

## Abstract

The increase in intra-state wars after World War II has been identified as one of the main reasons why non-state actors have come out of the periphery and became the center of attention in the media and public perception. This development also led to the realization by scholar-practitioners that their incorporation in conflict resolution efforts is by now crucial. Consequently, scholars, researchers, practitioners, have reacted by producing a growing body of literature in the study of violence and conflict resolution concerning non-state actors. Many different questions relating to these areas have already been explored; yet, some 'spaces' have yet to be tackled. This paper seeks to counteract the lack of knowledge for one of these 'gaps' by asking questions focusing on variance in agency, meaning why or how non-state actor decide on the nature of the performance (violent or nonviolent) when advancing a claim during contentious politics. The goal here is to shed light on the corresponding causality of either employing violent or nonviolent means or a mix of both – variance in agency - within contentious politics. In other words, why do non-state actors choose a certain performance during contentious politics to advance their claims? This question is especially important against the recent development referred to as Arab Spring, or why some other non-state actors prefer the use of violence to advance their claims at the same time in different contexts.

Against this background, this study analyzes claim-advancing performances by non-state actors within the given context of contentious politics in the Philippines. The definition of contentious politics is linked to the conceptual approach proposed by the *Dynamics of Contention Program* championed by Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, and is defined as involving interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties (McAdam et al. 2001). In sum, one of two goals here is to identify context-dependent factors influencing the choice of the claim-advancing performance (violent or nonviolent) to employ during contentious politics. The other goal is to reveal certain constellations, at which an intervention might potentially influence this decision-making process constructively.

## Citations:

McAdam, Doug; Tarrow, Sidney G.; Tilly, Charles (2001): *Dynamics of contention*. Cambridge ;, New York: Cambridge University Press. Available online at <http://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/description/cam021/2001016172.html>.

Pearlman, Wendy (2010): A composite-actor approach to conflict behavior. In Erica Chenoweth, Adria Lawrence (Eds.): *Rethinking violence. States and non-state actors in conflict*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, pp. 197–219.