

Revolutions

Past Questions

1. Where do rational actor-based theories fall short in explaining how revolutions arise? [TT23]
2. 'Revolutions cannot succeed without strong leadership.' Discuss. [TT22]
3. What explains whether a revolution is successful? [LV22]
4. 'Revolutions are so unique that finding a pattern among them is difficult, if not impossible.' Discuss. [TT21]
5. How and why do revolutions fail? [LV21]

Category 1: Definition of Revolutions and its Successes

Author	Full Definition
Goldstone Defines revolution in terms of both observed mass mobilisation and institutional change, and a driving ideology carrying a vision of social justice. Defines revolution not just in terms of its effect of structural change, but also in terms of violent methodology and ideology	<p>Revolution is the forcible overthrow of a government through mass mobilisation (whether military or civilian or both) in the name of social justice, to create new political institutions</p> <p>Revolution is the process by which visionary leaders draw on the power of the masses to seek to forcibly bring into existence a new political order</p> <p>Revolutions are not simply common and disruptive events, particularly since such events almost always occur as part of revolutions; revolutions are not just peasant revolts, grain riots, strikes, social and reform movements or civil wars → can lead to revolutions. Revolutions are always rebellions, but some rebellions are not revolutions, i.e. elite driven revolutions</p>
Skocpol Defines revolutions in terms of effects and the process and agents involved	<p>Social revolutions are rapid, basic transformation of a society's state and class structures; they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below</p> <p>Social revolutions are set apart from other sorts of conflicts and transformative processes above all by the combination of two coincidences: the coincidence of societal structural change with class upheaval; and the coincidence of political with social transformation</p> <p>Rebellions, when successful, may only involve the revolt of the subordinate class without eventuating any structural</p>

	<p>change; processes such as industrialisation which bring about structural change do not result from sudden political upheavals or basic political structural changes</p> <p>What is special about social revolutions are that basic changes in social structure and in political structure occur together in a mutually reinforcing fashion, occurring through intense sociopolitical conflicts in which class struggles play a key role</p> <p>Implications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies a complex object of explanation which have relatively few historical instances • Necessitates that revolutions must lead to successful sociopolitical transformations due to actual change of state and class structures being part of the definition
<p>Beissinger</p> <p>Defines revolution only in terms of its effects and contexts in which the revolution occurs</p>	<p>Revolutions are simply more a “mode of regime change” that exist under conditions of ousting an authoritarian leader</p> <p>So, operationalising a revolution’s “success” is simply ousting an incumbent authoritarian leader</p> <p>Motivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary revolutions are more urban and compact, lasting only a few weeks or months and are more “negotiated” or “electoral” • According to Thompson, today’s revolutions are nominally “democratic” in their ethos • Therefore, significantly expanded the definition of revolution <p>Example of negotiation revolution: South African anti-apartheid revolution (which arose from bases in the Black townships) where the authorities recognise that they cannot overcome the opposition and instead seek to negotiate entry of the opposition into a new, joint regime; involve elections in which both the ruling and opposition parties seek seats in the legislature, or joint councils with members of the opposition and old regime leadership</p>
Tilly and Tarrow	<p>Revolution is a special case of contentious politics resulting in social and structural upheaval and change; Revolutions is a special case of collective action in which the contenders both fight for ultimate political sovereignty over a</p>

	<p>population, and in which challengers succeed at least to some degree in displacing existing power-holders</p> <p>Social movements can simply be about repeated claim making, where the claims made on authorities do not necessarily result in their ousting or regime change</p>
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Operationalising Success

- Most authors presume that revolutions are by definition successful (such as Skocpol)
 - Failed revolutions may be called “attempted revolutions”
 - What matters for most revolutions to succeed is simply its guaranteeing emergence and mobilisation of the masses
- Most definitions coincide in the success being the observable political and structural change through regime change i.e. ousting of an authoritarian leader
- Stability of new order as a measure of success?
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Prominent Revolutions

Revolution	Key Features and Occurrences
<p>Constitutional Revolutions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● American ● French 	<p>American Revolution</p> <p>Context: constitutional revolutions arise as people began to doubt that rulers had a divine right to rule and instead started to see monarchy as simply an old custom that need not bind modern men</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Growing scepticism and secularism led to revolutionaries which attacked the claims of kings and churches to lead societies and who drew up constitutions based on reason and the concept of natural rights to liberate men from these authorities <p>Waning popularity of the British government: imposing taxation and constraints on trade and consumption on America to recoup war costs → sharp divisions arose between rebels and loyalists → many colonial elites, from Virginia plantation owners to New York and Boston bankers and lawyers, as well as popular groups, were outraged that they were being forced to pay for Britain's war without any say or consent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● American colonists believed that they had enjoyed the rights of the Englishmen and to have a Parliament of their choosing ● Leaders and ideology: Thomas Paine's pamphlet Common sense argued that it was absurd for an

	<p>island like Britain to rule a continent like America; that all men were created equal and owed no allegiance to a distant king and that America should create a continental congress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration of independence by Thomas Jefferson → deriving their powers from the consent of the governed <p>American and French armies besieged the British Army at Yorktown, Virginia and the British General surrendered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a US constitution afterwards <p>French Revolution</p> <p>Context: a year of famine had spurred riots across the country, and expectations ran high for major political and economic reforms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estates immediately broke down into acrimony • Professionals and Bureaucrats sought to acquire nobler status themselves and were enraged by being treated as insignificant by the clergy and nobility <p>Representatives of the Third Estate proclaimed that they spoke for the entire nation and reconstituted themselves as the National Assembly and joined by reformers from the other Estates → set out to reshape France</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced a Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and the elected Legislative Assembly and National Convention → abolished the monarchy and all feudal privileges, executed the King and Queen • France was declared a republic <p>The actions of national assemblies and conventions were spurred by popular uprisings in Paris and provinces. French armies spread across Europe and fomenting republican revolutions near and far</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French Revolution eventually came under the control of general Napoleon Bonaparte and advanced himself to emperor <p>The French Revolution with its popular attacks on aristocrats, revolutionary terror, creation of a new constitutional order, and military success and expansion under Napoleon, soon became the prototype of a revolution for succeeding generations</p>
Chinese Communist Revolution	<p>Context: waning power of the Qing dynasty and it tried to reform and modernise China's armed forces, schools and officials; revolutionary organisations arose aiming to</p>

	<p>replace imperial rule with a constitutional government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations drew support from officials, businessmen, professionals, students, workers and overseas Chinese, all seeking to expel the Manchu rulers and strengthen China • Provisional government did not last long: Sun Yat-sen set up a military government led by the Chinese Nationalist Party (GMD) • Mao Zedong was drawn to the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism and followed the communist revolution in Russia <p>Civil war between the CCP and the GMD: GMD printed money with abandon, creating galloping inflation and treated the populations of areas it liberated from the Japanese as traitors, imposing heavy requisitions and tolerating profiteering by regime cronies. Mao's forces swept the GMD out of more and more areas</p>
Russian Communist Revolution	<p>Context: weakening authoritarian incumbent through the weak-minded Tsar Nicholas II; Rasputin's malign influence over the royal family undermined popular and elite respect for the tsar; Russian elites demanded greater control over policy and popular protests against the war grew and the provisional government continued the war, provoking the anger of industrial workers of Moscow and St Petersburg and of peasants throughout the country</p> <p>Workers were recruited by the communists, soldiers and sailors began to defect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lenin's communist party, the Bolsheviks, managed to stage a coup and organised its supporters to silently take over the post offices, railroads, and government buildings of the capital in the dead of night <p>Needed to sustain the regime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Tsar generals raised a counterrevolutionary, anti-communist White Army to contend with the Red Army <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trotsky and Lenin created a Red Army from defecting soldiers, supportive workers and drafted peasants ○ Killed the tsar's family to prevent them from becoming a rallying point
Arab Spring Uprising (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen)	<p>Began with peaceful protests seeking democracy, all failed to deliver that outcome; although dictators were</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possible failure? 	<p>overthrown (except in Syria), they were replaced by new authoritarian regimes or states of civil war that are still ongoing a decade later</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New dictatorship: Tunisia, Egypt ● Old regime survived: Syria ● Civil war ongoing: Libya, Yemen
<p>Colours Revolution (non-violent and negotiated)</p>	<p>Non-violent revolutions in Philippines, Eastern Europe and the USSR, and Ukraine</p> <p>Non-violent resistance works best where rulers depend on support from a democratic foreign power that will neither tolerate ruthless actions against a peaceful opposition nor pay a high price to back the existing regime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gandhi's success in leading the Indian Independence movement against Britain relied on both the British public's repugnance at peaceful protests being brutally treated and the high costs to Britain of Gandhi's followers boycotting British goods ● Shah of Iran was similarly vulnerable when Jimmy Carter insisted that the shah call off his secret policy and permit the opposition to conduct peaceful demonstrations against his rule <p>Where a loyal and determined military supports a financially strong and independent government, nonviolent resistance will usually fail, succumbing to harsh repression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examples: attempted "Green revolution" in Iran in 2009, the pro-democracy revolt in Burma in 1988, and the Tiananmen Square revolt in China in 1989 <p>Example: "People Power" Philippines Revolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National Citizens Movement for Free Elections organised half a million volunteers to monitor polling places and guard ballot boxes throughout the country → their polling made it clear that Corazon Aquino had won a resounding victory but Marcos was still declared the winner ● Cory Aquino addressed a rally of two million people in Manila and called for a civil disobedience campaign to oust Marcos ● Marcos sent a tank battalion to crush the revolt but soldiers found a well-organised, cheerful

	<p>crowd, trained and disciplined to remain nonviolent → in the front line, nuns kneeled with rosaries in front of the tanks, while pregnant women, grandmothers and children offered food to the soldiers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Soldiers refused to kill unarmed and peaceful civilians and began to join the crowd → 80% of the army defected ● Marcos took the advice of the US admin and left once he realised that his power was gone <p>Factors resulting in more negotiated revolutions as it proves to become more successful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Global norms have moved strongly in the direction of requiring elections for regimes to claim legitimacy; even dictatorships have felt the need to hold elections, though they will often manipulate the results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When such manipulation is exposed, protests over flawed elections can become a powerful way to mobilise people for regime changes ● Tools of mass media – including social media and international cable television – has made it easier for the opposition to acquire and disseminate evidence of regime abuse ● Ride of international networks of activists to provide training in nonviolent resistance methods has empowered opposition movements
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Reason for negotiated revolutions

- Theory from Chenoworth and Stephan which finds that mobilisations employing nonviolent civil resistance as opposed to violent insurgency tend to be more successful at overthrowing autocracies → mechanism is greater mobilisation
 - Marginal and potential participants view nonviolent contention as more legitimate and less dangerous
 - Broadens the popular appeal of protests and raises the cost of state repression
 - Revolutionary mobilisations that adhere to nonviolence are more likely to succeed because they bring more people out onto the streets and simultaneously denying authoritarian regimes their comparative advantage in the realm of force
- Limitation: there is always a negative radical flank effect where that violent groups scorch the efforts of nonviolent movmeents mobilising nonviolent actors →

legitimising state repression and increases the risks associated with protesting which acts as a disincentive for mass nonviolent protests

- EV: Alternative perspective suggests that violent mobilisation and nonviolent action are intertwined → violent struggle can be an inspiration for nonviolent action e.g. in apartheid South Africa, the struggle against racial oppression saw numerous attacks on state security forces carried out by the armed wing of the ANC were credited with inspiring nonviolent contention in the country's townships
- Co-presence of violent protestors also enhance the bargaining power of nonviolent civil resisters → Philippines where armed communist and Islamic insurgencies in the countryside boosted the position of soft-liners within the Marcos regime and increased the leverage of liberal democratic opposition when they took to the streets during the anti-Marcos "People power" revolution

Category 2: Determinants and Framework for Revolution's emergences and successes

Frameworks for Revolution's emergences and successes

Framework	Key features
Aggregate Psychological theories (Ted Gurr)	<p>Explains revolutions in terms of people's psychological motivations for engaging in political violence, or joining oppositional movements</p> <p>Gurr: Political violence occurs when many people in society become angry, especially if existing cultural and practical conditions provide encouragement for aggression against political targets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People become angry when there occurs a gap between the valued things and opportunities they feel entitled to and the things and opportunities they get ● Face conditions of "relative deprivation" ● Revolutions are explained as basically due to the occurrence in a society of widespread, intense, and multifaceted relative deprivation that touches both masses and elite aspirants → if both are intensely frustrated, then both broad participation in and deliberate organisation of political violence are probable → fundamental conditions for revolution are present
Systems/value consensus theories (Chalmers Johnson)	<p>Explains revolutions as violent responses of ideological movements to severe disequilibrium in social systems</p> <p>Goldstone: 5 necessary and sufficient conditions to create an</p>

	<p>unstable social equilibrium from which revolutions can arise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National economic or fiscal strains: such conditions disrupt the flow of rents and taxes to rulers and elites and undermine the income of the general population; hinder the ruler's ability to reward their supporters and pay their officials and military forces • Growing alienation and opposition among the elite: older elites may feel unjustly excluded or some may feel that a narrow group/small circle is unfairly getting a dominant share of political power/economic rewards • Increasingly widespread popular anger at injustice: need not just be the result of extreme poverty or inequality but rather that people feel that they are losing their proper place in society for reasons that are not inevitable and not their fault • Bridging various popular and elite grievances and demands, and linking and mobilising diverse groups, requires an ideology that presents a persuasive shared narrative of resistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Take the form of religious or secular narrative against injustice and stressing the rights and innocent victims who have been abused ○ Narrative of nationalist liberation • Favourable international relations: requires foreign support for the opposition coming at crucial times or on the withdrawal of foreign support for the ruler <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Think about American withdrawal of support for the GMD in China which allowed Mao's revolutionary forces to achieve victory <p>Very difficult to assess that all 5 of these conditions coincide; usually only obvious on hindsight because we underestimate how much elites are seen as unjust or alienating</p>
<p>Political Conflict theories (Charles Tilly)</p>	<p>Conflict among government and various organised groups contending for power must be placed at the centre of attention to explain collective violence and revolutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It depends on how the environment presents opportunities and threats to such an agent who will act accordingly <p>Argues that no matter how discontented an aggregate of people may become, they cannot engage in political action unless they are part of at least minimally organised groups with access to some resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on Tarrow's notions of political opportunities (prospect of success) and threats (cost of action) • Kind of a rational-actor framework? A revolution can be

	<p>suppressed if the government makes the cost of action too high to bear. Action depends on the relative costs and benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Polity model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Major elements of governments (organisations that control the principal concentrated means of coercion in a population) and groups contending for power, including both members (contenders that have routine, low cost access to government resources), and challengers ● Mobilisation model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Variables designed to explain the pattern of collective action engaged in by given contenders; variables refer to group interests, to degrees of organisation, to amounts of resources under collective control, and to the opportunities and threats that given contenders face in their relationships to governments and other contending groups <p>Tilly and Tarrow model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political opportunities and threats ● High-capacity and low capacity democratic typology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capacity means the extent to which governmental action affects the character and distribution of population, activity and resources → high capacity = big difference ○ Democracy means the extent to which the people have broad political rights and equality etc ○ Regimes influence the opportunity structures that people have access to
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Skocpol's criticisms

Criticism/Solution	Explanation
Structural perspective: current models adopt too much of a purposive perspective for what social revolutions are	<p>Most of the theories assume that revolutionary crises come about only through the appearance of dissatisfied or disoriented people, or groups mobilise for revolutionary goals; the destruction and transformation of the old regime happens only because a purposive revolutionary movement has formed to accomplish that end</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tilly, while emphasising on group social organisation and access to resources as an alternative to social-psychological theories of political violence,

	<p>defines revolutionary situations in terms of the special goal – ultimate sovereignty – for which contenders are fighting, he ends up echoing Johnson’s arguments about revolutionary ideological leaderships and Gurr’s hypotheses about discontent as an explanation for mass support of revolutionary organisations</p> <p>Criticism: assumes that the ultimate and sufficient condition for revolution is the withdrawal of this consensual support, and conversely, that no regime could survive if the masses were consciously disgruntled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No historically successful social revolution has been “made” by a mass-mobilising, avowedly revolutionary movement • Brecher: “revolutionary movements rarely begin with a revolutionary intention; this only develops in the course of the struggle itself” <p>We must make sense of such complexity only by focusing simultaneously upon the institutionally determined situations and relations of groups within society and the interrelations of societies within world-historically developing international structures – emphasise patterns of relationships among groups and societies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a structural perspective → how institutions shape the relations between groups
Transnational influences as structural factors	<p>All modern social revolutions must be seen as closely related in their causes and accomplishments to the internationally uneven spread of capitalist economic development and the nation state formation on a world scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only looked at socioeconomic tendencies and conflicts within national societies, taken one by one in isolation <p>Notions of modernisation as an intranational socioeconomic dynamic harmonise nicely with conceptions of revolutions as purposive movements grounded in and facilitating societal development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid and disjointed economic expansion stimulates and then frustrates mass expectations → rise to widespread discontent • Economic relations are shaped by transnational influences due to international trade and flows → pre-existing economic structures are either reinforced or modified in ways due to industrialisation and international trade → historically developing transnational economic relations have always strongly

	<p>and differentially influenced national economic developments</p> <p>Threats from states: international system of competing states</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe as the site of continental political structure in which no one imperial state controlled the entire territory of Europe and her overseas conquests • European world economy was unique in that it developed within a system of competing states <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Not just Roman or Chinese empires controlling the world-economies • England vs France in competing for formal control or de facto hegemony over the whole of Europe's new colonial acquisitions and former New World holdings • China and Japan were advanced and powerful agrarian states but avoided ultimate or permanent subjugation in large part because the Western intrusions set afoot revolutionary upheavals that culminated sooner or later in vastly enhanced powers of national defence and assertion within the international states system • Skocpol thinks that national states are organisations geared to maintain control of home territories and populations and to undertake actual or potential military competition with other states in the international system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Modernisation has always meant national developments only within the contexts of historically developing transnational structures, both economic and military <p>Relevance of transnational structures of countries undergoing social revolutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically, unequal or competitive transnational relations have helped to shape any given country's state and class structures, thus influencing the existing domestic context from which the revolution emerges • Transnational relations influence the course of events during actual revolutionary conjunctures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Modern social revolutions have happened only in countries situated in disadvantaged positions within international arenas → realities of military backwardness or political dependency have crucially affected the occurrence and course of social revolutions (Russia and China?) • Skocpol claims that developments within the international states system as such – especially defeats
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	<p>in wars or threats of invasion and struggle over colonial controls – have directly contributed to virtually all outbreaks of revolutionary crises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These developments undermine existing political authorities and state controls, thus opening the way for basic conflict and structural transformation ● Skocpol also alludes to transnational influences of prospects of success → Chinese Communists emboldened by Bolsheviks and received direct advice and aid from the Russian revolutionary regime <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Also possibly politically significant breakthroughs such as the Industrial revolution or the innovation of the Leninist form of party organisation ● Skocpol warns theorist from thinking that transnational influences affect people directly → it is always almost state rulers, necessarily oriented to acting within international arenas, who are equally or more likely to be the ones who transmit transnational influences into domestic politics
<p>Conceiving of the state as a macro-structure</p>	<p>The state is not merely an arena in which socio-economic struggles are fought out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Johnson and Gurr think that outbreak of a revolution depends on whether the existing governmental authorities lose their legitimacy – governmental power and stability depend directly upon societal trends and popular support and neither believe that state coercive organisations can effectively repress discontented or disapproving majorities of people in society ● Tilly and Marxist theorists see the state as essentially organised coercion – but they still treat the state as primarily an arena in which social conflicts are resolved through domination rather than voluntary consensus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is because they see the state as a function of the dominant class subjugating the lower classes <p>The state, properly conceived, is a set of administrative, policing and military organisations headed, and more or less well coordinated by an executive authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coercive organisation that is potentially autonomous from direct dominant class control → pursue interests independent and distinct from the dominant class and may even compete with them to appropriate resources from the economy and society ● States also exist in determinant geopolitical

	<p>environments which create tasks and opportunities for states and place limits on their capacities to cope with either external or internal tasks or crises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hintze → the structure of social classes and external ordering of the state condition the real organisation of the state <p>The state, in short, is fundamentally Janus-faced, with an intrinsically dual anchorage in class-divided socio-economic structures and international system of states</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Must look at not just activities of social groups but the state as well ● Also focus on points of intersection between international conditions and pressures, on the one hand, and class structured economies and politically organised interests on the other
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How to improve on these frameworks

- Skocpol's inclusion of transnational influences
 - Ideology: it explains how the spread of ideology across national borders can lead to similar revolutions.
 - Consider how Lenin's Bolshevik revolution and his communist ideology influenced Mao to construct his revolution against the GMD in China, based on a modified version of Leninism.
 - In the same way, in the 18th and 19th century, there was the emergence of "constitutional revolutions" in America, France and later Europe and Meiji Japan to limit powers of the monarchy and utilise elections.
 - When we open up the explanatory factors to include transnational influences, we can see how the spread of ideology across borders quickens the development of revolutions not captured by the previous theories.
 - Repertoires and Methods of Revolutions: I want to push Skocpol's point further by considering Tilly and Tarrow's notion of "repertoires" and "modularity" in contentious politics.
 - Repertoires consist in the mode of claim-making – such as "sit-ins" during the American Civil Rights Movement. Contextualised in revolutions, repertoires can manifest as different types of violent and disruptive protests or Guerrilla tactics.
 - According to Tilly and Tarrow, the modularity of contentious politics implies that certain groups "inherit" pass methodologies for claim-making or revolution.

- By opening up our explanatory factors to include transnational influences, it is likely the case that groups intending to embark on a revolution attempt to inherit certain modules of repertoires that have been proven successful – this is why the revolutions in China, Cuba and Nicaragua all engaged in Guerrilla tactics, and is likely also why the more recent/contemporary revolutions have been construed as more “negotiated”.
- The realisation that a “negotiated” or “electoral” mode of contention is successful has led to a transnational inheritance of these modes of contention to effect regime change successfully. So, I think that Skocpol’s inclusion of transnational factors is far more potent than simply expanding the explanations for the emergence of revolutions, as it also explains the patterns of the modes of contention and revolution present in these revolutions.

Other Determinants of Revolution’s emergences and successes

Structural causes

1. Demographic change: population grows rapidly for several generations, usually culminating in huge effects of population change which causes institutions of social order to suffer
 - a. Land and jobs may grow scarce, rents rise and real wages decline, producing popular anger
 - i. Inflation and taxes may lag → elites cannot reward supporters
 - b. Youth bulge → youth are easily drawn towards new ideologies and mobilised for social protests
2. Shift in the pattern of international relations: Wars and international economic competition can weaken state authorities and empower new groups in society
 - a. Revolutions frequently arose in waves following global or continental wars as happened in Europe after the Thirty Years War, in the decades after the Napoleonic Wars, in the wake of WW1 and 2, and at the conclusion of the Cold War
3. Uneven or dependent economic development: where economic growth is so uneven that the poor and even middle classes fall farther behind while a small elite grows rapidly richer, or where economic growth is so dependent on foreign investment that growth benefits mainly the foreign investors and their associates, then economic changes will widely be seen as unjust, creating popular grievances and alienating and dividing the elites
 - a. Supported by Mexico (revolution of Madero vs Diaz) where there were huge issues of dependent development – 90% of Mexico’s eighty largest capitalised business were controlled by foreign capital (94% of banking was foreign controlled) → so while elites grew in economic power, it was clear that the

remittances back to the source country meant that the lower or middle classes fell behind

- b. Deteriorating urban conditions and crisis in agriculture: Peasants increasingly squeezed from their land and large scale latifundios encroached on their communal holdings where sugar plantations grew rapidly
4. New patterns of exclusion or discrimination against particular groups: enforced discrimination or exclusion can undermine the legitimacy of a regime and turn entire groups into enemies of the existing social order
 - a. If channels of social mobility are suddenly blocked/new groups take power and exclude former elites/number and wealth of a group suddenly increase greatly without any increased political opportunities for that group, then the existing equilibrium becomes unstable, as an entire social group becomes aggrieved and seeks to change the social system that they believe is unjustly holding them down
5. Evolution of personalist regimes: dictators and entrenched leaders try to manipulate elites and political institutions to stay in power → family members and cronies → corrupt regime
 - a. But need to educate the military and civil service in order to increase military and economic capacity in a backward rural nation
 - b. Such educated individuals would tend to resent power and favouritism of a venial dictator and the privileges of entrenched elites
 - c. Lay the basis for rigorous opposition to their rule

Importance of a strong leader

- Classical examples: Washington, Lenin and Mao
- Requires skillful revolutionary leadership tactics to take advantage of instability and disorder, to construct from this chaos a successful revolutionary movement, and to build a new regime
 - Ganz's strategic capacity: it is not just about the access to resources than an organisation has but rather whether they can use it effectively
 - This requires intense knowledge-how → ability to master and gain expertise in the usage of certain tactics
 - Ability to act under uncertainty
- But Ganz's also ignores the place of the leader in being about to articulate ideology and galvanise support → not just about the ability to mobilise resources effectively, but also the ability to inspire individuals to join the revolution
 - Goldstone thinks that the absence of a leader who spreads the vision of a new society and articulates the ideology is essential, otherwise the revolution would be defeated

- Classic examples: Thomas Jefferson and his declaration of independence, Lenin and Mao with their writings on communist ideology to inspire the people to rise up
- But are leaders really necessary? Examinations of the Arab Spring and the Colours Revolution
 - Many of the Colour revolutions did not have a clear cut leader as the American Revolution did George Washington
 - Notably, revolutions like the People's Power Revolution in Philippines did not have a leader (individuals like Cardinal Sin and Cory Aquino were influential but were hardly revolutionary leaders)
 - Instead, what substituted for the effects of the leaders were (i) NGOs like the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections as well as (ii) internet as a form of communication and mobilisation

Transnational causes: Hale's Theory Regime Cascades

- The observation that many revolutions occur in waves: the rapid collapse of successive communist regimes in 1989, the "colour revolutions" that toppled one post-Soviet autocrat after another in the 2000s, and the Arab Spring that set a series of Middle Eastern regimes alight in 2011
 - Appear to occur rapidly and in a chain reaction
- Disadvantages of studying regime cascades
 - Each individual regime cascade can be local-knowledge intensive and have localised, not general causes
 - Observers may fail to notice that not all of the oysters in the series resulted from the same causes
- Demonstration effects and modularity: "non-relational diffusion"
 - Particular tactics or strategies that can be used for democratisation might be witnessed in other countries and thus emulated especially if they become understood as a coherent package that is relatively easily adopted in a variety of contexts → Tarrow's notion of modularity
 - Witnessing some events in one country can lead people in other countries to increasingly expect something similar in their own country + overestimate the vulnerability of their authoritarian regime + embolden the people to reveal their own dissatisfactions
 - Such events supply critical focal points for opposition coordination and unravel preference falsification → because now people overestimate the vulnerability of the authoritarian regime, they no longer feel the need to pretend to be supportive of the regime
 - Empirical evidence (Arab Spring protests): the self immolation of provincial fruit vendor Mohamad Bouaziz in protest of his treatment by the state sparked a chain reaction of demonstrations in Tunisia; when Tunisia's dictator

was forced out, this triggered a major protest wave in Egypt and other Arab states, once Hosni Mubarak's regime fell in Egypt, the intensity of protest accelerated, inspiring efforts by activists in nearly every Arab country

- Beissinger finds that a particular pattern of protest following crooked elections had become "modular" and thus widely adopted by oppositions in post-Soviet countries after 2000
- Mitchell's study of the colour revolutions qualifies this argument, pointing out that demonstration effects appear to have been much more important in this protest activity than in others
- But there is a limit to how much these "demonstration effects" or peaceful protests actually drove regime change
 - Demonstration effects were clearly involved in a number of overthrows of incumbent autocrats in 2011, although this number was far smaller than the number of countries experiencing the protest cascade
 - Only the leaders of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya fell by the end of 2012, and the latter only with NATO military intervention
 - Syria's regime, whereby attempts to put down protests erupted into a civil war, was clearly a civil-war driven cascade of revolution
- Mediated cascading: not just the diffusion of people seeing other countries take down their regimes, but there might be powerful agents which undertake intentional efforts to facilitate such cascades
 - Agents such as influential individuals, national or transnational pro-democracy movements, youth organisations, private foundations etc
 - These agents can alter the cost-benefit calculus of revolutions
 - One way they can alter the cost-benefit calculus is via propagating new technologies of protests, revolution or regime change through the provision of information, public campaigning, or even education and training programs
 - They may also attempt to spread values and norms that are against the current regime
 - Empirical evidence: Weyland ascribes very few activists as an important mechanisms in producing cascading protests or revolutions in 1848
 - In 1848, media markets were not globalised across countries that experienced the protests and revolutions, ruling out a single actor shaping event framing in any unified way across the affected space
 - Empirical evidence: research on 1989 postcommunist protests also finds almost no role for revolutionary activists generating apparent cascades of protests, revolutions and regime change
 - Dissident communities in East Europe's brutal totalitarian regimes were small and isolated everywhere but Poland and perhaps Hungary

were simply not in a position by themselves to spread democratic norms

- Empirical evidence: Arab Spring resembles the above events in that the lead role was played not by influential agents but by “loose coalitions of disparate groups and individuals” who were able to coordinate focal points provided by other major events and media
 - A common narrative of shared fate and struggle was forged first and foremost by al-Jazeera satellite television network → it downplayed differences among Arab states, imposed its coverage of the 2011 Arab uprisings starting with the self immolation in Tunisia, and consciously portrayed each new uprising as part of a larger Arab-wide struggle, providing a cognitive frame for the dynamic, cascading interaction among protests and revolutions that took place through other media
- Empirical evidence: debate regarding the Colour revolution
 - Electoral model with democratic norms spread transnationally through the support of a broad coalition of transnational prodemocracy networks and foreign governments, including some new democracies that had emerged in the 1989 wave
- No common cause; simply contemporaneous triggers of independent domestic origin
 - Theories of democratisation thresholds to explain why regime changes might take on the external appearance of a cascade if given a set of internal factors which come into play at around the same time in a set of countries
 - Temporally proximate domestic triggers may account for cascade like dynamics → Hale made this case for the occurrence and timing of all post-Soviet colour revolutions
 - She treated them as normal phases in cyclic regime dynamics associated with formally presidentialist political systems in highly clientelistic countries → revolutions tend to occur when an incumbent president is both unpopular and a “lame duck” (in the constitutionally mandated final term or is entering old age or facing incapacitating health problems such that elites increasingly expect his/her imminent departure from office)
 - All these factors of domestic origin alone are able to account for both the occurrence and timing of all post-Soviet patronal presidential ousters → rendering cascade mechanisms secondary causes at best and also show why the result is usually a return to the old regime type instead of a breakthrough to democracy
 - Lust also makes such a case for the importance of domestic factors such as succession crises and ageing dictators in the Arab uprising
- Hale concludes that it is not clear that we can count any of the series of events (1848, 1989, Arab Uprising, Colour Revolutions) as a clear-cut case of regime change

cascades, since there are also strong domestic factors that simply coincided at the same time

- Research indicates that the dramatic collapses of 1989 are better explained by Gorbachev's actions setting in motion chains of events (including preference defalsification) in each country independently, leaving actual cross-national cascading to have been crucial primarily in the "end game" for hold out communist regimes in Albania, Yugoslavia and by some accounts the USSR
- 2011 Arab uprising may be the best case of a regime change
- Generalising theory about regime cascades
 - Regardless of how developed and institutionalised a regime's ruling apparatus is, its power still hinges on the coordinated expectations of regime agents at all levels that the regime will endure and be able to carry out in the future any threats or promises the regime's leaders make today
 - This insight directs scholars' attentions to factors driving the expectations as to the regime's likely future of all the people on whos behaviour the regime survival depends. Such expectations tend to be self-fulfilling and to change in cascades as coordination emerges and breaks down
 - We can distil from Olson's analysis of the fall of East European communism that regime change cascades among nondemocratic countries are most likely to occur when
 - expectations emerge in a set of countries that the existing leadership is on its way out
 - when this leadership is unpopular
 - when elites tend to lack other focal points around which to coordinate defection from the regime (no meaningful elections or major external shocks)
 - when a common frame of reference exists among masses and elites, making events in another country seem relevant to events in one's own country
 - when key conditions supporting the old regime type have fundamentally change
 - Occurred for most East European communist regimes → in part created by contingent actions by Gorbachev
 - This is why the Colour revolutions are not considered regime change cascades:
 - In each of the most commonly cited cases of a colour revolution (Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan), anticipation of presidential succession emerged as unpopular incumbents approached constitutionally

defined term limits or opted not to seek reelection and to try to install a successor instead

- Focal points enabling elites to coordinate their actions in anticipation of potential succession, including defection from the regime were supplied by elections themselves
- This presence of other focal points for catalysing coordinated elite actions in anticipation of succession meant that cross-national cascading processes were not needed to triggered revolutions
- And regime change was not generally the result because the key underlying conditions that had produced the existing hybrid regimes tended not to be changed, resulting in a cyclic return to the old regime type after the revolutions → could we say that these are failures of the revolutions?
 - Main exceptions are : (i) Ukraine whose revolution ended the strongly presidential constitution and had a significantly democratising outcome, and (ii) Serbia, which with the departure of Milosevic could benefit from the democratising effects of the EU

Examples exhibiting successes and failures

Failure: Arab Uprising in 2011

- Basically, countries either descended into civil war, or the regime it replaced eventually reverted back

Country	Reasons for Failure
Libya (ended up in full blown war with NATO)	<p>Gaddafi immediately sought to crush the protests and gave orders to shoot protesters on sight, and hundreds were killed in the first week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Most of Libya's professional army, just like those of Tunisia and Egypt, chose not to fire on their countrymen and most defected or stayed in their barracks● But Libya was an oil power, giving Gaddafi huge revenues that he directly controlled and used this wealth to create a private army of mercenaries from sub-Saharan Africa, twice as large as the regular army, who were willing to kill rebel Libyans● Libya remained a significant extent a tribal society, not a nation, so regime protection units commanded by Gaddafi's sons recruited mainly from his own tribe were especially loyal and willing to fight to the end against Libyans from

	<p>other regions</p> <p>Ended up as a civil war → no longer the same peaceful revolution and protests</p>
Syria (also descended into civil war)	<p>Emboldened by other Arab revolutions, young Syrians began a campaign of nonviolent resistance and began with demonstrations in the small southern town of Deraa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regime's indiscriminate and brutal response to initial protests, captured on YouTube and spread by overseas Syrians anxious to see regime change, quickly spread across the country on satellite television ● High threats and low prospects of success → artillery planes used to bomb neighbourhoods held by rebels and then special forces, dominated by loyal Alawites, were sent to clear the area ● Struggle had become a major civil war in 2013 and Russia gave full military support to Assad, turning the tide and helping the regime retake most of the country
Tunisia (slid back into authoritarian rule)	<p>Efforts at power sharing among religious and secular factions initially succeeded, but eventually broke down amid economic decline, with President Kais Saied suspending Parliament in 2022 and paving the way to take absolute power</p>
Egypt (counterrevolution)	<p>Army refused to fire on civilians, allowing them to camp in Tahrir Square</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up tents and barricades, determined to occupy Tahrir until Mubarak was gone ● After Mubarak refused, strikes paralysed the country from Alexandria to upper Egypt and from Cairo to Suez ● Seeing order dissolving, the military removed Mubarak from office and allowed for a democratically elected president to take over <p>Causes of the 2013 military coup (counterrevolution)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Claims by the National Salvation Front and other opposition organisations that there were irregularities in the 2012 referendum on changes to Egypt's constitution. Various members of the Constituent Assembly including church representatives subsequently withdrew

	<p>due to their dissatisfaction with the content of the changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unprecedented economic crises including power, fuel and foreign currency shortages. • Worsening state security with incidents including the murder of 16 border guards in Sinai, kidnappings and the blowing up of a gas pipeline supplying Israel and Jordan on numerous occasions. • Egyptian military economic interests. Estimates of the military's share of Egypt's economy range from 5% to 40% and include industries such as mining, real estate, farming and the production of household appliances. The military has long opposed modern economic policies such as privatisation that threaten their position in the economy. • Foreign interference: In 2015 secret audio recordings of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and members of his inner circle were leaked that indicated that during Morsi's presidency the UAE provided funds to the Egyptian Defense Ministry to launch a protest campaign against President Mohamed Morsi and funded the Tamarod protest movement. The recordings contained other highly controversial contents. <p>Politics became a struggle for power between the two best-organised groups remaining in Egyptian society – the army and the Muslim Brotherhood</p>
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Ketchley's Case study of Egypt's Revolution – Ketchley argues that no political revolution occurred in Egypt three years after Mubarak's demise, and that the Mubarak era state was never upended and remains resolutely intact + the citizens did not exercise meaningful democratic control over the state

Context	
Social/Political	<p>Anti-police violence due to the Egyptian police shooting and killing a nineteen year old high school dropout who was an anti-Mubarak protestor and had taken to the streets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episodes of collective violence against police stations were retaliation against police killing protestors from their district <p>Basically repressive regime by Mubarak</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revolution not entirely peaceful

	Violence against the police inspired the nonviolent movement → contrary to expectations by scholars of civil resistance
Framework: relational	<p>Not just privileging their ideas or behaviours, but the fact that rational people make transactions among people and groups far more central than do ideas and people. Humans develop their personalities and practices through interchanges with other humans and that the interchanges themselves always involve a degree of negotiation and creativity</p> <p>Ketchley intends to develop a conjectural and interactive account of the 25th January Revolution and post-Mubarak political process, grounding his explanation in a series of relationships: between collective violence and nonviolent activism, protestors and security forces, elections and contentious collective action, elites and street protests movements, and repression and mass mobilisation</p> <p>Ketchley places special focus on how Egyptians use “repertoire of contention” → modularity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marches were the most frequently used form of protest across the 25th Jan Revolution, to the anti-coup mobilisation
How it happened	
Anti-police violence	<p>Violence against the police inspired the nonviolent movement rather than alienating the nonviolent movement → contrary to expectations by scholars of civil resistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of violent action is excluded from analysis of anti-Mubarak protests
Mass mobilisation in the country's squares and roads	Sat and occupied Tahrir square peacefully
Fraternisation with the military	Basically, encouraging peaceful soldier-protestor interaction such as kissing the soldier on the cheek, or providing them with food to make them question their loyalties and overcome initial antagonism

	<p>Repertoire of Fraternisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Started with Trotsky during the Russian Revolution where he encouraged future revolutionaries to get physically close to the soldiers so that they reach the psychological movement where the soldiers would contemplate to which side they belong • Fraternisation occurred first during protests on 28th Jan and continued later in and around Midan al-Tahrir after protestors attacked newly arriving tanks and APCs • Protestors made claims on army to guarantee security especially when threatened by pro-Mubarak security forces → stimulated feelings of solidarity • Declaring that “The Army and the People are One Hand” → desecalating soldier-protestor violence • Protestors taking photos in front and on top of tanks → generating contentious performances symbolic of soldier-protestor solidarity → source of political capital <p>However, Ketchley argues that there were no historical experiences from which the protestors could draw from → had to be improvised</p>
Why it failed	
<p>Military Coup: Mursi was removed from office → pro-Mursi protestors organised themselves in town squares, only to be massacred by the soldiers on 14 August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated by elites to enable state capture 	
Lack of establishment of revolutionary forces + subsiding into normal democratic transition	<p>Democratic transition from Mubarak to President Mursi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demobilisation of social movements and decline in transgressive contentious politics → politics transition away from authoritarian rule following democratic breakthroughs, movements demobilise, shifting their focus from the street to securing a foothold in formerly closed state institutions via elections • Expected electoral successes further incentivises demobilisation

	<p>Basically, the Muslim Brothers attempted to electoralise contention and restrict a democratic transition to a process of negotiation, transaction and electioneering actually worked against the post-Mubarak democratic project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarrow calls it “uncoordinated demobilising” • SCAF encouraged the winding down of protests and the seek political dialogue with Mubarak-era opposition in general and the Muslim Brothers in particular → Muslim Brothers were invited to play a leading role in democratic transition <p>Breakdown of revolutionary relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Brokerage” mechanism faltering • Secularists were suspicious of the Muslim Brothers’ electoral advantage and referendums on constitutions became antagonisms between Islamic and non-Islamic factions of the revolutions • Demobilisation and disorganisation during a period of transition
Fragmented political landscape	<p>Extreme distrust between revolutionaries and the SCAF → Muslim Brothers’ cordial relationship with the SCAF made people suspicious of them and inciting protests; they were seen as “unprincipled opportunists” betraying the revolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure of Egypt’s liberal and secular forces to develop a competitive political machine, leading to FJP’s dominance and distrust of the Muslim Brothers’ as conspirators to take over → generating grievances • Led to anti-Mursi protests • Lack of coordination and trust led to a breakdown in revolutionary progress and perception of betrayal
Unprecedented repression + anti-coup protests refusal to take arms (i.e. peaceful/non-violent revolutionary situations tend to fail)	<p>Muslim Brothers threatened to fall back on street protests (the repertoire they used during the Jan 25 protests) if their electoral authority was threatened → optimistic that the coup could be reversed through protests</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilisation was extremely organised and competent • Repertoire of peaceful protests for example using Marches, Sit-ins, Human chains, Demonstrations → only in a limited number of ways <p>Repression did not result in violent uprising, but instead a reorganisation of repertoires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DiD regression analysis showed that Marches skyrocketed in repertoire share while occupations collapsed due to the unprecedented scale of killing • Use of live ammunition against occupants which led to dwindling numbers of people occupying town squares
Tendency of Egypt's poorest to equate protestors' refusal with socioeconomic threat	
Implications	
Expanding definition of "revolutionary situations"	<p>Because much of the definitions of revolutions implicitly contain the notion of success (see Bessinger), Ketchley thinks that mobilisations that are procedurally similar to revolutions but not similar in terms of outcome must be called "revolutionary situations", namely that it is a conjectural episode involving</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contenders or coalitions of contenders advancing exclusive competing claims to control of the state or some segment of it 2. Commitment to those claims by a significant segment of the citizenry 3. Incapacity or unwillingness of rulers to suppress the alternative coalition and/or commitment to its claims <p>Can bolster condition 1 with the claim involving the replacement of the incumbent authoritarian leader, and the intention to transform the political structure</p>

Category 3: Methodological Aspects of Studying Revolutions

From Essay:

Despite the sophisticated models that a multitude of scholars have launched to attempt to model the emergence and prospect of success for revolutions, I want to argue against such a presumption of the determinability of success. I will make two separate reasons for why we cannot properly determine the success of a revolution via the framework of analytical models – one methodological criticism and another regarding the fundamentally conjugal nature of causation and initial conditions.

The methodological criticism consists in the particular vulnerability of theoretical models regarding revolutions to multivariate limitations.

- More precisely, Skocpol notes that there have been very few actual revolutions that have occurred in the course of history, and that they have emerged from vastly different institutional preconditions.
- The upshot of this is that in controlling for these various factors to isolate and verify the causal factors, general theories of revolutions tend to face a “curse of dimensionality” – by controlling for multiple, impactful initial conditions to isolate causal effects, we will have even fewer observations to verify our theories. It is for this reason that Skocpol elected to engage in a comparative historical analysis rather than formulating a general hypothesis of revolutions and their successes.

However, I present what I think is a much stronger, second argument regarding the fundamentally conjugal nature of causation and initial conditions regarding the successes of revolutions. (Basically impossibility of a pattern)

- This is motivated from Skocpol’s identification of revolutions as complex phenomena, and that our analytical models tend to be largely limited in effectively and correcting isolating causal factors for a revolution’s emergence and success.
- But I want to go further to say that what Skocpol should have said is that revolutions (and social action in general) are particularly sensitive to their initial conditions – their institutional preconditions such as dependent development, political cultures etc. And it is the conjugal nature of not only causal factors (such as transnational and domestic causes combining) but also the institutional preconditions that affect a revolution’s success.
- The conjugal nature of these causes and initial conditions are exactly why the multivariate logic present in general models do not work – no causal factor can increase the probability of an outcome independently. It is instead the combination of factors that matter.
- This is why Foran notes that even though Skocpol attempts to find a causal pattern between France, China and Russia’s revolutions, she is committed to arguing that Iran’s revolution against the repressive Shah was successful due to various ad hoc causal factors instead of attributing it to some causal model. These conceptual problems limit the ability to find determinable and isolated causal factors that independently increase the prospect of success for a revolution.