KURDISH INSURGENCY IN IRAN: THE EFFECTS OF HISTORICAL MOBILIZATION ON SUBSEQUENT MILITANT RECRUITMENT

A Senior Honors Thesis

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Abstract

Determining the empirical causes of recruitment to nationalist militant organizations is a pertinent topic, given the global rise in neo-nationalist attitudes. In this article, I seek to explore one prospective cause through a case study of the Kurds in Iran. The Kurdish population within Iran has witnessed rising levels of insurgency into militant nationalist organizations. These organizations routinely conduct armed operations against Iranian forces in historically Kurdish regions within Iran, with the goal of reclaiming territory and halting perceived inequitable treatment of the Kurdish minority by the Iranian government. My research intends to explore the root causes of this rise in violence and whether historical political mobilization within Kurdish-dominated regions of Iran has resulted in the increased Kurdish insurgency efforts. I employ an original database and three models to test the relationship between an area's mobilization history and its subsequent insurgency recruitment levels. Ultimately, my results are unable to lend support to this hypothesis, and instead point to contextual variables as the driving factor behind insurgency recruitment compared to the aforementioned historical variables. My research provides a foundation for future exploration into the historical causes of Kurdish insurgency in Iran. A more sophisticated approach to data collection may generate a wider pool of data from which further analysis may be conducted.

Introduction

In December of 1946, an Iranian ethnic group proclaimed a republic in the small city of Mahabad, Iran. Albeit the area was under Soviet Union occupation at the time – this republic remains the only historical occurrence of autonomy for the Kurdish people in Iran. Just under a year later, in the same location where sovereignty was proclaimed and the Kurdish cultural renaissance began, the leaders of this movement hung from a scaffold in Chawarchra Square – signifying the end of this fugitive, self-governing, and unrecognized state (Koohi-Kamali 2003).

Yet, this uprising was not an isolated incident. As Iranian Officer Hassan Arfa recalled, on that day in 1946, "The [Kurdish] tribes returned, not with bitter and humiliated feelings of a vanquished nation which had lost its dearly-won but short-lived independence, but only with the knowledge that this venture, like many others before, had not come off and that for the time being they had better sit quietly and show themselves good citizens" (Ciment 1996: 67).

Iranian Kurds have mobilized throughout generations to protest inequitable minority treatment. In the case of Kurdish nationalists who challenge Iranian authority over Kurdistan and desire autonomy, demonstrations alone may not bring about desired change. Some may turn to armed insurgency by-way-of nationalist political groups (Tezcur and Asadzadeh 2018). This insurgency is partially representative of the effects of historic marginalization of the Kurds - specifically suppression of political and social equality, and lack of autonomy. Factions and cultural differences exist within the Kurdish people that affect their levels of insurgency into violent political nationalist movements. Kurds that identify as Sunni constitute not only an ethnic minority but a religious minority in majority-Shiite Iran, and are further shut out from the political sphere. Consequently, Sunni Kurds are more likely than Shiite Kurds to partake in insurgency (Tezcur and Asadzadeh 2018).

In this article, I seek to explore the historical causes of Kurdish insurgency. Specifically, I question whether prior political mobilization in Iranian Kurdistan leads to future insurgency by compiling a quantitative database of all insurgent events between Kurdish insurgents and Iranian Government Forces, as well as unarmed Kurdish protests. My research intends to explore whether trends show that mobilization itself inspires mobilization. Do grievances against the state continue to mount in Kurdish areas that mobilize, and are then repressed or disregarded without substantive systematic change - leading to future rebellion? Sentiment inspiring insurgency may also stir by-way-of stories told through generations glorifying Kurdish nationalism and demonizing the reign of the Shah and his regime up until his fall post-revolution.

This article utilizes original composite datasets to log all events of Kurdish mobilization from 1946 up until 2016. To compile my data, I primarily rely on archived news reports that I use to identify the county of each mobilization event. I then count the number of events that had occurred at each location to merge with a dataset identifying the number of PJAK recruits from Kurdish counties in three specific time periods – pre-2004, 2005-2009, and 2010-2016.

I present two models in this article, a bivariate with my independent variable - Kurdish mobilization history - and a multivariate accounting for other controls. To account for the disparity in results between the bivariate and multivariate models, I additionally run an OLS model using my independent variable - history of insurgency in an area - as an outcome to investigate the correlation between my variable and these other contextual factors. The bivariate analysis provides partial support for my hypothesis, that the mobilization history of a county is indicative of the rates of subsequent insurgents recruitment. Yet, the statistical significance disappears in the multivariate analysis. When I employ the OLS regression, there is significant correlation between Kurdish mobilization history and four other contextual variables. For

counties that were more populated overall, areas with a higher ratio of Kurdish people, and areas with a higher ratio of Sunni-Kurds, the coefficient for the ratio was positive and significant demonstrating that they are more likely to have a history of Kurdish mobilization. The coefficient for the ratio of Kurmanji speakers (a Kurdish dialect spoken in areas bordering Turkey) in the county is negative and significant, implying that these counties were less likely to have a previous history of mobilization.

This all points to contextual variables as having more relevancy in determining insurgency recruitment levels than historical variables like the history of mobilization. However, this may be due to the limitations of my data mentioned in the conclusion. I believe a more sophisticated data collection approach that could identify the original county of recruitment, access localized news sources in Farsi or Kurdish, and overcome ideologically-biased reporting, may still lend support to this hypothesis: Kurdish insurgency in Iran demonstrates that mobilization compounds over time. Additional research into the validity of this could be a further link needed to provide a holistic look at Kurdish sentiment that inspires armed political mobilization.

Kurds in Iran

After the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire at the conclusion of World War I and the subsequent settlements, the Kurds remained spread out post-war over primarily four states: Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. Presently, there are roughly 24 to 30 million Kurds. What territorial area constitutes greater Kurdistan has been, and continues to be, contested. Such history has woven itself into the Kurd's cultural identity. Although dialect and nationality are regionally contingent,

all Kurds are unified by a shared language and culture contrasting with that of other neighboring ethnic groups - like Arabs and Turks. Kurdish history has left them to reconcile how they may ensure proportionate representation, security, and legitimacy when they inhabit nations ruled by other ethnic groups. Such a task is multidimensional - as it involves the geopolitics, economies and nationalist identities of multiple countries. Moreover, Kurdish calls for autonomy exist on a spectrum - with many Kurdish nationalist organizations demanding an autonomous nation state, while others simply desire expanded Kurdish self-governance and representation within their existing country. State actors have imposed cultural assimilation and repression to address the Kurdish problem, with escalating violence towards calls for separatism (Yildiz and Taysi 2007).

Iran is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country. There are an estimated 7 to 9 million Kurds living in Iran, comprising the third largest ethnic group after Persians and Azeris, respectively. Kurds constitute an estimated 12 to 15 percent of the Iranian population. Iranian Kurds primarily inhabit four provinces in the west bordering Turkey and Iraq; the Kurdistan and Kermanshah provinces are mostly comprised of ethnic Kurds while they cohabitate with other minorities in West Azerbaijan and Ilam. Iranian Kurdish provinces span all terrains - from developed urban centers to traditionally tribal and agrarian mountainous regions (Yildiz and Taysi 2007).

Iran remains a republic in name and a hybrid mix of theocracy and democracy in practice, although the push for legitimate democracy has grown louder among citizens throughout the decades. Most Iranian citizens identify as Shiite Muslims in contrast to the overwhelmingly Sunni global majority. As a result, Shiites generally have more political representation in Iran. This is important to note, as Iranian Kurds are more diverse in terms of linguistic and sectarian factors compared to their counterparts in other nations. Kurds living in border regions with Iraq

speak Sorani and Gorani Kurdish dialects of Kurdish, while Kurds in border regions with Turkey speak Kurmanji dialect. Most ethnic and Iranian Kurds are Sunni Muslims - constituting a "double-minority" in Iran. Iran, although better at mediating ethnic tensions than its neighbors, has still been criticized for the oppression and marginalization of minorities. Similitude between Persian and Kurdish culture and language serves to alleviate some strain. However, Kurds have still faced oppression - contributing to their mobilization and unrest. To quote, "the institutionalization of exclusionist ethnic policies fosters grievances and emerges as a key factor in ethnic violence" (Tezcur and Asadzadeh 2018).

Iranian ethnic minorities faced cultural assimilation when Reza Shah Pahlavi, former ruler of Iran for nearly the first half of the 20th century, ushered in policies advancing the supremacy of Persian culture and language. President Muhammad Khatami, elected in 1997, eventually sought to lessen exclusionary minority policies. Provinces inhabited by ethnic minorities were additionally overlooked when Reza Shah decided to modernize Iran (Koohi-Kamali 2003). The Kurdistan province remains one of the most underdeveloped provinces in the country. Additionally, political representation in Iran disproportionately favors Shiite Muslims. This serves to mitigate ethnic tensions for Shiite Kurds who have more faculty, yet leads to political exclusion of the Sunni Kurds. Sunni Kurds continue to be underrepresented in government and political office - even in Kurdish provinces. This stifles avenues for social mobility among Sunni Kurds and leads to an increased likelihood of insurgent recruitment. The likelihood of ethnic mobilization is additionally contingent on the demographic of the specific area where the rebellion starts, inciting more potential for ethnically and secularly homogenous areas in Kurdish provinces (Tezcur and Asadzadeh 2018).

The Mahabad Republic, established in 1946, was the only contemporary occurrence where the Kurds were able to wrestle control of a territorial zone and establish autonomy. Under the republic, the Kurdish language was adopted and Kurdish politicians of local-origin became state officials. The republic existed under Soviet Occupation and less than a year into existence it was overthrown, but nonetheless it had strengthened Kurdish nationalism and resolve. After this suppression, Kurdish subversion remained relatively scant until the Iranian Revolution of 1979 when they had the opportunity to proclaim their dissatisfaction with the Shah's regime alongside other citizens. Calls for autonomy for the Kurds grew, albeit with continued dissidence between Sunni and Shiite Kurds about their contrasting agendas. There additionally exists a rift between rural and urban Kurdish rebellion leaders that has also destabilized their efforts (Ciment 1996).

A plethora of Kurdish nationalist organizations have operated since around 1943, with the KDPI (Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran) and Komala spearheading the movement. The establishment of the PJAK (Partiya Jiyana Azad a Kurdistan) in 2004 as an offshoot of a well-established group in Turkey (the PKK) renewed insurgency, and guerilla fighters continue to clash with Iranian forces that attempt to repress all Kurdish separatism. Rather than long-term armed resistance like Kurdish efforts in neighboring countries, Iranian Kurdish armed uprisings occur in brief events that have yet to really destabilize Iranian control of Kurdistan (Ciment 1996). Peace talks have been inconsequential in dissolving tensions as the administration has assassinated various KDPI leaders since 1989 (Tezcur and Asadzadeh 2018).

Theory

While many sociological analyses of protest explain protest as an outcome of other factors such as organizations, identities, or shifts in the political context, there is also a literature

pointing to the generative power of protests. Mobilization becomes generative by changing popular perceptions of viability, fortifying internal organizational structure, and formulating identities of recruits.

Mobilization can inspire further mobilization by increasing the perceived viability of an opposition movement. Individuals have to make judgement calls in real time whether to engage in collective action. Amidst the chaos, they infer the movement's level of volatility and its likelihood of success - rather than how weak they perceive the state to be - when deciding whether to join. Protest itself signals to potential protestors that a movement has feasibility. Consequently, as more individuals perceive a revolution or upheaval to be realisable, the movement ignites at an unpredictable point. The proliferation of a movement is thus dependent on popular perceptions of its viability (Kurzman 2005).

Mobilization additionally leads to further mobilization by strengthening the internal infrastructure of a movement; formal organizations in-turn also fortify mobilization. Collective-action can lead to the development of internal infrastructure by transmitting information necessary for organization-building, promoting organizations, and recruiting participants to join organizations. Protests additionally influence organizational tactics and strategy. Militant mobilization may propel organizations to be more adversarial. The development of such organizational infrastructure is necessary for continued mobilization under an authoritarian rule. With solidified organizational structure, such a group can then more easily mobilize resources, withstand further governmental crackdowns and evolve as necessary (Kadivar 2018).

Mobilization also becomes generative through the identity formation and solidarity of recruits. Insurgent identities form during episodes of mobilization and contention. If the movement faces governmental repression it may lead to micro-mobilization processes.

Repression may include martial law, violent quelling of protests, bans, arrests and executions. Micro-mobilization can be defined as an individual's initiation into collective action through identity development and structural processes like recruitment and social ties (Ward 2016). Those who were sanctioned for mobilization participation may gain special admiration from protest-generative groups but stigmatization by others - pushing them towards further embeddedness in the groups that commend their actions. Individuals may additionally become disillusioned with the regime and more susceptible to recruitment, and they may see violence as a new-means to bring about desired change (Opp and Roehl 1990). Militant groups then generate solidarity through spatial diffusion - spreading ideas, information and resources to additional geographical areas, increasing the long-term escalatory effects of mobilization (Rasler 1996). The likelihood of incoming generations harboring governmental resentment that pushes them towards armed insurgency would increase.

Previous incidents of mobilization can be conducive to future incidents of mobilization - specifically armed insurgency - through changes in popular perceptions of the viability of an oppositional group, identity formation, development of organizational structure, and the expansion of social networks. In the case of the Kurds, I foresee heightened levels of present insurgent recruitment in areas that have a strong mobilization history.

Data

To test my hypothesis, I attempt to compile a complete database of Kurdish mobilization events from 1946 up until 2016. 1946, the year following the conclusion of World War II, was the year that the Kurdish quest for political autonomy was able to gain extensive traction and instances of mobilization proliferated. The movement evolved from contained tribal revolts to

more widespread and structured nationalist organizations that spearheaded rebellion efforts. Thus, media coverage of Kurdish mobilization increased and data collection became more feasible. To log mobilization events, I primarily rely on archived news reports from the Foreign Broadcast Information Services – an archive with 20th century news reports translated to English from sources all over the world. I additionally found scattered news reports on mobilization events from the New York Times Archives, Google News Archives, and Nexis Uni. Mobilization is categorized as non-violent protests, armed insurgency, or repression.

I operationalize armed insurgent events as any occurrence where a Kurdish band of guerilla fighters or Iranian forces launched an organized attack against one another in Iran. The number of participants and death tolls varied. Iranian forces comprise both military and more localized security forces. From the aforementioned news archives, I extract and log the specific dates of the armed insurgency, the cities where the clashes occurred, the offensive attacking party, any organizational ties to a Kurdish nationalist party, the number of Iranian soldiers killed, the number of Kurdish insurgents killed or arrested, the number of civilians killed, and any claims made on behalf of the Kurds.

Unarmed Kurdish protests are operationalized as any demonstration where protesters did not possess firearms and gathered together in a city that was more than 51% ethnically Kurdish. I log the protest dates, cities where the protests occurred, the number of individuals that participated, the organizing party, and any claims made.

I logged 215 events of armed insurgency from 1946 to 1999. Each instance was differentiated by city and not date – for example, on March 21st 1946 I logged six armed insurgent events because clashes occurred in six different cities in Kurdistan. 176 events were logged from news articles obtained from FBIS, 37 events from the New York Times Archives, 1

episode from Google News Archives, and 1 episode from Nexis Uni. I logged 19 protest events from 1947 to 1982, 15 of which were from articles obtained through FBIS, 3 from Nexis Uni and 1 from the New York Times Archives.

After I had looked for mobilization events spanning from 1946 to 2003 and identified the location (county) of each incident, I then counted how many events occurred in each county to merge with the dataset from the article Ethnic nationalism versus religious loyalty: The case of Kurds in Iran (Tezcur and Asadzadeh 2018). Their dataset identified the number of PJAK recruits from Kurdish counties in three specific time periods – pre 2004, 2005-2009, and 2010-2016.

I intend to see whether the number of historical mobilization events that I had identified at each specific location was predictive of the number of Kurdish fighters that would then be recruited from these locations in the future (the future being the three aforementioned time periods). All variables had sought to address whether a history of ethnic mobilization itself has an effect on continued mobilization.

Methodology

The main outcome of this analysis is the count of recruits from each county. Thus a negative binomial model is appropriate. Through this model I explored whether the number of future PJAK recruits born in a county was correlated with my variable - the mobilization history of that county. I present two models here, a bivariate with my independent variable only in the model, and a multivariate model with other controls in the model.

As there is a discrepancy between results in the bivariate and multivariate models, I also use my independent variable as on outcome in an OLS model. In this model, I investigate the correlation between the history of armed insurgency and other contextual factors.

Analysis

Table 1 presents the results for the regression of the determinants of recruitment to Kurdish insurgency.

Table1. Regression Results for Recruitment to Kurdish Insurgency

	(1)	(2)
	The number of PJAK recruits born in the district	The number of PJAK recruits born in the district
The number of PJAK recruits born in the district		
Kurdish Mobilization	1.467^{+}	0.808
	(1.93)	(-1.39)
The ratio of Kurdish Population		2.278***
		(4.02)
Areas with Kurmanji speakers		10.81***
		(3.89)
Areas with Kurdish Sunni majority		15.50***
		(4.73)
Border with Kurdish areas in Turkey & Iraq		1.669
		(1.56)
Ratio of votes received by reformist presidential candidates		1.030**
		(3.07)

Population (ln)		7.127***
		(6.81)
Urban2011		0.987
		(-0.80)
Literacy2011		1.043
		(0.64)
Number of Iranian security forces killed		1.026
		(1.04)
Areas with Kurdish Sunni majority		1
		(.)
Number of PJAK militants killed as acknowledged by PJAK		0.967
		(-0.60)
/		
lnalpha	6.843***	0.806
	(10.91)	(-0.78)
Observations	159	159
AIC	518.3	398.8
BIC	527.5	438.7

Exponentiated coefficients; *t* statistics in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < .1$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

In model 1, the coefficient for Kurdish mobilization (my variable) from this bivariate analysis is positive and significant at $p < 0.1$. This provides partial support for my hypothesis. However, in model 2, a multivariate analysis is used and the significance disappears. To explore why the statistical significance disappears in the second model, I take my independent variable as dependent and regress it over other contextual factors. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table2. Regression Results for Past History of Kurdish Insurgency

	(1)
	Kurdish Mobilization
The ratio of Kurdish Population	1.134*
	(2.39)
Areas with Kurmanji speakers	0.593*
	(-2.58)
Areas with Kurdish Sunni majority	2.408***
	(6.19)
Border with Kurdish areas in Turkey & Iraq	0.952
	(-0.35)
Ratio of votes received by reformist presidential candidates	1.005
	(1.17)
Population (ln)	1.640***
	(5.22)
Urban2011	1.003
	(0.47)
Literacy2011	1.001
	(0.05)
Number of Iranian security forces killed	1.025
	(1.61)
Areas with Kurdish Sunni majority	1
	(.)
Number of PJAK militants killed as acknowledged by PJAK	0.986
	(-0.50)
Observations	159
AIC	367.5
BIC	401.2

Exponentiated coefficients; *t* statistics in parentheses
$^{+}$ $p < .1$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

As shown in Table 2, there is significant correlation between the history of insurgency and four other contextual variables:

1. The coefficient for the ratio of Kurdish population is positive and statistically significant. This means that areas with a higher ratio of Kurdish people are more likely to have a history of mobilization.
2. The coefficient for the ratio of Kurmanji speakers in the county is negative and statistically significant, implying that areas with a higher ratio of Kurmanji speakers were less likely to have a previous history of mobilization. Kurmanji is a dialect of Kurdish spoken by most Kurds in areas that border Turkey.
3. The coefficient for the ratio of Sunni Kurds in the area is positive and statistically significant. This means that areas with a higher fraction of Sunni-Kurds are more likely to have a mobilization history.
4. More populated areas are additionally more likely to have a history of mobilization - as demonstrated by the positive and statistically significant Population coefficient.

The results in this Table demonstrate that the history of insurgency is itself determined by contextual factors, and I posit that this may be why its statistical significance disappeared in the multivariate model in Table 1. In other words, contextual variables appear to be more relevant than historical variables. The outcome was heavily determined by the same contextual factors that predicted recruitment – or demographics of the region primarily.

Discussion

In summary, after merging my variable - Kurdish mobilization history - with this additional dataset logging PJAK insurgency recruitment rates, I ran three analyses. The bivariate analysis lent partial support to my hypothesis that the mobilization history of a county can be used as a future indicator of insurgency recruitment levels. Yet, upon running the multivariate analysis and accounting for other contextual factors, this significance disappears. The OLS analysis demonstrates that this is due to the strong correlation between Kurdish mobilization history and the four other aforementioned contextual variables. Thus, my data did not provide support for my hypothesis - that a history of mobilization in the county is a determinant of current recruitment to insurgency patterns – when you account for contextual factors.

In the analysis of contextual determinants in insurgent history, I find that areas that are more ethnically homogenous Kurdish and areas that are more Sunni-Kurdish have more mobilization history. Yet, the negative statistical linkage indicating that counties with more Kurmanji speakers are less likely to have a mobilization history was intriguing. Kurmanji is often used as an indicator of linguistic diversity, which may imply that linguistically homogeneous counties may also be more likely to have a history of mobilization. I had run an additional bivariate model to analyze the relationship between the ratio of Kurmanji speakers and an area's mobilization history, yet it provided no further explanation. This finding requires further exploration, with a data-set that potentially employs sources in Kurdish dialect.

The current results indicate that contextual factors have been more important in shaping patterns of recruitment than previous history of insurgency. However, this could be because of some shortcomings in the data, rather than the underlying validity of my hypothesis. I encountered several research limitations:

1. It is possible that future recruits travel from areas, like border zones, to areas with more geopolitical significance to conduct armed operations. These areas may be mountainous regions, or larger cities that are more threatening to the regime if the militant groups can occupy them. A more sophisticated data collection method that could trace the original county of recruitment may be better able to analyse the relevance of historical factors in predicting future recruitment.
2. Kurdish mobilization in Iran has occurred in waves. There should be an uptick in news articles documenting increased mobilization roughly in 1946, 1979 through the mid 1980's, and from 2004 to present. My data vaguely reflects such trends, yet falls short in that there were significant gaps where I was able to find no mobilization data or news archives despite extensive search efforts. When organizations go underground, data collection on their scant activity becomes difficult. This is especially compounded if their activity is concentrated in smaller cities or rural areas with less extensive news coverage. Mobilization events in these areas may only be documented by local news sources in Kurdish that I cannot access. Nearly all of the data I had collected came from larger cities in Kurdistan. This can skew the data when you consider that Iranian Kurdistan still has many tribal and agrarian mountainous regions.
3. There has been serious censorship of the media by the Iranian Regime that can also serve to skew the data. Both private and public mass media still remain subject to censorship. To deter domestic and international response to the oppression of their ethnic minorities, Iran has especially censored Kurdish media to downplay the extent of the conflict. This additionally means that data collection on events of Kurdish mobilization often rely on media accounts from government-owned news sources. Such reports often inflate

Kurdish casualties and spread falsified information. Yet, obtaining accounts of mobilization events from Kurdish nationalist sources – such as the PJAK's official website (Pjak.eu) – often runs the same risk of doctoring information based on different ideological orientations (Pro-Iranian vs Pro-Kurdish).

All of these variables affected my data collection. It is still possible to think previous history of insurgency would influence recruitment patterns. My research provides the structural base that a more sophisticated data collection strategy could expand on. If future research could identify the original county of recruitment, access localized news sources in Farsi or Kurdish, and overcome ideologically-biased reporting, such data may lend support to this hypothesis.

Conclusion

Whether prior mobilization leads to further armed-insurgency is a salient question for studies of insurgency in contentious politics - I use the case of the Kurds in Iran to explore this question. It involves the generative power of mobilization, and how one's place of origin affects their future susceptibility to recruitment. This article had investigated this question by outlining the effects of mobilization in Kurdish counties. This question is especially relevant considering that, while Iran has mediated ethnic tension better than their Iraqi or Turkish counterparts, there are continued efforts made by armed nationalist Kurdish groups to challenge Iran's authority and exclaim dissatisfaction.

This study was unable to lend support to the claim that a history of ethnic mobilization has an effect on continued mobilization. The analysis instead lent support to the pertinence of contextual factors in influencing mobilization patterns. There was a positive correlation between

the ratio of Sunni Kurds in a county and that area's mobilization history. This affirmed the idea that Sunni Kurds are more likely to be inducted into armed insurgent groups - and divisions within an ethnic group, like sectarian affiliation, impact insurgency patterns.

My data was limited in four ways. My data collection was concentrated in big cities which skewed the data. Smaller, more rural counties may have limited news coverage that is only available in Kurdish or Farsi sources. When Kurdish naionalist organizations had historically gone underground, it was difficult to find data on their scant militant activity - so there exists chronological gaps in my data. Recruits may travel to areas with geopolitical significance to conduct armed operations, influencing the data on the insurgency history of their place of origin. My sources all came from specific news clipping or events that were selected for translation, Kurdish and Farsi sources would prove more overall coverage of insurgent episodes.

The relevance of a location's mobilization history on affecting the levels of future insurgent recruitment into nationalist political organizations has yet to be proven by empirical research. Yet, it remains a key factor to explore with more advanced data collection in order to understand how mobilization processes occur and evolve over time.

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