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Introduction Revolution and the City

He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. LUKE 1:51-52

TWO UPRISINGS in the city of Kyiv, separated by almost a century, tell the basic story of this book. Like much of the rest of the Russian Empire in 1905, Kyiv-then a multicultural industrial center of three hundred thousand and the empire's third most important city—seethed with revolutionary activity. Unrest began with worker strikes in sympathy with the victims of Bloody Sunday (January 22) in St. Petersburg. By May, massive waves of peasant rebellion had unfolded in the surrounding countryside. They would persist for another two years. After ten months of turmoil, Tsar Nicholas II issued his October Manifesto recognizing political freedoms and the limited authority of a Duma. Angry that the monarch had not abdicated, crowds gathered the following day on Khreshchatyk, Kyiv's commercial boulevard. Students burst into the university and destroyed portraits of the tsar. A crowd of twenty thousand assembled at Duma Square (today known as Independence Square, a.k.a. Maidan) to listen to revolutionary speeches. After participants refused orders to disperse, mounted Cossacks with drawn sabers charged the gathering, and soldiers fired into the crowd. The protestors rioted, and in the tumult twelve demonstrators and ten soldiers were killed. That same evening, pogroms unfolded against the city's Jewish population, leaving forty-seven dead and four hundred wounded. A Soviet of Workers' Deputies was established and, with an arsenal of revolvers, hunting guns, and garden spades, began preparations for an armed uprising. On November 18, soldiers from the Kyiv garrison mutinied over social conditions in the army and paraded through the city. Their

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numbers increased as workers spontaneously joined the rebellion. Troops loyal to the regime surrounded the rebels and opened fire, killing forty and wounding two hundred. Martial law was declared, and the city was temporarily pacified. But on December 12, in solidarity with an armed rebellion that had broken out in Moscow, the Kyiv Soviet mounted an insurrection in the working-class neighborhood of Shuliavka. It armed workers and proclaimed an independent Shuliavska Republic, declaring it the sole authority in the city. The uprising lasted four days before it was crushed.¹

Contrast Kyiv in November 1905 with Kyiv in November 2004. By 2004, Kyiv was a major metropolitan center of 2.5 million—more than eight times its population in 1905—and the capital of an independent Ukraine. Whereas in 1905 78 percent of Ukraine's population consisted of peasants, by 2004 only 6 percent of the country's workforce was employed in agriculture, rendering peasant rebellion in the surrounding areas of Kyiv unthinkable. Not only had socialist collectivization (and post-socialist transition) transformed property relations in the countryside, but the majority of the population in outlying districts now lived in urban areas.

The Orange Revolution began when two hundred thousand citizens—ten times the number who participated in demonstrations on the same site a century before-descended on Independence Square to protest electoral fraud and support opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko. Despite frigid temperatures, in the ensuing days the number of protestors climbed to almost a million as people from all over Ukraine converged on the square. There was no Soviet of Workers Deputies during the Orange Revolution. But two competing centers of authority existed: Yushchenko was hastily sworn in as president on the Maidan in front of a large crowd of onlookers, even before the fraudulent electoral results declaring pro-incumbent candidate Viktor Yanukovych the winner had been formally announced. In 2004, no Cossacks with sabers drawn charged the massive crowds. After initially contemplating a crackdown, the regime backed off-fearful of what might ensue were violence perpetrated against such an enormous gathering. No mutinous soldiers roamed Kyiv's streets with their weapons, though cadets from the Interior Ministry academy did march into the square wearing orange to show their support for Yushchenko, and some members of the army and security services declared their loyalty to the Yushchenko camp. In all, the unrest associated with the 1905 revolution in Kyiv dragged on for several years and involved hundreds of deaths, with the revolutionary opposition eventually losing. In 2004, after seventeen days of round-the-clock protest that

^{1.} Edelman 2016; Heywood 2005; Hamm 1993; Khiterer 1992; Ascher 2004.

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shut down the government and paralyzed the country, the authorities caved in. Only one person died during the Orange Revolution—apparently of a heart attack.

This book is about political revolutions—though truth be told, all revolutions are political. Understood as a mass siege of an established government by its own population with the goals of bringing about regime-change and effecting substantive political or social change, revolutions are, in Foucauldian terms, exceptional moments of "chance reversal"²—when the ongoing trajectory of a political order is ruptured and potentially altered in fundamental ways by those subject to it. As Trotsky put it, revolutions involve "the forcible entry of the masses in the realm of rulership over their own destiny";³ they are political projects of mass collective agency in the remaking of government and society. Ordinarily, social and political life is heavily constrained by the regimes to which we are subject and the orderliness they impose, as well as by the exigencies of everyday life. Revolutions, by contrast, are extraordinary moments when populations attempt to force regime-change from below and fashion new regimes in their stead. In the words of political philosopher John Dunn, "Revolution raises in the most acute and painful form the two most fundamental questions in political understanding: how free ever are we to shape our own lives together on the scale of a political community; and how far do we ever understand what we are doing in politics, or what, in failing to act, we are contributing decisively to bringing about."4

But the frequency of these extraordinary moments, the ways in which populations go about the business of regime-change from below, the reasons they engage in such action, and the locations and social forces that mobilize in revolution have changed dramatically over the last century. This study is about that transformation—and in particular about the impact of the concentration of people, power, and wealth in cities on the incidence, practice, and consequences of political revolutions.

It is sometimes said that the age of revolutions is over. Certainly this is true with respect to one type of revolution—social revolutions, which Theda Skocpol defined as "rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures that are accompanied and in part carried through by mass based revolts from below."⁵ The study of social revolutions once dominated the

2. Lemert and Gillan 1982, 4.

3. Trotsky 1932, vol. 1, xvii. Sewell (1996, 851) similarly refers to revolution as "a self-conscious attempt by the people to impose by force its sovereign will."

4. Dunn 2008, 19.

5. Skocpol 1994, 5.

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scholarly literature on revolutions—and for good reason: social revolutions were often spectacular explosions of class upheaval, violence, and mobilization that exercised deep impacts on the societies that experienced them. But in recent decades, social revolutions aimed at transforming the class structures of society have largely vanished. A number of movements attacking class inequalities have been elected at the ballot box, and a number continue to press revolutionary struggles on the ground. But since the overthrow of Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza by the Sandinista National Liberation Front in July 1979, no movements openly seeking to transform their society's class structure have gained power through revolutionary means, anywhere in the world. Moreover, since the mid-1990s no new revolutionary seizures of power have started that involved at least a thousand civilian participants and articulated goals of class transformation.⁶

Yet, there has never been a shortage of political revolutions. By my counting, from 1985 to 2014 there were approximately fifty-six revolutions worldwide involving mobilizations of at least a thousand civilian participants that successfully displaced incumbent rulers; there were also another sixty-seven attempted revolutions during this period that involved mobilizations of at least a thousand civilian participants but failed to gain power. Two-thirds (eighty-two) of these "successful" and "failed" revolutionary episodes since 1985 occurred primarily in cities—compared to only 45 percent of revolutionary episodes from 1900 to 1984. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, revolution became a predominantly urban phenomenon.

The contrast between these new urban revolutions and the social revolutions that long dominated theorizing about revolution could scarcely be sharper. From the late eighteenth through the early twentieth century, revolution had been largely an urban affair, manifesting itself primarily as armed insurrections in capital cities.⁷ This was, after all, where the nerve centers of government were located, and where the social forces interested in revolutionary regime-change were concentrated. As William Sewell noted, these cities were

6. The most recent were the Chiapas Rebellion of 1994 and the Nepalese civil war of 1996. I use the peak number of direct participants in revolutionary mobilization as a way of identifying the mass character of revolutionary contention and differentiating revolutions from terrorist attacks and other small-scale actions aimed at seizing power. See Appendix 1 for further justification.

7. Many revolutions from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century (the English Civil War and wars of independence in the Americas) did not follow this pattern, but rather involved conventional armies pitted against one another. The Haitian Revolution, as a slave revolt, was also not an urban armed affair but consisted of uprisings on plantations, subsequently morphing into irregular and conventional civil war.

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characterized by "a particularly flammable combination. Not only did they have densely built poor neighborhoods whose labyrinthine streets were susceptible to barricades, but these working-class quarters were within easy striking distance of the neighborhoods of the rich and of the grand public squares of the ceremonial city."⁸ The urban revolts that broke out in Europe from the late eighteenth through the early twentieth century generally aimed at a combination of curbing monarchical power and transforming class relations in society. They assumed the form of street fighting and used the built environment of the city as cover for armed attacks, with the hope that armed revolt would catalyze a mass uprising and stoke mutiny within the armed forces. Although the main locus of these revolts was cities, almost all of them occurred in societies that were overwhelmingly rural. And like the Russian Revolution of 1905, they were often accompanied by significant peasant disorders.

But the old-fashioned way of making revolution through urban armed revolt generally had a low rate of success. As I will explore in more detail, proximity to command centers of power and commerce maximized the disruptive capabilities of revolutionary oppositions, but did so at the expense of their exposure to a regime's repressive capacities. As the state's repressive capacity and firepower grew, its strategic superiority over armed rebels in urban centers became overwhelming. Engels already recognized the stacked odds against urban armed revolts by the end of the nineteenth century: "Rebellion in the old style, street fighting with barricades, which decided the issue everywhere up to 1848, had become largely outdated. Let us have no illusions about it: a real victory of insurrection over the military in street fighting, a victory as between two armies, is one of the rarest exceptions."9 Beginning in the 1920s, and especially during the Cold War years, a ruralization of social revolution took place, as social revolutionaries migrated to the countryside, where rebels used distance from government centers and rough terrain as safe zones from which to hide from government retaliation. Revolutionaries still sought the ultimate prize of capturing power in cities. But cities had become too dangerous for them, given the imbalance in power between regimes and oppositions. Essentially, revolutionaries traded off capacity to disrupt for safety from government repression. As a result of this relocation to the countryside, peasants—once thought to be reactionary and irrevocably focused on local issues of access to landbecame the new social force underpinning social revolution.

As Skocpol observed in her classic work *States and Social Revolutions*, social revolutions were characteristic of a particular type of society—an

9. Marx and Engels 1990, 517.

^{8.} Sewell 2001, 62.

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"agrarian-bureaucratic society," which she defined as a social formation in which control over and extraction of resources from peasants depended on a coordination and division of labor between a semi-bureaucratic state and a landed upper class.¹⁰ Most theories of social revolution revolved around some aspect of this agrarian-bureaucratic society and the conditions under which it produced revolution—irrespective of whether social revolution primarily unfolded in an urban or a rural setting.

However, by the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, agrarianbureaucratic society was rapidly fading. Land inequality had not vanished.¹¹ But over the prior century there had been a growing concentration of people, power, and wealth in cities, as states proliferated and consolidated, urban economies developed, and the proportion of the global population living in urban areas rose from 13 percent in 1900 to 52 percent by 2010.¹² In 1900, there were sixteen cities in the world (located in nine countries) that had more than a million inhabitants.¹³ By 2016, there were 519 such cities located in 125 countries.¹⁴ In Latin America, for instance, the conditions that had once led Che Guevara to view the countryside as a hotbed of revolution have disappeared, as "capitals and industrial centers have swallowed up what were once independent towns," and "ranch land and farmland have been turned into airports and highways."¹⁵

Cities also functioned as the main spatial sites for the heightened connectedness and concentration of wealth characteristic of globalization in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, six hundred cities around the world (representing 22 percent of the world's population) are responsible for over 60 percent of the world's economy.¹⁶ As a United Nations report concludes, "global forces are centered in cities," where their effects are most acutely felt.¹⁷ Modern communications and transportation connect the world's urban centers into an integrated global network that penetrates deeply into the fabric of contemporary society.¹⁸

10. Skocpol 1979. See also Eisenstadt 1963; Moore 1966.

11. See Frankema 2010.

12. For data on world urbanization since 1950 as reported by the United Nations, see http://esa.un.org/wup2009/unup/index.asp?panel=1.

13. Chandler 1987, 492.

14. Cox 2017. Twenty countries had five or more cities with at least a million inhabitants.

- 15. Rosenthal 2000, 37.
- 16. Dobbs et al. 2011.
- 17. United Nations Center for Human Settlements 2001, xxxi.
- 18. Castells 1996, 380.

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Urban culture and modes of consumption have become increasingly available to rural populations, greatly affecting the countryside as well.¹⁹

All this has left a profound impact on revolutionary regime-change. As population, power, and wealth shifted to cities, so too did the phenomenon of revolution. In the world described by Skocpol (prior to the publication of her book in 1979), 60 percent of revolutionary episodes involved peasants. In the world since the publication of Skocpol's book, only 34 percent have. There are rare instances in overwhelmingly rural societies in which peasants from the surrounding countryside descend on the city and constitute the majority of participants in urban revolutionary protests. This occurred, for example, during the April 2006 revolution in Nepal—a society that, at the time, was one of the least urbanized on the planet, with only 16 percent of its population living in cities.²⁰ But for the most part the growth of contemporary urban revolutions has been associated with a different set of social forces. Not peasants, but the urban middle class (professionals, the technical intelligentsia, shopkeepers, and public and private sector employees) have participated disproportionately, usually with sizeable contingents of other urban groups: skilled workers, manual laborers, clerical workers, craftsmen, small-business owners, and the so-called de-commodified (individuals who occupy no niche on the labor market, such as students, pensioners, housewives, and the unemployed).²¹

Even though class has been an extremely important phenomenon in the societies experiencing urban revolutions in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, structuring life chances and the practice of everyday life, and though class, as we will see, has certainly not been absent in these revolutions, unlike social revolutions the political cleavages animating these new urban revolutionary mobilizations have tended to revolve less around social class and more around hostility toward the political class—a civic reclaiming of the state that, to varying degrees, cuts across urban class divides. This multi-class urban coalition (with the middle class disproportionately represented) becomes possible precisely because the state is most physically present in cities, where its dysfunctions are most directly felt, and where populations are most capable of learning about them. Government itself—not social class—has increasingly become the axis around which revolutionary cleavages have formed.²²

The most common form that these new urban revolutions have assumed is what I call in this book the "urban civic" revolution—that is, uprisings like the

^{19.} Clark 1996, 117–19.

^{20.} Routledge 2010, 1290.

^{21.} Offe 1985; Esping-Andersen 1990.

^{22.} Farhi 1990, 18. See also Goodwin 2001.

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Orange Revolution that seek to overthrow abusive government by mobilizing as many people as possible in central urban spaces, paralyzing commerce, administration, and society through the power of numbers rather than relying primarily on armed rebellion, street-fighting, strikes, or urban rioting. Since 1985, urban civic revolutions have constituted almost two-fifths (forty-seven) of all revolutionary episodes around the world (and nearly three-fifths of all urban revolutions). Some refer to them as "democratic" revolutions,²³ and they generally do articulate broadly liberal aims of containing the abuses of predatory and unaccountable government, among other goals. I prefer to call them "urban civic," for several reasons.

For one thing, a significant number of revolutions have articulated goals of establishing democratic government, but have not utilized urban civic tactics of concentrating large numbers of unarmed protestors in central urban spaces. Certainly this was true of liberal revolutions of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which used a combination of conventional civil warfare, irregular civil warfare, urban riots, and urban street-fighting to challenge incumbent regimes.²⁴ But a significant number of later cases also did not rely on urban civic tactics. The 1974 Carnation Revolution in Portugal, for example, was largely a military mutiny accompanied by demonstrations and strikes. The 1980 Solidarity uprising in Poland was primarily based on strikes rather than demonstrations. In the 1989 Romanian Revolution, demonstrations and riots morphed into violent armed combat. There have also been a number of revolutionary civil wars that produced democratic arrangements of varying degrees that could also be interpreted as "democratic" revolutions, even though democracy may not have originally been a goal.²⁵

While urban civic revolutions are focused against repressive and abusive governments, as we will see, there is a great variety of motives impelling people to participate in these revolts, and democratic purposes and values often rank low among them or are prioritized only by a minority of participants. Framing these revolutions as "democratic" can thus obscure the diversity of motivations underpinning them. Indeed, in some cases, a democratic moniker has been imposed on these revolutions by outsiders, or has been used strategically by movement entrepreneurs seeking external validation or support. And for reasons that will be explored, the democratizing effects of successful urban civic revolutions, while substantial in some areas, usually fall well short of the

23. See, for instance, Thompson 2004.

24. Palmer 2014; Sperber 2005; Weyland 2014.

25. See Wood 2000; Wantchekon and Neeman 2002; Gurses and Mason 2008; Fortna and Huang 2012; Huang 2016.

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standards of the average electoral democracy—especially as regards the rule of law and corruption. Moreover, these achievements are often quite precarious. In this sense, such revolutions might be better understood as revolutions *against* repressive and abusive regimes rather than revolutions *for* democracy. They are more about what people are struggling against than what they are struggling for. Nevertheless, these revolutions do seek to reclaim power in the name of citizens suffocating from lawless, corrupt, and oppressive government. They have generated some extraordinary displays of civic activism. And the setting of the city is critical to the social forces underpinning them and the mobilizational politics that they involve.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word "civic" means "of, belonging to, or relating to a citizen or citizens." It also means "of, belonging to, or relating to a city, town, borough, or other community of citizens."²⁶ Notions of city and citizen have been intimately intertwined since Greek and Roman times. The very term "citizen" derives from the Latin word for city (*civitas*) and historically was used largely to refer to urban dwellers.²⁷ As Anthony Giddens notes, only after sovereignty had been turned into a territorial principle of government did citizenship come to be widely applied beyond the confines of cities.²⁸ Modern ideas about inclusive citizenship first emerged in European and American cities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—the product of a series of revolutions and incorporating reforms from above.²⁹ In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, in an era of massive urbanization and growth in the size, power, and wealth of cities, the two meanings of "civic" have once again converged to produce numerous eruptions of large-scale urban revolt around the world, in which millions have mobilized to reclaim control from corrupt and despotic governments in the name of those to whom these states theoretically belong—their citizens.³⁰ Saskia Sassen has written of "the return of the city" as a site for the making of political and civic change and observes that urban revolts have become a "source for an expanded civicness" by opening up possibilities for remaking the political.³¹ This book is about that transformation—about the return of

26. Both meanings relate to the Latin word civicus.

27. Riesenberg 1992, 3–84. On the nature of citizenship in medieval European cities, see Weber 1958, 91–120.

28. Giddens 1987, vol. 2, 94.

29. Riesenberg 1992, 203–66.

30. Mona El-Ghobashy pointed to the "genius" of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution as "its methodical restoration of the public weal.... It revalued the people, revealing them in all their complexity—neither heroes nor saints, but citizens." El-Ghobashy 2012, 39.

31. Sassen 2011, 575, 579.

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the city as a site for revolution, and about the urban civic revolts that have been situated at the center of this development.

Social revolutions in the twentieth century were dominated by grievances over poverty, redistribution of wealth, and land inequality. By contrast, government repression, corruption, and misrule have been the main grievances of urban civic revolutions, though economic despair and the absence of civil liberties are often prominent complaints as well. As societies urbanized and moved into closer proximity to where state power was most concentrated, and as states proliferated and consolidated, the state came to matter more in people's lives. In cities, populations came into more regular contact with the state, including the state's unequaled capacities for predation and oppression. Urban civic revolutions have generally occurred in countries in which the political class has become a law unto itself, a mafia-like organization displaying an arrogance and venality that has pitted it against the bulk of the population it governs.

This does not mean that economics are unimportant in urban civic revolutions. On the contrary, they matter deeply. Urban civic uprisings have predominantly been a phenomenon of the era of neoliberalism, in which rapid private-sector growth has been considered the principal source of societal prosperity, while public sectors have been pressured to contract. Neoliberal economic growth was accompanied by a massive expansion of cities. It fostered the emergence of a new global middle class, especially in developing and emerging economies. The term "middle class" is often used loosely to refer to those who are neither rich nor poor, while others define it mainly by reference to consumption patterns. I use the term in this book in the sociological sense, as encompassing a particular range of occupations between those of the bourgeoisie and the working class.³² These groups primarily contribute to economic growth not through investment of their capital, but through their skills and the services that they provide. They are likely to be better educated than other citizens and to enjoy an above-average income and standard of living. But they should not be confused with the bourgeoisie, which today is usually closely enmeshed with ruling regimes and for the most part is not supportive of revolution (though sometimes switches allegiance as revolutionary challenges multiply).³³

32. Wright 1980.

33. In Marxist theory, bourgeois revolutions were oriented against the political power of landed elites and sought to establish the political predominance of capital. By contrast, urban civic revolutions are aimed against the predatory and repressive powers of the state in a world in which capital already predominates.

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Levels of income and consumption among the urban middle class can vary substantially within and across societies. Urban civic revolutions have sometimes occurred in a context of fiscal austerity, downward mobility, and declining levels of urban subsistence—motivated by what Asef Bayat terms the contractual norms of urban life:

Modern urbanity generates particular needs, such as access to cash to conduct exchange instead of relying on trust and reciprocity, as was practiced in traditional village life; urbanites need to learn work discipline instead of enjoying flexibility and self-arrangement; they need to behave in their urban life according to certain set contracts instead of relying on negotiations or customary norms. In addition, while modern urbanity engenders certain desires and demands (like paid jobs, regular pay, particular norms of consumption), it simultaneously inculcates among urbanites a set of entitlements and rights, for instance, the right to have optimum urban services such as roads, schools, police, and broadly what the city can offer. . . . If states are expected but are unable or unwilling to fulfill those demands, or if they are seen to violate those entitlements, urbanites are likely to feel and express moral outrage at the public authorities.³⁴

Middle-class youth unemployment, taxes on essential services, and the removal of government subsidies on fuel, food, or transportation in the context of widespread enrichment by the political elite have been common catalysts for urban civic revolt in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

This was largely the pattern exhibited in the Arab Spring, as well as in a number of urban uprisings in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia. But it is not the only pattern. Urban civic revolutions have at times transpired in the absence of economic distress (what Bryn Rosenfeld calls "protests of the 'want-mores' rather than protests of the 'have-nots'")³⁵—rooted in a broader frustration over the suffocating predation of government on society. The Orange Revolution in Ukraine, for instance, occurred in the context of a growing rather than a shrinking economy, but a society that was nevertheless deeply discontented over the pervasive graft and corruption of its political elite. Urban dwellers have shown particular concern about government corruption. World Values Survey data show, for instance, that city dwellers around the world are less likely to believe that it is justifiable to accept a bribe from someone in the course of official duties than are inhabitants of rural areas. This relationship is especially strong for inhabitants of large cities (with populations

34. Bayat 2017, 131. 35. Rosenfeld 2017, 643.

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over five hundred thousand).³⁶ Studies also show that in middle- and lowerincome countries, the middle class is more likely than the poor and less educated to perceive widespread corruption.³⁷ Whether this is due to different class experiences with the state, differential access to media, different time horizons or marginal utilities, or class differences in oppositional identity is not clear. Nevertheless, middle-class intolerance for corruption and clientelism has been well documented.³⁸

These two faces of neoliberal development—the rapid growth of urban middle-class populations frustrated by corrupt and repressive regimes, and the contraction of public goods provision and subsidies to many of these same urban groups—lie at the center of much of the animus fueling contemporary urban revolutions. But other factors can be at play as well. Some urban civic revolutions (the Orange Revolution, for example) have tapped into cultural difference, harnessing grievances over the relationship between culture and the state.³⁹ Looked at across countries and world regions, the individuals participating in urban civic revolutions have relatively little in common other than their desire to reclaim the public sphere from predatory and repressive government. As we will see, they display diverse grievances and ideologies—both within and across revolutions.

As the locations, social forces, and grievances involved in revolution have shifted, so too has the organization and technology of revolt. In his famous pamphlet *What is to Be Done*, Lenin emphasized the need to organize revolution around a vanguard party—a disciplined group of professional revolutionaries who could provide organizational and ideological coherence to revolt. He also devoted a significant portion of his treatise to the need for a newspaper to function as the main means for Russian revolutionaries, then primarily in exile abroad, to recruit workers by surreptitiously smuggling copies into the Russian Empire. Most social revolutionaries relied primarily upon the printed word or face-to-face agitation to spread their message. Today, the vanguard

36. For large cities, statistically significant at the .001 level. Results based on Wave 6 of the World Values Survey (47 countries), controlling for age, gender, and fixed country effects (with robust standard errors). The surveys also showed that in the seven Middle Eastern countries in which the question was asked, residents of large cities were more likely than rural dwellers to believe that their governments were corrupt. See Inglehart et al. 2014.

37. Maeda and Ziegfeld 2015. The study also found, however, that in higher-income countries, the middle class is less likely than the poor and less educated to perceive widespread corruption.

38. Stokes 2009.

39. Beissinger 2013.

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party is as obsolete as the typewriter—part of a technology of rebellion appropriate for a completely different historical era. It has been replaced by the loose revolutionary coalition—a rapidly assembled and highly fragmented alliance of opposition movements, bloggers, and political figures united only by their common hostility to the incumbent regime. This trend has been further amplified by the rise of the internet as a medium for coordinating revolt: it dilutes the role of leadership within revolutionary movements and accentuates the speed with which diverse oppositional groups can be convened.⁴⁰

In 1917, Lenin learned of the events of Russia's February Revolution on the day that the revolution ended; he was forced to rely on newspaper dispatches published with a several-day lag, or on word of mouth within the small Russian émigré community in Zurich. As he wrote to Alexandra Kollontai at the time, "Just imagine thinking about 'directives' from here, when news is exceptionally meagre."⁴¹ By contrast, in 2010 the large Tunisian diaspora abroad (10 percent of the country's population) was one of the driving forces behind the Tunisian Revolution.⁴² Many of the informational sites utilized during the revolution were managed overseas, and through the magic of cellphones, Facebook, and video-archiving sites abroad, urban Tunisians and the rest of the world could witness revolutionary protests and acts of government repression practically in real time. Today, most participants in revolutions do not even read newspapers.⁴³ Rather, television, Facebook, and Twitter have reconfigured the enterprise of revolution in fundamental ways, rendering visual representation and simultaneity increasingly integral to revolutionary processes and transcending international borders with speed and relative ease. These technologies and modes of organization are ideal for gathering large numbers quickly. They are most appropriate precisely where large numbers are concentrated: cities.

Essentially, the movement of hundreds of millions of people into cities over the past century rendered possible new urban repertoires for challenging regimes on the basis of the power of numbers rather than the power of arms. The population of Kyiv in 1905 could not have carried out the kind of massive mobilizations characteristic of the Orange Revolution a century later. As I will show, the city in 1905 was simply too small to generate the kind of numbers

40. Bennett and Segerberg 2013.

- 41. Lenin 1981, 287, 406; Lenin 1980, 297.
- 42. Graziano 2012, 9–10.

43. In the Euromaidan Revolution in Ukraine in 2014, only 44 percent of revolution participants reported reading a newspaper in the previous week, while 83 percent reported watching television. Only 2 percent of participants in the Egyptian Revolution, and no participants in the Tunisian Revolution, said that they primarily used newspapers to follow the events of these revolutions. On the sources for these data, see Chapter 7.

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necessary for protecting protestors against government repression and exerting leverage over a regime through unarmed crowds. Governments at the beginning of the twentieth century were also significantly more likely than governments today to shoot into unarmed crowds, making unarmed rebellion in cities a risky affair. And technologies for coordinating large crowds in the early twentieth century were primitive and severely limited in their reach. But by the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the proliferation of large, resourced, and highly networked populations in close proximity to the state's command centers altered the possibilities for making urban revolution, tilting the relationship between exposure to government repression and the ability to exert disruption in favor of urban oppositions.

Contrary to the belief in some circles that the age of revolution is over, as the world has urbanized and people, power, and wealth have shifted to cities, revolution as a mass political project of regime-change from below has actually become a more frequent affair. The historian Hugh Seton-Watson declared in 1951 that "the first half of the twentieth century is richer than any previous period of human history in the activities of revolutionary movements."44 This may have been true in 1951. But revolutionary episodes occurred at a significantly greater pace in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries than at *any* prior time in history—greater than during the first half of the twentieth century, and greater than during the Cold War. As we will see, this growth in revolutionary activity was driven by the multiplication of urban civic revolutions and was the product of a variety of factors-political, demographic, social, economic, spatial, technological, and geopolitical—that magnified the grievances, opportunities, and possibilities underpinning mass revolt in cities. Rather than disappearing, revolution as a mode of regime-change proliferated even as it urbanized. It evolved rather than evaporated—altering in its spatial location, the purposes to which it is put, the forms it has assumed, the social forces and organizational structures sustaining it, and the outcomes it involves. This book is about that transformation about how the concentration of people, power, and wealth in cities has altered the frequency, character, and consequences of revolution.

Plan of the Book and Key Arguments

Travelers who are about to embark upon a long journey deserve to know where they are headed. Essentially, the analysis that follows begins at the global level, progressively drills downward to the level of the episode and the individual,

^{44.} Seton-Watson 1951, 251. Martin Malia has argued (2006, 1) that, together with global war, revolution was "the defining characteristic of the twentieth century."

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and then broadens back to the global. In chapter 1, I define revolution and lay out a theory about how spatial location influences revolutionary processes, outlining what I call the repression-disruption trade-off in revolution and the "proximity dilemma" that all revolutionaries face. In essence, that trade-off emerges from the fact that cities are where the state is strongest, and therefore urban revolutionaries are more directly exposed than rural revolutionaries to the repressive capacities of the state. But cities are also where the nerve centers of government that revolutionaries seek to capture are located, and therefore where regimes are most directly vulnerable to disruption. Thus, proximity to centers of power involves both opportunities and dangers for revolutionaries. A basic dilemma facing revolutionary movements is how to manage this repression-disruption trade-off—that is, how to leverage their disruptive power to induce regime collapse while warding off regime repression.

Several factors affect the nature of this trade-off. One is the spatial location of rebellion. By moving further from centers of power, revolutionaries can gain safety at the cost of disruptive capacity; by moving closer, they can gain disruptive capacity at the cost of safety. Tactical learning and innovation by revolutionaries and regimes also affect the trade-off, as each side seeks to take advantage of its opponent's weaknesses within particular spatial contexts. Finally, long-term social structural and technological changes have greatly influenced the possibilities and effectiveness of particular tactical repertoires within spatial locations. Chief among these has been urbanization, which has concentrated large numbers in cities and thereby rendered repertoires relying on the power of numbers increasingly effective for warding off repression. The proximity dilemma not only helps us to understand the starkly different characters of urban and rural revolutionary processes. It also provides a framework for explaining why the locations of revolutionary challenges have shifted over time and how large-scale urbanization has altered the character and outcomes of revolutionary contention. In chapter 1 I also review my approach to analyzing revolution that centers on the revolutionary episode as a unit of analysis, the ways in which I classify episodes, and the empirical research on which the book is based.

Chapter 2 examines the shifting frequency and character of revolutionary episodes around the world since 1900. It shows that revolutionary contention has been growing more frequent over time despite a marked decline in the incidence of social revolutions. This increase is largely due to the urbanization of revolution and the proliferation of urban civic revolutionary episodes at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries. I show that the growth of urban revolutions derives from many of the long-term structural trends that are also responsible for the decline of social revolutions: the end of agaraian-bureaucratic society, large-scale urbanization, the shift of power to

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cities, the proliferation and consolidation of national states, and changes in the global geopolitical and economic order in the wake of the Cold War.

Chapter 3 explores the factors associated with the outbreak of urban civic revolutionary contention. It develops a probabilistic model of the onset of urban civic revolutionary contention, identifying the structural conditions associated with the materialization of an urban civic revolutionary episode. It shows that these conditions are not associated with the onset of social revolutions, other types of revolutions, or attempted military coups. The outbreak of urban civic revolutions is more sensitive to the features of political regimes, whereas the outbreak of social revolutionary contention is more closely associated with inequality, poverty, and underdevelopment. I then use the model's predictions of structural risk as a baseline for analyzing the actual emergence (or absence) of urban civic contention in specific cases, engaging in case studies of how episodes materialized in order to understand why the model's predictions proved accurate or inaccurate in particular cases. The analysis points to the critical processes that render urban civic revolutionary contention more similar to the emergence of hurricanes than to the outbreak of wildfires or earthquakes. Though clearly related to conducive structural conditions, they nonetheless develop tentatively and with uncertainty out of interactions between regimes and oppositions.

Chapter 4 explores revolutionary "success" in a minimalist sense—that is, whether revolutionary oppositions are able to overthrow incumbent regimes once revolutionary contention has materialized. It shows that, in general, the chances of revolutionary success have substantially increased over time. I show that these increased odds of opposition victory are rooted in several factors: the urbanization of revolution and the strategic advantages that proximity to the state provides for disrupting and toppling regimes; the increased vulnerability of regimes to disruption from urban mass revolt after the Cold War; and a revolutionary repertoire that effectively leverages these advantages.

Even taking these factors into consideration, revolutionary success is considerably less predictable, by the factors identified in the statistical model, than revolutionary failure. Chapter 5 shifts the focus downward to the eventful and "playful" processes in urban revolutionary contention. I argue that the speed, intensity, and compactness of urban revolutionary contention—themselves the products of proximity to governmental centers of power—create significant information problems for both regimes and oppositions and heighten the impact of contingency and miscalculation on revolutionary outcomes. The consequences of these problems are also acutely magnified in urban revolutions by the proximity of contention to nerve centers of state power, which leaves little margin for error.

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Chapter 6 focuses on contention over public space in urban revolutions. As states have proliferated and consolidated, and as urbanization has proceeded, large open spaces in proximity to the command centers of power have spread throughout the world, especially in capital cities. These spaces have been particularly important in urban civic revolutions, which rely on a strategy of rapidly concentrating large numbers in the spaces between buildings rather than using the built environment of the city as cover for armed attack. I explore how the shape, location, availability, and symbolic value of public space affect the manner in which urban civic revolutions unfold and how incumbent regimes attempt to forestall or undermine urban civic revolutionary challenges through regulation and control of public space.

Chapter 7 addresses urban civic revolutions at the level of the individual, using nationally representative surveys from four such revolutions to show that those who participate in them are highly diverse—more diverse, in fact, than either supporters or opponents of revolution in society at large. Urban civic revolutionaries harbor fundamental disagreements over major policy issues even while they are united by their intense disaffection vis-à-vis their regimes. This, I argue, is the product of urban civic revolutionary tactics that maximize numbers in a concentrated period of time. I also show that the social composition of participants has differed significantly across urban civic revolutions, even while in general the urban middle class has been over-represented. Despite the democratic master-narratives of these revolutions, most participants display weak commitment to democratic values. Thus, urban civic revolutions are better understood not as revolutions for democracy, but as revolutions against repressive, corrupt, and predatory government.

Chapter 8 examines changing patterns of mortality within revolutionary contention over the past century. The number of revolutionary episodes has grown; even so, many fewer people are dying in revolution. Much of this has to do with the declining incidence and lethality of revolutionary civil wars. But there has also been a decline in lethal violence in revolutionary episodes that have not involved civil war. As I show, urbanization and the shift of revolutionary contention to cities are among the factors associated with this pacification of revolution. To alleviate the controversy and likelihood of backlash mobilizations and defections associated with lethal violence in urban revolts, regimes over the past century have increasingly countered urban revolutionary challenges with less lethal technologies of crowd control. This has greatly reduced revolutionary fatalities and has lowered the risks involved in participation in urban revolution. Ironically, the weaponry used to counter rural rebellions has moved in the opposite direction—toward increasing lethality. I explore this paradox and the reasons behind it.

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Chapter 9 turns to the substantive impact of revolution. It compares the effects of urban civic revolutions with those of social revolutions in the years immediately following each type in terms of the outcomes that we ultimately care about: political order, economic growth, inequality, political freedoms, and government accountability. As I show, new regimes that result from successful urban civic revolutions last in power for significantly less time than those emerging from successful social revolutions. This fragility is largely the product of the compact, coalitional character of the urban civic repertoire. Urban civic revolutions generally bring a substantial increase in political freedoms in their wake. But on many dimensions of liberal democracy, they fall well short of what one finds in most electoral democracies (i.e., democracies defined in a minimalist sense). This is largely because they inherit the state, with its embedded relationships of corruption, intact from the old regime, limiting the ability of post-revolutionary governments to enact political and social change and contributing to an emerging crisis of economic stagnation.

The concluding chapter speculates about the future of revolutions. That future will undoubtedly be urban, given the continuing concentration of people, power, and wealth in cities. But one should expect that, just as revolutions in the early twenty-first century differ in fundamental respects from those of the past, revolution will continue to evolve in response to the structural forces long affecting it: changing patterns of political and economic power; altered social structures and the concentration of people into cities; new technologies of rebellion and counterinsurgency; and shifting currents of geopolitics. I suggest that the urban civic repertoire is likely to come under stress in the future, as governments find new ways of countering the power of numbers in cities and geopolitics shifts in new directions. Still, new patterns of rebellion—perhaps already visible—will emerge, overlapping with the old. Revolutionary regime-change is hardly likely to disappear. On the contrary, as the world urbanizes, revolutionary contention has been growing in frequency, even as it alters in its forms, purposes, and outcomes.

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