

OPPORTUNITY AND WILLINGNESS AND THE NEXUS  
BETWEEN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONFLICT\*

Harvey Starr

Department of Government and  
International Studies  
University of South Carolina

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## INTRODUCTION

Building on the earlier work of Most and Starr (1989) which uses the opportunity and willingness framework as a basis for developing the ideas of foreign policy "substitutability" and "alternative triggers" (the logic of studying phenomena that involve many-to-one mappings and/or one-to-many mappings), I have begun a project whose aim is to develop a "logic" and a set of concepts which will link a variety of internal and external conditions to a similar variety of internal and external behaviors. The evolution of the concepts and theory behind this project is outlined in Starr (1990, 1991).

Those papers outline a set of concepts and a common logic to deal with social conflict and system change at both the domestic and international levels, drawing on rational choice-expected utility considerations, as well as the tradeoffs between internal and external viability and the resources required to insure either (or both). One goal of the project is to model internal and external forms of mass violence with the same basic structure. This involves an examination of the logical relationships between revolution and war using the idea of "nice laws" (Most and Starr, 1989:chap.5). That is, after developing a common structure for the conceptualization of mass violence at either the domestic or interstate levels, I would follow the admonition of Most and Starr to eschew the search for general laws and ask under what conditions would revolutions encourage/lead to war (provide opportunity and increase willingness); under what conditions would wars encourage/lead to revolution (provide opportunity and increase willingness). An overview of the ways in which revolution could lead to war (rev>war) and the ways in which war could lead to revolution (war>rev) is presented in Starr (1991).

In this paper I wish to focus on the synthesizing capabilities of the frameworks employed and the models already developed. This will be addressed

in a section providing a brief review of the components of the project as presented in the earlier papers. I will then elaborate on the commonalities between internal and external conflict that can be drawn from the use of a more general social conflict perspective. The theme of commonalities will be expanded through the use of the opportunity and willingness framework, which will be outlined and applied to models of revolution or collective violence and models of war, especially hegemonic or system change war. Focusing on willingness, these commonalities will also be addressed using a general expected utility approach.

#### OPPORTUNITY AND WILLINGNESS: A BRIEF DIGRESSION

Following the possibilist position of the Sprouts, the concept of opportunity was developed to represent the possibilities available to any entity within any environment; that is, the total set of environmental constraints and possibilities. As opportunity represented macro-level (environmental and structural) factors, willingness represented the choice processes that occur at the micro-level; that is, the selection of some behavioral option from a range of alternatives. These ideas have been developed from the Sprouts' idea of the ecological triad, composed of an entity, an environment, and the entity-environment relationship (see Starr and Siverson, 1990; and Starr, Forthcoming for discussions of the Sproutian framework). As with the ecological triad, opportunity and willingness require the combination of both structure-environment and choice-decision process. Opportunity and willingness are therefore concerned with the relationships that nest decision makers within their surrounding environments.

Opportunity has a dual character. One aspect is possibilism-- that some activity must be physically, technologically or intellectually possible,

affecting the type and amount of interaction in which entities might engage. Once some obstacle to possibility is crossed, however, opportunity should be conceived as a continuous phenomenon, creating a second aspect. That is, initially some type of capability must be created so as to be part of the range of possibilities for at least some members of a social system. The second dimension of opportunity then involves the distribution of such capabilities across the system.

The concept of willingness is more familiar, being central to the study of decision making and choice. The dynamics of choice are embedded in a decision maker's images, or definition of the situation. Willingness is related to a decision maker's calculations of cost and benefit- advantage and disadvantage. It is through willingness that decision makers recognize opportunities and then translate those opportunities into alternatives that are weighed in some manner.

Opportunity and willingness do not create mutually exclusive categories. Anything that affects the structural possibilities of the environment(s) within which decision makers must act also affects the incentive structures for those decision makers. Opportunity and willingness thus become more than simply organizing concepts. They take on theoretical characteristics when we understand that they describe conditions that are necessary for the occurrence of events. It is from these two concepts that Most and Starr (1989) developed the ideas of substitutability and nice laws, and led them to investigate the substitution of policies on the international level, the domestic level, and possible cross level relationships. That discussion (Most and Starr, 1989:chap.5), in turn, directed me towards the concerns outlined in the introductory section above- how substitutability may be used to help solve the puzzle of the relationship between internal and external conflict.

## A COMMON LOGIC: WHY AND WHAT

A not inconsiderable literature has been devoted to the complex question of the linkages/connections/causal structure between political phenomena occurring within the borders of nation-states and phenomena occurring beyond those borders. The paradox raised in many studies and reviews concerns the apparent inability of scholars to demonstrate in a systematic empirical manner relationships between internal and external phenomena that have been suggested in separate historical case studies, anecdotal material, or the gut feeling that we "know" a relationship must exist. The present project seeks to investigate the overall relationship between internal and external policy through the use of models focusing on the choices of rational decision makers. This project seeks to develop models applicable to decision makers who must make choices coping with the domestic environment while simultaneously coping with the external environment, and vice versa.<sup>1</sup> These models are, in addition, based on the assumption that choices in one arena have consequences, intended and unintended, on the other.

As has been presented in Starr (1991), the relationships set out by the common logic reflect a common concern of governmental decision makers with the "viability" of the government (Boulding's [1962] term), from either internal or external threat, and how the government responds to that threat on the basis of a general governmental "capacity" or resources. The modeling of this linkage is based on four components of a common logic (see Most and Starr, 1989: chap. 5):

- $C_i$ , a state's (state  $i$ ) defense capacity
- $R_i$ , the external risks the state faces in the international system
- $S_i$ , the strength of the government in the face of domestic opposition

-  $T_i$ , the threat the government faces from domestic sources

Each of these components affects the perceptions that decision makers have of a state's viability, or security, and its capacity (resources) to defend itself against internal opposition or external threat. Viability is gauged on two levels: external risk (R) which may have economic as well as military or strategic components, and the internal threat to the viability of the government (T), which may have military, economic, or peaceful political dimensions. In order to respond to the demands placed on the government, or the political system of the state, the government requires resources. The overall capacity of the government to deal with such demands is reflected in C and S- the military/corecive, economic, and political resources it can bring to bear against external challenge or internal opposition.

We thus have a set of four concepts which are sufficiently abstract that they enable the investigator to recognize and avoid the worst effects of the substitutability problem, and yet are also "rich" in the sense that they overarch and embrace a number of concrete empirical factors which one can observe and measure. As with the opportunity and willingness framework, the point to recognize is that it is possible to organize things under a common logic, and begin to integrate what we know.

The central axioms of the five formulations (or models) that were developed by Most and Starr (1989:chap.5) are presented in Figure 1. Governmental goals are simply defined- to promote viability by maintaining (or increasing) OR and S>T; and/or to assure that the degree to which OR and S>T does not slip below the level attained at a previous period in time.<sup>2</sup>

[Figure 1]

FIGURE 1  
AXIOMS FROM MOST AND STARR'S FIVE FORMULATIONS

Axiom 3 from the five Most and Starr (1989: chap.5) formulations:

Formulation #1: A Unified Actor/National Security Dilemma

Axiom 3 The decision makers of an nth state are motivated or willing to establish the following inequality at time t:

$$C_n > R_n$$

Formulation #2: Unified Actor/Security Dilemma Ratio

Axiom 3b The decision makers of an nth state are motivated or willing to establish the following inequality at time t:

$$[C_n/R_n] \geq [C_{n-1}/R_{n-1}]$$

Formulation #3: Unified Actor/Governmental Stability

Axiom 3c The decision makers of an nth state are motivated or willing to establish the following inequality at time t:

$$S_n > T_n$$

Formulation #4: Unified Actor/Governmental Stability Ratio

Axiom 3d The decision makers of an nth state are motivated or willing to establish the following inequality at time t:

$$[S_n/T_n] \geq [S_{n-1}/T_{n-1}]$$

Formulation #5: National and Governmental Viability: An Integrated Formulation

Axiom 3 The decision makers of an nth state are motivated or willing to establish one or more of the four inequalities as set out above. Postulate 4 of Axiom 3 notes that if one or more of those inequalities are reversed, then the decision makers of the nth state will be motivated to adopt some policy which is designed to increase  $C_n$ , decrease  $R_n$ , increase  $S_n$ , and/or decrease  $T_n$  at t+1.

## THE COMMONALITIES OF SOCIAL CONFLICT

Despite the difficulties in establishing systematic empirical relationships between internal and external conflict in the literature, I feel that a continued concern with this relationship is justified because of a belief that it is possible to uncover the basic contours of a conflict process- whether or not that conflict is between nation-states or other types of actors at the sub-state level. This view crosses disciplinary boundaries in a desire to understand and map the phenomenon of social conflict.

Thus, as with James Rule (1988:3) I am concerned with "the problem of order" in that social conflict is a mechanism by which order is established, challenged and re-established. This can be seen in both the literature presenting theories of revolution and the literature which has developed around the concept of "general," "hegemonic," or "system change" war. On this broad basis I wish to use the relationship between domestic and foreign conflict as a way to study social change as well as the more general linkages between internal and external factors; social conflict and social change can, in turn, be used to conceptualize the internal-external relationship.

The study of social conflict is indeed capable of serving this purpose. A widely used working definition of social conflict can be offered. Citing Coser, Oberschall (1978: 291) presents social conflict as "a struggle over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflict groups are not only to gain the desired value but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate rivals." Such a definition is clearly and easily applicable to both domestic and international conflict.



On the domestic level, I will begin with the concept of "collective violence" as a basis for moving on to revolution. Rule (1988: 11) defines collective violence as the "deliberate destruction of persons or property by people acting together." This is similar to the position taken by Eckstein (1980: 137) where "collective political violence involves destructive attacks by groups within a political community against its regime, authorities, or policies." Revolutions, Eckstein argues "are the extreme cases of collective political violence," exhibiting the largest magnitude (in terms of "scope" and "intensity"), and the broadest goals (changing the regime or society)."

External conflict will be conceptualized in terms of the escalation of the conflict process to war.<sup>3</sup> I do not intend on rehearsing the complexities of conceptualizing war (see instead, Most and Starr, 1989:chap.4), with the attendant debates over operationalization, participants, degree of lethality, etc. The basic notion of war, as noted in Most and Starr, will include the following components: at least two parties (with at least one being a state), which hold conflicting goals and are aware of those goal incompatibilities, and are willing to use overt, organized military force to obtain those goals in a series of connected and temporally concentrated military activities.

The models on which I will focus here are those dealing with hegemonic or system change wars-- that is not simply wars between or among major powers, but those between the central or dominant states in the system, and challengers to their status as system leaders. These are wars which settle the nature and direction of the structure of the international system (e.g. see Gilpin, 1981: Modelski and Morgan, 1985; Levy, 1983, 1985; and overviews of projects by Doran, Organski and Kugler, Modelski and Thompson, in Midlarsky, 1989).

While treatments of some form of the revolution-war relationship may be found in the revolution literature, they do not specifically look at revolution and hegemonic war, they are not fully developed, and/or are not followed to a conclusion which will help solve the puzzle of the internal-external nexus. Most importantly they do not act to unite the two forms of conflict into a general framework for the study of social conflict. Tilly (1985b), however, is one scholar has most clearly moved in this direction, noting his desire to look across levels of conflict (1985b:517-18), and to show that "over much of history international and domestic conflict have been not merely similar but overlapping, even indistinguishable phenomena" (1985b:522).

Note that the desire to cross levels of conflict in this way is a basic feature of the Most and Starr analyses of the diffusion of international conflict; (e.g. Most and Starr 1980), and their later ideas concerning substitutability. The need to treat social conflict in the integrated fashion noted above is consistent with the conclusions of Most and Starr (1989:99):

If international behaviors can be alternative means that different states utilize in pursuit of their (perhaps heterogeneous) national goals and under at least certain conditions states may substitute one means for another, then all of the behaviors that tend to be studied in fragmented fashion need to be conceived and studied from the outset-- not as separate and distinct phenomena, the understanding of which will eventually be integrated- but rather as commensurable behaviors of component parts of abstract conceptual puzzles.

#### Commonalities in Components and Processes

The components of social conflict have been addressed by many scholars (e.g. see Boulding, 1962; M.Deutsch, 1973). Oberschall (1978:291) can be used to summarize an extensive literature when he notes that, "Conflict results from purposeful interaction among two or more parties in a competitive setting." Yet

Tilly (1985b: 517) indicates that this most basic concept of conflict- the recognition of two or more parties in conscious competition of some sort- may not be taken for granted in some of the literature dealing with conflict within states. In their conceptualization of war, Most and Starr (1989:chap.4) argue that the recognition of at least two parties is crucial, in that war as a conflict situation must be recognized as the interdependent outcome of the behavior of two or more actors. As Simon (1991:chap.1) notes, social conflict should make one think more about the nature of the interactions between actors than the nature (that is, the size or level of organization) of the actors themselves.

In addition to war being a result of the interdependent outcomes of choice by at least two actors, Most and Starr (1989) develop an argument demonstrating that war cannot occur without both actors possessing both opportunity and willingness. As a consequence, a major argument presented in Most and Starr (1989:chs.3 and 4) is that such interdependent-outcome phenomena cannot, logically, be explained by linear, additive, cross-sectionally analyzed combinations of single-actor attributes. As they summarize (1989:98), "While scholars have focused on identifying which factors are the determinants of international conflict, equally important... questions concern how those factors are logically and causally related to one another and to conflict itself."

The point of greatest relevance to this project is that revolutions are conflict phenomena that fully match these observations about war. They are "resultants" of interdependent choices- at least two parties are needed who are both willing and able to pursue organized violent conflict in a dominant-dependent relationship. The following comment on the war literature is equally applicable to much of the revolution literature (Most and Starr, 1989:97):

While many analysts have focused on linear and additive combinations of factors internal to states- "national attributes"- as possible sufficient conditions for war [revolution], the general existence of such relationships appears to be logically precluded by analysts' conceptualization of wars [revolutions] which envisions such phenomena as both interdependent outcomes or resultants of the actions of at least two states [or parties- government and opposition] and also as occurrences that are fundamentally tied to important micro- or decision- level considerations.

If these basic components of conflict are similar, so are the processes by which conflict develops. Both forms of conflict are concerned with "mobilization, organization, and collective action" (Oberschall, 1978:305) to support an actor's efforts against some opponent. The conflict can escalate to violence, to higher (or broader) levels of violence or deescalate to stalemate or resolution; (see Rummel, 1979, for a lengthy discussion of the "conflict helix"). Escalation may involve the expansion of the conflict to new areas, or the addition of new parties/combatants. That is, diffusion processes are inherent in social conflict, at either level, (see Most, et.al., 1989).

The interaction opportunity model developed by Most and Starr (see Most and Starr, 1980) can be used to deal with the growth of violent conflicts at both levels. The Most and Starr studies actually centered on the diffusion of organized, violent conflict (not "war" per se). The model that was developed proposed that positive spatial diffusion would be enhanced by the presence of violent conflict (either civil war, large scale collective violence, or interstate war) in neighboring states.

Basing the logic on earlier work by Midlarsky and Boulding, Most and Starr argued that the presence of organized violence in a bordering country is highly salient to its neighbors. This salience derives from a newly heightened uncertainty in the neighboring states as to the changing policies of a new government, possible ideological change and its interaction with either a newly

strengthened or weakened government and state. This salience also derives from a newly heightened uncertainty in the neighboring states as to their own viability or that of their neighbors. The neighbor must discern whether it has a newly strengthened or weakened country on its borders. In this way the study of war diffusion, or the diffusion of violent conflict, is highly relevant to both the rev>war and war>rev relationships (see Starr, 1991 for a full discussion).

Thus, as discussed in Starr (1991), internal or external violent conflict may invite escalation/diffusion through external intervention, whether requested or not.' Internal coalitions may grow around the government and its primary opposition in the same way that alliances form in the international arena. Reinforcement effects (Most and Starr, 1980) can also operate at either level- - collective violence begetting more collective violence within the same state, war experiences leading the state into further war experiences; (see Sorokin's [1957] view on change and violence).

#### Commonalities in Sources of Conflict

Returning to a basic definition of conflict- that social conflict derives from incompatibilities between social units of some kind- it is clear that there is a common core of sources to internal and external conflict. Governments face incompatibilities with other governments and with internal opposition over "who gets what when and how": "Like war, revolution and collective violence arise from ongoing contests for resources, influence, and hegemony previously managed within existing diplomatic channels" (Aya, 1979:68). Internal conflict centers on questions of who has authority within society; many external issues

are similarly about authority, or the territorial domain over which governments can exercise sovereignty.

In either case, as developed in Starr (1991), governments require resources in order to exercise authority and/or protect authority, and to do so legitimately by satisfying the demands of society. The internal extraction of resources may provoke opposition in a variety of ways— increasing governmental demands without requisite increases in benefits or governmental performance, damaging legitimacy and the bonds of integration, and increasing domestic grievance.<sup>5</sup> External extraction leads to "intersections" with other states seeking resources (to use Choucri and North's term).

These observations begin to indicate the central role played by lateral pressure processes for both internal and external conflict. Choucri and North (1989:295) do warn that "the search for resources is only one manifestation of lateral pressure," and thus, conflict. Nevertheless, they also note (1989:292) that, "Capabilities can be increased in two major ways: by drawing upon available technology for the development of specialized capabilities...; and by bargaining and applying leverages in order to persuade others to assist or cooperate with them." As governments apply leverage to internal or external groups they create situations of potential conflict, including potential violent conflict.

Choucri and North investigate the relationship between the lateral pressure process and interstate war in their study of the pre-World War I period (1975). David Snyder (1978:505-506) outlines an internal form of lateral pressure when he observes that as groups mobilize, they attempt "to apply their resources toward acquiring collective goods... Since such demands lay claim to scarce and competitive resources they are often met by organized resistance from

other mobilized groups and (most often) from governments via their agents of official force."

Highly relevant to the current project is understanding that lateral pressure is central to the whole array of models concerned with hegemonic/system change wars which are based on the differential growth of power. Lateral pressure-type processes are important to changes in "power" as they relate to the search for resources (and ultimately the mobilization and extraction of those resources). Similarly, as internal groups become dissatisfied they also search for resources, as Tilly and other exponents of resource-mobilization theories argue. These searches lead to conflictual intersections, involving opposition groups in a process of differential growth of power in regard to each other (and thus the process of coalition development and disintegration) and to the government. One might argue that this is a central theme of Mancur Olson's (1982) treatment of the rise and decline of states- that we must start with the basic premise that societies will always be comprised of differentiated groups with different resources, interests and power. These groups will then also grow, stagnate or decline at different rates.

The differential growth of power is, in turn, important to systemic change. whether the system is societal or international. Sorokin (1957:534-535) presents a picture of social conflict which derives from change- change disorganizes systems, thereby disturbing order and leading to violent conflict. Halliday (1990:211) makes the important point that students of international relations most often assume that revolutions indicate breakdown rather than transition. This is useful, because system change wars at the international level are usually not seen as breakdowns, but as mechanisms of transition! (e.g. see Rosecrance, 1963).<sup>4</sup> Although most studies of war do not take revolution into

account, they should- as revolutions, like war, are mechanisms by which the inertia of the international system to major change can be rapidly overcome (e.g. see Adelman, 1985:197, 208-209).

Gilpin (1981) clearly develops the concept of change, and specifies how it affects the conflict process. Changes brought about by differentiated growth in power have impacts upon the cost-benefit calculations of both government and challenger, whether internal or external (1981:95): "The critical significance of the differential growth of power among states is that it alters the cost of changing the international system and therefore the incentives for changing the international system." Change in power is also central to the Organski and Kugler (1981) power transition model. Changes in resources affect both the physical capabilities of the parties (opportunity) and the willingness to use them-- to challenge the government, or to be deterred by the power of the government (see Kugler and Organski, 1989:186).

While there is a fuller discussion of the role of rational choice models in the analysis of revolution and social conflict in Starr (1990), as an introduction to the next section, we need only note here that many students of revolution and war base their analyses on the cost-benefit calculations that challengers make before taking on a government, calculations that include the probability of winning. For example, a key to Lichbach's models of collective violence (e.g. 1990), is the calculation by oppositions, in their decision to challenge governments, on how events or factors affect the probability that such a challenge will indeed succeed. As Muller (1980:97) observes. "More simply and tritely put, people rebel when they believe it is right to rebel and that rebellion will pay off."



Similar types of calculations have been found in a variety of situations. For example, in a study of the processes by which wars end (rather than studying when groups will initiate or enter conflict), Wittman (1976:759) notes, "It is assumed that, unless both sides believe that they can be made better off by a settlement, the war will continue." Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman (1990:166) provide us with a succinct summary statement of rational choice calculations for social conflict:

Assume that decision makers are rational in the sense that they do what they believe is in their best interest. Assume, therefore, that they calculate the expected utility associated with challenging and not challenging a putative adversary... the more they believe they stand to gain, the more likely they are to use force in pursuit of their objectives.

Waterman (1981) reviews Gamson's work on the utility and instrumentality of social violence. He notes (1981:572) that, "the overall conclusion must be that Gamson is right: violence is usually intelligently used, and it pays."

#### CHANGE, CHALLENGE AND CALCULATIONS OF UTILITY

Two important works providing overviews of the thinking on revolution and collective violence are explicitly oriented toward rationality-based explanations, (see also Lichbach's [1989] section on the "Rational Actor Scientific Research Program"). Michael Taylor (1988:1) indicates that his book intends "to show that there is a useful role for ideas and theories of rational choice in the study of revolution and rebellion." James Rule (1988:18) notes that, "A full understanding of civil violence surely must deal with the interests of participants, and with participants' judgments as to how such interests are engaged in strife-torn situations." This observation is reflected in the work of many scholars, e.g. Eckstein's (1980) discussion of the

"inherency theory" of collective political violence which depends on strategy and the cost-benefit calculations behind tactical choices, or Aya's (1979) "political model" of revolution, which is centered on the strategic coercive interactions between collective actors.

It is important to note that Rule, after his survey of the theories of civil violence, concludes that the work of Charles Tilly is central to the understanding of civil violence. Tilly represents one major theoretical perspective on revolution-- a resource mobilization approach as opposed to the psychologically based deprivation/discontent approach; (see Davies, 1969; Gurr, 1970 for examples of the latter). More relevant for the present discussion, Tilly's work provides important analogues to utility-based theories which have become central to our thinking about system change war.

Robert Gilpin's (1981) theory of hegemonic challenge is representative of a number of theories/models of general, hegemonic, or system change war. His "framework for understanding international political change" clearly demonstrates the rationality/utility basis of his theory (1981:10-11):

1. An international system is stable (i.e., in a state of equilibrium) if no state believes it is profitable to attempt to change the system.
2. A state will attempt to change the international system if the expected benefits exceed the expected costs (i.e., there is an expected net gain).
3. A state will seek to change the international system through territorial, political, and economic expansion until the marginal costs of further change are equal to or greater than the marginal benefits.
4. Once an equilibrium between the costs and benefits of further change and expansion is reached, the tendency is for the economic costs of maintaining the status quo to rise faster than the economic capacity to support the status quo.

5. If the disequilibrium in the international system is not resolved, then the system will be changed, and a new equilibrium reflecting the redistribution of power will be established.

Although there are a variety of differences (all vigorously debated!), Gilpin's utility-based approach is not dissimilar to other approaches based on differential rates of power growth, and the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the hegemonic challengers arising from these different growth rates. For example, describing their work on the power transition theory, Kugler and Organski (1989:172) note that the "power transition conceived international competition as driven by the potential net gains that could be accrued from conflict or cooperation. The objective of nations was not... to maximize power; rather the objective was to maximize net gains." They also cite (1989:182-183) their earlier work demonstrating that challengers would initiate hostilities only after surpassing the power of the dominant system actor (and not before).

Tilly's view of collective violence- with emphases both on resource mobilization and the purposive calculus of participants (Tilly, 1985a)-- is analogous to the utility approaches of both Bueno de Mesquita and Gilpin, and incorporates both opportunity and willingness. In a piece looking at the relationship between modernization and revolution, (1986:47), Tilly asks a set of questions concerning the structure of political relationships which closely mirror those used by Bueno de Mesquita and colleagues (1985) in applying his expected utility models to domestic policy decisions: what groups contend for power? what claims do they make on the government? what capacity do they have to mobilize societal resources?'

Tilly (e.g. 1986:51-52) sees a polity as a "set of contenders" in a manner analogous to Gilpin's view of the international system. Gilpin's view (1981:9)

of the dynamics of challenge are easily translatable to the domestic setting: "As a consequence, those actors who benefit most from a change in the social system and who gain the power to effect such change will seek to alter the system in ways that favor their interests." Tilly's "Model of Political Conflict" is quite similar. The "government is an organization which controls the principal concentrated means of coercion within the population," in a manner analogous to the systemic hegemon. A "contender for power is a group within the population which at least once during some standard period applies resources to influence the government." Such a "contender" is Gilpin's "challenger."

Tilly (1986:52) continues: "...collective violence [hegemonic war] is largely a by-product of situations in which one contender openly lays such claims [for resources] and other contenders (or, especially, the government) resist those claims; such situations occur with particular frequency when groups are acquiring or losing membership [differential growth in power]...; a contender accumulating such resources outside the control of the government is likely to find itself in acute conflict with the agents of the government." This also closely resembles the Kugler and Organski (1989:174) version of the hegemonic challenger:

Challengers are those powerful and dissatisfied great nations who have grown in power after the imposition of the existing international order. Their elites face circumstances where the main benefits of the international order have already been allocated. The conditions for conflict are present. Peace is threatened when challengers seek to establish a new place for themselves in the international order, a place to which they believe their increasing power entitles them.

Tilly's contenders are likewise involved in a process of differential power growth, including group membership and the acquisition of other resources. Because he focuses on resource mobilization— for both the opposition group and the government— Tilly is concerned with opportunity in the form of acquiring

capabilities. Willingness flows from the desire of opposition groups, like Gilpin's challengers, to pursue their own interests rather than those of the hegemon/government.

But willingness encompasses more than simply interests- it must include the subjective expected utility of attaining those interests through the balancing of costs and benefits. In a statement that neatly ties together opportunity and willingness, Gilpin (1981:51) observes: "There have been many cases throughout history in which states have foregone apparent opportunities to increase their power because they judged the costs to be too high." In the same way, Lichbach's (1987) rational actor model of dissent emphasizes that opposition groups take into account the "relative prices" and "relative efficacy" of different tactics; (see also Schwartz, 1971:120).

In sum, Tilly's approach to collective violence strongly parallels Gilpin's view of hegemon-challenger relations at the level of the international system. This can be seen in Rule's (1988:179) summary of Tilly's rational choice approach to collective action: 1) collective action costs something; 2) all contenders count costs; 3) collective action brings benefits in the form of collective goods; 4) contenders continuously weigh expected costs against expected benefits; 5) both costs and benefits are uncertain because (a) contenders have imperfect information about the current state of the polity and (b) all parties engage in strategic interaction.

#### ORGANIZING MODELS OF VIOLENCE WITH OPPORTUNITY AND WILLINGNESS

The opportunity and willingness framework has the ability to order broad literatures, as demonstrated in Most and Starr (1989:chap.2) in regard to war. Much of the above material has concerned opportunity- the availability and

acquisition of resources that permit certain forms of behavior. But, as I have argued in discussions on geopolitics (e.g. Starr and Siverson, 1990), the various possibilities presented by the environment must be perceived and plugged into decision makers' calculations of choice (as in the utility discussions above). Both opportunity and willingness must be taken into account. Gilpin, (1981: 85; 101; 51) indicates the same requirement for opportunity and willingness as jointly necessary factors:

The structure of the international system itself greatly affects the capacity and willingness of a group or state to try to change the system... The great changes in the history of the world have been engineered by those political or military leaders and elites who have grasped the significance of new possibilities and reordered their societies to take advantage of such opportunities... Although a group or state may desire to change the international system in order to advance its interests, the effort to do so necessarily involves costs; the group or state not only must have sufficient resources to meet these costs but also must be willing to pay such costs.

Greater attention was given to willingness in Starr (1990). There the role of willingness was brought to bear through the use of Theda Skocpol's structural/resource mobilization theories, (e.g 1979). In brief, Skocpol (among others) has been unconvinced by the deprivation/discontent theorists— she argues that intense discontent is much more frequent in history than the rare event of revolution. She thus looks for the "rare structural conditions that permit existing discontents to coalesce in revolutionary action" (Tilly, 1984:105). In my terms, willingness in the form of discontent is almost always present. What is required is the opportunity in the form of resources or capabilities for revolution which are sufficient for overthrowing the considerable power of the government, or at the international systemic level, the considerable power of the hegemon. Recall that Gilpin at least implicitly

assumes that because of differential power growth there will always be a rising challenger— a state willing to change the status quo; similarly, some theorists of revolution assume that a substantial reservoir of anti-government discontent always exists.

Notice that we are now able to synthesize the two broadly competing perspectives on collective violence— psychological/deprivation models and resource mobilization models. As Most and Starr (1989: especially ch.7) argue, rarely are theories or models fully competing or contending. In this case both perspectives on revolution are needed in that they represent the two conditions which are necessary for action: opportunity and willingness. While resource mobilization models embody opportunity, deprivation/discontent models represent willingness. Both are required. The question is one of contingency (a primary theme of Most and Starr, 1989): under what conditions will the opportunity threshold be reached, and what relation does this have to the levels of willingness that exist; under what conditions will a willingness threshold be crossed, and what relation does this have to the levels of opportunity that exist.'

It should be clear that the logic whose components were introduced above provides an approach to system change that covers both the Gilpin and Tilly models. The model developed from the work of Most and Starr (1989) indicates that governmental decision makers in each state operate in an environment which is partially defined at any point in time on the basis of their state's capacities and the distribution of capacities across other states in the system. This distribution of capacities within a system "set" a government's viability ratios; i.e. externally, a state's C/R ratio is set at any initial time period, internally, a government's S/T ratio is set at any initial time period.

We can recast both Gilpin and Tilly within the terms of the revised Most and Starr formulation. For example, let us look at the external ratio, remembering that parallel comments could be made about the internal situation. Decision makers in some initially dominant state may be satisfied ( $C_i$  may be  $> R_i$  for example), but those in some other, initially weak state may not be content. Presuming that decision makers in the latter state seek OR, they would be expected to undertake to increase C (capacity) or decrease R (risks). If they succeed in either or both, then the other state's C/R condition would be altered and it, too would begin to act and react (in a classic security dilemma-conflict spiral relationship). If the initially weak state succeeds and/or the initially dominant state fails to react, a "new" power emerges and the system is transformed. If the initially weak state keeps going (now pursuing the goal of becoming continually better off) it could replace the dominant state as hegemon (or, the opposition group could replace the government).

In sum, the processes covered by the common logic indicate that the "type of system" in terms of polarity, "anarchy," etc., sets initial conditions, and may have an impact on the probability of system transformation (what decision makers are willing to do) and the possibility of such changes (what they are capable of actually doing). However, as demonstrated in Most and Starr (1989: especially ch.6), micro-level decision processes should be seen as having generative effects. If decision makers pursue certain goals and they are successful in their pursuits, systems should be expected to transform in intelligible ways.

The important point to note at this stage is that opportunity and willingness and the common logic are capable of dealing with the entire range of governmental behavior in the face of a challenge to governmental viability.



Not only is this scheme able to uncover patterns in the diverse behaviors of states, but also the non-behaviors of states (see especially Part B of Most and Starr, 1989: Table 5.1). That is, non-action by governments alerts us to investigate whether or not (1) they have the opportunity (capability) to respond to a challenge, or (2) they even perceive a challenge to governmental viability (e.g. see Figure 4 in Starr, 1991). If they do not, there would be no incentive (willingness) to take any action in regard to viability.

Note also, that as a consequence of the substitutability phenomenon, system transformations could occur with or without organized, collective violence.<sup>9</sup> Governments might use force against external challengers or internal opposition groups, but they could find a variety of other ways to decrease risks (R or T). Thus, the assertions that certain types of systems would be more or less conflictual or war prone really do not follow. As demonstrated in Most and Starr (1989:ch.6), system structures provide a range of possibilities, and even affect the probabilities that some actors will want to change the power structure of the system. But such systems do not seem likely to be strong determinants of the means by which governments (or opposition groups) will act.

#### CONCLUSION

As elaborated in this and two previous papers, I am attempting to develop tools which will be able us to make sense of the internal-external conflict relationship. These tools derive from the basic opportunity and willingness framework. They include concepts which have been derived from that basic framework (such as substitutability and "nice laws"), as well as a set of models or formulations that permit the "nesting" of internal and external games of viability or security (see Tsebelis, 1990).

If the opportunity and willingness framework is to serve as the conceptual basis for such a project, I needed to indicate how it could serve the broad integrating functions that undergird the project. I had also to indicate the plausibility of a general social conflict conceptualization, and how it could synthesize revolution and war. This paper, then, was a limited exercise demonstrating that the framework and concepts I wish to use provide at least minimal synthesizing capabilities. The very last lines of Starr (1990) convey the overall aims of the project and also highlight the themes and purposes of this paper:

Hopefully, when this project is completed we will know more about: —  
-revolution/collective violence, with the ability to synthesize  
"contending" models  
-general war, with the ability to merge models of revolution and war  
-substitutability (and nice laws)  
-rational approaches to the study of conflict  
-the applicability of opportunity and willingness

## NOTES

\* I must repeat the acknowledgments presented in Starr (1991): A number of individuals have commented on Starr (1990) which outlined the general concerns and shape of my project on revolution and war; others have provided comments on this project and suggestions about relevant literature and future research directions. In alphabetic order I would like to thank them for their thoughts and suggestions: Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Mark Lichbach, Roy Licklider, Mike McGinnis, Manus Midlarsky, Cliff Morgan, Karen Rasler, Peter Sederberg, and Charles Tilly. In addition, Mark Lichbach and I made presentations on "War and Revolution: A Discussion of Research Frontiers," a colloquium sponsored by the Political Science Department at Indiana University, January 10, 1991. I would like to thank those participating for their comments, especially Elinor Ostrom, Michael Squires, and John Williams. In addition to general comments, Jeffrey Hart, Mark Lichbach, Mike McGinnis and Marc Simon were particularly helpful in discussing and developing potential strategies for formal modeling. All these colleagues have provided useful lessons; I may have been less apt as a pupil. All errors and shortcomings, are, of course, my own.

1. As noted in Starr (1991) the initial impetus to this project was a concern for the relationship between "great revolutions" and the hegemonic or system change wars which are central to the study of long cycles, the power transition, or the rise and decline of great powers. Both the shape of this relationship and the consequences of each form of conflict for the other were to be part of the research. However, following the arguments of Most and Starr I found myself forced to confront broader issues regarding the more general relationship between revolution and war. This, in turn, could be seen as a subset of the relationship between internal collective violence and various forms of external violence- the most violent form of the relationship between internal and external conflict. In sum, the ultimate aim of the project will be to develop a model of the internal-external conflict nexus built upon a common logic, and applied to revolution (through collective violence) and war as each serves as an agent of change.

2. The first two of these models are based on unified actor assumptions, and are concerned with external viability (or the traditional meaning of security as presented by realism). The third and fourth models are unified actor formulations which deal with internal viability/security. The fifth model integrates all four to provide a model in which decision makers are posited as unified but in which they are allowed to pursue any one (or combination) of the objectives specified in the first four models.

3. I will not, as noted in Starr (1990), be concerned with other "dimensions" of external conflict, for example as identified through factor analyses of event data from the 1950s or early 1960s (e.g., see Rummel, 1963; Tanter, 1965).

4. Bueno de Mesquita (1983:356), for example, notes that, "Indeed, third parties to a conflict are often in a strong position to alter the expected utility estimates of adversaries..."

5. Lee (1990:3) notes that "Revolution thus requires at least two groups"-the challenger and the government/pro-government group. "The revolutionary struggle is the process by which these two groups try to maximize their control over the resources, human or material, in a society."

6. Consistent with Rosecrance's view that system change depends on the sources and degree of system disturbance vis-a-vis the existence and efficacy of systemic regulators, Gilpin (1981:13) argues: "In every international system there are continual occurrences of political, economic, and technological changes that promise gains or threaten losses for one or another actor. In most cases these potential gains and losses are minor, and only incremental adjustments are necessary in order to take account of them... The relative stability of the system is, in fact, largely determined by its capacity to adjust to the demands of actors affected by changing political and environmental conditions. In every system, therefore, a process of disequilibrium and adjustment is constantly taking place." As one example of a number of empirical verifications, Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman (1990) conclude that war does not causally follow from any specific distribution of power, but more from the process of change. Most and Starr (1989:chap.6) use simulation to develop an analogous point.

7. Oberschall (1978:306) similarly summarizes Tilly's concerns: "the number and types of major collective actors in the system, their collective interests, and the major resources at their command." Thus, in summarizing Tilly, Oberschall also discusses those aspects of Tilly's work that I find parallel to the ideas of Bueno de Mesquita and Gilpin (see p.306 for the Gilpin analogy also).

8. These questions must be asked for both the opposition group and the government. As noted, for interdependent outcomes such as war or revolution, -violence will occur only when both government and challenger/opposition have both opportunity and willingness. In addition, we must keep in mind that as government actions affect an opposition group's opportunity and willingness there will be (intended and unintended) effects on international challengers; as opposition groups take actions which affect the government's opportunity and willingness there will be (intended and unintended) effects on international challengers. This is especially true of opportunity as reflected in capabilities.

9. For a full discussion of substitutability and the revolution-war relationship, see Starr (1990).

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