

Maoists and should lead to questioning fundamental presumptions in the DDR perspective.

One puzzle remains after reading the book, which is the reference in the title to Ernest Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms*. That novel is set against the background of the Italian battlefield in World War I: it revolves around the love story of an ambulance driver and a nurse. Obviously, the reader can see the relevance of love as a social necessity that connects the novel to this book. Still, legend has it that Hemingway had 47 drafts for the ending of the novel (see Julie Bosman, "To Use and Use Not," *New York Times*, July 4, 2012). Ultimately the nurse dies in the arms of the ambulance driver in the published version. This legend, however, could have offered us more food for thought about the multiplicity of pathways in the process of saying farewell to armed conflict.

Response to Isabelle Duyvesteyn's Review of *Farewell to Arms: How Rebels Retire Without Getting Killed*

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— Rumela Sen

I am thankful to Isabelle Duyvesteyn for her thoughtful review of my book, which provides constructive criticism and highlights avenues for future research. Her primary criticism is that I "undersell" my contribution to various research programs, from postcolonial theory to transitional justice and state-making. As an author, it is perhaps a happier place to be in than to be critiqued for making exaggerated claims unwarranted by the evidence presented. Duyvesteyn correctly points out that the concept of a gray zone of state–insurgency overlap discussed in chapter 3 of my book would find wider resonance in the literature on postcolonial theory and subaltern studies. Following this genre's influential critique of Eurocentrism in social science, I emphasize the need to examine rebel retirement from the perspective of rebels, rather than through the DDR/SSR lens of global policy establishment. However, I do not subscribe to subaltern studies' conviction of the fundamental incommensurability of western and nonwestern categories, which questions the possibility of empirical and comparative political science. It also makes it impossible to apply any theoretical category developed in the West to an understanding of the Global South.

In the rest of this response, I delve into Duyvesteyn's questions about how the evidence presented in my book contributes to the argument that "rebels are social solidarity seekers rather than hardened ideologues." I did not directly comment on the debate on motivations for joining an insurgency because I was more interested in how rebels left an insurgency than in why they joined one: my emphasis is on "how" (process) rebels quit rather than "why" (motivations) they join. However, I considered this question of rebel motivations to join or quit because my open-ended life history format interviews with current and former Maoist rebels often veered in this direction. My respondents would reminisce about episodes of extreme personal tragedy, including expropriation, disfigurement, and the rape and murder of loved ones, which prompted them to take up arms. Propelled by personal tragedy, apprentice rebels followed someone they knew, either family members or neighbors, into the insurgency. But before doing that, they also considered various alternative paths to their goals of personal vendetta or social change, which ranged from doing nothing to joining either criminal groups, police forces, or even political parties. Those who ultimately joined the rebel group did so because they found the rebel ideology the most credible blueprint for vengeance and social change. Therefore, the either/or account of ideology versus social solidarity did not offer a holistic understanding of rebel motivations and recruitment in my research, and the reality is most likely somewhere in between.

In the case of retirement, however, rebels depended on locally embedded informal exit networks to quit, and they did not necessarily deradicalize even after retirement. In other words, the predominance of social solidarity over ideology as a driving factor is more clearly evident in rebel retirement than in recruitment. Therefore, policy debates need to recognize that retirement/conflict de-escalation is not necessarily a mirror image of recruitment/escalation: if structural conditions like inequality or unemployment, for example, drove men and women to rebellion, offering those incentives would not necessarily wean them away from violence. Based on my reading of Duyvesteyn's book, I think she would agree. If we want to end conflicts, policies need to recognize how exit pathways are locally and socially embedded. The logical next step would be to calibrate retirement policies and incentives according to the degree of social embeddedness of rebel groups.