

Making Waves

This study investigates the three main waves of political regime contention in Europe and Latin America. Surprisingly, protest against authoritarian rule spread across countries more quickly in the nineteenth century, yet achieved greater success in bringing democracy in the twentieth. To explain these divergent trends, the book draws on cognitive-psychological insights about the inferential heuristics that people commonly apply; these shortcuts shape learning from foreign precedents such as an autocrat's overthrow elsewhere. But these shortcuts had different force, depending on the political-organizational context. In the inchoate societies of the nineteenth century, common people were easily swayed by these heuristics: Jumping to the conclusion that they could replicate such a foreign precedent in their own countries, they precipitously challenged powerful rulers, yet often at inopportune moments – and with low success. By the twentieth century, however, political organizations had formed. Their leaders had better capacities for information processing, were less strongly affected by cognitive shortcuts, and therefore waited for propitious opportunities before initiating contention. As organizational ties loosened the bounds of rationality, contentious waves came to spread less rapidly, but with greater success.

Kurt Weyland is the Lozano Long Professor of Latin American Politics and professor of government at The University of Texas at Austin. He received his PhD in political science at Stanford University in 1991. Based on intensive field research in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Peru, and Venezuela, he has written three books and numerous journal articles on democracy, economic and social policy, populism, and diffusion processes in Latin America. Many of his articles and books have drawn on cognitive-psychological insights about bounded rationality to shed new light on puzzling political phenomena, such as the adoption of risky reforms in fragile democracies and the rash, ill-considered emulation of foreign precedents and models in a wide range of countries.

Making Waves

*Democratic Contention in Europe and Latin
America since the Revolutions of 1848*

KURT WEYLAND

University of Texas at Austin



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-04474-6 — Making Waves
 Kurt Weyland
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107044746

© Kurt Weyland 2014

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2014

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Weyland, Kurt Gerhard.

Making waves : democratic contention in Europe and Latin America since the revolutions of 1848 / Kurt Weyland.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-04474-6 (hardback) – ISBN 978-1-107-62278-4 (paperback)

1. Government, Resistance to – Europe – History – 19th century. 2. Government, Resistance to – Europe – History – 20th century. 3. Government, Resistance to – Latin America – History – 20th century. 4. Regime change – Europe – History – 19th century. 5. Regime change – Europe – History – 20th century. 6. Regime change – Latin America – History – 20th century. 7. Democracy – Europe – History – 20th century. 8. Democracy – Latin America – History – 20th century. 9. Europe – Politics and government – 19th century. 10. Europe – Politics and government – 20th century. 11. Latin America – Politics and government – 20th century. I. Title.

JN10.W48 2014

321.09'094-dc23 2013044142

ISBN 978-1-107-04474-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-62278-4 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page vii</i>
1 Introduction: Puzzling Trends in Waves of Contention	1
2 A New Theory of Political Diffusion: Cognitive Heuristics and Organizational Development	35
3 Organizational Development and Changing Modes of Democratic Contention	78
4 The Tsunami of 1848: Precipitous Diffusion in Inchoate Societies	99
5 The Delayed Wave of 1917–1919: Organizational Leaders as Guides of Targeted Contention	125
6 The Slow but Potent “Third Wave” in South America: The Prevalence of Negotiated Transitions	156
7 Crosscurrents of the Third Wave: Interorganizational Competition and Negotiation in Chile	192
8 Theoretical Conclusions and Comparative Perspectives	224
<i>Bibliography</i>	261
<i>Name Index</i>	299
<i>Subject Index</i>	309

Acknowledgments

Books result from years of systematic, painstaking research and patient, sometimes painful, writing and revising. But their origin can be unplanned and serendipitous. This happened with the present book. After completing *Bounded Rationality and Policy Diffusion: Social Sector Reform in Latin America*, I was groping around for a promising new topic, but without much success. Then, in late 2006, I received an invitation from Kirk Hawkins to present my “work in progress” at Brigham Young University. But I had little work to present, and certainly no progress! Hurriedly I wrote up some notes that applied the cognitive-psychological ideas of my diffusion book to the analysis of political regime contention: I conjectured that inferential shortcuts help explain why challenges to authoritarian regimes often spread in dramatic waves, as occurred recently during the “Arab Spring.” Given the unconventional nature of this claim, I left for Provo with trepidation. But unexpectedly, my hosts there found these ideas exciting and urged me with great enthusiasm to go ahead with the project.

I am glad I followed their advice. This study has been an exciting project from beginning to end. The main reason is its empirical and theoretical sweep. As regards the subject matter, it made sense to go back to the single most dramatic wave of political regime contention in recorded history, namely the revolutions of 1848. Yet this tsunami, which affected large parts of a whole continent within one month, contrasted starkly with the slower diffusion processes unfolding in Europe in 1917–19 and in South America from the late 1970s to the late 1980s. This observation of striking differences gave rise to the puzzle that the present volume seeks to explain. To compare three momentous waves that happened in two centuries, I had to research a vast range of historical developments in a variety of countries. How much I have learned! For the twenty-five preceding years, I had concentrated mostly on Latin America, a tremendously interesting continent. But after a quarter-century, the intellectual payoff of reading another book on that region was often limited. Not so

with the new project: Every book, every article taught me about institutions, structures, developments, people, and events about which I had known little.

In theoretical terms, this project led me on an interesting journey as well. I started out by applying the ideas advanced in my last book, arguing that the rash inferences suggested by cognitive shortcuts can account for the rapid but largely unsuccessful diffusion of revolution in 1848 (Weyland 2009). But then how to explain the slowdown of diffusion in 1917–19 and especially during the “third wave of democratization” in Latin America? To elucidate the repercussions of the Russian Revolutions, I developed an organizational macro-argument to complement the cognitive-psychological micro-foundation proposed in the preceding book (Weyland 2012b). And to explain the distinctive characteristics of the third wave, I extended this organizational line of reasoning to the input side of diffusion by analyzing the historical transformation of contentious precedents. In these ways, I gradually constructed a complex edifice that, in the stratosphere of theory, resembled the fantastic towers, buildings, and bridges that my sons Andi and Niko used to erect with their wooden building blocks; and it was similar fun to “see” this structure take shape!

This book has particular personal significance. Given my training and trajectory as a Latin America specialist, a good part of this study examines the southern subcontinent. But the other half examines Europe, and as the reader will quickly discover, those chapters focus primarily on Germany, my home country. Analyzing German history is, for obvious reasons, a difficult task – and I am not even analyzing the worst period. I avoided the whole topic for decades, even left Germany to settle in the United States, a (comparatively) uncomplicated country. But like other people who reach advanced middle age, I felt a longing to “go home” in my academic endeavors. And with the ideas about contentious diffusion, maybe I finally had something to say about major events in German history, such as the revolutions of 1848, which in one of their last tragic episodes played out in my provincial hometown, Kaiserslautern (Schneider and Keddigkeit 1999).

The cover photo with its tumbling dominoes, a common metaphor of diffusion, captures the interwoven themes of this book. For the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, a thousand colorfully painted foam dominoes were placed on the former East-West divide and then toppled in celebration of this high-profile episode of democratic contention. The collapse of communism constituted the most stunning surge in the third wave of democratization, which my study examines in its advance through South America in Chapters 6 and 7 and in its other regional manifestations in Chapter 8. Moreover, the setting of the joyous ceremony evokes the two earlier diffusion waves analyzed in this book, especially in Chapters 4 and 5. The plaza in front of the Brandenburg Gate, right where the dominoes are falling, is named after March 18, the traumatic day that brought the most violent street fighting of the 1848 revolution in Berlin. The same area also saw many of the crucial events of the November

Acknowledgments

ix

Revolution of 1918, for instance, the proclamation of the German republic from the Reichstag building next door. What picture could better encapsulate the multiple topics of my research?

While I am responsible for the unusual scope and complex argument of this book, numerous other people have helped me conduct this investigation, build the theory, and push me forward with the whole project. First and foremost, I thank Joe and Teresa Lozano Long for the generous resources that they have made available. Moreover, I am very grateful to Gary Freeman, the Government Department, and the College of Liberal Arts, all at the University of Texas, who over the years supported this project in important ways. Thank you also to the hardworking research assistants who collected and processed vast amounts of material over the years: Michelle Silva, Brian Smiley, Randy Uang, and especially Riitta Koivumäki and Fernando Rosenblatt. Andrew Stein helped with a steady stream of great documents, and Francisco Bulnes of CIDOC, Universidad Finis Terrae, in Santiago de Chile gave me access to a wealth of oral history transcripts. Eduardo Dargent was very helpful in setting up crucial interviews for me in Lima.

Over the years, I received a wealth of suggestions, comments, and ideas from Zoltan Barany, Jonathan Brown, Jason Brownlee, Tulia Faletti, Robert Fishman, Gary Freeman, John Higley, Scott Mainwaring, Pat McDonald, Ami Pedahzur, Dora Piroška, Kenneth Roberts, Nivien Saleh, David Samuels, Hillel Soifer, Sidney Tarrow, and Mark Traugott, all of whom were kind enough to read papers or draft chapters that I folded into this book. For their excellent comments at organized conference and workshop presentations I thank Kevin Arceneaux, Mark Beissinger, Graeme Boushey, Valerie Bunce, Ruth Collier, Gorana Draguljic, Frances Hagopian, Jonathan Hartlyn, Evelyne Huber, Scott Mainwaring, John Markoff, Covadonga Meseguer, Anne Nguyen, Philippe Schmitter, Charles Shipan, and John Stephens. Workshops at Temple University, Universidad Diego Portales (Santiago de Chile), University of Michigan, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, University of Zürich, and Yale University proved highly stimulating and productive. I am very grateful to Doug Biow of UT's Center for European Studies for providing the resources and administrative support for a workshop on "Spontaneity and Organization in European Democratic Contention" (February 2011), at which Kathleen Canning, Zach Elkins, David Shafer, and Jonathan Sperber offered stimulating feedback on a crucial part of this project.

As for all my work over the last decade, the Latin America Faculty Working Group at UT (Dan Brinks, Henry Dietz, Zach Elkins, Ken Greene, Wendy Hunter, and Raúl Madrid) proved essential with its outstanding feedback and advice on this evolving project. What a privilege to have such a talented group of colleagues! Other crucial contributions to this study arose from the day-long book workshop held at UT in December 2011. My departmental colleagues and PhD students, especially Joe Amick, Steven Brooke, Matt Buehler, John Higley, Matt Johnson, Riitta Koivumäki, Stuart Tandler, Jeffrey Tulis,

and Kristin Wylie (in addition to the colleagues named earlier), provided an abundance of comments, suggestions, and criticisms; and Josh Mishrikey faithfully recorded the many hours of discussion. Truly unique was the input of the two invited discussants, Ruth Collier and Frances Hagopian, who offered a total of fifty (!) pages of written comments and then followed up with further suggestions throughout the day.

Bits and pieces of my theory and case studies have appeared in earlier publications. Chapters 2 and 4 draw on my article, “The Diffusion of Revolution: ‘1848’ in Europe and Latin America,” published in *International Organization* 63:3 (July 2009), pp. 391–423. Chapters 2, 4, and 5 include material from my piece on “Diffusion Waves in European Democratization: The Impact of Organizational Development,” which appeared in *Comparative Politics* 45:1 (October 2012), pp. 25–45. Chapter 8 relies in one section on my essay entitled “The Arab Spring: Why the Surprising Similarities with the Revolutions of 1848?” in *Perspectives on Politics* 10:4 (December 2012), pp. 917–34. I thank these journals and their publisher, Cambridge University Press, for giving me permission to use this material.

This project could have been overwhelming and all-consuming. But my sons, Andi and Niko, guaranteed proper balance in my life, with exuberant Lego structures, wild soccer playing and noisy soccer watching, plentiful Latin homework, insane jokes, and a great deal of horsing around. Words cannot convey what I owe Wendy Hunter; I tried in my earlier books, but without full success. Constituting a bit of an academic homecoming, this book is dedicated to two old *Lautrer*, my parents Else and Dr. Helmut Weyland.