

# TOWARD A FOURTH GENERATION OF REVOLUTIONARY THEORY

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■ **Abstract** Third-generation theories of revolution pointed to the structural vulnerabilities of regimes as the basic causes of revolutions. In the last decade, critics of structural theories have argued for the need to incorporate leadership, ideology, and processes of identification with revolutionary movements as key elements in the production of revolution. Analyses of revolutions in developing countries and in communist regimes have further argued for incorporating these factors and for the inadequacy of structural theories to account for these events. Rather than try to develop a list of the “causes” of revolutions, it may be more fruitful for the fourth generation of revolutionary theory to treat revolutions as emergent phenomena, and to start by focusing on factors that cement regime stability. Weakness in those factors then opens the way for revolutionary leadership, ideology, and identification, along with structural factors such as international pressure and elite conflicts, to create revolutions.

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, scholarship on the causes, processes, and outcomes of revolutions has sprawled across topics and disciplines like an amoeba, stretching in various directions in response to diverse stimuli. What was once a fairly structured subfield, focusing primarily on a handful of “great revolutions” in Europe and Asia, now grapples with collapsed states in Africa (Migdal 1988, Migdal et al 1994, Zartman 1995), transitions to democracy in Eastern Europe and elsewhere (Banac 1992, Linz & Stepan 1996), movements of Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East (Keddie 1995b), and guerrilla warfare in Latin America (Wickham-Crowley 1992). Moreover, in addition to identifying key causal factors and outcomes, scholars now seek to explain the micro processes of revolutionary mobilization and leadership, using approaches ranging from rational choice analysis (Opp et al 1995) to sociological and anthropological studies of social movements (Selbin 1993, Aminzade et al 2001a). The study of revolutions has thus blossomed into a multifaceted exploration of a panoply of diverse events.

A short review cannot encompass this range of literature, much less the explosion of historical literature analyzing particular revolutions. I thus aim to present a brief overview of the development of the comparative and theoretical analysis of revolutions in the past decade and to lay out the main concepts and findings that now govern our understanding of how and why revolutions occur. However, the study of revolutions may be reaching an impasse at which it is simply overwhelmed by the variety of cases and concepts it seeks to encompass. I therefore close with some suggestions for shifting the approach, and improving the generalizability, of theories of revolution.

## THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

### Definitions of Revolution

Definitions of revolution have changed as new events have come forth on the stage of world history. Through the 1980s, most writers on revolution focused on the “great revolutions” of England (1640), France (1789), Russia (1917), and China (1949). Although scholars admitted that other events, such as the Mexican and Cuban revolutions (Womack 1968, Dominguez 1978, Eckstein 1986, Knight 1986), had valid claims to be great revolutions, the most influential comparative studies of revolution from Brinton (1938) to Skocpol (1979) dealt mainly with a handful of European and Asian cases. Skocpol’s (1979:4) definition of great social revolutions—“rapid, basic transformations of a society’s state and class structures . . . accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below”—was taken as standard.

Yet Skocpol’s definition ignored such matters as revolutionary ideologies, ethnic and religious bases for revolutionary mobilization, intra-elite conflicts, and the possibility of multiclass coalitions. This was intentional, for none of these were seen as central features of revolutions. Through the 1970s and 1980s, the dominant approach to revolutions was structural analysis, rooted in Marxist historical perspectives in which the action of capitalist competition on class and state structures produced class-based conflicts that transformed society.

Skocpol’s work capped what I have called the third generation of revolutionary analysis (Goldstone 1980). In that work, a series of scholars including Moore (1966), Paige (1975), Eisenstadt (1978), and many others expanded on the old Marxist class-conflict approach to revolutions by turning attention to rural agrarian-class conflict, state conflicts with autonomous elites, and the impact of interstate military and economic competition on domestic political change. This work, in which revolution was attributed to a conjunction of multiple conflicts involving states, elites, and the lower classes, was a major improvement on simple descriptive generalizations, such as those of Brinton (1938), or of analyses that rested on such broad single factors as “modernization” (Huntington 1968) or “relative deprivation” (Davies 1962, Gurr 1970).

From the 1970s through the 1990s, however, the world saw a host of revolutions that challenged the class-based understanding of revolutions. In Iran and Nicaragua in 1979 and in the Philippines in 1986, multiclass coalitions toppled dictators who had long enjoyed strong support from the world's leading superpower, the United States (Dix 1984, Liu 1988, Goodwin 1989, Farhi 1990, Parsa 2000). In Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989–1991, socialist and totalitarian societies that were supposed to be impervious to class conflict collapsed amid popular demonstrations and mass strikes (Banac 1992, Dunlop 1993, Oberschall 1994a, Urban et al 1997, Beissinger 1998). The Iranian Revolution and the Afghan Revolution of 1979 proudly proclaimed themselves as religious struggles, not based primarily on class issues (Keddie 1981; Arjomand 1988; Moghadam 1989; Ahady 1991; Moaddel 1993; Foran 1993a). And the host of anticolonial and antidictatorial revolutions in the Third World, ranging from Angola to Zaire, became so numerous and affected so many people that the parochial practice of defining revolutions in terms of a few cases in European history plus China became untenable (Boswell 1989, Foran 1997b). In addition, whereas the “great revolutions” had all led fairly directly to populist dictatorship and civil wars, a number of the more recent revolutions—including that of the Philippines, the revolutionary struggle in South Africa, and several of the anticommunist revolutions of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—seemed to offer a new model in which the revolutionary collapse of the old regime was coupled with a relatively nonviolent transition to democracy (Goldfarb 1992, Diamond & Plattner 1993).

In response to these events, theories of revolution evolved in three directions. First, researchers sought to apply the structural theory of revolution to an increasingly diverse set of cases, well beyond the small number of “great” social revolutions. These included studies of guerrilla wars and popular mobilization in Latin America (Eckstein 1989b, Midlarsky & Roberts 1991, Wickham-Crowley 1992, McClintock 1998); studies of anticolonial and antidictatorial revolutions in developing nations (Dix 1984; Dunn 1989; Shugart 1989; Goodwin & Skocpol 1989; Farhi 1990; Kim 1991, 1996; Goldstone et al 1991; Foran 1992, 1997b; Foran & Goodwin 1993; Johnson 1993; Goldstone 1994a, Snyder 1998); studies of revolutions and rebellions in Eurasia from 1500 to 1850 (Barkey 1991, 1994; Goldstone 1991; Tilly 1993); studies of the Islamic revolution against the Shah in Iran (Skocpol 1982, Parsa 1989, McDaniel 1991); and studies of the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Bunce 1989; Chiro 1991; Goodwin 1994b, 2001; Luper 1996; Goldstone 1998a).

Second, in part propelled by the above-noted works, which found in these new cases a powerful role for ideologies and diverse multiclass revolutionary coalitions, there emerged direct attacks on the “third generation” approach. Scholars called for greater attention to conscious agency, to the role of ideology and culture in shaping revolutionary mobilization and objectives, and to contingency in the course and outcome of revolutions (Sewell 1985; Rule 1988, 1989; Baker 1990; Kimmel 1990; Foran 1993b, 1995, 1997a; Emirbayer & Goodwin 1994, 1996; Goodwin 1994a, 1997; Selbin 1997). Important new comparative studies of revolutions

demonstrated the importance of these additional factors in recent events (Eisenstadt 1992, 1999; Johnson 1993; Selbin 1993; Colburn 1994; Sohrabi 1995; Katz 1997; Foran 1997b; Paige 1997).

Third, analysts of both revolutions and social movements realized that many of the processes underlying revolutions—e.g. mass mobilization, ideological conflicts, confrontation with authorities—have been well studied in the analysis of social movements. Indeed, some of the more extensive and radical social movements that involved major changes to the distribution of power, such as the international movement for women's rights, the labor movement, and the US civil rights movement, were revolutionary in the risks taken by activists and the institutional restructurings produced by their efforts. Thus, a new literature on "contentious politics" has developed that attempts to combine insights from the literature on social movements and revolutions to better understand both phenomena (McAdam et al 1997; Goldstone 1998b; Hanagan et al 1998; Tarrow 1998; Aminzade et al 2001a; McAdam et al, in preparation).

As a result of these critiques, the simple state- and class-based conception of revolutions advanced by Skocpol no longer seems adequate. A huge range of events now claim our attention as examples of revolution, ranging from the fascist, Nazi, and communist transformations of nations in the first part of this century to the collapses of communist regimes at its end; from the idealistic revolutions of America and France at the end of the eighteenth century to the chaotic revolutionary wars in Africa at the end of the twentieth. Two recent surveys of revolution (Tilly 1993, Goldstone 1998c) list literally hundreds of events as "revolutionary" in character. Nonetheless, these events still have a common set of elements at their core: (a) efforts to change the political regime that draw on a competing vision (or visions) of a just order, (b) a notable degree of informal or formal mass mobilization, and (c) efforts to force change through noninstitutionalized actions such as mass demonstrations, protests, strikes, or violence.

These elements can be combined to provide a broader and more contemporary definition of revolution: an effort to transform the political institutions and the justifications for political authority in a society, accompanied by formal or informal mass mobilization and noninstitutionalized actions that undermine existing authorities.

This definition is broad enough to encompass events ranging from the relatively peaceful revolutions that overthrew communist regimes to the violent Islamic revolution in Afghanistan. At the same time, this definition is strong enough to exclude coups, revolts, civil wars, and rebellions that make no effort to transform institutions or the justification for authority. It also excludes peaceful transitions to democracy through institutional arrangements such as plebiscites and free elections, as in Spain after Franco.

## Types of Revolutions

Revolutions are distinguished sometimes by outcomes, sometimes by actors. Revolutions that transform economic and social structures as well as political

institutions, such as the French Revolution of 1789, are called great revolutions; those that change only state institutions are called political revolutions. Revolutions that involve autonomous lower-class revolts are labeled social revolutions (Skocpol 1979), whereas sweeping reforms carried out by elites who directly control mass mobilization are sometimes called elite revolutions or revolutions from above (Trimberger 1978). Revolutions that fail to secure power after temporary victories or large-scale mobilization are often called failed or abortive revolutions; oppositional movements that either do not aim to take power (such as peasant or worker protests) or focus on a particular region or subpopulation are usually called rebellions (if violent) or protests (if predominantly peaceful). Despite these differences, all of these revolutionary events have similar dynamics and characteristics (McAdam et al, in preparation).

Revolutions do not always feature the same set of key actors, nor do they all unfold in the same way. Popular mobilization may be primarily urban (as in Iran and Eastern Europe), feature extensive peasant revolts (Wolf 1969), or involve organized guerrilla war. Huntington (1968) pointed out that major revolutions show at least two distinct patterns of mobilization and development. If military and most civilian elites initially are actively supportive of the government, popular mobilization must take place from a secure, often remote, base. In the course of a guerrilla or civil war in which revolutionary leaders gradually extend their control of the countryside, they need to build popular support while waiting for the regime to be weakened by events—such as military defeats, affronts to national pride and identity, or its own ill-directed repression or acts of corruption—that cost it domestic elite and foreign support. Eventually, if the regime suffers elite or military defections, the revolutionary movement can advance or begin urban insurrections and seize the national capital. Revolutions of this type, which we may call peripheral revolutions, occurred in Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Zaire, Afghanistan, and Mozambique.

In contrast, revolutions may start with the dramatic collapse of the regime at the center (Huntington 1968). If domestic elites are seeking to reform or replace the regime, they may encourage or tolerate large popular demonstrations in the capital and other cities, and then withdraw their support from the government, leading to a sudden collapse of the old regime's authority. In such cases, although the revolutionaries take power quickly, they then need to spread their revolution to the rest of the country, often through a reign of terror or civil war against new regional and national rivals or remnants of the old regime. Revolutions of this type, which we may call central revolutions, occurred in France, Russia, Iran, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

A variant of elite/popular mobilization dynamics is that some revolutions combine these types in different stages. In the Mexican and Chinese Revolutions, the old regimes initially fell in a central-type collapse; the Huerta and Nationalist regimes that first consolidated power were themselves overthrown by a peripheral mobilization.

Recent events suggest yet a third pattern of revolution, a general collapse of the government, as occurred in the totalitarian states of Eastern Europe and the

Soviet Union. In these countries, the state socialist regimes maintained firm control of rural and urban society through the party apparatus. When a combination of elite-led reform efforts, changing international alignments (the economic advance of capitalist countries, the Soviet Union's peace talks with the United States, and Hungary's open borders allowing mass German emigration), and popular strikes and demonstrations undermined the resolve of communist leaders, the entire national state apparatus rapidly degenerated (Karklins 1994, Hough 1997, Lane & Ross 1999). Although there were sometimes major confrontations in the capital cities (as in Moscow and Bucharest), the critical popular actions in several cases were taken by workers far from the capital—such as coal miners in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and shipyard workers in Gdansk in Poland—or by urban protestors in other cities, such as Leipzig in East Germany. There was thus no need for the revolutionary leaders taking power in the capital to spread their revolution by force throughout the country; the very breadth of the prior totalitarian regimes ensured that when they collapsed there were few or no competing power centers, except for the centrifugal forces lurking in autonomous and ethnically distinctive provincial governments (Bunce 1999). The main problem facing the new postsocialist regimes was not spreading the revolution but rather building new national institutions that could cope with the emergent private, criminal, and bureaucratic entrepreneurs rushing to fill the vacuum of power (McFaul 1995, Stark & Bruszt 1998).

Another typology rests on the guiding ideology of revolutionary movements. It distinguishes “liberal” or constitutional revolutions, which dominated the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and seem to be reappearing with the revolutions in the Philippines and Eastern Europe; communist revolutions, which became prominent in the twentieth century; and Islamic revolutions, which appeared in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

As this brief survey makes clear, a full understanding of revolutions must take account of the plasticity of elite and popular alignments, of the processes of revolutionary mobilization and leadership, and of the variable goals and outcomes of revolutionary actors and events. If a fourth-generation theory of revolutions is to emerge, it must embrace these factors. The sections below examine what we know (or think we know) about the causes, processes, and outcomes of revolution and bring together the contributions of often disparate approaches, such as comparative case studies, rational choice models, and quantitative/statistical analysis.

## CAUSES OF REVOLUTIONS

### The International System

Skocpol (1979) was crucial in pointing out the effects that international military and economic competition can have on domestic state stability. The costs of war or economic shifts can undermine elite and popular loyalty to a government and put state finances in disarray. Yet this only begins to suggest how international influences can trigger and shape revolutions.

Ideological influences can spread across boundaries, with both the example and the content of revolutionary movements in one nation influencing others (Arjomand 1992, Colburn 1994, Katz 1997, Halliday 1999). One can thus point to several waves of revolutions in history, including the Atlantic revolutions of the United States (1776), Holland (1787), and France (1789), propelled by antimonarchical sentiment; the European Revolutions of 1848, propelled by liberalism; the anticolonial revolutions of the 1950s through 1970s, propelled by nationalism; the communist revolutions of 1945–1979 in Eastern Europe, China, Cuba, Vietnam, and other developing countries; the Arab Nationalist revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa in 1952–1969; the Islamic revolutions in Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan; and the anticommunist revolutions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In each of these waves, international influences powerfully shaped outcomes and the direction of the revolutionary movements (Johnson 1993, Katz 1997, Boswell & Chase-Dunn 2000).

Direct military and diplomatic intervention by other countries can also shape revolutions, although often not as the interveners might have wished. Intervention by the Soviet Union could not defeat the Islamic Afghan Revolution, and interventions by the United States not only failed to prevent, but probably helped radicalize, the revolutions in Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, and Iran by supporting the prerevolutionary regimes (Wickham-Crowley 1992, Halliday 1999, Snyder 1999, Pastor 2001). On the other hand, US intervention did reverse the abortive Mossadeq revolution in Iran in 1953, and Soviet support did encourage Marxist revolutions around the globe.

Halliday's (1999) general rule is "don't invade a revolution." Because of their great ability to mobilize populations for conflict (Skocpol 1994), revolutions are highly resistant to external intervention once they have already mobilized a national population. If intervention is to be effective in averting a revolution, it must generally occur prior to mass mobilization by the revolutionary movement. However, if a revolutionary movement and a regime are in stalemate, international diplomatic intervention can play a critical role in achieving a peaceful resolution, as occurred in Nicaragua in 1990 and in Zimbabwe in 1979 (Shugart 2001).

In some cases, it is the absence of intervention or the withdrawal (or threatened withdrawal) of ongoing support for a regime that allows a revolutionary movement to grow. Goldfrank (1979) and other scholars (Goodwin & Skopol 1989, Wickham-Crowley 1992) have labeled this a permissive or favorable world context. US preoccupation with World War I helped create an interval for Mexican revolutionary movements to spread; the exhaustion of European states and the defeat of Japan provided openings for multiple anticolonial revolutions after World War II; US concern for global human rights under President Carter spread the perception that support of the Shah of Iran and the Somoza regime in Nicaragua was diminishing; and the reduction of cold war tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union under Gorbachev provided an opening for dissidents, workers, and urban protestors to test the resolve of communist regimes.

A further conduit of international influence on the prospects for revolution is through international trade networks and the actions of transnational agencies and alliances. Scholars have found that under certain domestic conditions, countries with an unfavorable trading position in the world economy have a high risk of rebellions (Boswell & Dixon 1990, Jenkins & Schock 1992). In addition, currency crises and policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund can hobble governments and result in unpopular price movements, sometimes provoking violent protests (Walton 1989, Walton & Ragin 1990, Boswell & Dixon 1993, Walton & Seddon 1994). The Helsinki agreement on international human rights clearly invigorated the dissident movements in European communist regimes (Stokes 1993). At the same time, however, all other things equal, higher overall levels of participation in international trade and participation in international regional alliances are associated with a reduced risk of state collapse in countries around the world since World War II (Goldstone et al 2001). Evidently, high levels of economic and diplomatic engagement with the world provide some constraint on domestic competition and conflict. Conversely, it tends to be smaller, more isolated nations such as Rwanda and Cambodia that have been the site of the most severe and genocidal competitions for state power (Harff 1991, 1995).

### **Relationships Among States, Elites, and Popular Groups**

Although the international environment can affect the risks of revolution in manifold ways, the precise impact of those effects, as well as the overall likelihood of revolution, is determined primarily by the internal relationships among state authorities, various elites, and various popular groups (peasants, workers, and regional or ethnic or religious minorities). It is now a truism, but worth restating, that fiscally and militarily sound states that enjoy the support of united elites are largely invulnerable to revolution from below. Popular misery and widespread grievances tend to produce pessimism, passive resistance, and depression, unless the circumstances of states and elites encourage actors to envision a realistic possibility of change (Scott 1985, 1990).

Skocpol (1979) specified a compact set of structural conditions that make a state vulnerable to social revolution: autonomous elites able to hamper state actions and peasant communities capable of autonomous resistance to landlord rule. However, close analyses of Skocpol's work have shown that these conditions are not wholly applicable even in her own cases (Nichols 1986, Sewell 1996, Goldstone 1997a, Mahoney 1999). Russia's elites in 1917 were clearly incapable of blocking actions by the Tsar and were able to act only because of the overwhelming defeat of the Tsar's forces by Germany in World War I. China's peasants had been under tight rural control by landed gentry since suppression of the Taiping rebellion in the mid-nineteenth century and played little role in the Republican or Nationalist revolutions of the early twentieth century. It was only when organized and mobilized by the Chinese Communist Party that the peasantry was able to play a revolutionary role. In addition, Skocpol underestimated the role of workers



in the Russian Revolution of 1917 (Bonnell 1983); her scheme thus misses the overwhelming impact of urban protests by workers and students in shaping such events as the Iranian Revolution, the Nicaraguan Revolution, the Philippines Revolution and the Great Cultural Revolution and Tiananmen revolts in China (Farhi 1990, Wasserstrom & Perry 1994, Calhoun 1994b, Perry & Li 1997, Parsa 2000). Although these problems indicate the weakness of Skocpol's simplified structuralism, her approach, and indeed the richness of her overall analysis, has spurred a deeper understanding of how shifting state/elite/popular relationships lead to state breakdown and upheavals.

First, it appears clear from many studies that it is not merely state/elite conflicts, nor even necessarily the autonomous position of elites, that govern political stability and change. Rather, the key issues are (a) whether states have the financial and cultural resources to carry out the tasks they set for themselves and are expected to carry out by elites and popular groups, (b) whether elites are largely united or deeply divided or polarized, and (c) whether opposition elites link up with protest by popular groups.

The tasks that rulers set for themselves vary enormously from state to state. Large states may have imperial ambitions, whereas small states may seek merely to survive in peace. Personalist rulers need to maintain flexible resources to support extensive patronage; democratic states need to manage party competition while still maintaining an effective bureaucratic and judicial government. Traditional monarchies faced few expectations from elites and popular groups—to respect custom in raising revenues and to provide opportunities for elites and their families to maintain their rank. States in modern developing nations, however, are expected to promote economic growth and to mediate ethnic and regional claims on resources. Almost all states are also expected to uphold national pride and traditions; modern states are expected to realize the nationalist ambitions of dominant ethnic groups for a state that will embody and defend their distinctive character (Goodwin & Skocpol 1989, Tilly 1993).

States also have a wide range of resources on which to draw to meet these goals and expectations. Domestic revenues in the form of taxation and exploitation of natural resources may be complemented by revenues from foreign aid and direct foreign investment. Funds may be borrowed and resources sold or mortgaged against future expectations of increased tax or other revenues. Some governments may also gain revenue from nationalized enterprises—although these often fail to return projected profits.

Trouble arises when revenues no longer meet state expenses, whether because of an enlargement of state goals or a reduction in income. The ways in which trouble can arise are so many as to defy brief listing. Overambitious military and/or development adventures can strain state finances; so can a failure to adjust revenues to keep pace with inflation and growing national populations. Overestimates of future revenues can lead to reckless borrowing; corruption can drain funds away from useful purposes and leave state coffers bare. Small but growing deficits can gradually eat away at state fiscal strength; military debacles or deadlocks with elites

over fiscal matters can precipitate loss of fiscal control and either runaway inflation or sudden state bankruptcies. In some cases, price shifts in key commodities in the economy can adversely affect economic growth and state revenues. Symptoms of fiscal illness can thus range from a slow depletion of state credit to ballooning debts to rapid price inflation to military incapacity to unanticipated shortfalls and bankruptcies.

Still, states are rarely so wholly in control of a society's resources that they cannot adjust to adversity if elites will contribute their efforts and resources to state reorganization. The threat of revolution appears when fiscal weakness arises while elites are reluctant to support the regime or are severely divided over whether and how to do so.

Such reluctance may reflect the financial difficulties of elites themselves. Elites who are struggling to maintain their wealth, or who see themselves being arbitrarily or unfairly fleeced by their rulers, will not readily support a weak and needy regime. Elites may also be alienated by exclusion from power or by assaults on their privileges or control of elite positions. But just as often elite (and popular) allegiance is lost through squandering or neglect of cultural resources.

State rulers operate within a cultural framework involving religious beliefs, nationalist aspirations, and notions of justice and status. Rulers violate these at their peril. Rulers who sell offices or appoint favorites to high positions may win their loyalty but incur the resentment of those left out. Rulers who seek to overturn traditional religious and cultural habits had better be sure of strong military and bureaucratic support to withstand the popular and elite protests that will ensue (Oberschall & Kim 1996). Rulers who lose face in military or diplomatic contests, or who appear too dependent on the whims of foreign powers, may lose the faith and support of their own peoples. The Puritan/Catholic contests in seventeenth-century England, the Jansenist controversies in prerevolutionary France, the devastating military defeats suffered by Tsarist Russia, and the controversies over Westernizing practices in Iran all involved rulers who violated cultural or nationalist beliefs and thereby forfeited elite and popular support (Skocpol 1979, Hunt 1983, Arjomand 1988, Van Kley 1996). In Russia, where cultural norms tolerated authoritarian regimes but required in return the state's paternal protection of the people, the blatant disregard for ordinary people shown in the Black Sunday massacres undermined support for the Tsar. The same cultural norms helped to support the Soviet Union, until the Communist Party's wooden response to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and other health and welfare issues similarly alienated its population.

The joint need to manage state tasks and cultural standing can be summed up in two words: effectiveness and justice. States and rulers that are perceived as ineffective may still gain elite support for reform and restructuring if they are perceived as just. States that are considered unjust may be tolerated as long as they are perceived to be effective in pursuing economic or nationalist goals, or just too effective to challenge. However, states that appear both ineffective and unjust will forfeit the elite and popular support they need to survive.

Three social changes or conditions, though neither necessary nor sufficient to bring about revolution, nevertheless so commonly undermine both effectiveness and justice that they deserve special mention. First is defeat in war—or even overextension, when a state attempts military tasks beyond its fiscal and logistic capacity. Military defeat can bring financial and bureaucratic disorder because of the losses of men and resources expended or taken by the enemy, or because of reparations. Defeat can also bring about loss of national pride, and the increased taxes and resources taken from the population for the war effort may exceed norms of what is reasonable and fair. Particularly galling is the waste of lives and resources for a losing cause. Bueno de Mesquita et al (1992) found a weak association between war and ensuing revolution but found this relationship much stronger among countries that initiated wars and then lost them. It is this combination that produces the greatest joint loss of both effectiveness and cultural standing for the state.

Second, sustained population growth in excess of economic growth frequently alters the relationships among states, elites, and popular groups in ways that undermine stability. If increased demand produces inflation, real revenues to the government will fall unless taxes are raised; but that may be seen as highly unreasonable if peasants have less land, and workers are finding jobs scarce and their pay declining due to increased competition for jobs and resources. Urban population may increase disproportionately—and faster than urban administrations can increase housing, health, and police services—if the agricultural sector cannot absorb the population increase. Moreover, as the price of land or other scarce resources rises, those elites or aspiring elites who control those resources will benefit disproportionately to other elite groups, upsetting the normal processes of elite recruitment and social mobility. If the state demands higher taxes while popular living conditions are declining, and if elite patterns of hierarchy and mobility are being upset while the state is demanding more resources or more authority, then perceptions of both effectiveness and justice may be severely damaged. Although some states may find the means, through economic growth or making favorable elite alliances, to cope with rapid population increase, it is not surprising that rebellions and revolutions have been exceptionally widespread during periods when population has grown exceptionally fast—e.g. in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and in parts of the developing world in the twentieth century (Goldstone 1991, 1997b).

Third, colonial regimes and personalist dictatorships are particularly prone to the dual faults that lead to revolution. Colonial regimes, by their nature, are an affront to the nationalist aspirations and power aspirations of native elites. While effective, they may be able to coopt local elites; however, should the balance of power shift between the colonial regime and the domestic elites with their potential popular support, colonial regimes will degenerate into revolutionary confrontations. Similarly, personalist dictatorships, because they exclude all but a tiny proportion of the elites from sharing in the fruits of power, have far less “justice” in the eyes of elites than more broadly based authoritarian regimes, such as military juntas,

or regimes with a clear ethnic, regional, or class base. Personalist regimes may support themselves by claiming to offer exceptional nationalist achievements or by being ruthless and effective in managing domestic affairs. However, economic reverses, loss of foreign support, or loss of nationalist credentials through corruption or excessive subordination to foreign powers can fatally undermine their effectiveness and spur a multiclass coalition against their narrow base (Goodwin & Skocpol 1989, Wickham-Crowley 1992, Goldstone 1994a, Goodwin 1994b, Foran 1997b, Snyder 1998).

Levi (1997), using rational choice models to analyze political behavior, has shown how state violations of norms of fairness lead to “the withdrawal of compliance,” and that this undermines governance. More than 60 years earlier, historian Crane Brinton (1938) noticed elites withdrawing their support from regimes prior to the outbreak of revolution, denouncing them as immoral and ineffective, and labeled this “the desertion of the intellectuals.” By whatever name, any set of circumstances that leads to a state’s loss of both perceived effectiveness and perceived justice leads to the defection of elites and loss of popular support; this is a crucial element in the causal pattern of revolutions.

Elite theory and comparative historical analyses have produced numerous case studies in which state breakdown was due to elite divisions and defections from the regime (Kileff & Robinson 1986, Arjomand 1988, Higley & Burton 1989, Wickham-Crowley 1989, Bunce 1989, Paige 1989, Goldstone 1991, Goldstone et al 1991, Bearman 1993, Haggard & Kaufman 1995, DeFronzo 1996, Hough 1997, Lachmann 1997, Dogan & Higley 1998, Snyder 1998, Parsa 2000). Conversely, in many cases state stability emerged from violence through the forging of elite pacts (O’Donnell et al 1986, Burton & Higley 1987, Higley & Gunther 1992, Shugart 2001).

However, division among elites is not sufficient to create instability. If they are highly factionalized and fragmented, elites can be reduced to incapacity when faced with a strong authoritarian leader. What is crucial for political crises to emerge is for elites to be not only divided but polarized—that is, to form two or three coherent groupings with sharp differences in their visions of how social order should be structured (Green 1984, Eisenstadt 1999).

Of course, even if elites are divided and sharply opposed to the state, the result may merely be coups d’etat (Jenkins & Kposowa 1990) or reforms. In order for a revolutionary situation to develop, there must also be mass mobilization. This may be traditional, informal, elite-directed, or some combination of these types.

Traditional mobilization occurs within the context of local communities to which individuals have long-standing commitments, such as peasant villages or urban craft guilds (Magagna 1991). Usually triggered by some news of political change, such as plans for state reforms, elections, or news or even rumors of war or local attacks [as Markoff (1996) has shown in the case of the French Revolution of 1789], much peasant mobilization is defensive, even reactionary, aimed at calling attention to economic distress or high levels of taxation. Direct attacks on landlords are less common and are usually prompted by news that the state’s authority has

been challenged or broken down. Traditional mobilization may also take place in cities through traditional workers' guilds, or through religious communities, and it too is often defensive and conservative in intent (Calhoun 1983).

Informal mobilization occurs when individuals' decisions to engage in protest actions are made not through communal organizations to which they have long-standing formal ties but instead through loosely connected networks based on personal friendship, shared workplace, or neighborhood. Such informal organization generally occurs in response to a crisis; neighborhoods or friends then mobilize themselves to take unconventional actions. Gould (1995) demonstrated the role of neighborhood ties in popular mobilization during the French commune of 1870; Opp et al (1995) and Pfaff (1996) have shown that informal organization lay behind the "spontaneous" Leipzig protests that brought down the East German communist regime; Denoex (1993) detailed the role played by informal networks in urban protest in the Middle East. Proximity and friendships among students helped mobilize protest in the Tiananmen revolt in China (Zhao 2001) and in the revolutions of 1979 in Iran and of 1986 in the Philippines (Parsa 2000).

Traditional and informal organization are not inherently revolutionary in themselves and usually lead only to abortive rural rebellions and urban protest. They become effective in creating revolutionary change when they link up with elite opposition to the regime. In some cases, as in the rural revolts of the French and Russian Revolutions and the Irish revolts of 1640, their impact is to frighten authorities into taking radical steps, shattering efforts by elites to move slowly or wrangle indefinitely. In other cases, dissident elites place themselves at the head of popular revolts, linking up varied local movements and giving them direction and coherence, as the Bolsheviks did with workers' revolts in 1917, or as the radical clerical leader Ayatollah Khomeini did with protests based in the *medresas* and bazaars of Iran.

A third way for elites to link up with popular mobilization is to create and direct the organizations through which mobilization takes place. Although it would be too much to say that the Communist Party fully controlled rural revolt in China in the 1940s, the Chinese Communist Party nonetheless played a key role in organizing peasants to redistribute land, curb landlord influence, and undertake armed struggle against the Nationalist regime (Friedman et al 1991, Selden 1995). In Latin America in the 1970s, most effectively in Nicaragua, priests established Christian base communities to mobilize opposition to the existing economic and political regimes (Levine & Manwaring 1989, Van Vugt 1991). At the same time, radical students and politicians, following the model of Fidel Castro in Cuba, sought to mobilize Latin American peasants through communist guerrilla movements (Wickham-Crowley 1992). In the 1980s, church leaders in Poland, the Philippines, and East Germany played a critical role in creating formal and informal linkages between workers, intellectuals, and professionals in opposition to the regime (Osa 1997, Parsa 2000, Stokes 1993).

Of course, elites can countermobilize as well. Traugott (1985) has demonstrated that there was little difference in occupation or income between the revolutionary

Parisian workers who fought on the barricades in 1848 and the Parisian workers in National Guard units fighting against them. The difference lay almost entirely in their mobilization experiences; the rebels had mobilized through neighborhood and workplace, whereas the National Guard members had been mobilized by the bourgeoisie of Paris to defend their rather more middle-class revolution against the King. Indeed, mobilization is usually competitive, with varied revolutionary and counterrevolutionary organizations seeking to rally supporters at the same time, often in chaotic circumstances. Although in hindsight we may identify one successful mobilizing group with its constituency to such a degree that the direction and magnitude of mobilization appear inevitable, in fact that is rarely the case. More likely, a triumphant revolutionary mobilization emerged from a contest for supporters engaging multiple allies and competitors (Meyer & Staggenborg 1996, Glenn 1999).

Given this enormous range of modes of popular organization, there is no easy way to predict the form or direction that popular mobilization will take simply from structural factors. Although there is a substantial literature on peasants in revolutions (Wolf 1969, Migdal 1974, Paige 1975, Scott 1976, Popkin 1979, Wickham-Crowley 1991, Skocpol 1994), and an ongoing debate about the degree to which inequality leads to revolutionary unrest (Muller 1985, Midlarsky 1986, Muller & Seligson 1987, Weede 1987, Lichbach 1989, Midlarsky 1999), none of these literatures has produced consensus. As Zamosc (1989) argues, it appears that peasants are not inherently conservative or revolutionary; rather, their aspirations take different forms depending on the state and elite responses and alliances they encounter. The single constant that one can derive from experience is that successful revolutions occur only where there is some linkage or coalition between popular mobilization and elite antiregime movements (Liu 1984, Dix 1983, Goodwin & Skocpol 1989, Eckstein 1989a, Aya 1990, Farhi 1990, Goldstone et al 1991, Wickham-Crowley 1992, Foran 1997b, Paige 1997).

## **PROCESSES OF REVOLUTIONS: Networks, Ideology, Leadership, Gender**

### **Networks, Organizations, and Identities**

The varied, competitive, and contingent nature of revolutionary mobilization has led scholars to place far more emphasis on the processes by which revolutions develop. Structural conditions may set the stage for conflict, but the shape and outcome of that struggle is often determined only in the course of the revolutionary conflict itself. How do elites link up with popular protest movements? How do individuals come together to act collectively, often in the face of great risk of repression or even death? How are diverse groups with distinct interests brought together to form wide-ranging coalitions? And how do particular leaders and groups emerge to dominate and set the course of a revolution? These questions

can only be addressed by attention to the organizational, ideological, and strategic elements of revolutionary action.

One key finding is that revolutionary actors do not act, or even think of themselves as acting, alone. They are recruited through preexisting networks of residence, occupation, community, and friendship. They are set in motion by organizations that range from small and informal bands of activists, such as the Charter 77 group in the Czechoslovak Revolution, to the highly disciplined, centralized, and bureaucratic revolutionary parties of China and the Soviet Union. They identify themselves with broader causes and groups and make sacrifices in their name (Cohen 1985; Calhoun 1994a,c; Somers & Gibson 1994).

In this respect, they are much like actors in more routine movements of social protest. Analysts of social movements in democratic societies have found that people are recruited to movements along the lines of membership in groups and friendship with people already tied to the movement (Snow et al 1980, McPherson et al 1992, McAdam 1995). Whether in the student movement, feminist movements, or the civil rights movement, the common denominator for successful activism is that actors become invested in the identities of the protest group, that they shape their actions by identification with the costs and benefits for a larger whole (Morris 1984, Hirsch 1990, Taylor & Whittier 1992).

Identities, however, are not inherent—particularly protest identities (Abrams & Hogg 1990). In order to create and maintain identities relevant to revolutionary action, elites and states must produce and cement novel identifications for people who normally just think of themselves as workers or peasants, friends or neighbors. Making certain identities more salient, indeed creating protest identities—that is, a sense of being part of a group with shared and justified grievances, with the ability to remedy those grievances with collective action—is a considerable project (Snow et al 1986, Snow & Benford 1988).

For many years, resource mobilization theorists argued that mobilizing people for collective action revolved around building organizations, such as unions, revolutionary parties, and grass-roots movement organizations such as the National Organization for Women or the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (McCarthy & Zald 1977, Tilly 1978). Such “social movement organizations” were held to be at the heart of sustained collective actions. However, recent studies of recruitment and of the experience of movement participants has shown that formal organization is neither necessary nor sufficient to create the sense of commitment and energy needed for risky collective action to occur (McAdam 1988, Calhoun 1994b, Gould 1995, Pfaff 1996). Instead, the formation of protest identities seems to be critical. Although formal organizations can often help choose tactics for protest and sustain a movement through reverses and lean times, informal organization—as shown in the 1989–1991 revolutions in Eastern Europe—can also bring people together for large-scale, risky, and effective challenges to state authority.

Protest identities—feelings of attachment and affection for a protest group—appear to have three sources. First, the group helps to justify and validate the

individual's grievances and anger against the status quo. Second, the group—if it provides concrete benefits or takes actions that seem effective in defending its members and pursuing change—gives a sense of empowerment, autonomy, and efficacy to its members, earning their affective allegiance (Knoke 1988, Lawler 1992). Third, the state itself may create or reinforce a sense of oppositional identity by labeling a group as its enemies or by acting against the group, thus demonstrating that the group is now outside the protection and justice of the state. Members then are forced to look to the group for justice and protection. The protest group, in other words, gains commitment through manifesting the same qualities that are expected from the state, namely justice and effectiveness.

Indeed, it is precisely because the protest group fulfils these functions in way that the state has failed to do, or in a way deemed superior to that of the state, that individuals are willing to transfer their allegiance from the state to the protest or revolutionary group (Finkel et al 1989). In some cases, the revolutionary movement literally becomes the state in the areas under its control, as did the Communist Party in the 1940s in rural China and many guerrilla movements in Latin America, taking over functions of law enforcement, justice, and even taxation (Wickham-Crowley 1991, Selden 1995, McClintock 1998). In other cases, the revolutionary movement gains allegiance by validating the grievances and aspirations of its members through solidarity rituals and by taking actions against the state that may be largely symbolic (Melucci 1989).

In either case, however, the creation and maintenance of protest identities is a substantial task that draws on cultural frameworks, ideologies, and talented leadership.

## Ideology and Cultural Frameworks

The perception that the state is ineffective and unjust whereas revolutionary movements of opposition are virtuous and efficacious is rarely a direct outcome of structural conditions (Gamson 1988, Gamson & Meyer 1996). Material deprivations and threats need to be seen not merely as miserable conditions but as a direct result of the injustice and the moral and political failings of the state, in sharp contrast to the virtue and justice of the opposition (Martin et al 1990). Even defeat in war, famine, or fiscal collapse may be seen as natural or unavoidable catastrophes rather than as the handiwork of incompetent or morally bankrupt regimes. Similarly, acts of state repression against protesters may be seen as necessary peacekeeping or conversely as unjustified repression; kidnappings, arson, and bombings may be painted as reprehensible and cowardly terrorist acts or as patriotic measures for liberation of the oppressed. Which interpretation prevails depends on the ability of states and revolutionary leaders to manipulate perceptions by relating their actions and current conditions to existing cultural frameworks and to carefully constructed ideologies (DeNardo 1985, Chong 1991, Berejikian 1992).

Analysts of revolution use the term cultural frameworks to denote the long-standing background assumptions, values, myths, stories, and symbols that are



widespread in the population. Naturally, the frameworks of elites and popular groups may differ, and those of different regional, ethnic, and occupational groups may vary. Thus we find a set of roughly overlapping frameworks rather than a homogenous set of beliefs. Ideologies, in contrast, are consciously constructed, perhaps eclectic but more coherent beliefs, arguments, and value judgments that are promulgated by those advocating a particular course of action. In the early twentieth century, Christianity, German patriotism, and a belief in the virtues of the Frankish tribes and pioneers who conquered the forests of central Europe were part of the cultural framework of Germany; Nazism in contrast was an ideology (Skocpol 1994).

As this example shows, those ideologies that are most effective are those that strike roots in prevailing cultural frameworks, appropriating older stories and images and retooling them to resonate with the issues of the present day (Nash 1989, Shin 1996). The Chinese Communists initially linked their justification for ruling China to restoring the patriarchal order of the traditional Chinese family, which had been undone by the economic chaos and military defeats suffered under the Nationalist regime (Stacey 1983). Similarly, Communist organizers in Vietnam had no success until they incorporated ethnic Vietnamese content and cultural themes into their appeals (Popkin 1988).

Foran (1997b) has argued that revolution is impossible without drawing on a "culture of rebellion" from widely remembered prior conflicts. For example, the 1970s Sandinista revolt in Nicaragua drew its name and its claim to virtue from the peasant leader Sandino, who fought against US domination of Nicaragua at the beginning of the century. Similarly, the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico in the 1990s drew its name and identified its ideals with the peasant leader Zapata of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. However, these examples do not imply that only countries that have actively recalled rebellions in their recent past have the cultural foundation for later uprisings. Revolutionary entrepreneurs have proved quite nimble at appropriating cultural foundations for revolt from the distant past, or even the imagined past or future. Millennial beliefs dating back to Native American legends were appropriated and reconfigured to draw popular support for the Mexican Revolution; similarly, the millennial beliefs of Chinese Buddhist sects undergirded some of the revolutionary imagery of the Chinese Communists (Rinehart 1997). In the English Revolution of 1640, regicides drew on the myth of the Norman yoke (though they were of ancient Norman lineage themselves), in which the English royal line planted in 1066 by the invasion of William of Normandy was decreed as a foreign oppressor that enslaved free Anglo-Saxon Englishmen. In their revolt against Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Dutch presented themselves as descendants of the ancient Helvetian tribes who had fought Roman imperial rule; in the French Revolution, in an ironic turnaround, the French revolutionaries liked to identify with the Roman founders of the Republic and their struggle against the Tarquin kings.

Any cultural framework may provide the basis for revolutionary or antirevolutionary ideologies. Christianity and Islam have long been the bastion of conservative

established church organizations; but in recent years Islamic fundamentalists and Christian base communities seem as radical as the English Puritans of the seventeenth century. Communism has been both a revolutionary ideology and the cloak for a conservative and privileged elite that was overthrown by liberal intellectuals and nationalist workers. Whether or not a revolutionary ideology emerges from a given cultural framework seems to depend entirely on how elements of that framework are adapted to particular circumstances or combined with new elements and adopted by particular groups.

Ideologies, in addition to providing value judgments and clothing of virtue for revolutionaries, may accelerate revolutionary momentum in two other, reinforcing ways. First, revolutionary ideologies usually present their struggle as destined to succeed; having history or God on their side will ensure the triumph of their followers (Martin et al 1990). Second, revolutionary ideologies aim to bridge the varied cultural frameworks of different groups and provide a basis for the multigroup and cross-class coalitions so important for challenging state power (Chong 1993). These functions reinforce each other. As a revolutionary group attracts a broader range of followers, it begins to seem destined to succeed; at the same time, the more likely a movement's success appears, the more followers it will attract.

Constructing an ideology that will (a) inspire a broad range of followers by resonating with existing cultural guideposts, (b) provide a sense of inevitability and destiny about its followers' success, and (c) persuade people that the existing authorities are unjust and weak is no simple task. Neither is planning a strategic and tactical campaign of opposition or skillfully taking advantage of spontaneous uprisings and chance events. Thus, the course and outcomes of revolutions depend to a considerable degree on the skills and actions of state and revolutionary leaders.

## Leadership

Popular histories of revolutions are filled with accounts of larger-than-life personalities: Cromwell, Washington, Robespierre, Napoleon, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Castro, Guevarra, Cabral, Mandela, Aquino. Sometimes it seems that the origins and outcome of the revolutions are inseparable from the will and fate of these revolutionary leaders. Yet collective biographies of revolutionary leaders have shown that although many are exceptionally charismatic, many are not, and indeed as a whole the background and personality profiles of revolutionary leaders do not markedly differ from those of conventional political leaders (Rejai & Phillips 1988). Moreover, in structural theories of revolution, these leaders hardly ever appear, or if mentioned, they seem to be unwitting dupes of history whose best intentions are always frustrated by deeper social, political, or economic forces.

This disconnect can be understood by focusing on the skills of revolutionary leaders themselves. Successful leaders excel at taking advantage of favorable political and economic circumstances. Poor leaders generally act when circumstances are highly unfavorable to success. The resulting pattern—leaders appear to

succeed only when conditions favor them and to fail otherwise—makes revolutionary success appear to be strictly a matter of background conditions and obscures the role of leadership in actually making a revolution out of merely potentially favorable circumstances. The importance of leadership is clearest in fairly extreme cases such as the “New Jewel” Revolution in Grenada, where poor leadership led an apparently successful revolution to self-destruct (Selbin 1993), or cases such as the Chinese Communist Revolution, where outstanding leadership was able to sustain a revolutionary movement through apparently crushing defeat and to plan for circumstances that would allow victory (Selden 1995).

The failure of revolutionary leaders to achieve their proclaimed aims—liberty, equality, prosperity—is also taken as evidence of the minor impact of leadership. Yet it is not that simple; after a revolution, its supporters often divide and fall out among themselves, military confrontations test and reshape revolutionary regimes, and once they attain absolute power, many leaders are blinded by it and indulge in megalomaniac fantasies. Thus it is no surprise that revolutions often fail to achieve their prerevolutionary aims. However, this does not mean leadership is insignificant, only that its impact is complex. It requires varied kinds of leadership not only to build a revolutionary movement that can help topple an old regime, but also to win the internecine struggles that follow the collapse of the old order, and to withstand the military blows that often rain down on a new regime. And if a revolutionary leadership survives all this and falls into megalomaniac excess, the resultant suffering only demonstrates the impact of revolutionary leaders on the fate of ordinary people and of nations (Friedman et al 1991, Chirot 1994).

Studies of leadership have found that there are two distinct types and that they usually must be combined—either in one person or through the cooperation of two or more—for an enterprise to succeed. Interestingly, these two types of leadership, “people-oriented” and “task-oriented” (Aminzade et al 2001b, Selbin 1993), mirror the two dimensions of successful governance or mobilization, namely justice and effectiveness. People-oriented leaders are those who inspire people, give them a sense of identity and power, and provide a vision of a new and just order around which their followers unite their energies and their purposes. Task-oriented leaders are those who can plot a strategy suitable to resources and circumstances, set the timetables for people and supplies to reach specific ends, manage money effectively, and respond to shifting circumstances with appropriate strategies and tactics. The purely people-oriented leader is personified by the religious prophet; the purely task-oriented leader is figured by the brilliant military general. Movements with only strong people-oriented leadership may end up as devoted but tiny cults (Hall et al 2000); movements that have strong task-oriented leadership but no vision often fail to consolidate themselves in popular consciousness, and their revolutionary character will soon fade away (Selbin 1993).

It generally seems to require two or more people or groups to fulfill the roles of visionaries and organizers of a revolution, even though the division of tasks is not always clear-cut. Puritan preachers and Oliver Cromwell’s generalship combined to inspire and effect the Puritan Revolution in Britain; Jefferson and Adams

were firebrands of the American Revolution, but it would have failed without Washington's generalship and power brokering at the Constitutional Convention; the Jacobins' vision for France might have failed sooner if not for Napoleon's military victories; Lenin had Trotsky to lead the uprising of the workers and to build the Red Army; Fidel Castro had Ché Guevarra and his brother Raul to fuel and organize the Cuban Revolution; the Ortega brothers had complementary ideological and military roles in leading the Nicaraguan Revolution; and Ayatollah Khomeini relied on the liberal professional Bani-Sadr to help institutionalize the Iranian Revolution and ward off the military attack from Iraq.

In many cases, the visionary and practical leaders clash in the course of the revolution, and one side takes over. In China, Mao and his initial successors, the Gang of Four, clearly leaned toward the visionary side regardless of the practical costs; in Russia, the dull and practical party-builders under Brezhnev won out shortly after Stalin's death. Interestingly, in both these cases, the result was a counterthrust—in China the ultrapragmatic Deng regime, in the Soviet Union the attempt to reinspire the nation with an infusion of liberal ideas under Gorbachev. In Iran, the more extreme ideological clerical groups initially won out over liberal pragmatists, as did the communist-leaning Sandinistas in Nicaragua over their more liberal allies. In the Iranian case, US pressure actually reinforced the extreme visionaries, and the current counterthrust of moderates remains weak; in Nicaragua, US pressure weakened the visionaries and allowed a pragmatic coalition under Violetta Chamorro to rise to power. Thus, there is no guarantee the "right" balance of people-oriented and task-oriented leadership will be sustained, and the course of a revolution can veer in different directions accordingly.

In addition to visionary and pragmatic leadership, Robnett (1997) has identified the dimension of "bridge" leadership, which carries both the ideology and the organizational tasks of mobilizing down to the grass-roots level. Bridge leaders are those neighborhood and community organizers who mediate between top leadership and the vast bulk of followers, turning dreams and grand plans into on-the-ground realities.

Interestingly, Robnett, who focused on the US civil rights movement, identified a strong gender component to this dimension of leadership. She found that whereas the main ideological and strategic leaders of the movement were black (and some white) males, the bridge leaders were largely female. Thus the civil rights movement, as has been shown elsewhere (McAdam 1988), despite its radicalism regarding race relations, mapped in its own leadership organization the prevailing patriarchal gender bias of the racist society it was fighting.

## Gender Relations and Revolutionary Movements

Numerous studies have now documented the extensive role played by women in revolutions, from the English and French Revolutions (Davies 1998, Hufton 1992) to recent Third World revolutions (Tétreault 1994, Wasserstrom 1994, Diamond 1998). Women have been active in street demonstrations, guerrilla

warfare, provision of food and supplies, and bridge leadership. However, despite this massive participation, there is often less connection than one would expect between female participation in revolutions and the gender character of the movement or the emergence of women as autonomous leaders.

Moghadam (1997) and Taylor (1999) have pointed out that protest and revolutionary movements always, whether implicitly or explicitly, have a gender agenda in their own organization and goals. Since almost all societies in history have been patriarchal, protest movements and revolutions generally oppose patriarchal regimes and institutions. They therefore must make a choice. While opposing the existing political institutions, do they nonetheless adopt and reproduce the patriarchal character dominant in society in their own movement? Or do they seek to overturn that character in their movement and in their vision of a new society?

Often, there is a significant divergence between rhetoric and practice. The Russian and Cuban revolutions consciously aimed to create a gender-equal society, and they did succeed in bringing many more women into the workplace and the professions (Goldman 1993, Smith & Padula 1996). However, they recruited few women to major leadership roles and did not alter the basically male-biased values of their societies. The English, French, and American Revolutions inspired many women to play critical grass-roots roles and even included female ideals in their revolutionary iconography (Hunt 1992). However, they took no action to change the traditional role of women in society. The Iranian Revolution involved many westernized, educated women who consciously adopted traditional Islamic female dress as a symbol of their opposition to Western cultural imperialism and their support for the revolution. Yet these women were surprised to find that they were excluded from further efforts to shape the revolution, and that the very anti-western Islamist modes of self-representation they adopted to help make the revolution became part of their enhanced repression afterward (Moghadam 1994, Fantasia & Hirsch 1995).

Even feminist movements have been torn over issues of how to engender their movements. Early feminists were concerned that embracing antisexual or prohomosexual attitudes would undermine their struggle for political emancipation and voting rights within mainstream society; modern feminists would prefer to undermine all traditional gender relations as part of the struggle against patriarchy and welcome gay and lesbian rights activists as partners in their cause (Taylor & Whittier 1992, Rupp 1997).

The key question about engendering revolutionary movements is whether in patriarchal societies women can ever be sufficiently persuasive and powerful to become visionary or effective leaders in their own right. The major female revolutionary leaders—Aquino in the Philippines, Chamorro in Nicaragua, Aung San Suu Ki in Burma—all acquired a leadership mantle from martyred husbands or fathers. This pattern also appears among democratic female leaders in Asia, such as India's Indira Gandhi, Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto, and Sri Lanka's Sirimavo Bandaranaike. To date, despite the widespread participation of women in revolutionary movements and their crucial contributions as bridge leaders, they have yet

to play an independently dominant leadership role (except in the movement for women's political equality, if one treats it as revolutionary). Nor have revolutions, even where they have brought women full participation in voting and workplace opportunities, brought rapid transformations in the household and leadership status of women in their societies.

## A PARADOX OF REVOLUTIONARY PROCESSES: Is Repression a Barrier or Spur to Revolutions?

The perception that structural conditions are the main, if not the sole, determinant of revolutions is strengthened by the fact that revolutions sometimes seem to come about despite all efforts of the state to appease or repress them. Often, paradoxically, fierce repression is unable to daunt, or even inflames, revolutionary opposition (Lichbach 1987, Weede 1987, Olivier 1991, Khawaja 1993, Kurzman 1996, Rasler 1996, Moore 1998). In many cases, state reforms only encourage revolutionaries to demand more. Yet in other cases, most recently in the democracy movements in Burma and in China, apparently highly favorable conditions and considerable mass mobilization were crushed by state repression (Walder 1989, Carey 1997, Brook 1998). And in Prussia in 1848, in Britain in 1830, and in South Africa in 1994, reforms combined with repression effectively defused and ended revolutionary movements. When do repression and reform work to halt the progress of revolution, and when do they fail or even backfire and provoke or inflame revolutionary action?

While perceptions of state injustice and ineffectiveness may lead to opposition, the development of such conflicts has a contingent and metamorphic character. The actions and reactions of regimes, regime opponents, counter-movements, and the broader public all reshape the processes of group identification, perceptions of the efficacy and justice of the regime and its opponents, and estimates of what changes are possible (Gartner & Regan 1996, Kurzman 1996, Rasler 1996, Zhao 2001). Movements of reform may become radicalized and revolutionary, initially small confrontations may spiral into mass uprisings, or large popular movements may be crushed.

It is well known that many revolutions and rebellions, from the English and French Revolutions to the Mau-Mau revolt in Kenya and *La Violencia* in Colombia, grew out of efforts to reform, not overthrow, the ruling regimes (Walton 1984, Speck 1990). A combination of unexpected popular pressures from below, conflicts between conservative and radical factions of the reform movement, reactions to international interventions, and temporizing or provocative actions by the regime, gave precedence to both more radical leadership and more revolutionary policies (Furet 1981). In fact, the structural conditions that give rise to social protest movements, unsuccessful rebellions, and revolutions are generally quite similar. The transformation of social movements into rebellions or revolutions depends on how regimes, elites, and publics respond to the conflict situation (Goldstone 1998b).

When facing demands for change, ruling regimes may employ any combination of concessions and repression to defuse the opposition (Davenport 1995). Choosing the right combination is not an easy task. If a regime that has already lost its perceived effectiveness and justice offers concessions, these may be seen as “too little, too late,” and simply increase the popular demands for large-scale change. This is why Machiavelli advised rulers to undertake reforms only from a position of strength; if undertaken from a position of weakness, they will further undermine support for the regime. The efforts of the Dowager Empress in late Imperial China, and of Gorbachev in the waning days of the Soviet Union, to encourage westernizing reforms led to escalating criticism of the old regimes and ultimately to their complete rejection and overthrow (Teitzel & Weber 1994).

Repression is also a matter of degree and of context. Repression that is powerful, or that is focused on a small “deviant” group, may be seen as evidence of state effectiveness and cow the opposition. However, repression that is not strong enough to suppress opponents, or that is so diffuse and erratic that innocents are persecuted, or that is aimed at groups that the public considers representative and justified in their protest, can quickly undermine perceptions of the regime’s effectiveness and justice (White 1989, Goldstone & Tilly 2001). Thus the deaths of Pedro Chamorro in Nicaragua and of Benigno Aquino in the Philippines, the diffuse persecution of ordinary citizens by Batista in Cuba, and the deaths inflicted on protestors in Iran by the forces of the Shah in 1978 spurred accelerations of popular protest. In contrast, the overwhelming force used against the Tiananmen Square protestors, who were publicly labeled as counterrevolutionary traitors, broke public resistance to communist rule in China for at least a decade (Zhao 2001).

Perceptions of the vulnerability of rulers also make a difference to the effect of repression. When the regime is judged to be losing support and capable of being overthrown, protestors may bear great risks, and great regime violence may simply further persuade people that the regime has got to go; yet when a regime is seen as unshakable, indiscriminate violence and terror may simply reduce the opposition to silence (Mason & Krane 1989, Opp & Roehl 1990, Opp 1994, Brockett 1995).

Rulers, however, have few guideposts to help them determine in advance whether a given level of concession or repression is sufficient. Lack of information and over-confidence further conspire to produce inappropriate responses. Worse yet, rulers often veer back and forth between concessions and repression, appearing inconsistent and therefore both ineffective and unjust (Goldstone & Tilly 2001). For example, both Marcos in the Philippines and Milosevic in Serbia believed they could rig victory in elections, and therefore they made the apparent concession of calling elections to justify their authoritarian rule. When, despite their efforts, it was widely perceived that they lost the elections, they then had to fall back on repression to maintain their rule. But because of the perceived electoral losses, military and police resolve to defend the regime was weakened, and repression of popular protests failed, leading to the collapse of the regime.

Foreign intervention can also lead to switches from repression to concessions and vice versa. The more active human rights policies of Jimmy Carter led Somoza

in Nicaragua and the Shah of Iran to reduce repression, giving a space for opponents to undertake more active public resistance. In the ensuing dance of repression, concessions, and protest, the regimes were not repressive enough to crush their opponents but were repressive enough to increase perceptions of their injustice and swing elites and publics to support the opposition, strengthening the revolution. In contrast, in 1956 in Hungary and 1968 in Czechoslovakia, the regimes were vacillating enough to encourage reformers to demand radical change in socialist rule; yet massive external repression from the Soviet Union quashed the widespread public uprisings.

In general, a strong regime facing a weak opposition can readily maintain itself by concessions or repression; however, a regime with major financial or military weakness facing widespread elite and popular opposition has a hard time surviving. In these cases, structural conditions largely determine outcomes. However, in many cases a regime's strength or weakness and the degree of public support or opposition are either intermediate or simply unclear at the beginning of a conflict (Kuran 1989, 1995b). In such cases, structural conditions offer no secure guide to what will ensue, and it is the interaction of the regime and its opponents that determines what will follow. An apparently strong regime that represses weakly or inconsistently, or that offers concessions deemed inadequate, can quickly undermine its own position (Kurzman 1996). Moreover, a regime that makes reform appear unlikely can undercut the moderates among its opponents and give more radical elements the upper hand in recruiting public support (Walton 1984, McDaniel 1991, Seidman 1994).

Because authoritarian regimes are often so distant from understanding their own subjects, or so overconfident in their estimation of their own power, errors by such regimes are common, and often an apparently secure regime that has lasted many years suddenly unravels in the face of a rapidly expanding opposition that in prior years no one had anticipated—Iran in 1979, the Philippines in 1986, and the Eastern European and Soviet communist regimes in 1989–1991. In contrast, regimes that appear structurally weak, such as the personal rule of Mobutu in Zaire, can persist for many years if the use of concessions and repression is skillful in dividing and neutralizing, rather than uniting and inflaming, the opposition (Snyder 1998).

## MICRO-LEVEL FOUNDATIONS AND QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The study of revolutions (and of peaceful democratic transitions) has been dominated in the past two decades by scholars using the case-study approach with national trajectories as cases. Scholars have therefore emphasized systemic macro-level factors in their analysis, such as the relations among states, elites, popular groups, and foreign nations; the ideologies or cultural frameworks of nations or large groups; and trends in national-level conditions such as social mobility, state debt, or population increase. This approach, relying on system-level analysis of a



small number of cases, has been the subject of considerable controversy (Lieberson 1991, Collier 1993, King et al 1994, Goldthorpe 1997, Goldstone 1997a, Katznelson 1997, Ragin 1997, Rueschemeyer & Stephens 1997, Mahoney 2000). Although most scholars still believe the case-study approach has merit, two other approaches have also attracted major research efforts: micro-level analysis of the motivations of individuals involved in revolutionary actions (including social psychological and rational choice modeling approaches) and quantitative analysis of factors associated with the incidence of revolutions (both Boolean and large-*N* statistical analyses).

### Micro-Level Foundations: The Rationality of Revolution

We have already alluded to the findings of social psychological analysis in our discussion of networks and leadership. Scholars have pointed out that individuals who participate in rebellious and risky protest activity are generally motivated, recruited, and sanctioned through preexisting communities to which they belong, but that activation of a specifically oppositional group identity depends on the actions of revolutionary entrepreneurs and states (Klandermans 1984, Klandermans & Oegema 1987). Commitment to an oppositional identity depends on believing in the efficacy of protest, which is reinforced by small-scale victories and benefits conferred by revolutionary groups; in addition, unjust actions or evidence of state weakness can push individuals to withdraw from identification with the state and to fall back on communities, informal networks, and opposition movements as alternative foci of political loyalty.

Rational choice models have further reinforced these findings. At one time, rational choice theorists argued that macro, case-based studies of revolution lacked micro foundations (Friedman & Hechter 1988, Kiser & Hechter 1991). They even argued that since individuals faced risks and costs if they participated in protest behavior, but reaped the same benefits if protest succeeded whether they participated or not, revolutionary action was irrational for individuals (Olson 1965, Tullock 1971). However, scholars have now demonstrated that in practice, this collective action problem for individuals can be resolved in many ways, and that revolutionary action can indeed have solid micro-level foundations in rational behavior.

Lichbach (1995, 1996) has shown that there are four main families of solutions to the collective action problem, each offering a way to motivate individuals to join in protest—changing incentives, using community obligations, arranging contracts, and using authority. In practice, they appear in various combinations and provide a plethora of ways to create collective action. Thus the research agenda of rational choice theory in regard to revolutions is no longer one of posing obstacles to collective action; instead, rational choice analysis has joined with other approaches in seeking to identify the processes by which collective action solutions are achieved, and the general characteristics of those solutions.

All these solutions rest on sanctioning and group identification. Although this can be considered problematic in itself (Hechter 1987), empirical studies

in anthropology, survey research, and psychological experiments all demonstrate a widespread tendency of people to practice norms of fairness and group orientation (Oliver 1984, Klosko 1987, Knoke 1988, Finkel et al 1989, Fiske 1990, Hirsch 1990, Piliavin & Charng 1990). People who strongly identify with a group generally feel an obligation to act if the group acts, and believe that other group members will act with them. The main check on protest activity then is not the collective action problem but whether people believe that the group will be efficacious if action is taken (Opp 1989, Macy 1990, Macy 1991, Oberschall 1994b). Once it is realized that groups, and not individuals, are the foundational unit for decisions regarding protest actions, then rational choice models predict patterns of revolutionary mobilization consistent with experience in a wide variety of cases across time and across different cultural settings (Taylor 1988a, Chong 1991, Tong 1991, Goldstone 1994b, Hardin 1995, Moore 1995, White 1995).

Now that it is clear that group identification allows the individual collective action problem to be overcome, rational choice analysis has focused on clarifying the kinds of group structure that favor protest action and the patterns by which mobilization is likely to occur. Such studies have shown that neither a simple homogeneous group with strong ties (such as a traditional peasant village) nor a highly heterogeneous group (such as a diverse urban population) is ideal for mobilization. Rather, mobilization flows most readily in groups where there is a tightly integrated vanguard of activists who initiate action, with loose but centralized ties to a broader group of followers (Heckathorn 1990, Heckathorn 1993, Marwell & Oliver 1993, Kim & Bearman 1997, Chwe 1999, Yamaguchi 2000). This helps account for the observations that peasants with more resources and more at stake often play a key role in leading peasant villages to rebel (Wolf 1969) and that urban revolts are rooted in smaller neighborhood, occupational, or religious communities (Gould 1995).

Rational choice models also demonstrate why revolutionary mobilization is prone to rapid and often surprising spirals of escalation. If the key to protest mobilization is convincing groups that their actions will be effective against the regime, then two bits of information are crucial: the relative weakness or resolve of the regime and the number of other groups that support the action. Shifts in perception or information can suddenly make groups that long harbored concerns about regime injustice or effectiveness believe that now their action can make a difference. Single events or crises that provide new information can thus precipitate sudden mobilization based on previously concealed preferences and beliefs, producing a “bandwagon” effect as more groups add their actions to what appears to be an increasingly favorable juncture for action (Kuran 1989, Carley 1991, Chong 1991, Macy 1991, Karklins & Peterson 1993, Koopmans 1993, Lohmann 1993, Lichbach 1995). These models provide a framework for understanding the explosive mobilization seen in events such as the sudden collapse of communist control in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Kuran 1991).

The past decade of rational choice research on revolutions has thus underlined the same topics—leadership, group identity, network ties—emphasized in

recent comparative historical studies. Instead of posing paradoxes, rational choice analysts have now moved toward providing a firm micro-level foundation for understanding the causes and dynamics of revolutionary action.

## Quantitative Analyses

Though many case-study analyses used quantitative techniques to analyze particular relationships, they remained focused on a small number of cases. In order to overcome this limitation, scholars have undertaken analysis of global data sets to search for general correlates of revolutionary activity.

An early wave of quantitative analysis of revolutions in the 1960s, based mainly on linear regression using global country-year data sets, focused on issues in modernization and deprivation theory (Feierabend et al 1969, Gurr 1968). Evaluations of such models found them lacking in consensus (Gurr 1980), and they gave way to structural and case-comparative analyses in the 1970s and 1980s (Skocpol 1979). However, in recent years a new wave of quantitative analysis has arisen that seeks to combine the virtues of large-*N* statistical analysis and sensitivity to case-based research and that focuses more on the character of the state.

The major new method used is Boolean analysis (Ragin 1987), which assigns binary “absent” or “present” values to variables for each of a large number of specific cases. It thus retains the specifics of each case and allows for multiple configurations of independent variables. Algorithms are then used to deduce the minimum set, or sets, of variables that characterize particular outcomes.

Foran (1997b) and Wickham-Crowley (1992) have used Boolean analysis to good effect in analyzing several dozen cases of Third World revolutions. They find that full-scale social revolutions are rare and are associated with the most distinctive set of variables. Other kinds of revolutions—failed revolutions, political revolutions, rural rebellions—are associated with other, more varied combinations. However, their analyses do not produce a clear theory of the causes of revolution because they use different sets of variables and different sets of cases. The Boolean method is very sensitive to the specific cases used and the variables tested. In Foran’s analysis, every successful social revolution had a “culture of rebellion”; in Wickham-Crowley’s analysis, this variable was not included and appears unnecessary to distinguish the successful social revolutions from other events. What the Boolean analyses do demonstrate is that there is no single set of factors whose absence or presence always leads to revolution or nonrevolution. Rather, different factors combine in a variety of ways to produce different types and outcomes of revolutionary conflict.

More conventional regression analyses have also moved away from simply using country-years as data points, with all the problems of multiple and complex autocorrelation that involves. Analyses of insurgency and civil war by Collier et al (2000) use regionally aggregated data to ask why civil conflict is more common in Africa than elsewhere; the analysis of Fearon & Laitin (2000) uses data aggregated over decades to create a panel format for analyzing succeeding events. Olzak (1992)

uses event-history analysis to explore the development of ethnic conflict in several well-defined cases. Interestingly, the Collier, Fearon & Laitin, and Olzak studies all aimed to test the same hypothesis—whether violent ethnic conflict (often a cause or accompaniment in revolutions) can be traced to the ethnic composition of a population. In all these studies, quantitative analysis of competing hypotheses rejected the view that ethnic composition itself is the prime cause of violence; instead, such factors as economic competition and lack of economic growth lead to political strife.

Yet another approach to blending case and quantitative analysis has been taken by the State Failure Task Force (Esty et al 1998, Goldstone et al 2001), a collaborative effort by academics and US government agencies to build a massive data base on major domestic political conflicts. The task force first identified over 100 discrete cases of civil war, rebellion, and revolution in the world from 1955 to 1995. For every year in which a “problem” case started, the task force then selected three other countries at random from among all those countries in the world that had no such internal conflicts for the decade centered on that year (“stable” cases). In this way, every problem case was matched with three randomly chosen control cases. Data on the problem countries were then pooled and compared with data on the control countries to seek factors associated with major political conflicts. This method produced over 400 cases for the pooled data analysis; nonetheless, each case of conflict was treated as a whole and was the basis for comparisons.

The task force repeated this analysis for global and regional data sets and produced fairly consistent findings. The three variables most often associated with political upheavals were regime type, international trade, and infant mortality. Regime type had a surprising, U-shaped relationship to political unrest: Democracies and autocracies were both fairly stable; however, partial democracies were at extremely high risk. Countries with a larger portion of their gross national product (GNP) tied to international trade, and with lower infant mortality, were generally more stable. These factors may seem sharply different from those evoked by Foran (1997c), Goodwin (2001), and other recent case studies of revolution. However, they can be reconciled. Partial democracies are precisely those states in which elites and rulers have begun the process of conflict, reform, and concessions; states have thus shown some weakness and are at a highly unstable juncture. Having a large portion of GNP involved in international trade requires adherence to rule of law and manageable levels of corruption; it may also restrain elite competition. Conversely, countries that have below-expected involvement in international trade for the size of their economy are likely to have elite factions that are distorting trade or economic activity for their benefit, heightening intra-elite conflicts. Infant mortality is known to be an excellent summary measure for standard of living; it thus addresses popular perceptions of the effectiveness of the regime in providing for the popular welfare and nationalist programs of economic development. That all three measures must be relatively high to pose high risks of revolution confirms the conjunctural approach of case studies.

These new quantitative approaches are still being developed. Nonetheless, it is striking that, with regard to the causes of political upheaval, all of them point in the

same general direction as the case-study analyses of revolutions. In all the major studies, regardless of methods, it is those factors that affect the strength of the state, competition among elites, and popular living standards that determine the stability or instability of the ruling regime. It may be hoped that this new generation of quantitative studies will reinforce and enrich, rather than rail against, comparative case studies.

## OUTCOMES OF REVOLUTIONS

The outcomes of revolutions have generated far less scholarly inquiry than the causes, with the possible exception of outcomes regarding gender. This may be because the outcomes of revolutions are assumed to follow straightforwardly if the revolutionaries succeed. However, such research as we have on outcomes contradicts this assumption; revolutionary outcomes often take unexpected twists and turns.

Stinchcombe (1999) offered the reasonable argument that a revolution is over when the stability and survival of the institutions imposed by the new regime are no longer in doubt. Yet even this definition is ambiguous, as it can take weak and strong forms. By the weak definition, a revolution is over when the basic institutions of the new regime are no longer being actively challenged by revolutionary or counterrevolutionary forces. By this standard, the French Revolution ended in Thermidor 1799 when Napoleon took power, the Russian Revolution of 1917 ended in 1921 with the Bolshevik victory over the White armies, and the Mexican Revolution of 1910 ended in 1920 with Obregon's presidency. Yet a strong definition, by which a revolution has ended only when key political and economic institutions have settled down into forms that will remain basically intact for a substantial period, say 20 years, gives far different results. By this definition, as Furet (1981) has argued, the French Revolution ended only with the start of the French Third Republic in 1871. The Russian Revolution of 1917 would not be considered over until after Stalin's purges of the 1930s; and the Mexican Revolution of 1910 would be dated as lasting through the Cárdenas reforms, to 1940. For that matter, the Chinese Revolution that began in 1910 has yet to end, as none of the Republican, Nationalist, Communist, or Great Proletarian Cultural Revolutions produced a lasting socioeconomic order.

Sadly, there is no scholarly consensus, and different analysts use weak, strong, or idiosyncratic definitions to determine when a revolution has ended. Yet although it is difficult to say precisely when a revolution is over, it is nonetheless possible to discuss the consequences that most commonly unfold after the fall of the old regime.

### Domestic Outcomes

Revolutionaries frequently claim that they will reduce inequality, establish democracy, and provide economic prosperity. In fact, the record of actual revolutions is rather poor in regard to all of these claims (Weede & Muller 1997).

Although many revolutions engage in some initial redistribution of assets (particularly land), no revolutionary regime has been able to maintain more than a symbolic equality. Rewards to administrators and top economic producers quickly lead to differentiation of incomes (Kelley & Klein 1977). This has been true in both capitalist and communist revolutionary regimes. In addition, many regimes that begin with radical and populist economic schemes eventually revert to “bourgeois” and capitalist economic organization, such as Mexico, Egypt, and most recently China (Katz 1999).

Until very recently, revolutions have invariably failed to produce democracy. The need to consolidate a new regime in the face of struggles with domestic and foreign foes has instead produced authoritarian regimes, often in the guise of populist dictatorships such as those of Napoleon, Castro, and Mao, or of one-party states such as the PRI state in Mexico or the Communist Party-led states of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Indeed, the struggle required to take and hold power in revolutions generally leaves its mark in the militarized and coercive character of new revolutionary regimes (Gurr 1988). It is therefore striking that in several recent revolutions—in the Philippines in 1986, in South Africa in 1990, in Eastern European nations in 1989–1991—the sudden collapse of the old regime has led directly to new democracies, often against strong expectations of reversion to dictatorship (Foran & Goodwin 1993, Weitman 1992, Pastor 2001). The factors that allowed democracy to emerge in these cases appear to be several: a lack of external military threat, a strong personal commitment to democracy by revolutionary leaders, and consistent external support of the new democratic regimes by foreign powers.

Economic performance is more puzzling. One might expect revolutions to unleash great energy for rebuilding economic systems, just as they lead to rebuilding of political institutions. Yet in fact this rarely if ever takes place. For the most part, long-term economic performance in revolutionary regimes lags that of comparable countries that have not experienced revolutions (Eckstein 1982, 1986). This may be in part because the elite divisions and conflicts that both precede and often follow revolution are inimical to economic progress (Haggard & Kaufman 1995).

It appears that the very effort that goes into rebuilding political institutions throttles economic growth (Zimmermann 1990). Revolutionary regimes are generally more centralized and more bureaucratic than the ones they replace (Skocpol 1979). In addition, to secure their authority, revolutionary leaders are often quite restrictive in regard to entrepreneurial activity; five-year plans and state supervision or ownership of major economic enterprises place economic activity in narrow channels.

Revolutionary regimes can often focus resources and create hothouse growth in selected industries. The Soviet Union and China were fairly successful in creating nineteenth-century-style heavy industrial complexes. Yet neither of them, nor Iran, nor Nicaragua, nor any other revolutionary regime, has succeeded in generating the broad-based economic innovation and entrepreneurship required to generate sustained rapid economic advance (Chirot 1991).

It may be, however, that the new democratizing revolutions will prove an exception. They appear to be less economically restrictive and less heavily bureaucratic than the regimes they replaced. Poland, the Czech Republic, and the former East Germany have all shown strong economic gains. Nonetheless, most revolutionary states even recently have either been so rigid as to continue to restrain economic activity (e.g. Belarus and the Central Asian postsoviet republics), or so weak and disorganized as to be unable to promote and secure a broad economic advance (e.g. Russia, Georgia, South Africa). The general tendency of revolutions to produce poor economic performance thus seems intact, although with a few hopeful exceptions.

As noted above, another area in which revolutionary outcomes usually fall short of expectations is the social emancipation of women and their elevation to leadership roles. Although modern socialist revolutions have generally brought women into the professions and the labor force, they have not changed their essentially secondary status (Lapidus 1978, Cole 1994). Despite women's extensive participation and grass-roots leadership in most of the revolutions in history, gender equality has remained absent, or if articulated, still illusory, in the outcome of revolutionary struggles (Lobao 1990, Randall 1993, Foran et al 1997).

Religious and ethnic minorities often do worse, rather than better, under revolutionary regimes. While revolutions often promise equality in the abstract to all followers, when counterrevolution or external interventions threaten the revolutionary regime, any groups not bound by ethnic and religious solidarity to the new government become suspect in their loyalties and may be singled out for persecution. Such has been the fate of the Ba'hai under the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Miskito Indians in Nicaragua, and those Croats, Muslims, and Serbs who found themselves on the wrong sides of borders in the revolutionary breakup of Yugoslavia (Gurr 1994).

With so many disappointments in the outcomes of revolutions, why have they nonetheless been so vigorously pursued? To answer that question, we need to recall one causal factor—the role of leadership—and one area in which revolutionary outcomes have met or even exceeded expectations, namely the augmentation of state power.

The major objectives of revolutionary leaders are to restructure the bases of political power, to leave their mark on the political and/or economic and social organization of society, and to alter the status of their nation in the international system. Whatever their other failings, revolutions have been remarkably successful in mobilizing populations and utilizing that mobilization for political and military power (Skocpol 1994). Although the eventual goals of democratization or equality or prosperity have often been elusive, the immediate leadership aims of seizing and expanding state authority, changing the rules for access to political power, and restructuring beliefs and institutions have been wildly successful for leaders from Napoleon to Hitler to Lenin to Castro.

The ability of successful revolutionary leaders to reshape their societies (if not always with the expected ultimate results) thus continues to inspire revolutionary

entrepreneurs. As we have seen, a major feature of revolutionary mobilization is the effort of a committed core or vanguard to mobilize a mass following based on ideological depictions of the present regime as fundamentally ineffective and unjust. Under such conditions, especially when prodded by concessions or repression and when the old regime seems vulnerable, popular mobilization against the regime is possible. The continued appeal of revolution, despite a lengthy history of frustration of mass aspirations, must be understood in the context of leadership dynamics and mobilization processes that focus attention on present injustices rather than future results (Martin et al 1990).

In addition, revolutions have a significant impact on the position of countries in the international arena. These outcomes provide the basis for potent nationalist appeals to both elites and popular groups (Hall 1993, Calhoun 1998).

## Outcomes in the International System

Walt (1996) has demonstrated why one of the first results of revolutions is often external war. The sudden appearance of a new regime upsets old alliances and creates new uncertainties. Foreign powers may judge the new regime as either vulnerable or dangerous; either judgment can lead to war. New revolutionary regimes, inexperienced in foreign affairs, may make similar errors of judgment regarding their neighbors. Still, regimes conscious of extreme weakness, such as Russia after the Bolshevik revolution and the United States in the aftermath of the War of Independence, may go out of their way to avoid international conflicts (Conge 1996).

Aside from these miscalculations, revolutionary regimes may take actions that precipitate or exacerbate military strife. Many revolutions, from the Puritan Revolution in England and the liberal French Revolution to the communist revolutions in Russia, China, and Cuba and the Islamic revolution in Iran, explicitly made changing the world part of their revolutionary program. Armstrong (1993) has shown how these efforts upset the existing international balance of power. However, the degree to which war is sought or welcomed to pursue these goals is a product of actions and reactions among revolutionary factions and external powers. We have noted that revolutions are made by coalitions and involve both visionary and pragmatic wings of leadership. Foreign threats may give leverage to the more visionary and radical elements in the revolutionary coalitions, who deliberately seek combat and missionary adventures (Blanning 1986, Sadri 1997). In contrast, where more moderate and pragmatic leaders remain in charge, and foreign powers support rather than threaten the new regime, internal impetus for war is likely to be weak, as was the case following the revolutions in the United States, Bolivia, and Zimbabwe (Snyder 1999).

Eventually, even revolutionary regimes must accommodate to the reality of the international states system and assume a position in the constellation of international powers (Armstrong 1993). Revolutions can produce long-lasting shifts in national standing and alignments in the international system. Some revolutions



provide new aggressive energy to older nations, leading them to become regional or global threats to older powers. Thus Japan after the Meiji Restoration, Germany after the Nazi revolution, and Russia after Stalin's consolidation of the communist revolution became expansionary states. The outcome of World War II, arguably a product of both the communist revolution in Russia and the Nazi revolution, brought Russian expansionism into Eastern Europe and split the German nation, shaping the major cleavages in the international system for 50 years. Anticolonial revolutions, of course, add new states to the international system and reduce the influence of colonial powers in the regions they formerly ruled. Many other revolutions occur in defiance of foreign patrons who supported the old regime; in Afghanistan, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Iran, such revolutions led to extended hostilities between the old patron power and the new regime. Both kinds of revolution satisfy revolutionary elites' strong yearnings for nationalist assertiveness and autonomy while reinforcing the general population's sense of power. Even in Mexico and the Philippines, where the revolutionaries did not assume a strongly hostile stance toward the United States (which had supported their pre-revolutionary regimes), the eruption of nationalist sentiment accompanying the revolutions led to nationalizing of assets in Mexico and expulsion of the United States from its Philippine military bases. Thus, in ways subtle as well as dramatic, the outcomes of revolutions reshape international relations for many decades, often giving new initiative and autonomy to states in which revolutions took place (Siverson & Starr 1994).

## RECONCEPTUALIZING REVOLUTION

Over 20 years ago, Skocpol (1979) laid down what has become the dominant paradigm for analysis of revolutions. In her view, although marginal elites play a key role in guiding revolutions, and world historical possibilities such as the availability of communist templates affect outcomes, the major forces making revolutions and their outcomes are structural features of states and the international system.

In this approach, the stability of regimes is normal and unproblematic; the task of theory is to isolate a short and consistent list of conditions or factors that undercut that stability and facilitate popular mobilization. Once those factors arise, and regime crisis ensues, the actions of the opposition to overthrow and transform the regime are treated as unproblematic and normal consequences, with the ultimate outcome of the revolution being set by the structural constraints and opportunities provided by the domestic economy and the international political and economic system. Agency, leadership, and specific actions of the old regime, revolutionary factions, or foreign powers are considered either inconsequential or driven by prevailing structural conditions.

Twenty years and some two dozen revolutions later, this view is ready to be stood on its head. Stability is clearly not unproblematic; all across central

sub-Saharan Africa, in the Balkans, in the Kurdish regions of Turkey and Iran, in Georgia, Chechnya, Tajikistan, and East Timor and other parts of Indonesia, stability remains elusive. The collapse of autocratic regimes in Iran, Nicaragua, the Philippines, and Yugoslavia, and the collapse of one-party states in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, have shown how pervasive and sudden the loss of stability can be.

In addition, a short and consistent list of the factors leading to revolution appears to be a chimera. In addition to the international military pressures and elite conflicts over taxation pointed to by Skocpol, analysts of revolution have demonstrated that economic downturns, cultures of rebellion, dependent development, population pressures, colonial or personalistic regime structures, cross-class coalitions, loss of nationalist credentials, military defection, the spread of revolutionary ideology and exemplars, and effective leadership are all plausibly linked with multiple cases of revolution, albeit in different ways in different cases (Goldstone et al 1991, Goodwin 1994b, Foran 1997b). Moreover, conditions conducive to mobilization include traditional village and workplace communities, informal urban networks, repressive and/or concessionary responses of states to opposition actions, guerrilla organizations, revolutionary parties, and effective ideological framing and organization by visionary and pragmatic leadership (Wickham-Crowley 1992, Selbin 1993, Gould 1995, Goldstone & Tilly 2001).

The preceding list includes not only structural factors but also conditions linked to leadership, ideology, culture, and coalitions. Regime characteristics alone seem to provide no help in ascertaining when and where revolution will strike; colonial regimes, communist regimes, and personalist dictatorships have all fallen to revolution. Democracies in Europe have fallen to fascist and Nazi revolutions, while democracies in Latin America—such as Peru and Colombia—have struggled to secure their territories against armed revolutionary movements (McClintock 1998). Conversely, many personalist regimes have persisted for decades (Snyder 1998). Nor can the outcomes of revolutions plausibly be read off of structural conditions. The emergence of democracy or dictatorship, war or peace, gender agendas, and Islamic, communist, or liberal regimes appears to be a contingent result of decisions by revolutionary leaders, foreign powers, and popular supporters, and of interactions among them (Karl & Schmitter 1991, Selbin 1993, Linz & Stepan 1996, Aminzade et al 2001b). Those scholars who have argued for a need to combine structural and agency approaches to regime change thus appear strongly vindicated (Karl 1990, Kitschelt 1992, Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994, Foran 1997c, Selbin 1997, Snyder 1998, Mahoney & Snyder 1999).

A fourth generation of revolution theory therefore needs to reverse all of Skocpol's key stipulations. It would treat stability as problematic, see a wide range of factors and conditions as producing departures from stability, and recognize that the processes and outcomes of revolutions are mediated by group identification, networks, and coalitions; leadership and competing ideologies; and the interplay among rulers, elites, popular groups, and foreign powers in response to ongoing conflicts.

## Problematic Stability

“All happy families resemble one another; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” What Tolstoy wrote of families may well apply to states and nations. Stable regimes enjoy a short and consistent list of conditions: The rulers appear effective and just in their actions; the majority of military, business, religious, intellectual, and professional elites are loyal to the regime; and most popular groups face steady or improving and fair conditions regarding work, income, and relationships with rulers and elites. Dictatorship or democracy, one-party state or military regime, traditional empire or constitutional regime, states that meet these conditions are “happy” states.

When these conditions begin to degenerate, stability declines. The laundry list of factors that may produce degeneration is long, ranging from global transformations of the economy or political system to localized corruption or unsatisfactory reforms by the ruling clique. Any factors that overstrain the military or financial capacity of the regime can lead to ineffectiveness; any actions that traduce traditional or legal norms or inflict unexpected harms can undercut perceptions of justice. Changing macro-level conditions, such as deteriorating access to jobs, falling real incomes, or heightened elite competition for positions, can produce accusations of both injustice and ineffectiveness. Changing micro-level conditions, such as spreading perceptions of regime vulnerability and of solidarity within and across networks, can persuade people to act against a regime. The precise combination of factors by which a particular state becomes “unhappy” may be highly specific to that regime—in fact, even Skocpol’s cardinal cases of Russia, China, and France showed different combinations of factors with varying magnitudes (Goldstone 1997a, Mahoney 1999).

In this view, stability is not an inertial state but implies an ongoing, successful process of reproducing social institutions and cultural expectations across time (Thelen 1999). Failure to sustain that process, not any particular combination of incident factors or conditions, is what leads to state crises.

## A Process-Centered View: Revolution as an Emergent Phenomenon

Once a regime loses its grip on the essential conditions of stability, a process of opposition mobilization and struggle begins, which in turn affects perceptions and relationships among actors. In this struggle, opposition actors, rulers, and countermovements deploy ideologies, seek to link up with different groups and networks, and build a sense of the justice and inevitable triumph of their cause. In some cases, a long struggle is required for the opposition to build support and for the state to lose it; in other cases, perceptions and actions shift so quickly that the state collapses with startling rapidity. Which actors, and how many, cease to support the regime; which leaders and factions come to dominate the revolutionary coalition; which foreign powers seek to intervene, on whose side, and with

what effort—all will determine the contours of the revolutionary struggle and its outcome.

If these considerations are valid, future theories of revolution will have to feature separate models for the conditions of state failure, the conditions of particular kinds and magnitudes of mobilization, and the determinants of various ranges of revolutionary outcomes, each of which may be the result of contingent outcomes of prior stages in the revolution's unfolding.

Fortunately, rational choice and network analyses have provided some guide to these dynamics. Vanguard groups, interpersonal networks, and cross-class coalitions are clearly pivotal in these processes; without them, revolutions are unlikely to develop. In addition, the ideology and organizational position of key actors can help account for the variety of outcomes. A negotiated transfer of power to Nelson Mandela and the pragmatic African National Congress leadership in South Africa was always more likely to yield a democratic regime than a violent transfer of power dominated by more radical black-power movements such as the Azanian People's Organization. Similarly, US support for the pragmatic moderates in the Philippines, and the popular support for Corazon Aquino, made a democratic outcome more likely than it would have been if the communist New People's Army had taken power through assault on an increasingly ineffective and unpopular United States-backed Marcos regime.

## Predictions and Extensions of Theories of Revolution

Given the important role of leadership, action/response patterns, and emergent perceptions and coalitions, many authors have argued that predicting revolutions is impossible (Keddie 1995a, Kuran 1995a, Tilly 1995). Others have argued that if we know what conditions are crucial to stability, then prediction in a probabilistic sense, if not a strictly determinate one, is possible (Collins 1995, Goldstone 1995). It is too soon to determine whose claims are correct.

Goldstone (1991, 1998a) has argued that a three-factor model, with proxies to track state financial health, elite competition for positions, and population well-being, can be used to longitudinally assess the risks of revolutionary crises in cases ranging from early modern monarchies to the collapse of the Soviet Union. More strikingly, a family of quantitative models developed by the State Failure Task Force, using various combinations of factors to denote the effectiveness of state institutions, population well-being, and elite conflicts, would have accurately predicted over 85% of major state crises events occurring in 1990–1997, using models based on 1955–1990 data (Goldstone et al 2001). However, further emphasizing the divergence between state crisis and the unfolding pattern of revolutionary conflict noted above, the State Failure Task Force, despite its high success in predicting the onset of state crises, has had no success in using prior conditions to predict the magnitude and eventual outcome of such events.

These findings suggest that despite the multiplicity of causes of state crises, models that focus on measures of regime stability may yet provide probabilistic estimates of whether state crisis is becoming more or less likely over time. However, future revolutions may continue to surprise us.

A further advantage of focusing on conditions that maintain stability, rather than the myriad of factors that can lead to its decline, is that such models have a fractal quality that is germane to social structure, which is self-similar on various scales. That is, society can be conceived of as having rulers, elites, and popular elements, but so can provinces, cities, and various formal organizations. A model of social stability (as opposed to causes of national revolutions) may be applicable across a wide variety of social scales (Goldstone, in preparation). Goldstone & Useem (1999) demonstrated that the incidence of prison riots in maximum-security institutions can be predicted using a version of the state-stability model. A model of prison stability using measures of prison administration effectiveness, of disaffection by prison guards (who play the role of elites), and of prisoners' perceptions of prison regime fairness provides a far better account of why prisons have revolts than explanations focusing on the characteristics of prisoners or on different patterns of prison authority.

Fractal analyses may prove a useful extension of theories of revolution in two respects. First, Goldstone (1991) has suggested that the reason why revolutions are so massively transformative is that in major social revolutions, social order breaks down on multiple scales simultaneously. That is, administrative effectiveness, elite loyalty, popular well-being, and perceptions of fairness are in decline at the national, regional, and local levels of organization. Comparing the conditions for stability across scales may give information on the magnitude of social upheaval and help bridge the micro-macro divide in studies of state crisis. Second, because a large variety of hierarchical organizations exist in societies (e.g. states, business organizations, military organizations, school systems, health systems, private corporations, prison systems), theories on conditions of stability may also have explanatory value for the stability of a host of nonstate organizations.

## CONCLUSION

The reign of third-generation theories of revolution appears to be over. No equally dominant fourth-generation theory has yet emerged, but the lineaments of such a theory are clear. It will treat stability as problematic and focus on conditions that sustain regimes over time; it will feature a prominent role for issues of identity and ideology, gender, networks, and leadership; and it will treat revolutionary processes and outcomes as emergent from the interplay of multiple actors. Even more importantly, fourth-generation theories may unify the results of case studies, rational choice models, and quantitative data analyses, and provide extensions and

generalization to cases and events not even conceived of in earlier generations of revolutionary theories.

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