(p. 82), allows for deep inspection of a particularly rich dataset like the one he was able to amass. But it entails a costly trade-off: although the use of structured questionnaires enables the quantitative analysis of interview materials, it precludes the use of interview data for close analysis of temporal sequences. The book's qualitative materials are short quotations from the structured interviews and from general, English-language secondary literature about the conflict in Syria. Analysis of temporal sequences would have greatly helped in drawing valid inferences to support the book's correlational statistical analyses. For example, although the statistical analysis includes information about individuals' migration timing, the reader has no way of gauging whether the time-invariant *wasta* variable was the driver of the decision to migrate, rather than one of the other covariates. More information on sequences of events in a given locale—whether gathered from specialized secondary sources or open-ended interviews with former residents—would have provided greater confidence that posttraumatic growth and *wasta* were doing the causal work the book attributes to them.

Questions about conceptualization and empirical strategies aside, *Surviving the War in Syria* has set the stage for future research on civilian strategies, a crucial but underexplored area of research on civil war violence.

Response to Kevin Mazur's Review of *Surviving the War in Syria: Survival Strategies in a Time of Conflict*

doi:10.1017/S1537592722000780

— Justin Schon

Kevin Mazur's review raises important issues. The most central point for discussion is the extent to which civilian behavior during conflict is a product of political identity. Although I would contend that there are some areas where Mazur mischaracterizes my argument in his review, nevertheless our very real disagreement about the central question of how much civilian responses to conflict are driven by political identity is valuable for further discussion. I therefore focus my response on this theme.

The foundation for Mazur's critique that I underemphasize political identity comes from literature showing how political identity influences the violent behavior of armed groups, such as the work of Stathis Kalyvas. Mazur then pivots from research findings that emphasize the role of political identity in the behavior of armed groups to asserting that civilians behave with the same logic. This is a major area of disagreement between us. My book stresses that civilian behavior must be understood through a fundamentally different lens than the behavior of armed groups. In fact, although armed groups tend to have explicitly political objectives that are linked with political identity, I stress in my book that civilians often do not want to get involved in political contention. Armed groups behave politically, but civilians often seek to avoid politics.

Instead, civilians seek to survive conflict and continue living their life as well as possible. The capacity of civilians to find ways to survive and cope with conflict requires some psychological discussion. Mazur asks how psychological factors interact with structural factors, and for this I would refer readers to the extensive discussion I provide of exactly this issue in chapter 4. I argue that people vary in their ability to identify available responses to violent threats during conflict, and posttraumatic growth can increase their capacity to adapt in this respect. When civilians lose their ability to identify available responses in a narrative rupture, I argue that migration can be selected as a last resort. In this way, narrative understandings of conflict dynamics connect structural conditions with the psychological characteristics of individual actors.

Regarding the structural factors, Mazur contends that I conflate material resources with personal networks in my conceptualization of *wasta*, whereas I explicitly observe that people vary in the extent to which *wasta* includes these components. Rather than define *wasta* through regression, I allowed my respondents to provide their own definitions of *wasta.* This is where some respondents equate *wasta* with membership in a specific ethnic group (namely, Alawi). By presenting a nuanced conceptualization of *wasta*, rather than my own externally imposed definition, I presented a complex concept to match the diverse perspectives of my respondents. Such an inductive conceptualization is crucial to adequately discussing such an important concept.

I greatly appreciate Mazur's engagement with my book. I do not claim to hold the last word on civilian survival strategies, and I sincerely hope that more is written in this vital research area.

Revolution in Syria: Identity, Networks, and Repression

. By Kevin Mazur. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. 306p. $99.99 cloth, $34.99 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592722001219

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Kevin Mazur's *Revolution in Syria: Identity, Networks, and Repression* has a difficult task. Knowing that unrest that began in 2011 in Syria turned into a full-fledged civil war fought along ethnic lines, or became "ethnicized" as Mazur puts it, the book zooms in on the first year of the Syrian uprising and traces how ethnicization occurred. Mazur highlights that in the first year, it was not at all clear what would happen. The uprising could have been short and fleeting and be easy for regime forces to quash, transform into ethnicized civil war as it became, or could have produced a broad coalition of actors waging a nonviolent

revolution. In his book, Mazur painstakingly shows how the unrest in 2011 began with widely varying dynamics across Syria and then how those varied dynamics converged into country-wide ethnicized civil war.

After the introduction in chapter 1, Mazur articulates his argument in chapter 2. He then dives into various forms of spatial and temporal disaggregation to expand on his argument. Chapter 3 describes the context in which the uprising began, with a focus on the Syrian regime and how it used patrimonial networks as a critical component of its governance. These networks elevated the Alawi ethnic group and included bridges to Sunni Arabs and other non-Alawi populations. Chapter 4 is an event study of the sequence of events in the first year of the uprising, with a focus on categorizing contention and regime response into five ideal types each and showing how those types evolved over time. For contention, these ideal types include citizenship-focused, parochial, hybrid popular, ethnic insurgency, and particularist challenge (pp. 110–11). Regime responses include clashes with armed challengers, three types of action short of clashes (crowd control, tactical control, and town destruction), and ally actions (pp. 99–100).

Chapter 5 examines why some Syrians participated in contention in the early months. Its discussion of participation focuses on citizenship-focused, parochial, and hybrid popular challenges. The particularist challenge in Syria is primarily attributed to the Kurds, and ethnic insurgency is arguably what these three types of challenge evolved into. Citizenship-focused challenge attracted the broadest base of support and actively used social media to organize and advance claims in central public spaces (pp. 123–29). Parochial challenge only occurred in Sunni Arab communities and often involved mediation through existing, informal channels to state authorities. This form of challenge thereby occurred in communities with dense horizontal network ties and strong vertical ties with state authorities (p. 129). Hybrid popular challenge also only occurred in Sunni Arab communities, but it involved a wider array of mobilization strategies and goals (p. 139). Mazur's discussion of this type is very interesting for readers, thanks to his case study of challenge dynamics in Homs (pp. 139–51): it draws from an especially wide variety of evidence to make his case. The spatial analysis informing the maps (p. 142) could potentially motivate several research articles in and of itself.

Chapter 6 meanwhile examines nonparticipation, highlighting four pathways (p. 161): (1) regular state access and fear of marginalization under Sunni rule; (2) vertical ties between state authorities and local notables that limited participation; (3) active relationship building between state officials and individual Syrian citizens that dissuaded people from participating; and (4) combined heavy state security presence and linkages between the regime and local population in Damascus and Aleppo.

Chapters 7 and 8 follow the transformation from a largely nonviolent, civic uprising into a full-fledged civil war that became ethnicized. Chapter 8's focus on Syria's Kurdish population in the northeast will be particularly jarring for readers reflecting on Kurdish armed groups battling with ISIS and other armed groups in more recent years, but it is an important precursor to those dynamics. Finally, the concluding chapter looks beyond March 2012 and identifies several threads of continuity between the first year of the uprising and its escalation into civil war. These insights will most certainly be useful for those considering postconflict reconstruction and governance.

The book is particularly strong in explaining how an antigovernment movement that wants to build a broad-based coalition becomes ethnicized. Mazur expertly walks the reader through the revolution that began with nonviolent mobilization, the government's violent reaction to opposition mobilization, and then the opposition's ethnicization that followed. Anyone who is broadly interested in how protest movements escalate into civil war, as well as conflict scholars pushing back against arguments framing war or its ethnicization as inevitable, will value this approach.

This argument incorporates discussion of how prewar network characteristics led to some Syrian neighborhoods mobilizing earlier than others. Prewar network characteristics also feature as important factors in explanations of behavior during war in books such as Evgeny Finkel's *Ordinary Jews: Choice and Survival during the Holocaust* (2017) and my own book *Surviving the War in Syria: Survival Strategies in a Time of Conflict* (2020). The network characteristics in Mazur's book specifically refer to the vertical ties that link community members with local elites who serve as intermediaries with the state (which individuals in my book identified as *wasta*), as well as the density of network ties within communities. These two network factors highlight one relational network characteristic (vertical ties) and one structural network characteristic (degree density) as critical for understanding the timing of when a given community mobilized and when that community's mobilization became organized along ethnic lines. Mazur's book presents vertical ties and density as existing together, so it is unclear whether one or both of these network features actually drove opposition trajectories, but identifying the importance of these two network features is valuable nonetheless.

My main critique is in how the book characterizes the regime response to the Syrian uprising. Mazur draws from a variety of examples of regime behavior to support his point (e.g., p. 155): that the regime used ethnicization because it lacked other options (a point made most

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592722001219 Published online by Cambridge University Press

explicitly at p. 185). This lack of options arguably existed when communities did not have strong vertical ties with state authorities and dense social networks that would have allowed state directives to reach all community members. This is a critical point for the reader to consider carefully because it is key to understanding the book's argument about regime behavior. Under Mazur's view, ethnicization was more of a last resort than a deliberate plan.

However, this argument does not sufficiently acknowledge the regime's role in actively inciting ethnicization. Examples from Baniyas (pp. 136–38) highlight regime restraint, but Mazur states that restraint was accompanied by ethnicization: "While the regime stoked ethnic fear among local Alawis to ensure their loyalty, it continued to reach out to Sunni local notables" (p. 138). More broadly, Mazur observes that regime agents actively created suspicion of Sunnis among non-Sunnis through state media, even when the opposition tried to resist ethnicization (pp. 161–64). These tactics included labeling Sunni protestors as Islamic radicals, drug smugglers, and terrorists. Consistently, the regime highlighted the role of extreme and sectarian members of the opposition (p. 199). In short, the regime strongly preferred that the uprising be understood as a struggle along ethnic lines, rather than a broad interethnic coalition advocating for improved and more democratic governance (p. 200). These details, which Mazur himself provides, suggest that ethnicization was an intentional and deliberate regime strategy, preferable to making concessions that would satisfy the opposition. Clearly, regime violence facilitated ethnicization, but the civil war cannot be properly understood, even with a narrow focus on the first year of contention, without framing ethnicization as an intentional regime strategy.

Fortunately, if the argument is relaxed to the point that ethnicization was not the regime's first choice (even if not its last resort), then the book's argument still works. Ethnicization is not inevitable. If the regime's first choice of using its preexisting ties with local elites to calm unrest had worked, then it may have been able to stop the uprising before it grew into a civil war and ethnicization occurred. That preferred scenario, however, is quite difficult to achieve if too much violence takes place.

Mazur's book provides extremely valuable insights into how an uprising attempting to build a broad interethnic coalition in a country with governance built on elevating specific ethnic groups is likely to fail. The role of violence in breaking preexisting ties between the regime and local elites and between those elites and their fellow community members is clearly critical. The book also adds to a growing body of work showing that prewar social networks strongly influence behavior during war. It pushes the reader to ponder how antigovernment movements ever build broad interethnic coalitions, a question I suspect Mazur would be delighted to encourage his audience to consider.

Response to Justin Schon's Review of *Revolution in Syria: Identity, Networks, and Repression*

doi:10.1017/S1537592722001220

— Kevin Mazur

The up-close view of the Syrian case suggests, as Justin Schon surmises, the enormous difficulty of sustaining a broad coalitional challenge to a regime that rules through a patchwork of alliances and instrumentalizes ethnic identity. My book dwells on pre-uprising techniques of governance because decisions taken in the moment of contention are so often heavily constrained by the networks and resources available to incumbents ruling in this manner. The question of uniting diverse segments of the population also hangs over attempts to build new governance arrangements out of the wreckage of civil wars in these polities; the hope is that understanding the historical exigencies that sustained such patchworks before revolution, as well as the processes that undid them, will contribute to building more equitable and durable arrangements for the future. However, the trajectory of the postrevolutionary states of the Arab region is not promising in this regard.

One of the book's contributions is to highlight the heterogeneity of networks tying social actors to an ethnically dominated regime. The prevailing model in the literature on ethnic exclusion and conflict treats state–society networks as a chain linking the regime to social elites to local communities. I found that this model accurately captures state ties to some segments of the population but bears little resemblance to many others; much of the work of accessing state power in Syria and many other informal regimes is about navigating the overlap of generationally reproduced social structures, state institutions, and economic opportunities arising from economic opening (e.g., "*wasta*" cousins holding civil service jobs rather than customary notables; patronage jobs and no-bid tender processes in newly privatized, formerly state-run industries). Because the messiness of these existing social relations was a crucial facilitating condition for both initial patterns of challenge and regime response, I sacrificed a degree of parsimony for veracity in characterizing these networks.

How exactly incumbent regimes ruling through a patchwork of intra- and cross-ethnic alliances go about instrumentalizing ethnic identity is a complicated matter. Although they have incentives to promote an ethnic interpretation of events among members of their ethnic group (and potentially others), simply pushing conflict along ethnic lines would be self-defeating—particularly in the case of regimes dominated by members of a small