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Introduction

In his May 1989 farewell speech to senior members of the Indonesian government, the outgoing U.S. ambassador, Paul Wolfowitz, assessed Indonesia's economic progress and political future in the context of the global tide[1] of authoritarian breakdown and political liberalization sweeping across Eastern Europe and Asia: "If greater openness is a key to economic success, I believe there is increasingly a need for openness in the political sphere as well."[2] The Indonesian term for openness, *Keterbukaan*, which borrowed its political connotations from its Russian equivalent, *Glasnost*, was soon seized upon by intellectuals, regime opponents, the media, and elements of the military elite who had grown increasingly disaffected by Suharto's often brutal and increasingly nepotistic regime.[3] Over time, tensions within the regime, coupled with pressures from both the street and abroad, led to a series of incremental reforms that would loosen the coercive grip of Suharto's authoritarian New Order regime during this period, which became known as *Keterbukaan*. Eventually, the 1997 Asian financial crisis (which sent Indonesia's economy into a deep contraction), an erosion of support from the military, and a burgeoning student movement would force Suharto's resignation in 1998, thus unleashing a torrid program of democratic reforms. This period became known as the *Reformasi* era (1998–2004) and ultimately yielded the world's third-largest democracy.

But just as in other cases of authoritarian breakdown, the optimism of newfound freedoms was not to be untempered. The first signs of trouble began in 1996 in East and West Java with the outbreak of anti-Chinese and anti-Christian

[1] Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[2] Alan Sipress and Ellen Nakashima, "Jakarta Tenure Offers Glimpse of Wolfowitz," *Washington Post*, March 28, 2005.
[3] Jun Honna, *Military Politics and Democratization in Indonesia* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 12–15.

riots. These were soon followed by rioting in West Kalimantan between ethnic Madurese migrants and indigenous Dayaks, which claimed at least 500 lives. Over the ensuing years, Indonesians increasingly learned of communal violence erupting throughout the country between different identity groups that were divided by migrant-indigenous status, ethnicity (*suku*), and religion. Although much of the public's attention was drawn to the six largest examples of communal violence that each claimed between 500 and 3,000 lives,[4] the rise in communal violence was a nationwide phenomenon affecting villages and subdistricts in every province. An accounting by Ashutosh Varshney, Rizal Panggabean, and Mohammad Zulfan Tadjoeddin of the violence in half of Indonesia's provinces provides a profile of the violence over time, revealing a steady rise in incidents of communal violence from 1996 to 2000 and a subsequent fall thereafter (see Figure 1.1).[5]

Despite the nationwide nature of the phenomenon, there was significant spatial variation in the incidence of communal violence, with communities in some areas more prone to violence than in others. The map in Figure 1.2 shows the distribution of communal violence from September 2001 to August 2002.

Amid this so-called paroxysm of violence,[6] with frequent media images of ethnic and religious mobs, militias running amok, and the resurgence of three

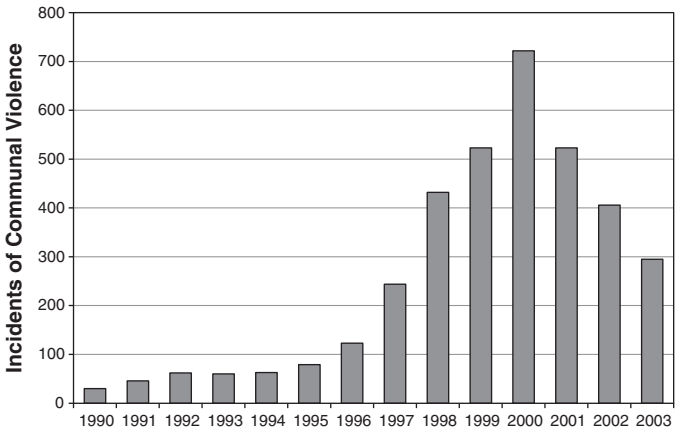

FIGURE 1.1 Communal violence in 14 provinces of Indonesia (data from Varshney, Panggabean, Tadjoeddin, 2004)

[4] These six large cases took place in the provinces of Maluku, North Maluku, Central Sulawesi, West Kalimantan, and Central Kalimantan, as well as the special administrative region of Jakarta.

[5] Ashutosh Varshney, Rizal Panggabean, and Mohammad Zulfan Tadjoeddin, *Patterns of Collective Violence in Indonesia (1990–2003)*, UNSFIR Working Paper (Jakarta: United Nations, July 2004).

[6] Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting? Indonesia in the 1990s* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), x.

FIGURE 1.2 Communal violence in Indonesia, September 2001 to August 2002 (data from BPS, "Podes 2003")

separatist wars,[7] it was not uncommon for Indonesians to wonder whether the country would disintegrate. Indeed, with more than 300 ethnic groups spread across 17,000 islands spanning the distance from London to Tehran and a long history of insurgencies and communal conflicts, the very existence of Indonesia as a unitary state had long posed a puzzle for scholars of state building.[8] Yet, a decade after the riots in East and West Java raised the specter of communal conflict in the national consciousness, the spike in communal violence had subsided, Indonesia continued to consolidate its young democracy, and the country remained intact.[9]

Indonesia's spike in communal violence is hardly unique among multiethnic countries that have experienced authoritarian breakdowns. Similar patterns of communal violence have been documented in countries that have transitioned from authoritarian states, often in the contexts of democratization. Such spikes in communal violence have also occurred in contexts of decolonization with the withdrawal of authoritarian colonial governments as well as periods of interregna.[10] This pattern of elevated risks of communal violence has been confirmed

[7] The three separatist movements sought independence for Aceh, East Timor, and Papua.

[8] See Furnivall's examination of interethnic tensions in the Netherlands Indies on the challenges of ethnic heterogeneity to governance in J. S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (New York: New York University Press, 1956), 311–12.

[9] Although East Timor gained its freedom from Indonesian occupation in 1999 following a UN-run referendum, Indonesia proper remained intact, albeit still plagued by endemic corruption.

[10] The violence in Indonesia was reminiscent of rioting during the period of *Glasnost* between native Uzbeks and migrant Turks in Uzbekistan, native Kazakhs and migrants in Kazakhstan, Abkhaz and Georgians in Georgia, and Armenians and Azeris in Azerbaijan. Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Brookings Institution Press, 1994), 394–5. Other examples of communal violence during the breakdown of authoritarian regimes include South Africa after apartheid (1990), the former Yugoslavia (in the 1990s), Rwanda and Burundi (1993–5), the anti-Jewish pogroms in what is now Moldova and Ukraine during the Russian Revolution (1905), Sistani-Baluch and Kurdish-Turk violence in Iran after the

in cross-national time-series data, which reveal that regime changes following authoritarian rule are associated with spikes in communal violence.[11]

Why does communal violence often spike during authoritarian breakdowns? In this book, I address this question by explaining the spike in communal violence during Indonesia's transition from Suharto's New Order regime. A compelling answer to this question must account for both temporal patterns in the aggregate incidents of communal violence at the macrolevel and spatial variation in violence at the microlevel. Thus, central to a satisfying theory is a causal mechanism that links macrolevel changes to microlevel variation in outcomes. Existing theories, while accounting for some aspects of communal violence, are unable to explain both macrotemporal and microspatial variation in communal violence during such transitions. In the Indonesian case, a compelling explanation must account for three key puzzles related to temporal and spatial variation. First, why did the number of incidents of communal violence begin to rise in 1996 – a year that predates the financial crisis, regime change, and political liberalization, which are frequently cited in the literature as explanations of the violence?[12] Second, why did some villages succumb to violence, while others were able to remain peaceful? Third, since its peak in 2000, communal violence has steadily declined; what accounts for this decline? I argue that during authoritarian breakdowns, spikes in communal violence result from temporary mismatches that emerge between formal and informal institutions of security as the coercive grip of the state loosens.

Before going any further, it is important to define what I mean by the terms "ethnic" and "communal" so that it is clear what is to be explained. Following the consensus in the comparative study of ethnic politics, I adopt Donald Horowitz's usage of the term "ethnicity" as describing ascriptive identities

ouster of the Shah (1979), and Amhara-Tigray-Oromo violence in Ethiopia following the ouster of Mengistu (1991). More recently, communal violence has spiked following the overthrow of authoritarian regimes in the Arab Spring countries of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, and Libya in 2011, as well as in Burma (Myanmar) following unexpected political liberalization in 2011–12. In the context of decolonization, communal violence spiked in India and Pakistan (1946–7), Nigeria (1953), Malaysia (1957), Ghana (1954–6), Sudan (1955), Guinea (1956–8), Congo-Brazzaville (1956–9), Cote d'Ivoire (1958), Democratic Republic of Congo (1959), Zanzibar (1964), Guyana (1962–4), Singapore (1964), and Mauritius (1965). Examples of communal violence during interregna include Lithuania between the Soviet and Nazi occupations (1941), Burma between the British and Japanese occupations (1942), Malaysia and Indonesia between the Japanese surrender and the redeployment of Allied troops (1945–6), and Iraq after Saddam Hussein's removal by the United States in 2003. Donald L. Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 332–4.

[11] Joakim Kreutz and Kristine Eck, "Regime Transition and Communal Violence," in *52nd International Studies Association Meeting* (presented at the International Studies Association, Montreal: All Academic Research, 2011).

[12] The Asian financial crisis, the resignation of Suharto in 1998, and the reforms of electoral liberalization and decentralization occurred in 1997, 1998, and 1999, respectively. While they likely played a part in exacerbating the violence, these factors do not explain the onset of the rise in violence in 1996.

such as race, language, religion, tribe, and caste.[13] The term "communal," however, has taken on a range of usages. In its narrower usage it can refer to racial or linguistic differences, whereas in its broader usage it is interchangeable with the term "ethnic."[14] In this study, I seek to explain forms of collective violence that include both ethnic violence in the ascriptive sense just described as well as violence between locational communities such as neighborhoods, villages, or towns. For the purposes of this study, I use the term "communal" in the broad sense of belonging to a community, which encompasses both locational and ethnic communities. I adopt this more inclusive definition because much of the spike in violence in Indonesia occurs between locational communities rather than ethnic groups. Moreover, cases of ethnic violence frequently began as incidents between communities, only to be recast in ethnic terms after the fact.

The well-established constructivist insight that a range of identities can be used to motivate identity-based violence sharing similar dynamics suggests that at the local level, intercommunity and interethnic violence may be usefully placed under this broader definition of communal violence. Using this more encompassing definition is not to gloss over the important differences between ascriptive and nonascriptive forms of communal violence. Once communal conflicts take on an ethnic interpretation, the potential for escalated violence is far greater because communities can now mobilize co-ethnics from afar, rather than being limited to the pool of members from their local communities. Thus, while what applies to communal violence also applies to the narrower category of ethnic violence, the reverse may not necessarily be true.

SOCIAL ORDER IN THE PRESENCE AND ABSENCE OF STATES

The widespread communal violence during the *Reformasi* period has attracted the attention of numerous scholars, including myself, to investigate its causes. It is natural to focus on the dramatic, extraordinary, and devastating, but it is folly to examine violence without excavating the conditions for order. Doing so risks attributing violence to factors that may also be present under conditions of order.[15] Indeed, despite the interest in communal violence, order is far more prevalent than violence both in the Indonesian context and more generally.[16] According to the Indonesian Village Census, 4.1 percent of Indonesia's villages

[13] Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 51–4. See also Kanchan Chandra "What Is Ethnic Identity and Does It Matter?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 9, no. 1 (2006): 397–424.

[14] Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life? Hindus and Muslims in India* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 4–5.

[15] This is known as selection on the dependent variable. See Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 129–32.

[16] James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation," *The American Political Science Review* 90, no. 4 (December 1, 1996): 715–35.

and urban neighborhoods experienced an incident of communal violence in 2001.[17] So why did intercommunal order prevail in the vast majority of Indonesian communities?

In this study, I begin with the premise that in order to explain violence, we must understand what sustains social order, which Michael Taylor has defined narrowly as "an absence, more or less complete, of violence, a state of affairs in which people are relatively safe from physical attack."[18] How, then, do societies solve the problem of social order? Beginning with Thomas Hobbes, one of the predominant explanations of order has focused on the state and its associated formal institutions. Indeed, statehood has long been measured in terms of the ability to achieve order as reflected in Max Weber's oft-cited definition as the ability to maintain "a claim on the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence in the enforcement of its order."[19] For Hobbes and John Locke, states impose order and prevent violence that would otherwise inevitably arise if societies were left to the "state of nature." The state itself emerges from a social contract in which individuals surrender sovereignty to the state in exchange for the provision of order.[20]

Certainly, it is difficult to deny that states are an important source of order. In the literature on civil wars, weak states have been found to be strongly associated with civil wars. Strong states deter rebels, whereas weak states create conditions in which rebellions can be more easily started and sustained.[21] Similarly, in the literature on communal violence, weak states are associated with the heightened risk of communal violence. Strong states are seen to be able to quickly snuff out communal violence, and weak states allow entrepreneurs to stoke communal tensions or create uncertainty that can lead to unintended spirals of communal violence.[22]

It is also difficult to deny that order can be achieved in societies largely bereft of states. Jean-Jacques Rousseau posited that mankind is inherently peaceful and would only turn to violence when corrupted by the resources associated with statehood.[23] Following Rousseau, scholars have long argued that stateless societies could achieve order. Although the evidence from early European explorers

[17] This includes both ethnic and what is referred to as intergroup conflict. See BPS, "Podes 2003: Potensi Desa Village Census" (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2003).

[18] Michael Taylor, *Community, Anarchy, and Liberty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 44.

[19] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 154.

[20] See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: Touchstone, 2008), 129–33; John Locke, "The Second Treatise of Government," in *Political Writings* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 309–24.

[21] James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90.

[22] Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* 35, no. 1 (1993): 27–47; Steven I. Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[23] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (Minneapolis: Filiquarian Publishing, LLC, 2007), 45–6.

quickly dispelled Rousseau's belief that stateless societies were incapable of violence,[24] subsequent anthropologists have encountered societies that can indeed achieve order without the state. In this vein, E. E. Evans-Pritchard's classic study of Nuer communities in colonial Sudan sparked a rich literature that sought to explain stateless order.[25]

INSTITUTIONS AND ORDER

Central to both the statist and stateless explanations of order is the importance of institutions – the "humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction."[26] Institutions are composed of "a repertoire of procedures and rules they use to select among them. The rules may be imposed and enforced by direct coercion and political or organizational authority, or they may be part of a code of appropriate behavior that is learned and internalized through socialization or education."[27] By acting as guides to everyday interactions and providing incentives to adhere to them, institutions reduce uncertainty and help to produce order.[28] States employ formal institutions such as criminal codes and military policies, whereas nonstate actors employ informal institutions to define the bounds of acceptable behavior and the sanctions for transgressions. By shaping the incentives of individuals to behave in ways that are conducive to security, institutions – both formal and informal – yield order. When security institutions break down, however, the risk of violence and disorder may increase.

Where theories of statist and stateless order differ is in the type of institutions to which order is attributed. Whereas statist theories attribute order to formal institutions, which are created and enforced through official channels, stateless theories of order specify how order can result from informal institutions, which are created and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels.[29]

Although statist and nonstatist theories have gained in acceptance in explaining intercommunal order,[30] there is a lack of convincing statistical evidence for these theories. This is due to three empirical challenges. First, there is a lack of credible, systematic measures of state and community capacities, which has led

[24] Lawrence H. Keeley, *War Before Civilization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 7.
[25] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968).
[26] Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 3.
[27] James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 33–4.
[28] North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, 3–4.
[29] Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky, "Introduction," in *Informal Institutions and Democracy: Lessons from Latin America*, ed. Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 5.
[30] Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*; Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict"; Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*; Taylor, *Community, Anarchy, and Liberty*; Fearon and Laitin, "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation"; Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*.

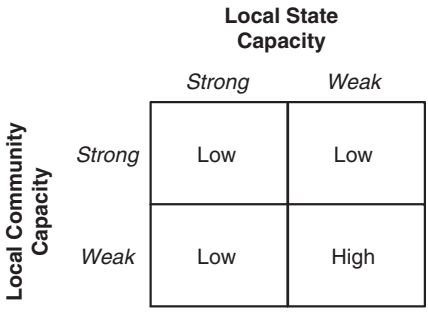

FIGURE 1.3 The predicted risk of communal violence of existing theories

to a reliance on crude cross-national proxies with multiple interpretations such as the widely used proxy for state capacity – GDP per capita. Second, state and community capacities are endogenous of order – that is, order may be not just a *result* of strong state or community capacity, but also a *cause* of a given level of capacity. Third, given the challenges of measuring state and community capacities, it is difficult to distinguish whether order results from a strong state, strong community, or both. This can be seen by examining the predictions of statist and nonstatist theories in equilibrium together, as in Figure 1.3, which shows that the risk of communal violence is predicted to be higher only when both state and community capacities are weak.

Despite the predominance of theories of statist and stateless order, the institutions that manage security rarely, if ever, exist purely as formal or informal institutions alone. Rather, contemporary societies employ a mixture of formal and informal institutions to manage order. As even Hobbes acknowledged, no state can extend its writ to all facets of social life.[31] By extension, there will always be zones within even the strongest of societies where the state cannot directly impose its will. Similarly, purely stateless societies largely ceased to exist following the last enclosures by states of *terra nullius*. Even people in the most isolated of societies are subject to some formal institutional constraints, however tenuous they may be. Moreover, for the vast majority of the world's population, formal and informal institutions have at least some minimal ability to shape their behavioral incentives.

THE ARGUMENT

My argument departs from statist and stateless theories of order by focusing on the interactions between formal and informal institutions. In essence, I argue that order is a product of complementary interactions between formal and

[31] Hobbes writes, "[T]here is no commonwealth in the world, wherein there be rules enough set down, for the regulating of all the actions, and words of men; as being a thing impossible . . ." Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 165.

informal institutions, and that an elevated risk of violence emerges when there are mismatches between formal and informal institutions. Authoritarian breakdowns are prone to spikes in communal violence because those breakdowns create *formal-informal mismatches* when the coercive grip of authoritarian regimes is loosened. That is, the restraining of existing formal security institutions exposes communities in which informal security institutions are overly dependent on an interventionist state and poorly adapted to lower levels of state intervention. This has important implications for fluctuations in order and violence as countries move through periods of state building and state restraining.

During the process of state building, as states extend their coercive capacities into society, they typically allocate their resources to meet the security challenges that are the most existentially threatening before addressing less threatening security risks. Thus, many developing countries allocate significant resources to their militaries and deploy them to neutralize rebellions and communal violence before those countries develop their policing capacities to deal with the less threatening problem of crime. A relatively strong military that intervenes against communal violence, which is coupled with a weak police force, has important implications for the kinds of informal institutions that communities adopt to maintain local order. Knowing that the state will largely neglect the policing of crimes yet will step in to contain communal violence, communities have an incentive to adopt *institutions of out-group punishment*, such as vigilantism, lynching, and retaliatory norms, as a means to deter crimes by outsiders. Such communities will be more willing to use vigilante violence to deter outsider crimes because they can count on the state to prevent reprisals by the communities of those outsiders. Thus, communities where the state casts a heavy shadow are able to adopt more aggressive security institutions that would otherwise raise the risk of violence were it not for the intervention of the state. In this way, state intervention against communal violence creates a moral hazard for security institutions by encouraging communities to adopt more aggressive means of managing crime.

Because the degree of state penetration is not uniform within countries, the incentives to adopt out-group punishment also vary across communities. Where there is less state intervention, communities are unable to count on the state to intervene when communal violence threatens to take hold. Instead, these communities develop informal institutions that can both deter crimes and manage the risk of communal violence themselves. To manage the risk of communal violence, communities further from the reach of the state are much more likely to have crime prevention institutions that are characterized by greater restraint than places that are more exposed to the state. Because such institutions rely on restraint among fellow community members in the face of crime or aggression from other communities, I refer to these as *institutions of in-group restraint*. Examples of institutions of in-group restraint are self-policing, peace committees, intercommunal pacts, and exogamy.

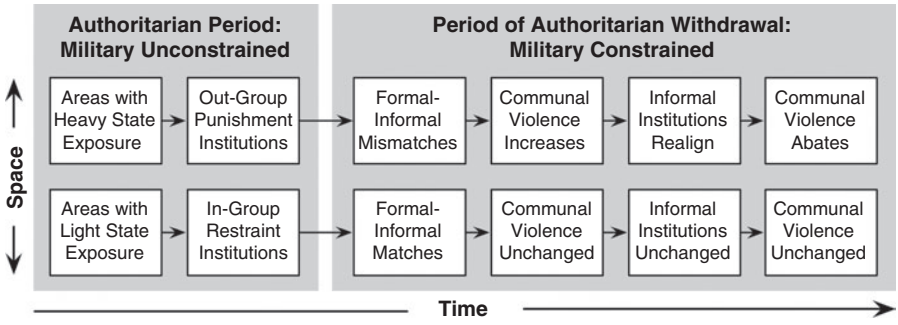

FIGURE 1.4 Summary of the theory

Since they are less dependent on state intervention, institutions of in-group restraint are more robust to sudden shocks to the state's capacity or willingness to intervene in security than are out-group punishment institutions. As long as the state continues to intervene against communal violence, out-group punishment institutions do not exhibit a higher risk of communal violence. During periods in which the state is constrained in intervening in local security – for example, authoritarian breakdowns and democratic transitions – communal violence should spike in communities that exhibit out-group punishment institutions. However, communities that maintain institutions of in-group restraint should exhibit no significant change in violence because they are not dependent on the state for preventing communal violence. Thus, we should expect communal violence to spike in communities that are more accustomed to state intervention than those with less of a state presence. Once the elevated risk of violence is revealed due to formal-informal mismatches, communities with out-group punishment institutions will have an incentive to adopt institutions of in-group restraint that are better adapted to a less interventionist state and can lower the risk of communal violence. The theoretical argument is summarized in Figure 1.4, outlining the progression of security institutions and the associated security outcomes.

DEVELOPING AND TESTING THE ARGUMENT

Similar to other recent studies of violence that have examined microlevel variation in violence within a single country,[32] this book examines village-level

[32] For canonical single-country studies of communal violence, see Stanley J. Tambiah, *Leveling Crowds: Ethnonationalist Conflicts and Collective Violence in South Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Paul R. Brass, *Theft of an Idol: Text and Context in the Representation of Collective Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*; Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*. For primarily single country studies of civil wars, see Roger D. Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) and Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).