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Structure, Politics, and Ethnonationalist Contention in Post-Franco Spain: An Integrated Model*

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Previous models of nationalism have been unable to adequately account for variation in forms or levels of contentious nationalist activity. Building on the most important theoretical tools from the literatures on social movements and nationalism, an alternative model is proposed in which structure, politics, and action assume equal roles in an interdependent causal system. It is further proposed that violent and nonviolent contention, though conceptually distinct phenomena, are the products of a fundamentally similar set of factors. The model posits that sociostructural 'root causes' are vital to the development of ethnonationalist contentious politics, but indirectly via mobilization. The direct determinants of protest and rebellion are a conjunction of organizational mobilization and political opportunity structures. In particular, a shared identity gives groups of people the *basis* for organizational mobilization; mobilizational resources provide the *means* for such mobilization; grievances lend the *reason*; and a series of political factors structure the *opportunities* of mobilized groups to contend in a conventional, violent or nonviolent manner. The opportunity structures are then themselves transformed by the nature of the contention that takes place. Using a 3SLS structural equation model and original data from the 17 autonomous communities of Spain between 1977 and 1996, the results show that structure, politics, and action are, as predicted, three fundamental components of an interdependent causal system. The vital, yet indirect role of grievances and group identity in the generation of ethnonationalist conflict is confirmed, and a number of powerful relationships obtain with the individual elements of the political opportunity structure. Higher levels of democracy are related to increased protest, more intense repression is associated with lower levels of contentious activity, and the level of regional autonomy has no apparent impact on conflict. In the short term, moreover, Spain's major democratic transition is shown to exacerbate existing conflict propensities.

Introduction

Ernest Gellner (1983: 45) once argued that 'for every effective nationalism, there are *n* potential ones . . . which do not bother to struggle, which fail to activate their potential nationalism, which do not even try'. In fact, there are vastly more linguistic, ethnic, and cultural communities than there are nationalist movements or states. While most ethnonational communities fail to mobilize and take action, those that do can have a dramatic impact on a country's political, economic, and social fabric. This is readily apparent in Spain, which experienced thousands of nationalist contentious events throughout its 17 autonomous regions

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between 1977 and 1996. A sample of Spanish newspaper accounts from the spring of 1977 highlights the diversity of actions and targets undertaken by budding ethnonationalists in the atmosphere of a rapidly democratizing country:

- On 4 April, a multitudinous protest took place in Bilbao. Protesters demanded recognition of the Basque national flag, the co-officiality of the Basque language, and total amnesty for Basque political prisoners.
- The same day, a group demanding the independence of the Canary Islands issued bomb threats against the government.
- On 12 April, three recently pardoned ETA members were detained for tearing down a Spanish national flag.
- On the 19 April, demonstrating groups of radical Galician nationalists confronted each other in a bloody street brawl.
- On the 23 April, more than 100,000 people demonstrated in Barcelona for a Catalonian statute of autonomy.
- Six days after that, a sergeant of the *Guardia Civil* was killed by ETA terrorists as they tried to rob a branch of the Banco Hispanoamericano in Tolosa in a botched 'fund-raising' effort.

In fact, the entire post-Franco period is notable for the sustained ethnonationalist contentious actions – ranging from small and spontaneous to massive and organized; from peaceful petitions to bloody executions; and from nonviolent exchanges to violent intergroup clashes – that have impacted numerous regions throughout the country, some of which had never before been noted for nationalistic tendencies. The point is, whenever a region chooses to act – or not to act – on its nationalist potential, it is difficult to predict *a priori* the form and intensity of contention that will predominate. What can explain this variation in levels of violent and nonviolent contention among ethnonational communities?

This article helps answer that question by testing the ability of an integrated model of contentious nationalist politics to account for levels of violent and nonviolent contention in the 17 regions of Spain over a 20-year period during and after the country's transition to democracy (1977–96). I argue that our comprehension of nationalist phenomena can be considerably enhanced by viewing both violent and nonviolent outbreaks of nationalism as the related products of a conjunction of broad sociodemographic and economic structural conditions on the one hand, and political processes on the other. My overarching premise is that structure, politics, and action are interactive in the generation of ethnonationalist conflict. While a set of economic and sociodemographic structural conditions deliver the identity, resources, and motivation necessary for successful group mobilization, political opportunities act as a filter for the transformation of structurally induced mobilization into political action. These political opportunity structures are then themselves transformed by the nature of political action that takes place.

This article further suggests that violent and nonviolent contention, although conceptually distinct phenomena, are the products of a fundamentally similar set of factors. Whether one is dealing with nonviolent protest or violent rebellion, the following five explanans – *mobilizational resources*, *grievances*, *group identity*, *organizational mobilization*, and *political opportunity structures* – are shown to be critical components of the conflict process. The difference between violent and nonviolent action forms comes in the precise impact of each of these explanatory factors on contention.

How does the application of this synthesis of the literatures on social movements and

nationalism enhance our understanding of ethnonationalist contention? The implications of the study are substantial. The findings show that, contrary to a growing conventional wisdom, structurally induced 'root causes' are not irrelevant; they play a vital indirect role in the waxing and waning of ethnonationalist conflict. The findings further shed light on the community-level structural factors that undergird the 'substitution effect' hypothesized to take place in individual organizations (Lichbach, 1987; Moore, 1998, 2000). Similarly, a number of powerful relationships obtain with the individual elements of the political opportunity structure with regards to their impact on the overall magnitude of violent and nonviolent contention. In particular, higher levels of democracy were related to increased protest, the rate of repression of protest demonstrations was associated with decreased levels of contentious activity, and the level of regional autonomy had no apparent impact on the conflict process. At the same time, several interesting relationships were found with indicators of the extent and durability of regime change. In the short term, Spain's major democratic transition tended to exacerbate existing conflict propensities.

Theoretical Foundations

Much of the literature pertinent to aggregate contentious activity within ethnonational communities,[1] especially that by scholars of nationalism, has focused on large-scale economic and sociodemographic structural conditions. In competition with this group are those researchers, working mainly in the rational choice and political process traditions, who focus on political and institutional explanations.

Structural and Group-Centric Analyses

A first branch of research on nationalism concentrates on aggregate characteristics of the national community. Primary theses within this tradition focus on the mobilizational resources afforded the group as a result of, inter alia, 'social mobilization' (Deutsch, 1954); on the mobilizational capacity of claims-making groups (Tilly, 1978); on the importance of cultural markers (especially language) and boundary-formation in the generation of movement strength (Barth, 1969; Anderson, 1991; Brass, 1991; Calhoun, 1993); on the role of cultural attributes unique to each community (Zulaika, 1988); and on the unique, powerful psychological pull of appeals to the national group identity (Connor, 1993).

A second group of research is built around Gurr's (1970) ground-breaking supposition of a 'politicization and activation of discontent' resulting from relative deprivation. The range of posited grievances runs the gamut from political to cultural to institutional to economic. Some of the most popular hypotheses focus on nationalism as the product of state suppression of minority cultural expression (Horowitz, 1985; Connor, 1993); on the supposed economic benefits of political independence (Bookman, 1993); on the combination of international forces and discriminatory domestic economic policy that results in 'internal colonialism' (Hechter, 1975); and on the negative consequences of ethnic competition and divisions in the labor market (Nagel, 1984; Horowitz, 1985; Olzak, 1992).

All of the above literature, however, suffers from fundamental shortcomings in

[1] As noted, the analytical focus is on the level of contentious activity within entire national *communities* (or groups), such as the Basques, rather than on the activities of specific nationalist *organizations* (e.g. ETA) acting within those communities. A national community is not a homogeneous entity; there can be numerous organizations – each with distinct strategies and goals – operating on behalf of the community at any given time. The community-level study conducted here focuses on the determinants of the aggregate of these organizations' contentious actions.

terms of predictive utility. When we try to predict the occurrence of nationalist protest based solely on the existence of favorable structural pre-determinants, we are frequently at a loss. In the United Kingdom, for instance, we can see that Scottish nationalism is consistently stronger than Welsh nationalism, though from a structural-linguistic basis the reverse should be true. In France, we can see that the strongest – and most violent – nationalist movements have arisen in the areas (Brittany and Corsica) with the *lowest* levels of social mobilization. And in Spain, we can see that instead of nationalism occurring in the peripheral areas with the least economic advantages, nationalism is strongest in Catalonia and the Basque Country – the two *richest* regions of the country. There is more to the story, it seems, than simply the existence of large, coherent, industrialized and aggrieved linguistic and cultural communities at the periphery translating directly into politically relevant outbursts of nationalism.

Political and Institutional Analyses

In response, a core group of social movement researchers has recently 'returned' to political and institutional explanations of nationalist and social movement protest. This research often has at its heart the notion of 'political opportunity structures' (POS), which McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly (1996: 24) characterize as 'the formal organizations of government and public politics, authorities' facilitation and repression of claims-making by challenging groups, and the presence of potential allies, rivals, or enemies'. The primary hypothesis is that these relatively stable features of the political environment fundamentally condition political behavior, and thus 'significantly affect any polity's patterns of contention' (ibid.). In recent tests applying this framework to the study of violent and nonviolent nationalist contention, a strong role has been found for the impact of government repression (Schock, 1996; Beissinger, 2002), regime type (Schock, 1996; Saideman et al., 2002), regional autonomy (Beissinger, 2002; Saideman et al., 2002), and electoral systems (Saideman et al., 2002).

At the same time, researchers working in the rational choice tradition have begun to focus on the role that state structures and actions play in tactical group choices. With such arguments as the 'substitution effect', which posits that activists will substitute violent for nonviolent contention, and vice versa, depending on which is more actively pursued by public security forces (Lichbach, 1998; Moore, 1998, 2000), these studies hold great promise for increasing our comprehension of what pushes groups to switch between violent and nonviolent tactics. However, their focus is not well suited to increasing our understanding of the overall magnitude of mobilization within a particular ethnic or national community. This points to a commonality in political-institutional studies thus far. Although the results provide insights into the effects of certain variations of regime type or institutional design, only with difficulty are we able to utilize their findings to predict variation in aggregate levels of ethnonationalist contention.

An Integrated Model of Ethnonationalist Contention

In sum, both the structural grievance and group theories of the nationalism scholars and the political-institutional theories of the POS and rational choice scholars are by themselves inadequate as explanations of ethnonationalist conflict. On the one hand, the structural theories are not very good at predicting the *form* of contention; on the other, the politics-centered analyses are not well suited to predicting *levels* of nationalist

activity. In other words, politics without structure is unable to explain why nationalism is present at a given level in any one community, while structure without politics cannot explain why the members of a community would favor non-conventional over conventional activity, nor why, once non-conventional contention is adopted, violent versus nonviolent action forms become predominant (Lichbach, 1998).

In effect, what is needed is a theoretical approach that can integrate these core factors by bridging the gaps among the literatures on social movements, domestic conflict processes, and nationalism. Such attempts have traditionally been rare, despite the fact that one of the fundamental reasons for which nationalist phenomena remain inscrutable is the failure of researchers to connect the relevant literatures (McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly, 1996). Fortunately, in the 1990s, a number of authors attempted to build a consolidated approach to domestic ethnopolitical conflict. Ground-breaking works by Gurr (1993), McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly (1996), and Lichbach (1998) provided important theoretical advances: the first via a synthesis of the relative deprivation and resource mobilization approaches, the second via an expanded, more all-encompassing political opportunity structure theory, and the last via an exploration of potential syntheses between the rational actor and political opportunity structure approaches.

What these studies suggest is that the grievances and incentives of the deprivation school (Gurr, 1970), the community-level mobilizational capacity of the resource mobilization approach (Tilly, 1978), the opportunities of structural political opportunity theory (McAdam, 1982), and the identity of the nationalism literature (Horowitz, 1985) all play a critical part in the generation of ethnopolitical conflict.

This integrated approach proposes to address three key shortcomings in the literature. First, care must be taken to integrate political factors with the structural determinants fundamental to the rise of nationalism. It is precisely those sociodemographic and group factors, I argue, that drive the mobilization of the national community: a shared ethno-linguistic identity provides the foundation, community mobilizational resources furnish the means, and grievances lend the reason. In an integrated model, politics then becomes crucial in conditioning the political behavior of the mobilized groups.

However, we cannot stop there. An attempt to integrate structure and politics should also take into account the indirect or interdependent nature of several of the key variables. The above sociostructural features, for example, are only indirectly influential to contention via mobilization (for example Gurr, 1993, 2000; Gurr & Moore, 1997). It is the conjunction of organizational mobilization and political opportunity structures that, in turn, directly impacts levels of violent and nonviolent contention. Subsequently, the opportunity structures are themselves transformed by the nature of the contention that takes place. These relationships have nevertheless been obscured by a heavy reliance in the literature on single-equation, unidirectional OLS and MLE regression techniques. I argue that we would be better served by expanding our methodological repertoire to include the approach of recent works (Francisco, 1995; Lindström & Moore, 1995; Gurr & Moore, 1997) that have experimented with structural equation models to operationalize interactive explanations of ethnopolitical conflict processes.

Finally, our studies would yield greater understanding were researchers to look at the entire spectrum of non-conventional protest activities as being the products of a fundamentally similar set of factors. In so arguing, this study dissents from the program of research running back to Sharp (1973)

predicated on the fundamental distinctions between violent and nonviolent behavior. This study instead allies with the growing number of scholars (Lichbach, 1987; Tarrow, 1994; Gurr & Moore, 1997; Moore, 2000) who have put faith in the theory-building potential of exploring the core similarities of violent and nonviolent action. Though they are identical neither in form nor causal process, there are substantial similarities in the generation of both types of action (Gurr, 1993). The conceptual umbrella under which both action forms can be subsumed is the generic term 'contentious politics', which Tarrow (1996: 874) takes to mean 'collective activity on the part of claimants – or those who claim to represent them – relying at least in part on noninstitutional forms of interaction with elites, opponents, or the state'. This term is favored, rather than 'the familiar triad "social movements, revolutions, and collective action", not simply for economy of action, but because each of these terms connects closely with a specific subfield representing only part of the [relevant] scholarly terrain' (McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly, 1996: 17).

In sum, a growing body of research suggests an integrated approach toward nationalist contentious politics in which structure, politics, and action assume equal roles in an interdependent causal system. In this system, a powerful shared identity is seen as giving groups of people the *basis* for organizational mobilization. Mobilizational resources provide the *means* for such mobilization, grievances provide the *reason*, and political factors structure the *opportunities* of the mobilized groups to contend in a conventional, nonviolent, or violent manner. At the same time, the political and contention variables are interdependent.

These relationships are portrayed graphically in Figure 1. Each arrow in the figure represents an empirically tested hypothesis. To estimate this complete system of

Figure 1. Integrated Causal Model of Nationalist Contention

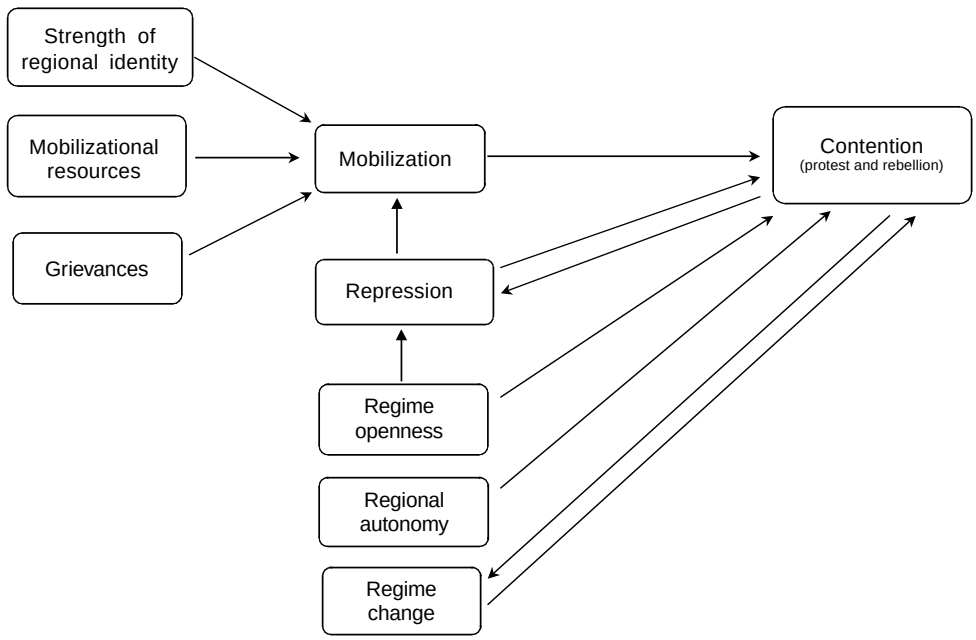

Table I. Summary of Systems and Equations

	Protest system *Dependent variable*	*Rebellion system* *Dependent variable*
Structural Equation (1)	Open mobilization	Militant mobilization
Structural Equation (2)	Repression	Repression
Structural Equation (3)	Regime change	Regime change
Structural Equation (4)	*Protest*	*Rebellion*

relationships concurrently, I utilize a three-stage least squares (3SLS) procedure. As depicted, the model contains four endogenous variables – mobilization, repression, regime change and contention. In the system estimated via 3SLS, each of these variables becomes the dependent variable in its own structural equation. All four equations (detailed in full below) are treated as integral components of an interactive system and are estimated simultaneously.

Consistent with my earlier arguments concerning the nature of 'contentious politics', the same set of determinants affects both violent and nonviolent conflict, albeit in potentially different causal directions. For this reason, violent and nonviolent contention will be tested separately.[2] Only by separating violent from nonviolent activity can we test, for example, the different motivational impact of repression or regime type on protest or rebellion. Accordingly, there will be one system of structural equations with nonviolent protest in the contention equation, and one with violent rebellion in that equation, as depicted in Table I.

Data and Methods

Case Selection

To operationalize the model, I utilize data gathered on the 17 regions of Spain over a 20-year period (1977–96). The unit of analysis is the region/year.[3] All variables are coded annually for each individual region (except for the Spanish regime-level variables, which vary temporally). Both the location and the time-frame chosen for the study are important. The analysis begins as the democratic transition (1975–82) was in its initial stages and ends after the democratization process had been firmly entrenched, thereby affording ample variation in the regime-level opportunity factors central to the theoretical model. At the same time, the Spanish state contains a number of important ethnopolitical movements that vary in terms of strength, the use of violence, and outcomes.[4] In order to get a more realistic view of how nationalism does – or does not – develop, we must account for this variation without sampling on the dependent

[2] This is consistent with much Minorities at Risk-based research (e.g. Saideman et al., 2002) as well as Gurr's original expectations: 'Both forms or strategies of action are assumed to be driven by the same general processes, but it is anticipated that independent variables will have somewhat different influences on each. This implies . . . estimating the parameters of each separately' (Gurr & Moore, 1997: 1089).

[3] The dataset includes a total of 340 observations. Since one of the variables is lagged, 323 observations are used to estimate the coefficients.

[4] Nevertheless, rarely do studies of nationalism in Spain take advantage of this multitude of potential cases. Most studies look separately at Basque or Catalan nationalism or, at best, compare the two (e.g. Clark, 1984; Zulaika, 1988; Heiberg, 1989). At the other extreme are large-N tests using datasets (particularly the *World Handbook*) in which the conflict variables are secondary and the unit of analysis is the country, not the ethnonational community. This is particularly inefficient in those countries – such as Spain – where there is more than one ethnonational group. The balance struck here is to have a comparative analysis that incorporates sophisticated regional-level data.

variable.[5] The present design avoids this problem by measuring contention in all 17 historic regions of the country.

Equations and Operationalization

Below are the specifications of the four model equations in the protest and rebellion systems. Consistent with earlier-stated hypotheses, with the exception of minor differences in the contention equations, Equations (4a) and (4b), the four equations are essentially the same for both systems.[6]

$$\text{Mobilization} = \alpha + \beta\text{Cohesion} + \beta\text{Grievance} + \beta\text{Repression} + \beta\text{GDP} + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Repression} = \alpha - \beta\text{Regime Type} + \beta\text{Protest} + \beta\text{Rebellion} + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Regime Change} = \alpha + \beta\text{Protest} - \beta\text{Rebellion} + \beta\text{Gen\_Protest} - \beta\text{Gen\_Rebellion} + \varepsilon \quad (3)$$

$$\text{Protest} = \alpha + \beta\text{Open\_Mob} + \beta\text{Regime\_Type} + \beta\text{Repression} - \beta\text{Nationalist\_Govt} + \beta\text{Regime\_Change} - \beta\text{Durability} + \beta\text{Major\_Dem.Transition} + \beta\text{Protest}_{t-1} + \varepsilon \quad (4a)$$

$$\text{Rebellion} = \alpha + \beta\text{Mil\_Mob} - \beta\text{Regime\_Type} + \beta\text{Repression} - \beta\text{Nationalist\_Govt} - \beta\text{Regime\_Change} - \beta\text{Durability} + \beta\text{Major\_Dem.Transition} + \beta\text{Rebellion}_{t-1} + \varepsilon \quad (4b)$$

Equation (1): Mobilization To measure organizational mobilization, I created two indicators analogous to those developed for the widely used Minorities at Risk (MAR) project: *OpenMob*, used in the protest system, taps community mobilization into and support of legal, open nationalist organizations; while *MilMob*, used in the rebellion system, taps mobilization into and support of militant, illegal organizations.[7]

I have posited that mobilization into nationalist organizations is greatest in those ethnonational communities with the strongest identities, the most extensive levels of mobilizational resources, and the most intense grievances (for example Lindström & Moore, 1995; Gurr & Moore, 1997; Gurr, 2000). To measure the strength of the ethnonational community's group identity, I utilize *Cohesion*, a survey-based indicator that reflects the percentage of each region's population that believes their region to be a distinct 'nation' rather than a mere 'region' of Spain. The greater the number of people with such a strong subjective adherence to the regional national identity, the easier it will be for nationalist movement organizations to mobilize the community at large.

Several potential indicators were then examined to tap community-level mobilizational resources. When thinking about which resources in a community will facilitate nationalist mobilization, Deutsch's (1954) notion of 'social mobilization' is particularly useful.[8] Deutsch posited numerous indicators of social mobilization, ranging from wealth to education to urbanization to newspaper readership. The more extensive any of these

[5] This has been a concern with the Minorities at Risk (MAR) dataset, for example. Although MAR represents an excellent resource for testing an array of ethnopolitical phenomena, there has been speculation that the data do not adequately incorporate weak or 'potential' cases of nationalism (Fearon & Laitin, 1997). For instance, only the two strongest Spanish cases are included – the Basques and the Catalans.

[6] 'Protest system' refers herein to the system of four structural equations that are associated with protest, while 'protest equation' refers only to the protest *equation* within that system. The same convention applies to rebellion.

[7] Further elaboration of measurement techniques, as well as summary statistics, are available for all variables at the replication web site noted earlier.

[8] In fact, one of Deutsch's original propositions integrated the notion of the cohesion of a distinct group identity with that of social mobilization: 'the share of the [socially] mobilized but differentiated persons among the total population . . . is the first crude indicator of the probable incidence and strength of national conflict' (1954: 103–104).

in a community, the better able that community will be to mobilize its members into social movement organizations. Therefore, all are useful indicators of community-level mobilizational resources. Because economics is the most pervasive of these forces, I have chosen to use regional GDP per capita, measured as a proportion of the overall Spanish average of 100, adjusted annually.

We should expect that the higher a community's GDP per capita – that is, the more extensive its mobilizational resources – the better able it will be to mobilize and organize its members. The extent of a community's mobilizational resources hence indicates its generic 'mobilization potential' – its capacity to mobilize community members in any social movement issue area. And when a community's resources are viewed in conjunction with the strength of its identity (*Cohesion*), we acquire a good sense of its potential to organize specifically around nationalist issues. In short, the conjunction of resources plus identity represents a community's *nationalist* mobilization potential.

When this mobilization potential is activated by a heightened sense of collective grievances about repressive government activities,[9] lost autonomy, cultural restrictions, and political and economic inequalities (for example Gurr, 1993, 2000; Lindström & Moore, 1995; Gurr & Moore, 1997), active mobilization into open or militant organizations is likely to occur. I have operationalized the first of these grievances with *Repression*, which taps restrictions on political activity via the measurement of the number of arrests, injuries, or deaths per protest event in each region.[10] There is substantial evidence that repressive regime responses to collective action can exacerbate domestic and ethnopolitical conflict (Lichbach, 1987; Francisco, 1995; Gurr & Moore, 1997; Moore, 1998, 2000; Beissinger, 2002) and incite mobilization among previously unmobilized populations (Gurr, 1993, 2000; Krain, 1998). Nevertheless, there are important nuances to these arguments. Tilly (1978) has proposed that repression will have a negative impact on mobilization insofar as it raises the costs of collective action. Following Lichbach (1987) and others, I argue that repression will only have a negative effect on *open* mobilization. Not only will repressive measures tend to push activists away from open forms of mobilization toward more militant forms, but 'repression will have a positive impact on the mobilization of groups already committed to a strategy of rebellion rather than protest' (Gurr & Moore, 1997: 1084).

To operationalize the other potential grievances of community members (*Grievance*), I measure the sum of the percentage of residents in each community who respond in favor of federalism or independence in periodically recurring surveys. These respondents effectively desire greater autonomy for their home region than that allowed for under current arrangements; they presumably feel, by extension, a sense of autonomy-related grievance that could lead to mobilization into nationalist organizations.

Equation (2): Repression In this equation, I am concerned with the sources of state *Repression* (as described above) of the national group's political activities. I first posit that *Regime Type*, an indicator of the relative openness of the regime (using Polity's popular democracy–autocracy index), should obtain a strong negative relationship with *Repression.* Regime type has been found to be a major factor in states' reliance on repressive measures; democratic states, in

[9] *Repression* acts as one of the most important grievances of nationalist groups and, on account of its ability to constrain and condition political behavior, as a central component of the political opportunity structure.

[10] This frequency count, or 'protest policing', approach to measuring coercive repression is analogous to measures used in Davenport (1995), Francisco (1995), della Porta & Reiter (1998), and Beissinger (2002).

short, are less likely to utilize coercive techniques as a primary policy response to internal challenges (Gupta, Singh & Sprague, 1993; Poe & Tate, 1994; Davenport, 1995; Zanger, 2000).

I also posit that the state will be more likely to apply coercive means of social control in those regions with elevated levels of protest and rebellion. This hypothesis is in line with research in the past decade that has found a connection between levels of repressive activities and the internal challenges a state faces in the form of nonviolent dissent, ethnopolitical rebellion, and civil wars (Poe & Tate, 1994; Davenport, 1995; Francisco, 1995; Gurr & Moore, 1997; Moore, 2000; Zanger, 2000). Overall, this equation highlights the benefits of utilizing an interactive approach to examine contention. In fact, the repression–contention nexus is not unidirectional. Not only is repression a prime determinant of both mobilization and contention, but also there is a feedback effect in which levels of repression are themselves determined by existing levels of protest and rebellion.

Equation (3): Regime Change *Regime Change* indicates the extent of change in the country's *Regime Type* score from the previous year. The degree to which a regime opens or closes in any given year is posited as dependent on the amount of *Protest* and *Rebellion* that takes place. In most countries, only one or two ethnonational groups are engaged in contentious activity. In Spain, there are fully 17 different cases in the analysis, any one of which could not reasonably be considered capable of effecting significant regime change. Accordingly, also included are measures of the general country-wide levels of ethnonationalist contention, *Gen_Protest* and *Gen_Rebellion*, the annual sums of all regional scores for protest and rebellion, respectively.

The precise nature of the relationship between contention and regime change is heavily debated. First, there is evidence that, far from being a negative development, protest and rebellion can in certain circumstances spur an authoritarian regime to democratize. Tilly (1999) contends that confrontation is in fact one of the key 'recurrent circumstances' that, throughout history, have led to the emergence of democratization – especially when it ends a mobilization–repression–bargaining cycle by facilitating the incorporation of excluded political actors. The findings of Bratton & van de Walle on protest and reform in 16 African states support Tilly's hypothesis: 'In some cases, governments are willing to embark on meaningful constitutional reforms only after protesters have proven the capacity to continue to press, and escalate, their demands' (Brattton & van de Walle, 1992: 420). Ekiert & Kubik (1999) similarly found that mass mobilization and protest was a key determinant in the decision of Communist elites in Poland to initiate the democratization process.

There is a further set of arguments centered on the impact of protest and rebellion on the post-transition *consolidation* of democracy. On the one hand, there is the argument (for example Bresser Pereira, Maravall & Przeworksi, 1993) that all political challenges must be channeled through the budding conventional democratic institutions if consolidation is to be successful. On the other, there is evidence from Eastern Europe that large-scale protest and mobilization was not a threat to democratic consolidation and that, in certain countries, it may have even fortified and accelerated the process (Ekiert & Kubik, 1998, 1999; Glenn, 1999).

In the end, I posit distinct effects for protest and rebellion. While levels of nonviolent protest will not adversely impact – and could possibly promote – regime liberalization, violent rebellion is more likely to have a negative, destabilizing impact on democratizing regimes.

Equation (4): Contention (Protest and Rebellion) At the heart of this analysis are the regional ethnonationalist protest and rebellion event count indicators I have developed from a non-sampled investigation of the annual indices to the Spanish daily *El País* from 1977 to 1996.[11] This data-collection technique permits the measurement of the full range of public nationalist actions – whether large or small, violent or nonviolent – that fall under the rubric of collective action and political and social movements. Throughout Spain over the 20-year time frame of the study, I recorded information on 4,267 nationalist contentious events. Using the same classificatory scheme for each event as the MAR project, nonviolent events were coded as 'protest' and violent events as 'rebellion'. Concurrently, each event was assigned a 'region' label according to which of the 17 Spanish regions forms the basis of support for the ethnopolitical action. That is, protest demonstrations undertaken by 'Galician' ethnopolitical actors were counted as 'Galician' protest events, wherever the action took place.[12] I then aggregated the number of protest and rebellion events for each region by year. Consistent with other studies that have used event count indicators to measure violent and nonviolent domestic conflict (Gupta, Singh & Sprague, 1993; Davenport, 1995; Rasler, 1996; Schock, 1996; Krain, 1998; Beissinger, 2002), these annual protest and rebellion event count measures are used as the indicators of *Protest* and *Rebellion*, respectively. To control for temporal dependence, I also include lagged versions of *Protest* and *Rebellion* in the protest and rebellion systems, respectively.

There is ample variation in contentious activity both across time and across cases.[13] Rebellious tactics are used at some point in time by organizations working on behalf of seven of the 17 autonomous communities, while protest activity is apparent in 13 of the regions over the course of the study. Only four regions – La Rioja, Murcia, Madrid, and Castilla–La Mancha – fail to generate any form of non-conventional ethnonationalist contentious activity.

As depicted in Figure 1, I hypothesize that – in addition to the indirect and interdependent effects of the endogenous variables – levels of violent and nonviolent contention are directly determined by a combination of mobilization (Tilly, 1978; Gurr, 1993, 2000; Lindström & Moore, 1995; Gurr & Moore, 1997) and political opportunity structures. The literature points to a variety of ways of operationalizing those domestic political factors that condition the opportunities of groups to engage in ethnopolitical protest and rebellion.[14] Six discrete POS indicators are used here, several of which have a distinct impact on violent and nonviolent contention, respectively.

First, there is the indicator of *Regime Type*, described above. The relationship between democratic institutions and contention is

[11] For a more in-depth discussion of this data-gathering technique, please see the replication site.

[12] In this dataset, the region on behalf of which an organization struggles is almost invariably the same region in which the event takes place. The exception is with ETA, which carried out violent ethnopolitical actions throughout Spain. For example, in the summer of 1980, ETA initiated a bombing campaign against tourist areas in the Valencian province of Alicante. These bombings are counted as 'Basque' rebellious events.

[13] The replication site contains annual *Protest* and *Rebellion* scores for each region from 1977 to 1996.

[14] In an early overview, Tarrow (1988) found that the most common POS variables were (1) regime type and capacity, (2) regime stability, (3) elite divisiveness, (4) repression, and (5) the presence of enemies and allies in the social movement sector. The last of these has proven difficult to operationalize in quantitative studies. The other four concepts have been successfully incorporated into the present analysis: the first via *Regime Type* and *Democratic Durability*, the second (and, indirectly, the third) via *Regime Change* and *Major Democratic Transition*, and the fourth via *Repression*. In addition, I have included a POS variable used in recent studies (Beissinger, 2002; Saideman et al., 2002) that is specifically relevant to nationalist political behavior – the extent to which regional nationalist actors are represented in the conventional political arena.

well established (see Powell [1982] for an early discussion). As Gurr notes, the considerable 'empirical comparisons made in the Minorities at Risk study show that national and minority peoples in contemporary industrial democracies face few political barriers to participation and are more likely to use the tactics of protest than of rebellion' (2000: 84). Still, there is some suspicion that democracy is 'a proxy variable for state preferences for policies of accommodation vs. repression' and that, after controlling for the latter, the effects of democracy on rebellion will disappear (Gurr & Moore, 1997: 1082). I argue, by contrast, that regime type has a direct impact on levels of protest and rebellion above and beyond its indirect impact via repression. In fact, a central tenet of POS theory is that disparate political structures favor distinct forms of political behavior. In a democratic regime, social movement protest is often 'normalized' (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998). Claims-making is effectively channeled towards conventional and nonviolent unconventional forms of expression. The opposite is true of autocratic societies, where societal pressures – to the extent they are not suppressed – are more likely to be expressed violently. Thus, as Lindström & Moore (1995) found, *Regime Type* should obtain a positive relationship with *Protest* and a negative relationship with *Rebellion*.

A counter-claim has been offered by those (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1972; Horowitz, 1985; Kaufman, 1996) who argue that conflict is often higher in democracies as a result of 'ethnic outbidding'. According to this argument, electoral competition between elites for the support of members of the same ethnic community can result in attempts to outbid each other with inflammatory appeals to ethnicity, which can eventually lead to violent confrontations and the weakening of democratic institutions.

Repression also plays a central role in the generation of nationalist conflict. In the mobilization equation, I posited that repression leads to lower levels of open mobilization but higher levels of militant mobilization, as government coercion propels activists towards more covert forms of organization. However, for groups that are already mobilized, repressive government actions will only have the equal and opposite reaction of increased resistance – in the form of violent and nonviolent contention (Davis & Ward, 1990; Tarrow, 1994; Krain, 1998). Thus, *Repression* should obtain a positive relationship with both protest and rebellion.

Third, there is now a sizable literature that explores the potential inflammatory impact of *Regime Change* on the conflict process. One argument is that political instability or regime change in any direction can engender the manipulation of ethnic and national identities by 'ethnic entrepreneurs' and increase the likelihood of ethnic 'outbidding' and 'security dilemmas'[15] (Roeder, 1991; Posen, 1993; see Fearon & Laitin, 2000 for an overview). In extreme cases, such as in the former Yugoslavia, these processes can lead to large-scale mobilization and conflict.

Other scholars have noted that it is regime openings, in particular, that appear to be associated with heightened ethnic and nationalist conflict (Huntington, 1991; Horowitz, 1993; Snyder, 1999), often citing the powerful transient increase in the political opportunities to engage in contentious politics engendered by democratization (Tarrow, 1994; Gurr, 2000). A common qualification is that because democratic regimes are better able to channel the increased opportunities for contention onto the path of nonviolence (Tarrow, 1994; Meyer & Tarrow, 1998; Gurr, 2000), regime openings should be associated with increases in nonviolent but decreases in violent

[15] In an ethnic security dilemma, pre-emptive attacks result from the tendency of nationalist groups to view one another's mobilization as threatening.

contention. I would expect this to be the case in Spain as well.

In a large-scale cross-national test, Hegre et al. (2001) argue that the impact of regime change is in fact much more complex than normally depicted in the literature. The authors show that not only does the direction and extent of regime change matter, but so do the type of regime from which the state is emerging (autocratic, semi-democratic, or democratic), the post-transition regime type selected, and the temporal proximity to the change. One of their principal findings is that while in the long term a full democratization delivers not only the most just but the most peaceful outcome, regime change in any direction 'clearly and strongly increases the probability of civil war in the short run. . . . When controlling for the regime type toward which the change leads, there is no significant difference between the effects of democratization and autocratization' (Hegre et al., 2001: 42).

Applying these findings to Spain, we should expect an increased likelihood of violent civil conflict with any change in the country's regime score – especially over those years (1975–78) when Spain underwent a large regime change from autocracy to democracy – but that this heightened conflict propensity should decrease the further away we move from the transition. Accordingly, I operationalize regime change with three variables: (1) *Regime Change*, which (as described earlier) measures the extent of change in the country's *Regime Type* score over the previous year; (2) *Democratic Durability*, a measure of the number of years since the transition to democracy; and (3) *Major Democratic Transition*, a dummy variable with a value of 1 for those years (1977 and 1978) where the regime was undergoing a large democratic transition.

The final variable in the equation operationalizes the extent to which ethnonational groups' interests are incorporated into the state's political decisionmaking processes. *Nationalist Govt* is a dummy variable with a value of 1 assigned to a community when its regional government is both autonomous and run either exclusively or in a coalition by a nationalist political party.[16] When a regional community's demands can be met via conventional means – such as occurs in federal systems – there is little reason to resort to non-conventional claims-making in the form of protest or rebellion (Lijphart, 1977). Nevertheless, there is some evidence for the counter-claim that nationalist representation in government increases nationalist conflict. Nordlinger (1972), Snyder (1999), and Roeder (1991) argue that, in a process similar to ethnic outbidding, the devolution of power can have the counter-intuitive effect of increasing demands for further autonomy by rendering it rational for politicians to make contentious appeals to nationality. This is especially dangerous with 'incongruent federalism', where the boundaries of the subfederal political unit and an ethnic minority coincide (Lijphart, 1999). In such cases, the existence of an autonomous region effectively provides a ready-made template for secession.

Results

Table II reports the results of the 3SLS estimations of the protest and rebellion systems of structural equations.[17] Within each of the two systems, the majority of the 19

[16] In cross-national tests, it makes sense to operationalize conventional incorporation into the polity via autonomy statutes and the like. However, since all of the Spanish regions attained a relatively high degree of political autonomy since 1980, further sophistication was necessary for the present test. Instead of merely measuring the existence of autonomy, I have also measured nationalist political parties' degree of involvement in the regional governments.

[17] Both the protest and rebellion models are identified in terms of rank and order conditions. In addition, all of the equations obtain statistical significance, with statistically significant χ^2 statistics at the $p \leq .05$ level.

Table II. Structural Equation Models: Three-Stage Least Squares Estimations of Protest and Rebellion Systems

	Protest system (N = 323)		*Rebellion system (N = 323)*	
	Coefficient	*Std. error*	*Coefficient*	*Std. error*
Mobilization equation				
Cohesion	4.01***	.52	.013**	.006
Grievance	4.92**	.94	.05***	.01
Repression	11.33	19.56	–.88***	.21
GDP per capita	.38**	.15	–.003	.002
constant	–82.10***	14.88	.10	.17
Repression equation				
Protest	.02**	.009	.004	.005
Rebellion	–.003	.004	–.01***	.003
Regime Type	.22	.18	.24**	.12
constant	–1.97	1.81	–1.96*	1.16
Regime change equation				
Protest	–.002	.007	.0005	.005
Rebellion	.001	.004	–.0007	.003
General Protest	.014***	.002	.014***	.002
General Rebellion	.012***	.001	.013***	.001
constant	–2.44***	.250	–2.47***	.25
Contention equation				
Mobilization	.10***	.02	10.38**	4.82
Repression	–21.32***	3.34	–10.24***	3.84
Regime Type	8.08**	3.30	.02	3.11
Nationalist Government	–3.03	2.07	.02	1.40
Regime Change	–11.50*	7.20	10.08	7.28
Durability	–.35	0.23	.33	.22
Major Dem. Transition	45.51*	28.56	–37.58	28.81
Lagged Contention	.66***	.06	.71***	.09
constant	–72.89**	30.44	–2.87	28.90

*$p \leq 0.1$; **$p \leq 0.05$; ***$p \leq 0.01$ (for two-tailed tests).

right-hand-side variables in the four equations produce statistically significant parameter estimates, and the results overall present substantial confirmation of the theoretical model. Before summarizing the two systems as a whole, I first examine the four equations individually.

Mobilization Equation

The results in Table II demonstrate both important similarities and differences between open and militant forms of mobilization. First, as predicted, the stronger the regional nationalist identity, as indicated by the significant positive coefficient for *Cohesion*, the greater the extent of mobilization into both militant and open organizations. Similarly, the positive parameter estimate in both models for *Grievance* confirms predictions that open and militant organizational mobilization is even more likely to occur when a community's mobilization potential is activated by a general, subjective sense of grievances.

Beyond that point, the two models diverge. To start, while greater repression of an ethnonational community's political activities does not obtain an impact on open mobilization, it is associated with lower levels of mobilization for militant political activities.[18] More interesting is the distinct effect of the indicator of mobilization resources, *GDP*, in each of the two models. In the protest system, the more powerful the regional economy, the greater the extent of mobilization into open nationalist organizations. In the rebellion model, in contrast, there is no association between regional mobilizational resources and levels of militant mobilization. Wealthier regions may generate protest, it seems, but they are not more likely to suffer from rebellions.

The distinct impact of *GDP* in the two models has several interesting implications. Recall that GDP is highly related to other indicators of Deutschian social mobilization – urbanization, education, agricultural labor, etc. Thus, we can infer that those regions with higher per capita GDPs will also generally have higher urbanization rates, more educated populations, and more workers employed in the secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy. In brief, the higher the regional GDP per capita, the more 'socially mobilized' the population. And the more socially mobilized the community, the greater its level of mobilizational resources, which in turn produces greater levels of organizational mobilization.

The present findings suggest that this process is not applicable to militant mobilization. This would be consistent with one view that suggests that the social mobilization argument itself is not particularly relevant to rebellion in the first place. For example, Laitin (1993) argues that rebellion is sustainable only in regions with large rural areas and agricultural economies. Rebellions that take place in urbanized regions – which axiomatically would be areas with elevated levels of social mobilization compared to more rural areas – are notoriously unsuccessful and short-lived.[19] The flip side of this argument comes from the 'social capital' literature. The assertion is that social capital, which is presumed to be greater in more developed, more socially mobilized areas (Putnam, 1993), is a necessary ingredient for successful, sustained *nonviolent* interactions (for example Inglehart, 1997). Assuming a similar relationship in Spain, it is plausible that nationalists in regions with lower levels of social mobilization would be more likely to resort to militant forms of organizational mobilization precisely because their communities lack the social requisites to successfully carry out more open forms of contentious activity.

Another explanation is offered by the budding literature on the economics of civil war and rebellion (Collier, 2000; Collier & Hoeffler, 2001; Elbadawi & Sambanis, 2002; Hegre & Sandler, 2002; Reynal-Querol, 2002). According to this perspective, higher levels of economic wealth, educational attainment, and social mobilization increase the opportunity cost of civil war. In fact, except for the insignificance of *Repression* with open mobilization, all of the above results make sense from an economic perspective: mobilization for rebellion is greatest when the costs are reduced – that is, when the likelihood of repression is small, when a powerful sense of grievance and strong group cohesion help overcome collective action problems, and when the

[18] A plausible explanation is that the policing of protest activities per se does not generate sufficient levels of grievance to incite a national group to undertake covert, militant activities. However, this does not mean that levels of contention themselves are impacted by such repression, which can only be determined via an examination of the contention equation.

[19] In fact, the only urban-based guerrilla movement of note was the Tupamoros of Uruguay. Its lack of success highlights both the futility and scarcity of urban-based insurgent movements.

opportunity costs of forgoing participation in a wealthy economy are low.

Repression Equation

It is interesting that in neither model was the extent of rebellious activities associated with an increase in the rate of protest repression. Indeed, in the rebellion model, *Rebellion* has a significant negative impact on *Repression*. Higher levels of *Protest*, in turn, are associated with increased rates of repression, at least in the protest system. Equally notable is the finding that increased levels of democracy were not associated with decreased repression and, in fact, the opposite was true in the rebellion model.[20] These findings thus lend further credence to the idea that studies should not use regime type as a proxy for repression in analyses of domestic conflict (Gurr & Moore, 1997).

Regime Change Equation

Above, I posited that protest would be related to regime openings and rebellion to regime closings. The results were surprising. Not unforeseen was the finding that in both systems the *Rebellion* and *Protest* indicators were insignificant. In a country with 17 distinct regions, and where five to ten of these contain actively contending ethnonational groups each year of the analysis, it is less likely that the group-specific indicators of *Protest* and *Rebellion* would be capable of attaining a relationship with the opening or closing of the entire regime in any given year.

More surprising was that, in both systems, the indicators of country-wide levels of protest and rebellion, *Gen_Protest* and *Gen_Rebellion*, obtained positive associations with *Regime Change*. This was expected for nonviolent protest, but the same was also true of violent rebellion. In this regard, Spain may have been lucky: the sometimes uncontrolled levels of violent and nonviolent contention throughout the transition period generated constant rumors of a reactionary coup d'état. Fortunately, the only substantive affront to the regime, the failed military coup of 1981, effectively de-legitimized any remaining anti-democracy activity within the country. In effect, these findings lend ample support to arguments (Ekiert & Kubik, 1998, 1999; Glenn, 1999; Tilly, 1999) that large-scale mobilization is not necessarily detrimental to successful democratization.

Contention Equation (Protest and Rebellion)

In the protest model, the findings strongly conform to theoretical expectations. Nonviolent protest is more extensive the greater the mobilization, the lighter the repression, the more democratic the regime, and during large democratic transitions.[21]

In the rebellion model, a distinct pattern of relationships obtains. As expected, levels of violent rebellion are positively associated with levels of militant mobilization. *Repression*, however, is negatively associated with rebellion. In effect, as some states might hope, the rate of repressive government actions was associated here with decreases in both violent and nonviolent conflict. Third, *Nationalist Govt* failed to obtain a significant parameter estimate in the equation; as was the case with nonviolent protest, increased involvement of nationalist political parties in regional governments had no ostensible impact on levels of violent rebellion. Also unexpected was the insignificant coefficient for *Regime Type*. The regime's level of democracy had no

[20] Jaime-Jiménez (1996) provides a possible explanation: he notes that the democratization of the Spanish security forces took place at a more gradual rate than that of the overall polity.

[21] The relatively low N for the simultaneous equation analysis gives especially high weight to the various significance levels. Consequently, I suggest that a p of $\leq .1$ (two-tailed) points to an interesting and important relationship between *Protest* and both *Major Democratic Transition* and *Regime Change*.

apparent effect on the extent of regional rebellion.

I also tested three dynamic measures of the change in regime type. The first of these, *Regime Change*, was insignificant, hence corroborating neither side of the debate surrounding the potentially inflammatory or ameliorative impact of polity changes. The indicator of the *Major Democratic Transition* was likewise not related to heightened levels of violent rebellion, though it was related to increased nonviolent protest. More significantly, the increasing *Durability* of the democratic regime was not associated with decreases in contention in either the protest or the rebellion model. Though this was unexpected, Hegre et al. (2001) offer a solid explanation: 'The most reliable path to stable democratic peace in the long run is to democratize as much as possible, . . . but if semidemocracies experience a succession of transitions in and around the middle zone, it will take a long time before there is a net decrease in violence. . . . In the short run, a democratizing country will have to live through an unsettling period of change' (Hegre et al., 2001: 44). In effect, Spain is still dealing with the effects of its historic transition.

Implications and Conclusions

The above findings illustrate that, in post-Franco Spain, structure, politics, and ethnonationalist contention are, as predicted, three fundamental components of an interdependent causal system. Thus, the results lend strong support to an integrated approach. This article posited that group cohesion, grievances, and sociodemographic and economic structural conditions are vitally important to the development of ethnonationalist contentious politics, but indirectly via mobilization. The direct determinants of protest and rebellion are a conjunction of mobilization and political opportunity structures: a shared identity gives groups of people the *basis* for organizational mobilization; mobilizational resources give them the *means* for such mobilization; grievances provide the *reason* to mobilize; and several political factors structure the *opportunities* of the mobilized groups to contend in a conventional, violent, or nonviolent manner. Moreover, in a manner that would be impossible to demonstrate using single-equation regressions, the findings confirm that the relationships among structure, politics, and action are interactive in determining both violent and nonviolent protest activity.

The results also support the hypothesis that though violent and nonviolent contention derive from distinct processes, they are the products of a fundamentally similar set of determinants. Indeed, whether one is interested in protest or in rebellion, these five factors must be accounted for: grievances, mobilizational resources, group identity, organizational mobilization, and political opportunity structures. Key elements of each of these five explanans are shown to play a significant role in the generation of violent and nonviolent conflict alike. In effect, the generic factors that determine whether ethnonational communities are host to violent or nonviolent contentious political behavior are the same. The difference comes in the precise mechanism by which the variables affect protest versus rebellion.

In short, the results further substantiate the belief that violent and nonviolent ethnonationalist behavior can be theoretically and empirically linked by an all-inclusive framework of 'contentious politics'. When contention is viewed via this overarching lens, we acquire a better sense of the overall causal picture of contention in ethnonational communities – not only in terms of levels of action, but also in terms of forms. A central lesson is that neither movements nor communities should be depicted as homogeneous

'nonviolent' or 'rebellious' entities. The amount and mix of protest and rebellion that obtains in any given community can change with the circumstances – both as new actors become engaged or disengaged and as previously engaged actors alter their tactics and strategies. Thus, the model sheds light on a community-level process analogous to the 'substitution effect' hypothesized (Lichbach, 1987) to take place in individual organizations. As the configuration of mobilization, identity, grievance, and POS variables in a community changes, organizations acting within that community may respond to the altered incentives by substituting violent for nonviolent forms of behavior, or vice versa. The end result, for the community as a whole, is a transformation in its overall ratio of violent to nonviolent behavior.

Previous literature has failed to adequately point out these linkages between violent and nonviolent forms of contention. What has been presented herein is a theoretical framework that effectively allows for a better understanding of the causes of and connections between aggregate levels of violent and nonviolent political behavior in ethnonational communities. The result is a synthesis of the literatures on nationalism and social movements that will aid in the comprehension of ethnonationalist protest politics.

An integral component of this synthesis was the notion of political opportunity structures, which were shown to play a significant role in the generation of ethnonationalist conflict. In this study, six POS variables were operationalized – repression, regime type, group autonomy, regime change, major democratic transition, and democratic durability – each of which has a unique and important impact on political behavior.

This article had, first of all, predicted a powerful inflammatory role for repression in both the mobilization and contention of Spain's peripheral ethnonational communities. Contradicting these predictions, repression had no impact on levels of open mobilization and obtained negative associations with militant mobilization, protest, and rebellion. The context of this repression was likely a critical factor: namely, what repression took place occurred within the environment of a steadfastly decentralizing and democratizing regime. This fact, as well as the finding that levels of repression do not fully correspond with levels of democracy, further highlights the notion that democracy should not be used merely as a proxy for repression in analyses of the conflict process.

The results do endorse theoretical expectations that a more open regime is likely to contain greater protest, yet they surprise in showing that the level of democracy has no impact on rebellion. Overall, these results confirm findings (Hegre et al., 2001) that we must look beyond simply the type of polity and the extent of polity change when attempting to study the complex impacts of regime type and change on domestic conflict. We must also consider the pre- and post-transition regime types, the direction of change, and the time elapsed since change. The theory would predict that, for a country like Spain that underwent a 'large democratic' transition, we should expect – and the findings confirm – an 'unsettling period' of civil conflict, but that, over the long term, Spain's full democratization is the choice most likely to provide for a secure and lasting peace.

The results are also encouraging for regime change in its interactive role in the conflict process. It was expected that the extent of violent and nonviolent conflict in a country could have a significant impact on whether and to what extent regime change (in either direction) takes place. Fortunately for Spain, though they clearly destabilized the situation, neither protest nor rebellion was associated with reversals in Spain's successful transition to democracy. This

lends further credence to evidence from Eastern Europe that civil contention is not necessarily prejudicial to successful democratic consolidation and that, in some cases, it may even help fortify and accelerate the process (Ekiert & Kubik, 1998).

Lastly, the measure of the level of nationalist involvement in autonomous regional governments was shown to have no association with either protest or rebellion. While the devolution of political power to regional ethnonational communities does not appear to appease contentious nationalist groups, neither does it seem to heighten the conflict propensity of these communities, as has been suggested (Nordlinger, 1972; Roeder, 1991; Lijphart, 1999; Snyder, 1999).

The findings do suggest several other policy tools available to central governments dealing with contentious ethno-regional groups. Not surprisingly, the findings show that the communities most likely to contend are those that are mobilized. However, governments can have an impact on the extent of regional mobilization. On top of the effects of repression discussed above, governments might be successful in ameliorating contentious mobilization via comprehensive 'nation-building' policies designed to counteract the more parochial or exclusive aspects of competing ethno-regional identities. They might also attempt to develop policies aimed at reducing the core grievances of contentious communities. Unfortunately, any impact derived from such effort would have only an indirect impact on the magnitude of conflict. The results further suggest that a common governmental response to ethnopolitical challenges – massive regional economic development efforts – may not do much to resolve the problem anyway. Though regional GDP per capita obtained a negative association here with levels of violent rebellion, it was positively associated with levels of nonviolent protest.

In the end, these findings help explain Gellner's puzzle concerning the relative weakness of nationalism. This study underscores that nationalist conflict is generated by a complex system of causal mechanisms. It effectively takes the proper interaction of a cluster of structural and political variables to 'awaken' nationalist communities to mobilize and initiate a process of contentious political activity. Instead of searching for answers in 'root causes' or antecedent causality, we should look towards the interdependence of the entire causal system. If we do, we will move a step closer to explaining not only the contentious cycle of nationalism that burst onto the scene with the demise of Franco, but also the occurrence – and quiescence – of nationalism throughout the world.

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