The London School of Economics and Political Science

# Revolution, International Counterrevolution and World Order

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A thesis submitted to the Department of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, London, October 2022.

# Declaration

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# Abstract

Why are some revolutions met with great power counterrevolution, while others are not? On the one hand, some revolutions face hostility and attempts at reversal by the great powers. Perhaps most prominently, the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia led to military intervention by the United Kingdom (UK), the United States (US), Japan and France in a bloody multiyear campaign. On the other hand, some revolutions are tolerated, or even supported, by the great powers. For example, the UK, the US and the USSR all supported Tito's Communist Revolution in Yugoslavia between 1941 and 1944, providing (respectively) advisers, diplomatic support, and military aid. To answer the question of why, when and under what circumstances great powers engage in counterrevolution, and when they do not, this thesis presents a novel macro-historical dataset covering the period between 1900 and 2020. This dataset is the first to systematically map the determinants of great power counterrevolution. The dataset introduces a crucial but undertheorized variable: 'order exit'. 'Order exit' is a profoundly destabilising act in which revolutionaries attempt to cleave their state from an existing international order. Revolutionaries that attempt to shift their state out of a great power order are more than twice as likely to face great power counterrevolution than those which don't. The thesis augments this large-N analysis with three case studies that illustrate the main mechanisms linking 'order exit' with great power counterrevolution: the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the Hungarian Revolution (1956) and the attempted Syrian Salafist Revolution (2012-2020). Taken together, these analyses provide two main insights: first, a comprehensive empirical account of post-1900 great power counterrevolution; and second, a set of theoretical resources for understanding the relationship between revolution, counterrevolution and international order(s).

# Acknowledgments

This project would not have been possible without the generous funding of the Norwegian Ministry of Defense and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). I have also benefited greatly from the support of my two institutional homes: NUPI and the London School of Economics. I am indebted to colleagues who have been so generous with their time, feedback and own work. Thank you to Jamie Allinson, Killian Clarke, Chad Nelson and Megan Stewart for sharing draft manuscripts of their work in progress. Thank you also to Elisabeth Rosvold and Lucas de Oliveira Paes for their patience in imparting their methodological expertise. The perceptive comments I've received on earlier drafts and chapters of the dissertation have played an important role in shaping it. On this front, thank you to Morten Andersen, Frida Bjørnseth, Benjamin de Carvalho, Killian Clarke, Tamta Gelashvili, Lars Gjesvik, Stefano Guzzini, Kristin Haugevik, Minda Holm, Neil Ketchley, Halvard Leira, Cristiana Maglia, Chad Nelson, Lucas de Oliveira Paes, My Rafstedt, Daniel Ritter, Elisabeth Rosvold, Natasja Rupesinghe, Jon Harald Sande Lie, Carsten-Andreas Schulz, Ole Jacob Sending, Ole Marten Stormoen, and Øyvind Svendsen. I am especially grateful to Tomila Lankina for her feedback and support. I can't thank my supervisor, George Lawson, enough for his guidance, expertise and enthusiasm in supervising this project. He has been incredibly generous with his time, advice and mentorship throughout the PhD process. Finally, thank you to Alex, Frida, My, Meryl, Robin, Robbie and Warwick for your fortifying encouragement from both close and afar.

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# Introduction

The rhythm of world politics over the preceding centuries has been driven, in part, by revolutionary attempts to transform domestic and international orders. Regimes have been toppled, international hierarchies have been overturned, and ideologies have been disseminated which fundamentally reconfigure relations between states, societies and individuals. Sometimes, in conjunction with revolutionary change, travels its antithesis: counterrevolution. Counterrevolutionary actors have tried to smother revolution at the Vendée 1793-96, across Prussia, Lombardy and Wallachia in the wake of the 'Springtime of Nations' in 1848, and in China with the suppression of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in 1864 (Reilly, 2004; Tilly, 1964; Weyland, 2016). More contemporary articulations of counterrevolution have been unleashed to quell revolutions in Guatemala (1954), Cuba (1961) and Egypt (2013). Counterrevolution – that is, attempts to prevent or reverse a revolution – have been a consistent feature of world politics over the last two centuries or so.

Counterrevolution is not only the preserve of domestic elites trying to cling on to or regain power; international actors stifle revolutions too. Some of the biggest wars of the twentieth century have been battles between revolutionaries and their great power adversaries: Russia (1917-1923), Vietnam (1965-1973) and Afghanistan (1979-1989). These major counterrevolutionary moments have been accompanied by more moderate forms of counterrevolution, such as the denial of diplomatic recognition (Albania 1924), the arming of regime opponents (Nicaragua 1979) and the imposition of economic sanctions (Iran 1979). But while some revolutionaries are faced with great power counterrevolution, others are spared. International counterrevolution is not a mechanical pendulum that swings back as revolution swings forward. Rather, it has a more intermittent relationship with revolution. According to this dissertation's accompanying dataset, 48% of revolutionary episodes were met with great power counterrevolution between 1900 and 2020. Why and when do great powers engage in counterrevolution? This is the question that this thesis seeks to answer.

In doing so, I draw on an original macro-historical dataset mapping great power counterrevolution between 1900 and 2020. In addition to capturing already theorised causes of great power counterrevolution, such as the role of competitor ideologies or revolutionary threats to international power hierarchies, this dataset introduces a new factor: 'order exit'. Order exit is the attempt, successful or otherwise, by a revolutionary state to leave a great power order. Exit is a profound act of resistance with the potential to undermine both domestic and international orders.

The consequences of exiting an international order have been demonstrated in other contexts, such as the current unravelling of US hegemony (Cooley and Nexon, 2020). This thesis adds to these debates by demonstrating the ways in which order exit by revolutionary states threatens great power orders frequently leading to counterrevolution.

A well-known example of order exit is revolutionary Iran. For the 25 years prior to the 1979 revolution, Tehran and Washington were firm allies (DeFronzo, 2006: 413, 418-19, 423; Emery, 2013: 1-2; Milani, 1999: 248-9). This changed swiftly when a revolutionary coalition deposed the Shah and took power in February 1979. The revolutionaries were vehemently opposed to the US, especially given its backing of the coup that had ousted Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddeq in 1953 (Milani, 1999: 248). Within 10 months of taking power, the US embassy in Tehran was being occupied and Ayatollah Khomeini had declared a foreign policy of "Neither East nor West" (Akbar, 1988: 62; Behrooz, 1990: 13). Iran had decisively exited the US-led order and established itself outside either great power camp.

Other examples of order exit include: Augusto Sandino's attempts to pull Nicaragua from US orbit and build an independent pan-Latin American order (Wilson, 2016: 29-31); the Afghan Mujahideen's attempts to extract Kabul from Moscow's grip (Payind, 1989: 118; Roy, 1999: 3); and Mongolia's shift from the Soviet-led order to the US-led order from the late 1980s (Bayantur, 2008: 4; Batbayar, 2003: 58). In the contemporary world, the most common articulations of order exit are exhibited by militant Salafists. Islamic State and al-Qaeda are examples of order-building projects seeking to drag states out of a US-led order and into a transnational *umma*. These examples illustrate that, while order exiting revolutions may seek to join an existing order (e.g. Cuba 1959), build a new order (e.g. Russia 1917), or operate independently of great power orders (e.g. Iran 1979), the common dynamic at play is a revolutionary abrogation of their state's current order membership. Although order exit and alliance configurations are closely related, they are not synonymous. A revolutionary state can change alliances without exiting an order, but a revolutionary state cannot exit an order without changing alliances. The differences between order exit and alliance configurations are explored in more detail in Chapter 3.

The theory of order exit developed in this thesis is both grounded in, and extends, existing scholarship on revolutions. Much work on revolutions emphasises that those revolutions that unsteady key pillars of international order will also antagonise the upholders of that order (see for example Bisley, 2004; Halliday, 1999; Walt, 1996). In other words, it is whether a revolution mounts a challenge to international order that determines great power counterrevolution, or the lack thereof. Underpinning this view is the categorisation of revolutionary episodes into two types:

order challenging revolutions versus order supporting revolutions (Lawson, 2019). An archetypal order challenging revolution is the Russian Bolshevik Revolution (1917); an archetypal order supporting revolution is the Russian February Revolution (1917). The Bolsheviks were met with great power counterrevolution, while the February revolutionaries were not. Existing work points to at least six axes along which revolutionaries may support or oppose international order: ideology, alliance configurations, international law, norms such as sovereignty, international power relations, and membership of international institutions (Armstrong, 1993: 242-3, 270-1, 306; Bisley, 2004: 50; Grosser, 2016; Halliday, 1999: 10-12, 13-14; Lawson, 2019: 41). The Bolshevik revolutionaries, for example: espoused the competitor ideology of communism, withdrew from the Entente alliance and made peace with the Axis powers, promoted a universalism that took aim at sovereignty norms, threatened power distributions by decrying capitalism and seeking to export socialist revolution, and set up rival international institutions such as the Communist International (Comintern), the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties (Cominform) and the Warsaw Pact.[2] By way of contrast, the February revolutionaries pursued constitutionalism, maintained the Entente alliance, and continued prosecuting World War I with its allies. The great powers responded in radically different ways to these two revolutionary episodes. Britain, France and the United States (US) supported the February Revolution by granting the provisional Kerensky government diplomatic recognition within two weeks of seizing power. In contrast, Britain, France and the US invaded Bolshevik Russia in a major act of counterrevolution.

This dissertation takes the order challenging versus order supporting thesis as its starting point. Its foundational premise is that order challenging revolutions drive great power counterrevolution. In building on this premise, this dissertation seeks to do three things. First, identify a new and important type of order challenge that drives great power counterrevolution - order exit. Second, disaggregate the binary approach of order challenging versus order supporting revolutions by examining how great powers react when revolutionaries support one axis of order, such as existing international power distributions, but challenge another, such as ideology. Third, develop a multi-perspectival approach that accounts for situations where revolutionaries may pose a challenge to one order, while simultaneously supporting another. For example, the 1959 Cuban Revolution was

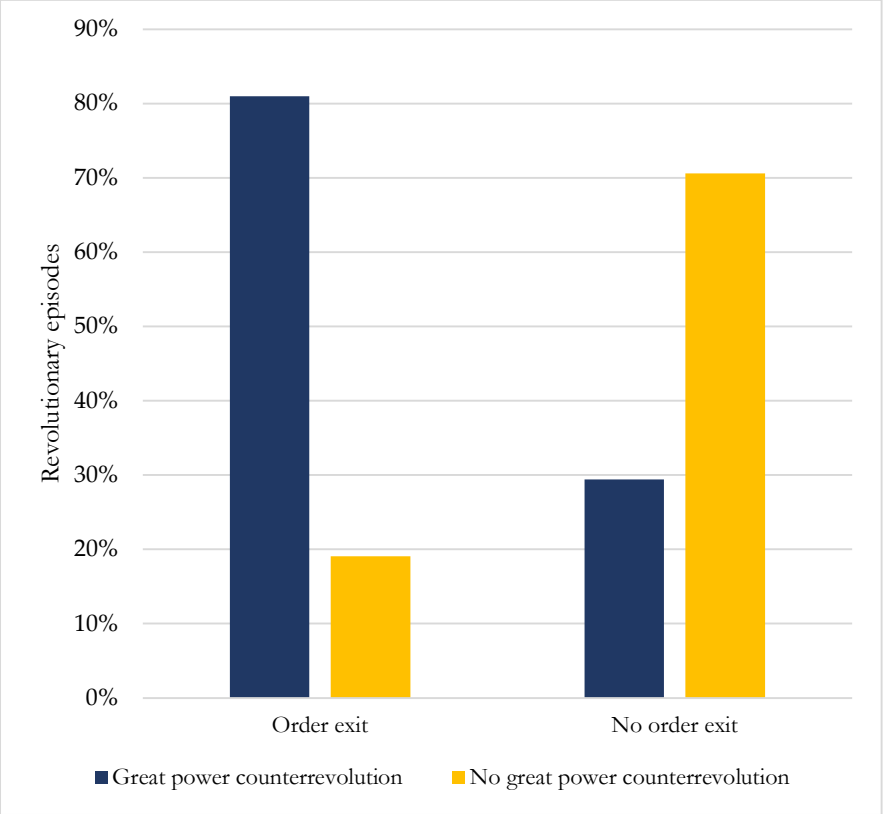
[2] The Comintern (or 'Third International') was established by the Bolsheviks in Moscow in March 1919 for the purpose of fomenting world communist revolution (Pons, 2014: 12-13). Although foreign delegates were involved in its founding, the Comintern was controlled by the Soviet Politburo (Pons, 2014: 12). The Comintern was abolished by the Soviet Union in 1943. In some senses a successor of the Comintern, the Cominform (1947-1956) was established as a coordination and information bureau for the international communist movement (Pons, 2014: xv; Swain, 1992: 657 fn. 65). The Warsaw Pact was an alliance coalition comprising the USSR, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania (Mastny, 2022: 3). The Warsaw Pact was made in 1955 after West Germany joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Pons, 2014: 209).

just as much an order challenging revolution as it was an order supporting revolution, depending on whose perspective we adopt. Each of these arguments is elaborated upon in greater detail in Chapter 3.

## Findings

Analysis of the dataset lends the order exit theory of great power counterrevolution empirical support. More than 80% of order exiting revolutions between 1900 and 2020 were met with great power counterrevolution, while this is true of only 29% of non-order exiting revolutions. This means that revolutionaries who attempted to exit a great power order were more than twice as likely to face great power counterrevolution than those revolutionaries who didn't (see Figure 1 below).

**Figure 1**. Rates of great power counterrevolution, 1900-2020




Multivariate analyses also show order exit to be a key driver of great power counterrevolution. There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution even when controlling for factors such as revolutionary ideology, the use of armed revolutionary tactics and whether the great powers are concurrently embroiled in interstate wars. Of course, the relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution is not a universal law. Non-order exiting revolutions can also trigger great power counterrevolution.

Similarly, not all examples of order exit engender great power counterrevolution. The reasons why counterrevolution occurs in the absence of order exit and why order exit doesn't always trigger counterrevolution are explored in the qualitative component of this dissertation.

To understand why order exit is closely correlated with great power counterrevolution, I examine three case studies: the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the Hungarian Revolution (1956) and the attempted Syrian Salafist Revolution (2012-2020).[3] The purpose of the first two cases is to illustrate the mechanisms linking order exit and international counterrevolution. They show three reasons why order exit is so important to great powers: i) order defectors deprive the great power of leverage to influence and mould the direction of the revolution (best illustrated by the 'negative' case of Mexico); ii) order defectors strengthen other orders at their former order's expense (best illustrated by the 'positive' case of Hungary); and iii) the act of exit can pose an existential challenge to great powers – after all, without members, an order ceases to exist (best illustrated by Hungary). The third case study – the Syrian Salafist Revolution – is used as an outlier case: there is no order exit, yet there is US counterrevolution. This case provides an opportunity to probe the limits of order exit theory, showing areas for future theoretical refinement and sharpening.

Order exit theory provides two main insights regarding revolution, international counterrevolution and world order(s). First, the theory helps to explain fluctuations in the frequency of great power counterrevolution over time. The existence of multiple great power orders at a given moment creates more opportunities for revolutionaries to jump ship. Although attempts at order exit do take place in moments of unipolarity, revolutionaries rightly assess that their prospects of victory are radically reduced without another great power order to welcome and defend them. This explains why the interwar and Cold War eras were propitious times for order exit (and great power counterrevolution), while the contemporary unipolar era is not. Second, order exit theory foregrounds a trade-off for would-be revolutionaries. Order exiters are rewarded with the possibility of pursuing radical change outside the constraints of their former order, but they also face the risk of great powers overturning their revolution. For their part, revolutionaries who remain within an existing international order are less likely to face counterrevolution, but have their transformative agendas straitjacketed by their existing order. For them, the cost of survival is

[3] Three groups comprise the Syrian Salafist case: Islamic State, Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham. These organisations belong to the jihadi Salafi sub-branch of Salafism (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2018: 1-2; Ismail, 2021: 27; Heller, 2016; Khadem, 2019: 132, 142; Laghmari, 2019: 52; Lister, 2016: 26). Moderate Syrian rebel groups – including the Syrian National Council and the Free Syrian Army – are counted as a separate revolutionary episode. This is a similar approach to that adopted in NAVCO 1.3, in which the Syrian Civil War is treated as a separate entry to Islamic State (Chenoweth and Shay, 2020).

revolutionary moderation. For order exiters, the cost of revolutionary transformation is survival. This survival-transformation tradeoff, what we might term 'the revolutionaries dilemma', highlights the difficulties of effecting enduring radical change in world politics.

## Contribution

This dissertation makes two original contributions: a new dataset and a new theory of great power counterrevolution. The first contribution is a novel macro-historical dataset mapping great power counterrevolution between 1900-2020. This dataset allows quantitative methods to be brought to bear on the question of what causes great power counterrevolution. Existing answers to this question have relied on individual and comparative case study analysis. Sharp insights have been generated about international counterrevolution against France (Kim, 1970), the 1848 'Springtime of the Peoples' (Weyland, 2016), Russia and Iran (Walt, 1996), the Nicaraguan Sandinista revolution (Walker, 2019) and the 'Arab Spring' revolutions (Allinson, 2019a; Dannreuther, 2015). Bisley (2004) and Halliday (1999) have had more expansive empirical horizons, theorising on the basis of cases as diverse as France (1789), Spain (1936), China (1949) Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968) and Afghanistan (1979). This study is the first, to my knowledge, to bring quantitative methods to bear on the question on of great power counterrevolution.[4] The dataset accompanying this thesis allows multiple variables to be considered across multiple decades and continents, offering new possibilities for theorising. This is, therefore, the first time that the phenomenon of great power counterrevolution has been systematically mapped.

Beyond bringing quantitative analysis to the study of great power counterrevolution, the dataset is also a contribution in its own right. To date, most revolutions datasets focus on the domestic dimensions of revolution, with a handful of international variables as controls (for example Beissinger, 2022; Chenoweth and Shay, 2020). The dataset accompanying this dissertation, in comparison, is focused squarely on the international dimensions of revolution and counterrevolution. The dataset was constructed by combining eight existing compendia of revolutions, and then applying a consistent definition to the combined universe of cases.[5] New variables in the dataset that may be useful beyond this project include great power responses to

[4] A related study is Killian Clarke's (2022) in progress book project on the causes and success rates of counterrevolution between 1900 and 2015. The project focuses on both domestic and international counterrevolution, with most counterrevolutionary episodes in his dataset being led by former regime elites (Clarke, 2022: 28). This diverges from my exclusive focus on great powers as the counterrevolutionary actors of interest. Another difference is Clarke's focus on counterrevolutions against successful revolutions, whereas I look at both preventative and post-hoc efforts to crush revolution.

[5] The eight compendia which form the foundations of the dataset are Beissinger (2022), Chenoweth and Shay (2020), DeFronzo (2006), Foran (2005), Goldstone (1999), Lachappelle et al. (2020), Ritter (2015) and Wickham-Crowley (1992).

revolution (made granular with a seven-point ordinal scale), revolutionary attempts to exit or remain in their current international order, and revolutionary challenges to international power hierarchies.[6] These variables were hand coded using both archival and secondary sources. Other variables such as revolutionary ideologies, and the universe of revolutionary episodes itself, will be an addition to the growing number of datasets on revolutions, which may prove to be useful for comparison and cross-checking. The case narratives contained in Appendix C include detailed information about each revolutionary episode, including participant figures, revolutionary objectives, targets, methods, key secondary sources as well as primary source extracts.

The second contribution is theoretical. This dissertation develops a new theory of great power counterrevolution, foregrounding the role of order exit. As such, this thesis adds to existing research on the drivers of international counterrevolution by expanding the current explanatory quiver. Further, order exit theory departs from existing accounts of international counterrevolution by explicitly conceptualising international order(s) in the plural, a move that adds greater theoretical precision in understanding revolutions that challenge some orders but not others. Order exit theory also helps to answer questions of what happens when revolutions challenge one dimension of international order but support a different dimension, helping to disaggregate the order supporting versus order challenging revolution binary present in existing scholarship. These two moves – disaggregating order challenges and conceptualising orders in the plural – create greater nuance and granularity in theories linking revolution, great power counterrevolution and international order(s).

The importance of understanding revolution and international counterrevolution into the twenty-first century cannot be overstated. While enduring questions of revolutionary destabilisation and status quo reaction continue to occupy us, so too do newer questions such as the role of counterrevolution in revolutionary success (e.g. Allinson, 2019a and 2022), and the relationship between revolutionary strength and counterrevolution (e.g. Clarke, 2022). Revolution and counterrevolution continue to be subjects that test and complicate conceptions of justice, emancipation and world order. Beyond matters of academic concern, counterrevolutions have widespread and often profound impacts across continents and eras. From Vietnam to Syria, Algeria to Cuba, states have clashed, wars have been fought, and crises have spilled across borders. Understanding the drivers of international counterrevolution is crucial in predicting when and where it will unfold, and the regularity of its occurrence as new orders emerge and recede. Recent events in Ukraine, in part fostered by the 2014 Euromaidan uprising, have shown that international

[6] For example, the abrogation of exploitative treaties and concessions, or territorial expansion.

counterrevolution continues to be a phenomenon of great significance not just to world order as an abstraction, but to the lives of communities and individuals that experience it. Better understanding this phenomenon, which has continued to impact states from 1792, through 1848, up until the present day, is of vital importance.

## Outline of the dissertation

This dissertation contains seven chapters and a conclusion. Chapter 1 lays out the conceptual foundations of the thesis. It defines the three core concepts animating this project: revolution, counterrevolution and international order. Revolution is defined as 'mass mobilisation with the objective of regime type change via extra-constitutional means'. These three criteria have been incorporated into definitions of revolution by a range of scholars including Beissinger (2022: 25), Goldstone (2014: 4), Goodwin (2001: 9-10) and Lawson (2019: 5). International counterrevolution is defined as 'great power attempts to reverse or prevent a revolution' (also see Halliday, 1999: 207). But who are the great powers? Taking a consensus approach to various positions in the literature (e.g. Correlates of War, 2016; Gunitsky, 2017; Owen, 2002; Waltz 1979: 162), I identify five great powers in the pre-Cold War era (France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the US), two great powers in the Cold War era (the US and the Soviet Union), and one great power in the post-Cold War era (the US). The response of these great powers to each revolutionary episode is captured in the dataset, the temporal frame being the start of the revolutionary episode until either the date of revolutionary failure or up until three years after revolutionary success.[7] Great power responses are coded on a seven point-scale from maximal support for revolution to maximum opposition to revolution: maximal responses are direct military intervention; moderate responses are military aid to the revolutionary or counterrevolutionary forces; minimal responses involve diplomatic measures such as sanctions and the bestowing or denial of diplomatic recognition. International order – a notoriously difficult concept – is defined as 'groups of political units bound by certain practices, institutions, ideas and linkages' (analogous to a club, see: Adler-Nissen and Zarakol, 2021: 621-2; Barnett, 2019; Lascurettes, 2020: 23-4). This thesis explores revolutionary exit from five great power orders between 1900 and 2020: the 'Concert order' (1900-1914), the Wilsonian order (1918-1945), the Soviet order (1917-1989), the Fascist order (1936-1945), and the US-led 'Liberal International Order' (1945-2020).

[7] This three-year temporal frame is less in instances where the revolutionaries were quickly overthrown. For example, if the revolutionaries only remained in power for two years, then the great power response is only measured for these two years (rather than three).

Chapter 2 outlines this study's mixed qualitative-quantitative methodology. It explains how and why the accompanying dataset was built, outlines the primary and secondary sources used in its construction, and introduces the hand coded variables. The dataset comprises 182 revolutionary episodes, which together make up 1,350 revolutionary episode-years. Anti-colonial revolutions are not included in the dataset given the different drivers of great power counterrevolution in colonial versus non-colonial contexts (not least the counterrevolutionary motivation of direct territorial losses). The decision to focus only on revolutions against non-colonial governments is discussed further in Chapter 2. Regarding the qualitative portion of this dissertation, this chapter discusses case selection, the purpose of each of the three case studies, and the sources used in case analysis. This chapter also discusses the trade-offs of this dissertation's mixed methods approach, including the relationship between breadth and depth, and the balance between macro-patterns and micro-contingency.

Chapter 3 develops a theory of international counterrevolution. It starts by parsing theories of counterrevolution's alter ego – revolution. It proceeds to map theories of counterrevolution, placing this dissertation within existing work on the subject. There are three existing clusters of theories explaining international counterrevolution: i) international counterrevolution is an automatic response to revolution (e.g. Bisley, 2004); ii) a great power's status as revisionist or status quo determines whether or not it engages in counterrevolution (e.g. Kim, 1970); iii) revolutions that challenge international order are met with great power counterrevolution (e.g. Lawson, 2019). An examination of these three theories shows the third cluster to be the most convincing. I then introduce the core argument of this dissertation: order exit as a driver of great power counterrevolution. I also clarify how order exit relates to other types of revolutionary challenge, as well as Skocpol's (1979) distinction between social and political revolutions. The chapter concludes with some reflections on the implications of order exit theory.

Having laid the conceptual, methodological and theoretical groundwork of the dissertation in Chapters 1-3, the next four chapters are empirical. Chapter 4 engages in statistical analyses, examining the determinants of great power counterrevolution. It analyses order exit alongside other independent and control variables, looking at the effect of order exit on the prospects of great power counterrevolution. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are dedicated to case study analysis. Chapter 5 explores the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920). This episode is a case of a social revolution that avoided US counterrevolution.[8] I argue that this is, in part, because revolutionary Mexico did not

[8] The focus of the Mexican Revolution case study is the victorious Carranza faction, which won US support. US counterrevolution against the Villistas is also considered in light of order exit theory.

attempt to leave the US order. Chapter 6 examines the Hungarian Revolution (1956). This revolutionary attempt was met with a swift and decisive Soviet defeat of the revolution. I argue that Hungary's attempt to leave Soviet orbit contributed to Moscow's counterrevolution. The two chapters on Mexico and Hungary elucidate the mechanisms linking order exit and great power revolution. In the case of Mexico, there was no attempted order exit and no great power counterrevolution. In the case of Hungary, there was attempted order exit and great power counterrevolution.

Chapter 7 examines a 'difficult' case for my theory: attempted Salafist Revolution in Syria (2012-2020). This revolutionary episode is a case of US counterrevolution without attempts at order exit. Syrian Salafists could not drag Syria out of US orbit as al-Assad's Syria was not contained within the US-led international order to begin with. I explain the US counterrevolutionary response in terms of the *indirect* threat of order exit posed by Syrian revolutionaries. Although there was no risk of them cleaving Syria from the US order, the transnational nature of their revolution threatened the order exit of other US allies, including Iraq. It also threatened the construction of an international order directly opposed to Western interests. This explanation notwithstanding, the Syrian Salafist case helps to identify the limits of order exit theory and suggests ways it could be developed in the future. Order exit is not the best explanation of great power counterrevolution in all cases all of the time. The Syrian case also suggests further theoretical refinements, including shifting beyond order exit theory's state centrism to be better attuned to transnational order exit threats.

The final, concluding chapter summarises the core arguments of the dissertation, outlines agendas for future research, and reflects on changing patterns of international counterrevolution in the contemporary world. I argue that emergent Russian and Chinese orders are creating more opportunities for order exit and therefore great power counterrevolution. International counterrevolution will likely be an enduring, and increasingly prevalent, feature of world politics over the coming decades.

# Chapter 1: Concepts

This chapter is dedicated to defining the three core concepts undergirding this dissertation: revolution, (international) counterrevolution, and international order. Given the fierce debate surrounding each of these concepts, this is no small task. Beissinger (2022: 21) deems the work of defining revolution to be "undoubtedly the most contentious issue within the study of revolution." The task of probing "into counterrevolution is to venture onto treacherous ground" (Mayer, 1971: 1). The concept of international order is "deceptively complicated" and the subject of "[s]ome of the most contentious debates among scholars of international relations" (Lascurettes and Poznansky, 2021). In light of the rich literature on each of these three concepts, I take some time mapping existing definitions, defending my choices, and elucidating what each of these concepts is *not*.

As a prelude to the three sections below, my chosen definitions of revolution, international counterrevolution and international order are briefly outlined here. I adopt a tripartite definition of revolution as: i) mass mobilisation; ii) with the objective of regime type change; iii) via extra-constitutional means. I define counterrevolution as attempts to prevent or reverse a revolution, while international counterrevolution is counterrevolution carried out by actors beyond the revolutionary state. Finally, I define international order as groups of political units, bound by certain practices, institutions, ideas and linkages. Each of these definitions is unpacked in detail below.

## Revolution

Revolution is a contested term (Beissinger, 2022: 21; Calvert, 2016: 1; Censer, 2016: 1; Foran, 2005: 6; Goldstone, 2014: 3; Ritter, 2015: 3; Stewart, 2021: 2). There is some consensus, however, as to its core features: i) mass mobilisation, ii) leading to regime change (Goodwin, 2001: 9). Narrower definitions also include violence (Bisley, 2004: 5; Censer, 2016: 1; Lachapelle et al., 2020: 559), a rapid pace of change (Stinchcombe, 1999: 51), the pursuit of a social justice narrative or aspirational ideology (Goldstone, 2014: 1; Halliday, 1999: 3), and the creation of new political, social and economic institutions (Bisley, 2004: 5; Goldstone, 2014: 1).

The lack of agreement about the core features of revolution is due to two main challenges. First, the concept of revolution has two temporalities – mass mobilisation leading to regime change, and transformations of economic, political and social relations (which can take place in the years and decades after the seizure of power, or indeed prior to the seizure of power, see Stewart, 2021: 13-

14 and 2022: 4-8). Goldstone (2014: 36) argues that it takes an average of around 10-12 years from the seizure of state power until the characteristics of the new regime start to solidify, while Hobsbawm (1986: 32) argues that the end date of a revolution can be measured from "when the first adult generation of 'children of the revolution' emerge on the public scene." Definitions that include deep economic, political and social change as a criterion often face the analytical challenge of not knowing if a revolution has taken place until much later (in those cases where transformations begin after the seizure of power). In other words, the outcome of a revolution is a constitutive part of the definition itself (de Smet, 2014: 11-12). This makes it particularly challenging to study contemporary revolutions, and means that older upheavals may look more or less revolutionary depending on where one is standing in history. Revolutionary changes can stop, stutter, reverse and leap forward again. During a period of rapid change, a particular episode may look very much like a revolution, whereas during a period of roll-back it may look less so.

The second challenge in defining revolution is that the concept covers a wide, disparate variety of phenomena (Goldstone, 2014: 2), necessarily so because both the concept and practice of revolution change over time (Calvert, 1990: 2-4; Halliday, 1999: 4; Lawson, 2004: 3 and 2005: 475-6). There are various trade-offs along the spectrum between an over-inclusive concept of revolution that becomes analytically ineffectual, and too narrow a checklist approach that is insensitive to the dynamism and diversity of revolutionary experiences over time.

In light of these two challenges, I define revolution as: i) mass mobilisation, ii) with the objective of regime type change, iii) via extra-constitutional (or 'illegal', 'irregular') means. A successful revolution is one that achieves regime type change, whereas an attempted revolution is one that aims to achieve regime type change, but fails to do so. My definition is adapted from Goldstone (2001: 142), who defines revolution as "an effort to transform the political institutions and the justifications for political authority in a society, accompanied by formal or informal mass mobilization and noninstitutionalized actions that undermine existing authorities." As my chosen definition indicates, the broader category of political revolution has been adopted as the subject of this study (rather than the more limited subset of social revolution).[9]

The exclusion of the criterion of deep social, economic and political change in my definition circumvents the two temporalities problem: whether or not deep change actually transpires is not constitutive of the definition.[10] To address the second challenge of the diversity and dynamism of

[9] Skocpol famously distinguishes between social revolutions, which entail transformation of state and societal structures, and political revolutions, which entail only transformation of the state (Skocpol, 1979: 4-5).

[10] This follows the precedent set by Goldstone (2001: 142) who focuses on *efforts* to transform the political system; Lawson (2019: 5) who incorporates *attempted* political, economic and symbolic transformation into his definition (2019:

revolution, I propose conceptualising revolution as a bundle of revolutionary properties, not all of which will apply to every revolution. I see the three elements of mass mobilisation, with the objective of regime change, via extra-constitutional means as the core, or 'DNA' of revolutions, while violence, a future-oriented narrative, fundamental social upheaval and a rapid pace of change may or may not be present. The core of revolutions is what stays constant over time, even as the other characteristics change. It is the additional features, which a revolution may or may not possess, that account for the variation within revolution, and that change over time.[11] Approaching revolutions as bundles of properties allows for sufficient temporal and geographic diversity, without losing sight of what makes a revolution a revolution.

Mass mobilisation

The three elements of my definition of revolution require further elaboration in terms of how each is measured and operationalised. First, what is meant by mass mobilisation? There are two broad approaches to this question in the literature: mass mobilisation as volume (i.e. lots of people mobilised), and mass mobilisation seen as non-elites (i.e. the masses, 'the people'). Examples of the first approach are Beissinger (2022) and Chenoweth (2011), who use absolute numbers of participants to determine whether the threshold for mass mobilisation has been reached. For both Beissinger (2022) and Chenoweth (2011: 8) this threshold is 1,000 participants (and specifically 1,000 *civilian* participants for Beissinger).[12] An example of the second approach is Lachapelle et al. (2020: 25 in codebook), who define a mass-based movement as one "that emerges outside the state." That is, the movement is not "led by groups or individuals with high positions in the old regime" and does not include any "military factions" (2020: 25 in codebook).

To incorporate both conceptions of mass mobilisation, I use a two sub-criterion approach. For a resistance episode to be seen as constituting mass mobilisation there must be at least 1,000

10-11); and Ritter, who understands revolution as comprising the first temporality of regime change only (2015: 8). Beyond temporally truncating the concept of revolution, another solution has been to focus on whether the agents of change themselves define their actions as revolutionary or not, making agency rather than outcome definitionally decisive (see de Smet, 2014: 12). This is a valuable approach, but would require consensus amongst revolutionaries themselves, as well as accounting for the tendency for people to self-label as revolutionaries when they are evidently not (the Soviets calling themselves revolutionaries when crushing the 1956 Hungarian uprising springs to mind, see Kramer, 1998: 187).

[11] For example, violent revolutions were the dominant revolutionary form until the 1980s, when unarmed revolutions began to proliferate (see Foran, 2005: 258; Goodwin, 2001: 294-5; Ritter, 2015: 4). Conceptualised in this way, violence is a characteristic of revolutions that may or may not be present in a given instance, not a definitional criterion (Goodwin and Rojas, 2015: 795).

[12] This approach of using absolute numerical cut-offs is also adopted in the democratisation and conflict studies literatures. For example, to be included in Polity5, a state must have a population of at least 500,000 (Centre for Systemic Peace, 2020), while the Correlates of War Project counts a dyadic war as one where both states suffer at least 100 battle-deaths and/or deploy at least 1,000 military personnel (Maoz et al., 2019).

participants *and* at least two societal segments involved. The 1,000 threshold is important, as it allows small-scale uprisings to be excluded even where these uprisings emerge from outside the state. An example is journalist-cum-guerrilla Jorge Masetti and his doomed 1963-64 *foco* in Salta, Argentina, involving only 30 insurgents (Clarín, 2005). According to La Chapelle et al.'s (2020) definition, Jorge Masetti's guerrillas could be construed as a mass-based movement since they emerged from outside the state (the participants were mostly white-collar employees and students, see Wickham-Crowley, 1992: 28). A numerical threshold is important as it accords with intuitions that 30 people does not constitute mass mobilisation. Of course, some revolutionary movements begin small and then expand e.g. the Cuban Revolution started with just 82 guerrillas but later grew to 7,250 by 20 December, 1958 (Lawson, 2019: 125; Macaulay, 1978: 291). In such a scenario, the point at which the Fidelistas surpassed the 1,000 guerrilla threshold is when they became a 'revolutionary' group (as per the numerical mass mobilisation sub-criterion). When mobilisation figures were unavailable, I used proxy indicators to ascertain whether 1,000 people had been mobilised. Proxies included the occupation of large plazas, revolutionary actions unfolding in multiple cities, and secondary source assessments (e.g. descriptions of an uprising as 'widespread'). My decision and reasoning in situations where numerical data wasn't available are contained under the relevant revolutionary episode in Appendix C.

The two-or-more societal segments criterion is equally important.[13] It allows the exclusion of movements that are numerically large but narrowly based in society, including those that are drawn wholly from the military or the political elite (such as 'revolutions from above', see Trimberger, 1978). In other words, it is not just how many people are involved that is important, but who those people are. For example, the 2010 attempt to topple Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa is excluded from my dataset on the basis that it is a coup attempt, not a revolutionary attempt. Given that the participants were drawn exclusively from one societal segment, the police (Chaplin, 2014: 159), this episode does not fulfil the mass mobilisation criterion (even though it passes the 1,000-person threshold). Lane's (2008) concept of a 'revolutionary coup' adds an interesting wrinkle. He defines revolutionary coups as being elite-led, with mass participants, such as protesters, being removed from the regime change action (behaving instead as onlookers) (Lane, 2008: 529-30). I don't make such a distinction in my coding: if two or more societal segments, such as students and the military, engage in illegal activities to bring about a new principle of political authority, I code

[13] This approach was inspired by Eric Selbin's (2009: 38) discussion of the 1979 Iranian revolution, where he links the broad-based nature of the uprising to the participation of various societal groups.

it as a revolutionary episode. This is the same approach adopted by Beissinger (2002: 29-30), who refers to such situations as 'coupvolutions' and includes them in his dataset.

A crucial difference between my two-sector criterion and Lachapelle et al.'s (2020) approach is that the former allows for the participation of the military (and other regime elites), whereas the latter does not. As long as the military is accompanied by other societal segments (e.g. workers), I deem this a revolution, not a coup. My reasons for allowing participation of the military to constitute mass mobilisation is that so many canonical revolutions include military participation: cossacks withdrew their support from the provisional government during the Bolshevik Revolution (Suny, 1999: 433); the 1959 Cuban Revolution saw army defections in concert with guerrilla, student, communist and civilian resistance (Domínguez, 1999: 123-4; Martínez-Fernández, 2011: 418); the 1985 April *Intifada* in Sudan saw the military side with the civilian movement (Berridge, 2015: 50, 53, 57); and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) played a crucial role in Egypt's 2011 revolution (Chalcraft, 2016: 514; Wickham, 2013: 154; also Ketchley, 2017: 46-77 on protester fraternization with the military). Indeed, the withdrawal of military support from the *ancien régime* is frequently a decisive factor in revolutionary success (see Nepstad, 2011b; also Barany, 2016; Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011: 46-8; and Russell, 1974: 77).

Objective of regime type change

The second definitional criterion – regime change – is more difficult to define. What does it mean to want, and succeed in, regime change? For the purposes of this study, regime change is defined as the institutionalisation of a new principle of political authority. Examples include shifting the locus of authority from the armed forces (military rule) to the people (democracy); or shifting authority from the proletariat (communism) to clerics (theocracy).[14] The way I use 'regime change', therefore, could be more accurately described as 'regime type change'. This definition is derived from Goldstone (2001: 142), who sees revolutions as transforming both "political institutions and the justifications for political authority in a society"; as well as Bukovansky's (2002: 212-3) characterisation of revolutions as contests over "legitimate authority". It also resonates with Yoder's (1926: 435, 437) discussion of revolutions entailing "a change in the location of sovereignty." Importantly, those movements that unsuccessfully attempt to bring about regime

[14] The most obvious indicator that a new principle of political authority has been instituted is to look at changes in *who* is ruling: a king being replaced by a parliament, for example, or a parliament being replaced by a military junta or religious cleric. There are some instances where the ruler may technically remain the same even though a shift in the principle of political authority has taken place, for example, when an absolute monarchy becomes a constitutional monarchy. In such circumstances, however, there is still a shift in the principle of authority, identifiable by looking at the new authority vested in parliament at the expense of the monarch.

change are failed revolutions, whereas those movements that effect regime change are successful revolutions. Crucial to this definitional criterion is an analysis of the principle of political authority legitimating the *ancien régime,* so it can be compared to the principle of political authority advocated by the revolutionaries. A *new* principle of political authority is relative to what existed before (see for example Colgan, 2012: 355; and Mitchell, 2009: 39, who makes this point regarding Georgia's Rose Revolution). In constructing the dataset, revolutionary objectives were gleaned from manifestos, lists of demands, protest slogans, banners and songs, secondary analyses of revolutionary objectives as well as the changes wrought by revolutionaries once in power, such as new constitutional settlements and legal orders (in cases of successful revolutions).

The bar to meet this definition of regime change is set high (or is 'restrictive', to use the terminology of Yoder, 1926: 435). 'Regime' is conceptualised as a system of government, rather than a specific administration. As a result, there are many things that regime change is not: a change in leadership, a change in policies or improved governance. Each of these three exclusion categories shall be discussed in turn. A frequent demand of political protest movements is the resignation of key regime figures, e.g. the 2001-2 Argentinian protest slogan of "All of them must go!" (Vilas, 2006: 176). But when such objectives are not accompanied by broader demands for a new principle of political authority, the episode in question is not counted as revolutionary.

This distinction between leadership change and regime change is not always clear in the literature (on this point, see Stewart, 2021: 2). For example, Chenoweth's NAVCO dataset counts multiple cases of leadership change as regime change, including: the 1960 campaign for Japanese Prime Minister Nobusuke's resignation; the mass demonstrations demanding Philippine President Joseph Estrada's resignation in 2001 (which were successful, with Estrada being replaced by his Vice President Gloria Arroyo); Ecuadorian protesters' occupation of government property in 2004 demanding the ousting of President Gutiérrez and the resignation of congress; Iceland's so-called 'Cutlery Revolution' which called for the resignation of the prime minister and his cabinet, as well as the boards of the central bank and the Financial Security Authority; and anti-Yameen protests in the Maldives between 2015 and 2019, demanding that the President step down. All of these cases of demands for leadership change without demands for a new principle of political authority are excluded from my dataset. They are seen to be changes of the incumbent administration, rather than the overarching system of rule.

Similarly, attempts by insurgents to dislodge incumbents and install themselves, without changing the prevailing principle of political authority, are not included as revolutionary attempts in my dataset. For example, during the Georgian Civil War (1991-1993), the paramilitaries, the National

Guard and the *Mkhedrioni* wanted to seize power in order "to secure their monopoly on extortion rackets and to find new loot" (Baev, 2003: 132). Given that desires for power weren't accompanied by desires to transform the system of rule, the Georgian Civil War is excluded from my dataset. Another example is Charles Edward Stuart's (Bonnie Prince Charlie) attempt to topple King George II, claiming hereditary rights to the English throne. This would not constitute demands for a new principle of political authority, as Bonnie Prince Charlie was affirming the principle of divinely mandated, hereditary, monarchical rule. He was challenging who should rule, not the system of rule. Kalyvas (2015: 43) makes this point by distinguishing between revolutionary Fidel Castro and non-revolutionary Charles Taylor. For Taylor, the acquisition of power was an end in and of itself, whereas for Castro, the acquisition of power was a means by which social and political order could be transformed.

Competing conceptualisations of regime-as-leadership versus regime-as-system are reflected in the democratisation and conflict literatures. Whereas some scholars use regime to mean institutions and systems of authority (see for example Bjørnskov and Rode, 2020; Cheibub et al., 2010: 68, 69, 90-92, 97; Enterline, 1998: 392-3; Fearon and Laitin, 2003: 81; Lueders and Lust, 2018: 737; Marshall et al., 2017: 35), others use regime to refer to who is in power (see for example Gill, 2013: 1; Greene and Jefferis, 2016: 8-9; and Hagan, 1989: 144). Conceptualising regime change as leadership change rather than as a new principle of political authority is not just a measurement and operationalization issue – there are normative implications too. Deeming leadership change to be regime change, as constituting a revolution, is a powerful act that can serve the purpose of halting more expansive resistance ambitions. In other words, it can take the revolutionary wind out of a popular movement's sails. For example, other states, seeing a changing of the guard, are often quick to announce revolutionary success absent a fundamental overhaul of the system. Governments swiftly recognise the new leader, announce democracy has been achieved, and carry on with business as usual. Treating such instances of leadership change as revolutionary success serves to buttress intransigent systems of rule, whose own leaders point to superficial changes as evidence of more substantive change, when this is clearly not the case. An illustrative example is provided by Algerian President Bouteflika's resignation in 2019 – Algeria's allies moved on despite *Hirak*'s attempts to substantively overhaul the political system (Rachidi, 2021). Although regime leaders are frequently targeted by resistance movements as the most visible symbol of the regime, they are not synonymous with the regime. Revolutionary ambitions are those that target not only the leaders, but the deep sub-strata of authority systems too.

A second thing regime change is *not* is policy change. Policy changes concern specific issue areas; they are political changes that fall short of a new principle of political authority. Examples of policy

change demands include: the 1904 revolt in Brazil calling for an end to the government's mandatory vaccination policy; 2012-14 demonstrations in Iraq demanding changes to the Anti-Terrorism Law and the release of political prisoners; environmental protests in Turkey between 2017 and 2019 against the Ida Mountains gold mine project and the filling of the Ilisu Dam reservoir; and protests in 2019 Senegal, which demanded a bigger role for the government in the negotiation of gas and oil contracts. While the 1904 Brazil Vaccine Revolt is included in Beissinger's 2022 dataset and the Iraq, Turkey and Senegal protests are included in Chenoweth's NAVCO dataset, all four cases are excluded from mine on the grounds that these constitute demands for policy change, not regime change (i.e. a new principle of political authority). Similarly, mass mobilisations concerning climate change or violence against women are deemed to be demands for policy change, not regime change, as are anti-war, anti-austerity and anti-nuclear weapons protests. Although such mobilisations target issues of great significance and in many cases galvanise huge numbers, they do not target the system of authority itself.[15] Not every unauthorised, anti-government protest is a revolutionary act, with the target and expansiveness of the protesters' demands being crucial in determining what is and what isn't an attempted revolution.

A third thing regime change is *not* is improved governance. A common resistance movement demand, particularly since the end of the Cold War, is for better governance. Better service provision, an end to corruption or greater institutional accountability have mobilised populations in a number of countries, including Turkey 2013-14 and Macedonia 2015-17. In the Macedonian case: "[t]he goal [of the protests] was to reach people of all ethnic and linguistic differences and to organize them under the common goal to push for new political leadership and more accountable public institutions" (Stojadinovic, 2019). The 2013-14 Gezi Park protests in Turkey similarly demanded leadership change in combination with demands for improved governance. The protesters called for Erdogan's resignation, as well as greater public consultation on environmental, zoning and development issues (Reynolds, 2013). All such cases have been excluded from my revolutions dataset, as demands for improved governance do not usually amount to demands for a new principle of political authority. Calls for greater transparency, accountability and policy effectiveness concern the quality of the existing system, rather than demands for a new system.

[15] This is the approach adopted by Goldstone (1999: vii), Goodwin (2001: 10), as well as Chenoweth and Lewis (2013: 11), who demarcate regime change from policy change. It also resonates with Foran (2005: 7) and Goldstone's (1999: 7) focus on the political domain as relatively distinct from other fields of change.

An important related phenomenon concerns the many anti-government movements denouncing fraudulent elections and demanding new elections or vote recounts. This has occurred in multiple instances including El Salvador (1977), Madagascar (2002-3), Georgia (2003), Kyrgyzstan (2005), Ethiopia (2005), Mexico (2006), Armenia (2008), Russia (2011), Bolivia (2019) and the US (2021). I do not count these as attempts at revolution as they are demanding that the incumbent regime play by the existing rules of the game, rather than demanding new rules (i.e. instead of demanding an alternative source of political authority to elections, they are demanding a re-run of elections). Instances where demands for election re-runs were coupled with demands for a new principle of political authority are included in the dataset. Iran's Green Movement (2009), for example, initially demanded only that June 2009 election results be annulled on the basis that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had won via fraudulent means (Black and Dehghan, 2009; Niakooee, 2020: 2). Government repression saw demands escalate, with the emergence of protester challenges to the very principle of theocratic rule ('Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist') itself (Niakooee, 2020: 2). To the widespread "Where is my vote?" slogan was added more radical references to the 'Iranian Republic' (instead of the Islamic Republic) (Niakooee, 2020: 2; Parsa, 2016: 217-18; Shams, 2019). When these demands for a new principle of political authority began to emerge (around six weeks after the June elections, see Athanasiadis, 2009), this episode became 'revolutionary' according to the criteria applied in this thesis.

Although demands for leadership change, policy change, better governance, or some combination of these, are the basis for excluding resistance episodes, it is important to note that such demands do also feature in many revolutions. The crucial point is that in such instances these elements feature *in addition to* demands for a new principle of political authority. Revolutionary demands frequently escalate: what might start as a protest against a specific policy might expand to include demands for the leadership's resignation, and then finally to demands for a new principal of political authority, as in the example of Iran above. These cases would be deemed as meeting the 'objective of regime change' criterion, whereas demands that stopped at leadership change would not. In other words, I consider revolutionaries to have demanded regime change if they make demands for a new principle of political authority *at some point* in their campaign. According to this logic, the 2019-20 uprising in Lebanon was not initially revolutionary in its demands concerning tobacco and WhatsApp taxes. However, as demands escalated over the duration of one week to target the very system of sectarian rule itself, this episode was classed as a revolution. Other examples include the 1933 uprising against Cuba's Machado which was initially motivated by economic grievances, but escalated to demands for Machado's resignation and then an end to the military's role in politics (Grobart, 1975: 93, 99; Pérez, 1974: 175). Similarly, in 1973, student

protesters in Greece demanded an end to conscription policies and to the junta's interference in university elections, but subsequently "escalated to calls for democratization and an end to the military junta" (Beissinger, 2022: 153 in codebook).

Irregular methods

The third necessary component of my account of revolution is 'irregularity'. There are two main approaches to irregularity in the literature: the first sees irregularity as context-dependent, the second sees it as absolute. An example of the former is McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001: 7-8, 41), who distinguish between "transgressive" and "contained" contention on the basis of whether action is "unprecedented" or "forbidden" as opposed to "accepted" and "familiar." [16] An example of the absolute approach is Colgan (2012: 453), who defines an irregular transition as one involving the "use of armed force, widespread popular demonstrations, or similar uprising". I adopt the context-dependent approach in arguing that what is considered to be irregular differs across place and time.

The rationale for this stance becomes apparent when examining various synonyms for irregularity used in the literature, for example, "illegal or forced change" (Banks, 2008 in Colgan, 2012: 451), "extra-constitutional means" (Buchanan, 2017), or change "in contravention to explicit rules and established conventions" (Colgan, 2012: 450-1, in his discussion of the Archigos dataset). Constitutional procedures for political change, and what is considered to be legal and illegal, are highly context-sensitive. Of course, some processes are always illegal across space and time, such as insurgencies, violent uprisings and assassinations (which may be one of the reasons why 'violence' appeared as a core criterion of revolution in many definitions until the return of non-violent revolutions).[17] Other processes, however, are more context-dependent. A government-approved protest in a democracy can be part of the regular workings of everyday politics. A forbidden protest in a more repressive regime is highly irregular. Unanchored from context, we cannot tell whether a protest is 'irregular' or not. For example, the UK Combination Acts, the first of which was passed in 1799, rendered all strike action illegal. In the UK today, strikes are a legal, regular feature of politics.

The key point is whether resistance actions operate within the parameters of an existing political system, or outside them. Change demanded through the rules and procedures of the existing system reinforces and reproduces that system (for example impeachment processes, petitions and

[16] The context-dependent approach to irregularly fits within broader literatures which assert that "context matters" (see for example Goodin and Tilly, 2006: 5).

[17] See for example Goldstone, 2014: 41 and Lawson, 2019: 3.

leadership spills). Change demanded from outside that system constitutes a challenge to it. Of course, as with most categories, the line between the 'regular' and 'irregular' is porous, with both regular and irregular forms co-occurring and interacting (McAdam et al., 2001: 7). The Italian Fascist Revolution (1919-1922) provides an illustrative example. Even though Benito Mussolini's National Fascist Party was a legitimate political party and Mussolini himself was appointed premier by the King, Mussolini's armed squads seizing land from socialists and the March on Rome were irregular processes (Acemoglu et al., 2020: 10; Whitlam, 1999: 272). Another example is the anti-Apartheid campaign in South Africa. The African National Congress (ANC) pursued a multipronged strategy: armed campaigns including sabotage and bombings by militant wing Umkhonto we Sizwe in the 1980s, as well as mass protests, strikes, boycotts and diplomacy (DeFronzo, 2006: 793, 796). Instances of a 'dual approach' (Whitlam, 2015: 272), where regular and irregular processes are combined, are deemed to meet the irregularity threshold for dataset construction purposes. The key point is that *some* of the methods used are irregular, even if these are combined with regular methods. In order to understand whether certain actions are irregular or not, I've considered constitutions, emergency laws and legislation specific to each context.

A second challenge with the irregularity criterion is the issue of irregular resistance actions and irregular processes of regime change. To meet my criterion of irregularity, only the resistance actions themselves need be irregular (this is distinct from Buchanan, 2017 who sees both resistance actions and regime change processes as needing to be irregular). For example, illegal protests leading to the resignation of a military junta, democratic amendments to the constitution and then free and fair elections bringing a civilian government to power would meet my irregularity threshold. Although the resignation, constitutional amendments and elections are 'regular' (or legal) processes, protesters still risked their lives, acted illegally and transgressed the extant order when they demonstrated. The focus on irregular resistance actions means that cases such as El Salvador's 1944 Strike of the Fallen Arms are included in the dataset: an armed uprising followed by illegal protests secured the resignation of President Martinez, the legislature's acceptance of his resignation, and a (short lived) transition to democratic governance (Tedla, 2011; Zunes, 2010: 2, 3, 5). Irregular resistance actions precipitated a procedural process of regime change.

What revolution is not

Having spent some time illustrating what a revolution *is* according to my tripartite definition, this section examines what a revolution is *not*. A significant amount of academic attention has been dedicated to distinguishing revolution from other related phenomena (Buchanan, 2017; Selbin, 2009: 10). This is a challenging task given that revolution often co-occurs with, is preceded by, or

follows coups, rebellions, civil and inter-state wars, and related processes (Goldstone, 2014: 4, 9; Lawson, 2019: 4). Efforts are further hampered by an academic tug-of-war that places revolution in different family trees. Revolution has been ascribed to the family tree of political struggle and conflict (Goodwin, 2001: 293, 297), disorders (Goldstone, 2014: 6), unruly or contentious politics (Goodwin, 2001: 293, 298, 302; Lawson, 2019: 49; Selbin, 2009: 10), social movements, civil resistance and collective action (Goldstone, 2014: 6; Goodwin, 2001: 10; Ritter, 2015: 9), and democratic transitions (Beissinger, 2007; Bunce and Wolchik, 2007; della Porta, 2014; Tarrow, 1993; Wood, 2001: 863-4, 865).[18] Is revolution more closely related to protests, boycotts, strikes and issue-based movements, or civil wars, coup d'états and rebellions?[19]

As revolution evolves, so too does the answer to this question. Historically, the close relationship between revolution and violence meant that revolution was studied in conjunction with armed phenomena. For example, during the Cold War, works proliferated on revolution and rebellion (Russell, 1974; Wakeman, 1977), revolution and revolt (Aron, 1969; Newell, 1979), revolution and terrorism (Hutchinson, 1972; Price, 1977), as well as revolution and war (Gurr, 1988; Johnson, 1973). The association between revolution and violent forms of contention has since weakened with the increase in 'unarmed', 'color' and 'negotiated' forms of revolution from the 1970s and 1980s (see Beck et al., 2022: 59, 84; Chenoweth, 2022: 222; Goldstone, 2001: 141, 2003: 53 and 2009: 18, 31; Lawson, 2019: 37-8, 202; Nepstad, 2011a: 4-5 and 2015: 415; Ritter, 2015: 4). The emergence of unarmed revolution has brought the field into closer conversation with social movements and civil resistance literatures (Allinson, 2019b: 142; Goldstone, 2001: 142; Beck et al., 2022: 59).[20] Studies, datasets and encyclopaedias have proliferated on revolution and protest (e.g. Abdelrahman, 2015; Francisco, 1993; Gerges, 2013; Ketchley and Barrie, 2020; Ness, 2009), revolution and civil resistance (e.g. Chenoweth, 2021: 14, 17-18; Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011; Mosinger et al., 2021; Nepstad, 2011a; Roberts, 1991), revolution and democratisation (della Porta, 2016), as well as revolution and nonviolence (Lawson, 2015b; Ritter, 2015; Zunes, 1994). This dialogue between work on revolution and civil resistance has opened up new lines of enquiry, such

[18] Although Wood does not specifically frame her research as looking at revolutions, her conceptualisation of 'popular insurgency' shares some similarities with Lawson's concept of 'negotiated revolution' (2004 and 2005).

[19] Goldstone (1982: 188-9) asks a related question: "To what extent should riots and coups, civil wars and unsuccessful revolutions be considered kin to the French or Russian Revolutions?".

[20] Although the 1980s marks the emergence of unarmed revolution as the dominant form, the 1980s is certainly not the decade in which this type of revolution was born. Unarmed resistance has been a feature of at least the last century: the early twentieth century constitutional revolutions (1905-11); India's independence movement (1919-1948); the Latin American strike revolutions in El Salvador (1944), Ecuador (1944) and Haiti (1946); and the toppling of dictatorships in Portugal (1974) and Ethiopia (1974) (Goldstone, 2009: 19; Lawson, 2019: 37-8; Nepstad, 2011a: 4 and 2015: 415-16; Ritter, 2015: 7 fn. 11). Similarly, violent revolution persists in the post-Cold War era, for example the Nepalese Maoist insurgency (1996-2006), the First Ivorian Civil War (2002-2005) and Islamic State (2013-).

as the relative success of violent vs. nonviolent campaigns (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011), as well as new opportunities for integrating structural and voluntaristic accounts (Ritter, 2015: 9).

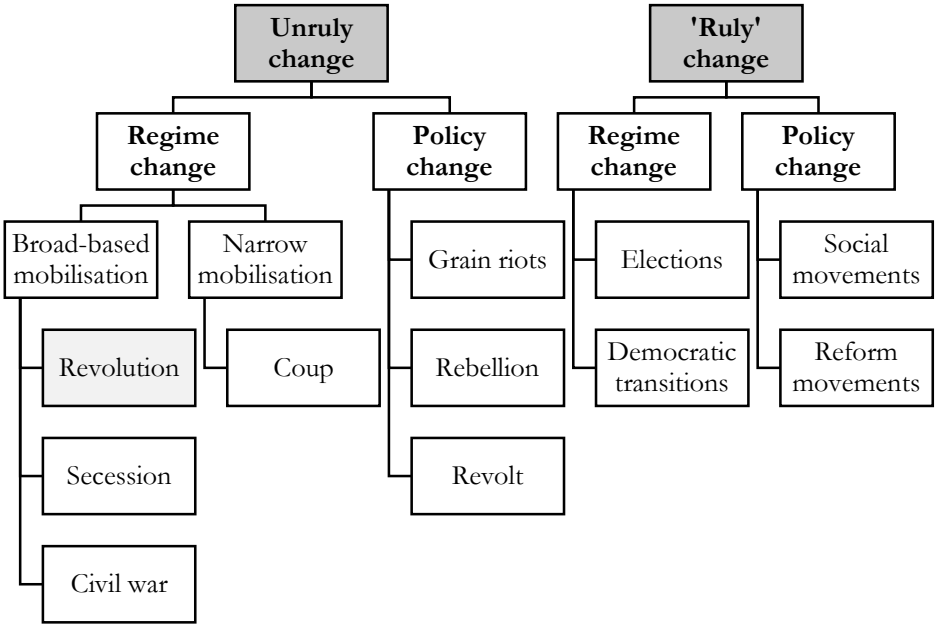
Clearly, revolution is a capacious concept, practice and field of study. It is somewhat of a chameleon as it has adapted to incorporate communist uprisings during the Cold War, democratisation during the 1970s and 1980s, civil resistance in the post-1989 era, and (renewed engagement with) terrorism after 2001. Revolution's ability to connect with other fields allows the incorporation of new theories, methods, and approaches. It also shows that the study of revolution is sensitive to the phenomenon's evolution in thought and practice.[21] This malleability does, however, present several challenges: Is the concept of revolution flexible enough to accommodate such diverse fields as civil resistance and terrorism? Is revolutions scholarship faddist, needing other sub-disciplines to remain relevant? There is also the challenge of academic de-centering, with much work on revolution taking "place outside the province of 'revolutionary studies'" (Lawson, 2019: 6 fn. 2). For the purposes of this discussion, the key question is: if revolution covers such a wide range of phenomena, from unarmed protests to civil war, then what is it not?

The tripartite definition used in this study is designed to apply to a wide range of processes, while also delineating what falls outside the bounds of being considered a revolution (see Figure 2 below).[22] Revolution is extra-constitutional or illegal, placing it in the 'unruly change' branch of the family tree (see for example Lawson, 2019: 49). This means that regular democratic transitions, electoral processes bringing about a new principle of political authority and law-abiding protest movements are not considered to be revolutions. Revolution seeks a change of regime, rather than eliciting a change from the regime, distinguishing it from grain riots and rebellions, which are usually focussed on a single grievance or policy (see for example Goldstone, 2014: 4-6). Finally, revolution involves the mobilisation of multiple segments of society, distinguishing it from coups that only involve the military (Goldstone, 2014: 6). Protests, strikes, boycotts, demonstrations and civil disobedience do not feature in the family tree below, as these activities can be legal or illegal, and aim for either state overthrow or state reform. As such, these processes can float between both branches of the family tree.

[21] It is an open question as to whether the changing idea of revolution is affecting what we see as the practice of it, or whether the changing practice of it is affecting our ideas of revolution (or both).

[22] In Goldstone's words (2001: 142), his definition (on which mine is based) "is broad enough to encompass events ranging from the relatively peaceful revolutions that overthrew communist regimes to the violent Islamic revolution in Afghanistan. At the same time, this definition is strong enough to exclude coups, revolts, civil wars, and rebellions that make no effort to transform institutions or the justification for authority".

**Figure 2.** Revolution's family tree




In addition to the three definitional criteria designed to distinguish revolution from other related phenomena, I deployed three exclusion criteria in constructing the dataset: movements that emerge in power vacuums, resistance to foreign invasions and occupations, and secessionist movements. First, I excluded movements that emerged and seized power in a vacuum on the grounds that there was no incumbent regime to be toppled. As, in such instances, there is no existing principle of political authority to be transformed, there is no baseline against which to measure revolutionary demands for change. For example, the 1918 Finnish Communist insurgency is excluded as there was no government to topple, but instead a struggle to fill the vacuum created by the Russian revolution. Excluding movements that emerge in a power vacuum follows the precedent of Colgan (2012: 455). Second, I excluded movements whose primary objective was to expel an invading or occupying foreign government. On this basis, for example, Danish resistance against Nazi occupation (1940-1945) was excluded. For inclusion in the dataset, the object of regime type change must be an established national government. There are a handful of difficult cases where movements had dual objectives targeting both a foreign occupying government and their own country's government-in-exile. One example is provided by Tito's forces that fought first to expel the Germans and then to install a Communist regime in Yugoslavia at the expense of the Yugoslav monarchy-in-exile. Cases such as these are coded as borderline, and are excluded in robustness checks in Appendix B. Excluding movements resisting foreign invasions and occupations from revolutions datasets follows the precedent of Beissinger (2022: 438).

The third exclusion criterion concerns the familial relationship between revolution and secession. This is a thorny question. For example, both the revolution and secession literatures claim Bangladesh (1971) and Czechoslovakia (1993).[23] Some studies of revolution include movements wanting to create new states, whereas others exclude them. Examples of the former approach include Chenoweth (2021: 13), who defines revolutionary campaigns as "large-scale mobilizations seeking to topple governments or create new nation-states." In contrast, Huntington (1968: 264) explicitly differentiates revolution from wars of independence, while Buchanan (2017) distinguishes secessionists from revolutionaries on the basis that their goal is "secession from a political order centered on a metropolitan state." Both positions present certain challenges. Definitions of revolution that include attempts to carve out new states face the challenge of conceptually collapsing revolution and secession. However, excluding separatist movements from definitions of revolution misses a wide range of important resistance episodes, from the breakup of the USSR to the creation of South Sudan more recently.

In this study, revolution is treated as distinct from secession on the basis of agent goals. Revolutionaries work to topple a central government, whereas secessionists battle a central government not to topple them, but to win the right to form their own independent state. For example, if Catalans wanted to topple the government in Madrid and re-order political authority in Spain, they would be revolutionaries in this study. However, as their goals are not to end the government in Madrid, but instead to form a separate government, they are treated as secessionists. This demarcation between secessionist and revolutionary movements follows Coggins' (2014: 64-5) logic: "A secessionist movement is a nationalist group dedicated to formal separation from its home state in order to form a newly independent state ... [while] groups that seek to overthrow the government of an established state, as in the case of revolution or coup d'état, are … not considered to be secessionist" (Coggins, 2014: 64-5). An example of how this secession-revolution distinction is applied empirically is the 1989 revolutions. The revolutions that occurred in states that were part of the Soviet Union (e.g. Latvia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Belarus) are excluded from the dataset on the basis of being secessions, whereas the revolutions in Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania are treated as revolutions as they delivered regime change within sovereign states.

[23] For example Beissinger (2022) counts these episodes as revolutions, while Sorens (2012: 3-4) counts them as secessions.

The substantive rationale for the decision to exclude secessions is that the reasons why great powers might oppose the creation of new states are likely to be different to the reasons why great powers oppose revolutionary changes in other states. Secession involves not just state-making, but also state-breaking, involving a whole host of additional challenges to international order(s). Even if conceptually secession is part of the broader umbrella category of revolution, in empirical terms, secessionist revolution and non-secessionist revolution are sufficiently distinct to warrant independent analysis (at least in the first stages of this research project). A future area of study is to explore the drivers of great power counter-secession – that is, attempts to prevent or reverse the formation of new states – and how these relate to the drivers of counterrevolution.

No attempts to demarcate the universe of revolutionary cases will ever achieve full consensus. As noted by Beissinger (2022: 439-440) while reflecting on his own dataset:

> No dataset provides complete coverage, and readers will undoubtedly identify particular episodes that they believe qualify as revolutionary by the definition used in this book and that should have been included. They may disagree with my definition of revolution, with my interpretation of particular cases, or the inclusion of a particular case in the analysis. Such differences of opinion are inherent to an enterprise of this kind.

This is a challenge with a long history. As noted by a revolutions scholar writing in the 1970s: "Initially, when I told people I was studying revolution, I experienced many irate reactions when it was learned that this or that "famous" case did not fulfil my definitional criteria, for example, the Spanish "Civil War," the "revolution" in Egypt in 1952, the Algerian "revolution," etc. It was as if I were belittling the importance of these cases" (Russell, 1974: 57 fn. 2). This gets to the heart of why definitions of revolution are so contentious: the designation of 'revolution' seems to confer normative weight. This is certainly not my intention in delineating the universe of revolutionary episodes being examined in this study. Instead, my purpose is to be clear about which episodes are included in the dataset and why.

## (International) counterrevolution

Perhaps because comparatively less has been written on counterrevolution, the phenomenon commands greater academic consensus regarding its definition than does revolution.[24] Most definitions of counterrevolution converge on it being an attempt to prevent, halt or reverse a revolution. For example, Mayer describes counterrevolution as "resistance to revolution" (Mayer, 2000: 46), while Halliday (1999: 207) defines the concept as "a policy of trying to reverse a

[24] The concept of counterrevolution emerged centuries after the political conception of revolution, being bound up with reactionary responses to the French Revolution in the 1790s (Bisley, 2004: 52; Calvert, 1990: 2; Halliday, 1999: 207-8; Mayer, 2000: 46; see also Mulholland, 2017: 372).

revolution, and, by extension, to policies designed to prevent revolutionary movement that have already gained some momentum from coming to power." Bisley (2004: 51) defines counterrevolution as "efforts to overthrow a revolutionary state", while Allinson (2019a: 327), inspired by Halliday (1999: 19), sees counterrevolution as policies "to reverse, contain, or prevent a revolution." Slater and Smith (2016: 1475) adopt a slightly more restrictive definition of counterrevolution as "collective and reactive efforts to defend the status quo and its varied range of dominant elites against a credible threat to overturn them from below." The definition used by Clarke (2022: 17) is similarly narrow: "an irregular effort in the aftermath of a successful revolution to restore a version of the pre-revolutionary political regime."

I adopt a Hallidayian definition of counterrevolution as any attempt to prevent or reverse a revolution (Halliday, 1999: 19). Crucial to this definition is its expansive temporal scope including both pre-emptive and post-hoc attempts to crush revolution. Some scholars focus only on one temporality. For example, Bisley (2004: 51-2) and Clarke (2022: 18-19) focus on counterrevolutionary responses to successful revolutions (post-hoc), while Allinson (2019a: 321-3) focuses on attempts to prevent revolutions from succeeding in the first place (pre-emptive), arguing that this temporality has been neglected. I have chosen to capture both temporalities as pre-emptive and post-hoc counterrevolutions are both integral parts of the counterrevolutionary picture. To cover only pre-emptive counterrevolution misses major counterrevolutionary moments such as Washington's attempts to dislodge the Nicaraguan Sandinistas from power, while covering only post-hoc counterrevolution misses Washington (and its coalition partners') attempts to prevent Islamic State toppling regimes in Iraq and Syria. As per the dataset accompanying this dissertation, 60% of revolutionary movements that faced great power counterrevolution never seized power. To only focus on post-hoc counterrevolution would miss all of these episodes. Capturing both post-hoc and pre-emptive counterrevolution in the dataset also allows temporality to be used as a variable in explaining great power counterrevolution: is great power counterrevolution more likely in situations where the revolutionaries have seized power, or in situations where the revolutionaries are fighting to win power? This variable is included in analyses in the robustness checks in Appendix B.

A second key feature of my definition is that it includes both failed and successful attempts at counterrevolution (Allinson, 2019a: 326-7). Indeed, most attempts at counterrevolution are unsuccessful (Clarke, 2022: 4; Halliday, 1999: 224). A third thing to note is that counterrevolution, like revolution, is a *process* rather than an event (Allinson, 2019a: 326-7; Mulholland, 2017: 370), with counterrevolutionary actions sometimes spanning decades. Finally, the chosen definition is

consciously broad, to account for the non-monolithic nature of counterrevolution both within and between counterrevolutionary movements (Allinson, 2019a: 329 and 2022: 65; de Smet, 2014: 12-13).

The chosen minimalist definition of counterrevolution is in purposeful contrast to others that attach additional criteria beyond attempts to prevent or reverse revolution. For example: Halliday (1999: 208) equates counterrevolutionary ideologies with conservatism; Calvert (1990: 18, 31) adds the use of force to his conceptualisation of counterrevolution to mirror his definition of revolution; Clarke (2022: 23) includes the criterion that counterrevolutionary actions must be irregular; while Allinson (2022: 24-5) sees counterrevolution as being popularly based in society, mirroring revolutionary mobilisations. These additional criteria raise the question of whether definitions of counterrevolution should in fact mirror definitions of revolution. Must counterrevolution involve mass mobilization, in the service of regime type change, via irregular means? I argue not. I reach this assessment not only because to do otherwise would make it virtually impossible to distinguish revolution from counterrevolution (a conclusion reached by Calvert, 1990: 31), but because focusing on *international* counterrevolution necessitates such a manoeuvre. My definition of counterrevolution is agnostic about mass mobilisation (because it can be carried out by foreign armies); agnostic about irregularity (because it can involve legal methods such as diplomatic sanctions); and partially agnostic about regime type change (counterrevolutionary states may seek the maintenance of existing regimes if the revolutionary movement hasn't yet seized power). My definition is also agnostic about ideology, making it possible to conceive of counterrevolutionary responses to fascist revolution (for example Russia's support of the Republican regime during the Spanish Civil War 1936-9). That counterrevolution is not simply revolution in reverse makes the two processes 'asymmetric opposites'[25] – counterrevolution is the antithesis of revolution in its aims, but this does not mean that counterrevolution mirrors revolution's definitional criteria. Indeed, several differences have recently been mapped between revolutionary and counterrevolutionary process, from pace and geographic spread to the bounded rationality of revolutionary versus counterrevolutionary actors (Weyland, 2016). Mapping the differences (and commonalities) between revolution and counterrevolution is an important area of future research.

So, having defined counterrevolution, what then is *international* counterrevolution? International counterrevolution is an attempt by actors beyond the state in which the revolutionary episode is unfolding to prevent or reverse the revolution. In other words, who the counterrevolutionary actors are is crucial in determining whether a counterrevolution is international or domestic (or

[25] Pestel (2017: 4) uses the term 'asymmetric other.'

both). Domestic counterrevolutionary actors include: "reactionary elites" (in the context of 1848 and the Arab Spring) (Weyland, 2016: 228); nobility, the clergy and royalists (in the context of the French Revolution) (Bukovansky, 2002: 159); and elites acting in concert with popular movements (in the context of Egypt 2011) (Allinson, 2019a: 327-8). Domestic counterrevolutionary actors may even include disillusioned members of the original revolutionary movement (on this phenomenon in the French Revolution see Bukovansky, 2002: 159, and in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution see Allinson, 2019a: 330, 337).[26]

In contrast to these domestic actors, international counterrevolutionaries include multinational corporations (for example the United Fruit Company after the 1944 Guatemalan Revolution, see Yashar, 1999: 207); foreign fighters (for example the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War 1936-1939, see Malet, 2013: 92-126); transnational ruling classes (for example in support of the 'Whites' during the Russian Civil War, 1917-1922, see Allinson, 2019a: 329), and of course, states (Bisley, 2004: 52; Halliday, 1999: 210-11). This latter category, and a particular subset – the great powers – has been the focus of analyses of international counterrevolution to date (see for example Bisley 2004: 52, 56; Davis, 2011: 7-8; Kim, 1970: 134). This focus may be because great powers bear the brunt of revolutionary impacts (Mann, 2001: 684), or because great powers are the most frequent counterrevolutionary actor in the international sphere.[27] This dissertation follows the precedent set in the literature by focusing on the great powers, noting that other international actors offer fascinating leads for future research. A second reason for focusing on great powers, other than precedent, is practical – great powers are a (relatively) clearly delimited subset of international actors, which makes their analysis feasible within a single project. So, who are the great powers? There is a degree of convergence as to who the great powers have been empirically over time (Wight, 1978: 4). Table 1 below maps several prominent approaches to great power identification.

[26] Some definitions of domestic counterrevolution are tied to which societal sectors are involved. For Slater and Smith (2016: 1475) counterrevolutionary mobilisation must be "collective" and in the service of "dominant elites".

[27] In terms of the related phenomena of intervention and forcible institutional promotion, great powers have been the most prolific actors (Bull, 1984: 1; Lawson and Tardelli, 2013: 1235, 1242; Owen, 2002: 376).

**Table 1.** Great powers

| | *Gunitsky, 2017* | *Owen, 2002* | *CoW, 2016* | *Waltz, 1979* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | 1898-2000 | 1901-2002 | 1898-2016 | 1910- |
| Russia/USSR | 1816-1991 | 1701-1900<br>1917-1991 | 1816-1917<br>1922-2016 | 1800- |
| Great Britain | 1816-1945 | 1701-1940s | 1816-2016 | 1700-1944 |
| France | 1816-1941 | 1701-1940s | 1816-1940<br>1945-2016 | 1700-1944 |
| Prussia/Germany | 1871-1945 | 1701-1945 | 1825-1945<br>1991-2016 | 1800-1944 |
| Japan | 1905-45 | - | 1895-1945<br>1991-2016 | 1910-1944 |
| Austria-Hungary | - | 1701-1900 | 1816-1918 | 1700-1910 |
| Italy | - | | 1860-1943 | 1875-1944 |
| China | - | | 1950-2016 | |

Taking a consensus position between the Correlates of War (2016), Gunitsky (2017), Owen (2002) and Waltz (1979: 162) I identify five great powers in the pre-Cold War era: France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the US; two great powers in the Cold War era: the US and the Soviet Union; and one great power in the post-Cold War era: the US. The crucial point in identifying the great powers is that they comprise the top tier of the power hierarchy in a given era; or in Bull's phraseology, "the front rank", such "that there is no class of power that is superior to them" (Bull, 1977: 195). France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the US were the most powerful states in the period 1900-1944. The USSR and US were the most powerful states in the period 1945-1989, while the US was the most powerful state from 1990. Labels other than 'great power' have been used to describe these states. For example, Westad (2005: 403) uses the term 'hyperpower' to describe the US' uniquely dominant position in the contemporary era, while Braumoeller (2013: 80) sees the US and USSR as becoming so powerful during the Cold War such as to earn the title 'superpowers', rather than just 'great powers.'

There have been different approaches as to whether 'superpowers' and 'great powers' are synonyms or distinct categories. This is in part due to the historical evolution in the way these terms have been applied. The most powerful states in the system at the turn of the 20th century were termed 'great powers'; the most powerful two states in the system during the Cold War were 'superpowers'; while the most powerful state in the post-1989 era has been termed a 'hyperpower' (Falkner and Buzan, 2022: 17). Waltz and other Realists saw 'great', 'super' and 'hyper' powers

more as synonyms, with 'superpower' being the appropriate label when the number of great power poles was small (Falkner and Buzan, 2022: 17). In contrast, Buzan and Wæver (2003) have argued that superpower and great power are distinct taxonomic categories (also see Falkner and Buzan, 2022: 18). This debate aside, the focus of this dissertation is on the most powerful state actors in the system during any given era (whether labelled 'great powers', 'super powers' or 'hyperpowers'). When I use the term 'great power' I am referring to this top echelon of states, whether it comprises one, two or several states of comparable, but unsurpassed, power. This is a polarity approach to determining great power status, reflecting the period of multipolarity until 1945, bipolarity until 1989, and unipolarity from 1990.

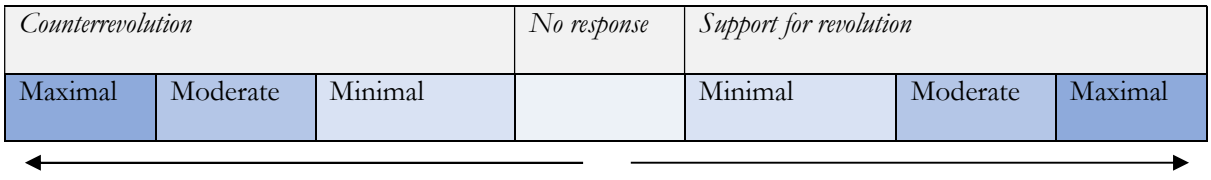
So what does it mean to be a great power? A commonly used measure is military power. For example: Mearsheimer (2014: 2) defines great power status in terms of "relative military capability"; Bull (1997: 195) sees "military strength" as a necessary (but not sufficient) condition of great power status; while Owen (2002: 391) focuses on military manpower. Military might is also foregrounded by Wight (1978: 52-3), who focuses on a state's ability to contemplate war with another powerful state as the relevant indicator of great power status. Kennedy (1989: 539), in a similar vein, defines a great power as "a state capable of holding its own against any other nation." Other scholars take a more expansive approach to capabilities beyond just the military domain, with Walz (1979: 31) considering "size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence". Other expansive approaches include the proportion of the system's capabilities possessed by a state (for example more than 10%, see Geller and Singer, 1998: 177), or a state possessing a "preponderance of material resources" including raw materials, capital, markets and high value goods production (Keohane, 2005: 32). Other approaches to defining great powers involve perception. For example, the Correlates of War project examines a state's reputation and status as perceived by other states in the system (Small and Singer, 1982; Singer, 1987). Bull (1977: 196) emphasises the social dimensions of being a great power, deeming great powers to be those states that are "recognised by others to have, and conceived by their own leaders and peoples to have, certain special rights and duties" (also see Zala, 2017). Despite these different approaches to measuring power, there has been "general agreement about who the great powers of a period are" (Waltz, 1979: 131), with it being easier to identify who the great powers are in a given era than giving a definition of what great powers are (Wight, 1979: 41).

Of course, many counterrevolutionary attempts involve domestic and international actors acting in concert with one another. Examples include Austria, Prussia and domestic conservatives in France trying to undermine the French Revolution (Bukovasnky, 2002: 159; Goldstone, 1991: 422; Halliday, 1999: 209-10); US support of Cuban exiles in mounting the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion

(Lachappelle, et al., 2020: 566); and Saudi Arabian support of the Bahraini regime in crushing the 2011 uprising (Weyland, 2016: 228). For the purposes of my dataset, international counterrevolution is deemed to have taken place if a great power engages in attempts to prevent or reverse a revolution, irrespective of domestic involvement (although there almost always is domestic complicity). While the existing counterrevolutions literature has focused on domestic actors, with international actors seen as playing a supporting role (e.g. Clarke, 2022; Weyland, 2016: 228), this dissertation inverts such a logic by bringing international actors front and centre. This foregrounding of international actors, and specifically states, is a crucial manoeuvre in understanding the relationship between revolution and international order.

Great powers tend to have sizeable counterrevolutionary repertoires at their disposal, which can be sifted into varying degrees of intensity depending on the specific methods chosen (see Figure 3 below).

**Figure 3.** Great power responses to revolution




'Maximal' counterrevolution involves the great power committing their own troops to prevent or reverse a revolution. 'Moderate' counterrevolution involves the great power supplying local groups for the same ends (e.g. arms, training and other military aid). 'Minimal' counterrevolution involves diplomatic efforts to stifle the revolutionary episode such as economic sanctions or the denial of formal recognition.[28] This counterrevolutionary scale can be extended to include great power actions in support of a revolution. 'Maximal' support is where the great power deploys their own forces to help a revolutionary movement topple the incumbent regime; 'moderate' support involves great powers supplying the revolutionaries with arms or other military aid; 'minimal' support involves diplomatic measures such as granting recognition to the revolutionaries or placing sanctions on the *ancien régime*. The scale in Figure 3 includes only concrete great power actions, rather than official statements or rhetoric. As such, public pronouncements of sympathy for, or opprobrium against, a revolution are not included in the 'minimal' category.

The relationship between revolution and counterrevolution

[28] For other schemas grading counterrevolutionary action, see Bisley (2004: 52-3). See also Halliday's (1999: 210-11) discussion of various counterrevolutionary means employed by states.

The tangled relationship between revolution and counterrevolution complicates efforts to distinguish one from the other. Lawson (2019: 34) notes that "revolution and counter-revolution are less two entities than one," while Mayer (2000: 7) states that "revolution and counterrevolution ask to be conceived and examined in terms of each other". Calvert (1990: 18) even goes so far as to say "[c]ounter-revolution is revolution". Examples of the difficulties in differentiating revolution from counterrevolution are that some scholars label Franco's 1936 rebellion and Pinochet's 1973 coup as counterrevolutions (see for example Halliday, 1999: 210), whereas others see fascism as an archetypal revolutionary ideology (see for example Mann, 2001: 685). Allinson (2022: 24-5) frames Islamic State as a counterrevolutionary movement, while other scholars see it as a revolutionary movement (see for example Dixon and Lawson 2022; Goldstone and Alimi, 2021; Kalyvas, 2015; Lawson, 2019: 235; Stewart, 2021: 1-4; Walt, 2015). Part of this ambiguity stems from the fact that revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries can share ideologies, actors, methods, and look to the past as well as to the future in reordering social, political and economic relations. An example of shared ideologies is the deployment of Nasserism by both the 25 January revolutionaries and the counterrevolutionary coalition (Allinson, 2019a: 336-7). In terms of actors, revolutionary democracy movement *Kefaya* was the wellspring of the leadership of counterrevolutionary *Tammarod* (Allinson, 2019a: 337). In terms of methods, pro-Mubarak elites used the same tactics as their 25 January Revolution adversaries: "street level mobilization and episodes of collective violence" (Ketchley, 2017: 120). Being "reactionary and forward-looking at the same time" is not just the preserve of counterrevolution (Slater and Smith, 2016: 1476). Revolutionaries frequently draw on the past in their attempts to shape the present and the future (Lawson, 2019: 39-40). Trying to create a novel future while drawing heavily on ideas and symbols from the past was a key feature of the 1979 Iranian Revolution as well as other attempts at 'revolution-restoration' such as those by al-Qaeda (Beck et al., 2022: 200-2; Calvert, 1990: 31; Dixon and Lawson, 2022; Lawson, 2019: 235).

Differentiation between revolution and counterrevolution is further hampered by the almost universal impulse to self-reference as a revolutionary while tarring opponents with the brush of counterrevolution: the Chinese Communist Party was quick to label student agitators in 1989 as counterrevolutionaries (Calvert, 1990: 78); Egypt's *Tamarrod* painted themselves as defenders of 25 January Revolution (Allinson, 2019a: 337; Ketchley, 2017: 103); and *Pravda* declared the Hungarian rebels in 1956 part of "a reactionary counterrevolutionary underground" (Bromke, 2013: 127).

There are three main ways of distinguishing revolution from counterrevolution in the literature: on the basis of ideology, on the basis of actors, and on the basis of sequencing. An example of the first approach is represented by Arno Mayer, who uses ideology to differentiate revolution from

counterrevolution. For Mayer (1971), fascism is equated with counterrevolution, and by implication, progressive forces with revolution. Such an approach reflects "a bias within the study of revolutions towards self-consciously progressive movements" (Lawson 2019: 236). A focus on progressive movements misses the profound ways fascists have sought to upend both domestic and international status quos. For example, the Falangist faction of Franco's Spanish Nationalists sought to build "a new world system, a New Order of nationalistic regimes, hierarchical meritocracies led by charismatic leaders and inspired by socially revolutionary ideologies" (Bowen, 2000: 1-2). If there is a such a thing as fascist revolution, then we must allow the conceptual possibility of progressive counterrevolution (Weimar Germany and its counterrevolutionary suppression of Hitler's 1923 Beer Hall Putsch is one such example). Having said that, counterrevolution more often than not does draw on right-wing-ideologies (Clarke, 2022: 31). Although counterrevolution does tend to ally with right-wing projects, this does not mean that it necessarily does. Acknowledging the full ideological spectrum of revolution means acknowledging the full ideological spectrum of its opposite, counterrevolution. This makes ideology a flawed means of distinguishing revolution from counterrevolution.

A second way of distinguishing revolution from counterrevolution is by focusing on actors. According to this view, 'the masses' engage in revolution while 'elites' engage in counterrevolution. This is the approach adopted by Mayer (2000: 7), who sees counterrevolutionaries, by definition, as elites.[29] While this is frequently the case, it isn't always. Revolutionary coalitions can comprise religious leaders (e.g. Poland 1956), economic and political elites (e.g. Cameroon 1960-70), and segments of the military (e.g. Bolivia 1946). Revolutionary leaders are often drawn from elite circles: Simón Bolívar was born into an aristocratic family flush with mining wealth, while Francisco Madero hailed from one of the richest families in Mexico. Although elites often want to protect the status quo, this is a tendency rather than a rule. Just as elites sometimes foment revolution, non-elites sometimes ferment counterrevolution (as was the case in the Vendée during the French Revolution, see Slater and Smith, 2016: 1476; Tilly, 1964). Given that revolutionaries can be drawn from the upper echelons of a social order and counterrevolutionaries can be drawn from lower down, the mobilisation of elite actors is not a useful criterion in distinguishing revolutionaries from counterrevolutionaries.

The third way of distinguishing revolution from counterrevolution is sequencing: a counterrevolution must follow a revolution (whether attempted or successful). While

[29] For Mayer, peasants resisting revolutionaries are 'anti-revolutionaries', not counterrevolutionaries (Mayer, 2000: 7, 57).

counterrevolution isn't always conservative, and counterrevolutionary actors aren't always elites, counterrevolution is always responding to revolution. For me, the two bare conditions for a mobilisation to be deemed counterrevolutionary are that: i) the mobilisation must be targeting processes that are revolutionary; ii) and the aims of the mobilisation must be to maintain or to return to the status quo ante (broadly construed, given the impossibility of a perfect return to the past, see Halliday, 1999: 208; Clarke, 2022: 24-5 and Said, 2021).

Regarding the first condition – that a counterrevolution must be responding to a revolution – seems obvious, but there are several examples of actions being described as counterrevolutionary which are unanchored from a revolutionary episode. Pinochet and Franco are cases in point. Pinochet was not reversing a revolution, he was reversing the progressive policies of Allende's elected government (albeit by invoking the spectre of revolution, although a revolution had not in fact occurred). Similarly, the Spanish republican government that preceded Franco's was not revolutionary in any conventional sense of the term. If Franco and Pinochet were not responding to revolutions, then they cannot be considered counterrevolutionary.[30]

Regarding the second condition, the key point is that counterrevolution isn't just *any* targeting of a revolutionary movement. Revolutionary movements, like counterrevolutionary movements, may also seek to challenge other revolutionaries. For example, the Bolshevik's toppling of the February Revolution provisional government does not make the Bolsheviks counterrevolutionaries. Nor does the communist ousting of the liberal Aster revolutionary government in Hungary in 1919. The Bolsheviks and Béla Kun's Hungarian communists wanted to build a new political order, not return to the pre-revolutionary order. Clarke (2022: 17-18) uses the concept of 'second revolutions' to distinguish these processes from counterrevolutions.

What, then, is the difference between a counterrevolution and a failed revolution? Although many failed revolutions are successful counterrevolutions (Allinson, 2022: 3), these two processes are not one and the same thing. A successful counterrevolution necessarily means a failed revolution, but a failed revolution is not always the result of a successful counterrevolution. Counterrevolution is one reason amongst several that revolutions fail. For example, revolutionary coalitions may disintegrate via infighting or disband because of global crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic or

[30] Of course, one may disagree with my definition of revolution and see the elected governments of Allende and Republican Spain in the 1930s as revolutionary. This would be grounds for treating Franco and Pinochet as counterrevolutionary. The crucial point is that counterrevolution must correspond to events classed as revolutionary (however one defines it), and this must be consistent. As elected regimes (instances of 'regular politics') are excluded from my definition of revolution, it would be inconsistent for me to treat Franco and Pinochet as counterrevolutionaries. In other words, how one defines counterrevolution is tied to how one defines revolution.

international wars. Revolutionaries might be defeated by alternative revolutionary projects (e.g. the 1917 Russian February Revolution was defeated by the Bolsheviks). A coup might topple the *ancien régime,* undermining the original impetus for the revolutionary project with the target regime no longer in existence (e.g. *La Violencia* in Columbia, 1948-1953). Revolutionaries might also sign peace agreements with the incumbent regime, going on to play important roles in government without bringing about radical political transformation (e.g. the Nepalese Maoists, 1996-2006). Further, these various reasons for failure might operate in conjunction with one another, including counterrevolution. Treating failure as the dependent variable and counterrevolution as an independent variable is crucial in understanding why some revolutionary projects collapse and others succeed. To view revolutionary failure as synonymous with counterrevolutionary success obscures this causal relationship as well as the role of other factors.

Relationship between international counterrevolution and other phenomena

The closest relative to great power counterrevolution is intervention. Intervention is usually defined as outside forces interfering in the affairs of a given state. For example, Westad (2005: 3) defines intervention as "any concerted and state-led effort by one country to determine the political direction of another country", while Bull (1986: 1) defines it as "dictatorial or coercive interference, by an outside party or parties, in the sphere of jurisdiction of a sovereign state, or more broadly of an independent political community". Like counterrevolution, intervention can take many different forms, including military, ideological and economic intervention (Tardelli, 2013: 23). So how do great power counterrevolution and intervention relate to one another? Great power counterrevolution is a *type* of intervention – it is intervention in a revolutionary episode for the specific purposes of preventing or reversing the revolution. This means that the dynamics and rationale of great power counterrevolution are likely to differ from the broader phenomenon of intervention, which as an umbrella concept subsumes underneath it myriad purposes and logics.

## International order

The third and final concept to be examined is international order. The concept of international order is rich and complex, but as a corollary there is a high degree of contention as to what the term means. Key axes of debate include whether order exists at the level of the system as a whole, or whether orders are sub-systemic; whether order is purposive or not; and if order is purposive,

what those purposes are (e.g. the avoidance of war, see Hall and Paul, 1999: 2).[31] Supervening upon these debates is the overarching, three-way contest between order as patterns of behaviour, order as the mechanisms generating this behaviour, and order as the group of states whose behaviour is being regulated. Each of these three approaches to international order shall be elaborated upon in turn.

Hedley Bull's seminal *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order and World Politics* (1977) is the foundational elucidation of order as patterns of behaviour. Bull (1977: 8) famously defined order as "a pattern of activity that sustains the elementary or primary goals of the society of states, or international society". Order can be maintained, disrupted and restored (Bull, 1977: 314). Some groups of states may exhibit order (international societies), while others may not (international systems) (Bull, 1977: 10, 13). Other scholars in the Bullian tradition include Tang (2016: 34 and 2018: 31-2), Cooley and Nexon (2020: 31) and Rosenau (1992: 22). These scholars see international order as "the degree of predictability (regularity) of what is going on within a social system"; as "stable patterns of behaviour", and as "routinized arrangements through which world affairs are conducted" respectively. Other scholars that are inspired by Bull's definition include Goh (2013: 7), Hall and Paul (1999: 2) and McKinlay and Little (1986: 15).

A second group of scholars see international order as the rules, practices, procedures, institutions, or in other words, 'mechanisms', that regulate relations amongst political units. Ikenberry (2001: 23), for example, defines political order as "the "governing" arrangements among a group of states, including its fundamental rules, principles, and institutions". This definition has influenced other scholars, for example forming the basis of the definition used by Colgan (2021: 34). Other scholars in the 'order-as-rules' camp include Kissinger (2014: 9), who describes order as "a set of commonly accepted rules that define the limits of permissible action and a balance of power that enforces restraint where rules break down, preventing one political unit from subjugating all others." Phillips (2010: 5), in a similar vein, defines international orders as "the constellation of constitutional norms and fundamental institutions through which co-operation is cultivated and conflict contained between different political communities". The crucial distinction between this approach and Bull's definition is that Bull sees international order as the thing that is being generated by these rules, not the rules themselves: "Order, it is contended here, does depend for its maintenance upon rules…" (Bull, 1977: xiii, 7). For Bull, rules produce order. For Ikenberry, rules are order.

[31] For an excellent overview of the concept of international order, including key debates, see Lascurettes and Poznansky (2021).

The third approach is to conceptualise international order as a group of political units that are bound by certain rules, ideas and linkages. An example of this approach is that of Lascurettes (2020: 6), who defines order as "actors of a system regularly observing common rules." Reus-Smit (2017: 875) also adopts an actor-centric view of international order, defining it as "systemic configurations of political authority, made up of multiple units of authority, arranged according to some organizing principle: sovereignty, suzerainty, heteronomy, or some combination" (also see Phillips and Reus-Smit, 2020a: 9 and 2020b: 25-6). Studies of regional orders also tend to view international order in this way – as systems of actors. Prominent examples include Phillips and Sharman (2015: 436, 446) on the Indian Ocean order, and Zarakol's (2020) understanding of the Ottoman Empire (also see Zarakol, 2022).

These three conceptions of international order: as patterns of behaviour, as mechanisms for regulating patterns of behaviour, and as groups of political units behaving in certain ways, are of course closely related (see Figure 4 below). Most conceptualisations of international order involve these three components, they just differ on which aspect they make the subject in their definitions (i.e. which element is the order).[32] Although Bull (1977: 10, 13) defines order as patterns of behaviour, he still conceptualises the group of political units that exhibit such behaviour ('international societies'). For Reus-Smit (2017: 875), what Bull (1977: 10, 13) refers to as international societies are in fact international orders.

**Figure 4.** Conceptions of international order


Although this distinction might seem like an exercise in semantic hair-splitting, it matters in substantive terms. Patterns of behaviour, rules, and groups of states are quite different things. To put it differently, rules governing states are not the same thing as states governed by rules. If order is a group of states governed by certain rules, it makes sense to talk of the US-led order. However,

[32] There aren't just differences in what is made the subject between studies, but within studies too. For example, in one part of his book Lascurette's defines order as "actors of a system regularly observing common rules", whereas in another he defines "order as a set of observed rules" (compare Lascurettes, 2020: 6 with 2020: 12).

the US as the leader of a pattern of behaviour is more ambiguous. Similarly, talking about interactions between regional orders makes more sense when thinking about groups of states than when talking about interacting patterns of behaviour. A discussion of diversity regimes (Reus-Smit, 2017) in regulating differences within patterns of behaviour is also somewhat awkward, as is talking about patterns of behaviour as hierarchical or exclusive.

In the context of these three competing conceptualisations of international order, I adopt the actor-centric approach of Lascurettes (2020: 6), Reus-Smit (2017: 875) and Phillips and Reus-Smit (2020a: 9 and 2020b: 25-6). International orders are groups of political units, bound by certain practices, institutions, ideas and linkages. Following the precedent of Adler-Nissen and Zarakol (2021: 621-2), Barnett (2019), and Lascurettes (2020: 23-4), I draw on the analogy of a club.[33] Orders have leaders, members and rules. They have joining and expulsion procedures. Clubs may compete and clash with one another, and they may emerge and disintegrate over time. The members of clubs enjoy various privileges, but they also must make certain sacrifices. In further keeping with Phillips and Reus-Smit (2020a and 2020b: 30), Reus-Smit (2017: 853) and Lascurettes (2020), I see international orders as hierarchical and heterogenous (i.e. the constitutive political units are not always uniform). International orders are constructed (i.e. the groupings of political units must be created and maintained) (Phillips and Reus-Smit, 2020b: 32), and they are excluding (i.e. premised on the differentiation between in and out groups) (Lascurettes, 2020: 8, 10-11). International orders can be stable or unstable (Phillips and Reus-Smit, 2020b: 32) – as distinct from Bull (1977: xi) who differentiates between order and disorder on the basis of stability. Crucially, for the central argument of this dissertation, actors not only join orders, but can *leave* orders. An actor-centric (rather than a pattern-centric or rules-centric) approach to international order is critical here. Patterns of behaviour can't have members; it isn't possible to leave a rule. Conceiving of international orders as configurations of actors opens up a broad array of analytic possibilities, such as the possibility of order exit.

International orders, defined as groups of political units bound by certain practices, institutions, ideas and linkages, allows for the existence of multiple different order types. Order members can be grouped together on the basis of geography (e.g. the Indian Ocean order), values (e.g. the liberal international order), degrees of subordination (e.g. the British imperial order), and issue areas (e.g. the nuclear non-proliferation order). Order builders (and leaders) tend to be great powers (Keohane, 1980; Lascurettes, 2020: 3, 7), although this is not always the case (see for example

[33] It would seem that the concept of international order is ripe for analogy and metaphor. Order can be egg cartons or billiard balls (Ikenberry, 2020: 329 fn. 69), or ecosystems (Cooley and Nexon, 2020: 16).

Colgan, 2021: 34-5 on the role of non-state actors in constructing oil governance orders). The prevalence of great powers as order makers is because they possess the requisite power to establish 'clubs', impose their preferences, regulate its members and incentivise rule abidance (Lascurettes, 2020: 7; Reus-Smit, 2017: 852). A classic example of a great power order is the Soviet order during the Cold War – the order's constituent political units had strong trade and security relations, norms regarding foreign policy formulation (i.e. deference to Moscow) and the common (although by no means universal) ideological underpinnings of socialism. The order was deeply hierarchical, with the Soviet Union using threats, coercion and violence to discipline its members, and incentives to recruit new members.

The above conceptualisation of international order draws upon several theoretical traditions in International Relations (as do many scholars in their treatments of international order, see for example Lascurettes, 2020: 11 and Phillips, 2010: 9). Giving primacy to great powers as order makers and maintainers is consonant with Hegemonic Stability Theory (Colgan, 2021: 2) and Classical Realism (Lascurettes, 2020: 8-9); the role of norms and ideas in binding states together in orders resonates with constructivism (Lascurettes, 2020: 11); while the 'club' analogy draws on the 'social' elements of the English School approach.

How order is defined matters for conceptualising revolutionary challenges to international order. There are at least two different ways of conceptualising the challenge that revolutions pose that relate to how international order is defined. The first entails change over continuity. In other words, a revolutionary state can be said to upend international order when it *changes* alliances, ideologies, power distributions or international organisation membership. According to this view, revolutionaries challenge international order by pursuing transformation at the expense of the status quo. To illustrate, the 1989 Central and Eastern European revolutions mounted a profound challenge to international order. Hungary upended its existing alliance configurations, changed its ideological stance, and altered its membership in international organisations (Eszenszky, 2007: 45, 47-8). This approach to revolutionary challenge resonates with the Bullian conceptualisation of international order. Order, as stable patterns of behaviour, can be disrupted by change, or a breakdown in patterns altogether. According to this view, any revolutionary attempt to transform the international status quo, whether liberal or communist, whether joining NATO or exiting NATO, amounts to a challenge to international order. This conceptualisation of order challenge necessitates an understanding of order in the singular. That is, revolutions are seen to clash or converge with *the* international order (see for example Bisley, 2004; Armstrong, 1993). Any revolution that radically and suddenly changes the international status quo presents a challenge to international order (irrespective of what direction this change is in).

A second conceptualisation of revolutionary challenge is that of subverting global ordering projects. Revolutionary challenges entail undermining the ideologies, institutions or power hierarchies structuring an order. Revolutionary support for an order entails the inverse. According to this conceptualisation of revolutionary challenge, the 1989 Central and Eastern European revolutions were order supporting: Hungary re-established ties with the capitalist camp, espoused a liberal-democratic ideology, and joined Western-associated international organisations. Although the 1989 revolutions involved significant *change*, they *supported* the liberal capitalist order. Similarly, revolutions that pursue international *continuity* can simultaneously *subvert* an order. For example, the Polish October uprising (1956) saw continuity of Poland's membership in the Warsaw Pact and ongoing espousal of communist ideology. This continuity meant subversion of the US-led capitalist order. In other words, continuity can challenge certain actors' ordering projects (and affirm others). This conceptualisation of order challenge resonates with the actor-centric view of international order, and invites the conceptualisation of global orders in the plural. In other words, order challenge is seen as perspectival, not absolute. Revolutionaries might challenge one international order, while simultaneously supporting another. According to this approach, order challenge is in the eye of the beholder. This is the approach adopted in this dissertation, given the associated commitments of defining international order as an actor-centric 'club'.

This section empirically anchors the conceptual discussion of international orders that has taken place above. I defined international orders as: *groups of political units, bound by certain practices, institutions, ideas and linkages*. I used the analogy of a club, describing orders as having leader(s), members, and rules, with their membership defined in contradistinction to those who are excluded (see Lascurettes, 2020). So, how can this definition of international order be applied in empirical terms? What orders have structured the twentieth and twenty-first centuries? This section is dedicated to answering this question.

Far from attempting to map all international orders that existed between 1900 and 2020, this dissertation is concerned with a particular order type: great power orders. So how do we know a great power order when we see it? A good starting point is to identify the great power "order builders" (Phillips and Reus-Smit, 2020b: 30) or "order architects" (Lascurettes', 2020: 4). Drawing on the rich existing literature on great power orders, Figure 5 is my interpretation of the lifespan of these orders between 1900 and 2020.

**Figure 5.** Great power orders, 1900-2020[34]


The 'Concert order' refers to the Concert of Europe. Forged in the Vienna Settlement of 1815 and reaching its heyday in the mid-nineteenth century, by 1900 the Concert was in its twilight.[35] The founding order leaders were Austria, Britain, Prussia and Russia, with France joining in 1818 (Lascurettes, 2020: 99; Mitzen, 2013: 4). Key principles patterning the order were the supremacy and special status of the great powers, and their 'acting in concert' to manage change, stability and crisis via consultation and multilateralism (Adanir, 2005: 396, 402; Lascurettes, 2020: 96; Mitzen, 2013: 4; Schroeder, 1986: 1). While frequently described as a 'European order' (e.g. Adanir, 2005: 396), the Concert cannot be neatly separated from its colonial entanglements. While the great power leaders were certainly European, its members comprised colonies, quasi-colonies and independent states on other continents. The regulatory reach of the Concert extended well beyond Europe: non-European members were the subject of Concert deliberations regarding intervention, just as were European states (Soutou, 2000: 331-2).

[34] The 'birth' and 'death' dates of orders are not always easy to capture. Even ostensibly clearcut 'big bangs' often belie more complex processes of emergence and retreat (de Carvalho et al., 2011: 740-1). For example, the 'collapse' of the Soviet Union was not a moment, but a process, that unfolded over several years (or even longer).

[35] Some scholars see the Concert of Europe enduring up until the outbreak of WWI (e.g. Crampton, 1974; Soutou, 2000: 332-3), whereas others date its demise to the second half of the eighteenth century (eg. Schroeder, 1986: 2; Slantchev, 2005: 565). Lascurettes (2020: 130) occupies a middle position arguing that after Crimea (1953-56) "[a] shell of the Concert order… remained in place up until the First World War."

In 1900, where this dissertation begins, the waning Concert order was a deeply hierarchical, multitrack system, with great powers controlling the destiny of weaker states. The Concert's origins as a system to contain revolutionary challenges had ominous overtones for states pursuing revolutionary change at the turn of the twentieth century. Given the existence of one great power order between 1900 and 1914, there were limited opportunities for revolutionaries to engage in order exit. Order exit during this period meant isolation – life as an international outcast. Unsurprisingly, no revolutionaries between 1900 and 1914 chose this fate. Even revolutionaries who were fervently opposed to the injustice of the great power order were resigned to remaining within it. An example is the Persian constitutional revolutionaries, 1908-11. In working to end the predatory meddling of Russia and Britain in Persian affairs, the revolutionaries sought the help of another great power in that order: the US (Ghaneabassiri, 2002: 157). Unsurprisingly, the US declined to help (Ghaneabassiri, 2002: 158-60). There was limited room to manoeuvre within the sole great power order, and limited options to effect change from without. Instead, the revolutionaries (unsuccessfully) sought help from within the order in which they found themselves.

This all changed with the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. This was the founding moment of the Soviet order. The Bolsheviks were swift to try and expand the order's membership, seeking to export revolution across Europe and in parts of Asia (Newman, 2017: 98, 102-3). The Communist Revolts in Germany (1919) were the second attempt at order exit in the twentieth century (the Bolshevik Revolution being the first). Amidst the tumultuous emergence of the Soviet order, another great power order was being born: the Wilsonian order. The institutional underpinnings of this order were the League of Nations, founded in 1920. Established in the aftermath of WWI, one of its key goals was the legal-institutional management of discord and power distributions amongst its members (Ikenberry, 2001: 117). The victorious Allied powers were the leadership core of this new order, binding order members with a series of "rules and obligations" (Ikenberry, 2001: 117-18). Relations within the order were hierarchically organised – the principle of self-determination enshrined in the Covenant of the League of Nations allowed the Allied powers to maintain control over most of their colonial possessions (albeit allowing greater autonomy and with a view to independence in future) (Lascurettes, 2020: 137-8). The rhetoric of inclusion surrounding this order building project belied its opposition to, and attempts to contain, the Soviet-Communist threat (Lascurettes, 2020: 132-4). The covenant preamble limited membership of the League of Nations to polities governed via representative institutions, although this was not strictly applied in practice (Lascurettes, 2020: 137-8). There was some continuity between the Concert order and the Wilsonian order, with "[t]he Concert the institutional precursor of the League of Nations" (Lindley, 2010: 195). There was also some continuity in terms of conflict

resolution procedures amongst the powers, contained in Article 15 of the League Covenant (Soutou, 2000: 336).

The third great power order to emerge in the first half of the twentieth century was the Fascist order, under the tripartite leadership of Nazi Germany, Japan and Italy (Johnson, 2021). This new order was underpinned by the principle of imperial expansion: Germany's quest to secure *Lebensraum*, Italy's ambitions to reconstruct the Roman Empire in southern Europe, and Japan's conquest of parts of East and Southeast Asia (Martin, 2016: 4; Yeller, 2019: 29-30).[36] Relations between the three order leaders were managed via pacts and treaties, delineating the boundaries of each power's domain (Martin, 1995: 92). The Tripartite Pact (1940), for example, carved out Europe for Germany and Italy, while East and Southeast Asia was for Japan (Yeller, 2019: 41). These domains were carefully guarded, with Germany keeping "jealous watch against any disregard of the demarcation line [in the Indian Ocean] by the Japanese fleet" (Martin, 1995: 271). While authority between the three Axis powers was split, authority within each of their domains was highly centralised. Berlin determined the economic, political, and social policies in the areas under its control, including its genocidal campaign against Jewish, Slavic, Romani and other populations (Einzig, 1941: 1-2; Martin, 2016: 1; Mazower, 2008). Attempts at expanding order membership were made via the distribution of money and weapons to subversive groups in the Balkans (Cassels, 2008: 162 and 2015: 395-6), as well as via invasion. The fascist order was short-lived, ending with the defeat of fascist powers in WWII.

With three different great power orders emerging in the period between 1917 and 1945, there were expanded opportunities for order exit. Defecting revolutionary states could try to join the Soviets (e.g. the Brazilian Communist Rebellion 1935), the Wilsonian order (e.g. Habibullah's uprising in Afghanistan 1928-9) or the Fascists (Franco's 1936 Revolution). They could also reject the great power's ordering projects altogether. An illustrative example is the Sandino Rebellion in Nicaragua between 1926 and 1933. The revolutionaries rejected both the Wilsonian and Soviet orders, instead seeking to dismantle state borders in Latin America and build alternative ordering institutions, including a Latin American Court of Justice and a regional armed forces (Wilson, 2016: 31, 29-30).[37] Sandino's ambitions did not end with a regional Latin American order. He saw his movement

[36] For Germany this was a *Neuordnung Europas* (a new European order) (Martin, 2016: 1); for Japan this was the 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity sphere' (Yeller, 2019: 26-7).

[37] Sandino was not the first to envisage a Latin American order. The antecedents of this project hark back to the Latin American independence struggles of the 19th century, including Simón Bolívar's vision of a Pan-American Union (Castro-Klarén, 2003: 26, 40-3).

as part of a broader international struggle against all colonisers, hoping to inspire other anti-imperial campaigns around the world (Wilson, 2016: 29). With no great order to support him, Sandino's rebellion was defeated.

As the Cold War set in, two dominant orders stabilised: the Soviet order, and the post-WWII US-led 'liberal' order (Bull, 1977: 4). Their respective order architectures included the Cominform, Comecon and the Warsaw Pact, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Bretton Woods institutions (Lascurettes and Poznansky, 2021). Both orders were deeply hierarchical and exploitative – "a continuation of colonialism through slightly different means" (Westad, 2005: 396). The three main pathways of order exit during the Cold War period were jumping ship to the Soviet order, jumping ship to the US order, or rejecting both power's ordering projects altogether. Examples of revolutionaries leaving the US order for the Soviet order include Cuba (1959) and Vietnam (1975). Examples of revolutionaries leaving the Soviet order for the US order are Hungary (1956), the Afghan Mujahidin (1979-92) and Poland (1981-90). There were also revolutions that sought to extract their state from its current great power order, without joining a new great power order. These include Iran 1979, El Salvador's Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (1980-1992) and Peru's *Sendero Luminoso* (1980-1992). This latter group were vehemently opposed to both the US and Soviet orders, mounting attacks against the USSR and US embassies, the Bank of America, as well as the offices of Aeroflot and Ford Motors (McCormick, 1987: 117). Despite their leftist ideology, Sendero did not want to shift Peru into Soviet (or any other) orbit:

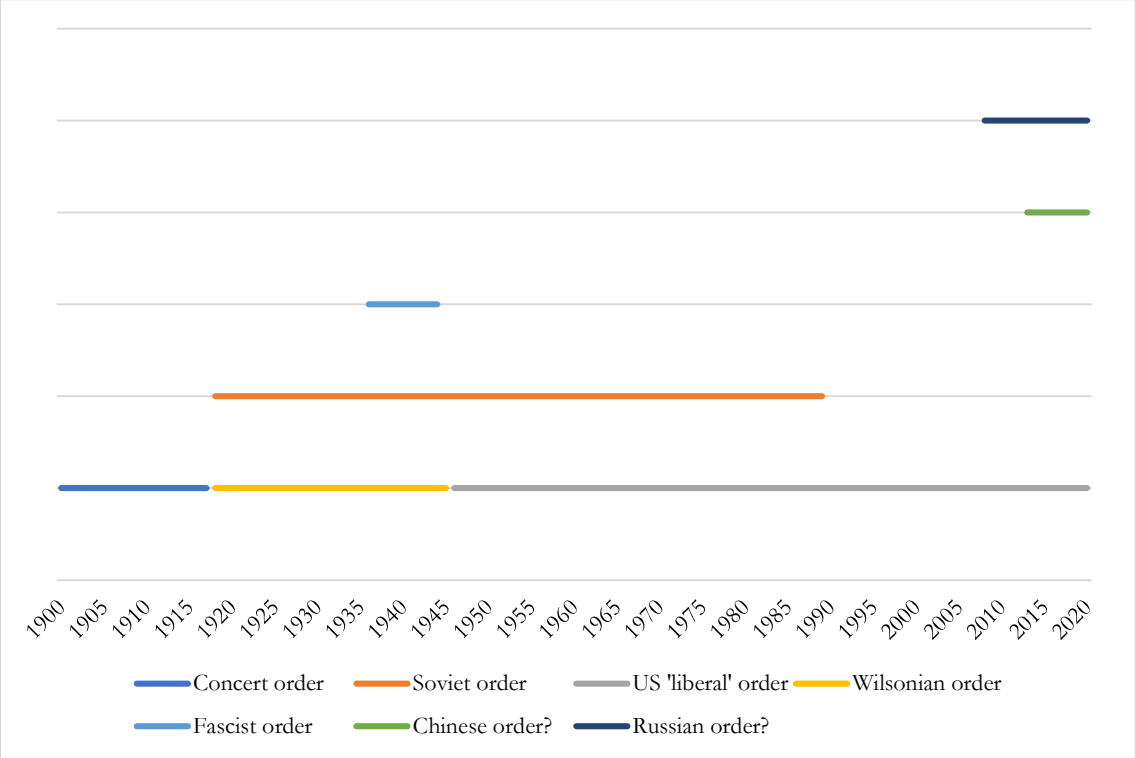
> Far from seeking its assistance, however, the international left has been roundly condemned by Sendero as 'Fascists', 'traitors', and 'revisionists'. Guzman once dismissed Che Guevera as a 'choir girl', while the Soviet Union is condemned for its corruption and treasonist ideology. The current Chinese leadership has been singled out for particular abuse for its 'betrayal' of Mao Zedong. Similar views are expressed toward other regional guerrilla groups such as the April 19 Movement (M-19), MIR, Armed Revolutionary Forces of Columbia (FARC), or Alfaro Lives Damnit, all of which are considered to be the 'puppets' of 'foreign masters'. Sendero's only known foreign contact was established with Albania during the mid-1970s. Since this time, however, even the late Enver Hoxa has been condemned for his revisionist tendencies (McCormick, 1987: 120-1).

With the collapse of the Soviet order at the end of the Cold War, the world was left once again with a single great power order. As with the early twentieth century, this solitary great power order left limited options for order exit. Rare examples include the Taliban (1994-1996), Nepal's Maoist insurgency (1996-2006) and Islamic State (2013-). Without another great power order to leap to, such revolutionary movements were short-lived.

It seems as though order patterns are beginning to shift again in the second decade of the twenty-first century. There are frequent assertions of a rising China, a resurgent Russia, and a declining US. Figure 6 provides a representation of what great power orders between 1900 and 2020 would

look like if these assertions are right. My reluctance to include emergent Russian and Chinese orders in this study is that it is hard to know what we are looking at as events unfold. Indeed, "[s]hifts in global order tend to become apparent only at their end" (Johnson, 2021). Is there a distinct Chinese order, when did it emerge, and how is it related to Russian order building efforts? When did Russia's revivalist order emerge? These are questions to be addressed in further projects. I provide an initial outline of what these projects might look like in the conclusion.

**Figure 6.** Great power orders, 1900-2020, reimagined



# Chapter 2: Methodology

Having defined the core concepts of revolution, international counterrevolution and international order, Chapter 2 discusses the chosen methodological approach. This dissertation uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the question of why and when great powers do or don't engage in counterrevolution. This chapter precedes as follows. The first section justifies the use of mixed methods. The second section describes the process of, and rationale for, dataset construction. The third section outlines the qualitative component of the thesis, including the purpose of the case studies and case selection. The fourth section concludes with some reflections on the methodological trade-offs associated with my chosen approach.

## Mixed methods

This dissertation uses mixed methods to understand the determinants of great power counterrevolution: statistical analyses and illustrative cases.[38] The first methodological component is quantitative: a new macro-historical dataset mapping the international dimensions of revolution is the methodological backbone of this dissertation.[39] The unit of analysis is revolutionary episode-year, and the timespan is between 1900 and 2020. For each revolutionary episode-year I map the presence or absence of great power counterrevolution (the dependent variable); the revolutionaries' status as order defectors or not (the independent variable of interest); revolutionary ideologies and attempts to alter international hierarchies (independent variables); as well as a range of control variables (see Chapter 4 below). I hand coded the dependent variable and three independent variables, drawing on over 1,500 sources including diplomatic archives, newspaper archives, revolutionary group manifestos, charters and websites, and a variety of secondary sources. The purpose of the dataset analysis is to understand the determinants of great power counterrevolution over a 120 year period of time, and specifically, to test the effect of order exit on the prospects of great power counterrevolution.

This dataset excludes a certain subset of revolutionary episodes: anti-colonial revolutions. When coding great power responses to anti-colonial revolutions it became apparent that the dynamics of

[38] Collier and Elman (2008: 781) distinguish between three conceptualisations of mixed methods – intra-qualitative method mixing, qualitative-quantitative method mixing, and qualitative-interpretative method mixing. Here I refer to mixed methods as the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

[39] The label 'historically-oriented integrated replication database' (HIRD), as coined by Lieberman (2010), could be applied here. By HIRD Lieberman means a database that converts events and processes into indexes, scales or dummy variables (Lieberman, 2010: 39).

these episodes were markedly distinct from revolutionary episodes against non-colonial polities. For example, all of the 49 anti-colonial revolutions in Beissinger's (2022) dataset faced attempts at great power counterrevolution. Of these 49 counterrevolutions, 88% were maximal, that is, involving armed suppression by the imperial power. This is a quite different pattern to revolutions against non-colonial polities in which 48% were met with great power counterrevolution, and of these, only 27% involved direct military intervention. These two differing counterrevolutionary patterns are likely to be explained by different sets of factors. Direct losses of territory, norms surrounding de-colonisation, and the colonial power being the primary target of revolutionaries are important for great power counterrevolution in colonial contexts, but less so in others. In colonial contexts, the imperial power was not just intervening in a revolution; rather as the government, they were the very target of the revolution.

These two types of revolution (and counterrevolution) also invite different questions. Given the 100% rate of counterrevolution against anti-colonial episodes, the question motivating this dissertation – why great powers engage in counterrevolution against some revolutions but not others – is not relevant to the anti-colonial subset. While my dataset helps to answer the question of why great powers initiate counterrevolution, a more interesting question for the anti-colonial subset is why great powers *stop* counterrevolution. In all cases the colonial powers engaged in counterrevolution, but then acquiesced to the creation of new states. Why did Britain initially suppress the 1919 Egyptian Revolution, but then grant independence three years later? In contrast, why did India endure decades of British counterrevolution before being granted independence only in 1947? The end of counterrevolution is a more interesting question in these anti-colonial cases, rather than its onset.

The different frequencies, drivers and strategies of great power counterrevolution in colonial and non-colonial contexts makes their integration into one analysis difficult. However, if this were to be done, I suspect it would support order exit theory. All of the anti-colonial revolutions are cases of great power counterrevolution *and* exit from colonial orders. Counterrevolution was unleashed on these cases despite differing ideologies – for example Islamism in the case of the Philippines (1901-1913), liberalism in the case of India (1920-1947), and socialism in the case of Algeria (1954-62). Although my hunch is that such a unified analysis would support my argument, it would also create a lot of noise in terms of cross-cutting exploratory factors and measurement issues.[40] This

[40] For example, should British intervention against the Bolshevik Revolution be coded in equivalent terms as the British armed response to attacks on their headquarters in Ghana in 1900?

hunch will be tested empirically in future, with an analysis of anti-colonial revolutions and great power responses next on my agenda.

The second methodological component of this dissertation comprises three case studies: the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the Hungarian Revolution (1956), and the attempted Syrian Salafist Revolution (2012-2020). The first two case studies illustrate how processes of order exit and great power counterrevolution are linked. The Mexican Revolution is a case of no attempt at order exit, and no US counterrevolution. The Hungarian Revolution is a case of attempted order exit and Soviet counterrevolution. The third case is a 'difficult case': there is no attempt at order exit, yet there is US counterrevolution. The purpose of this last case is to test the limits and limitations of order exit theory.

Mixed methods have been chosen for two reasons. The first is that the question being asked is expansive in temporal and geographical scope. The causes of great power counterrevolution in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries cannot be properly understood by analysing only a handful of cases; nor can they be properly understood via only statistical correlations. Understanding both macro-correlations and micro causal mechanisms are crucial components in addressing the research puzzle. The second reason for adopting mixed methods is that this is an underutilised (but growing) methodological approach in the revolutions field. Comparative historical analysis has been the dominant method used in the study of revolutions (see for example Brinton, 1938; Farhi, 1988; Goldstone, 2014; Goodwin, 2001; Halliday, 1999; Lawson, 2004 and 2019; Parsa, 2000; Ritter, 2015; Selbin, 2010; Skocpol, 1979; Sohrabi, 1995; and Tilly, 1978). Some exceptions have been solitary case studies (see for example Goldfrank, 1979 on Mexico and Ritter, 2010 on Iran), and some dabbling in Boolean analysis (see Foran, 2005; Ragin, 1987). Revolutions scholars have been self-conscious about the need for adjustments to existing methodological approaches (Beck et al., 2022). There have been calls for a greater variety of cases to be studied so that more cohesive theories can be developed (Abrams, 2019: 382); as well as highlighting the need for greater ambition in "scope", "database" and "methods" (Mann, 2001: 686).

Although quantitative methods are frequently used in the related areas of civil resistance, civil war, and secession, the revolutions field has been slower to adopt these approaches. Building on the precedent set by early movers including Goldstone (1991) and Gould (1995), important quantitative studies on revolution to emerge in the last decade include Beck (2009 and 2011), Beissinger (2022), Colgan (2012), Kadivar (2018), Ketchley and Barrie (2020), Lachapelle et al. (2020), and Stewart (2021). This shift towards quantitative (and mixed) methods has not yet resonated in the study of counterrevolution. Studies of counterrevolution to date have been

qualitative case studies (Allinson 2019a and 2022; Mayer, 2000; Slater and Smith, 2016; Weyland, 2016), with the only exception, to my knowledge, being Killian Clarke's (2022) mixed methods book project. The more expansive the methodological toolkit brought to bear on a particular topic, the greater the range of questions asked and answers given. This dissertation hopes to contribute to the broadening of the methodological toolkit in the study of counterrevolution.

## The dataset

Having given a brief overview of the mixed methods approach adopted in the dissertation, this section zooms in on its quantitative component. It outlines the rationale and process of dataset construction, as well as its structure.

Rationale for building the dataset

The construction of a new dataset was necessary on two grounds. First, although there are multiple existing compendia of revolutionary episodes, from datasets to encyclopaedias, they have different temporal frames, cover different regions, and most importantly, use different definitions of revolution. Any attempt at consolidating the many existing compendia required first collation of these sources, and then the application of a consistent definition. While just one existing dataset could have been chosen, to which counterrevolutions variables could have been added, there were no clear grounds for choosing one source over others. Beissinger (2022), Chenoweth and Shay (2020) and Goldstone's (1999) compendia are global in scope and cover (most of) the period under analysis in this thesis (1900-2020). However, there is wide variation in the revolutionary cases included in each. As such, it was decided to pool existing research and expertise into a new resource. The hope is that the dataset accompanying this dissertation has broad coverage of the revolutionary field.

The second reason for dataset construction is that, to my knowledge, there are no existing variables that code great power counterrevolution and related independent variables. A survey of existing, related variables shows why original data collection efforts were necessary. Chenoweth and Stephan's NAVCO 1.1. (2011) dataset includes three variables concerning external support for, or opposition to, resistance campaigns.[41] These include STATESUP, which captures whether or not the "campaign received overt military or economic aid from an outside another state to fight against the target" (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011: 35 in codebook). The REGAID variable captures the opposite scenario – when the *ancien régime* receives military support from another state

[41] These three variables are not yet available for NAVCO 1.3.

(Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011: 35 in codebook). A third indicator – SDIRECT – records whether the *ancien régime* was targeted by international sanctions for its actions towards the resistance campaign or not (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011: 35 in codebook). While these three variables are important for understanding the success or failure of resistance campaigns, they are less useful in understanding the determinants of great power counterrevolution. Crucially, they do not show which states are engaging in these support or opposition actions, including whether or not they are great powers. Identifying specific states is crucial in understanding why the US, the USSR, and other great powers try to roll back revolution. Further, STATESUP, SDIRECT and REGAID only capture some counterrevolutionary actions: sanctions and direct military and economic aid. They miss other types of counterrevolution such as the withholding of international recognition and other diplomatic measures. It is also unclear whether STATESUP and REGAID include direct foreign state intervention to crush a revolutionary movement.

Another relevant variable is Casey's (2020) measure of great power support for client autocracies in the period 1946-2010. This variable was extended by Clarke (2022: 89) to cover the period 1900-2015, and to include democratic, as well as autocratic client states. There were two reasons why this variable wasn't used in my study. First, sponsor support for their client states is narrowly defined as material (direct budgetary or military aid) and organisational support for the coercive apparatus (Casey, 2020: 428). This excludes counterrevolutionary measures such as non-recognition and some types of economic sanctions. The second reason is that Casey's (2020) variable only captures one side of the equation – support for authoritarian client states, and not support for movements trying to topple these client states. Clarke (2022: 89, 97) remedies this by coding for whether the pre-revolutionary regime had great power backing (while they were in power, not after they were deposed). While this variable is crucial for answering the question of domestic counterrevolutionary onset, it is less useful for my purposes. Whether the pre-revolutionary regime had a great power patron does not tell us whether great powers are engaging in counterrevolution themselves to prop up a regime or help it regain power.

Lachappelle et al. (2020: 577) do include a variable on the foreign imposition of communism. While this variable is helpful in capturing external support for communist revolutions, it is less useful in capturing external support for counterrevolution. It is also focuses on a specific type of revolution – communist revolution.

Finally, all of the variables outlined above are binary. The introduction of a seven-point scale from great power support to opposition to revolution allows for greater nuance, granularity and specificity. This will allow future research into the determinants of great power support for

revolution, as well as an examination of the effect of order exit on different degrees of great power counterrevolution. Although multinomial regression is beyond the parameters of this current project, the seven-point scale of great power responses will allow such analyses to be carried out in future.

Process of dataset construction

The foundations of this dataset are eight existing datasets and other compendia of revolutions: Mark Beissinger's *The Revolutionary City* dataset (2022), the NAVCO Data Project 1.3 (Chenoweth and Shay, 2020), James DeFronzo's three volume *Revolutionary Movements in World History* (2006), John Foran's (2005) study of "Third World" revolutions 1910-2005, Jack Goldstone's *Encyclopedia of Political Revolutions* (1999), Lachappelle et al.'s dataset of successful social revolutions (2020), Daniel Ritter's (2015: 5) cases of non-violent revolution,[42] and Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley's (1992) study of revolutionary guerrilla movements in Latin America. The collated master list comprises 679 episodes. The source origin of each revolutionary episode is noted in the 'source' column in the dataset. The temporal, geographic and substantive focus of these compendia varied. For example, Lachappelle et al. (2020) include only successful social revolutions, while Ritter (2005) includes only unarmed revolutions. Wickham-Crowley (1992) and Foran (2005) are geographically restricted to revolutions in Latin America and the 'Third World' respectively. Wickham-Crowley's (1992) temporal starting point is 1956. The most comprehensive sources are the global surveys of revolution conducted by Beissinger (2022), Chenoweth and Shay (2020) and Goldstone (1999). Beissinger (2022) covers the period from 1900 until 2014, Chenoweth and Shay (2020) cover the period between 1900 and 2019, and Goldstone covers the period 1500-1998.

The different definitions of revolution adopted by Beissinger (2022), Chenoweth and Shay (2020), DeFronzo (2005), Foran (2005), Goldstone (1999), Lachappelle et al. (2020), Ritter (2015) and Wickham-Crowley (1992) necessitated the application of a consistent definition to this master list of 679 episodes. Chenoweth and Shay's (2020: 11 in codebook) definition is particularly inclusive. They define regime change as the "removal of [the] incumbent national leader". This broad definition results in 430 regime change episodes between 1900 and 2019. Included in their universe of cases are protests demanding the resignation of the president (e.g. Honduras' 2019 Hernández Must Go campaign) and policy changes (e.g. France's 'Yellow Vests' 2018-2019). Despite their broad approach to regime change, key instances of revolution did not feature in their dataset,

[42] Ritter's list of cases is derived from Goodwin, 2001: 295, Nepstad, 2011a: xv, and Schock, 2005: 4.

including Portugal's Republican Revolution (1910), the Russian Bolshevik Revolution (1917),[43] Germany's Weimar Revolution (1918), the Korean Civil War (1950-1953) and Mexico's Chiapas Zapatista Rebellion (1994-2020). Goldstone (1999) also employs an inclusive definition of revolution, as "those events that share two characteristics: irregular procedures aimed at forcing political change within a society (which may include coups, mass protests, civil war, guerrilla warfare, peasant or urban uprisings, or planned insurrections) and lasting effects on the political system of the society in which they occurred" (Goldstone, 1999: vii). Captured by this definition are episodes such as the Women's Rights Movement (1848-2020), U.S. Labor Revolts (1890-1932) and China's May Fourth Movement (1919). Beissinger (2022) adopts a more restrictive definition of revolution. He defines a revolutionary episode as: "a mass siege of an established government by its own population with the aim of displacing the incumbent regime and substantially altering the political or social order— irrespective of whether the opposition successfully gained power" (Beissinger, 2022: 435). On the basis of this definition, Beissinger's dataset comprises 345 episodes (Beissinger, 2022: 436). Notable exclusions from Beissinger's dataset are the Korean (1950-1953) and Vietnamese (1954-1975) communist revolutions on the basis that they are irredentist conflicts. The Laotian communist revolution (1953-1975) is also excluded given significant Vietnamese involvement in the revolution.

My universe of cases is smaller than Chenoweth and Shay's (2020) 627 revolutionary episodes between 1900 and 2020, and Beissinger's (2022) 345 between 1900 and 2014. This is because of my more restrictive definition of revolution. Chenoweth and Shay (2020) include attempts at leadership change in their definition, whereas I only include attempts at system change. The main reason why my universe of episodes is smaller than Beissinger's is his inclusion of secessions and anti-colonial revolutions in his dataset. Beissinger's dataset includes 69 separatist movements and 49 anti-colonial revolutions, such as the Maji-Maji Rebellion in the German colony of Tanganyika (1905-1907), the Sakdal Uprising in the American-occupied Philippines (1935), the Mizo Uprising in Indian-controlled Mizoram (1966-1986) and the Yining/Ghulja Disturbances in Chinese-controlled Xinjiang (1995).

As noted in the previous chapter, the definition I applied to the master list of cases is a tripartite one: i) mass mobilisation ii) with the objective of regime change iii) via extra-constitutional means. This definition is drawn from existing scholarship. Mass mobilisation is a definitional criterion used by many scholars (e.g. Foran, 2005: 6-7; Goldstone, 2014: 4; Goodwin, 2001: 9-10; Halliday,

[43] The February Revolution against the Romanovs (1917) is included, as is the rebellion of the 'Whites' against the Bolshevik regime (1917-1921), but curiously not the Bolshevik Revolution.

1999: 21; Lachapelle et al., 2020: 559; Lawson, 2019: 5; Selbin, 2010: 14). So too is regime change or overthrow (e.g. Buchanan, 2017; Goldstone, 2014: 4; Goodwin, 2001: 9-10; Lachapelle et al., 2020: 559; Lawson, 2019: 5; Selbin, 2010: 14; Walt, 1996: 12). For its part, the use of extra-constitutional or irregular methods is stressed in several works (e.g. Buchanan, 2017; Colgan, 2013a: 62; Lawson, 2019: 5). I also applied three grounds for exclusion from the dataset: anti-invasion/occupation movements, secessionist movements, and revolutionary movements that emerge in a power vacuum (see Chapter 1 for a discussion of why these choices were made). The application of these inclusion and exclusion criteria whittled down the master list to a universe of 182 revolutionary episodes that were initiated in the time period between 1900 and 2020. Within this pool of 182 cases are 19 borderline cases on the cusp of exclusion. These episodes were excluded as part of the robustness check analyses undertaken in Appendix B. These 182 episodes together cover 1,350 revolutionary episode-years.

Once I had built the dataset of revolutionary episodes, I hand coded the dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable – great power counterrevolution – was coded by assessing great power responses to each revolutionary episode. As the great powers change over time, I assessed the responses of France, Germany, Russia, the UK and US between 1900 and 1944, the responses of the US and USSR from 1945-1989, and the response of the US from 1990-2020. Each great power response was coded according to the seven-point support-opposition scale outlined in Chapter 1 (Figure 3). Great power responses were assessed from the start year to the end year of the revolutionary episode, plus three years after the end date in the case of successful revolutions. For example, the Nicaraguan Sandinista Revolution was launched in 1978 and toppled the *ancien régime* in 1979. This means that great power responses were assessed during the period 1978-1982. Great power responses were gleaned from diplomatic cables, newspaper archives and secondary sources.

The independent variable of interest – order exit – was also coded for each revolutionary episode. This entailed first assessing what order the pre-revolutionary state was in. This information was, in most cases, gleaned from secondary sources detailing the relevant state's foreign policy orientation. For example, in analysing the Ecuadorian 'Glorious May' Revolution (1944), the pre-revolutionary state was deemed to be in US orbit given that it was described as being "pro-United States" by secondary sources (Becker, 2017: 128). Once order membership was determined, I then ascertained the revolutionaries' order membership desires. This information was gathered from revolutionary manifestos, protest slogans, list of demands, diplomatic cables as well as secondary sources. For example, in the case of Ecuador's Glorious May' Revolution (1944), the revolutionary coalition the Democratic Ecuadorian Alliance (ADE) declared that they would support the Allies

in WWII (Becker, 2017: 134-5, 146, 154), indicating a continuation of the former regime's support for the US war effort (on Ecuador's role in WWII see US Office of the Historian, 1976: Document 442). The interim government also declared that it wanted Ecuador to continue its good relations with Washington, and would neither interfere with US property rights nor harm US economic interests (Becker, 2017: 146, 149, 154; US Office of the Historian, 1967: Document 1016). Even the Communist Party "advocated taking advantage of the conditions that the war created, including accessing financial credit that the United States offered to encourage the development of industry and increase production" (Becker, 2017: 135).[44] On this basis, the Glorious May Revolution (1944) was coded as an order-remaining revolution.

Two other independent variables – revolutionary ideologies and attempts to upend international power hierarchies – were also hand coded. Revolutionary ideologies were parsed into six categories: liberal, leftist, conservative, religious, ethno-nationalist and negative coalition.[45] Revolutionary ideologies were determined by the policies the revolutionaries pursued. Liberal revolutions pursue the introduction of democratic institutions (e.g. parliaments, *majalis* or dumas), free and fair elections, civil liberties and human rights, or some combination of these. Leftist revolutionaries pursue economic redistribution, land reform, workers rights, collectivization and/or worker rule. Conservative revolutions pursue a repressive corporatist state in combination with capitalist development, and sometimes the expansion of monarchical and clerical powers. The institution of religious law is the hallmark of theocratic revolutions, while the diversion of resources and power to a particular ethnic group is associated with ethno-nationalist revolutions. Where there is no clear dominant ideological strand, the episode is coded as a negative coalition (Dix, 1984: 423, 432-4).[46] The policies pursued by revolutionaries were gleaned from their lists of demands, manifestos, slogans, and their actions once in power. The variations within each ideological type are shown in Table 2 below.

[44] It is worth noting that the Communist Party also raised the prospect of recognising the USSR, although they were overruled by President Velasco Ibarra (Becker, 2017: 166).

[45] Other classificatory schemes include Beissinger's (2022: 51, 53) six-part scheme: social, liberal, independence, constitutional/anti-monarchical, Islamist, and inversion of an ethnic order. Clarke (2022: 34) adopts a tripartite approach: liberal, leftist and ethno-nationalist (with this latter category including religious revolutions).

[46] Negative coalitions are also referred to as "anti-regime campaigns" (Davies, 2014: 300-1) and "anti-coalitions" (Lawson, 2019: 204, 156). Negative coalitions may comprise divergent political and class interests, but nonetheless loosely cohere in their opposition to the regime (Dix, 1984: 434-8). The concept of negative coalitions speaks to a broader distinction between positive and negative revolutionary objectives in the literature. Revolutions are dual processes of both the destruction of the old order (negative revolutionary freedom), as well as the creation of the new (positive revolutionary freedom) (Buchanan, 2017; Grosser, 2016). Negative coalitions converge on the former, but not necessarily the latter.

**Table 2.** Revolutionary ideologies

| *Liberal* | *Leftist* | *Conservative* | *Ethno-nationalist* | *Religious* | *Negative coalition* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constitutional<br>Republican<br>Parliamentary<br>Multi-party<br>Civilian | Socialist<br>Communist<br>Maoist<br>Marxist<br>Leninist | Fascist<br>Nationalist<br>Monarchist<br>Right-wing | Ethnic or sectarian rule | Christian<br>Islamist<br>Buddhist<br>Zionist<br>Hindu | Multiple ideological factions |

I also hand coded revolutionary desires to upend existing power hierarchies. This information was grasped from revolutionary demands, manifestos, as well as actions once in power. Secondary sources were also consulted. Revolutionaries wanting to alter international hierarchies usually either demanded an improvement in their country's status; and/or wanted to limit the influence of a great power meddling in their affairs (whether political, economic or both). An example is the North Yemen Republican Revolution and Civil War (1962-1970). One of the revolutionary objectives was to "achieve aims of Arab nationalism so that the Arab nation will restore its great glory and assume its appropriate position among progressive nations" (Blaustein et al., 1977: 780). Further, the first of six objectives outlined in the Yemeni National Charter was "Liberation from despotism and colonial rule and their consequences; the establishment of a just republican government; and the reduction of class distinctions and privileges" (Almadhagi, 1992: 45). There was a strong desire amongst the revolutionaries to improve North Yemen's status in the international hierarchy. This is in contrast to other revolutionaries who were at pains to show they would not upend international economic or political hierarchies. For example, in the wake of Bolivia's La Paz Riots (1946), "The revolutionary government of students and workers established Sunday announced today that it would abide by the Bolivian Constitution, observe international treaties and respect native and foreign capital" (New York Times, 1946a). Beyond the dependent and three independent variables outlined here, the control variables included in the dataset, and their underlying sources, are detailed in Chapter 4 and in the codebook (Appendix A).

As this dataset was constructed by a single coder, there were no opportunities for double coding, intercoder reliability or other consistency checks. To address concerns about reliability, I have been as transparent as possible about the sources underlying my coding decisions, the rationale for particular coding choices in the context of historiographical disagreements, and my reasoning processes in borderline coding cases. All of this is contained in Appendix C, along with the complete list of revolutionary episodes, decisions regarding inclusion and exclusion criteria, and the research underpinning the dependent and independent variables. This transparency allows

other researchers to see what I've done and how I've done it, making it easier for people to critique particular coding decisions and for me to update future iterations of the dataset on this basis.

Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis in this study is a revolutionary episode-year. Following Beissinger (2022: 7 in codebook), I define a revolutionary episode as "a stream of related events, with a roughly identifiable beginning and end." These streams of events have continuity of revolutionary goals, activities and actors. In keeping with Beissinger (2022: 6-7 in codebook), a revolutionary episode is conceived as being broadly similar to Tilly's notion of a 'revolutionary situation'; that is, the period during which a contending force emerges and challenges state authority (Tilly, 1993: 10).[47] A 'revolutionary situation' is distinct from a 'revolutionary outcome' – a revolutionary outcome being the transfer of state power to the revolutionaries (Tilly, 1993: 49-50). Note that episodes are sometimes called campaigns (see Beck et al., 2022: 162; Chenoweth, 2011: 1; Olzak, 1989: 127). For example, Chenoweth and Stephan (2011: 14) define a campaign as: "as a series of observable, continual tactics in pursuit of a political objective" that "can last anywhere from days to years", which comprises "discernible events" (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011: 14).

The precise start and end dates of revolutionary episodes are often difficult to discern (Beissinger, 2022: 7 in codebook; Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011: 14).[48] I treat the start date of a revolutionary episode as when a revolutionary situation emerges, which, according to my tripartite definition of revolution, is when: i) more than 1,000 people from at least two societal segments; ii) engage in extra-constitutional activities; iii) in an attempt to topple the incumbent regime and institute a new principle of political authority. The end date is when one or more of these criteria no longer obtains (the revolutionary situation ends) or when there is success (a revolutionary outcome).[49] The Philippine Huk Rebellion (1946-1954) is illustrative of when at least one of the revolutionary criteria no longer obtains. The end year of the episode is listed as 1954 – when the revolutionaries no longer met the mass mobilisation threshold. Rebel strength peaked at as many as 20,000 in 1950 (Lanzona, 2009: 7), but by 1954 numbers had significantly dwindled (Goodwin, 1997: 59). Although "small bands of Huks continued to rebel until the 1960s" (Kerkvliet, 1999: 397), there was no mass mobilisation beyond 1954. Another example is the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (1942-1969), whose start and end dates as a revolutionary episode are determined by their engagement in extra-constitutional versus regular activities. The Muslim Brotherhood was founded

[47] Although Trotsky sketched in detail the concept of a 'revolutionary situation' in a 1931 paper, some credit Lenin with being the progenitor of the concept (see Krasin, 1971: 106 in Johnson, 1973: 56).
[48] Olzak (1989: 127) also makes this point in relation to events (rather than episodes).
[49] This is the same approach adopted by Beissinger (2022: 7 in codebook).

in 1928, but only began resorting to illegal methods in 1942 with the establishment of its 'special section' (Wickham, 2013: 37, 41; Beinin, 1999: 149). After a series of assassinations and underground activity, by the late 1960s the Muslim Brotherhood had renounced violence, instead engaging in regular politics (Abed-Kotob, 1995: 328, 333, 335; Kirkpatrick, 2019; Savage, Schmitt and Haberman, 2019). The end date of the revolutionary episode is listed as 1969 accordingly, as the movement was no longer 'revolutionary' by virtue of failing to meet the irregularity criterion.

The end date of a revolutionary episode can also be the year of 'success', defined as the ousting of the incumbent regime and moves towards the institution of a new principle of political authority. For example, the end date of the Chinese Communist Revolution is listed as 1949 in the dataset. This was the year that Chiang Kai-shek resigned as head of the government and retreated to Taiwan with his supporters, as well as the year in which the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established the People's Republic of China (Averill, 1999: 78, 83). By 1949, the revolutionary situation had ended and become a revolutionary outcome. Although of course it is rare for a political transformation to take place in a year, the year of success is determined to be the year in which steps *towards* political transformation were taken after the seizure of power.

It is not only start and end dates that are contentious, but whether to treat a revolutionary episode as singular or multiple. For example, when does one revolutionary episode stop and another one begin? Goldstone (1999), for example, conceptualises a revolutionary episode as entailing a broad temporal horizon. His encyclopaedia lists the South African anti-apartheid movement 1948-1994, the Polish Protest Movements and Solidarity Revolution 1956-1991 and the Korean Democracy Movement 1960-1998 each as a single entry. This contrasts with Chenoweth and Shay (2020), who split these out into multiple revolutionary episodes: Poland is divided into three (1956, 1968-70, 1981-9), the anti-Apartheid revolution into two (1952-61 and 1984-1994), and the South Korean democracy movement into three (1960, 1979-80, 1987). In my approach, a period of dormancy of at least three years, where one of the three revolutionary criteria no longer holds, means a new episode if the movement is reactivated. The guiding principle in delineating revolutionary episodes is therefore continuity of goals, actions and actors.[50] It is on this basis that I divide the Guatemalan Civil War (1960-1996) into two episodes: the first leftist revolt between 1960 and 1967, and the second leftist revolt between 1975 and 1996. Although there was some continuity of actors between these two episodes (e.g. the Rebel Armed Forces, FAR) as well as continuity of goals

[50] Continuity of goals is broadly construed to mean continuity in wanting to institute of a new principle of political authority. This means that a movement that changes ideology during its revolutionary struggle to seize power (e.g. from communism to liberalism) is treated as a single episode. There is continuity in wanting to topple the regime and build a new system of rule, even if there is a shift in what this new system will look like.

(socialist revolution), there was not continuity of illegal actions. By 1967 the guerrillas had been repressed into virtual oblivion by the government, only managing to regroup by the mid-1970s (Wickham-Crowley, 1992: 16-17, 194). This period of dormancy from 1967 means a new episode begins with the resurgence of the guerrillas in 1975. Another example is the Afghan Taliban. Their struggle to seize power between 1994 and 1996 is treated as a separate revolutionary episode to their struggle to retake power from 2002. Between 1996 and 2001 the Taliban were no longer embroiled in a revolutionary situation; they were embroiled in a revolutionary outcome. The revolutionary situation (and episode) ended in 1996 with the Taliban's seizure of power. The three revolutionary criteria only obtained again after the Taliban had been ousted. It is then that they engaged in mass mobilisation to oust the government and institute a new principle of political authority via irregular means. This period of the definitional criteria no longer holding (1996-2001) means the start of a new episode when the Taliban tried to retake power from 2002.

My approach to delineating revolutionary episodes means considerable variation in their durations. Episodes can span days or decades. The Athens Polytechnic Uprising of 1973 was launched and crushed in three days (Beissinger, 2022: 153 in episode narratives). In contrast, Colombia's leftist guerrillas waged a revolutionary war for 52 years. There was continuity of actors (FARC), continuity of irregular activities (guerrilla warfare) and continuity of goals (toppling the government and engaging in socialist land and wealth redistribution). As such, Colombia's civil war is treated as a single episode.

What are the alternative units of analysis that could have been chosen instead of revolutionary episodes? There are at least two, each entailing a different degree of aggregation versus granularity: events and waves. Event analysis focuses on "a particular moment" (Beck et al., 2022: 162) or "conjuncture" (Beissinger, 2002: 14-15), capturing "snapshots" (Tilly, 2005: 5), or "interaction[s]… associated with a specific point in time" (Gerner et al., 1994: 95). Events also unfold in a specific locality (with the important exception of marches and other forms of moving contention) (Olzak, 1989: 126). Tilly (2005: xxiv, 36-7, 63), for example, ties each of the contentious gatherings in his event catalogues to a specific, publicly accessible place. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) also takes events as its unit of analysis, deeming a politically violent event to be "a single altercation" (ACLED, 2021: 7). Unlike episodes, events "occur at a specific named location (identified by name and geographic coordinates) and on a specific day" (ACLED, 2021: 7). Similarly, Ketchley and El-Rayyes (2021: 295-6) geolocate and date each event in their Egyptian protest event catalogue (December 2010-January 2012). What is the relationship between revolutionary events and revolutionary episodes? Revolutionary episodes are made up of a series of events, with events often numbering in the thousands per revolutionary

episode (see, for example, Ketchley and Barrie, 2020: 311 on Egypt and Tunisia). As such, a revolutionary episode can unfold over multiple locations and temporalities. In contrast, an event is temporally and geographically circumscribed. The difference between an event and episode becomes difficult to discern when revolutionary episodes are short. In situations where a revolutionary episode comprises only one event, event and episode conceptually collapse into one another.

A rare example empirically is Hitler's 1923 Beer Hall Putsch, which was crushed within a day. This revolutionary episode comprised only one event: 2,000 members of the Kampfbund took up arms on 8 November 1923, storming the Bürgerbräukeller (a Beer Hall in Munich) in an attempt to seize control of government in Bavaria before imposing it on Berlin (Beissinger, 2022: 309; Gordon, 2015: 254). The objective was to topple the Weimar Republic and institute a centralised, ethno-nationalist dictatorship (Gordon, 2015: 212, 264-5). The Beer Hall Putsch was spatially and temporally clustered. As there was mass mobilisation, with the objective of regime change, via irregular means, the Beer Hall Putsch meets my definition of a revolutionary episode even though it comprised only one event. I do not include duration as a definitional criterion of revolution. As such, other processes are excluded from my dataset not because they are short, but because they fail to meet one of my three definitional criteria. For example, the 6 January Capital rioters in Washington DC in 2021 were motivated by what they perceived to be fraudulent elections. Rather than desires to institute a new principle of political authority, they wanted the current principle of political authority – democracy – to be upheld, as they saw it.

Another potential unit of analysis in the study of revolution is waves (Beck et al., 2022: 163-4). A wave is a series of revolutionary episodes linked by emulation, export, or both. Examples of revolutionary waves include the 'Springtime of the Peoples' in 1848, the constitutional revolutions of the early twentieth century, the 1989 liberal revolutions in Eastern Europe and the Arab Spring revolutions from 2010 (Beck, 2009: 1; Beissinger, 2013: 574; Clark, 2019: 13; Lawson, 2019: 221-2). Events, episodes and waves each operate at different levels of granularity. Revolutionary waves comprise episodes, and revolutionary episodes comprise events.

The unit of analysis chosen has important implications for theory development, with each type of unit necessarily involving trade-offs (Beck et al., 2022: 160, 164). Revolutionary episode was chosen as the unit of analysis given that great power responses to revolution are difficult to capture

at the event level, while the use of revolutionary waves would make it difficult to capture great power support for one episode within a wave but not another.[51]

## The case studies

The second component of the dissertation is qualitative, comprising three case studies: the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the Hungarian Revolution (1956) and the attempted Syrian Salafist Revolution (2012-2020). The case studies were analysed using both primary and secondary sources, including diplomatic archives and the scholarship of areas studies experts. The sources used are outlined more fully in the introduction of each of the three case study chapters.

Case selection

These cases were selected due to their variation on the dependent and independent variables. The Mexican Revolution was chosen as a 'negative case': there was no order exit and no great power counterrevolution (against the victorious Carrancista faction). The Hungarian Revolution (1956) was chosen as a 'positive case', where both attempts at order exit and great power counterrevolution were present. These two case studies are 'on the line' revolutionary episodes. They conform with the correlative relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution identified in the regression analyses in Chapter 4. The purpose of these two case studies is illustrative: to map what order exit and great power counterrevolution look like empirically, and to understand if and how these two processes are causally linked. The attempted Syrian Salafist Revolution was chosen as an outlier case: there was no exit from US order, yet there was US counterrevolution. The purpose of this case study is to understand how far the order exit theory travels, as well as its limitations. The case variations on the dependent and independent variables are summarised in Table 3 below.[52]

**Table 3**. The three case studies

| *Case* | *Order exit* | *Great power counterrevolution* | *Purpose* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mexican Revolution (1910-20) | No | No | Illustrative case |
| Hungarian Revolution (1956) | Yes | Yes | Illustrative case |
| Syrian Salafists (2012-20) | No | Yes | Outlier case |

[51] On the advantages and limitations of analysing episodes instead of events, see Chenoweth and Stephan (2011: 244 fn. 15).

[52] This methodological approach to selecting both 'on the line' and 'off the line' cases was adapted from Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) and Stewart (2016).

Besides their variation on the dependent and independent variables, the three case studies were chosen to cover different eras, regions and revolutionary ideologies. The Mexican Revolution was a social revolution (moving left), the Hungarian revolution was a liberalising revolution (moving right), and the Syrian Salafist revolution was animated by religious ideologies. The case studies also represent a mix of successful (Mexico) and failed (Hungary and Syria) revolutions, as well as different organisational configurations (e.g. centralised in the case of Syria, spontaneous and fragmented in the case of Hungary). Further, the cases spotlight different great powers: Mexico and Syria are cases of US counterrevolution (or lack thereof), while Hungary is a case of Soviet counterrevolution.

The three chosen cases provide additional analytic opportunities. The presence of multiple revolutionary factions in the Mexican and Syrian revolutions allows for intra-case comparison. For example, the Villista revolutionaries in Mexico gave order exit indications, while the Carrancistas did not. The Mexican case allows the exploration of whether these differing stances on order exit conditioned the differing US response to each revolutionary faction. Similarly, the Syrian case allows for the exploration of why the US engaged in counterrevolution against Jabhat al-Nusa and Islamic State, but not Salafist group Ahrar al-Sham. While the Mexican and Syrian cases allow intra-case comparison, the Hungarian Revolution allows for cross-case comparison. 'Polish October' was unfolding at the same time as the Hungarian Revolution. While the Hungarian Revolution was met with Soviet counterrevolution, the Polish Revolution was not. This paired comparison allows the reasons for the divergent Soviet response to be explored, including the potential role of order exit.

Alternative cases that could have been chosen

Having justified the selection of the Mexican, Hungarian and Syrian Salafist revolutions, this section now considers the other cases that could have been chosen in their place. The Mexican Revolution belongs to a pool of episodes that did not attempt order exit and were not met with great power counterrevolution. There were 48 revolutionary episodes in this category, comprising 37% of the total universe.[53] Other revolutionary episodes in this category include the 'Young Turk' Revolution (1908), the Russian February Revolution (1917), Hungary's Communist Revolution (1919), Haiti's Revolution of 1946, Bolivia's National Revolution (1952), India's Naxalite Rebellion Part I (1967-73), Portugal's Carnation Revolution (1974-6), the SPLA, NDA and the Second Sudanese Civil War (1983-2005), Thailand's Black May (1992), the AFDL and the First Congo

[53] Cases with missing data were excluded.

War (1996-7), and Tunisia's Jasmine Revolution (2010). None of these revolutions attempted order exit and none were met with great power counterrevolution.

The Mexican revolution has been selected as a case as it is a non-obvious example of a revolution that would elicit US support, often touted as an archetypal 'disruptive' revolution. It has been grouped alongside Russia (1917), China (1949), Cuba (1959), Iran (1979) and Nicaragua (1979) as a 'classic social revolution' (Foran, 2005: 250; Lachapelle et al., 2020: 561-2); and alongside China (1911) and Russia (1917) as one of the great revolutions of the early twentieth century that "overturned established orders, the consequences of which paralleled those of the First World War" (Gilderhus, 2000: 37). The "anti-Yankee rhetoric and seizure of foreign property commonly associated with the Mexican Revolution" (Skirius, 2003: 50-51), as well as Mexico's abundance of oil, petroleum, and foreign investment make great power support for revolutionary change all the more surprising (Gilderhus, 1977: 10; Smith, 1972: 6).[54]

In these ways the Mexican Revolution stands out from the other potential cases. It is intuitively unsurprising that the Russian February Revolution (1917), Portugal's Carnation Revolution (1974-6) and Tunisia's Jasmine Revolution (2010) avoided great power counterrevolution. Although these three cases lend support to the order exit theory, the absence of great power counterrevolution does not provide a motivating empirical puzzle to begin with. The more radical revolutions in this pool of cases were close contenders for case selection, including Hungary's Communist Revolution (1919), Haiti's Revolution of 1946, Bolivia's National Revolution (1952) and India's Naxalite Rebellion Part I (1967-73). These are prime cases for future analysis.

The Hungarian Revolution (1956) was one of 51 revolutionary episodes where both attempts at order exit and great power counterrevolution were present, comprising 39% of the case universe. This category represents the most common configuration of independent (order exit) and dependent (great power counterrevolution) variables. Other episodes in this category include the Russian Bolshevik Revolution (1917), Nicaragua's Sandino Rebellion (1926-1933), Chad's Frolinat and the Civil War Part I (1966-93), Pinochet's rightist revolution in Chile (1973), the Athens Polytechnic Uprising (1973), UNITA and the Angolan Civil War (1975-22), the Iranian Revolution (1979) and Somalia's al-Shabaab (2006-2020). All these examples are illustrative of great power attempts to defeat revolutionary projects, whether via sanctions, the arming of opponents, or direct

[54] By 1914 Mexico was the third largest petroleum producer in the world, at 21,000,000 barrels (Gilderhus, 1977: 10). The pre-revolution economy was dominated by foreign capital, which owned 98% of the guayule and rubber sectors, 97% of mining properties and around 90% of the petroleum sector (Smith, 1972: 6).

military intervention. These cases are also examples of revolutionary attempts to drag their states out of their extant orders.

The Hungarian Revolution (1956) was chosen for detailed study as it is one of the most important events in the last seven decades, both in terms of its domestic and international effects (Nagy, 2019: 127). In terms of regional significance, the Hungarian Revolution (1956) stands in a select category of the most important post-WWII moments in Central and Eastern Europe, alongside Yugoslavia's international exile in 1948, the East German Uprising of 1953, 'Polish October' in 1956, and the Czechoslovak 'Spring' in 1968 (Sakwa, 1978: 62). It has also been described as "a watershed in the history of communism and of the cold war" (Kovrig, 1999: 227). Not only is the Hungarian Revolution of historical importance, but so is the Soviet Union's counterrevolutionary response. This is a maximal case of great power counterrevolution, with the USSR intervention resulting in the execution of 600 people, the imprisonment of 26,000 and the flight of 200,000 people abroad (Kramer, 1998: 210-11; Pienkos, 2006: 372). The Hungarian Revolution has also been chosen as it allows for a paired comparison with a negative case of great power counterrevolution: Soviet tolerance of the Polish Revolution (1956). The parallels between the events of 1956 in Poland and Hungary make Soviet support for the former and counterrevolution against the latter theoretically and empirically illuminating.

The third case study – the attempted Syrian Salafist revolution – is drawn from a pool of 20 revolutionary episodes where order exit was absent, but nonetheless, great power counterrevolution was present (15% of the of case universe). Revolutionary episodes in this category included the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (1905-11), the Hungarian Aster Revolution (1918), Cuba's Fall of Machado (1931-33), Myanmar's Communist Insurgency (1949-89), the Dominican Republic's Struggle for Democracy (1961-65), the Second Malayan Emergency (1968-89), and the 'Seoul Spring' Democracy Movement (1979-80).

The attempted Salafist revolution in Syria was chosen for two reasons. First, it has elicited one of the major great power counterrevolutions since the end of the Cold War. As part of 'Operation Inherent Resolve', the US and its coalition partners conducted 11,235 airstrikes in Syria between 2014 and 2017, at the cost of more than $14.3 billion US dollars (US Department of Defense, 2017).[55] The counterrevolution is ongoing and will have been running for eight years in October 2022. Such a major counterrevolution in the absence of order exit presents a difficult case for my theory. Second, the attempted Salafist revolution in Syria has been chosen as it is the only episode with this variable configuration (no order exit, great power counterrevolution) in the contemporary

[55] Total costs of the campaign as it related to both Iraq and Syria.

(post-1992) era. Further, of the three case studies in this dissertation, it is the only revolutionary episode that unfolded in the Middle East and which had an Islamist ideology. Cases spanning different continents, eras and ideologies have been chosen to test how far the order exit theory travels.

The outlier case could also have been chosen from a different category of cases: order exit, but no great power counterrevolution. There were 12 (9%) revolutionary episodes between 1900 and 2020 where demands for order exit were not met with great power counterrevolution. Half of these episodes were revolutions leaving the Soviet orbit at the end of the Cold War: Poland (1981-90), Hungary (1988-90), East Germany (1989-90), Romania (1989-90), Czechoslovakia (1989) and Mongolia (1989-90). The Soviet Union's implosion during this period is the likely explanation for the absence of great power counterrevolution. The USSR was transitioning from being a great power, no longer having the will or capacity to crush order exiting revolutions. Given that almost half the cases in this pool could be explained by Soviet collapse, the remaining six cases comprise a very small pool of exceptions, thereby reducing their potential significance. Instead, I chose to select the third case study from the larger pool of cases with the configuration of no order exit, with great power counterrevolution. Nonetheless, the six outlier cases are certainly worthy of close analysis as a future task. These six cases are: South African's Anti-Apartheid Campaign (1952-1964), Pakistan's 1968 Movement (1968-69), Thailand's Student Uprising (1973), Sudan's April *Intifada* (1985), South Korea's Grand March for Democracy (1987), Iraq's October Revolution (2019-20).

## Methodological trade offs

With any chosen methodological approach comes trade-offs. The advantages of macro-historical work include the ability to discern long-range patterns and processes of change across the broad sweep of history. Disadvantages include the inability to capture some of the nuance and richness of specific cases. A related concern of revolutions scholars has been balancing the particularism of cases versus projects of grand theorising (Foran, 2005: 15; Goodwin 2001: 290; Lawson, 2019: 9; Selbin, 2008: 34; Tilly, 1995: 1596). Some argue it is a fool's errand to attempt to find 'universal laws' given that each case context provides a unique constellation of descriptive or causal factors.[56] Kim, for example, is "skeptical of unabashedly "general" theories" (Kim, 1970: xix), while Emirbayer and Goodwin (1996: 360-1) have been critical of attempts to build a 'one-size-fits-all'

[56] This critique is an enduring one. As early as 1939 Samuel Bernstein mounted a withering critique of Crane Brinton for labouring similarities across the English, American, French and Russian cases that he believes were simply not there (Bernstein, 1939).

model of revolutionary causation that can travel across eras and geographies. Both Calvert (1990: 79) and Ritter (2015: 219) recognise the peculiarities and context specificity of each revolutionary episode. Reflecting on the idiosyncrasies of the 2010 Tunisian revolution, Ritter (2025: 219) muses: "how do social scientists account for the election of a human rights president and the publishing of a slanderous newspaper article, the self-immolation of a fruit vendor and the vacation plans of a president, or the example set by an unarmed revolutionary in a neighbouring country"? Indeed, revolutions are diverse events, from disparate geo-spatial, temporal and political contexts, to ideologies, strategies, actors and the challengers that they face (Goldstone, 2014: 2; Goodwin, 2001: 290; Lawson, 2019: 2; Ritter, 2015: 3, 218-19). An effect of navigating such diversity has been the abstraction of causes into broad categories such that they are applicable in many situations where revolutions do not occur (Foran, 2005: 9-10; Markoff, 2013: 239; Ritter, 2015: 218). The more fine-grained and context-contingent the causes, the less their generalisability. But if the causes are so broad as to encapsulate almost every scenario, both revolutionary and otherwise, their explanatory power becomes diminished.

Others are more optimistic about the possibilities of detecting broad (causal or descriptive) patterns in the face of case singularity. For example, Kurzman (2008: 7) argues that it is necessary to move beyond the isolated study of revolutionary cases to see broader linkages and patterns, while Lawson (2019: 40) argues that a 'process ontology' allows scholars to balance an appreciation of the specificity of each revolution with the discernment of similarities across time and place. Similarly, Schock (2005: xviii-xix) reasons that although "all countries are the unique products of their own histories and circumstances, I also recognize that their uniqueness does not vitiate appropriate comparison…."

Where does my dissertation land within this debate? The use of statistical analyses necessarily entails a concern with broad patterns (or average effects) across cases. While all instances of international counterrevolution are, in some sense, unique, this does not preclude theorising across disparate cases. The use of mixed methods is a partial corrective to concerns of the 'flattening' power of regression – peculiarities (as well as patterns) can be detected in case analyses. However, while it is possible to theorise across cases, is it possible (or desirable) to theorise across eras? The following charge might be levelled: by focusing on a handful of factors, one condenses history onto a single plane that is amenable to analysis by a constant, unchanging set of factors. In other words, as the world changes, surely the factors explaining world events should change too?

This critique can be approached in two ways. First, my argument for the importance of order exit is not the same thing as saying that order exit matters everywhere all of the time. There are multiple

cases of revolution where order exit seems to have minimal (or no) bearing on great power counterrevolution. While, on average, order exit matters for great power counterrevolution between 1900 and 2020, this logic doesn't hold in every single case. Second, focusing on the same variables over time can be a tool for mapping world historical change and dynamic processes. The order exit variable necessitates the mapping of multiple orders, their birth, rise and death; it allows us to view the changing stakes of order leaving with shifts in the number of great power orders, as well as changes in frequency of order leaving over time. The ideological challenge variable in my dataset allows the tracking of changing hegemonic ideologies, and the power redistribution variable demonstrates shifting international power configurations and hierarchies. In other words, a constant variable can be a prism for viewing and detecting world historical change.

A second and related trade off concerns the types of sources used: the detail and richness of archives which necessitates a narrower temporal and geographic scope, versus the use of secondary sources which allows more expansive global-historical theorising. This is an ongoing debate in the sub-discipline of Historical International Relations, with John Hobson's work being the archetypal example of global-historical theorising using secondary sources, versus Tarak Barkawi's meticulous use of archives to delve into a smaller range of cases (Barkawi et al., 2022). In the revolutions field, secondary sources have tended to form the basis of research so that broad case comparisons can be conducted (for justifications of relying on secondary sources, see: Allinson, 2022: 28; Foran, 2005: 1, 28; Goodwin, 2001: xvi; Kurzman, 2008: 7; Ritter, 2015: 25-6; Skocpol, 1979: xi). Some studies with a narrower geographic and temporal focus have relied on archives and other primary sources (see for example Weyland, 2016). I have tried to achieve a balance between these approaches by using both primary and secondary sources in dataset construction. More than half of the revolutions analysed in the dataset draw on primary materials, including online newspaper and diplomatic archives, revolutionaries' manifestos and photographs of protest banners. The digitisation of archives including the Foreign Relations of the United States repository and newspaper archives such as the New York Times' 'Times Machine' have been crucial in allowing me to do this.

A third trade off concerns the pursuit of causal depth versus causal breadth. Some 'fourth generation' revolutions scholars have been critical of the 'bold theorists' of earlier generations in their ostensible elevation of a single cause in explaining revolutionary phenomena (e.g. Skocpol's, 1979 focus on the state, Gurr's 1970 focus on psychology and Trimberger's 1978 focus on

revolutionary elites) (Abrams, 2019: 381-2).[57] Many fourth generation scholars have instead aimed to capture causal complexity by mapping the myriad factors that can contribute to revolutionary situations (Allinson, 2021: 152). Multicausal explanations of revolution span, for example, culture, agency, social structures, political economy, political systems and 'external' factors (Foran, 2005: 17-18; see also Goldstone, 2014: 21 and Goodwin, 2001: 3, 290-1). This multifactorial, conjunctural approach to causation has not been without critics. Some see it as an ever expanding 'ingredient list' of causal factors (Lawson, 2019: 53), where a complete recipe will produce a revolution (or counterrevolution). Such attempts to produce "an exhaustive list of variables" makes it easy to lose "sight of the logic of their operation" (Abrams, 2019: 381-2).

By focusing on a single factor – order exit as driving counterrevolution – this dissertation could be accused of some of the foibles of the earlier generation scholars. While order exit occupies a significant portion of this dissertation, this focus does not preclude the analysis of other factors. Further, although I consider only a small number of independent variables in the qualitative component of this dissertation (order exit, ideological challenges and international power hierarchy challenges), this approach does allow me to zoom in on each variable in greater depth, and understand the logics of interaction between them in the case studies. This is an advantage of the narrower causal approach of the pre-fourth generation scholars (Abrams, 2019: 382).

[57] The 'generations' approach to the revolutions literature, pioneered by Goldstone (1980, 1982 and 2001), delineates (at least) four generations of revolutions scholarship.

# Chapter 3: Theorising International Counterrevolution

Having laid the conceptual and methodological groundwork in the previous two chapters, the task of this chapter is to develop a theory of international counterrevolution. To this end, this chapter undertakes six tasks. First, I survey existing theories of revolution, comparing two different frameworks for parsing the literature: the 'generations' approach developed by Goldstone (1980, 1982 and 2001), as well as grouping the literature into descriptive, causal and normative branches. This brief overview of the revolutions literature provides a theoretical starting point from which to move onto theories of counterrevolution (the second task of this chapter).

In the second section of this chapter I map different theories of counterrevolution, locating this dissertation within the branch of the literature addressing the question of counterrevolutionary causes. In mapping existing theories of counterrevolution, it becomes apparent how comparatively little has been written on the topic vis-à-vis revolution. The literature on the international dimensions of counterrevolution is particularly sparse. Existing answers to the question of what causes great power counterrevolution are grouped into three strands. The first strand contends that international counterrevolution is an inevitable reaction to revolution. In other words, revolution, by its very nature, is a sufficient cause of international counterrevolution. I critique these approaches, which I term strand one theories, on empirical grounds: by my count, only 48% of revolutions were met with great power counterrevolution between 1900 and 2020. Strand two theories posit that great power counterrevolution is driven by the characteristics of the great powers themselves. Revisionist powers will support revolution, while status quo states will engage in counterrevolution. This theory has mixed empirical support. While the Soviet Union supported many more revolutions than it opposed, the US supported and opposed revolutions in equal measure. These empirics don't quite gel with revisionist-status quo theories of counterrevolution. The strand three theories contend that 'order-challenging' revolutions trigger great power counterrevolution, while 'order-supporting' revolutions are tolerated by the great powers. In other words, if revolutions challenge international order, the order fights back. I argue that strand three theories are the most compelling, using them as my theoretical starting point on which to build.

That said, the third section of this chapter outlines several critiques of strand three theories. First, these theories adopt a binary approach to order-challenging versus order-affirming revolutions. These theories are most illuminating in cases of wholly disruptive or wholly quiescent revolutions,

but are less suited to understanding great power responses to revolutions that challenge some aspects of their order but support others. Second, the idea of 'order-challenging' versus 'order supporting' revolutions implies that order is singular. However, revolutionaries frequently challenge one international order while supporting another. The 1989 Eastern European revolutions were just as much order supporting revolutions as order challenging revolutions. Third, there might be other types of order challenge that have not yet been fully theorised in explanations of great power counterrevolution. I argue that order exit is one of them.

The fourth section of this chapter details the core argument of this dissertation: order exit is an important driver of great power counterrevolution. The challenges that exiting states pose to great powers are transformative, strategic and existential. I define order exit as a shift in alliance configurations such that it affects a state's membership in one of the five orders mapped in Chapter 1 (Figure 5). Order exiting revolutionaries may attempt to shift from one great power order to another, or shift from one great power order to no great power order (e.g. the non-aligned movement). Order exit is distinct from other related processes such as order expulsion and more general processes of alliance shifts. The distinction between order exit and changes in alliance configurations is illustrated through several cases.

The fifth section clarifies two aspects of the theory. It discusses how order exit relates to other types of revolutionary challenge, showing that order exit sometimes pulls in the same direction as ideological and international power hierarchy challenges, and sometimes not. This section also outlines how order exit theory relates to Skocpol's (1979) distinction between social and political revolution. I justify not incorporating this distinction into order exit theory.

The final section of this chapter details the theoretical implications of order exit theory. Order exit theory has several advantages: it allows the disaggregation of different types of order challenge; it explicitly conceptualises orders in the plural; it explains why we see more great power counterrevolution in some eras and less in others; it highlights that great powers are not necessarily change resistant, being tolerant of certain configurations of revolutionary challenges; and it unsettles the revisionist-status quo power binary.

## Theorising revolution

Theorising counterrevolution first requires a discussion of its counterpoint, revolution. Revolutionary theory can be parsed in several ways. The orthodox approach is to divide the revolutions literature by generations (pioneered by Goldstone, 1980, 1982 and 2001). To date, we have seen four generations of revolutions scholarship. The first generation (c.1900-1940) engaged

in descriptive mapping of the phases of revolution, finding commonalities and patterns across cases (Goldstone, 1980: 425 and 1982: 189; Ritter, 2015: 9). Accordingly, they have been labelled the 'natural-history school' (Goldstone, 1982: 189). Scholars of this first generation include Brinton (1938), Edwards (1927), Pettee (1938) and Sorokin (1925). The second generation (c. 1940-1975) shifted from description to explanation, attempting to understand the causes of revolution. Their explanations focused on sociological and psychological factors, and as a result, individual and group-level motivations and grievances (Goldstone, 1980: 425; Lawson, 2019: 50-1). Key second generation works include Davies (1962), Gurr (1970), Huntington (1968), Johnson (1966) and Smelser (1963).

The third generation (c. 1975-1990) shifted attention from individual and group-level drivers of revolutionary behaviour to structural-historical factors (Goldstone, 1982: 194; Lawson, 2019: 51; Ritter, 2015: 10). As a result, these scholars have been described as the 'the structural-theory school' (Goldstone, 1982: 189 and 2001: 140). State breakdown, and associated processes of class competition, agrarian relationships, population growth, and international conflict feature prominently in third generation accounts (Goldstone, 1982: 193-4 and 2001: 139; Ritter, 2015: 10-12). Works emblematic of the third generation include Goldstone (1991), Moore (1966), Skocpol (1979) and Trimberger (1978).

The fourth generation of scholars (c.1990-) expanded the causal repertoire to bridge both agential and structural explanations, bringing in contingency, culture, ideology, identity, leadership and gender-based variables (Bayat, 2021: 394; Goldstone, 2001: 141; Ritter, 2015: 12). This resulted in increasingly complex, multi-factor models (Bayat, 2021: 394). Archetypal fourth generation scholars include Bukovansky (2002), Foran (2005), Goldstone (2003 and 2009), Goodwin (1997), Kurzman (2008), Lawson (2004, 2005 and 2019), Parsa (2000) and Selbin (1997 and 2010).

The 'generations' approach to parsing the revolutions literature is the locus of several debates, including whether or not we have witnessed the emergence of a fifth generation of revolutions scholarship (see Abrams, 2019 vs. Allinson, 2019b). There are also critiques of the generations approach altogether. Several shortcomings of this way of cataloguing the literature have been noted. These include the overly neat and linear characterisation of the way in which revolutions scholarship has developed – attained, in part, via the omission of works that don't fit chronologically and thematically within each of the four existing generations (Beck and Ritter, 2021: 134, 137; Lawson, 2019: 48). As the diversity of the revolutions field has grown, so too have the difficulties in homing such a broad range of theories and approaches within a quadripartite generations framework (Beck and Ritter, 2021: 137; see also, Goldstone, 2001: 139-40). Other

critiques include: the canonisation of some works at the expense of others (Allinson, 2018; Beck and Ritter, 2021: 136-7); the emphasis on intergenerational debates at the expense of intragenerational debates (Beck and Ritter, 2021: 136); and the forward momentum implicit in any generations framework that makes previous generations seem outdated and even obsolete (Beck and Ritter, 2021: 136).

These concerns notwithstanding, the generations approach does have several advantages. The framework clearly elucidates how the study of revolutions has been a bellwether for wider disciplinary turns in the social sciences (see for example Foran, 2005: 13-14, who highlights the impact of the 'cultural turn' on the study of revolutions). Viewed as a heuristic device (rather than as an exhaustive survey of the literature) the generations approach allows for a digestible sifting of more than 100 years of scholarship (Lawson, 2019: 48). Indeed, it "has been an invaluable orientating tool for virtually every student that has entered the field over the past four decades" (Beck and Ritter, 2021: 134). The resilience of the generations framework since it was introduced in 1980 is a testament to its value.

These advantages and limitations, taken together, suggest the need for new ways of parsing the literature that can exist alongside generational accounts.[58] No one framework will be able to do everything, so the more frameworks that are in use, the more comprehensive the coverage of the revolutions field will be. One suggested alternative way of making the sprawling revolutions field intelligible is by focusing on debates, rather than generations (Beck and Ritter, 2021: 136). Another way of carving up the revolutions literature is into descriptive, causal and normative branches. This is the approach pursued below.

The first branch of revolutions scholarship – descriptive analyses – have focused on anatomising revolutions. They seek to capture certain features, processes and trajectories of revolution. This branch not only maps the trajectories of specific revolutions, but also the trajectory of the phenomenon of revolution as a whole as it evolves over time. Key insights generated by this branch include: the different phases of communist versus constitutional revolutions (Sohrabi, 1995); the different phases of moderation and radicalization as revolutionaries try to consolidate power (Brinton, 1938); and the evolution of revolution from disruptive to more negotiated forms (Lawson, 2004 and 2005). Classic works also include Hobsbawm's (1986) elegant tracing of the

[58] This is a different view to that taken by Beck and Ritter (2021: 134), who instead "propose to take the field beyond generational thinking." Abrams (2021: 143) similarly "welcome[s] the rejection of the generational paradigm."

French political revolution and British industrial revolution, and Tilly's (2005) rigorous mapping of popular contention in 18th and 19th century Britain.

The second, and most prolific, branch of revolutions scholarship is causal. Two questions have dominated: what causes revolution to unfold? And what causes revolution to succeed? Works dedicated to understanding why revolution unfolds include DeFronzo (1991), Farhi (1988), Foran (2005), Goldfrank (1979), Goldstone (1991), Goodwin (2001), Parsa (2000), Selbin (2010), Skocpol (1979) and Slater (2009). These studies have identified a wide array of causal factors, arranged in various constellations: oppressive regime types, elite discontent, public outrage at injustice, a unifying culture, narrative or ideology of resistance, a debilitating political crisis of the state; as well as economic exploitation, intervention or crisis. International causal factors have been mapped too, including war, interstate competition, conjunctural crises of the system and rapidly expanding world culture (Beck, 2009 and 2011; Goldstone, 2014: 21-2; Halliday, 1999: 174-9, 189 and 1990: 214; Lawson, 2015b: 310 and 2004: 7).

There is a similarly rich literature on what causes revolutions to fail or succeed. Key works answering this question include Chenoweth and Stephan (2011), Ketchley (2017), Nepstad (2011), Ritter (2015), Russell (1974) and Schock (2005). Several important factors explaining success have been proposed. Nepstad (2011) and Russell (1974) examine the role of military loyalty shifts; Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) and Schock (2005) look at unarmed tactics; while Ritter (2015) draws our attention to the liberal state allies of incumbent regimes. Other factors contributing to the success of revolutionary movements include the breadth and cohesion of the revolutionary coalition (Foran, 2005: 23; Lawson, 2019: 199-200), the presence of both visionary and organisational leadership (Goldstone, 2014: 35), incumbent regime type (Goodwin, 2001: 30), emulation of other successful revolutions (up to a certain 'tipping point') (Beissinger, 2007: 260, 265), external support (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2021), as well as the presence and potency of counter-revolution in its ability to roll back revolutionary gains (Allison, 2022: 3; Lawson, 2019: 28-31). Beyond the question of revolutionary outbreak and revolutionary success, other causal studies seek to explain why movements use armed versus unarmed tactics (e.g. Pearlman, 2011); why revolution can lead to war (e.g. Colgan, 2013b; Colgan and Weeks, 2015: 163; Halliday, 1999; Walt, 1996); and why rebels govern in different ways (Stewart, 2021).

The third branch of revolutions scholarship asks normative questions concerning the ethics of revolution and the right to revolt. Such questions have occupied Immanuel Kant and John Locke (see for example Flikshuh, 2008, for an analysis of their views). More recent works include Arendt (2006), Buchanan (2013), Renzo (2020), Finlay (2009 and 2015), Kaufman (2013), Korsgaard

(1997) and Rawls (1971). One key debate centres on whether civil (or uncivil) disobedience is ever justified (see Alderson, 1974; Betz, 1970; Blackstone, 1970; Brand, 2013; Delmas, 2018; Dworkin, 1977; Simmons, 2003; and Singer, 1973). Another strand is engaged in constructing a theory of 'just revolutionary war' (to parallel 'just war theory') (e.g. Finlay, 2015). A different approach is taken by Arendt (2006), who argues that revolutionary lineages should be traced from the American, rather than the destructive French, revolution.

Of course, the division of the revolutions literature into descriptive, causal and normative branches is not a clearcut exercise. Some works straddle multiple branches. For example, Lawson's (2019) book engages in rich anatomical mapping as well as causal and some normative analysis. Tilly's (1993) study charts political transformations in Europe as well as theorising the causes of revolutionary situations. Causal and normative dimensions of revolution form part of Brinton's (1938) classic study. The similarities he identifies between pre-revolutionary England, France, America and Russia are in some senses causal factors, while using fever as an analogy for revolution suggests his normative disdain for the phenomenon.

The tripartite descriptive-causal-normative division of the literature has been proposed for three reasons. First, it allows the incorporation of scholarship from multiple different disciplines into a single framework. This makes it easier to see connections and complementarities across disciplines that together comprise the revolutions field (e.g. the similarities and differences in how revolution is defined). The tripartite approach adopted here can accommodate historians (e.g. Hobsbawm, 1986), political theorists (Arendt, 2006) and philosophers (e.g. Korsgaard, 1997). This is in contrast to the generations approach which was designed to parse social-scientific scholarship (Goldstone, 1980: 425). A generational framework encompassing multiple disciplines would quickly become unwieldly.

Second, the tripartite framework can accommodate a wide array of research agendas: how is revolution changing over time? Why do revolutionaries choose unarmed tactics? When is it permissible to revolt against a tyrant? This is in contrast to the generations approach which focuses almost wholly on the question of why revolutions occur and succeed (with the exception of descriptive, first-generation approaches).

Finally, if the literature on revolution is in conversation with the literature on counterrevolution, the two ought to be parsed in mutually intelligible ways. A generational approach is ill-suited to the literature on counterrevolution, not least because it lacks a self-conscious build-up of scholarship and contains far fewer works. In contrast, the tripartite descriptive-causal-normative

approach is not only applicable to revolutions scholarship, but to counterrevolutions scholarship too. Parsing the counterrevolutions literature in this way is the task of the next section.

## Theorising international counterrevolution

Theories of counterrevolution can similarly be parsed into descriptive, causal and normative branches. Descriptive works include Mayer's (2000) study of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary violence and terror via comparison of the French (1789) and Russian (1917) revolutions. Other examples are Walker's (1991) detailed mapping of processes of revolution and counterrevolution in Sandinista Nicaragua and Arboleya's (2000) tracing of counterrevolution in Cuba. On the Arab Spring, de Smet (2014) offers a Gramscian interpretation of revolution and counterrevolution in Egypt; Said (2021) provides a new framework for understanding the temporalities, actors and tactics of counterrevolution, also in Egypt; Filiu (2015) traces the processes of counterrevolution unleashed by the region's autocracies.

The causal branch of the counterrevolutions literature, like the revolutions literature, focuses on two questions: a) why do counterrevolutions occur; and b) why do counterrevolutions succeed? On this first question, Tilly's (1964) comparative analysis of regions in the Vendée highlights the role of urbanization and the rural-urban divide in stoking the flames of counterrevolution. Halliday (1999) and Bisley (2004) have hypothesised several causes of international counterrevolution, from revolutionary challenges to norms, sovereignty, dominant ideologies and the prevailing economic system. Dannreuther (2015) examines the role of geopolitics and domestic politics in driving Moscow's counterrevolutionary response to the Arab Spring. It is in this category that this dissertation falls, focusing on the specific question of the causes of great power counterrevolution.

Also within the causal branch, several studies have been dedicated to the question of counterrevolutionary success. For example, Weyland (2016) uses cognitive psychology to explain counterrevolutionary success after 1848, arguing that counterrevolutionary actors displayed greater political rationality than their revolutionary counterparts. Allinson (2019) uses the case of the Egyptian Revolution (2011) to examine the role of counterrevolutionary ideologies in establishing broad coalitions and eliciting external support to successfully crush revolution. Clarke's (2022) book project examines both questions of counterrevolutionary causation and counterrevolutionary success. Counterrevolutionary onset is tied to the capacities of counterrevolutionary actors as well as how well their interests are served under the new revolutionary regime (Clarke, 2022: 5). Counterrevolutionary success is contingent upon the organisation and strength of the revolutionary regime, which is often higher for left-wing and ethnic revolutions and lower for

liberal revolutions (Clarke, 2022: ii). Beyond the onset and success of counterrevolution, other causal questions concern counterrevolutionary impacts. For example, Mayer (1967) examines how domestic contests between revolution and counterrevolution impacted the peace-making process at Versailles. Another example is Slater and Smith (2016), who examine the effect of counterrevolutionary state making on the durability of political orders. In these studies, counterrevolution is best conceived of as the independent variable and others factors the dependent variables.

The normative branch reflects on the ethics of counterrevolution. An early contributor to this branch of scholarship was Hobbes, whose defence of absolute monarchy against the revolutionary threat of parliamentarianism has earned him the label "the first counterrevolutionary" (Robin, 2011: 61-75). More recent works in this category include Johnson (1997), who considers the ethics of US military counterrevolution from the Monroe Doctrine to the Nixon Doctrine. On a meta-level, Said (2018) reflects on positionality and ethics in researching revolution and counterrevolution in Egypt since 2011.[59]

This short mapping of the literature shows that, despite its significance in patterning world politics (Halliday, 1999: 19, 208; Mann, 2001: 685-6), the phenomenon of international counterrevolution has been doubly neglected. First, counterrevolution has suffered from relative neglect vis-à-vis its more famous twin, revolution (Allinson, 2019a: 324, 2021: 151 and 2022: 3, 7; Mayer, 2000: 45; Said, 2021: 3; Slater and Smith, 2016: 1472; Weyland, 2016: 215). Second, where counterrevolution has been the focus of academic works, its international dimensions have tended to be backgrounded vis-à-vis its domestic dimensions (see Allinson, 2019a: 326; Bisley, 2004: 51). The two most recent surges in the study of counterrevolution – during the 1990s and in the wake of the 'Arab Spring' – have each tended towards one of these two imbalances. The post-Cold War surge of interest in counterrevolution, while being international in focus, relegated counterrevolution to a supporting role behind revolution. Armstrong (1993), Calvert (1990) and Halliday (1999) typify this approach (for example, Halliday dedicates only one of the twelve chapters in his book to counterrevolution).

The more recent surge of interest in counterrevolution on the heels of the 'Arab Spring' has placed counterrevolution front and centre. However, its focus has, by-and-large, been on its domestic

[59] Unsurprisingly, revolutionaries have contributed to the normative branch themselves. In a 1794 speech, Robespierre declared "that which is corrupting is counterrevolutionary", decrying "the intriguers…the traitors…the mercenary libelers subsidized to dishonor the popular cause, to kill public virtue, to stir up the fires of civil discord, and to prepare political counterrevolution by means of moral counterrevolution" (cited in George Mason University and City University New York, 2019).

dimensions, with International Relations scholars largely absent (notable exceptions being Allinson, 2019a and 2022; Dannreuther, 2015). Examples in this domestically-oriented camp include de Smet (2014), Clarke (2022), Filiu (2015), Said (2021), and Winegar (2021). These studies remain anchored in the national or regional contexts in which the uprisings unfolded, with international processes and actors hovering in the background. Curiously, decades of scholarly urgings to focus on the international dimensions of revolution (Halliday, 1999: 6-7; Lawson, 2011, 2015a: 299 and 2019: 42-3; Rao, 2016; Ritter, 2015: 21) have not yet reverberated to the same extent in the counterrevolutions field. Exceptions to the general neglect of international counterrevolution include Allinson (2019a and 2022), Bisley (2004), Halliday (1999), Kim (1970) and Lawson (2019: 33-4).

In methodological terms, studies of international counterrevolution have tended to be qualitative and case based. For example: Kim (1970) focuses on the French revolution; Walt (1996) focuses on the French, Iranian and Russian revolutions; Walker (2019) examines the 1979 Nicaraguan revolution; Allinson (2019a) and Dannreuther (2015) focus on the Arab Spring revolutions; Weyland (2016) examines 1848 compared with the Arab Spring revolutions; Bisley (2004) and Halliday (1999) theorise international counterrevolution on the basis of an undefined pool of cases. These works have yielded rich insights on the international dimensions of counterrevolution, ranging from counterrevolution's international causes and effects (Halliday, 1999: 207), challenges to sovereignty norms (Bisley, 2004: 57; Halliday, 208, 230), the methods and means of international counterrevolution (Halliday, 1999: 210-11), as well as the international objectives of counterrevolutionary actors (Allinson, 2019a). Building on these insights, there is a need to expand both temporal and geographic scope in the study of international counterrevolution while diversifying methodological approaches. The lack of systematic mapping of the phenomenon of international counterrevolution, as well as the tendency to focus only on positive cases, means that more work is yet to be done in refining causal theories. The next section examines the existing literature on the causes of international counterrevolution. I have grouped this literature into three explanatory strands. Each is surveyed below.

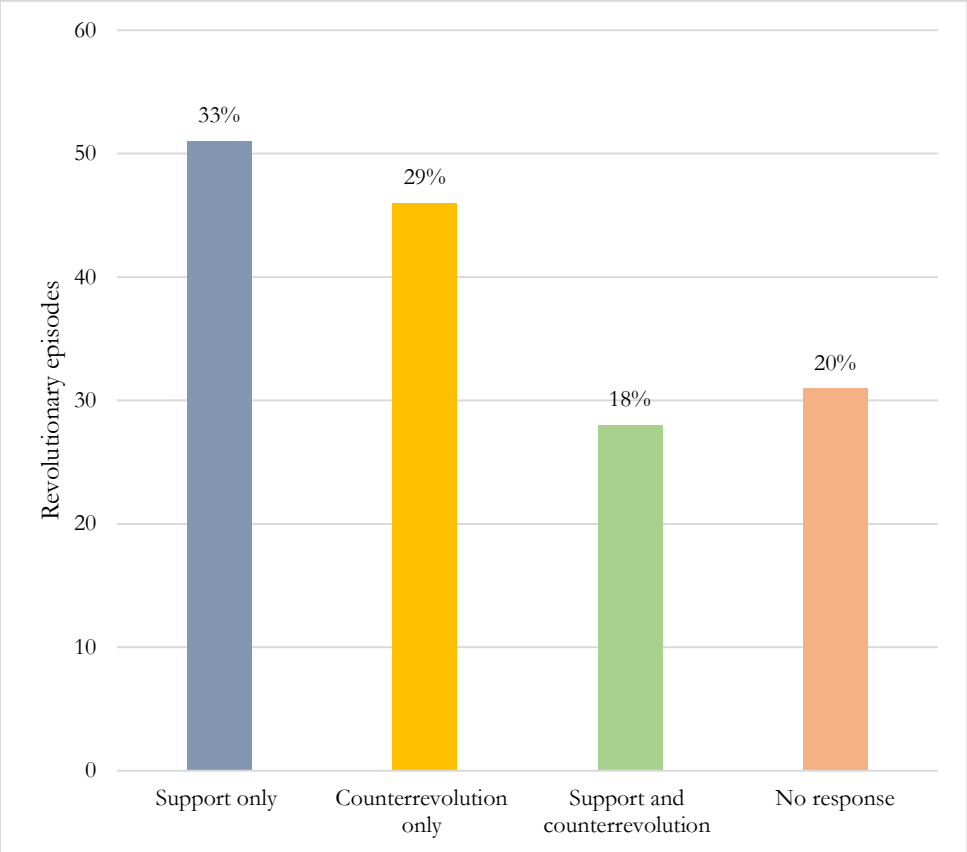
Strand I: Revolution and international counterrevolution go hand in hand

The first explanation of international counterrevolution is that it is a mechanical response to revolution. Revolutions, by their necessarily transgressive and extra-constitutional nature, pose profound challenges to the international status quo. Bisley (2004: 50) argues that "all social revolutions of the modern period have elicited some form of international counterrevolution", while Halliday (1999: 19) asserts that "revolutions have almost always provoked a response in the

international system and calls for the revolution to be overthrown". Wight (1978: 90) argues that "revolutionary power is morally and psychologically at war with its neighbours all the time", while for Mayer (2000: 45) "there can be no revolution without counterrevolution". Conceptualising international counterrevolution as "fundamental to the idea of revolution itself" (Bisley, 2004: 50) precludes theorising about when and why international counterrevolution unfolds, and when it doesn't. If counterrevolution is "inseparable" from revolution (Mayer, 2000: 45), then we should expect to see it whenever we see revolution. But we don't.

International counterrevolution was far from pervasive between 1900 and 2020. Only 48% of revolutionary episodes were met with great power counterrevolution. Breaking down great power responses into the four categories in Figure 7 below shows that great power support was the dominant response: one third (33%) of revolutionary episodes were faced with great power support and no counterrevolution; 29% faced counterrevolution and no support; 18% were the site of proxy conflicts (being supported by some great powers but being opposed by others). One-fifth of revolutionary episodes (20%) elicited no great power response at all.

**Figure 7.** Great power responses to revolution, 1900-2020[60]




[60] Missing data excluded in Figures 7 - 9.

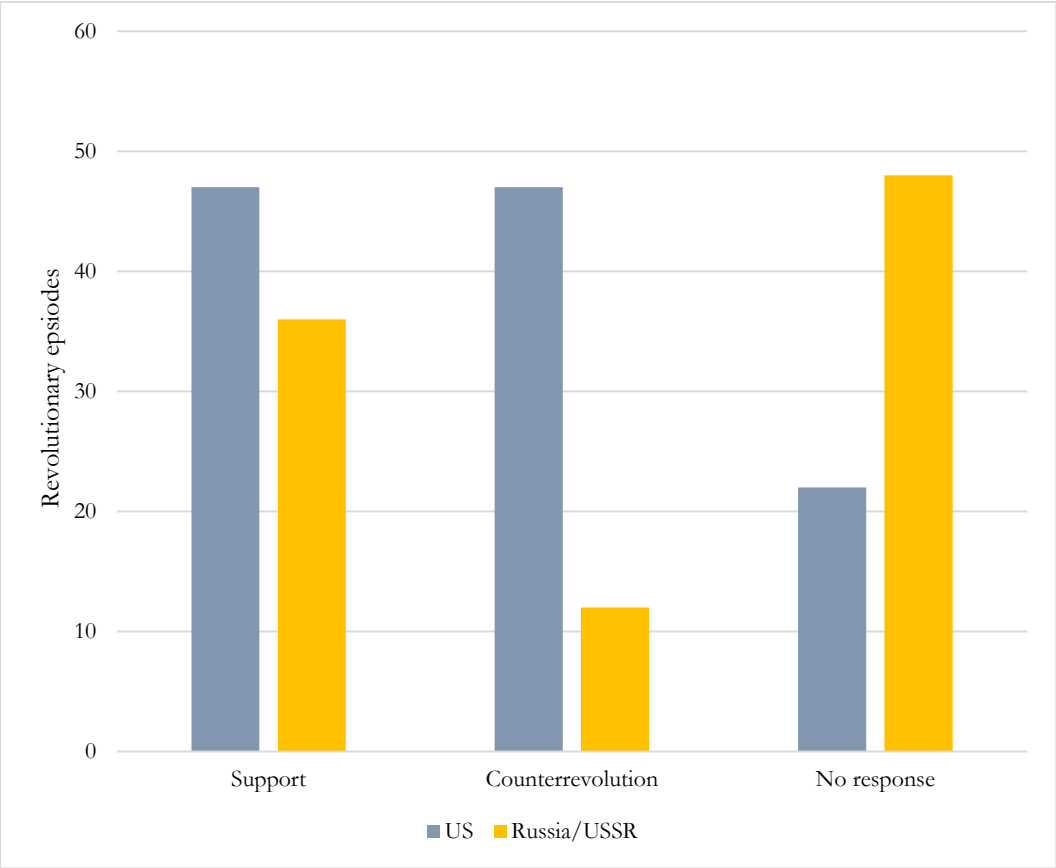
Counterrevolution is not a universal phenomenon even when looking only at social revolutions.[61] Almost 15% of social revolutions between 1900 and 2020 escaped great power counterrevolutionary backlash (and indeed 40% received great power support). This pattern of not every revolution being met with counterrevolution is also detected in Clarke's (2022: 4) research. He shows that only 53% of successful revolutions faced counterrevolutionary threats (domestic and otherwise), between 1900 and 2015. These results indicate that counterrevolution is not an automatic reaction to revolution, suggesting the need for alternative theories.

Strand II: Revisionist versus status quo states

A second possible explanation of international counterrevolution concerns not the revolution, but the great power responders to revolution. Revisionist powers will support revolutionaries and their attempts to reconfigure domestic and international orders, while status quo powers will attempt to block and reverse such violations of stability (see for example Kim, 1970: 134 and Kissinger, 2014: 65 who use the term 'conservative' states instead of status quo states; see also Clarke, 2022: 111 on the US as a consistently counterrevolutionary power pre-1989). The empirics suggest a more complex picture than this theory allows. A comparison of US and Russian/Soviet responses to revolution shows that both engage in support for revolution, counterrevolution and refrain from responding at all in various cases (see Figure 8 below). This is a quite different pattern to that of the USSR only supporting revolution, and the US only countering revolution, as we might expect ostensibly status quo and revisionist powers to behave. US responses are particularly striking: Washington supported 41% of revolutionary episodes that unfolded between 1900 and 1989 while opposing 41% of them.

[61] As per Skocpol (1979: 4-5), political revolutions are those that transform political relations, while social revolutions are more disruptive in their transformation of both political and socio-economic relations. Applying definitions of social revolution is easier in theory than in practice. Here I have counted religious and communist revolutions as social revolutions, and conservative, liberal and ethno-nationalist revolutions as political revolutions. See the final section of this chapter 'Caveats and clarifications' for a discussion of the difficulties of using the social-political distinction.

**Figure 8.** US and Russian/USSR responses to revolution compared, 1900-1989




Great power responses of course vary over time. During the Cold War period (1945-1989), the US opposed 36 (45%) revolutions, supported 33 (41%) revolutions, and didn't respond to 11 (14%) revolutions. This seemingly anomalous result, which runs counter to the common wisdom of the US being a counterrevolutionary power during the Cold War, is likely due to the number of liberal revolutions in my dataset (versus a focus on the big social revolutions in previous research). The revolutions that the US supported during the Cold War were by-and-large liberal, for example Bolivia's La Paz Riots (1946), Venezuela's Democratic Revolution (1958), Sudan's October Revolution (1964-5), Thailand's Student Uprising (1973), Argentina's Pro-democracy movement (1981-83) and the Philippines' People Power Revolution (1986). The revisionist-status quo theory applies more easily to Russia/USSR than to the US. The Soviet Union supported 26 (35%) revolutions during the Cold War, while engaging in counterrevolution against only nine (12%).[62] This pattern broadly fits with the Soviet Union as a revisionist power during the Cold War period. Examples of Soviet Cold War counterrevolutions include Hungary (1956), Sri Lanka's JVP (1971),

[62] Intriguingly, the Soviet Union didn't support or oppose 39 (53%) revolutions during the Cold War. This is, in part, because the USSR (mostly) tended to limit itself to intervention in its own sphere of influence, for the most part not responding to revolutions in countries in Latin America and Africa with which it didn't already have diplomatic relations.

Angola's UNITA (1975), the Muslim Brotherhood uprising and Hama massacre in Syria (1976-82), and the Afghan Mujahidin (1979-89). An examination of US and Russian/USSR responses provides mixed support for the status quo-revisionist power theory of counterrevolution. While Russia/USSR has supported more revolutions than it has opposed (consistent with being a revisionist power), the US has both supported and opposed revolution in similar proportions (complicating its status as a status quo power). This suggests that the status quo-revisionist power theory of counterrevolution is not the most compelling explanation of great power counterrevolution in the period under examination.

Strand III: Revolutions that challenge international order met with great power counterrevolution

The third explanation of great power counterrevolution shifts the focus from the great powers back to the revolutionaries. According to this strand, revolutions that challenge international order will be met with international counterrevolution, while order-affirming revolutions will be spared. Crucially, unlike the Strand I explanations that see all revolutions as existential threats to the international system, Strand III theories allow for a differentiation between world order-challenging revolutions and world order-affirming revolutions. Indeed, although revolutions necessarily challenge domestic orders, only some challenge international orders. There are multiple dimensions of international order that can be challenged by revolutionaries, including: alliance configurations, ideological ordering projects, power distributions, norms such as sovereignty, established diplomatic practices, international organisation membership patterns, international economic relations and international law (Armstrong, 1993: 242-3, 270-1, 306; Bisley, 2004: 50; Grosser, 2016; Halliday, 1999: 10-12, 228-30, 13-14; Lawson, 2005: 488 and 2019: 41, 222; Nelson, 2014). The challenges eliciting counterrevolution can be categorised as strategic, ideological, normative and economic (Lawson, 2019: 33), as elaborated below.

First, in strategic terms, revolutions can unsettle power relations, raising security concerns amongst other states (Bisley, 2004: 39; Lawson, 2019: 33). Revolutions can change alliance configurations as did Iran in 1979 (Bisley, 2004: 55), upset the international balance of power as did revolutionary Russia in 1917 (Walt, 1996: 129), and shift the international 'balance of threat' as did revolutionary France in the lead up to the Wars of the First and Second Coalitions (Walt, 1996: 1, 46-7, 122-3). Such insecurity can be heightened by mutual miscommunication, misunderstanding and an exaggeration of the threat posed by revolutionary states to non-revolutionary states, and vice-versa (Armstrong, 1993: 300; Kim, 1970: 49; Lawson, 2019: 34-5; Walt, 1996: 126-7). The close relationship between revolution and war throughout much of the twentieth century demonstrates the incompatibility of revolutionary and great power strategic interests. As Goldstone notes, major

interstate wars followed closely on the heels of the Algerian, French, Iranian, fascist German, Russian and Vietnamese revolutions, in which millions perished (Goldstone, 1999: xxxiv-xxxv). Multiple studies have noted the increased propensity for interstate war following revolution (Maoz, 1989; Skocpol, 1988; Snyder, 1999; Walt, 1996), whether because of the bellicosity of the revolutionary state (Colgan, 2013a: 17; Colgan and Weeks, 2015: 163), or the opportunism and perceived insecurity of other states in the system (Walt, 1996: 333).

In ideological terms, much of the contestation between revolutionary and non-revolutionary states has been painted as a clash between isms – between absolutism and constitutionalism, fascism and socialism, capitalism and communism, and Islamism and liberalism (see for example Nelson, 2014: 12; Lawson, 2019: 27). There are three mechanisms through which revolutionary ideologies might impact order. The first is that revolutions legitimate new forms of political authority, undermining established systems of rule in other states (Armstrong, 1993: 1; Bisley, 2004: 57; Goldstone, 2001: 142; Nelson, 2014: 3, 9). The rejection of one mode of political authority by a revolutionary state threatens the legitimacy of other states with that same mode of authority. For example, the French, US and Russian revolutions undermined divinely-mandated monarchical rule with their propagation of the legitimacy of popular sovereignty (Bukovansky, 2002: 1, 23; Pipes, 1990: 669). Similarly, the 1848 revolutions in Europe threatened absolutism with republicanism, eliciting a severe, swift and, eventually, successful counter-reaction from states led by monarchs (Clark, 2019: 13). A key premise of this view is that a majority (or key) states in the system share a similar political doctrine and basis of legitimacy with the overthrown regime.

A second proposed mechanism is that ideologically heterogenous systems are more likely to engage in hostilities with one another (Nelson, 2014: 3-4). This can be because of contradictory principles and values (Aron, 1966: 100), difficulty agreeing on the common rules necessary to establish an 'international society' (Armstrong, 1993; Nelson, 2014: 9-10), or the establishment of 'in' and 'out' groups, increasing the chances of conflict (Haas, 2005: 9-12; Nelson, 2014: 10). Ideological contests may also stem from competing claims to be the legitimate heirs of modernity (Westad, 2005: 4). A third mechanism concerns ideological contagion, whereby the threat of diffusion of competitor ideologies unsettles international orders (Owen, 2010). A variation of this argument is made by Nelson (2014: 24-5), whereby it isn't the spread of ideologies in and of itself that rattles non-revolutionary states, but when these ideologies are feared to energise domestic opposition groups within the boundaries of the counterrevolutionary state.

Revolutionaries may also pose challenges by subverting international rules and norms. Various scholars have pointed out that revolutions may challenge norms of diplomacy and international

law (see for example Armstrong, 1993), as well as the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention.[63] Scholars have pointed to a 'revolutionary internationalism' or an 'ideological universalism' which takes aim at the very notion of borders themselves, painting them as illegitimate constructs enforced by rulers to maintain their dominance (Halliday, 1999: 10-12). By exporting a universalising vision (Bisley, 2004: 50, Lawson, 2019: 32), intervening in the domestic politics of other states (Armstrong, 1993: 306), elevating solidarity above non-interference (Halliday, 1999: 13-14) and reconceptualising the world as comprised of people rather than states (Grosser, 2016), revolutions can unsteady the very foundations of the sovereign state system.[64]

Finally, revolutionary challenges to great power economic interests can drive counterrevolution. Financial reforms in the wake of the 1905 Iranian revolution collided with Russian and British economic interests (precipitating the Russian invasion of Tabriz); oil nationalization in 1960s Cuba contributed to a virulent US response (Halliday, 1999: 229-230); while labour law reforms in Guatemala threatened the interests of the powerful United Fruit Company (a contributing factor to the US-backed coup). Further, communist revolutions of all stripes upset existing systems of trade and investment, as well as the legitimacy of the capitalist system itself (Halliday, 1999: 229). In short, revolutionaries have upended the economic ambitions of great powers, while great powers have correspondingly obstructed the economic interests of revolutionary states.

## Analysis of the literature

The Strand III theories of order-challenging revolutions eliciting international counterrevolution are intuitive when thinking through archetypal revolutionary episodes. The Iranian revolution espoused a challenger ideology (theocratic rule), unsettled alliance configurations ('neither East nor West'), challenged the norm of sovereignty (via revolutionary export abroad) and upended existing power configurations (by trying to shake off Iran's dependency status) (Akbar, 1988: 62-3; DeFronzo, 2006: 421-2; Milani, 1999: 251). Accordingly, the US imposed economic sanctions,

[63] There are notable exceptions to the general pattern of revolutionary governments disregarding international law. For example, early revolutionary Russia made appeals to international law in pursuing their revolutionary objectives (Taylor, 2019).

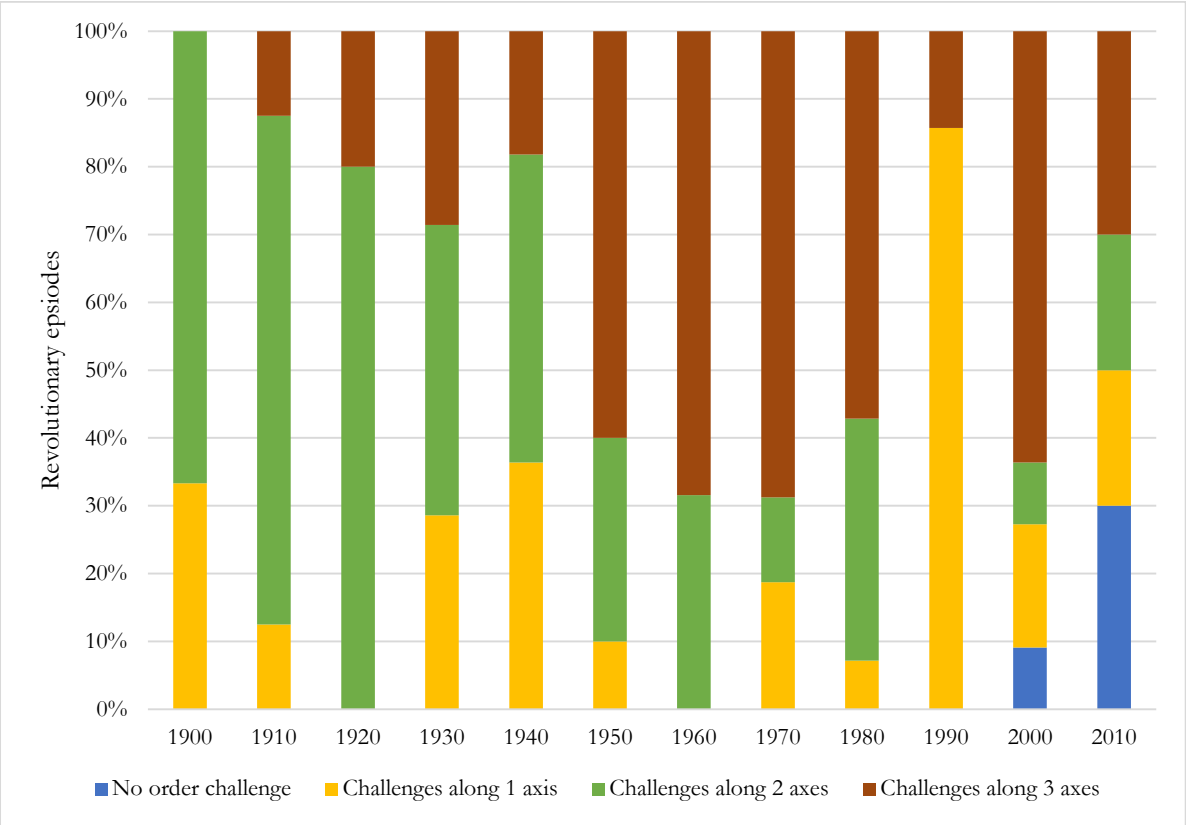
[64] The framework used for analysing the literature (derived from Bisley, 2004: 55) conceals a certain messiness. The strategic, ideological, normative and economic dimensions of revolutionary rupture are not always easily separated. For example, Manichean revolutionary ideologies form a key element of Walt's 'spirals of suspicion' (1996: 33). Further, the export of revolution cuts across all three categories. The export of revolution abroad can destabilise the system via altering the balance of threat (Bisley, 2004: 50; Walt, 1996: 18-45), disseminating competitor world views (Armstrong, 1993: 1; Lawson, 2019: 32), and undermining norms such as sovereignty. Given their potential mutual inclusivity, Bisley (2004) sees strategic, ideological and normative factors as all constituting challenges to the international system, rather than privileging the explanatory power of one set of factors over the others.

froze Iran's assets (to the value of $12 billion), cut off diplomatic ties, banned military sales to Iran and designated Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism (DeFronzo, 2006: 422; Emery, 2013: 151-2; US Department of State, 2020). In contrast, the Ecuadorian Glorious May Revolution in 1944 espoused an ideology shared by a majority of the great powers (liberalism), favoured continuity in Ecuador's close ties with the US (Becker, 2017: 134-5, 146, 149, 154; US Office of the Historian, 1967: Document 1016), and respected international sovereignty norms and prevailing power distributions – revolutionaries promised to respect "all the international conventions, treaties and agreements, in which Ecuador has taken part" (US Office of the Historian, 1967: Document 1016). The Glorious May Revolution was met with US diplomatic support, with the new Velasco Ibarra government winning recognition shortly after coming to power (Becker, 2017: 145). This theory of order-challenging revolutions driving counterrevolution is also extremely useful in conceptualising changes in the frequency of counterrevolution over time. The prevalence of disruptive revolutions during the Cold War meant more counterrevolution, whereas the rise of 'negotiated' revolutions as the dominant form in the 1980s and 1990s has meant more great power support than opposition (Lawson, 2004, 2005 and 2019). This thesis builds on Strand III theories, developing three elements as elaborated upon below.

Development 1: Binary approach to order-challenging vs. order-affirming revolutions

The first development concerns the 'all-or-nothing' approach Strand III theories take to order-challenging and order-affirming revolutions. Revolutions are seen as either maximally disruptive (e.g. Iran 1979) or maximally quiescent (e.g. Ecuador 1944). That is, revolutions either clash along multiple axes of international order, or none. This means that there isn't yet conceptual room within this theory to accommodate revolutions that fall somewhere in between these two extremes. In fact, revolutions that challenge only one or two axes of international order are the dominant form (see Figure 9 below). Just over 51% of revolutions between 1900 and 2020 mounted challenges to international order along one or two axes (of order exit, ideology and power hierarchies).

**Figure 9.** Revolutionary challenges to international order (exit, ideology and power)




Not only does this binary logic of order-challenging versus order-affirming revolutions leave out the dominant revolutionary form since 1900, it makes it unclear which *type* of order challenge matters most for great power counterrevolution. It is only when one conceptualises axes of contestation as pulling in different directions that this question can start to be answered. For example, is a revolution that seeks to maintain its country's position in the international hierarchy, but which also espouses a competitor ideology, more likely to face counterrevolution than a revolution that espouses a status quo ideology but wants to change its state's power position? A more granular analysis is needed to understand what order-challenging and order-affirming revolutions involve, and what happens when a revolution's approach to the various dimensions of international order do not push in the same direction.

Development 2: international order as singular versus plural

A second area for development within the Strand III theories of international counterrevolution is their conceptualisation of world order in the singular. That is, revolutions are seen to clash or converge with *the* international order (see for example Bisley, 2004 and Armstrong, 1993). As elaborated in Chapter 1, conceptualising international orders in the plural has several analytic and empirical advantages. It allows us to understand divergent great power responses to revolution.

Why did the USSR support the 1949 Chinese Communist Revolution, but the US oppose it? Was this episode an order-challenging, or an order-affirming revolution? A theory is needed that allows us to discern multiple international orders, how they interact with one another, and how they interact with revolutionary states. Conceptualisations of international order as singular miss conflicts between different orders, and how revolutionary states may clash with one order, but converge with another. A theory which explicitly grasps the existence of multiple orders also helps to shift away from 'our' order-centrism – just because a revolution clashes with 'our' order, doesn't mean it clashes with all orders. For example, the Vietnamese Communist revolution was just as much an order-supporting revolution as an order-clashing revolution, it just depends from which order's standpoint. The Vietnamese revolution is best seen as a clash between ordering projects, rather than as a clash between revolution and order. A perspectival approach to international order challenges is needed.

Development 3: are there other factors contributing to great power counterrevolution?

The revolutions literature has dedicated significant attention to elucidating the ideological, security, normative and economic challenges that revolutionary movements may pose. The literature has also linked these challenges to great power counterrevolution. But are there other important explanatory factors that have not yet been systematically assessed? While acknowledging the drawbacks of creating an ever-expanding list of variables, a critique that has been levelled against fourth generation revolutions scholars (see for example Abrams, 2019: 381-2), there is still more explanatory work to be done. This is particularly the case when thinking about international orders in the plural and the disaggregation of different types of revolutionary challenge: new explanatory possibilities open up that have not yet been considered in significant detail.

To address the three critiques elaborated upon above, this dissertation develops a theory of great power counterrevolution which identifies a new explanatory variable, can conceptualise multiple orders, as well as revolutions that challenge some axes of order but not others. This theory identifies a specific *type* of order challenge that wields significant explanatory power in accounting for great power counterrevolution, which requires further elucidation.

## The argument

The theory of order exit

A crucial factor explaining patterns of counterrevolution is whether a revolutionary state seeks to remain in its existing international order or not. 'Order-leaving' revolutions are more likely to be met with great power counterrevolution. In contrast, great powers are much more tolerant of

revolutions that want to remain in their existing order, even if revolutionaries want to change that order from within.

Exit is a powerful act of resistance. Those revolutionaries that become order escapers mount a profound challenge to their former order. The power of flight is transformative, strategic, and existential. First, in transformative terms, those who escape the domain of a hegemon stand to effect more change from without than within – they are no longer bound by the strictures of their previous order. The obligations between hegemon and subordinate are broken, with relations unanchored from common order norms and hierarchies. The transformative potential of order defectors is significant: freed from US influence, the Cuban Revolution was able to pursue rapid land redistribution policies, nationalization of foreign owned companies and revolutionary export (Domínguez, 1999: 124-5; Martínez-Fernández, 2011: 422). Order-remaining Mexico in 1920, in contrast, had to abandon its land redistribution and nationalization desires under pressure from the US (Gilderhus, 1977: 17, 54-5, 68; Katz, 1996: 21, 31; Smith, 1972: 75). It is this transformative potential of order-leaving revolutions that makes great power counterrevolution more likely. Order-leaving revolutions are more threatening to the order hegemon, as unlike order-remaining revolutions, they cannot be brought to heel with leverage, inducements, persuasion and coercion. Order-remaining revolutionaries can be influenced and moulded, whereas order-exiting revolutions must be halted altogether. In other words, order exit magnifies the other challenges that revolutionaries pose, allowing them to propagate competitor ideologies and disrupt international power hierarchies unencumbered by their former order.

A second challenge that defection poses is the strengthening of an order leader's rivals. The act of exit transforms not only revolutionary-hegemon relations, but hegemon-hegemon relations. Revolutionaries that leave an order and join a rival are deeply destabilising. Viewed in zero sum terms, the order defector strengthens another order at their previous order's expense. An example of this dynamic is revolutionary Nicaragua during the 1980s. US President Ronald Reagan saw Nicaragua's order defection as advantageous to Moscow to the detriment of Washington. For him, the alarm provoked by the Nicaraguan Revolution was not just about the spread of communism or the excesses of the Sandinista regime, but the impact that Nicaragua's defection would have on the Soviet-US Cold War struggle. Reagan lamented that revolutionary Nicaragua was giving Moscow the opportunity to gain the upper hand: "Using Nicaragua as a base, the Soviets and Cubans can become the dominant power in the crucial corridor between North and South America" (Reagan, 1986). This would "threaten the Panama Canal", "vital Caribbean sealanes" as well as facilitate "moves against Mexico" (Reagan, 1986). Strengthening the Sandinista's enemies

was therefore to "deny the Soviet Union a beachhead in North America" (Reagan, 1986). To Reagan, the Nicaraguan Revolution was not just about Nicaragua, but about Moscow. The strategic dimensions of order exit – strengthening hegemonic rivals – provides an important rationale for great powers to engage in counterrevolution.

Third, revolutionary efforts at order extrication also pose an existential challenge to great powers: an order needs members to exist. The ramifications of mass exodus at a domestic level are well known: exit en masse was crucial to the disintegration of domestic orders in East Germany in 1989 and Albania in 1990 (Ganev, 2006: 225; Goldstone, 1999: 5, 141, 144; Hirschman, 1993: 187-9). The existential threat of mass exodus had long haunted the East German State. In the first decade of its existence, out-migration, particularly of skilled workers, "came to be likened to a life-threatening "hemorrhage" that had to be stopped. The building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 was intended to achieve this objective" (Hirschman, 1993: 178-9). Smaller scale instances of escape can also have highly symbolic impacts on domestic orders, for example the challenge the 'Maroons' in the Caribbean and the Underground Railroad in the United States posed to slavery; escape lines across the Pyrenees in WWII organised by the French resistance; Trotsky's exile in Turkey, France, Norway and then Mexico; and elite sportsperson defections from Iran during international tournaments (Shahi and Abdoh-Tabrizi, 2020: 15-16).

State flight can pose similar symbolic challenges to international orders. The defection of revolutionary Cuba haunted the US. Over the subsequent decades, Presidents Johnson, Kennedy and Reagan were all candid in their commitment to preventing "another Cuba" (Bernell, 1994: 85; Rabe, 2006: 53-4; Reagan, 1986; Woods, 2008: 766). And indeed, they (paranoidly) saw signs of Cuba-esque defection everywhere. The revolution in the Dominican Republic (1961-65) was one such example, eliciting a heavy-handed US response. The US deployed 20,000 troops in 1965 to crush the revolution – the first overt US military intervention in the Americas in three decades and one of the largest in Latin American history (Rabe, 2006: 49; Woods, 2008: 755, 763-5). Between April and June 1965, President Johnson "would spend more time on the situation in the Dominican Republic than he would on any other issue, including civil rights and Vietnam" (Woods, 2008: 755). The ostensible threat of Santo Domingo shifting into the Soviet bloc loomed large for the US (Beshel, 2012: 56), with the symbolic power of another defecting neighbour contributing to Washington's sledgehammer response. Sometimes, the existential threat of order exiting states is real. Cooley and Nexon (2020: 57, 73) have shown how the exit of weaker states from the current US-led order is in part responsible for the present unravelling of that order. In sum, escape is a powerful act of resistance to a great power's order, frequently triggering counterrevolution. This is not only because revolutionary states pose greater challenges from

without than within, and because of the threat posed by the strengthening of rival orders, but also because of the symbolic and existential power of rejection, exit and existing apart.

Great powers are much more tolerant of other types of revolutionary challenge as long as the revolutionary state remains in its order. Order leaders tolerate (some) ideological difference and even have a high threshold for tolerating norm and rule breakers. For example, France, Britain and America accepted Mussolini's fascist Italy throughout the 1920s. Despite the violence of the March on Rome (1922) and Mussolini's transformation of parliamentary Italy into a "Fascist totalitarian dictatorship" (Celli and Cottino-Jones, 2007: 20), France, the UK and the US remained relatively unperturbed. Mussolini won over Britain by continuing the "traditional Anglo-French-Italian entente in the eastern Mediterranean" (Cassels, 2015: 16). France was grateful for the pressure Mussolini exerted on Germany to make its reparations payments (Cassels, 2015: 16). The question of whether or not to grant the new Mussolini regime diplomatic recognition was not even considered, it was taken as a given (Cassels, 2015: 17-18). Even Mussolini's invasion of Corfu in 1923 (only to be reversed under British pressure), was not enough to trigger a great power counterrevolutionary response (Cassels, 2008: 162 and 2015: 395-6). Mussolini's pursuit of order membership continuity proved crucial in great power acceptance of fascist Italy's ideological and norm transgressions throughout the 1920s.

Another example of great powers tolerating divergent ideologies is Peru's Aprista Rebellion (1932). Despite the rebellion being leftist and anti-imperialist in character (Dorais, 2017: 652), the US refrained from counterrevolution. The US response was neutral in that they neither aided the rebels, nor the Peruvian regime in quashing the insurgency. The Peruvian Government asked the US if it could buy 300 bombs to help put down the insurrection. This request was denied by the US ostensibly because it could not "deplete its reserve stock of bombs at the present time" (US Office of the Historian, 1948b: Document 939). The US was initially alarmed by the Apristas, believing that they were being directed by the USSR. On 23 September 1930, US Ambassador Dearing wrote that APRA leader Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre "is quite generally believed to be in the pay of the Soviets" (quoted Davies, 1971: 642). US alarm subsequently ebbed. APRA promised ongoing Peruvian cooperation with the US should they win power. Ambassador Dearing wrote of a meeting with Haya de la Torre on 7 September 1931: "he seemed to have a sincere regard for our country which he has visited several times... Senior Haya de la Torre indicated clearly that if his party should ever be successful, he would expect as much understanding and helpful-ness as possible from our Government and a real co-operation between our two countries; he merely wishes it to be careful, considerate and fair" (quoted in Davies, 1971: 643-44). Burdett (the Chargé in Peru) wrote to the Secretary of State on 8 July 1932: "Movement is anti-Sanchez Cerro not anti-

foreign" (US Office of the Historian, 1948a: Document 927). Another example of ideological tolerance is the UK's formal recognition of Mao's communist regime on 6 January 1950 (Ovendale, 1983: 153), while the UK for a long time tolerated apartheid South Africa's breach of international norms.

In this way, great powers accept some degree of ideological diversity and rule breaking. What great powers will generally not tolerate, is order leaving. There are two possible logics explaining this great power tolerance. The first is the tendency for great powers to treat friends better than acquaintances (or enemies). Different standards are applied to friendly states within an order compared to those outside it. There are numerous examples of this phenomenon. The US exempted its order members from human rights and democracy tests during the Cold War, while holding states outside its order to account (Gerlus, 1995: 40-41; see also Herard, 2016: 113). Notorious dictator beneficiaries of this policy included Haiti's Jean-Claude Duvalier (Gerlus, 1995: 41-2), Venezuela's Marcos Pérez Jiménez (Rabe, 2005: 51-2) and Bangladesh's General Hussain Muhammad Ershad (Jha and Bishwas, 2010: 242).

A second logic, beyond a different set of rules for friends, is that great powers have more leverage over revolutionary states in their order. Threatening the recall of an ambassador, a reduction in military assistance or the cancellation of trade negotiations can be used as leverage against its order members. However, these measures are ineffectual against a revolutionary state that had already severed relations with the power. With the loss of an order member a great power also loses previous sources of influence, leverage and control, making resort to counterrevolutionary actions the first and final option.

If 'order-remaining' revolutions are most likely to be met with support or no response, and 'order-leaving' revolutions are most likely to be met with counterrevolution and sometimes proxy wars, it would seem that revolutionaries should choose to remain in their existing orders. The situation, however, is not so clear cut. Although order-leavers and order-stayers may both want to re-order the world in substantial ways, they rarely achieve such objectives, albeit for different reasons. Order-leavers face the significant risk of counterrevolution from the order they are trying to escape. This places the very survival of their revolution at risk. Order-stayers, while unlikely to face international counterrevolution, encounter a difficult path to any sort of substantial international change. Their existing order acts as a straitjacket. Deference to the hegemon in their existing order might ensure their survival, but means the most radical elements of their agenda will have to be jettisoned. Survival of the revolution at home comes at the price of radical change abroad.

Twentieth century revolutions are in part stories of those deeply unsatisfied with the status quo attempting to navigate this survival-change trade-off.

Order exit in practice: what it is and isn't

So what does order-defection look like empirically, and how do we know when it is taking place? The indicator I use to measure order exit is alliance configurations.[65] Order leaving is a shift in alliance configurations such that it affects a state's membership in one of the five orders mapped in Chapter 1 (Figure 5). While alliance patterns and order membership are closely related, they are not one and the same thing. It is possible to change alliances without exiting an order, however, it is not possible to exit an order without changing alliances. Not all shifts in alliances are evidence of order-leaving. Order-leaving involves a specific reconfiguration of alliances (and could be conceived of something along the lines of 'alliance change plus').

Three examples of changes in alliance configurations that do not amount to order exit are elaborated below. First, revolutionaries that shift their state from having close ties with one great power to another great power in the same order are not order exiters. They are changing alliance configurations within an order, rather than shifting to a new order. For example, the Persian Constitutionalist Revolutionaries (1905-11) tried to shift away from the UK and Russia, instead seeking support from other great powers in their order (Ghaneabassiri, 2002: 157). The new Persian constitutional regime sought closer ties with Germany (Behravesh, 2012: 390; Nejad et al., 2017: 63-5) and tried (unsuccessfully) to elicit support from the US (Ghaneabassiri, 2002: 158-9).[66] Second, revolutionaries that want to drift away from an overbearing power are not order exiters unless they make clear moves to shift into a new order. In other words, order exit involves a change in alliances *relative* to another order. For example, Philippine-US ties were weakened after the 1986 'People Power' revolution, but the Philippines remained within the US orbit. A third point to note is that in order for a state to exit an order, it must be a member of that order in the first place. A revolutionary state shifting from non-aligned status to the Soviet camp is less threatening to the US than a revolutionary state shifting from Washington's orbit into the Soviet camp. The greatest

[65] I mean both formal and informal alliances. The reason I don't rely only formal alliances is because they have been few and far between. For example, the United States engaged in only 30 formal alliances (defined as defense pacts, security partnerships and military coalitions) between 1900 and 2020 (Davidson, 2020: 9-11). Orders have members beyond just those who are formal allies.

[66] In a 7 December 1911 letter, the leader of the *Majlis* appealed for US help against the Russian threat of invasion: "You who have tasted the benefits of liberty, would you witness the fall of any people whose only fault was to sympathize with your system to save its future?" (Yeselson, 1956: 119-20 in Ghaneabassiri, 2002: 158-9). However, "this ideological plea to the generosity of a sister democracy was not even answered. In fact, it was the cause of some jocularity in Congress" (Yeselson, 1956: 119 in Ghaneabassiri, 2002: 159).

counterrevolutionary ire is reserved for loyal states leaving the fold, rather than just any type of order hopping. As such, order-exit is measured from the perspective of each order leader.

Another important point to clarify is the distinction between order exit and order expulsion. Sometimes revolutionary states want to remain in their extant order, but are ejected by the great power order leader. An example is the Albanian June Revolution (1924). A series of protests and then armed revolt culminated in the success of a liberalising revolution led by Fan Noli (Austin, 1996: 153; Beissinger, 2022). The new Noli regime desperately tried to forge friendships in all quarters: Noli pleaded for recognition from the US and UK, and worked hard to ensure good relations with Yugoslavia and Greece, all to no avail (Austin, 1996: 165-6, 160, 164; Washburn, 1972: 720). Revolutionary Albania's failure to win recognition from the UK "was one of Noli's greatest disappointments" (Austin, 1996: 164). Noli unsuccessfully sought a loan from the League of Nations, before turning to Mussolini's Italy (Austin, 1996: 158, 163). Having been roundly rejected, Noli then turned to the Soviet Union, who promptly recognised Noli's regime (Austin, 1996: 155, 163). Given the Noli regime was rejected before it exited, the Albanian June Revolution (1924) is a case of order expulsion, not order exit.

A second example of order expulsion is the Ethiopian Revolution that ousted Haile Selassie in September 1974. Prior to the revolution, the US and Ethiopia had a history of strong ties underpinned by decades of US military and economic support (Keller, 1999: 159; Tareke, 2006: 261-2). The revolution did not immediately change this state of relations, despite the ruling military junta ('the Derg') announcing its "Ethiopian Socialist" agenda in December 1974 (Keller, 1999: 158; Tareke, 2006: 258). It was only in 1977 that human rights concerns led the US to cut off military aid to the revolutionary regime, presaging a "complete break in relations" that same year (Keller, 1999: 159). When the US hit the new military regime with an arms embargo in 1977, the Derg turned to the USSR for arms to defend itself against the 1977 Somali invasion (Tareke, 2006: 265). With $1.5 billion in weaponry forthcoming from the Soviets, "The Ethiopian government then switched its allegiance from the United States to the U.S.S.R" (Tareke, 2006: 265). This is another case of great power rejection of a revolutionary state, rather than the other way around. Such instances of order expulsion are not coded as order exiting revolutions.

To determine whether a revolutionary movement is order-remaining or order-defecting, I analyse the great power relations of the *ancien regime,* and compare these with the revolutionaries' desired relations (in the case of unsuccessful revolutions) and actual relations (in the case of successful revolutions) with the great powers. The key question is: *With whom are the relevant state's thickest*

*relations, and do the revolutionaries want to, or succeed in, shifting this*?[67] Revolutionaries may want to shift from reliance on one order leader to another order leader ('new great power friends'); or shift from reliance on one or more great powers to reliance on no great powers ('no great power friends' e.g. the non-aligned movement). An example of the former is Nicaragua's shift from US to Soviet orbit after the 1979 revolution. An example of the latter is Shining Path's rejection of both the US and the USSR.

Evidence of order exit desires includes: lobbying and setting up overseas missions in countries of a different order (e.g. the Afghan Mujahidin, 1979); receiving training from members of a different order (e.g. the Philippines Huk Rebellion, 1946); as well as revolutionary charters which reject their state's order leader and instead espouse a non-aligned foreign policy (e.g. Sudan's April Intifada 1985). Evidence of order remaining desires include: revolutionaries sending emissaries to foreign embassies to assure them of ongoing friendly relations (e.g. the Haitian Revolution of 1946); visiting their order's great power leader to drum up support for their revolutionary cause (e.g. China's Huizhou Uprising, 1900); and revolutionary regimes publishing letters to the editor in prominent Western newspapers promising to strengthen existing ties (e.g. Portugal, 1910). Protest slogans, public statements and secondary source assessments of a revolutionary group's alignments (e.g. being 'pro-Soviet) were also used. Assessing whether revolutionaries wanted to exit their order or not was easier in the case of successful revolutions. For example, cutting off diplomatic relations with former members of their order while establishing relations with members of a different order provides evidence of order exit.

Theories of exit in adjacent literatures

While nascent in the study of counterrevolution, theories of exit have been developed in other academic contexts. Hirschman (1970) developed a typology of possible actions an individual can take when they become disillusioned with an organisation: Exit, Voice (concerns) and Loyalty. This framework has been applied in various contexts, including membership in racist groups (Bjørgo and Horgan, 2009: 6), as well as families, political parties, shareholders and consumers (Hirschman, 1993: 175-6, 197). A pertinent application of Hirschman's exit-voice-loyalty theory is to the collapse of East Germany (Hirschman, 1993). Here, the entity was a state, and its members were citizens. In 1989, resistance against the state was enacted via both exit (out-migration) and voice (protests) (Hirschman, 1993: 176-7). The options available to individuals in East Germany

[67] This is in keeping with Cooley and Nexon's conceptualisation of exit, which focuses on small and weak states' patronage relationships (2020: 7, 10-11). For them, exit is a shift to "alternative patrons" (2020: 10-11). Exiting states seek new providers of economic, military and other goods (2020: 11, 17).

parallel the options available to states in an order: they can exit (leave the order), voice (their concerns within the order) or remain loyal to their existing order.

Exit has also been theorised by Cooley and Nexon (2020) in their examination of the current unravelling of the US order. They examine Russia and China's projects of alternative-order building and intra-US order contestation (Cooley and Nexon, 2020: 80-109). They also look at the potentially fatal consequences of weaker states exiting towards Russia and China, at the risk of inflicting "death by a thousand papercuts" upon the US-led order (Cooley and Nexon, 2020: 70, 73). The cumulative damage of weaker states leaving the US order in the present moment parallel the risks posed by revolutionary states exiting various orders elaborated upon in this thesis. Both Hirschman (1970) and Cooley and Nexon's (2020) works suggest the wide applicability of theories of exit across different subjects and levels of analysis. There are many potential avenues for future theorising about exit beyond organisations, companies and states (Hirschman, 1970), and the unravelling of the US order (Cooley and Nexon, 2020). It is the contention of this thesis that counterrevolution is one of them.

## Caveats and clarifications

Order exit and other types of revolutionary challenge

How does order exit relate to other types of order challenge? Order exit and ideological challenges frequently go hand in hand. Congo-Brazzaville's *Trois Glourieuses* revolutionaries (1963), Cambodia's Khmer Rouge (1975) and Islamic State (2013-) all posed profound ideological challenges to the US' order, while simultaneously attempting to leave it (whether to join a rival order or to establish a new order altogether). Similarly, Angola's UNITA guerrilla movement (from 1975), the Afghan Mujahidin (from 1979) and Poland's Solidarity Revolution (from 1981) mounted ideological and order exit challenges to the Soviet order. The ways in which ideology and order membership are linked vary. Sometimes ideologies demand certain international alignments. For example, Nikos Zahariadis – the leader of Greece's Communist Uprising (1946-49) – was an ardent disciple of communism and saw the Soviet Union as a natural ally (Iatrides, 2005: 12-13; Marantzidis, 2013: 27-28). He is reported to have proclaimed to a member of the Soviet regime that "We are ready to sacrifice everything for the USSR" (Papathanasiou, 1999 in Iatrides, 2005: 18-19). At other times, international alignments demand certain ideological commitments. For example, Ethiopia's TPLF went through an ideological transformation from Marxist-Leninism to liberal democracy around 1989, when it started soliciting support from the US (Gebregziabher, 2019: 471-4).

These cases notwithstanding, ideology and order membership do not always travel together. Sometimes revolutionaries pursue contestatory ideologies but choose to remain in their extant order. An example is Portugal's Carnation Revolution (1974-5). The revolutionary Armed Forces Movement (MFA) was "Marxist in coloration" (Davies, 1975: 189), nationalizing banks and confiscating large agricultural landholdings once in power (Opello, 1999: 405). The new April 1976 constitution "committed Portugal to a democratic and socialist future" (Opello, 1999: 406). Despite these leftist currents, the MFA did not show any desire to leave US orbit. As noted in a US diplomatic cable to Kissinger in December 1974: the MFA "have…shown no disposition to cast off Portugal's established relationships. They have shown sensitivity to U.S. opinions and actions" (US Office of the Historian, 2021a: Document 142). Sometimes, the reverse is true: revolutionaries seek to leave their extant order while professing the same ideology as their former great power leader. An example is the Athens Polytechnic Uprising (1973). The student and worker protesters not only wanted to topple the 'Colonels' junta' and replace it with a civilian democracy, they also rejected the US for its role in in propping up the military regime (Beissinger, 2022: 153 in episode narratives; Kornetis, 2013: 262). Protester slogans included "NATO out", "USA out", "NATO-CIA, traitors" and "Throw the Sixth Fleet out" (Kornetis, 2013: 256, 262).

Order exit and altering power distributions can be bound up with one another too. The Philippine Huk Rebellion (1946-1954), for example, sought to shift the Philippines into Soviet orbit, while also attempting to dismantle US political, economic and cultural control over their country (Fifield, 1951: 13, 15). There are also many instances where revolutionaries seek to challenge power hierarchies, but not to exit their order. A common configuration is for revolutionaries to pursue order continuity and ideological conformity, while also seeking to upend power hierarchies that relegate their country to subservient status. Examples of this order challenge constellation are the early 20th century constitutional revolutions: Iran 1905, Turkey 1908, and China 1911. In the case of China, Sun Yat-Sen wanted to end the system of concessions that prevented China from being treated as an equal in international affairs (Elleman and Paine, 2019: 286; Ling, 2012: 3-4).[68] This project did not entail breaking with the order, but instead renegotiating China's posit within the order. In sum, these examples are intended to illustrate the complex relationship between order exit and other types of order challenges. There are various possible constellations and interactions.

[68] On the efforts of Iranian constitutionalist revolutionaries to change their country's international standing see Abrahamian (1979: 401), Afary (1999: 247-8) and Ghaneabassiri, (2002: 157). On similar efforts by the Yong Turks, see Ahmad (1966: 305-7), Hanioğlu (2008: 65-6), Sohrabi (2002: 50) and Ünal, (1996: 35-6). For astute analyses of the early 20th century constitutionalist revolutionary wave more broadly see Kurzman (2008) and Sohrabi (1995).

Order exit and the social-political revolution distinction

I make use of a two-part typology in explaining great power counterrevolution: order exiting revolutions and non-order exiting revolutions. The use of typologies is a familiar approach in the revolutions literature. The dominant typological approach is Theda Skocpol's (1979: 4-5) famous distinction between 'political' and 'social' revolutionary types:[69]

> Social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures; and they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below. Social revolutions are set apart from other sorts of conflicts and transformative processes above all by the combination of two coincidences: the coincidence of societal structural change with class upheaval; and the coincidence of political with social transformation. ln contrast, rebellions, even when successful, may involve the revolt of subordinate classes—but they do not eventuate in structural change. Political revolutions transform state structures but not social structures, and they are not necessarily accomplished through class conflict. What is unique to social revolution is that basic changes in social structure and in political structure occur together in a mutually reinforcing fashion. And these changes occur through intense sociopolitical conflicts in which class struggles play a key role.

Skocpol's social-political distinction has been employed in numerous studies in the four decades since her 1979 book was published.[70] The social-political distinction has also been adapted and extended with something similar to social revolution being described as 'radicalizing' (Goldstone, 2009: 29), 'Jacobin' (Lawson, 2019: 226-7, 234-5, 245) and 'communist' (Sohrabi, 1995), and the political strand being associated with 'unarmed' (Ritter, 2015), 'negotiated' (Lawson, 2005 and 2019), 'color' (Goldstone, 2009: 18), 'rectifying' (Habermas, 1990), 'democratizing' (Goldstone, 2014: 37-8), 'constitutional' revolutions (Sohrabi, 1995), and 'eventful democratization' (della Porta, 2014: 15). How does my distinction between order exit and order continuity relate to Skocpol's social-political typology?

Although the stickiness of the social-political distinction indicates its ongoing utility in the study of revolutions, I have not adopted it in this study for two reasons. First, although it is intuitive to assume that order exiting revolutions tend to be social revolutions, this is not necessarily the case. The 1989 wave of liberal revolutions (seen as classic 'political' revolutions) were defectors from Soviet orbit. There are also cases of leftist revolutions (e.g. Haiti, 1946) remaining in their existing order. Given that the social-political distinction does not neatly map on to the order exit vs. continuity distinction, adopting it in this study would add an unnecessary layer of conceptual complexity.

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[69] Skocpol's typology is derived from Arendt's (2006: 50-1, 128) distinction between the revolutionary objectives of freedom versus prosperity (the latter objective being termed 'the social question').

[70] See for example Beissinger, 2022; Foran, 2005; Goldstone, 2014: 36-7; Goodwin, 2001: 298; Lachappelle et al. 2020; Ritter, 2015: 225; Selbin, 2009: 36, to name a few.

The second reason for shifting away from the social-political dichotomy concerns the difficulties in applying the typology empirically to a large universe of cases. The social-political typology is one that works best when analysing revolutions at the extremes. There is broad consensus that Russia 1917, China 1949, Cuba 1959 and Iran 1979 are social revolutions, while England 1688, America 1776, China 1911, the Philippines 1986, and Tunisia 2011 are political revolutions (Goldstone, 2003: 53, 2014: 29 and 2009: 19; Lawson, 2005 and 2019: 218-223; Ritter, 2015: 5; Sohrabi, 1995). However, revolutions that fall in between these classic cases can be more difficult to place. For example, where do fascist revolutions (e.g. Spain 1936), communal revolutions (e.g. Zanzibar 1964) and non-Salafist religious revolutions (e.g. Uganda 1986) fit in the social-political typology? There is confusion as to the classification of Mexico 1910, and even France 1789.[71] And it seems odd that transformations from liberalism to communism are seen as social revolutions (e.g. Hungary 1919), whereas transformations from communism to liberalism are seen as political revolutions (e.g. Hungary 1989). It is plausible that both processes amount to the same degree of political, social and economic transformation, just in reverse.[72] The neatest way of applying the social-political dichotomy is classing communist revolutions as social revolutions and everything else as political revolutions. This is the approach adopted by Beissinger (2022), who, by-and-large, uses social revolution as a synonym for communist revolution (included in his category of social revolution are communist revolutions plus two leftist revolutions and an Islamist revolution). While analytically neat, the utility of this approach is less clear. Parsing revolutionary episodes in this way – communist revolutions versus everything else – is somewhat lopsided, grouping together a wide range of diverse revolutions in the political category. Further, if social revolution is simply a synonym for communist revolution, the value of the social revolution label becomes less clear.

There are several reasons why the social-political distinction can be difficult to apply empirically. First, the social-political distinction collapses two axes of differentiation onto the one plane: domain of transformation and degree of transformation. Social revolutions are 'big' transformations that involve changes to social relations; political revolutions are 'small' transformations that involve changes to politics. This conflation of quantitative change (degree) and qualitative change (type: political, social) makes it difficult to categorise big political revolutions and small social revolutions. In trying to address this dilemma, Goodwin (2001: 11) comes up with

[71] Kim describes the French revolution as "a major political revolution" (Kim, 1970: xii), whereas Skocpol deems it a classic social revolution (1979: 3). Sohrabi (1995: 1384) says Mexico 1910 belongs to the constitutionalist strand, whereas Selbin (2010: 21) calls Mexico "the first great social upheaval of the twentieth century."

[72] Indeed, Goodwin and Rojas (2015) class the 1989 Eastern European revolutions as social revolutions.

the somewhat awkward (by his own admission) term 'conservative social revolution' to describe revolutions that seek limited change in all spheres:

> In any event, while the term "conservative social revolution" would clearly be an oxymoron, based on my definition of terms, it is certainly possible to speak of a conservative or reformist revolutionary movement, that is, a movement that seeks state power but which also wishes (or whose dominant leaders desire) to preserve or at most to modestly reform existing economic, social, and cultural arrangements, without changing them fundamentally. (For example, many leaders of the American War of Independence, sometimes called the American Revolution, and of the Mexican Revolution may be accurately described as "conservative revolutionaries").

The collapsing of the realm of change with degree of change has been exacerbated by the grafting of additional characteristics by successive scholars onto each of Skocpol's categories. This makes the two categories exceptionally narrow and difficult to apply beyond archetypal cases. For example, the association of political revolutions with unarmed resistance (tactics), refolution (degree of change), and constitutionalism (ideological programme) makes it difficult to categorise, for example, unarmed revolutionaries that want to capture the state and fundamentally re-order it according to socialist principles.

A second reason for the difficulties in applying the social-political typology in practice concerns the issue of distinguishing between what is political and what is social change. Although as a conceptual matter it seems intuitive that political revolutions change the state but not society, in practice changes to the state are difficult to insulate from the social and economic realms. For example, the end of South African apartheid in 1994 – usually thought of as a political revolution (see for example Foran, 2005: 249) – involved much more than a change in political system. It represented a major transformation of political *and* social relations. The dismantling of apartheid affected not only voting rights but who you could marry, where you could live, and to a certain extent, geographies of land ownership.

A third reason why the application of the social-political distinction can be challenging to apply is that political revolutions can become social revolutions (e.g. France, 1789 and Cuba, 1959) and vice-versa (e.g. Bolivia, 1952 and Ethiopia, 1975-1991). For example, the Bolivian National Revolution (1952) began as social revolution but increasingly took on the character of a political revolution. Initially, the revolution entailed a radical transformation of political, social and economic relations. In political terms, the MNR shifted power away from the ruling military and oligarchic elites to the middle class and indigenous populations, while simultaneously introducing universal voting rights (Foran, 2005: 155, 170; Weston, 1968: 85). In social-economic terms, the revolutionary government nationalized the three largest mining companies and engaged in agrarian land redistribution (Foran, 2005: 153, 170-1; Weston, 1968: 85). The revolution has been described

as "one of the most thorough political and social revolutions in Latin America in the twentieth century" (Klein, 1999: 44). However, by the late 1950s, the revolution looked more like a political revolution than a social revolution. Economic crisis and dependency on the US saw the rollback of key social programmes: nationalisations were compensated rather than confiscated, social services reduced and worker co-governance of the mining companies suspended (McFarren, 2021; Zunes, 2001: 38-9, 46). While political power remained with the middle class-dominated-MNR and universal suffrage endured, the social elements of the revolution were significantly scaled back. That revolutions can transform from being social to political and political to social hampers application of the social-political dichotomy. At what point does a revolution switch from being social to political and vice-versa?

These concerns resonate with a growing number of scholars who highlight the limitations of the social-political dichotomy. For example, Beck et al. (2022: 21-38) note that the 'social' and 'political' categories do not capture the full range of revolutionary types, providing limited utility in understanding Ukraine's Orange Revolution (2004) and other instances of electoral revolution. Further, Beck et al. (2022: 21-3) argue that the social-political dichotomy overestimates the amount of change effected by revolutions, frames revolutions as events not processes, and is hard to apply given the difficulties of measuring degree of revolutionary change in the face of roll-back, uneven progress and dashed hopes of transformation. Stewart (2021: 47-8 and 2022: 18-19) has also critiqued the concept of social revolution, for example highlighting its narrow view of social change as involving only class relations (at the expense of attempts to transform racial, colonial, religious and other hierarchies).

In light of these problems, should the social-political distinction be jettisoned? I argue not. The social-political distinction is of ongoing utility. It taps into a deep, widely shared intuition about maximally versus minimally disruptive revolutions, as well as changes to political and socio-economic structures. The challenges created by the social-political distinction suggest rehabilitation of the framework, not its abandonment. For example, Stewart (2022) develops a new framework for thinking about social revolution, while Beck et al. (2022: 26, 38) argue for a more granular and nuanced approach to typologizing revolutions. To this I would add the need to shift beyond the social-political dichotomy as the go-to analytical framework for studying revolutions. Instead of being the dominant categorisation tool, it should be one of several ways of grouping and analysing revolutions. The appropriate typological framework will depend on the research question, the scope of the study and the context being examined. Indeed, for the reasons outlined above, the social-political distinction is less useful for my purposes in analysing a large universe of cases in order to understand great power counterrevolution.

## Theoretical implications

There are six implications of the order-leavers versus order-stayers theory of counterrevolution. First, it allows for the analytic possibility that revolutionaries may challenge one dimension of order, but support others. For example, revolutionaries may support an order in one way by remaining a member, but challenge it in another way by trying to redistribute power within it (e.g. the Young Turks in 1908). Revolutionaries may also seek to remain in their state's existing order, but espouse a competitor ideology (e.g. the Bolivian leftist Nationalist Revolution 1952). Revolutionaries may even try to leave an order, while conforming with that order's ideology (e.g. the 1968 Movement transformed Pakistan from a military regime into a democracy, while simultaneously shifting out of US orbit). This theory is self-consciously agnostic as to whether order-remaining and order-leaving revolutions also challenge other dimensions of order, allowing for disaggregation.

Second, the proposed theory opens up the analytical aperture such that we can discern multiple international orders, how they interact with one another, and how they interact with revolutionary states. This is a departure from the dominant approach in the revolutions literature which understands revolution in relation to *the* international order, as discussed above. The framework of order-defecting vs. order-remaining is perspectival: Cuba was an order-defecting revolution for the US, and an order-joining revolution for the Soviet Union. This theory allows us to capture from whose perspective a revolution is order challenging or affirming.

Third, order exit theory deepens our understanding of how historical context affects the prospects of counterrevolution, and why this changes over time. Different periods in history are more conducive to order-leaving revolutions than others. Order-leaving revolutions are more likely in eras where there is a powerful alternate order that may help revolutionaries realise their international agendas for change (or greater availability of 'exit options', in the language of Cooley and Nexon, 2020: 110). The coexistence of the Liberal and Bolshevik orders, and for a briefer period the Fascist order, made the era between 1917-1989 conducive to order-leaving revolutions. The post-Cold War era throughout the 1990s and early 2000s has been less so. The lack of a powerful alternate order means that most revolutions in the contemporary era were order-continuers, even when they possessed grievances against their existing order. Revolutionaries rarely jump ship when there is no alternate ship to board (with rare exceptions such as Islamic State, who quickly found themselves drowning). According to this theory, the post-2010 shift towards a decentred world (or "fractured political world", in the words of Goldstone and Alimi, 2021: 2) will mean more order-leaving, and therefore destabilising, revolutions. The greater the number of

powerful poles there are, the more opportunities exist for revolutionaries to pursue change outside their current orders. We can expect to see more order-leaving revolutions, and therefore more great power counterrevolution, interstate conflict and stalemate wars. The Syrias and Ukraines, where powers fight over the order-membership of the revolutionary state will become the norm, instead of the more quiescent, order-remaining revolutions that characterised the 1990s and early 2000s. Revolutionaries that seek new friends also create new foes, with great risks for the great powers, international stability, and the revolutionaries themselves. [73]

A fourth implication of the order exit theory of counterrevolution is that it stands to sharpen our understanding of international orders and revolution, as well as the role of great powers as gatekeepers of change in the international system. Indeed, as Bisley (2004) argued nearly two decades ago, better understanding counterrevolution tells us a lot about the relationship between revolution and international order(s). The application of the order exit theory indicates that revolutions have not historically been as disruptive a force as we may think. It is only a specific subset of revolutions that seek to create new orders, jump ship to alternate orders, and remake the world free from the clutches of previous great power patrons. This finding is in stark contrast to seeing revolution as necessarily in opposition to international order (see for example Armstrong, 1993). Further, revolution does not have a twin in counterrevolution. The mapping of counterrevolution from 1900 shows that it is not a 'tendency' in the international system that goes hand in hand with revolution (see Bisley, 2004 for an example of this view). As not all revolutions are maximally disruptive, not all revolutions are followed by counterrevolution.[74]

A fifth implication of order exit theory concerns great powers. Great powers are more change-tolerant than we may think. Certain types of revolutionary change are tolerated, and sometimes even supported by the great powers. This unsettles the binary of revolutionaries driving change, and great power upholders of order blocking such change. Another implication is that the great powers are more worried about extra-order challenges, as opposed to intra-order challenges. This is, in part, because they have more control over their own orders and the members within it.

[73] This argument ties in with existing scholarship on the impacts of polarity on world politics. Realist scholars have argued that multipolarity increases the prospects of both interstate war (Mearsheimer, 1990) and civil war (Phillips, 2022). I suggest that multipolarity (or more precisely, multiple orders), increase the prospects of international counterrevolution via processes of order exit.

[74] The view that counterrevolution is a ubiquitous reaction to revolution is probably the result of the literature's focus on the 'big' revolutions: France (1789), America (1776), Russia (1917), China (1949), Cuba (1959) and Iran (1979). Theorising on the basis of these unrepresentative cases has stymied research on questions of when counterrevolution does and does not occur.

External great power threats, in contrast, pose a much bigger challenge. Revolutions that strengthen competitor great powers are duly treated as such.

Finally, order exit theory sits uneasily with the revisionist vs. status quo state distinction. The theory postulates that all great powers, whether ostensibly 'revisionist' like the USSR or 'status quo' like the US, oppose revolutions that attempt to leave their order. If in a certain period there is a mass exodus of revolutionary states from a given order, the great power leader of that order will seem counterrevolutionary. That very same great power, when faced with revolutionary states wanting to join their order, will appear to be 'revisionist'. I argue that rather than such a great power state morphing from a status quo power into a revisionist power, it is instead behaving according to the consistent principle of welcoming new members into its club, and trying to stop existing members from leaving its club. For example, the opposition by the US to the 1979 Iranian Revolution is entirely consistent with its (rhetorical) support for the 2009 Green Movement. The 1979 revolution shifted Iran away from US orbit, whereas the 2009 Movement was an attempt to shift Iran closer to US orbit. The US is not opposed to revolution per se (as being a 'status quo' power would suggest), but instead is opposed to certain kinds of revolution.

# Chapter 4: Determinants of Great Power Counterrevolution

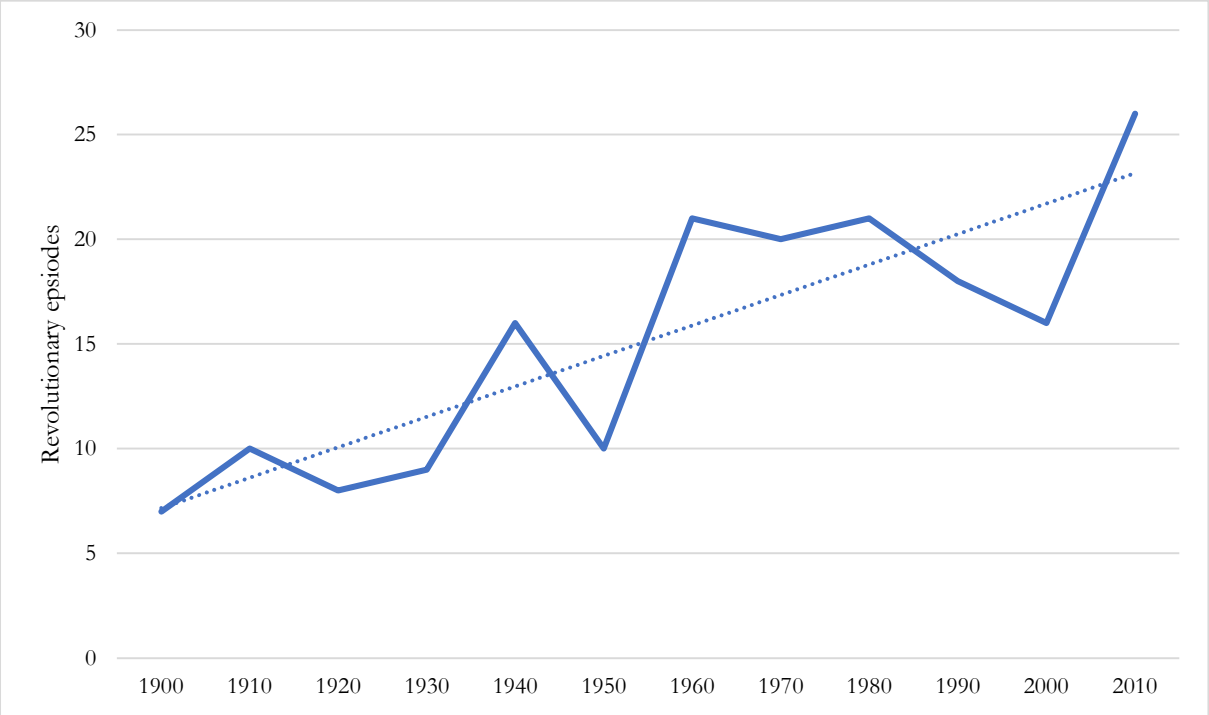
This chapter is dedicated to statistical analyses of the determinants of great power counterrevolution. The hypothesis is that order exiting revolutions are more likely to be met with great power counterrevolution than non-order exiting revolutions. The statistical analyses in this chapter rely on the dataset that accompanies this dissertation, comprising 1,350 revolutionary episode-years in the period between 1900 and 2020. Details about the rationale and process of dataset construction are contained in Chapter 2. Having laid out the conceptual, methodological and theoretical foundations of the dissertation in Chapters 1-3, this chapter is the first of four empirical chapters. This chapter engages in quantitative analyses to assess the effect of order exit on great power counterrevolution. The next three chapters comprise qualitative case studies for the purpose of probing the causal mechanisms linking order exit and great power counterrevolution (Chapters 5 and 6), as well as the limitations of order exit theory (Chapter 7).

This chapter proceeds in five parts. The first section descriptively maps global patterns of revolution and international counterrevolution between 1900 and 2020. This is a macro-historical scene-setting task, laying the descriptive groundwork necessary before addressing the causal question of what *explains* great power counterrevolution. This first section shows where and when revolution and international counterrevolution have unfolded, as well as the ways in which great power counterrevolution has changed over time. The second section covers the setup of the inferential analyses, outlining the dependent, independent and control variables, as well as the model specification. The third section shows the results: order exit has a positive and statistically significant relationship with great power counterrevolution. Order exiting revolutions are more than twice as likely to be met with great power counterrevolution than non-order exiting revolutions. The fourth section outlines the robustness checks that have been undertaken. The relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution remains statistically significant with a different dataset structure, alternative specifications of the dependent and independent variables, as well as the exclusion of borderline cases of revolution. The final section concludes by summarising the core findings of the regression analyses.

## Descriptive overview: revolution and great power counterrevolution 1900-2020

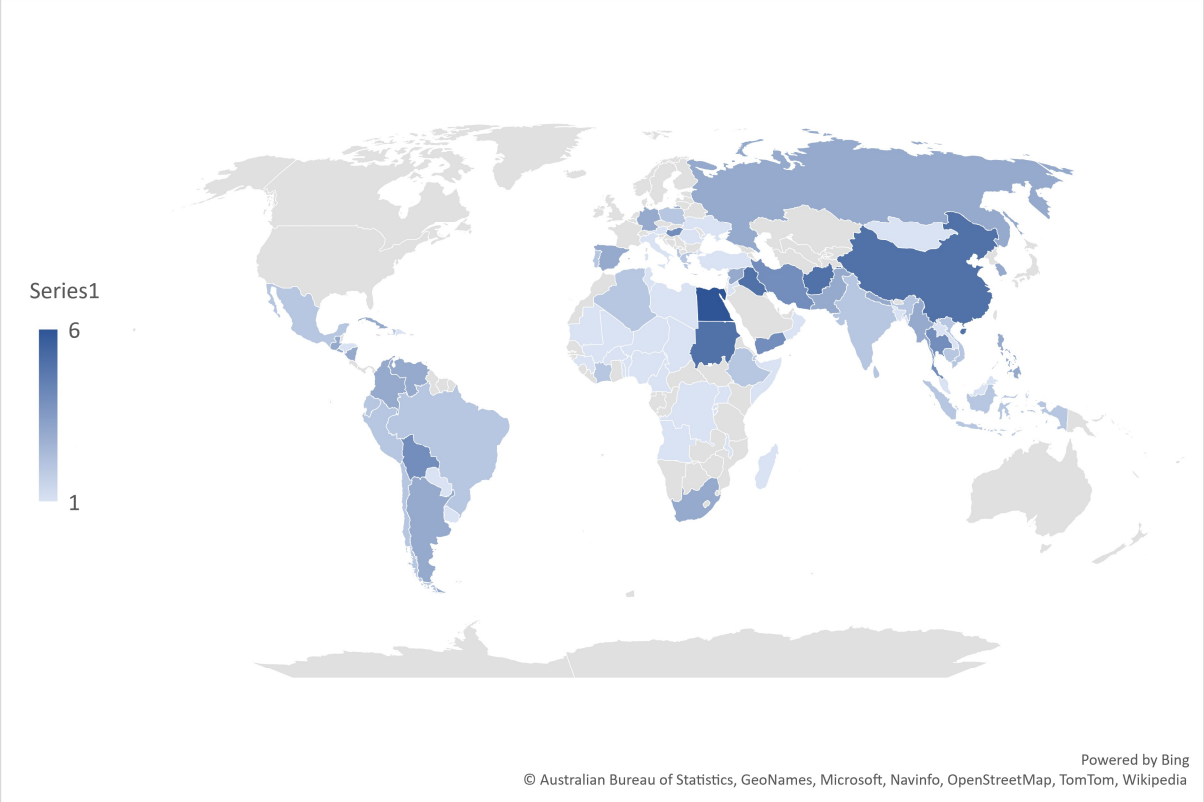
This section provides context for the statistical analyses by mapping the contours of revolution and great power counterrevolution since 1900. Revolution has been a consistent feature of twentieth and twenty-first century politics. It reached its apogee with the 'Arab Spring' revolutions in the early 2010s, and its nadir at the turn of the twentieth century. The ebbs and flows in revolutionary frequency belie a steady increase over time (with one likely reason being the proliferation of states in the system, meaning more units in which revolution can occur). Figure 10 below shows that revolutions are an enduring, and even expanding feature of world politics.

**Figure 10.** Revolutionary episodes, 1900-2020



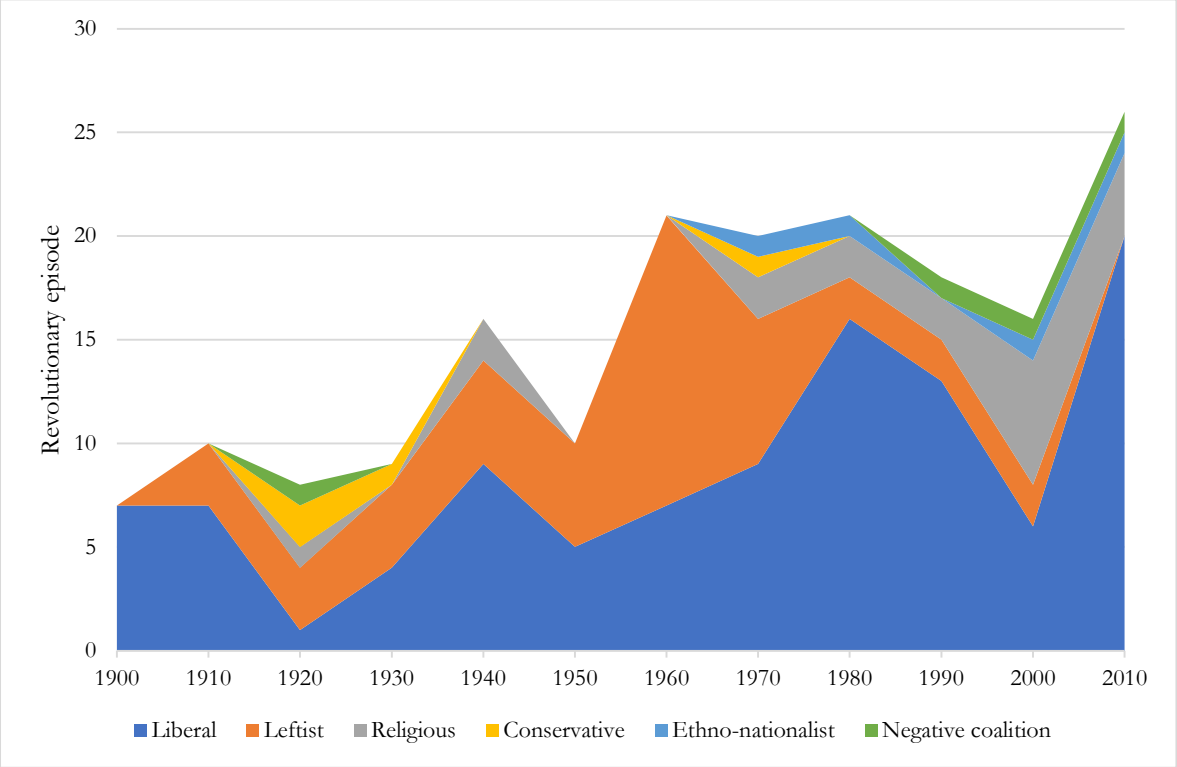
There were nearly as many revolutionary episodes (182) between 1900 and 2020 as there are countries today (195), although revolutions have not unfolded in even geographical distribution across the globe (see Figure 11 below). The country which has experienced the most revolutionary episodes is Egypt (six revolutionary episodes in the period under analysis). Four countries shared the status of being the second most 'revolutionary', each experiencing five revolutionary epsiodes between 1900 and 2020: Afghanistan, China, Iraq and Sudan. Another five countries each witnessed four revolutionary convulsions in the same period: Bolivia, Hungary, Iran, Thailand and Yemen. Indeed, once a country had experienced a revolutionary uprising, more often than not, others would unfold in that same country. Of the 90 countries that witnessed a single revolution (attempted or successful), 53% went on to experience another revolutionary episode in the period under analysis. Of the countries that experienced at least one revolutionary episode, 47% witnessed a single episode, 22% experienced two episodes, and 31% witnessed three or more.

**Figure 11.** Number of revolutionary episodes by country, 1900-2020



In terms of the characteristics of revolution over the last 120 years, the dominant revolutionary ideology has been liberalism (see Figure 12 below). More than 57% of revolutionary episodes between 1900 and 2020 were liberal, whether demanding constitutional, republican, civilian or multi-party rule. Leftist revolutions were the second most common ideological type, comprising 26% of revolutions in the period under analysis. Leftist revolutions peaked in the 1960s, while religious revolutionary ideologies surged from the 1970s. Rightist and ethno-nationalist ideologies are inflected at various points throughout the period under analysis. For more detail on how ideologies are coded, see Chapter 2, Table 2.

**Figure 12.** Revolutionary ideologies, 1900-2020




Turning now to the incidence of great power counterrevolution (see Figure 13 below), its frequency has fluctuated significantly since 1900, and not always in step with revolution. That counterrevolution does not perfectly correspond with revolution is intriguing given assertions to the contrary. Bisley (2004: 50), Halliday (1999: 19) and Wight (1978: 90) have all argued that some form of international counterrevolution accompanies every revolution (see Chapter 3).

**Figure 13.** International counterrevolution, 1900-2020[75]

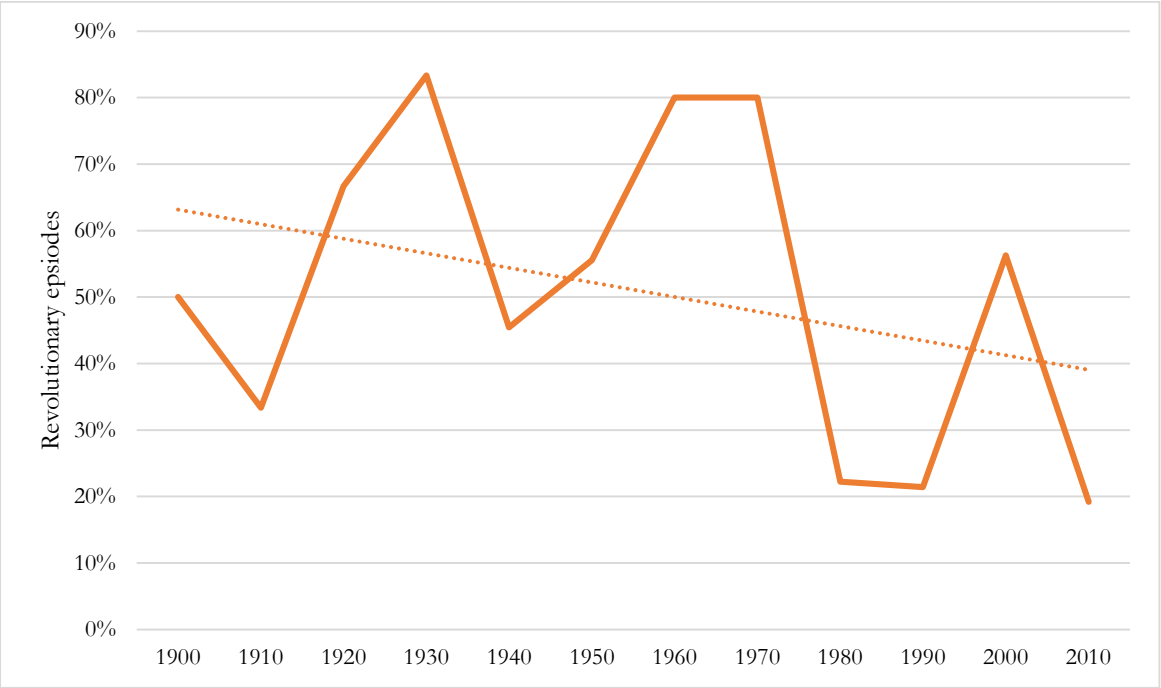



Figure 13 shows that rates of great power counterrevolution have been following a downward trend over time. Great power counterrevolution peaked in the interwar years, coinciding with the three-way contest between the Wilsonian, Fascist and Bolshevik orders. There is a second spike in great power counterrevolutionary activity at the height of the Cold War. Rates of great power counterrevolution decreased in the post-Cold War era. Counterrevolutions in the post-2000 period include US actions against the al-Houthi Rebellion in Yemen (2004), al-Shabaab in Somali (2006), Tehrik-e-Taliban in Pakistan (2009), Boko Haram in Nigeria (2009) and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (2009).

[75] Missing data excluded from Figures 13-16.

**Figure 14.** Average rates of great power counterrevolution per era

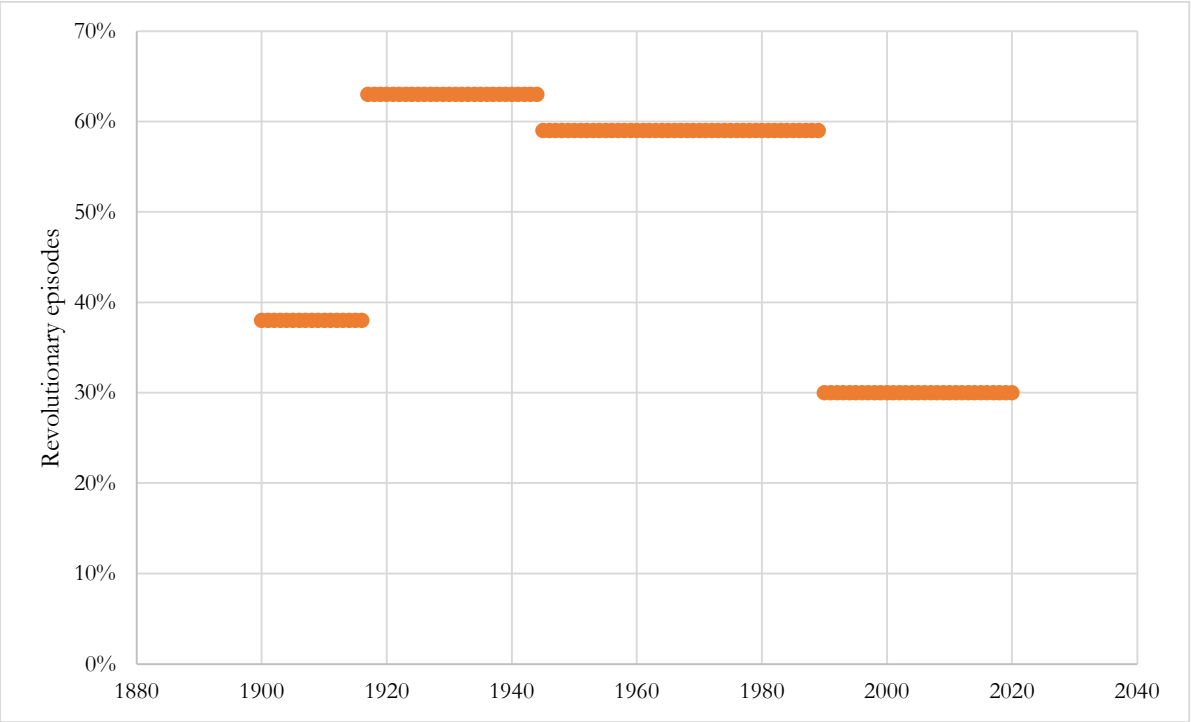



Figure 14 shows that between 1900 and 1916, only 38% of revolutions were met with great power counterrevolution. Between 1917 and 1944, this figure rose to 63%, and then 59% between 1945 and 1989. From 1990 rates of great power counterrevolution dropped back down to only 30%. The correspondence between periods of intense order competition and great power counterrevolution is consistent with order exit theory.

Where do the great powers engage in counterrevolution? Afghanistan stands out as the only country to have experienced five instances of great power counterrevolution, corresponding to the five revolutionary episodes it experienced between 1900 and 2020 (see Figure 15 below). All the great powers engaged in counterrevolution in Afghanistan at various points. France, Germany, Russia, the UK and US opposed Habibullah's revolution that ousted Aman-Allah Khan in 1929 (although they supported different counterrevolutionary factions) (Barfield, 2010: 150; Castagne, 1935: 701; McChesney, 1999: 236; Shahrani, 2005: 671-2, 674). Moscow fought a decade long war against the Mujahidin revolutionaries between 1979 and 1989 in a (failed) attempt to prevent them from seizing power (Moghadam, 2006: 7; Roy, 1999: 4). The US engaged in counterrevolution against the Taliban from 1999 (Strick Van Linschoten and Kuehn, 2018: 45), and again from 2002 (Giustozzi, 2019: 1-2). The US also opposed the Islamic State Khorasan Province (IS-KP) revolutionaries via airstrikes from 2015 (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2018). In all five cases

of great power counterrevolution, Afghanistan experienced counterrevolution on a massive scale, with foreign troops intervening directly (BBC, 2021; Castagne, 1935: 701; Giustozzi, 2019: 2; Mapping Militant Organizations, 2018; Moghadam, 2006: 7). The two countries which experienced the second highest number of counterrevolutionary episodes were Egypt and Yemen. In Yemen, great powers attempted to crush the Ahrar Revolt (1946-48), al-Houthi Rebellion (2004-2020) and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (2009-2020). In Egypt, great powers counterrevolted against the 1952 July Revolution, al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya insurgency (1987-2002) and the Sinai Insurgency (2013-2020).

**Figure 15.** International counterrevolution by target country, 1900-2020

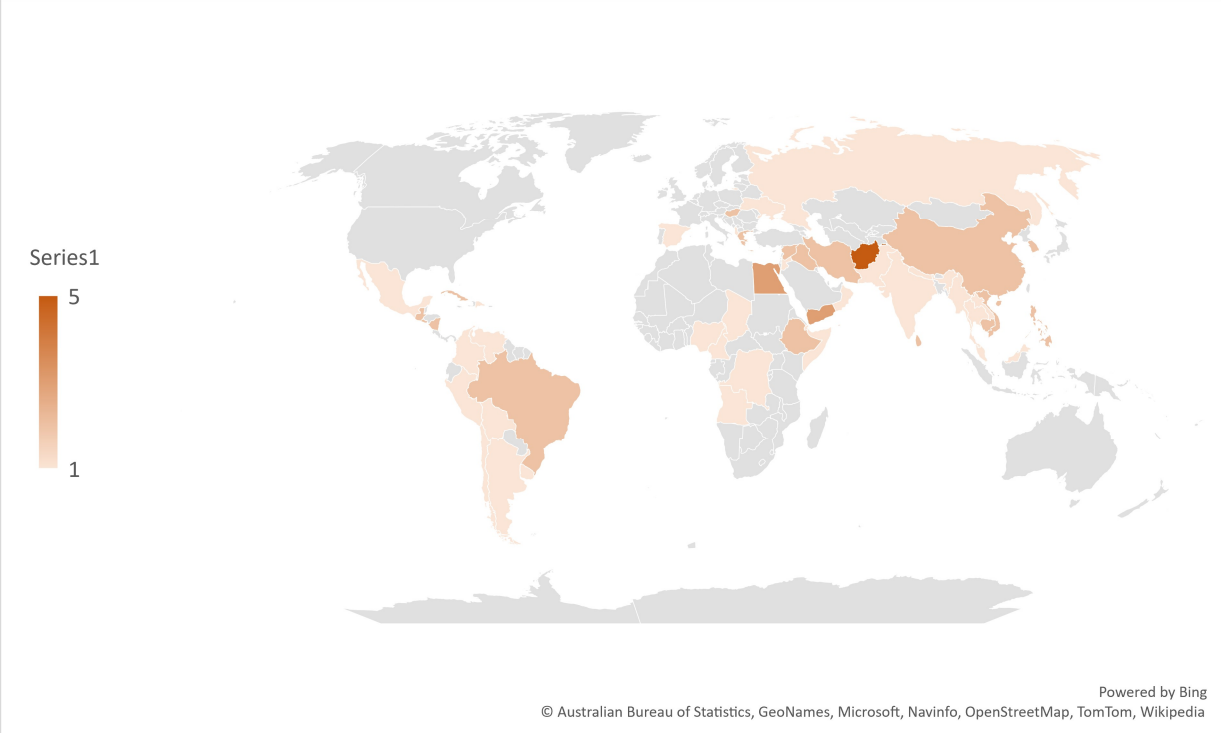
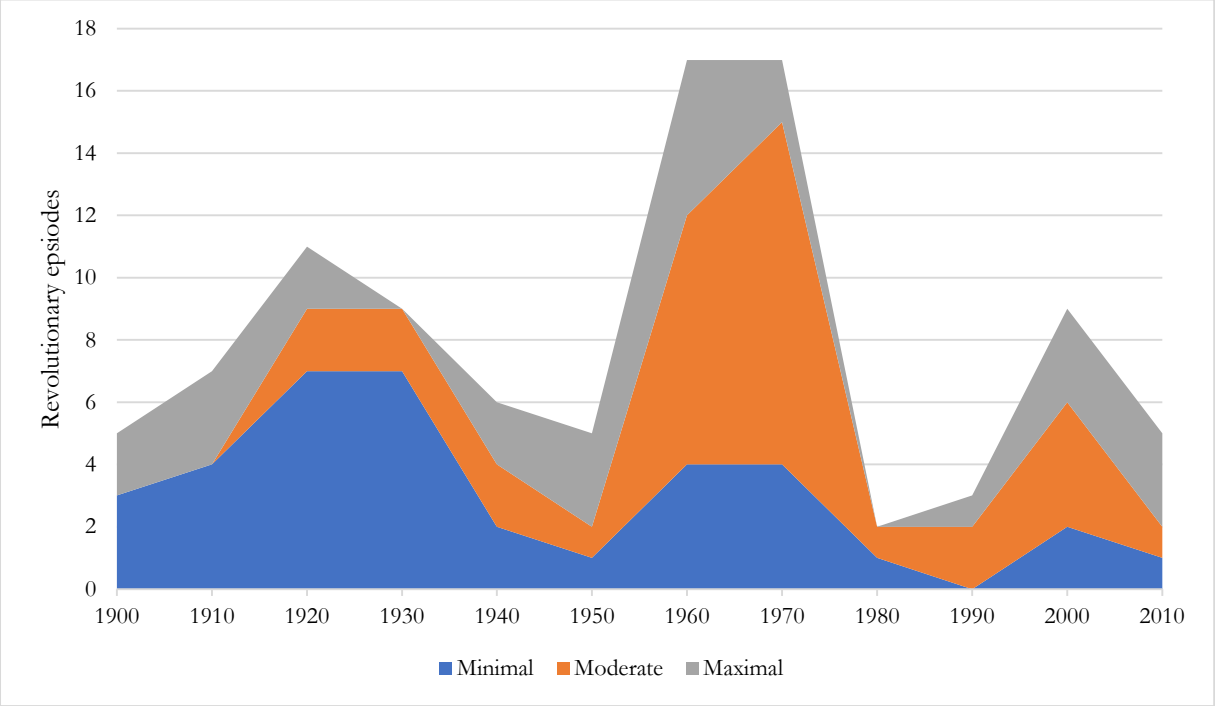



Figure 16 below shows the counterrevolutionary methods used by the great powers: maximal, moderate or minimal. As outlined in the introductory chapter: maximal counterrevolution involves the great power committing its own military forces; moderate counterrevolution involves military aid for counterrevolutionary groups; while minimal counterrevolution involves diplomatic and/or economic measures such as sanctions. In the era between 1900 and 1949, minimal methods were the most commonly deployed by the powers. From the 1950s, moderate measures became increasingly common, peaking in the 1970s. There have been three peaks in the use of maximal counterrevolutionary methods (vis-à-vis other methods): from the 1910s, during the 1950s and 60s, and from 2010. Increased use of maximal measures corresponds to unsettling times in great

power politics: after the Bolshevik Revolution, at the height of the Cold War, and attempts to maintain the US-led 'liberal order' more recently. The proportion of great power counterrevolutions deploying maximal measures was 24% between 1900 and 1949, 24% between 1950 and 1980, and 41% between 1990 and 2020. Perhaps counterintuitively, the contemporary post-1990 era has seen the highest rates of military intervention as a method of counterrevolution (as a percentage of the total number of counterrevolutions). The reasons for this could be a combination of the unfettered dynamics of unipolarity, associated notions of Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect, and attempts to maintain hegemony in the face of decline.

**Figure 16.** Counterrevolutionary methods used by the great powers, 1900-2020[76]




[76] The unit of analysis in this figure is counterrevolution, rather than revolution. As such, multiple great power counterrevolutions can be attached to a single revolutionary episode. For example, there are three 'maximal' counterrevolutions against the Bolshevik Revolution captured in this figure: one each conducted by the US, the UK, and France.

## The regression setup: variables and model specification

Dependent variable

The dependent variable is *Great Power Counterrevolution*. This variable is binary: 1 indicates that counterrevolution is taking place in a given revolutionary episode-year, whereas a 0 indicates that it is not.[77] Counterrevolution is deemed to have taken place if a great power attempts to prevent or reverse a revolution; whether via direct military intervention, the arming of domestic counterrevolutionaries, or via diplomatic or economic sanctions targeting the revolutionaries. The timeframe for assessing the presence of great power counterrevolution is the entire duration of the revolutionary attempt and up until three years after seizing power if the revolution is successful. This three-year temporal window has been selected for two reasons. First, this window is crucial given assertions that revolutions are most internationally disruptive immediately after seizing power, gradually moderating their agenda over time via a process of mutual socialisation with the international system (see for example Armstrong, 1993: 1, 242-3, 270-1).[78] This means that we should expect most revolutionary challenges to international order, and subsequent great power counterrevolutionary responses, to occur within this window.

Second, this three-year timeframe captures great power counterrevolutions that are temporally proximate to the revolutionary episode as it unfolds. The dynamics driving counterrevolutions during moments of revolutionary contention and success are likely different to the dynamics driving counterrevolutions that unfold 10 years or more after revolutionaries come to power. This ties in to the question of whether there is a 'statue of limitations' on counterrevolution. Some scholars, for example, see the 1989 Central and Eastern European revolutions as counterrevolutions against communist revolution decades earlier. A related question is whether current US sanctions against Iran are counterrevolutionary. Irrespective of whether these sanctions should be considered acts of counterrevolution or not, the reasons for US measures against the Iranian Revolution in 1979 are likely different to the reasons for sanctions today. A conservative three-year timeframe means that only those great power interventions temporally tied to the revolutionary seizure of power are captured in the dataset. Having said that, expanding the

[77] The dependent variable could also be treated as ordinal (a seven-point scale according to the degree of support or opposition). Conducting multinomial regression is the plan for the next (post-PhD) stage of analysis.

[78] This parallels arguments that the most radical phase of revolution tends to be short, with revolutionaries becoming less utopian and more pragmatic over time (Goldstone and Alimi, 2021: 3-4).

three-year timeframe is an important area for future research.[79] This would allow for the comparison of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary dynamics at different points in time after the revolutionary seizure of power. Such a project is discussed further in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

Independent variables

The statistical analyses incorporate three hand-coded independent variables. All three variables are types of revolutionary challenge that may elicit great power counterrevolution. The independent variable of interest is *Order Exit*. This variable measures whether the revolutionaries wanted, attempted, or succeeded in changing its state's order membership status. This is a binary variable with 1 indicating order exit, and a 0 indicating no order exit. The presence or absence of order exit is recorded for each revolutionary episode-year. For example, the Cuban Communist Revolution is coded as an order exiting revolution for each year in the period between 1959 and 1962.[80] 1959 is the year in which Castro started establishing ties with the Soviet Union and began publicly lambasting the US government (Domínguez, 1999: 123). USSR-Cuban relations continued to strengthen over the subsequent three years, with the Soviet Union and other socialist bloc countries eclipsing the US as Cuba's main trading partner (Martínez-Fernández, 2011: 423).

Another independent variable is *Ideology Challenge*. This variable is also binary: 1 indicates an ideological challenge, where 0 indicates no ideological challenge. Revolutionaries are coded as presenting an ideological challenge when they espouse an ideology that is different to one or more of the great powers. For example, Hungary's Communist Revolution (1919) is coded as posing an ideological challenge on the basis that its communist ideology is different to the liberalism espoused by the US, UK, Germany and France at that time. Similarly, Hungary's Aster Revolution (1918) is coded as posing an ideological challenge on the basis that its liberalism is different to the communism practiced by the USSR. To code this variable I first measured ideological challenge from each great power's perspective, and then collapsed these columns into a composite variable measuring whether or not revolutionaries pose an ideological to any of the great powers at a particular point in time. Ideological challenge, or absence thereof, is captured for each revolutionary episode-year. The ideological challenge variable is derived from revolutions scholarship which theorises competitor ideologies to be a driver of international

[79] The dilemma of temporal cutoffs is reflected in discussions about when to assess revolutionary outcomes. Approaches in the literature have variously involved five, ten and fifteen year timeframes (Colgan, 2012: 450; 2013: 45).

[80] The year 1962 is the end date of recorded observations for this revolutionary episode, that is, three years after the revolutionary seizure of power in 1959.

counterrevolution. The literature theorises four mechanisms linking ideological challenges and great power counterrevolution. These are: i) great power fears of ideological contagion (Owen, 2010); ii) apprehension about the emboldening of ideological rivals at home (Nelson, 2014: 6, 14, 24-5); iii) the instability generated by "transnational ideological struggles" (Owen, 2002: 394); iv) and the delegitimation of great power systems of political authority (Armstrong, 1993: 1; Bisley, 2004: 57; Bukovansky, 2002: 1, 213; Goldstone, 2001: 142; Kim, 1970: xviii).

I considered two alternative ways of operationalising the concept of ideological challenge. The first possibility was to code a revolutionary episode as posing an ideological challenge if it attempted or succeeded in supplanting an ideology held by at least one of the great powers. The logic of this approach is that by challenging an ideology shared by a great power, the revolutionary state undermines the legitimacy of that great power. The issue with this approach, however, is that the concept of 'ideological challenge' is based only on what was before, not what the revolutionaries were attempting to transform a state into. This means that transformations from military to communist states would not be coded as posing an ideological challenge, as none of the great powers were military states in the period under analysis (1900-2020). It seems counterintuitive to conceptualise ideological challenge independently from a revolutionary group's ideology.

Another approach that was considered was to code whether each revolutionary movement pursued an ideology not held by any of the great powers in the system (i.e. an outside or 'non-hegemonic' ideology). This approach is premised upon revolutions such as France 1789 and Russia 1917 being key moments of ideological rupture, with subsequent revolutions being less so as they mirror ideologies that have already been adopted by powerful states. Following the ideological lead of great powers seems less subversive than pursuing an outside ideology foreign to the powerful states in the system. This approach is also unsatisfactory given that all communist revolutions since the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 until the collapse of the USSR would not be coded as espousing a challenger ideology (as they share their ideology with a great power). Again, such coding outcomes seem counterintuitive.

A third independent variable captured in the dataset is *Power Challenge*. This variable is also binary. Revolutionaries are coded as posing a power challenge when they try to alter international power distributions. This variable is derived from the revolutions literature, which highlights the propensity for revolutionary states to unsettle balance of power systems and/or to improve their power position in international hierarchies (Skocpol, 1979: 3 Walt, 1996: 129). The challenges that revolutions pose to international power distributions can be grouped into two broad categories. The first are those revolutions that seek to end international hierarchies. Examples include the

*Xinhai* Revolution (1911), which sought to end China's inferior status vis-à-vis the great powers. These revolutionaries see unequal power relations between states as allowing great powers to exploit, mistreat and meddle in weaker state's affairs. The rhetoric of their challenge to power hierarchies is usually anti-imperialist and anti-dependency, while simultaneously invoking calls for independence and equal treatment in international affairs. Indicators of this type of power challenge are attempts to repudiate unequal treaties, revoke concessions and nationalize foreign-owned businesses. The second category of power distribution challenge are those revolutionary states that seek to move their state up the international hierarchy. Instead of seeking to end hierarchy, these states want to take their 'rightful' place within it. Examples include Mussolini's Fascist Revolution in Italy, Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch, and Cambodia's Khmer Rouge. The standard rhetoric of such approaches to power distributions is to restore the former glory of a lost empire, and the key indicator of this type of power challenge is territorial expansion (e.g. Mussolini's invasion of Corfu, see Cassels, 2008: 162 and 2015: 395-6). The power challenge variable is coded for each revolutionary-episode year.

The selection of the *Order Exit, Ideology Challenge* and *Power Challenge* variables was to the exclusion of other possibilities. The revolutions literature highlights multiple challenges that revolutionaries may pose to international orders, thereby triggering counterrevolution. Such challenges include the undermining of diplomatic practices, principles of sovereignty and international law (Armstrong, 1993: 242-3, 270-1, 306; Bisley, 2004: 50; Grosser, 2016; Halliday, 1999: 10-12, 13-14; and Lawson, 2019: 32). The ideology and power challenge variables were chosen because they are the most frequently cited axes of contention in the literature.[81]

Controls

There are three clusters of control variables captured in the dataset: those relevant to the revolutionaries, those relevant to the state or region in which the revolutionary episode is unfolding, and those relevant to the great powers. In terms of revolutionary-level variables, *Armed Tactics* captures whether revolutionaries' tactics are mostly armed or not. Revolutionary episode-years where the primary method is armed are coded as 1, whereas revolutionary episode-years where the primary method is unarmed are coded as 0. Given that many revolutionary episodes involve a mix of both armed and unarmed tactics, the crucial question is whether armed tactics

[81] See for example Armstrong, 1993; Bisley, 2004: 57; Bukovansky, 2002: 1, 213; Goldstone, 2001: 142 and 2015: xxxiv-xxxv; Goodwin, 2001: 4, 289; Kim, 1970: xviii, xix; 124-5; Nelson, 2014: 3, 8-9, 12, 24-5; Owen, 2010; Skocpol, 1979: 3; Walt, 1996: 129.

were *dominant*.[82] Unarmed tactics include protests, boycotts, marches, civil disobedience and strikes (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011: 6; Ritter, 2015: 8). The upper limit of the unarmed category includes building occupations, rock throwing and vandalism. Armed tactics include the use of guns, bombs, as well as methods such as insurgency and guerrilla warfare. Common to these methods is that they involve conventional weapons (as opposed to sticks, rocks and shields).[83] This binary approach to armed versus unarmed tactics is an abstraction from complex empirical contexts. The relationship between violence and nonviolence (or armed and unarmed tactics) is better theorised as existing along a spectrum, and "subject to interpretations that are, in turn, dependent on context and political position" (Lawson, 2019: 38). A gradated and perspectival approach to armed versus unarmed tactics would add a helpful layer of nuance in future iterations of the dataset. This variable was handcoded using primary and secondary sources (see Appendix C for the sources on which decisions were based).

Another revolutionary-level control variable is *Duration (logged)*. This is a continuous variable recording the length of the revolutionary episode in years.[84] The start year of a revolutionary episode is when the revolutionary action begins, and the end date is either when the revolutionaries seize power (in successful cases) or when the revolutionaries are crushed by the government or give up (in unsuccessful cases). Year values have been log transformed. The running tally of the duration of the revolutionary episode is recorded for each episode-year. Revolutionary attempts that are quickly crushed by the home state are presumably less likely to be met with great power counterrevolution – there is no need for intervention as the revolutionaries no longer pose a threat. Examples of this phenomenon include the Peruvian Aprista Rebellion (1932). Although initially alarmed by the revolution, one of the reasons the US Government withheld support from the incumbent regime was that the uprising would soon be crushed. US Charge d'Affaires in Peru, William C. Burdett, wrote to the US Secretary of State on 8 July 1932:

> Regarding cable advice Chief of U.S. Navy Mission today to Naval Intelligence concerning Peruvian request for naval air bombs from Panama, this would strengthen position of the Naval Mission but revolutionary movement can be suppressed without air bombardment and native aviators would probably kill helpless non-combatants. Embassy suggests that approval of the Department be deferred until the revolutionary movement in Peru is over which will probably be very soon (US Office of the Historian, 1948c: 929).

[82] This follows the approach of Ritter (2015: 8) who examines revolutions which are 'predominantly' nonviolent; and Chenoweth and Stephan (2011: 12) who define nonviolent campaigns as those which are 'principally' nonviolent.
[83] This is similar to the approach adopted by Beissinger (2022: 21 in codebook), who excludes "riots lightly armed with stones, sticks, shields, or Molotov cocktails" from his 'armed' category (Beissinger, 2022: 21 in codebook).
[84] This approach was inspired by Stewart (2018: 217-18).

The expectation of the relationship between duration and great counterrevolution is that the shorter the revolutionary episode, the less likely a great power is to intervene.

Another revolutionary-level control variable is *Seized Power*. This variable captures whether the revolutionary movement was in power or not for each revolutionary episode-year. There are two rationales for the inclusion of this variable in the dataset. The first is that it is a proxy for revolutionary movement strength – strong revolutionary groups are more likely to seize power, whereas weaker groups tend to be defeated or otherwise dissipate.[85] If stronger revolutionary movements are more threatening to great powers and therefore more likely to elicit counterrevolution, then revolutionaries that seize power might be more closely correlated with great power counterrevolution that those that don't. The second rationale is to explore whether revolutionary movements or revolutionary governments are more closely correlated with great power counterrevolution. Given that revolutionaries who are in charge of states might pose a greater threat to great powers than those without state resources at their disposal, we might expect revolutionaries in power to be more closely correlated with great power counterrevolution. This variable was handcoded, with research underpinning each coding decision contained in Appendix C.

The second cluster of control variables concern the state and region in which the revolutionary episode is unfolding. Three variables are used to capture the power of the state: *GDP pc (logged), Population (logged)* and *Material Capabilities*. The first variable captures log-transformed gross domestic product per capita. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data is taken from the Maddison Project Database (Bolt and van Zanden, 2020). Population figures were also taken from the Maddison Project Database (Bolt and van Zanden, 2020), which were then log-transformed. Material capabilities refer to the Composite Indicator of National Capability (CINC), taken from the National Material Capabilities (v6.0) dataset (Singer, 1987). The CINC combines annual measures of "military expenditure, military personnel, energy consumption, iron and steel production, urban population, and total population" (Singer, 1987). GDP per capita (logged), population (logged) and material capabilities were recorded for each revolutionary-episode year (or the closest available year). The effect of a state's power on great power counterrevolution is theoretically ambiguous. Great powers might be more likely to intervene in weaker states as there

[85] Another way of capturing the strength of a revolutionary movement is movement size. Although peak strength data is available for most revolutionary episodes, year-by-year estimates of movement size were far patchier. Movement strength per revolutionary episode-year is a variable I would like to capture in future iterations of the dataset. Peak movement size is included as a variable in the restructured, non-panel dataset analysed as part of the robustness checks undertaken in Appendix B.

are greater chances of counterrevolutionary success. However, great powers might be less likely to intervene in weaker states as they are of peripheral importance to great power interests.[86] Another variable concerning the state in which the revolution is unfolding is *Democracy*. This variable captures the extent of liberal democracy in a given country annually, drawing on the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) dataset's Liberal Democracy Index (Coppedge at al., 2015: 6 and 2022). *Regional CR* indicates whether a great power counterrevolution occurred in the same region as each revolutionary episode.[87] This variable is binary, measuring the presence or absence of regional great power counterrevolution in the three years prior to each revolutionary episode-year. The regional counterrevolution variable is theoretically important for two reasons. First, an existing great power counterrevolution in a given region might indicate that that region is of strategic importance to a great power. This would make a second counterrevolution in that region more likely. An example of this phenomenon is US counterrevolution against Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam during the 1960s and 1970s. Second, multiple revolutions in a given region might provoke great power fears of revolutionary contagion. If great powers have already intervened to halt one revolution, another revolution in that same region may be seen to be part of the same revolutionary wave, also needing to be crushed. The logic in both cases is that regional counterrevolution makes great power counterrevolution against future episodes in that region more likely.

The final control variable operates at the level of the great powers. *Great Power War* captures whether at least one of the greats powers was embroiled in an interstate war at the time that each revolutionary episode was unfolding. Data for this variable was derived from Correlates of War Inter-State War Data v4.0 (Sarkees and Wayman, 2010). This is a binary variable indicating whether a great power was at war for each revolutionary episode-year. The theoretical rationale for this variable is that great powers may be less willing and able to engage in counterrevolution when they are already embroiled in war. Empirical evidence to this effect is the US government's desire to avoid intervention in the Mexican Revolution while WWI was underway (Katz, 1981: 460). Exhaustion post-WWI also explains why great power intervention to reverse the Bolshevik revolution was so half-hearted and short-lived (Goldstone and Alimi, 2021: 3). The logic of this variable is the inverse of the regional counterrevolution variable above: I suspect that while regional counterrevolution makes subsequent counterrevolution more likely, great power war makes counterrevolution less likely. The independent and control variables used in the analyses are summarised in Table 4.

[86] See for example Walt (2016: 42), who argues that revolutions in powerful states are the most threatening.
[87] This variable is inspired by Clarke's (2022: 101) 'regional counterrevolution' variable. His variable is a count of domestic "counterrevolutions that broke out in the previous year within the same world region" (Clarke's (2022: 101).

**Table 4.** Summary of variables[88]

| *Level of analysis* | *Variable* |
|---|---|
| Revolutionary movement | Order Exit |
| | Ideology challenge |
| | Power Challenge |
| | Armed Tactics |
| | Duration (logged) |
| | Seized Power |
| Country | GDP pc (logged) |
| | Population (logged) |
| | Material Capabilities |
| | Democracy |
| Region | Regional CR |
| Great powers | Great Power War |

Model specification

I use a binomial logistic regression model given that the dependent variable is dichotomous (Kellstedt and Whitten, 2018: 277). Standard errors are clustered by country, while fixed effects are used in models 6 and 7.

## Results

The descriptive results show that most order-exiting revolutions were met with great power counterrevolution (81%), while most non-order exiting revolutions were spared (71%) (see Table 5 below). The percentage of order exiting revolutions faced with counterrevolution (81%) is more than twice the percentage of non-order exiting revolutions faced with counterrevolution (29%).

[88] The *GDP pc (logged), Population (logged)* and *Seized Power* variables do not form part of the main statistical analyses in the chapter, but are instead included in the robustness checks in Appendix B.

**Table 5.** Great power counterrevolution by order exit status (missing values excluded)

| | Counterrevolution | No counterrevolution | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Order exiting revolutions | 51 (81%) | 12 (19%) | 63 |
| Non-order exiting revolutions | 20 (29%) | 48 (71%) | 68 |

The regression results for *Great Power Counterrevolution* are summarised in Table 6. Model 1 includes only the independent variable of interest: *Order Exit*. Model 2 adds the two other independent variables: *Ideology Challenge* and *Power Challenge*. Model 3 adds the revolutionary-level control variables: *Armed Tactics* and *Duration (logged)*. Model 4 adds the state-level control variables *Material Capabilities* and *Democracy*. Model 5 (the base model) adds the regional and great power-level variables: *Regional CR* and *Great Power War*. Models 6 and 7 add temporal and geographic fixed effects.

The coefficient of *Order Exit* is positive and statistically significant in all models, indicating a strong correlative relationship with *Great Power Counterrevolution*. Referring to the base model – Model 5 – the coefficient of *Ideology Challenge* is positive and statistically significant at the 5% level, supporting existing theories that revolutionary ideologies matter for great power counterrevolution. The coefficient of *Armed Tactics* is also positive and statistically significant at the 5% level, showing that revolutionary movements that adopt armed tactics are more likely to face great power counterrevolution than those that don't. The positive coefficient of *Duration (logged)* indicates that longer-running revolutionary episodes are correlated with great power counterrevolution (at the 0.1% level). *Great Power War* is also positively correlated with *Great Power Counterrevolution* (at the 10% significance level). This could be because international wars are also moments of heightened instability and competition, making revolutions more threatening and therefore more likely to suffer counterrevolution at the hands of one or more powers.

The coefficients of the state-level variables are negative, indicating that lower levels of material capabilities and of liberal democracy in the country in which the revolution is unfolding are associated with great power counterrevolution. However, only *Material Capabilities* is statistically significant (in Models 6 and 7). The positive coefficient of *Regional CR* shows that revolutionaries are more likely to be faced with great power counterrevolution when a previous great power counterrevolution has unfolded in the same region in the last three years (although this relationship is only statistically significant in Models 6 and 7).

**Table 6.** Order exit predicts great power counterrevolution

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 | Model 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Order Exit | 2.628*** | 2.239*** | 1.950*** | 1.890*** | 1.962*** | 2.470*** | 2.636*** |
| | (0.412) | (0.429) | (0.468) | (0.487) | (0.496) | (0.538) | (0.530) |
| Ideology challenge | | 3.159** | 3.133* | 3.294* | 3.287* | 3.561* | 3.183+ |
| | | (1.118) | (1.403) | (1.478) | (1.562) | (1.645) | (1.778) |
| Power Challenge | | 1.624+ | 0.847 | 0.981 | 1.038 | 1.453* | 1.530* |
| | | (0.858) | (0.864) | (0.856) | (0.834) | (0.734) | (0.721) |
| Armed Tactics | | | 1.222* | 1.252* | 1.162* | 1.078* | 1.357** |
| | | | (0.514) | (0.513) | (0.492) | (0.510) | (0.500) |
| Duration (logged) | | | 1.596*** | 1.642*** | 1.762*** | 2.373*** | 2.642*** |
| | | | (0.444) | (0.452) | (0.434) | (0.483) | (0.509) |
| Material Capabilities | | | | -6.298 | -6.480 | -20.845*** | -16.421* |
| | | | | (4.764) | (4.533) | (5.357) | (6.597) |
| Democracy | | | | -1.375 | -1.144 | -0.874 | -1.089 |
| | | | | (1.190) | (1.111) | (1.205) | (1.306) |
| Regional CR | | | | | 0.205 | 0.558+ | 0.616* |
| | | | | | (0.336) | (0.318) | (0.310) |
| Great Power War | | | | | 0.769+ | 0.939* | 0.841+ |
| | | | | | (0.415) | (0.428) | (0.433) |
| Num.Obs. | 1098 | 842 | 842 | 841 | 841 | 841 | 841 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.251 | 0.326 | 0.393 | 0.397 | 0.406 | 0.439 | 0.445 |
| Std.Errors | by: country | by: country | by: country | by: country | by: country | by: country | by: country |
| FE: decade | | | | | | X | X |
| FE: region | | | | | | | X |

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

## Robustness checks

Several robustness checks are untaken in Appendix B. The first explores whether the effect of *Order Exit* on *Great Power Counterrevolution* is an artefact of the way my definition of revolution is applied. To test this, I excluded 19 borderline cases of revolution that were right on the cusp of inclusion as per one or more of the three revolutions definitional criteria. Next, I ran regression analyses with alternative specifications of the dependent and independent variables, different control variables, and a different measure of ideology. I also restructured the dataset so that each observation is a single revolutionary episode, and each variable is time invariant. Finally, I clustered standard errors by region, decade and year; and ran models with country and year fixed effects. The effect of order exit on great power counterrevolution remained positive and statistically significant throughout these checks.

## Conclusions

This chapter has undertaken two tasks. The first was to descriptively map the contours of revolution and international counterrevolution in the period between 1900 and 2020. This mapping has shown the dominance of liberal revolutionary ideologies, the concentration of great power counterrevolution in the Middle East, and that rates of great power counterrevolution have been decreasing over time. The period between 1917 and 1989 saw much higher rates of great power counterrevolution than the pre-1917 and post-1989 eras. This period of heightened rates of great power counterrevolution coincides with competition between multiple orders. According to order exit theory, contests between the Soviet, Fascist, and 'Liberal' orders provided revolutionaries with more opportunities for order exit, making great power counterrevolution more likely. The correlation between high rates of great power counterrevolution and periods of destabilizing order competition is a pattern deserving of thorough empirical investigation in future.

The second task of this chapter has been to explore the determinants of great power counterrevolution. Across multiple analyses, *Order Exit* is shown to have a statistically significant relationship with *Great Power Counterrevolution.* This relationship still holds up in several robustness checks carried out in Appendix B. In line with existing theories of counterrevolution, revolutionaries that espouse competitor ideologies are shown to be more likely to be met with great power counterrevolution than those who don't. Other determinants of great power counterrevolution include the use of armed tactics by revolutionaries, as well as the duration of the revolutionary episode. Finally, great powers are more likely to engage in counterrevolution when they are also embroiled in an interstate war. Taken together, these statistical analyses begin

to paint a picture of the determinants of great power counterrevolution throughout the world between 1900 and 2020. While drawing on and confirming existing theories, these results also show the important role played by revolutionary exit from great power orders. Order-leaving revolutionaries take significant risks in trying to break free from their extant orders: there is a robust and statistically significant correlation between order exit and great power counterrevolution. Having mapped the average effects of order exit on counterrevolution across time and place, the next three chapters are dedicated to specific revolutionary contexts. The upcoming task is therefore to sketch the dynamics of order exit and order continuity: What do these processes look like, and how do they condition great power responses?

# Chapter 5: The Mexican Revolution and Lack of US Counterrevolution, 1910-1920

The preceding chapters have been dedicated to developing a theory of great power counterrevolution, and then testing this theory statistically. Large-N analysis has shown a positive and statistically significant relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution. The next three chapters are dedicated to qualitatively mapping processes of order exit (or lack thereof). The purpose is to investigate whether the relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution is causal, or merely correlative. This is done by comparing order exit with two rival explanations: ideology and challenges to international power hierarchies. Case analysis not only helps to establish that there are casual linkages between order exit and great power counterrevolution, but sketches what the mechanisms linking these two variables look like in practice.

This chapter examines the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920).[89] The Mexican revolution is a 'negative' case in that there was no great power counterrevolution against the victorious revolutionary faction the Carrancistas, who won power in 1916 and set about consolidating the revolution. The task is to map the reasons for this absence – what was the role played by revolutionary ideologies, order membership and attempts to reconfigure power distributions in protecting these revolutionaries from aggressive great power responses? It is the contention here that the Carrancistas' decision to remain in their extant order was a decisive factor preventing counterrevolution. US armed intervention against the other major (but quickly suppressed) rebel faction – the Villistas and their allies the Zapatistas – provides a useful point of comparison with the Carrancistas in light of order exit theory.

The following case analysis of the Mexican Revolution draws on both archival and secondary sources. Archival sources include the Foreign Relations of the United States diplomatic archive, newspaper archives, and the speeches of revolutionary leaders. Language limitations prevented my analysis of primary Spanish sources, but fortunately there are multiple excellent volumes that do make use of, and translate, such primary sources, including Gilderhus (1977) and Katz (1981, 1998). In drawing on these primary and secondary sources, the purpose of this chapter is illustrative. This chapter does not attempt to make an original historiographical contribution to

[89] The timeframe under analysis is from 1910 (when the revolution erupted) until 1920 (three years after revolutionary leader Carranza formally took power via a new constitution and his election in 1917).

our understanding of the Mexican Revolution. Instead, its goal is to understand why the Mexican Revolution did not elicit a US counterrevolutionary response. Is the lack of counterrevolution causally related to Mexico's order remaining status? And if so, what are the pathways linking ongoing order membership with the absence of great power counterrevolution? These are the two tasks of this chapter.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the early twentieth century was a period of a single great power order with multiple leaders: France, Germany, the US, the UK and Russia. Mexico was embedded within this great power order via thick (and unequal) economic and inter-elite linkages (Katz, 1981: 4, 22; Wasserman, 1979). The US played an outsized role amongst the great powers in responding the Mexican Revolution (Durán, 1982: 487). This was because of the geographical proximity of Mexico to the US, as well as the growing power of the US vis-à-vis the other powers. In other words, the US was the "hemispheric hegemon" (Smith, 1972: xi). The US's growing economic strength and influence in Latin America coincided with a weakened Europe as WWI intensified (Gilderhus, 2000: 37, 46; Katz, 1981: 528; Knight, 2016: 101-2). Even before WWI the US had the most economically at stake, with more than $1 billion invested in Mexico by 1911 and substantial trade links totalling $117,000,000 in 1911 (Gilderhus, 1977: 1). Levels of US trade and investment were bigger than any single European nation (Gilderhus, 1977: 1; Smith, 1972: 6). The importance of Mexico to US interests was not just a matter of regional proximity, but contiguous proximity, with the two countries sharing a 2,000 mile border (Hart, 1987: 187-8; Knight, 2016: 101-2). The leadership position of the US in responding to the revolution was crucial as it conditioned the responses of the other powers, with the UK, Russia and France deferring to the US (see for example Gilderhus, 1977: 8-9, 32 and 2000: 43-4; Katz, 1981: 477; Skirius, 2003: 37-8; Smith, 1972: 34). The US was quick to define its leadership role, with US President Woodrow Wilson making clear "that, because of the European war, the United States was the only major power capable of taking the initiative… and would act as the representative of other powers in evaluating the acceptability of the new [revolutionary] government" (Kahle, 1958: 356). As such, the US response to the Mexican Revolution is the focus of this chapter as the key order representative.

Analysis of the Mexican Revolution shows that there is evidence to support the existence of a causal relationship between order membership continuity and the absence of counterrevolution. This relationship is established using two tranches of evidence. The first tranche relies on the timing and content of US reactions to the revolution. The second is an intra-case comparison between the Carrancistas and their rival faction, the Villistas. While initially Villista actions indicated their willingness to keep Mexico within US orbit and correspondingly won US sympathy, when the Villistas turned on the US they were subsequently met with US counterrevolution.

Chapter 5 proceeds as follows. The first section provides a brief overview of the Mexican Revolution, highlighting key events, actors and the US response. The second section applies order exit theory to the Mexican Revolution to determine whether there is a causal relationship between Mexico's continuity of order membership and US support for the revolution. The third and fourth sections explore other possible reasons for the absence of US counterrevolution, including the role of Mexico's revolutionary ideology and attempts to reconfigure international power hierarchies. The final section concludes by summarising the main findings of the case analysis, and the implications for order exit theory.

## A brief overview of the Mexican Revolution

The Mexican Revolution contains within it a series of rebellions, regime changes, counter-revolts and civil wars that took place between 1910 and 1920. It is a difficult case study for this reason – there are multiple revolutionary movements, leaders, factions and fault lines that coalesce, splinter and turn on each other and the revolution itself. That said, the Mexican Revolution can be parsed into two phases, bisected by the interregnum of General Victoriano Huerta's counterrevolution that held power between February 1913 and August 1914.

The first revolutionary phase was the Maderista revolution which swept longstanding dictator Porifirio Díaz from power in May 1911, ending nearly 17 years of continuous rule (Purnell, 2006: 560). Díaz was ousted from power by multiple revolutionary currents under the leadership (broadly conceived) of Francisco Madero (Hart, 1987: 254; Knight, 2016: 25). Once in power Madero set about instituting his liberal-democratic agenda. However, progress was hampered by challenges on multiple fronts (Hart, 1987: 252-3; Knight, 2016: 33, 37-8, 40). From the right came a challenge from the counterrevolutionary stalwarts of the old regime, and from the left came challenges from within the ranks of the revolutionaries (Knight, 2016: 33-4; Purnell, 2006: 561). Occupying a precarious centre Madero alienated both conservative and radical camps, portending his downfall (Knight, 2016: 34, 40).

The Maderista regime was toppled by a counterrevolutionary military coup on 19 February 1913 (Gilderhus, 1977: 2 and 2000: 41; Knight, 2016: 43-4). Madero was arrested, resigned as President from prison and was then murdered, with General Huerta becoming interim President (Gilderhus, 1977: 2; Hart, 1987: 261; Knight, 2016: 44). In keeping with the military's desire to return to the halcyon days of decisive rule by a member from within their own ranks, General Huerta set about filling the shoes of General Porfirio Díaz (Knight, 2016: 43, 45). He did so with limited success. His authoritarian lurch in closing the legislature, silencing the press and steely military repression

was not coupled with political nous or economic expertise (Knight, 2016: 45, 49). General Huerta faced insurrection from many of the same forces that had ousted Díaz during the Maderista revolution. The Zapatistas rebelled in the southern state of Morelos, while the northern armed opposition coalesced around Alvaro Obregón, Venustiano Carranza and Francisco Villa, in concert with more localised, loosely affiliated guerrilla groups (Knight, 2016: 46-9). Buoyed by the lifting of a US embargo on arms supplies, the revolutionary forces of Carranza and Obregón forced their way to the capital in August 1914 (Gilderhus, 1977: 11-12). Huerta resigned and fled to Europe (Gilderhus, 1977: 11-12; Knight, 2016:52-4).

Upon victory, major schisms hardened between the revolutionaries erupting into a fratricidal civil 'war of the winners' (Gilderhus, 1977: 12; Knight, 2016: 60). On the one side sat the northern Carrancistas, while on the other was an uneasy alliance between Division of the North leader Villa, and the Zapatistas of southern Mexico (Gilderhus, 2000: 48; Knight, 2016: 61-3). Superior military strategy led the Carrancistas to victory by August 1915 (Knight, 2016: 69). Carranza, however, faced no small task as ruler of post-civil war Mexico. Simmering opposition, hyperinflation, banditry, public bankruptcy, starvation and disease were rampant (Knight, 2016: 70-1). Carranza had to nimbly tread two tightropes. The first was balancing divergent views within his own ranks; the second was solidifying his control of the country without alienating popular hopes for a transformed Mexico (Knight, 2016: 72). This resulted in a curious combination of military coercion, press censorship and corruption, alongside the nationalisation of key assets and industries and the drafting of one of the most radical constitutions of the day in 1917 (Knight, 2016: 71, 72-3). With the new constitution in place, managed elections legitimated Carranza as President alongside an elected Congress in 1917 (Knight, 2016: 73). Ultimately, however, Carranza was not successful in this balancing act. His increasing unpopularity in the lead up to the 1920 elections saw Carranza murdered during a military uprising and the election of his former military commander, Álvaro Obregón, as President (Gilderhus, 2000: 63; Knight, 2016: 74). Obregón's election brought ten years of tumult to a close, as the "last violent change of government in the long revolutionary cycle" (Knight, 2016: 74).

An assessment of US government actions while the revolutionary attempt was underway and up until three years after the seizure of power indicates support for Carrancistas.[90] The US was sympathetically neutral to the Maderista revolution, supported the ousting of counterrevolutionary General Huerta by facilitating the blockage of European loans, denying recognition, occupying the

[90] After initially also supporting the Villistas, the US targeted them with counterrevolutionary military intervention in 1916. The reasons for this, in light of order exit theory, are discussed in more detail in the sections below.

strategic port of Veracruz and lifting the arms embargo on revolutionary Carranza but not the Huerta regime (Gilerhus, 1977: 2, 5, 9; Skirius, 2003: 40; Smith, 1972: 17, 34, 35-6).[91] The US granted the Carranza administration *de facto* recognition on 19 October, 1915 (US Office of the Historian, 1924a: Document 1002). The US extended unconditional *de jure* recognition just under two years later on 26 September 1917 (Gilderhus, 1972: 230 and 1977: 70). The US itself was quick to highlight the role it had played in supporting the Mexican Revolution, when faced with criticisms from the Carranza Government. On 29 June, 1916, US Secretary of State Robert Lansing wrote to the de facto government in Mexico:

> In reply to this sweeping charge, I can truthfully affirm that the American Government has given every possible encouragement to the *de facto* Government in the pacification and rehabilitation of Mexico. From the moment of its recognition, it has had the undivided support of this Government. An embargo was placed upon arms and ammunition going into Chihuahua, Sonora and Lower California, in order to prevent their falling into the hands of the armed opponents of the *de facto* Government. Permission has been granted from time to time, as requested, for Mexican troops and equipment to traverse American territory from one point to another in Mexico in order that the operations of Mexican troops against Villa and his forces might be facilitated… Hoping, however, that the people of Mexico would through their own efforts restore peace and establish an orderly government, the United States has awaited with patience the consummation of the revolution (US Office of the Historian, 1925: Document 755).

The support the US afforded the revolutionaries does not mean an absence of tension. There was plenty. Key sources of friction included Carranza's inability to secure the US-Mexican border against banditry, with US Secretary of State Lansing decrying "outrage after outrage, atrocity after atrocity", including the "frequent and sudden incursions into American territory and depredations and murders on American soil by Mexican bandits" (US Office of the Historian, 1925: Document 755). The 1917 Constitution's Article 27 provisions were another key source of friction, with oil nationalization provisions seen as "attempted confiscatory legislation" by the US Secretary of State (US Office of the Historian, 1936: Document 379). The US also feared Mexican collusion with Germany (US Office of the Historian, 1931: Document 158). On Mexico's part, a key grievance concerned US incursions onto Mexican territory in pursuit of "marauders" such as Francisco "Pancho" Villa without Carranza's consent (US Office of the Historian, 1925: Document 755). Despite Mexico and the US being at loggerheads at various points between 1910 and 1920 (and indeed beyond), the US response did not escalate beyond sternly worded letters, rhetorical opposition and veiled threats (none of which meet the threshold for counterrevolutionary action).

[91] Contrary to official US policy, the notorious US Ambassador to Mexico, Henry Lane Wilson, was an ardent opponent of Madero and supporter of counterrevolutionary Huerta (Hart, 1987: 253; Knight, 2016: 51; Skirius, 2003: 36). Ambassador Wilson allegedly even facilitated Huerta's coup against Madero (Knight, 2016: 51). This does not constitute US government policy however. Ambassador Wilson's rogue plans earned a lambasting and dismissal from the President (Knight, 2016: 51).

The closest the US came to counterrevolutionary action in the period under analysis was the failure to replace the outgoing Ambassador to Mexico in the period between 1920 and 1923.

## Order exit and great power counterrevolution

Why didn't the US engage in counterrevolution against Mexico? The absence of counterrevolution is somewhat puzzling given that the US was clearly displeased with the direction of the revolution at various points between 1910 and 1920. The revolutionaries not only pursued nationalization and land redistribution policies, but also tried to improve Mexico's status vis-à-vis its dominant northerly neighbour. Yet, US Ambassador to Mexico, Henry P. Fletcher, "cultivated normal relations with Carranza and his government" (Katz, 1981: 495). That the US would refrain from counterrevolution was not a foregone conclusion. Washington faced pressure from multiple quarters to intervene against Carranza. US companies exerted pressure on Washington to overthrow Carranza's government (Katz, 1981: 476-7, 493). The British similarly tried on multiple occasions, throughout 1917 and 1918, to obtain US support for a coup against Carranza (Katz, 1981: 476-79). Calls for counterrevolution even came from within the US government. New Mexican Senator Albert Fall announced in the Senate in 1919 that the US should send an "army of half a million to occupy its Southern neighbor" (quoted in Machado and Judge, 1970: 8). Even Ambassador Fletcher suggested to President Wilson in 1919 that diplomatic relations with Mexico be suspended, even insinuating the possibility of intervention, should Mexico not bend to America's will (Machado and Judge, 1970: 5-6). The closest the US came to intervention against Carranza was in June 1919, with the US War Department drafting plans for military engagement in Mexico should diplomacy falter (Machado and Judge, 1970: 8-9, 14-15, 22). Despite these calls and preliminary preparations for intervention, President Wilson chose conciliation to intervention, pursing an approach of "watchful waiting" (Machado and Judge, 1970: 2).

According to the order exit theory developed in this dissertation, a crucial factor inoculating revolutionary Mexico from US counterrevolution was its continuity of order membership. Although Carranza was deeply suspicious of the US and likely wanted to extract Mexico from the US sphere of influence, Mexican dependence on the US made order exit a highly risky endeavour. Ironically, Mexican dependency on the US both stoked the fires of Mexican nationalism, while simultaneously making the ultimate manifestation of this nationalism – order exit – an unrealistic option (Katz, 1981: 496). Mexico was hugely dependent on the US for arms, food, foreign investment and trade (Katz, 1981: 496-7). Without an alternative great power order to jump to, severing Mexico's dependency on its current order would have been a perilous route to take. As

a result, Carranza repeatedly assured the US of ongoing friendly relations between his government and the US, despite his misgivings and several sources of tension between the US and Mexico.

Two tranches of evidence are marshalled in support of the order exit thesis below. First, the timing and content of key US actions in support of the revolution is examined in relation to Carranza's assurances of ongoing friendship between the two countries. The second tranche of evidence derives from an intra-case comparison of the Carrancista faction with the Villista faction. Both factions initially sought friendly relations with the US and were met with US sympathy. However, when the Villistas turned on the US in 1916, the US responded with counterrevolution. Before these two tranches of evidence are examined in turn below, the next task is to establish the Carrancistas as order remining revolutionaries.

Continuity of revolutionary Mexico's order membership

The revolutionary regime that consolidated under Carranza from 1916 never seriously attempted to leave US orbit. That Mexico's relationship with the US would continue was not in question, rather it was the terms of this relationship that came up for re-negotiation. Throughout the revolution Carranza was explicit that his faction would maintain friendly relations with the US. On 4 May 1914, Carranza's representative R. Zubáran Capmany wrote to the US government: "The United States and Mexico have, at present, friendly and peaceful relations, which not only the Constitutionalists [the Carrancistas], but the vast majority of the people of Mexico desire firmly to maintain... Consequently, it will be the purpose of the Constitutionalists to strive to continue unaltered those relations between the people of the two Republics, and to resolve all differences in the same spirit" (US Office of the Historian, 1922: Document 751). Several months later, Carranza's foreign secretary Jesús Acuña tried to solicit international recognition of his government, writing to Washington and several Latin American governments that such recognition "would afford a further occasion for drawing closer the relations of friendship between the people and Governments of your excellencies and the Mexican people and Government" (US Office of the Historian, 1924c: Document 981). After being elected to the Presidency, Carranza wrote to "Great and good friend" President Wilson on 1 May, 1917, "to express to Your Excellency the earnest desire and firm intention of my Government to cultivate and to extend the frank and cordial relations which happily link the United Mexican States with the United States of America over whose destinies Your Excellency presides" (US Office of the Historian, 1926: Document 1119). At the Paris Peace Conference in January 1919, a Mexican government spokesperson spoke of the "feeling of frank cordiality and friendship with the United States" (quoted in Machado and Judge, 1970: 5).

Further evidence of the Carrancistas' order remaining desires includes the regular deployment of emissaries to the US. A crucial means of trying to ensure good working relations with the US was the deployment of special agents to Washington. Madero and later Carranza sent emissary Jose Vasconcelos to the US to woo business and political elites (Skirius, 2003: 50-51). This would be surprising for revolutionaries that reject the order in which they find themselves, but not so for those who want to remain in the order. Carrancista agents were also effective in lobbying the US government to lift the arms embargo against them (Smith, 1972: 35-6). One target of such Carrancista efforts was Texan Senator Morris Sheppard, who in turn urged President Woodrow Wilson to lift the arms embargo (Skirius, 2003: 40). Other targets were Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan and President Woodrow Wilson himself, who were the subject of lobbying efforts by Roberto V. Pesqueira (pseudonym F. Gonzalez Gante) and Captain Julio Madero (Madero's brother) in November 1913 (Gilderhus, 1977: 6; Skirius, 2003: 40). Carranza also sent confidential agents to Europe, with Jose Vasconcelos lobbying Paris and London to support his faction's cause against Huerta in 1913 (Skirius, 2003: 38). After the arms embargo was lifted in February 1914, the Carrancistas continued their efforts to curry favour in the US, including the creation of an information bureau (Gilderhus, 1977: 15, 131). As reports of the mistreatment of foreigners in Mexico City at the hands of the Carrancistas emerged in early 1915, Carranza's agent Eliseo Arredondo was tasked with proselytizing their cause amongst members of the US government, while the Mexican consul general promulgated Carranza's neighbourly goodwill (Gilderhus, 1977: 18-19).

Carranza similarly developed certain policies with US reactions in mind. While working to have the US arms embargo lifted in his battle against counter-revolutionary Huerta, Carranza promised a claims commission and demanded that his forces respect foreign properties (Gilderhus, 1977: 6). Once in power, Carranza similarly assuaged US concerns of Mexican involvement in WWI by promising neutrality in a speech to congress in 1917, and ejecting a German diplomat from Mexico who was accused of spying by the US (Gilderhus, 1977: 59, 64). Carranza was sometimes demonstrative in his language towards the US too. A note from the Carranza government to the US on 20 October, 1915 spoke of "the relations of friendship which have always existed between the [our] two nations", signing off "with wishes for the prosperity of American people…" (US Office of the Historian, 1924b: Document 1009). While addressing Mexico's congress in 1917, "Carranza praised the "discretion" and "spirit of cordiality" of the "great republic of the north", and blamed Mexican exiles for the acts which had caused difficulties with the United States" (Smith, 1972: 75).

Indications of revolutionary Mexico's goodwill towards the US were not the only mode of discourse adopted by Carranza. At various points he was critical of the US too, engaging in "frequent anti-American pronouncements and acts" (Katz, 1998: 530). Carranza would withhold responses to US correspondence, be cool in meetings with US diplomats, and voiced criticism of US actions (for example the occupation of Veracruz) (Gilderhus, 1977: 29; Kahle, 1958: 360; Katz, 1981: 499). Crucially, however, these sentiments never passed the threshold of indicating a desire to break with the US. Such criticisms of the US were contained within the bounds of the existing order of which Mexico and the US were both members.

The timing and decision-making of US support for Carranza

The above section has established that the Carrancistas pursued continuity of Mexico's order membership both before and after seizing power. But it is not yet clear that this had any effect on the US government's response to the revolution. Two tranches of evidence are marshalled to establish a link between Mexico's order continuity and the US government response to the revolution. The first tranche derives from US diplomatic cables, which show that Washington was not only aware of Carranza's stance regarding ongoing ties with the US, but that Carranza's overtures were temporally prior to key US support actions. Evidence that the US was cognizant of Carranza's order remaining status includes the following 1918 statement by US Ambassador to Mexico, Fletcher: "I am convinced that President Carranza – and that, today, means Mexico – seeks correct rather than intimate relations with the U.S." (quoted in Katz, 1981: 494-5). Despite Carranza's attempts to ensure greater independence for Mexico, the US was aware that this did not amount to a break with its current great power patron.

Mexico maintaining, and even growing, its ties to the US was a key objective of President Wilson. President Wilson wanted "Mexico to turn to the United States for guidance and counselling" (Katz, 1981: 551), with a Mexico that was "responsive, if not completely subservient, to his suggestions" (Katz, 1998: 502). Further evidence that Mexico's ongoing loyalty was a crucial issue for the US were Washington's obsessive fears of a secret alliance between Carranza and Germany, which never eventuated. As WWI progressed, the US saw signs of 'Axis intrigue' everywhere. Such fears reached their zenith with the intercept of the infamous Zimmerman telegram (Gilderhus, 1977: 58). The telegram, emanating from the German Foreign Office, instructed the German Ambassador to Mexico to court a Mexican alliance if the US should enter WWI against Germany (Gilderhus, 1977: 61-2 and 2000: 52-3). The US sought a direct assurance from Carranza that Mexico would stay neutral in such a scenario, which Carranza obliquely gave (Gilderhus, 1977: 61-3). During WWI, one of President Wilson's key goals in relation to the Mexican Revolution was

to prevent losing Mexico to Germany (Gilderhus, 1972: 231). Britain was aware that, if revolutionary Mexico were to defect to Germany, this would be a critical threshold for the US. In trying to persuade the US to support a coup that would topple Carranza during 1918, the UK military agitated that Carranza had already allied with Germany and was plotting attacks against US interests (Katz, 1981: 476-79, 494).

Mexico's attempts to ensure continued working relations with its northerly neighbour meant that the US attempted to shape rather than reverse the revolution. Although the US was deeply unhappy with the direction of the Mexican revolution in terms of its redistributive policies and challenges to US hegemony, Washington voiced its concerns via protest notes, exchanges with the US ambassador to Mexico and joint US-Mexico committees on specific issues – all actions suited to wayward states within its own order. The US did not impose sanctions, arm Carranza's opponents or attempt to install a regime friendlier to US interests (although such counterrevolutionary measures were proposed by New Mexico Senator Albert Bacon Fall) (Gilderhus, 2000: 57). US measures were such that a Texas newspaper commented wryly: "The latest [Secretary of State] Lansing note to Mexico indicates that if Mexico doesn't come to terms quickly our government may put several hundred more typewriters in action. We will simply write Mexico's life out of her" (quoted in Machado and Judge, 1970: 18).

The channels of communication established between the revolutionary regime and the US government meant that the US had a readily available means of voicing its discontent. Upon Carranza's victory against the other revolutionary factions in July 1914, President Wilson set out his directions for the new Mexican leader… "First, the treatment of foreigners, foreign lives, foreign property, foreign rights, and particularly the delicate matter of the financial obligations, the legitimate financial obligations, of the government now suspended. Unless utmost care, fairness and liberality are shown in these matters, the most dangerous complications may arise" (Smith, 1972: 36-7). Carranza responded in turn that foreigners would be safe and that 'legitimate' obligations and contracts would be protected (Smith, 1972: 36-7). The US continued to voice its grievances by pen. After Carranza complained of the ongoing Pershing Expedition's abrogation of Mexican sovereignty, Secretary of State Robert Lansing responded on 20 June 1916:

> SIR: I have read your communication, which was delivered to me on May 22, 1916, under instructions of the Chief Executive of the *de facto* Government of Mexico, on the subject of the presence of American troops in Mexican territory, and I would be wanting in candor if I did not, before making answer to the allegations of fact and the conclusions reached by your Government, express the surprise and regret which have been caused this Government by the discourteous tone and temper of this last communication of the *de facto* Government of Mexico… The Government

> of the United States has viewed with deep concern and increasing disappointment the progress of the revolution in Mexico (US Office of the Historian, 1925: Document 755).

From 1919, US Ambassador to Mexico, Henry P. Fletcher, regularly complained about Mexico's treatment of foreigners (Gilderhus, 2000: 57), while an "almost steady stream of protest notes" outlined US concerns over Mexico's attempts to wrest back control of its economy (Smith, 1972: 43-4). However, when choosing "whether to court Carranza or to safeguard their interests in Mexico by other means" (Gilderhus, 1977: 59), the US opted with the former. That Mexico remained in its extant order after the revolution meant that the US didn't have to resort to counterrevolution to get what it wanted. The US could use the dependencies tying order members together to pressure revolutionary Mexico without having to lift a counterrevolutionary finger. As an order co-member, Mexico's reliance on US arms and finance meant it frequently acquiesced to US demands: "The United States had at its disposal important means of economic pressure by which it hoped to make Mexico more favorably disposed toward its interests without a coup or intervention" (Katz, 1981: 496). The US repeatedly used measures short of counterrevolution – promises of loans, threats, persuasion and influence – to shape the direction of the revolution (Katz, 1981: 475; Machado and Judge, 1970: 13, 17). Such measures are not effective on order leavers, making counterrevolution a more appealing option.

While Mexico's continued relations with the US ensured the survival of the revolutionary regime, it came at a hefty price – the existing order straitjacketed Mexico's revolutionary ambitions. In other words, survival came at the cost of radical change. Winning the toleration of the US while pursuing their redistribution ambitions was an impossible task. While trying to reform the rules of the game, the Mexican Revolution was bound by them. Revolutionaries' attempts at effecting leftist policy changes and improving Mexico' international position were frequently followed by backtracking and conciliation. Carranza's January 1915 efforts to regulate the foreign-dominated petroleum sector were met with State Department threats (Gilderhus, 1977: 17). Carranza promptly watered down his proposal to merely an investigative 'Technical Commission on Petroleum' (Gilderhus, 1977: 17). Subsequent Presidents fared little better in trying to pursue Mexico's revolutionary agenda. President Obregón traded US diplomatic recognition for revolutionary moderation (Knight, 2016: 102). President Plutarco Elías Calles abandoned attempts to retroactively apply Article 27 and its nationalisation and land reform provisions when the US threatened to deny loans and even hinted at military intervention (Gilderhus, 2000: 64; Knight, 2016: 102-3). Although national control of the petroleum sector was a core revolutionary objective, nationalisation did not take place until 1938 (Skirius, 2003: 51; Smith, 1972: ix and 77-8). US attempts to force Mexico to abide by the rules of the "legal-economic order of the industrial credit

nations" were largely successful (Smith, 1972: x-xi). The revolutionary regime survived, but its wings were severely clipped.

The Villista faction

A second tranche of evidence linking revolutionary Mexico's order remaining desires with US quiescence is a comparison of the Carrancista and Villista revolutionary factions. At the outbreak of the revolution, the Villistas, like the Carrancistas were eager to win US support. Francisco "Pancho" Villa – leader of the Villistas – used agents in Washington to cement relations with the US (Gilderhus, 1977: 15, 131; Katz, 1998: 509). Villa's efforts to court US friendship extended beyond just the Wilson administration: he gave interviews to US newspapers, reserved a carriage of his military train for the press, and even signed a Hollywood movie contract (Katz, 1998: 322).

Villa was effusive in his language to the US too, reportedly stating "the last thing I want is war with the United States. I like Americans better than any foreigners; I have many friends in your country and I will not draw the sword against them to please that drunken little beast Huerta" (quoted in Skirius, 2003: 44). In a press interview Villa also praised "… the United States where all men are equal before the law and where any man who is willing to work can make such a living for himself and his family" (quoted in Katz, 1998: 311-12). Villa astutely exempted US citizens in Mexico from coerced loans, property confiscations and exorbitant taxes (Katz, 1998: 313, 328). Villa was also receptive to President Woodrow Wilson's calls for a unity government among the warring factions, in an attempt to secure US sympathies (Gilderhus, 1977: 23; Katz, 1998: 503-4). He also supported Washington's occupation of Veracruz for the purpose of targeting counterrevolutionary leader Huerta. When Carranza criticised the occupation as an infringement on Mexican sovereignty, Villa in turn criticised Carranza (Katz, 1981: 499). Francisco "Villa was the only major Mexican leader who declared that he did not resent the occupation and would not fight the Americans" (Katz, 1998: 325-6). Villa's ally Emiliano Zapata showed similar receptivity to the US's demands, fearing that pursuing an all-out victory against his revolutionary rivals could antagonise the US (Gilderhus, 1977: 29).[92]

Villa's efforts to assure Washington that he sought ongoing friendly relations bore fruit, winning US sympathy (Katz, 1981: 493-4 and 1998: 309). In 1914, Secretary of State William J. Bryan referred to Villa as 'Sir Galahad', writing to Villa's US representative that "we are earnestly desirous

[92] Such overtures towards the US were likely ingenuine. The power of the US was a reality that had to be contended with, and a smooth path for the revolution could only be won with US tolerance. Nevertheless, these overtures towards the US signalled a continuation of US-Mexican civility, rather than a break in relations.

that the most friendly relationships should exist and are greatly pleased and reassured by what you report General Villa as having said" (quoted in Katz, 1998: 499). However, the friendly relations between Villa and the US did not last long. They "deteriorated largely because it was clear to Villa that U.S. policy in practice contradicted Woodrow Wilson's idealistic pronouncements" (Katz, 1998: 505). Villa became increasingly willing to sacrifice US support to be free from US control (Katz, 1998: 508). He also began taxing and seizing US businesses in Mexico from mid-1915 as his financial situation became increasingly dire (Katz, 1998: 508-9).

Deteriorating relations came to a decisive break after Washington granted the Carrancistas *de facto* recognition as the government of Mexico in October 1915 (Katz, 1998: 531). Villa felt betrayed and was convinced of a secret pact between Carranza and the US, even though no evidence was uncovered to this effect (Katz, 1978: 102 and 1998: 530-1). For Villa, the US was now his number one target (Katz, 1998: 531). In a manifesto published on 21 November, 1915, "Villa raised the possibility of an armed conflict with the United States, while he denied that that was his intent" (Katz, 1987: 111). On 16 December, Villa proposed an alliance with several of Carranzas generals, "that would unite all of us against the Yanqui [the Americans]" who "is the natural enemy of our race and of all Latin countries" (quoted in Katz, 1987: 112). In a letter to his ally Zapata written several days later, Villa wrote they "must together start the work of reconstruction and enhancement of Mexico" while also moving against "our eternal enemy", the United States (Katz, 1978: 115). On 10 January, 1917, a group of Villistas seized and executed 17 American miners travelling on a train from El Paso to Chihuahua (Tate, 1975: 47). On 9 March, 1916, Villa attacked the American town of Columbus, New Mexico (Gilderhus, 1972: 214). Seventeen Americans were killed in the raid (Tate, 1975: 51). Speculation emerged in the US that Germany had facilitated Villa's incursion onto US soil and that the German consulate in San Francisco was involved in secretly arming Villa (Gilderhus, 1972: 220; Katz, 1981: 337-9). The Columbus attack precipitated a swift US counterrevolutionary response. General John J. Pershing's Punitive Expedition left the US for Mexico on 15 March in an unsuccessful attempt to capture the Villista culprits (Tate, 1975: 54). Whereas Carranza never broke with the US, Villa did. The US spared the former from counterrevolution, while unleashing it via direct military intervention on the latter.

## Other explanations: ideology

Another explanation for the presence or absence of great power counterrevolution concerns revolutionary ideologies. Arguments to this effect are that revolutionary ideologies that clash with great power ideologies elicit counterrevolution, whereas non-threatening ideologies do not. On the one hand, revolutionary Mexico posed such an ideological challenge to the US. The victorious

Carranza revolutionaries pursued a fundamental transformation of Mexico's socio-economic relations along leftist lines, presiding over "the twentieth century's first great social upheaval" (Selbin, 2009: 23). The Carrancistas declared their commitment to "profound land reform" (Katz, 1996: 21), while once in power the victorious Carranza faction pursued nationalisation provisions as well as the dismantling of large estates and return of appropriated land to peasants (these principles were famously contained in Article 27 of the 1917 Mexican constitution) (Gilderhus, 1977: 17, 54-5, 68; Katz, 1996: 31; Smith, 1972: 75). Article 3 of the 1917 constitution promised free universal education (La Botz, 2016; Library of Congress, n.d.) while Article 123 enshrined rights to labour organisation and collective bargaining as well as "an 8-hour workday, a 6-day workweek, a minimum wage, and equal pay for equal work" (Library of Congress, n.d.). This constitution amounted to one of the most radical of its time anywhere in the world (Knight, 2016: 71, 72-3).

On the other hand, the liberal dimensions of the Mexican Revolution meant that it did not pose such a great ideological challenge to the US. President Wilson was impressed with Carranza's democratic credentials, wanting a parliamentary system and free elections to be the source of political authority in Mexico (Katz, 1981: 551). President Wilson was even sympathetic to some limited land reforms (although he "opposed social upheavals, which might threaten the system of free enterprise") (Katz, 1981: 551). An April 1915 manifesto approved by Carranza sought to emphasise the moderate credentials of the revolution to the Americans – rejecting the confiscation of private property and promising to protect the property of foreigners (Gilderhus, 1977: 20).

On the whole, the liberal-leftist ideological complexion of the Mexican revolution between 1910 and 1920 was acceptable to the US. That the Mexican Revolution did not pose a significant ideological challenge contributed to the absence of US counterrevolution. Further, revolutionary Mexico's order remaining status may have also mitigated any ideological threats posed to the US by the more radical revolutionary elements. Washington could use its leverage and influence over a fellow order member to curb the more worrying leftist policies of the revolutionary government. And it did, for example insisting that grounds for land expropriation were not to be applied retroactively, a demand to which Carranza acquiesced (Machado and Judge, 1970: 8).

## Other explanations: threats to power hierarchies

A different explanation for the absence of counterrevolution concerns revolutionary attempts to alter power relations between states. According to this theory, revolutions that challenge power hierarchies – whether by demanding equality between states or improved status within global

hierarchies – are met with great power counterrevolution. In seeking to alter power distributions, revolutionaries challenge the pre-eminence of the great powers and their ability to meddle in weaker states' affairs. This theory wields limited explanatory power in the case of the Mexican Revolution. The Carrancista revolutionaries wanted to improve Mexico's international standing and weaken the US' hold over Mexico, but yet they did not face US counterrevolution. Attempts to alter power hierarchies are related to, but distinct from, attempts at order exit. The Carrancistas did not attempt to break relations with the US, but did seek to be treated better by the US. Carranza wanted new relations with existing friends, not new relations with new friends.

The revolution sought to reshape Mexico's relations with the powers, transcending the existing hierarchy so that Mexico would be treated as an equal (Gilderhus, 1977: 56-7; Smith, 1972: 19, 20). The revolutionaries bristled at any suggestion they were of lesser rank than the more powerful states, including one such outburst by Carrancista emissary Ignacio Bonillas at the US-Mexico Joint-Commission in 1916 (Smith, 1972: 78-9). The revolutionaries wanted Mexico to improve its status so as to protect Mexico from political intervention and interference by the powers, particularly the US (Smith, 1972: 20). Revolutionary leaders decried various intrusions on their sovereignty (Gilderhus, 1977: 14). Even though both the Veracruz occupation and Pershing Expedition targeted the Carrancistas' enemies, both US interventions were met with hostile pronouncements; the former an attack "on the dignity and independence of Mexico" (Skirius, 2003: 43) and the latter "a violation of the sovereignty of Mexico" (Carranza, 1916).

The order in which the revolutionaries found themselves was a hierarchical system of dominant and exploited states (Katz, 1981: 3-4; Smith, 1972: 23-4). The revolutionaries wanted Mexico to be afforded the same treatment as the more powerful countries in their order. The clearest articulation of the principles of sovereignty, self-determination and the equality of states under international law was the 'Carranza Doctrine', which he sketched in a presidential report in September 1918. According to the Doctrine, "first…all countries were equal and should respect each other's laws, institutions, and sovereignty. Second, no country should in any way interfere with the internal affairs of another. Further…. no individual or company should, on the basis of foreign status, claim a superior position to that of the people of the country in which such foreign interests operated. Nationals and aliens should be equal under the laws of the host nation." (McDonough, 1983: 19-20). In other words, the revolutionaries wanted to remake Mexico not as an extension of US territory open to meddling by the powers, but instead as an independent, sovereign state able to pursue its own course. The Carranza regime also gave form to the Calvo Doctrine in Article 27 of the post-revolution Constitution (Smith, 1972: 73-5). The Calvo Doctrine, developed by Argentine international law expert Carlos Calvo in the late nineteenth

century, espoused equal sovereignty, self-determination and equal treatment under international law (Smith, 1972: 28).

The Carrancistas also wanted to end the economic stranglehold of foreign capital over the Mexican economy (Smith, 1972: 6, 24). 'Revolutionary nationalism' demanded the wresting back of socio-economic control, directing profits to Mexicans instead of foreigners and unshackling Mexico from its dependency on the industrial nations (Gilderhus, 2000: 39 and 1977: 56; Smith, 1972: x). Carranza made recourse to national sovereignty so frequently that US Ambassador to Mexico, Henry Fletcher, advised the Secretary of State against raising the issue of petroleum taxes given that it may lead to Carranza's "refusal to discuss these questions on the usual Mexican ground that it is interference in a purely domestic matter" (Gilderhus, 1977: 69).

Carranza's desire to improve Mexico's power position vis-à-vis the US was not just bluster. He pursued these objectives in practice. He attempted to regulate and tax the petroleum industry and bestowed the ownership of subsoil resources on the nation, as distinct from surface land tenure (Gilderhus, 1977: 17, 54-5, 68; Smith, 1972: 75). Such revolutionary demands were far from modest: "The Mexican Revolution was the first important challenge to the world order of the industrial-creditor, and capitalistic, nations made by an underdeveloped nation trying to assert control over its economy and reform its internal system" (Smith 1972: x). Carranza's pursuit of such nationalistic policies certainly grated with the US. His announcement of an increase in the royalties to be paid by non-Mexican oil firms in February 1918 led to a spike in tensions (Katz, 1981: 479; Machado and Judge, 1970: 1-2). Events similarly came to a head in 1919 – the year of the "near-intervention crisis" (Machado and Judge, 1970: 1). Despite rising US discontent, this was not translated into counterrevolution. Carranza's attempts to lessen international hierarchies were not enough to trigger counterrevolution (although they came close).

Revolutionary Mexico's order remaining status provides a more compelling explanation of the absence of US counterrevolution. Order exit was absent, but challenges to international power hierarchies were certainly present; "Carranza's desire to act independently of the United States..[was] perhaps the most radical dimension of the Constitutionalist [Carrancista] ascendancy" (Gilderhus, 1977: xii). Carranza and his Constitutionalist colleagues "did not envisage an isolationist policy for the country. As part of this invigorated nationalism they wanted Mexico to play an influential role in the international affairs of the hemisphere and to become a leader among the Latin American nations" (Smith, 1972: 79). Their "quest for development, economic independence, and equality of treatment in international relations" (Smith, 1972: 80) were demands they felt their current order could be made to accommodate. The Mexican Revolutionaries

therefore wanted to remain in the US's ordering 'club', while changing their position within it. That Mexico's revolutionary leadership sought to shift their relationship of inferiority with the US is not evidence of an extra-order challenge: "Significant changes had taken place in Mexico and in Mexican relations with the developed, capitalistic nations. Yet the country still operated within the international order led by the United States of America" (Smith, 1972: ix). The Carrancistas were attempting to improve Mexico's position within a deeply unequal order.

A concluding caveat is in order. An examination of the role of order exit, ideology and power challenges in explaining the absence of US counterrevolution does not imply that other factors were irrelevant. Indeed, multiple factors contributed to US tolerance of the Mexican Revolution. One such crucial factor is that the Mexican Revolution coincided with WWI. US anticipation of becoming embroiled in WWI meant that Washington wanted to avoid distractions in Mexico (Gilderhus, 1972: 231: Katz, 1981: 493, 502). Washington "was resigned to the fact that Carranza would remain in power until the end of the war" (Katz, 1981: 493), with Ambassador Fletcher claiming success in his duty "to keep Mexico quiet" (quoted Katz, 1981: 493). Although after the war ended the Wilson administration still avoided counterrevolution, it did certainly dedicate more energy to events unfolding in Mexico (Machado and Judge, 1970: 2). Had WWI not been unfolding at the same time, it is likely that the US would have more seriously considered counterrevolutionary measures, at the very least diplomatic pressure and, perhaps, sanctions. Intriguingly, this is the opposite dynamic to that detected in the Table 6 statistical analyses: great power counterrevolution was positively correlated with great power war. This, however, does not rule out great power wars reducing the prospects of counterrevolution in individual instances, such as the Mexican Revolution.

## Conclusions

Why does order exit predict great power counterrevolution? An examination of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) shows a particular mechanism at play. Revolutions that continue their order membership allow the relevant great power to use their leverage to shape and moderate the revolution. In other words, order membership is a means by which other revolutionary challenges (ideological and challenging power hierarchies) can be tempered. Great power allies have a certain type of leverage over revolutionary states that great power enemies lack. Thick webs of economic, strategic and diplomatic ties are means by which the great power ally can pressure the revolutionaries to abandon their more radical ideological and power redistribution ambitions via methods that fall short of engaging in counterrevolution. In contrast, order exiting revolutions leave their former great power allies limited room to manoeuvre beyond resorting to

counterrevolution. The price of avoiding counterrevolution for the revolutionaries, however, is high. Survival of the revolution comes at the cost of its moderation.

A crucial dynamic in understanding the US response to the Mexican Revolution is the distinction between challenges intrinsic to an international order, and challenges extrinsic to an international order. Revolutions that seek to challenge their existing international order by leaving it and mounting an attack from outside are frequent victims of counterrevolution. In contrast, revolutions that seek to alter their order but to do so while remaining inside it, are often tolerated, and sometimes even supported. The Mexican revolutionaries sought to keep Mexico in its existing order after seizing power. Although they had quite significant re-ordering ambitions, they worked to achieve these from within their existing order, rather from without.

Revolutionary Mexico's signalling that it intended to stay in the US-dominated order conditioned the US response to the revolution in two ways. First, it was perceived as less threatening and destabilising than if the revolutionaries had defected from their existing order. The revolution was seen as amenable to influence via diplomacy, persuasion and incentives – measures better suited to members of their own order. Second, the US had more levers to influence the Mexican Revolution given that it remained in their order. There are multiple channels to be exhausted and pressures to be exerted before counterrevolution takes place. This is not the case for revolutions that jump ship, with counterrevolution being the first and final option. The US was able to trade their toleration of the revolution for moderation of the revolutionaries' agenda. That the revolutionaries needed US toleration as an order-remaining revolution gave the US significant leverage.

# Chapter 6: The Hungarian Revolution and Soviet Counterrevolution, 1956

The previous chapter analysed the Mexican Revolution as a case in which both order exit and great power counterrevolution were absent. This chapter is dedicated to an instance of the reverse scenario: the presence of both order exit and great power counterrevolution. The purpose of the Hungarian Revolution (1956) case study is to understand if and how these attempts at order exit are related to great power counterrevolution.[93] Is the relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution causal (and not simply correlative)? And if yes, what do the pathways linking order exit and great power counterrevolution look like in practice? Whereas the preceding Mexican case focused on the US as the relevant great power actor, the Hungarian Revolution (1956) has been chosen as a case through which to examine Soviet reactions.

Analysis of the Hungarian Revolution provides strong support for the existence of a causal relationship between order exit and Soviet counterrevolution. There are two devices which show this causal relationship. The first is the timing of Hungary's attempts at order exit in relation to Moscow's counterrevolution. The second device is a cross-case comparison between the Hungarian Revolution (1956) and Polish October (1956). These two episodes, which unfolded simultaneously, were remarkably similar except that the Hungarian Revolution was met with Soviet counterrevolution while Polish October was not. Crucially, revolutionary Poland chose to remain within Soviet orbit, whereas Hungary did not. These two devices not only show the causal relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution, but point to the mechanisms linking these two variables. The Soviet Union feared Hungary's order exit as it would strengthen great power rivals at its own expense. The Soviet Union also feared that the exit of Hungary would imperil the very survival of its order as other countries may follow suit, posing an existential threat to the USSR. In addition to order exit, two other explanations of Soviet counterrevolution against Hungary are considered. These are the ideological challenge Hungary posed to the USSR, as well as Hungary's attempt to reduce international power hierarchies by challenging the Soviet Union's position at the apex. Hungary's ideological challenge to the USSR is shown to be an important factor in Soviet counterrevolution, whereas Hungary's challenge to power hierarchies is not.

The following analysis of the Hungarian Revolution draws on both primary and secondary materials. The 'Malin notes', made available in 1995, are a particularly useful primary source in

[93] The timeframe under analysis is the year 1956. This is the year in which the revolution unfolded, and was crushed.

studying Soviet decision-making as the revolution was unfolding in October and November 1956 (Kramer, 1998: 166). Vladimir Malin was head of the General Department of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, as well as a meeting scribe between 1954 and 1965. His famously cryptic notes provide crucial glimpses into Soviet Presidium machinations. The Malin notes, along with other English translations of key archival sources, are contained in Békés, et al.'s (2002) compendium. These archival sources include transcripts of conversations and letters in addition to meeting minutes. This chapter also draws on the Foreign Relations of the United States diplomatic archive.

This chapter proceeds in five parts. The first section gives a brief overview of the events of the Hungarian Revolution. The second section traces the relationship between order exit and great power counterrevolution. The third and fourth sections examine alternative explanations of Soviet counterrevolution: ideology and threats to power hierarchies. The fifth section summarises the findings and arguments made in this chapter.

## A brief overview of the Hungarian Revolution

The antecedents of the Hungarian Revolution can be traced to (at least) World War II. Hungary initially allied with the Axis powers. When Hungary tried to switch sides, Germany invaded and occupied Hungary. The USSR drove Germany out of Hungary in 1944 and deployed its own forces there (Byrne, 2006: 372). Although initially a democratic republic, communists gradually took control of government, cementing their position via tightly controlled elections in 1949 (Byrne, 2006: 372; Joes, 2007: 42). Communist Party leader Mátyás Rákosi oversaw the implementation of Stalinist rule, a command economy, and political repression (Byrne, 2006: 373).

Economic crisis spurred growing dissatisfaction with the regime (Byrne, 2006: 373). It is against this backdrop that reformist communist party member Imre Nagy was appointed Prime Minister in 1953. He began steering Hungary in a new direction (the 'New Course'), loosening controls on the economy and easing repression (Byrne, 2006: 373; Granville, 2006: 419). The USSR and Rákosi's hardline Hungarian communist party faction became increasingly nervous at Nagy's political and economic reforms, forcing him to resign in 1955 (Byrne, 2006: 373; Granville, 2006: 419). This schism in the Communist Party reflected competing visions for the future of Hungary: the Soviet-style communist system of Rákosi, versus the open system advocated by Nagy (Byrne, 2006: 377-8). While the hardliner communist party elements moved to reassert control of government, Nagy tried to keep Hungary on its reformist course (Byrne, 2006: 373). Regime opponents began to coalesce around Nagy, including not just communist party members, but journalists and intellectuals too (Byrne, 2006: 373). Simmering grievances amongst the opposition

concerned the communist dictatorship, political repression, the economic situation, and the overbearing power of the USSR (Kovrig, 1999: 227).

Growing discontent erupted into peaceful mass demonstrations on 23 October, 1956 (Békés, 2022: 107; Byrne, 2006: 370; Joes, 2007: 43). The student-led protests drew hundreds of thousands of people from across the spectrum of Hungarian society (Békés et al., 2002a: xxxvii; Byrne, 2006: 372-4; Kovrig, 1999: 227). The Hungarian security service open fired on protesting crowds, with demonstrations turning violent by the evening of 23 October (Békés, 2022: 107; Byrne, 2006: 374; Joes, 2007: 43). Street-fighting spread across the country and rebels occupied factories and local government institutions (Byrne, 2006: 375). There were also reports of Communists being lynched (Byrne, 2006: 375). The targets of the revolutionaries were the Hungarian Communist regime and its Soviet backers. Evidence of the targets of the revolutionaries include their sites of protest, which included the Hungarian parliament and the toppling of a statue of Stalin (Byrne, 2006: 374). Chants of the 23 October demonstrators included "Rákosi into the Danube; Imre Nagy into the parliament" (Byrne, 2006: 374). The two main demands of the revolutionaries were the institution of a multiparty system and the withdrawal of all Soviet forces from Hungary (Byrne, 2006: 375). The demands of the revolutionaries were outlined in the '16 Points', developed by students gathered at Budapest Technical University on 22 October (Békés, 2022: 107).

When the demonstrations broke out on 23 October, the incumbent regime reached out to the USSR for help (Byrne, 2006: 374). Soviet tanks entered Budapest the next day on 24 October 1956 (Byrne, 2006: 371, 374). In the face of ongoing rebellion, spreading protests and Hungarian military defections, both the government and the Kremlin acquiesced to key revolutionary demands (Békés et al., 2002b: 198, 204). The initial wave of resistance between 23 and 28 October was nearly successful: the regime declared a ceasefire, reinstated Nagy as Prime Minister, dissolved the security apparatus, recognised previously outlawed grass roots organisations, abolished the one-party system and started negotiations for Soviet troop withdrawal (Békés, 2022: 115; Byrne, 2006: 371, 375). Accordingly, Soviet troops withdrew from Budapest on 30 and 31 October (Byrne, 2006: 371). On 1 November, Nagy announced Hungary's neutral status and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact (Békés, 2022: 115-16; Kramer, 1998: 207).

These victories were short-lived. The USSR suddenly abandoned its previous tolerance of these transformations and re-entered Hungary on 4 November without Hungarian approval (Byrne, 2006: 371). In a matter of days, the Kremlin had ousted Nagy's government and installed communist party figure János Kádár in its place. Kádár introduced emergency laws, presided over mass arrests, and executed people who resisted returning to work (Byrne, 2006: 376). Two-

hundred and twenty-nine people were hanged for their role in the uprising, and 22,000 were jailed (Byrne, 2006: 376). Nagy and his advisers were subjected to a show trial and shot in 1958 (Byrne, 2006: 376). Kádár had effectively returned Hungary to its Stalinist course, ending the revolution.

## Order exit and great power counterrevolution

Why did the Soviet Union intervene to crush the Hungarian Revolution? According to the order exit theory developed in this dissertation, a crucial factor was revolutionary Hungary's attempt to extricate itself from Soviet orbit. The culmination of this attempt was Nagy's 1 November announcement that Hungary had withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact in favour of neutrality, while at the same time seeking military aid from NATO and the UN (Byrne, 2006: 375; Kramer, 1998: 207). Unilaterally defecting from a security alliance is a definitive act of order exit; one that was "unprecedented in the history of the Soviet bloc" (Békés, 2022: 116).

Two tranches of evidence are marshalled in support of the order exit thesis below. First, the timing of Hungary's attempted order exit in relation to the Soviet counterrevolution. Of particular interest is the initial Soviet acceptance of the revolution on 30 October, and the subsequent about-face the next day. What happened in this short window of time to change the Kremlin's mind? The second tranche of evidence is derived from a comparative analysis of the Hungarian Revolution and events unfolding contemporaneously in Poland. Poland was undergoing a remarkably similar transformation at the same time as Hungary, however it was supported, not crushed, by Moscow. A crucial difference between these two revolutionary episodes is that unlike Nagy, the Polish revolutionary leader Gomułka never attempted to exit the Soviet camp.

Before delving into these two tranches of evidence, a caveat is in order. It is not my intention to argue that order membership was the *only* factor driving Moscow's divergent responses to Poland and Hungary. Myriad factors coalesce in specific explanatory configurations to drive causal processes. Rather than arguing that order exit was the only factor, I argue that it was an extremely important one. Crucially, when examining the three independent variables of this thesis: order exit, ideological challenge and power distribution challenge, it is order exit that takes causal pride of place.[94]

[94] Beyond the three variables being examined, other factors put forward as driving Moscow's response include fears of creating a crisis in Eastern Europe with two sites of intervention; the different histories of the two countries; the different personalities comprising the communist leadership in Hungary and Poland; the relative abilities of the Polish and Hungarian armies to crush the uprisings; fears of spillover; and the dynamics of the post-Stalin power struggles in Moscow (Bromke, 1958: 57; Granville, 2002: 656-7, 687; Kramer, 1998: 172, 183, 185-6, 188-9, 198).

The timing of order exit and the Kremlin's counterrevolution

The Soviet Union intervened militarily in Hungary not just once, but twice in a matter of weeks. The first intervention of 23 and 24 October was much smaller in scale, and was at the invitation of the Hungarian leadership (Granville, 2002: 668; Kramer, 1998: 184). Soviet tanks, artillery and troops were deployed swiftly to Budapest and other key cities, with instructions to fire only in self-defence (Békés, 2022: 127; Kramer, 1998: 185). Members of the Hungarian leadership requested a Soviet withdrawal on 28 October, and on 30 October the Soviet Presidium eschewed an escalation in military presence, instead agreeing on policies of negotiation and troop disengagement (Kramer, 1998: 186-7).

The very next day, on 31 October, the Soviet leadership made a dramatic change in course. The "Presidium unanimously approved the full-scale use of military force" (Kramer, 1998: 190; see also Granville, 2002: 686). A fresh wave of Soviet military personnel began entering Hungary (Békés, 2022: 115-16). While of course myriad factors contributed to this sudden about face, the role of Hungary's attempt at order extraction in the latter weeks of October was significant.

Hungary's trajectory towards order exit was driven by both the Hungarian leadership and the population more broadly. Nagy's desires for Hungarian neutrality had been cultivated for some time. Nagy had raised the idea as early as 1955 (Kramer, 1998: 189-90). In January 1956, he shared a treatise with colleagues outlining his support for the foundational principles of the non-aligned movement and belief that Hungary should pursue such a course (Békés, 2006: 481 and 2022: 113). At this stage, however, neutrality was envisaged by Nagy as being gradually and consensually achieved via changes in the world political context (rather than via abrupt unilateralism) (Békés, 2006: 481 and 2022: 113).

At the societal level, the idea that Hungary should pursue a type of neutrality similar to Yugoslavia's was circulating amongst intellectuals as early as 1955 (Békés, 2006: 481). Public agitation for Hungarian neutrality emerged during student demonstrations in Miskolc and Sopron on 22 October – the eve of the revolution (Békés, 2022: 166 n.28). Such demands were given renewed impetus with the first Soviet intervention of 23-24 October (Békés, 2022: 113, 127, 137). On 25 October, thousands of protesters gathered in front of the US Legation asking for US backing and demanding the Soviets leave (US Office of the Historian, 1990c: Document 108). Some Hungarians saw the uprising as an opportunity for the West to pull Hungary into its camp (Békés, 2022: 108). The newly established workers' councils, revolutionary committees and political parties, however, were more circumspect (Békés, 2022: 108). They did not court US aid for fear of antagonising Moscow, instead preferring Hungary to pursue non-alignment (Békés, 2022: 108). By

the last few days of October, Hungarian neutrality and abandonment of the Warsaw Pact were core popular demands (Békés, 2022: 110, 116). Pressure was mounting on newly reinstated Nagy to take action (Békés, 2022: 116).

During a 30 October speech, one of Nagy's inner circle, Bela Kovacs, demanded "a neutral Hungary" and the severing of "ties to military blocs" (Kramer, 1998: 189). Also on 30 October, Nagy himself supported Hungary's exit from the Pact, and raised the issue of a complete Soviet troop withdrawal with Russian envoys Anastas Mikoyan and Mihail Suslov (Kramer, 1998: 189). Although this was not the first time Nagy and Kovacs had raised the idea of leaving the Pact, Nagy's "decision to raise the issue with Mikoyan and Suslov at this delicate stage must have come as a jolt in Moscow" (Kramer, 1998: 190).

On 31 October, a major revolutionary council based in Győr added its voice to calls for Hungarian neutrality and departure from the Pact (Békés, 2022: 117). Realising the strength of mounting popular demands, Nagy stated during a speech on the afternoon of 31 October: "Hungary has now the chance to leave this alliance on its own, without the general breaking up of the Warsaw Treaty, and we will firmly stand by this position of ours" (quoted in Békés, 2022: 118). Nagy's formal announcement of Hungarian neutrality and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact came the next day, on 1 November. He simultaneously requested military support from NATO and the UN, to no avail (Byrne, 2006: 375; Kramer, 1998: 207).

Nagy maintained his stance on neutrality even as Soviet counterrevolutionary preparations were clearly underway. Between 1 and 3 November Nagy tried in vain to prevent military intervention by attempting to open negotiations with the Soviets and involving the UN (Békés, 2022: 122). At the same time, he dug in on the matter of Hungary's neutrality to Russian ambassador Yuri Andropov (Békés, 2022: 122). On both 2 and 3 November, Nagy unsuccessfully tried to facilitate recognition of Hungary's neutrality at the UN (Békés, 2022: 123-4). On 2 November, Moscow arranged Nagy's replacement: János Kádár. Moscow noted that Kádár, a senior member of the Hungarian communist party, had seemed hesitant on the question of Hungary's neutrality during party discussions (as observed by Soviet Ambassador Andropov) (Békés et al., 2002: 213). After four days of preparation, the Soviet military intervention named Operation Whirlwind, began on 4 November 1956. The outcome was the decimation of the uprising, the installation of a pro-Soviet government, and a series of purges, executions and arrests (Kramer, 1998: 208, 210-11).

Some scholars are skeptical of the role of the Warsaw Pact exit in stoking full-scale intervention, given that Nagy's announcement of Warsaw Pact exit (1 November) occurred after the Soviet decision to intervene had been taken (31 October) (see for example Granville, 2002: 681). As

shown above, however, there were a series of signals that Hungarian withdrawal from the Pact was imminent prior to 1 November. The broader population, members of government and Nagy himself gave multiple indications of their order exit desires in the days leading up to the Soviet decision to intervene. Not only were there indications of order exit desires, there is evidence that the Soviet leadership was aware of these desires. On 30 October, Nagy raised the possibility of Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact with Soviet envoys Mikoyan and Suslov, who then swiftly reported their conversation with Nagy to Moscow (Kramer, 1998: 189). Crucially, Mikoyan and Suslov's reportage of Nagy's plans to Moscow occurred in the window between the Presidium's decision not to intervene militarily, and their subsequent volte-face on 31 October.

Although the Soviet decision to militarily crush the revolution took place on 31 October, Hungary's formal withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and declaration of neutrality the following day are not necessarily without consequence. There were four days of logistical and political preparations for the intervention over the period between 31 October and 3 November. Had events in Hungary substantially changed, the Soviet Presidium could have halted their plans to intervene. Instead, Nagy's announcement on 1 November likely cemented Moscow's resolve to launch the counterrevolution.

The Malin notes documenting the Presidium meetings throughout the Hungarian Revolution indicate that, although the Soviet Union was willing to compromise on some revolutionary demands, there were two red lines: i) maintenance of communism in Hungary, and ii) Hungary's ongoing membership in the Soviet bloc (Békés, 2022: 130). The Presidium "unanimously agreed that Hungary's separation from the Socialist bloc was simply unimaginable and should be prevented at all costs" (Békés, 2022: 130). Emblematic of this sentiment, on 1 November Soviet envoy to Hungary, Mikoyan, was reported as saying to the Presidium: "We simply cannot let Hungary be removed from our camp" (Békés, 2022: 130).[95] An analysis of the timing and decision-making of Soviet officials lends support to the view that Hungarian attempts at order exit conditioned Moscow's armed, counterrevolutionary response:

> So the Hungarian leadership had fallen into a trap; intent on averting Soviet intervention, they had accepted one of the most important and radical demands of society, but this measure sufficed in itself for the Moscow leaders to decide in favor of an armed solution in order to preserve the unity of the Soviet bloc (Békés, 2022: 117).

[95] Interestingly, while aligning with the Presidium view that Hungary's exit from the Soviet camp was not an option, Mikoyan was alone in wanting to delay intervention to see how events unfolded (Békés, 2022: 130; Kramer, 1998: 199).

Another important piece of the temporal puzzle concerns simultaneous events unfolding on a different continent, but nonetheless of great import for Moscow. The timing of the Soviet U-turn from toleration of the Hungarian revolution to counterrevolution coincided with the Suez crisis. The Suez Crisis began with Israel's invasion of Egypt on 29 October, 1956 (Fry, 1989: 2; Kecskes, 2001: 56). On 31 October, the UK and France began air raids and instituted a naval blockade against Egypt – a precursor to their invasion on 6 November (Fry, 1989: 2; Kecskes, 2001: 54; Kramer, 1998: 191). Such attacks on their Egyptian ally were alarming to the Soviet leadership (Kramer, 1998: 191). Soviet ties with Egypt had already been affected with the withdrawal of Soviet military advisers at the first stage of the Anglo-French intervention (Kecskes, 2001: 55).

That both the Anglo-French attacks on Egypt and the Soviet decision to crush the revolution in Hungary occurred on the same day – 31 October 1956 – is unlikely to be a coincidence. The Malin notes show that during the crucial 31 October presidium meeting which authorised the counterrevolution, Khrushchev voiced concerns about 'losing' not just Egypt but also Hungary if they did not intervene.[96] Malin's minutes record the following statement by Khrushchev:

> If we withdrew from Hungary, it would encourage the American, English, and French imperialists. They would attribute it to our weakness and would swing into attack. We would demonstrate our weakness [with the withdrawal]. In that case our Party would not understand us. Besides Egypt, we would give them Hungary as well (quoted in Kecskes, 2001: 54).

This statement indicates that fears of losing order members to the Western camp fed into the counterrevolution decision-making process (Byrne, 2006: 375). It also provides some clues as to mechanisms linking order exit and counterrevolution. Three reasons why order exit can lead to counterrevolution were theorised in Chapter 3. First, order exit poses a threat to the relevant great power by enabling greater revolutionary transformation. Second, order exit can strengthen great power rivals. Third, order exit poses existential threats to the order leader, as an order needs members to survive. Khrushchev's statement indicates the operation of the second logic: should Hungary leave, Moscow feared that the rival Western bloc would benefit at its expense. There are also hints of the operation of the third logic in Krushchev's statement. Fears of Hungary leaving its alliance with the Soviets were compounded by fears of 'losing' Egypt. The mass exodus of order members threatens the very survival of the order. Further evidence of the operation of this logic are Soviet fears of the Hungarian crisis spreading to other Warsaw Pact countries, "causing the whole communist bloc to unravel" (Kramer, 1998: 192). The Soviets saw contemporaneous unrest

[96] Beyond fears of losing multiple order members, the Suez Crisis provided Moscow with another reason to intervene in Hungary: world attention would be focused on the Middle East rather than Europe, lessening chances of international opprobrium (Byrne, 2006: 375; Kecskes, 2001: 56).

in Romania, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and even the USSR as indications of possible contagion (Kramer, 1998: 189, 192-8). The Suez Crisis and fears of order exit spread both played into the Soviet decision to intervene in Hungary:

> Not only were the Suez Crisis and the fears of a spillover extremely important in their own right; they also magnified the importance of Hungary's status in the Warsaw Pact. The prospect of an 'imperialist' victory in the Middle East and of growing ferment within the bloc made it all the more important to keep Hungary within the Soviet camp… (Kramer, 1998: 189).

Comparison with 'Polish October'

'Polish October' in 1956 provides a useful point of comparison with the events unfolding in Hungary. Although "[t]here exists little doubt that the turn of events in Poland was not to the liking of the Kremlin", the USSR did not intervene to suppress the revolt (Bromke, 1958: 56-7). The lack of a Soviet counterrevolutionary response in Poland, in contradistinction to Hungary, has puzzled scholars (Granville, 2002: 656). The varied Soviet response is all the more surprising since the two uprisings shared multiple similarities. Both involved popular mobilisations against Stalinist regimes with strong Soviet backing. The two episodes unfolded contemporaneously, with activity peaking in October-November 1956. Revolutionary methods were similar in both contexts, with mass protests being accompanied by some violence (Granville, 2002: 660). Popular regime opposition coalesced around two popular leaders: Imre Nagy in Hungary and Władysław Gomułka in Poland. Both figures were reformist Communist Party figures who had been maligned by their parties, facing expulsion and jailing respectively. Revolutionaries in both Poland and Hungary had liberalisation demands. In Hungary, demands centred on multipartyism and democracy (Byrne, 2006: 375; Kramer, 1998: 182). In Poland, there were calls for "free elections for a new government" (Kramer, 1998: 168). In both cases, these liberalisation demands were contained within the bounds of socialism, with protesters wanting to shift from Stalinist dictatorship to democratic socialism (United Nations, 1957: 127-8). Finally, both the Polish and Hungarian revolutionaries were vehemently opposed to Soviet influence in their countries' affairs. Like the Hungarians, the Poles demanded more just and equal relations with the USSR and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from their soil (Byrne, 2006: 375; Kramer, 1998: 182; United Nations, 1957: 127).[97]

A crucial difference between these two episodes is that the Hungarian uprising was brutally crushed by Soviet military intervention, whereas the Polish uprising was not. Hungarian

[97] Some of these parallels are not mere coincidence. Demands for Nagy to be reinstated as Prime Minister of Hungary were inspired by Gomułka's ascendency in Poland (Granville, 2002: 665). Hungarian protester chants included: "Poland shows us the way, let's follow the Hungarian way!" (Granville, 2002: 666).

revolutionary leader Imre Nagy was captured and later executed; while 2,502 Hungarians were killed (Kramer, 1998: 210-11 fn. 187). Any hope of revolutionary change was extinguished, with Hungary locked in an even more brutal form of Stalinism than it had known previously. In contrast, Polish revolutionary leader Gomułka was allowed to govern Poland, some (but not all) elements of his liberalising revolutionary agenda were implemented, and the USSR withdrew some of its forces while promising Poland greater equality in their relations. What accounts for Moscow's vastly different responses to the twin uprisings of 1956?

This question has occupied multiple historians across decades. New sources were released from the Russian government archives during the 1990s, shedding more light on the events of 1956 (Kramer, 1998: 166, 183). These archival sources, despite adding greater detail and nuance to debates, have still not completely settled them (Granville, 2002: 657, 686). A definitive reason for Soviet intervention in Hungary can still not be gleaned from those archives that have been released (Keksces, 2001: 55). Different theories notwithstanding, from the available material a compelling case can be made for Hungary's attempt at order exit influencing Soviet counterrevolution, while Poland's continuity in the Soviet orbit elicited the inverse reaction.

An important difference between the Hungarian and Polish uprisings was that Hungary attempted to leave the Soviet-led order while Poland was clear from the outset that it would remain a loyal member of the Warsaw Pact. Events in Poland initially took a similar course to those in Hungary. Stalinist and more liberal factions of the Communist Party vied to control the future direction of the country (Bromke, 1958: 53). This struggle was reflected in the streets with growing public discontent with Stalinist rule, exploding in the Poznań Riots on 28 June 1956 (Békés, 2022: 105). Public support for Gomułka and his liberalising vision of Poland's future spread (Békés, 2022: 105; Granville, 2002: 676). Gomułka and his liberalisation agenda prevailed: he was elected First Secretary on 21 October 1956 amidst widespread rallies and protests in his support (Bromke, 1958: 55; Granville, 2002: 675, 678; Machcewicz, 1999: 99; Pienkos, 2006: 372). Hundreds and thousands of people took to the streets in Warsaw alone (Bromke, 1958: 51, 54-5). Gomułka ended the hated collectivization programme, continued rapprochement with the church, and eased restrictions on civil and political liberties (Bromke, 2013: 126, 128, 131; Pienkos, 2006: 373-4). Self-governing factory workers' councils were permitted by Gomułka, allowing them to continue their operations after they had spontaneously sprung up across Poland during the unrest (Bromke, 2013: 132). Nearly 85% of collective farming arrangements were dissolved, and private businesses grew by 40% in the cities between 1956 and 1957 (Bromke, 2013: 131-2).

At no point during these tumultuous events did the new regime in Poland indicate that it intended to leave Soviet orbit. To the contrary, Gomułka made multiple assurances to Moscow that Poland would remain within the Warsaw Pact throughout October and November 1956 (Granville, 2002: 677). At the peak of the crisis on 19-20 October, with Soviet forces en route to Warsaw, Gomułka told an anxious, Khrushchev-led delegation of Soviet officials that he intended to keep Poland in the Warsaw Pact (Békés, 2022: 104-5; Kramer, 1998: 169-70; Pienkos, 2006: 372). Fears of Poland "turning toward the West against the Soviet Union" were a source of Soviet apprehension amongst the delegates (Kramer, 1998: 170).

In the days after the 19-20 October meeting Gomułka again reassured Khrushchev that Poland would continue its membership in the Warsaw Pact and its strong ties with Moscow (Békés, 2022: 133; Kramer, 1998: 172-3). Gomułka's 23 October open letter confirmed the new government's commitment to the Soviet camp: "At the Eighth Plenum we told the entire Party and the nation that by building Poland we shall strengthen the relations of friendship and brotherhood between Poland and all the countries of socialism, and in particular with our great neighbour the Soviet Union" (quoted in Skardon, 2010: 316). In a rally speech on 24 October Gomułka criticised those who wanted to veer outside the Warsaw Pact, instead advocating for strengthened politico-military relations with the Soviet Union (Kramer, 1998: 173). These public pronouncements "and his follow-up discussions with Khrushchev further convinced the Soviet leader that Poland would remain a loyal member of the 'socialist commonwealth' and Warsaw Pact" (Kramer, 1998: 174).

Gomułka's assurances assuaged Moscow's concerns, with the military option being shelved (Békés, 2022: 132-3). Khrushchev was very much aware and approving of Poland's order remaining status. In his memoirs, Khrushchev wrote of Gomułka: "Here was a man who had come to power on the crest of an anti-Soviet wave, yet who could now speak forcefully about the need to preserve Poland's friendly relations with the Soviet Union and the Soviet Communist Party" (quoted in Granville, 2002: 676). Even Washington was pessimistic about the revolution prefiguring a change in Poland's order membership status. The US Embassy in Warsaw wrote to the Department of State on 6 November, 1956: "… the Gomułka regime reiterates again and again its membership in the Warsaw Pact… and within the past weeks has repeatedly and forcefully gone on record as favoring the Soviet alliance, Polish-Soviet friendship. Poland voted with the USSR on the Hungarian issue…" (US Office of the Historian, 1990a: Document 173). US government assessments at the time evince a belief that Poland's continued status as a Warsaw Pact member was critical in conditioning the Soviet response. The US Operations Coordinating Board wrote on 8 May, 1957: "by remaining in the Warsaw Pact and the Communist camp, and by restraining thus

far the Polish population from revolutionary uprisings, the Gomułka regime has been able to avoid the fate of Hungary" (US Office of the Historian, 1990b: Document 250).

The multiple assurances given by Gomułka to the Soviets are in stark contrast to the demands of the Hungarian population and leadership. Already with the first deployment of Soviet forces to Budapest on 23 and 24 October, Moscow saw Hungary and Poland as quite different. For the Soviet Presidium, Hungary was "no comparison with Poland", judging instead that "Nagy is in fact turning against us" (quoted in Kramer, 1998: 174). Subsequent statements by Nagy indicating his aspirations for a neutral Hungary are in marked contrast to Gomułka's reassurances of Polish loyalty. The presence of order exit in the Hungarian case, and the absence of order exit in the Polish case, were highly influential in conditioning the varied Soviet responses.

## Other explanations: ideology

Another explanation as to why the Soviet Union crushed the Hungarian Revolution concerns ideology. Arguments to this effect see Hungary's attempts to throw off Stalinist rule as triggering a swift backlash from Moscow. According to this view, it was the revolutionaries' attempt to change Hungary's domestic political system that was the most important factor conditioning the Soviet response (rather than the revolutionary foreign policy of non-alignment). There is some evidence to support this view, which is elaborated upon below. In addition to the dominant role of order exit, the ideology of the Hungarian Revolution played a part in Soviet counterrevolution.

So, first of all, what was the ideological basis of the Hungarian Revolution that posed such a significant challenge to Moscow? Most revolutionary demands were for political liberalisation, but contained within the bounds of socialism.[98] Consensus demands amongst revolutionary organisations included the removal of the Soviet military presence, the dismantling of the security police, amnesties for revolutionaries, and the establishment of a multiparty system (Békés et al., 2002b: 200-1). In contrast to these political liberalisation demands, there were few calls to radically alter the economic system. For example, although the Workers' Council wanted the introduction of some private enterprise and property rights, this was to be within the overarching framework of a socialist economy (Békés et al., 2002b: 201). In a similar vein, protesters professed their uprising to be democratic, nationalist *and* socialist in their interactions with Soviet troops stationed in Budapest (Békés et al., 2002b: 196). Even the more radical '16 demands' formulated by Budapest

[98] As formulated by Király (1999: xiii-xiv): "during the revolution of 1956, no stated program nor serious person or group demanded the instant abolition of socialism." Note that Békés (2022: 104) presents a different view, arguing that if it had not been for Soviet intervention, the establishment of a 'Western-type parliamentary democracy' was likely immanent.

students on 22 October 1956 did not reject communism outright. While demanding multiparty elections, freedom of speech and freedom of the press, they asked only that the current economic system be a topic of debate (Békés, 2022: 107; United Nations, 1957: 127-8). Point 7 of the 16 demands stated: "Our whole economic system based on planned economy should be re-examined with an eye to Hungarian conditions and to the vital interests of the Hungarian people" (United Nations, 1957: 127).

At the leadership level, Nagy remained a committed socialist his whole life (albeit one that was opposed to Stalinism) (Rainer, 1997: 273-5). At the height of revolutionary events in Hungary, Nagy still used the traditional Communist opening in his speeches: "Toilers of Hungary! Workers, peasants, and professionals!" (quoted in Rainer, 2009: 119). He also underscored his government's commitment to existing nationalization and land reform policies (Békés et al., 2002b: 215). Rather than abandon socialism altogether, Nagy wanted Hungary to pursue its own version of socialism, inspired by Yugoslavia's independent course (Békés, 2022: 113).

Intellectuals and workers tended to agree with Nagy, advancing a socialist "third road" as an alternative to the excesses of Stalinism (Békés, 2022: 108-9). For example, the Proclamation of the Hungarian Writers' Union, issued on the first day of the revolution on 23 October 1956, laments "Stalin's and Rákosi's régime of terror in Hungary" at the expense of "socialist democracy" (United Nations, 1957: 128). Further, the proclamation states: "We want an independent national policy based on the principles of socialism", and that "Our electoral system must correspond to the demands of socialist democracy. The people must elect freely and by secret ballot their representatives in Parliament, in the Councils and in all autonomous organs of administration" (United Nations, 1957: 128-9). Hungarians saw Moscow's warming relations with Tito in optimistic terms – indicating that perhaps the Kremlin would tolerate a Hungarian version of communism (Kovrig, 1999: 227). Demands in rural Hungary also supported liberalisation without radical changes to the socialist superstructure: "Just as the working class did not want to see the return of capitalist-era factory owners, the villagers had no desire to reverse the 1945 land reform" (Békés et al., 2002b: 204).

The ideological threat posed by Hungary does not seem to have been catastrophic to Moscow. Instead of pursuing the dismantling of communism altogether (and its replacement, say with capitalist democracy or religious rule), most Hungarians wanted liberalisation of the current system. Moscow tolerated variations of communism with the warming of relations with Yugoslavia between 1953 and 1955, making it is at least conceivable that Moscow might have done the same in Hungary.

There are at least two reasons why the new political system being established in Hungary was intolerable to Moscow. First, the Kremlin may have misread revolutionary demands, thinking that the changes underway were in fact the replacement of communism with capitalism. There is some evidence for this in the hyperbolic language used by Soviet leaders. For example, the Soviet Presidium described Nagy as "a reactionary debaucher" in a 31 October telegram to Italian communist leader Palmiro Togliatti (Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 2002b: 311). In a conversation with Tito on 3 November 1956, Khrushchev is recorded as saying that if events in Hungary were left to run their course "We would have capitalists on the frontiers of the Soviet Union" (Mićunović, 2002: 348-9). Further, during a 6 January 1957 meeting of socialist bloc governments (including Khrushchev), it was agreed that the Soviet intervention in Hungary had helped eliminate "The danger of establishing a fascist dictatorship in Hungary" (Békés et al., 2002c: 494). This false impression could have been created by informant reports to the Soviet leadership as the revolution was unfolding, which exaggerated the anti-communist character of the uprising (Békés et al., 2002b: 208). It also may have simply been regime propaganda to justify the intervention.

It is also possible that while Moscow was aware that the revolutionaries' demands remained within the bounds of socialism, the goal of multipartyism was a bridge to far, representing a degree of liberalisation they could not stomach. Although communism wasn't directly under threat during the revolutionary crisis, multipartyism meant it soon could be. The timing of Nagy's abolition of single-party rule vis-à-vis the Soviet decision to intervene lends this theory support. In a speech at around 2.30pm on 30 October 1956, Nagy stated that "The Government will continue to pursue democratization, abolish the single party system, and base its work on the cooperation of the coalition parties that emerged in 1945" (Rainer, 2009: 119-20). This was a concession to revolutionary demands for multipartyism that had been gaining traction over the preceding week (Békés et al., 2002b: 200-1, 203, 205). Putting his announcement into action, Nagy invited members of non-communist parties into a newly formed cabinet (Békés et al., 2002b: 207; Kovrig, 1999: 227).[99] The Kremlin viewed this announcement with alarm: "As Hungary seemed on the verge of restoring a *de facto* multi-party system, the Soviets no doubt recalled the last multi-party elections in 1945, in which the communist party fared poorly under more favourable conditions than pertained in 1956" (Békés et al., 2002b: 208). It was the very next day – 31 October – that the Presidium decided on military intervention. It is indeed possible that, by this point, the Soviets

[99] Although note that there was much criticism of Nagy's chosen individuals for not being true representatives of their parties, with some new cabinet members being tarnished by collaboration with the previous communist regime (Békés et al., 2002b: 207-8).

saw the communist system in Hungary as teetering on the brink of collapse in light of the latest round of radical measures taken by Nagy (see Békés et al., 2002b: 210 and Békés, 2022: 119, 127-8, 132 for examples of this view).

There are also indications to the contrary. In the 31 October Presidium meeting that decided on intervention, Khrushchev does not mention the risk of communist collapse in his rationale for switching policies from Soviet troop withdrawal to military intervention. Instead, he mentions the risks of empowering the US, UK and France if the Soviets showed weakness in Hungary, as well as the potential political fallout from Soviet Communist Party opprobrium at home (Kecskes, 2001: 54). There is also a curious exchange recorded between two Presidium members – Comrades Yekaterina Alexeyevna Furtseva and Piotr Nikolaevich Pospelov – during the 31 October meeting. Comrade Furtseva asks "What further should be done? We showed patience, but now things have gone too far. We must act to ensure that victory goes to our side"; to which Comrade Pospelov replied: "we should use the argument that we will not let socialism in Hungary be strangled" (Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 2002a: 308). Although Pospelov's phraseology is ambiguous, it does suggest that the threat to socialism is being used as a cover rationale, rather than being the genuine reason. This is the only mention of a threat to communism in the entire Presidum meeting, according to Malin's notes.[100]

Can ideology help explain the different Soviet reactions to the 1956 Hungarian and Polish uprisings? On the one hand, the ideological programmes of both Hungarian and Polish revolutionaries were similar. Both wanted liberalisation of the rigid Stalinist system, both fought for free elections, and both operated within the bounds of socialism.[101] On the other hand, Nagy's political changes were more expansive than Gomułka's, and were rolled out much more quickly (in particular, Nagy's introduction of multipartyism on 30 October) (Granville, 2002: 677). It certainly seems likely that Nagy's more extreme political changes fed into Soviet calculations to

[100] Another indication that the threat to communism in Hungary wasn't the main reason for intervention is that the two Soviet emissaries – Mikoyan and Suslov – were aware on 31 October that Nagy's new reformist government still espoused communist doctrine (2002b: 211). In fact, they saw the changes that Nagy was making to the leadership as the only way that communism could be saved (2002b: 211).

[101] Gomułka's vision of a 'democratic socialism' bears several similarities with Nagy's reformist agenda. For example, in an open letter of 23 October 1956, Gomułka wrote: "…only by marching along the path of democratization and eradicating all the evil from the past period can we succeed in building the best model of socialism, a model which will conform with the needs of our nation. A decisive part on that road must be played by widening the workers' democracy, by increasing the direct participation of workers in the management of enterprises, by increasing the part played by the working masses in governing all sectors of the country's life" (quoted in Skardon, 2010: 316). Other parallels between the Polish and Hungarian ideological programmes were demands for their respective countries to chart an independent socialist course, free from suffocating Soviet prescriptions (Békés, 2022: 106). For Nagy, this was Hungary's pursuit of the Yugoslav model; for Poland, this was the 'Polish way of socialism' (Békés, 2022: 106).

intervene. This is the view held by Békés (2022: 130), who argues that the two red lines for Moscow were the collapse of communism in Hungary and the departure of Hungary from the Soviet camp (Békés, 2022: 130).

There are, however, two reasons why Polish revolutionary ideology had the potential to pose an even greater threat to Moscow than Hungary's revolutionary ideology. First, revolutionary demands at Poznań were in many ways more radical than the demands espoused during the Hungarian uprising. The Poznań riots were decidedly anti-communist (Békés, 2022: 105). Protesters at Poznań chanted slogans directly challenging the communist system of rule: "Down with communism", "We want bread and freedom", "Down with the Party", "Down with the Bolsheviks", "Down with the communists" and "We demand free elections under United Nations supervision"' (Bromke, 1958: 51; Machcewicz, 1999: 110). These demands were more overtly anti-communist than the core demands of the Hungarian revolution. Another ideological challenge present in Poland, but not Hungary, was that religion had become fused with demands for liberalisation. Catholicism became a unifying symbol against regime oppression in Poland, with protesters singing hymns, chanting "We want God" and "We want religion in school" (Machcewicz, 1999: 111). The potent combination of liberalisation and religious ideologies posed a double challenge to the communist system of legitimacy and authority. Nonetheless, Gomułka's new government (presumably with Soviet Union consent) acquiesced to several religious demands. The Primate of Poland (and staunch opponent of communism), Cardinal Wyszynski, was released from prison on 22 October, 1956 (Monticone, 1966: 88). Religion was permitted to be taught in schools outside of regular hours; the Catholic Church was allowed to select ministers to work in hospital and gaols; the Catholic publication *Znak* was legalised at the end of 1956 (after it was banned in 1949); and the Church was given the opportunity to nominate five people to run in the January 1957 legislative elections (who were all successful)[102] (Monticone, 1966: 88-89). These two additional dimensions of ideological challenge in Poland, but not Hungary, do not easily fit explanations that focus on ideology driving Soviet counterrevolution. The anti-Communist nature of the Poznań uprising and the religious dimensions of Polish October notwithstanding, the ideological complexion of the Hungarian Revolution was likely an important factor in the Soviet counterrevolution against Hungary but not Poland. That Hungary went further in its liberalisation

[102] This warming of church-state relations was not indefinite: "Since 1962 the struggle between the Church and the state in Communist Poland has become more intense each year" (Monticone, 1966: 91).

agenda than Poland was an important factor alongside order exit in conditioning the Soviet response.

## Other explanations: threats to power hierarchies

After examining the evidence that Hungary's revolutionary ideology and order membership designs conditioned Soviet counterrevolution, this section looks at the role of a third factor: Hungary's attempts at reconfiguring international power relations. While there is significant support for order exit theory, and support for ideology as an explanation, there is very little evidence that Hungary's attempts to improve its power position conditioned Soviet intervention to crush the revolution.

A core, consensus demand from the earliest stages of the uprising was more just and equal relations with the USSR, and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary (Békés, 2022: 109, 116; United Nations, 1957: 127). This was seen as essential for Hungary to improve its status – from occupying a position of dependency to pursuing its own course free from great power meddling. Evidence of dissatisfaction with the Soviet's overbearing grip on Hungary include the tearing down of Budapest's Stalin statue and its dragging through the streets (Byrne, 2006: 374). The students' '16 Points' demanded "a re-examination and re-adjustment of Hungarian-Soviet and Hungarian-Yugoslav political, economic and intellectual relations on the basis of complete political and economic equality and of non-intervention in each other's internal affairs" (United Nations, 1957: 127). Further, point eight raised concerns regarding Hungarian uranium and USSR concessions (United Nations, 1957: 127). The first demand of the Proclamation of the Hungarian Writers' Union states: "We want an independent national policy based on the principles of socialism. Our relations with all countries and with the USSR and the People's Democracies in the first place, should be regulated on the basis of the principle of equality. We want a review of international treaties and economic agreements in the spirit of equality of rights" (United Nations, 1957: 128). Nagy first announced his plans to begin negotiations with the Soviets about a full troop withdrawal via radio announcement on 25 October (Békés, 2022: 114; US Office of the Historian, 1990c: Document 108).

Revolutionary demands for Hungary's equal treatment in international affairs did not have a significant impact on Soviet counterrevolution. Moscow proved willing to make concessions on the issue of equal treatment, indicating that it was not a 'red line' that, once crossed, would trigger counterrevolution. Amidst the escalating turmoil in Hungary, it was acknowledged during a 30 October Soviet Communist Party Presidium meeting that "The course of events reveals the crisis

in our relations with the countries of people's democracy" and resulting need "for other modes of relations" (Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 2002c: 296-7). The Presidium also agreed that "With the agreement of the government of Hungary, we are ready to withdraw troops" (Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 2002c: 296).

To this effect, the Presidium drafted a 'Declaration on the Principles of Development and Further Strengthening of Friendship and Co-operation between the USSR and Other Socialist Countries' (Kramer, 1998: 187). The declaration was written on 30 October, and published on 31 October. Remarkably, the declaration acknowledged Moscow's past infringements on state sovereignty and upheld the principle of equality between states (Békés, 2022: 115; Békés et al., 2002b: 210). It also flagged the possibility of winding back troop presence in Warsaw Pact countries (Kramer, 1998: 187-8). This Declaration is telling, as it stated, at least in principle, a willingness to accept revolutionary challenges to Moscow's overbearing power. Crucially, however, greater independence for Hungary was conditional on it "remaining loyal to Moscow and within the confines of the Soviet bloc" (Békés, 2022: 130). Indeed, the counterrevolutionary government of Kádár, catapulted into power by the Soviets on 4 November, promised "that several of the revolution's demands would be met, including beginning negotiations on a Soviet withdrawal once order was restored" (Békés et al., 2002b: 216). This would be a very surprising promise for Kádár to make unless it was acceptable to Moscow.

That Hungary's attempts to achieve sovereign equality did not drive Soviet counterrevolution is also supported by a comparison with Polish October. Both Poland and Hungary challenged Soviet dominance and meddling in their affairs, but only Hungary was met with counterrevolution. During the Polish uprising, anti-Soviet sentiment took many forms. Protesters at Poznań chanted "We want an independent Poland", "Russians go home", "Down with Russians" and "Russkies get out of town" (Machcewicz, 1999: 111). The national anthem was sung as well as the nationalist song 'Rota', substituting the mention of Germany in the chorus for the Soviets: "Until the Russian mess collapses into dust and ashes" (Machcewicz, 1999: 111). Other demands were for Poland to reclaim territories that had been annexed by Moscow, and an end to Russian language classes as part of the school curriculum (Machcewicz, 1999: 114). Greater equality in Poland's relations with the USSR were also emphasised by Gomułka and his vision of a "Polish Road to Socialism" (Pienkos, 1958: 373). The core nationalist demand in Poland, as in Hungary, was the departure of Soviet troops who were integrated into the Polish armed forces and stationed in Poland (Granville, 2002: 674; Machcewicz, 1999: 114). This was a near universal demand (Machcewicz, 1999: 114). During the Eighth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in October 1956, Gomułka declared: "Within the framework of relations [among countries of the

socialist camp] every country should possess full independence, and the right of every nation to sovereignty in an independent country should be fully and mutually respected" (Bromke, 1956: 56). Although Gomułka was willing to remain in Soviet orbit, he stood firm in demanding more equal power relations between Moscow and Warsaw and greater independence for Poland (Kramer, 1998: 170).

The Kremlin was receptive to these demands. One month after coming to power, Gomułka signed an agreement in Moscow establishing new terms of the relationship between Poland and the USSR (Bromke, 2013: 122). The agreement stipulated that the two countries were equals and that the national independence of Poland would be respected (Bromke, 2013: 122). On the heels of the November agreement came a military convention, granting Poland authority over Soviet troop movements in Polish territory (Bromke, 2013: 122). Moscow also agreed to disburse 500 million dollars to Poland as redress for previous unequal trade relations (Bromke, 2013: 122). These concessions "undoubtedly represented a significant improvement of Poland's position vis-à-vis Russia" (Bromke, 2013: 122). Poland's improved position within the Soviet order was tolerable to Moscow as long as Poland remained loyal to that order.

Hungary's challenge to Soviet dominance is an unlikely explanation of Soviet counterrevolution. The Kremlin was willing to give more power and autonomy to Hungary, and did in fact do so in the case of Poland. Ceding power was something the USSR was willing to compromise on. Further, the similar redistributions of power demanded by revolutionaries in both Poland and Hungary are not compelling explanations of the divergent Soviet response to the two revolutions. In other words, challenges to Moscow's hegemonic position in the order do not seem to have been a decisive factor in explaining counterrevolution in Hungary but not in Poland. Of the various Hungarian revolutionary demands, including multipartyism and neutrality, demanding more power vis-à-vis Moscow raised the least alarm.

## Conclusions

Why did the Soviet Union intervene to crush the fledgling Hungarian revolution as it was unfolding in October and November 1956? This chapter has explored three explanations: order exit, ideological threats to communism, and challenges to Moscow's hegemonic position. There is ample evidence to support the first two explanations, and limited evidence for the third. These findings reflect the multivariate regression results. Ideological and order exit challenges are correlated with great power counterrevolution, whereas challenges to power hierarchies are not.

The case of the Hungarian Revolution has provided a qualitative illustration of the phenomenon of order exit. Case analysis has shown what order exit desires look like in practice, how such demands gain momentum, and how this threatens great power order leaders. An analysis of the timing of order exit and Soviet counterrevolution provides evidence of a causal connection between these two variables. Further, a cross-case comparison of Hungary and Poland highlights how order exit in the case of Hungary, but not Poland, affected the divergent Soviet responses to these two revolutionary episodes. Beyond showing the causal linkages between order exit and great power counterrevolution, this chapter has sought to understand *why* these two processes are linked. The Soviet Presidium's meeting minutes show their fears that order exit would embolden Moscow's great power enemies, as well as posing an existential threat to the very survival of their order. These are two of the three pathways linking order exit and great power counterrevolution hypothesised in Chapter 3.

The comparison of the Hungarian and Polish uprisings also illustrates the survival versus transformation trade-off facing revolutionaries. The avoidance of counterrevolution in Poland came at a significant cost. Although remaining in the Soviet orbit prevented the counterrevolution that befell Hungary, it also gave the revolutionaries limited room to manoeuvre. The very thing that ensured the revolution survived also clipped its wings. This is presumably one of the reasons why the Polish revolution was less threatening to the USSR. Counterrevolution didn't need to be put on the table as Moscow could temper the revolution by other means: leverage and persuasion exerted on a member of its own order. This gives some insight into the interplay between different revolutionary challenges to international order. Order continuity is a way for great powers to mitigate the ideological and power hierarchy challenges posed by revolutionaries.

The Soviets exerted pressure at various points to steer the course of the Polish revolution. The Soviets condemned Poland's reintroduction of private agricultural holdings, economic decentralisation policies and easing of press censorship (Bromke, 2013: 132, 134). Such criticisms were often effective. Responding to Soviet disquiet at publications questioning elements of communist ideology, Gomułka shut down one Polish weekly and dismissed the editorial board of another (Bromke, 2013: 134-5). From 1958 the press had a diminished space in which to work (Bromke, 2013: 146). Gomułka similarly tempered his economic decentralisation policies and circumscribed the remit of the newly approved workers' councils (Bromke, 2013: 142-3). Gomułka also fell into line in terms of foreign policy, maintaining a safe distance from Tito's Yugoslavia, and hiding his desires for a warming of relations between East and West (Bromke, 2013: 136, 140, 147). Gomułka was in the unenviable position of being hemmed in on all sides. Like Carranza in the Mexican Revolution, he was caught between the pressures exerted by the great power order

leader and the pressures of more radical domestic elements. As noted in a US government report written at the time

> The Gomułka regime is engaged in a complicated balancing act. On the one hand, it has been subject to unremitting pressure from the [hardline] Natolin group [within the Communist party] and the Soviet Union seeking to regain control; on the other hand, Gomułka is being pressed by the liberalizing forces inside and outside the Party to ameliorate economic and political conditions in the direction of a freer society…. Gomułka and his "centrist" group are the only force in Poland capable of maintaining the delicate balance among these other forces: The Natolin group, the "revisionists", the people, and the USSR (US Office of the Historian, 1990b: Document 250).

Moscow's hollowing out of the revolution was not absolute, however. Two key victories for Poland were the indefinite abandonment of policies of agricultural collectivization and allowing a climate of religious tolerance (Bromke, 2013: 142-3, 147). Gomułka tried to effect as much change as the strictures of the Soviet order would allow, falling into line at crucial movements (Bromke, 2013: 136). One such crucial moment was an October-November 1958 meeting in Moscow between the Polish and Soviet leadership, only months after Imre Nagy's execution (Bromke, 2013: 137). The result was a settling of past differences and increased Polish towing of the Soviet line (Bromke, 2013: 137, 147). Instead of sanctions, the arming of regime opponents or outright intervention, the Soviets were able to moderate the direction of the revolution via verbal criticisms and meetings. Although such measures weren't enough to end the revolution, they did ensure it limped on as a glimmer of its initial ambitions.

Although the Polish revolution was less ambitious than Hungary's, it ultimately brought about more transformative change. This was because the Polish revolution managed to survive. By leaving the Soviet orbit, Hungary's revolution pursued maximal change at the cost of its demise. By remaining in the Soviet orbit, Poland's revolution survived but change was circumscribed. This is the revolutionaries' dilemma: survival versus transformation. In 1957, one year after the twin revolutions, the fortunes of Hungary and Poland were miles apart. Poland was experiencing a revival in press and intellectual freedom, collectivization had been abandoned, workers' councils legalised, and private ownership revived. The country was also experiencing unprecedented freedom from Soviet domination (J. F. A. W., 1957: 341-2). Meanwhile in Hungary, there were mass arrests, executions and deportations (Kramer, 1998: 210-11). The crackdown saw the imprisonment of 26,000 people, the execution of 600 people, while more than 200,000 people fled the country (Kramer, 1998: 210-11; Pienkos, 2006: 372). Collectivization was hastened, while Hungary was no freer from Soviet domination than it had been under Stalinist Russia (Bromke, 2013: 132; J. F. A. W., 1957: 341-2). The Hungarian Revolution shows how order exit can exacerbate other revolutionary challenges. Freed from the strictures of their order, exiting

revolutionaries can pursue far more radical transformations than their order-remaining counterparts. However, they do so at their own peril, risking the very survival of their revolution by eliciting great power counterrevolution.

# Chapter 7: The Syrian Salafist Revolution and US Counterrevolution, 2012-2020

The preceding two chapters have examined the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) and the Hungarian Revolution (1956) to illustrate the dynamics of order exit and great power counterrevolution. These two cases are 'easy' tests for my theory: revolutionary Mexico *did not* attempt order exit and there was *no* great power counterrevolution. In contrast, revolutionary Hungary *did* attempt order exit and *there was* great power counterrevolution. Instead of the illustrative function of the previous two chapters, this chapter is dedicated to understanding whether order exit theory is helpful in understanding a difficult case: the Syrian Salafist revolutionary movement (2012-2020).[103]

Not every case of great power counterrevolution is preceded by revolutionary attempts at order exit. The attempted Salafist revolution in Syria is one such example of an 'outlier case': there was a major US counterrevolutionary response, but no attempt to exit US order. The various Salafist groups couldn't cleave Syria from the US order as Syria was not a member of the US order to begin with. Syria and the US have frosty relations, with Syria instead enjoying close ties with Russia and Iran. As such, the US wasn't facing the prospect of losing an order member should the Salafist revolutionaries be successful. So, how can we best explain the strong counterrevolutionary response by the US?

The Syrian Revolution comprises multiple revolutionary factions operating in various alliance configurations. The moderate revolutionaries working to topple Bashar al-Assad – including the Syrian National Council (SNC), the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces ('the Coalition') and the Free Syrian Army (FSA) – are treated as a separate revolutionary episode in the dataset. Amongst the Salafist revolutionaries there are also multiple factions. These include Islamic State, al-Qaeda affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra (now called Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, HTS), Jaysh al-Islam, and Ahrar al-Sham. The umbrella group the Islamic Front was created in November 2013, led by Ahrar al-Sham and Jaysh al-Islam. Smaller al-Qaeda affiliates also operate in Syria including the Abdullah Azzam Brigades, Fatah al-Islam, as well as Iraqi and Jordanian groups

[103] The timeframe under analysis is the period 2012-2020. This is when the attempted revolution began (2012), and the temporal limit of the dataset (2020).

(O'Bagy, 2012: 6). This chapter focuses on Islamic State, with some comparisons between the next two largest Salafist groups, Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham.[104]

Islamic State might seem like a curious subject for a revolutions case study. Islamic State is more often categorised as an insurgent group or a terrorist group, rather than as a revolutionary movement (Dixon and Lawson, 2022). Islamic State, however, meets all three criteria to be classed as a revolutionary movement as outlined in this dissertation. Islamic State meets the mass mobilisation threshold, at one point comprising as many as 30,000 recruits drawn from diverse societal segments (including youths, professionals, prisoners, rural classes and unemployed Sunnis) (International Crisis Group, 2016; Williams, 2020). The goals of Islamic State are revolutionary: seeking to overthrow the autocratic Bashar al-Assad regime and replace it with an expanding Islamic Caliphate. Islamic State also uses irregular methods to achieve this goal, including warfare, insurgency and terrorism (Byman, 2016a: 129, 144; International Crisis Group, 2016: 28, 33). Several expositions of Islamic State as a revolutionary movement have appeared in recent years, including Dixon and Lawson (2022), Goldstone and Alimi (2021), Kalyvas (2015), Lawson (2019: 237-240), Stewart (2021: 1-4) and Walt (2015). These expositions are important in bringing the theoretical resources from the revolutions literature to bear on terrorist and insurgency groups.

This chapter uses both primary and secondary sources to understand why the US engaged in counterrevolution against Islamic State in Syria. Given the contemporaneity of this case study, crucial primary materials such as US National Security Council reports, diplomatic communications and US executive meeting minutes are not declassified.[105] Instead, I rely on former President Barack Obama's public letters, statements, speeches and interviews that mention Islamic State in the period between January and September 2014 – 28 sources in total.[106] This was the crucial window during which the US decided to launch anti-Islamic State airstrikes in Iraq and Syria. Of course, public Presidential communications are to be interpreted cautiously. It is possible

[104] The term 'Salafist' is multifaceted, capturing a broad array of actors and branches, as well as regional and temporal articulations. Ismail (2021: 1) distinguishes between three strands of Salafism: quietist, activist and jihadi (Ismail, 2021: 1). According to this three-party typology, Islamic State, Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham fall within the latter jihadi Salafi category (although some quiestist and activist Salafis disavow Islamic State's Salafi credentials altogether, see Ismail, 2021: 137). A distinguishing feature of jihadi Salafis is that they pursue 'revolutionary jihad' (Ismail, 2021: 25). This means they target Muslim rulers who are seen to have strayed from their religious obligations, as well as the US and its coalition partners for their encroachments onto Muslim lands (Ismail, 2021: 25). Jihadi Salafis also follow the principle of *al-Wala' wa al-Bara'*, "the unconditional adherence to the cause and total disavowal and rejection of other ones" (Laghmari, 2019: 52). These commonalities notwithstanding, there is variation between jihadi Salafi groups, including the intellectual and interpretative resources on which they draw (Ismail, 2021: 25-28). There is also variation within jihadi Salafi groups, for example disagreements within Ahrar al-Sham regarding the prioritisation of domestic (Syrian) versus more expansive (international) goals (Steinberg, 2016: 5-6; Lister, 2016: 27).

[105] As noted by Weyland (2016: 217): "History offers great opportunities because the passing of time has opened up the archives. By contrast, who could access equivalent material from Vladimir Putin or Hosni Mubarak?"

[106] This pool of sources was compiled by Sterman (2019).

that they may not give the true reason for intervention, or create an inaccurate hierarchy of reasons (for example, foregrounding the importance of humanitarian aims). However, until confidential communications are declassified, Presidential statements outlining the reasons for US intervention provide a crucial source of information.

Given that this chapter focuses on an outlier case, it is structured slightly differently to the previous two illustrative case study chapters. The first section provides a brief overview of the Islamic State revolutionary movement, as well two other Salafist groups: Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham. The second section applies order exit theory to the Salafist revolutionaries to see if it is able to shed light on why the US engaged in counterrevolution. Although the most charitable application of order exit theory can offer some insights regarding US counterrevolution, this is a somewhat awkward exercise. The application of order exit theory to this case shows some of its limitations and pinpoints areas for further development. The third part of this chapter examines these theoretical limitations, including the existence of alternative explanations, order exit theory's state-centrism, and alternative ways of conceptualising ideological challenges to great powers. The final section concludes by summarising what order exit can and cannot explain regarding the Syrian Salafist Revolution, and the implications of this for order exit theory more broadly.

## A brief overview of the attempted Salafist revolution in Syria

On 18 March, 2011, demonstrations erupted against the Syrian regime in the rural town of Dar'a (Droz-Vincent, 2014: 34). Protests soon spread in geographic scope and scale, with demands escalating (Hinnebusch, 2012: 106). The protests were mostly unarmed, non-sectarian, secular, and culminated in calls for the replacement of al-Assad's Ba'athist dictatorship with a liberal democracy (Hinnebusch, 2012: 109; O'Bagy, 2012: 6). By mid-2012, indiscriminate government repression had caused events to spiral into civil war (Keser and Fakhoury, 2022: 4; Lister, 2016: 9, 11). It was this initial attempt at democratic revolution and subsequent regime response that created the conditions for a second challenge to al-Assad's power: attempts at Salafist revolution. An unwieldy constellation of Islamist groups has been operating in Syria since 2012. The three most prominent Salafist groups are Islamic State, Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham. Sometimes coordinating efforts and sometimes engaged in fierce conflict with one another, these three movements are all fighting to topple the Syrian regime and build an Islamic State in its place (on Islamic State see International Crisis Group, 2016: i; on Jabhat al-Nusra see Zuhur, 2015: 147; on Ahrar al-Sham see El Yassir, 2016). Despite some similarities in the objectives of these three groups, they have different origins, allies and approaches to state-building. A brief overview of Islamic State, Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham is given below in turn.

Islamic State

Islamic State rose to prominence on 4 July, 2014, when its leader – Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi – declared the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate spanning portions of Iraq and Syria (Byman, 2016a: 135-6). [107] The new Caliphate controlled an area bigger than the UK, ruling over a population of more than 6 million people (Byman, 2016a: 135-6).[108] Islamic States' self-professed goal was the establishment and expansion of their state. State building has involved the provision of healthcare services, judicial, education, garbage disposal and taxation systems, a police force, traffic controllers and even a consumer protection agency (Byman, 2016a: 140-1; Stewart, 2014 and 2016: 1). The organising principle of Islamic State's governance infrastructure is Salafism (as interpreted by Islamic State). Schools teach Islamic State doctrine, the courts impose a version of *shari'a* law, and taxation is based on *khums* and *zakat* (Byman, 2016a: 136, 138, 142; Blannin, 2017: 18; Hashmi, 2021: 151). In areas they control, smoking and alcohol are often banned, and *hudud* punishments enforced (Byman, 2016a: 138). This Salafist ideology is supplemented with "an alternative nationalism" (Byman, 2016a: 136). For Islamic State, 'the nation' is the global Muslim community: "Syria is not for the Syrians, and Iraq is not for the Iraqis. The earth is Allah's" (al-Baghdadi quoted in Dixon and Lawson, 2022: 16). There are also sectarian ideological currents, with Islamic State targeting 'heretical' Shi'ites (Byman, 2016a: 135, 137-8). Islamic State's rigid ideology has created multiple powerful enemies, including Western states, Iran, and Sunni governments in the Middle East (International Crisis Group, 2016: i).

Islamic State's state-building and state-expansion activities involved guerrilla and conventional war tactics, as well as some use of terrorism (Byman, 2016a: 129, 144; Kaylvas, 2015: 45). Extreme brutality has been used in dealing with its enemies, both inside and outside the state. Islamic State 'provinces' were established in Libya and the Sinai Peninsula, with groups pledging 'baya' as far afield as Nigeria and the Caucuses (Byman, 2016a: 142 and 2016b: 78). The Islamic State Caliphate was at the height of its powers in 2015 (US Congressional Research Service, 2022). However, sustained attacks from both local and external state forces caused Islamic State's fortunes to dwindle (US Congressional Research Service, 2022). Islamic State lost its last piece of territory to the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in 2019. Islamic State's leader al-Baghdadi was killed that

[107] The precursor organisation to Islamic State emerged much earlier in post-Ba'athist Iraq. It was initially called Tawhid wal Jihad, transforming into al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in 2004, and then from 2006, Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) (Byman, 2016a: 127, 131-3). ISI took advantage of growing sectarian destabilisation in Iraq and the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, gaining recruits and capturing territory in Syria (Byman, 2016a: 127-8, 133-6). ISI formally split with al-Qaeda in 2013 (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2021). In 2014, ISI expanded into Iraq, taking the major city of Mosul (Byman, 2016a: 135-6). It was with the establishment of the new Caliphate that the organisation changed its name to Islamic State.

[108] Population estimates range as high as 8 million people (Dixon and Lawson, 2022: 1).

same year by US forces (US Congressional Research Service, 2022). Although Islamic State does not exercise any exclusive territorial control, it is waging a low-level insurgency in parts of Iraq and Syria (US Congressional Research Service, 2022). Islamic State is still an active international movement, with its revolutionary ideology continuing to resonate across borders. It has made inroads into Mozambique in the past year, while its affiliates still operate in Afghanistan, Nigeria, the Philippines and the Sinai (Goldbaum and Schmitt, 2021). These developments, highlighting that Islamic State is a revolutionary movement and not just a state, underscore the potential for the group to pose a threat even after its territorial defeat (Goldstone and Alima, 2021).

Jabhat al-Nusra

Jabhat al-Nusra announced its formation as the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda in January 2012 (Byman, 2016a: 135; Laub, 2021). Initially a sister organisation of Islamic State Iraq (ISI), the group split with al-Baghdadi in 2013 and instead confirmed its allegiance to al-Qaeda (Keser and Fakhoury, 2022: 2; Lister, 2016: 5). Jabhat al-Nusra and al-Baghdadi's Caliphate subsequently became staunch enemies (Lister, 2016: 5, 14). At its founding in 2012, the stated aim of Jabhat al-Nusra was the toppling of the al-Assad regime and its replacement with an Islamic system of rule (Lister, 2016: 10, 23). Jabhat al-Nusra pursues this goal via gradualism, practicing "ideological restraint" (Lister, 2016: 5-6). The establishment of Islamic rule is a long-term goal, with community consultation and ingratiation key interim processes (Byman, 2016a: 135; Lister, 2016: 5, 23-4). Jabhat al-Nusra has purposely avoided the brutal, alienating and exclusionary tactics of Islamic State (Byman, 2016a: 135; Lister, 2016: 5, 26).

Initially a peripheral actor, engaging in sporadic suicide bombings and assassinations, Jabhat al-Nusra began integrating itself with the Syrian revolutionary opposition in its war with the regime from mid-2012 (Lister, 2016: 10-11). Jabhat al-Nusra's military prowess made it a key component of the revolutionary forces (Lister, 2016: 11). Growing in strength and prestige, Jabhat al-Nusra began service provision in Aleppo and later Deir ez Zour. The organisation provided humanitarian relief, healthcare and utilities, as well as subsidised bread (Lister, 2016: 11-12). Jabhat al-Nusra also set up local *shari'a* governance structures and courts in areas it had infiltrated from 2015 (Lister, 2016: 12, 17, 28-9). Setbacks in the 2016 peace process ensured the continued relevance of Jabhat al-Nusra and its military expertise (Lister, 2016: 19). The organisation managed to recruit 3,000 Syrians in the first half of 2016 (Lister, 2016: 6-7). Jabhat al-Nusra's leader, Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, announced the group's separation from al-Qaeda in July 2016 (Keser and Fakhoury, 2022: 2). In January 2017, after it absorbed several smaller Islamist groups, Jolani's organisation was renamed Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) (Al-Zaraee and Shaar, 2021; Centre for Strategic and

International Studies, 2018: 2). HTS currently has control over parts of northwest Syria, where it rules via local civilian authorities (Keser and Fakhoury, 2022: 2). HTS continues to espouse a "Salafi-jihadist ideology", with its sights still squarely set on the al-Assad regime (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2018: 1-2).

Ahrar al-Sham

Harakat Ahrar al-Sham al-Islamiyyah (Ahrar al-Sham) traces its origins to al-Assad's cynical release of Islamist inmates from Seydnaya prison in March 2011 (Hooda, 2020: 6; Jonsson, 2016: 1; Steinberg, 2016: 1). Some of these prisoners, several of whom had fought in Chechnya, Iraq and Afghanistan, went on to found Ahrar al-Sham in 2012 (Drevon, 2021: 6; Jonsson, 2016: 1).[109] By 2013, Ahrar al-Sham had become one of the most powerful opposition groups in the Syrian civil war, under the leadership of Hassan Abboud (Hooda, 2020: 6; Steinberg, 2016: 1-2). A key component of its success has been its ability to absorb, ally, and form umbrella organisations with other insurgent groups (Jonsson, 2016: 1; Steinberg, 2016: 1-2). Peak size estimates range from 10,000-20,000 militants, while the group had 83 units operating all over Syria as at January 2014 (Hooda, 2020: 6; Jonsson, 2016: 3). Despite losing most of its leadership in a September 2014 bomb attack, Ahrar al-Sham and its coalition partners took Idlib later that year (Drevon, 2021: 2; Hooda, 2020: 6; Jonsson, 2016: 2). Ahrar al-Sham has engaged in service provision in areas it controls, and pursues the imposition of Islamic law consensually rather than via coercion (Jonsson, 2016: 3; Steinberg, 2016: 5).

Ahrar al-Sham has various relationships with other groups. It is a fierce opponent of Islamic State, while Jabhat al-Nusra has been its closet Syrian ally (Hooda, 2020: 6; Jonsson, 2016: 1-2). Tensions have nonetheless surfaced between Ahrar al-Sham and Jabhat al-Nusra (and its successor organisation HTS), even leading to combat between the groups as relations deteriorated from 2017 (Hooda, 2020: 6; Lister, 2016: 28; Mapping Militant Organizations, 2022). There are reports that Ahrar al-Sham has received economic support from Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar (Hooda, 2020: 6; Jonsson, 2021: 1-2; Lister, 2016: 29).

Ahrar al-Sham has been described as both Salafist (Drevon, 2021: 2; Hooda, 2020: 6; Steinberg, 2016: 2) and radical Sunni Islamist (Jonsson, 2016: 1). The target of the organisation is the al-Assad regime, which it seeks to replace with a system of Islamic rule (Hooda, 2020: 6; Steinberg, 2016: 2). While Ahrar al-Sham may be "collectively Salafist" (Heller, 2016), there is a degree of ideological heterogeneity among its members including jihadi Salafism and "a more mainstream political

[109] When precisely Ahrar al-Sham was founded is contentious. Some claim the organisation was founded in January 2012 (Jonsson, 2016: 1), while others say December 2012 (Pierret, 2018).

Islamism aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood" (Lister, 2016: 26). Several sources have noted the ideological affinities between Ahrar al-Sham, Jabhat al-Nusra and Islamic State (see for example Jonsson, 2016: 1-2). Since 2014, however, Ahrar al-Sham has moderated the more radical elements of its ideology (Drevon, 2021: 2; Steinberg, 2016: 6). The group has attempted to paint itself as moderate Islamist, rather than jihadi Salafi (Drevon, 2021: 2; Jonsson, 2016: 2). While still wanting to build a Sunni state, the group has guaranteed the protection of minorities and played up its domestic, rather than transnational, objectives (Jonsson, 2016: 1-3; Steinberg, 2016: 6). In line with this moderation, Ahrar al-Sham has protected journalists and activists against other insurgent groups in northern Syria, and "has made serious efforts to integrate itself with the revolutionary political mainstream" (Heller, 2016).[110] Ahrar al-Sham is still active as at 2022, but has suffered infighting and territory losses since its peak strength in 2015 (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2022).

US counterrevolution

The US response to Salafist revolution in Syria was swift. Within three months of al-Baghdadi's declaration of an Islamic caliphate, the US and its coalition partners began airstrikes against Islamic State targets in Syria as part of 'Operation Inherent Resolve' (on 23 September, 2014) (Bannelier-Christakis, 2016: 770; Gani, 2020: 221; Lister, 2016: 5, 16). Strikes in Iraq began even earlier – on 1 August 2014 (Byman, 2016a: 136; Christakis, 2016: 750; Sterman, 2019: 19-29). The US has also sent advisers to train Islamic State opponents (Byman, 2016a: 128). By January 2016 there were at least eleven states taking part in the US-led coalition, some also engaging in ground operations (Bannelier-Christakis, 2016: 759, 766). The US response is somewhat surprising given President Obama's concurrent attempt to pull out of Iraq after 11 years, 4,500 military deaths, 1.5 million troops deployed, USD 800 billion spent, and the memory of the Iraqi intervention (and its failures) still fresh (Hussein and Haddad, 2021; Obama, 2014b and Obama, 2014e). As stated by Obama when announcing the commencement of US airstrikes in Iraq: "As Commander-in-Chief, I will not allow the United States to be dragged into fighting another war in Iraq" (Obama, 2014d).

Jabhat al-Nusra has also been subjected to US counterrevolution. The US designated Jabhat al-Nusra a terrorist organisation in December 2012, and began air strikes against members of the group in September 2014 (Lister, 2016: 16). The US even suggested coordinating strikes against Jabhat al-Nusra (and Islamic State) with Russia in mid-2016 (Lister, 2016: 619-20). Obama ordered

[110] Many are skeptical that this ideological transformation is genuine, citing efforts to win over Western states as one possible rationale (Jonsson, 2016: 1; Steinberg, 2016: 6).

the expansion of attacks against Jabhat al-Nusra's leadership in November 2016 (Entous, 2016). Like its predecessor organisation, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) was designated a terrorist organisation in May 2018 (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2018: 1).

Unlike Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra, Ahrar al-Sham has not been met with US counterrevolution. Instead, the US response to Ahrar al-Sham has been ambivalent. On the one hand, the US scuppered a Russian attempt at the UN to label the group a terrorist organisation in 2016 (Jonsson, 2016: 3). On the other, the US put pressure on Qatar to limit its support of the group (Jonsson, 2016: 2; Steinberg, 2016: 6). These small diplomatic indications of support and opposition do not meet the threshold of counterrevolution applied in this dissertation.

## Most charitable application of order exit theory

Having briefly sketched the trajectories of three key Salafist revolutionary groups in Syria and the US response to each, the task of this section is explain *why* the US responded in the way it did. The empirical story so far presents a challenge for my theory: there is no order exit, yet there is great power counterrevolution. The Salafist revolutionaries were not attempting to pull Syria out of US orbit, as indeed, Syria was not in US orbit to begin with. The incumbent Syrian regime had long-standing political, economic and military ties with Russia prior to the outbreak of the revolution (Vorobyeva, 2020: 240). The Soviet Union and Syria were close allies during the Cold War, rekindling relations from the early 2000s with Russia writing off Syrian debt, the two countries signing a commerce agreement, and Russia re-invigorating its Cold War-era Logistics Support Division (commonly referred to as a naval base) in Tartous from 2006 (Vorobyeva, 2020: 229-31). Russia was a major supplier of weapons to Syria, providing 71% of Syria's imported major conventional weapons between 2008 and 2012 (Dick, 2019). Syria has also procured weapons from Iran, Belarus, China and North Korea, and bolstered trade relations with China, Iran and Turkey from the mid-2000s (Dick, 2019; Hinnebusch, 2012: 100).

Syrian ties with the US have been comparatively strained. The US designated Syria a state sponsor of terrorism in 1979, and imposed sanctions against the regime in 2004 and 2008 in the lead-up to the revolution (US Department of State, 2021). US-Syrian relations were tense in the context of Damascus' support for insurgents in post-2003 Iraq and Washington's role in facilitating the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon in 2005 (Hinnebusch, 2012: 100). Washington wasn't faced with the prospect of losing an order member should the Salafist revolutionaries be successful. So, why did the US unleash such a strong counterrevolutionary response? This section attempts to fit order exit theory to this case, providing the most charitable interpretation of the

empirics as possible. The next section, in contrast, plays the role of devil's advocate, highlighting the limitations of order exit theory and exploring ways it could be refined and amended in light of this case.

The most charitable reading of the Syrian Salafist revolution from the view of order exit theory is that both Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra indirectly threatened the US with order exit. Although these two groups couldn't extract Syria from US orbit, their transnational networks threatened the exit of key US allies. Both Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra are part of a broader order exit scheme beyond the state of Syria: their order-building projects threaten to draw in new members from the US camp. This is in contrast to Ahrar al-Sham, which does not pose a transnational order exit threat. Whereas the leaders of al-Qaeda and Islamic State have "thought, operated, and acted globally" (Goldstone and Alimi, 2021: 1), Ahrar al-Sham is focused on re-ordering Syria. This argument is developed further in relation to each of the three movements below.

Islamic State

First, examining Islamic State, the group is attempting to build a new order beyond the bounds of the Syrian state. Crucially, the Caliphate spanned not just portions of Syria, but portions of Iraq as well. Since the 2003 US invasion and toppling of the Saddam Hussein regime, successive Iraqi governments have had close ties with the US. While Islamic State does not pose an order exit threat in Syria, it certainly does in Iraq, and beyond. Iraq is a close US ally, described by the US as "a key partner for the United States in the region" (US Department of State, 2022). Since 2014 the US has given Iraq billions of dollars in humanitarian and other assistance (US Department of State, 2022). In 2021 there were approximately 2,500 US troops stationed in Iraq, and USD 4.6 billion in two-way trade (including almost USD 3.8 billion of crude oil exports to the US) (Hussein and Haddad, 2021; US Department of State, 2022). The US Embassy in Baghdad is the largest US embassy in the world in spatial terms, costing USD750 million to build (Arango, 2012). This close relationship is not tension free, however, with key flashpoints including US encroachments on Iraq's sovereignty, the US killing of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani on Iraqi soil, and Iraq's increasingly close relationship with Iran (Mack, 2020).

These tensions notwithstanding, the US relationship with Iraq would be very different if Islamic State successfully toppled the regime in Baghdad. Islamic State has given multiple indications it does not want to be in any great power order, whether US-led or otherwise (Khadem, 2019: 142). Islamic State's lack of state allies and their enmity towards both regional and great powers (Syria, Iraq, Iran, US, Europe, Israel) suggests they do not want to pursue friendships with these actors (Gerges, 2016: 5-6; Mapping Militant Organizations, 2021).

Further, Islamic State's predecessor organisation, al-Qaeda in Iraq, was "founded in direct opposition to the U.S. invasion" (Keser and Fakhoury, 2022: 4); while Islamic State's leadership had made frequent threats against the US (Obama, 2014l, 2014m and 2014o). Further evidence of Islamic State's order creation (and therefore exiting) desires is their "nearly entirely independent sources of income originating within their territory" (Lister, 2016: 31). Revolutionaries that want to remain in their state's existing order tend to seek out allies and financial support from that order. Islamic State has made no such overtures.

Islamic State's order building project threatens to shift Iraq out of US orbit. When Islamic State "destroyed part of the Iraqi-Syrian border, [it was] the first time a jihadist group had claimed supranational territorial authority" (International Crisis Group, 2016: 15). This order building project extends to other US allies beyond Iraq. Islamic State seeks to expand its territory into "other neighboring Muslim countries", overturning "apostate" regimes in the process (Gerges, 2016: 7). The threat to members of the US-led order is clearly outlined in an Islamic State video, during which it is declared that: "[t]his is the so-called border of Sykes-Picot: we don't recognize it and we will never recognize it. This is not the first border we will break—we will break other borders also, but we start with this… we will break the barriers of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, all the countries, until we reach Jerusalem" (quoted in Khadem, 2019: 139). Islamic State has affiliates, or 'provinces', in countries including Libya, Yemen, Egypt's Sinai, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia (Goldstone and Alimi, 2021: 1; Leigh et al., 2016). Should any of these affiliates be successful in toppling their respective governments, it would mean the loss of US order members to Islamic State's order building project.[111] It is perhaps telling that the US has intervened to crush Islamic State affiliates in member states of its own order (e.g. Libya, Yemen, Egypt and Afghanistan prior to 2021), but not Islamic State affiliates in states outside its order (e.g. Islamic State-Caucuses Province in Russia).

If order exit theory wields some explanatory power in the US decision to intervene in Syria to crush Islamic State, the next task becomes finding evidence to this effect. What kinds of evidence would support order exit theory? A good starting point is to look at the official stated reasons for US intervention. To this end, I examined the 28 public statements made by then-President Barack Obama between January and September 2014. In analysing Obama's stated reasons for intervention, however, there is no 'smoking gun'. This is because a multitude of different reasons

[111] Islamic State affiliates espouse the same anti-US rhetoric as their parent organisation. On the anti-US rhetoric of Islamic State-Khorasan Province see Mapping Militant Organizations (2018), on Wilayat Sinai see US National Counterterrorism Center (n.d.) and on Islamic State West African Province (Boko Haram) see the US Committee on Homeland Security (2011: 1).

are given (at least 12) which change in salience over time. In light of so many reasons, it is difficult to know which was the primary motivator of action. Further, some of the official reasons for intervention should be interpreted with a degree of skepticism. For example, the two most frequently cited reasons for intervening against Islamic State – humanitarianism and protecting US lives and property – are two of several legitimate grounds for intervention permitted under international law. The US government therefore had good reasons to say that these are the two primary reasons for intervention, even if they were not.[112]

These limitations of source materials notwithstanding, there is some evidence in Obama's statements to support an interpretation consistent with order exit theory. For example, Obama states that a key rationale for US intervention is to prevent Islamic State overrunning their ally Iraq. Obama repeatedly emphasises the good relationship between the US and Iraq. He makes reference to this close relationship in six communications,[113] referring to Iraq as a key partner (2014i, 2014j) and a strong ally (Obama, 2014b). He also speaks of the "strategic relationship that is important to both countries" (Obama, 2014s). Obama uses this relationship between Iraq and the US as a rationale for intervening to help Baghdad crush Islamic State, promising to "take action against threats to our security and our allies" (Obama, 2014t). Obama makes it clear that his goal is to ensure "that ISIL is not overrunning Iraq" and "to make sure that the gains that ISIL made in Iraq are rolled back" (Obama, 2014i).[114] In a 24 September speech, Obama states: "Obviously, Iraq is under enormous threat at the moment from the organization that calls itself ISIL. And as I've discussed today and for many weeks now, we consider ISIL to be a threat not only to Iraq, but to the region, to the world, and to the United States" (Obama, 2014s). Former President of Iraq, Haider al-Abadi, echoed Obama's sentiments about the close relationship between Baghdad and Washington. On 24 September, following a bilateral meeting between the two countries, he stated that: "We are keen in Iraq to promote further the strategic relationship between our two countries…" (Obama, 2014s). Although this is not definitive support for the order exit theory, it

[112] The US has repeatedly used the protection of US lives and property as a rationale for intervention. For example, this was ostensibly the rationale for sending a US war ship to El Salvador as the 1932 'La Matanza' Revolution was unfolding (Dur, 1998: 112). Revolutionaries, keenly aware of this being used as grounds for intervention, have made explicit assurances to the powers that foreign lives and property would be protected (for example the Mexican Carrancistas in 1915, Hungarian Communists in 1918, Chinese Nationalists in 1928, and Brazil's Paulistas in 1932; see Dennis, 1928: 594; Katz, 1981: 300; The New York Times, 1919; US Office of the Historian, 1948d: Document 438).
[113] Obama (2014b, 2014g, 2014i, 2014j, 2014s and 2014t).
[114] Obama refers to Islamic State as 'Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant' (ISIL) – evoking the transnational nature of the movement. The Levant is a region spanning Syria, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine (Carter Center, 2015: 1 fn. 2). Obama uses the nomenclature 'ISIL' even after Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announced the name change of the group to 'Islamic State' in June 2014.

is certainly consistent with it. We would expect Washington to support an order member if revolutionaries vehemently opposed to the US order threatened to topple that state.

So, how does the US decision to intervene in Iraq relate to their decision to intervene in Syria? Obama explicitly links Syria and Iraq when talking about the threat posed by Islamic State in ten different speeches and letters.[115] Obama references how Islamic State gains in Syria are threatening neighbouring Iraq (Obama, 2014a), how US actions in Iraq and Syria are part of the same anti-Islamic State campaign (Obama, 2014n, 2014q and 2014r), and how the Islamic State threat spans both countries (Obama, 2014k, 2014p and Obama, 2014t). Importantly, when Obama announced the expansion of the US air campaign against Islamic State from Iraq into Syria, during a speech on 23 September 2014, he linked actions in Syria with existing actions to defeat Islamic State in Iraq:

> Last night, on my orders, America's Armed Forces began strikes against ISIL targets in Syria… Earlier this month, I outlined for the American people our strategy to confront the threat posed by the terrorist group known as ISIL. I made clear that as part of this campaign, the United States would take action against targets in both Iraq and Syria so that these terrorists can't find safe haven anywhere (Obama, 2014q).

This statement indicates that US air strikes in Syria are an extension of the existing Iraq campaign. This means that the fear of losing ally Iraq may have compelled the US to intervene in Syria. Despite the air strikes being conducted in two countries, the reasons why they were initiated might be more closely tied to one country (Iraq) than the other (Syria).

Another stated rationale for intervention is the protection of other US allies beyond Iraq. Obama mentions this rationale in seven communications.[116] This rationale is consistent with fears of Islamic State encroachment on the US-led order. More order members are under threat than just Iraq. Obama declares: "We support our allies when they're in danger" (Obama, 2014d) and promises that "we will do what is necessary in order to make sure that ISIL does not threaten the United States or our friends and partners" (Obama, 2014j). Obama specifically describes the "long-term threat [Islamic State poses] to the safety and security of NATO members" (Obama, 2014j). He also outlines that an increasingly powerful Islamic State "poses great dangers not just to allies of ours like Jordan, which is very close by, but it also poses a great danger potentially to Europe and ultimately the United States" (Obama, 2014b). He goes on to say: "They [Islamic State] may claim out of expediency that they are at war with the United States or the West, but the fact is they

[115] Obama (2014a, 2014b, 2014k, 2014l, 2014n, 2014o, 2014p, 2014q, 2014r and 2014t).
[116] Obama (2014b, 2014d, 2014j, 2014k, 2014n, 2014p and 2014q).

terrorize their neighbors and offer them nothing but an endless slavery to their empty vision…" (Obama, 2014h).

The threat Islamic State poses to US allies is mirrored in rhetoric about Islamic State expansion and contagion. Obama makes several references to Islamic State as a spreading cancer (Obama, 2014h, 2014i and 2014k), and the need to "nip this at the bud" (Obama, 2014i). He fears that "If left unchecked" Islamic State would not only pose "a threat to the people of Syria and Iraq", but to "the broader Middle East" and beyond (Obama, 2014k). Similar sentiments are echoed in a 2014 Senate Committee meeting. In the opening remarks, Senator Robert Menendez stated that Islamic State "is recruiting disciples for its unholy war at a frightening pace from Europe, the United States, and anywhere they can find disaffected people…. It has declared the territory it occupies a caliphate with intent to seize more territory from United States partners and allies from Jordan to Saudi Arabia to Lebanon…. ISIL is an enemy of the United States and the civilized world" (Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, 2015). That the US is intervening in Iraq to protect its allies from a revolutionary group antithetical to its order; and that the US sees intervention in Syria as an extension of its campaign in Iraq, suggests that counterrevolution in Syria might be related to broader order exit fears. It is just that these fears do not relate directly to the position of Syria.

Jabhat al-Nusra

A similar logic applies in the case of Jabhat al-Nusra. Founded as the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda, the group is part of a broader network that has threatened US interests in multiple countries beyond just Syria. Al-Qaeda's goals include order creation and expansion, seeking to "extend Islamic authority and religion into new areas of the world" (Siebert and Keeney, 2017: 386). Al-Qaeda is working to achieve this via the creation of 'emirates', including in Yemen (al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, AQAP), north Africa (al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, AQIM), Somalia (al-Shabaab) and Egypt (al-Qaeda in the Sinai Peninsula). Yemen, Egypt and Somalia occupy important places within the US-led order, cooperating militarily with the US in counterterrorism operations (Council on Foreign Relations, 2015; Selim, 2020: 21). The expansion of al-Qaeda's ordering project threatens to draw in new members at the US order's expense.

Jabhat al-Nusra is part of the transnational threat al-Qaeda poses to the US-led order. Although Jabhat al-Nusra's leader, Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, has frequently emphasised the group's local goals in Syria, he has also "made it clear that he viewed Jihad in Syria as part-in-parcel of a global struggle" (Lister, 2016: 10). Early on, Jabhat al-Nusra announced that it was working to build the Syrian emirate of al-Qaeda's global caliphate (Lister, 2016: 17). Jabhat al-Nusra has espoused anti-

US rhetoric, and has made moves "to censure anyone with links to the West" (Lister, 2016: 10, 15, 18-19). The US government has been particularly wary of the so-called 'Khorasan Group' – (allegedly) an elite group of al-Qaeda operatives within Jabhat-al-Nusra dedicated to attacks on external targets in loose collaboration with AQAP (Lister, 2016: 6, 16-17).

Jabhat al-Nusra's links to al-Qaeda are a crucial reason why Washington targeted the group (Lister, 2016: 12, 16). In the lead up to the decision to target Jabhat al-Nusra, President Obama had been repeatedly briefed on how the group was absorbing al-Qaeda leaders from Afghanistan and Pakistan, creating "the largest haven for the network since it was scattered after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks" (Entous, 2016). Further, a high-ranking US government official stated of the November 2016 campaign against Jabhat al-Nusra: "The president doesn't want this group [Jabhat al-Nusra] to be what inherits the country if Assad ever does fall… This cannot be the viable Syrian opposition. It's al-Qaeda" (quoted in Entous, 2016). The threat posed by Jabhat al-Nusra isn't just about Syria, but about the broader order exit threat posed by al-Qaeda.

The broader threat posed by al-Qaeda affects the US as well as its order members. US government officials have repeatedly highlighted the importance of protecting American allies as part of the rationale for intervening against Jabhat al-Nusra. The White House's homeland security and counterterrorism adviser stated of the US intervention: "We have made clear to all parties in Syria that we will not allow al-Qaeda to grow its capacity to attack the U.S., our allies, and our interests…" (quoted in Entous, 2016). The director of the US National Counterterrorism Center similarly stated: "…now that many of them [al-Qaeda leaders] are in Syria, we believe they will work to threaten the U.S. and our allies" (DeYoung and Goldman, 2016). The emphasis on protecting its allies suggests that the US may fear the encroachment of al-Qaeda's ordering project onto members of its own order.

Jabhat al-Nusra rightly assessed that its association with al-Qaeda was threatening the organisation's survival (Lister, 2016: 20). On 28 July 2016, Jabhat al-Nusra's leadership announced that it had formally separated from al-Qaeda (Lucas, 2016). The replacement of the name Jabhat al-Nusra with the new name Jabhat Fatah al-Sham was to emphasise the organisation's domestic, rather than transnational, aims (Lucas, 2016). At the same time, Jabhat al-Nusra's spokesperson announced that "in the interest of keeping the Syrian jihad ongoing and strong, all other desirable interests, including targeting the West and America, fall away and disappear" (quoted in Lister, 2016: 20). Discourse shifted away from the goal of establishing a worldwide Caliphate (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2018: 2). To underscore its independence and domestic

objectives, Jabhat al-Nusra's derivative organisation HTS began detaining al-Qaeda operatives in Syria (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2018: 2).

Even once Jabhat al-Nusra had extracted itself from the transnational order exit threat of al-Qaeda, US counterrevolution continued. This was because the US remained skeptical that the split between Jabhat al-Nusra and al-Qaeda was authentic. On 4 August, 2016, President Obama affirmed that the US would continue to target al-Qaeda in Syria "no matter what name it calls itself" (quoted in Al-Monitor, 2016). Jabhat al-Nusra's successor HTS was designated a foreign terrorist organisation by the US on the basis that it is a tool of al-Qaeda (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2018: 2).

The preceding discussion has suggested that US counterrevolution against Jabhat al-Nusra and its successor organisations was not about Syria, but about the transnational threat of al-Qaeda. This threat affected not just the US but several of its order members who were vulnerable to overthrow by order-exiting al-Qaeda affiliates. That al-Qaeda was building a stronghold in Syria, and that al-Qaeda was working to elicit order exit in other states, made Syria a battleground for order membership even though Syria wasn't embedded in the US-led order to begin with.

Ahrar al-Sham

Whereas both Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra have faced US counterrevolution, the Salafist group Ahrar al-Sham has so far been spared. A potentially important difference between Ahrar al-Sham on the one hand and Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra on the other is that the former organisation has been careful to impress upon the US that its goals are contained within the borders of Syria. This is in contrast to the transnational ambitions of Jabhat al-Nusra and Islamic State which pose threats to the US and its order member allies.

Ahrar al-Sham is by and large a "nationalist" organisation (Steinberg, 2016: 5). It has been explicit that its re-ordering objectives end with Syria, and has indicated its willingness to work with the US to end the Syrian civil war (International Crisis Group, 2016: 28; Steinberg, 2016: 1). Ahrar al-Sham's foreign relations spokesperson has tried to win over the West via op-eds in the Washington Post and Daily Telegraph (El Yassir, 2016; Lister, 2016: 18; Steinberg, 2016: 6). The closest Ahrar al-Sham has come to prompting US counterrevolution is over its relationship with al-Qaeda affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra; "[t]he charge that it was acting as an enabler for al-Qaeda in Syria became an increasing problem for Ahrar al-Sham" (Steinberg, 2016: 6; see also Jonsson, 2016: 1). This suggests that the involvement of Ahrar al-Sham in a transnational order building project, such as al-Qaeda's, would be a red line for Washington. Since 2014, Ahrar al-Sham has been working hard

to distance itself from al-Qaeda, (Steinberg, 2016: 6). In an April 2015 Al Jazeera interview, the group obliquely criticised Jabhat al-Nusra for its al-Qaeda links which were endangering the revolution (Lister, 2016: 28; Steinberg, 2016: 6). A spokesperson for Ahrar al-Sham has also denied the group's links to al-Qaeda, writing "We are fighting for justice for the Syrian people. Yet we have been falsely accused of having organizational links to al Qaeda and of espousing al Qaeda's ideology. Nothing could be further from the truth…" (quoted in El Yassir, 2016). Ahrar al-Sham's efforts to distance itself from al-Qaeda have been hampered by the emergence of a hardline faction within the organisation (Lister, 2016: 27). While the moderate wing emphasises the group's domestic Syrian objectives, the hardliners are sympathetic to international jihad and see the group's future in cultivating its alliance with Jabhat al-Nusra (Steinberg, 2016: 5-6; Lister, 2016: 27). So far, the hardliners have not prevailed.

Why have Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra faced US counterrevolution while Ahrar al-Sham has not? A common factor between Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra is that their ambitions do not stop with Syria. Their expansive aims threaten US allies in Iraq, Egypt and beyond. In contrast, Ahrar al-Sham has repeatedly linked its objectives to the domestic revolutionary struggle against the al-Assad regime. That Ahrar al-Sham is not part of a transnational order exit threat helps to explain why it has been spared US counterrevolution.

## Other explanations: ideology and threats to power hierarchies

So far, this chapter has used order exit theory to explain why Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra experienced US counterrevolution, while Ahrar al-Sham has not. It has been argued that Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra posed an indirect order exit challenge to the US, seeking to build competitor orders with the potential to drag US order members into their gravitational pull. By contrast, Ahrar al-Sham's domestic objectives posed no such order exit threat. Two other explanations for the US pattern of counterrevolution against the three Syrian Salafist groups shall be considered next: ideology and threats to power hierarchies.

### Ideology

Ideology is another potentially important factor explaining the US response to Islamic State. Islamic State is explicit in its rejection of the 'heresy' of democracy (Khadem, 2019: 132-3). Obama criticised Islamic State's ideology in eight of his 28 speeches and letters to do with the group in the period between January and September 2014. Obama lambasted Islamic State's "warped" (Obama, 2014k), "extremist" (Obama, 2014p), "hateful" (Obama, 2014q), "bankrupt" and "nihilistic" ideology (Obama, 2014h and 2014j). He spoke of the need to combat "the danger posed by

religiously motivated fanatics" and "to dismantle this network of death" (Obama, 2014t). Apprehension about Islamic State's ideology is also evident beyond the executive. For example, US Senator Robert Menendez evoked Islamic State's "bankrupt religious ideology" and "warped vision of Islam" during a 2014 senate committee meeting (Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, 2015).

Ideology could also be used to explain US counterrevolution against Jabhat al-Nusra. The ideology of al-Qaeda is antithetical to the ideology espoused by the US. For example, former al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri stated in a recorded 2013 speech that "we have to recognize that legitimacy isn't in elections and democracy . . . [t]he legitimacy which you should defend and adhere to is the governance of the Shariah and its supremacy over all the constitutions and law" (quoted in Khadem, 2019: 134). Obama has accordingly been critical of both Jabhat al-Nusra's and al-Qaeda's ideologies. In a speech on 19 June 2014, Obama criticised the extremist ideology of Jabhat al-Nusra (Obama, 2014b). He has also been vocal about eliminating the ideology of Jabhat al-Nusra's affiliate al-Qaeda (Obama, 2014t).

The role of ideology, however, is at first glance less convincing in explaining the lack of counterrevolution against Ahrar al-Sham. Ahrar al-Sham's Salafism has been described as hardline and militant (Jonsson, 2016: 3). Others have noted the ideological similarities between Ahrar al-Sham and Jabhat al-Nusra (Steinberg, 2016: 4). Like Islamic State, Ahrar al-Sham has at times been uncompromising towards minorities. In pursuing its objectives in Syria, Ahrar al-Sham has committed atrocities against Alawite and Shiite civilians (although not to the same extent as Islamic State) (Steinberg, 2016: 3, 5). Ahrar al-Sham has even been described as the 'Syrian Taliban' by virtue of its ideological outlook, poor treatment of minorities, strong nationalism and links with Jabhat al-Nusra (Jonsson, 2016: 1; Steinberg, 2016: 5-6). An argument could be made, however, that Ahrar al-Sham's moderation from 2014 has had some effect in assuaging US concerns about the group's ideology. Ahrar al-Sham has emphasised to Western governments that it follows a moderate Islamism (Steinberg, 2016: 6). It has also publicly distinguished itself ideologically from al-Qaeda and Islamic State (Heller, 2016). If some scholars are skeptical as to whether such "subtle ideological differences" are likely "to convince many Western policymakers of Ahrar al-Sham's acceptability as an opposition actor" (Lister, 2016: 28), these subtle differences may have been enough to protect Ahrar al-Sham from US counterrevolution.

Threats to power hierarchies

Another possible reason for US counterrevolution against Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra is that they both explicitly seek to challenge international power hierarchies, whereas Ahrar al-Sham does

not. For Islamic State, the goal of establishing an expanding Caliphate is a means to restore "the glory days of global Islamic dominance" (Khadem, 2019: 138). Crucial to the Caliphate's mission to eclipse 'the West' is a rejection of the nation-state frame, which is seen as a tool used by Western powers to divide and weaken the Muslim polity (Khadem, 2019: 138). Islamic State declared in its English-language publication 'Dabiq' that "nationalism… limits the religion to a nationalist border, and it prohibits expansion beyond. For these reasons, nationalism was innovated by the West, as through it, they elevated their brethren, empowered apostasy in the Muslims' lands, divided and conquered the Muslim peoples, and defended the crusaders' lands from offensive jihad" (Dabiq, 2015a: 3-4 in Khadem, 2019: 138). Islamic State has relished the fears their campaign has allegedly drummed up in the US. In the eighth issue of 'Dabiq', it was highlighted that: "Over the last month, a number of crusaders voiced their concerns over the power and drive of the Islamic State, its revival of Islam and the Caliphate, and its eventual expansion into Europe and the rest of the world" (Dabiq, 2015b in The Carter Center, 2015: 8).

Islamic State has also sought to check the influence of Western powers by challenging encroachments onto Muslim lands. This has been pursued by targeting foreigners as well as regimes in the region for their subservience to Western powers (Khadem, 2019: 135). Such regimes are "betrayers", being "too ready to compromise with Western powers and too willing to allow for their intervention" (Goldstone and Alimi, 2021: 2). Rhetoric against the domination of Western powers has been accompanied by attacks in Western states. Islamic State has claimed responsibility for terrorist attacks in Europe, the US, and beyond. These include the Paris (2015), San Bernadino (2015), Brussels (2016), Nice (2016), Orlando (2016) and Manchester (2017) attacks (Celso, 2018: 7-8, 12-14).[117] Obama framed US intervention in terms of preventing Islamic State from targeting the US homeland, whether via returning foreign fighters, lone wolf terrorist attacks on US territory, or direct Islamic State plots against US interests (Obama, 2014a, 2014b, 2014e, 2014i and 2014k). Order exit objectives magnify this power hierarchy challenge. Islamic State's efforts to challenge US hegemony from the vantage point of a new order is more effective than wanting to climb the hierarchy of an existing order. An example of this latter phenomenon is Iraq's anti-government insurgency between 2004 and 2011. A key objective motivating the revolutionaries was ending US interference in Iraq's affairs, however the revolutionaries were (by-and-large) not proposing to leave the US-dominated order. While Islamic State also wants to end US interference in the Muslim world, it seeks to achieve this by building a new, and expanding, order.

[117] The precise role of Islamic State in these attacks varies. Some were directed by Islamic State, whereas others were Islamic State-inspired (Celso, 2018: 9-10, 12).

Like Islamic State, Jabhat al-Nusra posed a challenge to US hegemony. Although Jabhat al-Nusra (and especially HTS) have emphasised their domestic objectives, they are seen as challengers to the US by virtue of their ties to al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda, even more so than Islamic State, espouses an "anti-Western and anticolonial paradigm inherited from its Egyptian Brotherhood and Qutbist branch" (Laghmari, 2019: 75). While Islamic State has at various times prioritised the 'near enemy', including the Syrian and Iraqi governments and religious minorities such as the Shi'ia, al-Qaeda has been waging a decades-long campaign against the 'far enemy', namely the US (Gerges, 2016: 5-7). According to al-Qaeda, Western colonialism and its carving up of the Middle East via the Sykes-Picot Treaty sent the Muslim world into decline (Khadem, 2019: 140). This state of affairs between the dominator and dominated is to be reversed with the rebuilding of the Caliphate. Al-Qaeda's vision of an increasingly powerful Caliphate that defeats the West is articulated in the tenth issue of AQAP's English-language publication, 'Inspire' (2014: 45 in Bunker and Bunker, 2018: 82):

> Inshallah it is only a matter of time before the American empire collapses in the hands of the mujahideen in defeat and disarray, leading to the destruction of Israel and the establishment of a powerful pan-Islamic state which will implement the Law of Allah, hence it will play a major political and economic role in the world ever since and become renowned for its justice and prosperity.

Al-Qaeda is clear that the rise of this powerful 'pan-Islamic state' is at the US' expense. Al-Qaeda's 2013 jihad guidelines (quoted in Stewart, 2016 and Wright, 2016), state that:

> The purpose of targeting America is to exhaust her and bleed her to death, so that it meets the fate of the former Soviet Union and collapses under its own weight as a result of its military, human, and financial losses. Consequently, its grip on our lands will weaken and its allies will begin to fall one after another.

Jabhat al-Nusra has been much more circumspect about challenging Western domination than has its parent organisation. Such themes are nonetheless present in Jabhat al-Nusra's publications and statements. An October 2015 issue of Jabhat al-Nusra's publication, 'Al-Risalah', depicts images of its enemies including Barack Obama (Tony Blair Institute, 2015). Other themes present in 'Al-Risalah' include the affront of Western interventions into Muslim territories (Fedeli, 2017: 43).

Although jihadi Salafis generally oppose Western interventions into the Muslim world, Ahrar al-Sham has refrained from critiquing US power. Ahrar al-Sham has been at pains to emphasize its domestic and 'nationalist' aims, being largely silent on international relations (El Yassir, 2016; Lister, 2015; Zuhur, 2015: 148). The variation between the three Salafist groups in terms of their international power redistribution objectives could help to explain patterns of US counterrevolution (or lack thereof). That Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra have explicitly sought to eclipse the power of the US could have, at least in part, motivated the US to act. In contrast,

Ahrar al-Sham's approach of seeking to work with the US, accepting its leadership role in the peace process and in the region, suggests its acceptance of (or at least acquiescence to) US hegemony.

## Limitations of order exit theory

The application of order exit theory to the case of the attempted Syrian Salafist revolution highlights three limitations. First, it shows that order exit is not the most important factor in great power counterrevolution all of the time. While indirect order exit may have played a role in the US decision to intervene against Islamic State in Syria, this role does not seem to have been the main one. Second, the Syrian Salafist case shows order exit theory to be restricted by its state-centrism. The theory's insensitivity to transnational order exit threats, except via in-depth case analysis, shows some measurement issues in capturing the order exit variable.[118] Third, this case study has shown the limitations of how ideological challenge is conceptualised and operationalised. Each of these three limitations is considered in turn.

Limitation 1: order exit is not the most important factor in all cases

Although there is some evidence that the US intervened in Syria as part of their campaign to protect their allies, including Iraq, from falling to Islamic State, there are several other compelling explanations. In addition to Islamic State's extremist ideology discussed above, Obama gave multiple reasons for the US counterrevolution campaign against Islamic State. The two initial, and most prolifically cited, reasons for intervention are humanitarian objectives and to protect US lives and property in the Middle East. In 16 separate communications, Obama highlights his mission to protect US citizens in Iraq (civilians, diplomats and military advisers), the US Embassy in Baghdad, and the US consulate in Erbil (for example, Obama, 2014c and 2014d). In a press briefing on 28 August, Obama stated that "our core priority right now is just to make sure that our folks are safe" (Obama, 2014i). Obama also cited humanitarian objectives as driving US intervention, including saving Yazidis stranded on Mount Sinjar, protecting religious minorities targeted by Islamic State, and assisting civilians displaced by the conflict (Obama, 2014d, 2014f, 2014k and 2014l). Other reasons cited by Obama include the sheer "barbarity and brutality" of Islamic State (Obama, 2014e), "to uphold international norms" (Obama, 2014d), and the US' leadership role in combatting global threats (Obama, 2014m). On this latter point, Obama states that: "This is an

[118] Refining the measurement of order exit in this way would likely strengthen, rather the weaken, the regression results. The detection of a transnational order exit threat in the Syrian case, for example, lends order exit theory empirical support. In contrast, the current dataset coding of no order exit but great power counterrevolution detracts from the overall strength of the correlation between these two variables.

effort that America has the unique ability to lead. When the world is threatened; when the world needs help; it calls on America" (Obama, 2014o).

Although order exit has some explanatory power when applied to the Syrian case, it is likely secondary to other factors such as protecting US personnel stationed in the region, Islamic State's ideology, and preventing terrorist attacks on US soil. On the one hand, this chapter has shown how far the order exit theory can travel; it wields some explanatory power even when applied to an unlikely case. On the other hand, it suggests that order exit does not occupy a position of causal primacy in every case. Consistent with the average effects detected in regression models, order exit is not going to be the most compelling explanation in all cases all of the time.

Limitation 2: order exit theory has difficulty detecting transnational order exit threats

The Syrian Salafist case study has demonstrated a blind spot generated by order exit theory's state centrism. By analysing each revolutionary episode's order membership desires individually on a state-by-state basis, indirect order exit threats that traverse state borders have not been detected in the dataset. The starting point for coding order exit is whether each pre-revolutionary state was a member of a great power order. This means that while Islamic State's order exiting objectives were detected in Iraq (a US order member), they were not detected in Syria (not a US order member).

The state-centrism of order exit theory has to do with the way I define revolution, which is anchored in attempts to topple regimes. Given that Islamic State was trying to topple both the Syrian and Iraqi regimes, this revolutionary movement is split into two revolutionary episodes in the dataset, rather than one. Treating Islamic State as two separate episodes – one in Syria and one in Iraq – is not an accurate representation of Islamic State's objectives or activities. During this period, Islamic State was a reasonably coherent movement that sought to operate independently of externally imposed borders, with its leadership splitting its time between Raqqa and Mosul (Byman, 2016b: 78). Dividing Islamic State as per existing state borders, as I do the dataset, leads to coding decisions that do not reflect the transnational order-exiting objectives of the movement as a whole.

Islamic State is not the only revolutionary movement to mount a transnational order exit challenge. AQAP, for example, targets both the Yemeni and Saudi regimes, seeking to pull both out of US orbit. The Muslim Brotherhood has fomented revolution in Soviet-aligned Syria (1976-82) and Egypt (1942-69). Sendero Luminoso did not pose an order exit threat in un-aligned Peru, but its

expansive revolutionary objectives to build a greater Quechuan-socialist state threatened the order exit of key US allies Bolivia and Chile.[119]

The inability of order exit theory to capture transnational order exit threats suggests the need for refinement. Rather than treating each revolutionary episode as an independent entity, the linkages between episodes could be mapped and coded. This would allow more fine-grained measurement of the order exit variable, capturing exit dynamics in related cases. It may be that the state-centrism of my definition of revolution could also be relaxed. This would free the analytic focus to make visible attempts at social and political transformation that are not anchored to a single state. This wider definition of revolution would also make visible movements engaging in political and social transformation without having toppled (or seeking to topple) the central state authority – revolution from the bottom up (Stewart, 2021).

Limitation 3: measuring ideology

A third area for further refinement concerns this study's measurement of ideology. Revolutionaries are coded as posing an ideological challenge to a great power when the ideology they espouse is different to the great power's legitimating ideology. This case study, however, has highlighted an important nuance in terms of how ideological threats are captured in the dataset. Although Ahrar al-Sham is Salafist, their more moderate version vis-a-vis Islamic State seems to have played a role in protecting the group from US counterrevolution. This suggests that the role of ideology in triggering great power counterrevolution may be more about degree than kind. In other words, counterrevolution might not be triggered by an ideological category, but by a revolutionary movement's position within an ideological category. The case of Ahrar al-Sham seems to indicate that more moderate forms of threatening ideologies can be tolerated. This dynamic is also apparent in the case of the Hungarian Revolution (1956): the Soviet Union tolerated some liberalisation, but not too much. Another issue related to ideology is its international versus domestic dimensions. Ahrar al-Sham is Salafist domestically, but not internationally. This contrasts with Islamic State whose Salafist ideology is all-encompassing. The current measure of ideology used in the dataset captures only domestic ideological ordering projects.

[119] On the expansive objectives of Sendero Luminoso see McCormick (1987: 113).

## Conclusions

This chapter has applied order exit theory to a difficult case: great power counterrevolution without order exit. In testing the applicability of order exit theory, it has highlighted the role of transnational order exit threats. US counterrevolution against Islamic State wasn't about 'losing' Syria, but about the potential risk of 'losing' neighbouring US allies to Islamic State's ordering project. An intra-case comparison of Islamic State, Jabhat al-Nusra and Ahrar al-Sham lends some further support to order exit theory. Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra were embedded in transnational order building projects that threatened to lure US allies, while Ahrar al-Sham posed no such order exit risks to other states. If Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra weren't perceived by the US as posing a transnational order exit, it is at least possible to imagine that there would have been no intervention in Syria.

Although order exit has some explanatory power in the case of the Syrian Salafist revolution, it is secondary to other factors such as protecting the lives and property of the US and its allies, ideology, threats to power hierarchies and terrorist threats to the homeland. This case shows the limits of how far order exit theory travels: it does not operate in a law-like way, being a necessary condition for great power counterrevolution to occur. Rather, order exit explains some cases of great power counterrevolution some of the time (with order exit preceding 72% of great power counterrevolutions between 1900 and 2020). The Syrian Salafist case study has also pinpointed some areas for further theoretical refinement: capturing transnational order exit threats, and generating new measures of revolutionary challenges to great power ideologies.

# Conclusion

This chapter undertakes three tasks. The first section outlines the key findings and contribution of the dissertation. The second section suggests future lines of research. These include expanding the temporal and methodological parameters of the project as well as examining the role of nonstate actors in international counterrevolution. Other important tasks include exploring the determinants of international counterrevolutionary success as well as the determinants of great power support for revolution. The third section concludes by reflecting upon the future of international counterrevolution, tentatively deploying order exit theory to patterns of counterrevolution in the present moment.

## Key findings

This dissertation has been about great power counterrevolution: when, where and why it unfolds. As such, it has set out to do three things. First, it has mapped patterns of revolution and great power counterrevolution since the turn of the twentieth century. This mapping has shown that international counterrevolution is a phenomenon spanning continents and decades. It has also shown that great power counterrevolution does not always unfold in sync with revolution: for every two revolutions there is barely one counterrevolution. Second, this dissertation has sought to explain these varied patterns of international counterrevolution. In so doing, it has highlighted the role of order exit. Whereas existing theories of great power counterrevolution have emphasised ideological and power distribution challenges (among others), this dissertation has pointed to the destabilising power of resistance via exit. Order exit has a positive and statistically significant relationship with great power counterrevolution. Revolutions that attempt to exit their state's current order are more than two times more likely to be met with great power counterrevolution than those which don't. Third, this dissertation has sketched the contours of what order exit, and its opposite, order continuity, look like in three specific contexts. These cases highlight the constricting power of international orders to shape and mould revolutions, versus the risks and transformative futures facing revolutionaries that pursue change separate from their order *ante*. These three tasks have been carried out by three different means: descriptive statistics have been used to map macro-historical patterns of revolution and international counterrevolution; inferential statistics have been used to show the effect of order exit on great power counterrevolution; the case studies have zoomed in on dynamics of order exit and continuity, linking these dynamics to great power counterrevolution (or the lack thereof). The case studies

have also allowed the limitations of order exit theory to be explored, while pinpointing areas in need of further elaboration.

This dissertation is not just a story of how great powers manage, tolerate, and crush threats to their orders, it is also a story of revolutionaries desperately trying to effect radical change. Revolutionaries are faced with multiple difficult decisions and trade-offs in trying to transform domestic and international orders. There are those revolutionaries that succeed in radically re-imaging the world (the Bolsheviks in 1917 and the Iranians in 1979); there are those that try and fail (the Sandinistas in 1926 and the Hungarians in 1956); and there are those that compromise, acquiesce and survive (the Bolivians in 1952 and the Poles in 1956). Revolutionaries demonstrate their agency not only in fighting to the death, but in their manoeuvring to ensure the survival of their fragile revolutionary gains. It is a delicate game to eke as much change out of a particular international order as possible without fatally overstepping.

## Future research agendas

While answering some questions, this dissertation raises others to be addressed in future work. Four lines of inquiry are outlined here. The first set of future tasks concerns expanding the project's parameters. This could involve examining great power responses to revolution beyond the three-year temporal cut-off. Such an investigation would capture Yugoslavia's exit from the Soviet order in 1948, four years after Josep Broz Tito and his communist forces won control of the country. This expanded temporal frame would also capture China's exit in 1961, and great power responses to Mexico's radical policies during the 1930s, including the 1938 expropriation of foreign oil company assets under President Lázaro Cárdenas. Crucially, this investigation would show whether order exit theory applies only in the initial throes of revolution, or whether it still wields explanatory power in the years and decades after revolutions consolidate. Another way the project could be expanded is to extend the dataset backwards in time to show the interaction between eighteenth and nineteenth century orders, revolution and counterrevolution. This would involve, for example, explaining patterns of counterrevolution against the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), the Greek Revolution (1821-1829), the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) and the European revolutions of 1848. This expansion backwards in time would provide more empirical material from which to understand how the determinants of great power counterrevolution shift across eras, including the role of different configurations of international orders. Potentially promising lines of future research also entail expanding the number of great powers examined, for example, mapping China's response to revolution during the Cold War and post-Cold War periods. China's contest with the Soviet Union from 1961 changed the terrain of order exit possibilities for

revolutionaries and created more opportunities for grievances amongst the powers. The range of independent variables captured in the dataset could also be expanded. This would include mapping revolutionary challenges to institutions, international law and diplomatic norms, and analysing how these affect great power responses. The project could also be expanded methodologically, conducting interviews and field research to examine order exiting dynamics on the ground: how do contemporary revolutionaries see the great powers, when do they look to great powers for support, and when do they try and break free to forge their over path?

A second way this project could be built upon is to explore the full gamut of actors that engage in international counterrevolution beyond just the great powers. International counterrevolution can be waged by foreign fighters, transnational solidarity networks and multinational corporations. Examples include Hezbollah's support for the incumbent Syrian Bashar al-Assad regime against the 'Arab Spring' revolutionaries, and US oil companies lobbying for the overthrow Carranza's revolutionary regime in Mexico (Katz, 1981: 476-7, 493). Examination of the role of non-state actors in international counterrevolution would tie in with existing research that looks beyond the state. For example, Chenoweth and Stephan (2021) have produced a dataset on external support for non-violent campaigns in the period between 2000 and 2013. The range of external actors they consider includes diaspora groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), transnational labour unions, university groups and multinational firms. This non-state frame could be applied to revolutionaries too. Examining the transnational dimensions of revolutionary movements would be an important corrective to the state centrism of order exit theory as discussed in relation to the Syrian Salafist case (Chapter 7). Such a counterrevolutions research agenda, unanchored from the state, would resonate theoretically with calls for an "inter-social" approach to revolution (Lawson, 2019: 64-71). Examining interactions between social sites, rather than interactions between states, would not only help to unsettle international/domestic binaries, it would also provide a much richer and more nuanced picture of counterrevolution complete with all of its "transboundary entanglements" (Lawson, 2019: 64, 71).

A third future project is to examine questions of international counterrevolutionary success and failure. Whereas this dissertation has sought to explain the causes of great power counterrevolution, an important further question concerns the causes of great power counterrevolutionary victory or otherwise. Why was the US successful in crushing revolution in the Dominican Republic (1961-65) but not in Cuba (1959)? Order leaving revolutions, for example, might be more likely to survive international counterrevolution when they have a new great power order to back them. Whether revolutionaries construct or join orders would be another useful variable: revolutionaries that construct new international orders might be more vulnerable to

counterrevolutionary victory than those that join existing international orders. Factors such as revolutionary ideologies, movement structures and tactics might play a role too. An investigation into why international counterrevolutions sometimes succeed would parallel the large body of literature examining the reasons for revolutionary success and failure, and would dovetail with Clarke's (2022) examination of the determinants of counterrevolutionary success, domestic and otherwise.

A fourth future project is to examine why great powers *support* revolution. The reasons why great powers support revolution are not necessarily the inverse of the reasons why great powers engage in counterrevolution. For example, although order remaining revolutions may be protected from great power counterrevolution, their order remaining status doesn't necessarily guarantee great power support. Puzzling empirical examples of the phenomenon of great power support include the UK's diplomatic recognition of Communist China in 1950, US diplomatic recognition of the Sandinistas in 1979, and US support for the Khmer Rouge and its coalition partners holding Cambodia's seat at the UN from 1980. The dependent variable of great power support for revolution is already captured in this dissertation's dataset, however it has not yet been analysed.

## The future of international counterrevolution

Despite assertions to the contrary, revolution seems to be a continuing and even expanding feature of world politics (Beissinger, 2022: 417-18, 425-6; Goldstone, 2014: 132-3; Lawson, 2019: 248). As long as revolution persists, it is likely that counterrevolution will too. But what will the future of international counterrevolution look like? It seems as though we are in the midst of another period of world historical change: the rise of China, a more assertive Russia, and the relative decline of the US (see for example Ikenberry and Tang, 2018: 15; Schweller and Pu, 2011: 41-2). Relatedly, dynamics of regionalisation and 'multiplexity' are superseding previous logics of unipolarity-generated centralisation and domination (Acharya, 2017). These changes have implications for the form and practice of international counterrevolution. The twentieth century has indicated that order exiting revolutions, and great power counterrevolution, are less common in periods where there is only one great power order. The post-Cold War era, dominated by a hegemonic US, was relatively quiescent in this regard. In contrast, the existence of multiple great power orders between 1917 and 1989 saw much order exiting and much great power counterrevolution. The Fascist, Soviet and Liberal international orders saw attempts at order defection in all directions. New orders have the potential to draw in new members, especially in situations of sudden revolutionary transformation.

If we are indeed witnessing the emergence of new international orders, then we might expect more opportunities for order defecting revolutions over the coming decades. Although it is too early to fully understand the global order changes that are now in progress, it is plausible that Russia and China are not just rising great powers, but emerging order-builders. China's Belt and Road Initiative, expansive aid programmes in Africa and the Pacific, and its establishment of new international governance institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) could be the kinds of linkages, institutions, hierarchies and dependencies indicative of a nascent order. Similarly, Russia's construction of international governance architecture since 1991 – including the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Economic Union – is suggestive of order-building designs. Whether Russian and Chinese order-building projects are in competition, complementary, or one and the same project is an open question. Their joint role in establishing the Shanghai Five in 1996 and SCO in 2001 point to complementarity at minimum. China's unfolding response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine will also provide important clues as to the relationship between these two powers and their global ambitions.

How revolutionaries will negotiate these potentially emerging orders is not yet clear. But if the coming decades are like the multi-order periods of the twentieth century, then we might see more opportunities for exit, international counterrevolution and war. The current conflicts in Syria and Ukraine seem to support these predictions. The events unfolding in Ukraine can be interpreted as a stark instance of Russian counterrevolution against the 2013-14 Euromaidan Revolution. Erupting on 21 November 2013, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets throughout December and January to protest against the increasingly authoritarian and oligarchic regime of Viktor Yanukovych (Diuk, 2014: 9, 11-12; Sviatnenko and Vinogradov, 2014: 42). Instigated by students, the protests swelled to include broad swathes of the population and spread geographically to Crimea, Dnipropetrovsk and beyond (Diuk, 2014: 10-11, 13-15; Shveda and Park, 2016: 88; Sviatnenko and Vinogradov, 2014: 42). Revolutionary demands concerned the construction of a durable democracy in Ukraine (Shveda and Park, 2016: 86-7, 90). The 2013-14 revolutionaries not only sought to re-order domestic politics along liberal lines, but to transform Ukraine's foreign relations.

The spark igniting the revolution was President Yanukovych's sudden volte face on signing an expansive free trade deal with the EU. A key demand of the revolutionaries "concerned moving toward accession to the European Union (EU) and away from Russia and the Soviet past" (Pop-Eleches et al., 2022: 628; see also Sviatnenko and Vinogradov, 2014: 42). Protesters defaced statues of Lenin and posters sprang up in the Maidan with slogans including "No Putin No Cry" and

"Europe, dear, we are coming back home" (Kuhn von Burgsdorff, 2015; Sviatnenko and Vinogradov, 2014: 42). Amidst threats of violence and growing clashes between protesters and police, President Yanukovych was ousted on 21-22 February 2014 (Kuhn von Burgsdorff, 2015; Sviatnenk and Vinogradov, 2014: 42). The 2004 constitution was restored, Russian was dropped as an official language of Ukraine, a new President and pro-EU parliament were elected, and the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement was signed (Kuhn von Burgsdorff, 2015; Oliinyk and Kuzio, 2021: 807, 809). Viewed through an order-membership lens, the Euromaidan Revolution was an 'order-exiting' revolution. Russia responded by invading and annexing Crimea and Sevastopol in March 2014. As processes of order exit continued, including Ukraine's strengthening economic, governance and cultural ties with the EU, Russia has become increasingly wary, culminating in the February 2022 invasion.[120]

This pattern of order exit and international counterrevolution is also evident in Syria. Rebel groups attempting to topple Bashar al-Assad and reorient Syria's foreign policy towards the US and its allies have been met with counterrevolution from Russia, Iran and Hezbollah. Russian and Iranian military aid to the Syrian regime played an important role in beating back the advances of the Syrian National Council (SNC), the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces ('the Coalition') and the Free Syrian Army (FSA) (Kozhanov, 2020: 245, 248; Mazzetti et al., 2017). The ambitions of Islamic State make Syria a three-way contest between the order leaving project of the US-backed rebel groups, the order-creating project of Islamic State and the order remaining project of the al-Assad regime. Other order membership battlegrounds have resulted from the Sudanese Revolution that toppled the authoritarian regime of President Omar al-Bashir in 2019; Venezuela's anti-*Chavismo* movement from 2014; and Hong Kong's democracy movement from 2014.

Mapping emerging orders, their reactions to revolution, and the role of order membership battles is an important future task. Expanding the parameters of the current project to capture contemporary Russian and Chinese order-building efforts would be a four-stage process. First, this would entail exploring whether and when Chinese and Russian order building processes began. Second, determining how these ordering projects relate to one another: are they one project or two. Third, determining the reactions of these orders to revolutions in the contemporary era: when do they support, oppose and remain neutral in the face of revolutionary change. Fourth, looking

[120] The EU eclipsed the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) as Ukraine's biggest trading partner: the EU comprised 40.7% of Ukraine's international trade in 2020 (Rabinovych, 2022). Societal-level linkages have been strengthened via the Erasmus+ higher education exchange programme and visa waivers for Ukrainians with biometric passports. The EU has also invested millions of Euros to support improved governance, energy efficiency and security, and digital innovation in Ukraine (European External Action Service, 2021).

at the effects of order exit on Russian and Chinese counterrevolutionary responses. These are no small tasks. There is intense debate as to whether China is still 'rising', whether China is building a competitor order, and the degree to which Russia and China are acting in concert in international affairs (see for example Feng, 2015: 34; Haenle and Wyne, 2022; Rajah and Leng, 2022). Capturing the full range of orders in the present moment – emerging as well as established – is an important, albeit difficult, task. In the meantime, the above examples of Syria and Ukraine are suggestive of the counter-revolutionary potential of fragmenting orders.

If more orders create more opportunities for great power counterrevolution, they also create more opportunities for revolutionaries to transform the international status quo. The dampening effect of a single hegemonic order on revolutionary transformation dissipates when revolutionaries can secure support from a rival great power. This observation resonates with assertions of the return of more disruptive revolutionary forms (Allinson, 2019b: 142; Lawson, 2019: 234-244). It looks like we are entering a new future of more disruptive revolutions and more great power counterrevolutions, with order exit theory an important piece of the puzzle explaining why. As the role of international counterrevolution in world politics once again becomes increasingly prominent, so too does the necessity of mapping this phenomenon. Understanding where and when international counterrevolution occurs, as well as its drivers, are both tasks of crucial importance. This thesis has sought to provide a first step in achieving these tasks.

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