REVOLUTIONS:
ROBUST FINDINGS, PERSISTENT PROBLEMS, AND PROMISING FRONTIERS

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STATES AND PEOPLES IN CONFLICT: TRANSFORMATIONS OF CONFLICT STUDIES
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The latest cohort of revolution studies has failed. Not because of a lack of systematic research or recurrent findings, but because the promise of a new generation of scholarship that would solve persistent problems and unify the field has not been upheld (Lawson n.d.). Over a decade ago, Goldstone (2001) noted increasing fragmentation in the social science of revolution among types, causes, processes, outcomes, and levels of analysis. The solution would be in a new approach that "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" (Goldstone 2001: 175-176). Yet this approach has not emerged. Theories of causes and mechanisms of revolution have proliferated. Even as methodological advances have been made, in both quantitative and comparative analysis, little advantage has been taken. Persistent problems still bedevil the field, such as the repression-protest paradox, outcomes of revolution, the legitimacy-stability problematic, and the role of global factors.

But nonetheless, research has continued to produce robust findings and extend its analysis to new events, such as the Color Revolutions and the Arab Spring. Accordingly, the social science of revolution is a vibrant, but disjointed field. This chapter reviews what consistent findings can be drawn out of studies of revolution. I begin by providing a brief intellectual history of the study of revolution, and identify three sets of consistent findings—the role of external strains on states, brittle regimes, and revolutionary coalitions. Next, I discuss how two recent areas of interest, nonviolent revolution and the diffusion of contention across international borders, validate earlier findings yet pose a risk of further fragmentation. I then highlight promising approaches to old problems and sketch methodological advances that could contribute to the field. I conclude by briefly considering persistent problems in the field and how they might be overcome.

The Study of Revolutions

Over the last century, scholarship on revolutions has developed across four primary generations (Goldstone 1982, 2001). With each generational turn, the subject, theory, and method has shifted to take into account of new events and to address the perceived deficiencies of the prior cohort. Knowledge accumulation, while present (Goldstone 2003), has accordingly been slow as revolution presents a moving target. This section briefly reviews these generations of revolution.

The first generation of revolution in the early 20th century primarily sought to establish revolution as a distinct phenomenon that could be compared across seemingly disparate events (Merriman 1938; Pettee 1938; Sorokin 1925). The

"natural historians" of revolution (Brinton 1938; Edwards 1927) sketched commonalities in the lifecycle of revolutions, emphasizing the role of different social groups in different stages of the revolutionary process. The object of inquiry at this time was quite tightly bounded—revolutions were the "great revolutions" where elites, armies, intellectuals, and the masses joined together to overthrow absolutist *ancien regimes*. In the absence of formalized comparative methods, scholars employed a mix of narrative contrast, process tracing, and ideal-typical configurations to understand the occurrence of revolution.

As social science moved towards more explicit study of cause and effect, a second generation of revolution studies emerged that emphasized the linkage between social processes and aggregate social psychology. In contrast to stage theories of the first generation, mobilization was seen as the product of disruption to social equilibrium, often caused by modernization pressures (Huntington 1968; Johnson 1966; Smelser 1963). Revolution thus had its roots in mass grievances, relative depravation, and individual decisions to participate in contention (Davies 1962; Gurr 1970; Olson 1965). Revolutionary events were defined in a larger manner—no longer just transitions away from monarchy in core states, but also modernizing events of the decolonizing periphery. While quantitative studies of revolution (Gurr 1968; Snyder and Tilly 1972) and structuralist comparative case studies (e.g. Moore 1966; Wolf 1969) began to emerge, the primary method of the second generation was illustrating theoretical claims with exemplar cases of revolution.

By the 1970s, a third generation of scholarship developed where revolutions were seen as products of structural, not psychological, processes and mobilization was analyzed vis-à-vis organizational and tactical dilemmas (Moore 1966; Tilly 1976, 1978). A key tenet was the functional and analytical autonomy of the state both as an actor and an arena for revolutionary action (Moore 1966; Skocpol 1979). State-centered theory would dominate revolution studies for almost the next two decades, yielding the highpoint of the social science of revolution. The impact of Skopcol's approach was as much definitional as theoretical. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a common strategy of analysis was to critique prior works for not considering all types of revolution and propose a new variant with its own causal and mechanistic pattern, e.g. modernizing revolutions (Dunn 1972; Walton 1984), semi-peripheral and agrarian revolutions (Dix 1983; Paige 1975), revolutions from above (Trimberger 1978), etc. Skocpol's (1979: 4) clear elucidation of social revolution—"rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures… in part carried through by class-based revolts from below"—suggested a parsimonious object of study (see Goodwin 2001: Ch. 2). Accordingly, scholarship moved quite

quickly bringing old and new events into the study of revolution. Methodologically, the third generation was accompanied (and, in no small part, the instigator) of more rigorous comparative methodologies. Quantitative techniques were mostly left aside as innovative strategies for examining causality and conjunctural conditions were developed (see Mahoney 2004).

But with the cultural turn more broadly in social science, the unity of the third generation approach began to disintegrate. Structural theories of revolution were considered too deterministic and poorly equipped to deal with the current frontiers. The center of revolution studies thus became issues related to the structure-culture/agency problematic (Sewell 1985, 1992), leadership and ideology (Parsa 2000; Selbin 1993; Foran and Goodwin 1993), and the role of identity and solidarity, particularly among marginalized groups (Moghadam 1997; Reed and Foran 2002; Selbin 2010; Viterna 2006). The phenomenon of interest also shifted again focusing more on revolutionary processes rather than revolutionary onsets, incorporating episodes of dual power in revolutionary situations (Tilly 1993), electoral and pacted transitions (Lawson 2005), and failed or negative cases of revolution (Goodwin 2001; Foran 2005). Accordingly, Tilly (1995), in his second intervention in the field, argued that general theories of revolution were doomed to fail and that the goal should be identifying combinations of mechanisms rather than invariant law-like propositions: "Revolutions are not A Single Thing… structure, culture, and strategic calculation are not outside of the mechanisms of contention but the raw material for their action and interaction" (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001: 226). The methods of the fourth generation, while increasingly sophisticated, remained the comparative strategies of the third.

As should be clear from even this brief review, the social science of revolution has undergone notable generational shifts in theory and the phenomenon of study, with more limited methodological evolution. With a constantly shifting dependent variable, replication and refutation has rarely been undertaken systematically. Rather new cases are tested for congruence to old ones, and where prior theories are found lacking further explanatory factors tend to be added somewhat piecemeal (Kurzman 2004a). As a result, there has been a proliferation of causal conditions and mechanisms. Fragmented and multiplying theories of revolution are thus just as much a product of the field's evolution as the underlying empirical reality of revolution.

Tilly was correct, perhaps, to reject single variable explanations with linear relationships to the onset or outcome of revolution. But this does not require rejecting all generalization. As Roger Gould (2003: 13) reminds us: "It is quite possible that the principal flaw of general statements is not that they are general but

on the contrary that they are not general enough." We can thus identify larger sets of causal conditions that have been consistently found to matter in revolutionary episodes (see also Goldstone 2003; Mann 2013). While specific, measurable factors may differ from case to case, the abstract pattern is clear.

Consistent Findings: External Strain, Brittle Regimes, and Revolutionary Coalitions

Under what conditions do revolutions occur? Which regimes are most susceptible? How does contention transform into successful revolution? Complete answers to these key questions still elude the field. Yet, for each, there are robust sets of factors that consistently occur across the universe of revolutionary cases. These conditions are not law-like as the exact mechanisms may differ across events, and they operate in a conjunctural and contextual fashion. Yet even so, the social science of revolution has demonstrated that revolutions occur when state structures are under increasing strain, that particular types of regimes are most brittle and at risk of revolution, and that successful revolutions involve large coalitions of social groups and elites as challengers.

States under External Strain

That revolutions occur, at least partially, as a product of administrative strain on a state is perhaps the key finding of the field (Collins 1999). While administrative breakdown can come from intrinsic pressures, as detailed below, the instigating process is often extrinsic to the state itself. Two sets of conditions seem to yield the most pressure: economic factors and relations with other states.

Insurmountable economic pressures on states are a foremost condition for revolution. Skocpol's (1979) original state breakdown theory argued that social revolutions occurred when states faced fiscal strain, and this has been replicated in a variety of cases (e.g. Skocpol 1982; Farhi 1990; Foran 2005; Goldstone 1991; Paige 1975; Walton 1984). The exact mechanism can differ from case to case— for example, states can overextend themselves through spending (Skocpol 1979, 1982), states dependent on a single commodity or resource can lose revenue as prices change (Skocpol 1982; Farhi 1990; Foran 2005), or population growth can outstrip state capacities (Goldstone 1991). Many strains are directly connected to world-economic relationships, whether dependent development, international or domestic market downturns, or legacies of colonialism (Boswell and Dixon 1993; Foran 2005; Goodwin 2001; Paige 1975, Walton 1984). Notably, some first generation approaches to understanding revolution also emphasized economic conditions as a causal factor (e.g. Merriman 1938). On the face of it, this set of findings is not

dissimilar from the social strain approaches of the second generation (Davies 1962, Gurr 1970; Johnson 1966). But the grievances of individuals need not be the causal mechanism for a correlation between stressors and revolution. States are, after all, autonomous actors and not just aggregates of popular will (Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol 1985).

A state's relation to other states and the larger international environment can also create pressures that lead to revolution. Skocpol's (1979) original theory emphasized war and military competition as an ultimate cause behind state breakdown, but later work has found little correlation and suggested that war and competition are best seen as products of the uncertainty that revolution brings (see Beck 2011; Halliday 1999; Kestnbaum 2002; cf. Mann 2013; Walt 1996). Thus, states in a "bad" neighborhood of revolutions and political instability face increasing pressure particularly when a revolutionary regime seeks to export its revolution (Katz 1997; Halliday 1999; Walt 1996). More centrally, revolutions tend to occur when political opportunity exists at the international level, for instance, during periods of hegemonic decline or when great powers do not intervene to uphold the status quo (Goodwin 2001; Goldfrank 1979; Foran 2005; Kurzman 2008; Kowalewski 1991). And, as detailed previously, economic and material strains are often structured by sets of international and transnational relationships.

In sum, external strains on states make revolution more likely through a combination of domestic and international processes. Crucially, it is not these conditions alone that predict the occurrence of revolution—they are just one important factor in conjunctural causation. While the exact mechanisms can and do differ from case to case, revolutions do not appear to occur at the heights of peace and prosperity.

Brittle Regimes

Not all states perform the same under pressure. Some regimes are more brittle and less able to accommodate or coopt contention, leading to no other way out from political dilemmas than revolution (Goodwin 2001). The social science of revolution has emphasized the particular brittleness of patrimonial and personalist regimes, particularly in early modern states, as systems that coopt potential rivals through political appointments are more easily strained by changing fortunes (Barkey and Van Rossem 1997; Bearman 1993; Goldstone 1991). Modern rentier states, highly dependent on the revenue from extraction to assure loyalty, are also more likely to crumble when resources diminish (Skocpol 1982).

In broader terms, the primary cause of brittleness is political exclusion (Goodwin and Skocpol 1989; Foran 2005). Regimes that exclude rather than co-opt

their potential opponents and other legitimate social groups have a limited capacity to deal with challengers, and must rely on repression alone (Wickham-Crowley 1992). More inclusive regimes, even if only inclusive to the extent of bringing key elites in to the power structure, are better able to block the formation of large oppositional blocs (Slater 2010: Walton 1984).

But other regime structures are also susceptible to revolution. States can use various methods of legitimation and inadvertently create the resource basis and constituency for opposition. For example, Islamist revolts may stem from the use of religion in the public sphere (Beck 2009; Moaddel 2002). And empires face another dilemma as the necessity of extending imperial control through autonomous subunits creates loosely controlled peripheries (Barkey and Van Rossem 1997; Mann 1986). In broad strokes, the imagery of first generation scholars—absolutist monarchies facing revolution—identified these mechanisms. But, ironically, in the contemporary world the few remaining monarchies have proved to be more stable than secular authoritarian and partially democratic states.

Each of these factors is a state-intrisic mechanism, dependent on the construction of political authority and state administrative structure. While no one type leads to revolution, it is clear that revolutions are nurtured by regimes that are unable to respond to political crises effectively due to their underlying nature, and thus allow broad oppositional blocs to form.

Revolutionary Coalitions

If external conditions determine a bit about when, and state structures a bit about where, then the formation of large challenging coalitions tells how mobilization can turn to revolution. Originally theorized as a primary mechanism of revolutionary success in the third generation (Dix 1984; Goodwin and Skopcol 1989; see also Tilly 1976), coalitions have been found to be an essential ingredient of the revolutionary process.

Successful coalitions can take various forms and involve different sorts of actors, as long as they are sufficiently broad and cross-cutting of social cleavages (Foran 2005). Broad coalitions make it difficult for the state to repress challenges completely (Chang 2008; Slater 2010) as targeted contenders can seek safe haven, either practically or symbolically, with other social groups (Osa 1997). Large coalitions also have the advantage of providing multiple methods of mobilization and the very real ability to bring participants out for a diverse set of reasons (Beissinger 2011, forthcoming). Thus, sufficiently broad coalitions sustain mobilization.

Successful coalitions also tend to incorporate elites who are uniquely well positioned to overcome state power (Barkey 1991; Goldstone 1991; Markoff 1988; Slater 2010). In fact, exclusionary states are so brittle precisely because they tend to promote elite defections and schisms. For example, one path to successful overthrow of a regime is when its coercive forces refuse to repress challengers, as Egypt and Tunisia in 2011 so vividly demonstrate. Upon occasion, elites have even become authors of their own demise—whether as the intellectual backbones of republican movements (Kurzman 2008; Markoff 1996) or as moderates in negotiated transfers of power (Lawson 2005).

In short, the social science of revolution has moved beyond Marxist imageries of vanguards and discovered that successful challenges come when large and well-placed segments of society begin to oppose a regime. This finding is, again, not that dissimilar from the early natural histories of revolutions that saw the entrance of new social groups into the revolutionary process as a key factor (e.g. Brinton 1938).

Overall, these three sets of factors tell us much about why and how revolutions occur. When strained states with inflexible regimes are faced with broad alliances of opponents, revolutionary contention and success are both more likely. The details, of course, do matter, but in broad strokes this imagery of revolution is both empirically substantiated and theoretically quite coherent. Yet this set of findings has not risen to the sort of consensual, synthetic paradigm that characterizes other fields of social science. As suggested above, revolution studies has grown in fits and starts and, accordingly, new events are often explored as their own subtopics rather than as further instantiations of the broader field. This can be clearly seen in recent studies of nonviolent revolution and its international diffusion.

NEW TOPICS: NONVIOLENCE AND DIFFUSION

In recent years, the Color Revolutions swept the partially democratic and autocratic post-communist states, and the Arab Spring spread across the authoritarian Middle East and North Africa. Even before the return of revolution to the 21st century, there was growing attention to relatively peaceable movements and contentious waves. Yet, as I describe below, most of these debates have been relatively self-referential rather than seen as steps in advancing the more general social science of revolution.

With the experience of negotiated transfers of power such as in Chile 1990 and South Africa in 1993, the bloodless post-communist transitions in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, and popular uprisings such as the Philippines in 1986, Burma in 1988, and Tienamen in 1989, scholars began to move away from viewing

revolutions as only violent and forced transfers of power (Foran 2005; Lawson 2005; Sharp 2005; Zunes 1994). This "new" type of revolution based on nonviolent resistance has generated its own cottage industry of research (e.g. Ackerman and Kruegler 1994; Schock 2005; Nepstad 2011). Scholars have argued that nonviolent strategies are a distinct phenomenon, requiring new lines of inquiry (Nepstad 2011; Zunes 1994). For instance, Stephan and Chenoweth (2008, 2011) found, in their influential study, that nonviolent movements are more likely to succeed as the strategy enhances the international legitimacy of the contenders and diminishes the negative effect of repression on protest. Interestingly, the nonviolent resistance subfield has done little so far to synthesize its findings with the broader social science of revolution. Yet the parallels are clear.

As scholars have previously found, the global context matters for revolution (Beck 2011; Foran 2005; Goldfrank 1979; Kurzman 2008)—international legitimacy of nonviolence is as much a product of global democratic norms as of a particular strategy of mobilization (Goldstone 2004). Second, all revolutionary movements must overcome repression to be successful, and nonviolent tactics are only one mechanism for this. Others include developing resource bases for sustained insurgencies (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Wickham-Crowley 1992), creating resilient organizational networks and forms (Chang 2008, Osa 1997), and forcing elite defections from the regime (Markoff 1988). It is also very possible that this effect is actually a moderator of a consistent prior finding in revolution—nonviolent campaigns require high degrees of solidarity and are most effective with mass support, both of which are building blocks of coalition formation. And just as with all revolutionary situations, true social revolutions are a rare occurrence no matter the strategies employed (Tilly 1993; Goodwin 2001). Further, nonviolent revolutions do fail in a large plurality of cases, can devolve into violent civil wars and insurgencies in others, and have only in a handful of cases delivered seemingly permanent transformations of states and society, suggesting that research on the type by itself may be relatively narrow in its contribution.

The events of 1989, the Color Revolutions, and the Arab Spring have also brought more attention to revolutionary waves and regime change cascades (see Hale 2013), intimately connected with imageries of waves of democratization (Huntington 1968; Markoff 1996). A primary focus of research has been on the diffusion of contention across societies, due to cross-national linkages among activists and the development of modular tactical strategies that can be used beyond the site of their innovation (Beissinger 2007; Bunce and Wolchik 2006; Kuzio 2006). On the other hand, others have stressed a more structural account (Hale 2005; Levitsky and Way 2010; McFaul 2006; Way 2008), which places causality in features

of political structures and foreign influence. The debate here has been centered on regionally-bounded contemporary events with little reference to prior cases, even though revolutionary waves are not a new or geographically limited phenomenon (see Beck 2011; Goldstone 1991; Kurzman 2008; Sohrabi 2002; Weyland 2009).

Again, the findings of this recent subfield accord well with broader revolution studies. While much of the literature on the Arab Spring is yet to be written, initial reactions by social scientists noted their agreement with prior research (Goodwin 2011; Goldstone 2011; Mann 2013). Tactical innovation and portability has long been seen as a determinant of protest cycles (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001), and revolutionary waves have long been known to have a diffusive quality (Brinton 1938). Even so, structural conditions are important in the development of contentious waves (Beck 2011; Goldstone 1991), for without political opportunity from strained states and regimes weakened by their own internal contradictions, mobilization is less likely to amount to revolutionary challenge.

In short, the recent sub-literatures in revolution studies—nonviolent resistance and diffusive contentious waves—look much like the prior findings in the social science of revolution. The danger here lies in the development of research agendas limited to distinct sub-types of revolutions—a situation that characterized a stagnant field of study until Skocpol's (1979) breakthrough. Thus, the most promising research incorporates both violent and non-violent strategies and global and local events into unified and systematic research designs, as Stephan and Chenoweth (2008) and Foran (2005) do.

Promising Frontiers: Micro-mobilization, Cultural Milieus, and Methodological Advances

In contrast to scholarly debates centered on a few instances or singular type of revolution, other research on revolution has begun to push old questions into promising lines of inquiry. Two areas stand out for their potential: new accounts and investigations of micro-mobilization, and an emergent understanding of how cultural milieus affect revolution. Research in both is characterized by theoretical synthesis and innovation that has analytical utility vis-à-vis cases of revolution from diverse times and places. Further, social science has undergone a number of methodological innovations in recent years that could allow for synthetic empirical examinations of revolution in the future.

Micro-mobilization

In the latter part of the third generation, research began to emerge on micro-mobilization in revolutionary episodes. In contrast to the presumed irrationality of

participation in the second generation and the non-voluntarist, structural models of the third, scholars began to emphasize the individual rationality of revolution (Kimmel 1990; Kuran 1995; Taylor 1989). This research, rooted in rational choice models of human behavior, has been superseded in recent years by promising developments both empirical and theoretical.

First, the advent of non-violent revolutions has allowed scholars to engage in field research, both quantitative and qualitative, of participation in revolution more easily. For instance, recent surveys and interviews of participants in Ukraine's Orange Revolution (Beissinger 2011, forthcoming) and Egypt's 2011 revolution (Holmes 2012) provide systematic data on the demographic and attitudinal bases of mobilization. Notably, these studies find that mass participation is a social and emergent process, which resists attempts at repression and forms durable coalitions, rather than the mere product of individual calculation. Innovation in social network analysis has also allowed new ways of understanding individual activism, both contemporary and historical. Gould (1995) established the utility of historical networks for understanding how neighborhood demography and physical structure affected mobilization in France in 1848 and the Paris Commune. And Bearman (1993) and Hillman's (2008) work on networks of nobles in early modern England have shown how coalitions form. For a more recent event, Viterna (2006) uses interviews and network analysis to chart paths of recruitment for women into the Salvadoran FMLN. These efforts stand in contrast to the broadly comparative methods of 20th century studies of revolution and have pushed accounts of micro-mobilization out of the realm of the theoretical into the empirical.

Conceptually, there have also been useful advances. In addition to the recognition that individual participation is always a social process, recent work has recognized the limits of rationality, emphasizing strategic miscalculation by actors. Weyland (2009) has argued that revolutionary waves like 1848 in Europe result from "bounded rationality" where actors misestimate the utility of a modular repertoire for their own situation. Failure of revolutionary attempts in a wave may thus occur due to strategic mistakes as much as elite learning and countering (cf. Hale 2013; McAadam 1983; Beissinger 2007). Miscalculation can also lead to a revolutionary outcome when a large enough segment of the population simultaneously perceives there to be a likelihood of success no matter the actual conditions, as Kurzman (2004b) argues for the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Rationality has also been paired with external, structural conditions fruitfully. For instance, Pfaff (2006) shows how the interplay between protest and the availability of exodus from an oppressive regime led to the collapse of East Germany in 1989. Perhaps most intriguing is Ermakoff's (2009; see also Sewell 1996) argument that revolutionary episodes are

times when uncertainty about the future predominates to such an extent that contingent and random events can influence decision-making and affect revolutionary outcomes. For example, Salan's unplanned and spontaneous cry "Vive de Gaulle!" led to the collapse of the 1958 army coup in France. These formulations may suggest new ways of analyzing revolutionary outcomes and how seemingly small sparks, e.g. a Tunisian fruit seller's self-immolation, can set off widespread contention.

In short, micro-mobilization accounts of revolution have moved past debates over voluntarism vs. structure and irrationality vs. rationality, demonstrating the essential social and collective processes that guide participants. New methods of analysis and techniques of data collection show great promise for further development in this line of inquiry.

Cultural Milieus

After Skocpol's (1979, 1985; see also Sewell 1985) almost partisan advocacy of structural factors in revolution, the field became caught up in the larger structure-agency debate in 1980s social science. Culture—conceived in broad terms—seemed to hold a promising key for the future of the field (Foran 1993; Goodwin 1994). Initial attempts saw ideology as a factor that shaped the outcome of revolutionary situations once regimes had fallen (Goldstone 1991; Parsa 2000; Selbin 1993). Others invoked culture as an explanatory factor as challengers drew on histories of resistance as a mobilizing resource (Foran 2005; Reed and Foran 2002; Wickham-Crowley 1992). In both instances, cultural factors were important additives to otherwise structural accounts of revolution.

More recent work has pushed beyond the culture-structure dichotomy to consider the autonomous power of cultural milieus (see Stinchcombe 1986). Drawing on Sewell (1992), Sharman (2003) argues that cultural practices and norms affect state elites as much as challengers and thus have independent causal power on the occurrence of revolution. Similarly, Kittikhoun (2008) and Kandil (2011) have shown that cultural memories and discourses have direct effects on the capacities and actions of states. Systematic research has also invoked (and attempted to measure) the role of culture in contention. Hung's (2011) research on protest cycles in early modern China shows that the changing legitimacy of the imperial government affected both the rate and orientation of contentious politics, and Beck (2011) found a positive association between the growth of transnational cultural constructs and the rate of revolutionary waves in Europe since 1500.

The social science of revolution has long awaited a resolution to the culture-structure tension of third and fourth generation approaches. It appears that the field

is at its advent. Norms, discourses, and memories have direct affects on who participates and how they mobilize. States and elites are both constrained and enabled by culturally structured processes. And broad cultural milieus seemingly affect the onset of revolution itself, independent of other structural features.

Empirical and Methodological Advances

Over the past three decades, methodological innovation and explication has transformed the landscape of available analytical tools. While not yet fully incorporated into the study of revolution, these advances have the potential to reshape the field, settle old debates, and open new frontiers. Advancement has occurred on three fronts: ontological; comparative-historical methods; and quantitative data and statistical tools.

Where second, and early third generation approaches drew a relatively straight line from causal factors of revolution to the end of regimes, later third generation research began to re-emphasize the view of the first that different stages of revolutions may have different underlying processes (see Goldstone 1991; Sohrabi 1995). In the last 15 years, the emphasis among fourth generation scholars on the revolutionary process, and its dynamic and emergent character is an implicit recognition of the need to separate the onset of contention and its outcome (see Tilly 1993; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). The ontological advantage is that the field can move past selection on the dependent variable of a successful, revolutionary transfer of power. This is a helpful development but one that needs to continue to be made explicitly and adopted whole-heartedly in systematic research.

Comparative-historical analysis has also come a long way since early attempts at its formalization (e.g. Skocpol 1984; Skocpol and Somers 1980). Methods for identifying and isolating causal mechanisms are much more formalized, whether through the inclusion of negative, deviant and counterfactual cases (Fearon 1991; Mahoney and Goertz 2004), careful controlled comparisons (Slater and Ziblatt 2013), or congruence testing and Bayesian inference (Goldstone 2003; Rueschemeyer 2003). Essential to these advances is the recognition of the role that case selection plays in comparative analysis (George and Bennett 2005). Cases can be selected through radial designs of comparison to crucial cases (Collier and Mahon 1993), representatives of typological categories (George and Bennet 2005; Ragin 2008), or mixed-methods approaches of nested case selection (Lieberman 2005; Rohlfing 2008). Analytically, Ragin's (2008) innovation of Qualitative Comparative Analysis in which Boolean, fuzzy-set logic is used to identify conjoint causation in small- and medium-N samples shows great promise for a field where conjunctural mechanisms are at play. Some, but not all, of these innovations have

been adopted in the social science of revolution, see, for instance, Goodwin (2001: 7) on negative cases and Wickham-Crowley 's (1992) and Foran's (2005) typological QCA analysis. Given the continued pace of innovation and formalization of these methods, there is a promising future for systematic comparison in the study of revolution.

While early quantitative studies (e.g. Snyder and Tilly 1972; Gurr 1968) were generally found lacking due to limited results and limitations in methods, tools of analysis and available data have changed dramatically. The adoption of event history and path dependent modeling to account for temporal sequences, Bayesian statistics for inference, instrumental variables for identifying causality, and rare events logistic regression for uncommon phenomenon, all have direct application in providing statistical tests of revolutionary theory. Further, new sources of event data, such as the Political Instability Task Force, Nonviolent Actions and Outcomes Database, the Global Terrorism Database, and Beissinger's (in preparation) future catalog of revolutionary events, could be used for quantitative or mixed-methods analysis. Yet, so far, the social science of revolution has not widely adopted these tools.

In all areas, methodological and empirical tools have changed substantially in social science. There is now a great opportunity for revolution studies, long a bastion of historical and comparative analysis, to become less parochial in its methodology and move towards rapid knowledge accumulation.

Overall, these are promising frontiers in the social science of revolution. The two hallmark debates of the last twenty years in revolution studies, rationality and culture, seem to be on the cusp of fruitful settlement. Between research on the onset and processes of revolution that takes into account micro-mobilization dynamics and the broad historical and social context of states, a new paradigm for understanding revolution could emerge. With new tools of analysis at hand, knowledge could begin to accumulate rather than just proliferate. Even so, future research on revolution will need to address a number of persistent problems.

Persistent Problems: Repression-Protest, Aftermaths, Legitimacy-Stability, and Global Dimensions

Even as the social science of revolution has incorporated new events and types of contention and pushed past some of the older debates, there remain a number of unresolved questions. Some of these problems, such as the repression-protest paradox or the long-term outcomes of revolutions, are well known with their own sub-literatures. Others, for instance the legitimacy-stability problem and global dimensions of revolution, have only received implicit attention. Finally, rethinking

what, exactly, the object of study should be could forge new directions. Each of these is discussed briefly below.

Repression-Protest Paradox

Sometimes repression is found to be a barrier to revolution and sometimes it is found to be a spur (Goldstone 2001; Lichbach 1987). Research on this paradox is intimately connected to the social movements literature on protest, but little consensus has resulted (Earl 2011). Repression is one of the foremost barriers to sustained mobilization, and no movement is successful without overcoming it. Yet research has also consistently found that repressive acts by a state can stimulate more protest in revolutionary situations (e.g. Khawaja 1993; Rasler 1996). Thus, the dynamic has been argued to take a U-shape (Lichbach and Gurr 1981), where repression seems to be like Goldilocks' porridge—the level needs to be just right for it to succeed. Another view is that repression is a determinant of protest cycles, affecting mobilization differentially at different times (Brockett 1993; Tarrow 1989). Others have posited that repression should be embedded in the larger structure of political opportunities available to movements (e.g. Davenport 2007; McAdam 1983), further muddying an already unclear concept. As noted above, repression can be both a barrier and a spur to coalition formation, and coalitions in turn often succeed as they undermine repression's effectiveness and encourage defection by elites and repressive forces.

In short, there is yet no clear answer as to how best conceptualize, measure, and test repression role's in revolution. It is clear that it is important, and perhaps among the most important, determinants of not only sustained contention against a state but its success. Untangling how repression operates, and fails to operate, is a major task for the social science of revolution.

Revolutionary Aftermaths

Another well-known problem is the long-term impacts and outcomes of revolutionary situations. If revolution is deserving of attention precisely because of its potential to transform societies (Skocpol 1979) and alter global power relations (Halliday 1999; Mann 2013), then it is somewhat surprising that outcomes have received less attention. Some third generation scholars did try to assess the immediate aftermath of revolution and its connection to the ideological programs of leaderships (Foran and Goodwin 1993; Selbin 1993). But for longer-term outcomes, little systematic work has been done (with the notable exception of Eckstein's [1985] assessment of revolutionary impacts on Latin American societies). This is due, in part, to a lack of scholarly consensus on when it is possible to say a

revolution ended. If it is when revolutionary challenges are no longer active "the French Revolution ended in Thermidor in 1799 when Napoleon took power", or if it is when institutions take on a sustainable and stable form then "the French revolution ended only with the start of the French Third Republic in 1871" (Goldstone 2001: 167). Or we might even extend the consistent turmoil of French politics through to the founding of the Fifth Republic in 1958 or de Gaulle's resignation in 1969. The lack of systematic research may also be due to fragmentation of the outcomes question into the extensive democratization literature in comparative politics on the one hand, and dissections of post-revolutionary authoritarian states (e.g. Chirot 1994) on the other. As the history of revolution studies has shown, such fragmentation is often a barrier to knowledge accumulation.

As the comparative-historical tradition in revolution studies often begins with typologies, a good place to start might be with Stinchcombe's (1999) discussion of possible settlements of uncertainty about the distribution of power in the future. Such a framework is possibly quite helpful for understanding the current reversals and limitations of the Color Revolutions and immediate impacts of the Arab Spring. In short, a third generation account of causality and onset and a fourth generation investigation of process are not sufficient to understand revolutionary outcomes. It is time to recapture the long tail of revolution—no matter when they can be said to have ended, revolutionary situations reverberate across time and scholars need to pay attention to this.

Legitimacy-Stability Problem

Other problems are less well recognized in the field. One of these is the tension between the legitimacy of regimes and their political stability. Ever since Weber, social scientists have long recognized that legitimate authority is a basis for stable political orders. Yet history is full of numerous examples of regimes that were believed to be popularly illegitimate but persisted, for instance, Hussein's Iraq or the Islamic Republic of Iran since 1979, or regimes that most had thought were legitimate but whose stability collapsed quickly, such as the USSR. The basic view of legitimacy across 2,000 years of political theory and social science is that it is social psychological product of individual beliefs and collective processes (Zelditch 2001). Thus, many micro-mobilization theories of revolution implicitly try to solve the paradox (e.g. Kuran 1991; Kurzman 2004b). But explicit research on the issue in the social science of revolution has been lacking.

It is perhaps more useful to think of the legitimacy-stability problem as calling up questions about the timing of revolution, rather than using a vaguely defined (or

undefined) "legitimacy" as a catch-all for surprising revolutions. Different revolutions may have different causal time horizons (see Pierson 2003), whether occurring due to the accumulation of underlying strains and contradictions, the spark of seemingly random events setting off a cascade of contention, or some mixture of the two. Careful and systematic study should problematize this question, making a dependent variable out of the timing of revolution as much as the occurrence of revolution. As charted above, new methods of analysis could be helpful for this endeavor.

Global Dimensions

Many studies of revolutionary cases have tried to place events in their international context (e.g. Goldfrank 1979; Goldstone 1991; Skocpol 1979; Paige 1975). Yet even so, due perhaps to the comparative method, the field has mostly been caught in a trap of "methodological nationalism", where singular societies are the focus rather than societies in interaction or transnational processes themselves (Lawson n.d.). In comparative-historical sociology, there is a growing awareness of the need to take the global seriously as an autonomous object and level of analysis (e.g. Go forthcoming). Some recent work on revolution has tried to do this, as well (Beck 2011; Foran 2005; Kurzman 2008; Mann 2013). But there is much yet to be done. Progress might be made through synthesis with existing research traditions on the transnational system, e.g. world-systems analysis, world society neo-institutionalism, and constructivism in international relations, or through pioneering new accounts of the international system and revolution. Few states are islands, and the theories and methods of revolution studies need to take the global and transnational seriously.

Given the proliferation of findings about the causes of revolution, reframing the questio and object of study is one possible strategy for knowledge accumulation. Goldstone (2001, 2003) has proposed that the field should problematize state stability rather than revolutionary unrest. If the paths to revolution are numerous, perhaps stable regimes display fewer configurations. Based on data collected by the Political Instability Task Force, Goldstone et al. (2010) find that regime type is more predictive of instability than economy, demography, or other factors. While more common in political science studies of regimes, research from the revolution perspective on this issue has been limited to date. It is possible that future efforts may validate the approach.

Another tack could be to formalize the implicit thread in the literature that different types of revolutions may have different types of causes that are

generalizable to their subset. As noted previously, this strategy was common to pre-Skocpolian theoretical debates and is implicit in more recent studies. Systematic research that identifies and disentangles these types could be a fruitful path not yet taken and a solution to fragmentation.

While progress in revolution studies has been accomplished, persistent problems still bedevil the field. Some are quite old, some are quite implicit, and some are quite new. While solutions here will not be easy, they could help to provide the basis of a new synthesis in the social science of revolution and meet the promise of earlier periods of knowledge accumulation.

CONCLUSIONS

The intellectual history of the social science revolution yields a picture of a subfield that has grown in fits and starts with a grand synthesis that is still elusive. Even so, consistent sets of findings have emerged: revolutions are more likely when states face external pressures, when regimes cannot deal with their own contradictions, and when contention is sustained by broad coalitions often involving segments of the elite. Recent studies of the non-violent revolutions like the Color Revolutions and the Arab Spring have validated this basic framework, even as attention has shifted from the social science of revolution more broadly to area- and type-specific studies. While the field has not resolved a number of issues, either theoretically or empirically—such as the repression-protest paradox, aftermaths of revolutionary situations, the tension between legitimacy and stability, and the global dimensions of revolution—progress has been made in moving past old debates about the rationality of revolution and the culture-structure dialectic in fruitful directions.

Running throughout this review has been the question of what revolutions are and what sort of theoretical stances can best account for them. The current wisdom is that revolutions have little to no generalizable features and that the task of research is to identify how different causal mechanisms combine in different cases. This is at its heart an ontological stance. To verify the imagery would require systematic studies designed to determine whether it is a product of careful testing and re-testing of theories and cases or an artifact of the field's intellectual development. As such, generalizability or the lack thereof remains an open question.

It also appears that the social science of revolution has made the most progress when there is broad agreement about the object of study. While the early 20th century view of revolutions has been mostly abandoned today, the natural historians knew what types of events they were studying and created the basis for later progress. State-centered approaches of the third generation yielded a number of

findings because what counted as a revolution—a social revolution—was quite clear. On the other hand, second generation accounts of revolution made little progress once trapped in conceptual debates about the various types and sub-types of events that could be considered revolutionary. And the fourth generation of revolution has fragmented into studies of sub-types and partial processes. For knowledge accumulation to again move forward, scholars of revolution will have to take this dynamic seriously and incorporate new methods of analysis that can account for complex and diverse events and causal pathways.

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