On Revolution and Realism: A Structural Realist Theory of Revolution

Author: Samuel Kent

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On Revolution and Realism: A Structural Realist Theory of Revolution

A Senior Honors Thesis

Submitted to

The Honors Program

of the

Department of Political Science

by

Samuel Kent

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Chapter I: Why Realism and Revolution?

Revolutions have been formative to the International System throughout its existence. It is therefore surprising that, in the words of Fred Halliday, there has been such a “mutual neglect” between International Relations and Revolutions Studies.¹ Even realist par excellence Stephen Walt admits, “Despite its practical importance and theoretical potential, the topic of the relationship between revolution and international politics is surprisingly under-studied.”² In a scathing critique on realism, K. J. Holsti argues, “Perhaps the most damaging lacuna in realism is its dismissal or lack of interest in revolutions.” He continues, “To leave out one of the most important “international” events – revolutions – from analysis is a major shortcoming of realism’s theoretical lens and its capacity to generate convincing general characterizations of the world of international politics.”³ Realism must rise to meet this challenge.

Realism, including its structural variety, fails to explain the cause of revolutions. As a result, the tradition is confined to discussing revolutions post festum, that is, post-revolutionary state behavior. This neglects the most consequential aspect of revolutions – their occurrence. It also overlooks how they emerge. Furthermore, the absence of a theory of revolution gives rise to a distorted view of the post-revolutionary state in the International System, which captures how the International System socializes the post-revolutionary state but is unable to theorize about how the post-revolutionary state, in turn, affect the International System through shifting the distribution of capabilities.

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¹ Fred Halliday, "the Sixth Great Power: On the Study of Revolution and International Relations,”
determines power relations on the International System, the inability of realism to capture revolutionary phenomena is problematic for its claims to offer a descriptive and prescriptive theory of International Relations. Realism requires an etiology of revolution to rectify its current inadequacies.

Many have dismissed revolutions as beyond the purview of International Relations, viewing them as distinctly a domestic phenomenon. The domestic analytical bias permeates the International Relations discipline where revolutionary phenomena is often black-boxed within the state-unit. Paul Rich suggests, the “fact that most of [the work on revolutions] occurred outside the arena of IR meant that it tended to develop in a comparative rather than international perspective.”

Perhaps surprisingly, the reverse holds true for comparativist studying revolutions who amalgamate international affairs, *qua definitione* exogenous to domestic borders, as undefined “fortuitous circumstances,” to use Barrington Moore’s phrase. Yet, revolutions do not exist within a box, not in cause or in effect. The err in reasoning is twofold: (a) to bifurcate the cause and consequence of revolutions into a domestic and an international box; (b) to dismiss the

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5 As Moore explains using the Chinese Revolution, “fortuitous in the sense that they did not derive from anything taking in place in China itself.” This claim is not applicable to most 3rd Generation Revolutions Scholars who assumes a structural approach, which will be discussed at length later in this paper. Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967) 214.
international box altogether. As John Dunn succinctly states, “There are no domestic revolutions.”⁶ Its international dimension must be retained.

Revolution are inextricably international phenomenon in numerous respects. First, the origin of revolution can be traced to strain put on the state from its position in the International System. Theda Skocpol notes, “Modern social revolutions have happened only in countries situated in disadvantages positions within international arenas.”⁷ In addition, war, the threat of war, or the financial burden of war often provides the immediate crisis that triggers the collapse of the state and marks the start of revolution. This, in turn, greatly influences how the revolution is carried out and even the nature of the post-revolutionary state.

Second, revolutions have a profound immediate impact on the International System. Stephen Walt points to quantitative data suggesting that ‘revolutionary’ regimes engage in war nearly twice the rate of so-called ‘evolutionary’ states.⁸ Similarly, Robert Snyder asserts that revolutions disrupt existing alliances and relations between the revolutionary state and other state-actors, which undermines systemic stability.⁹ The fact that the very mechanisms of international relations – such as deterrence, alliances, signaling, and diplomacy – break down with a revolutionary state, at least in the short-term, should raise duibity about the conspicuous neglect of revolutions in the literature.

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⁷ Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China (Cambridge Eng. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979)23.
⁸ This refers to the more immediate post-revolution time frame. Walt, Revolution and War, 1. See Tilly’s discussion on the “important relationship between war and revolution.” Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" Comparative Politics 5, no. 3, Special Issue on Revolution and Social Change (Apr., 1973) 446.
Third, revolutions challenge the International System itself. Arguably the most consequential is the real threat revolutionary states pose to the Westphalian conception of sovereignty that underpins international order. “It is a peculiar characteristic of revolutions,” notes Peter Calvert, that they “call into question the very nature of state boundaries and of the international system of which they have for so long been an essential part.”\textsuperscript{10} The transnationalism of revolutionary ideology is emblematic of this point – revolutionary states seek to destroy all traditional boundaries. History abounds with examples, from the Marxist revolutionary internationalism realized in the diffusion of Communism to Ayatollah Khomeini’s velayat-e faqih that led to the Iran-Iraq War. Not only do new revolutionary states deviate from normative behavior, they invite status quo powers to likewise undermine the system by creating a security incentive to intervene in the domestic affairs of a state in the midst of a revolution in order to preempt conflict. The resulting cognitive dissidence between immediate national security and long-term systemic stability leads to misperceptions and miscalculations, confusing decision-making. The perceived opportunity to further state interests by intervening in revolutionary states further confounds the situation.\textsuperscript{11}

Fourth, revolutions have, historically, profoundly altered the structure of the International System. Their impact continues long after the revolutionary state has been re-socialized into the International System. Unfortunately, those outside the Marxist tradition have not adequately dealt with the long-term consequence. As Rich notes, “When revolutions have been considered from an international perspective they have


\textsuperscript{11} Theda Skocpol, "Social Revolutions and Mass Military Mobilization," \textit{World Politics} 40, no. 2 (Jan., 1988) 150.
often been viewed as of relatively minor long-term significance.”¹² This holds especially true for Realism. While capturing the more immediate post-revolutionary socialization of state-units, they fail to notice long-term underlying power shifts that result from revolutions. The resulting variation of post-revolutionary power redefines normative structures. This will be treated later so a synoptic explanation will suffice for now.

Revolutions profoundly increase state power in the long-term by means of centralization and rationalization. Numerous authors, including Alexis de Tocqueville, Max Weber, Samuel Huntington, and Theda Skocpol have written on this subject.¹³ The resulting increase of state power redefines the balance of power, as the post-revolutionary state become a principal regional or global actor, and thus the structure of the International System. As Kenneth Waltz writes, “consequential variations” in number of principal actors in the International System will “lead to different expectations about the effect of structure on units.”¹⁴ This is to say, while post-revolutionary states are socialized according to the normative structure of the International System, they come to redefine the structure given a greater timeframe. The argument becomes more intuitive when illustrated anecdotally by examining the importance of post-revolutionary France, China, Russia, and Iran in the International System.

¹² Chan and Williams, Renegade States, 18.
In short, so-conceived ‘domestic’ revolutions are undeniably a foundational and problematic international event. Unfortunately, even the occasional theorist who allows revolutions out of the cage of the ‘unit-level phenomenon’ fails to capture how revolutions have helped define and redefine the International System repeatedly throughout modern history.\(^{15}\) As Halliday finds, “Revolutions are part of the foundation, the formative process, of modern states, modern politics, and the modern international system.”\(^{16}\) Echoing this sentiment, Rich declares, “revolutions can be seen as an intrinsic part of the development of war, the nation state and international relations generally.”\(^{17}\) It is therefore a curious quality of modern IR theory that revolutions are viewed as beyond the modi operandi of the international system.

Revolutions, it is implicitly argued, are the disruption of normal affairs. Carl Friedrich in his \textit{The Pathology of Politics} goes as far as to claim, “they are spoken of as an “illness” or “sickness” of the political order.”\(^{18}\) Huntington expresses this much when he labels revolutions with “other forms of disorder.”\(^{19}\) Elsewhere he comments that the discipline of Political Science grew out of the belief that “radical change could be viewed as a temporary deviation in, or extraordinary malfunctioning of, the political system.”\(^{20}\) Such arguments rest uneasily on a biased revision of modern history. As Martin Wight famously opinions, “It might well be asked why unrevolutionary international politics

\(^{15}\) See Fred Halliday, "'The Sixth Great Power': On the Study of Revolution and International Relations," \textit{Review of International Studies} 16, no. 3 (Jul., 1990), pp. 207-221.
\(^{17}\) Chan and Williams, \textit{Renegade States}, 25.
\(^{19}\) Samuel P. Huntington and Harvard University., \textit{Political Order in Changing Societies}, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968) 358.
should be regarded as more normal than revolutionary, since the history of international society has been fairly equally divided between the two.” To this end he calculates between 1492 and 1960 that “there are 256 years of international revolution to 212 unrevolutionary.” To equate the established order with an immutable normal is to ignore Heraclitus’ admonition: Πάντα ρέει καὶ οὐδὲν μένει.22

Revolutions in IR Literature

To preface, it is sufficient to state that the literature on revolutions in International Relations is meager at best. The challenge revolutions pose to International Relations is not especially unique, for, according to Alex Callinicos, “Few subjects in social and political theory pose greater difficulties today than that of revolution.” Nevertheless, it is concerning that the disciplines of International Relations and Revolution Studies – as Walt contends – “do not even engage in much of a dialogue.” Problematically, as Chan and Williams further explain, “There have been few attempts to link the growing but dispersed theory about both revolution and international relations (IR) in a coherent way.” This reflects the substantial theoretic gap between Comparative Politics and International Relations, which complicates work between the two branches. Accordingly,

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22 Everything changes, and no thing abides.
efforts will be made for bridging comparative work on revolution and International Relations. To this end, the existing IR literature on revolutions will now be explored.

The English School of International Relations has directly addressed the topic of revolutions. Tracing its origins to what Timothy Dunne termed the “proto constructivism” of E. H. Carr, the English School comprises a rich literature on the ‘society of states.’

Martin Wight, one of the English School’s original advocates and a seminal thinker of the 20th century within the discipline, rejects the notion of revolutions being a domestic affair; rather, through the sheer mass of historical evidence provided, he defends their “international aspect.” Distinctively, he finds revolutions to be the driving force of history. This is to say, revolutions define the organization of the society of states, which is then institutionalized by laws, customs, and international organizations. This will remain the status quo until another revolutionary wave – what he terms ‘international revolution’ – amends the foundation of international society again.

Hedley Bull, a student of Wight, greatly popularized the English School with his Anarchical Society. Yet, if Wight represents ‘one step forward’ on the treatment of revolutions then Bull represents ‘two steps back.’ Despite furthering the English School tradition by leaps and bounds, Bull ignores revolutions, failing to list them as one of his four mechanisms of international society. Fortunately, the insight was not lost for long.

Revolution and World Order authored by Hedley Bull’s student, David Armstrong, is widely considered one of the most direct commentaries of the international

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aspect of revolutions. In it, he attempts to resolve the question: “To what extent do revolutionary states succeed in altering the international society of which they find themselves members, and to what extent does it succeed in ‘socializing’ them?” His answer, somewhat unremarkably, echoes the findings of others; namely, revolutions challenge international norms but, eventually, become socialized by their environment. Still, he provides analytical insight into the dialectic between revolutionary ideas and the “Westphalian concept of international society.” Overall, Armstrong’ work falls short on three counts. First, he exclusively analyzes post-revolutionary states, thus failing to account for how revolutionary situations arise in the first place despite claims for providing a full account, much like the realist tradition. Second, he does not stipulate what comprises international society, preferring to leave his central concept nebulous. Third, studying revolutions proves to be a means to further an alternative understanding of international society, where norms include the domestic compositions of states dissimilar to Wight and Bull’s conceptualization. Yet, the problem of analysis with an agenda is self-evident, which he aggravates by writing as if preparing for a doctrinal dispute. Still, his writing provides the groundwork for a Constructivist approach to revolutions that may yet provide insight.

Unlike Wight, Bull, and Armstrong, who can be said to belong to a fairly coherent school of thought, Fred Halliday can only loosely be considered to come from the Leftist tradition. Susie Linfield elegantly described Halliday as “an uncategorizable

29 Fred Halliday claims, “David Armstrong’s work is the most systematic attempt from within this tradition to meet the challenge posed by revolutions.” Halliday, Revolution and World Politics: The Rise and Fall of the Sixth Great Power, 297.
independent” who “embodied the dialectic between utopianism and realism.” While insightful, his writings are often unsystematic. Throughout his numerous publications, Halliday’s portrays the boundaries between state and society as permeable, which allows him to capture the international aspect of revolution. For him, “Revolutions as having causes rooted fundamentally in international processes: comparative weakening vis-à-vis rival states, the uneven and combined spread of modern capitalism, the removal of support from regional or global hegemons, and the transnational spread of ideas.” These divergent factors suggest another theme of his work: the tendency towards first-image analysis and the determinacy of ideology, which lends itself to historical sociology rather than a political theory. Accordingly, he is much more concerned with historical particularities, especially radical foreign policy, than with making normative or prescriptive claims about revolutions in the International System.

Unlike most authors within International Relations, Halliday views revolutions in a positive light. Due to the inherent oppression of the International System, revolutionary movements necessarily act against the rules of international order, manifested in laws, diplomacy, sovereignty, et cetera, according to an ideal of a universal society. As such, they present a challenge in numerous respects, from disrupting existing relations and defying norms to, in the long-term, offering a systemic alternative to the existing order. Regardless, Halliday faults the status quo powers as responsible for post-revolutionary conflict. Revolutions, Halliday argues, fulfill the need of humans “to dream.” They are,

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in his words, “the radical rejection of the given” that is “central to the human condition.”\textsuperscript{35} This is diametrically opposed to the common scholarly sentiment within International Relations, which holds, as Calvin formulates it, that revolutions hold “no great mystery.”\textsuperscript{36}

Another leftist approach to revolutions in International Relations can be found in Wallerstein’s World-Systems Approach. Largely drawing from the Marxist tradition, this theory assumes a world-system— that is, a single division of labor throughout a plurality of polities and cultures – defined by an exploitative Capitalist hierarchy that goes through historic stages. The division of labor is differentiated geographically into the core, semi-periphery, and periphery nations, and tied together by world market trade. Sovereign states are but “one kind of organizational structure among others within this single social system.”\textsuperscript{37} Nevertheless, they are critical in ensuring not only the appropriation of surplus value from labor, but also the “appropriation of surplus of the whole world-economy by core areas.”\textsuperscript{38} The difference of state strengths leads to operations of unequal exchange between the core and periphery.\textsuperscript{39} The inherent systemic contradiction that results from the continual system-wide division of labor and consolidation of capital leads to what is termed ‘antisystemic movements,’ which are revolutionary. Since the Capitalist market is no longer embedded in the state, “the coming to state power of all these movements has

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{36} Peter Calvert, Revolution and International Politics (New York: New York : St. Martin's Press, 1984a)198.
\textsuperscript{39} In other words, Wallerstein believes the state acts as an extra-economic support for capitalist classes.
resulted in a very widespread sense of unfulfilled revolution.\textsuperscript{40} Problematically, the world-system that leads to antisystemic movements “has no overarching political structure” for labor forces to overthrow.\textsuperscript{41}

In the World-Systems Approach, state structure and policies are reduced to an instrument of the economically dominant class who leverages them for world-market advantage. Viewed system-wide, all political phenomena are reduced to single division of labor that, which in turn is reducible to market exchange and technological production.\textsuperscript{42}

While parsimonious, Wallerstein’s state reductionism undermines his ability to capture international relations. Furthermore, his explanation of revolutions disregards the role of the state, which empirically does not hold up. Overall, the World-System Approach lacks explanatory capacity due to the failure of recognize the possibility of state autonomy of interest and action in the domestically and internationally. Nevertheless, Wallerstein excels in demonstrating a causal linkage between the transnational and the national.

The next two authors –Kyŏng-dong Kim and Richard Rosencranc– attempt to offer alternatives to the realist narrative in order to explain how revolutions interact with the international system, although they differ in their approach. Kim favors a perceptual explanation where revolutions produce avoidable conflict due to misunderstanding and misperception produced by newly introduced revolutionary ideologies in the International System. This leads him to a general formula: regional or international unity in ideology is determinative of peace, or conversely, heterogeneous ideology is determinative of


\textsuperscript{42} The reduction of social relations of production to market exchange is a break from the Marxist understanding that social relations are determined by relation to the mode of production.
conflict. As he explains, shared values allow states to anticipate reactions and engage in positive signaling whereas heterogeneous ideologies introduced by revolutions lead to a “distortion of perception.”\(^{43}\) The insight is akin to the logic of Jervis applied to a historical analytic approach that strongly rejects the realist tradition. Overall, Kim convincingly displays the role of confused signaling stemming from heterogeneous value systems following revolutions. Nevertheless, he problematically assumes the perceptual variable as exclusively causal and, in doing so, disregards the power relations between nations. To claim all post-revolutionary conflict is the product of misperception is to overlook the (a) the existing systemic turbulence, (b) the revisionist pursuit of post-revolutionary radical foreign policy, and (c) the determining role of the balance of power in system outcomes. He also fails to explain the origin and timing of emerging ideologies and how counter-hegemonic ideologies gain force in a Gramscian sense.

Rosecrance approaches the topic differently, highlighting domestic and international structural change in addition to ideological variables. The International System is determined by four variables for him. First, direction, or the ideological complex of elite objective domestically and abroad, can promote stability in the case of ideological harmony. Yet, even serious “ideological frictions are not the sufficient cause of instability.”\(^{44}\) Direction can be understood permissive environment for either international stability or instability. Second, control, or factors that affect the elite’s exercise of control such as scope of power, is tied up with domestic security and revolutions. Control patterns the initial disturbance on the International System; actors’


reaction to the disturbance is shaped through the balance of power. The third determinant is resources, which acts as the base of control. The final factor is capacity, which is understood as the total ability of the International System to contain disruption. It is suggested that international stability depends on the ability to absorb “convulsive internal change” such as revolutions.\textsuperscript{45} Revolutions and understood within this framework as a breakdown of the control variable, which inevitably results in new forms of efficacious control after the revolution. Rosencrance views such domestic occurrences as unavoidable, and thus the onus is on the International System’s capacity to contain new revolutionary actors. Not surprisingly, Rosecrance concludes his \textit{Action and Reaction in World Politics} by noting the high correlation between domestic insecurity of elites and international instability.

Rosecrance’s work provides a strong account linking revolutions and domestic change to international dynamics. Nevertheless, this linkage fails to capture how the International System affects internal change, instead viewing ‘disruptions’ as transferring from the domestic to the international sphere. Likewise, he avoids any discussion on how these disruptions affect other societies through his dyadic framing of revolution as between the elite of a potentially revolutionary state and a unitary International System. By amalgamating the collection of states into the unitary concept in his understanding of the International System, Rosecrance also overlooks how different state actors could be affected differently. Still, his work provides a useful framework connecting domestic to international change.

Unlike Rosecrance, the Transnationalism theorists such as James Rosenau and Peter Calvert emphasize the inter-societal processes of revolution. Structural conflicts over the basic organization of society lead to greater conflicts unto revolution that is not contained within a society. Rosenau finds three ‘linkages’ between polities: (a) penetrative processes “when members of one polity serves as participants in the political processes of another”; (b) reactive processes where “recurrent and similar boundary-crossing reactions rather than by the sharing of authority;” and (c) emulative processes “when the input is not only a response to the output but takes essentially the same forms the output.”\textsuperscript{46}\hspace{1em} The transnational linkage approach demonstrates how revolutions can have a system-wide impact without emphasizing the International System.\textsuperscript{47} Linkage theories rely on a strong agential variable and are underpinned by a behaviorist understanding of revolution. For example, Calvert discusses in his *Revolutions and International Politics* the psychological origin of leaderships and even the behavioral qualities of gang organization. These theories have not realized their own potential due to a weak understanding of revolution, which Calvert loosely defines as “the politics of violence,” and the inclusion of too many variables.\textsuperscript{48} Nevertheless, the inter-societal understanding, especially Rosenau’s forms of linkage, provides a powerful tool for understanding patterns of inter-societal influences.

\textsuperscript{47} Calvert allows a larger role of international politics in explaining revolutions.
Despite boasting a rich tradition, Realism is surprisingly silent on the subject of revolutions. The majority of its views are informed either by the work of Henry Kissinger, in the case of Classic Realism, or Stephan Walt for Structural Realism. Robert Snyder has also written on the matter, although his work is not widely read. For a subject as pertinent to the International Relations as revolution, the poverty of realist literature is unexpected. Kissinger claims that revolutionary states are ‘dissatisfied’ with the existing international order. As Halliday claims, “For Kissinger, revolutionary states pose a challenge to the international balance of power: because of the dissatisfaction that underlies the revolution itself, they are states that tend not to accept or recognize the limits in the conduct of foreign affairs.”49 Such a state is inherently irrational for “nothing can reassure it.”50 This is because it rejects the validity of the international framework itself. Demonstrated international stability “implies the acceptance of the framework of the internal order by all major powers” and thus bestows legitimacy on the order.51 When a revolutionary state rejects conventional rules, it produces a revolutionary order.

Kissinger’s theory of revolution is incredibly problematic. First, as Kenneth Waltz finds, Kissinger’s “reasoning is circular.”52 A revolutionary state rejects the order and a revolutionary order contains a revolutionary state. Second, the psychological root of revolution – dissatisfaction with the existing order – is projected into the international realm as dissatisfaction with the existing international order. Halliday notes, Kissinger

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51 Ibid., 1.
52 Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 63.
“denies any causation of revolution by the social and economic structures of society.”

Consequently, revolution is understood merely as the refusal to accept limits. Third, Kissinger fails to explain how the international system suppresses dissatisfied members through power domination. If dissatisfaction defined a revolutionary order, there would never have been a stable order. Likewise, domestically Kissinger’s aggregate-psychological account of revolution overlooks elite domination that ensures revolutions are not a constant affair. There always exists dissatisfaction domestically and internationally as interests are frustrated by the rules that disadvantage some over others; it is when the power that enforces the rules ceases to prevent their violation that dissatisfaction has the opportunity to be demonstrated. Overall, Kissinger provides an incredibly weak account for revolutions. Nevertheless, it is the only realist account that attempts to capture any causal origin.

Stephan Walt’s *Revolution and War* convincingly portrays how revolutions exacerbate the security competition between revolutionary and status quo states that increases the possibility of war. He frames his argument within a Balance-of-Threat model that claims states are more sensitive to perceived threats than power. Aggregate power, perceptions of intent, and the offense-defense balance define threats. By temporarily depressing state capability, revolutions create a window of opportunity for a state to improve its power position through aggression. As a result, the window of opportunity also incentives other states to preempt any attempt by another state to take advantage of the revolutionary state because that would disadvantage them. Furthermore, the revolutions cause (a) a state to change its preferences, leading to new conflicts of interests; (b) a distortion of perception of the external environment due to revolutionary

ideologies; and (c) increased uncertainty and misinformation. All this acts to generate a spiral of suspicion where insecurity and the perception of threat act to enforce each other. Here Walt builds on Jervis’ perception-based spiral model.54 Finally, revolutions attempt to export their revolution due to ideological commitments while counter-revolutionary states believe revolutions can be stopped through force. The consequence of the increase of threat and misperception is the great increase probability that revolution will lead to international conflict.55

Walt succeeds in explicating the causal relation between revolution and war. However, his work must be recognized as a limited venture; that is, he does not attempt a realist theory of revolution. As such, he is forced into the same position as Armstrong where the occurrence of a revolution is assumed and thus theorizing captures only phenomena temporally after the revolution. One shortcoming of his approach is that he fails to incorporate into his theory how changing power realities due to revolution play into the revolution-war nexus.

Whereas Walt holds both revolutionary and status quo states responsible for post-revolutionary conflicts based on his threat-based spiral model, Robert Snyder counters that it is revolutionary states acting with revisionist intentions that precipitate conflict. Snyder approaches the topic from a Classic Realist-Constructivist synthesis perspective that is akin to Samuel Barkin’s proposed Realist Constructivism.56 Focusing on the

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55 For a similar approach that yields different conclusions, see Patrick J. Conge, From Revolution to War: State Relations in a World of Change (Ann Arbor : Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 1996).
foreign policy of third world powers vis-à-vis hegemons with the United States as his case study, he finds that “revolutionary states externalize their domestic conflict with the U.S. following the radicals’ efforts to defeat the moderates.”\textsuperscript{57} This is the source of international disturbance. Revolutionary conflict is externalized according to a four-step process: first, a domestic conflict arises; then, this conflict is externalized; in response, the hegemon hesitates; finally, the hegemon becomes hostile. His research “challenges Walt’s spiral model” and “casts doubts on his theoretical understanding of revolutionary states, particularly Third World ones.”\textsuperscript{58} In particular, the transnational linkage of revolutionary states defies Walt’s notion of states as unitary actors; instead, Snyder advocates the status quo-revisionist dyad of Classic Realism.

\textit{Why Realism and Revolutions}

The question remains: why realism and revolutions? The answer is twofold. First, it is because the failure to comprehend the persistent and consequential reality of revolutions continues to haunt us today. The impact of International Relations literature goes beyond the ivory tower to affect – either positively or negatively – how practitioners can manage world politics. Furthermore, as Robert Keohane notes, “world politics today is a matter of life and death – not just for soldiers or citizens caught in the path of war, but for the whole human race.”\textsuperscript{59} As such, realist scholars have an obligation to account for international phenomena, even if it is not analytically appealing to do so. Recently,

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., 285.
Joe Hoover condemned what he termed the “failure of realism” vis-à-vis the revolution in Egypt.⁶⁰ While the Arab Spring movements fall short of the criteria for social revolution – a term that will be defined in the following chapter – they still reveal how analytically unprepared realism leaves us with revolutions.

Second, it is because revolutions challenge the fundamental assumptions of realism. Halliday claims, “Revolutions force us to question the central, realist, assumption that internal/domestic structures can be excluded from the study of international relations.”⁶¹ Furthermore, the case of revolutions shows realism to be in tension with itself. Realism claims to give a descriptive and prescriptive interpretation of state behavior in international politics, yet fails to provide an account of the sudden and dramatic behavior-deviation of revolutionary states. Likewise, it cannot explain why a rational state-unit would undergo revolutionary destruction given the window of opportunity it creates for surrounding states. Finally, realism differentiates state-units according to its ordering principle of material-capability; yet, it cannot account for the increase of post-revolutionary state power by this alone. If realism can resolve these tensions in accounting for revolutions, it will further substantiate its explanatory claim to international politics. However, a failure to do so may suggest that realism is merely interpreting a political symptom of something structurally more profound, as is often argued by its neo-Marxist critics.

I am convinced that such an attempt to resolve the tension between realism and revolutions is not a fool’s errand. It is not necessarily beyond realism to account for revolutions. To do so requires providing a realist explanation of the origin of revolutions.

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⁶⁰ Joe Hoover, "Egypt and the Failure of Realism," *Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies (JCGS)* 1, no. 4 (127.

Given this necessitates an examination within the state-unit, many contemporary realists would label such an attempt as ‘reductionist.’ This is particularly true within Waltzian Neorealism. Yet, as Barry Buzan conveys, “there has been continuous pressure to push what Waltz counts as unit level factors back into the structural level.” Revolutions, as will be shown, are as structurally dependent upon the capability of the state and the international context as wars. Accordingly, a structural explanation of revolutions that aligns with the structural realist paradigm is possible. In fact, bridging neorealist and third generation ‘structural’ revolutions literature can enrich how each understands its own subject matter.

Revolutions are a structural phenomenon. They are not, as is popularly conceived, the product of a new ideology or a charismatic leader. Too often the study of revolutions connotes a colorful historical account of a teleological movement driven by liberté, égalité, fraternité, a proletariat paradise, or the Elysian velayat-e faqih. As such, as Maryam Panah has complained, “the origins of revolutionary crises are factored out as their causes are deemed to be cultural or ideological ones and the legitimate domain of departments of Cultural Studies and Sociology, but not of International Relations—they become relevant to IR only when they exhibit ‘rogue behaviour’ that upsets the precarious international order.” This is an unjustified assumption. Rather, it is origins of revolutions that are most relevant to International Relations. Furthermore, these origins are structurally determined; in the words of Wendell Phillips, “Revolution are not made;

63 Theda Skocpol claims revolutions “requires that the analyst take a nonvoluntrist, structural perspective on their causes and processes.” Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, 14.
they come.” It is only after the structurally determined crisis of the state has occurred – theoretically and practically the most significant stage – that a revolution ‘emerges’ in the sense of being phenomenologically available to the human experience.

There is, in addition to a structural causality, a common subject between revolutions and international politics: the state, or more specifically, state power. In Neorealism, the state-unit and its capabilities, which determine its power in relation to other states, is the most ontologically basic feature of the systems approach. Likewise, to cite Vladimir Lenin, “The basic question of every revolution is that of state power.” As such, a collapse of power in one realm is equally as consequential in the other realm. Revolution’s relationship to state power can be understood through the, albeit imperfect, comparison to war. As E. H. Carr stated, “War lurks in the background of international politics just as revolutions lurk in the background of domestic politics.” While Carr misrepresents revolutions as a domestic phenomenon, he captures the common relation to state power. Both are the self-correcting principle of an existing system, especially during periods of systemic transformation. Revolutions can only occur when a state loses its capacity to ‘self-preserve’ against endogenous pressure, otherwise domestic threats would be suppressed, as is usually the case. Thus, revolutions – like change in the International System – require an explanation of how states gain or lose its power capacity. Instead of challenging Realism, revolutions can be understood as strengthening it by increasing the socio-political cohesion of the state-unit and reinforcing the territorial and functional ordering principle of sovereignty in post-revolutionary states. A successful

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65 Wendell Phillips, Speech January 8, 1852.
67 Carr, Twenty Year War, 102.
realist account of change (i.e. consequential variation in state power over time) should provide the theoretic explanatory power to explicate the origins and consequence of revolutions. Exactly how revolution can be explained within the static structural realist model is the conundrum to be explored in the thesis.

Roadmap

Thus far, the reader has been familiarized with both the inadequate interdisciplinary ties between Revolution Studies and International Relations and the absolute necessity for an international account of revolutions. Next, in Chapter II, revolutions will be discussed. Starting with the semantic ambiguity, a definition of revolution will be developed, followed by a critical review of the existing literature. Chapter III will turn to the realist tradition, where Neorealism will be analyzed for its theoretical strengths and weaknesses. In particular, the problem of change and the incomplete account of capabilities will be emphasized. In Chapter IV, the groundwork laid out in the previous chapters will bear a theoretic fruit – a Structural Realist theory of revolution. Here the relationship between deep structural change and state-society adaption in structural rationalization will be explicated. Revolutions, it will be found, occur when a structural contradiction between state and society, formed due to changing material and International conditions, inhibit the mobilization of capabilities, which is self-corrected in revolution. Revolutionary occurrences will be highly correlated to systemic change, as they are theorized to reflect changing structural realities and, in turn,
produce long-term increase of state capabilities that alter the system-wide balance of power.

In the following Chapter V, the implications of the Structural Realist theory of revolution will be sorted through. Tensions arising out of the interdisciplinary roots of the theory will be resolved on the topics of the agent-structure dichotomy; ideology and revolutionary waves; change, ahistoricism and the state; and revolution and war. Chapter VI will conclude the thesis by discussing the future of revolution. It will be suggested that revolutions – regardless of specific form – will continue to play a formative, albeit rare, role in the International System.
Chapter II: On Revolution

‘Revolution’ seems like an intuitive concept – this is hardly the case. The word can denote and connote a plethora of different and, at times, orthogonal occurrences. It has been used to reference a specific phenomenon or categorize a range of activities. Accordingly, Calvert finds, “Despite the intense interest that the subject has attracted in both scholarly and popular literature over the past twenty years, it remains as elusive as ever.”¹ Perhaps, that is a semantic complication. Indeed, the polysemy is evident with even a cursory examination. The word revolution rings far beyond the granite walls of the world’s social science departments, as popular culture abounds with ‘revolutionary’ hair products, protein shakes, Christian mingle sites, and the like. The problem is, as Halliday explains, “the concept ‘revolution’ has evolved over time, and contains variant meanings.”² For example, Montesquieu’s employment of the term is antithetical to the usage in this paper: “a revolution that would not change the form of the government or its constitution.”³ Likewise, Martin Luther King, Jr. even speaks specifically of a “social revolution” in his Letter from a Birmingham Jail in reference to the contentious politics of the civil rights movement.⁴ Social science has not escaped this, where revolution can denote coups, urban insurrection, guerrilla warfare, et cetera.⁵ In short, as Crane Brinton slyly understates, “revolution is one of those looser words.”⁶

Whither (to Define) Revolution?

It follows that, before revolutions can be explained, they must first be defined, although the two are an inherently interrelated process. Chan and Williams have argued, “The expression ‘revolution’ has been overused to the point of becoming almost meaningless.” While there is validity in this claim, it should not suggest that the concept of revolution be altogether abandoned. Rather, a definition of revolutions must be reclaimed – at least within the social sciences. The difficulty is that revolution, beyond its polysemy, is a profoundly historic concept. As a result, as Antonio Negri’s work reveals, “Over the last two hundred years it has meant everything and its opposite, the good and the bad, emancipation and terror, etc.” Tilly further notes, “whether it includes coups, assassinations, terrorism, or slow, massive changes such as industrialization is controversial not only because the world is complex but also because to call something revolution is, within most forms of western political discourse, to identify it as good or bad.” In order to clarify the concept of revolution, it will be helpful to have a basic understanding of the origin and development throughout history. This will provide a solid foundation to build an analytical definition of revolutions for this thesis. Against the criticism that such an exercise amounts to hollow academia, I must defer to the stance of historian R. H. Tawney, who once commented, to look to the past is “to summon the

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Change.” Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change. (1978) 87-89. Friedrich Carl notes the problem inherent in this: “There is an obvious difference between the kind of violent overthrow caused by some of the Latin American revolutions, apart from [even] the many coup d’ètats, and the great French Revolution.” He goes on to relate the former with the Aristotelian understanding and the latter with modernity. Carl J. (Carl Joachim) Friedrich 1901-, The Pathology of Politics; Violence, Betrayal, Corruption, Secrecy, and Propaganda (New York: New York, Harper & Row, 1972) 47.

7 Stephen Chan and Andrew J. Williams, Renegade States : The Evolution of Revolutionary Foreign Policy (Manchester; New York; New York: Manchester University Press ; Distributed exclusively in the USA and Canada by St. Martin's Press, 1995) 6.
living, not to invoke a corpse, and to see from a new angle the problems of our own age, by widening the experience brought to their consideration.”⁹ Without further ado, let the summoning begin!

**Historic Understanding of Revolution**

The concept of revolution has a long history.¹⁰ Calvert has traced it all the way to ancient Egypt where “[r]evolution represented a reversion to the primitive practice of sacrificing a weak ruler when he had outlived his usefulness.”¹¹ The concept truly began to take form during Roman and Greek Antiquity. Arendt relates, “Antiquity was well acquainted with political change and the violence that went with change, but neither of them appeared to it to bring about something altogether new.”¹² In the Greek setting, revolution implied the dissolution of *stasis* that captured both the change of rulers due to palace revolt and “the social displacement implied by the rise of an aristocracy or the fall of aristocratic exclusiveness.”¹³ Thucydides gave a famous account of revolution in Coreya in his *The Peloponnesian War* where he states, “Revolutions… occurred and will always occur so long as human nature remains the same.”¹⁴ Aristotle captures the cyclical nature of political change that underpinned Antiquity’s conception of revolution. He writes in Book V of his *Politics*, “Revolutions break out when opposite parties, e.g. the

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rich and the poor, are equally balanced, and there is little or nothing between them; for, if either party were manifestly superior, the other would not risk an attack upon them.”

The prime cause of revolution is inequality, which manifests itself differently in different government types. Ted Gurr summarizes, “the principal cause of revolution [for Aristotle] is the aspiration for economic or political equality on the part of the common people who lack it, and the aspiration of oligarchs for greater inequality than they have.” Revolutions can be pursued “by force and by fraud” and can alter the constitution or the form of government.

The concept of revolution lost significance during the Dark Ages where violence against the throne was considered sacrilegious. St. Thomas Aquinas, for example, outright rejects the possibility of violence against a tyrant in his *Summa Theologica*.

The concept only regained popularity during Reformation, where it began to connote a return to the Christian community before the papacy. Göran Therborn has tied the concept of rolling back to “originally the stone in front of the grave of Jesus.” It was not only in theology that the concept of revolution was being used to denote a rolling back. The word *revolution* came into Old French as early as the late 14th century from the 5th century Post-Classic Latin *revolutio* (return or recurrence of point or period in history) and was used to describe celestial bodies, such as with Copernicus’ *On the Revolutions of*
Richard Pipes traces the shift to a more modern understanding through astrology:

From astronomy, the word passed into the vocabulary of astrologers, who claimed the ability to predict the future [through] the study of the heavens. Sixteenth-century astrologers serving princes and generals spoke of "revolution" to designate abrupt and unforeseen events determined by the conjunction of planets—that is, by forces beyond human control. Thus the original scientific meaning of the word, conveying regularity and repetitiveness, came, when referring to human affairs, to signify the very opposite, namely, the sudden and unpredictable.

Revolution quickly began to develop its modern definition soon after. It gained the meaning of political change in 1615, a coup d’etat in 1636, a change in government by violent means in 1680, and in 1688 the Glorious Revolution solidified its political meaning.

The French revolution and the fall of the ancien régime in 1789 marked the birth of the modern nation-state and the modern understanding of revolution as a mass uprising against the state leading to a fundamental reordering of society. Pipes notes that “henceforth began to refer to grandiose plans to transform the world – no longer to changes that happened but to changes that were made.” George Pattee similarly found that “after the French Revolution we find a conscious development of revolutionary doctrines in anticipation of revolutions to come, and the spread of a more active attitude

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20 This can be traced to the earlier Latin form revolvere or “turn, roll back.” “revolution (n.)” Online Etymology Dictionary, accessed April 1, 2013, http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=revolution&allowed_in_frame=0
towards conscious control over institutions in general.”

This is captured in the word of Thomas Paine:

What were formerly called Revolutions, were little more than a change of persons, or an alteration of local circumstances. They rose and fell like things of course, and had nothing in their existence or their fate that could influence beyond the spot that produced them. But what we now see in the world, from the Revolutions of America and France, are a renovation of the natural order of things, a system of principles as universal as truth and the existence of man, and combining moral with political happiness and national prosperity.

The intentionality implicit in the concept of revolution left a huge impact on the epoch to follow.

Nineteenth-century Europe experienced a radical wave in its intellectual tradition with the emergence of professional revolutionaries. These revolutionaries actively aimed at, in the words of Leon Trotsky, “overturning the world.” As Karl Marx argued in his Theses on Feuerbach, “Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it.” Despite the claims of action, revolution was also understood as inevitable to a certain degree, as a historical necessity. During the Cold War the concept of revolution was thoroughly ideologically polarized. For many third world independent movements of the time, it became a liberation ideology that was fused with nationalism. The concept of revolution today carries the ideological baggage of the 19th and 20th century. Still, after the fall of the Soviet Union and the recent Arab Spring, revolution is reemerging as a democratizing concept. Now that the concept of revolution

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throughout history has been clarified, a definition of revolution will be developed for the realist theory of revolution that will later be developed.

**Revolutions: A Definition**

Alexander George and Andrew Bennet find, “Better results are achieved if the “class” of the phenomenon to be investigated is not defined too broadly… [it should be] a well-defined, smaller-scope subclass of the general phenomenon.” Based on this criterion, Stephen Walt provides a decent definition of revolution: “the destruction of an existing state by members of its own society, followed by the creation of a new political order.” Still, this definition fails to recognize an essential difference between what is termed a political and a social revolution. Due to the resilience of the state, especially of the bureaucracy as Weber notes, it is not possible to produce profound institutional changes without fundamentally reorganizing the societal structure upon which the state apparatus is constructed. As such, ‘political revolutions’, defined as transformation of “state structures but not social structures,” can only create superficial structural change.

History is full of political revolutions – the Arab Spring revolutions being the most recent case. While more common, these revolutions have less of a long-term impact on society and the International System. With the former, it is because social structure remains intact, including structures of elite dominance; with the latter, the socialization process

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returns state behavior to normative patterns while the any variance in state capability is minimal, and thus does not greatly affect the balance of power.

Scholars often fall into the theoretic trap of failing to distinguish between a political revolution and what is called a ‘social revolution.’ Goldstone, in his self-proclaimed ‘fourth generational’ definition, commits this error by defining revolution as, “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.” He problematically makes a claim on the whole class of revolution while only discussing political change in state structure. A definitional distinction between political and social revolutions must be upheld for, as Skocpol argues, “analytic oversimplification cannot lead us towards valid, complete explanations of revolutions.”

The subject examined in this thesis is social revolutions. These differ from purely political revolutions by reordering the social structure as well as the political structure. Social revolutions will be defined as the rapid, basic transformation of the political and socio-economic structure of an individual state that is accompanied and in part carried through by mass-based revolt from below. This definition of social revolution has been adapted from Theda Skocpol’s definition. It has been altered according to Wickham-

32 Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China (Cambridge Eng.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979) 5.
33 Ibid., 4 It is often argued that Skocpol’s definition is too specific towards traditional peasant-based monarchical and imperial states, as in Mattei Dogan and John Higley, Elites, Crises, and the Origins of Regimes (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 99; and Jack Goldstone, “The Soviet Union: Revolution and Transformation” in Matei Dogan and John Higley, Elites, Crises, and the Origins of Regimes, (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 8. For a good alternative definition, see Colburn who effectively captures the two-fold process of revolutions and
Crowley’s suggestion of replacing class-based with mass-based and a rewording of the state provided by Calvert in order to deemphasize the focus on class. The result of such a stringent definition of revolution is that few cases of social revolution exist. According to John Foran, “the list of twentieth-century social revolutions: Russia 1917, China 1949, Cuba 1959, Nicaragua 1979, Iran 1979 in the first instance; and, arguably, Mexico 1910-20, Vietnam 1945-75, Algeria 1954-62, and Angola, Zimbabwe and Mozambique in the 1970s, among others, if the definition is relaxed somewhat.” This is not a definitional weakness; it is a historic reality – social revolutions are a historically rare yet profoundly formative phenomenon. For convenience sake, revolution should be understood as social revolution unless otherwise specified.

Explanations of Revolutions

It must be prefaced that revolutions, like all complex phenomena, can be understood from innumerable perspectives. To study revolution through a purely causal prism does not preclude the possibility or merit of examining the influence of the French Revolution on male footwear, the economic impact of changed shipping lanes during the Iranian revolution, or trends in post-revolutionary race relations. Neo-Kantian philosopher Heinrich Rickert once suggested that all phenomena could be described in infinite unique ways since the subject of study is limited only by human creativity and the extreme degree of transformation. Forrest D. Colburn, The Vogue of Revolution in Poor Countries (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) 6.


35 John Foran, "The Future of Revolutions at the Fin-De-Siecle," Third World Quarterly 18, no. 5 (12/02, 1997) 791.
imagination.\textsuperscript{36} If nothing else, this claim holds with the complex, dynamic experience of revolutions – the ways to approach revolutions are endless. As such, it must be clarified that the subject of study here is a causal account of revolutions. This allows all non-causal variables and considerations to be abstracted away, resulting in a more parsimonious account of revolution.

Yet, confusing the matter is the fact that revolution scholars have argued for numerous sets of deterministic causal factors, ranging from agency, gender, and race to class and culture.\textsuperscript{37} Goldstone alone includes “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” as possible causes.\textsuperscript{38} The preferred explanation of revolution has developed in three waves: the first generational natural histories, the second generational political violence, and the third generational structural theories.\textsuperscript{39} Out of this literature an explanation of revolution – the foundation for the upcoming international theory of revolution – will be developed.

It is generally agreed upon that the 1930s saw the beginning of Revolution Studies, although Goldstone dates it as far back as 1900.\textsuperscript{40} This early wave of Natural

\textsuperscript{38} Goldstone, \textit{Toward a Fourth Generation of Revolutionary Theory}, Vol. 4, 2001) 172.
\textsuperscript{39} It should be noted that the recently proposed ‘fourth generation’ of literature is non-existent, the work done merely amounts to an intergenerational synthesis that offers little to no new perspective.
History authors tended towards simplistic, historical accounts of revolution with minimal theoretic work involved. This first generation included American authors such as Lyford P. Edwards who wrote that revolutions are caused by “repression of elemental wishes” and thus revolutionary violence will reflect degree of repression, and George Pettee who discusses society feeling “cramped” by unjustified repression.\textsuperscript{41} Crane Brinton, who developed a general, historical sociological model of revolutions based almost exclusively on the French Revolution, stands an exception to the over-simplification of the time. Anticipating the social equilibrium arguments that became prominent in the second-generation literature, Brinton argues, “As new desires arise, or as old desires grow stronger in various groups, or as environmental conditions change, and as intuitions fail to change, a relative disequilibrium may arise, and what we call a revolution break out.”\textsuperscript{42} Likewise, he engages in proto-aggregate psychological explanations critical in the work of Davies, Gurr, and others. Finding subjective ‘feelings’ more revealing than objective ‘conditions’, he declares, “Of much greater importance is the existence among a group, or groups, of a feeling that prevailing conditions limit or hinder their economic activity.”\textsuperscript{43} While anticipating much of the second generation, Brinton is not especially systematic in his writing and often relied on vague psychological assumptions, drawing heavily from Le Bon’s questionable work on crowd psychology.\textsuperscript{44} Nevertheless, Brinton


\textsuperscript{42} Brinton, \textit{The Anatomy of Revolution}, 16.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 33.

\textsuperscript{44} To call Le Bon’s work quasi-scientific is a stretch, as writing amounts to generalized observed descriptions: “Whoever be the individuals that compose it, however like or unlike be their mode of life, their occupations, their character, or their intelligence, the fact that they have been transformed into a crowd puts them in possession of a sort of collective mind which makes them feel, think, and act in a manner quite different from that in which each individual of them would feel, think and act were he in a state of isolation” Gustave Le Bon 1841-1931, \textit{The Crowd a Study of the Popular Mind} (London: London : T.F. Unwin, 1908) 29-30.
should be recognized for introducing a social science approach to revolution that broke from the polemical work of Marx and Engels that predated him. In particular, his conception of the state as semi-autonomous is instrumental in understanding revolutionary dynamics.

The second-generation of theorists who came onto the scene in the late 60s and early 70s focused on collective political violence. They shared a common two-stage framework: stage one was normal/equilibrium/harmony, and stage two was revolution, with a variable standing between the two. Despite this essential similarity, Goldstone notes how the second-generational theories “drew heavily on broad theories from psychology (cognitive psychology and frustration-aggression theory), sociology (structural-functionalist theory), and political science (the pluralist theory of interest-group competition.).” Psychological theories focused on collective cognitive states, especially vis-à-vis expectations. Many of the models, such as the James Scott’s Moral Economy model or James Davies’ J-Curve model, trace mobilization to the popular perception of adverse trends limiting class potential – immediately experienced or anticipated, respectively. Davies’ model in particular highlights the destabilizing effect of short-term economic lapses of growth, which leads to frustrated expectations; yet, like Scott, he ultimately fails to explain (a) the dynamics of change on a macro-structural level and (b) why revolutions occur in some societies and not in others, despite similar dynamics.

Ted Gurr presents the most sophisticated model of frustration-aggression theory. He begins with the “seemingly self-evident premise that discontent is the root cause of violent conflict.” This discontent is due to a relative deprivation, which is “a perceived discrepancy between men’s value expectations and their value capabilities.” It is critical to note that it is not objective discrepancy but the perception of deprivation. Interlacing his aggregate-psychological approach with societal conditions, Gurr finds societal conditions such as the systematic closure of political and economic opportunity to certain groups is often causal in creating the discrepancy between expectations and value satisfaction. When this occurs, it disposes men to violence thus producing collective action. According to his basic frustration-aggression proposition, the degree of frustration directly correlates to the degree of aggression against the source. Revolution results from an extreme case of relative deprivation.

The sociological strand of the second generation pulls heavily from Talcott Parson’s systems-approach to society and seeks to explain causes of systemic disequilibrium. Chalmers Johnson is exemplary of the Parsonian functionalism prominent of American post-war sociology. He posits two clusters of mutually influencing necessary causes of revolution. The first is pressures created by a disequilibrated social system, which exists when values and environments are desynchronized due to external or internal intrusions such as technologies. This causes societies to become disoriented and thus willing to accept alternative value systems. Critically, the source of social

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47 Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World*, 100.
50 Ibid., 9.
51 Chan and Williams, *Renegade States*, 20.
disequilibrium is dissimilar to the source of revolution, although it creates the necessary environment. The second causal cluster is the quality of the purposeful change being undertaken. This “depends upon the ability of the legitimate leaders.” Any factor that either deprives the elite’s ability to enforce social behavior or causes the illusion of the loss of elite’ coercive capabilities acts as the sufficient cause. These are enforced by immediate causes of revolution are labeled ‘accelerators’. Revolution is a special category of social change that introduces violence into civil social relations. Violence is considered a rational strategy with the expressed intention of altering social constructions. Problematically, the sociologist’s focus results in the complete exclusion of any international or global considerations.

The Political Science branch of the second generation of literature is based on a pluralist methodology where revolution is the ultimate conflict between interest groups. Of the many authors, Samuel Huntington is by far the most influential, viewing revolution as intrinsically tied to modernization. Modernization is a multifaceted process that introduces change to all aspects of human thought and activity. Significantly, it removes “major clusters of old social, economic and psychological commitments,” freeing the population to be socialized according to new behavioral patterns. Additionally, it develops economics leading to a profound increase in economic activity and output of a society. The result of social and economic modernization is political instability where “the degree of instability is related to the rate of modernization.”

(Huntington and Harvard University. 1968b) According to Huntington’s Gap Hypothesis, the gap between social and economic modernization determines the impact of

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53 Ibid.
54 Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 33.
modernization on political stability. Revolution, “a rapid, fundamental, and violent
domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political
institutions, social structure, leadership, and government activity and policies,” is an
extreme case of when political institutionalization occurs at a rate too slow for the pace of
social change.\footnote{This is known as his Balance Development Theory. Ibid., 265.} Political institutions prove incapable of channeling new social forces
whose preferences are excluded from politics. Accordingly, revolutions are unlikely in
political systems that have the capacity to incorporate the participation of new social
forces, which explains why there has never been a revolution in a democracy.

Huntington is often criticized for tailoring his model to Western revolutions. John
Gillis contends Huntington’s analysis is tied “to the European regimes of the late
eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.”\footnote{John R. Gillis, "Political Decay and the European Revolutions, 1789-1848," \textit{World Politics} 22, no. 3 (Apr., 1970) 349.} Furthermore, his view that “Modernization
is a \textit{homogenizing} process” leads him to assume a single or converging path from
traditional society to modernity, which disregards the transnational structures that
diversifies modernizing paths.\footnote{Samuel P. Huntington, "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development, and Politics," \textit{Comparative Politics} 3, no. 3 (Apr., 1971) 289.} This leads Tilly to charge Huntington with being weak
on “large-scale structural change.”\footnote{Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" \textit{Comparative Politics} 5, no. 3, Special Issue on Revolution and Social Change (Apr., 1973) 432.} By including anything from ideological and
technological change to forming economic groups and elite structure, Huntington fails to
provide an elegant theory. Consequently, modernization becomes a “vague, tendentious
concept” that is also value-laden with the Western view of modernization.\footnote{Ibid., 429.} Still
Huntington’s work deserves to be recognized for revealing how change relates to
revolution. In particular, his insight of how new social forces are obstructed by lagging political institutions, causing strain that result in revolution must be taken seriously.

Charles Tilly represents a transitional figure between generations of literature. While emphasizing the collective violence of the second-generation, he provides a structural account akin to the third generation. For this reason, John Foran places Tilly among the third generation, a move Goldstone and Skocpol strongly reject. Tilly’s Contention Model of Revolution is based on the capacity of challengers to state power to mobilize resources and build a coalition strong enough to challenge and ultimately overthrow the state. Here revolution is understood as a special type of collective action with the replacement of the political sovereignty as the goal. Long-term shifts in balance of resource in society due to “the rise and fall of centralized states, the expansion and contradiction of national markets, the concentration and dispersion of control over property” and medium-term occurrences that increase popular discontent and introduce radical ideologies lead to the formation of coalitions of contenders. When these coalitions become sovereign polities, revolution becomes possible. Following the work of Trotsky, Tilly bifurcates revolution into the revolutionary situation and the revolutionary outcome. A revolutionary situation arises when “one bloc [is] effectively exercising control over a significant part of the state apparatus.” A bloc includes a coalition of classes, a modification Peter Amann suggested to Trotsky’s dominant-class approach. Revolutions “ends when a single sovereign polity regains control over the government.”

61 Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, 190.
62 Peter Amann, "Revolution: A Redefinition," Political Science Quarterly 77, no. 1, 36-53.
63 Skocpol, Social Revolutions in the Modern World, 109.
Tilly’s account is alluring on several levels. Unlike many theorists before him, he holds aggregate discontent as irrelevant to collective action unless it is organized into a coalition that is able to mobilize resources. Even if this occurs, action may not occur if the government or elite is able to mobilize its resources to repress it. While he does not reject aggregate-psychological factors, problematically depending on social-psychological hypotheses to explain the emergence of revolutionary contenders, he frames them within the structural constraints of the balance of resources. Likewise, the balance of resources is key in predicting whether a government is able to prevent the emergence of multiple polities. Additionally, within his framework, he does not give primacy to certain structures over others. As he notes, the “[r]apid rural-to-urban migration has no particular tendency to excite protests; marginal urban populations are not the tinder of revolutions; the initial exposure of peasants to factories does not generate high levels of industrial conflict; and so on.”64 The advantage of this becomes apparent when examining the tendency of the third generation of literature to give explanatory primacy to agricultural structure.

Recently, with the emergence of the third generation in the 70s, there has been a paradigm-shift in the field towards a state-centric structural approach that comes out of the strong Neo-Marxist tradition. It has provided an explanatory power that other theoretical approaches lack; most significantly, it addresses the elusive puzzle of why t=n, i.e. when revolutions occur, while still providing predictive power to revolutionary outcome. Barrington Moore and Eric Wolf proved instrumental in initiating the shift by assuming a macro-sociological level of analysis in the 1960s. Moore’s seminal The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy unveils the obscured human cost of

change, revealing that both evolutionary and revolutionary paths are stained in blood.\textsuperscript{65}

He finds four preconditions to revolutionary action: first, elite loss of control over means of violence; second, the emergence of a conflict of interest within the dominant classes; third, the emergence of an alternative mode of thought that undermines predominant justification for human suffering; and fourth, the mobilization of revolutionary masses due to a disruption of daily affairs compounded by an increase of misery. In a similar macro-historic approach, Wolf’s comparative study on twentieth century peasant wars assumed a structural framework, where foreign pressures include wars and commercialization of agriculture – the result of population growth and capitalism – lead to a social dislocation from traditional order.\textsuperscript{66} While failing to fully commit to a purely structural approach, especially by retaining a cultural aspect, the authors moved beyond the structural-functionalist tendencies of the second-generation sociological approach.

Even within the structural literature, a variety of explanations began to emerge.

Timothy Wickham-Crowley is exemplary of common units of structural analysis:

“(1) world-systemic structures of international trade, finance, and investment; (2) patterns of interstate competition, conflict, domination, alliance, and cooperation; (3) state-class relations within individual nations, especially over issues such as taxation, governance, coercion, and access to state power; (4) patterns of class, ethnic, religious, and perhaps gender conflicts (or alliances); and (5) the relations of formal organizations, including social movement organizations, to the society, as mediated by social networks.”\textsuperscript{67}

His overview left out two more popular approaches. First, several later structuralist authors, such as S. N. Eisenstadt, have argued for a culturally oriented structural analysis.

\textsuperscript{67} Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, “Structural Theories of Revolution,” in Foran \textit{Theorizing Revolution}, 38-72
Culture, in the structural sense, is normally explained as a summation of patterned
tendencies.\textsuperscript{68} Second, Jeffery Paige and others have focused on structures of peasant
unrest.\textsuperscript{69} In this case, “the state, urban actors, and nonexport-oriented rural sectors” are
completely bracketed out.\textsuperscript{70} By narrowing down the topic of analysis, Paige is able to
reach incredibly specific conclusions: “Decentralized share-cropping systems therefore
create the conditions for a social movement based on revolutionary socialism as the
dominant ideology and warfare as the dominant tactic.”\textsuperscript{71} These historical conclusions
tend to be non-generalizable.

Theda Skocpol employs a similar methodology that emphasizes peasant
structures; still, her incredibly influential work stands out for its ability to generate
convincing conclusions about revolutionary activity. Until Skocpol, no theorist had truly
comprehended the intrinsically \textit{international} role of modernization.\textsuperscript{72} In particular, her
work reveals how international military and economic competitions can directly affect
domestic state stability, providing a causal linkage between the international and
domestic spheres through the state. In her comparative examination of the French,
Chinese, and Russian Revolution, she concluded that “(a) the centralized, semi-
bureaucratic administrative and military organizations of the old regimes disintegrated
due to combinations of international pressures and disputes between monarchs and

\textsuperscript{68} See S. N. Eisenstadt, \textit{Revolution and the Transformation of Societies: A Comparative Study of
\textsuperscript{69} In fact, as Skocpol notes, Wickham-Crowley does account for peasant structure when he discuses
regime form vis-à-vis social form, although he does not give it primacy like Paige. See Skocpol,
\textsuperscript{70} Foran, "Theories of Revolution Revisited: Toward a Fourth Generation?", Vol. 11American
\textsuperscript{71} Jeffery M. Paige, \textit{Agrarian Revolution: Social Movements and Export Agriculture in the
Underdeveloped World} (New York: Free Press, 1975) 120.
\textsuperscript{72} Skocpol claims revolutions “cannot be explained without systematic reference to \textit{international}
structures and world-historical development.” Skocpol, \textit{States and Social Revolutions}, 14.
landed commercial upper classes, and (b) widespread peasant revolts took place against landlords” was common in all cases.\textsuperscript{73}

Skocpol develops a strong state-centric structural methodology noteworthy for its high explanatory capacity. Her approach is structural in two aspects: first, it examines inter-unit relations, such as class-class, class-state, and state-state; and second, revolutions result from a singular objectively conditioned crisis that is not attributable to any single unit. Furthermore, the state proves crucial in her argument. She convincingly argues, “The key to successful structural analysis lies in a focus on state organizations and their relations both to international environments and to domestic classes and economic conditions.”\textsuperscript{74} Here, states are conceived as “administrative and coercive organizations – organizations that are potentially autonomous from (though of course conditioned by) socioeconomic interest and structures.”\textsuperscript{75} Fahri Farideh finds Skocpol’s notion of state autonomy her most “controversial contribution” to the literature.\textsuperscript{76} The state proves critical to her often-overlooked duality of (social) revolution, where social and political structures are both profoundly changed so as to mutually reinforce each other.\textsuperscript{77} This is a change from the sociological second-generation of literature that focused on social systems at the expense of political institutions. Furthermore, Skocpol correctly recognizes the state as a macro-structure instead of a political arena, refuting the prominent pluralists’ school of thought.\textsuperscript{78} Likewise, she views it semi-autonomous from

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{73} Theda Skocpol, "Social Revolutions and Mass Military Mobilization," \textit{World Politics} 40, no. 2 (Jan., 1988) 151.
\item \textsuperscript{74} Skocpol, \textit{States and Social Revolutions}, 291.
\item \textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 14
\item \textsuperscript{76} Farideh Farhi, "State Disintegration and Urban-Based Revolutionary Crisis A Comparative Analysis of Iran and Nicaragua," \textit{Comparative Political Studies} 21, no. 2 (1988) 233.
\item \textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 5.
\item \textsuperscript{78} See Robert Dahl, “The Concept of Power,” \textit{Behavioral Science} 2, no. 3 (July, 1957).
\end{itemize}
direct dominant class control, which avoids the socioeconomic reductionism of the Marxist approach.

Skocpol situates the state between two transnational contexts. First is the structure of the world capitalist economy and the international system. Inter-unit competition within these systems strained the state, explain why revolutions occurred in countries both “caught behind more economically developed competitor nations” and where “existing structures made it impossible for [the states] to meet the particular international military exigencies.” Second there is what she terms ‘world time’, which “affect both the overall world context within which revolutions occur and the particular models and options for action that can be borrowed from abroad by revolutionary leadership.” To clarify, Skocpol believes world time operates through (a) developing a repertoire of action through historical demonstration that can be emulated later and (b) the juncture of two historical occurrences that interact. While including world time allows Skocpol to capture the transference of historically particular significance in the form of events, ideologies, and aspects of culture, it sacrifices the ability to make generalizable claims. For her macro-historical purpose, it is a worthy tradeoff. The emphasis is thus on the content of change instead of the dynamics of it.

Overall, the third generational literature contains the best analytic tools for uncovering the causes and processes of social revolutions. It avoids the necessity of reducing explanations to complicated psychological (i.e. moral economy/ relative deprivation) and personality (e.g. elite intransigence) determinants or relying on overly simplistic historic accounts. Furthermore, it provides theoretic elegance while explaining

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80 Ibid., 22-23.
why revolutions occur when they do (why \( t=n \)). A focus on structure avoids the common mistake of understanding revolutions as the product of a voluntaristic endeavor. Nevertheless, the third generation literature is limited in generating general comments about revolution due to its macro-historical methodology. Structure is derived \textit{a posteriori} from historical cases, summatting structural commonalities between them, and thus cannot make normative claims or extrapolate to other cases. This type of structure reflects a sample of cases is called ‘descriptive structure’.

With a descriptive structure, a general explanation of revolution is not possible. Trimberger prefaced her famous \textit{Revolution from Above} by noting its “emphasis on both structural and historical determinants of revolution from above indicates that there can be no general theory of revolution.”\textsuperscript{81} The problem with creating an inductive general theory is that future trends do not necessarily reflect past ones. For example, the agrarian-peasantry focus of Skocpol, Wolf, Paige, and Eisenstadt have lost relevance with the recent urbanization trends.\textsuperscript{82} As such, \textit{ex ante} analysis becomes unachievable, which should concern the practitioner and practically-inclined. Furthermore, each sample of cases yields different results. Whereas Skocpol examined the three ‘Great Revolutions’, Paige exclusively studied late 19th and early 20th century Latin America, Asia, and Africa – inevitably ‘historic’ variables between the samples radically vary. The result, as Goldstone found, is that “studies of the impact of agrarian structure on peasant revolutionary participation have yielded contradictory results.”\textsuperscript{83} In short, such an inductive approach to theory building has its advantages; nevertheless, it is ill suited for a

\textsuperscript{82} Skocpol runs into this problem with the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Theda Skocpol, "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution," \textit{Theory and Society} 11, no. 3 (May, 1982), 265-283.
\textsuperscript{83} Goldstone, "Theories of Revolution," 452.
general theory due to its historical contingency found in ‘world time’ or ‘historical determinant’ variable.

A general structural explanation of revolution is needed. Such an approach would necessarily have to shift from a descriptive structure to a generative structural theory of revolution. Reliance on generative structures, where deeper structures have causal priority over superficial ones, would allow an abstraction away from superficial comparative historical descriptions, thus permitting for a general theory. Constructing a generative structural theory would necessitate limited a priori ontological assumptions given its hypothetico-deductive nature. Nevertheless, the descriptive and prescriptive theoretic capacity would outweigh this cost. The insight of the third generation, especially Skocpol’s state-centric strand, could be retained. Farideh Farhi demonstrates how Skocpol’s approach can be applied beyond the Classic Revolutions of France, China, and Russia. Such a theory would need to develop a framework to explain the dynamic of change instead of comparing the content of change found in historical cases. This parsimonious general structural theory of revolution will be developed within the tradition of structural realism.

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84 Farhi, State Disintegration and Urban-Based Revolutionary Crisis: A Comparative Analysis of Iran and Nicaragua, 231-256.
Chapter III: On Realism

Realism has a long history. Its realpolitik origins can be traced as far back as 431 B.C. to Thucydides, who penned The History of the Peloponnesian War. Later political theorists, such as Niccolò Machiavelli and later Thomas Hobbes, augmented the tradition. Yet, the Realist school did not formally emerge until the 1940 publication of The Twenty Year Crisis by E. H. Carr. Carr wrote against what he deemed the “inadequacy of pure aspiration as the basis for a science of international politics” that marked the legalistic inter-war Idealism school of thought.1 Eight years later, Hans Morgenthau’s seminal Politics Among Nations was released. Like Carr, Morgenthau sought to make international relations into an objective science unlike the “scientific utopianism” of Idealism.2 Classic Realism emphasized the relations between nation-states, the character of government, and the relation to society, implicitly identifying “the state as an agent of the larger nation.”3 In the wake of failed appeasement and rising fascism in the 1930s, Realism soon replaced Idealism as the dominant theory of International Relations.4 It has remained so, in several forms, ever since.

Classic Realism soon fell under attack for its vague and problematic reliance on human nature (i.e. animus dominandi), statesmen, and the attributes of states to explain international relations.5 Kenneth Waltz emerged as a leading critic, first in his Man, the State, and War where he rejected what he termed first and second image analysis and

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5 Additionally, its attempts to explain foreign policy was highly contested.
later in his *Theory of International Politics* where the two are amalgamated into the ‘reductionist’ category. These works provided a new foundation for an elegant systems version of Realism to emerge – Neorealism.  

**Neorealism: A Theory**

Neorealism is not a theory of everything. In fact, it is not even a theory of everything international. Rather, it is a power theory of international politics. This is not to reject the existence and importance of international economic or diplomatic relations; Waltz freely admits as much. Furthermore, it does not claim to explain all international political phenomena. Quite the opposite, it adamantly rejects any attempt to explain foreign policy. What Waltz’s structural theory of international politics *does* do is “fix ranges of outcomes [among states] and identify general tendencies, which may be persistent and strong ones but will not be reflected in all particular outcomes.” Thus, while Waltz’s structural approach can “never tell us all that we want to know,” it does

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7 “An international-political theory serves primarily to explain international-political outcomes… But saying that a theory about international economics tells us something about politics, and that a theory about international politics tells us something about economics, does not mean that one such theory can substitute for the other. In telling us something about living beings, chemistry does not displace biology.” Kenneth Neal Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co, 1979) 38.

8 Waltz describes his theory as a structural theory in this passage, as opposed to a systems theory as he does elsewhere. Wendt has argued that Waltz’s theory cannot be classified as a structural theory, but can as a systems theory. Kenneth Waltz, “A Response to my Critics,” in Robert O. Keohane, *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) 344. ; Alexander E. Wendt, “The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory,” *International Organization* 41, no. 3 (Summer, 1987), 335-370
“tell us a small number of big and important things.”

Waltz’s systems theory of International Relations is notable for providing its ability to explain international dynamics – description – and make strong normative claims – prescription – all within an ultra-parsimonious framework.

Neorealism conceives the International System as defined by anarchy in which like-units – states – strive to ensure their own security. This is dissimilar to the centralized hierarchy of the domestic system, which is black-boxed. Anarchy is not only descriptive; it is explanatory of behavioral outcomes by providing a permissive environment where no central authority can enforce behavior. In the resulting self-help system, only the state can ensure its own survival. The unitary states are distinguished solely by their capabilities – “population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence.” Power, a single variable, is a function of the differentiation of capabilities between state-units, which provides the structure of a system – the balance of power. Since power can only be considered comparatively, being a relational concept, it is thus a systemic variable. A state’s behavior is determined in by its position in the balance of power, which informs state-level expectations and defines the dynamics in an international system. For the state, power provides the means of self-preservation. For the system, the number of hegemons, which is described in terms of polarity, give shape to the system.

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12 Ibid., 98.
13 As such, conversations of absolute power are misled. One can only have absolute capabilities, since power presupposes one or more other units.
Neorealism: A Theory Explained

In Neorealism, states are not power maximizing, which may compromise security; instead, they seek to increase security. This represents a break from the Classic Realist tradition, where “statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power,” and offensive structural realism, where states do seek to maximize power. Consequently, Waltz falls into the defensive realist camp. Scholars often confuse the significant difference between power maximizing and security seeking behavior, where security-seeking states may avoid opportunities to increase power for fear of triggering a spiral model conflict. Waltz goes as far as to claim that states may not even necessarily “bend all its efforts towards securing its own survival.” Rather, a high margin of security is sought, since, as David Baldwin points out, “absolute security is unattainable.” The very fact of international conflict perforce indicates that interests exist beyond security – for logically, if all states sought only security, there would be no threat that causes the security dilemma. Interests, it should be noted, can be “endlessly varied.”

19 Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 91. Waltz further argues, “If all states wanted simply to survive, then none would need to maintain military forces for use.” Kenneth Neal Waltz 1924-, *Man,
security is taken to be the objective interest of every state, it is unclear if the secondary and tertiary interests are objective as well.

Another common point of confusion is the role of anarchy, which can be attributed to Waltz’s own inconsistency of thought. In *Man, the State, and War*, Waltz convincingly argues anarchy provides the permissive cause (nothing prevents State A from acting on State B), which is combined with the efficient cause (State A and State B have a conflict of interest) to produce the self-help attribute of the system. Yet, as Wendt notes, the efficient cause relies on first-image and second-image explanations. Consequently, he reverses his stance in *Theory of International Politics* to disregard efficient causality. Yet, anarchy as a permissive environment alone cannot provide a causal account of the system’s attributes. On further point, Waltz’s anarchic international system has often been compared to a Hobbesian *bellum omnium contra omnes* due to the permissive environment. Nonetheless, Waltz argues that, while always a possibility, is not always realized. He believes that “order may prevail without an orderer.” This would be a function of a stable balance of power, which depends on the system’s polarity. Yet, without an orderer, order could never be ensured, hence ‘the tragedy of great power politics.’

Waltz is often charged with reducing state behavior to structure, thus compromising any notion of agency. Structure, playing such a critical role in Waltz’s systems theory, deserves a closer examination. On one hand, Waltz is very explicit in

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*the State, and War; a Theoretical Analysis* (New York: New York, Columbia University Press, 1959) 204.
20 Waltz, *Man, The State, and War*, 234
22 This line is a reference to Mearsheimer’s work
rejecting claims that structure determines behavior; he argues that it “can tell us what pressures are exerted and what possibilities are posed by systems of different structure, but it cannot tell us just how, and how effectively, the units of a system will respond to those pressures and possibilities.” It would seem that agential variant behavior is permitted, albeit only through unit irrationality. On the other hand, by amalgamating power and structure into one concept, Waltz’ parsimonious systems theory necessarily abandons state agency to the exogenous formation of behavior. While he does admit that states must find ways to conform to the structural reality, he then argues that the most rational way of doing this will be emulated by all, thus reducing any implicit diversity of action into a unity of behavior. The ontological primacy of Waltz’ structural power and its description as unintentional have led many to charge Neorealism with either equating power with structural restraint or making it an “amorphous all-encompassing concept.” Waltz’ positional understanding of power structure rejects popular choice-theoretical modes of explanations. This tension in the agent-structure dichotomy has been addressed for clarification yet will not be resolved, for it is beyond the purpose of this thesis and the capability of this author to do so.

Two further qualities of Waltzian structure must be highlighted: its generative and positional nature. The structure is generated due to state interaction; yet, the structure is

23 Waltz, Theory of International Politics, 71.
24 States, like firms in microeconomics, must act rationally or else fail. Waltz defines rationality loosely as “do better than others.” Whatever this entails, it must be emulated by all states. This implicitly argues that irrational states cannot exist over time, for if they are not socialized, they will be destroyed through competition – the twin mechanisms of structure. Ibid., 77. This amounts to an individualist-utilitarian conception of rationality where behavior is understood instrumentally as a means to an ends.
26 Waltz himself is often inconsistent on the issue, usually permitting agency when discussing the state but rejecting it when he turns to structural or systemic topics.
not defined by the interaction, as the interaction is abstracted away in a systems theory. Instead structure is a product of their relative capabilities.\textsuperscript{27} State interaction is only the necessary precondition to structure. This captures the structural logic of Waltz: “Each [state] is not just influencing the other; both are being influenced by the situation their interaction creates.”\textsuperscript{28} States are conditioned by the resulting unintentional power structure, \textit{nolens volens}. By defining the International System by the arrangements of its parts, possible due to the generative structure Waltz employs, “one arrives at a purely positional picture” where unit-location in the system defines its behavior.\textsuperscript{29} Now that the deeper theoretical considerations of Neorealism have been discussed, it is time to turn to a concept that is foundational to Neorealism and at the center of our investigation into revolution – power.

\textit{Neorealist Power}

Within International Relations, Brian Schmidt claims, “the concept of power is closely associated with the theory of realism.”\textsuperscript{30} This understatement is undeniable. One needs only to reflect briefly on why Realism is often referred to as \textit{power} politics. This ‘close association’ is even more evident with Neorealism, which bases its whole systems theory on a concept of power. Nevertheless, no less than Kenneth Waltz found that “although power is a key concept… its proper definition remains a matter of

\textsuperscript{27} Waltz argued that one “must show how the systems level, or structure, is distinct from the level of interacting units.” Waltz, \textit{Theory of International Politics}, 40.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 74.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 80.
controversy.” Stephen Walt adds, “There is still little agreement on how it should be conceived and measured.” Gilpin, exhibiting less restrain, declares the multiplicity and variety of definitions of power as “an embarrassment to political scientists.” Power must be understood.

In Structural Realism, state-units are distinguishable only by their relative power within a system. “Power,” according to Gilpin, “refers simply to the military, economic, and technological capabilities of states.” More specifically, power is capabilities understood systemically, which is generative of the system’s structure. This is critical – states and their capabilities are ontologically prior to structures. This leads Alexander Wendt to charge Neorealism with ontological unit reductionism, which reduces “the structure of the state system to the properties and interactions of its constituent elements, states.” The result of reducing structure to states is that states become the individual explanatory factor while structure cannot be understood independently, which is reflected


34 The concept of power is key to the analysis of this thesis; nevertheless, it is a nebulous concept. Margaret and Harold Sprout claim, “Power is one of the most common terms in the vocabulary of international politics.” Sprout, Margaret, 1903-2004, joint author and Harold Sprout 1901-1980, Foundations of International Politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, N.J., Van Nostrand, 1962) 136. Regardless, as Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane add, it “has always been an elusive concept for statement and analyst of international politics; now it is even more slippery.” Joseph S. joint author Nye and Robert O. (Robert Owen) Keohane 1941-, Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition (Boston: Boston : Little, Brown, 1977) 11-19. Structural Realism conceives of power in terms of capability, which is not measured based on demonstrated outcome. While this understanding is analytically strong, the concept of power is still elusive. Perhaps the best description of power is offered by Nye: “Power is like the weather. Everyone depends on it and talks about it, but few understand it… Power is also like love, easier to experience than to define or measure, but no less real for that.” Joseph S. Nye, Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics (New York: New York : Public Affairs, 2004) 1.


in the Neorealist methodological individualism. The primacy of power in the Neorealist
account is evident.

Despite the multiplicity of capabilities, power is conceived unitarily. Furthermore,
Waltz’ whole notion of a monolithic power structure is dependent on a fungible power.
Schmidt found this to be a product of Waltz’ parsimony, which “necessitates that he
define power in terms of resources and, furthermore, that he assume that these resources
are highly fungible.” Yet, this overlooks how the underlying microeconomic model in
Waltz’s theory necessitates a monetary fungibility for power. Some – such as David
Singer, Stuart Bremer and John Stuckey – finds the parallel to be acceptable, claiming,
“power is to political science what wealth is to economics, but not nearly as
measurable.”37 Others have been far more critical, arguing that “the tendency to
exaggerate the fungibility of power resources and the related tendency to neglect
considerations of scope” weakens Neorealist claims.38 Kissinger declares, “power is no
longer homogenous,” prompting Waltz to counter, “The economic, military, and other
capabilities of nations cannot be sectored and separately weighted.” Rather, state rank
“depends on how they score on all of the following items: size of population and
territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability,
and competence.”39 Power is, in a word, homogenous.

37 David Singer, Stuart Bremer, and John Stuckey, “Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major
38 David A. Baldwin, “Power Analysis and World Politics: New Trends Versus Old Tendencies,”
World Politics 31, no. 2 (1979) 42. See Nye and Keohane, Power and Interdependence : World
Logic of Anarchy : Neorealism to Structural Realism (New York: New York : Columbia University
Press, 1993) 54-56.
While the conversation over the homogeny and fungibility of power is often discussed, the source of capabilities is not. The lack of literature within Structural Realism on the subject is undoubtedly tied to the problem of reductionism, which Waltz defines as understanding a system but the attributes and interactions of its parts.\textsuperscript{40} Robert Cox finds, “Neorealism implicitly takes the production process and power relations inherently in it as given elements of the national interest, and therefore as part of its parameter.”\textsuperscript{41} Classic Realism fairs better in this respect. Another under-theorized aspect of structural realism is that of change.

\textit{Change in Neorealism and Beyond}

Neorealism struggles to capture change due to its “atemporal structuralism.”\textsuperscript{42} This is especially true when “the sources of the change lie in the world political economy or in the domestic structure of states.”\textsuperscript{43} In Neorealism, Walker notes, diachrony is studied synchronistically; process is a matter of ongoing relations constrained by structure.”\textsuperscript{44} This is because Waltz’ theory “contains only a reproductive logic, but no

\textsuperscript{40} Kenneth Neal Waltz, \textit{Theory of International Politics} (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co, 1979) 79.
\textsuperscript{44} R. B. J. Walker, "Realism, Change, and International Political Theory," \textit{International Studies Quarterly} 31, no. 1 (Mar., 1987b) 77.
transformational logic.”\textsuperscript{45} The emphasis on continuity of the International System instead of the change of its content reflects Waltz’ priority. Transformation can only occur within the Neorealist model when anarchy is substituted with hierarchy, which has historically never occurred and, if the Structural Realist tradition is correct, never will happen.\textsuperscript{46} Gilpin defends the emphasis on continuity, arguing, Thucydides “provides insights today as it did when it was written in the fifth century B.C.”\textsuperscript{47} By focusing on continuity of framework, Structural Realism is able to attain elegance. Conversely, to comment on the content of the International System would limit Structural Realism’s ability generate \textit{ex ante} statements, as is the case with Constructivism. Yet, change is a continuous feature of the International System. Including change into the theoretical framework of the International System does not necessitate a commentary on its content. In a later revision, Waltz claims “Systems change, or are transformed, depending on the resources and aims of their units and on the fates that befell them.”\textsuperscript{48} Still, this general statement hardly suffices in explaining how change arises within the systems-theory of international politics. Several questions remain unanswered: how do resources change? How does aim affect system transformation if structure determines outcome? What causally accounts for ‘fate’?

There have been two dominant modes of explaining change within the International System coming from Realism and Marxism. Both explain change in terms of differentiating increase of power among states. Yet, while Realism stresses uneven

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power growth that is theoretically underdetermined based in a strong account of international relations, Marxism provide a strong causal account of uneven development based on profit motives in Capitalist Society that is situated in an impoverished understanding of the International System. Within the Marxist tradition, change occurs across history when a contradiction forms between the forces of production and the relations of production, leading to a revolution that transforms the mode of production. For this reason, Marx claims, “Revolutions are the locomotives of history.”49 Within a historical stage, the superstructure, which acts to reinforce the forces and relations of production, is conditioned by changes in its economic base. Robert Cox argues, “Historical materialism examines the connection between power in production, power in the state, and power in international relations. Neorealism has, by contrast, virtually ignores the production process.”50 Still, the Marxist account of change struggles to translate into the international realm due to the lack of a Marxist theory of International Relations. Martin Wight contends, “Neither Marx, Lenin, nor Stalin made any systematic contribution to international theory; Lenin’s Imperialism comes nearest to such a thing and this has little to say about international politics.”51 Likewise, Kubálková and Cruickshank note “the truly incredibly divergences between Marxism and International Relations.”52

Marx and Engels theorized that the bourgeoisie struggle not only against other classes within a nation, but with the bourgeoisies of foreign nations. Marx writes in *The Civil War in France*, “The international relations of capitalist countries are always a result of foreign policies in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices and squandering in piratical wars the people’s blood and treasure.”

Lenin augmented the Marxist stance on International Relations in his *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Here Lenin forwards his Law of Uneven Development – the tendency for rates of profit to fall causes advanced capitalist states to compensate through imperialist expansion. This is built on the theory of diminished returns popular among many the classical school of economy. Imperialistic wars, it is concluded, are endemic to Capitalism because capitalist economies grow and accumulate capital at different rates.

Classic Realists primarily view of the fundamental cause of war among states and change in the International System as tied to the uneven growth of power between nations, although alliance factors are considered. Power directs resources away from other social objectives, and thus is the product of a domestic effort. Organski finds war due to “the differences in rates of growth among the great powers.” More specifically, the manner and rate of national growth changes the pool of resources available for a nation, which produces the conditions for international conflict. When national growth causes a select number of new states to assume positions of power over their rivals in the

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53 Ibid., 34.
International System, war ensues. Robert Gilpin synthesizes Classic and Structural Realism with his seminal *War and Change in World Politics* to further the study of change within the realist paradigm.

Gilpin begins with a description of the International System reminiscent of the English School: “actors enter social relations and create social structures in order to advance particular sets of political, economic, or other types of interests.”\(^5\) Over time, the interest of these actors and the balance of power they reside in shift due to changes in economic, technological, or other developments. This produced a ‘disjuncture’ between power distribution and the International System, which is the precondition for political change. Consequently, the actors who would benefit from a change in the system attain the means to enact such change, leading to a new system that reflects the new balance of power and interest of the dominant members. From the state point of view, it is a cost-benefit analysis based on the material environment and the international balance of power.

Change in the International System, thus, reflects change in power realities. A system returns to equilibrium when the distribution of benefits and costs mirrors the distribution of power, which implies “no state believes it profitable to attempt to change the system.”\(^6\) According to Gilpin’s model of change, the International System can be described as cyclical where the disjuncture between the system and the distribution of power grows until “hegemonic war and the peace settlement create a new status quo and equilibrium reflecting the redistribution of power in the system and the other components

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\(^6\) Ibid., 14.
of the system.\textsuperscript{59} The dynamic of change is due to the changing material environment and
the tendency “for [the] economic costs of maintaining the status quo to rise faster than the
economic capacity to support the status quo.”\textsuperscript{60} Finally, change can be divided in three
categories: (a) interaction change, or change in the normative interactions or processes
among entities in the International System; (b) systemic change, or change in the form of
control or governance of the system; and (c) systems change, or change in the nature of
the actors or diverse entities that compose the system. This last category – systems
change – is largely ignored by International Relation literature.\textsuperscript{61}

Overall, Gilpin provides a strong account for change in the international realm.
His theoretical shortcomings derive from his sociological understanding of the
International System. First, he prefaces his argument by trying to argue that Waltz’
systems theory provides a sociological framework, within which an economic
individualistic rational-choice approach is employed. Gilpin then uses this understanding
to create a pseudo-Parsonian functionalism theory of international society that deals with
equilibrium within a social system. Even his inclusion of rational-choice assumptions is
problematic due basing his cost-benefit analysis on ‘satisfaction.’ For example, he writes,
“An international system is in a state of equilibrium if the more powerful states in the
system are satisfied with the existing territorial, political, and economic arrangement.\textsuperscript{62}
Including ‘satisfaction’ as a variable is difficult to operationalize and suggest general
poor theorizing.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 15.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 11.
\textsuperscript{61} Gilpin declares, “Although students of international relations have given little attention to this
category of change and have left it (perhaps wisely) to the philosophers of history, it should be more
central to their concern.” Ibid., 41.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 11.
On an analytic level, Gilpin fails to address how systemic disequilibrium is at times absorbed into the international system through adjustment and at other times produces a disjuncture that leads to crisis. As Keohane notes, Gilpin merely “restates the problem without resolving it.” 63 Furthermore, the degree of intensive (domestic) and extensive (international society) considerations render his theory notably inelegant. Finally, Gilpin’s formulation of the International System cannot be reconciled with Neorealism, although it can with Classic Realism. 64 This is primarily because the purpose-driven orientation of Gilpin’s theory (i.e. seeking satisfaction) counters the structuralism (i.e. determining range of outcomes) of Waltz’s conceptualization. Structural realism requires another account for change.

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64 See Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, ”Is Anybody Still a Realist?” International Security 24, no. 2 (Autumn, 1999), 5-55.
Chapter IV: Towards a Structural Realist Theory of Revolution

Realism requires a theory of revolution. With the existing literature, realists are confined to explaining the socializations process of post-revolutionary states and their relation to war. Accordingly, the tradition has failed to explain: (a) why a state-unit self-destructs, which ostensibly violates the rationality of a security-seeking unit, given the window of opportunity it creates; (b) the sudden behavior deviation of a state-unit, which both undermines specific mechanisms of the International System such as alliances, deterrence, and diplomacy and generates misperceptions and miscalculations; and, most importantly, (c) the consequential increase of state-unit capabilities, which alters the Balance of Power over time and thus restructures the entire International System. Such a theory should build on the Structural Realist paradigm, given that the literature that draws from Classic Realism leads theorist to under-determined volunteeristic conclusions such as Kissinger’s ‘dissatisfaction’ explanation of revolution or Gilpin’s ‘dissatisfaction and disequilibrium’ theory of change. Yet, Structural Realism is ill equipped to deal with the question of revolution – lacking a theory of the state, a theory of change, and a theory of power production.¹ For revolutions to be explained within the Structural Realist tradition, questions of the state, change, and power production must be engaged.

Theory-Building

A Structural Realist theory of revolution will now be developed. Adopting the position of Buzan, Little, Jones, and Keohane, ‘Neorealism’ will be reserved for “Waltz’s

¹ To clarify, there is a rich realist literature on measuring capabilities, but not their production.
narrow theory of international politics;” instead, the label ‘Structural Realism’ will be used in order to connote the greater theoretic tradition. Curiously, critics of a general theory of revolution in International Relations preexist a theory itself. Chan and Williams argue, “The variety and number of revolutionary states make a general theory, at this early stage of their appreciation by International Relations, impossible.” Citing the opposite rational, Skocpol claims, “a primarily deductive and universalizing mode of theory-building makes no real sense for explaining revolutions, because there have been, by any well-focused definition, only a small number of cases, and all of them, as the etiology of the concept “revolution” implies, have occurred during the era of “modernization,” in the last several hundred years of world history.” Both challenges must be addressed.

Chan and Williams’ concerns are misplaced for two reasons. First, the variety of revolutionary states should not affect a general theory given that, building off of Waltz’s theory, a diversity of content within a system still results in a similarity of outcome. While the richness of any historical case does result in a high degree of uniqueness, “[t]heory, as a general explanatory system, cannot account for particularities.” Structural Realism is concerned with generative structure – “the deeper structure levels [that have] causal priority” which determines “the structural level closer to the surface of visible phenomena [that] take effect only within a context that is already “prestructured” by the

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3 Stephen Chan and Andrew J. Williams, Renegade States : The Evolution of Revolutionary Foreign Policy (Manchester; New York; New York: Manchester University Press ; Distributed exclusively in the USA and Canada by St. Martin's Press, 1995) 199.
5 Waltz, Theory of International Politics, 118.
deeper level.” Accordingly, a generative structural theory can abstract away from the particularities of cases. Second, Chan and Williams believe the theoretic platform for understanding revolutions ‘at this early stage of their appreciation by International Relations’ is lacking. Here, the solution is simple – construct the theoretic platform. Doing so will facilitate a debate within the literature as to the deficiencies and necessary remedies for a general theory. The Structural Realist theory of revolution will do exactly this by producing a theoretic platform for explaining the state, power production, and change necessary to explain revolution.

Skocpol, on the other hand, is not concerned with the wide variety of cases as much as their limited number, referring to the fact that, as Huntington succulently remarks, “Revolutions are rare.” Furthermore, she makes note that revolution is a distinctly modern phenomenon. While she is correct in both of these regards, she nevertheless draws the wrong conclusion. The infrequency of revolution only poses a problem to purely inductive theory building, which relies on drawing out descriptive structure through comparing a range of cases. In fact, hypothetico-deductive theory-building with select induction can circumvent the methodological problem associated with a limited pool of cases, given that it is able to identify the causal variable(s) within the theoretical framework and logically trace it to the expected outcome. Such a theory can then be tested using a well-structured case study based on the before-after method supplemented by process tracing and within-case congruence procedure. This will reveal the validity of the theory.

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7 Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968) 262. Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, 1.
8 Waltz, Theory of International Politics, 7-13.
Additionally, Skocpol’s criticism of the modernity of revolution is irrelevant to the theory-building intention of this thesis. While the “no states, no revolutions” dictum holds true, the Structural Realist paradigm presupposes state-units, thus avoiding any theoretical disagreement.9 It could be added that, as the history of revolution in Chapter I suggests, the concept of revolution predates Antiquity. The modern concept of revolution discussed here is inevitably tied to modernity and the modern state; nonetheless, a pre-modern proto-revolutionary structural rationalization mechanism existed prior to the modern state, as Perry Anderson and other neo-Marxist historian have illustrated.10 Hence, to dismiss revolutions as modern phenomena is a mischaracterization; revolutions are merely the modern manifestation that emerged concomitantly with the nation-state. 

The Structural Realist theory of revolution being developed conceptualizes revolution as a self-correcting mechanism of the state-unit that is structurally determined. Revolution is defined as the rapid, basic transformation of the political and socio-economic structure of an individual state that is accompanied and in part carried through by mass-based revolt from below. They occur when a structural contradiction forms between state and society, in which the dominant group or coalition in society obstructs the state, strained by its position in the International System, from realizing its capabilities. The suppression of state capability is self-corrected by the structural rationalization of state and society in revolution. In fact, revolutionary structural rationalization substantially increases state-unit capabilities and thus alters the Balance of Power over time; hence, revolutions reshape the International System in the long-term. Critically, revolutions are not ‘made’ by agential forces; they are determined by structural

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conditions. Moreover, while structure determines the outcome of revolution, it does not address on the content of the outcome. As Goldstone observes, “Revolutions do not always feature the same set of key actors, nor do they all unfold in the same way.”¹¹ Regardless, the actors and events of revolutions do occur within the range defined by the existing generative structure.

Due to the emphasis on generative structure, the theory offers syntactic simplicity, or elegance. Likewise, the ontological construction of the theory permits parsimony, although not the ‘ultra-parsimony’ of Waltz’s theory. Equifinality is avoided by developing the necessary and sufficient stages of revolution: international pressure, state-society structural contradiction, state destruction, state reconstruction, consequential variation in power, and change in Balance of Power. The theory offers a high explanatory capacity, not only explicating revolutions but also reinforcing the concept of power and change in the Structural Realist paradigm. Additionally, it is prescriptive. To echo the cautionary note of economist Arthur Lewis, “‘The process of social change is much the same today as it was 2,000 years ago… We can tell how change will occur if it occurs; what we cannot foresee is what change is going to occur.’”¹² In other words, the theory can prescribe the structural range of revolutionary change without answering what form it will take within the range. The Structural Realist theory of revolution will now be developed.

A Structural Realist Theory of Revolution

**International Framework**

The International System is comprised of a collection of survival-seeking state-units existing within anarchy, resulting in a self-help system. State-units are only distinguished by their capabilities, which must be understood comparatively.\(^\text{13}\) The differentiation of capabilities between interacting states generates a power structure – often referred to as the Balance of Power.\(^\text{14}\) Polarity, the “main pattern of relational power,” is defined by powerful or hegemonic state-units and gives shape to the International System.\(^\text{15}\) Through the dual structural mechanism of socialization (which reduces variety) and competition (which provides order) based on the threat or use of coercion, state-units conform to existing power realities. This does not assume behavioral rationality, although rational state-units emerge as a product of competition in anarchy given that irrational actors do not survive.

**Theory of the State**

Power, as it has been said, is state capabilities viewed systemically. The source of state capabilities is left undefined in Neorealism, as it rejects explanatory reductionism where “the whole is understood by knowing the attributes and the interactions of its parts.”\(^\text{16}\) Yet, due to its ontological unit reductionism where the structure of the system is reduced to its units, the source of state capabilities becomes determinative of the whole

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\(^\text{14}\) Although it is the interaction of state-units that is generative to structure, it is abstracted away in the theory.
\(^\text{15}\) Jones, Richard and Buzan, *The Logic of Anarchy*, 68.
International System. Accordingly, “there has been continuous pressure to push what Waltz counts as unit level factors back into the structural level.” William Wohlforth argues that although power “is systemic in [a] sense, the distribution of power is nonetheless partly the result of process internal to states that lie completely outside the purview of Waltz’s theory.” For this reason, many argue that Neorealism requires a theory of the state in order to become a true general theory of International Relations. Waltz himself admits, “Realist theory by itself can handle some, but not all of the problems that concern us. Just as market theory at times requires a theory of the firm, so international-political theory at times needs a theory of the state.” He later further acknowledges, “Change in, and transformation of, systems originates not in the structure of a system but in its parts.” In order to reveal the source of state-unit power, which will be critical for theorizing revolutions, the International System must be tied to capability production inside the state-unit. Yet, as Maryam Panah comments, “one well-established complication with a theory that connects the International System with a intra-state

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17 This is not exclusive of the Neorealist tradition. Sprout and Sprout similarly argues, without “supernational world government,” it is nations that set the patterns of international politics. “For this reason, the role of national power is basic to any discussion of international politics.” Sprout and Sprout, Foundations of National Power, 4. See Halliday’s commentary on Waltz’s conception Fred Halliday, Rethinking International Relations (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994) 125. Also, see Richard Ashley for a full explanation of why “Neorealism is statist before it is structuralist.” Richard K Ashley, “The Poverty of Neorealism,” 272.


22 Ibid., 343.
system is the conceptualization of the state itself.\(^{23}\) A concept of the state must be forwarded that accounts for its dual role.

The state will be defined as fundamentally Janus-faced, with an intrinsically dual anchorage in society and the International System.\(^{24}\) This understanding upholds an ontological duality of the state while recognizing a common convergence in state capability—the ultima ratio regum—that defines the state both international and intra-national systems.\(^{25}\) It also notes that states are survival seeking in both contexts. In the International System, the state assumes the form of a simple “micro-decision unit.”\(^{26}\) Everything within the territory of the state-unit, including society and capability production, is subsumed. Intra-territorially, the state is a macro-structure anchored in society that acts as a self-preserving coercive-administrative entity.\(^{27}\) The administrative capacity of the state over society has been demonstrated in Trimberger’s Revolution from Above and Stepan’s The State and Society where the state acts “not only to structure relationship between civil society and public authority in a polity but also to structure many crucial relationships within civil society as well.”\(^{28}\)


\(^{24}\) This is a modification of Skocpol’s definition. Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, 32. For the dual nature of state, see G. J. Ikenberry, David A. Lake and Michael Mastanduno, The State and American Foreign Economic Policy (Ithaca: Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1988) 1-14.

\(^{25}\) There are analyses that dissolve this ontological division to discuss an integrated world system with relations between sub-national, national, and supra-national levels. See Jan Scholte, International Relations of Social Change, (Open University Press, 1993), 25.

\(^{26}\) This is the definition of a firm in a microeconomic model. Morris Silver and Richard D. Auster, The State as a Firm: Economic Forces in Political Development (Boston:: M. Nijhoff Pub, 1979) 1.

\(^{27}\) Halliday argues that the study of revolution produces the need of a “new, second, concept of the state, a sociological category of the state as an administrative-coercive entity, in addition to the legal-political one normally used in IR.” Halliday, Rethinking International Relations (Vancouver: Vancouver : UBC Press, 1994)140. For a definition of means of administration (Verwaltungsmittel) and means of coercion or war (Kriegsmittel), see Richard Swedberg and Ola Agevall, The Max Weber Dictionary: Key Words and Central Concepts Stanford University Press, 2005) 163, 164.

coercive role of the state is readily recognized in the literature. Randall Collins finds that the state “consists ultimately of military control over a territory.” Similarly, Weber defines a state as the legitimate monopolization of force while Gilpin views the state as a legitimate actor that “provides protection and welfare in return for revenue.”

Legitimacy need not be included in the definition of state coercion, as many view the state “as a mechanism of domination and control,” especially within the neo-Marxist tradition. Instead of legitimation or domination, the emphasis must be on self-preservation.

The survival seeking state is defined by intra-territorial and extra-territorial competition. Consequently, the state performs two basic tasks: “It maintains order, and it competes with other actual or potential states.” That is, a state controls and defends its territory. Intra-territorially, as Mastanduno, Lake, and Ikenberry contend, this “demands that the state meet and overcome challenges from, and maintain the support of, societal groups and coalitions.” This includes acting in both legitimate and dominating

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31 Stepan, The State and Society : Peru in Comparative Perspective, xii.
32 In addition to intra-territorial and extra-territorial competition, what he labels ‘state making’ and ‘war making’, Tilly adds protection of social clients and extraction as the four dimensions of the state. Yet, the protection of social clients can be reduced to an aspect of intra-territorial competition, akin to alliances in extra-territorial competitions. The state in its coercive capacity addresses intra- and extra-territorial competition. The administrative capacity of the state addresses extraction. Hence, defining the state as a coercive-administrative entity captures the fundamental state activities. Charles Tilly et al., War Making and State Making as Organized Crime (Cambridge University Press, 1985) 181.
34 Mastanduno, Lake and Ikenberry, Toward a Realist Theory of State Action, 463-464.
capacities. Extra-territorially, the state must ensure its survival in an anarchic International System, as has been discussed. Critically, the ability to compete intra-territorially and extra-territorially depends on state capabilities. These capabilities, in turn, depend on extraction from society. While the state may perform numerous other tasks and maintain additional interests, they are secondary or tertiary to the primary goal of survival. Mastanduno, Lake, and Ikenberry note, “States do many things only tangentially related to survival,” yet “any state – whether pre-capitalist, capitalist, centrally planned, relatively autonomous, or wholly autonomous from society – must assure its survival (and that of its nation-state) prior to pursing other objectives.”

Accordingly, Skocpol finds, “Any state first and fundamentally extracts resources from society and deploys these to create and support coercive and administrative organization” (emphasis added). Given that the state is distinguished by its ability to survive intra-territorial and extra-territorial competition, it is expected that the state is a semi-autonomous actor. However, this conceptualization is at tension will much of the literature.

When analyzed within a domestic system, the ontological salience of the state found in International Relations literature is often lost. Such is the case with the Pluralist and Liberal tradition, where the state acts as a legitimate political arena of social groups, thus reducing it to socioeconomic forces. Here, the state does not have unique interests. As a result, “the dominant theories and research agendas of social sciences rarely spoke of states.” This tendency is also evident in the neo-Marxist tradition. Marx originally

36 Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, 29.
37 Peter B. Evans et al., Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 4.
viewed the state as superstructural epiphenomena that acts as “a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.” A noticeable shift occurred in neo-Marxist thought during the mid-1960s that criticized, as Nicos Poulantzas formulated in the New Left Review, the “long Marxist tradition,” which assumes “the State is only a simple tool or instrument manipulated at will by the ruling class.” Still, even the more society-centric theories ran into the “inherent problems of choosing the appropriate level of interest aggregation and measuring the strength of various domestic groups.”

Overall, most neo-Marxists fail to provide a robust understanding of the state due to its tendency to view it exclusively through the lens of Capitalism. As Skocpol criticizes, “it won’t do to pretend that all states structures are themselves simply an aspect of an amorphous, all-encompassing “capitalism.” One strand has broken from the tradition to define the state as semi-autonomous.

The state, fundamentally Janus-Faced, is necessarily semi-autonomous. State autonomy is defined as “a structure with a logic and interests of its own not necessarily equivalent to, or fused with, the interests of the dominant class in society or the full set of member groups in the polity.” It deserves to be emphasized that this does not link state interest to the interests of those holding authority, as Gilpin implies, or state officials, as Goodwin argues. On one hand, a state’s autonomy derives from its participation in the

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43 Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 27.
44 Gilpin states, “The state…has interest of its own” but these are later reduced to the interests of the authority. Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 16. Jeff Goodwin claims that the state-autonomy perspective recognizes the tendency of state officials to “to develop identities, interest, ideologies, and (ultimately) lines of action” that are distinct.” Jeff Goodwin. “State-Centered Approaches to Revolutions,” 12.
International System, which demands resource extraction that often creates conflict with
the interests of the dominant class. In fact, as Otto Hintze reveals, “All state organization
was originally military organization, organization for war.”\(^{45}\) This leads Tilly to
formulate that “States are war-makers, and wars are state-makers.”\(^{46}\) Furthermore, a
state’s determinant geopolitical environment constrains the range of state behavior. On
the other hand, this autonomy is conditioned by the society within which it is embedded
in. Hence, “the very structural potentials for autonomous state actions change over time,
as the organizations of coercion and administration undergo transformations, both
internally and in their relations to societal groups.”\(^{47}\) In short, the state is semi-
autonomous – determined extra-territorially by the geopolitical environment and
conditioned intra-territorially by society, it is not reducible to either.

The state, as discussed above, is embedded in society. Society must be understood
as the collection of classes with different resource-mobilizing capacities that is organized
according to the relations of production. Following Weber, class “represents possible, and
frequent, bases for social action.”\(^{48}\) While the interest of state and society often diverge
on the extraction of resources from society, they converge on the necessity of territorial
integrity from exogenous threats and the benefit of economic activity.\(^{49}\) Consequently,

\(^{45}\) Quoted in Peter Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic
\(^{46}\) Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" 446.
\(^{47}\) Skocpol, “Explaining Social Revolutions: First and Further Thoughts,” in Evans et al., *Bringing the
\(^{48}\) Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, 927. As a whole, society is the distribution of resources over a
plurality of people, which has the potential for collection action.
\(^{49}\) This is because “societies with states have had superior survival values to those without them.”
Journal of Sociology* 25, no. 02 (1984) 119. Additionally, as Jeffery Sellers explains,
“Among a range of theoretical perspectives, scholars in the field have converged around a broadly
similar conclusion that society provides crucial elements of support for a state to be effective, and that
a state is critical to collective action in society.” Mastanduno, Lake and Ikenberry believe this
the state-society relationship exists in a potential contentious positive-sum environment.

In society, it is assumed that there is a dominant or elite structure.

**Capability Production**

State-unit capabilities – the “necessary conditions of state power” – are the product of material conditions within a territory realized through the state and society, or state-society.\(^{50}\) Separating the material condition and the structures of production and extraction enriches Waltz’s definition of capabilities – “population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence” – by unveiling their origin instead of merely measuring certain demonstrated outputs.\(^{51}\) The material conditions include geography, population, natural resources, and technology within the territory of the state.\(^{52}\) To be realized as capabilities, they must be mobilized by state-society.

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\(^{50}\) Singer quoted in Ted Robert Gurr, "War, Revolution, and the Growth of the Coercive State," *Comparative Political Studies* (21, no. 1, 988) 46.


\(^{52}\) This definition provides the most basic foundation of power, which requires a production or mobilization level of analysis. Others have amalgamated the material base and the production into one level of factors. For example, Morgenthau includes geography, natural resources (e.g., food, raw materials), industrial capacity, military preparedness (technology, leadership, quantity and quality of armed forces), population (distribution, trends), national character, national morale (quality of society and government), quality of diplomacy, quality of government. Hans Joachim Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations; the Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf, 1967) 124-159. Gilpin argued accretive factors such as demography was most salient, but included organizational, technologic, economic, and military factors as well as the environmental factors of transpiration and communication; military technique and organization; economic factors. Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 1981). Likewise, Gurr defined the material base of state power as “national territory’s
Many authors have discussed the notion of realizing or mobilizing the material base in order to produce power, usually considering organizational variables. Gurr, for example, discusses the ‘political base’, or the “conditions that determine the extent to which the state apparatus and rulers are able to recruit, extract, and organize human and material resources, then use them coherently (efficiently over time) in the service of the state’s interests.”53 Likewise, Sprout and Sprout opine, “Manpower and economic resources are essential, but tools, skills, and organization are required to transmute them into political power and influence.”54 Yet, confusing factors such as aggregate skillsets and strategy can easily be avoided by examining structural rationality. State-society structural rationality is defined as the efficiency of the state-society structure in extracting and mobilizing its material endowment relative to other state-societies.55 Critically, the specific form is irrelevant to analysis; instead, it is solely efficiency relative to other state-units that matters. Through the dual structural mechanisms of competition and socialization, there is a pressure to maximize efficiency, including through emulating other state-societies. It is important to note that what is structurally rational for one material condition may be structurally irrational for another. Overall, material conditions and state-society structural rationalization determines state-unit capabilities.

54 Sprout and Sprout, Foundations of International Politics, 29. Also see Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, 22.
55 This differs from the behavioral rationality that arises as a structural-function of Waltz’s system-theory.
Change

The framework developed above is static, much like Waltz’s own theory. An explanation of change is necessary for a Structural Realist theory of revolution. However, explaining change has always been a problem for the social sciences. John Keynes once declared, “The great events of history are often due to secular changes in the growth of population and other fundamental economic causes, which, escaping by their gradual character and notice of contemporary observers, are attributed to the follies of statesmen or the fanaticism of atheists.” He reveals the fundamental nature of change here; namely, it results from deep macro-structural trends. Ralph Hawtrey offers another insight:

“Changes in relative power are always occurring. Without any extension of territory or similar overt act, the natural growth of population and wealth and the march of economic progress will bring about a greater increase of power in one country than in another. And while some countries are growing stronger in unequal degrees, others may stand still or may actually decay.”

The deep macro-structural change that occurs within the territory of the state has profound ramifications for the International System. In order to theorize change within the International System, transformational trends in the basic material conditions of the state must first be examined.

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56 As it has been above developed, change in a systems-theory must come from the unit-level; yet, Waltz argues structure is the productive agent and hence abstracts away from the state-unit. Consequently, Waltz cannot explain change. William Wohlforth provides the compelling reasoning that, “Because Waltz’s theory does not account for changes in the distribution of capabilities that occur as a consequence of domestic processes, it might be irrelevant for significant stretches of international history and seems to be flat wrong about others.” William C. Wohlforth, “Measuring Power – And the Power of Theories,” in John A. Vasquez and Colin Elman, Realism and the Balancing of Power: A New Debate (Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic, 2005) 252.
The material condition of a state-unit changes according to deep demographic, environmental, economic and technological macro-structural trends. These deep structures tend to change extremely gradually; nevertheless, by changing they alter the material condition within a state-unit, often system-wide. Change in the material condition necessitates adaption in state-society structure in order to remain rational, or efficient in extracting and mobilizing its material endowment relative to other state-societies. To elaborate, what was rational in efficiently extracting and mobilizing resources in material condition \( n_1 \) may not be in material condition \( n_2 \). Furthermore, there exists the structural pressure to maximize rationalization. Failure to adapt will be rectified through intra-territorial and extra-territorial threats to survival, or ‘competition’.

Consequently, state-society must adapt their structure to efficiently extract from material condition \( n_2 \). The logic of adaption, whether in innovation or emulation, is intrinsic to Neorealism and is manifested in the isomorphic tendencies of socialization to the system. Due to competition and socialization, it is structurally determined that change will be adapted to over time. This is normal change and results in a gradual variation of

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60 This concept is similar to the Marxist ‘forces of production’. Still, one must be careful not to reduce capability production to the mode of production. It is evident that, as Collins formulated, “Productive economies have proportionately greater surplus for investment in war equipment, larger populations, and greater proportions of the population freed for military action.” Randall Collins, "Some Principles of Long-Term Social Change: The Territorial Power of States," 1. Gilpin falls into this trap when he argues, “the distribution of power itself ultimately rests on an economic base, and as sources and foundations of wealth change because of shifts in economic efficiency, location of industry, or currents of trade, a corresponding redistribution of power among groups and states necessarily occurs.” Gilpin, War and Change in World Politics, 67. Yet, capability production requires more than economic activity; specifically, it requires the state’s effective coercive-administration of society (i.e., order) and the extraction of societal resources. E. H. Carr found, “the science of economic presupposes a given political order, and cannot be profitably studied in isolation from politics.” E. H. Carr, The Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1956) 117.

61 Waltz, Theory of International Politics, 127-128. Socialization may cause a state-society to emulate another efficient state-society structure. Skocpol indicates, “From the start, international relations have intersected with preexisting class and political structures to promote and shape divergent as well as similar changes in various countries.” Skocpol, State and Revolution, 20.
capabilities and thus power relations in the International System. With the exception of revolution, a Structural Realist theory can abstract away from change-adaption dynamics as the logic of structure results in states adapting to increase capabilities given pressures from the International System. It follows that the state can be abstracted from save with revolutionary cases.

**Revolution**

Revolutions occur when state-society structure does not adapt to deep structural trends.\(^6^2\) Yet, according to the theoretic framework, the structural mechanism of competition in intra- and extra-territorial competition acts to ensure that state-society *does* structurally adapt to deep structural change. Accordingly, revolutions can only arise when state-society adaption to change is inhibited by a structural contradiction between the state and society. The state, already strained from the International System, becomes fundamentally incompatible with a high resource-mobilizing section of the socioeconomic structure, which obstructs its extraction from and administration of society. Usually, this would be the elite structure given its greater resource-mobilizing capacity. Still, a non-elite coalition can form to fill this role – key is the structurally determined incompatibility that leads social resource-mobilization against strained state capabilities.\(^6^3\) The structural incompatibility cannot be rectified. This results in depressed state capabilities and, thus, the state’s inability to counter intra-territorial threats. As will

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\(^6^2\) As case studies will reveal, state-society structure may be adjusting without necessarily adapting, which entails rationalization.

\(^6^3\) The elite-centric conclusions found in comparative studies of the ‘Classic Revolutions’ proved inaccurate with the Iranian Revolution of 1979. This highlights the problems of a purely inductive general theory.
be explained below, revolution removes this structural contradiction, allowing for state-
unit self-correction.

The international dimension of analysis must be retained, for, in the words of
Gourevitch, “the outbreak and outcome of… revolutions is unintelligible without an
examination of international factors.”\textsuperscript{64} Strain on a state’s capabilities due to pressure
from the International System is a necessary condition for revolution.\textsuperscript{65} This explains
why revolutions have only occurred in states situated in disadvantageous positions within
the International System.\textsuperscript{66} Formulated another way, the extra-territorial pressures that
demand and expend state capabilities – the preparation for international conflicts, the
threat of invasion, arms races, defeat in war, \textit{et cetera} – reduces the amount of
capabilities that can be devoted to intra-territorial competition, providing a permissive
condition. Skocpol found, “Although uneven economic development always lies in the
background, developments within the international states system as such – especially
defeat in wars or threats of invasion and struggles over colonial control – have directly
contributed to virtually all outbreaks of revolutionary crisis.”\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{64} Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics," 900.
\textsuperscript{65} Goldfrank labeled this a ‘permissive world context’ whereas Foran uses the term ‘world systemic
opening Walter L. Goldfrank, "Theories of Revolution and Revolution without Theory: The Case of
Mexico," \textit{Theory and Society} 7, no. 1/2, (Jan. - Mar., 1979) 142.; John Foran, "The Comparative-
Historical Sociology of Third World Social Revolutions: Why a Few Succeed, Why Most Fail," in
Foran, \textit{Theorizing Revolutions} (London ; New York: Routledge, 1997b), 222. Pressures can originate
from society itself to supplement exogenous pressures. Eric Wolf illustrates the case of endogenous
pressures using data on population growth that suggests doubling or tripling of growth rates prior to
peasant wars; he finds, “social structures often failed to absorb the added burden of supernumerary
281.
\textsuperscript{66} Skocpol, \textit{States and Social Revolutions}, 23. ; Examples from Latin America, Middle East, and Asia
have illustrated that revolutions actually act a balancing behavior against system hegemons. Skocpol,
"Social Revolutions and Mass Military Mobilization," 158.
\textsuperscript{67} Skocpol, \textit{The State and Social Revolution}, 23.
in the International System are common whereas revolutions are rare.\textsuperscript{68} This is because, even when strained by exogenous pressures, the state possesses far greater capabilities than found in society divided by class.\textsuperscript{69} In addition to exogenous pressure, revolutions require a contradiction between the state and society.

Pressure from the International System necessitates that a state ensures state-society structural rationalization in order to maximize capabilities. According to the theoretic framework, changing material conditions requires adaption of state-society structures in order to be rationalized for the new material condition. However, this is not possible when the state’s rationalization of extraction or the administrative reordering of socioeconomic structure becomes incompatible with the structure of the dominant group or coalition of society. Specifically, \textit{a contradiction forms when the range of options structurally determined for the state is incompatible with the range of options structurally determined for the dominant group or coalition of society}. This not only depresses state capability, but also undermines socioeconomic structure.\textsuperscript{70} When the crisis becomes sufficiently acute, the dominant class or coalition obstructs state extraction, coercion, and administration, producing state-society irrationality hence depressed capabilities. As a result, the state succumbs to intra-territorial competition, or, in a word, revolution.

The state-society structural contradiction is dissimilar to the Marxist version of structural contradiction that results between the forces of production and the relations of production. Here, the Marxist tradition holds that the political crisis of revolution is

\textsuperscript{68} See John Foran, "The Comparative-Historical Sociology of Third World Social Revolutions," 227.
\textsuperscript{69} Jack A. Goldstone, "Theories of Revolution," 448.
\textsuperscript{70} Richard Lachmann upholds that "revolutions matter structurally only when they extinguish, amalgamate, or destroy elite capacities." While this elite-exclusive explanation is one sided, it highlights the role of elite structure in revolution. Richard Lachmann, “Agents of Revolution: Elite Conflicts and Mass Mobilization from the Medici to Yeltsin,” in \textit{Theorizing Revolutions}, ed. John (London: Routledge, 1997), 96.
epiphenomenal to class antagonism. Yet, Skocpol notes how “Marxist scholars have failed to notice that causal variables referring to the strength and structure of states and the relation of state organizations to class structure may discriminate between cases of successful revolution and cases of failed or nonoccurrence far better than do variables referring to class structures and patterns of economic development alone.”\(^71\) Furthermore, the theory does not claim that revolutions result from change alone. This breaks from the modernization literature that holds the rate of modernization correlates to the degree of stability.\(^72\) Pitirim Sorokin’s extensive longitudinal study rejects any direct correlation between change and instability. Likewise, the twentieth century abounds with cases of rapid social and political transformation that did not result in revolution, such as with post-World War II South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, Egypt, Brazil, Zaire, Argentina, and elsewhere.\(^73\) In short, revolutions are the product of change only when it leads to a structural contradiction, and only when this structural contradiction is between state and society, which ultimately leads to depressed state capabilities allowing intra-territorial competition to succeed.

The depression of state capabilities creates a systemic opportunity that, in the context of intra-territorial competition, is ultimately realized in the destruction of the state. Amann holds, “revolution prevails when the state’s monopoly of power is effectively challenged and persists until a monopoly of power is re-established.”\(^74\) State destruction is a violent process in that it destroys political institutions and later the

\(^{71}\) Skocpol, Social Revolutions in the Modern World, 116.
\(^{72}\) Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, 45.
\(^{74}\) Amann, “Revolutions: A Redefinition,” 39. Consistent with this definition, Friedrich argues, “Revolution, when successful, signalizes the death of one political order and the emergence of a new one.” Friedrich, Pathology of Politics, 55.
socioeconomic structure as well. Forrest Colburn notes the “sudden, violent, and drastic”
nature of revolutions in which a “group formerly excluded from the government”
captures the foci of state power and then engages in an “assault on state and society for
the purpose of radically transforming society.” Similarly, Mark Katz offers an empirical
analysis where he concludes that the agents themselves “partly get rid of whatever
political or economic system [they] object to, and to replace it with an alternate
system.” Tilly’s conceptualization of multiple polities may be the most useful analytic
tool for examining this period. However, the theory can abstract away from the dynamics
and politics of the interregnum period since the contradiction between state and society
necessarily leads to state-society structural rationalization through revolution.

State reconstruction is the organic development of the state and socioeconomic
structure in the institutional vacuum where relations between units are rationalized
according to the material condition. It would be overly simplistic to not recognize that
“the class and economic structures of the prerevolutionary society set certain constrains
on post-revolutionary state building.” Yet, the rationalizing-adaption process in non-
revolutionary state-societies is similarly constricted to a far greater extent by solidified
existing state and socioeconomic structures. Given that state and socioeconomic
structures are destroyed in revolution, the normal barriers to state-society rationalization
are removed. Thus, not only does revolution remove the structural contradiction between
state and society, it allows state-society to attain a remarkable high degree of structural

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75 Colburn, The Vogue of Revolution in Poor Countries, 6.
76 Katz, Revolutions and Revolutionary Waves, 8.
77 While in theory the interregnum can be abstracted from, casework should process-trace through this period.
rationalization. State reconstruction begins with the consolidation phase of a revolution and “often spans decades” afterwards.\(^7\)

During this time, a state is increasingly able to extract material resources and mobilize the population, thus increasing capabilities. Empirical work has found that revolutions “have given birth to nations whose power and autonomy, markedly surpassed their own prerevolutionary pasts and outstripped other countries in similar circumstances.”\(^8\) Often cited is the post-revolutionary increase of ‘infrastructural power’ – also known as organizational reach, which refers to a state’s ability to penetrate into society.\(^9\) Chan and Williams have come to a similar conclusion: “The effect of such a revolutionary transformation has often been the long-term strengthening of the state through the mass mobilization of the population under its control.”\(^10\) In other words, state-society structural rationalization allows the state to mobilize a greater section of the society. This explains the post-revolutionary “mobilization of citizen support across class lines for protracted international warfare.”\(^11\) Yet, post-revolutionary rationalization affects more than just population mobilization. Tilly found that revolutions put “resources at the disposal of the state which were simply unavailable before the revolution: property, energy, information, loyalties.”\(^12\) In particular, state means of coercion and administration are greatly reinforced by revolution, which allows it to impose order on intra-territorial

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79 Ibid., 10. For the “consolidation” phase, see Calvert, Revolution and International Politics, 21.
80 Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, 3.
81 Infrastructural power was coined by Michael Mann. Jeff Goodwin, “State-Centered Approaches to Revolution,” 13.
82 Chan and Williams, Renegade States, 26.
83 Skocpol, Social Revolutions and Mass Military Mobilization, 150.
competition. In short, revolutions are about state building.\footnote{Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution; Tilly, Ardant ,The Formation of National States in Western Europe.; Skocpol, "Social Revolutions and Mass Military Mobilization," 147-168.} Still, this process occurs \textit{over time}. The state \textit{in statu nascendi} has depressed capabilities.\footnote{Stephen M. Walt, Revolution and War, 21. ; Tilly contends that specifically the "efficiency of government coercion is likely to decline, at least in the short run. Tilly, “Does Modernization Breed Revolution?” 443.} It is only in the long-term that state capabilities substantially increase.

There is long-standing sub-strain of theoretical thought that notes the strengthening of the state in revolutions, refuting popular misperceptions of post-revolution weakness. This tradition dates back to Alexis de Tocqueville, who observed in 1856 that “centralization was salvaged from the ruins and restored … [as] a power more extensive, more minute, and more absolute than [the] kings had ever exercised (emphasis added).”\footnote{Alexis de Tocqueville, The Ancien Régime and the French Revolution, Ed. Jon Elster and Arthur Goldhammer, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 183.} Max Weber elaborated on this with his notion of routinization and rationalization of informal revolutionary charisma into the formal and permanent structure of bureaucracy.\footnote{Weber argued that irrational revolutionary charisma was maintained only in the form of ritual. He also introduced the notion that the further bureaucratization of states will make revolutions increasingly less likely. Max Weber et al., The Russian Revolutions (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995), 175-180.} More recently, Samuel Huntington adopted this logic in his explanation of revolution as modernization, suggesting that revolutions enhance popular involvement in the national political realm – increasing a state’s ability to mobilize its manpower and extract resources.\footnote{Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, 488.} Finally, Theda Skocpol suggested that revolutions are a process of resynchronization that leads to “more bureaucratized and centralized states.”\footnote{Skocpol, "Social Revolutions and Mass Military Mobilization," 48-49; and Theda Skocpol and Ellen Trimmerger, “Revolutions: A Structural Analysis,” in Jack A. Goldstone, Revolutions: Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies (Belmont, Calif. ; London: Wadsworth, 2002), 68.} These different conceptualizations – whether it is centralization, routinzation
and rationalization, modernization, or resynchronization – recognize the same
fundamental causal role that revolutions have in reconstituting state power.

According to the theoretic framework, the increased rationalization of state-
society results in greater state capabilities over time. From the international perspective,
as state-unit capabilities increase, it improves its position in the Balance of Power. Post-
revolutionary state-unit behavioral deviation is rectified through systemic socialization,
maintaining the homeostasis of the International System. It would be incorrect, as
Halliday remarks, if “the lesson drawn [were] that even revolution cannot duck the
system.”91 The post-revolutionary increase of state capabilities over time alters the
distribution of capabilities system-wide, thus restructures the International System. This
type of “structural change is a revolution” for the International System, explains Waltz,
“because it gives rise to new expectations about the outcomes that will be produced by
the acts and interactions of units whose placement in the system varies with changes in
structure.” Elsewhere he formulates, “Structural thought conceives of actions
simultaneously taking place within a matrix. Change the matrix – the structure of the
system -- and expected actions and outcomes are altered.”92

Conclusion

The Structural Realist theory of revolution proposed is based on two units – state
and society. First, the state is defined by three features: (a) it is security-seeking; (b) it is
distinguished by its capabilities; and (c) it exists extra-territorially in an International

92 Kenneth Waltz, “Reflection on Theory of International Politics: A response to My Critics,” in
System and intra-territorially in a society. Second, society is defined as a collection of its sub-units – classes – with the dual feature of resource-mobilization and self-interest. The theory also makes a certain number of assumptions. First, an International System is assumed to be anarchic and comprised only of state-units. Second, capabilities are assumed to be material conditions realized through the structure of the two units – state and society. No assumption of structural rationality is necessary since it is a function of structure. Third, it is assumed that material condition change according to deep macro-structural trends. This framework is supplemented with two inductions: first, the state acts as a coercive-administrative entity intra-territorially; second, there is a dominant or elite class in society.

Revolutions can be explained within this framework. The state, seeking security and positioned in both the International System and the socioeconomic structure, is determined a range of options. Similarly, the dominant class or coalition, seeking self-interest and rooted between other classes and the state, is determined a range of options. When the structurally determined range of state and dominant group action are incompatible – that is, when their self-interest in maintaining the means of survival is incompatible, capabilities for the state and resources for society, a structural contradiction forms that inhibits rational extraction of material conditions. Capabilities – the function of material condition and state-society structural rationalization – depress. The state, without capabilities, cannot fulfill its security-seeking goal in the intra-territorial system.

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93 State-unit is defined as the state with its third feature – being dually anchored – removed. This should not be considered a third unit of analysis; rather, it is the first unit partially represented.

94 That is, the structural mechanism of socialization and competition determine state-society structural rationalization.

95 Once again, state-society adaption to change is a function of structure and does not have to be assumed.
Revolution removes the structural contradiction by destroying and recreating state and socioeconomic structure. With the structural contradiction removed, state-society rationality returns as a function of the structure. State-unit capabilities increase as a result, improving the state-unit’s position in the Balance of Power.

This Structural Realist theory of revolution suggests a number of solutions to some of the ‘riddles’ confronting realism. First, it answers why a survival-seeking state-unit destroys itself. As specified by the theory, revolutions can be considered a mechanism for reconstituting state power. Revolutionary self-destruction, which creates a short-term window of opportunity, results in increased capabilities and thus allows a state-unit to survive in the International System in the long-term. Furthermore, it does so while maintaining territorial integrity. Second, the consequential increase of state-unit capabilities that, over time, redefines the structure of the International System is explained by the state-society structural rationalization, which can occur unobstructed during a revolution. Third, as Halliday suggests, the “combined study of the international and revolution may help to clarify… the relationship between structure and change.”

The theory offers one interpretation of the relationship by tying deep macro-structural trends in material conditions and state-society structural rationalization through state-unit capabilities to change in the International System.

Finally, the theory of revolutions developed focuses within a single state-unit, tying change in the state-unit to change in the International System. However, it may be useful to examine it from a system-wide view. The deep macro-structural trends are transnational and hence affect the material condition of state-units system-wide. Since the

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structural contradiction between state and society that give rise to revolutions occur when changing material conditions alter their relationship, it follows that periods of great deep macro-structural change would increase the likelihood of revolution. Consequently, periods of great deep macro-structural change alter the state-unit capabilities system-wide and are more likely lead to revolution. This is explanatory of periods of great systemic change where the Balance of Power is redefined. A system-wide view of revolution can offer an answer to the final riddle; as Kim inquires, “If some periods in history are characterized by a greater stability than others, the question naturally arises: What accounts for it?”

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Chapter V: Defense and Implication of Theory

A Structural Realist theory of Revolution has been proposed. There are numerous tensions that arise out of connecting two traditions as disparate as Realism and Revolution Studies. The difference between the two traditions can be tied to the greater gap between the Comparative and International Relations branch of Political Science concerning anything from the nature of the state, power, and change to the agent-structure dichotomy, the role of history, and the linkage between the domestic and international. Inevitably, many of these challenges face any theory that attempts to tie the two traditions together. By connecting the intra-territorial and the extra-territorial systems through a Janus-Faced state, many of the potential complications were avoided. Nevertheless, several topics must still be addressed: the agent-structure dichotomy; ideology; ahistoricism and the state; and revolution and war.

Agent-Structure Dichotomy

Revolutions are often considered highly agential phenomena. While true of popular conceptions, this tendency has also found its way into scholarly works – for example both the realist Kissinger and the comparativist Gurr wrote about the causal role of dissatisfaction or discontent. People, the intuitive argument goes, revolt when they are dissatisfied with their current condition. Yet discontents are a historical constant whereas revolutions are a rarity. As Leon Trotsky put it, “in reality the mere existence of privation is not enough to cause an insurrection; if it were, the masses would be always in revolt.”

Likewise, James Scott maintains, “if anger born of exploitation were sufficient to spark a

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rebellion, most of the Third World (and not only the Third World) would be in flames.”

Pointedly, examining discontent cannot explain the normative quiescence of oppressed populations. Even when quiescence is abandoned, discontent proves insufficient to produce revolution. It may be asked why the numerous peasant revolts failed to produce revolution in France until 1789, why the Russian revolution failed in 1905 but succeeded in 1917, or how Imperialist China could exist unchallenged for centuries prior to the Communist overthrow. The answer, which Skocpol provides, is simple: “historically, mass rebellious action has not been able, in itself, to overcome state repression.”

The capabilities necessary for the state to exist in the International System ensures a dramatic asymmetry of resources over society, which is divided by class and dominated by an elite structure. The profound reduction in state capability provides the necessary systemic opportunity for revolutionary intent to become actualized.

In fact, it is not necessary that a revolutionary intent must precede the systemic opportunity allotted by the structural contradiction between state and society. The structural contradiction between state and society necessarily provokes a mobilized mass. Crane Brinton argued that the most critical factor of mobilization is “that prevailing conditions limit or hinder [groups] economic activity.” Structural contradiction depresses economic activity, negatively affecting society as well as the state.

Additionally, “the conditions that give rise to state breakdown” claims Jack Goldstone,

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3 Theda Skocpol, "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution," *Theory and Society* 11, no. 3 (May, 1982) 226.
“also give rise to a widespread perception that something has “gone wrong” in society.”  

They, in a sense, limit the conscious intention of actors. Many authors, even from the structuralist tradition, would argue otherwise, claiming that an action-oriented discontented population or a high mobilization potential is a separate variable for revolution. Yet, mobilization arguments require a descriptive reductionist approach that eludes measurement. This is avoidable. Implicit in the logic of structure is that structure determines the range of behavior. As such, agent mobilization is a necessarily function of the structural contradiction between state and society – although agential considerations ultimately decide what occurs within the structurally determined range of outcomes.

The role of agent intentionality in ultimately shaping the form and content of revolution and its outcome within the structural limits is the matter of a socio-historical analysis of revolution. For the purpose of the theory, it is only necessary to dismiss that revolutions are ‘made’ by intentional actors. Intention does not produce revolutions. “In fact,” Jeremy Brecher found, “revolutionary movements rarely [even] begin with a revolutionary intention; this only develops in the course of the struggle itself.”

Moreover, history has proven how revolutionary ‘intent’ has radically shifted between largely contradictory goals during the revolution. “The purposes of men, especially in a revolution,” Gordon Wood conveys, “are so numerous, so varied, and so contradictory that their complex interaction produces results that no one intended or could even

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11 Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" *Comparative Politics* 5, no. 3, Special Issue on Revolution and Social Change (Apr., 1973a) 447.
system, but does so indirectly.”12 The structural mechanism of competition and socialization are critical in linking agent behavior to structural limits. In The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, Marx appropriately articulates the agent-structure balance: “Men make their own history, but do not make it just as they please…”13 In short, structure determines the range of outcomes, within which agency alone can explain. Yet, the particularities produced by agents, while important socio-historically, do not affect the coming of revolution, nor do they explain the post-revolutionary impact on power structure.

_ Ideology _

Ideology is often tied to revolution. Eric Selbin, in a rejection of the one-sided structural approach, vigorously defends the notion that “revolutions do not come, they are made.”14 While acknowledging that structural conditions create the limits of mobilization, Selbin argues, “people’s thoughts and actions – even if haphazard or spontaneous – are the mediating link between structural conditions and social outcomes.”15 This agency-centered approach depends on ideology derived from ‘popular political culture’, which encompasses cultural symbolism and collective memory. Accordingly to this view, proper ideology is a prerequisite to mass mobilization. For this, it is critical that popular grievances are articulated in a diagnostic frame that appeals to

15 Ibid., 126.
the popular political culture. Furthermore, a successful ideology must provide a
prognostic frame in which an alternative or solution to the current problems are
addressed.

Numerous comparativist authors have commented the predictive and explanatory
weakness of ideology. Wickham-Crowley bashes cultural and ideological approaches
for their reactionary explanation of revolution – this is to say, their inability to explain
why “n = 1” – and their regional uniqueness, which resists comparative studies. From
within International Relations, Morgenthau criticized, “It is a characteristic of all politics,
domestic as well as international, that frequently its basic manifestation do not appear as
what they actually are – manifestations of a struggle for power… the true nature to the
policy is concealed by ideological justifications and rationalizations.” Neither the
ideology as causal nor the ideology as excuse approach is convincing.

Ideology cannot be understood as an independent force. Nevertheless, it can
greatly influence agential forces within the structural limits. Sewall convincingly calls
for “a structural, anonymous, and transpersonal analysis of ideology.”

16 See the chapter 7, “The Withering Away of an Idea” in Forrest D. Colburn, The Vogue of
Revolution in Poor Countries (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); and Jack A. Goldstone,
Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990),
417-421
17 Barry Hoffman donor and Hans Joachim Morgenthau 1904-., Politics among Nations; the Struggle
18 John Foran, "Theories of Revolution Revisited: Toward a Fourth Generation?" Sociological Theory
11, no. 1 (Mar., 1993) 9.; Peter B. Evans et al., Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge
them." Additionally, they are important for transferring politico-social agendas and group-formation. Still, to judge the cognitive content of ideology as any way determinative would be greatly misplaced.

Change, Ahistoricism, and the State

Neorealism has repeatedly been charged with ahistoricism. Richard Ashley asserts, “Neorealist structuralism denies history as process.” This is inherently tied to the lack of change evident in Neorealism. Waltz finds that historicism is unnecessary for the “texture of international politics remains highly constant, patterns recur, and event repeat themselves endlessly.” While the historic particularities change, the fundamental system does not. Ruggie counters, “One problem with [this conception] is that it provides no means by which to account for, or even to describe, the most important contextual change in international politics in this millennium: the shift from the medieval to the modern international system.”

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Neorealism struggles to explain this shift due to its inability to capture change and what can be termed the ‘problem of the Feudal state’.24 Most fundamentally, the Feudal state cannot be conceived of as a sovereign unit as it consisted of a loose network of lord-vassal relationships based on the fief.25 It was not until the Modern state when property became the basis of social organization that this became possible. Bull recounts how sovereign exclusiveness derived from “the tendency to make us of the Roman-law notion of *dominium* or private property, with its implication that a territory and its people are the patrimony of the ruler.”26 Additionally, capabilities as stipulated in Structural Realism are descriptive of the modern nation-state, and thus struggle to capture the Feudal system. Consequently, the argument goes, Neorealism can only explain modernity. Waltz’s response is a convincing one, albeit incomplete. He responds:

“I would be surprised if many different sorts of unit-level changes did not alter systemic outcomes. Ruggie says that I omit such forces. Yet I define a system as consisting of a structure and of interacting units. The question is not one of omission but of the level at which one sees such forces operating. Changes in some or in all units will make their relations harder, or easier, to manage.”27

His explanation makes Neorealism seem like a reactive theory while profound system-level change remains undefined given its unit-level origin.

The theoretic platform of the state and change developed here could prove useful in filling this gap. First, the two inductive assumptions of the theory must be dismissed – the state as a coercive-administrative entity and the existence of a dominant class. In the

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Feudal system, given the loose association, exogenous pressures were low. Consequently, there was minimal pressure to rationalize political units. As the change in material conditions prompted political unit restructuring towards the Absolutist states form, exogenous pressures began to increase for all territorial entities.\textsuperscript{28} Resulting from the increased system’s level competition, there was a rationalization of structure, which was similar in form due to socialization. The move from the Absolutist state to the modern state with the French Revolution is captured by the Structural Realist theory of revolution. After the fall of the ancien régime and the emergence of a powerful new French state, the resulting increase of pressure in the International System necessitated a similar rationalization of structure for all units.

Gilpin’s simplification partly conveys why the modern nation-state replaced feudal, city-state, and imperial forms of organization – “it was simply more efficient, given the changed economic and military environment.”\textsuperscript{29} While the application of the developed framework to this question fails to explain the specific historical forms, it does succeed in explaining why certain forms were socialized across the system (i.e., structural rationality – efficiency in mobilizing the material condition – under exogenous pressures) and others where not (i.e. structural irrationality). Furthermore, it provides an explanation for the change in structure (i.e. shifting material conditions and increased exogenous pressure). This is enough to continue to explain shifts in the structural limits of outcome at the systems-level despite change over the millennium.

In fact, the question of state form often comes into question with revolution, explaining a good deal of tension between International Relations and Revolution

Studies. Whereas Waltz dismisses the content of the state for “[n]ations change in form and in purpose,” many view state form as determinative of revolutions.\(^{30}\) For example, Huntington noticed that “the most important and obvious but also most neglected fact about successful great revolutions is that they do not occur in democratic political systems.”\(^{31}\) Wickham-Crowley specifically designated patrimonial praetorian states, or as he calls them, “mafiaocracy,” to name one of the many form-based categorizations.\(^{32}\) While certain state forms may lend themselves to greater vulnerabilities given the material condition and International context, analysis of state-form produces conclusions intrinsically tied to a historical context. Furthermore, such theories can only address the tendency of one form to be more vulnerable, because it omits how incredible different state-society structure can be within a historic governing form such as fascism or democracy. The general explanation of structural rationalization provides an explanation that applies to all states regardless of form.

The theoretic supplement made in the Structural Realist theory of revolution cannot completely rectify the fact that, as Ashley has discussed, “Neorealism is bound to

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\(^{30}\) Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 67. Robert H. Dix first suggests this type of analysis when he distinguished between “Relatively open” states that do “not concentrate power and perquisites in a narrow clique centered on one man” and “an isolative, corrupt, antinational, and repressive regime, especially a personalistic one.” Robert H. Dix, "Why Revolutions Succeed & Fail,” *Politics* 16, no. 3 (437, 442). The inclusionary-exclusionary dichotomy defined by the “scope of the polity and … access to the state and the centers of political power,” has been used by numerous authors since. Parsa, *States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran, Nicaragua, and the Philippines*, 11. See Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?” *Comparative Politics* 5, no. 3, (Apr., 1973), 445-446; Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 47; and Jeff Goodwin and Theda Skocpol, “Explaining Revolutions in the Contemporary Third World” in Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World* (Cambridge England ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 279.


The states-as-actors is an *a priori* commitment of the Structural Realist tradition. This ultimately ties it to modernization because, according to Bull, “Political units were thought of as civitates, principes, regni, gentes, respublicae but the idea of the idea of a society made up principally or exclusively of a single kind of political entity called ‘states’ could not take shape” given the organization of society. While the theoretic platform constructed for explaining revolutions has helped Structural Realism account for pre-modern phenomena, even with loosening the definition of the ‘state’ some tension remains.

*War and Revolution*

The relationship between revolution and war has been under-studied. Walt asserts, “Revolution and war are among the most dramatic and important events in political life, yet few of the countless works on either topic devote much attention to the relationship between them.” The conclusions drawn have, curiously, found that war often leads to revolution and revolution often leads to war. Exemplifying the former, Tilly lists:

> “the extraction of resources for the prosecution of a war has repeatedly aroused revolutionary resistance; the defeat of states in war has often made them vulnerable to attack from their domestic enemies; the complicity of some portion of the armed forces with the revolutionary bloc has been absolutely essential to the success of the modern revolution…; the waning phrases of major movements of conquest … are strikingly propitious for revolution; and the period of readjustment immediately following large international conflicts also seem favorable to revolution.”

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On the other hand, historical cases suggest that revolution leads to war as well: the French Revolution in 1789 consumed Europe in war until 1815; the Russian Revolution was followed by the Cold War and numerous ‘hot’ proxy wars; the Chinese Revolution of 1949 can be tied to the Korean War in the early 1950s and conflict among the Sino-Soviet border in the 1960s; the Iranian Revolution of 1979 triggered the Iran-Iraq war of 1980 to 1988. Whereas Halliday faults status quo powers and Snyder revolutionary states for post-revolutionary war, Walt holds both responsible.37

Revolution and war are clearly interrelated phenomena. This is why, as Chan and Williams argue, “Revolutions need in fact to be understood in the context of the outbreak of war and collective violence.”38 Hannah Arendt furthers, “the interrelationship of war and revolution, their reciprocation and mutual dependence, has steadily grown.”39 The relationship, Halliday argues, is not causal; rather, they are different expressions of “a broader social context.”40 In fact, the relationship between war and revolution can be considered on two levels. First, war leads to revolution and revolution leads to war by each providing an increase of pressure in the International System. In the case of revolutions, increased exogenous pressures tie up state capabilities, thus straining the state. For war, revolutions challenge the International System and alter power relationships, thus causing miscalculations. Yet, this level of analysis focuses on structurally more superficial and immediate ‘triggers’ of conflict and revolution.

37 See Introduction for a review of all three authors.
38 Stephen Chan and Andrew J. Williams, *Renegade States*, 24.
A deeper structural analysis is simultaneously possible. As concluded in the last chapter on theory, the Structural Realist theory of revolution can be viewed system-wide. Here, profound shifts in the transnational material conditions increased the likelihood of revolution. Similarly, the changing material conditions altered state-capabilities system-wide and thus their distribution. The redistribution of capabilities restructures the International System, but, as the Realist tradition has noted, changing power relations are also explanatory of war. As a result, a surge of deep macro-structural change in the material conditions may lead to periods of revolution and war. This explains the more structurally profound relationship between revolution and war. Martin Wight called these periods “international revolution” due to the transformation of the international “by force, by war or revolution or both.”  

41 During these periods, Wight goes on to say, international revolution “blurs the distinctions between war and peace, international war and civil war, war and revolution.”  

42 In short, the relationship between war and revolution can be analyzed on two levels – as an immediate trigger through structural shock and as similar manifestations of systems-change due to trends in the material condition.

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42 Ibid., 90.
Chapter VI: The Future of Revolution

The future of revolutions in a globalized, democratized world is greatly contested. In 1963, Arendt commented, “wars and revolutions… have thus far determined the physiognomy of the twentieth century.” She went on to predict, “it seems more than likely that revolution, in distinction to war, will stay with us into the foreseeable future.”\(^1\) Over one hundred years prior, Alexis de Tocqueville prophesized the opposite – that in fact revolutions were to become more rare.\(^2\) With the end of the Cold War, the ghost of de Tocqueville has seemingly returned to the 21\(^{st}\) century. Revolution, it seems, is a quickly fading phenomena with the ‘end of history’.

_The End of Revolution?_

Many view revolutions as a product of modernization. Consequently, they are understood, to borrow the words of Huntington, not as “not a universal category but rather an historically limited phenomenon.”\(^3\) As the liberal democratic tradition spreads, history, defined as a sociopolitical evolution – will come to an end. De Tocqueville originated this movement of thought in 1840 with the publication of his second volume of _Democracy in America_. Here, he argues:

> Not only are the men of democracies not naturally desirous of revolution, but they are afraid of them. All revolutions more or less threaten the tenure of property: but most of those who live in democratic countries are

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possessed of property – not only are they possessed of property, but they live in the condition of men who set the greatest store upon their property.\(^4\)

Fukuyama redefined the argument to claim that, with the collapse of communism in the fall of the Soviet Union, the world was no longer divided on the virtue liberal democracy.\(^5\) The ‘great idea’ has triumphed and history had reached its final stage. According to this world-view, revolutions have ended with history itself.

Within Revolution Studies, the future of revolution is still being debated – especially vis-à-vis globalization. Halliday adamantly rejects the ‘end of history thesis, ironically suggesting, “Since no human institution has, as yet, lasted for ever, it may be premature to suggest that liberal democracies will do so.”\(^6\) Contradictions still exist within the modern state, and although “one cannot foresee” what form of crisis will occur in the era of globalization, crisis will occur as it always has.\(^7\) Eric Selbin supports Halliday’s position, predicting that Neoliberalism will spawn revolutionary reactions. While he accepts the thesis that democracies preclude revolutions, Selbin finds that “meaningful democratic practices remain weak.” The majority are not inclusive but are “based instead on elite pacts.”\(^8\) Revolutions, in short, are far from irrelevant.

Goodwin holds a different position claiming, unlike Selbin, that democracies are well established. This premise leads him to conclude: “Is the age of revolutions now

\(^4\) Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 269.


\(^7\) Ibid., 338.

over? I believe that it probably is."\textsuperscript{9} Similar to Huntington, Goodwin highlights the fact that no revolution has ever overthrown a consolidated democracy. Still, he pointedly acknowledges that grave social injustices still exist within such a system. Nevertheless, globalization has led to the political transformation to democracy and that alone has “destroyed the basis for revolutionary conflict in those societies that it has reached.”\textsuperscript{10} Nodia takes the argument a step further by claiming that “in a world where liberty and equality no longer face any fundamental challenge,” revolutions have seen their end.\textsuperscript{11} This analysis appears idealistic, failing to notice many of the inequalities structurally inherent to globalized Neoliberalism.

Snyder specifies numerous reasons why revolutions are no longer an acting force on the world stage. First, like many authors, he cites the spread of democracy. Yet, he adds the spread of market-based economics and the transnationalism and rise of the middle class associated with it. Furthermore, the removal of weak colonial or neopatrimonial rulers, the reduction of the peasantry and ‘great power conflict’ explain the end of revolution. As he succinctly summarizes, “Revolution ushered in the modern world, but modernity has killed it.”\textsuperscript{12} Resilient orders built on inclusive political and economic systems that respond to changing pressures have removed the necessary conditions for revolution.

Two authors – Jeffery Paige and John Foran – have provided convincing arguments as to why the post-Cold War decline in revolution does not necessarily signify the ‘death’ of revolutions. Paige admits, “The collapse of the Soviet Union also marked

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., 303-304.
\textsuperscript{11} G. O. Nodia, "The End of Revolution?" \textit{Journal of Democracy} (11, no. 1) 170.
\textsuperscript{12} Robert S. Snyder, "The End of Revolution?" \textit{The Review of Politics} 61, no. 1 (Winter, 1999) 5.
the end of Marxist-Leninist revolution as a historical form.\textsuperscript{13} Nevertheless, he adds that revolutions as a radical state transformation can still occur, even if it does not assume the form popularly conceived. The notion of a post-modern form of revolution is useful to connect changing conditions with the continuous rationalizing mechanism. It provides an effective critique to those who equate the end of a historic form of revolution to the end of revolution itself.

Foran adds to this criticism by pointing out that actual social revolutions are rare at best, therefore any apparent lull in activity is misleading. Specifically, “we shouldn’t expect to see a great deal of revolutionary activity at any given time, and the prospect for ‘success’ (measured by the seizure of state power and the initiation of a project of social transformation) have always been poor.”\textsuperscript{14} Furthermore, he finds that the evidence from the Third World since 1989 suggests that it is “far from the case that revolutions are headed for extinction as a species of social change in the near future.”\textsuperscript{15} While others have cited Neoliberalism for spreading either democracy or social inequalities, Foran focuses on the World-Systemic Openings Neoliberalism provides due to the cyclical economic downturns endemic to it. Chan and Williams further explain this point, discussing how “structural adjustment [from the World Bank and IMF] threatens to unravel the bureaucratic apparatus of the post-colonial state completely.”\textsuperscript{16} They go on to discuss the possibility that “there will be new revolutionary challenges to this global Holy

\textsuperscript{14} John Foran, "The Future of Revolutions at the Fin-De-Siecle," \textit{Third World Quarterly} 18, no. 5 (12/02, 1997) 791.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 815.
\textsuperscript{16} Stephen Chan and Andrew J. Williams, \textit{Renegade States: The Evolution of Revolutionary Foreign Policy} (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995) 29.
Alliance [i.e. global financial institutions]. The pattern of twentieth-century politics hardly suggests that the revolutionary idea can be considered dead.”

*From Another Perspective*

Revolutions, like realism, are tied to the state. Thus, their fate is necessarily bound to it. Globalization has raised arguments about the changing nature of the power structure from international to transnational. That is, it is claimed that the state is becoming obsolete as power diffuses – even realist Joseph Nye has written about how the diffusion of power should alter the paradigm. In his more systematic examination of the subject, constructivist John Agnew was led to the conclusion that “the spatiality of power… need not be invariable reduced to state territoriality.” Accordingly, Gilpin found, “In the final decades of the twentieth century, technological, economic, and other developments have suggested to many individuals that the nation-state has finally ceased to be the most efficient unit of economic and political organization.”

The twenty-first century has proven that the modern nation-state is hardly obsolete. The spatiality of political power, while not exclusively contained in the state-unit, is mostly held there. Furthermore, arguments about the changing nature of global Capitalism and the world market making the state anachronistic run into the fact that, as Karl Polanyi first commented upon, Capitalism as a system requires the state to

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17 Ibid., 30.
continually enforce it in order to function properly.\footnote{Karl Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation} (New York: Octagon Books, 1944).} The state is and should continue to be the basic unit of analysis for the foreseeable future. That the form of the state may change is undeniable; regardless, this does not affect the Structural Realist theory of revolution given the emphasis on structural rationality. Even a post-modern state could be captured by the theory. In fact, it would be explained by it as a more rationalized structure given the International System and the material conditions system-wide. Waltz views that the one transformation that can fundamentally change the International System and the state is the move from anarchy to hierarchy – in a word, world-government. The realist tradition has often commented on the unlikely, and historically unprecedented nature of this.\footnote{This is implicit in the logic of balancing.} With the state secured as a fundamental political unit, revolutions too are ensured a place as a mechanism for reconstituting state power.

Finally, the ‘end of history’ argument must be refuted as a denial of the future of revolution. It is not only the liberal-democratic tradition that forwards the argument. Chan and Williams find that “there is a real danger that we will be trapped by the ‘neo-realists’ or indeed the ‘structuralists’, into believing that we have reached the final phase of our development.”\footnote{Chan and Williams, \textit{Renegade States}, 11.} The revision made to the Structural Realist theory suggests that with changing material and international environment, state and society structure will have to adapt – a sociopolitical process that can be considered the continuation of history. Perhaps this can be achieved within the liberal democratic form, perhaps not – this is a test for epochs beyond ours. Nevertheless, to assume that the “the longest period of major power peace in centuries” due to the spread of liberal democracies globally is indicative

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\item \footnote{Karl Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation} (New York: Octagon Books, 1944).}
\item \footnote{This is implicit in the logic of balancing.}
\item \footnote{Chan and Williams, \textit{Renegade States}, 11.}
\end{itemize}
of future centuries without war or revolution may prove short-sighted. As Polanyi revealed, the violent systems-change in the World Wars was preceded by a hundred years of peace. Change does not come easily, but it comes nevertheless. As long as there exists political units – states or otherwise – competing for self-preservation within anarchy, any internal obstacle to mobilizing the means of survival that cannot be remedied must be destroyed and reconstructed, or else unit survival is abnegated. This is the essence of revolution and the reason for its future.

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25 Polanyi, The Great Transformation
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