Radicalism in the Contemporary Age

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Sources of Contemporary Radicalism

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Studies of the Research Institute on
International Change, Columbia University

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Contents

William H. Overholt, a political sociologist specializing in political development, Asian politics, and foreign policy, has served on the research staff of the Hudson Institute since 1971. Principal author of several book-length studies for Hudson, Dr. Overholt has also published many articles on land reform, organization of political movements, and revolutions. His study, Political Revolution, *is to be published by Westview Press in 1977.*

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Sources of Radicalism and Revolution: A Survey of the Literature
William H. Overholt

"Sources of Radicalism and Revolution" could well serve as title for a history of social science thought over two millennia, for there is very little in the social sciences which does not directly address the sources and varieties of discontent among individuals and the reasons for stability or fundamental changes in social or political or economic systems. Any survey is therefore necessarily idiosyncratic, and this one is no exception.[1]

Some Definitions

The word "radical" is used in both absolute and relative senses, and sometimes denotes one end of the political spectrum, other times both ends. In its absolute sense, radicalism refers to a congeries of views that advocate more fundamental restructuring of society than liberalism; in this sense Harry Truman was a liberal, but C. Wright Mills was a radical.

But what is called radical tends to vary over time, so even the absolute concept of radicalism varies over time. A more thoroughgoing relativism makes the concept completely relative to its political context; thus for many purposes

Liu Shao-chi was viewed as relatively conservative whereas Chiang Ching, Mao Tse-tung's widow, is called a radical. Likewise, in Ethiopia during the 1960s any advocate of the most minimal democratization of the regime was called a radical.

Sometimes radicalism refers solely to left-wing ideas, sometimes to both left and right. In the first sense, radicalism is the opposite of reaction or of whatever is labeled right-wing; in this sense the John Birch Society and the German Nazi party are not radical. On the other hand, radicalism frequently refers to any views dramatically different from whatever is regarded as centrist or normal. Thus a famous collection of articles on the recent right wing in American politics is titled *The Radical Right.*[2] This latter concept of radicalism is consistent with the evidence that members of the extreme right and the extreme left often share certain psychological characteristics and that extreme right and extreme left polities frequently share structural characteristics.

When radicalism refers exclusively to the political left, it is often broadened to include any view vaguely associated with Marxism, with social classes, with economic determinism, or even with the view that social, political, and religious institutions tend to support the interests of an economic elite. Thus military-industrial-complex explanations of government decisions are often termed radical. Among economists there are three theories of unemployment: the orthodox, which views the labor market as atomized; the dual market theory, which views the market as stratified; and the radical theory, which emphasizes the importance of competitions among strata and groups.[3] The substance of the radical economic theory is often presented along with a penumbra of dialectical materialism and devil-theory perspectives on the capitalist class, but what is most striking to the noneconomist is not this penumbra, but rather the automatic association of the most elementary sociological considerations (viz., group cohesion and conflict) with radicalism.

If one views radicalism as extreme deviation from a society's median political views, then one faces further ambigu-

ities. Is a man radical if he is alienated from his society and as a result opts for quietism and depoliticization? Or does radicalism require active demands for restructuring society? If radicalism requires active demands for restructuring society, then what do we do with the man who desires restructuring but does not actively seek it because of fear?

A more abstract concept of radicalism defines the latter as a single-minded attempt to explain or prescribe social action by reference to some single ultimate principle. Egon Bittner, following Max Weber, employs such a definition, specifying in addition that radicalism implies unreasonableness and disregard of contrary evidence.[4] Stripped of the latter (nonessential and possibly biased) specifications, this definition ties radicalism to the tradition of Western rationalism and to zealous carving of reality with that ultimate principle of modern science, Occam's Razor. Using such a definition one can comprehend key linkages between modern science and modern radicalism, such as the congeniality many groups of scientists have felt for Marxism. (The linkage with modern science is more direct than one might imagine. It has been argued that the concept of the critical experiment can only arise in cultures based on fanatical—i.e., radical—religions. In cultures with tolerant religions, the concept of "many mountains up to God, many roads up each mountain" tends to preclude rigid distinctions between truth and falsehood.[5])

This linkage with modern science creates difficulties for this definition. Identification of, for instance, Einstein's urge for simplicity of explanation as a form of radicalism would be anomalous. A scientist seeking simplicity is behaving conservatively even if his conclusions prove novel. If, to avoid this difficulty, one insists upon Bittner's specification of unreasonableness and disregard of evidence, then the concept of radicalism becomes restricted within boundaries far narrower than is customary in scholarly usage and tainted with invidious judgments whose implications would make even conservative American politicians squirm.

I shall avoid final choice among these definitions, but will

discuss various forms and sources of discontent which might create, or prove useful to, advocates of fundamental restructuring of society.

"Revolution" is an equally slippery concept. In popular literature virtually any substantial change is labeled revolution: the Green Revolution, the revolution of rising expectations, the sexual revolution, and the communications revolution. Any writer who fails to perceive a revolution in his subject is surely a scribbler at loose ends. Students of revolutions have usually employed restrictive concepts of revolution, however, frequently distinguishing social revolutions, which are major structural changes in society, from political revolutions, which are major changes of government and politics.

Because so many phenomena can lead to fundamental social change, social revolution is too broad to study under a single rubric. Therefore most writers have focused upon political revolution. Huntington has chosen the most restrictive concept of political revolution, namely a "rapid, fundamental and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, and government activity and policies."[6] Moreover, Huntington views revolution as a phenomenon occurring narrowly in time, as a sometime concomitant of the modernization process of the last few centuries. In contrast, Tilly advocates broadening the concept to include all forms of "multiple sovereignty," that is, of struggles by more than one group for political hegemony. There are indeed solid justifications for examining Huntingtonian revolutions, coups d'etat, and internal wars together, but clearly there are also important distinctions: if Tilly expands the word "revolution" to cover all situations of multiple sovereignty, then eventually some new words will be required for the very special phenomenon of political changes which go much deeper than coups and civil wars. Why not retain "multiple sovereignty" as the overreaching category? For this reason, and because there is an exciting, cohesive, and distinctive subject matter and literature on "revolution"

narrowly conceived, and also because the narrower concept dovetails best with a discussion of radicalism, I shall employ a definition just a little broader than Huntington's.

A revolution occurs when a domestic insurgent group or groups displace the government of a society by means which are illegitimate according to the values of the existing regime and when fundamental political institutions are destroyed or transformed and fundamental values of the system are dramatically changed. An abortive revolution occurs when a domestic group attempts to carry out a revolution without success. Fundamental political institutions are those without which a regime would be illegitimate in terms of its own values. For instance, competitive elections are fundamental political institutions in the United States because they implement the value of political equality. Fundamental values are those which serve as basic legitimating principles for the political system.[7] The reference to illegitimacy of means in the eyes of the old regime eliminates the logical possibility that the changes in groups, values, and institutions would result from the normal and legitimate processes of the system, such as from elections in a democracy; such a situation does not conform to most intuitive conceptions of revolution.[8]

This definition includes as revolutions the French, Russian, Nazi, Meiji, Chinese (1911-49), Cuban, and Mexican revolutions, as well as successful revitalization movements,[9] and the transformation which occurred in China from the disintegration of the later Han dynasty to the stabilization of the T'ang dynasty.[10] It excludes simple coups, imperial conquest, wars of independence, civil wars which are mere struggles for power, transformations of the international system, political changes which do not overthrow the central government, and nonpolitical changes (though the transformations of institutions and values during a revolution virtually always coincide with major socioeconomic transformations).

Revolution is not mere change.[11] The *speed* at which the transformations occur[12] is not mentioned because there is no way to construct an index which would in all cases

differentiate revolutionary rates of change from nonrevolutionary ones. The definition includes no reference to war[13] or violence,[14] although war and violence frequently accompany revolution; such references would add little additional precision and would eliminate a useful empirical question of the possibility of nonviolent transformations of this kind. The identity and political attitudes of the revolutionaries[15] are not part of the definition, because such a specification would drastically restrict the inquiry, as would specification of the type of society in which the revolution occurs.[16] Moreover, we reject a criterion of progressiveness[17] or sense of novelty or freedom[18] or modernity,[19] because such criteria are ambiguous and can impose arbitrary restrictions on the scope of inquiry, and because events which are universally accepted as being revolutions (e.g., the French revolution) fail to meet these standards in important ways. If revolutions invariably advance freedom and progress, by whose standards shall we judge Russia in 1917? The concept of revolution originally referred to an attempt at restoration.[20] Revolution can be in large part a revolt against freedom.[21] The aims of the groups which initiate revolution frequently consist of the restoration of *old* rights.

Several concepts frequently employed to characterize revolution prove misleading or unfruitful. Revolution is not the antithesis of evolution. Revolutions may be the punctuation marks of evolution (Marx), or the selection mechanism of evolution, or short-term setbacks of evolution, but never its opposite. "Discontinuity," a term often used erroneously to describe accelerated, nonmonotonic, or nondifferentiable change,[22] does not adequately describe guerrilla warfare situations where authority, territorial control, and so forth, change continuously. Discontinuity, disintegration, strain, incongruence, and disequilibrium,[23] when they accurately describe a revolutionary event, do not facilitate analysis of the internal processes, struggles, and sequences of revolution. Instead, they reduce revolution to the disruption of a system, and leave revolution itself as an unanalyzable black box.[24]

The Psychological Bases of Radicalism and Revolution

Studies of the psychology of radicalism and revolution range along a continuum from an exclusive emphasis on individual psychology to an empathetic concern for the existential dilemmas faced by members of key social groups. That is, they range from those which emphasize what goes on inside the head of a radical to those which emphasize the social situation confronted by his peers. With some crucial exceptions, studies of revolutionary leaders emphasize individual psychology, whereas studies of the followers emphasize social psychology. In accordance with Michelet's dictum that in revolutions "the people were usually more important than the leaders"[25] the sociological studies of mass groups have generally proved more fruitful.

The discontents in which modern social psychology has located the roots of radicalism and revolution have generally derived from the existential dilemmas of those social groups uprooted by the disintegration of the medieval synthesis and those created by the industrial revolution. The basic themes of these analyses are that people, or specific groups, have been torn from their secure relationships to God and society, deprived of the full development of their individual personalities, isolated from their fellow men, and deprived of guidance regarding the proper means and ends of their lives. Marx's analysis of the proletariat picked up all the major themes of alienation and radicalism: frustration at absolutely or relatively declining living standards, powerlessness as a cog in an incomprehensible industrial machine, personality mutilation, and intolerable identity as a man with his diverse potentialities subjugated to the performance of a single menial task. Weber perceived the oppression and alienation of the bureaucrat who must subordinate his whole personality to professional tasks. Erich Fromm, David Riesman, and C. Wright Mills provide similar analyses of the alienation of commercial man, the sales personality, and white collar man. Durkheim paints a broader picture of modern man isolated from his fellows and condemned to infinite

striving in a normless world. Robert Merton has picked up
these themes of Durkheim, formalized them, and employed
them in a sketch of the dilemmas faced by men whose lives
are structured by social demands for monetary success. Paul
Goodman has portrayed students as an oppressed minority
which is charged tuition for the privilege of having their per-
sonalities remolded to fit social roles. A host of writers ana-
lyzing peasant society has developed the themes of insecurity
and anxiety in a subsistence world invaded by the aspirations
and demands of a monetary economy and deprived of the
security provided by traditional ties to landlords.[26]

These studies of social dilemmas and their psychological
consequences have yielded a set of labels for specific psy-
chological conditions, namely *frustration, anomie, search
for identity, isolation, powerlessness,* and *anxiety.* Having
derived such a list from studies of particular groups, social
scientists have tended to reverse their perspective: they
assume that the psychological states are the basis of radi-
calism, and then seek generalized descriptions of social situa-
tions which would produce such psychological states. Thus
we find Ted Robert Gurr, the Feierabends, and many others
arguing that economic improvement, or decline or fluctua-
tion, can stimulate frustration and thereby induce radicalism,
violence, and possibly revolution.[27]

As a psychology of membership in radical movements, the
above list probably needs broadening. *Boredom* may well be
a central source of radicalism for certain social groups,
particularly in previous centuries when boredom constituted
a principal psychological problem of the elites from which
part of the revolutionary leadership was drawn. *Compulsive
conformity* probably provided a principal source of partici-
pation in radical movements in Nazi Germany and in revolu-
tionary China—and, in a very different way, in some contem-
porary university upheavals as well. Moreover, in all revolu-
tions it is clear that for many the motivation for joining
revolutionary movements has been *opportunism,* in the sense
of choosing the politics that will best facilitate pecuniary or
status advancement. Such opportunism is particularly marked

among peasant revolutionaries, since peasant youth often see the revolutionary organization as their sole opportunity for escaping from the tedium of village life. Similarly, scholars since Burke have noted that ideological movements attract intellectuals, since all great ideologies require more scholarly exegesis than do the myths of routinized and instrumentalized old regimes.[28]

Analyses of revolution must explain why nonradicals and nonmembers of the revolutionary organization lend their support to revolutionary movements. Such support may be the product of terrorization as well as opportunism, and may take the form of passive nonsupport of the government as well as active insurgency. Neither responses to terror nor the reasons for passivity rather than activity are well understood. But a revolutionary movement may derive much of its information, taxes, and obedience from the uncommitted, and thus studies of the psychology of revolution are imperfect without explanations of the behavior of the uncommitted. In a country where the government does not penetrate far into the countryside, radical groups may tap virtually unlimited resources simply because they have no competitors. Similarly, bureaucrats who perceive their role as entirely instrumental may make a government an object to be captured rather than an active force defending itself.[29] Although there is a large collection of studies which focuses upon one special kind of bureaucracy, namely the military, in conflictful situations, even the most insightful studies of professionalization, ideology, organizational structure, and organizational and personal interests, do not satisfactorily explain why some militaries intervene frivolously in politics, why others react relatively passively to vast political changes, and why still others intervene only when the most basic structures of the polity are threatened.

The excessive narrowness of psychological studies of radicalism becomes extreme in single-variable explanations which emphasize frustration as the exclusive source of violence, radicalism, or revolution, and relative economic deprivation as the exclusive source of frustration. If such simplification

could adequately explain violence, radicalism, or revolution, it would be highly desirable. But the numerous psychological bases for radicalism described above all have considerable empirical support, and most of them cannot be subsumed as subcategories of frustration caused by relative deprivation.

Supposing that one possesses an adequate typology of discontents which stimulate radical attitudes or behavior, several tasks remain: first, to identify the logical and psychological connecting links between the particular discontents and radical or revolutionary behavior; second, to identify the social and political conditions under which these links will activate concerted political action or political change; and, third, to identify anew the precise groups likely to experience such discontent and to organize politically.

The psychological and logical links between discontent and radicalism identified in the literature take two distinct but not mutually exclusive forms: radical or violent or revolutionary behavior is explained first of all as a result of psychological phenomena and alternatively as a result of rational, problem-solving choices. The psychological links are not difficult to establish. Frustration leads to anger and anger leads to violence, radicalism, or revolution. Anomie produces an anxious and conflict-ridden individual seeking order and discipline. Lack of an adequate identity or possession of an intolerable identity can stimulate a desire for metaphorical death and rebirth, for cleansing through violence as advocated by Frantz Fanon,[30] and for identification with a cause which will lead one's group or society or all mankind into a better order of things. Escape from isolation and powerlessness can be achieved through sadomasochism, authoritarianism, destructiveness, or automaton conformity.[31]

These psychological analyses explain the characteristic features of radical ideologies. For the frustrated and powerless there is absolute assurance that success is inevitable, that God or history is on the side of the insurgent.[32] For the anomic there is a fully integrated set of values and norms,

an ideology which provides "a unified and internally consistent interpretation of the meaning of the world" allowing its holder to reason from a rigidly supreme principle to all occasions of actual conduct.[33] The need of the anomic for such an ideology explains the overwhelming emphasis on doctrinal purity found in many radical movements. For people with inadequate or intolerable identities, revolutionary ideologies invariably offer extravagant praise for the worker or other downtrodden individual and assure him of a historically important role.[34] For isolated personalities there is the fraternity of the radical movement.

Rational choice explanations of radicalism and revolutionary ideology sometimes complement these purely psychological explanations and sometimes contradict them. Chalmers Johnson argues—without evidence—that revolutionary paths are chosen only when all alternatives have been exhausted.[35] Certainly most revolutions do display a gradual groping around among the nonrevolutionary alternatives, and, if such alternatives fail, a gradual expansion of support for groups which pursue revolutionary goals. But history provides numerous examples of groups and group leaders who have adopted revolutionary goals long before nonrevolutionary alternatives have been exhausted. Barrington Moore emphasizes that societies turn revolutionary when the ineffectiveness of key institutions has been demonstrated, a view strongly supported by the so-called Western revolutions, where the disintegration of government has long preceded the rise of powerful revolutionary movements.[36] Likewise, groups naturally turn radical or revolutionary when they perceive the government as being, or as allied to, a dangerous, hostile enemy. Thus when the Czar orders his troops to fire on peaceful protesters, or when the Ngo Dinh Diem government in Vietnam invades Buddhist temples, they naturally stimulate revolutionary attitudes and behavior. Finally, manifest inconsistencies between institutions and the prevailing values or the prevailing social myths naturally stimulate radicalism. For instance, the great military dictator

who loses a war, the landlord class which abrogates paternal responsibilities to the peasants, and the "democratic" party which rigs an election, all risk the rise of radical movements.

However, to establish these links of psychology and logic between discontent and radicalism is not to explain the rise of radical movements, much less their success. The linkages are weak; they bind in some cases and not in others. Frustrated people can abandon their goals, or divorce their wives, or work compulsively, rather than join radical movements. Powerlessness, isolation, and anomie can be overcome through Calvinist religion, through Marine Corps fraternity, through feverish accumulation of Mitsubishi profits, through dedication to one's family, through Nazi party violence, or through peaceful Vietnam War protest. Herman Kahn has remarked, correctly, that one of the American strata suffering most from relative deprivation, defined as a gap between inculcated expectations and value received, is the group of ugly, upper-middle-class girls. But these frustrations vent themselves peacefully at the boutiques rather than violently at the barricades. Citation of this case may seem frivolous, but there is little in the theory to tell us why this kind of frustration would be less significant than another. Relative deprivation theorists dominate much of the literature on revolution, violence, and radicalism, despite having unconsciously ignored all the forms of relative deprivation which fail to support their case, and despite having failed to distinguish among different kinds of deprivation, some of which clearly differ in their consequences. Likewise these theorists make much of correlations between social class and radicalism, while ignoring stronger correlations with such variables as youthfulness and unmarried status.

Under what conditions, then, does psychological discontent lead to a radical consciousness in a psychological sense, and in what cases does such purely psychological consciousness lead to consciousness in the Marxist sense, namely a radical political organization? Practical revolutionaries universally acknowledge that usually neither form of consciousness arises spontaneously. Lenin maintained that the labor movement

could never work out an independent ideology for itself and cited Kautsky's argument that socialism arises from bourgeois science rather than from class struggle.[37] Mao complained that:

> Wherever the Red Army goes, it finds the masses cold and reserved; only after propaganda and agitation do they slowly rouse themselves.[38]

The accessibility of an appropriate ideology is certainly a key factor. Chilean peasants adjacent to radical mining towns tend to vote radical regardless of class differences, whereas peasants not adjacent to such towns divide their votes along class lines.[39] American farm laborers choose radical ideologies because, helpless without outside organizational leadership, they find that the only leadership available to them has radical political orientations.[40] As Barrington Moore puts it:

> The partial failure of a set of institutions to live up to what is expected of them provides an atmosphere receptive to demands for a more or less extensive overhaul of the status quo. At this juncture the future course of events depends heavily upon the models of a better world that become available to various strategic groups in the population.[41]

Degree of discontent is another key factor. Since radicalism is in some sense an extreme response to discontent, it probably results from particularly extreme forms of discontent. Thus, whereas moderate frustration might lead to reformist activities, extreme frustration might lead to revolutionary acts. But the hypothesis is neither self-evident nor empirically established beyond question. Absolute repression seems to work, even though it must maximize frustration at least temporarily.

A third criterion for adoption of a revolutionary ideology clearly must be that the ideology provide a plausible explanation for the individual's or group's problems and, explicitly or implicitly, offer some solutions. What is plausible depends, of course, upon the individual's or group's experience and patterns of thought; for instance chiliastic religion may

no longer be plausible for many highly secularized modern groups.

By far the most promising explanation of group acceptance of a revolutionary or radical perspective has been that such acceptance occurs in response to blatant infringement by the government or by another group of those *older* values which the group or that society holds most sacred. Prerevolutionary French peasants saw themselves as *counterattacking* against nobles who were threatening existing rights; the nobles in turn thought that they were *regaining* old rights which had been gradually nibbled away. American revolutionaries demanded the *old* rights of Englishmen. The Chinese dynasties, whose legitimacy was based in large part on the personal virtue of the emperor, often ended with revolt against a corrupt emperor. This brings to mind Hannah Arendt's observation that the term "revolution" originally referred to restoration.

If the specific values of a society constitute the means by which discontent becomes politically or socially radical, then the conditions under which radical ideologies are adopted will vary among societies. Rigging an election would stimulate radicalism in the United States but not elsewhere. Since individuals and groups respond to infringement of those *distinctive* values which they hold sacred, Lupsha has suggested a distinction between "relative deprivation" on the one hand and "righteous indignation" on the other—where righteous indignation is the response to infringement of ultimate values.[42] Lupsha's concept is not really a substitute for "relative deprivation" but rather a subcategory of frustration/anger, namely frustration/anger that has been channeled in a particular direction because of the uniquely important values that have been infringed. Understood in this way, it may be useful.

One virtually universal source of such righteous indignation is the failure of a government or a society to provide some minimal degree of law and order. This responsibility of government is almost universally acknowledged and is a key feature of all political philosophies, except anarchism and

other utopian theories which claim to solve the problem of order without recourse to government. Emphasis on law and order as a key responsibility is particularly noteworthy among traditional peasants, who frequently receive little else in return for their taxes and obedience. For such peasants, governments which do not maintain law and order are inherently evil. Such is the justification for revolution in Mencius's Mandate of Heaven, and such are the less-articulated feelings of peasants in all other societies with which this writer is familiar. Middle-class Americans frequently express similar views.

Having identified the varieties of radical discontent, and the groups experiencing such discontents, one must then explain why particular members or sections of such groups adopt radical ideologies or join revolutionary movements whereas others do not. Only about two percent of American students joined radical protest movements at the height of the Vietnam era in the United States. Only a tiny proportion of Chinese peasants ever participated in the Communist Party or the Red Army or active local level organizations. Only a small proportion of the German lower middle class ever joined the Nazi organization. Given that a group is somehow oppressed or discontented, who from that group joins and who does not? Are the differences explained by different experience or by different character or by something else? Research on the subject provides a variety of insights but no satisfying answers.

Contemporary research on ideology initially assumed that each ideology attracted a single kind of personality, such as an "authoritarian personality" identified with fascism.[43] But subsequent evidence has shown that certain personality types are susceptible to ideologies of either the far left or the far right—or even to oscillation between them. Attempts to distinguish these personality types from more middle-of-the-road personality types have included distinctions between the "open" and "closed" mind,[44] and more recently between personalities which display little ability to tolerate cognitive dissonance and those able to tolerate greater

dissonance.[45] More detailed psychoanalytic studies may yet restore some distinction between those personalities attracted to the extreme left and the extreme right. Other studies have begun to explain susceptibility to radicalism as a consequence of the interaction of different forms of discontent (e.g., when low self-esteem is accompanied by powerlessness or frustration).[46]

More detailed than these studies of mass radicalism are biographical studies of great revolutionary leaders. Some of these have confined themselves to what might be called micropsychological hypotheses about the individuals involved. For instance Wolfenstein's study of Lenin, Trotsky, and Gandhi discovered unresolved difficulties in relationships with the leaders' fathers;[47] these were later projected onto a political scene that happened to provide an arena for working out their personal problems. Mao of course experienced similar difficulties with his father.[48] Wolfenstein also employs studies of Gandhi, Nasser, and Lenin to argue that an individual leader's propensity for violent means to achieve social change is inversely proportional to his sense of active guilt, proportional to masculine identification, and proportional to the perceived dangerousness and animosity of the enemy.[49] One can find various peculiarities in the backgrounds of many revolutionary leaders. For instance, Edmund Wilson tells us that Bakunin "was in love with one of his sisters" and "apparently remained impotent all his life." LaSalle had terrible conflicts with his sister and his classmates. Lenin's attitude toward liberals was affected throughout his life by his friends' desertion of him at the time of his brother's arrest; and so forth.[50] But how does one make more out of these observations that mere cocktail gossip? Tumultuous, unusual upbringings and lives may well be characteristic of most great men, conservative, reactionary, and revolutionary alike. Energy, imagination and intelligence are far more predictable qualities among such leaders than any particular psychological quirks, except perhaps for the unsurprising finding that future revolutionaries so frequently conflict with authority figures such as their teachers and fathers.

At a much higher level of generality, Erikson's studies of the quasi-revolutionary personalities of Luther and Gandhi discern correspondences between personal crises and broad social crises.[51] These men experienced personal crises directly related to the broadest social problems of their day and managed to encompass and to articulate those crises so clearly that they as individuals became symbols of the crises and of their resolutions. At a similar level of generality, Fromm asserts that the character structure of the individual who creates a new doctrine and the character structure of the followers of that doctrine are likely to be similar. "If the same ideals appeal to them their character structure must be similar in important respects."[52] At first blush these two great hypotheses of Fromm and Erikson appear to be complementary, but they could hardly be further apart. If one combines the insights of the various micropsychological hypotheses with Erikson's conclusions about the ability of these great men to somehow encompass within their own experience the broadest crises of a society or civilization, few things are more obvious than the distinctive characters and personalities of the great men. These great creative figures in fact are as different from their followers as the charismatic politician from the obscure bureaucrat. And indeed most revolutionary organizations display an extraordinary contrast between the creative, volatile, charismatic top leader and the highly disciplined bureaucratic followers.

Indeed one of the central insights that should have been gained from studies of the psychology of revolution, but generally has not, is that people become radicals and join revolutionary organizations for a broad variety of reasons. Charismatic leaders may join because only the role of revolutionary leader will permit them to act out and resolve their great personal crises. Intellectuals may join because of the attractiveness of being in the avant-garde, because of admiration for the systematic logic of revolutionary theory, and also because revolutionary ideology requires so much systematic exegesis that intellectuals have great opportunities for high-ranking positions. Bureaucrats may join for reasons of pure

efficiency or opportunism. Poor peasants and oppressed workers may join because of intolerable economic frustrations. Middle peasants and rich peasants whose motivations are not particularly radical may eventually join successful radical peasant movements in order to play the same organizing roles in the new society that they played in the old. Crucially, the revolutionary organization needs all of these different motivations and skills, and uses them at different levels of the organization.

Ultimately it is to be hoped that studies of the psychology of radicalism and revolution will provide means for distinguishing cranks from charismatic leaders, for identifying which members of a society with the specified sources of stress will join a movement, and for predicting which types will tend to rise to the top. It is further to be hoped that such psychological studies will establish links to the sociology of revolutionary organization and of social change. Does the revolutionary society produce more revolutionary leaders or does it simply give the existing reservoir of leaders an opportunity to exercise their personalities? For instance, do periods of socially disruptive change produce more sons who cannot work out satisfactory relationships with their fathers or with other social authority figures? Or do they merely provide more opportunities for such discontents to focus upon politics? Or both?

Economic/Psychological Theories

There is an entire genre of theories whose principal content is psychological—although sometimes embroidered with a few hypotheses about the balance of coercive capabilities— and whose methods and data are almost exclusively economic. These theories not only interpret violence or radicalism or revolution as a response to relative deprivation, but they also assume that the principal sources of this relative deprivation are economic and that the sole forces channeling the expression of the frustration and anger are a few cultural and coercion variables. If one reads the substantive theory and then imagines the appropriate methods, one summons up an image

of Freud interviewing a peasant on a couch. If one looks exclusively at the supportive evidence, one sees graphs which seem to demonstrate that revolutions or violence occur when economies rise, that likewise they occur when economies fall, that they also occur when economies rise and then fall or when they simply fluctuate; finally, if for some reason expectations rise, then revolutions or radicalism or violence will occur even if the economies remain constant.

Such relationships prove absolutely nothing about the basic frustration/aggression hypothesis, since the links between the sociological variables and the psychological hypotheses are never really established. In fact, the findings are consistent with any of the pure sociological models, to be discussed later, which completely ignore psychological variables.

For example, one such study considers the effects of regime coerciveness on political violence. It finds that moderate levels of coerciveness and inconsistent levels of coerciveness are associated with political instability and violence. From this it concludes that "coerciveness at first stimulates violence until a certain point is reached. Then coerciveness, in the form of tyranny, seems just as apt to bring internal peace as more violence." It concludes that "regimes that resort to force, especially if they use force inconsistently, must expect political instability and violence."[53] The data do not support this interpretation over an opposite interpretation, namely that regimes troubled by violence and instability are forced by the situation to be at least moderately coercive but are often too weak to employ adequate force to suppress the violence. Inconsistent use of force would seem to indicate the same kind of organizational weakness that made it impossible for the regime to employ great force.

A rich variety of similar studies now exists. All implicitly or explicitly focus their analysis on the psychological frustration/aggression hypothesis, and all test that hypothesis with primarily economic data. Most use correlations or linear regressions as their primary statistical tool. They vary in several ways. Some, like James C. Davies' famous paper on the

J-curve, rely on a vague concept of "need satisfaction," which, because it is not constructed in any objective empirical fashion, is impossible for any other investigator to replicate or test;[54] but most recent studies emphasize easily measurable variables, such as poverty or social inequality. Economic/psychological studies also vary in whether they use aggregate data for an entire nation, or whether they focus on specific social groups within nations.[55] Finally, they differ in the other variables that they happen to include in the analysis; other variables which have been used include regime coerciveness, alien ideological influence, strategic terrain (Mitchell), and various broad social process variables such as Hofheinz's modernization. Perhaps the most complete data of this kind are those on land inequality and peasant societies. Here the resulting statistics typically show very weak and sometimes even negative relationships between violence or radicalism and land inequality within countries, thus *seeming* to conflict with Russett's finding of a positive global relationship between some discontent variables and violence.[56] Finally, Hofheinz's study of rural influence patterns in China demonstrates that neither modernization nor inequality nor any of the other variables relied on by the simple empirical theories can adequately explain peasant support for the Chinese communists.

When one examines what kind of theory of revolution these statistical analyses actually test, it becomes obvious that they are in effect testing pure mass uprising theories— i.e., theories where mass discontent leads directly to support for revolution. Comparative historians have persuasively discredited such theories. (Spontaneous mass uprisings frequently do occur, but gain historic importance only on those rare occasions when they are accompanied by organizational phenomena which these theories cannot explain.) Until some way is developed to include the relative organizational capacities and achievements of the insurgents and the government, these statistical analyses will lack explanatory power. Some of the authors of these empirical studies have come to this conclusion themselves. Thus Hofheinz proposes

a theory of "organizational dynamism," and Averch, Denton, and Koehler speak of a "self-perpetuating organization" rather than discontent as the reason for insurgency. That organizational phenomena are the key to analysis is correct, but organization is not an *alternative* explanation. Discontent is just one of several prerequisites of revolutionary organization.

The economic/psychological studies of revolution, violence, and radicalism are the epiphenomena of a curious convergence among the methodological fetishes of behaviorism, the simplicity of economic variables, and the substance of vulgar Marxism. To be sure, no major author of such studies is a Marxist, much less a vulgar Marxist. But the present generation of behavioralists allows method and data to dominate substance, and economic data are the easiest to obtain and manipulate. Thus simple economic variables tend to dominate analysis as in vulgar Marxist discussions. Ultimately these studies tell us that economic change is somehow related to discontent, which sometimes, somehow, is channeled into violence or radicalism or revolution. Organization, politics, strategy, and any but the most primitive military considerations are ignored, and with them the essence of the process under consideration.

Sociological Theories of Radical Movements and Revolution

The psychological theories just discussed provide contemporary versions of the old Mass Uprising theory and the Great Man theory of revolution. Most sociological theories are modern versions of disharmony theory or of conspiracy theories. There are also a few modern versions of the Idealist theory, namely modern studies of the influence of political ideas and ideology on society and politics.[57] Marx provides the paradigm of contemporary disharmony theories, and interpretations of Leninist writing and experience provide the paradigm of contemporary conspiracy theories.

Disharmony theories hold that political or social stability depends upon proper dovetailing of various components of society or of the universe and that disruption in one

component will cause disruption in the other components. Modern disharmony theories tell us that revolution and radical movements are consequences of social strain, dysfunction, disequilibrium, incongruence, stress, discord, contradictions, distress, leads and lags, and the like.[58] The literature of modern disharmony theories testifies to the capacity of modern social science to promulgate literary metaphors. The adequacy of these metaphors as scientific theory is less clear.

Modern disharmony theories have distinguished predecessors. Sung neo-Confucianism described society and the universe as a hierarchy of interrelated parts, with the emperor mediating between heaven and earth and maintaining general harmony through his personal virtue. The Great Chain of Being provided later Western society with a parallel theory of considerable sophistication and broad acceptance.[59] Contemporary disharmony theories are descendants of the Great Chain of Being, even though students of Shakespeare's *King Lear* are more likely to recognize the lineage than students of society and politics. These older disharmony theories, like some contemporary theories of revolution as a concomitant of the modernization process, are limited in their applicability to certain kinds of societies. But particularly in the case of Sung neo-Confucianism, there is a useful concreteness and specificity behind the grand metaphors. One knew what the emperor had to do to retain the Mandate of Heaven and what the consequences of disharmony or lack of virtue would be: namely, famines, border wars, breakdown of the irrigation system, and so forth. Modern variants of the disharmony theory have tended to lack this redeeming precision. The most recent disharmony theory to which such criticism does not apply is that of Karl Marx.

For Marx, revolution was a consequence of social contradictions arising out of the division of labor.[60] At this aery level of generality Marx's theory resembles contemporary versions of the disharmony theory. But Marx vivified his metaphor of contradictions with detailed analysis of all other key aspects of bourgeois revolutions. The resulting

theory is scientifically testable, despite its high level of generality and broad applicability to a class of events roughly equivalent to Huntington's concept of revolution. Marx argues that the proletariat would find its life experiences so contrary to prevailing bourgeois ideology that the old social myths would become unacceptable; their *susceptibility to a new ideology* and their increasing numbers made probable transformation of the basic social myth of the society if they could gain power. At the same time, their concentration in factories, their increasing homogeneity, and their training in industrial skills provided the resources necessary for *political organization*. Economic competition ensured absolute or relative deterioration in their standards of living,[61] while economic growth ensured rising aspiration,[62] and the meaninglessness of the work which provided the workers with their identities degraded them;[63] all of these ensured revolutionary *discontent* among individual workers, in Marx's view. Simultaneously, wealth became more concentrated, and therefore the *possessors of wealth became fewer and more vulnerable*. Business cycle crises would further weaken the capitalists' position and would *precipitate* the revolution.

Most of Marx's specific predictions about revolution have failed. Crucially, the semiskilled workers eventually became more differentiated, less numerous as a proportion of the population, better paid, and—through unions—more politically influential. But Marx's theory, although wrong, provides a model of scholarly craftsmanship, just as Isaac Newton's theory of motion, although wrong, provides such a model. Consistent with the evidence available to him, Marx's theory accounted for individual discontent, political organization, value transformation, the precipitants of revolutionary struggle, and the triumph of new institutions. Contemporary disharmony theories have never even aspired to comparable standards of craftsmanship.

Functionalist theories of revolution assert correctly that specification of the conditions of stability constitutes specification of the conditions of instability. But Chalmers Johnson goes further and argues that

a knowledge of morbid conditions in animals depends upon a knowledge of healthy conditions in the same species. . . . the sociology of functional societies comes logically before the sociology of revolution.[64]

The problems with the analogy between society and the animal body are familiar. But even if the analogy were accurate, a complete theory of health is *not* logically antecedent to a theory of the causes, sequences, and consequences of some particular disease; indeed, medicine has fully analyzed most diseases in the absence of an overarching theory of health.

Johnson's *Revolution and the Social System* maintains that revolution results from multiple dysfunction plus elite intransigence plus an accelerator.[65] The alleged need for elite intransigence is not supported and, more important, merely constitutes a type of dysfunction. Separate mention of it confuses levels of analysis and serves merely to introduce into the theory Johnson's unsupported belief that all revolutions are avoidable. Moreover, all societies suffer from multiple dysfunction, but not all societies are revolutionary, yet Johnson provides no criteria for the importance of dysfunction or for situations in which multiple dysfunctions will reinforce one another. Contemporary American society suffers from *serious* dysfunctions in its police and criminal justice system, its economic and welfare system, its educational system, its family system, and to a lesser extent, in its political and military systems, yet it is clearly not on the verge of revolution.

In *Revolutionary Change* Johnson maintains that revolution results from disequilibrium (i.e., lack of congruence between values and environment), power deflation (increasing need for the government to employ force to obtain obedience), loss of authority (decreasing governmental legitimacy), and an accelerator.[66] He links individual discontent to system disequilibrium by saying that noncongruence between values and environment leads to personal tension and by arguing:

Utilizing the concept of the social system, we can distinguish between those instances of violence within the system that are

revolutionary and those that constitute criminal or other forms of behavior.[67]

But this is precisely what he cannot do; he fails in his attempt to provide independent measures of personal tension and system disequilibrium, and does not even attempt to provide empirical distinctions between revolutionary and nonrevolutionary violence.

Another flaw in this disequilibrium theory is its treatment of accelerators. Johnson maintains that accelerators trigger the revolution, make it appear that the elite is unable to maintain its monopoly of force, and determine the success or failure of the revolution.[68] Most writers have preferred a more limited concept of precipitant, which is merely a trigger of the revolution.[69] There is no logically necessary connection between an event that triggers a revolution and the conditions which determine success or failure. Edwards saw the Boston Tea Party as a precipitant of the American Revolution,[70] and Marx saw the expulsion of unmarried workers from the *ateliers* as a precipitant in France,[71] but neither of these events determined the success or failure of the revolution. Johnson's class of possible accelerators is rather small: weakening of the elite's armed forces, ideological belief in insurgent success, and the launching of special operations like guerrilla warfare against the elite's forces.[72] But the latter is the thing triggered, not the trigger itself. Johnson's theory also omits the possibility that a government's capabilities and its opponents' discontent remain the same, but that social change provides the opponents with new resources which make them stronger than the government. Even if these difficulties were solved, Johnson's theory still could predict only the breakdown of the system and never the internal processes, sequences, and outcomes of the revolution.

Arnold Feldman argues that societies should be conceptualized as tension-management mechanisms, a view which can explain both stability and change and therefore avoids the characteristic difficulties of functional and conflict theories of society. In his view a revolution occurs when tensions

become greater than the capacity for tension management. In this theory, tensions result when society is fragmented into subsystems (e.g., classes and functional divisions), and when individuals are placed in inconsistent status positions. The capabilities to manage these tensions result when change is slow and predictable, and when all social groups assign a high priority to tension management.[73] But other writers have identified the fragmentation of society as a source of stability—indeed fragmentation ruined Marx's theory of revolution. And Feldman does not really identify tension-management mechanisms, only conditions (slow change, high priority for management) which would allow such mechanisms to operate if they did exist. Once again, we have a metaphor without content. Feldman and Johnson and others agree that revolution occurs when something gets out of whack, but as Bienen says, "What is out of whack is never clear."[74]

Organization Theories of
Revolution and Radical Movements

The second major division of sociological theories of revolution and radical movements includes the descendants of the conspiracy theory, namely the studies of the rise and fall of political organizations. Because conspiracy theories have been so abused in the past, both as intellectual tools and as excuses for victimizing particular groups, they have rightly been neglected. But this writer takes the position that studies of political organization constitute the only theoretical tools making it possible for a single theory to explain all of the following phenomena:

1. The goals of revolution
2. The participants in revolution
3. The role of ideology
4. The structure of revolutionary organization
5. The causes of revolutions
6. The sequences of revolution
7. The precipitants of revolution
8. Strategies of revolution and counterrevolution
9. Consequences of revolution

In short, organizational theories of revolution and radical movements are capable of an intellectual imperialism which absorbs the other kinds of theory, whereas the other theories are inadequate bases for such a synthesis.

Within organizational studies of revolution there is a fundamental division between those which emphasize the forest and those which emphasize particular trees. The favorite trees coming under scrutiny are the intricacies of insurgent organization building and the processes of political decay of old regimes. Lenin's essays on the organization of a revolutionary party, the importance of professionalism, and the uses of a newspaper, have collectively become a classic. Philip Selznick's book, *The Organizational Weapon*, provides parallel analyses.[75] Franz Schurmann's classic study of the Chinese Communist Party[76] is particularly insightful regarding the role of ideology in organizing a revolutionary party, a revolutionary state, and a revolutionary society. For instance, Schurmann tells us that pure ideology, which states values, can be used to mobilize mass support; practical ideology, which states norms of behavior, can be used to mobilize support from "the line component of the middle tier organization"; and nonideological ideas can be used to mobilize professional staff.[77] Studies of social movements provide similar insights although these are generally neither so detailed nor so fruitful as the studies of revolutionary organizational building. Parallel to the studies of revolutionary organization *building* are the studies of *decay* of old regimes. Samuel P. Huntington is largely responsible for focusing contemporary political scientists' attention on political decay, but his contribution has been not so much to analysis of this particular tree as to providing one sketch of the forest as a whole.[78] The primary students of the process of political decay are the comparative historians, particularly those who study the sequences of revolution.

Analysts of sequences of revolution have received roughly the same acclaim from contemporary social scientists that numerologists receive from professional mathematicians. Since it has proved difficult to incorporate the sequences into

other kinds of theories, such sequences have generally been treated as prescientific folklore imbued with the same quaintness as the Greek division of the universe into earth, air, fire, and water. But in fact most of our concrete, generalizable knowledge of revolutions is indebted to these discoverers of sequences. Moreover, neglect of these studies is a principal reason why "theorists by and large are trying to explain why men rebel rather than why revolutions occur and why governments collapse."[79]

Lyford Edwards, the original and principal student of descriptive sequences,[80] believed that alienation of the public from a regime typically increased over four generations. Individualized discontent becomes general, oppressed people acquire new capabilities, intellectuals' loyalties shift toward the oppressed, the rulers lose faith in themselves, discontent focuses on a single institution, and diversionary wars or circuses fail. A new social myth provides a novel set of values, a justification of alternative modes of property ownership, and assurance of success to insurgents. The revolution is then precipitated by some trivial event. Moderates initially gain control of the government and persecute the conservatives. Public opinion becomes radicalized, conservatives undermine the moderates from within and without, and the moderates demonstrate incompetence at using force. Thus the radicals take over. The radicals face internal insurrection, foreign invasion, and their own inexperience at governing. But the new social myth becomes entwined with defense against invasion, and effective military command becomes supplemented by political control of the military. Bureaucratic revolt is quelled by purges and threats of pension loss. Popular revolts are ended by a few highly visible acts of terror and by war weariness. A period of factionalism and corruption is followed by the formulation and institutionalization of a new constitution. Crane Brinton elaborated this sequence,[81] and Anthony Wallace discerned a very similar sequence for revolutionary phenomena ("revitalization movements") among primitive tribes.[82]

Not all revolutions have followed the western sequence,

however, so the search for sequences must either be abandoned, or supplemented by one or more new sequences, or continued at a higher level of generality. Huntington adds a new sequence,[83] which he identifies as the eastern revolution, which begins at the periphery of society and has the government fall at the end of the revolution rather than at the beginning. Moderates are eliminated early and the primary struggle is between government and radicals. Such sequences are useful insights, but do not constitute theories. Huntington's explanation of why one sequence occurs in one place and the other sequence in another depends in part upon an unsatisfying distinction between elites which have lost their will to rule and those which have not. Moreover, new sequences are neither ruled out nor predicted.

Other writers, primarily theorists of social movements, have described sequences at a much higher level of generality, sequences which we may term *analytic* as opposed to the *descriptive* sequences described above. Rex Hopper condensed the Edwards-Brinton sequence into four primary sequences which can be labeled (somewhat differently from Hopper's labels) individual excitement, organization, struggle, and institutionalization.[84] Hans Toch says that social "problem situations" create "problems" for individuals, who in turn become "susceptible" to certain beliefs and to mobilization by movements which advocate them. Toch fails to provide empirical criteria for discriminating social problem situations from individual problems, and he has the social movement enter the theory as a *deus ex machina*.[85] Ted R. Gurr provides a sequence, basically similar to Toch's, in which discontent is generated, becomes politicized, and then becomes actualized in violence. Gurr's more detailed hypotheses can be strung together to form alternative sequences based on such criteria as the relative strength of government and insurgents, but crucial phases, such as organization, are omitted from his sequence.[86]

Smelser provides the most convincing analytic sequence, a sequence applicable to all forms of collective behavior.[87] A revolutionary movement occurs when (1) the revolutionary

movement is structurally possible, (2) the society is subject to strain, (3) a generalized belief grows "which identifies the source of strain, attributes certain characteristics to its source, and specifies certain responses to the strain as possible or appropriate," (4) precipitating factors focus attention on a concrete problem, (5) participants are mobilized for action, and (6) social controls succeed or are overwhelmed. Smelser's discussion of revolution argues the necessity for charismatic leadership, for institutionalization of various organizational features, and for appropriate tactics; these emphases are welcome in a literature which otherwise neglects organizational problems and ignores human purpose. But Smelser's analysis is not tied to measurable variables and his discussion of each element in the sequence is inadequate. For instance, in discussing the structural possibility ("conduciveness") of a value-oriented movement, he mentions differentiation of the value system from other components of action, availability of means to express grievances, insulation and isolation of value-oriented movements, and communications. Supposing these preconditions satisfied, and the first five elements of the sequence fulfilled, how does one know whether the revolutionary movement will carry the day? What kind of mobilization is required in the fifth element of the sequence? Such questions remain unanswered.

Examining these various sequences carefully, one discerns that there are really two distinct sequences being discussed. One is the rise of an insurgent organization: individual discontent becomes group discontent and then an organized political actor that eventually clashes with the government and sometimes gains control of society. The analytic sequences and the literature on social movements focus on this rise of a protesting group. In the special case when the group is revolutionary, it evolves into a full-fledged revolutionary organization like that described in the work of Lenin and Selznick. The second sequence, detailed in the descriptive sequences but generally ignored in the analytic sequences, is the organizational decay of the government and the concomitant decadence of the governing elite. The western sequence

of revolution predominates when the decay of the government almost entirely precedes the rise of a revolutionary party. Huntington's eastern sequence occurs when the decay and collapse of the government is so slow and prolonged that the sequential development of the insurgent movement occurs while the government remains a powerful political actor.

The literature on the development of radical movements, including revolutionary ones, and the parallel literature on the decay and collapse of governments, are complementary in every respect except for the differing jargons employed. Together they focus on the essence of revolution, namely the triumphant rise of a radical regime and the collapse of a government. Psychological studies of revolution are easily absorbed as part of the discontent phase of the sequences of organizational rise and decay. Disharmony theories are transformed from metaphors into theories by examining social stresses in terms of their effects on the organization of an insurgency and the disorganization of a government. Studies of the psychology of particular groups involved in a revolutionary insurgency divide neatly into studies of which groups would be motivated to join particular parts of a revolutionary organization. Following Franz Schurmann's previously noted insights we can then trace the motivations of the leadership, of the staff, of the mass base, and of other differentiated parts of the organization, and we can assess the extent to which the groups have the capacity to perform as an integrated organization facing a hostile environment.

What remains is to incorporate into such an overall organizational perspective on revolution the insights of studies of ideology, of revolutionary strategy, and of precipitants of revolution.

Samuel P. Huntington has sketched the framework within which most current organizational theories proceed.[88] His key concepts are "political mobilization and participation," by which he means the emergence and activity of political organizations in a modernizing society, and "political institutionalization," by which he means organizational stability. Revolution in these terms is an explosion of participation and

a concomitant failure of institutionalization. Since "partici-
pation" covers everything from voting to interest group activ-
ity to revolutionary insurgency, it in effect encompasses all of
politics under a single word. Likewise "institutionalization"
encompasses everything known about the stability and insta-
bility of organizations. Not surprisingly, then, the concepts
require a great deal of intricate differentiation and analysis
before they are applicable to any particular situation. Never-
theless, during the modernization process, and in revolution-
ary situations generally, there is a general expansion of polit-
ical participation of all kinds, and there are systematic, mul-
tiple failures of institutionalization. And it is more fruitful to
start from such broad, insightful characterizations of the sit-
uation and work down to greater details than it is to try to
piece together a broad picture from numerous studies of
seemingly unrelated details.

Even more ambitious, and just as successful, is Barrington
Moore's neglected general analysis of the processes by which
groups (revolutionary and nonrevolutionary) acquire power.[89]
According to Moore, active search for power begins (1) when
a society undertakes activities requiring high coordination,
(2) when "external shock or internal decay produces a move-
ment for the forced reintegration of society around new or
partially new patterns of behavior,"[90] or (3) when "rulers of
one segment of a loosely ordered system gradually expand
their control over the whole system or a substantial part of
it."[91] In the first case, coordination is typically required to
allocate large resources in frequently changing ways, to per-
suade or compel a large number of people to act contrary to
their inclinations, and to realize a competitive advantage
accruing "to that social unit which can mobilize or control
the larger quantity of resources."[92] In the second case, the
center may be strengthened or other extensive changes may
occur, depending on available concepts of a better world. The
third case occurs because of personal ambition.

In Moore's theory, desire for change results from discon-
tent, which in turn results either from the desire of the outs
to be in or from dissatisfaction with the performance of

institutions. The latter leads to formation of a charter myth, which chooses between nativism and xenophilia, and between hierarchy-discipline and equality-freedom. The myth allocates authority, designates interpreters of the myth, and delineates membership. At this point, conditioned by the situation, the movement chooses an internal structure (segmental, feudal, bureaucratic, or totalitarian) and defines its relations with external groups. In a stable society with diffused levers of power, broad coalitions are necessary to maintain power and such coalitions are necessarily loose. In a stable despotism, minimal alliances are necessary and power can be acquired by appeasing a few groups. In both of these situations little change occurs. Transformation of society requires a movement to seek a mass base and then to "atomize those segments of society that have maintained some degree of corporate identity."[93]

Out of these sequences of choices come four basic patterns: *totalitarianism* results from external shock or internal decay and a charter myth emphasizing hierarchy. *Monarchical absolutism* results from the piecing together of societal fragments by an ambitious ruler. *Feudalism* emerges from decay of a centralized regime or from tying together of fragments; here loyalty is to a person and this limits the system. A *highly centralized nontotalitarian system* (unnamed by Moore) results from the rise of activities requiring high coordination contrary to popular desires, whereas *egalitarianism* may result from the need to coordinate activities consistent with popular desires (e.g., in the English industrial revolution). Moore's historical patterns do not constitute highly integrated theory, but his approach is far more consistent with evidence, far more testable, and much more convincing in the way it relates individual movement and ideology, than its functionalist or tension-management or internal war counterparts.

Leites and Wolf have attempted a general theory of *Rebellion and Authority*[94] organized around a simple systems analysis in which both the rebellion and the authority receive endogenous and exogenous *inputs* which a conversion

mechanism transforms into *outputs* for conflict with the opponent and for generation of new inputs. Leites and Wolf emphasize that organization is central to the strength of rebellion and to its analysis,[95] but in fact they emphasize inputs and outputs and deemphasize the conversion mechanism. They rely heavily on analogies with market theory (indifference curves to explain individual behavior, supply and demand for revolution as an explanation of conflict), which take the structure of the organization as given. Their failure to separate the inputs necessary for construction and maintenance of the conversion mechanism from the inputs necessary for strategic resources, and their failure to analyze strategies and structures of organization, make their book primarily a useful contribution to strategic literature of Sun Tzu, Mao Tse-tung, and Vo Nguyen Giap, rather than to the organizational literature of Lenin, Barrington Moore, Philip Selznick, and Frank Schurmann, despite the authors' frequent contrary assertions.

My own work has also focused on a broad synthesis of theories of revolution based upon studies of organizational development and conflict.[96] In this organizational perspective, a revolution is fundamentally a conflict between two political organizations in which the insurgency shatters the government and restructures the society. The first question such a theory asks is: under what conditions does a government in effect spontaneously disintegrate or weaken? Second, what social groups or coalitions of social groups are capable of forming a potent political organization? It turns out that virtually the whole literature of political sociology bears upon and revolves around an answer to this question. Theories of interest groups, of social stability, of organization, and of social stratification concur that groups can organize politically only if they possess certain key attributes, including goals that are visible and salient, communications, leadership, time, and autonomy. Third, the structures of revolutionary organizations are explained by examining the structural requirements of an organization threatened with destruction if it does not achieve secrecy, discipline, rapid

decision-making, and so forth. Fourth, ideology turns out to be a prerequisite of successful revolution because of its key role in enhancing the organizational resources of the group, legitimizing the organizational structure of the insurgency, and providing tools and strategies for revolutionary conflict. Fifth, sequences of revolution are explained by the interacting sequences of rise and fall of insurgency and government. Sixth, the causes of revolution are those social phenomena which facilitate the rise of a revolutionary organization and enhance the decline of a government. Seventh, the precipitants of revolution turn out to be, not inexplicable chance phenomena, but rather classes of events which precipitate *decisions* by either the government or the insurgency; the precipitants are subject to analysis because the decision processes of the two conflicting parties are susceptible to analysis. Finally, strategies of revolution and counter-revolution are susceptible to systematic analysis in terms of the organizational and strategic weaknesses of the two conflicting organizations.

Some Concluding Perspectives

The role of psychology in studies of revolution remains controversial. The behavioralist movement promulgates reductionist theories, which must be dismissed as methodological fetishism; psychological and economic variables have been allowed to dominate political, organizational, and military questions simply because polls and economic data happen to fit the kind of statistics which political scientists are being taught these days.

Tilly[97] suggests dismissing psychological analyses altogether, leaving a pure political/social theory of revolutions. Certainly the possibility of such a theory can never be ruled out. But revolution seems to require distinctive kinds of political organization whose existence and effectiveness depend in turn upon acceptance of distinctive ideologies. These ideologies tend to be accepted only by individuals experiencing certain kinds of psychological pressure. If such psychological pressures were fully understood, and if they

followed fairly automatically from certain gross features
of social structure, then the prospects for a purely socio-
political theory would be auspicious. However, all our
experience so far suggests that the psychological pressures,
the acceptability of ideologies, and the abilities of groups
to organize depend upon some fairly fine features of social
structure. To be more concrete, if social inequality, tenancy,
and absentee landlordism automatically stimulated peasant
radicalism and peasant political organization, then reference
to psychological and other variables would be unnecessary.
But it turns out, for instance, that the Philippines, with
far greater tenancy rates than China, does not generate
powerful peasant organizations like those of China—for
reasons connected in part with the psychological conse-
quences of religion, family structure, village social organi-
zation, and politics. Hopefully it will turn out that all these
complexities simply result from an erroneous perspective
or a failure to grasp some fundamental point, but for now
we seem doomed to trade with the psychologists.

Tilly's view of multiple sovereignty as a competition
among abstract groups for political power, and Huntington's
concept of a general expansion or explosion of political
participation also raise other, purely socio-political, issues.
So long as one imbues such models with an historian's
wealth of differentiation and detail, they provide useful
images, but unless one is terribly careful it can be fatal
to think in terms of abstract groups instead of particular
groups. Some groups can organize and carry through political
action; others cannot. Because Marx showed *French* peasants
incapable of political action *at a certain date,* generations
of Marxists mistakenly believed peasants in all places and
at all times incapable of such organization. Following the
successes of Mao Tse-tung and Ho Chi Minh, men like
Robert McNamara came to believe that all peasants in all
places were organizable. Marx himself foundered on a similar
point, and Edmund Wilson's analysis of his error is worth
quoting at length:

Karl Marx had arrived at his vision of the working class expelling the capitalists by way of two false analogies. One of these was a probably unconscious tendency to argue from the position of the Jew to the position of the proletarian. The German Jews in Karl Marx's time were just escaping from the restrictions of the ghetto, which meant also the system of the Judaic world; and in this case the former victims of a social and economic discrimination, with their ancient religious discipline and their intellectual training, were quite easily able to take over the techniques and the responsibilities of the outside modern world. The proletariat, however, unlike the Jews, had no tradition of authority; they were, by their very position, kept ignorant and physically bred down. The country—industrial England—in which Marx prophesied that the widening gulf between the owning and the working classes would first bring about a communist revolution, had turned out to be the country where the progressive degradation of the underprivileged classes had simply had the effect of stunting them and slowly extinguishing their spirit. The other false analogy of Marx was his argument from the behavior of the bourgeoisie in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to the behavior to be expected of the working class, in their turn, in relation to the bourgeoisie. The European middle classes who finally dispossessed the feudal landlords were, after all, educated people, accustomed to administering property and experienced in public affairs. The proletariat, the true ground-down industrial workers on whom Marx was basing his hopes, were almost entirely devoid of any such experience or education; and what we now know invariably happens when the poor and illiterate people of a modern industrial society first master advanced techniques and improve their standard of living, is that they tend to exhibit ambitions and tastes which Karl Marx would have regarded as bourgeois.[98]

Since identification of specific groups and their capacities is crucial, some obvious but frequently neglected theoretical and methodological points follow: First, studies which examine the relationships between gross economic indices

of a whole society, such as GNP trends, Gini indices of inequality, and so forth on the one hand, and political variables like violence, radicalism, and revolution on the other are very crude; they have made a limited contribution, but they have little additional to add to our understanding of revolution. Second, crude distinctions between elite and mass also have little value in such studies, since revolutionary organizations display a far more complex stratification. Third, it is crucial that the inventory of groups which are scrutinized for potential radical or revolutionary behavior be complete. The literature on the lumpenproletariat, blue collar workers, white collar workers, and the subcategory of white collar workers with menial tasks and little hope of advancement, is thorough and impressive. On peasants there is great volume of writing, but crucial errors recur.

Whole categories of groups are systematically excluded from analysis. In many revolutions youth and women have played crucial roles, and those roles have typically been ignored. For instance, in the Chinese Revolution, Mao made a central point of organizing women's groups and youth groups as well as peasant groups. These organizations tapped central sources of discontent in Chinese society and played central roles in reorganizing that society. In his writings, in his revolutionary organizing, and in his recent political struggles, Mao has emphasized the role of women and youth. Anthropological observers in Chinese villages were invariably impressed by the potency of such organizations, and the Chinese media continue to highlight their roles. Despite the increasing attention devoted to youth and women after the Western experiences of the 1960s, and despite the political development literature on these groups, it remains true that social scientists have systematically neglected the roles of women and youth. The literature also tends to systematically neglect ethnic bases for radicalism and revolution in favor of class bases. Studies of peasant revolts in the Philippines have invariably uncovered ethnicity as the strongest predictive variable. Rwanda experienced a revolt in which ethnic bases clearly predominated over class considerations. Fortunately

the work of Moynihan and Glaser[99] and others may be initi-
ating a process of legitimization of discussion of the ethnic
basis of American politics, and Jewish students of Jewish
radicalism may be legitimizing the study of that subject.

Finally, intellectuals studying radicalism and revolution
need to be particularly self-conscious about their own role.
Intellectuals are the group most vulnerable to the Durkheim
and Weber varieties of alienation: infinite aspiration, norm-
lessness, isolation, and even abandonment of personality to
role requirements. Scholars tend to project their own discon-
tents onto other groups, for instance in overrating the alien-
ating effects of the meaninglessness of assembly-line work.
Scholars also tend to reach, by one route or another, the con-
clusion that the solution to societies' problems is rule by the
intellectuals and that such rule is imminent; on this point
there is a noteworthy convergence in the views of Plato, Le-
nin, Galbraith, C. Wright Mills, David Apter, and Daniel Bell.

Although the lower-middle class has received considerable
scrutiny as a potential radical or revolutionary or authori-
tarian force, there is a conspicuous neglect of the upper-
middle class as a group defending its class interests, perhaps
because the unmaskers of class interests tend to be drawn
from this class. Throughout modern history the upper-
middle class has occupied a peculiarly precarious position.
Lacking the security that comes with being truly wealthy,
this group finds itself constantly threatened by the rising
wealth of the rest of society. Maids become unavailable,
commuting to work from the suburbs becomes burdensome,
the increasingly well-to-do lower-middle-class groups have the
temerity to clutter the landscape with "ticky-tacky" housing
developments, and the quiet rural lake previously containing
one upper-middle-class house on its shore and one large
upper-middle-class boat on its surface becomes cluttered and
noisy because of lower-middle-class cottages and boats. Not
surprisingly, "quality of life," which means having only one
cottage on the lake, comes to replace "standard of living"
as a principal theme of upper-middle-class magazines.[100]

A substantial proportion of this class raises its interests to

an ideology that the world is being made worse and threatening its own destruction by continued economic growth. A somewhat smaller proportion of this class begins to view high consumption of resources as a crime. Use of resources by industrialized nations comes to be viewed in terms of the now-famous life raft analogy, in which a dozen men on a life raft possess a single barrel of water and one of the men insists on taking a bath in the barrel on the flimsy excuse that he owns the water. If this set of views proves not to be a passing fad, it could prove to be one of the great sources of radicalism and revolutionary fervor of the future. Built into the (dubious) intellectual arguments about resources are justifications for linkages between upper-middle-class minorities in some rich countries and deprived majorities in poor countries; for terrorism directed against power plants and other conspicuous symbols of economic development; for a new ideology of steady-state economies; and for political domination by a mandarinate of scholar-bureaucrats rationing resources. Henceforth discussions of radical and revolutionary groups cannot afford to ignore the revolutionary potential of this group with this issue.

Once an adequate inventory of groups is in hand, the next concern must be adequate analysis of the motivations and capacities of each group. With few exceptions, students of radicalism and revolution have emphasized motivation to the exclusion of questions of organization and strategy, and they have stressed economic sources of motivation to the exclusion of noneconomic. For instance, almost universally the literature assumes that peasants are exclusively economic animals. If peasants revolt it must be because the economy in which they reside is going up, or because it is going down, or because it is fluctuating, or because subsistence is being threatened, or because the balance of exchange with landlords is changing. Now all of these factors are terribly important. But politics counts too. Nationalism has been a central factor in most recent peasant revolutionary movements. In China and Yugoslavia the governments were destroyed by the Japanese and the Germans, and the revolutionaries merely

administered a final blow. In the Philippines a democratic political system short-circuited most of the potential for peasant rebellion. The failure of the Philippine Congress to seat two peasant movement representatives precipitated the rebellion in the early 1950s, and the lines of communication established by the democratic political system turned out to be the key to destruction of the guerrilla movement.[101] A more recent uprising of Muslims has been primarily an ethnic conflict triggered by the ending of the democratic system and by government attempts to confiscate weapons which served as symbols of masculinity and status in Muslim households. At no time in the postwar period were Muslim or communist areas threatened with loss of subsistence or with severe degradation of traditional exchange balances. Regression studies of political behavior throughout the Philippines have invariably turned up ethnic and linguistic factors as the best predictors of political behavior. Thus, by ignoring crucial ethnic and political factors, traditional economic-focused studies have consistently fallen wide of the mark.

Neglect of political *variables* is complemented by neglect of broad political *perspectives*, especially neglect of strategies and strategic situations. Sociologists and political scientists have almost completely abandoned analysis of political strategy and strategic situations to historians, and of military strategy and strategic situations to ex-colonels. When social scientists do confront issues of strategy, they tend either (1) to jump out of their own discipline and lose themselves in military thought; or (2) to focus on the *tactics* of a specific situation like Vietnam; or (3) to focus on the politics and social psychology of a situation and to dismiss military and international considerations as trivial. As a result there is *no* social science study which integrates serious military considerations into a broad sociopolitical analysis. Sheldon Wolin is right in criticizing the "militarization" of studies of revolution and counterrevolution, and in denouncing excessive concern with "technique," because of the proliferation of guerrilla warfare books.[102] But it is simultaneously true

that, whereas colonels have become aware of political and social considerations, social scientists have utterly failed to integrate political strategy and military variables into their work. Had Mao been a better sociologist and a worse military strategist he probably would have lived a short life. Had Aidit of Indonesia built upon less peasant discontent but created a competent army, he would have ruled Indonesia. But nothing in contemporary social theory would tell us so.

In China and Yugoslavia, the Japanese and German invasions, respectively, created political/strategic situations in which mobile, rural, radical groups could organize and fight, and in which geographically fixed groups were subject to blackmail. Analyses of discontent, strain, and military strategy are simply incapable of incorporating such political/strategic considerations. What is wrong with our theories is fragmentation, trivialization, methodological fetishes, academic contempt for military issues, and neglect of the essence of politics, namely choices and strategy.

It may be well to close with another comment by Sheldon Wolin, one which questions the worth of the entire enterprise just surveyed. He asserts that social science demeans revolution "by using categories which trivialize or devitalize revolutionary thought and action,"[103] and that revolutionaries enamored of technique do the same thing. His comment is correct, but pointless. Any scientific study trivializes and devitalizes its subject. The great crime of Copernicus was to trivialize man and to demean God's universe. Studies of the physiology of human mating trivialize and demean sex. Psychobiography trivializes and demeans the processes of creative genius. Such trivialization and demeaning are the price we pay for analysis, for the acquisition of systematic, scientifically valid information. So Wolin's criticism is invalid, considered as a comment on the achievements of social science in light of the standards of social science. Nonetheless, in two larger senses Wolin is correct. First, by a kind of Gresham's Law the behavioral revolution has come to mean that methods drive out substance. As a corollary, because our elementary statistics can test only trivial or fragmented ideas,

our knowledge becomes increasingly fragmented and trivial. Second, empirical social science has become an imperialistic ideology driving philosophy into those corners of the library reserved for the quaint. The genes of Taine pervade social science. Poor men's Lenins spring up wherever the dragon's teeth of consulting fees are sown. But the descendants of Burke and Jefferson and Babeuf have been banished to the computer center. We are poorer for this.