades have passed since these predictions, and tribes persist as a relevant political phenomenon. In 1990, Mottahedeh looked back at those decades and noted: "Some historical subjects remain unrecognized until they are discovered; some need to be rediscovered every generation."<sup>33</sup>

Regional specialists are not the only ones pointing to this issue. Migdal, who wrote about "strong societies and weak states" in 1988, argued again in 2001 that tribes are one of the few traditional social organizations still affecting the social order, but that too little research was being done on this topic.<sup>34</sup> The reasons why blind spots for segmentary societies persisted, with several exceptions, have to do with concepts, data, and values.<sup>35</sup>

The first obstacle is definitional. The concept of "tribe" has been applied to different forms of societal organizations, from loosely connected, highly localized camps and chieftaincies, to large confederations of millions of people, or even whole ethnic groups, with different kinds of processes that affect them at each of these levels.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it seems hard to produce an all-encompassing definition of a tribe.

The second issue is related to data. Contemporary segmentary societies, as a traditional form of social organization, have mostly persevered in areas that have developed on the peripheries of states and empires. Systematic data collection about the social structure of these populations is more an exception than a rule. Clastres pointed out that sometimes the only information the outside world had about South American tribes was their name.<sup>37</sup>

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30 Horowitz 1985, Gurr 1993, Fearon and Laitin 1996, Brubaker and Laitin 1998, Wimmer 2002, Beissinger 2002, Varshney 2003, Toft 2005, Kalyvas 2008, Cederman et al. 2010, Jenne 2014, Lewis 2017, Mukherjee 2018, Kocher, Lawrence, and Monteiro 2018.

31 Collins 2006.

32 Huntington 1968, 140.

33 Khoury and Kostiner 1990, ix.

34 Migdal 1988, 2001.

35 See for instance Schatz 2004, Posner 2005, Collins 2006, or the treatment of tribes in Fukuyama 2011.

36 Khoury and Kostiner 1990.

37 Clastres 1987, 33.

Finally, some authors promoted the view that tribal people are particularly violent. Several recent works brought back to life a vision of traditional societies as plagued by tribal conflict.<sup>38</sup> In these neo-Hobbesian accounts, the mechanism of violent revenge led to constant warfare, which was only pacified by the ascent of the state. Such representations resemble the more ominous depictions of tribal societies from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>39</sup> The research agenda got wedged between the views of tribalism as a backward form of social organization and responding to such views by scorning the use of the term “tribe.”

This history of neglect recently began to change. Interest in tribes has been on the rise in the previous decade, primarily motivated by the Western involvement with insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>40</sup> Another productive line of inquiry deals with the role of kinship networks in development-related outcomes such as interpersonal trust, corruption, cooperation, or psychological factors,<sup>41</sup> as well as the recent work by Moscona, Nunn, and Robinson on the relationship between segmentary society and conflict.<sup>42</sup>

This thesis acknowledges the gap in the literature and attempts to contribute to refocusing the Political Science literature on civil wars towards the variation in types of societies in which wars take place. This thesis joins the theory of civil war mobilization with the literature of social structure. Previous research that this thesis builds upon has shown the potential of social structure to explain the ability of social groups to organize and sustain rebellions. This thesis goes a step further. It unpacks the puzzle of civil war mobilization in tribal areas, where specific interactions of social groups and armed actors keep defeating expectations.

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38 For criticism of works by Chagnon 2013, Diamond 2012, and Pinker 2011, see Scott 2013, and Corry 2013.

39 Lewis 1973.

40 Kilcullen 2011, Martin 2014.

41 Moscona, Nunn, and Robinson 2017, Schulz et al. 2019, Enke 2019, Akbari, Bahrami-Rad, and Kimbrough 2019.

42 Moscona, Nunn, and Robinson 2019.

### 1.3 Theories of civil war mobilization

Civil war literature has identified numerous aspects that affect mobilization and sustain rebellion. Some of the reasons in recent literature have included military control,<sup>43</sup> safety-seeking,<sup>44</sup> counterinsurgency measures,<sup>45</sup> geographic distance,<sup>46</sup> nonviolent alternatives,<sup>47</sup> political mobilization,<sup>48</sup> pre-war political participation,<sup>49</sup> ideology,<sup>50</sup> wartime governance,<sup>51</sup> discrimination,<sup>52</sup> previous violence,<sup>53</sup> civilian victimization,<sup>54</sup> economic grievances,<sup>55</sup> material incentives,<sup>56</sup> relative deprivation,<sup>57</sup> armed actor organization,<sup>58</sup> participation in violence,<sup>59</sup> socialization,<sup>60</sup> emotional reasons,<sup>61</sup> or status attainment.<sup>62</sup> In addition, a significant body of literature, both classical<sup>63</sup> and more recent<sup>64</sup> have also identified pre-existing or wartime social structure as being fundamental for the process of mobilization.

In general, it would be possible to divide the literature on civil war mobilization along multiple dimensions, but two dimensions are most appropriate for further analysis. The first is the stage at which mobilization is determined, and the second is the treatment of social structure. One branch of the literature finds that mobilization is primarily endogenous to war and that pre-war factors, including social structure, generally fail to explain the connection with wartime support for armed actors. The second branch takes the pre-war elements to have explanatory value but finds other components, such as economic or political to be more critical than social structure. The third and the fourth group find social structure essential and either explain mobilization as endogenous or exogenous to the war.

Therefore, the literature, based on these two dimensions (endogeneity of mobilization to the civil war, the role of social structure), is divided into four primary groups. Finally, the fifth and sixth groups include both pre- and in- war factors. Table 1.1 shows several representative theories from each of these groups. The next section will briefly describe the logic behind these theories and place this thesis in a relationship with them.

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43 Kalyvas 2006.

44 Kalyvas and Kocher 2007

45 Lyall, Blair, and Imai 2013, Day and Reno 2014.

46 Gates 2002.

47 Walter 2004, Chenoweth and Stephan 2011.

48 Chandra and García-Ponce 2019.

49 Balcells 2017, Finkel 2017.

50 Gutiérrez Sanín 2008, Costalli and Ruggeri 2015, Leader Maynard 2019.

51 Mampilly 2012, Arjona 2016.

52 Gurr 1993, 2015.

53 Laitin 1995.

54 Wood 2010, Kocher, Pepinsky, and Kalyvas 2011.

55 Collier and Hoeffler 2004.

56 Weinstein 2006, Bahney et al. 2013, Oppenheim et al. 2015.

57 Stewart 2002, Østby 2008.

58 Kenny 2010.

59 Cohen 2013.

60 Wood 2008, Hoover Green 2016.

61 Wood 2003, Pearlman 2013.

62 Abrahms 2008

63 Tilly 1964, 1978, Pinard 1968, Scott 1977, Moore 1969, Skocpol 1979, McAdam 1986, Wickham-Crowley 1992, Gould 1991, 1995.

64 Petersen 2001, Hechter and Okamoto 2001, Wood 2008, Parkinson 2013, Staniland 2014, Shesterina 2016, 2019, Kaplan 2017, Larson 2018, Turber 2019.

Figure 1.1 Theories of civil war mobilization

		SOCIAL STRUCTURE	
		<i>non-essential</i>	<i>essential</i>
STAGE	<i>only in-war</i>	Control-collaboration	Socialization
	<i>both pre- &amp; in-war</i>	Political competition	Multiple networks Collective threat framing
	<i>only pre-war</i>	Economic endowments	Community structure Socio-institutional model

*Explanations of mobilization*

Kalyvas offers a convincing case that civilian support for belligerents is endogenous to war. The argument is that, empirically, most efforts to predict support for rebels based on preexisting socio-structural characteristics produced “rather meager returns.”<sup>65</sup> Kalyvas bases his theory on diverse empirical records that provide substantial evidence that control spawns collaboration, independent of prewar patterns of support.<sup>66</sup> The proposition that a higher level of control exercised by an actor leads to a higher rate of collaboration and lowers the rate of defection is tested using empirical data from Greece.<sup>67</sup>

The control-collaboration model finds that wartime circumstances dictate wartime civilian participation. An alternative explanation of wartime mobilization by Weinstein<sup>68</sup> looks into armed actors’ pre-war access to economic endowments. This model assumes that armed actors which are initially well-endowed attract opportunistic recruits, interested in short-term gains, whereas a lack of resource endowments brings more recruits motivated by grievances or ideology, who are more long-term oriented, and who in turn use violence more selectively and maintain the support of the civilian population. Unlike the control-collaboration model, which rests on war-related factors, the economic endowments model considers pre-war conditions as necessary for explaining later developments.

The third possibility is that both pre- and in- war stages are critical for the dynamics of wartime mobilization. An example of such a theory is Balcells’ work on the Spanish Civil War.<sup>69</sup> Balcells shows that pre-war political competition is the best predictor of the patterns of direct violence by

65 Kalyvas 2006, 80.  
 66 Kalyvas 2006, 118.  
 67 Kalyvas 2006, 132. See also Kalyvas (2012) for extensions.  
 68 Weinstein 2006.  
 69 Balcells 2017.

one of the sides in the war, but also that after the first rounds of violence, war-related factors gain more explanatory relevance. This theory combines the effects of pre-war political cleavages and wartime dynamics, unlike the previous two. However, just like the other two theoretical approaches, it excludes the potential effects of social structures.

### *Social structure and mobilization*

In the other camp are the explanations of civil war that take account of social structure, and among them those that find the effects of the social structure either preceding the war or emerging during the war. Based on the study of Lithuania in the 1940s, Petersen<sup>70</sup> developed a theory of mechanisms that drive the actions of individuals to initiate and sustain rebellions. Petersen finds that not all communities are equally conducive to moving individuals towards rebellion. Strong pre-war communities enable the resolution of collective action problems through specific mechanisms.

More recently, advances in civil war literature emphasized the organizational and institutional aspects of rebellions.<sup>71</sup> The socio-institutional theory of Paul Staniland<sup>72</sup> suggests that prewar networks in which insurgent leaders are initially embedded define the nature of organizations at the onset of insurgency. Mobilization and internal structure of the group are related, hence affecting the wartime cohesion of insurgents and, therefore, the outcome of insurgency. Whereas Petersen focused on community structure, Staniland analyzed the social embeddedness of the armed actors' leaders.

Based on the study of the 1980s war in El Salvador, Elizabeth Wood developed a theory that, unlike the theories of Petersen and Staniland, explains the role of social structure as primarily emergent during the war.<sup>73</sup> The armed actors recruited combatants from pre-existing social networks loaded with distinct norms and values. However, Wood argues that the process of socialization into the armed actor could radically alter these. Ultimately, the political mobilization of civilian networks into support networks for armed actors reshapes existing social networks.<sup>74</sup>

There is a third group of theories that are in the middle – finding the role of social structure as formative in both prewar and wartime. Gould's sociological theory of multiple networks explained mobilization through the interaction of the pre-war social structure and war-time rebel organization.<sup>75</sup> Gould studied the 1871 Paris Commune insurgency, explaining how successful mobilization depended on the interplay between ties created by the insurgent organizations and pre-existing social networks, which followed the settlement patterns of the Parisian neighborhoods. Gould pointed to neighborhood social structure as the principal source of commitment to the insurgent effort and argued that the interaction between the informal networks and formal ones during the conflict could explain the mobilization process.<sup>76</sup>

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70 Petersen 2001.

71 Sanín and Giustozzi 2010, Mampilly 2012, Staniland 2014, Arjona 2014, Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015.

72 Staniland 2014.

73 Wood 2008.

74 Wood 2008, 545.

75 Gould 1991.

76 Gould 1991, 716, 720.

Along similar lines to Gould, Parkinson<sup>77</sup> and Shesterinina<sup>78</sup> more recently explored the role quotidian networks had in mobilization in the cases of the 1980s Lebanon and 1990s Abkhazia civil wars, respectively. Parkinson argued that to understand wartime mobilization, rebels must be situated in their organizational and social context. The overlap between rebel hierarchies and quotidian social networks helps explain the trajectories of mobilization.<sup>79</sup> Shesterinina showed that social structures provided the individuals embedded within them with collective threat frameworks and, therefore, critical information for mobilization decisions. These works showed that quotidian structures indeed affect mobilization dynamics in high-risk situations such as insurgencies.<sup>80</sup>

### *Position in the literature*

This thesis explains the effects of social structure on wartime mobilization, similar to the last group of theories, through different mechanisms that are related to both pre-war situations and war-time developments. In that sense, as will be further explained below, the group of theories that it is most directly opposed to is the approach best exemplified by Kalyvas' control and collaboration model. Showing the differences between the two will help explain the relations between this thesis and the other approaches.

In Kalyvas' model, the behavior of individuals - participation and defection - is primarily driven by local military balance. The military balance, in turn, mainly depends on the village's geographical position. Therefore, an individual has an active role in this model, but it behaves in a way unaffected by any social tie, other than the village location. In a way, it is the chance of living in a specific locality that primarily determines the position of the individual during wartime.

Kalyvas points to this "chance" of village location in several empirical examples from different contexts. As an illustration, the position of a Greek peasant during the occupation in 1942 was depending on the "...chances that were largely geographical. If he lived in one part of the mountains, he was more likely to be in contact with the Communist influence first; if in another, with the non-Communist resistance..."<sup>81</sup>

Social structure is related to its geographic environment. While the model developed by Kalyvas should have high explanatory power in homogenous societies, disregarding the underlying structure prevents it from accounting for social ties that change the way individuals participate in insurgencies or defects from an armed actor. The structure of segmentary societies is profoundly confounded with its geographic environment, so the assumption that location is a matter of chance should not stand.

Just as with the military balance, the effects of political affiliation or economic endowments overlook social ties and the organization of society as the primary way through which both political and economic resources can be channeled. In societies that are organized on a tribal

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77 Parkinson 2013.

78 Shesterinina 2016.

79 Parkinson 2013, 419.

80 See also Arjona 2015, Kaplan 2017.

81 Kalyvas 2006, 131.

basis, social groups direct the distribution of resources and political power. Pre-war social structure is antecedent to both political and economic factors in explaining mobilization, and as this thesis will show, it also better predicts wartime behavior than these two factors in tribal societies. However, the approaches that account for pre-war developments, exogenous to war, are closer to this thesis than the approach that finds a mobilization entirely endogenous for war.

This thesis is also distinct from the existing theories that find social structure essential for explaining mobilization processes. Unlike the accounts that find mobilization driven by mechanisms established either before or during the war, this thesis argues that it is essential to look at both. Unlike the theories that focus on either combatants or non-combatants, this thesis explains mobilization as having a dual basis, being produced by both civilians and armed actors. It is not only that pre-war social structure affects the behavior of individuals; it is also how armed actors respond to the social order.

Finally, segmentary societies stand out from other social structures. They often subdue other civil or professional structures, its kinship ties make their cohesion robust, and in addition, they enable mechanisms that serve functions in both peacetime and wartime, which makes them completely different from quotidian or any other social groups. The next sections will take a closer look at the way mobilization is treated in this thesis, and then proceed to incorporate findings from the segmentary society theory into the civil war literature.

## 1.4 Elements and forms of mobilization

Civil war mobilization is a process that turns civilians into combatants. It is a process fundamental to the onset, dynamics, and termination of wars. When the war starts, individuals who were peasants, students, or bureaucrats in peacetime, join armed actors. It is also a process that precedes a war and which ends after hostilities have ended. Without mobilization, there can be no civil war, since there would be no armed actors which would challenge the existing state authority. Similarly, irrespective of the way a war ends, the process of demobilization, or the return to non-combatant status, can take years, and the failure of demobilization after a war can lead to a return to armed conflict.

Civil war mobilization is different from mobilization in conventional interstate wars. In conventional wars between states, the recruitment of combatants by both sides is enforced by the state power, and failure to comply is sanctioned with imprisonment or capital penalty. Actors tend to keep the lines between the soldiers of the rival armies on the one hand, and non-combatants on the other, as visible as possible. Uniforms and insignia testify to the need to emphasize these differences.

Civil war mobilization has different incentives. In the case of irregular civil wars, participation in combat is followed by the possibility of sanctions by multiple sides.<sup>82</sup> In a situation of military asymmetry, and increased insecurity, which usually characterizes civil wars, the line between combatants and non-combatants is usually vague.<sup>83</sup> Even though the structure of incentives favors ambiguity (“peasants by day, soldiers by night”), there is still a need to differentiate combatants from non-combatants conceptually and explore different paths that take individuals from one role to another.<sup>84</sup>

The critical insight for understanding mobilization is its dual basis, as the process always involves both civilians and combatants, both the population and the armed actors (Figure 1.2). Mobilization is a process in which armed actor recruits and civilians participate. This process is neither homogenous nor unidirectional. There could be a scale of different relations between these actors. On the one side could be forced conscription,<sup>85</sup> where the choice of participation is primarily affected by an armed actor’s use of force. On the other side, the civilian population might take action, but the armed actor might be absent or refuse to engage with them.<sup>86</sup> Instead of brushing such cases under the rug for their uniqueness, such phenomena help delineate the concept of mobilization.

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82 Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008.

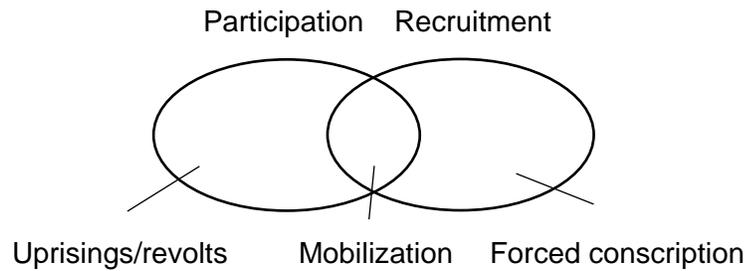
83 Kalyvas 2003.

84 For the purpose of distinguishing civilians from non-civilians, it is not adequate to take a too formal approach which would consider as combatants only members of state militaries, or too encompassing, which would include any individual bearing arms. Civilians are all those who are not full-time members of an armed organization, thus including all types of part-time participants or collaborators with armed actors. Combatants, on the other hand, are full-time members of any armed organization (Kalyvas 2006, 19.)

85 Cohen 2013, Eck 2014.

86 Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008.

Figure 1.2 Dual basis of mobilization



Recruitment and participation produce mobilization, yet three other phenomena are also objects of inquiry. Once civilians become combatants, efforts to keep them in that role are combatant retention.<sup>87</sup> A lack of retention means two things, either combatants are deserting the group and returning to civilian status, or they are defecting. Defection means that once recruited by one of the parties in a conflict, the combatant switches to the other side. Defection could be understood as a zero-sum relationship in which a failure to mobilize by one group means mobilization on the part of a rival. It makes sense to see these related processes, recruitment and retention, as well as retention, desertion, and defection, as parts of a broader phenomenon of mobilization, rather than as separate phenomena.

Mobilization is therefore defined as a civil war process involving the participation of civilians and armed actors' recruitment, which turns civilians into combatants through collective action.<sup>88</sup> Once the concept is defined, the next question is how to observe its dynamics. The answer is not straightforward. Adapting Tilly's<sup>89</sup> magnitude of collective action, variation in mobilization can be observed along three dimensions: extent, speed, and duration. The extent, or size, of mobilization, tells us how many civilians have mobilized, which can be observed as an absolute number or a proportion of a population. The second dimension of the process is speed. It tells us how long it takes for participation and recruitment to align, from an instance in which one of the actors had signaled an intent to mobilize. Finally, the length of the combatant status is the third dimension, duration. Effective mobilization is extensive, fast, and durable; it quickly turns many civilians into combatants, and keep them in that status.

One additional distinction should be made about the extent of mobilization. In much of the literature, insurgents have two choices: rebel or not. Such a clear distinction is necessary for explaining the changes between combatant and non-combatant status. However, attempts were made to present mobilization as a continuum, from neutrality to participation on one or another side, including intermediary roles.<sup>90</sup> Similar useful distinctions were made between hard and soft supporters, passive and active supporters, and between direct and indirect participants.<sup>91</sup> These categorizations of support to armed actors in a civil war can be simplified into a categorization in

<sup>87</sup> Gates 2002.

<sup>88</sup> This definition builds upon Shesterinina's 2014 definition.

<sup>89</sup> Tilly 1978, 96.

<sup>90</sup> Petersen 2001, 8.

<sup>91</sup> Kalyvas 2006, 100.

which support is divided along two dimensions of extent and intensity, or involvement and commitment, from the perspective of participants.

Individuals can be directly involved with the armed actors, serving in its ranks, or indirectly, being in a temporary, or supportive roles. The levels of commitment differentiate core from incidental recruits, among directly involved, and ancillary roles from occasional support in indirect involvement.<sup>92</sup> (Figure 1.3)

Figure 1.3 Extent and intensity of mobilization

		Extent ( <i>involvement</i> )	
		DIRECT	INDIRECT
Intensity ( <i>commitment</i> )	HIGH	Core	Auxiliary
	LOW	Incidental	Support

Direct and intense support is required only from a minority of politically committed (core) individuals. The majority fall into the remaining category of incidental involvement, where individuals are not as committed as the core group. This thesis primarily deals with these two groups, and the distinction between the core and incidental recruits is made through the text. On the other hand, the relations with the civilians who indirectly support the armed actor or who don't are also discussed as a part of a military-civilian interaction.

How many people are involved in civil wars is a matter of debate. Empirical evidence indicates that a small minority of the population is directly involved.<sup>93</sup> Different authors have suggested evidence that only about five percent of the population is active and militant ("the five percent rule").<sup>94</sup> In general, most ordinary people try to keep low levels of association with risk-taking minorities. But this assessment does not necessarily hold for civil wars in segmentary societies. The cohesive nature of segmentary social groups, as explained in previous sections, should lead to much higher levels of incidental mobilization, which should, however, remain more conditional upon armed actor behavior, and therefore with more variation in duration and direction.

In this thesis, it is argued that effective mobilization depends on the pre-war social structure and the behavior of armed actors during the war. The critical question is whether civilians participate as parts of groups or in isolation from one another. If individual choices depend more on the

<sup>92</sup> See Kilcullen 2011.

<sup>93</sup> Kalyvas 2006, 102.

<sup>94</sup> Lichbach 1995a, 1995b.

behavior of other individuals, this significantly alters the dynamics of participation than if individuals were utterly free of consideration of their social surroundings.

The structure of society primarily determines the collective nature of the decision to participate in a civil war. Belonging to different types of groups can be significant for determining civil war participation, from economic groups to religious, social, neighborhood, or family groups. However, this thesis will argue, the social structure that rests on segments – tribes or clans – is qualitatively different from other types of structures. These groups usually have high cohesion that enables them to act collectively and have historically developed to fulfill both peace and war-related functions. Segmentary groups mobilize fast, and with high numbers of incidental combatants.

The same cohesive property of tribal groups makes for a more unpredictable duration of mobilization. This thesis argues that the duration depends on the interaction between armed actors and social groups. Armed actor addresses several questions that affect its relations with the population in general and their recruitment specifically. Often these choices have to be continually reassessed throughout the war and change due to contingencies of war. How is armed actor organized, and what kinds of actions it takes to outperform armed rivals militarily and establish their presence in a specific territory? What happens once territorial control is established – what kind of institutions the armed actors form in their state-building project and how they relate to the civilian population? If these armed actor's actions disturb the cohesion of social groups, desertion or defection of these combatants can be as fast and as extensive as the initial mobilization. These concepts help clarify further discussion.

## Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the missing piece in the civil war literature, as well as the rationale and the building blocks of the social structure theory of civil war mobilization. It showed that the literature has mostly overlooked the connection between social structure and wartime outcomes and suggested the way to bridge this gap. Unlike the existing theories, this theory will account for pre-war social ties as factors that change the way individuals participate in a war. As such, the counterpoint to this theory is the control-collaboration model of Kalyvas. However, unlike other similar theories that account for social structure, this theory goes a step forward in identifying specific structures as indispensable for explaining modern civil war mobilization and incorporates the role of armed actors.

This theory posits that the more pre-war social structure rests on cohesive social groups, the more it enables individuals to mobilize in insurgencies effectively. However, the pre-war structure is not a sufficient explanation. Once the war starts, armed actors have a crucial role, and if they align behavior with the existing social order, then mobilization can be effective. If their behavior disrupts social group cohesion, then the mobilization changes its dynamics. The cohesion of social groups is not one dimensional or one-directional; it is a feature of societies that makes insurgencies fast and extensive, but can also create sudden defections. When and why these shifts happen is explained by the theory in this chapter.

### *Plan of the thesis*

This chapter introduced the central research question, positioned the problem in the broader civil war literature and outlined the main concepts used throughout the thesis. Chapter two introduces the foundations for the theory and Chapter three discusses the research design. Chapter four gives a background to conditions in Montenegro prior to the war, outlining its social structure. In a simplified way, it describes the mobilization outcomes in the 1941 insurgency and 1942 civil war as well as the strategic choices of armed actors. The level of analysis is at the level of tribes and central decision making of the armed actors.

Chapter five is the first of the two empirical chapters that analyze mobilization in a single county of Danilovgrad. It provides a detailed account of the pre-war social structure, especially the elements of cohesion, as well as the voting patterns that demonstrate pre-war cohesion. Chapter six follows with the analysis of 1941-1942 developments in the county. The focus here is on the mechanisms of participation and recruitment. These are micro-level chapters that analyze individuals, brotherhoods, and local-level actions of armed actors. Both chapters have both qualitative and quantitative parts. Finally, Chapter seven tests the alternative hypotheses, and several statistical tests are carried out on the municipal meso-level. Chapter eight concludes the thesis.

# CHAPTER TWO. THEORY OF CIVIL WAR MOBILIZATION

## Introduction

This chapter lays out the foundation for the theory of civil war mobilization. The theory argues that mobilization in segmentary societies proceeds differently than in non-segmentary societies because of highly cohesive social groups. The horizontal ties in these groups allow for fast and extensive participation, yet the interaction with armed actors affects this cohesion. It can change the direction and duration of mobilization.

Cohesion is not given in any society. Instead, it has to be created and reproduced; it increases and decreases over time.<sup>1</sup> Unity of groups that are involved in competitive relations is often taken for granted, but as it turns out, it is precisely at those times that cohesion is under the most significant challenge. Consequently, it is impossible to evaluate group conflict cohesion before the conflict starts.<sup>2</sup> Whether groups have the cohesion to act as one, only shows when they are challenged to act.

Because the significance of group cohesion for mobilization is observable only in wartime, examining the sources of its cohesion has to rely on pre-war manifestations of the cohesion. Relying on pre-war cohesion is both a methodological and theoretical issue. It rests on the assumption that the sources of peacetime and wartime group cohesion are the same or closely related. From the point of view of the theory, this implies: explaining links between individual and group interests in the pre-war period, then the links from group interest to group conflict and mobilization, and then the maintenance of the individual-group link in wartime mobilization.<sup>3</sup>

The chapter will proceed to theorize these relations, first focusing on pre-war social group cohesion, followed by wartime relations between armed actors and social groups, followed by the mechanisms of participation and recruitment and finally their maintenance and interaction during the war.

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1 Brubaker 2004.

2 Gould 2003, 136.

3 Kalyvas 2006, 80.

## 2.1 Social group cohesion

Social groups are no simple agglomerations of individuals. For groups to exist at all, or to act as groups, individuals need to develop a way to “stick together.” Group cohesion is a critical factor that enables effective mobilization in civil wars. When cohesive social groups are recruited by armed actors, they can mobilize in high numbers and fast. This is due to strong horizontal ties between individuals.

Horizontal ties are associated with egalitarianism, a structure of relationship in which every individual has equal status and in which no individual outranks any other. However, horizontal ties are only one dimension of cohesion. Even in societies considered “truly egalitarian,” there was no ideal equality. Hierarchy, or status inequality, is an essential vertical dimension of social groups. When armed actors recruit social groups, they also import these hierarchical ties into their military organization. Depending on how armed actors deal with these elements of cohesion, the mobilization changes during the war, and in case of a conflict between social group cohesion and armed actors’ military or political goals, desertion or defection become likely outcomes.

Therefore, the condition of cohering, cleaving, or sticking together is understood in this thesis as the quality of horizontal and vertical integration of individuals in groups. The horizontal dimension of cohesion is solidarity that depends on the individual members’ willingness to put group interests above their interest. On the other hand, the vertical dimension is understood as status or the position in the relationship where one side decides on behalf of the other.<sup>4</sup>

This thesis argues that the cohesion of social groups matters for civil war outcomes. It makes a more general argument about social structure, a relatively permanent configuration of social relations between and among individuals and groups. There are different kinds of social structures, and this work analyzes types of societies best described as segmentary lineage - a type in which social structure rests on cohesive segments, or tribes.<sup>5</sup>

High unit cohesion is the goal of any civil war armed actor. As segmentary social groups have high cohesion, this can help armed actors gain military advantage. However, it also creates potential problems as it introduces hierarchy parallel to that of the military. The following sections first introduce the significance of cohesion in segmentary societies and then proceeds to explain the sources of social group cohesion.

### *Cohesion in segmentary societies*

Cohesion is a critical aspect of the existence of segments in segmentary societies. These social groups depend on the strength of ties, commonly defined in terms of kinship. These inter-personal ties are a central element for this theory that sets forth the argument that social structure affects mobilization primarily through cohesion.

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4 Gould 2003.

5 Tribes are defined as informal social groups comprising of individuals linked by kin and fictive kin identities (Collins 2006).

Segmentary societies are a type of society where political power stems from social structure. During long historical processes, political entrepreneurs that centralized power built states on preexisting social structures.<sup>6</sup> In some parts of the world, characterized by the history of indirect rule, these social structures persisted. The Introduction argued that the majority of contemporary civil wars and insurgencies take place in or near tribal areas with a potentially high salience for mobilization. However, as the previous chapter demonstrated, mobilization theories do not seem to consider this sufficiently. Even though civil war theory has failed to engage with segmentary societies sufficiently, the social and political anthropology literature certainly did not.

The segmentary society theory traces back to the publication of Evans-Pritchard's work on the Nuer in 1940.<sup>7</sup> Evans-Pritchard differentiated "states" from "stateless societies." An administrative system defines territorial units in the former. However, in the latter, territorial units are local communities that correspond to lineage ties and political relations in societies which are regulated by the "segmentary lineage system."<sup>8</sup> Based on the empirical analysis of the Nuer people, Evans-Pritchard formulated an ideal type of segmentary lineage society, in which the most significant territorial and political unit is the tribe. The tribal territory is further divided into segments, and at each of the lower levels, segments become smaller and more cohesive. These segments are not absolute and permanent, and they emerge as actors in specific situations, which arise from the process called "complementary opposition."

Complementary opposition has a simple causal sequence. If a man from one village killed a man from another, this would engulf both villages in conflict. If a man from one village killed a man in another area, then the villages in that area would enter into conflict with the whole other area, overcoming the previous inter-village conflict. Evans-Pritchard found these constant processes of "fission and fusion" to constitute complementary opposition, which is the heart of the segmentary lineage political conflict dynamics.<sup>9</sup> Complementary opposition is encapsulated in the Arab proverb: "I against my brother; I and my brother against my cousin; I and my brother and my cousin against the world."<sup>10</sup>

Early attempts to explain the quality of the relationship between the immediate family and the clan was psychological and suggested that sentiments generated in the family were projected onto more distant cousins.<sup>11</sup> However, Evans-Pritchard and, in particular, Fortes<sup>12</sup> proposed a sociological relationship in which the ties of kinship, generated in families, constituted a specific domain of social action which was distinct from both family and the public "politico-jural domain." The distinction between the two domains – domestic and politico-jural was always a matter of context for the individual: interests and values interpenetrated the social landscape and might pull an individual in different directions.<sup>13</sup> The quality of relations between members of

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6 Mann 1984.

7 Evans-Pritchard, 1940, Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, 1940.

8 Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, 1940, 10.

9 Kuper 1982, Evans-Pritchard, 1940.

10 Salzman, 1978.

11 Kuper 1982.

12 Fortes 1945.

13 Kuper 1982.

segmentary society groups is thus critical for both the private and public sphere – and most relevant for this thesis, the nature of ties in social groups.

Segmentary societies are therefore highly relevant for civil war dynamics, for at least three reasons. Segments are positioned at the overlap of social and political spheres, which means that these social groups can have an important political role. Secondly, the segmentary structure rests on specific mechanisms for conflict management that are relevant for both peacetime and wartime. Most importantly, it points to the corporate quality of the segments and the “glue” that keeps individuals together in segmentary groups – social cohesion.

### Sources of cohesion

This section explains the first theoretical links between individual and group interests. In order to do that, cohesion is broken down into two dimensions - horizontal and vertical ties. The horizontal ties are ties of solidarity between individuals, and the vertical ties are ties of domination.

#### *Solidarity: Horizontal group ties*

Scholars from different fields have relied on solidarity as a mean of resolving collective action dilemmas. This was especially the case in studies of collective violence, one of the most prominent examples being the study of social revolutions. Skocpol analyzed agrarian structures in the prerevolutionary time through two factors: “the degrees and kinds of solidarity of peasant communities” and “the degrees of peasant autonomy.”<sup>14</sup> She argued against a narrow view of the degrees of solidarity in purely economic terms – the individual property holding and economic differentiation between richer and poorer peasants. Instead, Skocpol suggested that kinship and community institutions have been neglected in the study of revolutions.<sup>15</sup>

Why solidarity matters in insurgencies? Military conflicts have repeatedly shown that traditional measures of strength, such as numbers and resources, can be outweighed by solidarity, or the willingness to put group interests above individual.<sup>16</sup> However, solidarity is far from stable. Instead, it is a continuous renegotiation between group members, which are always in the process of establishing “groupness.”<sup>17</sup>

Individuals faced with violent outcomes have strong incentives to enjoy the benefits of group membership but to let others take the risk.<sup>18</sup> Obviously, the free-riding problem would cause massive consequences in wartime: it would lead to shirking and desertion, and ultimately to the lack of cohesion of units and a defeat by a more cohesive group. Therefore groups organized on the “all for one and one for all” principle enhance solidarity and solve this problem through abiding by the authority and solidarity within the group.<sup>19</sup>

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14 Skocpol 1979, 115.

15 Skocpol 1979, 116.

16 Gould 2003, 110.

17 Brubaker 2004.

18 Lichbach 1995a.

19 Gould 2003, 112.

Ties of solidarity depend on the individual members' willingness to put group interests above their interests. How much solidarity exists is often difficult or impossible to ascertain in the pre-war or war environment. The way to approach it then is to assess how much individuals are dependent on the social group to realize some of the fundamental interests in peacetime, which should continue to exist in wartime. Three such factors tie individuals to groups – resources, identity, and security.

Each of these three factors contributes to stronger ties of solidarity, and in turn, to a higher propensity for the group to act as one. However, security is the most pressing concern for group members in an unstable environment. Even though access to resources and identity are important, once civil war starts and violence becomes a tangible, omnipresent threat, security becomes central for individuals and groups.

### *Resources*

Groups value resources, such as territory, and they enter competitive relations to protect and gain access to resources. At certain times groups intrude on other groups' resources to directly or indirectly gain benefits from it or to preempt other groups benefiting from it.<sup>20</sup> The existence of such groups is possible since at least some of their members derive individual benefits from belonging in them and enjoy resources based on group membership. If and how members participate in conflicts regarding resources is another matter.<sup>21</sup>

The features of tribal societies that have to do with economic production and ownership make these insights about group membership and access to resources particularly applicable. For one, most tribal societies practice sustenance economy. That means that in these societies, just like many other peasant societies, individuals produce just enough products for the survival of their families but not enough to reinvest the surplus or to expand the production.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to this similarity to many peasant societies, the specificity of tribal societies is the dominance of the communal form of ownership. The absence of private land ownership, as well as security of tenure that depended on the strict following of tribal customs, guaranteed right to the use of land to every member of the group.<sup>23</sup>

This model of ownership varied in practice and changed over time, depending on existing economic institutions. As individual family farms, or loosely connected neighbor groups, replaced previous communal forms of agriculture, many members of the community become more generally unconnected and less subject to community influences.<sup>24</sup> However, even the gradual transition of the property rights from the absolute (those that are due for all members of a group, such as communal rights) to contractual (due only to the parties involved, such as

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20 Gould 2003, 115,

21 Wolf 1969, Oberschall 1995.

22 Gould 2003, 14.

23 Yudelman, 1964.

24 Petersen 2001, 73.

private property) often happened in accordance to the community rules, which reflected in the later forms of property ownership.<sup>25</sup>

The incentives of the individual to conform to the group rules in order to maintain access to the resources, which in many tribal societies were vital for survival, strengthens the basic principle of solidarity. From this perspective, it is reasonable to expect that the more resources that individuals obtain through the group membership, the stronger the individual ties to the group, which in turn enables effective mobilization.<sup>26</sup>

### *Identity*

Besides resources, which are a mostly material basis of solidarity, identity is the second, ideational dimension of solidarity. Individuals are, in some circumstances, prone to see themselves not as unique, autonomous individuals, as much as instances of categories.<sup>27</sup> The argument expounded by the social psychology literature is that the basic psychological need for self-esteem leads individuals to see groups to which they belong as positive and the groups they do not belong unfavorably.<sup>28</sup>

The in-out group perspective of social identity theory says that even though groups are accumulations of individuals, they are more than that. Group membership is not only derived from but constitutive of individual identity.<sup>29</sup> This condition, on the one hand, increases solidarity among group members, but also fosters resentment and potential hostility towards members of other groups, irrespectively from any material basis for the competition.<sup>30</sup>

When society is organized along the kinship lines, or based on descent, what follows is that personal identity is strongly related to the position in the hierarchy of the lineage. Lineage based society produces clearly delineated groups which claim descent from different ancestors and which are private yet intertwined with public and political.

Just like the resources, the identity in itself is insufficient to explain either conflict or mobilization in conflict. It does, however, explain a dimension of ties that bind individuals in social groups. To start with, social identity matters in descent-based societies. There is rarely any anonymity in collective action in descent-based societies – any contentious action, from protests to acts of violence, mostly happen among people who, if not know, then know *of* each other. The same applies to the course of the war. Unlike non-tribal societies in which war is usually waged with and against strangers, fighters in tribal military units are more likely to know people not only on “their” side but also on the “other” side.

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25 Ault and Rutman 1979.

26 Petersen 2001, 73.

27 Gould 2003, 115.

28 Sherif 1966, Tajfel and Turner 1979, Tajfel 2010.

29 Gould 2003, 116.

30 Horowitz 1985, Lyall, Shiraito, and Imai 2015

## *Security*

As much as resources and identity matter for the strength of ties, the security dimension carries the most weight. Literature has discussed security and conflict mechanisms in segmentary societies at large. A body of ethnographic and historical works investigated “honor societies,” which are characterized by several closely related features.<sup>31</sup> Despite diverse practices that existed in different societies, security there rests on the notion of collective responsibility and the revenge mechanisms of blood revenge or feuding.<sup>32</sup>

Feuding practices are most resilient in arid, pastoral environments, where centralized state authorities have shallow reach. These mechanisms developed for dispute resolution, a tool for managing conflicts as a functional alternative for the missing formalized justice system that delivers a credible threat of sanction.<sup>33</sup>

The absence of state institutions that protect lives and property led individuals to organize in groups for mutual self-defense, most often in the form of kinship groups. The collective nature of disputes, violence, and revenge in feuding societies rests on the mechanism that obliges members to treat an offense against any member as an offense against all members. The responsibility for both offenses and exerting revenge does not belong to the individual but the group as a collective.<sup>34</sup> Feuding is a way to regulate social power in a society lacking central authority, rather than a war of all against all, and states often condoned these practices as part of the strategy of indirect rule.

The ties among individuals that make their conflicts collective also make groups more cohesive. The basic rules that ensure the survival of individuals in peacetime do not disappear at the moment of state collapse; they reemerge in wartime. As these mechanisms were developed to protect the group against the predatory actions of outsiders, they are as quickly employed against a state or non-state actors in the war. They are an adequate answer to aggression in both stateless societies and civil wars.<sup>35</sup>

The assumption, therefore, is that the more individuals rely on group mechanisms for the protection of lives and property, the stronger the individual ties to the group, and this should hold in both peace and war.

## *Status: Vertical group ties*

The horizontal ties of solidarity are one dimension of cohesion. The other is the vertical ties between group members of lower and higher status. In all groups, there are relatively stable relations in which some individuals systematically exert dominance over others.<sup>36</sup> The vertical relations of domination and deference are analogous to the ties of solidarity in horizontal

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31 Hasluck 1954, Gilmore 1987, Boehm, 1987, Gellner 1988, among others.

32 Gould 2003, 130.

33 Gould 2003, 127.

34 Evans-Pritchard 1940, Gluckman 1955, Black-Michaud 1975, among others.

35 Kalyvas 2006, 72.

36 Gould 2003, 22.

relations. Hierarchies are formal or informal arrangements where individuals settle with relations of dominance, which they find legitimate, and that reproduce over time.<sup>37</sup>

Exerting dominance between individuals can be understood in terms of deciding what goes on in the relation between them. The individual that dominates has more influence on the content of the relationship than the individual that defers. Hierarchies, as arrangements of relations of dominance and deference, distribute status unevenly among individuals. Therefore, minorities at the top of hierarchy decide and have higher status than the majority at the bottom of the hierarchy that defers to decisions.

Vertical ties have, just as horizontal, been studied in the context of mobilization. In one of the classical texts, Moore makes a distinction between two types of solidarity. “Conservative solidarity” implies the domination of rich peasants and landlords, while “radical solidarity” means peasants themselves run the community.<sup>38</sup> This treatment of solidarity resonates clearly with the solidarity and status dimensions of social group cohesion.

Even though deference to decisions is an essential part of any acting group, it is an often-overlooked dimension of cohesion, which is usually reduced to only horizontal ties of solidarity. Vertical relations that distribute status are also not static. Sides to these hierarchical arrangements are, as Gould argues, in a constant process of challenge and re-negotiation.<sup>39</sup>

If we consider traditional patriarchal societies in peacetime, we can safely assume that the minority of older men, most of the time, decide what goes on in the social group. That puts them in a higher hierarchical position. However, that does not mean that there were no constant challengers, such as young men wanting to rise in status,<sup>40</sup> and women such as those who were historically inverting prevalent hierarchies and gaining high status.<sup>41</sup>

Three factors additionally complicate the status dimension. First of all, arrangements of dominance relations can have multiple sources. Authority can rest on different bases, and individuals could be in dissimilar relations of dominance and deference in diverse spheres of their lives. Take, for instance, secular and religious authority. A member of a social group could have a high status through social hierarchy and no status in the religious hierarchy, but a member of another social group could have these positions reversed.

Social groups in segmentary social structures are informal, and the hierarchies are usually informal, as well. All members know the hierarchy of the community, which rests on interpersonal, intragroup influences. The informal hierarchies pervade formal hierarchies of state, and the intersection of these parallel hierarchies can affect the cohesion, either strengthening or diluting it.

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37 Gould 2003, 23.

38 Moore 1969, 475-476.

39 Gould 2003, 38.

40 Nielsen 2017.

41 McLaughlin 1990.

Secondly, higher status in the group has intrinsic value for the individuals occupying them, independent from any other benefit that individuals might have from the status. The membership in the higher rank of a group can be considered in the same way as social identity was treated earlier. It is reasonable to suggest that the sense of identity of the higher status group members offers more incentives to remain a member of the group than the sense of identity of lower-ranked groups.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, inter-group relations add another layer to the intra-group hierarchy. The relations of domination constantly shift through a mechanism of complementary opposition in segmentary societies. A useful analogy for understanding the relations between and among segmentary groups is to compare them with extended families. Domination and solidarity relations inside the nuclear family also extend to closer and further cousins. Even though some ties of solidarity exist between cousins, especially in relation to non-family members, a conflict between two cousins would probably lead to their nuclear families coalescing around their nuclear family members. In these relations, elders or individuals with higher status would adjudicate disputes. The point is that domination relations rarely exist only between two individuals or only inside one group. Just as individuals call on allies as a way of demonstrating to their adversaries that they are not alone, so do groups. Conflicts and disputes always involve both intra and intergroup relations, which is the logic of complementary opposition proposed by the segmentary lineage theory.

The complementary opposition is an ideal model, and practice often diverges from it.<sup>43</sup> Some authors saw a segmentary lineage as nothing else than an organization of predatory expansion, an organizational mean of temporary consolidation of an otherwise fragmented tribal polity for concerted external action, always directed outwardly.<sup>44</sup> However, the doctrine is maintained because it is “a kind of conceptual insurance, a social structure in reserve, available for activation in the future” when conditions change.<sup>45</sup>

This framework provides a set of organizational guidelines on the one hand and, on the political level, group-based security when the existing territorial arrangement gets disrupted, which is often the case in wars in the peripheries. On the military level, Salzman argues, it defines both interests and loyalties in such a way that internal conflicts can be suspended in order not to undermine externally directed military activity. This is especially suited for areas that often experience instability and threats to survival, and for such an abstract organizational model to be available for activation, it must be maintained during times of stability too.

### *Conclusion*

Cohesion matters in wars. It is the “glue” that keeps individuals tied to each other in groups and enable effective mobilization. Societies that practice the “all for one and one for all” principle are more likely to outweigh rivals with more resources or combatants.

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42 Hall, Huff, and Kuriwaki 2019.

43 Evans-Pritchard 1940, 159, Gluckman 1955, Peters 1967.

44 Sahlins 1961.

45 Salzman 1978, 68.

Even though there are many differences between segmentary societies, they still have some family resemblances, similarities in different periods, and different places in the world. The cohesion that helps segments form groups in peacetime should be more or less universal in these societies. As such, it is the necessary first link in connecting individuals to social structure and the wartime behavior of social groups.

Individuals might be more or less dependent on one or all of these three properties of a group membership. But the expectation is that the more individuals depend on group membership for their access to resources, identity, and security, and the more these three intersect, the more individuals will be tied together and the more the group “holds.”<sup>46</sup> Therefore, the theory suggests that a) access to resources through group membership, b) identification with the group, and c) reliance on group mechanisms for protection lead to stronger individual ties to the group. The more independent ways individuals are horizontally tied to the group, the more cohesion.

On the other hand, the often overlooked vertical relations are the second dimension of cohesion. Relations of domination and deference create stable hierarchical arrangements that distribute status unevenly. What complicates vertical dimension is that deference can often be towards different authorities, including religious, or economic. In addition, those with higher status are expected to have stronger ties to the group. Finally, besides intragroup cohesion, inter-group cohesion is defined by the structural equilibrium between segments, which are also part of a larger unit.

Therefore the individual ties to the group are stronger when individuals' status in society depends on its position in the group, when individuals are higher positioned in group hierarchy, and when parallel hierarchies overlap. Also, following the logic of complementary opposition, the more cohesive groups are, the more likely they are to shift and coalesce around different group levels, depending on the outside circumstances.

The strength of horizontal and vertical ties defined in this way is the answer to the first causal link in theory, between individual and group interests. These ties should exist in peacetime. The next link the theory should make is between group interests and group conflict. The theory has to make a bridge to wartime and include armed actors as agents in order to create this linkage.

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46 Moody and White 2003, 106.

## 2.2 Civil-military interactions

The previous section explained the sources of cohesion in social groups that should be observable before the war, and which should inform the ways individuals behave during the war. However, what this theory posits is that the behavior of armed actors matters too, especially the way armed actors interact with civilians and affect social group cohesion.

Civil wars occur when external shocks or internal dynamics remove the monopoly of violence from the state through an armed internal challenge. As armed actors compete for control over territory, the division of the state into rival camps becomes physical.<sup>47</sup> The armed actors contest not only territory but also sovereignty over territory and population, which leads to a situation of divided, multiple sovereignty.<sup>48</sup> Therefore armed actors disintegrate a political entity through armed contestation and, at the same time, build governance on the territories they control.

The critical distinction made here between military control and civilian governance is based on this view of dual nature of civil wars – a context of both armed contestation over territory and the nature of the rule over civilians.<sup>49</sup> The decisions made by armed actors in these two dimensions are crucial for their relations with civilians, and through this, it affects the participation and recruitment in civil wars.

The previous section discussed the structural features of social groups that affect their cohesion. Just as social groups, political actors also face a significantly different environment in wartime. Political actors that engage militarily have to adapt to much higher stakes than in peacetime. This puts a premium on their organization, and their adaptability to act as armed actors.<sup>50</sup> Both of these elements reward cohesive political actors. Equally important, forming and expressing political preferences is fundamentally different in war.<sup>51</sup> What kind of governance structures will armed actors build depends on their political goals, but in wartime, it is also driven by military goals.

This thesis sees civil war armed actor behavior as an interplay of military and political goals aimed at attaining unit cohesion and growth in order to maximize advantage over rivals. No armed actor operates without resolving the frequent collisions between the two, and to understand the outcomes in a civil war, both the military and political sides have to be incorporated into the theory.<sup>52</sup>

The view presented throughout this section is that social structure affects the way mobilization occurs, but that the armed actors affect social cohesion in return. The section explains in more detail the four dimensions of these relationships, which should theoretically be the main channels through which armed actors affect the internal structure of the social group. It starts

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47 Kalyvas 2006, 17.

48 Tilly 1978, 191-192.

49 Tilly 1985.

50 Kalyvas 2006, 26.

51 Kalyvas 2006, 22.

52 Hägerdal 2019.

with the armed actor organization, followed by the warfare tactics, as crucial components that enable the armed actor to gain control over territory, and then institutions and coercion of civilians as key elements of its governance.

## Military control

### *Organization*

Armed actor organization is significantly different from their civilian counterparts.<sup>53</sup> These organizations have to exert power over their members during the war that has few equivalents in contemporary Western societies.<sup>54</sup> The step from any other type of organization to a military organization, specialized and engaged in organized violence, is huge for most individual members.<sup>55</sup> So how does the internal military organization respond to these challenges?

At the core of organizational adaptation of armed actors is unit cohesion.<sup>56</sup> The sources of cohesion are still poorly understood in civil war literature, even though cohesion is an essential part of a military organization.<sup>57</sup> When armed actors are cohesive, the retention rates are high, and decisions are complied with, while when it is missing, desertion and defection are on the rise.<sup>58</sup> Maintaining cohesion is therefore essential for military outcomes of any armed actor, and military literature has consistently shown that keeping all other factors equal, the armed actor with more cohesion prevails.<sup>59</sup>

Despite its obvious importance in military theory and practice, the prominence of the concept was acknowledged only after World War Two. The “primary group” model of peer and leader bonds in small units became a standard in military studies.<sup>60</sup> Advancing on the tide of information about the wartime behavior of soldiers, especially the lack of disintegration of German units even at the end of the war, Shils and Janowitz had traced their cohesion to the social organization of the Wehrmacht. They established that units organized as primary groups satisfied individual soldier’s immediate needs, and as long as groups provided for these needs, the soldiers were willing to risk their lives to maintain the group. The point of the group was not only that it satisfied the material needs of soldiers, but it was also a source of identity and security, in the words of a German soldier they quote, the company was “the only truly existent community.”<sup>61</sup>

Shils and Janowitz’s article had started a research program that focused on military cohesion at a group, or micro level, and which pointed out that soldiers keep fighting primarily for the comrades next to them. This research program has dominated the discourse on military cohesion.<sup>62</sup>

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53 Kenny 2010.

54 Käihkö 2018b, 579.

55 Käihkö 2018a, 1.

56 Käihkö 2018b, 572.

57 Janowitz and Little 1974, Blattman and Miguel 2010, Käihkö 2018b, 572.

58 McLauchlin 2015.

59 Henderson 1985.

60 Shils and Janowitz 1948, Käihkö 2018a.

61 Shils and Janowitz 1948, 283.

62 King 2006, 2007, Siebold 2007, Siebold et al. 2016.

Primary groups are characterized by intimate face to face association between individuals. The causal mechanism behind the primary group hypothesis is essentially that physical proximity results in interpersonal bonding.<sup>63</sup> Indeed, the empirical evidence shows that these groups often cease to exist when removed from a military context, through demobilization<sup>64</sup> and that ties break during periods of unit rotation.<sup>65</sup> The implication is that combatants are replaceable, as any new combatant will be tied to the unit through the same mechanism.

However, as Käihkö recently argued, these findings rested mostly on Western armed forces during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.<sup>66</sup> Shils, one of the founders of the primary group theory, warned that micro-level analysis has to be embedded in the socio-cultural context.<sup>67</sup> The point was that military units are a product of broader military institutions that serve a function within the socio-political context.

These criticisms present a two-fold weakness of the primary group theory: the absence of non-Western and historical militaries, and a situational understanding of intragroup cohesion. The focus of the literature on Western state militaries assumed many things about the social context of mobilization. However, Western state populations have different social structures than non-Western, and the state-society relations are more on the side of strong states rather than strong societies.

On the other hand, the different social structure in non-western societies means that assuming the situational nature of ties between individuals is unjustified. In Western societies, military units and kinship groups do not have any connection; they don't serve the same functions, nor do they face similar choices when confronted with threats of violence.<sup>68</sup> Yet, in segmentary societies, this duality can be resolved through social group participation in militaries, and through social cohesion becoming a building block for military organization.

The overlap between a military and social organization in segmentary societies comes with several implications. First, there is the question of alignment of the social group and military goals. If vertical social ties are imported and maintained in the military hierarchy, the militaries benefit from having cohesive units, as it reduces the risk of desertion and disobedience. However, unlike military units where a lost soldier or squad can be replaced with new recruits, and cohesion can be forged again in the unit, in segmentary societies, military losses have a more significant impact on the group, and losses can cause stronger friction with central military leadership.<sup>69</sup>

If military goals are not aligned with the goals of social groups, then a potential problem can be much more severe than in non-segmentary cases of mobilization. In this perspective, a whole

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63 Käihkö 2018b, 576.

64 Käihkö 2017.

65 Moskos 1970.

66 Käihkö 2018b, 575.

67 Shils 1950.

68 Käihkö 2018b, 577.

69 Käihkö 2018b, 577.

range of micro-level factors, from basic social group survival to issues of status of the social group in inter- and intra-tribal relations, become points which military leadership has to balance continuously, in addition to regular military and political consideration.

To further discuss these dynamics, the way in which military organizations can affect relations with civilians should be disaggregated. Military cohesion consists of horizontal and vertical ties within units, which is reflected in the risks taken by unit members for one another<sup>70</sup> and in the links unit members have with the unit commanders, reflected in the obedience.<sup>71</sup> The strength of ties between units and between units and central command at the higher level of organization can also be analyzed as meso- or macro- elements of an organization.<sup>72</sup>

The individual-level cohesion is, however, primarily observed at the local level and more important for the theory. In the analysis of the role of cohesion in the mobilization of Abkhaz insurgents, Shesterinina shows that strong preexisting quotidian ties bonded fighters to one another and shaped horizontal cohesion between them, while the local community ties facilitated vertical cohesion with commanders. Fighters explained the strong reciprocity and risk-taking between them: "We passed the rifle back and forth with my cousin."<sup>73</sup> In addition, the organization of the emergent Abkhaz army closely followed the socio-structural basis of initial mobilization. Commanders were chosen from local-level figures, which produced loyalty to commanders.<sup>74</sup>

While armed actors benefit from the horizontal dimension of local cohesion, they can have different strategies for achieving vertical cohesion. Armed actors aim to establish centralized monitoring over individuals and groups that join their ranks. The weaker monitoring is, the smaller the chances the commands will be obeyed, and higher chances that units on the ground will steer away from military or political goals and use force for other purposes.<sup>75</sup> Militaries aim to resolve the problem of high demand for monitoring and low capacities in different ways, directly or indirectly.

The direct way to establish control is to enforce the domination and ensure commands are obeyed. However, this risks the legitimacy of armed actors in the eyes of those made to obey. The sanctions can produce unintended consequences and lead to increased desertion. This is especially true for segmentary societies where individual punishments could be easily perceived as an affront to the collective. So the second option in segmentary societies is to rely on internal vertical ties of social groups, which is an indirect way of establishing control.

The extent of the indirect strategy can vary and can lead to establishing almost autonomous units. Armed actors often form militias or similar units, which outsources the business of

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70 McLaughlin 2015.

71 Shesterinina 2019, 8.

72 Staniland 2014.

73 Shesterinina 2019, 16.

74 Shesterinina 2019, 20.

75 Gates 2002.

centralization to groups or organizations on a local level.<sup>76</sup> Such formations can sometimes dominate civil wars, but applying indirect strategy can also lead to excessive fragmentation.<sup>77</sup>

When armed actors recruit a cohesive segmentary social group, as a part of an indirect strategy, there is a double threat at work. If a local segmentary organization takes control of the leadership, an armed actor regresses to a parochial organization, lacking central command.<sup>78</sup> On the other hand, if segmentary groups do not fully participate in the indirect strategy, armed actors will have a shallow reach, detached from the civilian population. So in order to create cohesive and integrated units, armed actors need to replace the vertical ties and harness horizontal. But as it was shown earlier, there are problems with this approach too. When armed actors recruit groups with strong social ties, these ties persist despite formal chains of command.<sup>79</sup>

Armed actors can also attempt to break the ties of cohesion by the process of formal or informal military socialization.<sup>80</sup> Military training, rituals, and ideological indoctrination can all serve to mold individual recruits into cohesive units in which loyalties to other recruits and group itself would be stronger than previous loyalties, such as kin loyalty.<sup>81</sup> Even though some potential for socialization exists in all armed actors, and though it depends on the organizational capacity of the armed actor, it is not productive in segmentary societies for two reasons.

Kinship ties, fortified through economic, identity, and security dimensions, are much harder to mold than any other quotidian family or friendship ties. This is the main argument that explains why “strong quotidian ties,” usually molded by armed actors in the process of the war, produce different dynamics in segmentary societies.<sup>82</sup> In addition, the strategy of breaking social ties through socialization is counterproductive if the goal of an armed actor is to harness kinship ties.

The literature on armed actor unit cohesion and its dependence on the organization has been, like most of the other military studies and civil war literature, missing the possible effect of coherent social groups on recruitment patterns. The primary group theory implies that combatants are replaceable. The socialization inside the armed unit molds new combatants and trains them into deference to military authority. However, recruitment in segmentary societies imports both horizontal ties based on kinship, which makes replacement harder, but also vertical ties of segmentary authority, which run parallel to any military hierarchy and make commanding more complex. How the armed actors approach it is a matter of overall strategy, but the outcomes have clear consequences for the recruitment patterns.

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76 Carey, Mitchell, and Lowe 2013, Jentzsch, Kalyvas, and Schubiger 2015.

77 Fragmentation is the splitting of an armed organization into more separate organization, and the opposite is structural integrity. On the other hand, the opposite of cohesion is the desertion or defection of combatants. Kenny 2010, also Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour 2012.

78 Staniland's 2014 terminology.

79 Shesterinina 2019.

80 Wood 2008, Fujii 2009, Cohen 2013.

81 Wood 2008, 546, Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014.

82 Shesterinina 2019, 10, Parkinson 2013, 422.

## *Warfare*

The other crucial decision besides internal organization that gives the armed actor an advantage over rivals, but also affects cohesion, is an approach to warfare. The literature distinguishes between conventional and irregular (guerilla) types of warfare. The main difference between the two is the existence of the front lines and face to face combat in the former, and its absence in the latter.<sup>83</sup>

Empirically, irregular warfare is the most common type of civil war warfare – few civil wars have included only the conventional type.<sup>84</sup> Irregular war is not connected to any particular ideology, it was pursued by revolutionary as much as status-quo groups. Guerilla warfare preceded the practitioners of the twentieth century, such as Che Guevara or Mao Zedong. Most guerilla movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were conservative or nationalist, rather than revolutionary.<sup>85</sup>

Irregular war is not limited to any region or context, either. It is common in wars of empire building and decolonization, wars of occupation, where regular armies have been defeated and continue to resist, and in weak modernizing states that are trying to control their peripheries. The asymmetry of power is a crucial difference that leads actors towards different tactics. The insurgents who are a weaker side have more incentives to hide and engage in irregular warfare than incumbents who want to bring them into the open. While incumbents can field regular troops and control accessible terrain, insurgents typically choose to hide from the sight and engage in surprise actions, meant to impose attrition to the other side, and “win by not losing.”<sup>86</sup>

Insurgents are typically the first movers; they dictate the type of warfare that incumbents respond to. The critical question is how the incumbents respond. Conventional militaries are rarely prepared for guerilla wars. Adapting a military doctrine to irregular warfare is not an easy task, and it might take time. Because of this, in practice, there is often a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of irregular warfare and a lack of adequate response.<sup>87</sup>

How do different types of societies respond to different warfare strategies? Armed actors practicing guerrilla warfare can operate in areas with segmentary groups with more success. Segmentary society has typically developed in opposition to coercive state apparatus, and actors that use irregular tactics, typically insurgents, can rely on these anti-central sentiments as well as their intimate knowledge of the terrain.

In addition, the ties of solidarity can shield guerilla members from denunciations to incumbents. The incumbent threats of violence towards civilians might be less effective in segmentary societies than elsewhere. The incumbent violence against civilians who shield guerillas can easily backfire due to the collective nature of disputes.

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83 Mao 1978, Guevara 1998, Wood 2003.

84 Kalyvas and Balcells 2010.

85 Wickham-Crowley 1992, Kalyvas 2006, 83.

86 Mack 1975.

87 Kalyvas 2006, 163, 217.

On the other hand, the security-seeking logic of segmentary groups rests on seeking safety in numbers. The high cohesion of groups and the logic of collective action imply that segmentary groups prefer mass participation in anti-state activities. Engaging in guerilla warfare is the opposite of that. It fragments the group into rebels and non-rebels, and it makes the settlements where insurgents come from undefended and vulnerable to the incumbent repressive measures. In that sense, insurgents should prefer conventional front lines in which settlements can be defended from the rival forces.

This position of insurgent groups in segmentary societies has so far been undertheorized. Both causal explanations presented here seem theoretically plausible. Which one takes over depends more on the course of the war and social groups' responses to the actions of incumbents than they depend on the insurgent military tactics. In any case, even though it is inconclusive when it comes to the direction of the change, theory gives enough reason to believe the type of warfare and the response of social groups could alter mobilization dynamics.

## Governing civilians

### *Institutions*

Armed actors do not only compete to control the territory, but they also enter a process of competitive state-building, aimed at governing the territory they control. The goal of government differentiates the role of armed actors in civil wars from other forms of collective actions such as organized crime or social movements.<sup>88</sup> Insurgents secure power and develop elaborate counter-states.<sup>89</sup> These insurgent governments, at a minimum, include activities such as collecting taxes<sup>90</sup> and policing; however, they can also expand their role to the economy, education, or justice.<sup>91</sup>

Rather than a collapse of all authority in a civil war, there is a transfer of power from a state to armed actors. On the one hand, taxing and policing is considered a minimum involvement required to maintain control of the area. However, depending on the depth of changes that armed actor introduces in other spheres of life, these institutions can have real palpable consequences for the segmentary groups.<sup>92</sup> How exactly does it come to this?

The insurgents set up governing institutions, with low-level information-processing groups found in most civil war settings. One of the goals of this local-level administration is to facilitate direct monitoring and control by the armed actors.<sup>93</sup> The insurgent logic is that the rule of local people increases the sensitivity to local demands and shows the capacity and flexibility of the rebels.<sup>94</sup> In return, the locals who constitute the administration can gain the power to rule over their communities.<sup>95</sup>

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88 Olson 1993.

89 Wickham-Crowley 1987.

90 Revkin 2019.

91 Mampilly 2012, Arjona 2016.

92 Arjona 2015.

93 Kalyvas 2006, 109, 128.

94 Kalyvas 2006, 110.

95 Kasfir 2015.

Setting up insurgent administration makes a provision of rewards and punishment, as instruments of rule, possible. When it comes to rewards, rebel administration enables the provision of benefits intended to generate loyalty of the civilian population.<sup>96</sup> However, if large programs of radical change, such as land reform, are introduced, then they raise the question of how many locals benefit from the rebel administration and how many lose.

Once control is achieved, coercion does not become redundant.<sup>97</sup> Quality of governance is a factor that influences civilian acceptance of insurgents as rulers. Multiple causal mechanisms could lead a civilian population to reject rebels because of their civil administration.<sup>98</sup> Institutions can enforce policies that benefit some parts of society more than the other, and this differential approach can disrupt existing status relations. This can be driven by ideology.<sup>99</sup> But motives do not have to be political, and power can also be abused, with reasons unrelated to the rebel group ideology, with a similar effect.

Rebel's administration can also use coercion to resolve cohesion problems caused by harmful policies. If the policies affect the population negatively, then the administration can serve not for distributing benefits, but for punishments. Most importantly, insurgents may increase ideological commitment, as a way of resolution of cohesion problems, which were brought by some of the ideologically motivated policies in the first place.<sup>100</sup>

This link between insurgent policies, cohesion, coercion, and revenge is one that should theoretically be one of the most pressing for relations between armed actors and social groups in segmentary societies. Radical interventions can disturb established order in hierarchical social groups and disrupt cohesion. Armed actors can use coercion to compensate for the fallout of policies, but the security logic of segmentary society might lead to blowback against the armed actors' rule.

### *Coercion*

Unlike peacetime, loyalty in civil wars is less stable and harder to acquire. As actors are confronted with limited resources, violence is increasingly used to shape the behavior of individuals instead of material or nonmaterial benefits.<sup>101</sup>

A distinction is made in the theory between selective and indiscriminate violence. Selective targeting of civilians is based on the presence of some personal attribute or action, while this is absent in indiscriminate violence. Selective violence can be used tactically to eliminate persons of influence, bureaucrats, and various police officials. It can also be used strategically to signal armed actors' strength and deter collaboration with the enemy.<sup>102</sup> The logic of indiscriminate

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96 Weinstein 2006.

97 Gutiérrez Sanín 2015.

98 Arjona 2015.

99 For recent works on ideology see: Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014, Oppenheim et al. 2015, Costalli and Ruggeri 2015, Leader Maynard 2019.

100 Kalyvas 2006, 242.

101 Kalyvas 2006, 114.

102 Kalyvas 2006, 216.

violence is different from selective violence primarily because it is based on the idea of a generalization of guilt. When the “guilty” individuals cannot be identified, indiscriminate violence targets members of the group randomly. Thus, indiscriminate violence is, in most cases, strategic, identity-based targeting,<sup>103</sup> driven by the underlying assumption that the suffering community will force the rival armed actor to modify behavior or that the armed actor will do so willingly to protect the population.<sup>104</sup>

It is generally thought that indiscriminate violence often yields unintended results, ineffective and at worst counterproductive, and that political actors are incentivized to shift from indiscriminate to selective violence.<sup>105</sup> The pattern of selective targeting becomes an important aspect that differentiates how armed actors relate to civilians.<sup>106</sup> And the pattern of violence can be related to armed actors' political outlook.

Most revolutionary practitioners warned against the use of indiscriminate measures, aware of its adverse effects. However, the strategic use of selective violence was often condoned by revolutionary actors, or even accepted as a principle.<sup>107</sup> As an effect, campaigns of violence by revolutionary groups were at times intense, such as the Soviet Bolshevik violence against rich peasants,<sup>108</sup> or against suspected “fifth-columnists” in the Spanish Civil War.<sup>109</sup> Therefore the politics of the armed actors' matters for the pattern of civilian casualties.

The patterns of violence in segmentary societies can have different dynamics than elsewhere. First, the distinction between selective and indiscriminate violence is often blurry in practice anyhow. It depends on the perception of violence, more than the motives. People can perceive selective violence to be indiscriminate and vice versa.<sup>110</sup>

The intimate knowledge of society seems to be a prerequisite for selective violence against civilians. Local agents are often engaged by the outsiders to commit localized selective violence.<sup>111</sup> Selective violence usually targets community members strategically, with an effect intended for the whole community. Selective violence can also be erroneous, but as long as the actors maintain a perception of credible selection, they can reap the effects of violence. If people are not sure about the victims' innocence, and armed actors are convincing, most people will retrospectively infer the guilt.<sup>112</sup>

However, precisely because of the intimate knowledge of a society that is a characteristic of segmentary societies, the reaction to the selective violence can be different than in other areas, and civilians can react stronger. Higher degrees of intimate knowledge of other civilians also

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103 Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2017.

104 Kalyvas 2006, 150.

105 Kalyvas 2006, 144, 169. Also Lyall 2009, Kocher, Pepinsky, and Kalyvas 2011.

106 Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2017.

107 „Assaults and terrorism in indiscriminate form should not be employed.” Also: “In special circumstances, after careful analysis, assaults on persons will be used.” Che Guevara 1998, 91.

108 Brovkin 2015.

109 Beevor 2014.

110 Kalyvas 1999.

111 Lyall 2010.

112 Kalyvas 2006, 190-191.

means not only that victims kin will not be convinced by armed actors' explanations, but they also may not easily back down from revenge. Unlike other societies where civilians can imply that someone killed by the outside force must have been guilty, this assumption does not work in tribal society.

The ties of solidarity in tribal groups mean that an affront to one is an affront to the group. In addition, targeting more prominent members of society means targeting individuals with higher status in the tribal hierarchy, which can mobilize not only one immediate smaller segment but several larger segments at once. These violent interactions can activate the self-protection mechanisms, and lead to changes in the mobilization patterns.

On the other hand, the effects of indiscriminate punishment in tribal society might be initially strong but short-lived. The “random” nature of such measures might deter civilians from action, but it ultimately also plays right at the logic of association of collective response, and just as selective violence, activates mechanisms of revenge, therefore changing the calculus of mobilization.

### *Conclusion*

Civil wars are an environment in which armed actors recruit civilians in the process of disintegration of one political entity and the creation of another. Since both the military control of territory and governance in the controlled territory are the ultimate goals of armed actors, they are both incorporated in this theory. Mobilization is shaped not only by military control but also by the interaction of armed actors with the pre-existing social cohesion.

The vital issue that armed actors have to resolve is how to adapt to new wartime circumstances. The more armed actors rely on social cohesion in recruitment, the more their actions also profoundly affect it. When cohesive social groups become building blocks of military units, together with combatants, come sturdy horizontal and vertical social ties that enable cohesion. But this also means that neither soldiers nor their leaders are easily replaceable. The military leadership has to balance the interests of the social group to maintain unit cohesion. The goal of armed actors is to transform the vertical ties and harness horizontal, but this might be difficult or counterproductive. The direct enforcement can backfire, and indirect strategies can lead to cohesive but nonfunctional groups.

On the other hand, armed actors use different tactics to overcome a rival. Groups that practice irregular warfare may find it easier to operate in areas with segmentary social groups. Segmentary groups, on the one hand, could be more willing to shield armed guerilla actors, but the logic of seeking safety in numbers prescribes mass participation in anti-incumbent activities. The resolution depends on specific responses of armed actors and primarily on what kind of warfare protects the social group at a given moment during the war.

Armed actors do not only aim to control the territory but to transfer the power and govern. The outcomes affect relations with civilians. Their institutions and policies have differential benefits that can disrupt status relations. The idea that once military control is achieved, coercion

becomes redundant does not hold in segmentary societies. If armed actors cause disruptions with the policies, and affect cohesion, they can also introduce new coercive policies to resolve cohesion problems, creating vicious circles which affect mobilization patterns.

During the war, coercion can become the main instrument that armed actors use to shape the behavior of civilians. Different political goals can lead to targeting civilians belonging to a different status. This can have unintended consequences in segmentary societies, primarily because social status is tied to segmentary hierarchy. The targeting of individuals will always be inferred as intentional, due to intimate social relations, and will likely prompt a reaction driven by revenge. The same applies to indiscriminate violence due to the logic of association.

These four propositions outline the main relationships between armed actor activity, social group response, and the consequence this has on the cohesion of armed units. The previous section explained the links between individual interests and group interests, and this outlined the links between group interest and conflict. The next section explains the causal mechanisms that drive participation and recruitment. In the end, these are tied together in the theory of mobilization.

## 2.3 Mechanisms of mobilization

This final section explains the creation and maintenance of the links between individuals and groups during wartime mobilization. It does so by suggesting a series of mechanisms of participation and recruitment.<sup>113</sup> The sequences of these mechanisms of participation and recruitment constitute the process of mobilization. There are several possible mechanisms in each part of the process, which can be observationally equivalent. However, an empirical analysis of individual and group behavior should be able to identify at least some of them.<sup>114</sup>

The sequence suggested in this theory consists of three steps. The first step includes mechanisms that affect individual participation, which is based on the hypothesized behavior within groups in the first part of this chapter. The second step deals with the mechanisms of recruitment, which was covered in the second part of the chapter, and together, these mechanisms produce mobilization. Finally, the process of mobilization affects social relations, which changes the dynamics of mobilization.

### *Participation*

The mechanisms that connect the pre-existing social structure with mobilization can be divided into three groups.<sup>115</sup> First, there needs to be an explanation of conditions inside groups and the real or perceived condition in their environment, most importantly, social cohesion inside the group and wartime insecurity outside of it. Then there are mechanisms that either keep individuals neutral in these conditions or change their propensity to participate. Finally, these mechanisms need to be linked to mobilization outcomes.

During the war, individuals find themselves in an environment that differs fundamentally from the environment during peace, with heightened insecurity and relations increasingly based on coercion rather than consent.<sup>116</sup> In a situation when the breakdown of order occurs, individuals intimidated by perceived outside threats are likely to coordinate around focal points, which in segmentary societies are social groups.<sup>117</sup>

As groups become surrounded by violence, survival becomes a central goal of civilians.<sup>118</sup> Individuals primarily pursue security-maximizing behavior and act in accordance with risk aversion mechanisms.<sup>119</sup> The most important mechanism is free riding, one of the most widely shared mechanisms in the literature. The behavior that is known as a “rebel dilemma” assumes that individuals can benefit from collective action in the form of rebellion but do not have incentives to contribute to it voluntarily and therefore try to remain passive.<sup>120</sup> The second mechanism, fence-sitting, means that individuals, caught between rival factions, try to avoid

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113 Mechanisms are specific causal patterns that explain individual actions across a wide range of settings (Gambetta 1998).

114 The mechanisms in this section are mostly built upon Petersen (2001) for participation and Kalyvas (2006) for recruitment, and in turn, derived from classical Social Science literature. See: Olson 1965, Migdal 1974, Popkin 1979, Hechter 1988, Kuran 1991, Tilly 1992, Posen 1993, Gould 1993, Hardin 1997, Lichbach 1995b, Elster 1998, 1999, Petersen 2002, Wood 2003, Pearlman 2013.

115 Petersen 2001, 56.

116 Kalyvas 2006, 38.

117 Schelling 1960, Hardin 1997.

118 Popkin 1979.

119 Kalyvas 2006, 40, 116.

120 Lichbach 1995b.

getting involved for as long as possible until there is more certainty of which side would prevail. Finally, a type of fence-sitting is hedging or participation on both sides at the same time. Such “double collaboration” can be found in instances when civilians collaborate with both insurgents and incumbents, for instance, family members participating on both sides in order to be on the “winning side” in any case.<sup>121</sup>

Set against the risk aversion mechanisms, which typically lead individuals towards passive or neutral behavior, mechanisms related to social structure change the propensity of individuals to participate in the war. When a social structure is built on cohesive social groups, members do not answer the question of joining insurgency independently from the behavior of the rest of the individuals in the group. Strong ties of solidarity imply that when a community member participates in an action related to the collective, the others feel obligated to participate as well, and alternatively if a member of the community is in trouble, the others feel obligated to assist.<sup>122</sup>

Two social mechanisms that rest on horizontal social ties work against the neutrality position in the war. First, the reciprocity mechanism makes actions of individuals activate an increase in risk acceptance among other group members. A well-known behavior among family members is that if one member of the family is in trouble, then all other family members are moved by the reciprocity mechanism to assist.<sup>123</sup>

The second way in which solidarity mechanisms work is the differential obligation they incur to members of the group. Mechanism of conformity puts the pressure on the majority not to act if a too small or fringe minority rebels, and correspondingly, if the majority rebels, then the minority that does not rebel is pressured to join the others. The pressure is most robust against those that do not conform fast enough – those that rebel when the majority does not, and those that do not rebel when the majority does.<sup>124</sup>

Status also shapes participation through mechanisms of status rewards and resentment formation. The first mechanism rewards higher status to those that are the first to act in violent activity. These individuals have a disproportionate influence on other group members also to rebel by rewarding courageous behavior in the high-risk environment and also reciprocation to such behavior. There is a threat of exclusion of those who do not reciprocate, and therefore do not conform to such behavior. In tribal societies, the status rewards mechanism has an especially important role as vertical social mobility often depends only on this mechanism of wartime status rewards. In some cases, however, first actors can receive negative status rewards, as hotheads that expose the group to increased risk.<sup>125</sup>

Status rewards are essential in the early stages of the conflict. The other mechanism is vital in both the early and later phases. The mechanism of resentment formation captures the rise in

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121 Kalyvas 2006, 228.

122 Gould 1993.

123 Hardin 1997.

124 Petersen 2001, 55.

125 Petersen 2001, 20, 40.

emotional antipathy towards specific enemies. The resentment formation is based on the changes of status hierarchies instigated by an armed actor. The more reordering of political and social hierarchy there is, especially in the police, military, and bureaucracy, the more resentment there will be towards the responsible actor. The way and extent to which the hierarchy is reordered during the war affect the direction and intensity of resentment.<sup>126</sup>

However, mobilization cannot be explained without the armed actors, and the following section analyzes mechanisms that affect recruitment in civil wars.

### *Recruitment*

Armed actors incentivize civilians to join through different mechanisms and keep them motivated to stay and fight. Political actors also face much higher risks in war than in peacetime. Civil war recruitment is typically burdened by a threat of informing and collaborating with the rival side. The threat that members of political organizations, civil administration, and the security forces can be collaborating with the rivals is high, which can lead to higher thresholds for recruitment in order to hedge against the possibility.<sup>127</sup> This makes armed actors hesitant to recruit extensively or recruit at all.

Civil wars, especially wars of occupation, lead to the effective dissolution of a national-level political organization, such as political parties. Links between national parties and their local units atrophy, effectively leading to a narrower, geographically smaller perspective of the world, and this narrowing of horizons leads to optimization of behavior. The combination of increased risk for political organizing and narrowing focus emphasizes the need for recruiting local social groups. Recruiting cohesive social groups allows political actors to overcome the risk of recruiting, because with combatants, also comes the knowledge about who can be trusted.<sup>128</sup>

Irrespectively of how armed actors proceed in recruitment strategy, their primary goal is to increase their numbers and then to have them continue fighting. The failure of these goals leads to narrowing the extent of mobilization. This is dangerous for armed actors not only because it lowers the ability to fight against rivals, but it also inhibits access to resources and increases the risk of information leaks.<sup>129</sup>

The mechanisms through which armed actors affect recruitment and retention are related to both military and political goals. Armed actors rely on selective incentives, including both persuasion and coercion, as well as a combination of both. First, in the environment of increased risk in the war, armed actors can shield the population from the competitors. Individuals targeted by one side will look for safety with the rival, and this can work in both directions – insurgents or incumbents.<sup>130</sup>

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126 Petersen 2002.

127 Petersen 2001, 52.

128 Petersen 2001, 18, 24, 26.

129 Petersen 2001, 75.

130 Kalyvas 2006, 97, 124.

Dynamics of recruitment can be affected by the self-reinforcing mechanisms — recruitment peaks after successful military engagements, and indiscriminate violence against civilians by the rival side.<sup>131</sup> Individual subjective satisfaction coming from “small victories” helps retention and prevents an overall evaluation of the balance between occupier and resistance.<sup>132</sup> This mechanism usually underpins the logic of guerilla warfare where the goal is “not to lose” to the rival, rather than militarily defeat it.

Recruitment may also flow through a combination of persuasion and coercion. If convincing is hard and draining resources from the insurgents, then coercion may be a more effective way to sustain insurgency, primarily through monitoring and the threat of physical violence. The reason why armed actors act this way is that they can perceive the neutral position of civilians as equivalent to defection, a form of passive collaboration with the other side.<sup>133</sup>

Once the armed actor controls the territory, it can use coercion to identify opponents and deter defection. The population usually complies, and switch to the side of the ruler to maximize survival. Coercion used in this way solves collective action problems and deters opposition. Defection depends on an assessment of risk in staying with the armed actor and potentially lower risk of joining the rival. Clearly, for the first instance of safety-seeking, joining insurgent organizations can be less risky than joining incumbents. On the other hand, civilians and insurgent supporters are often left with no choice but to join incumbent forces.<sup>134</sup>

Civilian support to armed actors is conditional on their behavior, which includes both incumbents and insurgents. Establishing control increases the credibility of an armed actor, but it is through setting up institutions that the actor shows it is capable of the provision of benefits and sanctions, which increases expectations about the outcome of the war and helps recruitment.<sup>135</sup>

However, wartime administration can also become a reason for joining the rival or defections. When insurgents establish their institutions in the territory they control, they are in a position to exercise policies that might end up alienating people, and from which incumbents can capitalize, recruiting combatants that resent status reversal. The key mechanism here is resentment formation or grievances caused by policies such as redistribution or excessive taxing.<sup>136</sup>

Another reason that civilians would join armed actors once the war is on the way is revenge. Once war begins, and cycles of violence start to take place, revenge becomes one of the main motivations for joining armed organizations. Revenge can be a direct cause of violent actions, but it can also work indirectly, through joining organizations that are bound to commit violent acts.<sup>137</sup> Civil war increases the opportunities for revenge, and civilians are known to “use”

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131 Kalyvas 2006, 126.

132 Petersen 2001, 76.

133 Kalyvas 2006, 78, 233.

134 Kalyvas 2006, 98, 100, 104, 131, Goodwin 2001.

135 Skocpol 1982.

136 Arjona 2015.

137 Kalyvas 2006, 60.

political actors to settle their private conflicts.<sup>138</sup> Revenge is an effective mechanism for recruitment; however, it can also backfire, and this especially holds in segmentary societies.

### *Conclusion*

The goal of this section was to suggest theoretically plausible causal mechanisms that drive mobilization and determine its dynamics. First, it showed that in wartime social mechanisms can drive individuals to turn towards social groups and armed actors recruiting groups instead of individuals. Second, it argued that the solidarity mechanisms and status rewards in cohesive social groups could work against the risk aversion mechanisms which should be dominant in all other types of social structures, driving individuals towards participation.

Finally, it demonstrated that armed actors could produce both positive and negative incentives that could change the dynamics of mobilization in cohesive segmentary societies. Armed actors can shield the population through its military activity and distribute benefits through institutions on the one hand. On the other hand, they can cause status reversal that leads to resentment formation, and distribute sanctions that can lead to revenge mechanisms.

This section argued plausible social mechanisms that could drive individual behavior in participation and recruitment as predicted by the theory. Based on the previous three sections, the final section outlines the theory of civil war mobilization.

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<sup>138</sup> Martin 2014.

## 2.4 Social theory of civil war mobilization

There are two widely held beliefs often found in literature and among practitioners, that highly cohesive groups are easy to mobilize for fighting, but also prone to in-fighting and feuding. Both of these beliefs are only half-true. These expectations over-predict both participation and infighting, and the main reason is that they fail to address the key issue that this thesis puts forward. Pre-war group cohesion partially explains how groups participate in insurgencies and civil wars because the participation is dynamic. Mechanisms that drive participation depend on the social group's structure and on armed actors' political and military decisions.

This thesis argues that the more pre-war social structure rests on cohesive social groups, the more it enables individuals to mobilize in insurgencies effectively. Once the war starts, armed actors' behavior affects social cohesion, which can either enable retention or lead to desertion or defection. The cohesion of social groups can be an asset and a liability for armed actors, but what comes out of it depends on the armed actor behavior too.

This theory was set up to provide the explanation of civil war mobilization based on the understanding of the pre-war social structure and war-time dynamics. To achieve this goal, it has set up a theoretical foundation for a chain of causal links. The first link is between individual and group interests in the pre-war period. To establish this, horizontal and vertical ties that maintain social groups are unpacked at the beginning of this chapter.

In the next section, the second link between group interest and group conflict was explained through different ways in which armed actors' military and political choices during the war affect cohesion. The third link, leading from conflict to mobilization, was outlined in the following section through specific social mechanisms that affect participation and recruitment. Finally, the last link, maintenance of the individual-group link during wartime mobilization, is discussed here.

Civil wars start for various reasons, because of an external shock or internal instability. In any case, they profoundly change the environment in which individuals operate. Not only do civil wars disturb the power relations in society, but the use of violence also gives rise to the insecurity that affects both civilians and armed actors that organize at the onset. There are strong incentives for individuals to turn towards social groups and for armed actors to recruit groups. Both social group participation and armed actor recruitment rely on several mechanisms that move individuals towards engagement in organized violence.

The mechanisms that push individuals towards participation are heavily dependent on the pre-war social structure. In cohesive groups, individuals gain status rewards for being the first movers to lead the group. The more cohesive groups are, the more the strength of their horizontal ties activate mechanisms of reciprocity and conformity that can quickly engage the group as a whole. The group as a whole, or a part of a group, can be lifted by such action from the position that their members resent. Therefore, through these mechanisms, the more cohesive groups, the faster and more extensive participation.

Social structure and mechanisms emanating from cohesive groups are necessary but not sufficient to explain wartime mobilization. How armed actors behave during the war has profound effects. Some of their political goals are imported from the pre-war period, but the adaptation to the wartime insecurity is also significant. As a pre-war organization transforms into a wartime armed actor, their political goals are balanced continuously with the military goals, and the outcomes may vary depending on the wartime circumstances.

However, two regularities exist: military and political goals affect the way civilians are recruited. Through mechanisms that persuade, coerce or both, armed actors incentivize civilians to behave in a certain way and join their ranks. They offer military protection from the rivals, but also increase the cost of neutrality. Their governance provides benefits, but also sanctions. The more they establish control over civilians, the more they disturb its status relations. Finally, a robust mechanism of revenge can bring new recruits but also be used against them. Unlike the unidirectional logic of social group mechanisms, the decisions of armed actors are more complex and can interact with civilians and social groups in both directions: actively increasing or decreasing the extent, speed, and duration of recruitment.

Both mechanisms of recruitment and participation carry with them the possibility of desertion or defection. The mechanisms that reward and maintain status and lead to resentment formation can be turned both inwards and outwards, and the cohesiveness of social groups could become a liability for armed actors. Similarly, safety-seeking mechanisms can also lead to desertions or defections from armed actors.

Therefore the outcome of these mechanisms is that the more cohesive social group is, the more effectively it can mobilize due to solidarity and status mechanisms. However, more cohesive social groups also have more propensity for switching sides or deserting, which also depends on armed actors. The dynamics of status reversal, and resentment formation, is driven by the fact that once the war starts, the conflict generates effects at all levels of state and society. From the central government to the small social groups, individuals who were previously at the top of the hierarchy find themselves in the situation of commanding fewer resources, less respect, and not being able to guarantee security. New armed actors rise, and change social relations in unpredictable directions.

This is what the classic proverb *"I against my brother; I and my brother against my cousin; I and my brother and my cousin against the world"* point to, at least to some degree. The proverb does not say why this pattern historically reoccurs. The theory explains that the cohesion ties individuals horizontally, but also puts them in vertical status relations. Which "cousin" becomes redefined as "the other" instead of the outsider depends on whether the cousin is higher or lower in the hierarchy and ultimately on resentment formation that is as effective against the "world" as it is against a "cousin" or a "brother."

Armed actors have strong incentives to recruit local groups. The goal of any armed actor is to increase the numbers of direct participants and the ratio of core combatants, and cohesive

social groups participate in large numbers. But they are not as committed, which means that there is also a high potential for the loss of control over large numbers of units.

How this happens is also explained by the theory. The more armed actor mechanisms increase cohesion and align with the interests of social groups, the mobilization will be faster and more extensive. The more armed actor military and political goals disrupt the cohesion and status relations of the social group, and the more recruitment will decline.

Both social groups and armed actors have their calculi of risk. If the mechanisms that increase the propensity to participate and recruit overcome mechanisms that keep them in a neutral or passive position, then they will be engaged in the process of mobilization, which will be fast and extensive in segmentary societies.

Because of cohesive social groups' ties of solidarity, a change in armed actor military or political behavior affects too many individuals with shared interests and strong ties at once. Together with low commitment, this makes mobilization of cohesive social groups brittle. It tends to oscillate between fast and extensive participation and the same quality of desertion or defection.

Armed actors typically punish the desertion and defection of individuals. But such attempts are more likely to invite collective reply in cohesive social groups than in other social structures. The logic of safety in numbers, which these groups operate on, makes such behavior less risky than if individuals deserted or defected one by one. This gives groups in segmentary societies more negotiating space and gives an additional explanation of why armed actors are not likely to prevent these shifts in mobilization.

Hence, this theory suggests the following core hypothesis:

- H1 Civil war mobilization is determined by the pre-war social structure and the wartime effects of armed actors' decisions on social structure.

The goal of empirical chapters, therefore, is to show that:

- H1a The more cohesive the social group, the more solidarity and status mechanisms produce effective mobilization in civil wars.
- H1b The more control and governance mechanisms instigated by the armed actors affect social group cohesion, the more they affect recruitment patterns.

Based on the theoretical accounts discussed in this chapter, the theory argues against the proposition that:

- H2 Civil war mobilization is better explained by other factors than by the pre-war social structure.

Therefore, the goal of the empirical part of the thesis is to address the alternative explanations:

- H2a The pre-war economy determines civil war mobilization.
- H2b Pre-war politics determine civil war mobilization.
- H2c Wartime processes determine civil war mobilization.

## Conclusion

This chapter has presented the foundations of a social theory of civil war mobilization. The theory aims to refocus the study of civil war dynamics to the social environment in which mobilization takes place. Civil wars should not be understood as products of nation-wide phenomena manifesting at the local level, but the opposite, the product of local dynamics with outcomes on the national level. The theory explains these dynamics, the interaction between social groups and armed actors.

The key concept in this theory is social cohesion. To restate the theory, groups with high cohesion mobilize effectively; however, mobilization can turn towards outside but also towards inside. Armed actors' military and political decisions affect the cohesion of the groups, and the outcomes of these decisions can switch the support from one actor to another.

Wars are theaters of political as much as of military rivalry. They are a tool for achieving a dominant position in which social groups and armed organizations both act. In segmentary societies, tribal groups mobilize against the outsiders, due to their high cohesion, but the internal struggle between competing rebel groups becomes aligned according to the prewar social structure and the power relations that rest upon it.

Much of the argument in this chapter was based on the co-evolutionary logic that things go together – specific geographies go with certain types of societies and attract insurgents. It is difficult or impossible to untangle the segmentary structure. However, understanding the mobilization dynamics is a step towards a better understanding of the complexity of these wars. The next chapter explains how this theory will be tested in the remaining empirical chapters of the thesis.

# CHAPTER THREE. RESEARCH DESIGN

## Introduction

This chapter outlines the way in which the empirical part of the thesis is structured. It discusses the methodological approach, introduces main concepts and variables, and in the end, recapitulates the alternative explanations and the way they were operationalized.

## 3.1 Methodology

### *Empirical puzzle and CRQ*

Insurgencies and civil wars in segmentary societies are among the most enduring and ubiquitous phenomena in contemporary conflicts. The theory, developed in the first chapter, explains why pre-war social structures make segmentary societies mobilize effectively in civil wars, but also that the dynamics of mobilization also depend on the war-time decisions made by the armed actors.

When the Second World War began in 1941, not for the first, but probably for the last time in Montenegro's history, the tribes mobilized in war. From the onset of the war, strong kinship bonds enabled the mobilization of tribes against the Italian outsiders. However, in the later stage of the war, in 1942, enemies became local. The communist insurgents who were, in the beginning, successful in recruitment, collided with the cohesive segmentary groups, which turned to their anti-communist rivals, and expelled them out of the country.

The empirical puzzle that motivated this research was the different way war in Montenegro played out than in the rest of Yugoslavia, both in the dynamics of the insurgency against the occupation and in the intensity and of the civil war between local armed actors that ensued.

To answer the central research question, why do tribal societies mobilize in civil wars differently than non-tribal societies, the theory chapter had put forward social structure and group cohesion as an explanation for the dynamics of mobilization in civil wars. It argued that the more the pre-war social structure rests on cohesive social groups, the more it enables individuals to mobilize in insurgencies effectively. However, during the war, armed actors' behavior affects the cohesion of social groups. Mobilization becomes an outcome of the interaction between armed actors and social groups.

The remaining empirical part of this thesis will test this argument. First, it will be tested in the case of Montenegro. By using qualitative and quantitative data from primary and secondary sources, the relations between participation and recruitment in civil war will first be described in the context of 1941-1942 Montenegro. This is followed by an in-depth analysis of the mechanisms of mobilization at a micro-level in only one county. The alternative explanations will then be quantitatively tested at the meso-level of Montenegro's 139 municipalities.

The scope conditions for this theory are civil wars in segmentary societies. According to the definitions outlined in the previous chapter, in the case of World War Two Yugoslavia, these scope conditions excluded the war of Yugoslav Royal Army against the occupying forces in April 1941. By definition, this conflict is not considered a civil war, but a war between two sovereign states. They do, however, include the insurgency against occupying forces by local armed actors, as well as the war between those armed actors. Following the definition of the civil war used in this thesis, the war of local armed actors against occupying forces that claim sovereignty is considered a civil war, as does the war between two local armed actors.

In this thesis, two distinct terms are used - insurgency and civil war - which should be considered synonymous under the civil war definition. However, to clarify, in the case of Montenegro, an insurgency is a relationship between insurgents and Italian occupying forces, and the relationship between the Communists and the Nationalists in 1942 is called a civil war. These two processes fall under the same definition of civil war, and different terms are used to refer to phases of civil war where different rivals were engaged.

#### *General methodological approach*

The general approach taken in this thesis diverges from some of the approaches prevalent in the field. For one, it adopts a strategy of disaggregation, which allows the analytical level to shift between macro, meso, and micro level, unlike the works that focus on only one of these levels of analyses. Secondly, unlike works that only study one type of actors, or even one specific actor, this thesis approaches mobilization as a process in which civilians and armed actors jointly produce outcomes. Not only are both civilians and combatants integrated into the study's design, but the comparative approach allows for comparison of variation among and between different social groups and armed actors, across space and time.

Thirdly, mixed methods are used to respond to both the strategy of disaggregation and to the comparison at different levels of analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed, relying on both primary and secondary accounts of the war. In addition, the hypothesis that pre-war social structure and armed actor behavior drive the dynamics of mobilization during the war means that data from both pre-war and war-time had to be used.

Fourthly, as mobilization is a process that turns civilians into combatants, it has been an object of study by several disciplines. While military historians usually focus on tactics while omitting social and political processes, social science emphasize these but overlook military developments.<sup>1</sup> This thesis aims to put equal importance on both social and military processes and to integrate perspectives from several disciplines, including insights from ethnology and military studies that are rarely joined together.<sup>2</sup>

The research uses both qualitative and quantitative analysis. In Chapters 4-6, mechanisms explained by the theory are first traced in the case of Montenegro, mostly relying on historical

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<sup>1</sup> Kalyvas 2006, 37.

<sup>2</sup> Political actors have rarely engaged anthropologists to gain information about the civilian population. On the recent controversy of the Human Terrain System see: Kipp et al, 2006, Albro 2009, Sims 2015, 2016, McFate 2016.

documents. In Chapter 7, the relationship between the variables, defined by alternative hypothesis H2, is statistically tested. The remaining part of this section is used to introduce the case of Montenegro, and to describe the data and variables which are used in the coming chapters.

#### *Micro comparative historical analysis*

The empirical part of this thesis can be best described as a micro comparative historical analysis.<sup>3</sup> Unlike research that either compares several or all countries (macro), the unit of analysis here shifts between micro, meso, and macro-level. However, most of the analysis of wartime mobilization in segmentary society is done at the lower levels, micro and meso, where individuals as parts of social groups (segments, sub-segments) interact with military units (local or medium level, rarely central) in villages and administrative units such as municipalities.

The comparative leverage comes from the spatial and temporal variation among these units of analysis. Therefore analyzing the micro-level relies on the use of large sets of fine-grained data. The key benefit of this approach is that it is possible to control for structural differences between countries that are expected at the macro-comparative level. The main setback is the problem of the generalizability of the findings to other cases. This is the central dilemma of micro-comparative research.

Finally, the third element of the methodology is historical analysis. This research relies on historical data, but not primarily in order to offer a novel interpretation of the events in the past, which is what historians would do. Instead, it uses this data to make inferences about general social and political phenomena, especially to trace the processes and mechanisms which guide individual and group behavior.

Studying contemporary conflicts is hampered by both security risks and challenging to obtain data. On the other hand, studying a historical case means most of the work is done with historical data instead of in war zones, and more documents and systematic data become available with time. However, societies change, and with them, the technology, ideas, and, ultimately, patterns of human behavior. These limitations of historical analysis should always be acknowledged.

#### *The strategy of disaggregation: Spatial variation*

Mobilization is a process that moves individuals and groups between non-combatant and combatant roles. This understanding emphasizes the *joint* character of mobilization, as well as the interaction between actors at local levels and higher organizational levels.<sup>4</sup> The disaggregation in data collection and analysis follows the disaggregation of actors and processes in theory.<sup>5</sup>

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3 Mares 2015, 232.

4 Kalyvas 2006, 10.

5 Brubaker and Laitin 1998.

The comparison at the macro level is a cross-state comparison. These include both comparisons between Montenegro and other parts of Yugoslavia at the time before and during World War Two, as well as comparisons with other cases outside of Yugoslav context.

The meso- and micro- are empirically more appropriate levels of analysis. (Table 3.1) As social structure varies inside a state, this, in general, makes a state, nation, or ethnic group a less suitable unit of analysis. The variation of social structure or cohesion inside a single sub-national region cannot be easily explained with differences in terrain, history, culture, or the balance of power at the national level, nor with other factors usually used to explain violent conflicts such as relative deprivation, ideology, or norms. Instead, this thesis mostly follows an approach where relatively small differences in social structure can create different incentives for social groups and insurgent groups – and produce different mobilization outcomes.<sup>6</sup> The specific mixture of modern and premodern influences in Montenegro had produced social groups with different levels of cohesion. Whereas the structure of society varies, other broader effects can be held constant.

The spatial variation in the social structure is systematically at the meso and micro levels.<sup>7</sup> Yet, the difference between the meso and micro levels is not always clear. The meso- level of analysis treats armed actors and social groups at a given territory, having in mind their strategic considerations, policies, and recruitment or mobilization outcomes. However, these meso- level actors cannot be treated as monolithic, and the internal dynamics of meso level actors is crucial for explaining the outcomes of interest. The dynamics within and among small groups is the level of small military units and intra-community relations, as well as individual behavior.<sup>8</sup> This is the final, micro-level of analysis where much of the following chapters reside.

Table 3.1 Levels of analysis

<i>Level</i>	<i>Administrative units</i>	<i>Actors</i>
<i>Macro</i>	Between/within the country	armed actor central commands, ethnic groups
<i>Meso</i>	Between counties/municipalities	local armed actors, tribes
<i>Micro</i>	Within counties/municipalities	primary armed units, sub-tribes (brotherhoods), villages, individuals

<sup>6</sup> Petersen 2001, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Pepinsky 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Kalyvas 2006, 11.

*Temporal variation: before and after the onset*

In addition to capturing spatial variation through the disaggregation strategy, the design of this thesis builds upon an intra-state comparison of violent conflict between different actors and at different points of time.

An additional assumption in this thesis is that the relations between group members in pre-war time (t0, See Table 3.2), which are based on social structure, carry over to the war period, to the extent that patterns of behavior in peacetime should be observable in wartime. The social life of individuals and groups before the war is essential for understanding the wartime mobilization, and this is where insights from anthropology primarily meet political science. This assumption could be criticized from an obvious point that political preferences are fundamentally different in times of peace and war, due to much higher stakes in wartime. However, as it was shown in the theory chapter, the mechanisms in segmentary societies, which ensure group cohesion, do affect both peacetime and wartime group behavior of individuals and groups.

Before the war, the social groups (non-combatants, Nc) were under the authority of the sovereign state of Yugoslavia (Ic0). The future insurgents were operating within political organizations that did not challenge the sovereign authority through armed combat. The first wartime period is the insurgency (t1) against the Italian military that lasts from July 1941 until the end of 1941. During this time, social groups (Nc) are mobilized against Italian occupiers as incumbents (Ic1) by the Communists as insurgents (Is1).

The second phase, called the civil war, takes place from January to June 1942 (t2). During this period, the Communists who were insurgents in t1 have established their government in most of the countryside by the end of the year, and in t2, they are treated as incumbents (Ic2). During the civil war, social groups are mobilized by the Nationalists (Is2) as challengers to rebel government.

Table 3.2 Periods and actors

<i>Period:</i>	"Pre-War" (t0)	"Insurgency" (t1)	"Civil war" (t2)
<i>Incumbents:</i>	Yugoslavia (Ic0)	Italy (Ic1)	Communists (Ic2)
<i>Insurgents:</i>	-	Communists (Is1)	Nationalists (Is2)
<i>Civilians:</i>	Social groups (Nc)		

Comparison across time at the lower levels of analysis level allows differentiating between the incumbent and insurgent strategies and, by that, the responses of social groups to these strategies and different outcomes as a result (Chapter 4). The developments at the micro-level are approached by careful sequential disaggregation of the processes. In the micro-level analysis, rich empirical data is used to show that when the status relations were disrupted in the insurgency, it was the little things as much as macro developments that were critical for the relations between groups and armed actors. Particular historical cases are explored, in

Chapters 5 and 6, to examine the choices of individuals embedded in specific settings, in order to “trace the sequences of actions, decisions, and responses that generate events and outcomes.”<sup>9</sup>

*External validity*

It could, however, be argued that the analysis of World War Two Montenegro, a small European country in the mid-twentieth century, does not travel to other contemporary civil wars outside of the Balkans. This is a valid concern, and this thesis cannot empirically demonstrate the external validity of the findings, for at least two reasons.

Cross country analysis of civil war outcomes does not seem appropriate for testing the generalizability of the propositions in this thesis. As argued earlier, a segmentary structure implies several difficulties not only with data availability but also of conceptual differences between “tribes” in local contexts.

Instead, valid testing of the generalizability of this theory should be done on an in-depth single country basis, with contemporary ethnographic data for contemporary civil wars. However, such analysis falls outside the scope of this research project. In any case, these results invite further research and open the ways to operationalize social structure and conduct future analyses.

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<sup>9</sup> Bates et al. 1998.

## 3.2 Variables, concepts, measurements

This section deals with the conceptualization and operationalization of variables used in the remaining part of the thesis.<sup>10</sup> Concepts and measurements are discussed for the dependent variable and the primary independent variable, which are at the core of Chapters 4-6. The variables which are tested in the last empirical chapter on Montenegro are derived from alternative theoretical explanations, as introduced in the theory chapter. Since most data used in this thesis, except when noted otherwise, is transformed and used in the analysis for the first time, special attention is given to data sources.

### *Dependent variable: Mobilization*

Wartime mobilization is the dependent variable. Mobilization is understood in civil war literature as a process that turns civilians into combatants. (Table 3.3) Here it is understood primarily as the participation of civilians in armed activities through recruitment by armed actors. Two indicators that are used in the empirical chapters are the extent and speed of participation, following the theoretical framework.

On the one hand, the extent of participation is observed as the total or the relative number of civilians that join the armed actors' units. On the other, the speed of participation can be observed as the amount of time necessary for either the formation of units or their actions. In different parts of the analysis, using one or the other indicator is equally appropriate.

Table 3.3 Concepts: Dependent and independent variables

<i>General concept</i>	<i>Systematized concept</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Scores</i>
Mobilization	Participation	Extent/speed	Combatants/days
Social structure	Segmentary groups	Cohesion	Deputy concentration

Data sources for mobilization come from primary and secondary sources. Between 1949 and 1986, the Military History Institute of Yugoslavia published an extensive collection of primary documents called the Collected Documents and Data on the National-Liberation War of the Peoples of Yugoslavia<sup>11</sup> (abbreviated: ZNOR) in fifteen tomes (I-XV) and 173 volumes. Four tomes contain material about Montenegro, which was further used: II (Partisan HQ), III (Montenegro), XIII (Italy), and XIV (Chetniks). Some of the oral histories and memoirs collected by the Military History Institute were published in several collections that deal with the 1941-1942 stage of the war.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Adcock and Collier 2001, Sartori 1970.

<sup>11</sup> Vojnoistorijski institut, Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda. (ZNOR)

<sup>12</sup> Vojnoistorijski institut 1964.

Secondary sources are also extensively used. However, the main secondary source is “Montenegro in the National Liberation War and Socialist Revolution” by Jovanović, published in 1960.<sup>13</sup> Since much of the documents were destroyed in the war, in 1951, the Yugoslav Military History Institute conducted a project of recording oral histories. Jovanović used these extensively, as well as his interviews with hundreds of participants in the war. Jovanović often gave systematic accounts of insurgent military units throughout his book. One of these is the size of insurgent units during the early phases of the 1941 insurgency, which reflects the extent of mobilization. The data includes size, location, and unit leadership. The speed of insurgency was based on event data from a comprehensive chronology of the war in Montenegro, published in 1963.<sup>14</sup>

The leading principle in collecting data on the civil war mobilization was data triangulation, diversifying the sources and relying on data collected by participants or actors close to them. The data on civil war mobilization was collected from four sources, two for each rival side.

Yugoslav Partisans started forming “mobile” units, as opposed to territorial or tribal ones, starting from December 21, 1941. By June 1942 and the retreat to Bosnia, all remaining soldiers from Montenegro were drafted in four “Proletarian” battalions. The directories of members of these units were published as annexes in several books<sup>15</sup> decades after the war. Together with the data of Partisan combatants that died in the civil war, which was published in the 1964 Census of War Victims,<sup>16</sup> these two sources were sufficient to create a database of the Partisan combatants in 1942. The reliability of these sources was acceptable, and even though it probably had many missing combatants, there was no reason to think that data has been systematically omitted.

Reliable sources on the nationalist combatants were also collected from two sources; however, it was harder to compile them. During 1943 “Glas Crnogorca,” an official journal of the Civilian Commissariat of Montenegro, published eight special issues<sup>17</sup> including data on Partisan units and deaths attributed to Partisan units and material damage caused by the insurgents. It was compiled from regular reports made by municipal authorities and the collaborationist units. This was a propaganda tool, and, as such, it is of questionable reliability. Nevertheless, it remains meaningful as it conveys deaths and damage that was, if not caused by the Partisans in each case, then at least attributed to them. During the coming decades, this data was used by most *émigré* anti-communist authors as the ultimate “black book” of communism. To the extent that it could be cross-checked, the data on Partisan leadership can be corroborated. The data on individuals from different units who were reportedly killed or wounded by the Partisans in the civil war was collected from this source.

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13 Jovanović 1960.

14 Hronologija 1963.

15 Vidović 1972, Đurović et al. 1972, Janković 1975, Vuksanović 1981.

16 Savezni zavod za statistiku 1966, Bogosavljević, 1995.

17 Glas Crnogorca 1943.

Data on the surviving anti-communists from the county were collected from the registry of participants in the 1944 exile,<sup>18</sup> the mass Montenegrin withdrawal towards Austria in front of the approaching Partisan army.<sup>19</sup> A recent independently organized census<sup>20</sup> was conducted, and even though this data seemed less systematic and reliable than the data on the communist combatants, compared to the qualitative data, it mostly fitted the descriptions in the sources.

*Independent variable: Social structure*

Social structure is a relatively permanent structure of social relations between and among individuals and groups. In this work, this concept is further narrowed to segmentary structure, where social structure rests on segments, or tribes, as informal social groups comprising of individuals linked by kin and fictive kin identities. The primary indicator used to operationalize social structure is cohesion or the condition that keeps these groups together. Cohesion was further disaggregated into horizontal and vertical dimensions, and the theory and empirical chapter deal at length with these two dimensions.

For social structure as the explanatory variable, there are two primary sources of data: ethnographic works and the electoral results. These are used throughout the empirical analysis of Montenegro. From the 1910s to the late 1920s, many ethnographers conducted fieldwork in the Montenegrin tribes, most of which were published over the decades in the *Settlements and the origin of the population* series of the Serbian Royal Academy of Sciences.<sup>21</sup>

These ethnographic studies contain sections with descriptions of settlements, which include the number of households for each brotherhood. In most of the cases, brotherhoods were distinguishable by surname.<sup>22</sup> However, there were numerous issues with coding that had to be resolved. For instance, sometimes large brotherhoods carry different surnames, or a widespread patronymic surname can appear among different brotherhoods of the same tribe. Furthermore, some brotherhoods are additionally divided into sub-brotherhoods or make large super-brotherhoods. These were coded according to the descriptions of ethnographers. If a collective identity was shared in super-brotherhoods based on broader classifications and common shared ancestor in ancient past, they were coded as separate brotherhoods. But if the interviewees considered themselves members of the somewhat distinct group but a part of the same brotherhood still, they were coded as such.

The problem with the ethnographic data is that it was not collected for the whole territory of Montenegro. To address the discrepancy, membership of brotherhoods in municipal bodies serves as a proxy for pre-war social structure. The validity of inference about social group concentration based on electoral results is illustrated in Chapter 6 with a strong positive association between the size of brotherhoods members in population and municipal bodies, where data were available from both sources.

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18 Gregović, 2009.

19 Even though the list of over 5000 individuals include mostly combatants, it is possible that some non-combatants were also included in this dataset. Without the means to verify this, they are treated as combatants for the purpose of the analysis.

20 Gregović 2009.

21 Jovičević 1911, Šobajić 1923, Erdeljanović 1926. This research was done following the methodology of the geographer and ethnographer Jovan Cvijić, which enabled a comparability of results across different regions.

22 Miljanić and Miljanić 2002.

The data on the social structure of deputy members is based on the comprehensive list of municipal deputies from the 1931 official directory of Zeta Banovina.<sup>23</sup> The Directory contains names and functions of 3901 officials in local municipalities in Montenegro. These included the president, secretary, members of municipal level courts, and members of the assembly - deputies.

A simple index of the concentration of social structure was devised using the data on the surnames of municipal officials. First, all instances of officials in the municipality with a surname that occurs more than once were identified, their numbers added together, one was subtracted from that sum, and then divided the difference with the total number of officials in the municipality.<sup>24</sup> The resulting index ranges from 0.01 in city municipalities such as Nikšić and Ulcinj, to 0.89 in Komani and 0.86 in Pavkovići municipalities, where brotherhoods Radulović and Pavićević had 11 municipal officials out of 35 and 29 respectively. An alternative measure of network density was also created, understood here as the number of social ties in a group, divided by the total number of possible ties.

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23 Almanah-šematizam 1931.

24 For eight municipalities without any reoccurring surnames 0.1 was divided with the number of officials in the municipality. The reason for subtracting 1 from the number of reoccurring surnames is in order to adjust the high scores for municipalities with relatively small numbers of officials.

### 3.3 Alternative explanations

This final section reviews other main theoretical explanations of wartime mobilization that could have been tested in this thesis. The explanations that do not consider social structure as relevant fall into three groups, exemplified by a representative theory in the first chapter. The main explanations are pre-war economic, political, and conflict processes endogenous to the war. Also, controls such as geographic factors are included in the analysis; however, an in-depth description of the use in the analysis is in the empirical Chapter 7. (Table 3.4)

Table 3.4 Alternative explanations

<i>General concept</i>	<i>Systematized concept</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Cases</i>
Pre-war economy	Non-lootable resources	Landholdings	Arable land
	Relative deprivation	Development investment	Teachers
Pre-war politics	Political competition	Political party parity	Election results
	Political grievances	Previous insurgency	Election results
Wartime dynamics	Control	Exclusive presence	Territory
	Wartime repression	Incumbent activity	Violent deaths
	Insurgent capacity	Insurgent organization	Combatants

Economic models take pre-war and wartime conditions as relevant factors in accounting for mobilization in the war, and they predict a causal link between economic resources and conditions and patterns of mobilization. Two concepts were systematized for further testing in this thesis – availability of resources and relative deprivation. These concepts were further operationalized as land holdings and development investment.

As Montenegro was primarily an agricultural, pastoralist society, arable land area data is the primary resource over which individuals and groups would compete. Unfortunately, data on individual landowning in pre-war Montenegro is available only at the broadest level of aggregation, so instead, arable land data was used from the first comprehensive census after the war in 1960.<sup>25</sup> Data on investment in development is perhaps best captured in mostly illiterate Montenegro by the investment in education. Therefore numbers of active teachers from the same official directory where data was collected on municipal deputies were used as an indicator.

Politics, just as the economy, can be conceptualized in different ways. Pre-war political competition could be one predictor of the patterns of mobilization. On the other hand, a way to

<sup>25</sup> Savezni zavod za statistiku 1964.

predict an insurgency should be possible based on the previous insurgency, so the logic would be to look at the extent of the last episode of large-scale political violence in the country. Election results are used as the counts for both of these indicators. In the first case, political parity was calculated based on the votes for government and opposition lists in the 1935 elections.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, a proxy for the support to political options that had opposed the previous sovereign government in 1919 was taken from the votes for the pro-independence Federalist Party in the 1923 general elections.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, the third strand of the literature finds explanations of wartime mobilization not in the pre-war conditions, but the war-time dynamics. Three concepts are derived in order to be analyzed throughout the following chapters, territorial control, wartime violence, and insurgent capacity. The data on territorial control in this thesis comes from several sources, most importantly, the Chronology of National Liberation war in Montenegro 1941-1945.<sup>28</sup> The Chronology is a detailed account of the war in Montenegro, which drew on archival material and participant testimonies to reconstruct the war on a day/settlement level. Data from the Collected Documents and Data on the National-Liberation War of the Peoples of Yugoslavia was also used.<sup>29</sup>

The incumbent repression can, as theorized earlier, change the pattern of participation in the insurgency. Operationalized as the number of civilian deaths, the source of data for the wartime civilian deaths is the 1964 Census of War Victims.<sup>30</sup> Finally, the activation of pre-war insurgent networks is understood as an important factor in insurgency organization, and the 1941 insurgency in Montenegro was for a very long time attributed in the literature to well-prepared communist clandestine organizations.<sup>31</sup> Before the insurgency, the Communist Party organized “strike groups” made of 10-30 individuals, mostly party members, who were conducting military and political training, together with party sympathizers. Jovanović collected data on the distribution of almost 300 of these groups with almost 6000 members.<sup>32</sup>

These alternative explanations are further discussed in more detail throughout the following chapters. They are thoroughly tested in Chapter 7, where several control variables are included, related to population and geography, and different operationalization of variables are used in robustness checks. For that reason, these variables are explained in more detail at the beginning of Chapter 7.

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26 Statistika izbora 1938.

27 Statistika izbora 1924.

28 Hronologija 1963.

29 ZNOR.

30 Savezni zavod za statistiku 1966.

31 Jovanović 1960.

32 Jovanović gives different figures for aggregate data: 285 strike groups with 6200 people (p.46).

## Conclusion

This thesis puts forward a social theory of civil war mobilization that explains why different societies experience different civil war dynamics and outcomes. The propositions from the theoretical chapter are not all testable in the same way. Some are testable using qualitative, some quantitative data. They are approached at different levels of analysis, starting from a macro level in Chapter four, to micro-level in Chapters five and six, to the meso level in Chapter seven.

The evidence presented in the empirical chapters is suggestive and gives tentative support to the hypothesis that civil war mobilization is determined by the pre-war social structure and the war-time effects of armed actors' decisions on social structure. It also invites further research and more comprehensive testing of this hypothesis.

## CHAPTER FOUR. CIVIL WAR IN 1941-1942 MONTENEGRO

Montenegro was defending itself against the conqueror. But  
Montenegro was at odds with itself, rent and torn.  
Before it ever burst into the round of blood and fire [...] war had  
reopened all its wounds, the frantic feuds and insensate hatreds  
among the Montenegrins themselves.

“Montenegro” by Milovan Đilas (1911-1995)

I fear them not, this Devil's spawn,  
Though they be thick as autumn leaves,  
But I have fear of ills at home!  
Our kinsmen wild have own'd Mahomet's Name;  
And if the renegades we should attack,  
Their Serbian kindred never would desert them;  
Our land would be o'erwhelm'd in tribal strife,  
And there would rule red carnage and great gore.

“The Mountain Wreath” by Petar Petrović Njegoš (1813-1851)

## Introduction

This chapter draws from primary documents and secondary sources to illustrate the situation in Montenegro before the war, and to trace the main developments that led to mobilization in the 1941 insurgency and the 1942 civil war. It demonstrates an important link between armed actor behavior and mobilization outcomes in a segmentary society. To do so, it first argues, relying on accounts of pre-war Montenegro, that this was indeed a society where tribal organization still had a functional role, and it introduces the main actors in the Second World War.

In the second part, the Chapter shows that the extent and speed of the insurgency against the Italians were primarily related to the organization of social groups. It then argues that insurgent decisions regarding warfare, unit organization, the establishment of institutions, and the use of violence all affected social group cohesion. It ends with the documents that show how mobilization has changed because of these decisions and how support shifted to the rival armed organization.

### 4.1 Montenegro before the war

Tribal organization: *“like federal units”*

In the Slavic-speaking part of the Balkans, the tribal organization has only survived to the modern period in Montenegro and, to a lesser extent, in Herzegovina.<sup>1</sup> The idea of a tribe as a constitutive unit of a state was deeply ingrained in the worldview of the Montenegrins up until the early 20th century. Take, for instance, the first sentences from the primary school geography textbook from the turn of the century Montenegro. “People live in houses. Villages or towns are places where several houses are nearby. Several villages form a tribe. Several tribes constitute nahiye, and several nahiye make a state.”<sup>2</sup> Many participants in the Second World War were likely to have learned these lines by heart as children. How did the traditional tribal life look like, and how much of it had survived at that point?

Tribes were a dominant form of social and political organization during the Ottoman period and only started dissolving with the ascent of the nation-state. With the foundation of Montenegrin state and the incorporation of the tribes, tribes were losing their independence, so that by the interwar period, many characteristics of autonomous political entities have already waned.<sup>3</sup> In a 1928 speech at a party conference, Andrija Radović, a pre-war politician from a prominent Bjelopavlići political family, reflected on the shifting identities: “My grandfather was Bjelopavlići, my father was Montenegrin, I am Serb, and my son will be Yugoslav, perhaps even I will be.”<sup>4</sup>

By the onset of the Second World War, most traditional tribal roles have passed permanently to the state, but the state didn’t fully replace the tribal organization of the society. The dissolution of the tribal organization in Montenegro was not even close to complete. This is essential for the

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1 Šobajčić 1923, 103.

2 Popović 1899. Nahiye were administrative units in the Ottoman period.

3 Šobajčić 1923, 104.

4 Politika 20/10/1928, 2.

analysis of the tribal mobilization in the wartime. If the social groups are to mobilize in war, they need to be “real” before the war too.

#### *Historical tribes as political-military units*

Historically, tribes were the main political-military units that had made war and peace with their neighbors, not unlike mini-states. The conflicts among the tribes were primarily about the communal resources – mountain pastures, forests, or water. The permanent settlements were rarely disputed. The conflicts would sometimes be resolved peacefully, but most often, they would cause what the tribesmen called “wars.”<sup>5</sup>

When a tribal war would break out, a whole tribe would mobilize to capture the territory of another tribe. The fighting was as harsh as when fighting the outsiders. Casualties were high, and villages were burned and plundered. The defeated tribe would have to rescind the territory, but it would also plan the opportunity to return it, which made conflicts cyclical and often involved outsiders into the disputes.<sup>6</sup>

There were also instances of cooperation between the tribes. Alliances were possible if tribal interests did not conflict - for instance, if they did not share a border, or had had hard geographic borders that weren't disputed, as well as sharing a history of peacefully regulated relations.<sup>7</sup> When alliances were formed, the resources taken in the wars were shared among the allies.<sup>8</sup>

Cooperation between the tribes was strengthened through marriage ties. High status houses were marrying into families of similar status from other tribes. These kinds of relationships could not prevent the hostilities, but rather open some channels for communication.<sup>9</sup> Besides the marriage ties, other factors opened the space for cooperation. These were tribal assemblies and patron saint celebrations, where members of other tribes would visit. Tribes were also developing trading relations, mostly barter, and it was in the interest of higher status families to maintain these ties.<sup>10</sup>

#### *The permeation of the state authority*

The state entry into tribal relations was a long process of establishing the state's monopoly over the instruments of power. The tribal independence was unchecked until 1851 when Prince Danilo organized the modern state and started the pushback against the tribal autonomy.<sup>11</sup> When the borderland Kuči tribe refused to pay taxes in 1856, they were met with a ruthless response – a lesson to other tribes to defer to state sovereignty. However, even though the state was gradually imposing its power, it never tried to eliminate the tribes, and instead relied on tribal self-governance.

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5 Vlahović 1939, 184.

6 Vlahović 1939, 184.

7 Vlahović 1939, 124.

8 Šobajić 1923, 105, Vlahović 1939, 184.

9 Vlahović 1939, 185.

10 Vlahović 1939, 186.

11 Prince Danilo was soon assassinated by one of the Bjelopavlići tribesmen.

The state allowed tribes to prevent the purchase of property from the outside of the tribe. This way, tribal communal property survived into the twentieth century. State also maintained the existing identities and internal hierarchies of the tribes, working more on the cooptation of its leadership than its elimination. One example of how the state elevated identity and the leadership of the tribes is the collection of poems that Montenegrin last King Nikola created for each tribe, similar to tribal anthems.<sup>12</sup>

The state was a protector of tribal traditions and respected the status of its distinguished brotherhoods. Each tribe was choosing its leadership, including in the state military. Tribes not only maintained the communal property, but they also expanded their territories when their soldiers fought against the external enemies. "Tribes themselves decided on the tribal matters, as long as they do not conflict with other tribes or the state."<sup>13</sup>

Another way in which the state was allowing practices inherited from the tribal period to persevere was its attitude towards intrapersonal conflicts. Even though feuding was illegal since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the court practice, even under the Yugoslav legal system, still treated motives of blood revenge as a mitigating circumstance. The court evaluated the motives following the popular understanding of a crime as an honorable act.<sup>14</sup> When the law regulating carrying guns was introduced in Yugoslavia, it made an exemption for Montenegrins in traditional clothing, allowing them to carry guns openly.<sup>15</sup>

An author writing in 1939 compared this changing position of tribes through an analogy with states and international relations. The original tribal order in the period before the ascent of Montenegrin state looked "...like a primary form of states, and the inter-tribal relations were similar to contemporary international relations."<sup>16</sup> However, in the period after the state encroachment, the analogy changed, and now "the highland tribes are more like federal units."<sup>17</sup>

How much of tribal life had survived by 1939? "Although the real tribal life of highlanders is dissolving, it maintained until today many characteristics from the near past, and it will take a long time until tribal divisiveness and sensitivity disappear." The assessment was based on the observation that conflicts about communal land are still alive: "It is easier to accept the appropriation or plunder of personal property than of the communes." Indeed, several documented cases of inter-tribal conflicts about the land occurred in the inter-war period.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, the competition between and among the tribes has, to an extent, transferred to the political life of interwar Montenegro. "The voters in one tribe will not likely elect someone from a different tribe. They will even prefer a complete outsider than someone from another tribe..."<sup>19</sup> Sekula Drljević, a pre-war federalist politician, who cooperated with Italy at the start of

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12 Vlahović 1939, 187.

13 Vlahović 1939, 123.

14 Šćepanović 2003, 185.

15 Zakon o nošenju i držanju oružja, Arhiv Jugoslavije, fond 63, fascikla 48.

16 Vlahović 1939, 123.

17 Vlahović 1939, 124.

18 Vlahović 1939, 189.

19 Vlahović 1939, 189.

the war, succinctly described the political-military nexus: “Montenegrins are not a homogenous mass but a community of tribes [...] in peacetime, tribes are basic components of state’s life, and in the wartime, units of the Montenegrin army.”<sup>20</sup>

The traditional political-military functions of tribes in Montenegro fully conform to the ideal type of segmentary society. Significant changes occurred in the process of state-building, but the state had not thoroughly permeated the tribal society. Instead, it had allowed the tribes to persevere up to the Second World War. The economic organization, the administrative division, and military organization had maintained tribal units until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Internal tribal hierarchies were coopted instead of suppressed, which allowed both horizontal and vertical ties that maintain social groups to be in place.

The social structure that rested on social groups still had meaning and performed important social, economic, and political roles. The next two sections will briefly describe the economic and political conditions in Montenegro immediately before the war.

Economic and political conditions: *“kin is always closer”*

During the interwar period, Montenegro was an underdeveloped, primarily agricultural land. Almost 80% of its sparse population was agrarian, and only 10% was engaged in trade, craft, or industry.<sup>21</sup> Only 43% of the total population was literate, with high variation across counties. In the mountainous areas, the percentage of the literate population was under 30, while in the coastal areas, it reached 70 percent.<sup>22</sup>

Agricultural land covered 39% of the territory of Montenegro, while forests covered 44%.<sup>23</sup> The structure of land ownership shows that small properties (less than 5 hectares) account for almost three-quarters of the total number of holdings.<sup>24</sup> However, the arable land was only a fraction of total land used in agriculture, as 87% was composed of pastures, meadows, and reeds.<sup>25</sup> Another important feature is the type of ownership. The data on the type of ownership of agricultural land was not collected in the interwar period. However, the evidence shows that a significant ratio of the land used for husbandry was still owned collectively by villages, brotherhoods, or tribes. The traditional tribal arrangement of collective ownership, called “komunica”<sup>26</sup> also existed for the forests, the primary industrial product of the country. The percentage of forest size collectively owned by villages, municipalities, brotherhoods, and tribes was 63% in 1938.<sup>27</sup>

Before the war, Montenegro was a land of peasants. The sustenance typically depended on small individual farms close to houses, as well as on the participation in collective ownership and production. The broader social structure in which individuals were embedded was still

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20 Drljević 1944, 45-46.

21 Medenica 2007, 29.

22 Medenica 2007, 35.

23 Medenica 2007, 36.

24 Medenica 2007, 37.

25 Medenica 2007, 43.

26 Ćirić-Bogetić 1966.

27 Medenica 2007, 94.

significant for the everyday life of Montenegrin peasants. Tribes and brotherhoods still marshaled most of the resources necessary for the peasants' survival.

The political dynamics of interwar Montenegro, on the other hand, could be divided into two parts. Immediately after the unification with Serbia, a period of scattered armed resistance to the central government lasted until 1929.<sup>28</sup> The primary political cleavage in this period was between two factions, the proponents of federalism, "the Greens," and the supporters of centralization, or "the Whites."<sup>29</sup> The Communist Party was also active in this period, and at the only elections in which it could participate before being banned, in 1920, it received a significant percentage of votes. Later on, the support for communists, working illegally, petered out.<sup>30</sup>

After King Aleksandar introduced dictatorship in 1929, the political life stagnated. The work of political parties was eventually reintroduced, and elections were held again, with no secret ballot, banned anti-system parties, and limited suffrage. Politics mostly revolved around the work of branches of several centralist parties headquartered in Belgrade. The political base of these parties in Montenegro largely depended not on ideology but the strength in numbers, derived from the kinship groups of the leading politicians.<sup>31</sup> As a keen political observer noted in 1939: "Perhaps the sentiments of brotherhoods and tribes are the real hindrance to the development of political life. A tribe votes for their tribesmen and support him politically, as if they are voting for a tribal chief, and not for a member of the parliament. From a tribal perspective, the kin is always closer than the like-minded."<sup>32</sup>

The political life in pre-war Montenegro was highly turbulent in the early 1920s, with strong anti-system political movements. The worsening socio-economic conditions in the 1930s perhaps increased the role that tribal structure already had in local politics and weakened the salience of ideological cleavages. However, when the war started in 1941, tribes and brotherhoods mobilized for the insurgency against the Italian occupation, and during the civil war, they joined rival armed forces.

#### Armed actors: *dramatis personae*

When the Second World War started in Yugoslavia, the Royal Yugoslav Army in Montenegro was defeated by the Italian Royal Army.<sup>33</sup> The Yugoslav Army had capitulated, and the Italian Army had taken over civilian and military administration in Montenegro. In this environment, three main local groups had appeared in Montenegro during 1941 and 1942.

The first local armed actor to emerge in the war were the Communists (Partisans).<sup>34</sup> The Communist Party was an illegal organization whose social base was mostly made up of workers, students, and intellectuals. Their ideology centered on the social revolution and the establishment of a communist state. The Party had organized armed actors before the start of

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28 Rastoder 2005.

29 Rastoder 1996.

30 Lakić 1981, 26.

31 Rastoder 1996.

32 Đonović 1939, 9.

33 Goddi 2017.

34 Pavlowitch 2008.

the insurgency. Once the insurgency began, the Communists became the main organizers of rebellion, and they formed military units, which were called “Guerilla,” and then “Insurgent” until October 1941. After that, they become known as Partisans. Montenegrin Partisans, led by Josip Broz Tito, who was at the time located in Serbia, were responsible for initially driving the insurgency and setting up the first bodies of the rebel government. They lost the civil war in Montenegro in 1942 and retreated to Bosnia, only to return in 1943 and finish the civil war as the winning side.

The second group was the Nationalists, also known as the Chetniks.<sup>35</sup> When the Royal Yugoslav Army capitulated, some of its members fled to the hills. They formed what became known as the “Yugoslav Army in the Homeland” led by Colonel Dragoljub Mihailović, also located in Serbia during the 1941 insurgency. Chetniks had a conservative ideology that advocated the return of the monarchy. In Montenegro, they found support among bureaucrats, military and police officers, as well as more prosperous peasants. Unlike the well-organized Communist Party that operated clandestinely, this was a more heterogeneous and loosely organized actor. Chetniks became the leading party in the civil war against the Partisans, actively cooperating with the Italian authorities, and making a temporary alliance with the third side in the war, the Greens. Chetniks won the first phase of the civil war and ruled Montenegro undisrupted until 1943, when a new phase of the civil war started, one which they eventually lost.

Finally, the third party in Montenegro were the Federalists (often called the Separatists, or the Greens).<sup>36</sup> Its leadership came from the interwar Federalist Party, which advocated for Montenegrin independence and shared a similar social basis as the Chetniks. Their territorial basis was the surroundings of Cetinje, a county of the capital city. The ideology of the Federalists was conservative and nationalist. However, they maintained the closest cooperation with the Italian authorities. Among several leaders of units that cooperated with the Italians, and which eventually unified, General Krsto Popović, one of the leaders of the interwar insurgency, became the commander for the duration of the war. In an ironic turn of event, the Federalists allied with the Chetniks, their pre-war enemies, against the Communists, their pre-war allies. Like the Chetniks, they also ended up on the losing side.

During the civil war, the distinction between the Chetniks and the Separatists was not always clear. The close cooperation between these two political actors was operationalized in the formation of the “National” forces, and for the sake of clarity, throughout the rest of the thesis, these units are called “Nationalists.” The final terminological note regards the use of the term “tribe” and “brotherhood.” These terms are the literal translations of words used in Montenegro. On the other hand, the alternative term often used in the literature, “clan” is more associated with organized crime networks. For these reasons, these literal translations are a better choice of terms for the segmentary groups in Montenegro.

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<sup>35</sup> Tomasevich 1975.

<sup>36</sup> Pajović 1977.

## 4.2 The 1941 insurgency

The Second World War started in Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941. The Kingdom was swiftly run over by the overwhelming Axis forces. Italy occupied all of the territories of the Adriatic coast, including Montenegro. There were not many disruptions in the Italian occupied part of Montenegro, Italy kept the complete state apparatus that existed on the day of occupation running.<sup>37</sup> Compared to surrounding parts of Yugoslavia, the conditions were relatively mild, and other than some arrests, for more than two months, no big events had happened. Italy framed the occupation as a liberation of Montenegro from the Versailles-imposed Serbian rule.<sup>38</sup> However, when on July 12, the assembly in Cetinje declared the independence of Montenegro under Italian protectorate, the uprising exploded.<sup>39</sup>

Participation: *“fast as lightning”*

Most of what we know about these events of weeks and months after the July 13 start of the uprising comes from the Partisan documents. These describe how they saw insurgency spread: “[The news of insurgency] spread fast as lightning to the most remote villages, much faster than the Partisans could carry it. [...] the meetings started, assemblies of villagers, somewhere in cooperation with the Partisans, somewhere furtively, a village would connect to a village, tribe to a tribe, often beyond our networks...”<sup>40</sup> In some regions in only a few days, almost all men have mobilized.<sup>41</sup> In a matter of days and weeks, some 32000 insurgents<sup>42</sup> managed to take control of almost all of the countryside, six out of twelve county seats, and almost all smaller towns.<sup>43</sup> Italian battle death casualties were high, estimated to 735, while only 72 insurgents were killed.<sup>44</sup> How was this possible? How did these poorly equipped small bands of peasants bring such defeat to the army of the “Empire on the Mediterranean”?<sup>45</sup>

These were not ordinary rural civilians that Italian soldiers in Balkans were expecting to encounter.<sup>46</sup> As the news of insurgency spread, the civilians were following a well-known pattern of behavior. The brotherhoods were forming smaller military units, and together they were forming larger tribal units. A Partisan report from the battle led by the coastal Brajići tribe describes the high level of organization which led to the attack on the Italian forces, with the Partisans barely coping with following them into the combat.<sup>47</sup> The insurgents’ effectiveness also depended on superior knowledge of the terrain. They could outmaneuver regular Italian troops, who had little experience in fighting in these mountains.<sup>48</sup>

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37 Jovanović 1960, 21.

38 Jovanović 22.

39 ZNOR III/4, 389

40 ZNOR III/1, 86.

41 Jovanović 119.

42 Jovanović 257.

43 Jovanović 258.

44 Jovanović 259, ZNOR III/4, 19.

45 Burgwyn, 2005.

46 Jovanović 269.

47 Jovanović 143-145.

48 Jovanović 218-219.

The mobilization did not progress uniformly across Montenegro. The tribesmen would make decisions, including ones about their position in the conflict at large assemblies, and their decisions varied.<sup>49</sup> One Partisan report from the Banjani tribe complained about the speed of mobilization: “for every single thing, Banjani organize brotherhood counseling, so everything goes slow and unpredictable with them.”<sup>50</sup> Tribal assemblies communicated with the armed insurgents, sometimes inviting the leaders to the assembly to make their case.<sup>51</sup>

The Communists were the first of armed actors to emerge in Montenegro after the collapse of the old country. Before the insurgency, there were around 1800 Communist Party members in Montenegro, mostly armed and combat trained.<sup>52</sup> When the insurgency started, the Communists were trying to get hold of the situation. Insurgent tribes were looking for their support, and on the other hand, army leaders were trying to put their people at the head of the local insurgencies.<sup>53</sup> The first element of mobilization, readiness to participate, was mostly there, and the main task for the Communists was recruitment. For that purpose, the Communists would try to exert their influence in these tribal assemblies, usually by trying to put their people at the helm.<sup>54</sup> At first, they have also preserved the traditional form of military organization.

Recruitment: *“in keeping with the old”*

Throughout the war, armed actors recruited based on tribal membership.<sup>55</sup> This was formalized in internal documents as the following of the pre-1916 Montenegrin people’s military organization.<sup>56</sup> October 1941 Partisan HQ instruction for Montenegro stated: “The battalions are formed [...] in keeping with the old Montenegrin formation. Therefore, battalions are formed based on larger brotherhoods, tribes, or municipalities. [...] named by national heroes, tribes, geographic features, etc. [...] so that the soldiers learn to love their units and compete with other such units.”<sup>57</sup>

What the Communists consciously capitalized upon was the attachment of individuals to their tribes. In their calls, the Communists were invoking the honor of the tribe, the historical examples of the tribe’s military achievements, and pointing to already mobilized neighboring tribes.<sup>58</sup> In a late 1941 declaration, the Communist Party addressed the people of three counties to join the Partisans, taking an effort to address each of the seventeen tribes and subtribes.<sup>59</sup>

When the communist military units recruited tribal units, they also absorbed the internal tribal hierarchy. These segmentary units were cohesive hierarchical organizations. On the top of the hierarchies were the tribal elders who waged immense authority and were a force to be

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49 Tribal assemblies were held, among other tribes, in: Rovci (ZNOR III/1, 39), Cuce (ZNOR III/1, 203), Bjelice (ZNOR III/1, 142), and Vasojevići (ZNOR III/5, 297).

50 ZNOR III/5, 112.

51 ZNOR III/1, 205.

52 Jovanović 45-46.

53 ZNOR XIV/2, 99.

54 ZNOR III/1, 203.

55 ZNOR III/1, 173.

56 Jovanović 57.

57 ZNOR III/1, 52, 56.

58 ZNOR III/1, 173, III/1, 384, XIV/2, 719, III/6, 295.

59 ZNOR III/1, 373.

reckoned with.<sup>60</sup> These hierarchical organizations exerted a strong influence on their members, and they steered the group's behavior.<sup>61</sup>

Tribal groups were virtually self-defense units, aiming for the protection of the tribes' property, honor, and lives.<sup>62</sup> They would oppose the occupying forces as much as it was needed to increase their security, but then they would avoid taking any unnecessary risks. The preference was always to act unanimously and to avoid internal divisions, and this insistence on maintaining internal cohesion sometimes frustrated the armed actors throughout the war.<sup>63</sup>

Tribesmen were physically tied to their houses, and tribal territory, ready to die defending it, but not so eager to move away from it, and when they did, they would try to return as soon as possible.<sup>64</sup> The Partisan documents complained about this extreme parochialism<sup>65</sup> - tribesmen were "paying too much attention to their house, their sheep, their wife, and children."<sup>66</sup>

This had direct effects on the inner working of the military units. In the first phase of the insurgency, the unit commanders were chosen by tribesmen, not appointed from above.<sup>67</sup> The military leadership cadres looked much more like tribally representative bodies, rather than operative commands.<sup>68</sup> This meant the Partisans could not take disciplinary action against the soldiers.<sup>69</sup> There was a limit to deference, as the commanders who were members of the tribes could not severely punish their kinsmen.<sup>70</sup>

One more property of the tribe would prove to be of great consequence. Tribes had a traditional way of regulating conflict within and among the segments. The security of the tribesman in the peacetime was regulated by the practice of collective revenge. Members of the family, brotherhood, or tribe, were morally obliged to respond to kin's death by retaliating against the culprit or their kin. In wartime, the mechanism would still apply. Also, the power balance between the tribes was considered. The leaning of one tribe towards one of the armed actors affected the calculus of the other.<sup>71</sup> The encounters from different tribes in the same armed faction were often laden with suspicion and misunderstanding.<sup>72</sup> The extent of this careful consideration went so far that, for instance, tribesmen from one village in Njeguši tribe were wary of participating in the attack on the Italians in the neighboring village, fearing not the Italians, but the possible repercussion on the relations with their neighbors in the same tribe.<sup>73</sup>

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60 ZNOR III/1, 174, III/4, 46.

61 ZNOR III/9, 602.

62 ZNOR III/1, 203, III/4, 101, III/4, 383.

63 ZNOR III/7, 555.

64 Jovanović 588, ZNOR III/1 389, Jovanović 283.

65 ZNOR II/3, 462.

66 ZNOR III/9, 225.

67 Jovanović 120.

68 Jovanović 590.

69 ZNOR III/2, 23.

70 Jovanović 589.

71 ZNOR III/4, 185, III/2, 225, III/5, 115.

72 ZNOR III/2, 7.

73 Jovanović 105-106, ZNOR III/1, 28.

Such drawbacks of the tribal military organization became apparent early on,<sup>74</sup> but the Partisans did not have the capacity to change this type of organization. In a series of letters, from autumn 1941 to spring 1942, the supreme commander Tito heavily criticized Montenegrin Partisan leadership for what he called “succumbing to the preferences from below.”<sup>75</sup> The Supreme command was pushing the local Partisans to be more energetic in their relations with the rank and file and to overcome these tribal constraints. But even direct threats that their behavior would be treated as disobedience did not change things.<sup>76</sup> The frustration caused by the recruitment of cohesive groups was evident.

In the later phase of the civil war, when the anti-communists started mobilizing, they followed the same pattern, forming their units on a tribal basis.<sup>77</sup> As it soon became apparent, the Nationalists were struggling with the same properties of the tribal army.<sup>78</sup> They worried about the effects of tribal cohesion on military and political performance. “Alas,” one Nationalist officer complained, “when a man is valued by the number of his guns and the strength of the tribe, and not by his dedication to the organization or his commitment to work.”<sup>79</sup>

The armed actors in the insurgency were using the potential of cohesive groups to mobilize effectively. However, they were also aware of the problems that cohesive hierarchical groups made to the military and political goals. The next sections expand on this through the four main dimensions of interaction between armed actors and civilians.

#### Warfare: “*just read Lenin*”

One of the fundamental questions of warfare involves the choice between small scale guerilla warfare and frontal confrontation. In Montenegro, this problem became one of the central issues of the Second World War and was discussed by politicians, historians, and the military for decades to come. The primary debate was about the relationship between central and local commands and their interpretation of the events in the insurgency.

On July 4, 1941, after Germany attacked the Soviet Union, but before the start of the insurgency in Montenegro, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, located in Serbia at the time, decided to start low-intensity guerilla warfare and a campaign of diversions.<sup>80</sup> This order (No1) was then sent to the Montenegro Committee, which, after necessary preparation, sent order (No2) on July 10, calling their local units to start forming small guerilla units.<sup>81</sup> The goal was to mobilize enough people who would be “peasants by day and guerillas by night” – there would be no formation of conventional military units.<sup>82</sup>

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74 ZNOR III/1, 203.

75 ZNOR III/1, 203-205, III/1, 234.

76 ZNOR III/1, 258.

77 ZNOR III/3, 80, XIV/2, 716.

78 ZNOR III/3, 362, ZNOR XIV/2, 1027, ZNOR XIV/3, 16.

79 ZNOR XIV/2, 793.

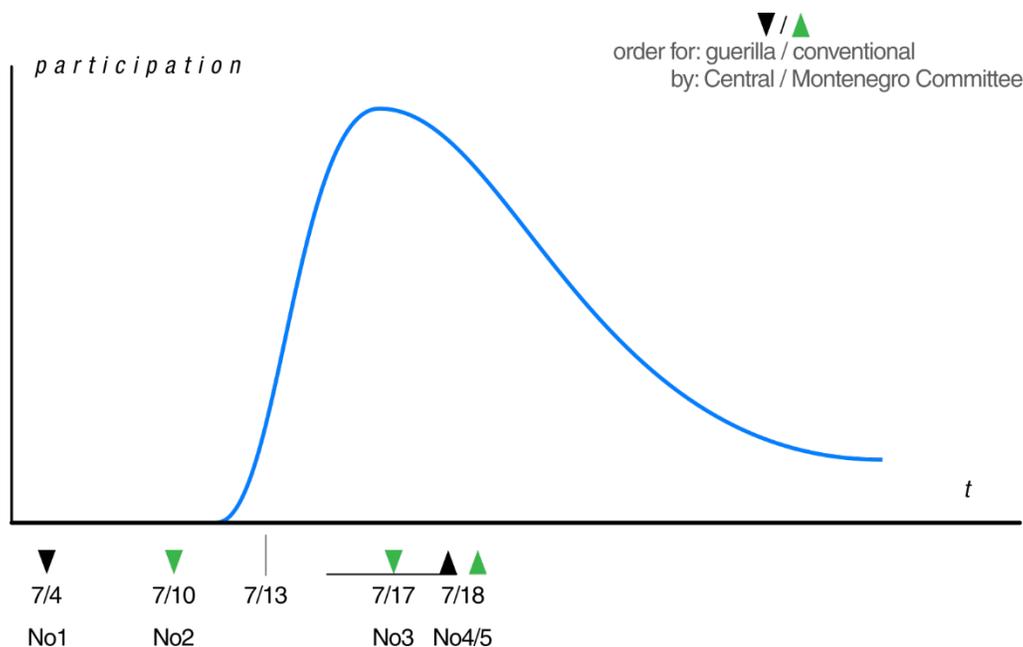
80 Jovanović 73.

81 ZNOR III/1 272.

82 Jovanović 269.

However, when the insurgency started on July 13, it was not a guerilla war, but frontal warfare. The mobilized tribes preferred to take safety in numbers and overwhelm the Italians. Their cohesion enabled this through fast and extensive mobilization. In only a couple of days, most of Montenegro was controlled. Not having a connection with the Central Committee, and working under the existing order of July 4, the troops were ordered to disband and return to their homes on July 17 (Order No 3).<sup>83</sup> What they did not know was that the Central Committee was informed of insurgency and had sent another order (No 4), which took time to reach Montenegro. It only did so a day after they already called most of the insurgents to go home. Having been caught in a complicated situation, the Montenegrin Party had no other choice but to send yet another order on July 18, this time calling for a full-scale insurgency after the momentum had already been lost (Order No 5).<sup>84</sup> The succession of orders compared to the dynamics of insurgency is schematized in Figure 4.1.<sup>85</sup>

Figure 4.1: Dynamics of mobilization and the Communist Party orders



The communication between the higher and lower command levels revealed that the central command instigated the orders, uninformed about the developments in Montenegro. A critical letter from the Central Committee to the Montenegrin Communists from November 10 says: “your perspective on the development of the insurgency was wrong. You were at the tail of the events [...] you do not see that there is no contradiction between partisan warfare and popular uprising, partisan warfare is, under certain conditions, a form of insurgency. Just read Lenin’s 1905 article on the proletarian revolution, and this will become clear to you...”<sup>86</sup> This was of a way to save face, and the real problem was that the military decisions about the recruitment and

<sup>83</sup> ZNOR III/1, 229.

<sup>84</sup> Jovanović 270.

<sup>85</sup> The graph shows a model of July participation dynamics. The data will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

<sup>86</sup> ZNOR III/1, 228.

warfare tactics did not match the dynamics of participation, and as a consequence, mobilization was affected. Tribes maintained their cohesion in the frontal formation and the order to disband exposed them to unwanted risk at that phase of the insurgency.

Unit organization: "*your brigades are not here*"

The other pressing issue was the question of creating territorial or mobile units. The official unit formation principle in 1941 was tribal-territorial. However, this was from the beginning, a choice imposed by the circumstances, which went against the idea of the Central Committee. What Tito had wanted to see implemented in practice in Montenegro was a switch to guerilla warfare: avoiding frontal combat, with mobile units, not the ones living at homes.<sup>87</sup> The goal was not to capture and hold villages and cities. Instead of protecting the territory, the main goal was to protect personnel and steadily increase it by continually keeping it on the move.<sup>88</sup> The orders were to reorganize the units from the territorial to mobile principle. Nevertheless, this did not happen in Montenegro, despite almost a year of constant attempts.

The low mobility of units in Montenegro was criticized throughout 1941.<sup>89</sup> The first mobile battalions were made only in December 1941 when around 320 Montenegrin soldiers joined the "Proletarian brigades."<sup>90</sup> They were told they would fight on all territories of Yugoslavia until the end of the war and also until the end of the revolution. These were the first mobile but also the first fully ideologically fortified units.<sup>91</sup>

The Partisans Supreme Command wanted this replicated through Montenegro, and in December, they ordered the local HQ to form more brigades. However, they could not deliver.<sup>92</sup> On March 7, 1942, the HQ informed the Supreme Command that it had finally solved the problem. However, they had only created shock units inside the existing territorial battalions, with personnel staying in the previous units, and being called to move based on need.<sup>93</sup> This was not well received by Tito, who then gave them a direct order on March 10 to form mobile brigades<sup>94</sup> and gave them ten days. However, again, they did not deliver.<sup>95</sup>

The Partisans were shifting blame, unable to form mobile units from recruited tribal groups. Tito blamed the Montenegrin Partisan commanders. In an April 10 letter to his delegate in Montenegro, he writes: "appoint courageous and committed officers, who will follow the orders and finally understand out battle tactics."<sup>96</sup> In response, the delegate was blaming the soldiers: „you need to understand, everybody is in the Partisans here: the fifth column, the volatile ones, people who were yesterday our open enemies... We do have enough personnel [...] but your brigades are not here. That is the problem."<sup>97</sup> What he was saying is that the soldiers were

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87 ZNOR II/3, 241-243.

88 ZNOR II/3, 353-357.

89 ZNOR III/1, 164.

90 ZNOR III/1, 354.

91 Jovanović 396.

92 ZNOR III/1, 409.

93 ZNOR II/3, 72-79.

94 ZNOR II/3, 96-98.

95 Jovanović 596.

96 ZNOR II/3, 361-366.

97 ZNOR III/4, 216.

there, but not the kind of soldiers who could form this mobile army. Again the critical part that was missing from the picture was that the tribal hierarchy could not be molded as easily as the Partisans supreme command had expected.

The decision to disband all units formed on a brotherhood-tribal basis happened only on April 17, 1942, during the civil war. From then on, units were to be formed “voluntarily, as a permanent (standing) army which will stay until the end of the liberation war.”<sup>98</sup> In the coming months, as Partisans in Montenegro were losing the civil war, mobile battalions were finally being formed, as the army was retreating - more of a necessity than a strategic success.<sup>99</sup> It was only when the Partisan units were reduced to the core combatants, and had lost all incidental combatants with strong horizontal ties that this change became possible.

At the end of this long process, Tito started to accept the reality of waging war in tribal Montenegro. On May 26, he writes that not even sending five proletarian brigades could help Montenegro, instead, a “complete u-turn in waging war is needed.”<sup>100</sup> On June 2, he writes a final condemnation that must have stung the pride of the Durmitor unit commanders whom it was addressed: “Do not follow the Montenegrin way of combat... it cannot yield any results to us.”<sup>101</sup>

Partisan decisions about guerilla warfare and unit organization affected the cohesion of social groups, which had resisted these changes. However, the groups still participated in 1941, as being led by the Partisans in combat was not the same as being ruled by them.

Civilian institutions: “*all previous organs of government are abolished*”

Communists were not only trying to win the war but also to carry out a revolution. Throughout the war, the Communist Party had political representatives in the military units. At the start of the insurgency, these were called “people liaisons,” with a limited role of providing a link with the civilians.<sup>102</sup> In October 1941, they were renamed to “political commissars,” and their roles were expanded, citing experiences of civil wars in Spain, China, and Mongolia.<sup>103</sup> Their role was to provide contact between the military and civilians. They also monitored military commanders’ decisions, and they had the power to recall them for political reasons, as long as they could justify the recall to the party leaders. Their third role was to ensure the combatants’ morale and battle readiness.<sup>104</sup>

The political wing was essential in the conception of a revolutionary army. Tito would insist that the military should be in the function of the political and not the other way around. “Partisan units are – just like any other mass organization - a conveyor between the party and the masses.”<sup>105</sup> When the Partisans experienced problems in mobilization, they were increasingly

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98 ZNOR III/3, 80.

99 Jovanović 607, 609.

100 ZNOR II/4, 190.

101 Jovanović 594.

102 ZNOR III/4, 10.

103 Jovanović 325-326.

104 Jovanović 325-326.

105 ZNOR III/1, 367.

finding reasons for that in the insufficient zeal of the political wing, so stricter measures were ordered to influence the mobilization.<sup>106</sup> As was argued before, the problems of participation and deference to orders had more to do with the social structure of the combatants and their kin ties to the commanders. The activity of political wings could not change that, but it could have had adverse effects.

The presence of political officers in the military units was a divisive issue from the beginning of the insurgency. At the meeting with the former Royal officers in Andrijevica, they were refusing to accept the commissioners' role, saying that as soldiers, they wage war and do not engage in politics.<sup>107</sup> At one of the many meetings of officers and NCOs in the town of Berane early in the insurgency, there was a big argument between communists and anti-communists about the strategy. The most significant objections were made against the representatives of the Communist Party having any role in either military or political decision making. Accepting the authority of the Communist Party members over time became one of the reasons why cooperation with non-communists was gradually failing.<sup>108</sup>

The main reason that created a political opposition to the Communists was the nature of their rule in the territories they controlled. On July 27 the Montenegrin Partisans proclaimed themselves to be the supreme military and civilian authority in the country.<sup>109</sup> However, more important than the proclamation was the issue of the type of institutions the Partisans would want to have in the territory they controlled. In two neighboring counties, Berane and Andrijevica, two assemblies regarding the institutions of rebel government took place on the same day in July 1941. The Partisans wanted all bodies of government, which were set up either during Yugoslavia or by Italy, to be disbanded, and "People's Liberation Committees" were formed to take over.<sup>110</sup>

During the meetings, divisions emerged. Communist leaders wanted to create new organs of government and insisted they could not be the same as they were in former Yugoslavia. Against them were the conservative representatives who insisted that the nature of government should remain the same as before. The different opinions quickly escalated to the point of both sides accusing the other of being "enemies of the people."<sup>111</sup> Eventually, the municipal presidents were dismissed and replaced with temporary ones, who were supposed to serve until elections, which in some places never happened because of the Italian counterinsurgency.<sup>112</sup> The fact that the non-communists felt cheated after this did not help future cooperation.

These initial failures to agree on the type of civilian institutions affected the support for the Communists in the long run. The reason was that the political divisions also ran along the lines of social status in social groups. The non-communist leaders were officers, intellectuals,

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106 ZNOR III/1, 146-153.

107 Jovanović 205.

108 Jovanović 246.

109 ZNOR III/1, 23, ZNOR III/1, 91.

110 Jovanović 239-240.

111 Jovanović 242.

112 Jovanović 241.

pensioners, bureaucrats, gendarmes, and rich peasants.<sup>113</sup> They were from well-known, powerful brotherhoods, over which they had influence.<sup>114</sup> When they started becoming the opposition to communists, they influenced their whole brotherhoods. These processes were driving political divisions during 1941. The final junction was the November 20 Partisans order that proclaimed: “all previous organs of government ... are abolished, and we cease to recognize them.”<sup>115</sup>

Communists were not only changing the government, but they were also profoundly changing the relations between the government and society. In the territories which they controlled, the Communists were setting up a new system of Popular Liberation Committees responsible for far-reaching policies. The committees had judicial functions – the village level was the court of the first instance, and the municipal was second.<sup>116</sup> Trade was taxed on all territories,<sup>117</sup> prices were strictly controlled, and smuggling was sanctioned.<sup>118</sup> Requisitions for military needs were usual, but also the food was redistributed from those who had more to those who had none.<sup>119</sup> Finally, and not the least important, the land was redistributed to the small owners or the landless, sometimes through coercion.<sup>120</sup>

Even though the communist organization had clear ideological precepts, there were no political consequences for the mobilization during the early insurgency. However, in the later phase, once the Communists established control and started ruling, the political differences emerged, and the participation declined. The new institutions subverted existing hierarchies and caused resentment. The tribes were still participating in the actions of the Partisan forces in the second half of 1941, but this was starting to change. These were gradual processes, but they were also increasingly catalyzed through the use of violence.

Selective violence: “*start with the liquidations*”

The violence does not stop after military combat. It continues as an instrument of control over civilians. Not all parties to the war exhibit the same patterns of violence. Italians used direct indiscriminate violence, but they also displaced many civilians to camps in Albania. Nationalists were committing both selective and indiscriminate violence, depending on the ethnic groups, and also operated many prisons. Partisans had prisons but did not rely on them as much,<sup>121</sup> and they did not displace civilians at any rate. Instead, they mostly participated in acts of precisely targeted selective violence. This violence was heating up as participation was slowing down and as political opposition was growing. It was, at the same time, a product and also a generative force of the conflict.

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113 Jovanović 486.

114 Jovanović 250.

115 ZNOR III/1, 170.

116 Jovanović 746-749.

117 Jovanović 704.

118 Jovanović 292.

119 Jovanović 719.

120 Jovanović 758.

121 Jovanović 240.

The “left deviations” as they became known were a campaign of selective violence against individuals who were considered a political threat. The campaign started to gain momentum around autumn 1941. The internal documents from the Montenegro Communist Party were straightforward: “all those who are today against the peoples’ war should be physically destroyed [...] It is most urgent to start with the liquidations...”<sup>122</sup> The HQ called for the fight against the “internal enemy.” Kangaroo courts were set up, with authority to impose death penalties for crimes including spying, demoralization, forceful resistance, and market speculation.<sup>123</sup> Among the targets were municipal presidents, gendarmerie commanders, and even former MPs.<sup>124</sup> However, because of the overlap between social and political hierarchies, what this campaign also led to was the elimination of a large number of high-status tribesmen.<sup>125</sup>

Not only were many high-status villagers killed this way, but many peasants were killed for even the smallest infractions. A report from November 1941 describes such an abuse of power. Among people accused of being the enemies, one villager was singled out: “...rather a typical village big mouth than a fifth column... but since he has a habit of insulting our fine comrades, and being a nuisance in the village [...] we should treat him as the fifth column.”<sup>126</sup> In December, the accumulated problems in party organizations were responded to with the orders to “cleanse” it, by punishing all breaches of party discipline, sabotage, and betrayal with the death penalty. Full jurisdiction was given to agents who were dispatched from the regional party committee to enforce these orders, even though these agents did not know well the local situation.<sup>127</sup>

Critical voices inside the party were pointing to possible blowbacks. A letter to the county party organization in Podgorica expresses fear that: “if not explained to the masses, the destruction of the fifth column will appear as terror.”<sup>128</sup> However, in other instances, the same organs criticized the local party committees for unnecessarily wasting time with trials, instead of proceeding with the executions.<sup>129</sup> The communist cadre worried about the perception and the framing of violence but did not ultimately question its justification.

The political situation at the end of winter was becoming bad for the Communists. Anti-communist propaganda effectively used high numbers of executed people.<sup>130</sup> Partisan leadership in Montenegro did not pay enough attention to the mechanisms of revenge,<sup>131</sup> and the executions had strong effects among the brotherhoods of the executed. The political opposition to the Communists skillfully used these mistakes too.<sup>132</sup>

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122 ZNOR III/1, 254, 256.

123 ZNOR III/1, 25.

124 Jovanović 298.

125 ZNOR III/4, 101, ZNOR III/1, 25.

126 ZNOR III/4, 47.

127 Jovanović 488.

128 Jovanović 723.

129 Jovanović 723.

130 Jovanović 541.

131 Jovanović 503.

132 Jovanović 723-4.

The Partisans supreme command was late to respond. In March 1942, Tito wrote: “what they need to do more is to persuade instead of executing and threatening. They cannot call the whole masses of people deserters, traitors...”<sup>133</sup> Tito was advising in November not to “bother with the old leaders who are now sabotaging the liberation struggle. Connect to their activists from below, attract them...”<sup>134</sup> However, even if this strategy was genuinely preferred, it was not probable. Connecting to the activists from below and bypassing tribal hierarchy could not work in this society, it would have only caused more resentment. It helped the political opposition grow, and eventually, everybody who was not openly supportive of communists was becoming a potential target. As this bifurcation followed the tribal lines as well as the hierarchical relations inside them, much of what followed in the course of the civil war was tribes mobilizing against the Communists. While military decisions caused frictions, status reversal and revenge were mechanisms that had pushed towards mobilization changes.

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133 ZNOR II/3, 113.  
134 ZNOR III/1, 229.

### 4.3 The 1942 civil war

After the July insurgency against the Italians, the communist military continued recruiting for the insurgency. However, the participation in the communist ranks was faltering, political opposition was developing, and the rival recruitment was starting. These processes led to the civil war mobilization.

#### Wavering participation: “*discontent through the tribal prism*”

After the initial success of insurgency, the participation rate declined. There were two main reasons. One was harsh Italian reprisals that followed the insurgency. However, the other was that the communist military and political decisions affected cohesion. With the increased insecurity, and with the armed actor working against the cohesion of the tribal groups, they began hedging.

Italian authorities also intentionally used tribal enmities to still the uprising,<sup>135</sup> often using disputes in order to get involved as arbiters.<sup>136</sup> There are reports of local disputes about the property being a cause to denunciate the neighbors as communists, leading to the Italian reprisals against all villagers.<sup>137</sup> One Partisan document from October 1941 describes an event in which the Italians used a person from a neighboring tribe to assassinate the Partisan leadership in another tribe. The person was described as a “traitor of his brave tribe,” and the report concludes: “By doing this the occupier wanted to drive a bloody knife between the two neighboring tribes.”<sup>138</sup> Tribal divisions and animosities gained momentum, and due to increased insecurity, tribes mostly became wearier of collaborating with insurgent armed actors.<sup>139</sup>

The previous sections demonstrated how insurgent leadership decisions contributed to the decline in participation. Segmentary groups, brotherhoods and tribes, preferred mass mobilization because this protected the intra-group cohesion, and avoided any possible splits that would harm the community. They approached combat frontally because fighting guerilla warfare would make the lives of their families and their property exposed to the enemy. They were organized in territorial instead of mobile units for a similar reason, but also because mobility increases the potential of inter-group conflicts with the neighboring tribes, of which tribes were increasingly weary.

The political wings in the military units established parallel chains of command, which collided with pre-existing social hierarchies. Tribes were self-policing their members, and this could not have been done by the outsiders, not even by the army. The elimination of the state apparatus and the creation of a power vacuum was disrupting intra-group dynamics. New policies that regulated ownership and production caused resentment. Eventually, coercion was used to resolve problems. Declining participation due to rising incompatibility of military and political decisions with the tribal cohesion lead to violence as a way to break the stalemate.

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135 ZNOR III/1, 21-24, III/4, 406.

136 ZNOR III/4, 47.

137 ZNOR III/9, 10.

138 ZNOR III/1, 115.

139 ZNOR III/1, 62.

The Communists were increasingly referring to political opposition in terms of class enemies. Nevertheless, in the tribal society, social status was tied to the tribal hierarchy and, therefore, kinship ties. For communists, this was a national-liberation war, which meant that alleged cooperation with the enemy was a sufficient reason for execution. It was also a revolution, which meant that class enemies were legitimate targets.

However, on the receiving side of this violence was a society in which an individual, be it a “collaborator” or a “capitalist,” was never isolated, but immersed in a dense and extensive social network. The killing of any individual tribesmen was triggering a process of revenge that started the vicious cycle that neither the Communists nor the tribesmen could stop. It was on top of this that the occupying forces actively played the revenge card and sponsored the creation of the rival anti-revolutionary forces.

The Partisan documents show they have been aware of the mechanism that was turning tribes against them. A report from December 1941 execution of a local elder is described as in general, “leaving good impression... [...] All villages, received the news with great joy, except Građani. We should see their discontent through the tribal prism.”<sup>140</sup> The killing of tribesmen by a Partisan would be followed by Partisan’s removal from the region, to avoid blood revenge by other tribe members.<sup>141</sup> One report warns directly: “It is a wrong thing to rely on blood revenge and local feuds for dealing with spies.”<sup>142</sup> Still, not enough was done to prevent these mechanisms.

To confront the problem of the low commitment of the “incidental” troops, the Partisans' strategy was to fortify and extend the ratio of “core” combatants. The critical elements of this strategy were thorough ideological socialization and an attempt to undermine the social hierarchy. A significant element that differentiated the Partisans from other armed actors involved in the war was their focus on both extensive recruitment and thorough socialization. The recruitment of tribal units was the focus in the first phase of the war, as was described earlier. However, the Communists were progressively widening their base from the “warrior-tribesman,” which can primarily be exemplified in their recruitment of women. The strategy was not only in line with the ideology they professed but also a way to undermine the patriarchal basis of the elders’ authority.

The socialization of combatants was indeed communists’ forte. They had set up a gradual system in which the Communist Party membership was at the top of a ladder of advancement. The party members were receiving training, where the information on the political situation in the world and country, the history of the Bolshevik party and the Revolution, and the basics of Leninism were combined with studying articles from the party newspapers.<sup>143</sup> In later phases, the job of the political commissars was expanding to include the training of the Partisan units who were not members of the party. There was a set of political topics tailored for discussions in all three forums - Party cells, regular Partisan units, and the civilians - which dealt with the

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140 ZNOR III/1, 343.  
141 ZNOR III/9, 211.  
142 ZNOR III/1, 63.  
143 Jovanović 45-46.

politics and the conduct of the war.<sup>144</sup> Partisans were responding to the problems of tribal mobilization by trying to create a more “model,” ideological army, consisting of highly committed, core combatants.

Women were active members of the Communist Party from the first days of occupation.<sup>145</sup> Women also participated in the insurgency, but not in high numbers<sup>146</sup> and mostly in ancillary or supporting roles.<sup>147</sup> Their role was, however, rapidly changing. As the civil war was starting in late 1941, more women started participating in the military. In some units, they made up to 20% of combatants.<sup>148</sup> This process became crucial after March 1942, when the situation for the Partisans became critical.<sup>149</sup> This did not go well with the perceived roles the women had had in society and was used as an argument against them.<sup>150</sup> Communists knew this all too well but valued the effects of women's participation more than they feared the backlash.<sup>151</sup> Adding to this, the Communists mostly recruited youth, another layer of society that was at odds with rigid tribal hierarchy.<sup>152</sup>

Whereas recruitment of the tribal groups was increasingly seen as problematic, relying on these sections of the society as the core of the new communist army was becoming essential. Either from virtue or necessity, the Communists looked further away from the “pillars” of tribal society, and towards the categories that were previously marginalized. The success of this strategy can be inferred from their mid-1942 unit statistics. Once the troops retreated from Montenegro, there were more than 400 women in two brigades, almost one quarter. The ratio was, according to Jovanović, more substantial than in any other Partisan units in Yugoslavia at that point. Jovanović also adds that there is no record that any woman deserted nor defected from these units.<sup>153</sup> If this were the case, it would show not only how important this category of recruits became for the Partisan units numbers, but also their high level of commitment.

Nationalist recruitment: “*appeal to prominent individuals*”

The political opposition to the Communists started building early on, but the formation of anti-communist armed actors took some time. Once these groups started organizing, they did so on a tribal basis, same as the Communists. However, they mobilized with a different set of military and political goals, and comparing them to the communist decisions helps understand the difference in outcomes.

During October 1941, a group of Royal officers was organizing in Berane county and renewing their oath to the King. The goal of the organization was to take power in case the occupation suddenly ended and to “prevent any revolutionary actions until a legal government arrives, and

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144 ZNOR III/2, 221-222.

145 Jovanović 62.

146 Jovanović 108.

147 Jovanović 190.

148 Jovanović 329.

149 Jovanović 598.

150 Jovanović 544.

151 Jovanović 786.

152 ZNOR III/1, 205.

153 Jovanović 792.

then return the power to them.”<sup>154</sup> When one of the first Nationalist battalions was formed in December 1941, the commander wrote to the Partisans that the “Ljevorečki battalion was formed on the tribal basis” for “a widespread insurgency against the enemy” and “to prevent killings of certain individuals.” As such, “it cannot be a part of any [...] organization with a political character, but only of a tribal organization of Montenegro.”<sup>155</sup> The politics of these groups organized parallel to the existing communist insurgent groups was conservative. More importantly, the conservatism was equated with “tribalism.” It was framed as the protection of the conservative tribal order from the revolutionaries.

This difference in approach manifested in a different pattern of selective violence in the early phases of their organization. While the Partisans targeted prominent villagers, treating them as ideological enemies, and coerced non-cooperative peasants, the Nationalist strategy was the opposite. They were co-opting the prominent individuals and tried appeasing the peasants, whereas when attacking communists, they focused on lower ranks, instead of targeting highly positioned people. This strategy was more compatible with the tribal hierarchy of cohesive groups. It appealed to high-status individuals that dominated social groups and did not cause severe revenge mechanisms.

The Instructions of the Nationalist HQ to Montenegro HQ from December 1941 says that it was imperative to act, having in mind local conditions. Also “Everything should be done to admit to our ranks prominent leaders from Montenegro [...] Immediately after getting this order, appeal to prominent individuals [...]”<sup>156</sup> Nationalist document from 1942 explains the strategy of fighting the Communist supporters from the ground up, instead of the top-down strategy of Partisans: “The first goal is to destroy the Communist Party, primarily its lowest forums, the village cells. [...] That means clearing the villages from permanent and main propagators of communism. To destroy the higher forums [...] is neither easy nor important because a general without the army is no force to be reckoned with...”<sup>157</sup> This was the opposite strategy from what the Communists were doing, and did not lead to the backlash. Instead, tribal participation and Nationalist recruitment successfully produced mobilization. The ultimate political goal was formulated by the Nationalist leader Mihailović: “before the end of the war, a preventive counter-revolution will have to be executed.”<sup>158</sup>

Civil war mobilization: “*each tribe runs their own affairs*”

Both the Partisans and the Nationalists started more intensively recruiting, anticipating the conflict, between the end of December<sup>159</sup> and early January.<sup>160</sup> The first Partisan killed in the civil war was the political commissar of the Berane Battalion in the Vasojevići tribe on January 2, 1942.<sup>161</sup> On January 13, Nationalists attacked Partisans in the same region, which was the first

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154 Jovanović 443.

155 Jovanović 452.

156 ZNOR III/4, 458-459.

157 Jovanović 447.

158 Jovanović 446.

159 ZNOR III/4, 460.

160 Jovanović 455-6.

161 Jovanović 448.

Nationalist military action in Montenegro.<sup>162</sup> The whole county surrendered to the Nationalists by the end of the month.<sup>163</sup> Soon the Vasojevići tribe, the most numerous in the country, became the first one in which the Nationalists became a dominant force.

Local Nationalist leaders skillfully used the tribal mechanisms of deliberation, as well as hostility towards communists, to take over the tribal leadership and turn the tribesmen against the Partisans.<sup>164</sup> Soon Tito was referring to the whole Vasojevići tribe as mobilized by the Nationalists.<sup>165</sup> Partisan reports from March 1942 onwards start to read more and more as if they are in a war with tribes, and not the Nationalists. “Kuči, Bratonožići, and Brskut tribes are holding a front against us, but they are still not attacking, they are waiting for the outcome of the battle in Vasojevići, and their behavior will depend on that.”<sup>166</sup> Another member of the Partisan HQ was hoping to “finish off” the whole Vasojevići tribe.<sup>167</sup>

Tribes were becoming more cautious in participating in the war if it meant entering a conflict against other tribes, so they were increasingly hedging. When the Partisans tried to recruit Cuce tribesmen to fight against the Nationalists in Vasojevići tribe in March 1942, they got a negative response that “each tribe runs their own affairs.”<sup>168</sup>

As the war was spreading after January, eventually, the primary mechanism of the Nationalist mobilization was through the defections of whole Partisan units.<sup>169</sup> In some areas, defections from Partisan units completely undermined their ability to defend.<sup>170</sup> It was becoming more evident that the territorial-tribal units had success in fighting the Italians, but that they could not be used against tribal-based Nationalists,<sup>171</sup> because they were swiftly disbanding when a local actor seriously challenged Partisans’ control.<sup>172</sup>

Not all Nationalist attempts to take control of tribal units were successful. For instance, a member of the Kovačević brotherhood of the Grahovo tribe in the west of the country had organized the desertion of all his cousins.<sup>173</sup> However, he was captured by another Kovačević, a Partisan leader, and put to trial at which seven were sentenced to death, four of which were from the Kovačević brotherhood. Similar internal splits of brotherhoods and tribes around the country continued.

Still, as brotherhoods and tribes were undergoing internal takeovers, the power relations were changing and affecting the closest neighbors.<sup>174</sup> A cascading process went from the most powerful and numerous tribe to its immediate neighbors. When the Nationalists gained a

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162 Jovanović 466.

163 Jovanović 471.

164 ZNOR XIV/2, 99-108.

165 ZNOR II/3, 57.

166 ZNOR III/2, 349.

167 ZNOR II/4, 89.

168 ZNOR III/9, 211.

169 Jovanović 473.

170 Jovanović 571, 585.

171 ZNOR II/4, 202, Jovanović 484.

172 Jovanović 485.

173 Jovanović 457, ZNOR III/4, 101-107.

174 ZNOR II/3, 73.

foothold in Vasojevići, their influence had spread to Bratonožići, Kuči, Piperi, Bjelopavlići,<sup>175</sup> Rovci,<sup>176</sup> and Morača tribes,<sup>177</sup> and continued to rise beyond these adjacent areas. Another part of Montenegro, “The Old Montenegro,” ended up being controlled by the other armed actor, the Federalists, who entered a temporary alliance with the Chetniks.<sup>178</sup> Only the northern parts of the country, with looser tribal bonds, remained communist strongholds, but for only one more month.

The end of this phase of the civil war came before the summer. A major offensive started in May 1942, which included 8 Italian divisions and Nationalist units serving as infantry<sup>179</sup> who, together with federalists and other local units, made a 12000 combatant-strong army.<sup>180</sup> In mid-May, Tito decided to retreat from Montenegro<sup>181</sup> while the shrinking units were slowing down Nationalist advancements,<sup>182</sup> and by June 23, the last unit left Montenegro for Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>183</sup> Montenegro was practically divided between the Italians who were in the cities and the Nationalists who were in the countryside. The official agreement was made that further divided the country between two Chetnik and one Green military commander who together continued to control these territories in the coming year.<sup>184</sup>

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175 ZNOR III/3, 361.  
176 ZNOR III/2, 351.  
177 ZNOR III/2, 106.  
178 ZNOR III/2, 348-349, XIV/2, 912.  
179 Jovanović 639-640.  
180 Jovanović 641.  
181 ZNOR III/3, 364.  
182 Jovanović 668.  
183 Jovanović 678.  
184 Glas Crnogorca, 04/08/1942.

## Conclusion

This chapter has introduced Montenegro as a case in which the segmentary structure still existed at the onset of the war. It introduced the main actors in the war and described the insurgency against the Italian occupation. This was followed by the explanation of the decisions that had led from overwhelming support for communist insurgents to their defeat in the civil war by the armed rivals. The chapter covered the whole territory of Montenegro and the full length of the insurgency and civil war. It mostly relied on primary published documents, but it also used secondary and had looked at the events from the perspective of armed actors.

This chapter mostly dealt with the connections between military and political decisions and mobilization outcomes, and it answers particularly the hypothesis which posits that the more control and governance mechanisms instigated by the armed actors affect social group cohesion, the more they affect recruitment patterns. The chapter first showed that the cohesive groups mobilized fast and extensively, but with low commitment to the armed actors. It demonstrated how security considerations played an important role in raising thresholds for participation. It also went through a detailed explanation of the Communist decisions, and a brief comparison with the rival nationalist actor. This comparison brings out the extent to which military and political decisions affected the recruitment, but also how much were the armed actors aware of this, albeit unable to respond to the declining participation.

The establishment of military control and governance affected the cohesion of the social groups primarily through disrupting their hierarchies, shown in several instances in the chapter. The effective participation of tribal groups was possible due to the strong horizontal social ties that were drawn into the insurgent units. The limitations of this type of organization were evident early on. However, it was the status of the group members that was an obstacle for establishing new forms of government, and the coercive responses produced counter-effects. Tribes were driven by safety-seeking mechanisms to reevaluate their positions, and, following the power changes in their surroundings, switch sides.

The chapter also points out that several competing explanations are not as good predictors of mobilization. The communist organization does not explain the dynamics of insurgency, and the chapter shows that initial participation significantly outweighed the communist capacity for recruitment. Also, the pre-war political relations between the armed actors changed. The two political nationalist options that conflicted before the war cooperated during the war. Resources and coercion are not factors that explain initial mobilization, yet, they gain an explanatory role in the later phase. It was through mechanisms of status reversal and revenge that social groups had mobilized.

The chapter demonstrated the effects of social group cohesion for the civil war mobilization, and the importance of armed actors' decisions for its dynamics. What it does not show are the sources of cohesion and concrete mechanisms that connect individual and group behavior, and drive the groups' decisions. This is the goal of the next two chapters that will carefully look at the micro-dynamics of insurgency and civil war in a single county.

# CHAPTER FIVE. SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN THE INTERWAR DANILOVGRAD

## Introduction

This is the first out of two chapters of an in-depth analysis of a single county of Danilovgrad. This county was chosen after a preliminary analysis of social structure in three counties in the south, center, and north of the country. This analysis showed that the variation in social structure across municipalities was higher in central Danilovgrad, compared to southern Cetinje and northern Šavnik counties. In Danilovgrad, municipalities with large brotherhoods bordered municipalities with very fragmented structure. This seemed like a good setup where many structural, historical, and political conditions could be controlled, and with substantial comparative leverage.

While this fourth chapter deals with the social structure and sources of cohesion in Danilovgrad county before the war, the following fifth chapter analyzes the wartime developments. The first part of this chapter introduces the interwar county, with emphasis on its administrative and tribal divisions. The second part analyzes elements of social structure in the county. It first takes a historical look at the patterns of behavior of tribes as political and military units in the past and describes the extent to which the state limited their autonomy before 1941. It further analyzes in-depth the sources and dimensions of cohesion: livelihood, security, identity, and status. The final part of the chapter examines the prewar manifestations of social cohesion in the voting patterns of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The theory of civil war mobilization in tribal societies rests on the concept of cohesion. It argues that horizontal cohesion has three primary sources: resources, identity, and security. In this chapter, qualitative evidence supports these prerequisites for civil war tribal mobilization. The further quantitative data from the elections in Montenegro held from 1905 to 1938 shows that voters followed both horizontal and vertical (status) patterns of cohesion. This evidence taken together shows a high level of social group cohesion in the interwar county. The sixth chapter proceeds with the discussion of the mechanisms that moved individuals and groups during the war.

The data on social structure primarily comes from ethnographic sources, from several authors that had studied the tribes of Montenegro in the early twentieth century. This chapter describes three tribes from the Danilovgrad county – Bjelopavlići, Zagarač, and Komani. The fieldwork in the larger Bjelopavlići tribe was conducted before the First World War and continued in 1920-1921,<sup>1</sup> while the two smaller tribes, Zagarač and Komani, were visited in 1910-1911.<sup>2</sup> Both studies were done sufficiently close to the start of the war.

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1 Šobajić 1923, 6.

2 Erdeljanović 1926, 7.

Other ethnographic works published closer to the outbreak of the war were also drawn upon.<sup>3</sup> They show that as late as 1941, the tribes in Montenegro and Danilovgrad county still had a vital role in society. Other sources from the period are used to create a complete picture of the political, social, and economic circumstances in the county. The last part of the chapter uses data on social structure, and electoral data, to test if the tribal membership affected political outcomes in the period ranging four decades before the war.

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<sup>3</sup> Vlahović 1939.

## 5.1 Danilovgrad county in the interwar period

This section deals with the Danilovgrad county before the Second World War. It describes the geographic environment and differences in terrain between parts of the county, as well as the different patterns of settlement, ranging from homogenous to mixed population. It points to the history of autonomy of the tribal groups and the preservation of their different forms of self-government to the modern period. Finally, it discusses different ways in which the tribes are divided internally, through the administrative and tribal organization.

Danilovgrad was a historical county situated in the central part of Montenegro, whose borders more or less coincided with contemporary borders of the municipality with the same name. It lay in a strategically important position between the cities of Podgorica, Nikšić, and Cetinje (Map 5.1). The county could be roughly divided into three parts. Its main geographical feature was the valley around the Zeta River, which runs from Nikšić in the northwest towards Podgorica in the southeast. The valley, with its fertile fields, was the geographically most accessible part of the county. Elevation sharply increases on both banks of the Zeta, towards less fertile but densely populated areas. The third area was the tribal mountain, in the north, with terrain rising to almost 2000 meters.<sup>4</sup>

The fields of Zeta were settled by the surrounding Montenegrin tribes only after the Ottoman period. Historically almost all villages were positioned on the slopes on both sides of the Zeta field, up until 600m altitude where agriculture was possible.<sup>5</sup> Behind these settled areas were the commons in the mountain, which were not permanently settled.<sup>6</sup> In the middle of the Zeta valley is the city of Danilovgrad, which gives a name to the county. It was established by a nascent Montenegrin state in the mid-19th century, at a strategic location, as a new, modern city.<sup>7</sup> When the main market was moved there in 1869, it proliferated as the commercial and administrative center of the Bjelopavlići tribe.<sup>8</sup>

The Danilovgrad county consisted of the territory of three Montenegrin tribes. It is primarily identified with the Bjelopavlići tribe, which is by far the largest of the three (the whole Zeta valley is also known as “Bjelopavlići field”). Bjelopavlići, one of the largest tribes in Montenegro, had a long history of revolts against the Ottomans, as well as intra-tribal conflicts. It joined other Montenegrin tribes in a political union only after 1796 but continued to engage in conflicts with the neighbors throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>9</sup>

The other two tribes are Zagarač and Komani. These two smaller tribes were historically not a part of the same administrative unit as Bjelopavlići and became one only in the interwar period through the establishment of the Danilovgrad county.

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4 Šobajić, 9-13.

5 Šobajić, 13.

6 Damjanović 1928, 353.

7 Šoć 1955.

8 Šobajić, 51.

9 Šobajić, 25.

Bjelopavlići were a part of Brdo or Highland Nahiye (the exonym Highlanders was given to them by the neighboring tribes).<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, Zagarač and Komani tribes were historically part of the Katun Nahiye, and they became part of the new state earlier than Bjelopavlići. Zagarač and Komani had gravitated towards neighboring Cetinje until Danilovgrad became the administrative center of the County.<sup>11</sup> In these chapters, Komani and Zagarač are treated only sporadically. The main focus is on the internal structure and the dynamics of the Bjelopavlići tribe.



Map 5.1 Municipalities of Danilovgrad county

#### *Administrative division*

In interwar Montenegro, municipalities were a relatively new form of organization. From 1836 to 1910, the only administrative division in Montenegro was captaincies, based on the long-standing tradition of the self-organization of the Montenegrin tribes. Captaincies operated without written regulation, headed by captains, responsible to the central state for the civic and military duties of the tribal members.<sup>12</sup>

Municipalities replaced captaincies only under the Austro-Hungarian occupation during the First World War. Municipalities were maintained in the new Yugoslav state, regulated by the Serbian

<sup>10</sup> Šobajić, 102.

<sup>11</sup> Erdeljanović, 177-187.

<sup>12</sup> Damjanović 1928, 351.

law on municipalities.<sup>13</sup> In the interwar period, Danilovgrad county consisted of nine municipalities: Vražegrm, Pavkovići, Petrušin, Danilovgrad city, Jelenak, Kosovi Lug, Spuž, Zagarač, and Komani (Map 5.1).<sup>14</sup>

The municipalities mostly followed the historical borders of the captaincies. The only exceptions were two captaincies that were split.<sup>15</sup> The changes in municipal borders were not frequent, and the population would actively resist them.<sup>16</sup> During the interwar period, there was only one change in the administrative organization of the county. The short-lived municipality of “Danilovgrad – village” was merged in 1931 with “Orja Luka” to form the “Petrušin” municipality,<sup>17</sup> which was a reversal to the historical name and territory of the tribal captaincy. Some villages on the left side of Zeta, much closer to Pavkovići municipality, were again merged into the Petrušin municipality because of closer ancestry ties with the villages on the right bank of the river.<sup>18</sup>

### *Tribal division*

Underneath the administrative division was the more complex internal tribal organization. Individual identity was not only related to the tribes but also the sub-tribal groups. The Bjelopavlići tribal area, which covers seven out of nine municipalities, was divided into five sub-tribes. From North to South, these were Vražegrm, Pavkovići, Petrušinovići, Brajovići, and Martinići. These sub-tribes were named after large brotherhood groups, except Vražegrm, named after an area.<sup>19</sup>

The sub-tribes all had fixed territories, mostly spreading from Zeta to the tribal mountain, and exact borders, which mostly coincided with the municipal borders. Vražegrm had an uninterrupted territory furthest in the North, with 495 homes in 11 villages.<sup>20</sup> Pavkovići was a neighboring sub-tribe, south of Vražegrm, with 413 homes in 11 villages. Their territory, an arid karst area, expanded to the tribal mountain in the north-east. In the south, Pavkovići villages were mixed with Petrušinovići. Petrušinovići were the largest subgroup in the tribe, with 737 homes in 21 villages, and on whose territory was the city of Danilovgrad (not included in the house count).<sup>21</sup>

In the south from Petrušinovići and Pavkovići were the two remaining sub-tribes: Brajovići and Martinići. Brajovići is the only sub-tribe that is not a group of brotherhoods but is considered a single brotherhood – the largest brotherhood in the tribe. Pavkovići by descent, they moved to the south and grew to 195 homes in 6 villages. Finally, Martinići is the south-western-most part

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13 Damjanović 1928, 352.

14 Almanah-šematizam 1931, 254.

15 Brda region captaincies were Vražegrm (captaincy seat Boronjina), Pavkovići (Rsojevići), Petrušin (Danilovgrad), Martinići-Brajovići (Donje Selo), Spuž (Spuž), and Katun region captaincies: Komani-Zagarač (Bijela Rudina). Law on administrative division of the principality of Montenegro, Glas Crnogorca, February 23, 1910.

16 Damjanović 1932, 30.

17 Almanah-šematizam 1931, 254.

18 Damjanović 1932, 30-31.

19 Šobajić, 14.

20 Šobajić, 14.

21 Šobajić, 15.

of the tribe, with 398 homes in 5 villages. These two sub-tribes, Brajovići and Martinići, formed the Jelenak municipality.<sup>22</sup>

Two smaller municipalities also existed in the Bjelopavlići part of Danilovgrad county – Kosovi Lug and Spuž. Tribesmen settled these only after they took over control from the Ottoman Empire, and their structure was more mixed as a result. Kosovi lug, thick forest on the right bank of Zeta in the 19th century, cleared and settled by Pavkovići and Petrušinovići brotherhoods, had 481 houses in 6 villages before the war. These brotherhoods lived at a more considerable distance, across the river, but they maintained strong bonds into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, the municipality of Spuž was the latest expansion of the Bjelopavlići tribe. After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, few Montenegrins were living in this area. The land was divided among the high-status families from the surrounding captaincies.<sup>24</sup> Military leaders and tribal elders, primarily from Piperi and Bjelopavlići, also Zagarač and Komani distributed the land.<sup>25</sup> This process was not smooth. Members from several tribes were mixed in the area, and reapportioning of land caused some disputes.<sup>26</sup>

Table 5.1 Danilovgrad county: tribal and administrative divisions

<i>Tribe</i>	<i>Descent-group</i>	<i>Sub-group</i>	<i>Municipality</i>	
Bjelopavlići	Bubići	Vražegrm	Vražegrm	
		Martinići	Jelenak	
	Mitrovići	Brajovići	Jelenak	
		Pavkovići	Pavkovići	Kosovi lug
		Petrušinovići	Petrušin	
Mixed		Spuž		
Komani		Komani		
Zagarač		Zagarač		

The sub-tribes were only one aspect of intra-tribal divisions, which was primarily defined by the patterns of settlement. However, a deeper aspect of intra-tribal relations, which defined the hierarchy between the brotherhoods, was the division by descent. In the Bjelopavlići tribe, there were three main groups of brotherhoods, which were divided by the waves of migration. These were the “Old Folk,” “Dukađinci,” and the “Newcomers.”<sup>27</sup> The Old Folk were considered the older Slavic population. Dukađinci were the dominant part of the tribe, the descendants of the medieval migrants to the area, and the Newcomers came to the area and had integrated into

22 Šobajić, 16.

23 Šobajić, 17.

24 Pejović 1973, 342.

25 Pejović 1973, 343.

26 Pejović 1973, 354.

27 Šobajić, 26.

the tribe last. Oral histories traced the origins of all Bjelopavlići brotherhoods to one of these waves of migration.<sup>28</sup> These descent groups did not follow a municipal pattern of settlement. Instead, they were scattered through the whole territory of the tribe, among different sub-tribes.

Only 13 surviving brotherhoods with 190 houses or around 6% of the Bjelopavlići tribe in the early 1920s, were associated with the “Old Folk,” as in the rest of Montenegro, their status in the tribe was the lowest.<sup>29</sup>

Dukađinci were the largest descent group of the tribe (three-quarters of the households), which consisted of two big groups of descent-related brotherhoods: Mitrovići and Bubići.<sup>30</sup> All Dukađinci brotherhoods claimed lineage from Bijeli Pavle (White Paul), the medieval founder of the tribe, which migrated from the Dukađin area in Kosovo.<sup>31</sup> The first homes of Bijeli Pavle were in the geographic middle of the tribe. From there, the sub-groups had spread, Bubići to North and South while Mitrovići mostly stayed in the center.<sup>32</sup>

However, “Mitrovići” and “Bubići” descent groups were not names in everyday use, unlike the names of the brotherhoods or the sub-tribes.<sup>33</sup> Mitrovići consisted of three sub-tribes described earlier. The Pavkovići sub-tribe had spread around the original home of Bjelopavlići. Brajovići brotherhood (also a sub-tribe had split from Pavkovići) had moved to the south but remained close to Pavkovići, and in the past, formed a single military battalion.<sup>34</sup> Petrušinovići sub-tribe, whose origin also stems from the late 14th century, moved from Sretnja towards Zeta, where they settled on the left bank.<sup>35</sup> These brotherhoods moved to Kosovi Lug starting from the 18th century.<sup>36</sup> Bubići was the second large branch of Dukađinci, which lived in Martinići and Vražegrmci sub-tribe areas.<sup>37</sup> They did not inhabit a contiguous territory, but instead, Martinići lived in the South and Vražegrm in the north from the Mitrovići branch.<sup>38</sup> The size and geographic concentration made Mitrovići the dominant part of the tribe, where, during the civil war, the first brotherhoods mobilized against the Communists.

Finally, there were the “Newcomers,” or brotherhoods which at some point were incorporated into the tribe from other tribes.<sup>39</sup> It was a common phenomenon to incorporate whole families, which were often involved in blood feuds and had to move or fled old homes for some other reasons.<sup>40</sup> Eventually, some of these families grew and became brotherhoods.

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28 Šobajić, 29.

29 Šobajić, 32.

30 Šobajić, 32.

31 Šobajić, 27.

32 Šobajić, 28.

33 Šobajić, 41.

34 Šobajić, 33.

35 Šobajić, 37.

36 Šobajić, 34.

37 Šobajić, 41.

38 Šobajić, 44.

39 Šobajić, 46.

40 Šobajić, 35. One of the strongest brotherhoods in the Bjelopavlići tribe - Kadići from Vražegrm – were expelled from Montenegro collectively after one of their members, Todor Kadić assassinated Prince Danilo in 1860 and they settled in Albania (Šobajić, 40).

### *Conclusion*

This section showed that geography was an essential factor in the formation of compact, cohesive social groups in Danilovgrad county. The geographic circumstances have historically favored the development of tribes as social groups based on the descent, which enjoyed a higher level of autonomy from the outsiders. The reason for this pattern was the Ottoman presence in the valley. When the Ottomans were gone, so did the reasons for such settlement patterns; however, the pattern persisted.

Bjelopavlići tribe had a long history of self-government and resistance to the outsider rule. Their autonomy was limited by incorporation in the new state, but it further evolved, in captaincies and modern municipalities, the administrative divisions that had still reflected the tribal subdivisions.

However, the section also showed that the tribes were divided not only horizontally in sub-tribes, but also vertically, according to the descent-based hierarchy. The variation in the distributions of brotherhoods and their complex associations with broader tribal groups meant that these were not only cohesive groups with the potential for mobilization but also for internal conflicts between the groups along the lines of status.

## 5.2 Elements of social structure

After describing the Danilovgrad county and the administrative and tribal divisions, this section moves to the elements of social structure in the county. In the interwar period, individuals still relied to a large extent on the tribes for their livelihood, security, identity, and social status. This reliance is shown through historical accounts and original data where available. To evaluate the manifestation of the level of cohesion in the interwar period, the third part of the chapter analyzes voting patterns before the war. The purpose is to establish the theoretical assumption that wartime cohesiveness should be observable before the war. Even though wartime mobilization and political mobilization in time of peace are not the same, it is the closest competitive political setup that can be identified before or after the war.

### *Tribal forms of ownership and production*

Different forms of ownership and production affected the relations of individuals and social groups, with a high dependency on the group to fulfill basic needs.

Several forms of land ownership existed in the county in the interwar period. The land was partially private, partially brotherhood or village communal land, and partially tribal. The need for communal and tribal land was dictated by animal husbandry, a dominant form of production until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>41</sup> The formation of modern tribes in Montenegro owed much to the convergence of individual interests in the communal property, communes, pastures, and preserves, and surprisingly much of it still existed by the Second World War.<sup>42</sup>

The market forces and the transformation of the ownership and production processes were well underway at the turn of the century. However, despite these processes, even as late as 1940, more than 50% of land holdings were still collectively owned.<sup>43</sup> The collective use of these holdings was dependent on the existence of both smaller and larger closed economic units based on kinship, ranging from villages to brotherhoods and tribes. The members were the right holders only through membership in the collective. The individuals did not hold any personal rights to these forests, pastures, or waters, and could only use them in the way and the scope that was allowed by the collective.<sup>44</sup>

An important resource for maintaining a material basis for the existence of tribes and brotherhoods were the forests. State-owned forests only existed in Montenegro from 1912, when new territories were taken from the Ottoman Empire. Before that, the ownership was either personal or communal.<sup>45</sup> Danilovgrad county had large areas under forests, and a high proportion of the forests was owned communally. These communal assets were a potential source of significant income.<sup>46</sup> Protective of them, the tribe maintained control over the forests until the Second World War. In 1937 the negotiations were held with a commercial company

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41 Šobajić, 104.

42 Radusinović 1978, 45.

43 Ćirić-Bogetić 1966, 189.

44 Ćirić-Bogetić 1966, 224.

45 Marović 2006, 58.

46 Marović 2006, 59-60.

about the contract to exploit all Bjelopavlići forest. Tribal assemblies were held about this matter, and the decision was made to proceed with the deal under some conditions. Despite the deal eventually not being finalized, probably due to the rising instability, it is an illustration of the value the communal property had at the dawn of the war.<sup>47</sup>

According to the last population census in 1931, 89% of Danilovgrad county was employed in agriculture - one of the highest ratios in the country.<sup>48</sup> The primary form of agriculture was animal husbandry. Cattle were moved throughout the seasons from the brotherhood and village communes to the tribal mountain. The mountain was almost wholly owned communally, with a complex system of communal exploitation. The lower mountain area was divided among brotherhood or villages, and the higher land was owned by all who live beneath it. In the past, each brotherhood had uninterrupted land, from Zeta valley to the end of the lower mountain, and all sub-tribal groups had their parts of the mountain.<sup>49</sup>

This old order of land ownership was somewhat disturbed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The migrations, economic changes driven by the rise of farming, as well as the formation of new settlements have all contributed to these changes. Communal lands shrank, as better land was parceled among households, however waters and mountains remained entirely communal in the interwar period. Štitovo Mountain, won through tribal war, remained tribal land. The tribe as a whole was also granted a part of Sinjajevina Mountain, outside of Danilovgrad county, as a reward for their military valor. The mills on the river Zeta have also remained communal.<sup>50</sup>

High insecurity in the Ottoman period left the Zeta valley barren. The tribesman lived on the mountain slopes where any approaching danger could be avoided by fleeing further into the mountain. In these times, the “land was plowed with guns on shoulders,” and the crops were grown that could ripe early. In the Ottoman period, large households would not produce more than 150-200 kg of wheat annually.<sup>51</sup> In such circumstances, the dependency from cattle was high, and therefore the dependency from communal pastures.

Bjelopavlići tribe gained the city of Spuž in 1878 after the conquest of Ottoman territory.<sup>52</sup> Only from this point, farming started to develop in the tribe, and by the interwar period, individuals were becoming more dependent on farming. The shift to farming and the movement of population to the Zeta fields had made the field the wealthiest part of the tribe. However, even though they owned some of the best lands in Montenegro,<sup>53</sup> Bjelopavlići did not consider themselves a wealthy tribe. They still considered the tribes with cattle as “real” rich, a relic of the old way of evaluating wealth.<sup>54</sup>

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47 Vučković, 1965, 447.

48 Opšta državna statistika 1937.

49 Šobajić, 104.

50 Šobajić, 105-106.

51 Šobajić, 107.

52 Šobajić, 107.

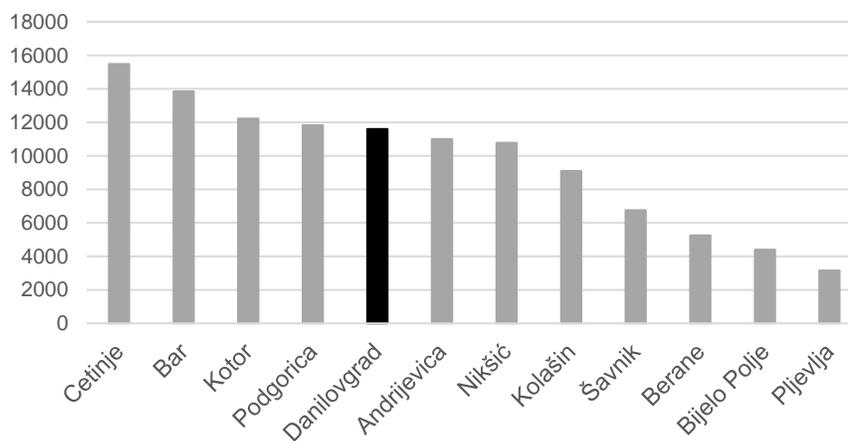
53 Šobajić, 106.

54 Šobajić, 108.

Villages on the slopes had less land and could produce less food than in the valley, so they had to buy food, usually in the markets in the Zeta field. As the communal land was slowly shrinking, that meant that fewer cattle were being produced. In the interwar period, an average household owned up to 10-15 cows and up to 100 sheep.<sup>55</sup>

With the economic crisis and the falling prices of agricultural products in the inter-war period, the peasants were growing increasingly indebted.<sup>56</sup> It did not make a big difference that Zeta valley was relatively fertile, and Danilovgrad was considered among the economically more developed regions. The 1932 survey of peasant indebtedness showed the scale of debt, which became one of the significant political issues of the time. (Figure 5.1) The debt was concentrated in smaller farms – those that could not produce more products for sale and were economically unsustainable, which was the case with most farms in Danilovgrad.<sup>57</sup> The level of debt could also be seen as an indicator of the penetration of the modern financial system into different counties, and here Danilovgrad was in the middle.

Figure 5.1 Debt per farm in 1932 Montenegro counties (dinars)



Small farm size was a structural constraint that prohibited individual farmers from rising out of the debt trap. The 1931 agriculture census recorded the distribution of farms by their size.<sup>58</sup> Figure 5.2 shows the density of the farms on vertical and the size of the farms on the horizontal axis for the twelve counties. Danilovgrad farm structure was not as fragmented as in the coastal counties of Kotor and Bar, and extensive landholdings were not as frequent as in the northern Pljevlja and Berane. Half of all farms in Danilovgrad county were smaller than two hectares, which means that half of the population did not own land other than gardens around their houses.

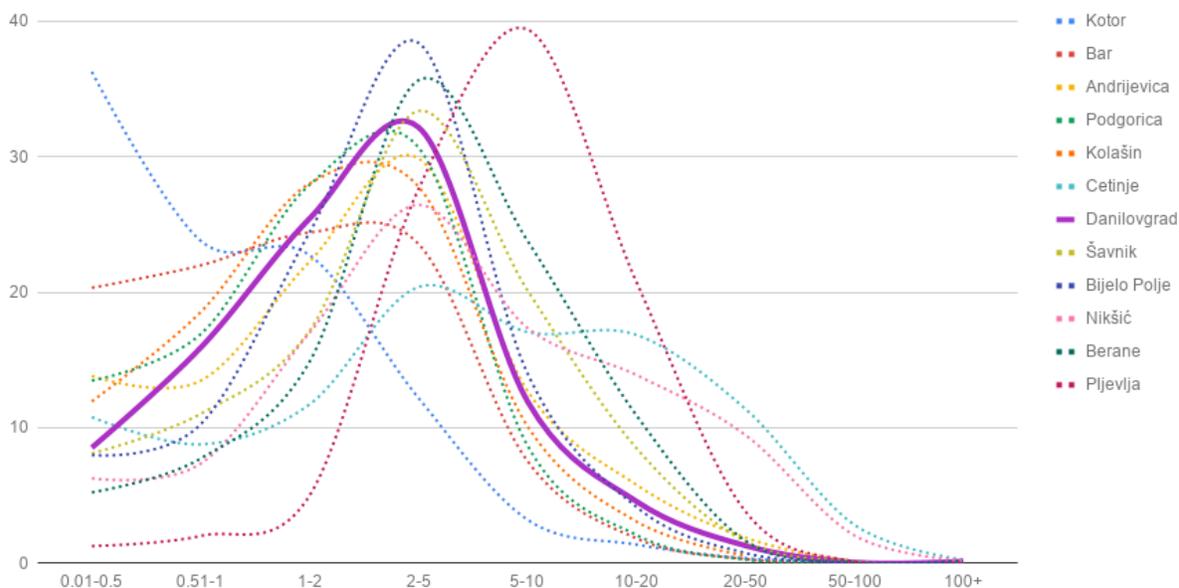
<sup>55</sup> Šobajić, 108.

<sup>56</sup> Lakić 1960, 643-644.

<sup>57</sup> Marović 2006, 31. Data from: Komadinić, Milan. Problem seljačkih dugova, Beograd, 1934.

<sup>58</sup> Državni statistički ured 1945a.

Figure 5.2: Distribution of farm size in 1931 Montenegro counties (hectares)



The evidence points to a relatively high reliance on collective forms of property and production, mostly dictated by the constraints of an individual's position in the economy of the time. The group membership mediated access to the resources. However, that does not mean that there were not strong political forces aiming to overturn the existing order. Due to problems with the availability of land and increasing indebtedness, there was a rising movement for changes in the mode of production in the interwar period. The illegal Communist Party was behind the formation of "peasant self-help" cooperatives. These were popular in Danilovgrad county, they mobilized people during the anti-government demonstrations, and supported the opposition parties.<sup>59</sup>

#### *Security in the tribal area*

Tribes had a significant role in maintaining the security of its members' lives and property in peacetime. This section explains how tribal groups engaged and resolved conflicts involving individuals.

The reason why tribes persisted in this area for so long was due to geography and the absence of effective government. Many basic features of the tribal society had a primary goal to ensure the survival of its members. In this time called "lawless," the tribes were pitted against one another. The goal of attacks was to increase pastures, capture cattle, or for revenge. To pursue these goals towards outside, tribes had to act as cohesive groups. "Common interests, not the blood ties, connected the unrelated elements of a tribe into a tight community."<sup>60</sup> Maintaining

<sup>59</sup> Lakić 1960, 643-644.  
<sup>60</sup> Šobajić, 109.

borders, communal lands, freedom to move and work, and survival was only possible for individuals through connecting with others that shared these same interests.<sup>61</sup>

For a tribesman, a member of the community was always a closer relation than any other individual from another tribe. Tribes like Bjelopavlići, where the majority of members claimed common descent and shared patron saint, were efficient in mobilization. In comparison, tribes such as Banjani, where brotherhoods were more loosely related, were slower to mobilize in the war, as shown in the previous chapter. Participating in conflicts, in turn, further strengthened the cohesion of groups.<sup>62</sup>

The external conditions of the tribes affected their internal organization too. In effect, the constant need to maintain external security made their internal civilian structures resembled the military organization. Šobajić wrote about the Bjelopavlići tribe: “The tribe was exposed to fights with the Turks and neighboring tribes, so the tribal community was like a military camp, in which each able member was a soldier. Divided in brotherhoods, they formed military units, led by the best from their company.”<sup>63</sup> The kinship identity and horizontal cohesion were strongly associated with maintaining the security of the groups.

As should be expected from political-military units, they had a strong hierarchical structure. At the head of the tribe was a single person – voivode – who had both civilian and military authority: “In wartime, voivode led the tribe, and in peacetime, a voivode was the main judge and the representative towards the outside.”<sup>64</sup> The higher the competence and the reputation of voivode was, the more voivode was able to increase the cohesiveness of the tribe members and to increase the power and prestige of the community. Such people were well known outside of the tribe, as well. Voivode rank was heritable in one house, but the more deserving houses could claim it.<sup>65</sup> In Bjelopavlići voivodship was uninterrupted for centuries in the house of Vojvodić, from Đurovići brotherhood. Out of 17 known voivodes, 11 belonged to this brotherhood, and this had changed only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when other families rose.<sup>66</sup>

The intra-tribal relations were driven by the competition between brotherhoods for the primacy. Brotherhoods were not equal, and this inequality brewed grievances. The resolution of conflicts depended on the power of the brotherhood – more powerful brotherhoods gave leaders to the tribe and made decisions; the weaker ones deferred. The power of the brotherhood primarily depended on their numbers. “The strength of the brotherhood consisted primarily of the number of men, or as they would say, the number of guns...”<sup>67</sup> However, the numbers of gun-carrying men were not the only criterion for the position of the brotherhood. The status could also have increased through heroic behavior or having notable moral qualities.<sup>68</sup>

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61 Šobajić, 110.

62 Šobajić, 110.

63 Šobajić, 110.

64 Šobajić, 110.

65 Šobajić, 111.

66 Šobajić, 112.

67 Šobajić, 116.

68 Šobajić, 117.

Conflicts were frequent among different tribal sub-groups. Bjelopavlići consisted of smaller units, sub-tribes, and brotherhoods.<sup>69</sup> The relations between the brotherhoods were, in a way, very similar to the relations between tribes. Just like the tribes, the brotherhoods primarily protected their interests and competed for status with the other sub-tribal groups. An individual's identity was layered and started with a house, then brotherhood, and only then with a tribe. "Individual was valued through the brotherhood, the prestige and the primacy came from the reputation of the brotherhood. In the lawless times, the individual had as much security in its life and property as its brotherhood was strong. As closest of kin, the members of the brotherhood were standing together [...] Prime duty was to avenge a member of the brotherhood as one's brother."<sup>70</sup>

The conflicts engaged cohesive groups that were kept together with strong horizontal ties, and that also competed for high status inside the tribe. This followed the model of complementary opposition, as expected from the segmentary society. The smaller, weaker, brotherhoods were dominated by powerful ones and had to seek their protection. In this way, the powerful brotherhoods would create spheres of influence. Through competition between spheres, a tribe would be divided into several competing factions. The everyday life of the tribe in such circumstances was filled with infighting. These violent cycles were called "krvna kola" or "blood circles," in which the brotherhoods that claimed direct descent from Bijeli Pavle were especially prolific. It might look strange that tribal communities could survive as a whole given such propensity to infighting. However, tribes controlled their members and made sure these violent cycles would not even start. Also, when the outside danger would appear, the internal disputes would be subdued, and the groups would mobilize against the outsider.<sup>71</sup>

How much did the mechanisms of tribal-based conflict resolution survive into the modern period is well illustrated, among others, by the perseverance of the blood vengeance in modern time.<sup>72</sup> A person from Vražegrm municipality was sentenced to death in 1923 for the murder committed during the rebellion. The court documents from 1924 show that the motivation for rebellion was the vengeance of his brother, who was killed by the guerillas during the 1919 insurgency. The official opinions submitted in response to the pardon request were illustrative of conflicting perceptions on the legitimacy of vengeance.

The highest authority, the chief of the Zeta region, gave a negative opinion on the request. Nevertheless, he did so because he wanted the state to dispel an entrenched opinion that the central government did not dare to commit capital punishment over Montenegrins.

The lower authorities had different opinions. The head of Danilovgrad county took a community-based perspective. He noted that people in the convict's municipality wanted him pardoned and that the involved sides promised that they would forgive the crime and would not pursue revenge. Finally, an official from the ministry had an even more condoning view. He saw the rebellion as motivated by vengeance and that the person was "overtaken by a special feeling

69 "Brotherhoods are closest relatives with common ancestry." Šobajić, 115.

70 Šobajić, 116.

71 Šobajić, 117.

72 AJ, 63, F-12-3-1924, published in the online database of capital punishments in Yugoslavia, Srbija protiv smrtne kazne 2019.

and prejudice for such vengeance, deeply rooted in the people of Montenegro.”<sup>73</sup> Eventually, the person was pardoned, and the opinions in the case offer an insight into the reasoning, very much motivated by social norms that condoned revenge.

The society and the environment have changed over the decades, and the provision of security by the state largely replaced the need for self-protection mobilization. However, these descent-groups continued existing in the formal organization of the military forces until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including the internal hierarchies of social groups. Perhaps more important, the quotidian reliance on group membership for protection had characterized the rural population up until the outbreak of the war. The power of brotherhoods rested on the number of guns, and the ability to protect their lives and property increased their status in society. In reliance on resources and security, the population of Danilovgrad county still showed signs of dependence on social structure up until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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73 AJ, 63, F-12-3-1924, Srbija protiv smrtne kazne 2019.

*Status: the tribal hierarchy*

This section analyzes social status in Bjelopavlići, through differences among and between brotherhoods and sub-tribal groups, descent branches and sub-tribes. Based on extensive data in the ethnographic literature, all 117 brotherhoods in the county were classified according to their relative status.

It is important first to acknowledge the relationship between identity and status. Individual identity was not only related to the tribe or the brotherhood but also with the sub-tribal groupings, which were introduced earlier in this chapter. Even though social status depended on more factors, the descent was a crucial element, and for that reason, the discussion of identity and status cannot be meaningfully separated. In the Bjelopavlići tribe, “the differences in social position stem from the disparity of brotherhoods.”<sup>74</sup> The disparity, in turn, was primarily based on descent, increased by the accumulated power of the brotherhoods, and the reputation earned by the behavior of its members.

As explained earlier, the primary division in the Bjelopavlići tribe is in three groups – the Old Folk, the Dukadžin, and the Newcomers. In all parts of Montenegro, the Old Folk were considered to be of lower rank.<sup>75</sup> The folk narrative is that when ancestors of Bjelopavlići came to this region, they quickly established dominance over the Old Folk, fragmented with infighting, and with a weak tribal organization.<sup>76</sup>

The formation of the Bjelopavlići started in the old territory of the tribe – the contemporary Pavkovići, Vražegrm, and Petrušinovići. The Bjelopavlići that still live there – called Mitrovići – have done so since the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>77</sup> The Bubići part of the tribe arrived later and expanded at the expense of remaining Old Folk. The differences between these two branches of the tribe have faded to the point that they started claiming common origin.<sup>78</sup> The later expansion of the tribe was through the conquest of territory from other surrounding tribes.

The Newcomers' brotherhoods continued arriving later to the territory of the tribe, driven by different migratory dynamics.<sup>79</sup> However, the descendants of Bijeli Pavle maintained primacy over both the Old Folk and the Newcomers. They had claimed higher status and leadership in the tribe based on descent, as the founders of the tribe. They were also numerically stronger and more cohesive.<sup>80</sup>

The remainder of this section describes status relations between individual brotherhoods. Based on ethnographic data collected by Šobajić in the 1910s and 1920s, it was possible to infer the relative status of all 117 brotherhoods in Danilovgrad county. They are divided into four

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74 Šobajić, 117.

75 Šobajić, 55.

76 Šobajić, 56.

77 Šobajić, 87.

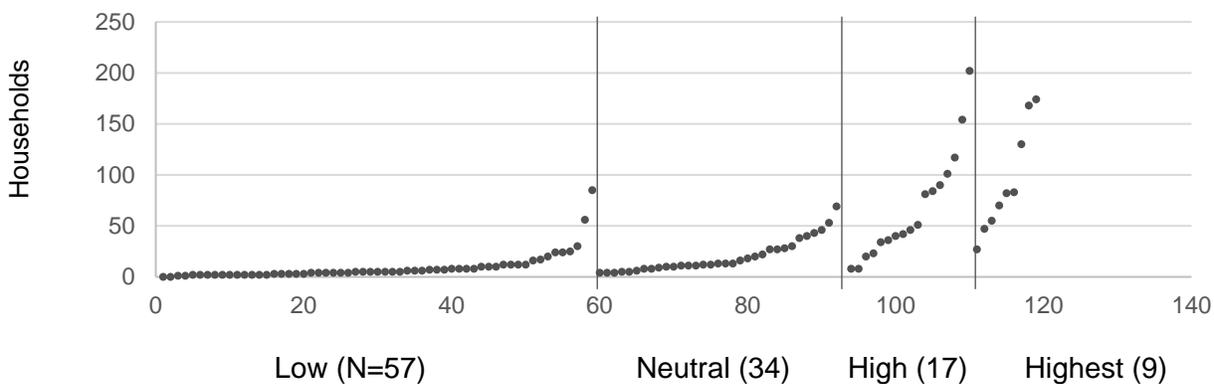
78 Šobajić, 96.

79 The brotherhoods were migrating for different reasons. They were avoiding Ottoman repression after common insurgencies, avoiding poverty and hunger caused by environmental changes, or avoiding blood vengeance. Sometimes whole tribal-military companies moved to avoid retributions to the civilians (uskoci). Šobajić, 59-61.

80 Šobajić, 117.

categories, from the lower to the highest.<sup>81</sup> The horizontal axis in Figure 5.3 shows brotherhoods by status (number of brotherhoods in the given category is in the brackets), and the vertical axis shows the number of households of each brotherhood. As a general rule, larger brotherhoods had higher status. However, there were many exceptions, as some large brotherhoods have had low status and vice versa.

Figure 5.3 Brotherhoods by household size and social status



Brotherhoods descended from the Old Folk had the lowest status.<sup>82</sup> For example, the Old Folk brotherhood of Simonovići stood out as a numerous brotherhood (56 households), however, with the worst standing in the whole tribe. Simonovići considerable size and descent from the Old Folk led to more hostility with large and competitive brotherhoods that surrounded them.<sup>83</sup> This was a disadvantaged brotherhood that engaged in crafts for a living, which was not considered an honorable occupation. As a consequence, they were rarely married into, which further increased their isolation.<sup>84</sup>

For decades Simonovići were trying to raise their status by different means. They changed the name, appealed to the rulers of Montenegro, to intervene, to no avail.<sup>85</sup> Simonovići saw the outbreak of the First World War as an opportunity to increase their status, but that did not happen, despite high battle casualties.<sup>86</sup>

The Newcomer brotherhoods had different origins, but they mostly came individually from the neighboring tribes such as Katun nahiye, fleeing from feuds. Newcomers were received in the tribe, given a part in the communal land and married with. The older Newcomer brotherhoods were larger, up to 50 houses, while the later Newcomers were smaller, usually just a few houses.<sup>87</sup>

81 Šobajić, 118-141.

82 Šobajić, 118.

83 Šobajić, 120.

84 Šobajić, 118.

85 Šobajić, 119.

86 Šobajić, 120.

87 Šobajić, 122.

Unlike the Old Folk, the Newcomer brotherhoods were a more numerous part of the tribe, but not compact, living scattered across the tribal area. They usually lived mixed with other brotherhoods. However, even though they were a large part of the tribe, they never had as much power as Dukadžinci, primarily because, unlike them, Dukadžinci were bound by descent and could act with more cohesion.<sup>88</sup> Despite having a higher status than the Old Folk, the Newcomers could rarely have a leading position in the tribe.

The status of Newcomer brotherhoods varied. Small brotherhoods, like Miškovići,<sup>89</sup> or some larger ones, like Kovačevići, had lower status.<sup>90</sup> In some parts of the tribe, the Newcomers were better positioned and integrated into the tribal structure. In Vražegrm sub-tribe, Marušići and Milatovići grew into powerful and prestigious brotherhoods.<sup>91</sup>

Dukadžinci was the largest part of the tribe. In general, Mitrovići descent branch of the tribe (Pavkovići and Petrušinovići sub-tribes) was always more prominent than Bubići (Martinići and Vražegrm, see Table 5.1). Among the Mitrovići branch, the direct descendants of Bijeli Pavle lived in Vražegrm and Pavkovići sub-tribes. These two closely related sub-tribes dominated the surrounding areas and usually resolved their conflicts internally, and in disputes and feuds with the outsiders, they acted as a homogenous group.<sup>92</sup>

Within the Mitrovići branch sub-tribes, brotherhoods were competing for status and those who stood out competed with similar ones from other segments of the tribe. When in the 19th century Stanišići from Vražegrm and Jovanovići from Pavkovići feuded, the whole Vražegrm and Pavkovići mobilized in the conflict against each other. Such relationships meant that all brotherhoods in the tribe were sucked into conflict through a hierarchical structure, eventually leading one of the brotherhoods to the top. "Each sub-tribe had one or more brotherhoods, which represented it and was its head. The best of these was at the helm of the tribe."<sup>93</sup>

Pavkovići's Matijaševići brotherhood served as the voivode of the tribe for centuries. Two powerful Pavkovići brotherhoods, Pavićevići and Jovanovići, were often involved in feuds about status and Pavićevići usually ended dominating the sub-tribe.<sup>94</sup> In the coming war, the high status of these brotherhoods closely aligned with their siding with the rival sides in the conflict.

The individual's status in the tribe primarily depended on its membership in the brotherhood, and brotherhoods status in turn primarily depended on the descent, and then the size. All brotherhoods were woven into a complex and rigid hierarchical structure. Brotherhoods would feud with one another to maintain or gain a higher status. However, individuals could have acted in a way that would affect their position. Profession, marriage, religion, and war participation, for

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88 Šobajić, 121-122.

89 Šobajić, 123.

90 Šobajić, 125.

91 Šobajić, 124.

92 Šobajić, 127.

93 Šobajić, 127.

94 Šobajić, 127-128.

example, were all mentioned as ways in which status could have been changed, in a positive or negative direction.<sup>95</sup>

Nevertheless, it was also the case that the brotherhood status gave new opportunities for individuals to advance. Individuals from high-status brotherhoods would become military leaders, and that way further increased their position. Also, it is worth noting that there is a positive relationship between perception of cohesion of brotherhoods and their status. To summarize, here too, individual to a large extent, depended on their position in the social group to maintain and improve their social status.

### *Conclusion*

This section offered the historical overview and arguments that during the interwar period in Danilovgrad county, individuals connected to groups through strong horizontal and vertical ties. Group membership mediated access to resources, individuals strongly identified with social groups, and they still relied on the groups for protection. Together, these different ways in which individuals were tied up created cohesive social groups.

An individual's status in a society heavily depended on its position in the group, and the group's position in the larger hierarchy. The members of higher status groups could combine this position with religious, professional, or state authority to fortify their position in the hierarchy. The higher position groups are also described as having higher cohesion, as they had more incentives to cooperate, and the protection of the group's position was of paramount importance. Finally, the groups with high cohesion were highly competitive, and they led smaller and less cohesive groups into the conflict cycles.

These arguments support the theoretical assumptions about the sources and the forms of cohesion in segmentary societies. The theory chapter suggested that in order to observe cohesion, the pre-war period should be analyzed. The final section in this chapter delves into the pre-war politics for the evidence of the strength of individuals' ties to their groups.

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<sup>95</sup> Šobajić, 131-132.

### 5.3 Cohesion before the war: the voting patterns

In addition to the qualitative data presented in the previous sections, in this, the final part of the chapter, the pre-war cohesion is evaluated using quantitative data in a setting of electoral competition. The rationale behind this is that the cohesion in the social group should be driving the political choices in both participation in war and participation in elections. The salience of social cohesion manifests when individuals follow the group membership rather than any other. Therefore, establishing that individuals act as group members in the electoral context is an additional argument that the cohesion in social groups could be the reason behind war-time behavior too.

#### Elections in prewar Montenegro

From the first representative Constitutional Assembly in 1905 to the last elections held in Yugoslavia in 1938, there were almost twenty election cycles in Montenegro. The electoral context changed over time,<sup>96</sup> and the availability of data varies, especially for the earliest elections. The following sections analyze only a selection of these election cycles, at different levels, and in different periods (Table 5.2). The selection was made to cover the beginning and the end of the period, as well as elections at different levels, from local to national.

The first section discusses five elections for the national assemblies during the period Montenegro was an independent state, 1905-1914. It shows that the elected members of the parliament were disproportionately coming from large, high-status brotherhoods.

The next section lowers the level of analysis to two cycles of municipal elections in the 1920s and 1930s and shows that the elected presidents continued to be from large, high-status brotherhoods. It also shows, using larger data sets on municipal assembly members, that the size and status of brotherhoods were related to political representation, overcoming the political divisions.

Finally, the third section raises the level of analysis back to national assembly elections – the last two multiparty elections in Yugoslavia before the war. It first shows that the brotherhood size and status continued to be translated to political power. In addition, the analysis of the votes shows that segmentary social structure affected political mobilization when controlled for political divisions.

The data shows a consistent pattern of votes for candidates from high status, large brotherhoods, but it does not show how individuals voted. The inference about individual behavior based on aggregate data is a potential ecological fallacy. However, the context of the elections gives enough reason to think this is not the case. The municipal electoral data comes from relatively small polling stations with a homogenous population, and the association between the numbers of voters and votes for specific brotherhoods is robust. Also, since voting

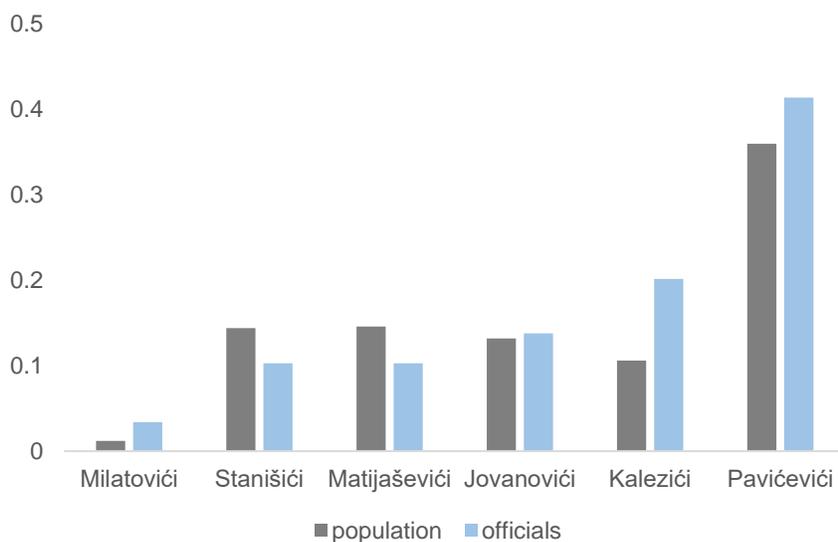
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<sup>96</sup> Electoral system was majoritarian, first past the post, voting was public, suffrage limited to males, in the beginning those paying taxes, although this threshold was later removed, and in some elections there was no competition between political options.

was public, it is doubtful that individuals would openly “switch” the votes to representatives from neighboring brotherhoods, to produce such outcomes.

The strong association between social structure and elected officials can be illustrated with an example of the Pavkovići municipality in Danilovgrad county. In Pavkovići, a whole municipal population consisted of only a few large brotherhoods. Figure 5.4 shows the social structure and the 1931 political representatives of this municipality.

Figure 5.4. Ratios of Pavkovići municipality brotherhoods



Surname analysis shows there were representatives of only six brotherhoods among municipal officials in 1931. When the distribution of officials is compared with household distribution from the ethnographic survey from 1920-1921,<sup>97</sup> there is an almost exact translation. Around 36% of households in the municipality belonged to the largest Pavkovići brotherhood, as opposed to 41% of the municipal officials, followed by the remaining five brotherhoods, which together accounted for 90% of the municipal population. Only the smallest families were not represented in the municipal bodies. This association does not only show that inference about the political behavior of brotherhood members is unlikely to be an ecological fallacy, but it also confirms that using data on representatives’ brotherhood status well reflects the underlying distribution of social groups.

<sup>97</sup> Šobajić 1923.

Table 5.2 Selected elections in Montenegro 1905-1938

<i>Date</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Mandates</i>	<i>Contestation</i>
1905, November 27	Parliamentary	60 members	no parties
1906, September 27	Parliamentary	60 members	single party
1907, October 31	Parliamentary	62 members	single party
1911, September 27	Parliamentary	62 members	single party
1914, January 11	Parliamentary	62 members	multiparty
<i>From 1918: Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes</i>			
1926, August 15	Local	Municipal assemblies	multiparty
<i>From 1929: Kingdom of Yugoslavia, dictatorship from 1929 to 1931</i>			
1935, May 5	Parliamentary	370 members	multiparty
1936, November 22	Local	Municipal assemblies	multiparty
1938, December 11	Parliamentary	373 members	multiparty

#### 1905 – 1914 National assembly elections

From 1905 to 1914, representatives to the Montenegro assemblies were elected from the six historical captaincies that mostly coincide with the interwar municipalities of Danilovgrad county.<sup>98</sup> The data on elected representatives is collected from the official newspaper in the period, *Glas Crnogorca*.<sup>99</sup> The newspaper had the names and professions of elected representatives from six captaincies for the five elections held in this period, so the sum was a total of 30 appointments. Five members of the parliament were elected more than once, and these re-elections were counted.

The status of the 117 brotherhoods was constructed based on data from the ethnographic literature<sup>100</sup> and classified into four categories: highest, high, neutral, and low status. Data on brotherhood status is shown together with data on brotherhood size, based on the numbers of households.

<sup>98</sup> The six captaincies were: Pavkovići, Petrušini, Martinići, Vražegrm, Komani-Zagarač, and Spuž.

<sup>99</sup> *Glas Crnogorca*, November 19 1905, July 1 1906, October 20 1907, September 17 1911, and January 4 1914.

<sup>100</sup> Šobajić 1923, Erdeljanović 1926.

Most MPs in this period came from the brotherhoods, whose status was the highest in the tribal hierarchy (Figure 5.5). Out of 30 members in five convocations, twenty MPs came from the two highest-ranking categories, whereas only five members came from the lower two ranks and only one representative (a priest from Vražegrm municipality) from the lowest. Five representatives elected from the Spuž captaincy were from the Piperi tribe. Their status, based on their biographies, was probably high, but in the absence of systematic data on Piperi's social structure, they are treated as "Other."

The 1905-1914 data shows that the elected representatives came not only from brotherhoods with higher status but also from large brotherhoods. The average number of households of the brotherhoods from which they were elected was 99, higher than the average brotherhood size of 26 households in the county. Brotherhoods of the elected representatives can be compared to other brotherhoods in the municipalities. Figure 5.6 shows that the majority of elected representatives came from the four largest brotherhoods in their primary municipality.

Figure 5.5 Brotherhood status of elected parliament members 1905-1914

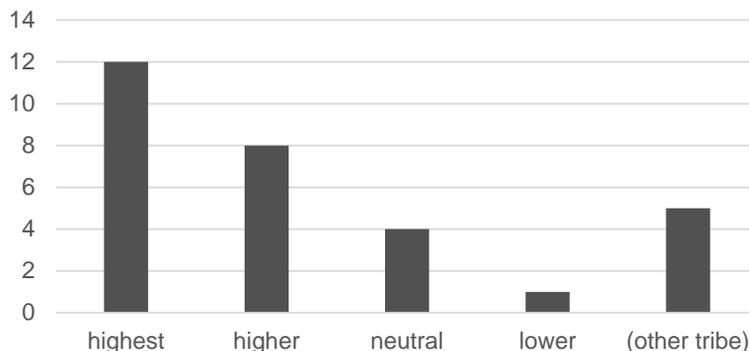
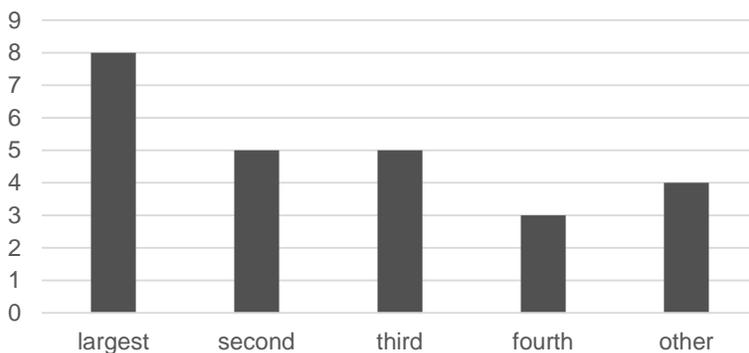


Figure 5.6 1905-1914 Parliament members by brotherhood size rank



In a model segmental society, the political and social hierarchies are inseparable, the tribal leader is at the same time the leader of the political unit. In the process of state garnering competencies from the tribes, the tribal and administrative sources of authority can continue to coexist. A person can be a tribal elder and a military officer, or a member of the executive. As the data for elected representatives also included their professions, Figure 5.7 shows a matrix of professional status and the sources of authority.

The data shows that, in addition to the relationship between membership in the parliament and the brotherhood status, which is a social feature, the professional status in this period was strongly associated with the societal source of authority. The overlap between social and political authority is visible with the 13 MPs that had high societal status, whereas 12 MPs drew their authority from the state functions. There was a substantial overlap of the sources of authority among the high-status individuals in the tribes. This is also in line with the theoretical assumption that in segmentary societies, tribal and political hierarchies can overlap, and the outcome should be higher cohesion of these segments.

Figure 5.7. The status of elected MPs, 1905-1914

		Source of authority		Total
		<i>Societal</i>	<i>State</i>	
Professional status	<i>High</i>	Tribal captain 5 Priest 5 Land-owner 3	Administration 5 Military officer 4 Judge 3	25
	<i>Low</i>	Peasant 1	Doctor 2 Teacher 1 Supervisor 1	5
Total		14	16	30

### 1926 and 1936 Municipal elections

In the two decades between the wars, there were a dozen elections. In this section, the level of analysis moves to the municipal elections, held in the 1920s and 1930s. The elections were held in 10 municipalities in 1926, and 9 municipalities in 1936.<sup>101</sup> The data on the elected members of municipal assemblies and presidents of municipalities comes from the 1931 official registry of the Zeta region,<sup>102</sup> while the results of municipal elections of 1936 are from the *Politika* newspaper.<sup>103</sup>

101 Orja Luka and Danilovgrad–village municipalities merged to Petrušín municipality between these two cycles.

102 Almanah-šematizam, 527-579.

103 *Politika*, November 24, 1936.

Even though there were changes in political and electoral systems, the level of elections was different, and two decades had passed, a similar pattern emerges as at the beginning of the century. The majority of 19 elected presidents of municipalities came from the high and highest status brotherhoods (14), while the rest was coming from the lower ranking brotherhoods (Figure 5.8). Unlike the previous period, most municipal presidents were coming from the second-highest rank, not the highest one, as it was in 1905-1914.

The mean household size of the brotherhoods of elected officials in the municipalities was, just as in the elections for the national assembly in the previous period, higher than the county mean – 85 compared to 26. Also, as in the 1905-1914 period, the majority of municipal presidents were from the four largest brotherhoods in their municipalities (Figure 5.9).

Figure 5.8 Elected presidents of municipalities by brotherhood status

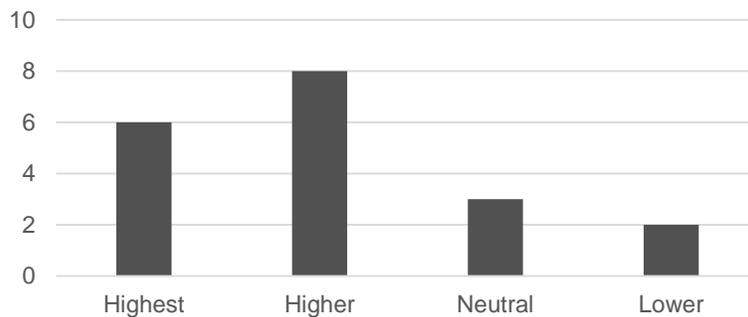
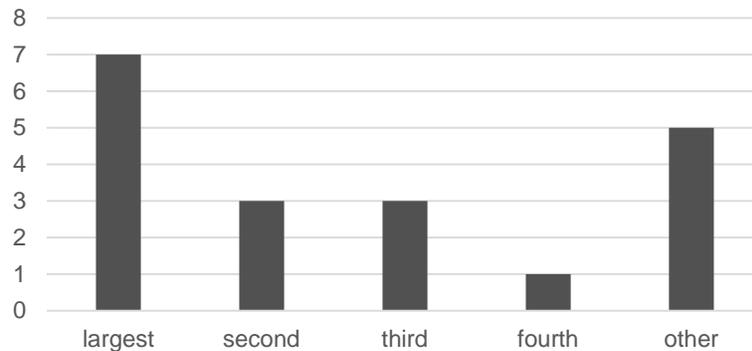


Figure 5.9 Elected presidents of municipalities by brotherhood size



The data on municipal assemblies from 1931 offers a fine-grained picture of the representation of the brotherhoods. The plot in Figure 5.10 shows all county brotherhoods, with the ratio of the total number of county households on the horizontal axis and their ratio of representatives in municipal assemblies on the vertical axis. A strong positive association existed between brotherhood's size and its political representation,  $R^2 = 0.83$ ,  $N=117$ . This adds support to the previous evidence of electoral support to the members of brotherhoods, and against the possibility of ecological fallacy, mainly because the voting was public.

The data also shows that besides the overrepresentation of high-status brotherhood at the commanding positions of members of assembly or presidents of municipalities, the low-status brotherhoods were underrepresented, even at the level of municipal assemblies.

Figure 5.10 Ratios of brotherhood members in assemblies and population (%)

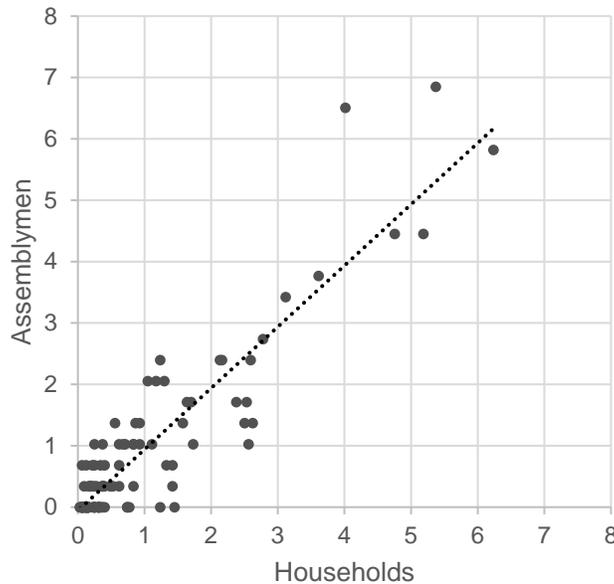
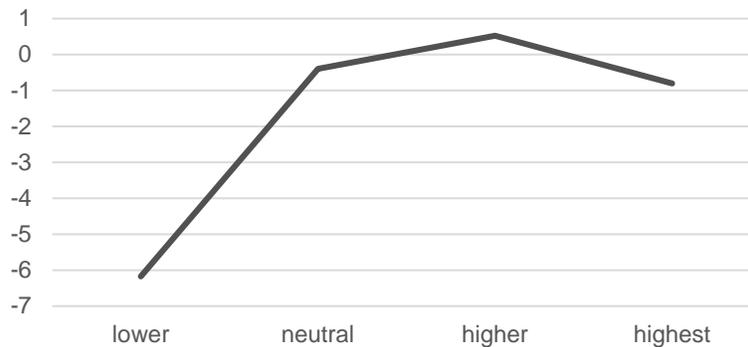


Figure 5.11 shows the difference in percentage points between brotherhoods population size and its representation in municipal assemblies sorted by status. The brotherhoods in the highest three categories had a proportionate representation. Only the low-status brotherhoods were underrepresented by more than six percentage points.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Assembly members who were not from the tribe, or whose brotherhood membership could not be identified, were not counted.

Figure 5.11 Underrepresentation of lowest status brotherhoods in municipal assemblies (p.p.)



How did the political parties fit these patterns? For one, political parties could be blind towards the social structure, or they could be responsive to it. If they were responsive, the political parties could have represented segments of the population in different positions on the tribal hierarchy. For instance, the ruling party could be drawing support from high-status brotherhoods and opposition from the lower status. The other option would have been that the parties transmitted the power relations from society to the state institutions proportionately.

The evidence from the 1936 elections (as well as the 1935 elections, discussed later) supports the latter proposition – that the parties transmitted the hierarchical relations of society into politics, rather than ignoring, or challenging them. The 1936 municipal elections were marked by a high level of political polarization between the supporters of the government and the united opposition candidates.<sup>105</sup> Despite this, the votes followed the previous patterns, and again more than 80% went to the candidates from high and highest status brotherhoods (Figure 5.12). Not only did candidate status follow a similar pattern as all previously analyzed elections, but there was also no difference between the ruling and opposition electoral lists (Figure 5.13).<sup>106</sup> The political rivals primarily nominated high-status individuals. A similar pattern occurred in the national elections that happened around this time, as explained in the next section.

<sup>105</sup> Lakić, 1991.

<sup>106</sup> Votes were for the ruling Yugoslav Radical Community (JRZ), and on the other hand for the United Opposition (UO) and the independent candidates.

Figure 5.12 1936 Municipal elections votes (%) and candidate status

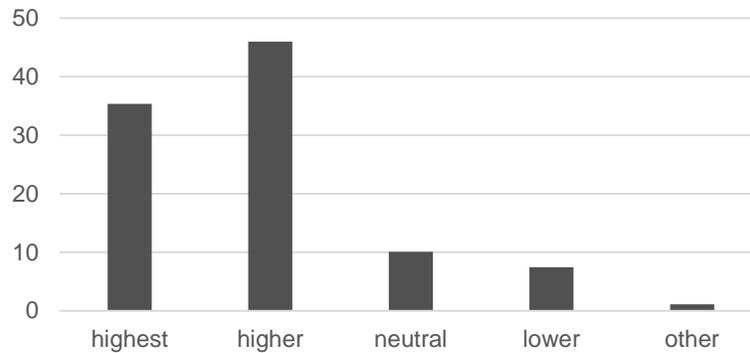
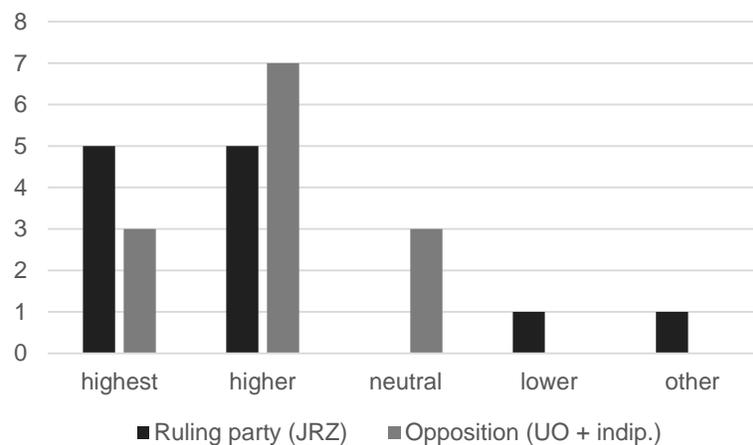


Figure 5.13 1936 Municipal elections candidates by status and government/opposition lists



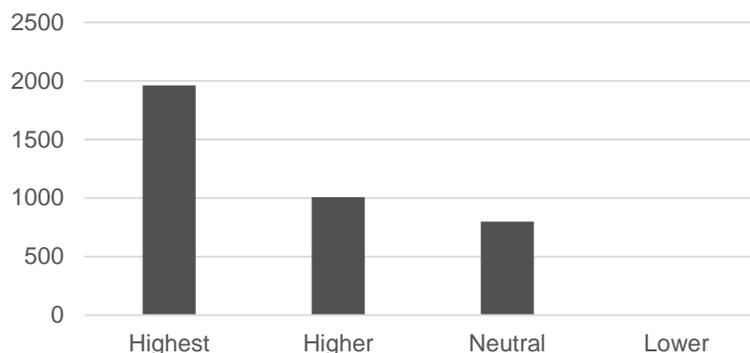
### 1935 and 1938 Assembly elections

After the 1929 dictatorship ended, and after the 1931 elections in which only government-supported list was running, towards the end of the period, two multiparty elections for the Yugoslav assembly were held. After the analysis of the Montenegro assembly and Yugoslav municipal elections, the question is whether the patterns identified earlier persisted.

In the 1938 elections, six candidates were running on different lists in Danilovgrad county. Figure 5.14 shows that almost 80% of the votes of enfranchised men were cast for the lists of three candidates from the highest and high-status brotherhoods. The remaining three candidates from

neutral status brotherhoods received the remaining votes. The only candidate from the low-status brotherhood did not receive any votes.

Figure 5.14 Total 1938 votes for the candidates by brotherhood status



This is in line with the previously presented data. The additional 1935 national election data sheds additional light on the voting pattern where votes follow the brotherhood rather than party affiliation and show that it was still holding in the late 1930s. In these elections in Danilovgrad county, there were three candidates from the same ruling party lists. Together they received more than 90% of the votes, one candidate from the nationally relevant opposition list received the remaining votes, and two remaining candidates received only 11 votes.

In essence, this was a tight competition not only between three candidates with the same political platform but also three candidates from large, highest status brotherhoods. How did the voters behave? Once political affiliation is controlled for, as in all previous elections, the votes followed the brotherhood affiliation of the candidate.

Figure 5.15 shows the voting pattern for the three candidates on the ruling party list (Bošković, Jovović, and Radović). The bars show the number of votes each candidate won in each municipality, and the outline indicates in which municipality candidate's brotherhood was numerically dominant. All three candidates received the relative majority of the votes in municipalities where their brotherhoods were coming from. However, as there were more municipalities than candidates, how did the voters behave when there were no candidates from their brotherhood? Here the complex structure of segmental society should be considered. Each segment is at the same time a part of the largest descend branch, or a sub-tribe. Indeed, the voters will most likely support a candidate who is the closest kin, if not the member of the brotherhood, then a member of the same sub-tribe or descent branch.

The lines in Figure 5.15 show the number of households of the descent branch of the candidate per municipality. In the case of candidate Bošković, it looks like most of his votes came from municipalities where his closest cousins lived. The next Figure shows that candidate Jovović

received the most votes where his wider Pavkovići-Brajovići descent branch lives. He also received some votes in Vražegrm municipality, where not many of his descent branch lived. Finally, candidate Radović received his votes from the municipalities where his branch of Bubići lived, but also from the town population in Spuž and Danilovgrad.

To sum, these data provide tentative support for the proposition that the votes followed the brotherhood affiliation pattern when political party affiliation is controlled. It gives limited support that the voting pattern follows the complex segmentary lineage structure of society.

### *Conclusion*

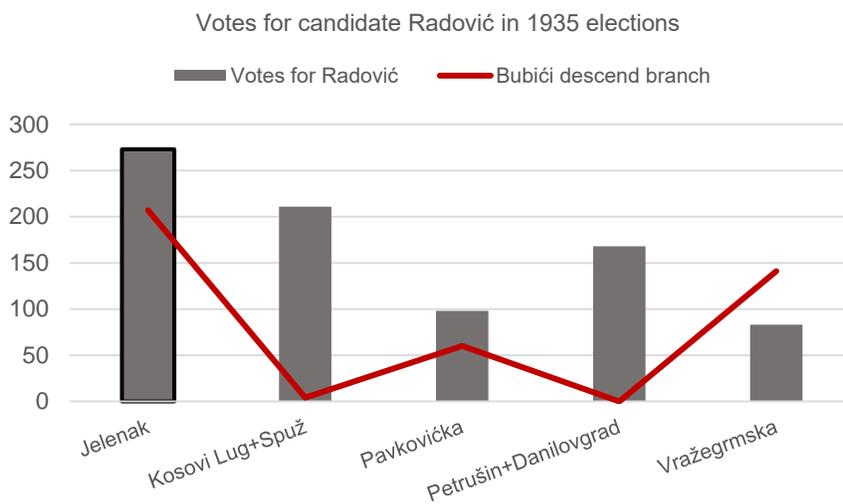
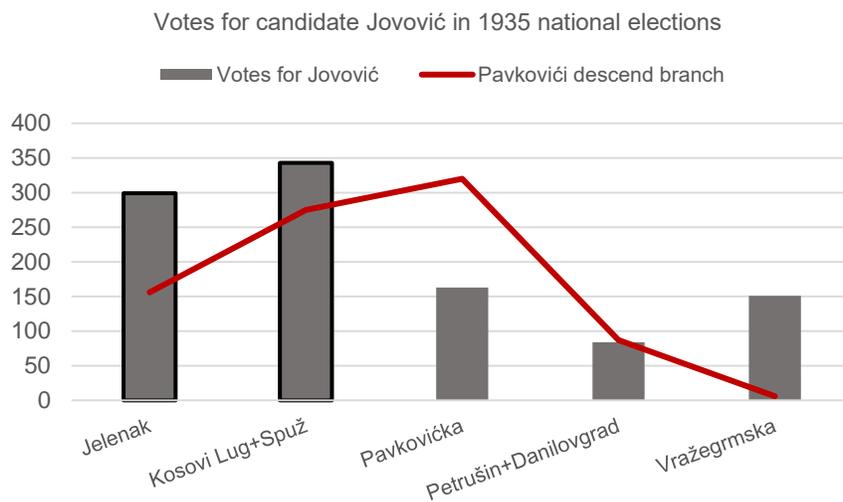
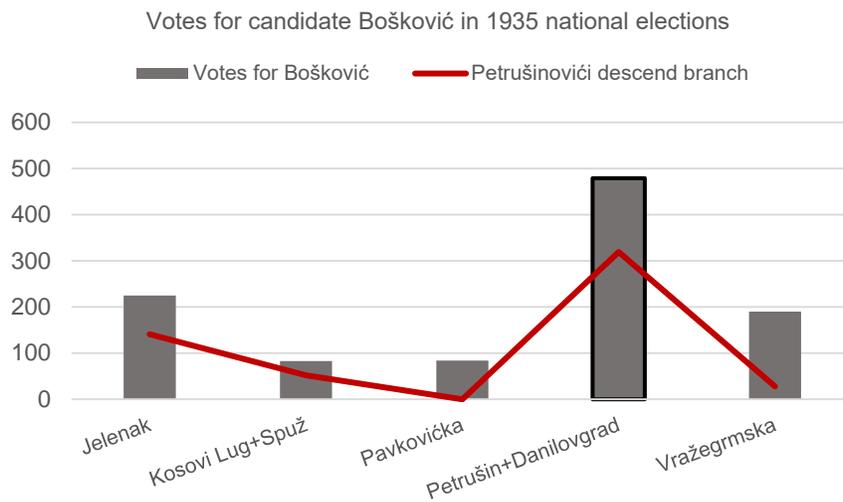
Based on this section, five tentative conclusions can be made about the behavior of voters in the pre-war period. Higher status individuals voted for representatives who were members of their kinship groups. Lower status individuals, on the other hand, also voted for the higher status representatives. This suggests that higher status brotherhood members had stronger cohesion and voted for their kin, while the less cohesive lower status brotherhood members' votes dispersed, and went to the dominant brotherhood members.

It further shows this voting according to status crossed political divides, with both government and opposition lists recruiting high-status representatives. Representatives were highly positioned, with overlapping social and political authority, and these properties, as assumed in the theory, are a feature of highly cohesive groups. Finally, voting followed the extended descent branches when there were no representatives from the immediate kinship group. This means that the logic of the segmentary association of larger social groups can be partially observed in the prewar period.

These conclusions speak to the expectations about individual behavior in cohesive social groups. The individuals make choices that are putting their group membership above any other identity, in this case, political. If horizontal cohesion means solidarity in voting, that means supporting the group member irrespectively of any individual preferences that might drive individuals towards other candidates. It also shows that high brotherhood status is useful in mobilizing the lower status individuals and that overlapping authority has more political salience in this context. Therefore both dimensions of cohesion from the theoretical framework, horizontal and vertical, can indeed be observed in the pre-war period.

In further analysis in Chapter seven, the strong association between brotherhood ratios and municipal deputies demonstrated in this chapter is used to create a proxy indicator for the prewar social structure. This metric shows precisely that – the concentration of brotherhoods in the prewar period. It does not measure wartime cohesion. However, the theory predicts that groups with a high concentration of social structure will be more cohesive during the war, which should lead to a faster and extensive mobilization in the war, and the following two chapters demonstrate this in more detail.

Figure 5.15 Votes for 1935 candidates by municipality, brotherhood basis, and descent branch distribution



## Conclusion

This chapter was an analysis of the social structure in Danilovgrad before the Second World War. The nature of ties between individuals themselves and the group is a sticky feature of society that does not change quickly. This chapter argued that despite long-term state encroachment, many of the features of tribal society survived long enough to be activated in the war.

When the war starts, state institutions collapse, insecurity rises, and social groups become focal points. The pre-existing kinship network is a taught, historical scheme, which guided individual behavior in times that were described as “lawlessness.” The cohesion that connects the individuals and puts them in relationships of domination and deference is maintained in peacetime through individuals' reliance on the social group for livelihood, security, and social status. The qualitative evidence from the ethnographic studies and primary documents, as well as the analyzed political manifestations of cohesion before the war, corroborate these propositions.

Whereas the previous chapter mainly set the stage and explained the armed actor behavior on the macro level, and this chapter dealt with the sources of cohesion and its manifestation before the war, the following chapter will build on this analysis, and its goal is to demonstrate the mechanisms that drive the dynamics of wartime mobilization. Similarly to this chapter, the evidence will first be provided using qualitative data, followed by a quantitative analysis of 1941 insurgency and 1942 civil war in Danilovgrad county of Montenegro.

# CHAPTER SIX. INSURGENCY AND CIVIL WAR IN DANILOVGRAD COUNTY

## Introduction

This chapter is a micro-level historical analysis of the insurgency and civil war in Danilovgrad county between 1941 and 1942. Its goal is to demonstrate, by relying on historical data, the mechanisms through which cohesion affected the mobilization in the war.

The chapter is organized chronologically, in eight sections. It covers the period from the capitulation of the Royal Yugoslav Army in April 1941 to the communist defeat and complete withdrawal from Montenegro in June 1942.

The descriptive part of the chapter follows the chronological flow without much disruption. In order to avoid burdening the narrative with quantitative data, the quantitative analysis is condensed into two of the eight sections (parts five and eight). The conclusion reconnects the main findings from the whole chapter with the hypotheses about civil war participation from the theoretical framework.

A note about the data: several types of data sources were used, including books and edited volumes, published memoirs, journal articles, newspapers, collections of documents, and chronologies of the war. In addition to these, the quantitative part of the chapter relies on sources already introduced in the previous chapters, including ethnographic literature, censuses of victims, and inventories of combatants.

The literature used for this chapter was often biased. Measures were taken to triangulate the events with different sources whenever possible, and to avoid relying on the narrative in the literature and instead of using the literature as a source of data.

## 6.1 Danilovgrad between the occupation and the insurgency

The Second World War in Yugoslavia started on April 6 with a sudden invasion by the Axis Powers. The area of Montenegro was occupied by the Italian forces in a short military campaign known as the “April War.” The Yugoslav Royal Army was not sufficiently prepared, and the mobilization of the Yugoslav military was perceived as slow and ineffective.<sup>1</sup>

During the April War, there was only one additional Yugoslav infantry regiment and artillery division camping in Danilovgrad. The soldiers were in bad condition, obtaining food from the nearby villages.<sup>2</sup> The military had a low recruitment capacity. Young men from the neighboring villages who wanted to volunteer were sent back, as they could not be provided with training and equipment.<sup>3</sup>

As the defeat of the Royal Yugoslav Army appeared more imminent and wanting to avoid the capture of party members in the military ranks, the Communist Party prevented further recruitment, before the capitulation.<sup>4</sup> Once capitulation happened, many of the soldiers who avoided being captured were finding their way to their homes.

### *After the capitulation*

There was a growing sense of insecurity after the capitulation. The villages in Danilovgrad county were in disarray.<sup>5</sup> As the battalions were leaving weapons, ammunition, equipment, wherever the news of surrender had reached them, the civilians were quick to collect these weapons. Stocks were made in small improvised deposits at individual homes.<sup>6</sup> The collection of these great amounts of military material left by the dissolving army was spontaneous – villagers were collecting weapons because they felt safer with guns.<sup>7</sup>

A sense of frustration was looming in the county after the April War. There was a lingering sense of betrayal by the military commanders, as it was hard to reconcile the martial tradition and the military victories of the previous decades with a swift defeat of 1941.<sup>8</sup> Veterans from the previous wars felt especially betrayed, their honor and military valor humiliated.<sup>9</sup> “If we, old men, had fought with only our sticks, we would not have lost in this way.”<sup>10</sup> The sense of resentment played in the hands of the Communists who portrayed the Royal Military as traitors.<sup>11</sup>

### *The benevolent occupation*

Italy framed the occupation as the liberation of Montenegro, and there was a part of the population that responded positively to this. After the capitulation, individuals close to previous

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1 Brajović 1964, 220.

2 Brajović, 221.

3 Brajović, 222.

4 Brajović, 223.

5 Perović 1964, 626.

6 Ivanović 1964, 116.

7 Đuričković 1964, 433.

8 Bobičić 1964, 241.

9 Brajović, 224.

10 Bobičić, 241.

11 Brajović, 224.

Montenegro's government organized the reception of the Italians in Danilovgrad.<sup>12</sup> A temporary "Montenegrin committee" was set up already on April 24.<sup>13</sup> Local government was soon set up by the Italian forces. On May 17, Lieutenant Nazario took over the civilian authority in Danilovgrad county.<sup>14</sup> Civilian Commissioner for Montenegro Mazzolini visited the city, showing that invasion was over, and a new phase of Italian rule was beginning.<sup>15</sup>

The Italians in Danilovgrad were presenting themselves to the local population as friends and liberators from the oppressive regime. They guaranteed freedom and security to the population and had expected friendly attitudes towards the Italian military.<sup>16</sup> This Italian message was not without response.

The pre-war separatist movement that was in good relations with Italy before the war,<sup>17</sup> was not particularly active in the county, but they were vocal. The Temporary committee proclamation said that "old, noble, proud Montenegrin state" was reestablished. It had finally gained its long-wanted independence "after twenty years of Yugoslav captivity." It was saying that insurgency against the Italians would be unreasonable.<sup>18</sup> The newspaper "Glas Crnogorca" (Voice of the Montenegrin) was re-established, and the first issue congratulated Montenegrins for their freedom.<sup>19</sup>

Italian military was based in the cities and rarely engaged with the countryside. However, they were looking for cooperation from former local authorities to inform on communists.<sup>20</sup> The gendarmerie stations from the Yugoslav period continued with their operation and were absorbed for these purposes.<sup>21</sup> Communist Party members, on the other hand, were informed that municipal authorities were preparing such lists.<sup>22</sup>

### *Socio-economic conditions*

The Italians appeared as benefit providers in the beginning, but they did not fully control the conditions in the county, which were increasingly worsening. After the occupation, the market in Danilovgrad was well stocked. The Italians were providing essential supplies, which was supporting the image of a benevolent and generous rule.<sup>23</sup> However, this did not last long. The market was disrupted when stocks of Yugoslav currency appeared after the fleeing Yugoslav government left them near Nikšić before boarding planes to leave the country. Prices skyrocketed, and trust in money was lost, replaced by barter. The communal property suffered: fish stock in Zeta was hunted with explosives, and communal forests were cut.<sup>24</sup> As the occupation unfolded, food became even scarcer, and markets were running out of flour. Some

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12 Brajović, 223.

13 Hronologija 1963, 27, Pajović 1977, 52.

14 Glas Crnogorca 05/25/1941, 2.

15 Glas Crnogorca 06/24/1941, 1.

16 Ivanović, 117.

17 Rastoder 2004.

18 Glas Crnogorca 04/19/1941, 1.

19 Brajović, 226.

20 Ivanović, 117.

21 Pajović, 40.

22 Perović, 629.

23 Brajović, 229.

24 Ivanović, 118, Brajović, 228.

corn or cattle could have been purchased for guns and ammunition, but this was discouraged by the Communists.<sup>25</sup>

With increased insecurity and with basic needs becoming more challenging to attain, the social groups became focal points for individuals. Villagers started relying on themselves again. The villages lived like a big family and made all decisions at village assemblies.<sup>26</sup> Getting together and relying more on the group was, as in any other time of uncertainty, “increasing their chances of honorable survival.”<sup>27</sup>

The power relations were shifting due to new circumstances. The elders paid more attention to what the youth was saying. They relied on youth to be better informed about the fast-changing environment.<sup>28</sup> Soldiers, students, and clerks were returning from the cities where they were before the war. Communist Party Youth Organization was organizing groups around these returnees.<sup>29</sup>

Former Montenegrin colonists in Kosovo and Vojvodina were also returning to the safety of mountain villages. “Fleeing to the old homeland was the only way out.”<sup>30</sup> They were well received and incorporated in the villages of their cousins.<sup>31</sup> Some 20000 refugees came to Montenegro in this period, of which around 2000 to Danilovgrad county.<sup>32</sup> The students, former soldiers, and clerks, as well as refugees, flooded the county and brought into disbalance already fragile power relations.

#### *Communist organization*

The experience of operating as an illegal organization before the war had benefited the Communist Party in the war setting. The communists arriving from different parts of the country to their home villages were connecting with the existing cells. At the first meeting in one of the municipalities – Vražegrm, there were thirteen members of the municipal cell, mostly peasants with three to five years of experience in the Party, and basic political knowledge, but disciplined and eager to fight.<sup>33</sup>

The party positioned their people around the county. Party members discussed the possibility of moving from more exposed villages in the Zeta valley to the mountains. However, the instruction was to stay in villages and remain close to people.<sup>34</sup> This was necessary for the execution of their plans. Montenegro Committee held a meeting on April 24 at Velje Brdo between Danilovgrad and Podgorica and decided to collect weapons and form local commissions to

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25 Brajović, 228.

26 Ivanović, 118.

27 Ivanović, 117.

28 Ivanović, 118.

29 Bobičić, 241.

30 Brajović, 227.

31 Ivanović, 118.

32 Filipović 2005.

33 Perović, 626.

34 Brajović, 226.

oversee the process.<sup>35</sup> After this party directive, the collective stockpiles were made from May to June.<sup>36</sup>

Individuals in charge of weapon collection would be the future leaders of the insurgency. Bajo Sekulić was in charge of the collection for the Danilovgrad, Nikšić and Šavnik areas. Under him, Blažo Mraković, secretary of county Committee, was responsible for Danilovgrad.<sup>37</sup> The municipal cells were establishing contact with the county cell where Boško Đuričković was in charge of the military sector. Đuričković, born in Zagarač, a law student and an NCO, was later described as “the soul of the July insurgency.”<sup>38</sup> Even though Sekulić came from a high-status Bjelopavlići brotherhood, the other two leaders, Mraković and Đuričković, came from the smaller Zagarač tribe. The relative lack of communist leaders from powerful Bjelopavlići brotherhoods will be a permanent phenomenon throughout the war.

### *Stockpiling weapons*

The actions of the Communist Party, weapon collection, and training, made this organization a focal point for the insurgency. The collection of weapons was the first order of business for the local party cells.<sup>39</sup> Before the Italians entered Danilovgrad, the Communists organized breaking in of all the weapons magazines. People were carrying three or four guns on shoulders or 20-30 guns on carts.<sup>40</sup> As a consequence of both spontaneous and organized weapon collection, out of three ammunition depots, only one partially preserved depot was taken by the Italians. All the military material from the depots, and left along the roads by infantry regiments, were collected and moved to hidden locations.<sup>41</sup>

The Communist Party was also collecting weapons from individuals. Peasants were hiding weapons in individual stockpiles.<sup>42</sup> There was also a high proportion of personal gun ownership, and almost every house owned a gun.<sup>43</sup> However, many individuals refused to give guns for collective stocks. Partially a matter of honor, it was also a matter of trust, as the villagers felt safer with guns.<sup>44</sup> The Communists registered those not willing to hand down weapons in special inventories.<sup>45</sup> The compromise was to allow people to mark their guns and be able to take them at any time from collective stockpiles.<sup>46</sup>

Where civilians felt less threatened by the Italian patrols, they were less prone to cooperate with the communist weapon collection. In the more isolated villages, where no Italian carabinieri patrolled at all, collecting weapons was almost not happening. In such cases, the Communists were giving up from collection and advised villagers to at least hide some weapons in caves.<sup>47</sup>

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35 Đuričković 1964, 433.

36 Ivanović, 117.

37 Đuričković 1964, 434.

38 Filipović 2005.

39 Perović, 626.

40 Brajović, 225.

41 Đuričković 1964, 434.

42 Brajović, 226.

43 Bobičić, 241.

44 Škerović 1964a, 652.

45 Đuričković 1964, 435.

46 Bobičić, 242.

47 Perović, 627.

As the demand for guns was high in the country, a weapons black market developed. Buyers were primarily from the areas where no military stocks were left behind. The Communist Party directive was to extinguish these markets. Party members had a task to eliminate traders from the villages and to prevent the traditional gratuitous shootings in order to save ammunition.<sup>48</sup> The weapon collection and the interference in the market were the first instances in which communists affected the daily life of the county.

### *Training guerilla groups*

Weapon collection was perceived by many as a preparation for the insurgency. By early May, the collection was finished and reports submitted to the Montenegro Committee of the Communist Party.<sup>49</sup> The final results were around 2000 guns and one cannon.<sup>50</sup> The party was simultaneously developing its military wing, by forming military sectors, which were organized parallel to the Party organization at the local level.<sup>51</sup>

After the weapon collecting campaign, the Party started preparing.<sup>52</sup> The “strike groups” were guerilla groups, between 10 and 30 people strong, mostly consisting of youth, students, peasants, and some workers.<sup>53</sup> In the beginning, these were either party members, party youth, or candidates for membership.<sup>54</sup> Primarily these were individuals positioned low in the social hierarchy.

By July 10, there were 33 guerilla groups with around 600 guerilla combatants in the county (Figure 6.1).<sup>55</sup> The guerilla groups were the core combatants, committed, and politically trained. The Party assessment at the time was that there were up to 2000 people in the county, willing to participate, the potential incidental participants in an insurgency.<sup>56</sup> The events will show that even the most optimistic assessment underestimated the extent of the insurgency that began only several days later.

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48 Bobičić, 241.

49 Đuričković 1964, 435.

50 Brajović, 228.

51 Đuričković 1964, 435.

52 Brajović, 228.

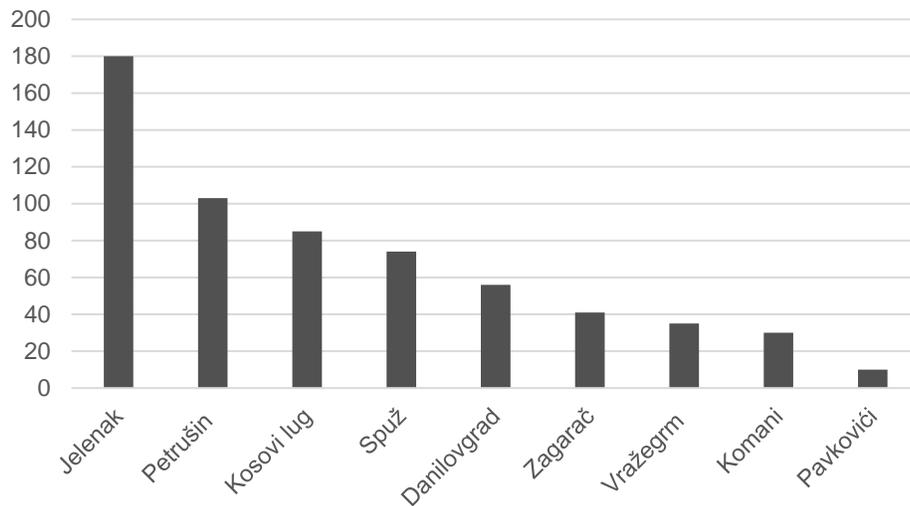
53 Brajović, 228, Ivanović, 119.

54 Đuričković 1964, 435, Bobičić, 242.

55 Đuričković 1964 435-436, Čagorović 614, Jovanović 1960, 51.

56 Đuričković 1964, 436.

Figure 6.1 Size of guerilla strike groups before the insurgency



#### *Situation preceding the insurgency*

The formation of strike groups had led the people to expect mobilization and focused them on the communist organization. They did not know when and how, but it was thought that “communists were up to something.”<sup>57</sup> The groups that passed the guerilla training were indeed the kernels of future armed units.<sup>58</sup>

Before the insurgency, the fighting spirit was high in the county, and Italian power was underestimated.<sup>59</sup> Italians felt safe occasionally patrolling the villages, and the most significant incidents were occasional stealing of livestock.<sup>60</sup> However, when the Italians started collecting weapons from civilians in early June, it changed the perception of their benevolent intentions.<sup>61</sup> People were hesitant to hand over guns, and the collection was unsuccessful.<sup>62</sup>

The Italian weapon collection had increased the sense of insecurity. Other factors have inflated expectations. The Axis invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22 and the perspective of “Russians” joining the war had emboldened the Communist message of a swift victory.<sup>63</sup> The Communists were testing the mood of the population – they were asking how people would react if there were an attack on the Italians, but still, they had no plan.<sup>64</sup>

Some members of the Communist Party had participated in the Spanish Civil War as volunteers. Except for the military experience that they had, of the modern, ideologically driven

57 Ivanović, 119.

58 Brajović, 228.

59 Ivanović, 120.

60 Bobičić, 242.

61 Ivanović, 120.

62 Brajović, 227.

63 Ivanović, 120. See also Selhanović 2012.

64 Bobičić, 242.

war, it has influenced not only their organization but also their perception of the threat of a Fascist regime. They did not believe at all in the idea of benevolent occupation.<sup>65</sup> To subvert the Italian military, communists were reaching out to the rank and file. Those that spoke some Italian or Spanish languages tried to establish contact with Italian soldiers, many of whom were from the working-class background or even antifascist. Others had already had enough of war after Ethiopia and just wanted to return home.<sup>66</sup>

Preparation intensified in early July, and on July 10, it was decided to start with guerilla actions in Montenegro. On the same day, the Regional Committee was formed, which included Danilovgrad and Podgorica counties.<sup>67</sup> Danilovgrad Communists met on July 11 and received the general decision to start the actions.<sup>68</sup> This order still had to be operationalized.

The Regional Committee met on July 12 and decided a plan of actions that would start in Podgorica, where they placed the Headquarters. However, despite all the preparations, the plan was not realized as the insurgency had already started in Cetinje county on July 13. The Regional Committee left Podgorica, and on July 13, the plan of action was brought to the Danilovgrad county Committee.<sup>69</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The occupation has increased insecurity among civilians, who were arming in order to protect themselves. The economic conditions worsened, and providing for livelihood was difficult. The additional disruption was the influx of people returning to the county, which additionally complicated power relations. Individuals were turning towards their groups for security, which was increasing group cohesion.

There was resentment towards both old authorities, because of a humiliating defeat, and towards the Italian military, whose power civilians underestimated. The Italian occupation was, however, unlike the occupying regimes in neighboring Croatia or Serbia, where violence against civilians was intensive. Few people decided to cooperate with the Italian forces, mostly drawn by benefit provisions, as well as driven by the resentment towards the Yugoslav government it had replaced.

The Communists had the advantage of clandestine work and military experience from the Spanish Civil War. Their activities and skill in operating under new circumstances, as well as the vocal opposition to the occupation, made them a focal point for civilians. Their gun collection and military training presented them as an actor capable of providing security.

Resentment towards the old authorities and occupying forces, and turning to Communists as focal points are mechanisms that were taking individuals closer towards participation in the

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65 Brajović, 226.

66 Brajović, 229.

67 Đuričković 1964, 436.

68 Hronologija, 35.

69 Đuričković 1964, 437.

insurgency. There was a sense of increased uncertainty since the war started, but security was increasingly being found in group membership.

Finally, some individuals were bound to have developed resentment towards lower-status communists even in this period, due to imposed collective weapons collection, interference with the black market, or opposition to collaboration with the Italians. However, there was still no organized political opposition to their presence in the county, and civilians were willing to cooperate with them.

## 6.2 The July insurgency

### *The first actions*

The mobilization in Danilovgrad county was exceptionally fast. Danilovgrad party committee received a plan of action on the night of July 13-14. The plan was not ambitious. It was to take over three Italian posts and two gendarmeries and disrupt communications. On July 14, the committee met to operationalize the plan, and during the day, units were formed to execute the orders.<sup>70</sup>

However, as the sounds of fighting around Čevo in Cetinje county were heard in the Zeta valley, people started gathering and spreading the news of neighboring insurgency.<sup>71</sup> The actions in Danilovgrad finally started on the night of 14-15 July.<sup>72</sup> Italian post in the town of Spuž was overtaken after intensive fighting,<sup>73</sup> and Ostrog surrendered without fighting,<sup>74</sup> as did the gendarmerie stations. The third Italian post in Kosovi Lug was attacked; however, it received reinforcement from Danilovgrad, and the combat ensued.<sup>75</sup>

As the fighting in Kosovi Lug continued, the sounds of fighting brought almost the whole municipality to arms. When Italian soldiers from Danilovgrad arrived to unblock the station, they were confronted by strong forces and eventually retreated to the city, executing in retaliation seven members of Dragovići brotherhood.<sup>76</sup> At the end of the first day of insurgency, instead of small scale actions, almost the whole county was overtaken, except Danilovgrad, with the Italian garrison.<sup>77</sup>

### *The unexpected mass participation*

Not only was the action plan fulfilled, but it also exceeded expectations, mainly because of the fast and extensive participation of social groups in the insurgency. The Communist attacks were followed by villages self-organizing in platoons and companies, which the guerilla groups recruited in their ranks.<sup>78</sup> These military units consisted of kinship groups, with several generations of one family serving in the same unit.<sup>79</sup> Driven by the mechanism of reciprocity, these highly cohesive groups could organize and collectively mobilize in a single day.

As participation started cascading through the county, it could not be stopped. The insurgents were moving through the villages, and the people were increasingly joining.<sup>80</sup> During the Spuž siege, before the dawn, after hearing gunshots, some 500 villagers from the surrounding area

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70 Đuričković 1964 438, Hronologija, 49.

71 Đuričković 1964, 438.

72 Đuričković 1979.

73 Đuričković 1964, 438, Čagorović, 614-617.

74 Đuričković 1964, 439, Perović, 628-630.

75 Đuričković 1964, 439.

76 Đuričković 1964, 440, Hronologija, 55.

77 Đuričković 1964, 440, Hronologija, 52-53.

78 Ivanović, 121.

79 Ivanović, 122.

80 Perović, 630.

joined the insurgents, armed with agricultural tools – axes and billhooks, or even unarmed at all. The guerillas were trying to send them back, but could not force the villagers to leave.<sup>81</sup>

Communist groups did not have the capacity, nor the instructions, to recruit many people. The first directive of the Communist Party was to organize small guerilla groups, but the insurgency went the other way. When the communist organizers told them to go home, the peasants responded, “nobody can stop us from fighting the occupiers,” and older tribesmen said: “if the youth is dying, we can die too, that is less damage.”<sup>82</sup>

The mismatch between the planned guerilla warfare and the unfolding insurgency was evident. When the Montenegro Committee received first reports from the field, on July 15, it decided to demobilize these units and revert to guerilla organization. This decision that was later retracted caused great confusion around the country. In Danilovgrad county, the message was not even received in time, so it was not implemented. Montenegro Committee member Radoje Dakić who visited Danilovgrad said that he did not understand the logic of the demobilization order.<sup>83</sup>

*The peak of insurgency: the capture of Danilovgrad*

On July 16, the county was in arms, and the Italians held only the town of Danilovgrad. It was surrounded by around 3000 insurgents, armed with Yugoslav, Italian, and old Montenegro military guns.<sup>84</sup> Even though the insurgency did not follow the plan, the Communists did not attribute this to tribal mobilization. Instead, they found reasons for the extensive participation in their political work with “the masses.”<sup>85</sup>

When the Montenegro Committee met again, and after another change of mind about the mass insurgency that came from above, it decided to use these units to capture Danilovgrad.<sup>86</sup> Danilovgrad County Committee proceeded with a plan to attack during the night of 16-17 July. It decided to form territorial units and to set the HQ in Zeta valley. On July 16-17, the directive for the attack was dispatched to all units, enthusiastic about taking Danilovgrad.<sup>87</sup>

Before the attack, units were reorganized due to a high number of armed peasants joining, to replace old guerilla strike groups.<sup>88</sup> Previous guerillas were a backbone in the formation of insurgent companies, which was finished by July 17.<sup>89</sup> Companies based on brotherhood structure were formed, 26 of them, with between 2200 and 2300 combatants. All companies were formed at mass assemblies, and commanders were selected by acclamation, after unit members, or party members, nominated them.<sup>90</sup> This way, the whole tribe, and all sub-tribes participated in the attack and selected commanders.

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81 Čagorović, 617, Škerović 1964a, 653.

82 Đuričković 1964, 441-442.

83 Đuričković 1964, 441.

84 Đuričković 1964, 441.

85 Ivanović, 121.

86 Đuričković 1964, 442.

87 Đuričković 1964, 443-444, Hronologija, 65.

88 Hronologija, 67.

89 Četa (company) consisted of vod (platoon), which consisted of desetina (squad).

90 Đuričković 1964, 444.

The preparations for the attack on Danilovgrad started on July 17. The operationalization of the plans for the attack was done on July 18. The plan was to geographically surround the city with nearby brotherhood units that knew the terrain best. The four Pavkovići units were held as a reserve at Sekulići and Gorica, and they were supposed to intervene from the north when needed. Six other units from Komani, Zagarač and Kosovi Lug were securing the southern communication.<sup>91</sup> All the weapons were distributed, and preparations finished by July 18.<sup>92</sup> The insurgents held the city besieged before attacking it on July 19 from all sides.

After heavy fighting, the attack by some 2000 insurgents finally made the Italians surrender.<sup>93</sup> The Italian military had 14 dead, 70 wounded, and staggering 825 soldiers captured, and swaths of equipment lost.<sup>94</sup> The capture of the city was an unqualified victory by the insurgents. A meeting of insurgents and people was organized, and insurgent authority was established in the city.<sup>95</sup> Immediately preparations were made to move insurgents to the Velje Brdo front where Italian troops from the south were heading.<sup>96</sup>

#### *Communist leadership and the anti-communists*

During these days of the insurgency, the leadership and the core of insurgents were communist, while the incidental participants were not. Throughout the string of victories, the relations were cooperative across the political divide. The leadership of the insurgency had a robust communist majority, but non-communists also participated, both as commanders and insurgents. The swift victory over the enemy who was prepared for attack caused excitement in the whole region. Red flags were flown during the attack on Danilovgrad, and Italians thought the insurgents were mostly communists – some were saying “*io comunista*” after being captured.<sup>97</sup> At this time, the communist ideology might have been a problem for committed anti-communists. Many have joined the Communists as parts of the groups, out of reciprocity and conformity. But for the ordinary civilians, there were still no drawbacks to the communist presence in the county.

The older and influential tribesmen at this time gave way to the Communists. There were, however, disagreements about the leadership of units, as well as the generational divide between younger party members and older experienced soldiers. One example of generational and political divides was the process of commander selection in the Donji Petrušin company, formed from 200 insurgents, and equally split between older and younger members.<sup>98</sup> On July 19, the company gathered at an assembly in a village orchard to select the commander. The younger insurgents, which were in communist guerilla units before, some 50-60 of them nominated Škerović, the son. The older ones nominated his 60 years old father, an old warrior, and reserve captain. The son was thought to be too young, and imprudent, to lead Donji Petrušin into the war. However, after long deliberation, the older generation eventually pulled

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91 Đuričković 1964, 445.

92 Đuričković 1964, 446, Ivanović, 121.

93 Đuričković 1964, 447-448, Ivanović, 121.

94 Đuričković 1964, 448.

95 Ivanović, 123, Hronologija, 74.

96 Hronologija, 76.

97 Ivanović, 122.

98 Škerović 1964a, 653.

back, so young Škerović was chosen unanimously.<sup>99</sup> The youth shifted the power relations, motivated by status gain. However, unanimity was crucial for social groups, and higher status segments conformed to the lower ones at this moment.

The resentment between ideological rivals was not strong, and reciprocity between tribe members still prevailed. During the attacks on the targets, local post members were contacted in advance, to avoid unnecessary bloodshed. There were anti-communists among them, many of whom were active gendarmes. In the Spuž station siege, a communist commander contacted a former gendarme sergeant, an anti-communist who was and will later join the Nationalists. “I knew he would not cheat or betray, so I was open with him.” The gendarme cooperated, and all gendarmes left the station the night before the attack, leaving only the Italian military.<sup>100</sup>

Many anti-communists joined the insurgent units to conform to the majority and to avoid negative sanctions. Nevertheless, this siding with the communist insurgent leadership was temporary, and not all conformed. Among those that were not conforming was the Pavkovići sub-tribe. It was slower in mobilization and was not planned for active participation in the attack on Danilovgrad. Bajo Stanišić, who later became the leader of the Nationalists, participated in the insurgency but refused to command. As an officer and an anti-communist, Stanišić opposed the communist organization of the insurgency.<sup>101</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The insurgency in the county was spread fast, and participation was extensive, driven by mechanisms of reciprocity and conformity. Armed units were formed on a segmentary basis, with bottom-up leadership selection, which amplified the group cohesion.

While communists were the core of the units, incidental insurgents were mostly non-communists. The lower status individuals, such as youth, were gaining status through participation, and higher status individuals conformed and participated during this period. The self-reinforcing mechanism of consecutive insurgent victories enabled this, but this would change with the first defeats.

The communist recruitment could not initially respond to the participation, and the leadership showed signs of confusion, leaving a sense that they might not have known what they were doing.

In this period, resentment towards communists was growing, but it was kept in check by the mechanisms of conformity and reciprocity. However, status conflicts about military leadership and organization were evident.

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99 Škerović 1964a, 653.

100 Čagorović, 615-616.

101 Đuričković 1964, 446.

## 6.3 Counterinsurgency and beyond

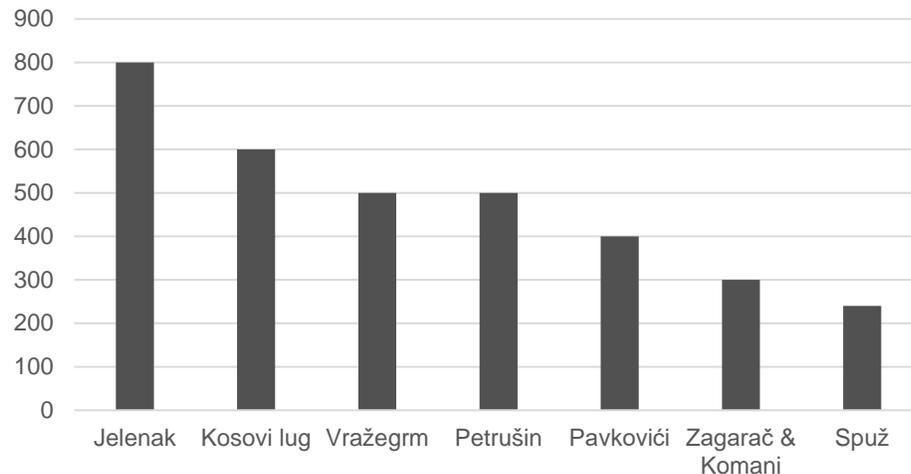
### *The failure of the Velje Brdo front*

Military failures can reverse the dynamics of mobilization. Because actions of cohesive groups create fast and extensive mobilization, desertion that comes immediately after large defeats can effectively stall the insurgency. This section explains the mechanisms of desertion after the failure of the Velje Brdo front.

The Italians started planning military response almost immediately after the insurgency started, and most of the insurgent successes were possible during this logistical phase.<sup>102</sup> Italians divisions' movement created a frontline towards the Danilovgrad area, and Velje Brdo was a natural spot for preventing counterinsurgent forces from entering Zeta valley.<sup>103</sup>

The same day that the insurgents captured Danilovgrad, another reorganization of units had started, in order to prepare for the defense of the insurgent territory.<sup>104</sup> New battalions of different strengths were formed with slightly over 3000 combatants and sent to the Velje Brdo front.

Figure 6.2 Size of insurgent battalions on July 21, 1941



Status conflicts intensified in this process of military reorganization, primarily because of the appointment of commanders. Military officers confronted the Party leadership. They demanded commanding positions, based on their pre-war military rank, the strength and the numbers of soldiers from their brotherhoods, or based on their commanding position in previous wars. Many officers remained disgruntled with the appointments.<sup>105</sup>

102 ZNOR III/4, 392.

103 Hronologija, 52-55, 66, 72-73.

104 Đuričković 1964, 449, Ivanović, 123.

105 Đuričković 1964, 449.

The units were in position when the Italian attack on Velje Brdo started on July 21.<sup>106</sup> The battle lasted the whole day under high temperatures and intense Italian artillery and aviation attacks. Most insurgent artillery was not functional, rising speculations about intentional sabotage.<sup>107</sup> The Italian troops managed to enter the left bank of Zeta and started burning houses. When insurgents saw villages in flames, they started returning to protect their homes.<sup>108</sup>

Fearing for families and property, when the night fell, the front line started dissolving, unit by unit.<sup>109</sup> The logic of frontal formation made sense for the groups, as they could protect their homes behind the lines. However, once the front line broke, the commitment to the security of family members and property prevailed over the commitment to the collective action, and desertion was the result.

### *The Italian repression*

The Italian counter-insurgent measures have started with indiscriminate violence but soon reverted to selective violence. Italians used indiscriminate violence strategically, to the extent that it affected insurgents deserting the front. Once this was achieved, it shifted to targeting insurgent leadership. On July 22, strong Italian forces broke the insurgent front and started moving through Zeta valley. Several villages were burned, but the destruction ceased soon, in the region of Jelenak.<sup>110</sup>

The insurgents mostly dispersed to evacuate their families.<sup>111</sup> Villages in Zeta valley were emptied, and many moved to the surrounding mountains, where they formed big refugee camps.<sup>112</sup> The atmosphere in these mountain camps was morose, very different from the enthusiasm only one week earlier.<sup>113</sup> The new situation was difficult for the Communists to operate in the county, and contact between the local party and Montenegro Committee was temporarily severed.<sup>114</sup>

The Italians switched to selective violence for which they needed the information. Italians released from the captivity went with the advancing troops denouncing insurgents.<sup>115</sup> The local collaborationist leadership was helping with the identification of communist houses.<sup>116</sup> The communist houses, or those denounced for other reasons, were burned.<sup>117</sup>

The advancing Italian army demanded that the population returns to homes and surrender weapons.<sup>118</sup> On July 28, Novica Radović, the leader of the 1919 Rebellion in Danilovgrad, was sent by the Italians to Spuž and Martinići to convince insurgents to give up. He used his family

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106 Đuričković 1964, 450, Hronologija, 72-73.

107 Ivanović, 123.

108 Đuričković 1964, 451.

109 Đuričković 1964, 450.

110 Bobičić, 244, Hronologija, 87.

111 Ivanović, 123.

112 Ivanović, 123.

113 Filipović 2005.

114 Đuričković 1964, 458.

115 Ivanović, 123.

116 Đuričković 1964, 451.

117 Đuričković 1964, 457.

118 Đuričković 1964, 452.

connections to reach the insurgents and was partially successful. Radović reported back to the Italians that 93 guns were returned.<sup>119</sup>

The campaign of combined indiscriminate and selective retributions was effective, dampening the enthusiasm for the insurgency.<sup>120</sup> Amnesty was offered for returning to homes and turning in weapons. The message was that “those who were peaceful or are ready to become peaceful now, are spared of repressive measures.”<sup>121</sup> This campaign of weapon collection was partially successful, mostly in the valley. Several petitions were signed in the villages expressing loyalty to Italy. The villagers also demanded from the guerillas not to be seen carrying guns, to avoid being targeted again by the Italians.<sup>122</sup>

The association of sanctions with communist responsibility worked. Some people accepted the Italian terms, pledging to turn in insurgent leaders. Blamed for the insurgency, the Communists were now getting negative status rewards. Even people sympathetic to the Communists started having doubts. Most have returned to the villages quickly and were not interred. Such individual decisions were possible because people were now scattered in the mountains, and actions were not coordinated at the assemblies.<sup>123</sup>

On the other hand, from the communist perspective, the willingness to accept Italian deals was equal to defection. Some, but not all, village assemblies stood by this position and treated individuals who gave guns to the Italians as traitors.<sup>124</sup> Wedged between the demands from two sides, as civilians often are in wars, many found solution in turning in old weapons that were barely functional.<sup>125</sup> However, differential responses to safety-seeking mechanisms led to intra-tribal divisions and have initiated the mechanisms of denunciations and revenge.

#### *The reorganizations of guerilla units and the Communist comeback*

Italian advances sharply cut the first phase of the insurgency. The cities of Spuž and Danilovgrad were recaptured, as well as the chief communications. By the end of July, only small pockets of guerillas were left scattered. In early August, meetings of remaining cells in the county were held. Groups were again transformed to adapt to the new circumstances, this time with more selective recruitment, accepting only core members experienced in the July insurgency.<sup>126</sup>

On August 20, new 19 guerilla platoons were formed, ranging from 30 to 50 guerillas, with 650 people in total.<sup>127</sup> Compared to guerilla groups before the insurgency, the extent and intensity of communist recruits were now reduced to its pre-war core combatants.

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119 Pajović, 70.

120 Đuričković 1964, 456.

121 Đuričković 1964, 451.

122 Đuričković 1964, 452.

123 Ivanović, 124.

124 Ivanović, 124.

125 Đuričković 1964, 452.

126 Đuričković 1964, 452.

127 Hronologija, 113-114.

The guerilla units from the places that were directly controlled by the Italians have fled to the hills, while those from areas where there were no Italians lived at homes. Intensive political work started in order to rebuild the organization now with the core combatants that had experience in the insurgency.<sup>128</sup> The guerilla group members were mostly young, educated people capable of spreading propaganda against Italians effectively. They managed to regain trust with the civilian population throughout August, which enabled the Communist Party organization to recover.<sup>129</sup>

During August, these small guerilla groups held intensive training and executed several smaller actions.<sup>130</sup> In September, there was an increase in rebel forces, which required a new military organization, more food, and better civilian organization.<sup>131</sup> All guerilla platoons become companies,<sup>132</sup> and these units were ready for more significant actions, several of which happened in late September already.<sup>133</sup>

Guerilla tactics that allowed the Communists to claim small victories proved successful in reigniting recruitment and led to the re-establishment of a communist control on more territory. In September, the Italians directly controlled only Danilovgrad, Spuž, and a couple of posts in the narrow territory around the Podgorica-Danilovgrad road. The reemerging Communists controlled all other territories.<sup>134</sup>

In October, the military organization went through several profound changes. The units were reorganized, and under stronger political control by the party. The units were joined in the new Zeta detachment and reorganized into squads, platoons, companies, and battalions.<sup>135</sup> The organization on the tribal-brotherhood basis was maintained.<sup>136</sup> However, unlike at the beginning of the insurgency, the commanders were not chosen by the soldiers any more but appointed from the top.<sup>137</sup> Also, the Communist Party cells were embedded in all units, and from October 24, every soldier, now formally called a Partisan, wore a red star on their caps.<sup>138</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The military failure of the insurgency was caused by the overwhelming Italian power, but also because of the sudden insurgent desertion. The commitment of insurgents to the security of their social groups was higher than to the military units. The counter-insurgency has quickly abandoned indiscriminate violence and turned to selective violence against the denounced Communists. Selective sanctions targeted communist insurgents rather than being distributed randomly. The rest of the safety-seeking population, exposed to this differentiation in the provision of sanctions and the association of guilt with the communists, demobilized and returned to homes.

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128 Đuričković 1964, 452.

129 Filipović 2005.

130 Đuričković 1964, 453.

131 Ivanović, 128.

132 Hronologija, 131.

133 Đuričković 1964, 453, Hronologija, 126-129.

134 Đuričković 1964, 454.

135 Đuričković 1964, 455.

136 ZNOR III/1, 52.

137 Đuričković 1964, 455.

138 Ivanović, 129, Đuričković 1964, 455.

The Communists were reduced to core pre-insurgency combatants, but they proceeded with guerilla tactics. The smaller actions and diversions had a self-reinforcing logic, and civilians gained trust in the Communists again, which allowed them to take control of the territory away from the main communication lines.

Status driven conflict about the leadership and organization of units was intensifying, but it was only after the military defeat of the insurgency that the Communists reaped negative status rewards, and were openly denounced. In addition, the Communists saw the mass desertion as a political betrayal. The denunciations on the one side and a sense of betrayal after desertion, on the other, had set the tone for a more coercive period of communist rule.

## 6.4 Insurgent rule between the insurgency and the civil war

The period between the initial surge and the end of 1941 is crucial for understanding the shift between insurgency to civil war. The Communists have not only regained control of much of the countryside, but they started building new institutions, they affected the economy and confronted political opposition with coercion. These political processes have pushed them towards the conflict with the anti-communists in 1942.

### *New revolutionary government*

The disorder that was created by the occupation created a power vacuum that the insurgents had attempted to fill. The Italian military had maintained parts of the old administrative apparatus.<sup>139</sup> However, after the insurgency, some of the first moves were to replace county heads, appointed in Yugoslavia.<sup>140</sup> On July 31, the Italians ordered that all county heads cease jurisdiction to military commands of the cities, effectively diminishing the remaining local institutions.<sup>141</sup>

In early autumn, the military situation changed again, and the Italians were under pressure of the communist-led insurgents that controlled most of the county.<sup>142</sup> With this second expansion of insurgent control, driven by the small tactical victories, much better suited to the Communist tactics, also came a push for establishing a new insurgent government to fill the institutional gap left by the occupation and the counter-insurgency.

As the old institutions collapsed, the communist organization was the first to form new ones. In the beginning, the institutions were informal and based on the need to maintain the connection between insurgent groups and villages in the rear.<sup>143</sup> The liaisons appointed by the Communists were people of confidence, mostly younger and close to the Party. The guerillas reported about the urgent need to create “some sort of temporary authority [...] In the village, we chose one person [...] it does not matter how we call it, most important is to have somebody that people can appeal to when the military command is not in the village.”<sup>144</sup>

The authority of these institutions gradually increased. In September, the Communists were busy setting up “People Liberation Front” (NOF), kernels of the future rebel government. The NOF roles were now to mediate in disputes, assist the military, and resolve fundamental economic needs. NOF was active in all villages, and municipal bodies (odbor) were elected at the village assemblies. Many NOF functions later passed to the People’s Liberation Committees (NOO), which soon became the central civilian institution.<sup>145</sup>

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139 Ivanović, 125.

140 ZNOR XIII/1, 226-227.

141 Hronologija, 95.

142 Đuričković 1964, 455.

143 Lakić 1981, 68, Ivanović, 127.

144 Lakić 1981, 68.

145 Đuričković 1964, 454.

At first, there were no elections for representatives, instead, the communist rebels appointed friendly villagers to these positions.<sup>146</sup> However, the July 22 instruction for the election of representatives of people's government foresaw elections, as well as active and passive suffrage for citizens above 18, men and women, for the first time in Montenegro's history. Every 25 combatants or 100 citizens were to select ten municipal delegates, and every ten municipal delegates chose one county delegate.<sup>147</sup> In August, preparations were made for the elections of the president, secretaries, and up to three members of these bodies. Voting was public, and candidates were usually chosen unanimously.<sup>148</sup> In eight municipalities that were controlled by the insurgents, the elections could be held, and in the city clandestine elections for assembly were held.<sup>149</sup>

The assemblies of elected municipal/county delegates formally became the highest authority. They were meeting when necessary, but not less than twice per month. Assembly was choosing the local government, which people also had the right to dissolve. Duties and responsibilities were comprehensive and included ensuring provisions for the military, motivating mobilization, and forming militias against criminals, spies, and enemies. While the county authority could pass sentences up to one month of prison, only the military HQ court could prosecute local authorities.<sup>150</sup> Despite formal authority and legitimacy gained through elections, civilian institutions remained restrained by military power, which was, in turn, accountable to the party.

The new institutions were, however, radically changing the way local authorities functioned. As village committee ("odbor") functions were increasing, there was also a greater need for collective bodies.<sup>151</sup> There were discussions if "kmet" (a pre-war function of a village chief) should be abolished and also if kmet should be a part of the NOO. In one Petrušin village, the conversation between an older villager and a younger communist illustrates the conflict about the way villages were governed.

Villagers were used to traditional deference to the kinship-based authority. Breaking the kinship bonds in local governance was affecting the cohesion of the social group. In the discussion, one of the villagers said: "Kmet was always one of us, from the village, a cousin, a brother, not someone from the outside. Kmet would do everything we agreed upon. [...] We are like a family, and a family needs one head – to obey him like a father. I say we should keep what we are used to." To this, the communist guerilla responded: "You speak as if everything was good until now... Nothing was good, and everything should be changed, from kmet upwards – so that we could never again live through shame and humiliation, anguish, and suffering. Even if kmet is ours, I cringe when I hear that word. Why? Kmet was there to transmit the orders from all governments [...] Kmet was there to spy on us all. Down with all kmets and let us forget they ever existed."<sup>152</sup>

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146 Lakić 1981, 76.

147 ZNOR III/4, 10.

148 Ivanović, 127.

149 Ivanović, 125.

150 Ivanović, 125.

151 ZNOR III/1, 34.

152 Ivanović, 128.

By eradicating the traditional forms of self-government, the insurgents have managed to erase almost all traces of former authority.<sup>153</sup> The formal municipal and county Committees were formed at the assemblies of village representatives in October and November.<sup>154</sup> In a sharp distinction with previous times, women were included in the work of the NOO.<sup>155</sup> All municipal archives in the county were burned, except in the city.<sup>156</sup> This was a usual practice that had a dual purpose. Not only were the symbols of former authority destroyed, but also the insurgents were able to destroy the documents that the municipal authorities were collecting about them.

The changes in the organization of institutions were only the necessary condition for the beginning of deep interventions in society. The institutions were instrumental in enforcing new policies, most importantly, related to property, and in dealing with the political opposition.

### *Dealing with property*

The new institutions introduced a series of new policies, primarily affecting economic relations, including trade, production, ownership, and redistribution of property.

In October, selling provisions to the Italian garrison in Danilovgrad was prohibited, and fighting against market speculators and Italian suppliers began.<sup>157</sup> All trade with Danilovgrad was forbidden as well as going to the city without a permit. Individuals who did not comply were arrested and interrogated.<sup>158</sup> In mid-October, Petrušin-Pavkovići battalion requisitioned 500 sheep, which were being taken to Danilovgrad and distributed it to the units.<sup>159</sup> Requisitions became common.<sup>160</sup>

The local institutions controlled production and distribution. Komani NOO took control of the mills on the river and determined the percent of distribution between the owners and the NOO. This helped them form food stocks.<sup>161</sup> In November, all mills in the county were controlled by the NOO, with only a smaller part of the produce going to the owners. Besides, they also controlled church and monastery estates.<sup>162</sup>

The new institutions became involved with long-standing disputes about land ownership, often inserting itself in traditional ways these disputes were regulated. Danilovgrad county NOO settled a case between two brotherhoods in a long-standing dispute about a water spring, which one brotherhood used for the mill and flooded the other brotherhood's arable land. Zagarač NOO settled divorce cases, dividing the property to husband and wife equally.<sup>163</sup>

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153 Đuričković 1964, 455.

154 Lakić 1981, 114-115, Đuričković 1964, 455.

155 Ivanović, 129.

156 Đuričković 1964, 455, Hronologija, 134.

157 Đuričković 1964, 455, Hronologija, 147.

158 Ivanović, 129.

159 Đuričković 1964, 455, Hronologija, 147.

160 Ivanović, 129.

161 Ivanović, 131, Lakić 1981, 185-186.

162 Ivanović, 136.

163 Lakić 1981, 143.

During the winter of 1941, there was a greater need for provisions, and the distribution of resources became one of the main functions of the new institutions. Food was obtained through donations, purchase, exchange, requisition from the wealthy, and confiscation from the “enemies.” Municipal NOO would share these surpluses with other municipalities.<sup>164</sup> Komani and Zagarač NOO gathered supplies of wheat and salt and created inventories of personal supplies. They controlled surpluses that were going to the military, the poor, and the refugees, and controlled communal forests.<sup>165</sup>

These measures firmly positioned the Communists as the organization capable of providing benefits. However, as much as the measures were enabling the survival of lower status individuals, they were also antagonizing higher status segments of society. The county Communist Party Committee criticized the requisitions in Pavkovići municipality, where even the most unnecessary minor things were taken away from the villagers in a requisition campaign.<sup>166</sup> The party described this as a „big political mistake which will undoubtedly lead to a hard blowback.”<sup>167</sup> Indeed these villages had the most defections to the Nationalists in the civil war.

Occupiers’ propaganda used these measures against the communists and instilled the notion that they were responsible for the economic hardships of the villagers. Anti-communist mobilization in Bjelopavlići was framed in terms of economic survival. The argument was that Montenegro was food deficient and that by instilling insurgency, which prevented peasants from work on their lands, cutting transport lines, and looting the Italian food convoys, the Communists were responsible for the lack of food.<sup>168</sup> Communists were accused of “sowing divisions between the brotherhoods” by these measures.<sup>169</sup> Partisan troops were also accused of wreaking havoc in the “loyal and peaceful” villages, killing cattle, and stealing food.<sup>170</sup> This propaganda helped the mobilization against the Communists of those segments of society, which had disproportionate material losses due to new policies introduced by the communist government.

### *Dealing with enemies*

From the beginning of the insurgency, but especially towards the end of 1941, there was an increasing use of coercion against civilians.

One of the Montenegrin communist leaders explained that much of coercion was driven by revenge against civilians who opposed them following the insurgency. “We went rogue and moved to the forests from which we occasionally returned to the villages to retaliate over those who criticized us and proclaimed us lunatics and adventurers over our conduct of the insurgency. We could not stand being criticized. We arrested people and interrogated them [...] some of them we killed...”<sup>171</sup> The Montenegro Communist Party Committee and the local party

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164 Ivanović, 136.

165 Ivanović, 130.

166 Lakić 1981, 187.

167 ZNOR III/9, 176.

168 Glas Crnogorca 03/07/1942, 4.

169 Glas Crnogorca 03/07/1942, 7.

170 Glas Crnogorca 02/28/1942, 8.

171 Nikčević, 2010, 38.

officials dictated these events, and usually, the exact person who gave the orders was never known.<sup>172</sup>

An event from February 1942, when the Partisans killed four members of the prominent Jovović brotherhood, is illustrative of several mechanisms that led to coercion.<sup>173</sup> According to one account, three sons were killed together with the father, who was not meant to be killed but could not have been left alive for fear of revenge. The reason for the killing could be traced back to the insurgency, and the first assembly that decided on the leadership of their insurgent unit. Jovovići, whom themselves were supporting communists before the war, probably resented not even being considered for the leadership positions, and the eldest son objected to the communist leadership after which they left the assembly. One of the party members reportedly told them in passing, “either you are with us or against us.”<sup>174</sup>

The following day it was rumored that the Jovovići family had left the assembly in a foreboding manner. However, despite objections at the assembly, they joined other Brajovići insurgents in the morning and continued participating in auxiliary and support roles.<sup>175</sup> Neither the participation in the insurgency nor the prewar support for communists was enough to guarantee security. This act of coercion can be connected both to the resentment caused by status changes on the side of civilians, but also to the mechanism of sanctioning the neutral position. Also, fear of revenge in these instances of decapitation of high-status individuals led to the execution of all family members capable of retaliating.

The revenge was not an impulse-driven mechanism. The relations with enemies were institutionalized through several documents. July 27 Order on creating Court Martials introduced death sentences, and such courts were formed in all major units. July instructions that announced firm determination to fight against internal enemies had great importance in the county, especially in the time of withdrawal of participation.<sup>176</sup>

As much as the Communists were appearing as providing benefits, they were also publically providing sanctions. The beginning of August saw the first formal executions, which were always openly announced. The units were sending public warnings to “suspicious people” and warnings were also distributed through village assemblies.<sup>177</sup> The change in the pace of executions came in October, with the new ideological vigor and newly formed units whose goal was to “mercilessly eliminate spies and the fifth column.”<sup>178</sup> The official bulletin of the HQ was publishing the lists of executed until March of 1942.<sup>179</sup>

Chief Party ideologist Milovan Đilas’s, writing in 1946, summed how central coercion became in the logic of communist rule: “Attention should be drawn to the application of the two methods of

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172 Nikčević, 39.

173 Glas Crnogorca 03/14/1942, 6.

174 Filipović 2005.

175 Filipović 2005.

176 Ivanović, 125.

177 Ivanović, 126.

178 Đuričković 1964, 455.

179 Pajović, 222.

governing: persuasion and coercion. It often happens that these two methods are confused, or that only one of them is applied. These two methods are, in fact, only two aspects of the same principle-democratic self-government of the masses, by the masses, and for the masses. [...] ...the use of coercion is unavoidable in dealing with negative individuals.”<sup>180</sup> This was an explicit positioning of coercion as not unwanted but another method of government, equally crucial in dealing with the political opposition.

Coercion was an instrument of ensuring monitoring and control over civilians. At that time, every village was thought to have had an Italian spy or collaborator. The only openly active ones were those who were protected by the Italians in Danilovgrad. Those who were identified, rightly or wrongly, were punished by death. After the executions, the communist saw their enemies “being more silent,” inferring that coercion was effective.<sup>181</sup> However, what they were causing was a temporary preference falsification, until the moment that the rival armed actor organized, which offered a chance to enact revenge.

Coercion was more than an accident or deviation; it was an instrument in establishing control and dealing with the competition. The fact that violence intensified at different times should not obscure its permanence throughout the communist rule.

### *Conclusion*

The military decisions of armed actors affected relations with civilians, but it was political processes that pushed actors from insurgency towards the civil war. After gaining control, the Communists started building new institutions. The insurgent institutions were filling the gap left by the dissolution of the previous government, and gradually expanded their authority, but maintained under military and party dominance.

New institutions affected relations with civilians in several ways. First, by diminishing old forms of authority, radically new institutions disrupted social cohesion and led to the status reversal. Secondly, it also matters what institutions did. They were instrumental for distributing benefits and distributing sanctions, through pursuing radical policies and coercive control over civilians.

The distribution of benefits through a series of economic measures led to the status reversal. The higher-status segments were more hurt by these changes that redistributed resources, whereas lower-status benefited more from this. While the former developed resentment, the latter segments had developed more supported the armed actor.

Coercion was a primary, institutionalized instrument of distributing sanctions. Several mechanisms led to selective violence. Armed actors used violence to maintain control and prevent non-cooperative behavior. For that reason, they punished neutral behavior, but also revenge for public opposition. Also, the higher the status and the more weight the individual had over others in society, the more likely it was that it would be targeted through a mechanism of decapitation.

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<sup>180</sup> Đilas 1975, 165. In *Komunist*, No. 1, October 1946.

<sup>181</sup> Bobičić, 246.

This identifiable pattern of targeting reveals the mechanisms that had led from coercion to defection. The previous chapter demonstrated an overlap between social and political power basis. Targeting the political opposition, which had developed due to status reversal and differential benefit provision, also meant that individuals from high-status brotherhoods were likely targeted.

Further, the higher the status, the more cohesive social groups were, as the theory and the previous chapter also suggested. As a consequence, targeting political opposition had caused an activation of the revenge mechanisms of cohesive, large brotherhoods. Eventually, these brotherhoods would turn against the communist insurgents.

## 6.5 Quantitative analysis of the insurgency

The quantitative evidence supplements qualitative evidence from the previous four sections. It first shows the extent and intensity of participation in the insurgency and civil war. In the next part, it shows the status reversal that happened during the insurgency when higher brotherhood status individuals were sidelined by the lower-status communist insurgents, which caused resentment mechanisms. Finally, it compares the patterns of targeting of higher and lower status individuals by the Italians and the Communists. It shows that this difference in coercion patterns can explain revenge as one of the mechanisms that led to the civil war.

### *The extent of insurgency and civil war mobilization*

The speed of mobilization in the insurgency in Danilovgrad county was discussed in the first part. The extent of insurgency also varied through time. From the 600 members of the communist strike groups before the insurgency, in only a couple of days, it rose to 3300 due to mobilization of cohesive social groups. However, after the Italian counterinsurgency and the mass desertion, this number was again reduced to the core 600, combatants, only to be increased during the year, but never again at the extent it was at the peak of insurgency.

The 600 communist combatants before and after the peak insurgency were the committed core. The remaining 2700, or almost 4/5 of the total number, can be described as incidental insurgents. When the civil war started, the intensity and the extent increased, with the number of core combatants have almost doubled compared to the insurgency phase.<sup>182</sup>

How do these numbers compare to the population of the county? Table 6.1 shows the percentages of these categories by the 1931 Census total population, the male population, and battle aged population. An estimate was also made for the 1941 battle ready population.<sup>183</sup>

Table 6.1 Danilovgrad combatants by period and type, as a percent of the population

		Total pop. (1931) 18000	Total men (1931) 8300	Battle aged (20-59) 6000	Battle ready (1941 est.) 4500
Core communist (pre-insurgency)	600	3	7	10	13
Insurgency core and incidental	3300	18	40	55	73
Core communist (post-insurgency)	600	3	7	10	13
Core civil war (both sides)	1030	6	12	17	23

<sup>182</sup> Total number of core combatants was calculated as a sum of 470 communists and 560 nationalists in the databases discussed in the final section of this chapter.

<sup>183</sup> The assessment is based on historical data. In 1911, there were 51316 battle able men, while the population estimate was 238000. Therefore 20% of the population before the wars were battle able men. This ratio was likely lowered due to the war losses. The calculated estimate of battle-ready men based on this 1911 projection was 4000. One should count in the refugees (2000) but probably a minority of them were battle able, as well as the population increase since 1931. Therefore, the rough assessment is that there was 4500 battle ready men in the county in 1941. (Batričević 2015, 316, Medojević and Pavlović 2017, 137)

Core combatants making three to six percent of the total population is close to the empirically established “five percent rule” in the literature. The ratio of committed fighters was relatively low, as expected. However, when the extent of insurgency is compared to the estimated number of battle-ready men, then the hypothesized broad extent of mobilization in segmentary society becomes apparent.

Almost three-quarters of battle-ready men were recruited in the insurgent ranks, with the others probably in auxiliary or support roles. In only a day or two, almost all battle aged men mobilized for the insurgency, a result of a collective action almost unthinkable in the absence of cohesive social groups.

The first hypothesis says that the more cohesive the social group, the more solidarity and status mechanisms produce effective mobilization in civil wars. In the case of Danilovgrad, both qualitative and quantitative data suggests that the cohesive social groups produced fast and extensive mobilization that went beyond the expectations of any armed actors at the time. However, the theory also suggests that such mobilizations can have a very short duration and high volatility. As the empirical data showed, confronted with the standard rebel’s dilemma, the desertion was as fast as the mobilization.

The second part of this section explains how armed actors affected the second dimension of cohesion – status relations, and again produced outcomes for the mobilization.

#### *Insurgency and status reversal*

The communist organization of the insurgency has disrupted the power relations, and the status reversal has led to resentment of higher-status brotherhoods. The previous chapter had analyzed political representation in pre-war Danilovgrad. It showed that the tribal hierarchy was fully translated into political institutions throughout the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The political behavior of the tribesmen was primarily following the brotherhood affiliation. Relatively numerous, high-status, brotherhoods had a politically dominant position in the peacetime, while the others deferred.

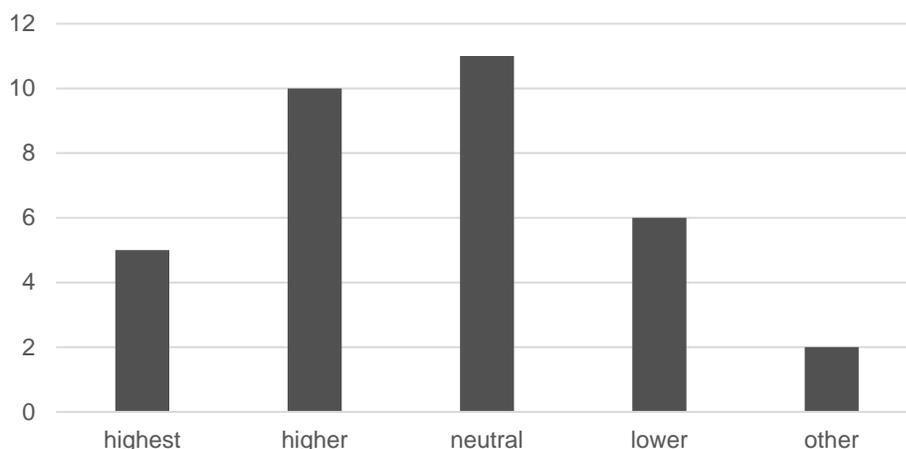
Once the war had started, the Communists organized the insurgency, took control, and started building new political institutions. The Communists had a primary political goal of overturning the existing order. Therefore, this was not only the transfer of territorial control from the Italians to the insurgents but also an attempt to transfer the political control and change the social order. The civilians participated in the early and later phases of the insurgency, as the Communists were offering positive incentives, and social groups still acted homogeneously, driven by mechanisms of reciprocity and conformity. However, once the effects of the military measures, and especially the communist rule, started affecting the social cohesion, there was a process of defection to the civil war rival side.

The leadership of the Communist Party was different from the leadership of the society they were mobilizing. The Communist Party at a national (Yugoslav) and the Montenegro level was led by a professional revolutionary cadre that did not have connections to the Danilovgrad

county area. The cadre of the Danilovgrad, the data shows, does not follow the same pattern of high brotherhood status that was identifiable in the pre-war politics. This will later be contrasted to the mostly local nature of the anti-communist organization, which had strong ties with the largest and high-status brotherhoods.

The Communist Party organized strike groups to lead military activity in the county. Among the leaders of these groups,<sup>184</sup> the least represented out of four status categories were the highest-ranking brotherhoods. Out of 34 strike group leaders, more came from the lower ranking brotherhoods than the higher ones (Figure 6.3)<sup>185</sup> Members of lower-status brotherhoods were occupying leading positions in the early insurgency, which was a contrast to the pre-war power relations and the traditional way of waging war.

Figure 6.3 Leaders of 1941 communist strike groups by brotherhood status

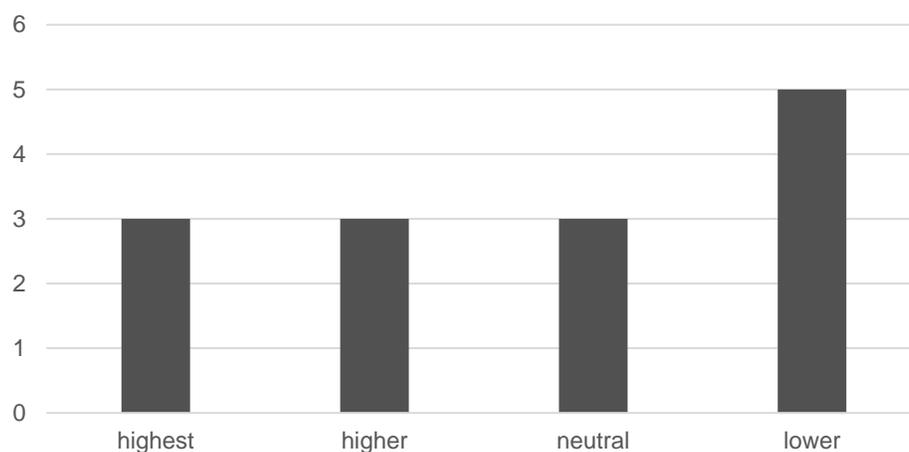


This finding is not isolated. When the Communists organized the insurgents into battalions for the first time in July after Danilovgrad was taken, and in preparation for the Velje Brdo front, they appointed commanders and people liaison officers (later political commissars). The lower-ranking brotherhoods were the most represented among the communist military and political structures (Figure 6.4). Again, this was an instance of status reversal for the brotherhood members that traditionally occupied leading military positions.

184 Jovanović 1960, 45-56.

185 Đuričković 1964 435-436, Čagorović 614, Jovanović 51.

Figure 6.4 Communist commanders and people liaison officers by brotherhood status



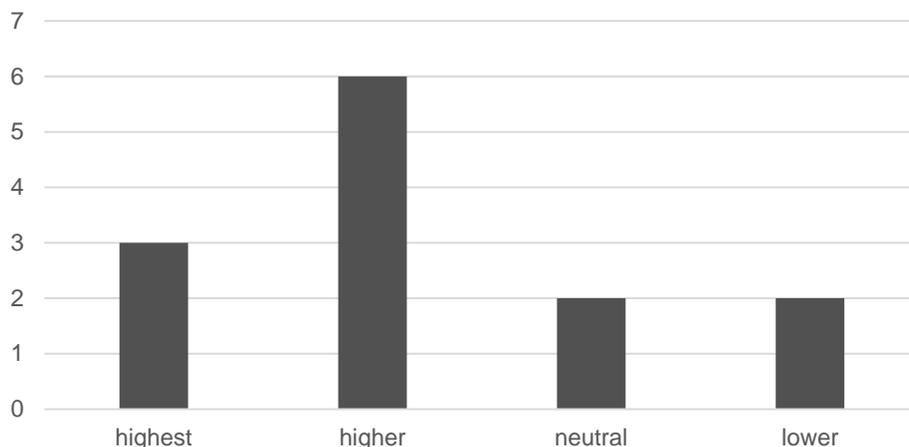
This quantitative evidence points in the same direction as qualitative. The communist organization went against the traditional hierarchy. By sidelining the most powerful brotherhoods in the leadership of the insurgency, resentment was created in the second half of 1942 that led to the creation of the political opposition. The coercive communist response towards this opposition was, in reality, violence against the members of powerful brotherhoods. This pattern would cause revenge mechanisms and eventually spiral towards civil war.

However, additional evidence interestingly shows that the formation of municipal authorities did not follow the same pattern as military leadership. Presidents and secretaries of the People Liberation Committees (NOO),<sup>186</sup> the first formal institutions of the insurgent new government, mostly came from higher-ranking brotherhoods (Figure 6.5). Out of thirteen known presidents and secretaries of nine municipalities, the majority came from the highest two categories of brotherhoods.

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186 Ivanović 1964.

Figure 6.5 New communist municipal authority members by brotherhood status



This should, however, be interpreted in the light of qualitative evidence. Communists approached the formation of local government as an extended arm of the army and, therefore, the party. Civil authority was effectively subservient to the military, not the other way around, and the selection of civilian leadership depended on their loyalty to the Communist Party at the top. The qualitative evidence suggests that the Communists might have intentionally promoted in the civil positions persons who were loyal to them and who belonged to higher status brotherhoods, perhaps as a way to bolster legitimacy or stir these large groups into the direction they wanted.<sup>187</sup>

#### *Coercion by incumbents and insurgents*

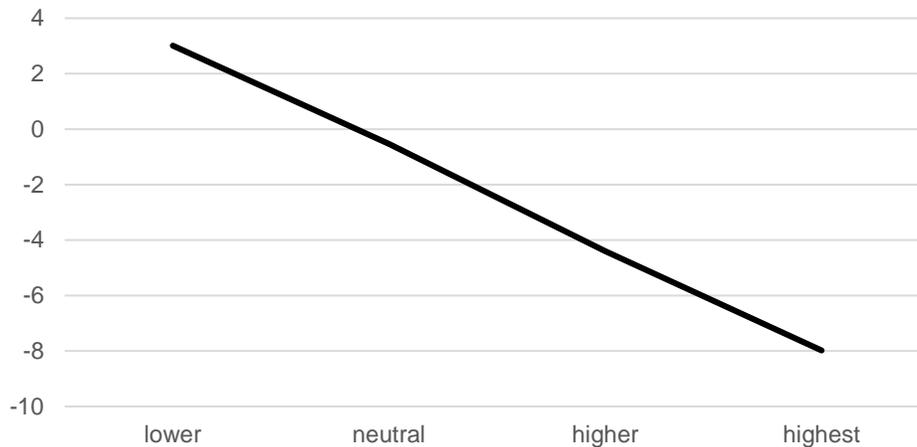
Besides the status reversal that created resentment, coercion was the other critical development that affected mobilization. While incumbent coercion targeted lower-status brotherhoods, insurgent coercion targeted the opposite – higher status, which further corroborates qualitative evidence. The decapitation of higher-status brotherhoods members led to revenge mechanisms that turned these groups against the communist insurgents.

The 1964 Census of war victims<sup>188</sup> identified 101 civilian deaths in Danilovgrad county, during 1941 and 1942, attributable to the occupying forces. Figure 6.6 compares the proportions of victims belonging to status categories to their size in the county, in percentage points. It shows their distribution, specifically the ratio of each of the four categories in the population, compared to the ratio of victims belonging to the category. This data shows excessive targeting of lower status brotherhood members, compared to other categories, especially compared to the highest status brotherhood members.

187 Bobičić, 245

188 Savezni zavod za statistiku 1966.

Figure 6.6 Italian coercion of brotherhood members by status, compared to the population (p.p.)



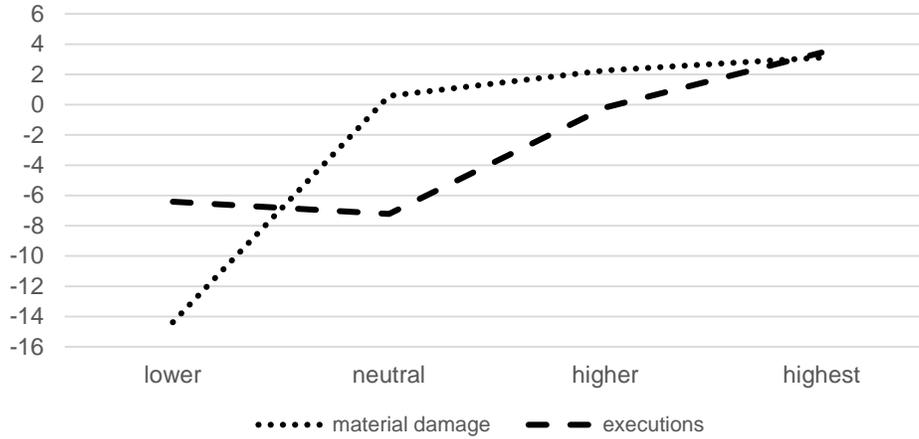
Italian counterinsurgency repression was partially indiscriminate, with villages attacked and punished only based on their proximity to the frontlines and communications. However, other evidence showed that it was selectively targeting communist families and villages. Both patterns of violence, indiscriminate and selective, could have produced these outcomes. For one, the agricultural villages close to the roads were historically settled the last by different brotherhoods, many of which were lower status. On the other hand, as was shown earlier, the communist leaders of the insurgency were coming from the lower ranking brotherhoods. If the Italians were receiving this information through denunciations, then the intentional targeting of lower status brotherhoods could have also led to the identified disparity.

The violent communist push back against the opposition targeted the parts of society which held political power before the war, and whose status was already reversed in the new environment. Building upon information on communist damages to property and executions published in Glas Crnogorca, it is possible to find the categories of the brotherhoods that were targeted more than the other.<sup>189</sup>

Figure 6.7 shows the executions of civilians by the insurgents, and the instances of material damage to property (mobile or immobile) according to the brotherhood status of the targeted households. Higher ranking brotherhoods were more often the targets of these attacks relative to their ratio of households, than the lower status brotherhoods. Such finding is in agreement with the expectations that the Communists, with better information at hand, targeted civilians more selectively than the Italians. However, decapitating higher ranking, brotherhoods had led to revenge and the next sequence critical for the onset of the civil war – the military organization of the powerful brotherhoods against the Communists.

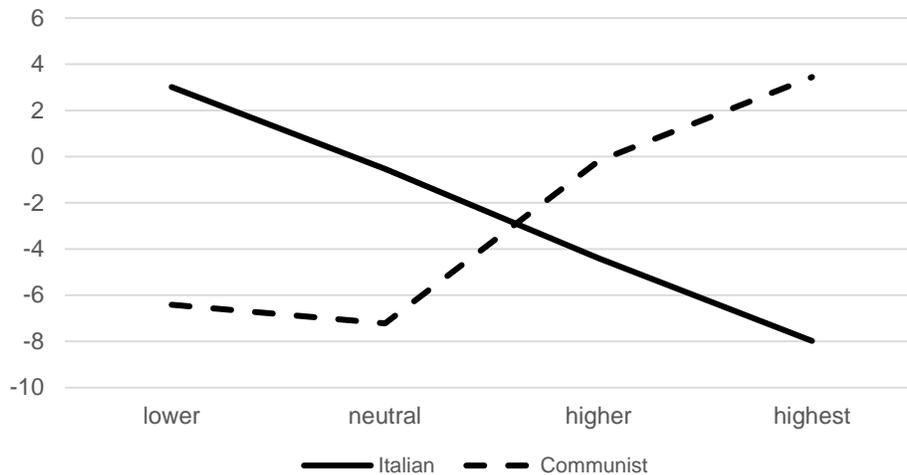
<sup>189</sup> Glas Crnogorca 1943.

Figure 6.7 Communist material damage and executions of brotherhood members by status, compared to the population (p.p.)



Finally, Figure 6.8 juxtaposes the Italian and the Communist violence against civilians and shows the data from the previous two graphs, with the material damage data excluded. This Figure illustrates the critical finding of this analysis: the differential targeting and the diverging patterns of incumbents and insurgents.

Figure 6.8 Italian and Communist targeting patterns of brotherhood members by status, compared to the population (p.p.)



The quantitative evidence from the period of insurgency shows a marked difference in how two armed actors – the occupying force and the insurgents targeted non-combatants. While the pattern of violence inflicted by the Italians affected disproportionately lower status brotherhoods, communist violence was the opposite, targeting higher status brotherhoods. While the violence

of the occupying forces was indiscriminate or had targeted the lower status brotherhoods of communist insurgents, the communist inflicted violence was highly selective and precise. The communists targeted political rivals in an attempt to control the population and eliminate political opposition.

These sequences have led towards the mobilization of powerful, prominent brotherhoods against the Communists in the civil war, which will be described in the following sections. The differential targeting explains why the threat of the domestic actor – the Communists – was perceived by some brotherhood members as more imminent and perilous than that of the foreign occupying force. How brotherhoods have split in the coming civil war will be described, again, by first using qualitative, and then the quantitative historical data.

### *Conclusion*

Data shows that mobilization in Danilovgrad county did not divert much from the theoretical prediction. It was fast and extensive, but with low commitment. The dynamics of mobilization, both high participation in the insurgency, as well as the sudden desertion, can be attributed to the cohesive social groups.

The data also shows status disparities during the insurgency which offers additional insights into the processes that led from the insurgency to the civil war. Communist leadership during the insurgency did not reflect the tribal hierarchy. Higher status brotherhood members were underrepresented. On the other hand, once control was established, they were more targeted by selective violence.

The status reversal bred resentment, and when this resentment was manifested, as qualitative evidence suggests, and quantitative confirms, it was also met with coercion, that had started the mechanism of revenge. The data also helps explain why higher-status brotherhoods perceived the Communists as a more imminent and perilous threat than the Italians. This perception will lead them to cooperate with the Italians during the civil war.

Together, the findings from this analysis so far support the hypothesis that civil war mobilization is primarily determined by the pre-war social structure and the war-time effects of armed actors' on social cohesion.

## 6.6 Path to civil war: anti-communist organization

### *Early attempts to create an anti-communist organization*

The attempts to organize individuals and groups who politically opposed communist rule in Danilovgrad came from both inside the county and the outside. In autumn of 1941 first attempts were made to create the “people’s army” in the county. Individuals were sent from Podgorica to different parts of Montenegro, including Danilovgrad, to instill these organizations.<sup>190</sup> In Bjelopavlići, there were two active anti-communists centers - one in Vražegrm and another in Jelenak, mostly made of former government officials, officers, conservative intellectuals, and former politicians. The Vražegrm group was attracting people and tried to hold assemblies several times, but the Communist Party members were obstructing it.<sup>191</sup>

On the other hand, Dragoljub Mihailović’s “Yugoslav Army in the Homeland” Chetnik organization, based in Serbia at the time, had an early interest in Montenegro. From June to December, they were attempting on several occasions to connect with local anti-communist military commanders and eventually established contact.<sup>192</sup> These groups, scattered around the county, were acting in secrecy, and it was not until the defeat that had tarnished Partisan credibility that they started acting openly.

### *Pljevlja defeat and fear of repression*

The changing military circumstances lead to the Italians being feared more than the Partisans again. On October 3, the supreme commander Tito issued a directive to Montenegro Partisans to send 3000 people to Serbia to help with the operations. The order was received, and with some delay, the Montenegro command eventually decided to send the soldiers. It had also ordered an attack on the city of Pljevlja on their way to Serbia. December 1 attack on Pljevlja failed, with high casualties, and significantly damaged Partisan reputation throughout Montenegro. It also affected Danilovgrad, which had sent to Pljevlja 480 Partisans from the recently established “Bijeli Pavle” unit.<sup>193</sup>

In the meantime, the surrounded the Italian garrison in Danilovgrad used the opportunity of Partisan weakness for a sudden attack on the surrounding area.<sup>194</sup> Villages were shelled, and the most exposed villages were evacuated to the mountains. Evacuations did not go easy, as people wanted to stay close to their houses.<sup>195</sup> Italian forces in Nikšić and Danilovgrad were surrounded, with occasional heavy fighting with Bijeli Pavle detachment through January and the beginning of February.<sup>196</sup> However, the Italians brought in the reinforcement and, in February, finally succeeded in de-blocking Danilovgrad.<sup>197</sup> The Partisans were not perceived as being able to provide security anymore.

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190 Pajović, 134.

191 Pajović, 151.

192 Pajović, 131, 190.

193 Ivanović, 137, ZNOR III/1, 326-328, III/4, 67-72, 449-451.

194 Ivanović, 137.

195 Ivanović, 138.

196 ZNOR III/2, 132.

197 ZNOR III/2, 182.

The shelling and Italian offensive actions had once again changed the mood in the villages. There was a growing fear of retributions. That led civilians to hedge again. Elders in the village of Orja Luka did not allow any actions against the Italians. Anti-communists in other villages were agitating against the communist authorities.<sup>198</sup> In these circumstances of increased fear of new Italian repression, in late January, Bajo Stanišić started preparations for defection.

*Colonel Stanišić and anti-communism in Pavkovići sub-tribe*

Bajo Stanišić was an officer from a high-status brotherhood of the Pavkovići sub-tribe. Stanišić became an officer in the Kingdom of Montenegro and was wounded in World War One. After the war, he rose in ranks to the position of a colonel of the Royal Yugoslav Army. Before the Second World War, he led the NCO school in nearby Bileća. In the April War, he commanded a regiment at Shkodër front, after which he returned to his village. In July insurgency, he was a member of temporary insurgent command but refused any leading positions. After the insurgency, he had retreated to his village, remaining mostly passive.<sup>199</sup>

Stanišić combined his position in the tribal hierarchy with a high position in the military, where the officers knew him well. After the occupation, many of these, together with government officials, returned to Pavkovići. Their influence was significant, and they were connecting with Stanišić. The influence of a group around Stanišić was a problem for the Communist Party in Pavkovići, where recruitment was slower than in other municipalities. When the insurgency started, Pavkovići did not form operative military units in time. Even though the insurgency stirred people, Stanišić surrounded himself with the elders and remained passive.<sup>200</sup>

The Communists attempted to move Stanišić and Pavkovići sub-tribe from the neutral position but did not use coercion. The delegation was sent to talk to the group around him, but they unanimously thought insurgency was premature. Stanišić's only communication with the delegate at the meeting was to inquire which family he belonged to and then left the conversation. A group of around 150 people eventually joined the Partisans at Danilovgrad siege but did so late and did not actively participate in the attack.<sup>201</sup>

*The formation of the anti-communist organization*

The formation of the first anti-communist groups was framed as providing security from the Partisans and preventing further actions against the Italians. Bajo Stanišić's first direct act towards defection was a January 21 document outlining the organization of Nationalist units that was sent from his village in Pavkovići to an anti-communist group in Vražegrm.<sup>202</sup> Bajo Stanišić collaborators eventually formed a "national" organization in Mijokusovići. They recruited 27 men to "secure their village" from the Partisans. Part of the members was going to other villages to propagate what was becoming a new movement.<sup>203</sup> Stanišić and his followers were still freely

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198 Ivanović, 138.

199 Pajović, 190, Glas Crnogorca 03/07/1942, 3.

200 Škerović 1964a, 654.

201 Škerović 1964a, 655.

202 Pajović, 190.

203 Pajović, 191.

moving in the Partisan controlled territory throughout January and February. They were gathering in the villages, and the Partisans still took no actions.<sup>204</sup>

The first open call for defection came after a change in the power balance. After an especially hard defeat of the Partisans who had lost control of the strategically crucial Taraš hill above Danilovgrad,<sup>205</sup> on February 11, Stanišić openly stood up against the Partisans. With the help of his associates, he organized an assembly in Donji Rsojevići, where he invited all members of his sub-tribe Pavkovići Partisan units.<sup>206</sup> Stanišić said that the insurgency was premature, that instead, they should wait for the occupier to become weaker.<sup>207</sup> Stanišić called the Partisans to remove red stars from their hats and join his organization.<sup>208</sup> He also said that the allies, “brotherly Russia,” England, and America were supporting the Nationalists.<sup>209</sup> The call was compelling, and two Pavkovići companies that had attended the assembly had mostly defected to Stanišić or deserted the Partisans.<sup>210</sup>

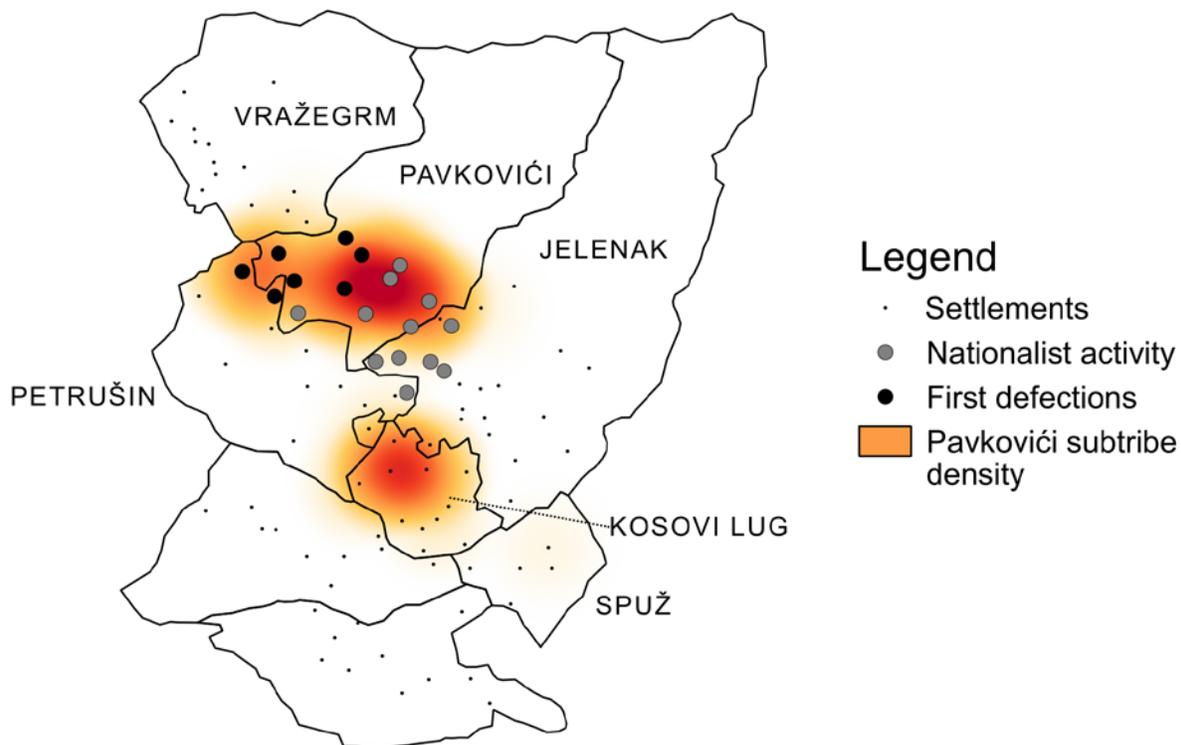
Map 6.1 shows the first registered recruitment activities of the Nationalists<sup>211</sup> and the villages from which the first Partisan units defected to them.<sup>212</sup> It also shows the density of Pavkovići sub-tribe households by settlements. The anti-communist mobilization was led by the most powerful and the most cohesive part of the tribe. It wasn’t the Pavkovići brotherhoods in Kosovi Lug, shielded by the Italian garrison in Danilovgrad that had defected. Instead, it was the part of the tribe in the hilly geographic center, where the cohesion was highest.

From the units that defected, Stanišić formed Pavkovići Nationalist Battalion, with eight officers, 15 NCOs, and 207 soldiers.<sup>213</sup> Another assembly was organized where the Communists were accused of “leading people into disaster.” Stanišić was made a commander of the “National Liberation Army of Montenegro and Herzegovina,” and in that role, he sent a proclamation to people of all Montenegro.<sup>214</sup>

Partisan Bijeli Pavle detachment reorganized its positions after losing two Pavkovići units and sent their representatives to negotiate with Stanišić, with no success.<sup>215</sup> On February 14, the Italians forced moved from Danilovgrad, using Partisan weakness after the defections.<sup>216</sup> After concentrating fresh troops, three days after Bajo Stanišić defection, the Italians started a new offensive in the Zeta valley. Stanišić sent a warning to Donji Pješivci Partisan Company that if they resist the Italians, his troops will attack them.<sup>217</sup>

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204 Bobičić, 247.  
205 Bobičić, 246.  
206 Pajović, 188.  
207 Bobičić, 247.  
208 Pajović, 188.  
209 Bobičić, 247.  
210 Pajović, 188.  
211 Bobičić, 247.  
212 Pajović, 188.  
213 Pajović, 188.  
214 ZNOR III/4, 472.  
215 Pajović, 189.  
216 ZNOR III/2, 155.  
217 ZNOR III/4, 186.



Map 6.1 The spread of anti-communist recruitment activity and the first defections

### *Conclusion*

The Partisans' defeat has damaged their credibility, and new Italian actions led to growing insecurity. People were hesitant about supporting the insurgency, especially in the winter conditions, when taking refuge in the mountains was not an option.

In these circumstances, the Nationalist organization challenges the Partisan rule and organizes the units to provide security to the civilians. The credibility of the Nationalists rested on the overlapping high status of their brotherhoods and high position in the military hierarchy.

With rising insecurity, and with credible security provision by the rival armed actor, the first armed units from Stanišić's sub-tribe defected from the Partisans. These were the cohesive, high-status groups that had more resentment, and more reasons for revenge against the Partisans, than other groups in the county.

As this section shows, neither the anti-communists outside of Montenegro nor the Italians in Montenegro could have alone produced these defections. The mechanisms of resentment and revenge were driving the behavior of these social groups, and outside actors could only have assisted it.

## 6.7 Civil war in Danilovgrad county

### *First clashes*

The anti-communist organization was spreading rapidly. The day after Stanišić stood against the Partisans at the Donji Rsojevići assembly, the movement had already spread through the municipalities. A group of 35 people was formed in Rošci and Dabovići in neighboring Vražegrm municipality, and the same day they joined Stanišić.<sup>218</sup> The supporters of Stanišić then moved to the right bank of Zeta, while the Partisan units moved from the right bank to the left, and during this exchange of control, there was still no fighting.<sup>219</sup> The groups that were together in the insurgency have now separated on the two banks of the river, confronting each other in the civil war.

With no success in negotiating with Stanišić, the Partisans started organizing an attack on the Nationalists in Vražegrm and Pavkovići. When Stanišić was informed about a possible Partisan enclosure, he took a position with his Pavkovići and Vražegrm forces in his village of Vinići.<sup>220</sup> On February 22, the two sides clashed for the first time in Vinići and Rsojevići. Stanišić was forced to retreat to the right bank of Zeta (Kujava), where some of his troops were already stationed.<sup>221</sup> The Nationalist HQ was moved to Kujava, shielded by the Italian garrison.<sup>222</sup>

In early March Stanišić started larger scale military operations against the Partisans, and battles ensued in Pavkovići and Vražegrm. Slowly, and with direct Italian assistance, the Nationalists appeared as the superior side. The Partisans were increasingly cut off and in retreat, some individuals started defecting to the Nationalists during these battles.<sup>223</sup> The loss of control was increasingly leading to even more defections.

### *Spread and growth of the Nationalists*

Stanišić operated from the center of Montenegro and immediately reached out to neighboring regions around Danilovgrad.<sup>224</sup> Stanišić first established contact with nearby Danilovgrad, Podgorica, and Nikšić. Stanišić succeeded in getting 137 “nationally upstanding” individuals released from the Italian prison in Danilovgrad. From these, a new Danilovgrad unit was formed which soon grew to 186 members.<sup>225</sup>

The anti-communist organization was also developing its first civilian institutions. In late February, Danilovgrad National Committee (NO) was set up to coordinate supply provision for Stanišić’s units. The role of Danilovgrad NO was also to mobilize villages around Danilovgrad<sup>226</sup>

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218 Pajović, 191.  
219 Bobičić, 247.  
220 Pajović, 191.  
221 ZNOR III/2, 218.  
222 Bobičić, 247.  
223 Bobičić, 248.  
224 Pajović, 192.  
225 ZNOR III/4, 557-558.  
226 ZNOR III/4, 558.

and neighboring municipalities.<sup>227</sup> The committee assisted in the organization of Kosovi Lug, Komani, and Zagarač companies.<sup>228</sup> On February 27, the Nationalists organized in Spuž.<sup>229</sup>

Mobilization was based on inciting defections of high-status brotherhoods. Prominent members of the tribes were called to join the organization. Committee of Komani from Podgorica asked Komani elders to expel the Partisans from the tribes and to prevent the killings of Komani amongst themselves. They asked the tribe to send envoys in order to prevent possible military expedition of Italian and Nationalist troops against Komani.<sup>230</sup> Such public appeals to higher status members of the tribes, offering to shield the population from the armed actors, prepared the terrain for the spread of nationalist organizations in Zagarač and Komani.<sup>231</sup>

#### *Nationalists overtaking Danilovgrad county and final defeat of the Partisans*

The military balance was switching to the Nationalist side, with heavy Partisan losses. On March 10, after a formal treaty was made between the Nationalists and Separatists in Montenegro, Stanišić units started a full-scale attack on the Partisans. Initially, without much success,<sup>232</sup> the attack continued, gradually isolating the Partisan units.<sup>233</sup> March saw more fighting in Vražegrm, and Pavkovići, with heavy Partisan losses, including almost whole military leaders of Bijeli Pavle Shock Battalion.<sup>234</sup> Some 500 Nationalists from neighboring Lješkopolje Battalion took control of the southern edge of the county.<sup>235</sup>

As control shifted, safety-seeking groups were defection to the Nationalists as a whole. After forming two companies, on March 22, Nationalists from Komani organized an assembly in Crvena Paprat.<sup>236</sup> Former president of the municipality asked people to join the Nationalists “to save our tribe,” after which Komani Nationalist Battalion was formed, with 169 people. Nationalists in Zagarač were forming units around the same time. On March 18, Zagarač Nationalist Battalion was formed, with two officers, six NCOs, and 170 soldiers, and quickly grew to 401. Nationalist units were formed in all places where they did not exist and solidified where they did.<sup>237</sup> Controlling more territory and organizing new units, Stanišić managed to split the Partisan-controlled territory.<sup>238</sup>

Assisted by 1580 combatant strong Lješani Battalion in the south,<sup>239</sup> the Nationalists took control of most of the Bjelopavlići tribe territory. Montenegro Partisan HQ, which was in Jelenak, decided to evacuate from the area. Once this happened, the Partisan credibility plummeted, followed by a cascade of further defections of the neighboring tribes’ Partisan units.<sup>240</sup>

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227 Pajović, 198.

228 Pajović, 197.

229 Hronologija, 259.

230 Pajović, 198.

231 Pajović, 198.

232 ZNOR III/2, 318, 319.

233 ZNOR III/2, 321-322, 343-344.

234 ZNOR III/2, 321.

235 Pajović, 211.

236 Hronologija, 285.

237 Pajović, 211.

238 Pajović, 209.

239 Pajović, 212.

240 Pajović, 213, Hronologija, 293.

Nationalists finally captured Pavkovići and Vražegrm on March 28, and immediately Nationalist Battalion was formed in Vražegrm.<sup>241</sup> By the end of March, most of Danilovgrad county was under Nationalist control. On March 27, the Partisans left the Bjelopavlići territory overrun by Nationalist units.<sup>242</sup>

Gaining control over Bjelopavlići territory enabled the Nationalists to gain collaboration from almost the whole tribe. After the Partisans retreated, the Nationalists' recruitment intensified. As they were now becoming the only armed actor in the tribe, the incidental recruits started joining. A new Nationalist Bjelopavlići detachment was formed, with seven battalions that followed sub-tribal organization: Vražegrm, Pavkovići, Petrušin, Jelenak, Martinići, Kosovi Lug, and Spuž.<sup>243</sup> The full attack of Nationalists and Separatists on the remaining territory of Danilovgrad county commenced and continued in April. The battle for Zagarač was especially hard, the control of this municipality switched sides several times until the Nationalists took control on April 11.<sup>244</sup>

In the next two months, the Partisans were trying to regain control, but eventually lost the war and retreated. In April, the Partisans continued counter-attacking from their base in the north of the county.<sup>245</sup> However, repeated attacks by the Nationalists forced the Partisans to desert even the neighboring counties. Stanišić battalions proved more persistent than the Partisans in these battles.<sup>246</sup> From May to June, the Partisans were gradually pushed further north.<sup>247</sup> Troops of Bajo Stanišić participated in the final push to expel the Partisans from Montenegro. New 1500 combatant strong Golija detachment was formed, which moved from Nikšić to Golija, and from Golija to Piva, reaching the border with Herzegovina on June 12.<sup>248</sup> The main Partisan forces left the country, and civil war in Montenegro had, for the time being, ended.

#### *Politics of the Nationalist organization*

Two political decisions helped Stanišić gain an advantage in the early phase of the war. One was the extensive recruitment of all anti-communists, and the other was material and military support Nationalists received from the Italians.

Stanišić's strategy was to recruit anti-communists of different pre-war political affiliations. There was a distinct Chetnik command, separated from the rest of the organization. Its commanders, on the other hand, were the pre-war members of the separatist Federalist Party.<sup>249</sup> As it was gathering individuals who might have been on the opposing sides before the war, the "National liberation army of Montenegro and Herzegovina" was framed as an umbrella for different anti-communist orientations, which enabled extensive recruitment.<sup>250</sup>

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241 Hronologija, 290.

242 Hronologija, 289.

243 Pajović, 213.

244 Pajović, 228.

245 Hronologija, 303.

246 ZNOR III/3, 161.

247 Pajović, 232-233, Hronologija, 324, ZNOR III/3, 296.

248 Pajović, 237.

249 Pajović, 192.

250 ZNOR III/4, 475.

For that reason, Stanišić's political positions were initially relatively vague, focused only on security and anti-communism. In his February 11 proclamation, he calls for mobilization to "liberate the hearths, fields, mountain, village, and town" and postpone political conflicts for after the war: "freedom first, politics later."<sup>251</sup> No direct political attacks on the Partisans were made until the February 22 clashes. Only then, in the February 24 proclamation, Stanišić openly accuses communists of the "war between brothers," and pledges to release "these hills from communist shackles."<sup>252</sup> The appeal of the Nationalist organization rested on the demand for status affirmation and revenge, after a period of short but consequential communist rule.

His close associates further formulated the anti-communist political position. They pledged to destroy communism and otherwise be peaceful Italian subjects.<sup>253</sup> His delegate formulated the political goals at the Cetinje meeting with Separatists on March 9, 1942. The said goal was to preserve people and wait out peacefully until the war is over.<sup>254</sup> These political messages enabled individuals and groups that resented communists and wanted to take revenge, to unite in the organization, leaving other political divisions on the side.

#### *Cooperation with the Italian military*

The other key characteristic of the Nationalists was its cooperation with the Italian military. The Italian support gave it an autonomy of action, strengthened its position through benefit and sanction provision, and encouraged participation through propaganda.<sup>255</sup>

Initially, the Nationalist organization responded to a widely expressed opinion that no further actions should be taken that could provoke Italian reprisals. The cooperation with the Italians was open in the beginning. The first contact with the Italian troops was made in mid-February in Kujava.<sup>256</sup> On February 17, the first agreement was made with the Italian Taro division command responsible for Danilovgrad. Stanišić's forces could freely move, take over responsibility for order, and protect communications from diversions. Italians, on the other hand, obliged to deliver food and necessary provisions to civilians under Nationalist rule.<sup>257</sup>

Through a delegation from Podgorica that visited Kujava on February 26, Stanišić communicated with the commander of occupying troops Mentasti. Stanišić informed him of cooperation with the Danilovgrad commander and asked for further cooperation of other Italian units, military equipment, and food, assistance to civilians under Nationalist rule, and the return of interned civilians.<sup>258</sup> This request by Stanišić, signed by members of the delegation, was the first public act of cooperation with the Italians.<sup>259</sup>

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251 ZNOR. III/4, 475.

252 Pajović, 192.

253 ZNOR III/4, 557.

254 Pajović, 193.

255 Glas Crnogorca 02/28/1942, 1.

256 ZNOR III/2, 214.

257 Dokumenti o izdajstvu, 1945, 65.

258 ZNOR III/4, 478-481.

259 Dokumenti o izdajstvu, 153.

Soon after that, on March 6, Stanišić went to Podgorica and signed a formal pledge to fight against the Communists, which divided the control of the countryside with the Italian military. Stanišić was obliged to maintain constant contact with the Italians, “avoid any politics” in his movement, and never to turn against Italian soldiers. The same day an agreement was signed with HQ of Italians forces in Montenegro that foresaw a divided territorial control - the Italians would maintain order in the towns and the Nationalists in the villages.<sup>260</sup> Stanišić was eventually made one of three sector commanders of Montenegro at the March 9 Cetinje meeting, where a formal command of the “National front” was selected.<sup>261</sup>

The regional basis of the Nationalists gave them proper knowledge about who could defect and who could be targeted. The approach taken by the Nationalists was to selectively entice Partisan defections, calling for the “mised sons” to leave Partisan units. Instead, they were to target only those with “blood of their brothers at their hands.”<sup>262</sup> At the same time, the Nationalists were solving the identification problem for the Italians. The Italian military governor and commander of occupying troops praised the local organization because they knew “how to punish only those who are guilty” and avoid unnecessary killing.<sup>263</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The Nationalists mobilization occurred in the circumstances of civilians hedging from violent actions due to fears of Italian reprisals and increased demand for revenge and status affirmation from high-status brotherhoods. Their appeal consisted of their ability to act as a cohesive unit and shield civilians from both Communists and Italians. By developing cooperation with the Italians, they could also provide benefits for civilians.

Unlike the Communists, the Nationalists were recruiting high-status individuals, through which they could recruit whole cohesive groups. The self-reinforcing mechanism of military victories, and gaining control of the country meant that more Partisans were defecting to the Nationalists, following the patterns of sub-tribal social structure. The high cohesion of these groups had enabled mechanisms of reciprocity and conformity, and defections could be fast and extensive.

Nationalist recruitment did not require high ideological commitment. It enabled them to recruit widely, all those that had anti-communist resentment or seeking revenge. The cooperation with the Italians was crucial for ensuring provisions and shielding. In exchange for establishing their own rule in the countryside, they were solving the identification problem for the Italians, allowing selective targeting of the Communists, and providing safety for the non-communists.

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260 Dokumenti o izdajstvu, 72.

261 Glas Crnogorca 03/14/1942, 1.

262 Glas Crnogorca 03/10/1942, 1.

263 Pajović, 204.

## 6.8 Quantitative analysis of the civil war

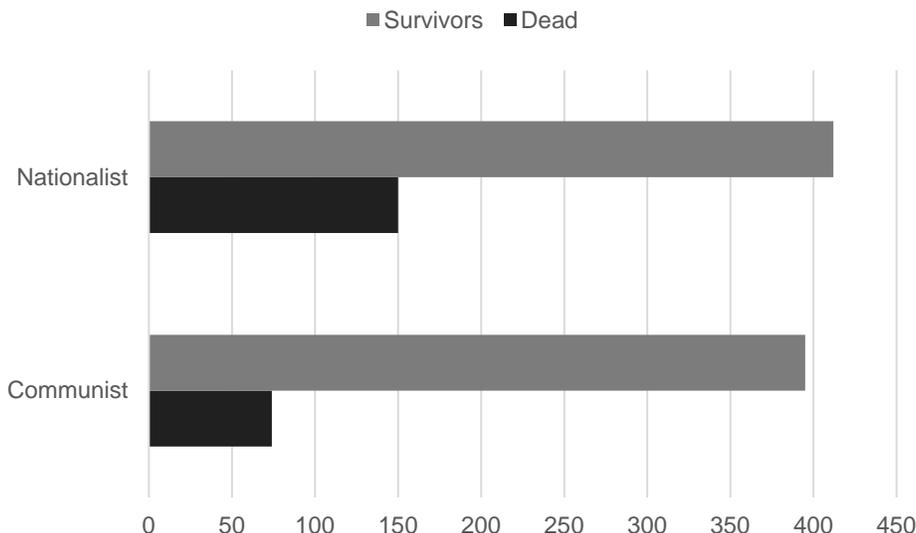
The final section in this chapter turns again to quantitative evidence to show the extent and intensity of civil war mobilization, as well as the diverging rates of core combatant mobilization among brotherhoods, based on their status and size. For this, data was collected from four separate sources described in the Research Design chapter.<sup>264</sup>

### *Extent and intensity of civil war mobilization*

The data on Communist and Nationalist mobilization does not include all fighters that at any time fought on one or the other side, in incidental, auxiliary or support roles. Incidental combatants were likely a much larger number. This data tries to identify the mobilization of “core” participants in the civil war, as defined in the theory chapter: individuals with stronger and permanent ties to only one side.

The total number of core individuals mobilized in civil war collected in the dataset is 1031 (Figure 6.9). Categories of dead and surviving combatants are similarly distributed on both sides. While the numbers of combatants surviving 1942 were very close (412 Nationalists, 395 Communists), the number of nationalist combatants that died until 1942 (150) was higher than the number of dead Communists (74).

Figure 6.9 Civil war core mobilization in Danilovgrad (total numbers)



The rate of core mobilization can be observed in two ways, one would be the fraction of brotherhoods that had at least one core combatant, and the other would be the number on rival sides per brotherhood size.

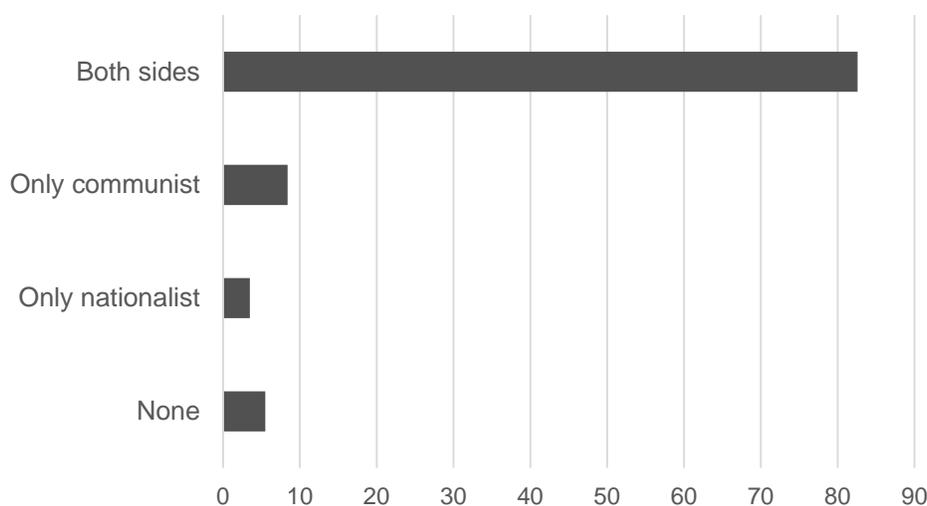
The insurgency was extensive, as discussed earlier. Nevertheless, the extent of civil war mobilization was equally comprehensive, when observed firstly, as a fraction of brotherhoods

<sup>264</sup> Glas Crnogorca 1943, Savezni zavod za statistiku 1966, Vidović 1972, Đurović et al. 1972, Janković 1975, Vuksanović 1981, Gregović, 2009.

that had at least one core combatant. Only 5.5% of households in Danilovgrad county belonged to the brotherhoods from which there were no combatants mobilized in the civil war. Put differently, 94.5% of the households had at least one member of the brotherhood fighting in the civil war. Another striking feature is that only 12% of the households had brotherhood members in only one of the two armed actors. That leaves 82.6% of the households with brotherhood members on both sides of the war (Figure 6.10).

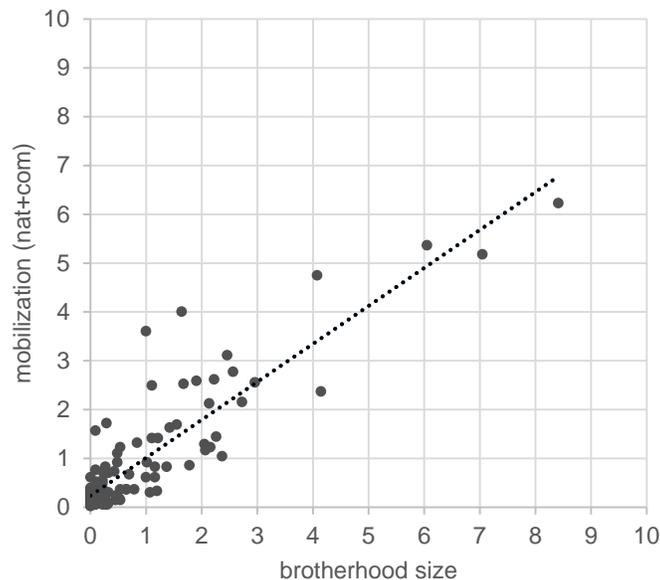
This evidence speaks about the extent of insurgency in a segmentary society. Avoiding participation was almost impossible. A high ratio of brotherhoods with combatants on both sides should not be surprising. Communists and the Nationalists recruited individuals from different positions in the brotherhoods – a youth from one brotherhood could have joined the Communists while the elders could have joined the rivals. Another possibility was that brotherhoods were intentionally hedging and giving support to both rival sides, but no empirical evidence was found so far for such widespread practice.

Figure 6.10 Households by the incidence of individual brotherhood members' mobilization (%)



The mobilization of core combatants was strongly associated with the brotherhood size. Figure 6.11 shows the relationship between the brotherhood size as a fraction of the total number of households in the county on the horizontal axis and the fraction in core mobilization on both sides of the civil war on the vertical axis. The data indicates a strong positive association between brotherhood size and wartime mobilization ( $R^2 = 0.78$ ,  $N=177$ ).

Figure 6.11 Brotherhoods by total civil war mobilization and household size (%)



This data supports the 1942 qualitative evidence, which shows that civil war mobilization was extensive, encompassing civilian population as fully and as thoroughly as the 1941 insurgency. The civil war had involved almost all brotherhoods, and the participation was proportional to the brotherhoods size. It was not the case that some parts of society were more politically involved than the other. The strategy of armed actors of pushing civilians out of neutral position was very successful. It can be explained by the horizontal ties between the groups and the cascading effects between them. However, even though members from almost all brotherhoods participated, there was a striking divergence in participation on the rival sides, which coincided with status and size.

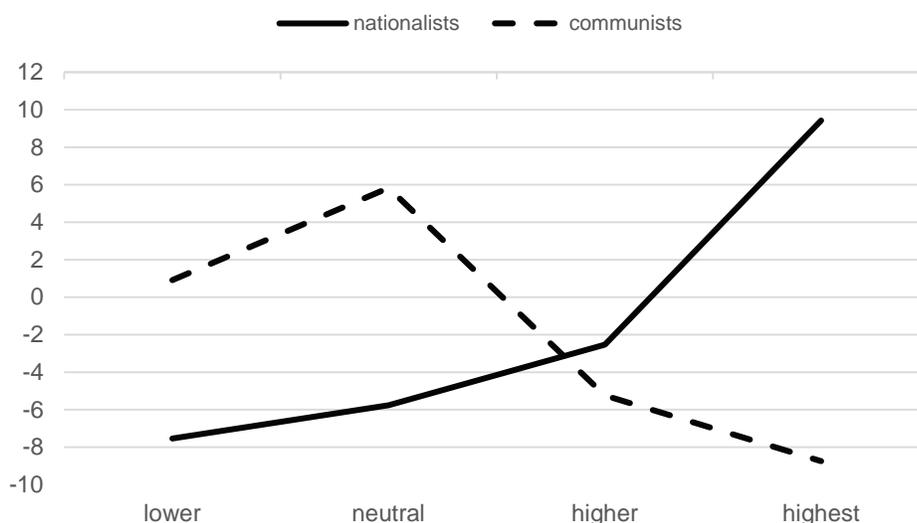
#### *Status and civil war mobilization*

Those brotherhoods that were mobilized did not participate in the civil war equally on both sides. Their status can explain the divergence. By now, the qualitative and quantitative evidence suggested that: a) lower-status brotherhood members led the communist insurgency, and b) they disproportionately targeted civilians from higher status brotherhoods. The political opposition to the communist power building was anchored in the higher status brotherhoods, and when the military mobilization had started in 1942, these brotherhoods were the core of the new military formations of the Nationalists.

The data on the civil war mobilization is additional support for this pattern of divergence according to the brotherhood status. Figure 6.12 shows the proportion of mobilized combatants on both sides of the war according to the status category and relative to the proportion of the

same category in the population. The Figure shows the disproportionality in the mobilization of brotherhoods according to status.

Figure 6.12 Nationalist and Communist core mobilization by brotherhood status, compared to the population (p.p.)



The mobilization during the 1942 civil war ran along the lines of the tribal hierarchy. The Communists recruited lower brotherhood status members disproportionately and had less success in mobilizing higher status brotherhoods. The Nationalists mobilized the highest status brotherhoods to fight against the Communists but did not reach the lower status brotherhoods as much.

The civil war fragmented the tribes along the lines, which divide those that traditionally held power and those that did not. The divergence was the culmination of the process, which started with the communist-led insurgency, described in detail in these chapters.

The whole tribe mobilized in the insurgency against foreign occupation, but the occupation and the communist mobilization disrupted the traditional power relations. The mobilization against the communist insurgents was a process if not swift as the July insurgency against the Italians then at last comparable to it. The whole brotherhood military units changed sides overnight, which made the political instability dramatically increase in the first months of 1942. Other brotherhoods followed the most powerful ones along the lines of mobilization discussed in the previous chapter, those of status and descent. The large, powerful brotherhoods could steer resources – in this case, foremost the manpower, and could provide security at the time when chaos threatened the Bjelopavlići valley.

Further disaggregated data shows the distribution of all brotherhoods on a communist-nationalist continuum. Figure 6.13 shows four panels for each of the four status categories. Each brotherhood is positioned on the horizontal axis, which shows the ratio of all communist combatants, and the vertical with the nationalist combatants. The brotherhoods above the diagonal line have participated more in the nationalist ranks, while the brotherhoods below the line have participated on the communist side. The further from zero the brotherhood is, the more participants in the civil war went to one of the sides, and those close to the line have been evenly split between rival sides.

The brotherhoods of the highest status shown in the upper left panel have all mobilized primarily on the side of anti-communists. Among these were the large brotherhoods of Komani and Zagarač, but also the brotherhoods of Pavkovići sub-tribe, where the nationalist mobilization had started. The upper right panel shows the distribution for the second-highest-ranking brotherhoods. The number of brotherhoods above and below the line is the same – seven on each side. Some powerful brotherhoods including that of Stanišić mobilized more on the side of the Nationalists, while some including the Šaranović mobilized on the communist side. The largest brotherhood, Brajovići, shown just below the line, in the upper right corner was close to being evenly split between the two sides.

In the lower two panels are the brotherhood mobilizations of the lower status brotherhoods. The situation was quite different from the upper ones – brotherhoods have tended to side more with the Communists. The lower right panel shows the lowest ranking brotherhoods where all brotherhoods, which had a significant role in the civil war - such as Kovačevići - participated on the side of the Communists.

The previous two sections demonstrated the mechanisms that were pushing individuals and groups towards civil war participation. This data shows how full the extent of the participation was, and the strong association of civil war mobilization and brotherhood status.

### *Conclusion*

Civil war mobilization was extensive, with core combatants from almost all brotherhoods. The majority of brotherhoods had core participants on both sides. However, the size and status of the brotherhoods, which was, as shown earlier, related to cohesion, affected the way they diverged in the civil war. Mobilization ran along with the vertical distribution of status: Communists were disproportionately recruiting lower-status, and anti-communists were recruiting higher-status.

The most powerful brotherhoods, those with high numbers and high status sided against the Communists, while the others followed them. This evidence supports the previous empirical evidence that explained the mechanisms that had led from the communist actions during the war to the anti-communist mobilization.



## Conclusion

This chapter had analyzed the insurgency and civil war in Danilovgrad county in order to identify the micro-level mechanisms that drove the behavior of individuals, social groups, and armed actors. These conditions and mechanisms were traced through six phases: pre-insurgency, insurgency, counter-insurgency, insurgent government, anti-insurgent mobilization, and finally, the civil war. Additional quantitative evidence on civil-military relations was produced that support the conclusions on both insurgency and the civil war.

The findings emphasize the importance of safety-seeking behavior that increases with the rise of insecurity in the environment. In these circumstances, social groups become focal points that individuals turn to for survival.

The mechanisms of conformity and reciprocity are vital in enabling efficient and fast mobilization. On the other hand, several mechanisms enable the recruitment, but security through shielding and benefit/sanction provision appears as indispensable with all armed actors.

The political and military decisions of armed actors mattered as they could profoundly disturb cohesive relations inside the groups. Armed actors sanction non-cooperation and push civilians from the neutral position. However, the behavior of armed actors causes resentment and revenge, the fundamental mechanisms that drive civil war mobilization along the vertical dimension of cohesion.

Differential status gain and loss during the war lead to divergence between the groups, which accounts for patterns of civil war mobilization. This chapter has traced several mechanisms that together explain the process of civil war mobilization. Status reversal breeds resentment, which, if manifested and met with coercion, starts the mechanism of revenge.

As the theory predicts, the pre-war cohesion allows fast and extensive mobilization, but the political and military decisions of armed actors can distort cohesion and change the mobilization dynamic. In Danilovgrad county, it was shown that the mechanisms of reciprocity and conformity led cohesive groups to participate in insurgency and then desert. It was also shown that status reversal, and coercion against higher-status groups had led to civil war mobilization. These mechanisms pitted higher-status groups in the tribal hierarchy against the communist insurgents.

So far, the chapters have offered support for the central hypothesis that civil war mobilization is determined by the pre-war social structure and the wartime effects of armed actors' decisions on social structure. However, it was not systematically shown how other factors explain civil war mobilization, which is the topic of the final chapter.

# CHAPTER SEVEN. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

## Introduction

This thesis argued that civil war mobilization is determined by the pre-war social structure and the wartime effects of armed actors' decisions on social structure. The following chapters offered evidence about the social group and armed actor behavior in the civil war, as well as the mechanisms of participation and recruitment. This chapter tests the competing explanations of mobilization in civil wars. The three alternative hypotheses suggested based on the literature are:

- H2a The pre-war economy determines civil war mobilization.
- H2b Pre-war politics determine civil war mobilization.
- H2c Wartime processes determine civil war mobilization.

This chapter tests these alternative hypotheses using quantitative data from the territory of contemporary Montenegro with historical municipalities as units of analysis. It first introduces the variables, their collection, and transformation, and then proceeds with several statistical tests, including the difference of means, multivariate regression, and survival analysis.

The first analysis tests if there are significant differences in variables between tribal and non-tribal areas. The second tests the extent of mobilization in the insurgency and civil war as dependent variables, with social structure as an independent variable. Finally, survival analysis tests if the speed of insurgency mobilization was significantly different in tribal and non-tribal areas.

The results of this analysis offer tentative support for the central hypothesis in this thesis. The results of the comparisons of means and survival analysis show that the insurgency was more extensive and faster in the tribal areas, as the theory suggested. The regression analysis shows that social structure and armed actors' presence are significant predictors of insurgency, as well as that resources as disputes might be the factors that account for the conflict between local groups in the civil war. However, the results are not very robust and show sensitivity to different model specifications.

While the results show that pre-war politics and economy are not better predictors than the social structure in explaining civil war mobilization, the analysis shows limited support to wartime processes, especially the presence of organized armed actors, as good predictors of wartime mobilization.

## 7.1 Scope and units of analysis

The analysis covers the territorial scope of contemporary Montenegro, with its 1945 borders. However, it uses the best available approximation of its pre-war 1941 municipalities as units of analysis. As this is an ahistorical setup, the next two sections explain the territorial development and organization of Montenegro, as the context for such a choice.

### *Scope: the territory of Montenegro*

Montenegro, as a political unit, changed its borders multiple times in the period leading to the war. These changes presented a challenge for the research design. What was Montenegro in 1941?

Montenegro's transformation from the semi-independent theocratic principality in the 18th century to an internationally recognized state in 1878 was followed with a considerable expansion. The nucleus of the state was the area surrounding Cetinje, mainly corresponding to the Cetinje county (Map 7.1). Through a sequence of conflicts with the Ottoman Empire, Montenegro expanded, primarily to the East and to the North, multiplying its size several times. The last expansion was in 1912-1913 Balkan Wars. The 1913 borders of the Kingdom of Montenegro resembled contemporary borders the most, with the addition of small territory in Kosovo, and without parts of the coastline still part of Austria-Hungary.

After the First World War, the Kingdom of Montenegro became a part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, later Yugoslavia. Montenegro became an administrative unit with borders that shifted three times over the next two decades. Immediately after 1918, Montenegro was a province (*pokrajina*), without the territories gained in 1913. In two consecutive administrative reforms, it became the Zeta area (*Zetska oblast*) in 1922<sup>1</sup> and *Zeta Banovina* in 1929.<sup>2</sup> The latter was an effort to redraw the internal borders of the country without prejudice to former “national” borders, in order to instill a new Yugoslav identity. Also, for the first time, the territory of contemporary Montenegro was a part of one administrative unit, Banovina, which also included parts of contemporary Croatia, Herzegovina, Serbia, and Kosovo.

These borders remained static until the Second World War. When Yugoslavia was occupied, Italy made contemporary Montenegro a protectorate (*Governatorato del Montenegro*). Italy annexed the coastal area around Boka bay, and the strips of land in the border areas were attached to the Italian protectorate of Albania. On the other hand, the protectorate included other territories in the North, which were never before a part of Montenegro. After the war, Montenegro became a federative republic, a part of socialist Yugoslavia, with the contemporary borders.

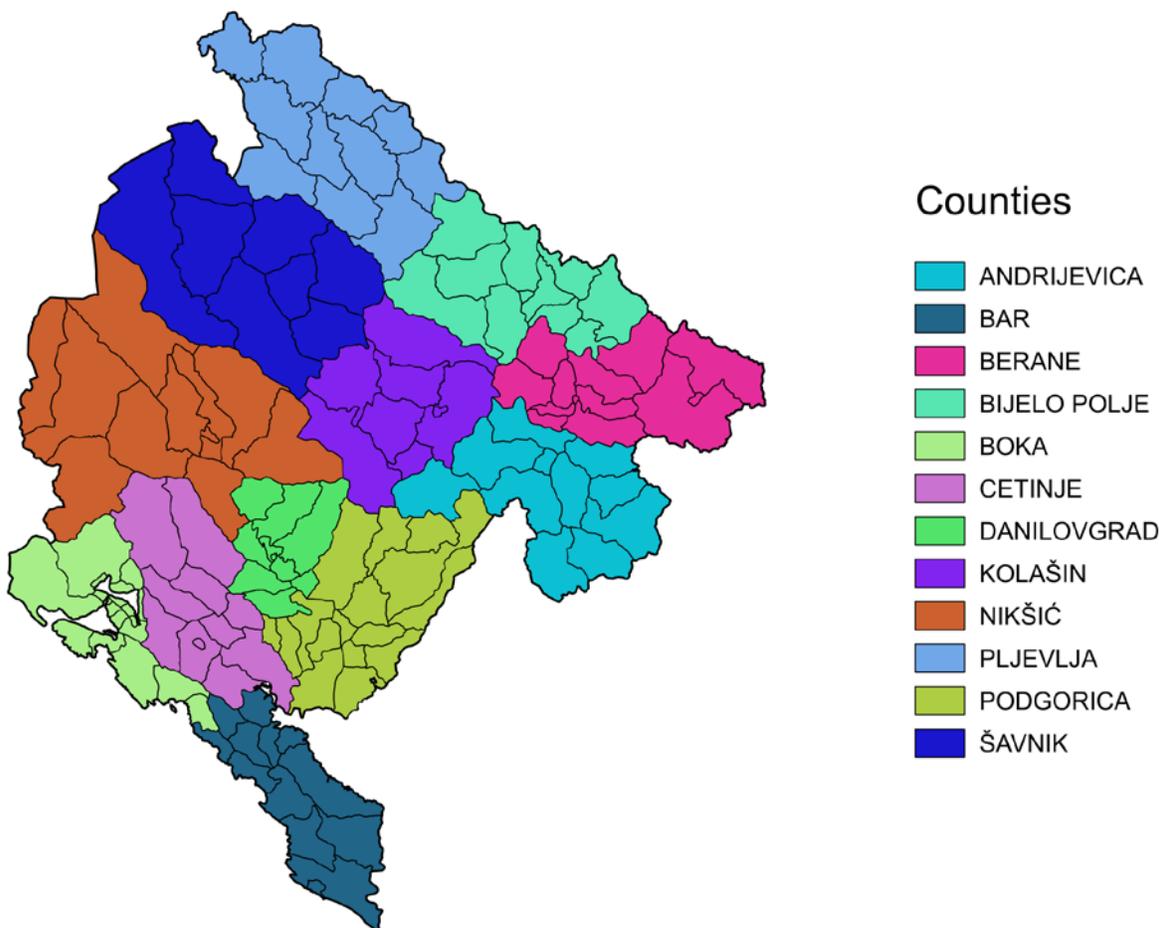
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1 Zeta area of 1922-1929 resembled Montenegro of 1913 in as much as it incorporated parts of Kosovo, but without the two counties (Pljevlja and Bijelo Polje) which were still administered from Serbia, and coastal area of Boka became administrative part of Montenegro for the first time.

2 Banovinas were administrative units governed by ban. The nine banovinas were named by major rivers, to avoid any ethnic identification.

The scope of this analysis is Montenegro in contemporary borders. In choosing the territorial borders of Montenegro for the analysis, one option was to study the area of the 1941 Italian Protectorate. However, the area of the Protectorate was highly arbitrary. It included some areas that were never part of Montenegro and excluded some, which were historically connected to the rest of the country. The borders of the Protectorate were drawn in Rome, through the balancing of Italian military interests as well as those of Italian and German neighboring proxies.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, using the 1941 historical borders was not the best option.

The other option was to include either the preceding or the succeeding borders. The pre-war borders have changed several times before the war. Unlike them, 1945 borders have not changed since. This stability was partially a reason to choose the borders of contemporary Montenegro. Data used in the empirical analysis is from both the pre-war and post-war periods, and boundaries of contemporary Montenegro coincide with the pre-war administrative boundaries of nine counties. Choosing to study the contemporary (or post-war) territory of Montenegro enables the systematic comparison of data created both before and after the war. The map of counties (Map 7.1) is, therefore, the historical administrative division of the contemporary territory of Montenegro.



Map 7.1 Montenegro counties

<sup>3</sup> Burgwyn 2005.

### *Units: administrative organization*

The units of this analysis are municipalities. There were three levels of territorial organization in pre-war Yugoslavia. The changes that often occurred at the highest level were discussed. The second and third levels were, however, more constant. During the interwar period, there were two levels, counties (*srez*) and municipalities (*opština*). Their borders rarely changed, which made the comparison of data collected at different times possible.

Municipalities were the lowest level of administrative organization. Unlike counties, which were the regional organization of the central government, municipalities were units of local self-government, with an elected representative and executive organs, budgets, municipal property, and an area of jurisdiction transferred from the central government. However, municipalities in Montenegro had another essential quality, which makes them relevant for this analysis, as they were also relicts of the historical tribal self-government.

Like its predecessors, the “captaincies,” the territory of municipalities mostly followed the previous tribal territories. Half of the Montenegrin municipalities (70 out of 139) were associated with a titular tribe. They enabled the historical tribal boundaries to be fixed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued to exist to the Second World War when the Italian occupying forces integrated the Yugoslav administrative organization. Municipalities were the most consistent form of territorial organization in the otherwise changing administrative design. For these reasons, the choice of municipalities was not only convenient for data collection, but it was also substantially meaningful.

On several occasions in the prewar period, municipalities were merging or splitting. Several official sources were used to track these administrative changes.<sup>4</sup> The result was the selection of 139 municipalities. This selection is, however, ahistorical, as there was no point in time in which this exact arrangement of municipalities existed. The 1941 arrangement was the baseline, and since some of the data went back into the 1920s, there was a need to include some smaller municipalities that existed until several years before the outbreak of the war. Excluding these municipalities would have meant a smaller N, so the choice was to keep in the analysis as many municipalities, as long as all data, going backward, could be systematically collected for them.

The sources for the territory of municipalities were the 1:500 000 1940 Zeta Banovina<sup>5</sup> and 1941 1:200 000 Yugoslavia maps.<sup>6</sup> These were georeferenced, following which two sources for settlements were georeferenced also, the 1925 Dictionary of settlements, and the first postwar, 1948 census with 1305 settlements. These were used to check the accuracy of the georeferenced 1940 and 1941 municipality maps, and to rearrange the territories of the municipalities where necessary.

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4 The data used was Opšta državna statistika 1932, Rečnik mesta 1925, Opšta državna statistika 1937, Almanah-šematizam 1931, and Opšta državna uprava 1932.

5 Gemeindegrenzen 1940.

6 Krallert, 1941.

## 7.2 Variables

Alternative theories of civil war mobilization presented in the introduction were grouped into three broad groups: pre-war politics and the economy, and wartime conflict dynamics. The research design expanded on these concepts and their operationalization. This chapter, before the analysis, introduces the variables, data collection, and data transformation process. Table 7.1 describes the twelve variables.<sup>7</sup>

Table 7.1 Variables and data sources

	Data structure	Year (publication)	Source
Units: Municipalities	Location	1940	Historical map
<b>Dependent variables</b>			
Insurgent mobilization	Location	1941 (1960)	Jovanović (author)
	Location	1941 (1963)	Chronology of war
Civil war mobilization	Individual	1942 (1943, 1964,	Census of victims, wartime records, monographs
		1972, 1975, 1981, 2009)	
<b>Independent: Society</b>			
Social structure	Individual	1931	Official directory
Interpersonal conflicts	Individual	1934-1940	Archival records
<b>Independent: Politics</b>			
Previous insurgency	Polling station	1923	Election results
Political competition	Polling station	1935, 1936	Election results
<b>Independent: Economy</b>			
Education investment	Individual	1931	Official directory
Arable land	Settlement	1960	Census of agriculture
<b>Independent: Wartime</b>			
Communist organization	Municipality	1941 (1960)	Jovanović (author)
Counterinsurgent repression	Individual	1941 (1964; 2009)	Census of victims
<b>Control variables</b>			
Population size	Settlement	1931	Population census
<b>Geography Index</b>			
<i>Communications</i>	Location	1940	Historical map
<i>Terrain Ruggedness</i>	Location	2011	Digital elevation model
<i>Forests</i>	Location	1985-1990	Land cover database

<sup>7</sup> The original data structure could be: location or settlement if data was geographic; individual if it was based on lists and directories; polling stations for the electoral data; and finally, municipal if the source data was already aggregated. The second and third columns are the years the data was produced or published, and the type of the source.

## 7.2.1 Social variables

### *Municipal population*

The baseline information about the population of Montenegro comes from the two censuses carried out in prewar Yugoslavia – 1921 and 1931. The census planned for 1941 was not performed due to the outbreak of the war. This leaves a researcher of the wartime Yugoslav population with a lack of valid data. The period since the last census was maximal, and the next census was held after the war losses and displacements of the population.

The post-war Yugoslav authorities made an official assessment of the population in 1941, based on the demographic trends in the interwar period (mainly the 1934-1938 annual data). However, these assessments were made at the county level only, and do not exist for municipalities.<sup>8</sup>

A new variable was constructed to assess the 1941 population. The 1931-1941 population changes on the county level were taken as bounds for each county. Each municipality was then weighted inside the given county based on the 1921-1931 changes. The result was an assessment of the 1941 population, which took into account official data on the growth of the population in the years leading to 1941, as well as the historical variation in population change between municipalities.<sup>9</sup> The analysis in this chapter uses the 1931 population census and, alternatively the 1941 estimate.

The other relevant population variable pertains to ethnoreligious diversity. Civil war literature has traditionally seen diversity as having a dampening effect on insurgencies and increasing the possibility of inter-ethnic conflict. Interwar Montenegro was a relatively homogenous society, with division existing along two dimensions: religion and ethnicity. The interwar censuses only registered ethnicity in 1921, while in 1931, it registered only religious affiliation. Religiously, the majority of the population was Christian Orthodox, with Christian Catholic and Muslim minorities. An overlapping division existed between ethnic groups. The 1921 census differentiated “Serbs or Croats” as the majority population in Montenegro and Albanians as the only significant minority ethnic group.

Religious and ethnic divisions between the majority of orthodox Montenegrins and other groups were not straightforward. The Albanians were predominantly Muslim on the Adriatic coast and in the East, while most of them were Catholic in the border Highlands. There was no significant Orthodox Albanian population. Even though the census did not differentiate further among “Serbs or Croats,” religious differences can point to two other ethnoreligious groups in Montenegro. The coast had a majority “Serb or Croatian” population and significant numbers of Catholics. This population was mostly Croatian, historically living in Boka Bay. Similarly, “Serb or Croatian” Montenegrins in the East of the country, which was Muslim, had a separate identity from Orthodox Montenegrins.

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<sup>8</sup> Državni statistički ured 1945b.

<sup>9</sup> The 1931-1941 growth is allocated to those municipalities which experienced growth in the 1921-1931 period, according to the ratio of the absolute growth. Municipality which gained more population between the first two censuses than the others in the county gained more, and those municipalities that experienced any reduction of population in the first period maintained the same numbers in 1941 as they had in 1931.

Therefore, instead of ethnicity, religion seems to be the single variable that can encompass these ethnoreligious divisions between the majority Orthodox Montenegrins and several different minorities, which is why it was used in the analysis. The population and religious distribution by deciles are presented in Maps 7.2 and 7.3 in Appendix 1.

### *Social structure*

As demonstrated earlier, half of the Montenegrin municipalities were associated with a titular tribe. However, merely dividing the country into nominally or traditionally tribal and non-tribal areas is not sufficient to claim any differences in cohesion. Instead, the pre-war voting records help establish the effects of social cohesion in peacetime. Also, they capture the variation between municipalities, which should not be reduced to the binary categorization.

The critical element that enabled the analysis is family surnames. Tribes are amalgamations of brotherhoods, which consist of several extended families. The family name distinguishes members of different brotherhoods. Even though not all members of a brotherhood need to share the same surname, all families with the same family name in a given area can be safely assumed to be a part of the same brotherhood.

Some amount of complexity of brotherhoods always existed. Families branched into different sub-families, sometimes family names changed, usually based on a shared ancestor, but they still maintained brotherhood connections amongst each other. Considering only family names as an indicator of brotherhood ties is, therefore, a conservative approach. Establishing further connections between brotherhood members based on ancestry and self-identification would probably better approximate the actual brotherhood structure, however, this is limited by the coverage of the existing ethnographic data.

Also, there were many, mostly patronymic, surnames, which were geographically widespread and crossed tribal boundaries. These families could have been related, but even if that was the case, there was no reason to consider them functionally being parts of the same brotherhoods. Only surnames of individuals living in the same municipality were considered to be the indicators of belonging to the same brotherhoods.

The data on social structure is based on the comprehensive list of municipal deputies from the 1931 Registry of Zeta Banovina.<sup>10</sup> The registry contains names and functions of 3901 officials in municipalities of Montenegro. These included the president (*pretsednik*) and secretary (*delovođa*), members of municipal level courts (*kmet*), and assembly members - deputies (*odbornik*).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Almanah-šematizam 1931.

<sup>11</sup> Local officials were called differently in the Boka County – *vijećnik*, *prisjednik*, *tajnik* and *načelnik* instead of *odbornik*, *kmet*, *delovođa* and *presjetnik* - due to a different tradition, inherited from Austria-Hungary.

Table 7.2 shows the distribution of municipal officials in Montenegro.<sup>12</sup> The data was available for 138 of 139 municipalities.<sup>13</sup> Out of these, all municipalities had presidents, and 96% had secretaries. Municipal courts members varied between 2 and 37, and assembly deputies between 2 and 66. When all municipal functions were added, the small coastal municipality of Stoliv had only seven officials, while the large Župa Pivska municipality in Šavnik county had 66 officials. On average, there were 28 officials per municipality.

The social structure was operationalized in two ways. One indicator is the ratio of the number of all deputies whose surname appears more than once, minus one, in the total number of deputies in the municipality<sup>14</sup> (Map 7.4 in Annex 1). Also, an alternative measurement for robustness check was calculated as network density - the number of actual connections between the same surnames of deputies (nodes) divided by the potential number of connections.

Table 7.2 The structure of 1931 municipal officials by administrative function

Function	Min	Max	Mean	Total
Presidents	1	1	1	138
Secretaries	0	1	1	133
Judges	2	27	7	931
Deputies	2	37	20	2699
All officials (138 municipalities)	7	66	28	3901

### *Interpersonal conflicts*

Another way of explaining behavior is not through social cohesion but a practice associated with it – feuding. The violence that produces feuds could affect mobilization in two ways, by diminishing insurgency mobilization and pitting families against one another in the civil war phase. Data about persons convicted for violent disputes in the interwar period was used to approximate interpersonal conflicts. A new dataset of parole requests was collected from the records in Archive of Yugoslavia.<sup>15</sup>

The quarterly parole request records submitted to the Ministry of Justice contained information about the convicts. This included, among others, name, date, place of birth, occupation, marital status, religion, previous convictions, as well as a short description of the crime and the motive. All quarterly reports from the 1933-1940 period, which were preserved in the archives, 27 in total, were analyzed. Not all quarterly reports were preserved; still, there is no reason to expect that a missing record would systematically bias this data.

<sup>12</sup> All values are rounded to full numbers.

<sup>13</sup> For Rijeka municipality in Cetinje county where no deputies were reported in the directory, the ratio was inferred based on the brotherhood numbers (Jovičević 1911).

<sup>14</sup> Eight small municipalities had no surnames appearing twice, however it was reasonable to expect some cohesion existed there, so they were coded with 0.1, divided by the number of deputies.

<sup>15</sup> Ministarstvo pravde Kraljevine Jugoslavije, Arhiv Jugoslavije, Fond 63, 1933-1940.

By sampling the 1933-1940 parole requests, data was collected on the violent crimes committed in the whole interwar period, ranging from 1919 to 1940 (average sentence length was 7.6 years). As these violent acts occurred in the society which practiced feuding, the release of the prisoner convicted for a crime committed in the early 1920s could start the cycle of revenge in the late 1930s. Thus using the parole requests from immediately before the war as a source of data for interpersonal conflicts had a dual advantage of both covering a long interwar period and being relevant for the dynamics of mobilization at the onset of the war.

Data was collected based on the place of birth, and not based on where the crime occurred. There were 464 unique entries after cleaning up the dataset, and the convicts were from 110 municipalities, out of 139. Motives were then aggregated into six broad categories, and the largest one involved disputes in general (228), followed by crimes against property (96), political reasons (58), domestic disputes (47), sexual violence (15), and others (20). The analysis uses those cases which had the potential for triggering vengeance: general disputes, domestic disputes, and sexual violence, as a sum. An alternative operationalization includes all cases.

### 7.2.2 Political variables

Two pre-war confrontations could have yielded mechanisms relevant to civil war mobilization. One was the last violent conflict, the 1919 insurgency against the integration into the new state, measured with the number of votes for the Federalist Party in 1923 elections. The other is the pre-war political competition, measured through parity between parties in 1935 elections.

#### *Previous conflict cycle*

Speaking of the “interwar” period in Montenegro, it is easy to think of 1918-1941 as a period of relative peace. However, as in other European countries, it was a tumultuous period. The primary cleavage in Montenegrin politics was between the supporters and the opposition to integration in Yugoslavia. The process was far from peaceful, which resulted in a lesser-known 1919 insurgency. The conflict was intensive, with reports calling it the “bloodiest slaughter spot in Europe,” and the last rebels were fighting as late as 1929.<sup>16</sup>

The issue at the heart of the conflict was the form of integration and the maintenance of Montenegrin political identity in the new state.<sup>17</sup> The “Green” faction opposed the full merger of Montenegro and advocated its reestablishment as a political entity, on a federal basis. The “White” faction supported the centralization and developed in opposition to the Greens. The 1919 insurgency known as the „Christmas Rebellion” was led by the prominent Greens and mostly spread through tribal areas of Old Montenegro and the Highlands. The counterinsurgency relied on the mobilization of the Whites, also mostly in Highland tribes.

Given that primary data about the insurgency is sparse, and could not be used without extensive data collection process, the proxy used for the support to the insurgency is the votes

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<sup>16</sup> Rastoder, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> Pavlovic, 2008.

for the political party that represented the insurgent politics in the 1923 elections.<sup>18</sup> The Federalist Party was formed to bring together the opponents of the annexation. The party participated in 1923, 1925, and 1927 elections, gaining 7912 votes in 1923, and 12% more – 8873 votes in 1925, after which the numbers declined. The party did very well, especially in areas where insurgents were most active in 1919.<sup>19</sup> (Map 7.5 in Annex 1)

In addition to the Federalist Party, the Cemiyet party that, for the first time, participated in the 1923 elections represented Albanians and South Slavic Muslims in the areas that became part of the country only in 1913, and where the Federalists did not put up their list for the elections. The two parties were relatively compatible, in the sense that they represented segments of voters that stood against the interwar governments and opposed centralization.<sup>20</sup> Therefore the analysis uses the ratio of votes for the two parties as a proxy for the support for the previous insurgency, alternatively using only votes for the Federalists.

### *Pre-war political competition*

The most recent municipal electoral data was available for the general election of 1935 and the municipal election of 1936. The last pre-war elections on the territory of Montenegro were held in 1938. However, no municipal level data was released. The 1935 general election data comes from the official statistics published by the Yugoslav parliament in 1938.<sup>21</sup> The data on 1936 municipal elections was published in *Politika* daily.<sup>22</sup> The analysis uses the 1935 results to calculate the level of competition between government and opposition parties. The alternative operationalization in the robustness check uses 1936 data. The detailed account of the 1936 municipal elections from local primary sources was published in an edited volume in 1991, which offered contextual data and reasons why some municipalities did not hold elections.<sup>23</sup>

Competition levels are calculated as the index of parity between the votes for government and opposition. The difference between the percent of the ruling party and opposition is divided by a hundred, and the absolute value of the quotient is subtracted from one:  $\text{Parity} = 1 - |(\% \text{Gov} - \% \text{Opp}) / 100|$ . The index ranges from 0 in municipalities where only government or opposition got votes (lowest) at the elections to 1 if the total numbers of votes for the government and the opposition were equal (highest parity).

### 7.2.3 Economic variables

Two variables in the model address the economic conditions of Montenegro at the time. One is the number of teaching staff, taken to reflect the overall level of investment in socio-economic development. The other is the size of arable land as the primary resource in the municipality.

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18 Statistika izbora 1924

19 Rastoder 1996.

20 Rastoder 1996, 507.

21 Statistika izbora 1938.

22 *Politika* 11/24/1936.

23 The elections were not held in four cities, and in four municipalities the conditions for holding elections were not met.

### *Socio-economic development*

Data on teaching staff employed in primary education is collected from the directory of primary schools in 1930 Zeta Banovina.<sup>24</sup> The teaching staff was used as an indicator of the development investment for the following reasons. As the individual and settlement level data is hard to find for this period in Montenegro, there were only several potential indicators for the assessment of investment in socio/economic development. These were hospitals (doctors), the number of companies, civic associations, and communications. However, most of these were concentrated in urban areas, which meant that they were not useful for analyzing variation between mostly rural municipalities.

Out of different possible indicators, schools were the most directly connected to the economic activity in the municipality, as they depended on the municipal financing. Urban areas were the centers of trade and economic activity, so they raised more taxes on goods and services. Rural municipalities could only raise enough money through additional municipal taxes (*prirezi*), which were determined as a percentage of direct taxes collected by the state (*porezi*).<sup>25</sup> The only significant part of the municipal budget that was not used for municipal administration was used for schools.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, the number of the teaching staff was taken to be a better indicator of investment in education than the number of schools. Counting teaching staff accounts for the differences between smaller schools with just one teacher or even schools that were lacking teachers (13 out of 374) and the largest ones in cities with over 20 staff members. The total of 374 schools was georeferenced, and the teaching staff (N=819) was then aggregated by municipalities. The number of teaching staff is finally divided with the total number of individuals in the municipal bodies, which presents an operationalization of the municipal investment in education. (Map 7.6 in Annex 1)

### *Land size*

In a peasant society, land is the primary resource, and the disputes about land ownership, which are to be expected when arable land is sparse, could potentially drive the conflicts between groups and individuals during the civil war. The agricultural land data comes from the 1960 census, held 15 years after the end of the war.<sup>27</sup> There are several reasons for this. Two agricultural censuses that were held before the war could not be used. The 1921 agriculture census recorded only livestock, not arable land. The 1931 agriculture census was general, but the disaggregated data was destroyed during the war.

The only general agriculture census that was close to the 1940s was the postwar 1960 census. It recorded the use of agricultural land by individual households, irrespectively of the ownership

24 Almanah-šematizam 1931.

25 If the direct state taxes were too low, which was the case in the poorest municipalities, the additional municipal taxes could be as high as 6300% in Komani or 3077% in Brčeli.

26 Almanah-šematizam, 330. The budgets of rural municipalities in 1930 were used for: 50% personnel and office costs, 30% debt servicing (mostly made through personnel costs), 16% school maintenance, and the remaining 4% was spent on everything else, including roads maintenance, water supply, all other municipal institutions and social programs.

27 Savezni zavod za statistiku 1964.

status. Recording households as units allowed it to capture even the smallest uses of land, which was convenient for the mountainous areas of Montenegro.

Two types of data extracted from the 1960 census were: 1) the total cropland area, including fields as well as gardens, and 2) the total used agricultural area, such as meadows and pastures, in hectares. The data was collected on the settlement level and aggregated to the municipal (Map 7.7 in Annex 1). Data on agricultural population, livestock, or machinery, would change over decades and would be affected by war and the changes in the models of production. However, the assumption is that the total size of land, especially collected through a census which used households as units of analysis, would not change significantly, and that 1960 data would still be a valid measure for the prewar conditions. The model primarily uses the cropland, or arable land area, while the broader category, which includes meadows and pastures, serves as an alternative measure.

#### 7.2.4 Wartime variables

Conflict variables include insurgent organization immediately before the insurgency, insurgent mobilization, repression against civilians in the wake of insurgency, and civil war mobilization. Also, the control variable is included for geographic factors that favor insurgents.

##### *Insurgent organization*

The existence of pre-war networks is an essential factor in insurgency organization.<sup>28</sup> The socialist historians after the war also attributed the extent of the 1941 insurgency to the well prepared communist clandestine organization.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the pre-war existence of the insurgent organization is another factor that might affect mobilization. Before the insurgency, the Communist Party organized “strike groups,” a total of 296 in 111 municipalities with 5772 members.<sup>30</sup> There was no communist organization in 28 municipalities, but more than 200 operated in Drobnjaci, Grahovo, and Piperi municipalities.

##### *Insurgent mobilization*

Insurgent mobilization is the dependent variable in the first (insurgency) model. Two measures of mobilization are to be tested by explanatory variables. The first captures the temporal variation - the time that passed from the moment insurgency started in Cetinje county until before it occurred in other municipalities. The second variation is spatial – the extent of participation in the insurgency in municipalities.

The July insurgency lasted for about one month before the participation decreased, only to increase in the autumn again. Data on 166 events were collected, in which the insurgents took action against the Italian military from July 13 to August 5 from the detailed chronology of the war in Montenegro, published in 1963.<sup>31</sup> The events included four categories: diversions, ambushes, attacks, and seizing settlements. These events were georeferenced and then

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28 Staniland 2014.

29 Jovanović 1960, 45-57.

30 Jovanović figures for aggregate are 285 strike groups with 6200 people (p.46).

31 Hronologija 1963.

classified by municipalities. In the next step, it was calculated how many days from July 12 have passed until insurgents took action, from one, being municipality where the insurgency started, to twelve, which was the longest time to start. In 34 municipalities, insurgents were not active.

The other dimension of insurgency mobilization is the number of civilian participants. The primary source of data on July insurgency is Jovanović's comprehensive history of 1941,<sup>32</sup> which collected systematic data on insurgent numbers. However, for some municipalities, data were reported only for the county level, it was descriptive, or it was reported in the number of units and not in the number of participants. All the numeric data was first collected from Jovanović and other supplementary sources.<sup>33</sup> The number of insurgents in missing municipalities was then imputed based on the data from county level and the average number of insurgents in units, inside the bounds of potential battle aged men from the 1931 census, and the total number of insurgents from historical sources.

Jovanović gave an estimate of 32000 rebels,<sup>34</sup> which was widely circulated in the literature and was not challenged by any authority.<sup>35</sup> This figure was an upper bound, used in calculating the number of insurgents in each county and the municipality. In the end, the insurgents came from 104 municipalities, with numbers ranging from a couple of dozens of insurgents to close to one thousand in large municipalities such as Piperi or Jelenak. (Map 7.8 in Annex 1)

### *Wartime repression*

Insurgency could have affected the civil war mobilization, and it is included in the second civil war model. However, the repression which followed the insurgency could have affected the civil war phase also. The repression escalated in July, as part of measures against civilians suspected of aiding insurgents. Soon enough, it became a part of the systematic campaign to deter the population from supporting the insurgents.

The critical source of data for the wartime civilian deaths is the 1964 Census of War Victims.<sup>36</sup> The census was a comprehensive attempt to produce a "final" account of the war victims. Based on the door to door work of 25 000 census takers, and cross-checking primary documents, the Yugoslav Federal Census Commission produced a list, only made public with the dissolution of Yugoslavia. The successor states have continued filling in the gaps, so the data used for Montenegro is the latest available edition from 2009.

Montenegro data included 17052 deaths during the war, out of which 1598 died in the first year of the conflict. Out of these, 937 were classified as non-combatant deaths.<sup>37</sup> The deaths were coded as non-combatant if the person died in indiscriminate violence by occupying forces, "direct terror" (604), in battles or bombings (175), during internment in prisons, concentration

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32 Jovanović 1960.

33 Đaković 1978.

34 Jovanović 1960, 257.

35 Tomasevich 2001, 140.

36 Savezni zavod za statistiku 1966.

37 Deaths without any data (36) were included in this category.

camp, or forced labor (122). The data which was on individual-level was first sorted based on georeferenced places of birth, which were then aggregated to the municipal level.

### *Civil war mobilization*

The dependent variable in the second (civil war) model is the extent of the civil war mobilization. It is a combination of four sources that were already introduced in the research design chapter. First, the communist side in the war includes data on Yugoslav Partisan soldiers, which died in Montenegro during 1942 and the survivors that were drafted in the first half of 1942, and left for Bosnia. The first category (944 combatants) was collected from the post-war census of war victims. The second is based on the directories of members of the units of the Proletarian brigades, published in the decades after the war, based on official documents and the testimonies of survivors. Montenegrins were recruited in four proletarian brigades: First, Third, Fourth, and Fifth.<sup>38</sup> Based on the place of birth, 2859 combatants were identified from Montenegro. The places of birth of these individuals were georeferenced and aggregated to municipalities.

Nationalist data comes from two sources, the lists of combatants killed and wounded in the civil war published in Glas Crnogorca in 1943 (427) and the new census of 5094 individuals that retreated from Montenegro in 1944, published in 2009. As there were survivors in the 1943 list, those individuals that were also registered in the 1944 retreat were not counted twice. Same as with the Communists, the birthplaces of these individuals were georeferenced and aggregated to the municipal level.

Having data from four different sources compensates to some extent for the expected biases of each source. However, this also presented a problem for the construction of a variable. None of these sources captures the full extent of civil war mobilization but some aspect of it. The data from two sources have first been added up for both sides, and the values for each municipality have been turned to fractions of thousand (this was done for the sake of a more straightforward interpretation of results). The total civil war mobilization for the municipality was then calculated by adding communist and nationalist fractions and dividing it with two. In this way, the two sides were equalized, to account for the fact that sources captured different scores in different periods. The total civil war mobilization is presented in Map 7.9 in Annex 1 and Mobilization by rival sides in Maps 7.10a and 7.10b.

### *Geography*

Geography is considered one of the conditions that can favor rural guerrilla warfare.<sup>39</sup> Insurgents are usually the weaker side in the conflict, and to be able to wage asymmetric war against a superior power, they need to be able to hide tactically. To determine such areas, an index of geographic conditions that favor insurgency is developed, which is composed of three elements: distance from major roads, the roughness of the terrain, and forest cover.

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38 Vidović 1972, Đurović, Matunović, and Raičević. 1972, Janković 1975, and Vuksanović 1981.

39 Fearon and Laitin 2003.

For the proximity to communications, a map of roads in made based on the military map of the Yugoslav road network produced in May 1940.<sup>40</sup> These were the roads that could have been used for military transportation. Waterways: Adriatic Sea coast, river Bojana, and Skadar lake coast are also included, as these were navigable waters. In the next step, distance is determined of all points in Montenegro to any of these lines, and finished with transforming the distance to an index with a value of 0 for points on the lines of communication and one the point in Montenegro which is furthest from any land or waterways.

The second geographic feature which favors insurgency is the roughness of the terrain. The source of data was the Digital Elevation Model of Europe (DEM).<sup>41</sup> Based on the elevation raster, a terrain analysis was conducted to produce the Terrain Ruggedness Index (TRI), which is the mean difference in elevation between any pixel on the map and its surrounding cells. Same with the distance to communication, the TRI was transformed into a new index with a value of 0 for the areas which are smoothest to 1 for the area of Montenegro, which is most rugged.

The forested area was associated with insurgencies in civil war literature, as it is, besides distance from communications and rugged terrain, another geographic feature that favors irregular warfare. The area was inferred from the Corine Land Cover (CLC) 1990 data.<sup>42</sup> The CLC is a geographic land cover database encompassing Europe based on satellite images and supplementary data, which was initiated in 1985 by the European Union. The data for Montenegro comes from the satellite imagery created between 1985 and 1990. Three categories of forests (broad-leaved forest, coniferous forest, and mixed forest) were aggregated into one layer with the location precision of 100 meters. The territory of Montenegro was divided into a forested area with a value of 1 and a non-forest area with a value 0.

The final Index of geographic factors that favor insurgency was created by combining these three values. The geography index could have a minimum value of 0 and the maximum value of 3 (as the maximum values of all three sub-indices were 1). The range, in reality, spanned from 0.05, which would be the area in Montenegro where insurgents would have the hardest time hiding, to 2.3 where the geography would be the most favorable to insurgents. Finally, the mean value of the composite geographic index for each municipality was calculated (Map 7.11).

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40 Generalstab des Heeres 1940.

41 European Environment Agency 2016. Version 1.1, tile E50N20, with a 25 meters resolution from 2011.

42 European Environment Agency 2019.

## 7.3 Analysis

The final section of this chapter analyzes the insurgency and civil war in Montenegro in the following way. The descriptive statistics and the density estimates first give a better sense of the data. Descriptive statistics are followed by the difference of means analysis, which shows structural differences between tribal and non-tribal areas. Multivariate regression analysis tests how well these different variables predict the mobilization outcomes, the extent of insurgency and civil war mobilization. Finally, as the mobilization is not only about the extent, but also about the speed, survival analysis explores the temporal dimension of the insurgency.

### *Descriptive statistics*

The twelve variables described in the previous sections are grouped into societal variables, political, and economic, control variables, and conflict variables: the communist organization from before the insurgency, the extent of July 1941 insurgent mobilization, the 1941 civilian repression that followed the insurgency, and the civil war mobilization in 1942. The units of analysis are 139 municipalities.

The two models in the analysis are based on two points in time, the insurgency (t1), and the civil war (t2). The first eight variables are explanatory in both models. However, the four conflict variables are changing positions in the models due to the passage of time. In the first model (Insurgency), the communist organization is an explanatory variable, and the extent of insurgent mobilization is the response. However, as the pre-war communist organization changes with the insurgency, it is removed from the second civil war model. For civil war mobilization (response variable), insurgent mobilization becomes explanatory variable, and civilian repression is added to the model, as it historically followed the insurgency and could have had an effect on the civil war mobilization.

Table 7.3 shows some of these basic features of the data: minimal and maximal values, the arithmetic mean, and the standard deviation. The variables are ordered by the groups and include the type of data. Most of the variables start with zero and have means closer to the minimum, as well as relatively large standard deviations.

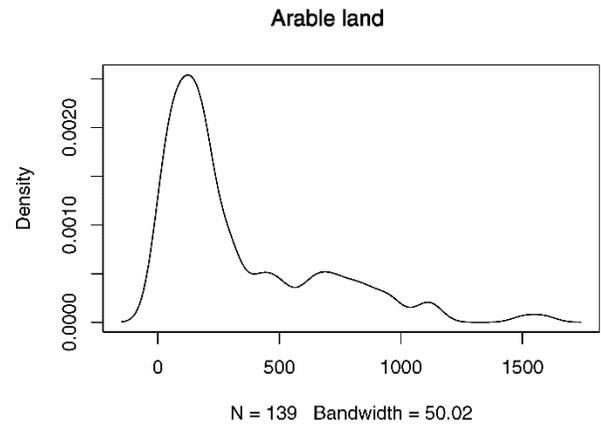
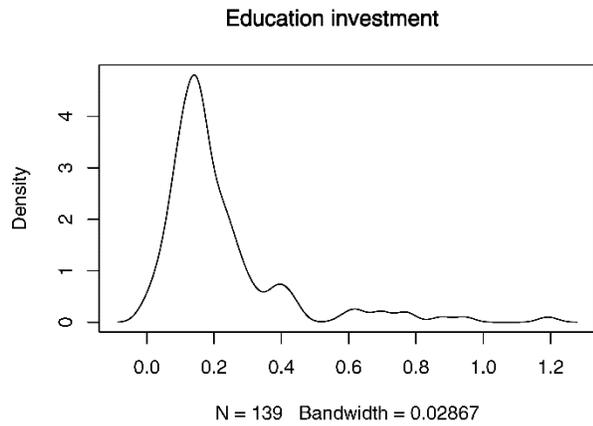
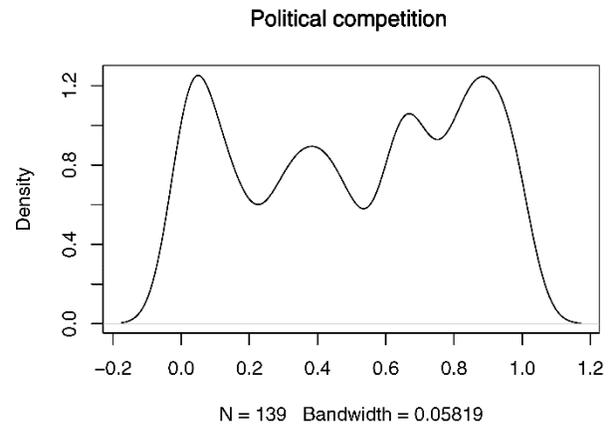
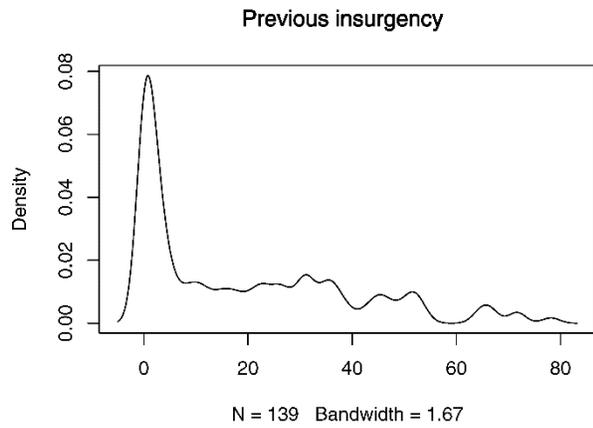
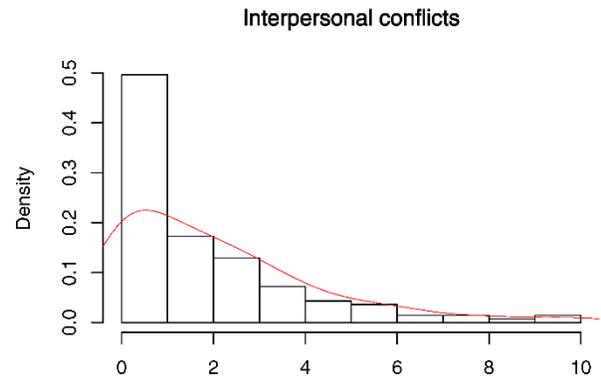
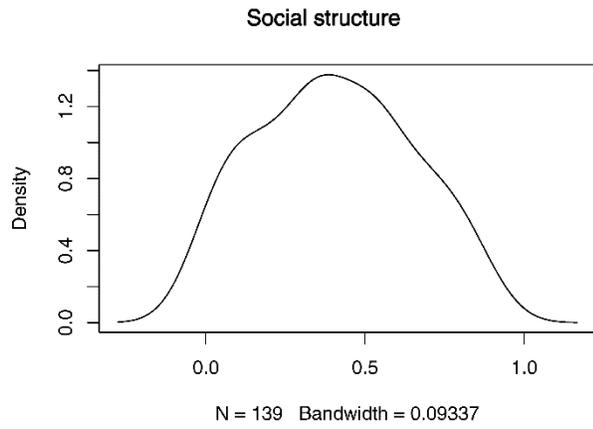
Table 7.3 Descriptive statistics

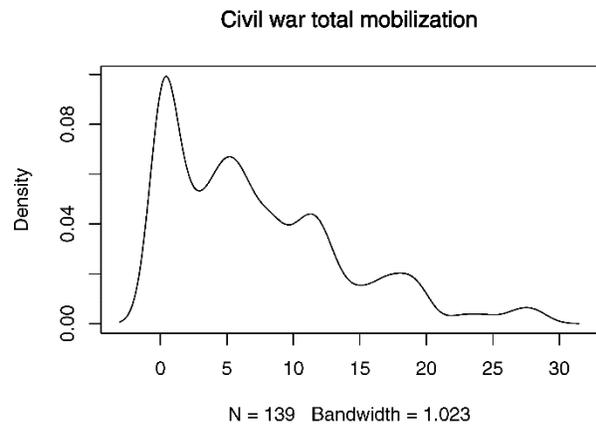
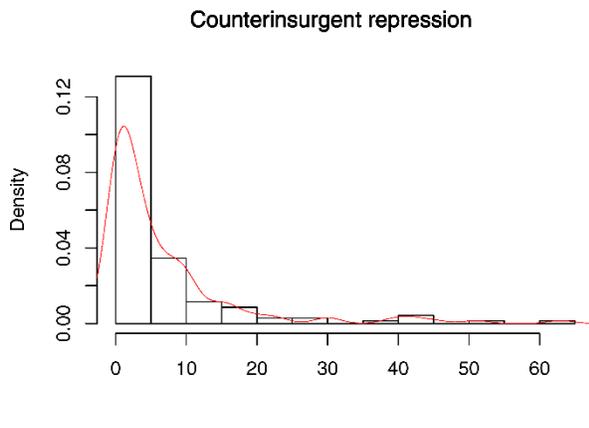
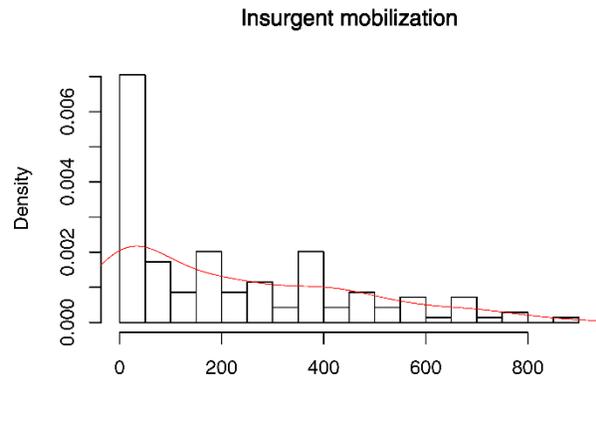
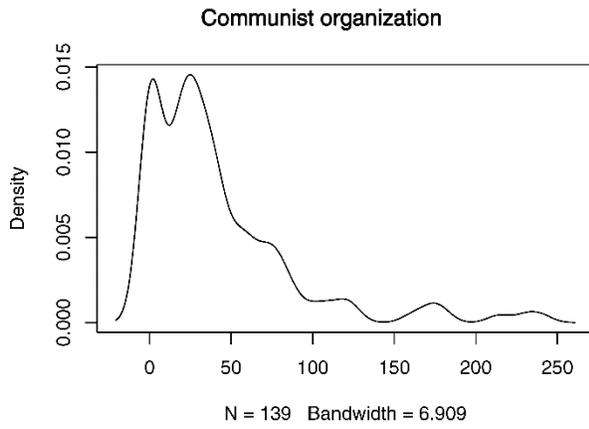
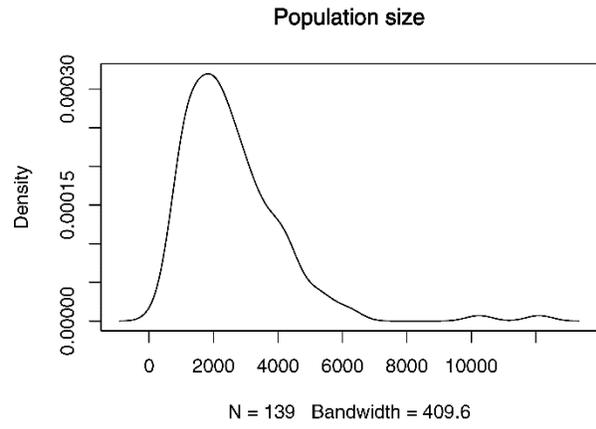
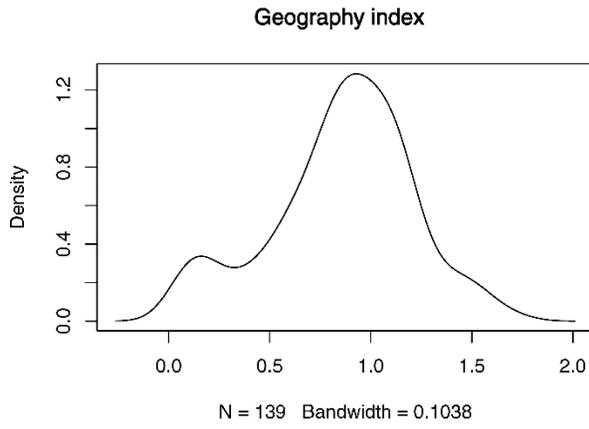
Variables	Type	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Social structure	index	0	0.89	0.41	0.24
Interpersonal conflicts	count	0	10	2.09	2.22
Previous insurgency	fraction	0	78.16	18.78	20.2
Political competition	index	0	0.997	0.5	0.33
Education investment	fraction	0	1.19	0.22	0.19
Arable land	count	1	1590	330.5	330.09
Geography index	index	0.05	1.7	0.86	0.35
Population size	count	313	12110	2590.24	1627.93
Communist organization	count	0	240	41.53	46.7
Insurgent mobilization	count	0	900	230.22	230.16
Counterinsurgent repression	count	0	63	6.74	10.54
Civil war total mobilization	fraction	0	28.4	7.19	6.61

Figure 7.1 shows the density estimates. The variables can be grouped into those that have distributions resembling normal, and those that do not. The social structure variable has the closest shape to normal distribution. Geographic conditions, in general, resembles a normal distribution, but with a small part on the left that approaches bimodal distribution. Arable land, education investment, population size, and communist organization follow, however, with pronounced right skew.

The other six variables (interpersonal conflicts, previous insurgency, political competition, Insurgent mobilization, civilian repression, and civil war mobilization) seem affected by having too many zeros. Among these, previous insurgency and political competition particularly suffer from over-dispersion, with the latter having a bi-modal distribution due to the high density of zeros and ones. These characteristics make them closest to negative binomial distribution. Overall, these distributions give enough reasons to choose a normal distribution for further analysis, even though it does not entirely fit the data. The analysis with different specifications and with the use of alternative variables was conducted, and did not produce results that corroborate the hypotheses. The robustness checks analysis is in Annex 2.

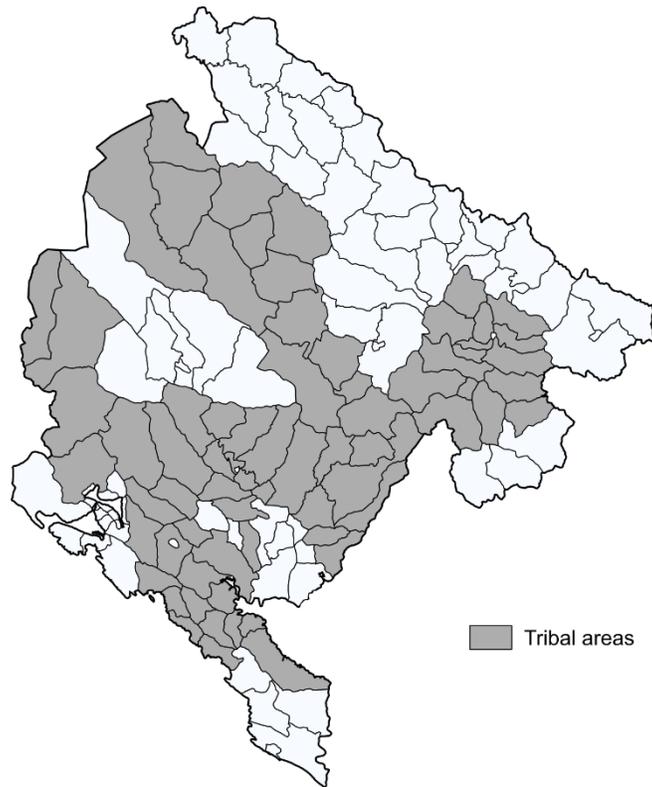
Figure 7.1 Density estimates





### *Difference of means*

The first analysis is the test of the difference between two groups of municipalities belonging to tribal and non-tribal areas. The tribal area dummy variable is based on the ethnographic literature survey on what were considered to have been tribal territories in the prewar period. These traditional tribal areas are shown on Map 7.12.



Map 7.12. Tribal areas of Montenegro

The results of the Welch Two Sample t-test with the tribal area as a factor variable are given in Table 7.4. It compares all twelve variables to determine whether there is statistical evidence that the associated means are significantly different. Establishing this difference is important for several reasons. First, it should offer the first insights into structural differences between tribal and non-tribal areas. It should show whether the conflict variables have significantly different values in tribal areas as well as its direction. Finally, it also shows how well does the social structure variable produced for the analysis corresponds with the pre-existing qualitative information about the structure of Montenegro's tribes.

Table 7.4 Difference of means

Variable	Non-tribal	Tribal	Diff.	t value (df)	p value	
	Mean (St. dev)	Mean (St. dev)				
Social Structure	0.28 (0.21)	0.53 (0.21)	0.26	7.29 (137)	0.000	***
Interpersonal conflicts	2.26 (2.54)	1.91 (1.85)	-0.35	-0.92 (124)	0.360	
Previous insurgency	20.16 (22.18)	17.42 (18.10)	-2.74	-0.80 (131)	0.426	
Political competition	0.48 (0.33)	0.53 (0.33)	0.04	0.78 (137)	0.440	
Education investment	0.27 (0.24)	0.16 (0.10)	-0.11	-3.62 (91)	0.000	***
Arable land	452.90 (404.54)	209.84 (163.98)	-243.06	-4.63 (89)	0.000	***
Geography index	0.79 (0.39)	0.93 (0.30)	0.14	2.37 (128)	0.019	*
Population size	2988.48 (1962.13)	2197.70 (1091.45)	-790.78	-2.93 (106)	0.004	**
Communist organization	27.75 (36.47)	55.10 (51.72)	27.35	3.61 (124)	0.000	***
Insurgent mobilization	153.26 (211.78)	306.07 (223.57)	152.81	4.14 (137)	0.000	***
Counterinsurgent repression	7.19 (10.92)	6.30 (10.22)	-0.89	-0.50 (136)	0.621	
Civil war mobilization	5.71 (6.41)	8.66 (6.52)	2.95	2.69 (137)	0.008	**
	N	<b>69</b>	<b>70</b>			

The total number of observations is 139. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. \*\*\*, \*\*, \* indicate significance at the 0.001, 0.01, and 0.05 levels.

The distributions are also visualized using box plots in Figure 7.2, with zero representing non-tribal municipalities and one tribal. Starting with the social structure, there is a significant difference in the scores for non-tribal ( $M=0.28$ ,  $SD=0.21$ ) and tribal municipalities ( $M=0.53$ ,  $SD=0.21$ );  $t(137) = 7.29$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . The social structure should have been the most substantial difference among the variables. It means that the family concentration of deputies in the assemblies differs significantly between tribal and non-tribal areas, which indicates the validity of the social structure variable.

On the other hand, the difference in the number of interpersonal conflicts between the two groups is both substantially small and statistically insignificant. This goes against the idea of

tribal societies as more prone to violent conflicts, usually associated with the mechanism of revenge. This data from peacetime shows that nominally tribal areas were not much different in violence escalation than non-tribal.

The previous violent political confrontation and the level of opposition-government competition all exhibit small and statistically insignificant differences between tribal and non-tribal areas. This finding also counters the expectation that tribal social organization can be associated with more conflictual and competitive political relations.

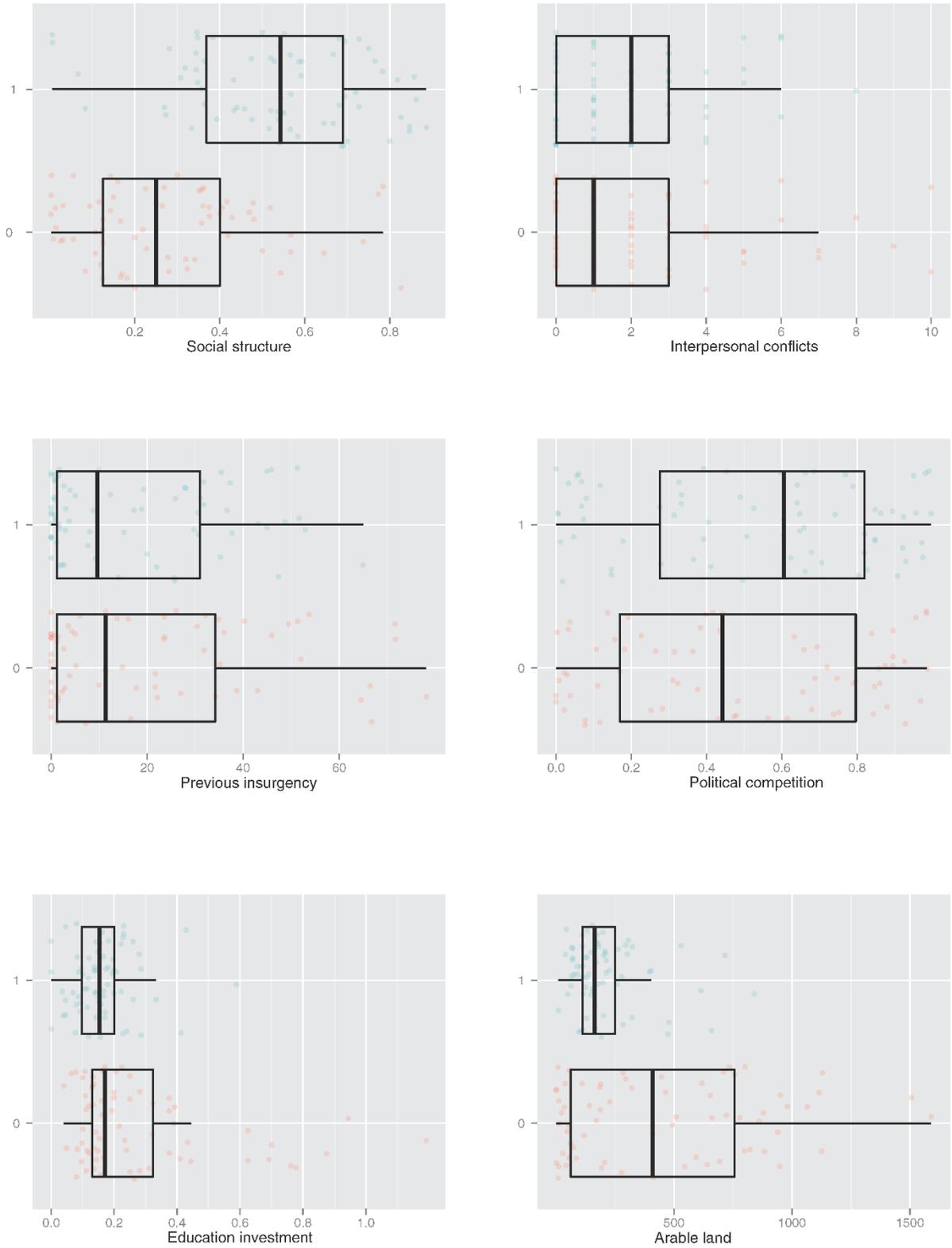
The economic variables, however, show a more predictable pattern. Both the investment in education and the arable land size are significantly smaller in tribal municipalities. This is understandable, as the tribal areas are mountainous, further from urban centers and the plains with arable land, which mostly spread in the north and the south. However, not all mountainous areas are tribal, and this is an important source of variation. The differences between population size and geographic conditions favoring insurgency are also significant, even though the differences are not as pronounced. The tribal municipalities are somewhat more rugged, further from communications, forested, and are less populated than the non-tribal areas.

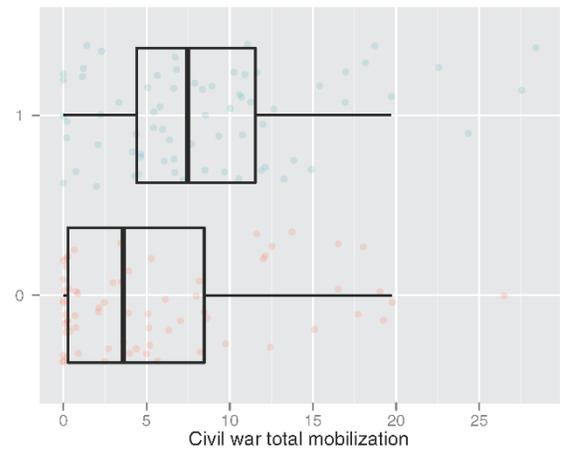
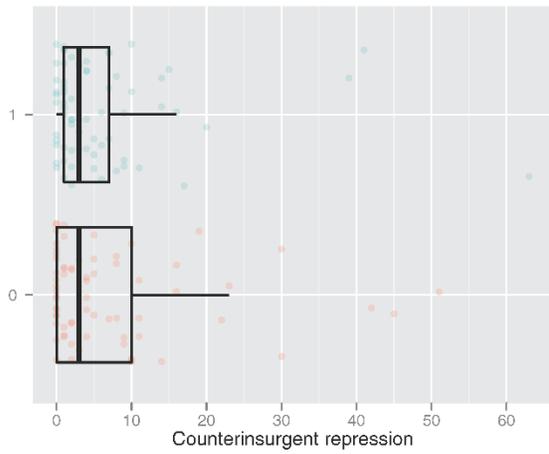
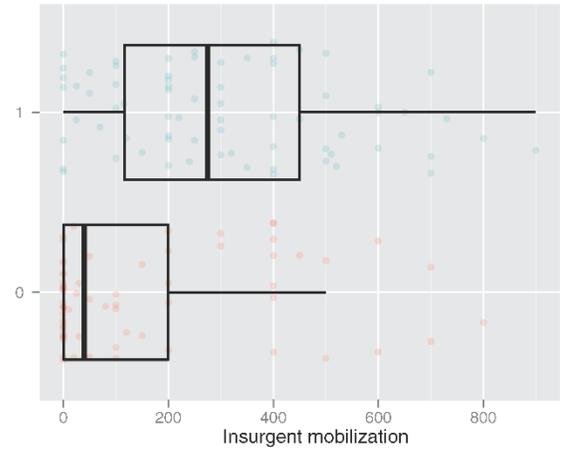
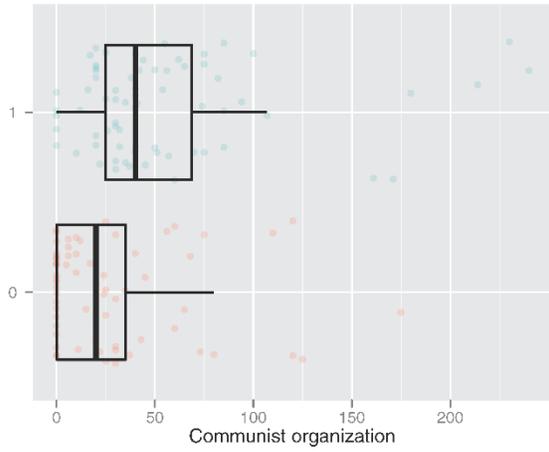
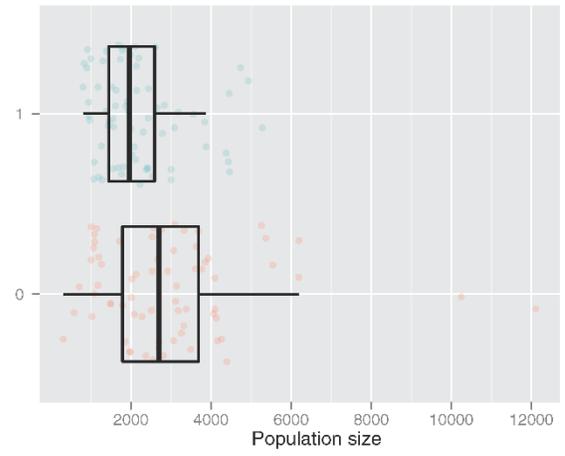
The conflict variables follow an expected pattern. The number of members of the Communist Party military organization in tribal areas is higher, and the number of the July insurgents also, and both differences are substantially and statistically significant. Communists were preparing for guerilla war before July, and they have organized in those areas where guerilla warfare would have been possible due to geographic conditions, and which are related to tribal social structure. That the insurgency mobilization was more extensive in tribal areas is again corroborated with a large and statistically significant difference.

The repression against civilians after the insurgency does not differ significantly between the two groups of municipalities. Finally, civil war mobilization, on both sides of the war, was significantly more extensive in tribal areas. As the communist organization was larger in tribal areas and insurgency more extensive, this was to be expected.

However, when the total civil war mobilization is disaggregated, and communist and anti-communist mobilization are observed separately, it turns out that it is the anti-communist mobilization that drives this difference ( $t(131) = 2.8, p < 0.01$ ), whereas the difference in communist mobilization was not significant ( $t(134) = 1.4, p=0.15$ ). The communist military had an excellent foothold in the tribal areas, but after the insurgency, it was the anti-communists that had more success in recruiting in tribal areas. This finding supports the qualitative evidence about primarily tribal mobilization against the communists.

Figure 7.2 Differences between tribal and non-tribal municipalities





*Multivariate regression*

There are two models of multivariate regressions that test how well these variables predict the outcome when controlling for other factors. The first model has insurgency mobilization as a response variable, and the second has civil war mobilization as a response, and insurgency as an explanatory variable. Table 7.5 presents the results of the ordinary least square regression. In addition, the pre-insurgency communist organization is removed from the second model, and counterinsurgent repression is added, following the chronological order of events.

Table 7.5 Multivariate regression coefficients

	<b>(M1) Insurgency</b>			<b>(M2) Civil War</b>		
	Est. (SE)	t	p	Est. (SE)	t	p
Social structure	176.37 (75.04)	2.35	0.020 *	0.90 (2.37)	0.38	0.704
Interpersonal conflicts	4.46 (7.48)	0.60	0.552	0.69 (0.23)	3.06	0.003 **
Previous Insurgency	-2.91 (0.76)	-3.84	0.000 ***	-0.002 (0.02)	-0.06	0.949
Political competition	84.52 (45.07)	1.88	0.063 †	0.16 (1.41)	0.11	0.911
Education investment	-193.42 (117.46)	-1.65	0.102	1.82 (3.65)	0.50	0.619
Arable land	0.07 (0.06)	1.15	0.252	-0.004 (0.002)	-2.29	0.024 *
Geography index	72.14 (43.09)	1.67	0.097 †	-1.50 (1.32)	-1.14	0.256
Population size	0.01 (0.01)	1.07	0.286	0.001 (0.0004)	1.77	0.079 †
Communist organization	2.81 (0.37)	7.63	0.000 ***			
Insurgent mobilization				0.014 (0.002)	6.43	0.000 ***
Counterinsurgent repression				-0.02 (0.05)	-0.43	0.666
Adjusted R-squared:	0.51			0.45		
df	129			128		

The number of observations is 139, robust standard errors are reported in parentheses. Significance at the 0.001, 0.01, 0.05, and 0.1 levels is indicated by \*\*\*, \*\*, \*, †. The coefficients are not standardized. The dependent variables are insurgency (model 1) and civil war mobilization in model 2.

The first model has adequate explanatory power, with 0.51 adjusted  $R^2$ , whereas the second model has slightly lower but still acceptable  $R^2$  of 0.45. Regarding the quality of model 1, the errors are normally distributed, with a mean close to 0. There are no problems with multicollinearity, VIFs are between 1.1 and 2.4, and there are no influential outliers, Cook's distance is around 0.15 for two municipalities, which did not warrant exclusion. However, there are reasons to be worried about heteroscedasticity, which was expected due to about half of the variables departing from the normal distribution. Finally, another reason to worry about the model is that there might be non-linearity present in the relationships between the explanatory variables and the response. This is again driven by issues of data distribution. The second model has similar problems with heteroscedasticity and non-linearity. However, the models are well specified, and all the variables that should be meaningfully associated with the outcomes were included.

The unstandardized effects of the variables which passed the significance threshold are plotted in Figures 7.3 and 7.4, while standardized coefficients are in Figures 7.7 and 7.8 in Appendix 2 (Robustness checks). Social structure significantly predicted insurgency scores ( $b = 176.4$ ,  $p < .05$ ). An increase in the social structure ratio from 0 to 1 corresponds to an increase in almost 200 insurgents in a municipality. Interpersonal conflicts, on the other hand, show a weak and insignificant effect on the outcome.

One percent increase in support for political parties that opposed the previous state reduces the number of insurgents by almost 3, keeping all other variables constant. This is understandable, having in mind the historical context. These parties represented the proponents of the 1919 insurgency, which was fought against the new state and led by the individuals with strong ties to the old Montenegro state, as well as the ethnic minority, which only became a part of Montenegro ten years before the 1923 elections. Both political options had reasons not to participate in the 1941 insurgency which started after July 12 proclamation of independence. These groups had more chance of regaining their status in the new wartime circumstances. In addition, holding all other variables constant, a change from uniform voting for a political party to a complete parity is responsible for an increase in 85 insurgents; however, the results are not significant at .05 level in this model.

Regarding the economic variables, educational investment reduces the number of insurgents, while arable land size increases it. However, both variables fail to reach the significance threshold. Expectedly, the size of the population and the geographic conditions for insurgency contribute to an increase in the number of insurgents, but also could not significantly predict the response variable. The last variable, the pre-war communist organization, significantly predicts the insurgency,  $b=2.81$ ,  $p < .001$ . For every additional member of the communist organization in the municipality before the war, there were around three more insurgents in July. The standardized coefficients figure (Figure 7.7, Annex 2) shows that the communist organization has by far the largest effect size.

In the second model, where civil war mobilization is the dependent variable, the prewar communist organization is replaced with insurgent mobilization as the independent variable, and

Italian repression is added. In this model, explanatory variables are predicting a slightly smaller ratio of the variance. The model has similar issues with heteroscedasticity and potentially has a problem with non-linearity, for the same reasons as the first model. Keeping these caveats in mind, the model shows a meaningfully different picture than in the insurgency.

The insurgent mobilization is the best predictor of civil war mobilization. When all other variables are held constant, for every additional 1000 insurgents, there was a 1.4% increase in the total extent of civil war mobilization ( $p < 0.001$ ). As expected, social structure and previous insurgency, which predicted the insurgency mobilization in the first model, in the second model lose their significance. All other explanatory variables do not pass the significance threshold except two, interpersonal conflicts and arable land size, with meaningful directions.

For one, an increase of ten prisoners sentenced for a violent dispute in the interwar period corresponds to an additional 0.7 percent of the total number of recruits in the civil war ( $p < 0.01$ ). Also, for every additional 10 km<sup>2</sup> of agricultural land in the municipality, the total civil war mobilization is reduced for 0.4 percent ( $p < 0.05$ ).

These results of the regression analysis support the findings in the previous chapters. When all competing and controlling variables are accounted for, the segmentary structure of social groups and the armed actors' presence best explain the extent of the mobilization in the insurgency. This gives additional support together with the findings from previous chapters, which had demonstrated that the hypothesis that civil war mobilization is determined by a) pre-war social structure and b) wartime effects of armed actors' decisions. The negative direction of the third significant variable, previous insurgency, leads to the conclusion that the 1941 insurgency indeed mobilized parts of society which experienced status reversal brought by foreign occupation.

The mobilization in the insurgency, driven by social structure and armed actor's organization, is the best predictor of the civil war mobilization. However, two variables shed additional light on the social and economic environment in which civil war mobilization occurred. The agricultural land size is smaller in tribal areas, as shown in the difference of means test. This variable did not predict the insurgent mobilization in the first model; however, it became significant in the civil war model. Interpersonal conflicts also did not significantly differ in the tribal and non-tribal areas in peacetime and were not a significant predictor for the insurgency, but they also gain a new explanatory role in the civil war circumstances.

These variables show that unlike the insurgency, where mobilization was against the outside occupying forces, factors which were already explained in the previous chapters, resources, and security, might have had a new role in mobilization in the tribal areas. More competition over scarce resources, and more interpersonal conflicts before the war seem like factors that would catalyze the mechanisms which drove groups from the insurgency to the civil war.

Figure 7.3 Effect plots: Insurgency

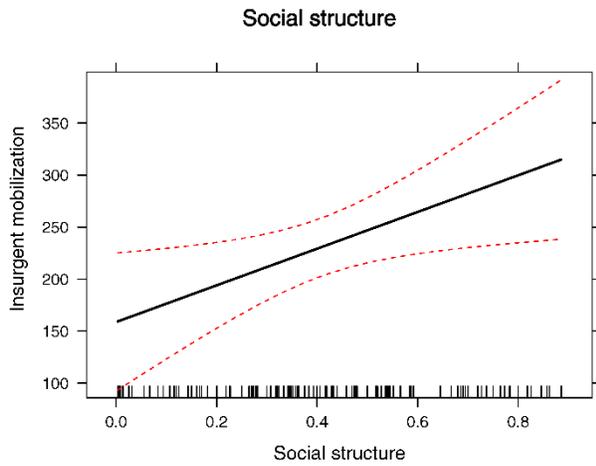
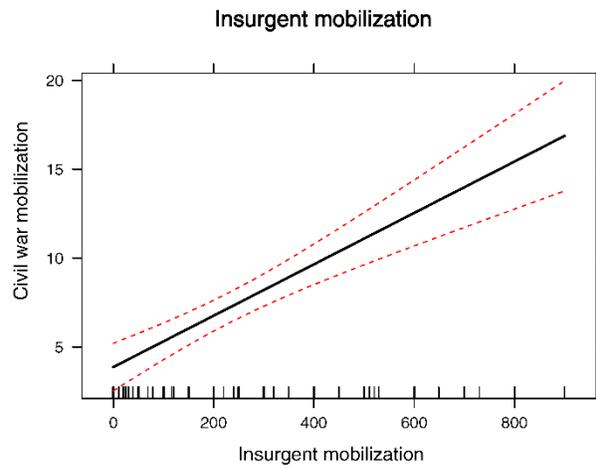
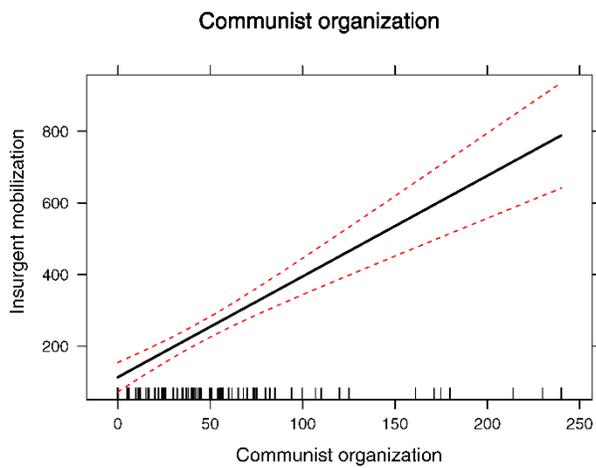
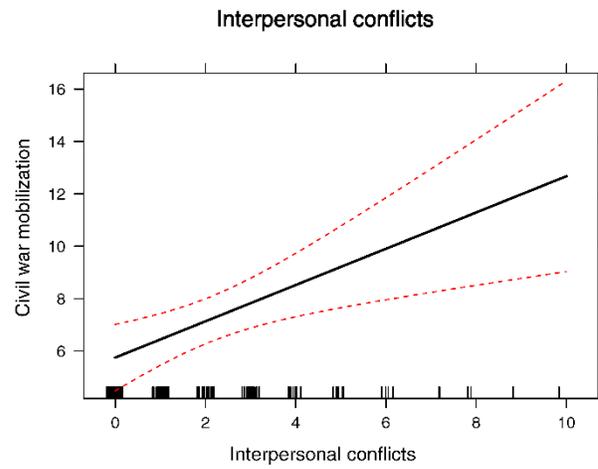
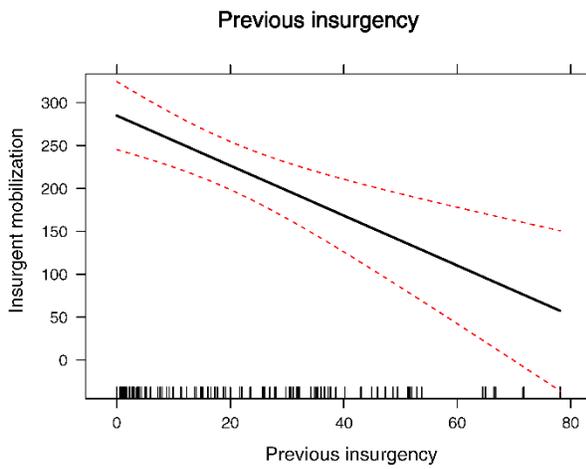
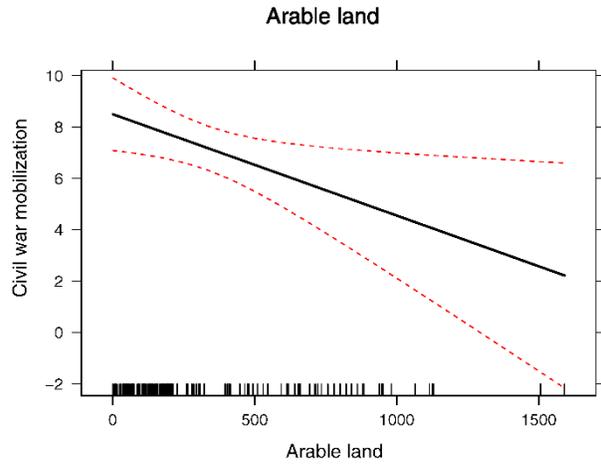
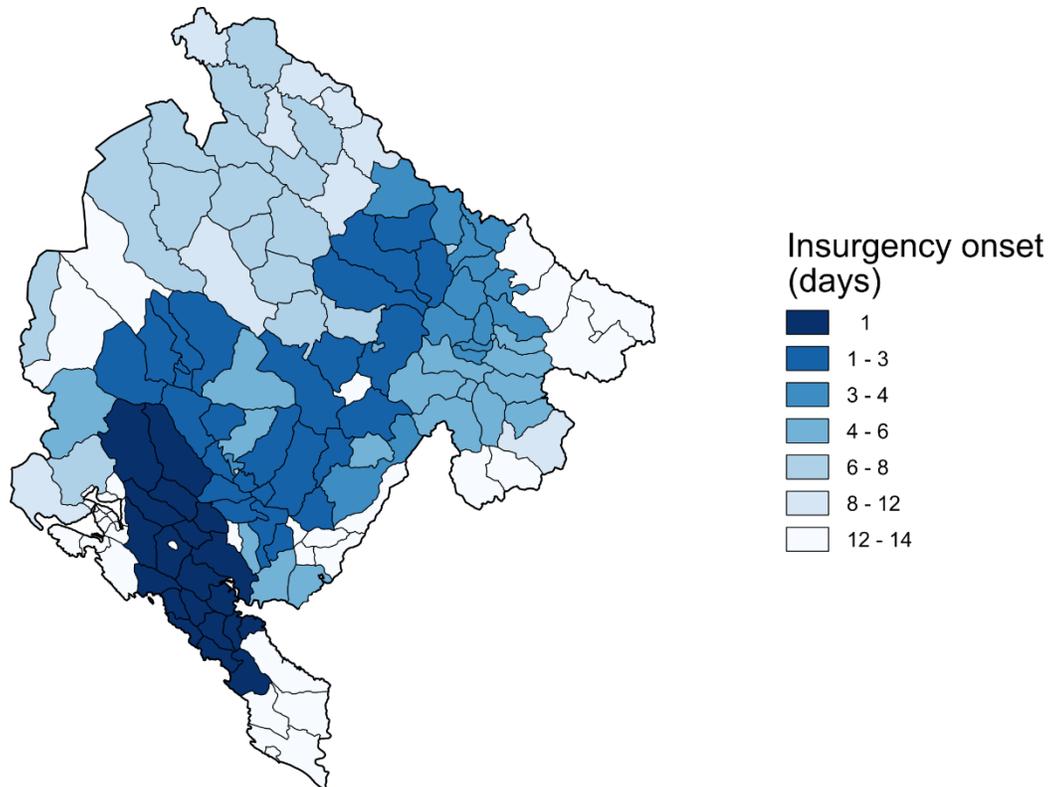


Figure 7.4 Effect plots: Civil war



### Survival analysis

The analysis so far dealt with the extent and the direction of mobilization. However, just as the number of combatants varied for different parts of the country, so did the speed mobilization, which can be demonstrated with the speed of the July insurgency. The insurgency started right after the July 12 assembly in Cetinje. The first offensive actions against the Italian army happened on July 13, and continued for at least a month. However, participation in some municipalities was quicker than in the others. Map 7.13 shows how many days have passed between the proclamation of Independence and the onset of insurgency.



Map 7.13 Days until the onset of insurgency

Survival analysis estimates the probability of the onset of the insurgency after day zero. It uses a new variable, based on the published data in war chronology, which tells how many days passed until there was a recorded offensive insurgent activity in a municipality.<sup>43</sup> Kaplan-Meier test, a non-parametric statistic, tests if survival probability is different in groups of municipalities divided into tribal and non-tribal.

Table 7.6 shows the distribution of municipalities based on the tribal area as a factor. Even though the number of municipalities in both groups is roughly the same, there were more tribal municipalities in which the event (insurgency) took place in the first two weeks. The non-tribal

<sup>43</sup> Hronologija 1963.

municipalities have a larger ratio of municipalities, which were censored based on the event not occurring in a given 14-day period.

Table 7.6 Summary of distribution with the tribal area as a factor

	Total	Events	Censored	Censored %
Non-tribal	69	41	28	40.6%
Tribal	70	64	6	8.6%
Overall	139	105	34	24.5%

Figure 7.5 plots the cumulative hazard functions for two different groups of municipalities, divided based on traditional grouping of municipalities into a tribal and non-tribal dyad. The analysis showed that the median time to the insurgency for tribal municipalities was four days, and for the non-tribal ten days. The log-rank test of the two curves showed them to be significantly different ( $\chi^2= 29.3$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Based on the hazard curve and the statistical test, it can be safely concluded that the hazards of the insurgency onset are not equal in the population and that it was higher in the tribal areas.

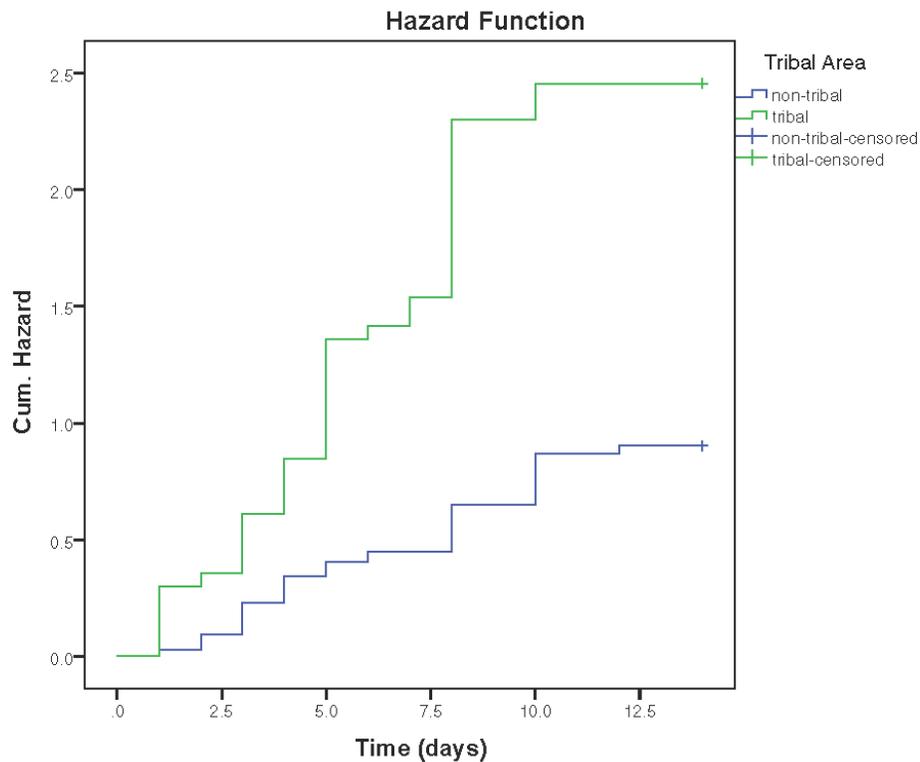


Figure 7.5 Hazard function of insurgency onset in tribal and non-tribal areas

This analysis used a dummy variable based on the traditional division into tribal and non-tribal areas. In the next analysis, the municipalities are divided into three equal groups based on the pre-war social structure variable, derived from the concentration of deputies with the same surnames used in the earlier analysis – into high, medium, and low concentration in the pre-war period. Table 7.7 shows how the municipalities were divided. Figure 7.6 shows that the hazard function was again obviously different for these three groups. The estimated median of insurgency onset for the group with the highest concentration was three days, for medium five, and low eight days. The log-rank test showed the difference between them to be significantly different ( $\chi^2 = 11.5$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ).

Table 7.7 Summary of distribution with social structure as a factor

	Total N	Events	Censored	Censored %
Low	47	30	17	36.2%
Medium	46	36	10	21.7%
High	46	39	7	15.2%
Overall	139	105	34	24.5%

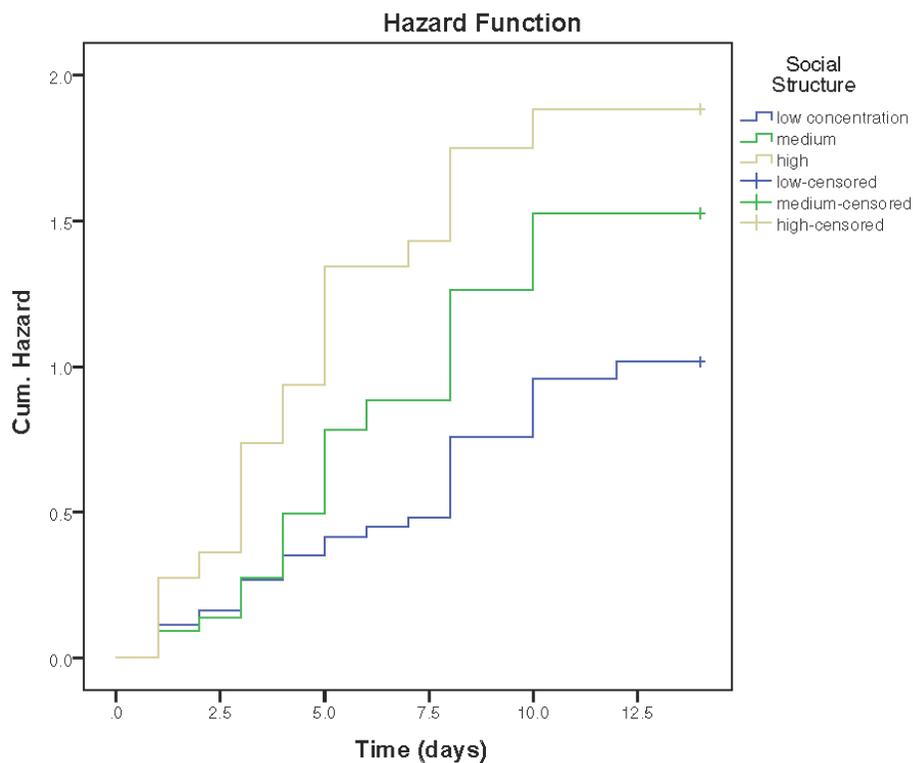


Figure 7.6. Hazard function of insurgency onset in municipalities divided by social structure

The Kaplan-Meier test showed that there is a significant difference in the spread of insurgency between tribal and non-tribal areas, which corroborates the theoretical expectations. However, if we wanted to know what might be driving this, more variables should be taken into account.

The onset of the insurgency is finally tested with the parametric Cox proportional hazards model. In this model, only those variables that are meaningfully associated with the onset of the insurgency were selected. While concentrated social structure, geographic factors favoring insurgency, and communist organization should increase the rate of insurgency, the previous insurgency and political competition should decrease it. Out of these, two variables have a significant association, social structure (hazard ratio = 2.541,  $p=.037$ ), and communist organization with a coefficient of 1.006,  $p<.001$ . However, this is not a robust finding, because if population size is added to the model, the significance of the social structure association is replaced by the significant increase of the rate by the previous insurgency.

As with the previous regression analysis, survival analysis models also give limited support to the hypothesis, but they are highly sensitive to different model specifications. This calls for further testing with data on different levels of analysis. The choice of a relatively small number of units at the municipal level was driven by an extreme difficulty of obtaining prewar data on a lower – individual or settlement level. Yet, this is the level of analysis most important for the theory that puts kin-based groups at the center of explanation.

## Conclusion

Micro-comparative historical analysis implies a lot of sensitive choices about sources and the treatment of data. The analysis conducted in this chapter rests on the validity of this data. The first part of the chapter justified the way that indicators were selected.

The second part of the chapter presents the results of a series of statistical tests. The results show that the extent of the insurgency was more substantial in the tribal areas, with a more concentrated social structure. It also showed that the onset of insurgency was faster in these areas, which enabled effective participation. However, even more substantive than a social structure for the insurgency was the presence of an armed actor that recruited civilians. Indeed, the results consistently show that both of these variables are good predictors of the main dimensions of insurgency – extent and speed.

In addition, when it comes to the mobilization in the civil war, analysis shows that anti-communist mobilization was more pronounced in tribal areas, despite prewar communist foothold there. It also shows that the conflict between local actors might have been exacerbated in the areas with fewer resources and more interpersonal disputes. This resonates with the previous analysis of mechanisms that had identified resources and security as important factors in explaining the dynamics of mobilization.

However, models are sensitive to different specifications, and cannot make robust predictions about the relations between variables. More analysis with finer-grained data should be conducted for the models to more firmly establish the relations between these factors.

To the extent that these results are interpretable, they offer limited support to the main hypothesis that finds pre-war social structure and wartime armed actors' behavior as key determinants of civil war mobilization. The political variables are not found to be good predictors of civil war mobilization. Previous political grievances did not predict the insurgency, and pre-war political divisions did not predict well civil war dynamics either. Economic grievances do not provide a reasonable explanation for wartime dynamics. However, the model finds that resource scarcity might have a role in increasing competition, which should be tied to civil war mobilization, and explored further.

Finally, to the extent that wartime processes could be evaluated with the existing data, the findings are mixed. Clearly, as the theory suggests, mobilization dynamics cannot be explained only with wartime variables. However, as this chapter also shows, the wartime organization of an armed actor and its positioning in society have a robustly significant role, and in a meaningful direction. This analysis shows that rather than the patterns of indiscriminate violence, which had no predictive value, it is the organizational aspect of the armed actor that matters. And, as the previous chapters had indicated, the armed actors' interventions in society are a determining factor in mobilization.

## CHAPTER EIGHT. CONCLUSION

The empirical puzzle that motivated this research was the unusual dynamics of mobilization in Montenegro. Why did the extensive July insurgency happen under the circumstances of relatively moderate occupation? Why did the population turn against the communists that had led the insurgency just months earlier? Secondary sources were mentioning the role of tribes in Montenegro. However, there was no substantial study of the behavior of these social groups in civil wars, nor was there a theory for that matter. Once the contours of the research question started to appear – why do segmentary societies mobilize differently in civil wars, the relevance of the question for contemporary conflicts from Somalia to Philippines, and Afghanistan to Iraq, became evident.

Civil wars in segmentary societies come across as protracted, riveted by factionalism. Armed actors appear suddenly, and intensively. They sustain their activity under the pressures of overwhelming military power. However, they often equally quickly fragment and disappear, only for the whole cycle to restart after some time. This has been the case with Anbar province in Iraq, but similar processes can easily be identified in Mindanao in the Philippines, or the mountainous regions of Afghanistan. Each of these cases had an underlying social organization that had rested on kinship-based social groups. In each of these cases, armed actors could mobilize these often marginalized groups in times of instability. Nevertheless, equally important, just like the state could not, so the armed actors could rarely establish effective governance.

This research dealt with social structure and civil war mobilization. It aimed to answer why societies with segmentary social structure mobilize differently than other societies. The main reason it identified was the social group cohesion and the interaction of social groups with wartime armed actors. One of the contributions of this thesis was to theorize this relationship between cohesive social groups and armed actors.

Cohesion is not a given state of armed actors – nor social groups. Instead, it is consciously produced and tested through the ability of groups to act collectively. The sources of horizontal social group cohesion are found in the access to resources, identity, and security that a group provides to individuals. When individuals' access to these depends on the group membership, the group will more likely be able to act cohesively.

On the other hand, social groups are hierarchical. Status is not distributed randomly; instead, traditional patterns distribute the power to make decisions to the minority, to which the majority defers. If the vertical ties are weak, then social groups cannot act collectively.

When armed actors recruit individuals from segmentary societies, they also absorb all the invisible ties between them. While the horizontal ties between individuals enable armed actors to mobilize effectively and maintain unit cohesion, vertical ties between combatants create parallel hierarchies. Armed actors have incentives to disassemble and rearrange the groups according to their military and political goals.

Social groups' cohesion can be affected by such armed actor's behavior in different ways, but the theory puts the spotlight on four main dimensions: warfare, organization, institutions, and interactions with civilians. Through these military and political decisions, armed actors can strike at the sources of cohesion, especially the resources, security, and status. The social groups react, and the effect is that participation changes. The direction depends on the specific mechanism which is triggered by these actions.

In general, conditions of increased insecurity in civil wars make individuals hedge against participation in high-risk activity. However, the mechanisms of reciprocity and conformity make social groups participate as a collective, which explains the extent of participation. Mechanisms of positive status rewards, and resentment to specific actors, explain the changing patterns of participation. Armed actors, on the other hand, can shield the population and provide benefits. Just as possible is that they would sanction the noncooperation or neutrality and cause the mechanisms of revenge, or that benefit provision to one part of the society will be at the cost of the other.

The mechanisms of participation and recruitment determine when groups will stay passive, participate, desert, or defect. The mechanisms of reciprocity and conformity will make these shifts fast – one reason affects many individuals at once. Status reversal mechanisms will make these shifts go in a predictable direction of higher status parts of social groups moving first to protect the cohesion. Therefore the theory includes all crucial links that explain behavior in a civil war: between individual and group interests before the war, links between group interest and group conflict, and links between the group conflict and mobilization, as well as the maintenance of individual-group links during the war.

The empirical part of the thesis relied on a single case of Montenegro in the Second World War. The disaggregation strategy had enabled micro, meso, and macro-level analysis and provided comparative leverage. The variation within the case, across space, time, and actors, enabled inference where much of the national level variation could be controlled for. This approach limits the generalizability of results, but it enables valuable insight into micro-level mechanisms, which were essential for the theory.

The empirical evidence brought up in these chapters broadly supports the propositions raised in the theoretical framework. However, not all propositions could be tested in the same way. The third chapter on Montenegro used primary published documents to show the effects of armed actors' decisions on their relations with individuals and groups in a segmentary society. The fourth chapter, first out of two dedicated to the micro-level analysis of Danilovgrad county, used ethnographic literature to establish the sources of cohesion – ties that hold groups together before the war. It used a sample of pre-war electoral data to demonstrate that the social groups in the prewar period were cohesive as expected by the theory, and suggested that this cohesion could have had an effect in the wartime too.

The second Danilovgrad chapter traced the micro-level mechanisms that influenced individual and group behavior. While it was shown that reciprocity and conformity made effective

mobilization possible in the insurgency, resentment, and revenge, caused by status reversal and coercion, had led to civil war mobilization. The qualitative data was fully supported by quantitative analyses that showed the divergence of social groups according to status. Several limitations hindered this line of inquiry. Due to the limitations of time and resources, the preferred interviews were replaced by recorded and published testimonies, and abundant published documents were used instead of unpublished archival material. However, a further analysis that would include data collected in these ways will hopefully corroborate the findings.

To test the social structure explanation against other possible explanations of mobilization, a model that included economic, political, wartime conflict variables, as well as control variables, was used. The statistical analysis, including the comparison of means, survival analysis, and multivariate regression, showed that municipalities with a more concentrated social structure and with the presence of armed actors mobilized effectively in the insurgency, which supported the hypotheses. The model, however, proved sensitive to different specifications and this calls for further analysis with more disaggregated data.

The definitional problems and data availability limit the possibilities of a cross-country analysis that would test this hypothesis outside of Montenegro. The case-by-case extensions that would use reliable and valid ethnographic data combined with the existing data on civil war dynamics would be the best way to further this research.

The essential theoretical contribution of this thesis would be to focus the civil war literature to the study of underlying social structure. After the Cold War, civil war literature dealt extensively with the notion of ethnic groups. However, the shift to the group-level study of civil wars has successfully demonstrated that these macro-level concepts fail to explain micro-level behavior. This thesis points out a valuable field of inquiry at the micro-level, where kinship-based social groups have a high potential for agency in civil wars due to their high internal cohesion.

Further contributions to the civil war literature should be seen in the light of the theoretical focus on the relationship between armed actors and civilians. Even though the literature is growing and explaining ever more dimensions of civil war, the study of civil war governance, violence against civilians, military organization, and warfare, could potentially benefit from these findings.

The methodological contribution is the application of the micro comparative historical research which had integrated multiple approaches. As discussed in the first chapters, the research design had to include both civilians and armed actors, pre-war and war-time data, quantitative and qualitative analysis, and multiple levels of analysis of processes, which are topics of study in several distinct fields and disciplines. The integration itself has not necessarily been optimal in each instance. However, it offers a blueprint for future attempts to study similar topics.

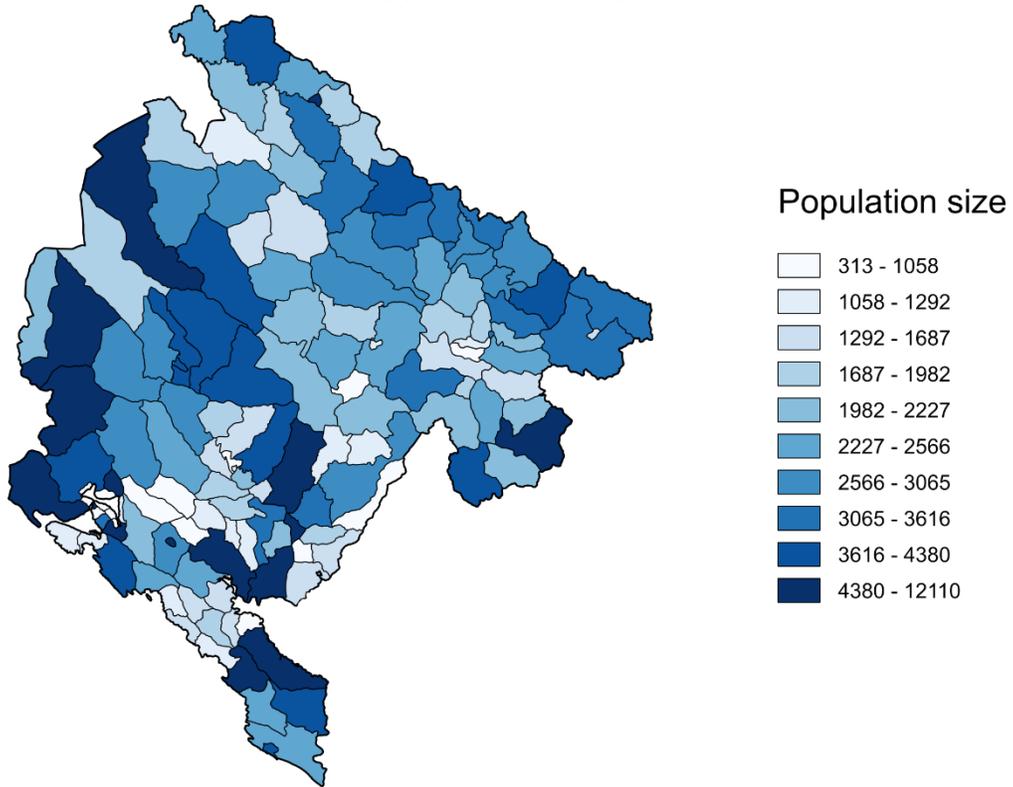
Finally, the work on this thesis is to the author's best knowledge, the first systematic use of several sources of data coming from Montenegro and Yugoslavia. The war-related published documents, as well as the existing censuses of war participants, offer much more potential than this limited research has been able to use. On the other hand, the ethnographic data was

collected from historical publications, transformed, and used for the first time in comparative historical research. Again, the extent of data collected is much greater than used in this thesis. It has a promising potential for understanding the effects of social structure not only on civil war outcomes but also on other related problems, such as political participation, or economic development.

Finally, these findings offer some insights into contemporary conflicts. Due to evident exhaustion with involvement with the protracted civil wars, there is a tendency to retreat from these “endless wars.” It is fair to say that not only military interventions proved ineffective, but that the economic and political interventions based on twin pillars of development cooperation and institution-building do not bring the intended stability. On the other hand, even if the social structure is taken seriously as a factor, social engineering is not an acceptable intervention. What remains?

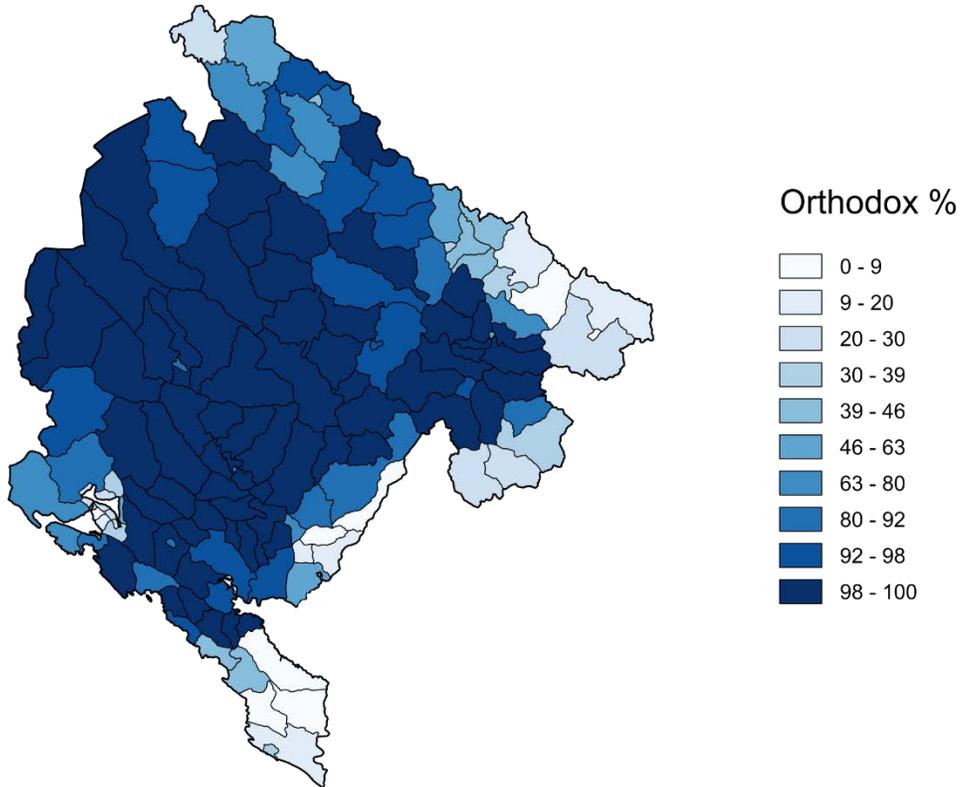
Dealing with conflicts in segmentary societies calls for the understanding that political, economic, and military outcomes cannot be meaningfully separated from the structure of society. Almost every outside intervention, that has political or economic weight, will likely affect the cohesion of these groups. This thesis suggests that responses to outside interventions could be somewhat predictable. Social cohesion, its sources, complex and sometimes contradictory consequences, and different instruments used to preserve it should be built into our outlook when we deal with social groups in a wartime environment.

# Appendix 1. Maps

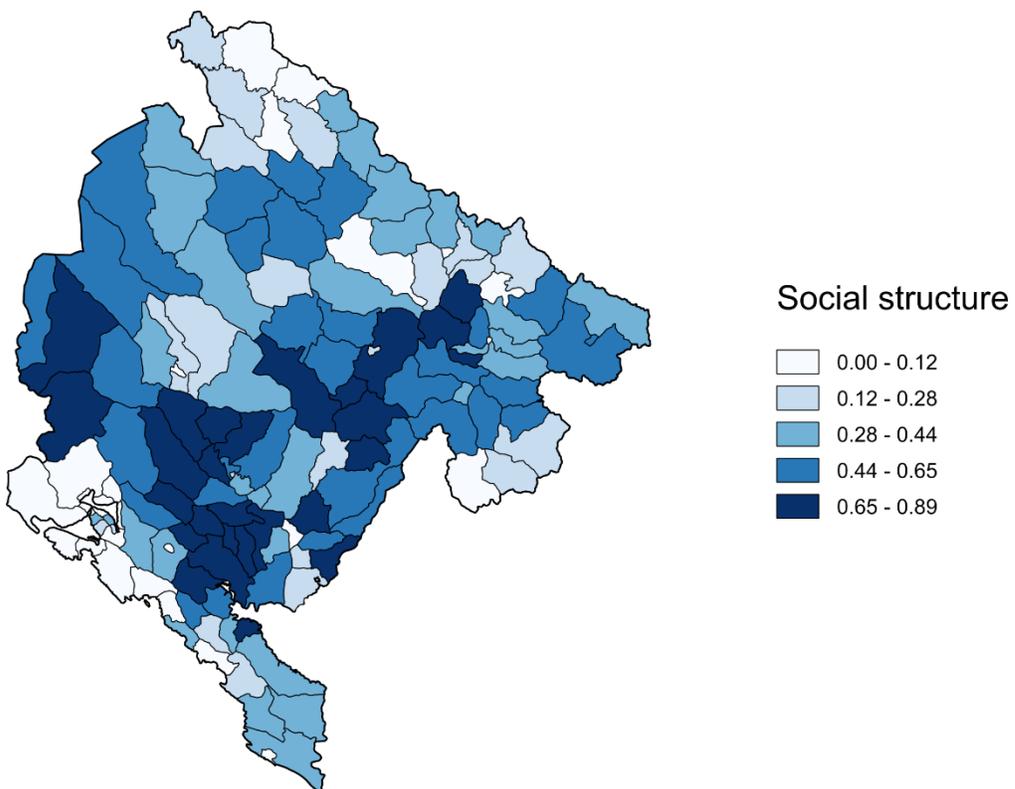


Above: Map 7.2 Population size

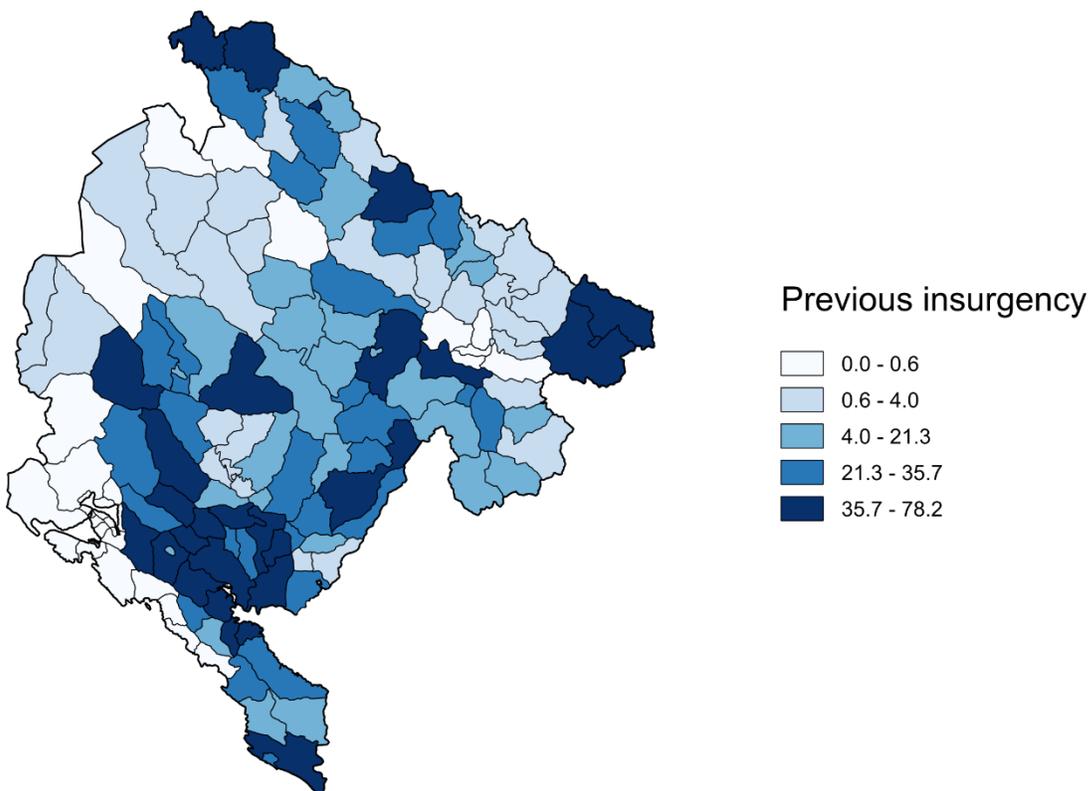
Below: Map 7.3. Ratio of Orthodox population



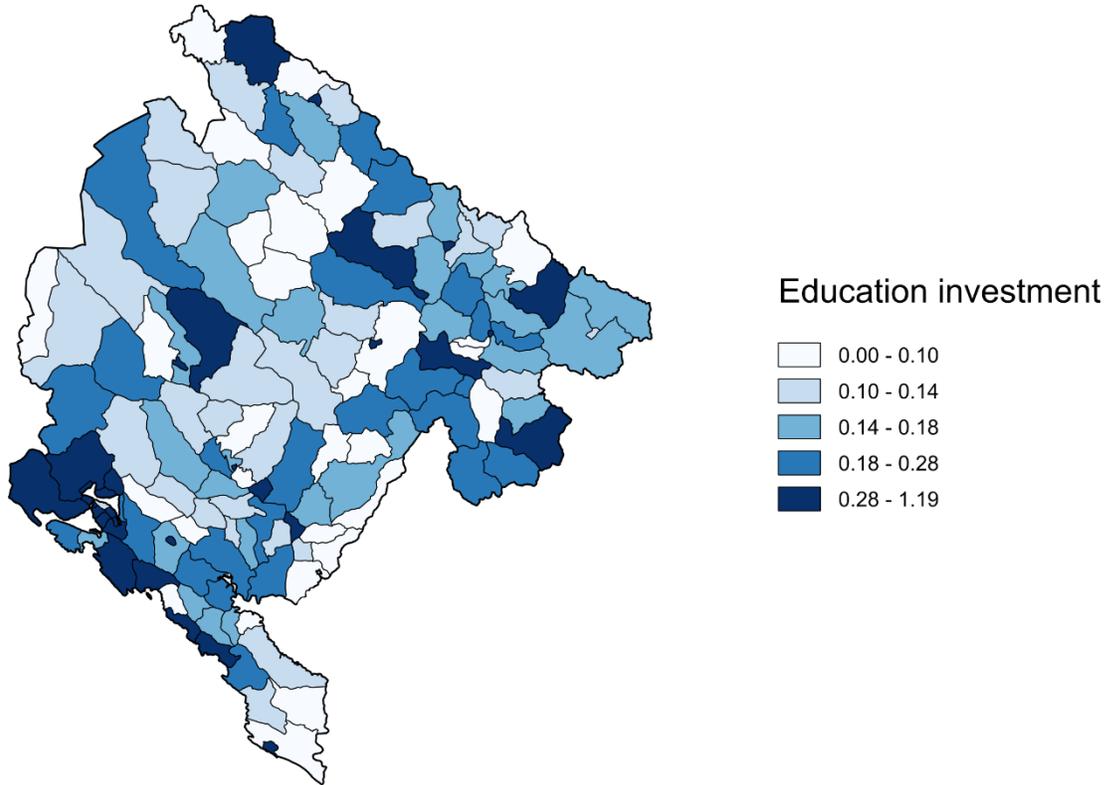
Map 7.4 Social structure index



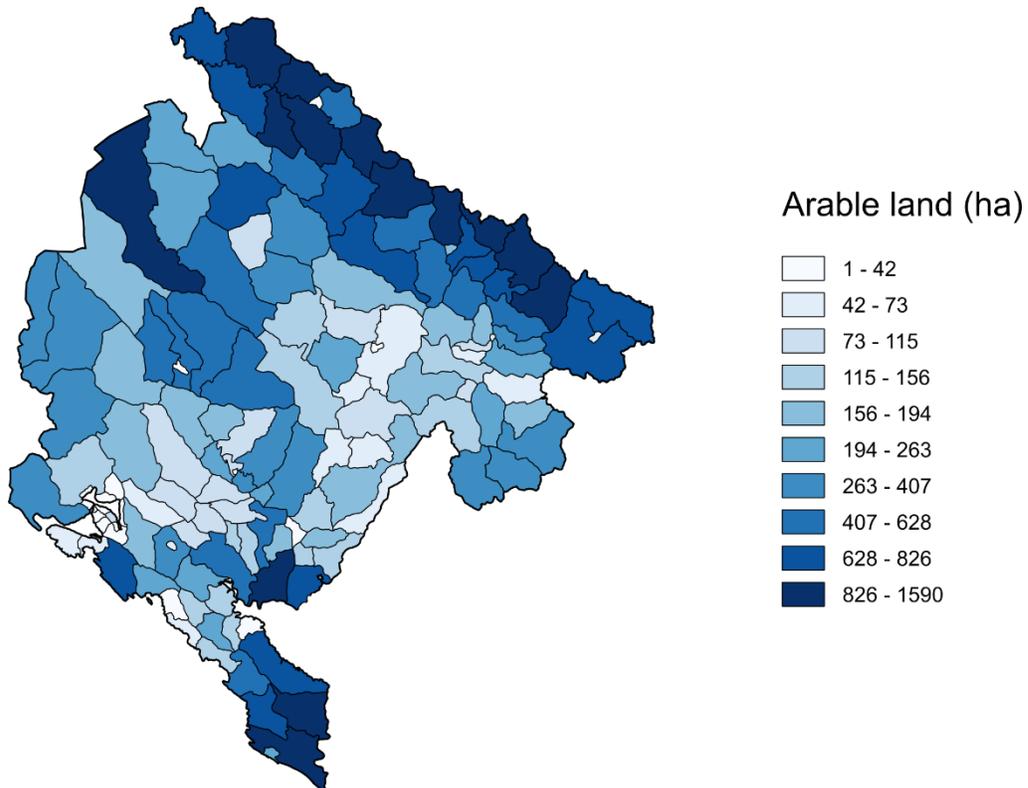
Map 7.5. Support for previous insurgency (%)



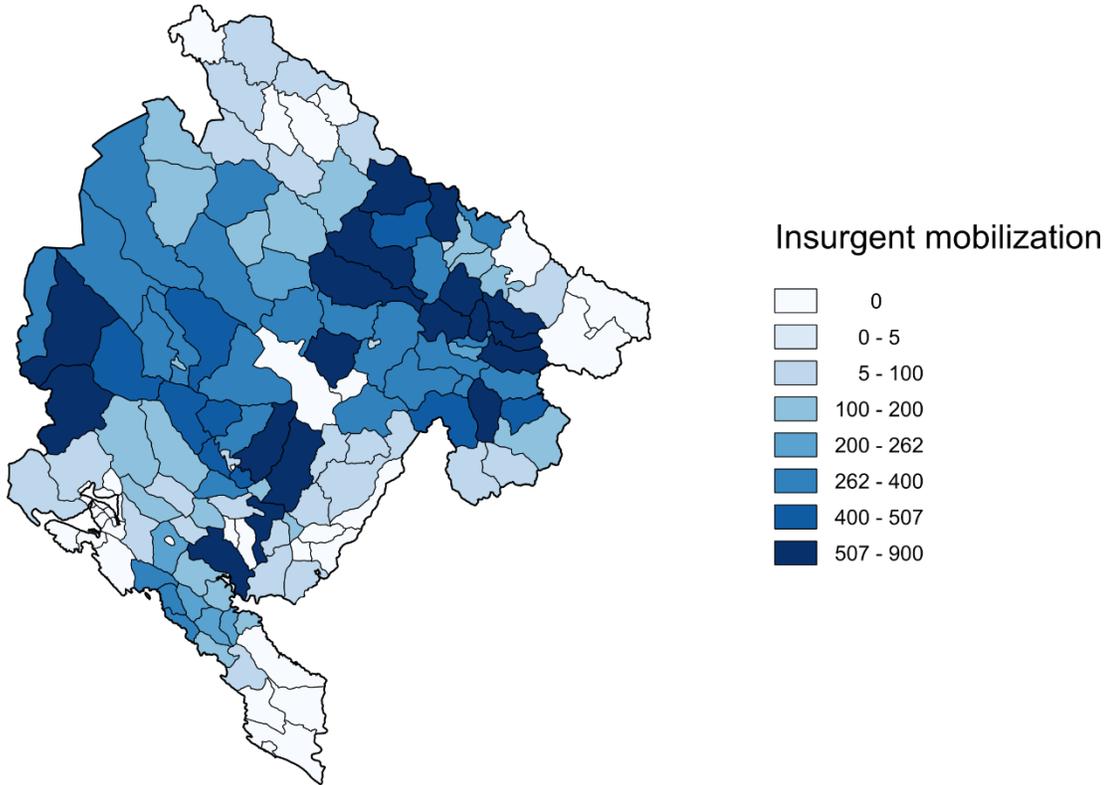
Map 7.6 Investment in education index



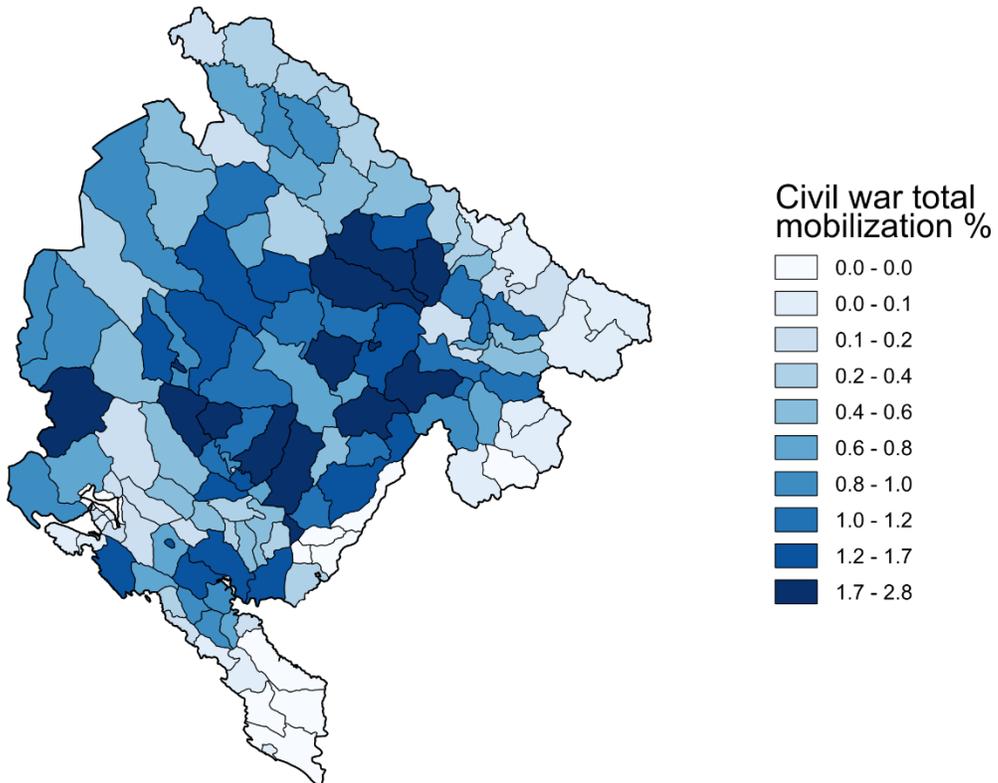
Map 7.7. Arable land size



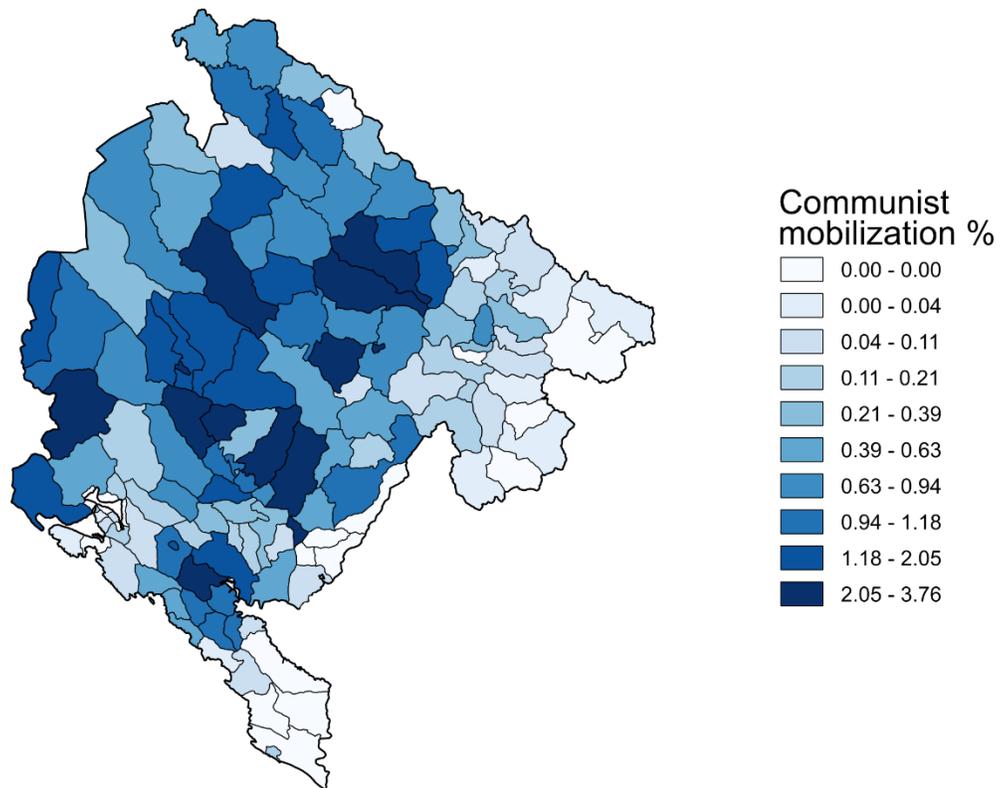
Map 7.8 Insurgent mobilization (total)



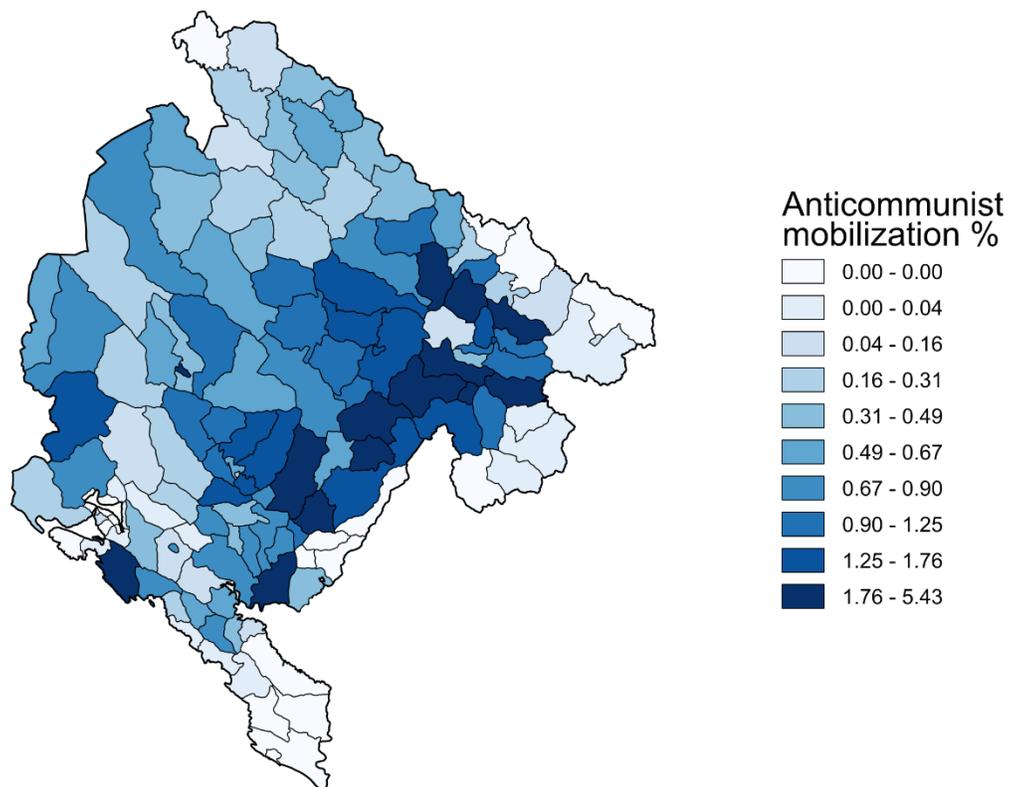
Map 7.9 Civil war total mobilization (%)



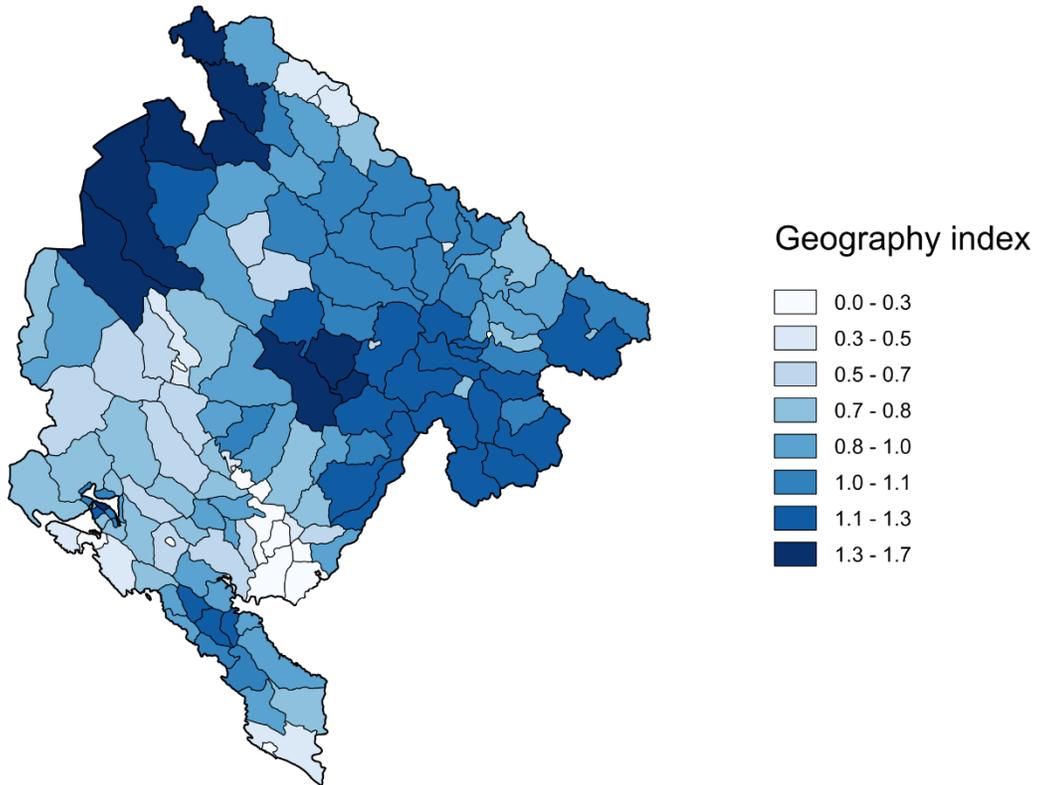
Map 7.10a Civil war communist mobilization (%)



Map 7.10b Civil war anti-communist mobilization (%)



Map 7.11. Geographic conditions favoring insurgency (index)



## Appendix 2. Robustness checks

The two models were first tested with differently operationalized variables. Each alternative indicator was replaced in each of the models, and they affected the results to a varying degree. Instead of a simple ratio of kin-related deputies as a social structure indicator, the network density of municipal deputies was significant at the 0.1 level in the first model. This replacement made the education investment coefficient negative and significant at .05 level, while the other variables remained in the same direction and with the same significance. The social structure measured as a tribal area factor positively predicted both insurgency and civil war but was not significant.

Replacing the previous insurgency with the ratio of votes for the Federalist Party only changes the significance of the political competition, which becomes significant at .05 level in the first model, while no such changes happen in the second model. Replacing 1935 political competition with 1936 competition becomes significant at .05 level in the first model, with no changes in the second, civil war model. Replacing interpersonal conflicts with a wider operationalization does not change the results of the first model, while it leads to the land area being above the significance threshold in the second model.

Replacing arable land with total agricultural land (including pastures) leads to this variable losing the significance in the second model, and to social structure losing the 0.05 significance and education investment gaining in the first model. When the teacher-deputy ratio is replaced by the total number of teachers in the municipality, no change is observed in the first model, while this new variable replaces land area at the 0.05 level of significance in the second model.

Replacing the total 1931 population with 1931 male population or 1941 total population estimates did not yield different results in either model. However, the Orthodox population becomes statistically significant positive predictors in both models, leading to the statistical significance of education investment in the second model.

Depending on the choice of indicator, the social structure in the first model, and land area in the second can lose significance, while education investment and political competition can gain significance in the first model. However, no changes occur in the substantive relations between variables, and the communist organization and insurgent mobilization remain robust in any indicator alteration.

Finally, this analysis was done with Gaussian normal distribution regression. However, data distribution analysis suggested the need for the zero-inflated negative binomial model. The analysis with zero-inflated models, both Poisson and negative binomial, appear as better fits for the data. Vuong's closeness test preferred the latter. However, these models have not produced theoretically meaningful results, especially when it comes to the direction of the predictions.

Figure 7.7 Plotted standardized coefficients for insurgency model

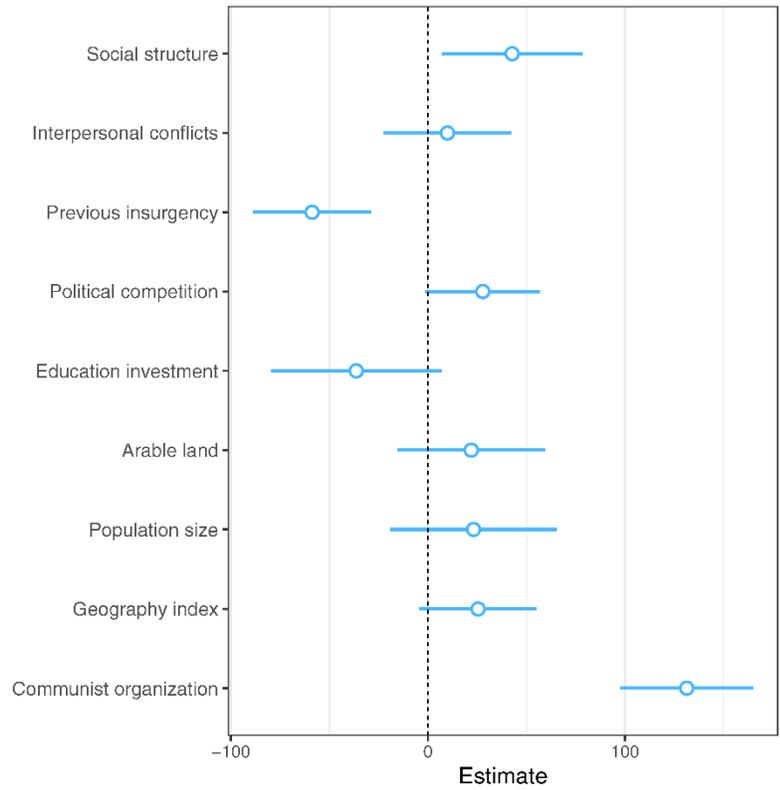
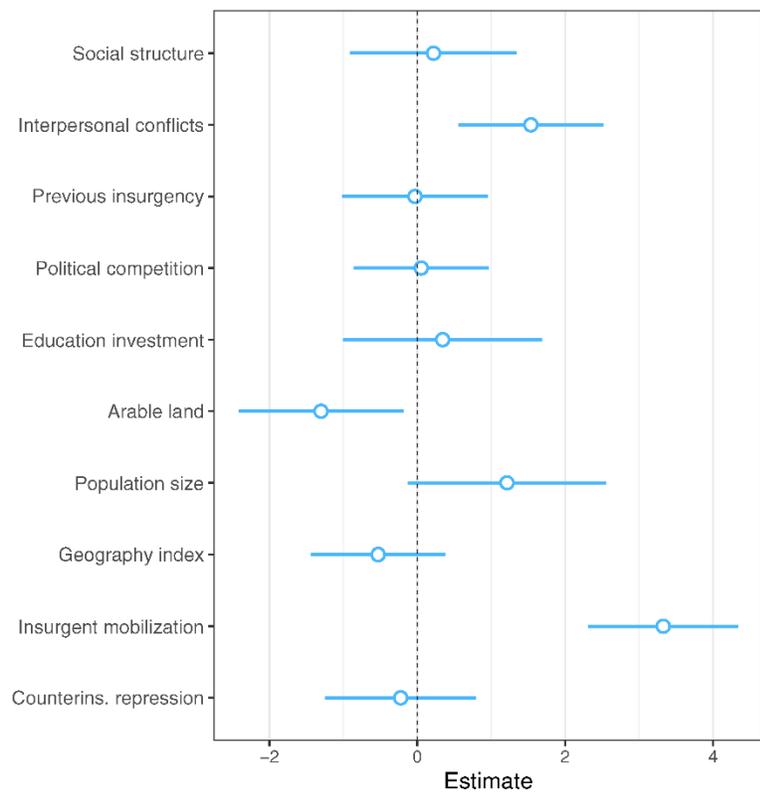


Figure 7.8 Plotted standardized coefficients for civil war model



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