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Jeff D. Colgan

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DOMESTIC REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

By JEFF D. COLGAN*

THERE is a strong scholarly consensus that domestic revolutions create conditions ripe for international conflict.[1] Traditionally scholars have treated revolutions as events that are followed by a period of time during which international conflict is more likely. Yet some states experience significant international conflict only during and in the immediate aftermath of a revolution, whereas others continue to engage in conflict for many years afterward. For example, revolutions in Egypt (1952), Cuba (1958), and Iraq (1968) led to a series of wars and international conflicts that continued for twenty or more years, whereas revolutions in Nicaragua (1979) and Cambodia (1975) led to a burst of international conflict that finished relatively quickly. What explains the persistence of conflict for some but not all revolutionary states?

This article seeks to answer that question by differentiating, both theoretically and empirically, the concept of revolutionary leaders from that of revolutions as events. To that end, I build on a growing body of recent studies suggesting the importance of leadership types and leader attributes for international relations.[2] I show that existing theories linking revolution to international conflict underemphasize an important mechanism through which revolution leads to conflict: by "selecting" conflict-prone leaders through the dynamics of revolutionary politics. Specifically, I argue that revolutionary politics allows leaders with certain characteristics—including high risk tolerance and

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[1] Walt 1996; Maoz 1996; Gurr 1988; Skocpol 1988; Goldstone 1997.

[2] Chiozza and Goemans 2004; Chiozza and Goemans 2011; Rosen 2007; Weeks 2008; Weeks 2012; Horowitz and Stam forthcoming; Saunders 2011; Croco 2011.

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strong political ambition to alter the status quo—to obtain executive office because individuals without these characteristics generally do not succeed in leading revolutions. Weak political and legal constraints in the postrevolutionary regime amplify the salience of leaders' characteristics. Having obtained power, revolutionary leaders have aggressive preferences that make their states more likely than nonrevolutionary states to instigate international conflict.

I then test the theory empirically, using a newly developed data set designed specifically to identify revolutionary leaders, thereby overcoming some of the limitations in existing research on revolutions and conflict. I find that the elevated propensity for conflict characteristic of revolutionary states exists for as long as the original revolutionary leader(s) is in power, whether for five years or twenty-five years, but disappears once the leader is no longer in power. The evidence thus reveals that much of the effect of revolutions is contingent on the leader, rather than on a temporary disruption in international relationships that fades over time.

This article therefore makes three contributions. First, it establishes empirically that revolutionary leaders are indeed conflict prone. States led by revolutionary leaders are on average almost three times as likely to instigate a militarized interstate dispute (MID) as states led by nonrevolutionary leaders. This suggests that it is not just "which way out" (that is, leaders' posttenure fate) that matters for leaders' in-office behavior;[3] "which way in" (to office) is also critical.[4] Second, I show that differentiating among the possible causal mechanisms linking revolution to war sheds light on unresolved questions, such as whether revolutionary states are conflict prone primarily because they instigate conflicts or because they are particularly vulnerable to attack by other states. Finally, the article contributes broadly to the study of international conflict by illustrating how the concept of revolutionary leaders can easily be integrated into quantitative studies of conflict to avoid a potential omitted variable bias.

One striking result of the analysis is that it shows that the effect of revolutionary leaders on conflict propensity is quite large. It is therefore surprising that revolutionary leaders have not received more attention in the scholarly study of international conflict, especially in quantitative

[3] Goemans 2008; Chiozza and Goemans 2011.

[4] The "which way in" argument has been made before, although not in the form found in this article. Russett 1993 argued, for example, that the democratic peace can be explained in part by the method leaders use to attain power domestically, which affects the norms they externalize on the international stage. However, Rousseau 2005 tested Russett's proposition and found little supporting evidence.

analyses. Yet until now, there has not been a well-defined empirical data set to identify revolutionary governments, making it difficult to incorporate them into standard models of international conflict.

The article is structured as follows. I begin by providing definitions for key concepts. Second, I review the literature, highlighting the areas of scholarly agreement and disagreement about the relationship between revolution and international conflict. Third, I theorize the role of revolutionary leaders in instigating international conflict, suggesting that such leaders are more risk tolerant and ambitious than nonrevolutionary leaders. The fourth section provides a brief description of the new data set of revolutionary leaders. Next, I conduct both monadic and dyadic analyses to show that there is indeed a strong correlation between revolutionary leaders and militarized interstate disputes (MIDs). The evidence also suggests that this correlation lasts throughout a revolutionary leader's tenure in office but rapidly disappears once such a leader leaves office—an entirely new finding that departs from existing research. The final section concludes.

Definition

This article defines a revolutionary leader as one who transforms the existing social, political, and economic relationships of the state by overthrowing or rejecting the principal existing institutions of society.[5] Revolutions are distinct from other events such as coups, assassinations, and revolts (although these events could be a component of a revolution), because revolutions result in substantial transformations of social, economic, and political life. A revolutionary state or government is simply a state/government where a revolutionary leader is currently in power. These definitions are similar to those provided by Walt, Huntington, and others.[6] However, not all scholars define revolution in the same way. Skocpol, for instance, focuses on rare "social revolutions." The definition used in this article lies between Skocpol's "social revolution" and the broader concept that she calls "political revolution," because while revolutionary governments are not necessarily accompanied by a major class conflict, they do transform social and/or economic structures and practices in addition to political structures and practices.[7] A more detailed empirical operationalization is given below.

[5] This definition is consistent with Colgan 2010; and Colgan 2013a.

[6] Walt 1996; Huntington 1968; Maoz 1996; Goldstone 1993; Goldstone 1998; Goldstone 2001; Snyder 1999.

[7] Skocpol 1979, 4.

I use the term "domestic revolution" to emphasize that revolutionary leaders are identified entirely on the basis of domestic transformations within the state, to avoid a potential tautology when considering the impact of revolution on international variables. Some scholars have sought to explain the complex factors that cause a revolution.[8] This article takes revolutions as its starting point, to focus on what happens in the postrevolutionary period.

Literature

Among scholars who have looked at the impact of revolutions, there is a consensus that revolutionary states are unusually prone to international disputes and wars.[9] There is less agreement on the precise causal mechanism(s) responsible for this relationship. Walt argues that the conflict is caused by system-level changes in the balance of threat in the international system.[10] He suggests that revolutions (1) create windows of opportunity for revolutionary states in turmoil to be attacked by other states, (2) increase the perception of hostility between the revolutionary state and its nonrevolutionary neighbors, (3) alter the offense-defense balance in the international system, and (4) increase the chance of miscalculation by lowering the quality of information available to state leaders. He also offers an account of how domestic politics increases the probability of war but at the same time explicitly rejects an emphasis on domestic politics or revolutionary leaders and argues that international systemic factors are primary.

Maoz views a revolutionary state as facing both internal and external pressure to engage in conflict. Internally, the pressure "stems from the need of the new ruling elite to mobilize support for the regime through scapegoating."[11] Externally, the pressure derives from the combination of opportunity and fear felt by neighboring states or external powers. While both Maoz and Walt provide evidence of the overall relationship and have mostly compatible views about the underlying causal mechanisms, they do not directly test their hypothesized mechanisms.

Other scholars place more emphasis on the characteristics of revolutionary leaders and domestic political movements as causes of inter-

[8] Brinton 1958; Gurr 1970; Skocpol 1979; Kuran 1991; Goldstone, 1993; Lohmann 1994; Tilly 1996; Goodwin 2001; Kurzman 2004; Foran 2005.

[9] Walt 1992; Walt 1996; Maoz 1989; Maoz 1996; Gurr 1988; Skocpol 1988; Goldstone 1997; Goldstone 2001; Snyder 1999; Enterline 1999.

[10] Walt 1992; Walt 1996.

[11] Maoz 1996, 92.

national conflicts. Skocpol, for instance, argues that successful revolutionary leaders are particularly good at organizing and mobilizing their populations for campaigns of mass violence, a skill necessary for their success in the domestic revolutionary struggle.[12] Consequently, revolutionary states are more capable of aggression. Gurr shares Skocpol's view that revolutionary leaders tend to be aggressive internationally, but he argues that revolutionary leaders who have secured power and maintained their positions through the use of violence domestically are disposed to respond violently to future challenges, even if those challenges arise internationally.[13] Skocpol's and Gurr's arguments are plausible, but again neither explicitly tests the hypothesized causal mechanisms. Thus, the role of revolutionary leaders remains unclear and contested among scholars.

The proliferation of causal mechanisms means that important theoretical debates are unresolved. One issue, for example, is whether revolutionary states are conflict prone primarily because they are aggressive or because they are frequently attacked. Some scholars point to international systemic factors rather than to the aggressiveness of the revolutionary state as the key factors in increasing the probability of war.[14] Indeed, revolutionary states are sometimes attacked by other states during an initial window of opportunity immediately after the revolution, when they appear weak. Other scholars argue, however, that revolutionary states are aggressive, and that this is due to the characteristics of their leaders or domestic politics.[15]

One limitation of existing research stems from limitations in the empirical approaches used. In qualitative studies, case selection is not always justified, leaving such studies susceptible to selection bias and the possibility that the analysis focuses primarily on cases that are supportive of the theory.[16] Walt, for instance, selects three primary cases over the course of three centuries, ignoring many other potential cases. When additional cases are added (the Mexican, American, and Turkish revolutions), Walt acknowledges that the evidence is not as supportive, as none of these cases resulted in war.[17] Quantitative work faces a different challenge: measurement error. Existing quantitative work relies on measuring revolution based on changes in the score provided by the

[12] Skocpol 1988. For evidence that postrevolutionary regimes have greater military capacity, see also Carter, Bernhard, and Palmer 2012.

[13] Gurr 1988.

[14] Walt 1996.

[15] Enterline 1999; Maoz 1989; Maoz 1996; Snyder 1999; Gurr 1988; Skocpol 1988.

[16] King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Geddes 1990.

[17] Walt 1996, 269.

Polity database.[18] Yet the use of a Polity-based measure is often conceptually inappropriate to the analysis, because Polity focuses on a limited set of political institutions and practices, rather than on the full panoply of political, economic, and social change that typically accompanies a genuine revolution. This leads to significant problems. For instance, Polity-based measures record the transition from monarchy to republic in Libya (1969, Qadhafi) and Iraq (1958, Kassem) as the continuation of a single regime—a highly questionable claim. Consequently, a new theoretical and empirical approach could add significant value.

Theory

Existing work suggests a number of causal mechanisms that link revolutions to a high propensity for international conflict. Multiple causal mechanisms are probably at work. I argue, however, that previous research underemphasizes the role that revolutions play in selecting leaders with particular characteristics that make their states more prone to international conflict and in weakening the constraints on such leaders. Revolutions are not the only way that such leaders come to power, but they significantly affect the probability. Some scholars have suggested that "which way out" matters for international security (that is, leaders' posttenure fate matters for their in-office behavior).[19] My argument is complementary, hypothesizing that "which way in" also matters because it could select for particular kinds of personality traits among leaders.

Social scientists are often uncomfortable with explanations based on individuals' preferences or personality traits. The concern is that differences in preferences can explain everything, and therefore nothing, because they are unfalsifiable. In a seminal article, Stigler and Becker argued that it was more useful to assume that all people have the same preferences and to focus instead on the structural incentives that determine their choices.[20] While that assumption might have been reasonable in 1977, researchers since then have identified a large body of empirical evidence in personality psychology that undermines it.[21] The consensus emerging from psychology is that personality preferences are relatively stable over time for an individual and quite different across people, both of which make them useful (and falsifiable) predictors of

[18] Maoz 1989; Maoz 1996; Enterline 1999.
[19] Goemans 2008; Chiozza and Goemans 2011.
[20] Stigler and Becker 1977.
[21] Caplan 2003 offers a useful review of the evidence.

behavior. These findings generate what one scholar characterizes as a Myers-Briggs approach to social science (which includes personality traits), in contrast to the Stigler-Becker approach (which does not).[22] Recent scholarship on the role of leaders in international relations reflects both approaches, with some scholars focusing solely on structural incentives[23] and others taking seriously the differences in personality traits.[24] My own argument uses both approaches, although it emphasizes the latter. While direct tests of state leaders' personality traits are not feasible, the empirical implications of those traits can be theorized and tested.

Revolutions Select Risk-Tolerant, Ambitious Leaders

Leaders who take office through a revolution are, on average, more risk tolerant and politically ambitious than nonrevolutionary leaders, because individuals without those characteristics are unlikely to start a revolution.[25] All leaders require some risk tolerance and ambition, even in the safest of countries. Yet the level of risk tolerance required to win office is higher when the leader must do so outside of a regularized process, which often requires defeating multiple rivals, sometimes violently, in order to hold power. George Bush took some risks to obtain office; Fidel Castro took considerably more. Many revolutionaries break the law and take actions that bring them into conflict with the incumbent regime. Consequently, revolutionaries often risk injury or death and actually experience exile or imprisonment before they reach office. Many would-be revolutionary leaders are deterred by these risks. The individuals who succeed, by contrast, have the perseverance to keep going.

A revolution that is violent typically raises the level of personal risk required to obtain office, thus increasing the selection effect for risk-tolerant leaders, but violence is not necessarily the key factor. The degree to which a leader must operate outside of the regularized political processes of the country is more important. For instance, a palace coup might be violent, but the prince who overthrows his father is still working within the framework of a hereditary monarchy and thus might face few if any real challengers to his leadership claim. The risk tolerance required to conduct a (violent) palace coup is therefore relatively low compared with leading a social revolution such as Khomeini's in

[22] Caplan 2003; Briggs Myers and Myers 1995.
[23] Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2004; Chiozza and Goemans 2011.
[24] Byman and Pollack 2001; Rosen 2007; Saunders 2011.
[25] The argument in this section draws on Colgan 2013a.

Iran, in which an individual seeks to overturn the entire political apparatus along with the established monarchy and replace it with a theocratic republic. The latter process throws open the possibilities for rival leadership claims, and often there are multiple coup attempts after the initial revolution. Only a risk-tolerant (as well as politically skilled and lucky) individual will succeed in the race for executive office in these conditions.

In addition to risk tolerance, revolutionary politics selects for individuals who have ambitions to change the status quo. Almost all leaders are ambitious in the sense that they seek national office, so in this sense revolutionaries are not different. Yet while some nonrevolutionary leaders are satisfied to simply enjoy the spoils of executive office, revolutionaries are systematically more likely to come to office with a desire to change the status quo in society. A true revolution, which changes the political, economic, and social institutions and practices of a country, is more likely to occur when the leader's preferences support such a transformation. Of course, leadership preferences are not all that matters: sometimes a revolution is led by a reluctant leader and sometimes a leader has frustrated revolutionary aspirations. Still, the general tendency toward high ambition distinguishes revolutionary leaders from nonrevolutionary leaders, even those who have seized office violently.

Risk-Tolerant, Ambitious Leaders Are Aggressive and Conflict Prone

The high levels of risk tolerance and ambition of revolutionary leaders make their states more likely than nonrevolutionary states to instigate international conflict, for three mutually reinforcing reasons. First, risk tolerance leads to aggression in international affairs because it increases the perceived payoff of risky gambles.[26] Someone who is risk neutral derives the same utility from the expected payoff of a gamble as from a certain payoff of the same value. For example, someone who is indifferent between a certain $1 payoff and a 10 percent chance of a $10 payoff is risk neutral. Someone who is risk averse would choose the certain payoff, whereas someone who is risk acceptant would choose the gamble. A leader who has a greater degree of risk tolerance than another leader is less risk averse (but is not necessarily risk acceptant; both could be risk averse). Risk tolerance is relevant for international conflicts because militarized conflicts are much less predictable than

[26] Zagare and Kilgour 2000; see also Rosen 2007.

accepting the status quo, and thus they are akin to risky gambles.[27] Consequently, a leader with high risk tolerance derives higher utility from engaging in international conflict than a leader with low risk tolerance, all else equal.

Second, the ambition of revolutionary leaders also contributes to aggression. Ambition makes it more likely that a leader will reject the status quo internationally as well as domestically. This happens for one of two reasons. In many cases, the nature of a revolution is only partly national and has a significant transnational element as part of its essence.[28] Pan-Arabism, Marxist-Leninism, and Islamic republicanism are examples of revolutionary ideologies that sought change at both domestic and international levels. In other cases, the nature of a revolution is primarily national, but the leader (1) feels the revolution is externally threatened and decides to attack preemptively, (2) feels more resources are required to sustain the revolution, or (3) needs a new outlet for his ambitions once substantial domestic changes have occurred.[29] Regardless of whether the revolution is strictly national or partly transnational in character, ambition at the domestic level spills over to foreign policy.[30] For these reasons, a revolutionary state is likely to become what some scholars call a "greedy state."[31]

Third, revolutionary leaders are less likely than nonrevolutionary leaders to be constrained by domestic political structures. As part of the revolutionary process, the domestic political landscape is overturned and replaced by a new order.[32] This raises the salience of the leader's preferences, risk tolerance, and ambition, because postrevolutionary leaders are typically free of any meaningful constraint on their ability to declare war, such as a legal requirement to get congressional or cabinet approval. Consequently, a potential obstacle to instigating interna-

[27] Fearon 1995; Powell 1999; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2004; Filson and Werner 2004.

[28] This means that the seizure of domestic power is partly a stepping stone toward a broader agenda. The domestic arena is insufficient for these leaders' ambitions. For example, some communist revolutions have quasi-universal aims to change not just the country but the world.

[29] These conditions are true as a matter of probability: they are more frequently the case when the leader is revolutionary. An example of each condition is (1) Pol Pot's preemptive attack on Vietnam, (2) France's invasion of the Low Countries and Savoy following 1789, and (3) the Napoleonic Wars.

[30] One might wonder whether the effort to sustain the revolution at home would discourage leaders from instigating new wars. Yet that does not appear to be true, as the subsequent empirical evidence suggests. Indeed, students of revolutions consistently find revolutions disruptive of international politics. As Walt 1996, 1, points out: "[R]evolutions are more than just critical events in the history of individual nations; they are usually watershed events in international politics. Revolutions cause sudden shifts in the balance of power, alter the pattern of international alignments, cast doubt on existing agreements and diplomatic norms, and provide inviting opportunities for other states to improve their positions." Maoz 1996; Skocpol 1988; and others arrive at a similar conclusion.

[31] Glaser 2010.

[32] Walt 1996; Huntington 1968; Skocpol 1979.

tional conflict is removed. The lack of domestic structures also leads to greater opportunities for strategic miscalculation, for it is unlikely that anyone outside of the revolutionaries' inner circle can provide independent input on decisions and help the government avoid groupthink.[33]

Two caveats are in order. First, this third mechanism focuses more on the domestic constraints faced by the leader than on his personality characteristics. In that sense, this mechanism is logically distinct from the other two. Both the leader and the regime structures probably play a role in the revolutionary state's propensity to instigate international conflict. In practice the mechanisms are not easily separated, as the leader's impact depends in part on the change in regime constraints and vice versa. Still, the empirical analysis discussed later investigates both types of mechanisms. The evidence seems especially strong that the original revolutionary leader(s) per se, not just the regime structures, is important for explaining the outcomes. For instance, I show that successors to revolutionary leaders do not have the same conflict propensity as the original revolutionaries. I also show that even when one controls for various kinds of autocratic regime types, including personalist dictatorships, the conflict propensity of revolutionary leaders remains.[34] Nonetheless, one opportunity for future research is to explore how variation in postrevolutionary regime structures affects the state's propensity for conflict initiation.[35]

The second caveat is that I do not argue that there is a single "revolutionary personality" or psychology that such leaders always have; I am suggesting, rather, that the political dynamics of revolutions select certain leadership characteristics more frequently than do nonrevolutionary processes. Every revolution has its own particular political dynamics, and not all of them produce leaders with the characteristics just described. On average, however, there is a tendency in revolutionary politics to select ambitious, ruthless, and risk-tolerant leaders and to reduce domestic constraints in favor of a strong executive that can pursue revolutionary goals. These tendencies follow from the incentives generated by revolutionary movements, even if the actual outcomes are idiosyncratic.

State Aggression Can Cause Dyadic Conflict

This article joins a growing body of research that focuses on the causes of international conflict arising from domestic- or individual-level fac-

[33] Walt 1996.
[34] Weeks 2012; Geddes,Wright, and Frantz 2012.
[35] Colgan and Weeks forthcoming.

tors (monadic factors).[36] One common question for all such theories is how monadic factors relate to strategic interaction in dyadic conflict. Bargaining models of war suggest that if actors are fully rational, all information is public, and there are no commitment problems, the actors ought to be able to reach a bargain that reflects the balance of power, thus rendering monadic factors irrelevant.[37] The potential for conflict arises when the bargaining model's initial assumptions break down. One possibility is that even fully rational state leaders could miscalculate about the win set and therefore choose to engage in conflict, if there are incentives for bluffing due to private information.[38] Another possibility is that state leaders are boundedly rational and make imperfect judgments about a complex world.[39]

The bargaining model is useful to show how monadic factors can increase the probability of conflict. A leader with high risk tolerance and ambition places a lower value on the status quo, relative to war, than a leader with low risk tolerance and less ambition. This means that the leader is more likely to challenge the status quo (that is, the set of status quos that the leader is willing to challenge increases), leading to more opportunities for conflict.[40] Consequently, there are more chances for problems to arise, stemming from private information, lack of credible commitments, or miscalculation; and these, in turn, lead to actual conflict.

Walt's analysis of revolutionary politics points to an additional factor that contributes to the link between revolutions and international conflict.[41] He argues that revolutions lower the quality of information available to leaders both inside and outside of the revolutionary state, thereby increasing the potential for uncertainty and miscalculation. Walt's argument is plausible but not strictly necessary in order to explain the increased propensity of revolutionary states to engage in international conflict.

[36] Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2004; Chiozza and Goemans 2004; Chiozza and Goemans 2011; Mansfield and Snyder 2005; Rosen 2007; Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz 2008; Saunders 2011; Weeks 2008; Weeks 2012; Croco 2011; Horowitz and Stam forthcoming.

[37] Fearon 1995; Powell 1999; Filson and Werner 2004.

[38] Fearon 1995.

[39] Kirshner 2000; Lake 2010–11.

[40] Another way of thinking about this issue is that the "win set" (that is, the range of acceptable bargaining opportunities) shrinks, and that creates opportunities for war. When the win set is small, the potential for war rises because even small miscalculations or commitment problems could mean that the parties are no longer able to find a mutually agreeable bargain to avoid war. See Fearon 1995; and Chiozza and Goemans 2011, 42.

[41] Walt 1996.

Distinguishing the Causal Mechanisms in the Link between Revolution and Conflict

The emphasis here on revolutionary leaders, as opposed to revolutions as events, has significant implications. Scholars who treat revolutions primarily as events, such as Walt and Maoz, focus on the period immediately following the revolution to test their theory's expectations of international conflict. However, theory does not provide any clear guidance about the length of the postrevolutionary period or when a revolution "ends." Consequently, scholars often simply pick an arbitrary duration, such as five, ten, or fifteen years.[42] Not only does this approach lack substantive justification, but it is also applied rigidly to all cases, ignoring the apparent variation between cases. For instance, the Khmer Rouge's revolutionary regime lasted just four years in Cambodia, whereas Qadhafi's most dramatic political changes in Libya did not even start until he had been in power for almost a decade.

By contrast, I focus on revolutionary leaders. My argument suggests that the conflict propensity of a revolutionary state should be higher than that of a nonrevolutionary state so long as (one of) the original leader(s) of the revolution is in executive office. (Sometimes there are multiple revolutionary leaders in the highest office consecutively, such as Naguib and Nasser in Egypt.) It follows that the consequences of a revolution for international conflict depend significantly on the length of time that a revolutionary leader is in office. This is especially true for conflicts instigated by the revolutionary state (rather than ones in which it is targeted), for it is in these conflicts that the ambition and risk tolerance of the revolutionary leader are likely to play the most significant role.

My theory of the causal role of the revolutionary leader departs significantly from existing theories, but I do not claim that the effect of a revolution is entirely explained by the revolutionary leader. Other causal mechanisms are likely to be at work, especially in the period immediately following the revolution. For instance, a revolutionary state is relatively likely to be the subject of an attack by another state(s), and that propensity is highest in the immediate postrevolutionary period. Thus an empirical analysis that distinguishes the causal role of the revolutionary leader from the immediate postrevolutionary period could help inform theory by determining the causal role of various mechanisms.

Three hypotheses follow from these theoretical considerations:

[42] Maoz 1996; Walt 1996, 15; Enterline 1998.

H1. Revolutionary states participate in international conflicts more frequently than nonrevolutionary states.

H2. Revolutionary states instigate international conflicts more frequently than nonrevolutionary states.

H3. The high propensity of revolutionary states to instigate international conflicts endures so long as (one of) the original leader(s) of the revolution is in executive office.

While H1 is consistent with all of the causal mechanisms that have been suggested in the literature, the same is not true of H2 and H3, and thus they are revealing. For instance, Walt suggests that revolutions create windows of opportunity for revolutionary states, while still in turmoil, to be attacked by other states. Similarly, Maoz suggests that revolutionary states are conflict prone in part because neighboring states or external powers experience a combination of opportunity and fear. If such windows of opportunity were the primary mechanism linking revolution to conflict, we would not expect H2 and H3 to be true. By contrast, H2 and H3 are empirical implications of the mechanism I suggest in this article, that is, that revolutions select ambitious, risk-tolerant leaders. To clarify, evidence in favor of H2 and H3 would not disprove the idea of "windows of opportunity," but such evidence would suggest that they are only part of the story. Further, such evidence would add precision about the relative importance of the various hypothesized mechanisms.

Operationalizing Revolutionary Government

One problem that has plagued the research on revolution and war is a lack of a widely accepted universe of cases of revolution or revolutionary governments. While some scholars focus on only a handful of cases, others consider hundreds.[43] This difficulty can lead to a selection bias in favor of the theoretical hypotheses.[44] Avoiding selection bias is facilitated by using a comprehensive domain of cases defined by a well-specified identification procedure.

This article uses a new data set to operationalize the variable *Revolutionary Leader*. Each state-year is given a dichotomous 1/0 coding,

[43] Walt focuses his 1996 research on revolution and war on ten cases of "unambiguous" revolutions, though he suggests in his 1997 work that other cases exist. Skocpol's focus on only the "great" revolutions appears to limit the universe of cases to fewer than ten. Snyder 1999 identifies twenty-four revolutions during the Cold War for his research. Maoz 1996, Table 5.2, identifies 592 instances of revolutionary observations (state-years) in the period 1816–1986; he does not identify precisely how many revolutions these observations stem from, but it appears to be more than 100.

[44] King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Geddes 1990.

based on whether the state is ruled by a leader who came to power in a revolution, which is judged according to two principal criteria plus two exclusions. The first criterion is whether the leader of the state came to power through use of armed force, widespread popular demonstrations, or a similar uprising (henceforth called an "an irregular transition"). While most revolutions are violent, this operationalization does not make violence an essential component of the concept, following the practice of recent research on revolutions.[45] It is possible for more than one leader to have "led" an irregular transition, but the leadership is restricted to its senior leaders. Thus both Lenin and Stalin had an "irregular transition" as leaders of the Russian Revolution, but Khrushchev did not, even though the latter fought in the Revolution at a young age. For the purpose of this data set, a "government" is equivalent to the period of time that a leader was continuously in power (for example, four or eight years for a US president).

The second criterion is that once in power, the government must have implemented radical domestic changes for the purpose of transforming the organization of society, including its social, economic, and political institutions and practices.[46] In all cases, the focus is on domestic policy, not foreign policy. The measure takes into account seven possible areas of change: the selection and power of the national executive; the structure of property ownership; the relationship between state and religion; the official political ideology; the official state name and symbols; the institutionalized status of ethnicity and gender; and the presence of a governing revolutionary council or committee. Dramatic changes in policy in at least three of the seven categories are required for the leader's policy to be considered revolutionary. For example, the Iranian Revolution in 1979 changed the relationship between state and religion (political dominance by clerics), the power and selection of the national executive (replacement of the monarchy by a clerical Supreme Leader), the status of women (inequality in inheritance law and segregation of the sexes), and the official name of the country (changed to the Islamic Republic of Iran), as well as many other changes. While the threshold of three out of seven changes is somewhat arbitrary, robustness checks are performed to ensure that the empirical results are consistent at higher thresholds.

[45] Tilly 1996; Goldstone 2001; Goodwin 2001; Colgan 2012.

[46] Strictly speaking, to be coded revolutionary a leader need have made changes in only two out of three of those types of institutions (for example, political, economic, social). In theory, it is possible that a leader could be coded as revolutionary on purely political grounds (by making changes to the executive, political ideology, and installing a revolutionary committee), but in practice there are no such instances in the data set.

Two types of leaders are excluded from the revolutionary category even though they are irregular. First, leaders who are installed by foreign powers after a major international war are not coded as revolutionary. States with foreign-installed leaders do not always have a free hand to control their state's policy, especially in the realm of foreign affairs; indeed, such states behave differently from other states.[47] Second, the founding leader of a state is not coded as revolutionary, as I focus on changes relative to a "prior government" within the same polity.[48] When the two principal criteria are met, and neither exclusion applies, the state-year is coded as revolutionary.

Each observation was coded twice, by different coders, and reconciled so as to improve the accuracy and concept validity of the data. The data set provides a dichotomous indicator for revolutionary government for 7096 observations of 168 states over the period 1945–2001.[49] Of these, 968 state-years are coded as revolutionary, stemming from 77 revolutions (plus 3 revolutions that occurred prior to 1945). Revolutionary leaders are quite distinct from those that emerged through coups or assassinations. In the data set, only 28 percent of the leaders that used force to come to power are coded as revolutionary. Geographically, revolutionary leaders have appeared in all areas of the world, except North America since 1945, and no one region dominates.[50]

A full list of the leaders coded as revolutionary is provided in an appendix.[51] Likely there will be disagreements about whether this or that government should be coded as revolutionary. Still, the benefit of the data set used in this article is that a consistent set of rules has been applied, both to shield against selection bias and to reveal the coding assumptions in a transparent fashion. Greater detail and justification of the coding rules, along with an explicit comparison to related data (for example, the Archigos data; Maoz's operationalization of revolution) is available elsewhere.[52]

The data set implicitly addresses the issue of the duration of a revolutionary government. The exact time at which a government ceases

[47] Lo, Hashimoto, and Reiter 2008.

[48] I focus on what Maoz calls "internal revolutions"; that is, the state itself already exists but the existing social, political, and economic relationships of the state are transformed. Consequently, this operationalization of revolution does not include new governments that might be considered "revolutionary" when the state itself is born. Future research could address this topic. However, this would involve a nontrivial amount of additional work, as it would require additional rules to distinguish "revolutionary" cases from "nonrevolutionary" founding governments.

[49] Following the rule used by the Polity IV project, states with populations less than 500,000 are not coded in this data set.

[50] For more details, see Colgan 2013b.

[51] Colgan 2013b.

[52] Colgan 2010; Colgan 2012.

to be "revolutionary" is a vexed question, to which there is probably no single answer. Nonetheless, some kind of practical rule is necessary for analysis. The design of the data set follows this article's emphasis on the role of leaders' characteristics. Consequently, the variable *Revolutionary Leader* is coded positively for as long as (one of) the original leader(s) of the revolution is in executive office.

To probe the robustness of the results presented in the next section, the analyses were retested using both broader and narrower definitions of "revolutionary government." First the definition was broadened to test whether the transformative domestic policy of a revolutionary leader is actually important as an indicator of foreign policy behavior. That is, one could imagine (following Gurr) that all leaders who have come to power by force or by some irregular transition are similarly inclined to behave aggressively in their foreign policy.[53] Thus the key explanatory variable was replaced with a variable indicating any leader who came to power through irregular transition. (*Revolutionary Leaders* are a subset of this group.) That variable was not found to be statistically significant, supporting the notion that revolutionary leaders are indeed special. Conversely, if one narrows the definition of revolutionary leader to include only the "unambiguous" cases of revolutionary leaders, the effect on international conflict grows even stronger in size and significance. This was done in two ways. First, all state-years were coded with a dichotomous variable called *Ambiguous* to indicate borderline cases or cases where information was missing; this variable was used to identify "unambiguous" revolutionary leaders. Second, an even more restricted group of just eleven leaders who have been widely recognized as revolutionary was used.[54] Either approach leads to consistent but statistically stronger results, again supporting the notion that revolutionary leaders are special. Results and details are available in the online appendix.[55]

Empirical Analysis and Results

The theory being tested is primarily about the characteristics of revolutionary leaders and politics, and therefore it is initially tested using a

[53] Gurr 1988.

[54] The eleven "unambiguous" revolutionary leaders/regimes are Mao (China), Castro (Cuba), Khomeini (Iran), Pol Pot (Cambodia), Ortega (Nicaragua), Banti (Ethiopia), Qadhafi (Libya), Kerekou (Benin), Ngouabi (Congo), Al-Bashir (Sudan), and Ne Win (Myanmar). These regimes are selected based on the frequency with which they have been identified as revolutions by other major scholars (Walt, Huntington, Goldstone, and so on).

[55] See Colgan 2013b.

monadic analysis in which the unit of analysis is the state-year. I then extend the analysis to a dyadic approach that uses dyad-years as the unit of analysis. This sequential research design—first monadic, then dyadic—follows the practice of previous research.[56]

The dependent variables are based on militarized interstate disputes (MIDs), a class of international events in which a state threatens, displays, or uses force against another state(s). While there is heterogeneity in these events, from full-fledged wars to relatively minor disputes, they provide considerable information about a state's interstate conflicts. These events have been coded in the Correlates of War (COW) data set (v3.02), and the data are widely used by scholars for studying international peace and conflict.[57] This analysis focuses on the onset of MIDs, since the factors leading to dispute onset are not necessarily the same as those that lead to dispute continuation or duration.[58]

Monadic Analysis

For the monadic analysis, three different forms of the dependent variable are used: *All MIDs*, *Attacker-MIDs*, and *Defender-MIDs*. The latter two variables are created using the COW coding of whether or not the state acted as a "revisionist" party in the dispute—that is, a state that seeks to revise the status quo by force.[59] If the state is coded as revisionist, it is considered to be an attacker, and thus the incident is an *Attacker-MID* for that state; otherwise, the incident is a *Defender-MID*.

The hypotheses are tested using a random-effects negative binomial regression model adjusted for time-series panel data. I use negative binomial regression because the dependent variables are event counts and because tests suggest that there is overdispersion in the data.[60] For a monadic analysis, a negative binomial regression is superior to a logit

[56] Mansfield and Snyder 2005; Rousseau 2005; Colgan 2010.

[57] Data set: Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer 2004. Data used by Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2004; Mansfield and Snyder 2005; Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz 2008; Weeks 2008; Weeks 2012; Enterline 1998; Russett and Oneal 2001.

[58] Multilateral disputes are handled in the usual way: in the monadic analysis, a state's dispute with multiple opponents counts as just one MID; it also counts as a MID for each of the opponents. In the dyadic analysis the MID is counted for each relevant state pair.

[59] Using the COW coding of "revisionist" is arguably a better measure for this purpose than the "side A" measure focused on which side initiated the first military move (for example, fired the first bullet). I use the word "instigate" rather than "initiate" to denote my use of the revisionist variable. In a small proportion of the cases (11 percent), both sides have at least one state coded as revisionist. For further information, see the COW database. At http://www.correlatesofwar.org/, accessed August 11, 2011.

[60] As a robustness check, the models were also tested using Poisson regression because Poisson can be more efficient in estimating the coefficients. The results did not materially change between Poisson and negative binomial.

model because approximately 11 percent of all values (and one-third of the nonzero values) for the dependent variable are higher than one.[61] The period of analysis is 1945–2001. The base models use random effects for greater statistical efficiency in estimating the coefficients, but fixed-effects models are also used in order to control for state-specific variables that do not vary over time. The regressions control for other variables that could affect a state's propensity to engage in MIDs and have been used by previous work in the literature. The analysis includes (logged) population size, (logged) GDP per capita, the state's national military capabilities (as measured by the Composite Index of National Capability or CINC score in the COW data set), and the number of contiguous territorial borders with other states as basic characteristics of a state's likelihood to engage in international conflict.[62] These variables proxy for the degree to which the state is capable of waging war (population, GDP, CINC) and the geographical likelihood of contact and thus friction with its neighbors (borders).[63]

Democratic peace theory suggests that democracies may be less inclined than other kinds of governments to engage in conflict.[64] Although most scholars believe this tendency is strongest (and perhaps only present) in a dyad of two democracies, the state's composite Polity IV score is included as a control variable to address the possibility of monadic differences in a state's propensity to engage in conflict.[65] As a robustness check, a dichotomous variable for democracy was also used.[66] Huntington contends, in addition, that religious and cultural factors shape the disputes in the international system and that Islamic countries in particular have "bloody borders" and "bloody innards" because they have cultural and demographic features that make them violence prone.[67] To account for this possible effect, the Muslim percentage of the population is used as a control variable.

[61] The distribution of values for *All MIDs* is the following: 71 percent of observations are 0; 18 percent of observations are equal to 1; 11 percent of observations are greater than 1.

[62] Several researchers have expressed concern about the poor data quality associated with military expenditure data, an important component of the CINC score (Smith 1995; Colgan 2011). Consequently, regressions were retested without including the CINC score; the results did not materially change.

[63] Enterline 1998; Lo, Hashimoto, and Reiter 2001; Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz 2008; Weeks 2012.

[64] Russett 1993; Russett and Oneal 2001; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2004; Rousseau 2005.

[65] The Polity IV score is a proxy for the regime's "degree of democracy"; it ranges from −10 to 10. See Marshall and Jaggers 2010.

[66] The state is coded as a democracy if its composite Polity IV score is above +6 on the −10 to +10 scale; otherwise it is a nondemocracy.

[67] Huntington 1996.

Other control variables were included. A dummy variable was included for major powers in the international system, following the COW data set's specification of those states. Each analysis includes a dummy variable for the Cold War period (pre-1990), which may have altered the dynamics of international disputes. Dummy variables for eight geographical regions were also included, based on the World Bank's classification. Finally, it has become standard practice in the literature to include a statistical control for temporal dependence. Following Carter and Signorino,[68] the models include the number of years that have elapsed since the country last experienced a MID, along with the square and cube of this value. These variables are included in all of the regression models, although the estimates of these parameters are not shown.

Data on states' borders, population, and major power status come from the COW data set. Data on states' religious makeup are drawn from the World Christian Database.[69] A data set by Fearon and Laitin provides the GDP per capita data.[70] The World Bank's *World Development Indicators* data on GDP per capita were used where data are missing from the Fearon and Laitin data set. Considerable effort went into addressing missing data and ensuring that the data set was as complete as possible.

Results from Monadic Analysis

Table 1 provides the results, which indicate significant support for the theory. The first column shows a basic model using all MID onsets as the dependent variable. As expected by H1, the coefficient for *Revolutionary Leader* is positive and strongly significant, with confidence levels above 99 percent, indicating that states with revolutionary leaders participate in international conflicts more frequently than nonrevolutionary states. The second and third models then shift the dependent variable to *Attacker-MIDs* and *Defender-MIDs*, respectively. Again, the coefficient for *Revolutionary Leader* is positive and strongly significant.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth columns in Table 1 show the results when country fixed-effects are added to the regression models; the results remain largely consistent. The only slight difference in the results when fixed-effects are included is that the statistical significance for *Revolutionary Leader* is weaker when the dependent variable is *Defender-MIDs* ($p<0.13$). Nonetheless, H1 and H2 receive strong sup-

[68] Carter and Signorino 2010.
[69] At http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/, accessed June 22, 2010.
[70] Fearon and Laitin 2003.

TABLE 1
MONADIC ANALYSIS OF MID ONSETS, 1945–2001

Dependent Variable	*All MIDs*	*Attacker*	*Defender*	*All MIDs*	*Attacker*	*Defender*
Revolutionary Leader	0.305***	0.433***	0.165**	0.275***	0.412***	0.135
	0.059	0.085	0.082	0.062	0.088	0.087
GDP/Cap, Log	–0.106***	–0.126**	–0.116**	–0.140***	–0.071	–0.192***
	0.036	0.057	0.046	0.044	0.067	0.058
Population, Log	0.135***	0.218***	0.070	0.202***	0.110	0.279***
	0.037	0.066	0.044	0.070	0.110	0.080
Polity IV	0.003*	0.005**	0.001	0.003*	0.005**	0.001
	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.002
Contiguous Borders	0.095***	0.106***	0.090***	0.108***	0.120***	0.090***
	0.013	0.020	0.016	0.017	0.024	0.023
Coldwar	0.112**	0.165**	0.072	0.140**	0.138	0.137*
	0.049	0.078	0.063	0.057	0.091	0.071
Muslim, %Pop.	–0.211	0.094	–0.562***			
	0.173	0.288	0.210			
Major Power	0.483**	0.516	0.610***			
	0.192	0.422	0.216			
Capabilities (CINC)	–1.110	–0.760	–1.225	–0.320	1.271	–1.414
	0.935	1.575	1.138	0.993	1.524	1.261
Fixed Effects	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
N	6746	6746	6746	6649	5708	6411
log-likelihood	–5317	–3023	–3894	–4772	–2589	–3410

All models use negative binomial regression analysis for time-series panel data.
Panel-adjusted standard errors are below coefficients; * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
Regional dummies included in all random-effects models but not shown.
The number of peace years for each state, along with its square and cube, is included in all models but not shown.

port in Table 1. The fixed-effects models use almost the same set of independent variables, except without variables that are time-invariant, such as the regional dummy variables.[71]

As discussed earlier, one issue debated in the literature is the extent to which revolutionary states are aggressive and act as the instigators of international conflict. The second and fifth models in Table 1 are especially important as they provide evidence in support of H2, which suggests that states with revolutionary leaders act as instigators of

[71] The *Muslim* variable is dropped because only a single observation is available for the religious demographics of each country. The *Major Power* variable is also dropped because it is time-invariant in most cases.

international conflict. This result is confirmed by the evidence in Table 2, which indicates the average annual number of MID onsets experienced by each type of state. The table suggests that in the aggregate, states with revolutionary leaders are more likely to act as attackers than as defenders. Moreover, the increase in a revolutionary state's propensity to instigate conflict, compared with nonrevolutionary states, is higher than the increase in its propensity to act as the defender. Thus while neighboring states do occasionally attack postrevolutionary states (for example, Iraq-Iran, 1980), these events do not adequately explain the pattern of observations. Revolutionary states have a higher rate as both the instigator and the defender in MIDs, but the former is far more important in driving the overall rate.

The other striking feature of Table 2 is the magnitude of the impact of revolutionary leaders on the state's propensity for international conflict. The first column shows that revolutionary states engage in almost twice the number of MIDs per year as do nonrevolutionary states.[72] The next columns indicate that revolutionary states instigate MIDs at a rate 179 percent higher than do nonrevolutionary states; for defensive MIDs, the rate is 42 percent higher. These are substantively large effects.[73]

Table 3 tests H3, which suggests that the high propensity of revolutionary states to instigate international conflicts endures so long as the original leader(s) of the revolution is in executive office. To test the hypothesis, two new variables are introduced. The first is *Postrevolutionary Period,* which is coded dichotomously. It equals 1 only in the ten years immediately following the uprising or event that brought a revolutionary leader to power, and 0 in all other observations. In the robustness checks, this ten-year period was varied to five- and fifteen-year periods, and the results were consistent. A second variable, called *Revolutionary Leader*Period* is an interaction term, created by multiplying together the two dichotomous variables *Revolutionary Leader* and *Postrevolutionary Period*. Forty-two percent of the state-year observations of *Revolutionary Leaders* occur after the ten-year *Postrevolutionary Period*, and 21 percent of the state-years in the *Postrevolutionary Period* occur after the initial *Revolutionary Leader* has left office (that is, the leader's tenure was fewer than ten years).

Introducing these new variables allows us to focus on the relative explanatory power of the leader of the revolution as distinct from the

[72] The overall rate of conflict remains relatively low on an annual basis, a little less than one MID per year. See Table 2.

[73] Note that Table 2 indicates the impact *in the aggregate* and does not control for other variables as in the regression analysis. See further discussion below.

Table 2
Aggregate Rate of MID Onsets, by Leader Type, 1945-2001

	All MID Onsets	*Attacker-MIDs*	*Defender-MIDs*
Nonrevolutionary	0.431	0.166	0.264
Revolutionary	0.841***	0.465***	0.376***
Revol as % of Nonrevol	195%	279%	142%

Count of MID onsets per state-year, average over 1945–2001. Data: COW MIDS data set v3.02.
t-tests used for statistical significance: * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table 3
Monadic Analysis of MID Onsets, Distinguishing the Postrevolutionary Period

Dependent Variable	*All MIDs*	*Attacker*	*Defender*	*All MIDs*	*Attacker*	*Defender*
Revolutionary Leader	0.201***	0.261**	0.123	0.147*	0.226**	0.070
	0.077	0.109	0.108	0.081	0.114	0.114
Revolutionary Period	0.280*	0.168	0.358*	0.357**	0.185	0.484**
	0.147	0.228	0.189	0.148	0.230	0.190
Revol. Leader*Period	–0.081	0.147	–0.260	–0.114	0.144	–0.332
	0.167	0.253	0.222	0.168	0.255	0.223
GDP/Cap, Log	–0.106***	–0.127**	–0.115**	–0.152***	–0.099	–0.194***
	0.036	0.057	0.046	0.044	0.068	0.057
Population, Log	0.148***	0.252***	0.075*	0.254***	0.207*	0.302***
	0.037	0.067	0.045	0.072	0.119	0.081
Polity IV	0.003*	0.005**	0.001	0.003*	0.006**	0.001
	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.002
Contiguous Borders	0.093***	0.105***	0.088***	0.106***	0.122***	0.085***
	0.013	0.020	0.016	0.017	0.024	0.022
Coldwar	0.109**	0.161**	0.074	0.150***	0.162*	0.141**
	0.049	0.078	0.063	0.057	0.093	0.071
Muslim, %Pop.	–0.206	0.119	–0.562***			
	0.174	0.289	0.211			
Major Power	0.454**	0.420	0.603***			
	0.193	0.424	0.217			
Capabilities (CINC)	–0.755	–0.132	–1.020	–0.111	1.480	–1.207
	0.930	1.560	1.135	0.974	1.520	1.241
Fixed Effects	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
N	6746	6746	6746	6649	5708	6411
log-likelihood	–5313	–3019	–3892	–4765	–2585	–3406

All models use negative binomial regression analysis for time-series panel data.
Panel-adjusted standard errors are below coefficients; * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
Regional dummies included in all random-effects models but not shown.
The number of peace years for each state, along with its square and cube, is included in all models but not shown.

political turmoil in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. H3 focuses on the propensity of revolutionary states to instigate conflicts, so we should pay most attention to the models that have *Attacker-MIDs* as the dependent variable. If H3 is correct, we should expect the coefficient for *Revolutionary Leader* to remain positive and significant even when the new variables have been introduced. This would suggest that even when we control for the effects of a postrevolutionary period, the role of the leader is associated with an increased propensity to instigate conflict. H3 does not make a strong prediction about the size or even the sign of the new variable *Postrevolutionary Period*. As for the interaction term, it gives us some indication of whether revolutionary leaders are especially aggressive in the immediate postrevolutionary period, as compared with the rest of their tenure in office. This is possible, but if it is the leader's individual attributes that matter most, it is also possible that the interaction term will be close to zero and statistically insignificant, suggesting that the propensity of revolutionary leaders to instigate conflict is relatively constant over time.

The first model in Table 3 focuses on all MID onsets as the dependent variable. As the results indicate, both the *Revolutionary Leader* and *Postrevolutionary Period* variables have positive and significant coefficients, suggesting that the presence of a revolutionary leader increases the state's propensity for international conflict somewhat independently of the turmoil in the postrevolutionary period and that this propensity persists even after that period has elapsed. The interaction term between the two variables is not statistically significant. The second model is even more instructive, because it focuses on *Attacker-MIDs* as the dependent variable. In this model, only the coefficient for *Revolutionary Leader* is positive and significant, suggesting that the postrevolutionary period by itself has no independent impact on the revolutionary state's propensity to instigate international conflict. By contrast, the third model focuses on *Defender-MIDs*. In this model, the result is reversed: only the coefficient for *Postrevolutionary Period* is positive and (weakly) significant. This result is entirely consistent with the expectations of the theory, as it suggests that the role of revolutionary leaders is to increase the aggressiveness of the state. The fourth, fifth, and sixth columns of Table 3 retest these first three models using country fixed-effects, and again the results are quite consistent. Thus the evidence supports H3.

Two further tests are illustrative. First, Figure 1 examines revolutionary leaders' propensity for MIDs over time. Along the x-axis, the time since the state's last revolution is indicated; the y-axis indicates

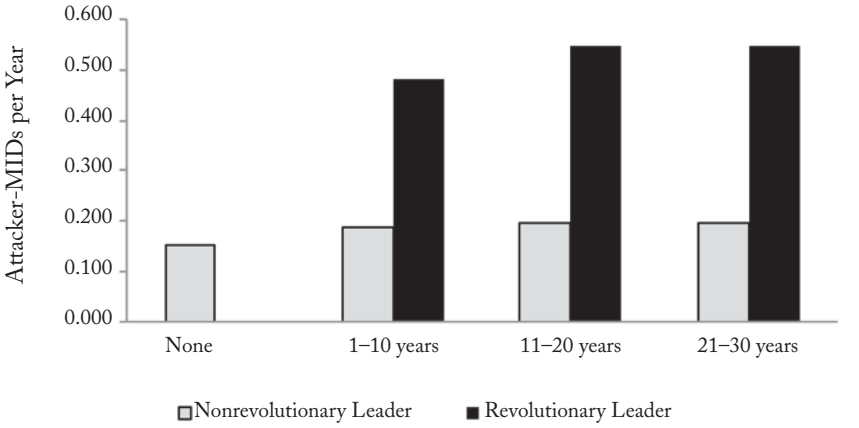

FIGURE 1
RATE OF ATTACKER-MID ONSETS OVER TIME SINCE A REVOLUTION, BY LEADER TYPE

the average rate of *Attacker-MIDs* per year. The black bars show the rate of *Attacker-MIDs* for revolutionary leaders who are still in office; the white bars show the rate of *Attacker-MIDs* for states in which the original revolutionary leader is no longer in power. Thus, as revolutionary leaders exit office, the state is reclassified as nonrevolutionary, such that it contributes to the conflict rate represented by the white bar rather than the black bar. For purposes of comparison, the rate of *Attacker-MIDs* for states that have never had a revolution is indicated on the far left hand side. As the figure indicates, the rate of *Attacker-MIDs* is consistently higher among revolutionary leaders than among nonrevolutionary leaders. This is true even thirty years after the revolution. By contrast, after the revolutionary leader(s) have left office, a state returns to a much lower rate of *Attacker-MIDs* (as represented by the white bars). This provides additional support for H3.

Second, one might wonder about whether it is the leader's personality or the structure of a revolutionary regime that makes the state more conflict prone. As a way of investigating this question, state leaders are divided into four categories: (1) leaders who are nonrevolutionary (that is, who came to power in a normalized way); (2) leaders who came to power in an irregular transition (for example, by a coup) but who did not subsequently lead revolutionary governments; (3) revolutionary leaders; and (4) leaders who are successors in a revolutionary regime but

who were not leaders of the original revolution. This allows us to compare revolutionary leaders with their successors (thus offering insight about whether it is the revolutionary leader or the revolutionary regime that affects a state's propensity to instigate international conflict) and to distinguish the behavior of leaders who were merely violent from those who are truly revolutionary. A revolutionary successor is defined as one who (1) was not a leader of the original revolution and (2) came to power within three years of a revolutionary leader being in office, so long as (3) there was not a significant change in the regime structures.[74]

Table 4 shows the results of introducing these other leader types into the regression models. As expected, revolutionary leaders instigate significantly more international conflicts than all of the other leader types. Revolutionary successors tend to instigate at a significantly lower rate than the original revolutionary leaders; postestimation tests show that this difference is statistically significant.[75] This suggests that the individual attributes of the original revolutionary leader(s) are especially important in explaining the initiation of state conflict, as compared with other factors such as the postrevolutionary regime structures. The difference between revolutionary leaders and nonrevolutionary irregular leaders is also significant, as expected. The pattern in Table 4 remains consistent even if the data sample is restricted only to non-OECD countries or only to MIDs in which at least one fatality occurred (*Fatal-MIDs*). It also remains consistent if one narrows the definition of revolutionary leaders to only those who were the first to lead the state after the revolution (for example, only Lenin, not Stalin).[76]

The evidence in support of H2 and H3 sheds new light on the causal mechanisms linking revolution and international conflict. As discussed earlier, some scholars suggest that revolutions create windows of opportunity for revolutionary states in turmoil to be attacked by other states.

[74] N=175 state-years involving thirty-two unique leaders coded as "revolutionary successors." A "significant change in the regime" is judged to occur when there has been a significant disruption, such as a coup or shift in Polity score. I also broadened the definition of revolutionary successors by allowing any leader who came to power within twenty years (rather than three) of a revolutionary leader to be considered a successor; this did not materially change the pattern of the results.

[75] The positive and significant difference between revolutionary leaders and their successors is true in all models in which the dependent variable is *All MIDs* or *Attacker-MIDs* (for example, in model 1, the difference is significant at $p<0.058$; for model 2, $p<0.01$). The difference disappears when the regressions focus on *Defender-MIDs*, which is quite consistent with my theory.

[76] Following the definitions described earlier, some events produce multiple revolutionary leaders (for example, Lenin and Stalin) who count as original revolutionaries; the leaders who follow them (for example, Khrushchev) are considered successors. As a robustness check, I excluded all leaders such as Stalin who are coded as revolutionary but were not the first to lead the state, and this did not materially change the results in Table 4.

TABLE 4
MONADIC ANALYSIS OF MID ONSETS, WITH REVOLUTIONARY "SUCCESSORS"

Dependent Variable	*All MIDs*	*Attacker*	*Defender*	*All MIDs*	*Attacker*	*Defender*
Revolutionary Leader	0.309***	0.423***	0.169*	0.274***	0.377***	0.164*
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Revol Successor	0.107	–0.025	0.205	0.101	–0.076	0.250*
	0.107	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.148
Nonrevol Coup Leader	–0.010	0.102	–0.139	0.003	0.062	–0.030
	0.080	0.000	0.111	0.000	0.000	0.000
GDP/Cap, Log	–0.117***	–0.133**	–0.130***	–0.159***	–0.095	–0.207***
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Population, Log	0.132***	0.226***	0.065	0.201***	0.134	0.000***
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.000	0.000
Polity IV	0.000*	0.000**	0.000	0.000*	0.000**	0.000
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Contiguous Borders	0.098***	0.110***	0.000***	0.000***	0.128***	0.093***
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Coldwar	0.000**	0.158**	0.067	0.135**	0.138	0.131*
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Muslim, %Pop.	–0.228	0.089	0.000***			
	0.175	0.289	0.000			
Major Power	0.476**	0.480	0.612***			
	0.194	0.423	0.000			
Capabilities (CINC)	–1.079	–0.676	–1.292	–0.235	1.271	–1.378
	0.934	1.573	0.000	0.990	1.530	1.255
Fixed Effects	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
N	6727	6727	6727	6630	5689	6359
log-likelihood	–5292	–3007	–3872	–4746	–2573	–3387

All models use negative binomial regression analysis for time-series panel data.
Panel-adjusted standard errors are below coefficients; * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
Regional dummies included in all random-effects models but not shown.
The number of peace years for each state, along with its square and cube, is included in all models but not shown.

Such windows of opportunity cannot adequately explain the evidence presented here in support of H2 and H3 (although they are consistent with the finding that the coefficient for *Postrevolutionary Period* is positive and significant, especially for *Defender-MIDs*). Mechanisms that focus on the leadership of the revolutionary state are needed to explain the empirical evidence. Thus the evidence is consistent with the key mechanism hypothesized in this article—that is, revolutions select ambitious, risk-tolerant leaders. It also could be viewed as consistent with some of the mechanisms suggested by others, but at a minimum this article offers new precision as to how those mechanisms operate

in practice. For example, Maoz suggests that new revolutionary leaders need to mobilize support for the regime through scapegoating.[77] The evidence in this article would suggest for Maoz that the tendency to scapegoat endures as long as the revolutionary leader is in office, rather than for some initial period of time, and that subsequent leaders who take office after the original revolutionary leader(s) do not engage in the same type of behavior.

Dyadic Analysis

I now move to the dyadic analysis. This analysis uses data and methodology similar to that used by Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz in their work linking civil wars and MIDs.[78] Building on their model serves to increase the comparability between the results presented here and the large existing literature on the causes of war and conflict. I use a probit regression model to conduct the analysis, with dyad-years as the unit of analysis. Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz's data sample is restricted to politically relevant dyads: that is, only dyads in which the states are geographically contiguous or at least one of the states is a major power. This is different from, and complementary to, the monadic analysis, which considered MIDs with all other states, not just with the politically relevant ones. The dependent variable is the onset of a MID, which is coded dichotomously (1 for dyad-years in which there is a new MID, and 0 otherwise). The dependent variable is coded as missing in dyad-years with ongoing MIDs, as the analysis focuses on dispute onset. The time period of the analysis is 1948–2001, based on the availability of data.

The multivariate analysis includes a series of standard control variables known to influence the risk of a dyadic dispute; all of them are drawn from the model used by Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz. One advantage of this approach is that it can control for some variables that cannot be captured in the monadic analysis. A second advantage is that the dyadic results permit us to compare the substantive effect of revolutionary leaders with other covariates highlighted in the literature on international conflict, such as the democratic peace hypothesis. Included as control variables are dummy variables indicating (1) whether both states in the dyad are democratic; (2) whether either state in the dyad is experiencing a civil war; (3) whether the states in the dyad are territorially contiguous (by land or a short distance of water); and (4) whether the states were ever territorially contiguous through co-

[77] Maoz 1996, 92.
[78] Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz 2008.

lonial holdings or dependent territories. Also included are measures of the states' military capabilities (using the CINC score: the ratio of the strong state to the weaker state, logged); a variable measuring the similarity of the two states' alliance portfolios; the level of trade dependence within the dyad; and the number of IGOs of which both states were members.[79] Finally, the regressions include a natural spline function (with three knots) of the number of years that have elapsed since the country last experienced a MID, though the estimates of these parameters are not shown.[80] The independent variables are lagged by one year to avoid the risk of inflating estimates due to reverse causation.[81]

Table 5 provides the results of the analysis. Model 1 is an exact replication of the findings by Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz.[82] The model indicates that joint democracy is negatively associated, and civil wars are positively associated, with the onset of MIDs. In model 2, the *Revolutionary Leader* variable is added to the base model, and it is found to be positively and significantly correlated with MID onset. Again, the results provide strong support for H1: revolutionary states are highly conflict prone. The effect of revolutionary leaders is striking: postestimation analysis suggests that they are associated with a 112 percent increase in the probability of MID onset (Figure 2).[83] This is significant because to date the impact of revolutionary leaders is rather less well known or as well integrated into quantitative studies of international conflict as are other phenomena such as the democratic peace.

The final model in Table 5, model 3, switches the unit of analysis to a directed-dyad-year, which allows the analysis to determine whether the state acted as the attacker or the defender in the dispute.[84] The *Revolutionary Leader in Dyad* variable is then broken into two constituent parts, based on whether a revolutionary leader was present in the attacking state or the defending state (or even both). As the coefficient on *Revolutionary Attacker* indicates, the variable is positively and significantly correlated with the onset of a MID. The coefficient for *Revolutionary Defender* is also positive but the correlation is only weakly

[79] For details about the data and methods used to construct these variables, see Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz 2008.

[80] Beck, Katz, and Tucker 1998.

[81] Tests performed using the nonlagged independent variables yield virtually identical estimates.

[82] Model 1 of Table 2 in Gleditsch, Salehyan, and Schultz 2008

[83] Figure 2 shows the conditional effect of having at least one revolutionary leader in the dyad on the probability of MID onset, holding other variables at their means. For a comparison of the effects of revolutions and joint democracy, see also Colgan 2013b, Figure A-5

[84] Note that this approach of identifying the "attacker" and the "defender" is slightly different from the approach used in the monadic analysis. In the monadic analysis, the "revisionist" variable was used. However, in practice, there is little difference between the two approaches.

TABLE 5
DYADIC ANALYSIS OF MID ONSETS

	1 Gleditsch et al.		*2 Revol. Gov'ts*		*3 Directed Dyads*	
	df/dx	*Std Err*	*df/dx*	*Std Err*	*df/dx*	*Std Err*
Revolutionary Leader in Dyad			0.0050***	0.0012		
Revolutionary Attacker					0.0041***	0.0008
Revolutionary Defender					0.0009*	0.0005
Democratic Dyad	-0.0060***	0.0009	–0.0051***	0.0010	0.0015***	0.0006
Civil War in Dyad	0.0047***	0.0014	0.0035***	0.0012	–0.0025***	0.0004
Transitional Regime in Dyad	–0.0012	0.0014	–0.0009	0.0014	–0.0004	0.0006
Contiguity	0.0206***	0.0024	0.0205***	0.0024	0.0089***	0.0012
Colonial Contiguity	0.0119***	0.0034	0.0114***	0.0033	0.0051***	0.0015
Ln (Capability Ratio)	–0.0016***	0.0003	–0.0016***	0.0003	–0.0008***	0.0001
Alliance S-Score	–0.0071***	0.0017	–0.0074***	0.0017	–0.0037***	0.0008
Low Trade Dependence	–0.0826	0.0529	–0.0727	0.0507	–0.0308	0.0212
Shared IGO Memberships	0.0001	0.0000	0.0001	0.0000	0.0000**	0.0000
N	44491		44303		94657	
Pseudo-R2	0.291		0.295		0.276	

All models use probit regression analysis; entries show the marginal change in the probability of MID onset.
Robust standard errors are clustered by dyad; * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
A spline (three knots) of peace years included in the regression but not shown.

significant. Again, this suggests that the role of revolutionary leaders is most important in initiating MIDs.

ADDITIONAL ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

The results of the monadic and dyadic analyses were subjected to a battery of additional robustness checks. First, additional control variables were inserted into the analysis, such as a dummy for the Iran-Iraq "Tanker Wars," the geographic distance between capitals, and a dummy variable for each year. Second, the definition of revolutionary was broadened and narrowed as discussed above, as was the definition of the postrevolutionary period. Third, all of the state-years associated with each important country case (for example, Iraq, Iran) were dropped, one country at a time, and the regressions retested. Fourth, the data sample was restricted to only developing countries (that is, non-OECD), to test for possible heterogeneity between developed and developing states. Fifth, I included a control variable for each of the

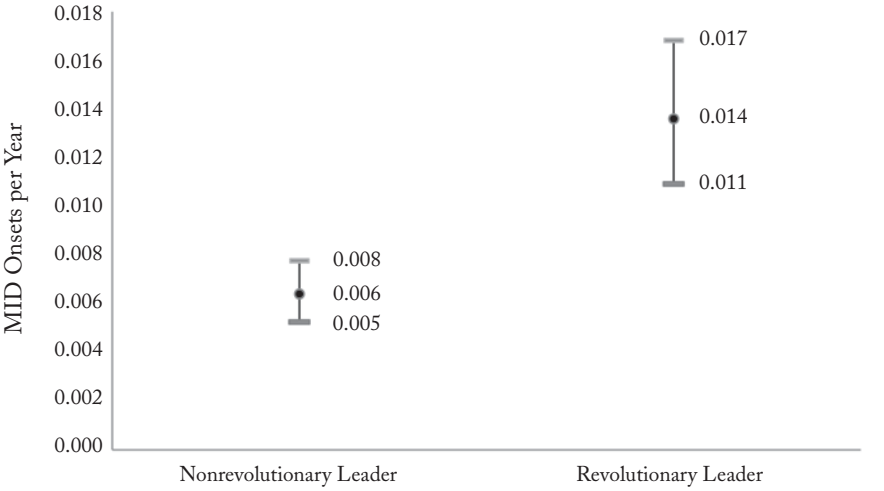

FIGURE 2
DYADIC RATE OF MID ONSETS, EFFECT OF REVOLUTIONARY LEADER (AT LEAST ONE IN DYAD)[a]

[a] Results based on model 2 of Table 5.

autocratic regime types (for example, personalist regimes) coded by Geddes, Wright, and Frantz.[85] In none of these robustness tests did the results change substantively.

I then tested for temporal differences during the Cold War (1945–89) and the subsequent period (1990–2001) by running separate regressions using only the observations in these time periods. *Revolutionary Leader* remains positive and statistically significant in both time periods, although the statistical significance is somewhat weaker in the post-1990 period. This is perhaps not surprising, given that roughly three-quarters of all observations are in the pre-1990 Cold War period, and the sample size of state-years that are revolutionary in the post–Cold War period is relatively small (233 observations).

As a further robustness check, the analyses were retested using a variety of different forms of the dependent variable. First, only the MIDs in which at least one fatality occurred (*Fatal-MID*s) were used, and the results remained consistent. Second, instead of using the COW "revisionist" variable to classify a state's role in a MID as an attacker or

[85] Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2012. The regressions with control variables for regime type are shown in Colgan 2013b.

defender in the monadic analysis, I also tried using the "Side A" coding. Again, the results remained consistent. Finally, previous work suggests that oil and revolutionary governments are particularly prone to international conflict.[86] Additional tests confirm that even when a measure of oil income is added to the regression, *Revolutionary Leaders* remains a highly significant variable on its own.

Finally, a state's propensity to engage in MIDs is correlated with the number of "revolutionary changes" made by the leader (as coded in the seven categories of potential political, economic, and social change).[87] The evidence shows that as the threshold for classification of a leader as "revolutionary" is raised, thereby eliminating some of the more ambiguous cases, the correlation between revolutionary leaders and international conflict is strengthened. Conversely, when the threshold for the "revolutionary" classification is lowered, thus including some leaders who are not truly revolutionary, the correlation with international conflict is weakened. This increases our confidence that the measure has conceptual validity.

Conclusion

This article provides new evidence that domestic revolutionary leaders have a profound impact on international politics. Revolutionary leaders are highly conflict prone, principally because they act aggressively to instigate militarized interstate disputes. This phenomenon is observed statistically even when country fixed-effects are used to control for unobserved time-invariant properties of the states, and even when the analysis distinguishes between the effect of leader attributes and post-revolutionary regime structures. Moreover, the magnitude of these effects is large: for instance, a state led by a revolutionary leader is almost three times as likely to instigate a MID as is a state with a nonrevolutionary leader.

The large magnitude of the impact underscores the importance of including revolutionary leaders in research on international conflict, especially in quantitative analyses, and this article illustrates how that can be done relatively easily using a new data set. New light is also shed on some long-standing theoretical debates about the impact of revolutionary governments. For instance, scholars have debated whether revolutionary states are conflict prone primarily because they are aggressive or because they are attacked by neighboring states. This article

[86] Colgan 2010.
[87] Colgan 2012. The relevant graph is also available in Colgan 2013b.

offers evidence that revolutionary states are more aggressive than has been emphasized previously.

Opportunities for further research exist across the subfields of political science into the causes and consequences of domestic revolutions. For scholars of international relations, one pressing question is how revolutions affect other pertinent variables affecting international conflict, such as incomplete democratization, the size of the selectorate, the duration of conflict, or authoritarian regime types.[88] It is possible that some existing analyses suffer from omitted variable bias by not considering the impact of revolutionary leaders. A second question is how different types of postrevolutionary governments (for example, juntas versus personalist dictatorships) affect the state's propensity to engage in conflict.[89] For students of American foreign policy, these findings invite further inquiry into how the US government can best react to foreign revolutions and mitigate their impact on international peace and security.[90] For comparativists, this article reinforces the demand for insight into the causes of revolutions and the character of different types of revolutions. Additional research might investigate how the impact of revolutions on international conflict varies by the type of revolution or its goals. In sum, the significant international impact of revolutionary leaders has been understudied for far too long.

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[88] Mansfield and Snyder 2005; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2004; Weeks 2008.
[89] Colgan and Weeks forthcoming.
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