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978-0-521-62069-7 - No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991

Jeff Goodwin

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No Other Way Out

No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945–1991 provides a powerful explanation for the emergence of popular revolutionary movements, and the occurrence of actual revolutions, during the Cold War era. This sweeping study ranges from Southeast Asia in the 1940s and 1950s to Central America in the 1970s and 1980s and Eastern Europe in 1989. Following in the “state-centered” tradition of Theda Skocpol’s *States and Social Revolutions*, Goodwin demonstrates how the actions of specific types of authoritarian regimes unwittingly channeled popular resistance into radical and often violent directions. Revolution became the “only way out,” to use Trotsky’s formulation, for the opponents of these intransigent regimes. By comparing the historical trajectories of more than a dozen countries, Goodwin also shows how revolutionaries were sometimes able to create, and not simply exploit, opportunities for seizing state power.

Jeff Goodwin is associate professor and director of graduate studies in the Department of Sociology at New York University. He has published numerous papers on revolutions and collective action in such journals as the *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, *Social Science History*, *Sociological Forum*, *Theory and Society*, and *Politics and Society*. His articles have been awarded prizes by two sections of the American Sociological Association, including the Barrington Moore Prize of the Comparative-Historical section. Professor Goodwin has also edited three forthcoming volumes: *Paths to Protest*, *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements* (with James M. Jasper and Francesca Polletta), and *Social Movements: Readings, Cases, and Concepts* (with James M. Jasper). He has conducted research in Central America, the Philippines, and Ireland.

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<i>Abbreviation, Acronym, or Name</i>	<i>Nation/Region</i>	<i>Organization</i>
AD	Venezuela	Democratic Action
ALN	Brazil	National Liberating Action
ARENA	El Salvador	Nationalist Republican Alliance
ARVN	Vietnam	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
ATC	Nicaragua	Association of Rural Workers
AVC	Ecuador	¡Alfaro Lives, Damn It!
BRP	El Salvador	Popular Revolutionary Bloc
CD	El Salvador	Democratic Convergence
CGUP	Guatemala	Guatemalan Committee of Popular Unity
CMEA	Soviet bloc	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CNT	Guatemala	National Confederation of Workers
CNUS	Guatemala	National Committee for Trade Union Unity
Comecon		(see CMEA)
CONDECA	Central America	Central American Defense Council
CPRs	Guatemala	Communities of People in Resistance
CUC	Guatemala	Committee of Peasant Unity
DA	Philippines	Democratic Alliance
DCG	Guatemala	Christian Democratic Party of Guatemala
DIT	Guatemala	Department of Technical Investigations
DRV	Vietnam	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
EDCOR	Philippines	Economic Development Corps
EGP	Guatemala	Guerrilla Army of the Poor
ELN	Bolivia	National Liberation Army
ELN	Colombia	National Liberation Army
ELN	Peru	National Liberation Army
EPL	Colombia	Popular Army of Liberation
EPR	Mexico	Popular Revolutionary Army
ERP	Argentina	People's Revolutionary Army
ERP	El Salvador	Popular Revolutionary Army

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EZLN	Mexico	Zapatista National Liberation Army
FALN	Venezuela	Armed Forces of National Liberation
FAO	Nicaragua	Broad Opposition Front
FAPU	El Salvador	United Popular Action Front
FAR	Guatemala	Rebel Armed Forces
FARC	Colombia	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FARN	El Salvador	Armed Forces of National Resistance
FDNG	Guatemala	New Guatemala Democratic Front
FDR	El Salvador	Democratic Revolutionary Front
FDRC	Guatemala	Democratic Front Against Repression
FECCAS	El Salvador	Christian Federation of Salvadoran Peasants
FENASTRAS	El Salvador	National Union Federation of Salvadoran Workers
FFF	Philippines	Federation of Free Farmers
FMLN	El Salvador	Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation
FNO	Guatemala	National Opposition Front
FP-31	Guatemala	January Thirty-First Popular Front
FPL	El Salvador	Popular Forces of Liberation
FPR	Honduras	Lorenzo Zelaya Popular Revolutionary Forces
FPMR	Chile	Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front
FPN	Nicaragua	National Patriotic Front
FSLN	Nicaragua	Sandinista National Liberation Front
FSN	Romania	National Salvation Front
FUR	Guatemala	United Front of the Revolution
GN	Nicaragua	National Guard
HMB	Philippines	People's Liberation Army
Hukbalahap	Philippines	People's Anti-Japanese Army
ICP	Vietnam	Indochinese Communist Party
KOR	Poland	Committee for the Defense of Workers
L-23	Mexico	September Twenty-Third Communist League
LP-28	El Salvador	February Twenty-Eighth Popular Leagues
JUSMAG	Philippines	Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group
M-14	Dominican Republic	June Fourteenth Movement
M-19	Colombia	April Nineteenth Movement
M-26-7	Cuba	July Twenty-Sixth Movement
MAAG	Vietnam	Military Assistance Advisory Group
MASAKA	Philippines	Free Farmers' Union
MCA	Malaya	Malayan Chinese Association
MCP	Malaya	Malayan Communist Party
MDN	Nicaragua	Nicaraguan Democratic Movement
MIC	Malaya	Malayan Indian Congress
MIPTES	El Salvador	Independent Movement of Professionals and Technicians of El Salvador
MIR	Chile	Movement of the Revolutionary Left
MIR	Peru	Movement of the Revolutionary Left

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MLN	Guatemala	National Liberation Movement
MLN	Uruguay	National Liberation Movement (Tupamaros)
MLP	El Salvador	Popular Liberation Movement
MNR	El Salvador	Revolutionary National Movement
MPAJA	Malaya	Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army
MPL	Honduras	Cinchonero Popular Liberation Movement
MPN	Argentina	Montonero Peronist Movement
MPSC	El Salvador	Popular Social Christian Movement
MPU	Nicaragua	United People's Movement
MRLA	Malaya	Malayan Races Liberation Army
MRTA	Peru	Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement
OAS	Americas	Organization of American States
ORDEN	El Salvador	Nationalist Democratic Organization
ORPA	Guatemala	Revolutionary Organization of People in Arms
PAC	Guatemala	Civilian Self-Defense Patrol
Partindo	Indonesia	Indonesian Party
PCN	El Salvador	National Conciliation Party
PCS	El Salvador	Salvadoran Communist Party
PCV	Venezuela	Venezuelan Communist Party
PGT	Guatemala	Guatemalan Labor Party (Communist)
PKI	Indonesia	Indonesian Communist Party
PKKI	Indonesia	Indonesian Independence Preparatory Committee
PKP	Philippines	Philippine Communist Party
PLI	Nicaragua	Independent Liberal Party
PNI	Indonesia	Indonesian Nationalist Party
PPL	El Salvador	Local Popular Power
PPSC	Nicaragua	People's Social Christian Party
PRTC	El Salvador	Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers
PRTC-H	Honduras	Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers–Honduras
PSD	Guatemala	Democratic Socialist Party
PSN	Nicaragua	Nicaraguan Socialist Party (Communist)
RCP	Romania	Romanian Communist Party
ROTC	U.S.	Reserve Officer Training Corps
UDEL	Nicaragua	Democratic Union of Liberation
UDN	El Salvador	Nationalist Democratic Union
UMNO	Malaya	United Malays National Organization
UNO	El Salvador	National Opposition Union
UNTS	El Salvador	National Unity of Salvadoran Workers
UPD	El Salvador	Popular Democratic Union
URNG	Guatemala	Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity
USAFFE	Philippines	U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East
VNQQD	Vietnam	Vietnamese Nationalist Party
VPR	Brazil	Popular Revolutionary Vanguard

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Preface and Acknowledgments

The various chapters and ideas in this book have been presented on so many occasions and before so many colleagues, peers, and students that any list of the people who have kindly (and sometimes impatiently) responded to its arguments would no doubt consume several pages. I would like to thank, however, a rather smaller circle of friends and colleagues who have been especially helpful, directly or indirectly, in my continuing efforts to understand revolutions, social movements, and political conflict more generally.

I have been most privileged – perhaps uniquely privileged – to know and to have worked with the two most influential contemporary scholars of revolutions, Theda Skocpol and Charles Tilly. I want to thank them for their inspiration and encouragement, both that which they have expressed personally and that embodied in their own exemplary scholarship. I also want to recognize several other important scholars of revolutions who have also greatly influenced my thinking, albeit often from a somewhat greater distance, including John Foran, Jack Goldstone, Tim McDaniel, Eric Selbin, and Timothy Wickham-Crowley. And I would like to thank Mustafa Emirbayer and Jim Jasper, intellectual collaborators who have continually engaged and challenged my thinking about a host of issues.

A number of people at Harvard, Northwestern, and New York Universities (many of whom have since moved on to other institutions) have also helped me, more than they may realize, to think more clearly about revolutions and not-so-related issues. Thanks, then, to J. Samuel Valenzuela, Stephen Cornell, Orlando Patterson, Murray Milgate, Peter Bearman, David Brain, Debra Satz, Daniel Goldhagen, Joseph Schwartz, Richard Snyder, John A. Hall, John D. Stephens, Evelyne Huber, Charles Ragin, Edwin Amenta, and Edward Lehman. Finally, I would like to thank

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a number of research assistants who have helped me over the years (although not all of their diligent efforts are reflected in this book): Loren Bough (at Harvard) and Ellen Bienstock, Liena Gurevich, Miliann Kang, Meenoo Kohli, and Miranda Martinez (all at NYU).

Chapter 2 draws heavily upon a paper that appeared in *Theorizing Revolutions* (1997), edited by John Foran, reprinted here with the permission of Routledge; and an earlier version of Chapter 8 appeared in *Social Science History* 18 (1994). I would like to thank Roy Wiemann for his help with the figures in this book.

I should note at the outset that this book is based upon, for all intents and purposes, widely available secondary sources. I have managed over the years to visit all of the Central American countries that I write about, and I have spoken with various intellectuals as well as ordinary folk there; these travels certainly shaped my understanding of that region in subtle and not-so-subtle ways, but they did not result in the production of any new data, other than that of a strictly subjective and impressionistic variety. I have also researched primary materials in the Philippines that pertain to the Huk rebellion, but the results of that inquiry, in which I deploy an altogether different theoretical framework from the one found in this book, are published elsewhere (see Goodwin 1997). In fact, like many first books too long in the making, this one reflects a theoretical standpoint that I have largely moved beyond, as the discussion in Chapter 2 may suggest.

There is, in short, no “new” historical data in the pages that follow. What *is* new, I think, is my juxtaposition within a single analytic framework of data that has generally remained compartmentalized by academic divisions of labor, particularly those that separate “area experts” from one another and from theorists. I can only hope that I have juxtaposed this data in interesting ways and drawn the right conclusions therefrom. My plea to historians and area specialists, who are certain to lament mychutzpah in this vast undertaking, is to note that comparative sociologists, as T. H. Marshall once put it,

must inevitably rely extensively on secondary authorities, without going back to the original sources. [We] do this partly because life is too short to do anything else when using the comparative method, and [we] need data assembled from a wide historical field, and partly because original sources are very tricky things to use. . . . It is the business of historians to sift this miscellaneous collection of dubious authorities and to give others the results of their careful professional assessment. And surely they will not rebuke the sociologists for putting faith in what historians write. (1964: 38)

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Of course, I have tried not to read what anyone writes, even historians, uncritically!

This book also prioritizes analysis over historical narrative, although I have tried to write for the proverbial general reader who has little if any knowledge of the various regions and countries that I discuss. Accordingly, I have tried to include just enough narrative and background information (including several chronologies) to make my analyses accessible and, I hope, persuasive to such readers as well as to specialists. However, this book does not offer anything like comprehensive historical narratives of the revolutionary movements, revolutions, or time periods that it examines. For those who seek such narratives, or who wish to explore issues that this book touches upon only lightly, I offer an old and increasingly rare device, the annotated bibliography, which I hope will help light the way.

I was once told that before I could write sensibly about revolutions, I would need to decide for myself whether they were morally good or just. Are they? As is so often the case with the big questions about revolutions, this one has no simple or invariant answer. Certainly, after Stalin and Pol Pot, it is impossible to believe in the inherent goodness or progressive character of revolutions. Yet I have come to believe that revolutions are generally necessary or, more accurately, perceived as necessary by most of their ordinary protagonists – politically, morally, and even existentially necessary in the face of extreme duress and hardship. “Prudence, indeed, will dictate,” an American revolutionary once wrote, “that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.” These words from the Declaration of Independence capture an important truth: Revolutions do not usually happen – for good or ill – until the status quo becomes truly insufferable for masses of ordinary folk. It hardly follows from this that revolutions are necessarily good and just, although I find equally wanting the idea that they are invariably evil in their consequences. What seems invariably evil are not revolutions per se, but the circumstances that give rise to them. This said, those who are looking for a moral interpretation of Revolution (with a capital R) will find this book deeply disappointing; my goal is to provide a plausible causal account of a subset of revolutions.

Although this book is analytic in nature (perhaps excessively so for some readers), I have attempted to write it with a modicum of academic jargon

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and precious neologisms. Not to sound too self-righteous, but I share Gerge Orwell's suspicion that opaque language usually masks (and reflects) bad ideas as well as bad politics. Given my subject matter, certainly, it would be all too easy to lapse into talk of "transgression," "post-coloniality," "subalternity," "subject positions," and the like. Suffice it to say that "ordinary" words like "revolution" and "the state" pose enough conceptual difficulties for the analyst, at least for this one; heaping on still more verbiage rarely removes those difficulties, and it typically creates additional ones. Accordingly, I offer up in the pages that follow precisely one "new" concept, if I am not mistaken, namely, "state constructionism" – although the term refers to an idea that has survived in various forms at least since the work of Tocqueville. I am not sure, in the end, that all of the arguments that I advance in this book are either correct or interesting, but the reader should not have to struggle to figure out what those arguments are.

Attentive readers will notice that I have toyed with the title of Walter LaFeber's (1993) excellent book on Central America in the title of my own Chapter 6. I hope Professor LaFeber (whom I have never met) appreciates that, under the circumstances, some such riposte was, well, inevitable. Finally, I have played with the title of both a wonderful article by Eldon Kenworthy (1973) and Werner Sombart's classic *Why Is There No Socialism in the United States?* (1976 [1906]) in my section on Honduras in Chapter 5. Sombart's is a leading question, to be sure, as any lawyer would point out. And yet I believe, like Sombart, not only that counterfactual questions are worth raising, but also that comparative analysis can go a long way towards answering them.

I would like, finally, to thank my parents, Dorothy and Roger Goodwin; my brothers, Ron and Don; and my parents-in-law, Lucy and Gerhard Steinhagen, for their affection and support. I dedicate this book to my wife, Renée Steinhagen, who has herself challenged my thinking for the better on so many issues, and to our wonderful daughter, Naomi. They're the best thing that's ever happened to me.