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**NAVAL
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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN IRREGULAR WARFARE

by

Leonardo Villalobos and Ryan J. Ward

December 2022

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Shannon C. Houck
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SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN IRREGULAR WARFARE

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**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INFORMATION STRATEGY AND POLITICAL
WARFARE**

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ABSTRACT

Many influence professionals within the U.S. Department of Defense are aware of the power of social movements, but current training and doctrine does not address the key components that affect the success of a movement. When successful, social movements have been an effective driving force to enact change in their respective societies. Change can be seen in the form of major policy changes or, in some instances, a full transfer of power. Regardless of outcome, however, social movements are characterized by the social and political instability that accompanies them. In an era of intense global competition, the U.S. should leverage all mechanisms of competition to combat its adversaries. The purpose of this research is to examine the variables both quantitative and qualitative that influence a movements probability of success. This research identifies key variables that influence practitioners should consider and evaluate prior to committing support to a movement organization. Furthermore, this research supports the idea that non-violent action may be a better alternative to compete with U.S. adversaries in environments with little to no U.S. presence.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| I. | INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM..... | 1 |
| A. | BACKGROUND | 1 |
| B. | RESEARCH QUESTION | 3 |
| C. | LITERATURE REVIEW | 3 |
| | 1. Strategic Guidance..... | 4 |
| | 2. Understanding Social Movements..... | 6 |
| | 3. Protest as a Vehicle for Political Action..... | 7 |
| | 4. Application of Social Movement Theory in Special Operations | 10 |
| D. | APPROACH TO RESEARCH DESIGN..... | 12 |
| | 1. Overview of Cases | 14 |
| II. | A DATA DRIVEN APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS..... | 19 |
| A. | INTRODUCTION..... | 19 |
| B. | HYPOTHESES | 20 |
| | 1. Datasets | 20 |
| | 2. Overall Movement Statistics (Preexisting Data) | 23 |
| | 3. COCOM Breakdown | 24 |
| C. | RESULTS | 26 |
| D. | CONCLUSION | 30 |
| III. | CASE STUDIES..... | 33 |
| A. | THE AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT (1954-1968) | 33 |
| | 1. The Events | 34 |
| | 2. Method of Network Diffusion | 36 |
| | 3. Leadership | 38 |
| | 4. Functional Coordinating Unit..... | 41 |
| | 5. Collective Identity | 42 |
| | 6. Outcome and Analysis | 43 |
| | 7. Conclusion | 44 |
| B. | EUROMAIDAN MOVEMENT (2013-2014)..... | 45 |
| | 1. The Events | 45 |
| | 2. Method of Network Diffusion | 47 |
| | 3. Leadership | 49 |
| | 4. Functional Coordinating Unit..... | 51 |
| | 5. Collective Identity | 53 |

| | | |
|-----|--|------------|
| 6. | Outcome and Analysis | 54 |
| 7. | Conclusion | 55 |
| C. | THE NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT (1967-1972)..... | 55 |
| 1. | The Events | 56 |
| 2. | Method of Network Diffusion | 60 |
| 3. | Leadership | 61 |
| 4. | Functional Coordinating Unit..... | 63 |
| 5. | Collective Identity | 65 |
| 6. | Outcome and Analysis | 67 |
| 7. | Conclusion | 68 |
| D. | CHINESE DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT (1988-1989) | 69 |
| 1. | The Events | 70 |
| 2. | Method of Network Diffusion | 74 |
| 3. | Leadership | 76 |
| 4. | Functional Coordinating Unit..... | 78 |
| 5. | Collective Identity | 79 |
| 6. | Outcome and Analysis | 80 |
| 7. | Conclusion | 82 |
| IV. | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION | 83 |
| A. | THE APPLICATION OF SOF AND INFLUENCE..... | 83 |
| 1. | The American Civil Rights Movement | 83 |
| 2. | Ukrainian Euromaidan Movement | 84 |
| 3. | Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement | 85 |
| 4. | Chinese Democracy Movement | 86 |
| B. | BEST PRACTICES | 88 |
| C. | CONCLUSION | 91 |
| D. | SUGGESTED FUTURE RESEARCH | 92 |
| | LIST OF REFERENCES | 93 |
| | INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST | 101 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | | |
|------------|--|----|
| Figure 1. | Geographic Combatant Commands | 22 |
| Figure 2. | COCOM Preliminary Analysis | 23 |
| Figure 3. | COCOM Breakdown | 24 |
| Figure 4. | Social Movements from 1909–2019 | 25 |
| Figure 5. | Interaction Effect of Polity and Non-violence on Probability of Success | 28 |
| Figure 6. | Interaction Effect of Non-violence and Polity on Probability of Success | 28 |
| Figure 7. | Key Variable Effect on Probability of Success..... | 29 |
| Figure 8. | Predicted Effect of Non-violence on Polity | 29 |
| Figure 9. | Structure of a Typical Movement Center..... | 37 |
| Figure 10. | Best Practices Diagram | 90 |

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LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|----------|--------------------------------|----|
| Table 1. | Case Studies Crosswalk | 13 |
| Table 2. | Regression Table Results | 27 |

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------|---|
| AAC | African American Church |
| AFRICOM | Africa Command |
| AIC | Akaike Information Criterion |
| CCP | Chinese Communist Party |
| CENTCOM | Central Command |
| COCOM | Combatant Command |
| CORE | Congress of Racial Equality |
| CRM | Civil Rights Movement |
| DCAC | Derry Citizens Action Committee |
| DHCA | Derry Housing Association Committee |
| DIME | Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic (Instruments of national power) |
| EU | European Union |
| EUCOM | European Command |
| FDC | Federation for a Democratic China |
| GDPDC | Gross Domestic Product Per Capita |
| INDOPACOM | Indo-Pacific Command |
| INSCR | Integrated Network and Societal Conflict Research |
| IO | Information Operations |
| IRA | Irish Republican Army |
| IW | Irregular Warfare |
| IWMA | Irregular Warfare Mission Analysis |
| MIA | Montgomery Improvement Association |
| MISO | Military Information Support Operations |
| NAACP | National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NAVCO | Non-Violent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes |

| | |
|------------|---|
| NICRA | Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association |
| NORTHCOM | Northern Command |
| NSS | National Security Strategy |
| PD | People’s Democracy |
| PRC | People’s Republic of China |
| RUC | Royal Ulster Constabulary |
| SCLC | Southern Christian Leadership Conference |
| SMO | Social Movement Organizations |
| SMT | Social Movement Theory |
| SNCC | Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee |
| SOF | Special Operations Forces |
| SOUTHCOM | Southern Command |
| UDAR | Ukrainian Alliance for Reforms |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| U.S. | United States |
| USAJFKSWCS | U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School |
| USSOCOM | United States Special Operations Command |
| UW | Unconventional Warfare |
| WDI | World Development Indicator |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis expands the understanding of social movements within the context of irregular warfare by answering the question: How can special operations use social movements against adversaries to achieve strategic objectives in irregular warfare? United States (U.S.) military doctrine addresses social movements exclusively as resistance movements as part of guerilla warfare. This view, however, neglects the utility of social movements to disrupt or degrade adversarial efforts in strategic competition. Social movements must be innovative and flexible to succeed. They are irregular actions by their very nature. This research contributes a new, simple evaluation method, informed by both quantitative and qualitative analyses, to examine social movements' potential to succeed. Results from this work provide Special Operations Forces (SOF) elements with guidelines to evaluate existing conditions and decide whether to commit resources.

This research used two methodological approaches. First, we conducted a quantitative analysis using multiple linear regression tests of over 600 violent and non-violent events to determine what factors most prominently influenced the likelihood of a social movement achieving its goals. Second, we conducted an in-depth qualitative case study analysis comparing two successful and two unsuccessful social movements. We selected the cases based on their geographic diversity, the type of government, and movement success/failure and examined four key components: method of network diffusion, leadership, functional coordinating unit, and collective identity.

Findings suggest the following:

- Protest tactic (violent vs. non-violent) is a critical factor to consider when crafting a social movement's strategy
- Non-violent protest tactics have a statistically significant higher probability of success in democratic societies vs. autocratic societies
- Leadership is the most critical of the four components

- In the four case studies analyzed, the major failures point to significant leadership failures or miscalculations
- The political credibility of a movement flows through a leader's ability to articulate the goals of a movement to external audiences while motivating and shaping a shared collective identity within the group
- While leadership may be most critical, mass collective action cannot occur without the presence of the other three components

These findings inform our recommendations to future SOF planners who may consider partnering with a social movement organization and include the following:

- Understand the objectives and desired end-state (both those of the movement and the U.S.)
- Ensure those objectives align enough to support the desired end-state
- Consider the type of government the social movement opposes
- Understand the effectiveness of violent versus non-violent tactics and craft a strategy to address those variables
- Conduct a thorough analysis of current and potential leadership
- Identify grassroots organizations to act as coordinating units
- Advise and support the movement accordingly based on the above conditions

Future research can apply this framework to additional case studies to further validate results. The variables used for this study are not exhaustive. Planners must consider various political and military factors that influence whether or not they should partner with or support movement organizations. Nevertheless, this framework for evaluating a social movement's utility is another tool analysts can use to determine if devoting finite SOF resources to an issue would yield success.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM

A. BACKGROUND

The utility of social movements as a means to achieve societal, cultural, or political change is well established throughout history. In particular, adversaries of the United States (U.S.) have demonstrated their ability to leverage social movements to shape the operational environment in favor of their objectives. Competition with these adversaries will likely involve low intensity conflicts in the form of proxy wars, irregular warfare, and cyberspace. Special Operations Forces must explore social movement theory (SMT) to better leverage social movements to remain competitive in a complex and dynamic global environment. For the purposes of this paper, we refer to *social movement theory* as the broad set of theoretical studies that attempt to explain why individuals and groups engage in collective action. *Social movements* are the actual execution of collective actions.

U.S. doctrine addresses social movements exclusively as resistance movements as part of guerilla warfare. This view neglects the utility of social movements to disrupt or degrade strategic competitors' efforts in this era of strategic competition. FM 3-05 Army Special Operations devotes one paragraph to grievances and motives as root causes for the mobilization of the masses, but it refers to such mobilization strictly as insurgencies rather than social movements.¹ JP 3-13 Information Operations and JP 3-04 Information in Joint Operations, arguably the most pertinent doctrinal publications to SMT contains no reference to these concepts.² Although well-understood in the realm of academia, social movements are not broadly understood within a military context, and therefore, their applicability within strategic competition has not been explored.

¹ Department of the Army, *Army Special Operations*, FM 3-05 (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2014), https://armypubs.army.mil/ProductMaps/PubForm/Details.aspx?PUB_ID=83552.

² Department of Defense, *Information Operations*, JP 3-13 (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2014), https://www.jcs.mil/portals/36/documents/doctrine/pubs/jp3_13.pdf; Department of Defense, *Information in Joint Operations*, JP 3-04 (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2022), <https://www.jcs.mil/Doctrine/Joint-Doctrine-Pubs/3-0-Operations-Series/>.

According to the Irregular Warfare Mission Analysis (IWMA) dated 19 October 2021, the United States should seek to deter opponents' influence by exhausting its will rather than through the exercise of traditional military power.³ Our thesis aims to expand the understanding of the utility of social movements within the context of irregular warfare. Special Operations Forces (SOF) are uniquely postured to address this problem set through non-traditional means. That is not to say these concepts are limited to use by SOF elements, but because of the force structure, cultural knowledge and training, SOF is best equipped to identify and influence these movements.

United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) recognizes the distinctive role that operations in the information environment must play in this global competition space. With over five thousand personnel deployed to 62 countries, SOF's global presence, combined with its expertise in low-intensity conflict, uniquely postures it to provide innovative capabilities in both the information and military space that conventional capabilities cannot.⁴ Innovation, which is a priority under the SOCOM posture statement, should not be limited only to capability platforms but should also be expanded to methods of influence in the context of irregular warfare (IW). Regarding irregular warfare, the Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy states, "We will apply IW to shape our adversaries' behavior to our advantage, increase the cost of hostile action against the United States and its allies, and pursue innovative ways to disrupt, counter, and preempt coercion and subversion."⁵ The call for innovative methods of influence and cost imposition could not be clearer. The United States must pursue ways to undermine the aggressive and subversive methods of the competition.

This thesis focuses heavily on social movements as a tool for irregular warfare. The current competition environment presents a compelling argument for the importance of finding new and creative methods for countering adversaries and imposing costs below

³ Office of Irregular Warfare and Competition, Joint Staff Joint Force Development and Design Directorate (J-7), *Irregular Warfare Mission Analysis* (Washington, DC, 2021).

⁴ Richard D. Clarke, "USSOCOM Posture Statement," Statement to United States Senate Committee on Armed Services, March 25, 2021, https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/clarke_03-25-21.

⁵ White House, *Summary of the Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy* (Washington, DC: White House, 2020), <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/AD1112946.pdf>.

the level of armed conflict. Social movements ranging from the American Civil Rights Movement (CRM) to the recent color revolutions of the 2010s provide a rich tapestry of examples of ordinary people with dynamic ideas effecting change.⁶ In many ways, social movements are like irregular warfare. One of the fundamental tenets of social movements is their reliance on both routine and non-routine tactics.⁷ Social movements are forced to be innovative and flexible to succeed. By their very nature, they are irregular actions.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

How can special operations use social movements against adversaries to achieve strategic objectives in irregular warfare?

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social movement literature contains a wealth of knowledge that is broadly understood within the realm of academia. Scholars ranging from David Snow, Doug McAdam, Doowan Lee, Aldon Morris, and Gene Sharp discuss the topic in-depth, and some even touch on their application in irregular warfare.⁸ However, until now, there has been very little crossover between the military and academia to determine what the application of social movements in a military context looks like. One of the keys to determining how social movements can be leveraged lies in understanding what they are, what they are not, and the characteristics that these movements share. Snow and McAdam “define a social movement as a loose collectivity acting with some degree of

⁶ Gene Sharp - *How to Start a Revolution* (The Big Indy, 2013), <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/genesharp>.

⁷ Doug McAdam and David A. Snow, eds., *Readings on Social Movements: Origins, Dynamics and Outcomes*, 2nd ed (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 4.

⁸ David A. Snow et al., “Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation,” *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 4 (August 1986): 464–81, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095581>; McAdam and Snow, *Readings on Social Movements*; Doug McAdam, “Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency,” *American Sociological Review* 48, no. 6 (December 1983): 735, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095322>; D.W. Lee, “Resistance Dynamics and Social Movement Theory: Conditions, Mechanisms, and Effects,” *Journal of Strategic Security* 10, no. 4 (2017): 42–63, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26466768>; Doowan Lee and Glenn Johnson, “Revisiting the Social Movement Approach to Unconventional Warfare,” *Small Wars Journal*, December 1, 2014, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/revisiting-the-social-movement-approach-to-unconventional-warfare>; Gene Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy: A Conceptual Framework for Liberation*, 3rd U.S. ed (East Boston, MA: Albert Einstein Institution, 2008).

organization, temporal continuity, and reliance on non-institutional forms of action to promote or resist change in the group, society, or world order of which it is a part.”⁹

1. Strategic Guidance

Prior to examining social movement theory, however, it is necessary to understand its importance within the framework of national strategic guidance. Two successive administrations identified critical threats to the national security of the U.S. in their respective National Security Strategies (NSS). These threats narrow down to five critical elements of concern: Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and transnational threat groups or terrorist groups.¹⁰ In the realm of information statecraft, the United States is particularly vulnerable to Russia’s efforts to destabilize the information environment, China’s exploitation of information for competitive advantage, and Jihadist groups extolling hateful rhetoric and recruiting more extremists.¹¹ In addition to identifying who the United States’ competitors are, the strategy also highlights the usefulness that local networks demonstrate to the U.S. to secure a foothold in ideological competitions.¹²

Although it pivots substantially in language and tenor from the 2017 Trump Administration strategy, the Biden Administration’s NSS also recognizes the threat that strategic competitors pose to the United States and its allies. Both administrations name the same top competitors, indicating that the threats they pose are of real concern and not political posturing by two opposing parties. These competitors use all forms of power to undermine the rules-based international order the United States has been the leader in establishing.¹³

⁹ McAdam and Snow, *Readings on Social Movements*.

¹⁰ White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, 2017), <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/AD1043812>; White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: White House, 2022), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Biden-Harris-Administrations-National-Security-Strategy-10.2022.pdf>.

¹¹ White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2017.

¹² White House.

¹³ White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2022.

Increasingly, the manipulation of information, whether it be outright disinformation or misinformation, is the weapon of U.S. competitors.¹⁴ In the United States European Command (EUCOM) theater of operations, Russia undermines U.S. objectives through a range of disruptive measures, including disinformation, cyber activities, and obfuscated or private military companies.¹⁵ As the posture statement clearly articulates, Russia, one of the United States' competitors in the environment, seeks to be the proverbial bully on the block, intimidating, dividing, and subverting the global order at every turn.¹⁶ As a result of Russian aggression, NATO has already taken measures to establish a more resilient population.¹⁷ In modern times, it is far more likely that conflict will occur in what SOF often refers to as the gray zone. The Kremlin and other hostile governments are not immune to influence within their borders or proxy states. Social movements demonstrate an enormous capability to influence legitimate change in oppressive regimes and cultures.

Similarly, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) faces challenges with strategic competitors in the Indo-Pacific region. China aggressively seeks to achieve regional hegemony and to rival the United States' global power projection capabilities.¹⁸ North Korea continues to be a belligerent and unpredictable actor on the Korean Peninsula. Although not as active as on its western front, Russia poses a threat in both the Arctic region and through further cooperation with China.¹⁹ One of the primary concerns in the INDOPACOM theater is the erosion of conventional deterrence, which may embolden the People's Republic of China (PRC) to take aggressive action in opposition to U.S. objectives in the region.²⁰ A wide range of operational methods should be

¹⁴ Clarke, "USSOCOM Posture Statement."

¹⁵ Tod D. Wolters, "EUCOM Posture Statement," Statement to United States Senate Committee on Armed Services, April 13, 2021.

¹⁶ Wolters.

¹⁷ Wolters.

¹⁸ Philip S. Davidson, "INDOPACOM Posture Statement," Statement to United States Senate Committee on Armed Services, March 9, 2021, https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/download/davidson_03-09-21.

¹⁹ Davidson.

²⁰ Davidson.

considered when countering threats given the resources of such a massive country. Assisting political opposition groups with fostering support from the aggrieved populations should be among those considerations.

2. Understanding Social Movements

Studies of social movements in the academic realm primarily explain the drivers behind collective action. Doug McAdam and David Snow, two prominent social movement scholars, highlight the relationship between social ties and activism, the need for tactical innovation in movements, and how the mobilization process develops. Furthermore, much of their work has focused on establishing social movements as rational in nature and not a spontaneous reaction to the environment.²¹ Understanding these variables is essential to establish a baseline for which characteristics are necessary for social movements to succeed.²² Their work, however, is largely theoretical and primarily focuses on the required conditions to generate collective action. Where and how external actors can influence a social movement's direction, purpose, and goals remains largely unexplored.

Nobel Peace Prize nominee Gene Sharp is arguably one of the most influential authors on non-violent action as a means for resisting authoritarian-type governments. Sharp argues that non-violent action is superior to war to combat oppressive governments. Relevant to this thesis is his assertion that for a movement to succeed, it must overcome atomization. Atomization is the method that authoritarian governments use to prevent a population from uniting, by creating a sense that individuals cannot safely unite due to a pervasive atmosphere of mistrust.²³ In other words, citizens need to

²¹ Aldon Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization," *American Sociological Review* 46, no. 6 (December 1981): 744, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095077>; Sarah A. Soule, "Diffusion Process within and across Movements," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah Anne Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, Blackwell Companions to Sociology (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2004).

²² McAdam, "Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency"; Doug McAdam and Ronnelle Paulsen, "Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism," *American Journal of Sociology* 99, no. 3 (November 1993): 640–67, <https://doi.org/10.1086/230319>; Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation."

²³ Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*.

form a collective identity prior to engaging in collective action.²⁴ What differentiates Sharp's work from McAdam's and Snow's is the applicability and purpose of his theories. Despite his pacificism, his work has been used as a guide to foment insurrections against autocratic governments.²⁵ He offers innovative tactics and techniques to combat oppressive regimes.²⁶ However, his work lacks empirical data to validate the effectiveness of non-violent protests. Furthermore, his approach largely focuses on regime change in autocratic governments, which is often not the goal of social movements.²⁷ This thesis incorporates many of Sharp's views on non-violent movements and looks to validate the effectiveness of non-violent protest which he suggests is critical for cultivating political change.

3. Protest as a Vehicle for Political Action

Political scientist Michael Lipsky argues that protests can effectively generate conditions favorable to enact political change, but "relatively powerless groups" will have limited success due to their lack of organizational resources. Relatively powerless groups are those with little to no traditional political or organizational resources available to them.²⁸ Lipsky provides a framework for the application of protest as a political tool. He categorizes the relevant actors into four categories: protest constituents, communications media, reference publics of protest targets, and protest target. For a protest to be successful, the protest leader must influence the *protest constituents* into participating and garner enough attention from the *communications media* to reach the *reference publics of protest targets*, which can pressure the *protest target* to bargain with the *protest leader*. Because this model requires a protest leader to reach and interact with

²⁴ Sharp.

²⁵ *Gene Sharp - How to Start a Revolution*.

²⁶ Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*.

²⁷ Sharp.

²⁸ Michael Lipsky, "Protest as a Political Resource," *American Political Science Review* 62, no. 4 (December 1968): 1144–58, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1953909>.

four different audiences, Lipsky concludes that powerless groups will have limited success in achieving political gains through protests.²⁹

McAdam argues that a social movement's powerlessness can be offset by introducing "negative inducements" that impose a high cost on those Lipsky considered *protest targets*.³⁰ By creating events that affect the financial, physical, or psychological well-being of the "target," protesters can generate the conditions necessary for their opponent to grant concessions. McAdam calls this process "tactical innovation," which is the various protest techniques devised to counter any political superiority that the adversary might possess.³¹ McAdam analyzes the effectiveness of the bus boycotts, the sit-ins, the freedom rides, and the community-wide protest campaigns that occurred during the American CRM.³² He provides two points of relevance for this work. First, for tactical innovation to be successful, it must be developed at the ground or "tactical" level. This implies that indigenous organizations like churches and colleges, and not social movement organizations (SMO), are the ones that create and execute the action. Second, the adversary will confront tactical innovation with tactical adaptation. As a new technique is applied, the opponent will adapt and apply a countermeasure that will eventually reduce activist participation. These countermeasures are often acts of violence, unjust arrests, and intimidation tactics to compel movement participants to cease their protests.

Protests, however, create a dilemma for recruitment when it is likely that participating will lead to some form of physical or material cost. As a result, movement leaders and their organizations must recruit new participants and retain those already involved. This presents two questions that must be addressed. First, knowing the risks associated with participation in a social movement, what drives so many individuals to participate in the movement? Second, how can an organization recruit, given the risks associated with participating?

²⁹ Lipsky.

³⁰ McAdam, "Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency."

³¹ McAdam.

³² McAdam.

McAdam indirectly addresses these questions in his analysis of recruitment into high-risk activism.³³ He defines high-risk activism as activities that require an “expenditure of time, money, and energy that are required of a person engaged in any particular form of activism.”³⁴ This definition of high-risk is specifically “anticipated dangers-whether legal, social, physical, financial, and so forth-of engaging in a particular type of activity.”³⁵ Though McAdam’s study is specific to the 1964 instances of civic activism in Mississippi, known as Freedom Summer, high-risk/cost is inherent to all the previously mentioned protests. Why then did so many choose to participate? He found that those that engaged in high-risk/cost activism are likely to have strong ties to other participants and a history of prior activism.³⁶ His findings suggest that recruitment most often occurs through family and friends. He also notes that recruitment for social movements is aided not by recruiting individuals but by recruiting like-minded organizations. This form of recruitment makes sense because if those who participate are already engaged in some other organization, they would have a history of activism. Furthermore, if an organization, such as the church, is recruited, the organization would primarily be composed of friends and family.

Along with Ronnelle Paulsen, McAdam later built on this premise by looking closer at the relationship between those that had ties to other participants and other movement organizations.³⁷ Their analysis finds added “support for that linkage [between movement and identity] from persons who normally serve to sustain the identity in question” and “the absence of strong opposition from others on whom other salient identities depend” as additional factors that influence participation in activism.³⁸ These conditions add the notion that it is not just about having strong ties to others in the group.

³³ Doug McAdam, “Recruitment to High-Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer,” *American Journal of Sociology* 92, no. 1 (July 1986): 64–90, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2779717>.

³⁴ McAdam.

³⁵ McAdam.

³⁶ McAdam; Sean F. Everton, *Networks and Religion: Ties That Bind, Loose, Build up, and Tear Down*, Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

³⁷ McAdam, “Recruitment to High-Risk Activism”; McAdam and Paulsen, “Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism.”

³⁸ McAdam and Paulsen, “Specifying the Relationship Between Social Ties and Activism.”

Having support from strong ties who have a high degree of influence in the participant's life is also a factor. For example, having parental support affected whether the participant decided to show up or withdraw from the event.³⁹ Additionally, McAdam and Paulsen found that participation in civil rights organizations and religious organizations, as opposed to other activist organizations, played an essential role in determining activist participation in *Freedom Summer*. Therefore, if participation in high-risk/cost activism is predicated on having strong ties to other activists who support the identity of the participant and have a history of prior involvement with religious or social movement organizations, then it is important that SMOs partner with local, grassroots organizations to facilitate recruitment and diffusion.

4. Application of Social Movement Theory in Special Operations

Social movement theory provides an overarching theoretical framework to understand movement structure and organization. The various sub-theories provide different lenses with which to assess the potential success of a social movement. Doowan Lee starts to bridge the gap between social movement theory and its possible military application.⁴⁰ His analysis is one of the most thorough contemporary examinations of social movements specific to SOF activity. Drawing from the work of Sharp, McAdam, and others, Lee frames the perspectives of social movements within existing guidance from USSOCOM. Critical in his examination of social movement theory as related to special operations is that social movements are not measured strictly according to their capacity to fight in guerilla warfare. Instead, they are measured by a diverse range of both peaceful and violent methodologies.⁴¹

In the context of strategic competition, these movements stand little chance of withstanding an insurgent conflict with the traditional American competitors. In strong authoritarian states like Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, violent insurgencies have limited potential to alter the status quo or create significant disruptions. According to

³⁹ McAdam and Paulsen.

⁴⁰ Lee, "Resistance Dynamics and Social Movement Theory."

⁴¹ Lee.

Lee, an imbalance of lethal and non-lethal methods by social movements can lead to severely negative strategic consequences.⁴² Lee's assertion is accurate when the overthrow of a regime is the case. The question we pose is whether this assertion is the same when the United States' objective is to disrupt or degrade an adversary instead.

Lee's study, however, broadens the definition of resistance movements, using the term almost interchangeably with social movements. In the Department of Defense, certain definitions carry with them certain authorities, so precisely defining these terms is important. This distinction is necessary because Joint and U.S. Army doctrine refers to resistance movements exclusively in the context of unconventional warfare (UW).⁴³ Unconventional warfare requires SOF to operate "through or with an underground auxiliary and guerilla force in a denied area."⁴⁴ Our contention is that social movements are broader than just resistance elements that require a guerilla force. Therefore, more work must be done to close the theoretical and doctrinal application gap. The IWMA points out that Information Operations (IO)/Military Information Support Operations (MISO) should be integrated into all operations; however, doctrinally, MISO is not considered in doctrine on UW.⁴⁵ Therefore, if Lee's work is specific to resistance movements, the definition presented in this article does not encompass the full range of application for social movements in irregular warfare. Understanding the relationship between social ties and activism is crucial to forming an understanding of the conditions under which social movements flourish.

To affect strategic competition, SOF military leaders need a full range of options available to them to accomplish their mission now more than ever. As small units that can have outsized effects at the operational and strategic levels of conflict, they are uniquely positioned and qualified to understand and manipulate complex environments. Strategic documents highlight the need to develop innovative ways to compete against our

⁴² Lee.

⁴³ Department of the Army, *Army Special Operations*, 2014.

⁴⁴ Department of Defense, *Special Operations*, JP 3-05 (Washington, DC, 2014); Department of the Army, *Army Special Operations*, FM 3-05 (Washington, DC, 2014).

⁴⁵ Office of Irregular Warfare and Competition, Joint Staff Joint Force Development and Design Directorate (J-7), *Irregular Warfare Mission Analysis*.

adversaries in all spaces. The information environment is specifically named in various documents as a key area of competition. Political instability is a defining characteristic of the change associated with the aforementioned movements. As the U.S. seeks to find ways to degrade and disrupt our strategic competitors, using social movements to accomplish these objectives are worthy of closer examination.

Courses taught to SOF personnel at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS) touch on the principles of social movement theory as a potential tool for conducting unconventional warfare. Doctrinally, however, little exists to guide these courses, and a further examination of the causes of social movements may allow professional practitioners of influence to understand, recognize, and use this phenomenon effectively. This thesis aims to fill that gap by conducting a comparative analysis of several prominent social movements to identify key characteristics that will assist in identifying future social movements that can be leveraged in support of U.S. objectives.

D. APPROACH TO RESEARCH DESIGN

Sharp stresses the importance of using non-violent tactics for a movement to be successful. He identifies a plethora of non-violent tactics that can be used to peacefully protest oppressive regimes. However, few studies have focused on validating how non-violence effects the probability of success of a social movement. One of the goals of this research project is to address this gap and determine the effectiveness non-violence as a preferred protest tactic by measuring it against other objective variables that may also influence the probability of success.

Our research project explores the research question using a mixed methods approach. To fully understand how to leverage social movements, it is critical to understand the variables that influence success. In Chapter II, we attempt to analyze objective quantitative variables across a broad range of non-violent and violent movements to isolate variables and methods that are likely to have the most influence on the probability successful outcomes. These include polity level of countries, gross domestic product, population size, and violence vs. non-violence. These results may

allow future researchers or practitioners of influence to understand how choice of tactics or other external variables should influence tactical decision making for a movement. While Chapter II focuses on objective variables that influence success, Chapter III takes a subjective approach that is grounded on the principles of social movement theory. Using the theoretical principles covered in the literature review, the researchers established four key components from which to evaluate the case studies. These components are method of network diffusion, leadership, functional coordinating unit, and collective identity, which we define more fully later in this section. This quantitative and qualitative comparative framework can be replicated across other case studies in future research. Table 1 summarizes the case studies we analyze.

Table 1. Case Studies Crosswalk

| | Successful | Unsuccessful |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Democratic | American Civil Rights Movement (1954-1968) | Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement (1967-1972) |
| Authoritarian | Euromaidan (2013-2014) | Chinese Democracy Movement (1988-1989) |

We selected two social movements each from authoritarian regimes and democracies, of which one successfully achieved its goals and one that did not. Case studies include: (1) The American Civil Rights Movement (1954-1968) (democracy, successful); (2) the Ukrainian Euromaidan Movement (2013-2014) (autocracy, successful); (3) Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement (1967-1972) (democracy, unsuccessful); and (4) the Chinese Democracy Movement (1988-1989) (autocracy, unsuccessful). The cases were chosen based on their geographic diversity, form of government, and movement success/failure.

We define a successful social movement as one that achieved the overall goal of the movement. With this definition we accept the fact that not all of a movement's goals may have been met. For example, in the case of the American CRM, segregationist laws were largely repealed across the American South and at the federal level, but the movement did not end racism in the country. Nevertheless, the overall intent of the comparative case analysis is to determine patterns, commonalities, and differences amongst a diverse set of cases. A thorough understanding of social movements allows for a mutually beneficial relationship where the goals of the movement can be met, the goals of the U.S. in opposing strategic competitors are furthered, and the values of a democratic world are advanced.

1. Overview of Cases

The American Civil Rights movement is a helpful case because most people are familiar with it and its goals, there is significant literature devoted to it, and it occurred in a democratic society. It is important because it demonstrates a movement with limited objectives that ended relatively peacefully. Moreover, it serves as a baseline from which to compare other movements. This movement has traditionally been a model for other organizations that have attempted to replicate some of the techniques and methodologies seen in the American CRM.⁴⁶ In short, it serves as the traditional model for successfully implemented civil disobedience.

The Euromaidan protests provides an interesting comparison because it differs from the American CRM in multiple ways. One of the key differences is that it occurred in a relatively authoritarian state. It is a cautionary tale of the unintended consequences that a social movement can have. This movement began with limited objectives but rapidly morphed into a maximalist movement that unseated the government and instigated third-party intervention within the state. However, ultimately it succeeded against an authoritarian government.

⁴⁶ Aldon D. Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks," *Annual Review of Sociology* 25, no. 1 (August 1999): 517–39, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.25.1.517>.

The third case, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement, failed to obtain its stated goals in a democratic society. Studying this movement is vital to this project since it highlights that broad and ill-defined goals, coupled with intermittent changes in leadership, undermine the effectiveness of a social movement. Furthermore, it highlights that applying violence can reduce a movement's effectiveness and legitimacy. Although offshoots of this movement eventually achieved some of the original goals, success came after decades of insurgent activity. Our analysis leads to the conclusion that a lack of collective identity and a disjointed leadership structure were two key contributing factors to the movement's overall shortcomings. We analyze this movement during its reform-oriented time-period, rather than when its offshoots attempted to achieve independence.

The final case, the Chinese Democracy Movement, explores an unsuccessful social movement against an authoritarian regime. We determined it was vital to include unsuccessful social movements in our comparative case analysis to evaluate the role our four components played in the outcome of the movement. Understanding the conditions that were not present can illuminate key decision points for decision-makers to determine whether those objectives can be achieved through some sort of assistance or if the movement is not a viable one to partner with.

Combining these four cases provides a holistic overview of social movements with four distinct outcomes. These cases are most appropriate because they provide a robust sample of the varying outcomes of social movements and the principles required for success. The cases are a sample from four different global regions with distinct cultures. This allows for broader generalizations that are more useful to the global competition space. We limited the number of case studies to four due to time and resource constraints; however, their diversity provides balance to our study.

Our review of the existing literature on social movements led us to develop the theory that the four most important pillars of a social movement's success are the existence of method of network diffusion, leadership, functional coordinating unit, and collective identity. These four functions are derivative of a combination of the theories asserted by Sharp, McAdam, Snow, Morris, and Lee. We speculate that for the U.S. to capitalize on existing organizations, the U.S. must be able to fill a missing gap. Likewise,

we anticipate it is not necessary to partner with an already successful and thriving organization, provided its goals align with U.S. objectives. It would not be a good use of finite U.S. resources and may hinder the movement. Ultimately, this study's intent is to assist special operations influence practitioners in identifying movements that have most of the key elements for success but need assistance with fully achieving all the necessary elements to make them successful. We define the four pillars as follows:

Method of Network Diffusion: A hierarchical or proximal method of communicating the movement's goals, objectives, activities, and tactical innovations to participating SMOs and participants. Furthermore, a movement's method of network diffusion facilitates an effective recruitment process.⁴⁷

Leadership: Effective social movement leaders are those who clearly establish and communicate the strategic goals of the movement to external and internal audiences. They can direct and coordinate the movement while inspiring participants to mobilize in a unified and consistent manner. Successful movements have leaders who are present throughout the majority of the movement and have a decidedly positive effect on the outcome.

Functional Coordinating Unit: A functional coordinating unit is inherently tied to a movement's leadership. While the movement leader has responsibility for coordinating and orienting the movement's goals and objectives, the coordinating unit is the internal mechanism through which those goals and objectives are accomplished. Furthermore, the coordinating unit is charged with organizing and coordinating collective action as well as the resources required to sustain the movement.⁴⁸

Collective Identity: We define collective identity as a shared sense of collective agency that establishes a connection with the broader community or institution which creates a sense of commitment and willingness to carry out actions that drive change.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Soule, "Diffusion Process within and across Movements."

⁴⁸ Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement."

⁴⁹ Scott A. Hunt and Robert A. Benford, "Collective Identity, Solidarity, and Commitment," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007), 433–57, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470999103.ch19>.

If our tentative theory is accurate, the evidence from the four case studies should indicate that in successful movements, those characteristics were present, while in the unsuccessful movements, not all were. The initial quantitative analysis sets the stage to then complete the more contextual qualitative analysis that is the basis of the four selected case studies. This big-data examination followed by a historical and theoretical analysis of the events in case studies enables future researchers to take the same framework and apply it to case studies of their selection to better replicate the results. Finally, our thesis concludes with an in-depth discussion of how the involvement of special operations forces can play a role in influencing the trajectory of a social movement to achieve strategic objectives.

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II. A DATA DRIVEN APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

A. INTRODUCTION

Non-violent action has been key to effecting governmental change in the modern world. Previous research using open-source data analysis demonstrates that non-violent resistance is often more effective than violence.⁵⁰ The data presented in this chapter corroborates this key finding and expands on it by showing that while multiple variables affect the probability of success, none have a greater effect than the tactics employed. Taken together, these findings provide important insights for understanding social movements as a component of irregular warfare.

Non-violent resistance opens avenues for resistance operations to disrupt and degrade strategic competitors and delegitimize violent responses from the target government. Multiple scholars assert that movements that primarily employ non-violent tactics are more likely to be viewed as legitimate.⁵¹ When legitimacy is established, social movements are more likely to garner increased support from the local populace, as well as from members within the target government.⁵² Prior to developing concepts for the application of social movements in irregular warfare, it is necessary to assess the validity of non-violence as the preferred method of resistance. Much has been written on this topic, but there is relatively limited research using this specific data-driven approach.⁵³ To fill this gap, we use statistical models to identify factors that have a significant effect on movement success.

⁵⁰ Chenoweth, Erica, “How to Change the World,” Hidden Brain Media, accessed November 15, 2022, <https://hiddenbrain.org/podcast/how-to-change-the-world/>.

⁵¹ Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, 49.

⁵² Sharp, 49.

⁵³ Doug McAdam and Sidney Tarrow, “The Political Context of Social Movements,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements: New and Expanded Edition*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah Anne Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, Second Edition, Wiley Blackwell Companions to Sociology (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2018).

B. HYPOTHESES

Social movement theory provides a wide range of explanations for why social movements materialize. While some argue that adequate resources are required to shape movement grievances into collective action, others make compelling arguments that the political environment must also be conducive for a movement to effectively take off.⁵⁴ We sought to expand beyond the motivations and grievances that spark a movement and instead focus on an analysis of factors that influence the outcome of a movement once it is already underway. Specifically, “what factors influence the overall likelihood of a social movement’s success?”

Political process theory suggests that the political environment presents activists with opportunities to mobilize to achieve their objectives.⁵⁵ We are not testing this assertion but rather theorizing that those political opportunities would be most likely to be found in democratic states. This theory led to the following hypotheses:

H1: Social movements are more likely to experience success in governments with higher levels of democracy than in autocratic governments.

H2: Social movements that primarily employ non-violent tactics are more likely to experience success than violent movements.

1. Datasets

To test our hypotheses, we used three distinct datasets: the Non-violent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO), the Center for Systemic Peace’s Integrated Network for Societal Conflict Research (INSCR), and the World Bank’s World Development Indicators (WDI).

The NAVCO dataset sponsored by Harvard University provides data on 622 maximalist campaigns ranging from 1900 to 2019.⁵⁶ It represents the most

⁵⁴ McAdam and Tarrow, 20.

⁵⁵ McAdam and Tarrow, “The Political Context of Social Movements.”

⁵⁶ Erica Chenoweth and Christopher Wiley Shay, “List of Campaigns in NAVCO 1.3,” *NAVCO Data Project*, March 17, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/ON9XND>.

comprehensive of its kind and covers the longest available timespan. It provides binary coding for the type of movement (“violent or non-violent”), movement outcome (“success, failure, limited, ongoing”), and movement objective (“regime change, secession, or self-determination”). The dataset’s creators defined maximalist campaigns as attempting to achieve regime change, secession, or self-determination.⁵⁷ However, this definition is potentially problematic since non-violent resistance movements can have a range of goals that fall short of total regime change or independence. Grievances that do not seek to obtain maximalist objectives can be addressed through increased inclusion, greater civil liberties, or enhanced economic rights to name just a few that this dataset excludes. On the one hand, this dataset is limited in that it excludes other movement objective outcomes, but on the other, it is streamlined and standardized for maximum integrity and usability. If anything, including only maximalist campaigns further underlines the argument on the utility of non-violent resistance as a method to effect significant political change and concessions.

We made two modifications to the original dataset. First, to analyze the findings in more specific regions and to make the data more relatable to a military audience, we added a continent classification and a combatant command (COCOM) classification, which is divided into AFRICOM, CENTCOM, EUCOM, INDOPACOM, NORTHCOM, and SOUTHCOM. These classifications are graphically depicted in Figure 1.

⁵⁷ Chenoweth and Shay.

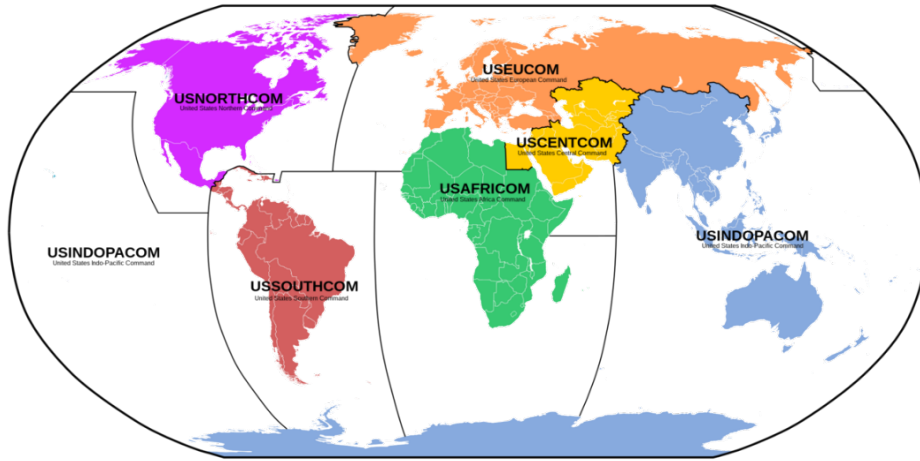


Figure 1. Geographic Combatant Commands⁵⁸

The division into a COCOM classification allows the analysis of both the holistic trends and patterns for social movements worldwide, but additionally provides a look at the trends and patterns in specific regions of interest. A copy of the updated tables with the COCOM variable inserted is available upon request.

We incorporated the INSCR’s annual rating of the democracy to autocracy levels of all countries with total populations over 500,000 from the years 1800 to 2018.⁵⁹ The specific subset of data included for this research is the Polity2 variable, which allows for the use of the polity data with time-series based analysis. The dataset converts the Polity data to a conventional polity score ranging from -10 to +10 indicating a full autocracy to full democracy range and all ratings in between. For the purposes of this study, these scores were further subcategorized into autocracies (-10 to -6), anocracies (-5 to 5), and democracies (6 to 10).⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Source: Wikipedia, “Unified Combatant Commands,” November 10, 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unified_combatant_command.

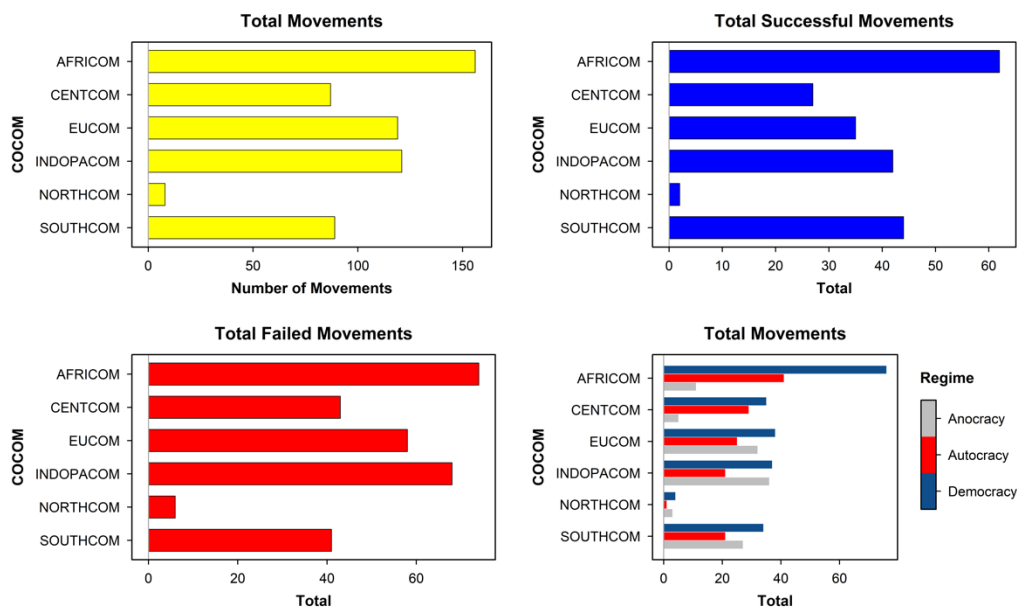
⁵⁹ Monty G. Marshall, “INSCR Data Page,” Center for Systemic Peace, April 23, 2020, <https://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html>.

⁶⁰ “The Polity Project,” The Center for Systemic Peace, 2021, n. This perspective envisions a spectrum of governing authority that spans from fully institutionalized autocracies through mixed, or incoherent, authority regimes (termed “anocracies”) to fully institutionalized democracies., <https://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html>.

The WDI includes multiple financial and population metrics for countries around the world.⁶¹ This dataset was added to account for population and gross domestic product per capita (GDPPC). Though this dataset adds to the study, it also presented limitations because the data only encompasses the years 1945 to 2015. The effect of this limitation is likely minimal because the majority of the movements tracked in the NAVCO dataset align with the years represented in WDI data. Despite the limitations, the datasets allowed the researchers to account for and measure the effect of population and relative wealth as control variables for the hypothesis.

2. Overall Movement Statistics (Preexisting Data)

Initially the research team used the NAVCO and INSCR datasets to compare the total number of movements by COCOM. These comparisons are displayed in Figure 2.



Total movements by COCOM (top left), total failed movements by COCOM (top right), total successful movements by COCOM (bottom left), movements by regime type (bottom right).

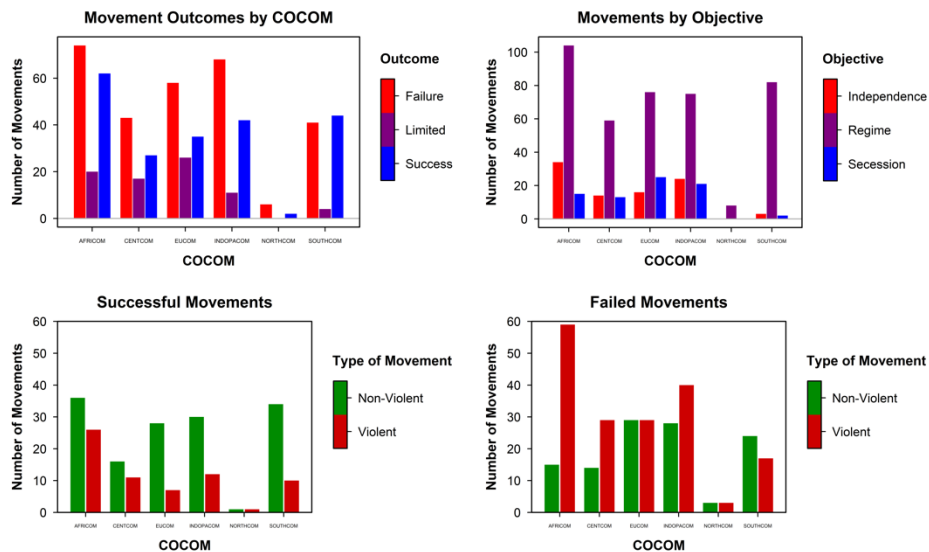
Figure 2. COCOM Preliminary Analysis

⁶¹ The World Bank, “World Development Indicators,” The World Bank, accessed May 20, 2022, <https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=world-development-indicators>.

The y-axis shows the COCOM in which each movement occurred, and the x-axis depicts the total number of movements for each respective category. In the aggregate, the top three COCOMs for total movements are AFRICOM, EUROM, and INDOPACOM. However, when the number of successful movements are analyzed, SOUTHCOM overtakes EUROM. The difference between these two theaters was particularly interesting to the researchers, because historically SOUTHCOM nations are considered less affluent and stable than EUROM nations. Additionally, if higher levels of democracy increase the probability of social movement success, then one should expect higher rates of success in EUROM than SOUTHCOM. This initial assessment fueled further interest in identifying the factors that influence success. Finally, as we compare the type of government that spawns the most movements, it is observed across the board that anocracies are far more likely to face both violent and non-violent resistance.

3. COCOM Breakdown

Further breaking down the movements visually by region, outcome, movement objectives and the type of movement yields the following results (see Figure 3).



Movement outcomes (top left), movement objectives (top right), effect of violence on success (bottom left), effect of violence on failure (bottom right).

Figure 3. COCOM Breakdown

Figure 3 (top left) demonstrates that in the aggregate, failures far outpace successes in all COCOMs except SOUTHCOM. Figure 3 (top right) reveals that out of all movements in the dataset, the overwhelming majority were seeking regime change. When analyzing data relating to the type of movement and movement outcome, it becomes apparent that although failure far outpaces success, when a movement is successful, it is often characterized as a non-violent movement. At this point, however, it is not yet clear whether success is more likely in democratic or autocratic forms of government when measured against the type of movement.

Finally, before conducting statistical analysis using the third dataset, we visualized the number of social movements across time. Figure 4 plots the beginning year of each movement on the x-axis and the number of incidents as the y-axis.

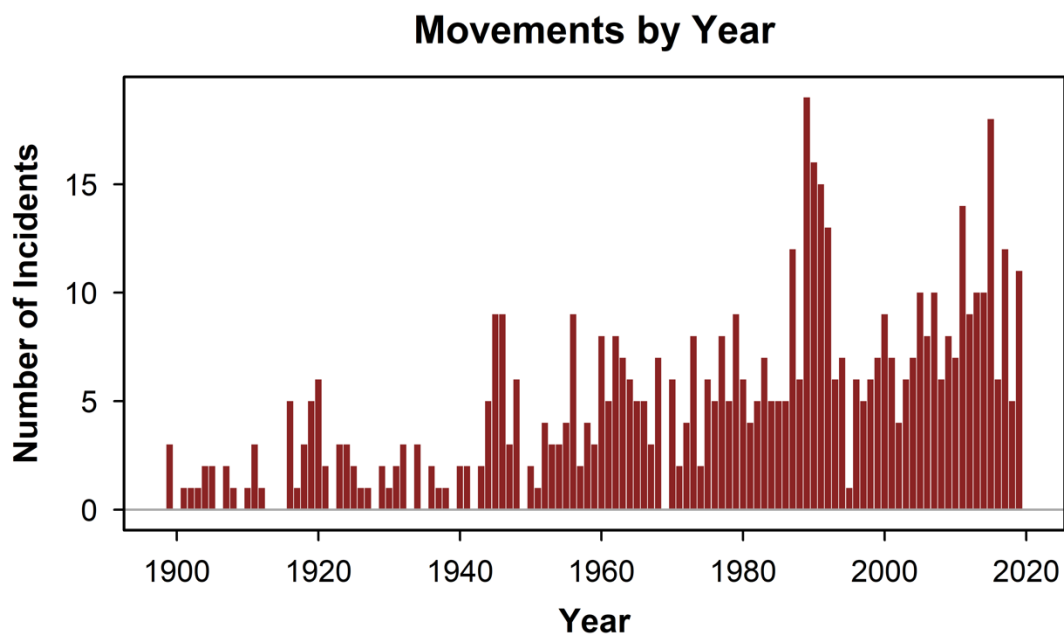


Figure 4. Social Movements from 1909–2019

The chart shows that immediately following periods of significant unrest, there are spikes in the numbers of movements. This effect can be seen here in the late 1940s through the 1960s as decolonization was taking place. Another spike occurs following the

collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, and finally a spike again occurs during a period of unrest in the Middle East (2001 to 2019) that saw the rise of Arab Spring movements, and the U.S. Global War on Terror. This visualization lends some credence to the idea that regional instability and transitional governments may also be a contributing factor in the rise of social movements.

Given these results, we determined that it was vital to incorporate several variables to determine their effect on the likelihood of success. As suggested by our hypotheses, the variables that we were most concerned with are the effect that polity levels and non-violence have on the probability of a movement to succeed.

We used the following unit of analysis and variables to test the hypothesis. The unit of analysis is movement-year. The dependent variable is a dichotomous indicator of movement success. The independent variables potentially influencing this outcome include the number of years a movement takes, the violent or non-violent nature of the movement, and the polity level of the country in which the movement occurred. Additional control variables that the team factored into the model include the goal of the movement, GDPPC, and population size at the time of the movement.

C. RESULTS

We estimated a logit model regression analysis with the dependent, independent and control variables factored in. The dependent variable was the probability of success for a movement, measured against multiple other independent (Polity Levels, Non-Violence, Ongoing Years) and control (Population, GDPPC, Movement Objective) variables. The team ran eight separate logit models, gradually factoring in more control variables with each model. The final two models also incorporate a quadratic effect of polity and an interaction effect of polity and non-violence. Table 2 reports the results:

Table 2. Regression Table Results

| | Probability of Success | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Logit (1) | Logit (2) | Logit (3) | Logit (4) | Logit (5) | Logit (6) | Logit (7) | Logit (8) |
| Population | -0.005*** (0.001) | -0.005*** (0.001) | -0.003** (0.001) | -0.004*** (0.001) | -0.004*** (0.001) | -0.004*** (0.001) | -0.004*** (0.001) | -0.003** (0.001) |
| GDPPC/100 | | 0.004* (0.002) | 0.004* (0.002) | -0.002 (0.003) | -0.001 (0.003) | -0.001*** (0.004) | -0.01*** (0.004) | -0.01*** (0.004) |
| Regime Change | | | 1.345*** (0.220) | 1.478*** (0.230) | 1.045*** (0.235) | 0.792*** (0.243) | 0.794*** (0.243) | 0.750*** (0.247) |
| Polity Levels | | | | 0.091*** (0.016) | 0.101*** (0.016) | 0.086*** (0.017) | 0.087*** (0.017) | -0.030 (0.029) |
| Ongoing Years | | | | | -0.142*** (0.022) | -0.081*** (0.021) | -0.081*** (0.021) | -0.080*** (0.021) |
| Non-Violence | | | | | | 1.673*** (0.202) | 1.671*** (0.202) | 1.676*** (0.222) |
| Quadratic Effect | | | | | | | -0.001 (0.004) | |
| Interaction Effect | | | | | | | | 0.189*** (0.037) |
| Constant | -2.332*** (0.090) | -2.448*** (0.112) | -3.511*** (0.224) | -3.437*** (0.243) | -2.490*** (0.255) | -3.035*** (0.282) | -3.007*** (0.291) | -3.148*** (0.296) |
| Observations | 2,569 | 2,551 | 2,551 | 2,458 | 2,458 | 2,458 | 2,458 | 2,458 |
| MAE | 0.127 | 0.126 | 0.123 | 0.121 | 0.114 | 0.107 | 0.107 | 0.104 |
| RMSE | 0.252 | 0.251 | 0.249 | 0.245 | 0.238 | 0.229 | 0.229 | 0.227 |
| AIC | 1,257 | 1,239 | 1,193 | 1,112 | 1,033 | 962 | 964 | 936 |
| BIC | 1,269 | 1,256 | 1,216 | 1,141 | 1,068 | 1,003 | 1,011 | 982 |
| Log Likelihood | -627 | -616 | -592 | -551 | -511 | -474 | -474 | -460 |
| <i>Notes:</i> | *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01 GDPPC effect should be multiplied by 100. Reduced for consistency of number of digits | | | | | | | |

These findings suggest that even when controlling for multiple variables, polity level still has a statistically significant positive effect on the likelihood of a movement to be successful. Furthermore, non-violence also had a statistically significant effect on movement success. The Akaike information criterion (AIC) scores in the regression table indicate that model eight is the most accurate and incorporates all of the variables of interest. The lower the AIC score, the better fit a model is. Further examination of model 8 is visually depicted in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5 visualizes the interaction effect between polity and non-violence in model 8. Figure 5 overlays the effect of non-violence and polity level's impact on the probability of success. Figure 6 shows the same information with the X and Z axis flipped:

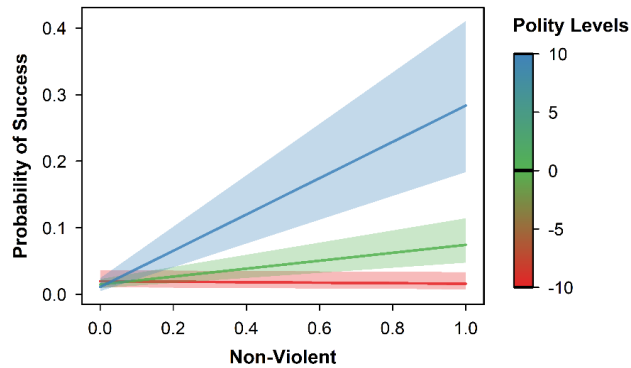


Figure 5. Interaction Effect of Polity and Non-violence on Probability of Success

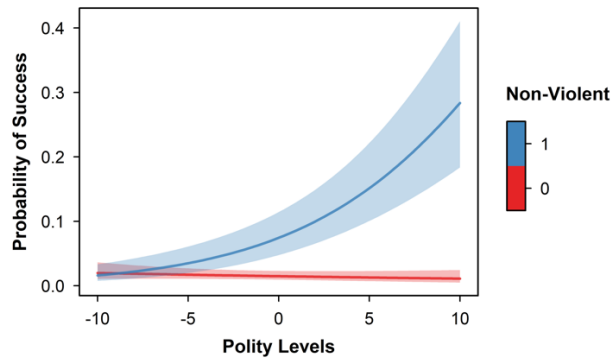


Figure 6. Interaction Effect of Non-violence and Polity on Probability of Success

In both figures, the Y-axis is the predicted probability of movement success. In Figure 5 the x-axis is non-violence, color coded by polity levels. The darker plotted line is the predicted probability of success measured by polity level, with the lighter-shaded bands indicating the margin of error at a 95% confidence interval. Figure 6 presents the same information presented in Figure 5 but better illustrates the effect that non-violence

has at higher polity levels. The interaction effect produced by model 8 reveals that polity has a negligible effect on the success of violent movements, however, polity has a significant positive effect on non-violent movements.

To determine which variables within model 8 had the greatest effect on likelihood of success, we calculated predicted differences based on the regression. Figure 7 indicates that the non-violence variable has the highest effect on probability of movement success with all other variables held at their mean values. Figure 8 shows further evidence of the level of interaction effect that polity has on non-violent movements.

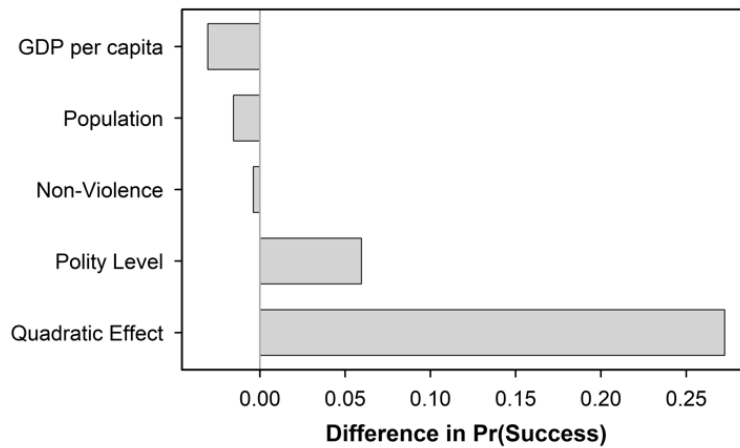


Figure 7. Key Variable Effect on Probability of Success

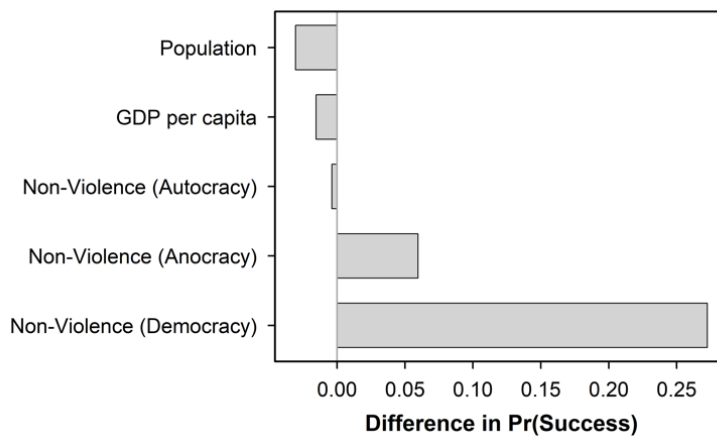


Figure 8. Predicted Effect of Non-violence on Polity

This differential calculation supports the observations made during the initial visual analysis of the data. Non-violent movements have a higher probability of success than violent ones. Moreover, non-violence has a greater effect and higher probability of success in democratic nations. Therefore, it is important to consider the tactic that a movement employs when developing strategies that look to incorporate them.

The key takeaway is that it is important to consider the ultimate goal of a social movement in constructing a partnership. If planners favor regime change, then considering the polity level of any country in question is a vital consideration in planning for success. If the goal is disruptive in nature, polity level and movement tactic are far less of a concern.

D. CONCLUSION

Because of the diversity of social movements, maximalist campaigns provide a baseline from which to categorize and measure movements. Previous efforts to quantify the success or failure of a movement was highly subjective to the interpretation of the analyst.⁶² Therefore, this dataset provided the most measurable evidence for determining the success or failure of a movement. Findings, though limited to maximalist campaigns, add credibility to advocates of non-violence as the primary method of achieving social change. For SOF, this may mean rethinking our approach to how we conduct unconventional warfare planning.

Our results provide compelling evidence that if maximalist non-violent campaigns are this effective, particularly when dealing with unstable governments, then campaigns with more narrow objectives have strong potential to not only succeed, but also be disruptive and influential in shaping policy objectives. According to our analysis, there are certain regions where these types of operations may be more effective than others. Potential partnerships with these social movements must be studied closely to determine viability and feasibility of success. Our analysis identifies factors and variables that the operational researcher should take into account as part of an overall determination. The

⁶² Chenoweth, Erica, "How to Change the World."

variables examined are by no means exhaustive, but they provide a framework for planners to use in support of their analysis. Pairing these factors with more in-depth case study analysis provides a more holistic understanding of social movements and their applicability in this field.

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III. CASE STUDIES

A. THE AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT (1954-1968)

We selected the American Civil Rights Movement (CRM) (1954-1968) for this study because it represents a successful social movement within a democratic society. The American CRM resulted in various changes to federal law that ultimately desegregated the South and, for the first time, provided legitimate protection for African Americans seeking to exercise fundamental rights under the U.S. Constitution.⁶³ While characterized as a successful movement, the period in which this case study took place was far from peaceful, despite the activist's commitment to non-violent protest. Sharp notes that using non-violent tactics often does not equate to an absence of violence on the part of the oppressors.⁶⁴ The application of state-sponsored violence to stifle movements that challenge the status quo is a recurring theme in the case studies examined in this thesis.

The findings in the previous chapter indicate that non-violence plays a significant role in predicting the success of a social movement within democratic societies. While the data was limited to maximalist movements, this case study supports the findings compared to the Northern Ireland CRM. The American CRM maintained a non-violent approach throughout the movement, whereas the Northern Ireland CRM turned violent and eventually failed to achieve its objectives within the observed timeframe. While the American CRM can broadly be characterized as non-violent, it is essential to acknowledge that not all movement activities were peaceful, and not all movement leaders were advocates of non-violent action.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the difference between the success and failure of a movement is not as simple as committing to non-violent tactics. We maintain that a successful movement requires four essential components: (1) a

⁶³ Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement."

⁶⁴ Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*.

⁶⁵ James T. Patterson, *Brown v. Board of Education: A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), chap. 6.

method of network diffusion, (2) leadership, (3) a functional coordinating unit, and (4) a collective identity.

The four components key to the success of a movement were evident throughout the American CRM. First, the CRM had the leadership of Dr. King and various other strong leaders who understood the political climate in which they were operating. By working together, the heads of these various SMOs communicated their objectives to one another and presented a united front. In this manner, these SMOs diffused their ideas and innovative ways to combat their oppressors through non-violent means. Second, Dr. King and his contemporaries ensured the news and media stations covered the violent responses from segregationists.⁶⁶ In doing so, it exposed the country at large to the harsh and violently racist practices of the South. This movement also greatly benefited from the involvement of the African American Church (AAC). The church played a vital role in attracting talented leaders to the movement while providing a physical place to organize. More importantly, the church served as a coordinating unit that converted the intent of the larger SMOs into coordinated, non-violent direct action. Lastly, the church provided a salient identity for the vast majority of the movement participants. Practically all the leading figures of the American CRM had close ties to their church. Through the church, they could connect across all classes to mobilize collective action because of a shared identity.

1. The Events

The landmark 1954 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* is widely considered the starting point for the American CRM.⁶⁷ However, the struggle for equal rights has a much longer history.⁶⁸ Since 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has engaged in various legal battles to combat racial inequalities in the U.S. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the NAACP won cases that challenged the issues posed by a racially segregated

⁶⁶ Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement."

⁶⁷ Patterson, *Brown v. Board of Education*.

⁶⁸ Patterson.

society.⁶⁹ While states expanded African American rights in some instances, these expansions remained under *Plessy v. Ferguson*'s "separate but equal" ruling until the Supreme Court overturned it in 1954.⁷⁰

An example of a legal battle that attempted to expand African American rights is the 1935 U.S. Supreme Court order that forced the University of Maryland to accept an African American student on the basis that there were no law schools available to them in the state. Six years later, the U.S. Supreme Court case *Mitchell v. United States* directed the Interstate Commerce Commission to provide African Americans with equitable railway accommodations after the railway ejected the plaintiff from the first-class seating area in Arkansas.⁷¹ Though neither case led to ending segregation, momentum was beginning to build and quickly established legal precedent.

With *Brown*, the court overturned the "separate but equal" ruling with a limited effect. One particular issue with the *Brown* decision was that it did not establish a timeframe for desegregation.⁷² Naturally, states and cities not on board with the decision did not take immediate measures to desegregate. Nevertheless, judge and civil rights activist, Nathaniel R. Brown, notes that the "*Brown* decision has been the locomotive of the train onto which many aggrieved groups and individuals have hitched their claims." In other words, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision to end segregation in schools provided the legal and political momentum necessary for the various movement organizations to mobilize and put an end to segregationist laws. Although the *Brown* decision was specific to the public schools, it provided a legal footing to challenge segregation everywhere.⁷³

⁶⁹ Johnny E. Williams, *African American Religion and the Civil Rights Movement in Arkansas* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2003), chap. 4.

⁷⁰ Williams, chap. 4; *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896).

⁷¹ Williams, *African American Religion and the Civil Rights Movement in Arkansas*, chap. 4.

⁷² Michelle Fine, "The Power of the Brown v. Board of Education Decision: Theorizing Threats to Sustainability.," *American Psychologist* 59, no. 6 (2004): 502–10, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.59.6.502>.

⁷³ Williams, *African American Religion and the Civil Rights Movement in Arkansas*; Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement"; Patterson, *Brown v. Board of Education*; Nathaniel R. Jones, "Civil Rights After Brown: 'The Stormy Road We Trod,'" in *Race in America: The Struggle for Equality*, ed. Herbert Hill and James E. Jones (Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993).

Furthermore, sociologist and social movement scholar Aldon Morris observed that American international politics during the Cold War also contributed to creating a political environment conducive to the American CRM. Morris remarks, “Racism and democracy were opposing ideologies, and Black leaders were aware that America’s treatment of Blacks could be a stumbling block in America’s quest to become a major superpower.”⁷⁴ Failure to address racist practices within the U.S. undermined American legitimacy abroad. Therefore, the national leadership needed to be careful in handling the CRM. The civil rights leadership understood this and capitalized on the political opportunity presented.

The first notable protest following the *Brown* decision was the Montgomery bus boycott led by Martin Luther King Jr in 1955. The boycott intended to end a segregated public transportation system that required African Americans to sit in designated seating areas. The Montgomery bus boycott lasted 13 months and resulted in a U.S. Supreme Court decision that declared it unconstitutional to segregate public buses.⁷⁵ Over the next 12 years, the American CRM movement used non-violent protest techniques to pass three major U.S. legislations: the *American Civil Rights Act of 1964*, the *Voting Rights Act of 1965*, and the *Fair Housing Act of 1968*. While these legislation changes did not end racism or racist practices, these changes provided legal protection for people of color. They paved the way for the society we live in today.

2. Method of Network Diffusion

The American CRM was composed of several well-known SMOs, such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and NAACP, Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), among others. These SMOs leveraged collective action through boycotts, sit-ins, and mass protests to achieve societal changes. While crucial to the success of the American CRM, the SMOs linkage to AAC supports the idea that the church was just as critical to the

⁷⁴ Morris, “A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement.”

⁷⁵ The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, “Montgomery Bus Boycott,” The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, April 26, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/montgomery-bus-boycott>.

success of this movement. The church served as the linchpin connecting the SMOs to the local population, thus enabling mass mobilization.

Before establishing the SCLC in 1957, movement organizations were typically responsible for organizing protests. These organizations, however, often had issues generating sufficient participation in the South. Low participation was primarily due to the political power structure that banned organizations like the NAACP from operating in southern states.⁷⁶ After the success of the Montgomery bus boycotts, civil rights leaders recognized the church's ability to organize and mobilize the African American community in the South. With the creation of the SCLC, the American CRM leaders transitioned the organizational responsibilities to the church.⁷⁷ The following organizational structure for the American CRM then became commonplace:

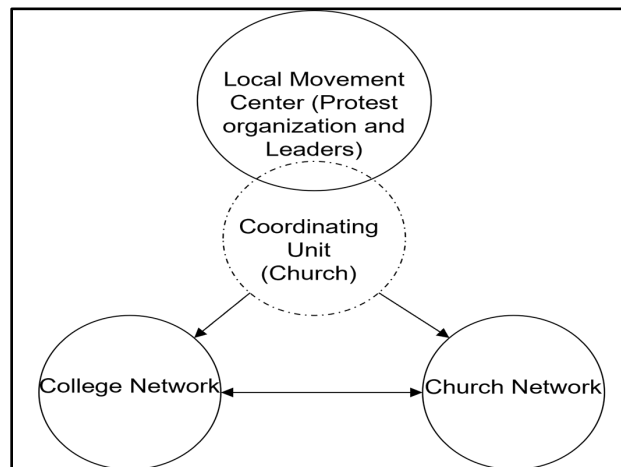


Figure 9. Structure of a Typical Movement Center⁷⁸

Under this structure, the larger SMOs became responsible for reaching their local chapters and informing them of the protest activity to be implemented. In the case of the sit-in movement, the local church, serving as the coordinating unit, used its internal communication network and tap into the college/student network. The college network

⁷⁶ Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement."

⁷⁷ Morris.

⁷⁸ Source: Morris.

was responsible for conducting the actual sit-ins. The church also reached out to the other members of its congregation. Members of the church network supported the college network via monetary donations and legal or medical support, among other things.⁷⁹ Using this model, local indigenous organizations like the church achieved what the larger movement centers could not. It was church-like entities rooted in the community capable of developing and employing innovative tactics that they could then relay to the SMOs for diffusion.

3. Leadership

The American CRM benefited from a multitude of strong leaders from the African American community, most notably Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Renowned sociologist Joseph Gusfield highlights the importance of having a leader who can fulfill two conflicting roles: that of a “mobilizer” and an “articulator.”⁸⁰ The mobilizer is concerned with inspiring participation in the movement, while the articulator is concerned with communicating, mediating, and negotiating the movement’s goals with the larger society.⁸¹ Dr. King was the pinnacle of such a leader. While certainly not the only prominent persona of the American CRM, Dr. King’s demeanor and oratory skills set him apart from his contemporaries.

Morris and Staggenborg note that successful social movements tend to have leaders who come from the more affluent segments of society and have high levels of education.⁸² Dr. King was born to a middle-class family in Atlanta, Georgia. While confronted with the issues caused by segregation all his life, the environment in which he grew up insulated him from the harsher treatment of African Americans typical across the

⁷⁹ Morris.

⁸⁰ Joseph R. Gusfield, “Functional Areas of Leadership in Social Movements,” *The Sociological Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (March 1966): 137–56, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.1966.tb01684.x>; Aldon Morris and Suzanne Staggenborg, “Leadership in Social Movements,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007).

⁸¹ Gusfield, “Functional Areas of Leadership in Social Movements.”

⁸² Morris and Staggenborg, “Leadership in Social Movements.”

South at the time.⁸³ At various points in his life, Dr. King was exposed to relatively desegregated parts of the country, allowing him to interact with and even befriend whites.⁸⁴ Dr. King's exposure to a mostly desegregated society influenced his upbringing. His return to a segregated environment in the South was troublesome and enforced his desire to challenge the status.⁸⁵ While in college, Dr. King was an ardent student of theology, sociology, and philosophy. His willingness to explore the various ideals espoused by Mahatma Gandhi, Walter Rauschenbusch, Georg Wilhelm Hegel, and Reinhold Niebuhr widened his understanding of the practical application of non-violent philosophies.⁸⁶ Dr. King's social status and high level of education made him a prime candidate to lead the American CRM.

Following the arrest of Rosa Parks, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) formed, and the group elected Dr. King as president of the organization.⁸⁷ The newly created MIA launched the opening salvo of the American CRM movement with the Montgomery bus boycott on December 5th, 1955.⁸⁸ Morris notes that non-violent direct action was crucial for the boycott because it shifted the power balance in favor of the activist by removing the segregationist's ability to respond violently without penalty.⁸⁹ The boycott's success was primarily due to Dr. King's understanding of the effectiveness of non-violent protest.

Following the success of the boycotts, the SCLC was formed, with Dr. King again serving as the organization's leader. The SCLC differed from other SMOs by being an overarching organization that linked multiple organizations to facilitate coordination and

⁸³ David L. Lewis, *King: A Biography*, 3rd ed (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013).

⁸⁴ Lewis.

⁸⁵ Lewis.

⁸⁶ Lewis.

⁸⁷ The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, "Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA)," The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, June 5, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/montgomery-improvement-association-mia>.

⁸⁸ The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, "Montgomery Bus Boycott."

⁸⁹ Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement."

diffusion of movement tactics.⁹⁰ Serving as the president of the SCLC afforded Dr. King considerable influence in various organizations, enabling him to keep competing personalities and interests at bay.⁹¹ Furthermore, as the movement progressed, Dr. King quickly became the most well-known civil rights leader of the time.⁹² As a mobilizer, Dr. King's popularity among African Americans enabled him to recruit young African American leaders at the tactical level. In addition, his exceptional capacity as an articulator enabled him to reach out to the white community and its leaders.⁹³ This observation is not to say that Dr. King's SCLC and the other SMOs did not have any disagreements in terms of planned protests or the tactics they employed. However, as mentioned earlier, his leadership was instrumental in dissuading the various organizations from shifting away from civil disobedience.

Before concluding this section, it is essential to note that Dr. King was not the only activist that emphasized the importance of non-violent tactics as a means of resistance. Key to the movement's success was the leadership of James Farmer, Bayard Rustin, James Lawson, and Glen Smiley—all of whom studied Gandhi's movement.⁹⁴ They are just a few of many other American civil rights leaders who understood the value of non-violent resistance. Bayard Rustin worked closely with Dr. King to craft non-violent protests throughout the movement.⁹⁵ While Dr. King received much credit and attention for his contribution to the movement, the American CRM had many strong, moderate leaders at multiple echelons. A lack of multiple strong leaders committed to the

⁹⁰ David J. Garrow, "The Birth of the SCLC, 1957–1959," in *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference*, 1st ed (New York: W. Morrow, 1986); The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, "Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)," The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, July 7, 2017, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/southern-christian-leadership-conference-sclc>.

⁹¹ John A. Kirk, *Martin Luther King Jr.* (London: Routledge, 2015).

⁹² Lewis, *King*; Kirk, *Martin Luther King Jr.*; Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement"; Lea Esther Williams, *Servants of the People: The 1960s Legacy of African American Leadership*, 2nd ed (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

⁹³ Kirk, *Martin Luther King Jr.*

⁹⁴ Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement."

⁹⁵ Garrow, "The Birth of the SCLC, 1957–1959"; Kirk, *Martin Luther King Jr.*; Lewis, *King*.

same cause can have detrimental consequences, as shown in the subsequent case studies. The following section exemplifies the need for leadership at multiple levels.

4. Functional Coordinating Unit

As previously noted, tactical innovation is required to maximize the effectiveness of protests as a political resource. Tactical innovation is best devised and implemented by local community-based indigenous organizations. Morris's analysis of the sit-in movement aligns with this concept. Morris argues that internal organizations, like the church, played an integral role in the sit-in movement and other forms of non-violent direct action.⁹⁶ While larger SMOs like the NAACP, CORE, and SCLC were necessary for diffusing the employed tactics, internal organizations were responsible for event coordination and information diffusion within the local community.

According to Morris, "Nearly all of the direct-action organizations that initiated these early sit-ins were closely associated with the church. The church supplied these organizations not only with an established communications network but also with leaders, organized masses, and a safe environment in which to hold political meetings."⁹⁷ Because of the abundant benefits the AAC provided, SMOs quickly sought out local churches and used them as a coordinating unit for the movement. By appealing to and partnering with movement-oriented churches, the movement organizations gained an organized group of like-minded individuals who possessed organizational and leadership skills essential to mobilizing the community in support of the social movement.

The church then served as the touchpoint for implementing the majority of the protest activities. The SMOs facilitated the diffusion of the protest tactic that would be used and disseminated the protest plans to the churches. The local churches would then assume coordinating responsibility to mobilize people and resources for the demonstration. Thus, the church proved an indispensable resource for the American CRM. The focus of this section is not on the church itself but on the function that the AAC provided. Morris argues that the presence of multiple SMOs can be beneficial to a

⁹⁶ Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement."

⁹⁷ Morris.

movement so long as a cooperative spirit is maintained. Still, the outcome can be disastrous when the objectives and end states differ significantly.⁹⁸ The Northern Ireland CRM we discuss in a later section illustrates this concept. At this point, the leaders must be quick to find or establish a church-like entity for coordination if a movement is to succeed. Because, in this particular case study, many of the participants affiliated very closely with the church, it is only natural that the church also contributed to the identity of the movement.

5. Collective Identity

The works referenced to this point acknowledge that religion, specifically the AAC, played an essential role throughout the American CRM as a coordinating and recruiting entity that enabled collective action. Johnny Williams, a professor of sociology, argues that church culture played more than a mediating role in encouraging activism. Williams makes a case for church culture's vital role in mobilizing support and participation in the American CRM. Williams thoroughly analyzes how Christianity evolved and embedded itself within enslaved African Americans early on. The church, regardless of denomination, was where the African American community could come together and "confront collectively the reality of their earthly oppression."⁹⁹

Collective action was one of the traditions that formed during slavery and carried on within the AAC after slavery ended. "Involvement in church activities nurtured social ties, beliefs, moral ideas, and skills that gave individuals the confidence, social support, and commitment essential for stimulating collective organizing and activism."¹⁰⁰ In his book, Charles Payne quotes Ella Baker, a key leader in various SMOs throughout the American CRM. Miss Baker stated, "I became active in things largely because my mother was active in the field of religion."¹⁰¹ Miss Baker's experience is not unique.

⁹⁸ Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement."

⁹⁹ Williams, *African American Religion and the Civil Rights Movement in Arkansas*.

¹⁰⁰ Williams.

¹⁰¹ Charles M. Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

Like Miss Baker, many American CRM leaders grew up in homes where religion was part of everyday life.

The essence of church culture permeated the African American communities and prompted many to conduct volunteer work within their church. The studies by McAdam cited earlier demonstrated that prior participation in religious or movement organizations is an indicator of future commitment to activist participation. Williams found that volunteer work at church and connections to others involved in movement organizations were essential to mobilizing church members to support the American CRM.¹⁰² McAdam and Williams articulate the same finding from different perspectives. Williams' contribution is that his study provides a deeper understanding of the role of the ACC by highlighting the cultural element that other studies neglect. Religious culture, in this case, provided a salient identity that was nested with the goals of the American CRM and predisposed would-be activists to engage in collective action.

6. Outcome and Analysis

The American Civil Rights Movement came to an end shortly after Dr. King's death and the passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968—though the fight to end racism, and racist practices continued for many years after. This movement is considered a success not only because of the major legislative changes it achieved during its span but also because of its success in implementing those changes. *Brown* legally established that segregation in public schools was illegal, but the Jim Crow society of the time prevented its implementation. It was not until the people organized and mobilized that they achieved real desegregation.

The works reviewed repeatedly stressed the importance of using indigenous organizations to induce collective participation in social movements. The AAC emerged as one of the leading establishments to organize and mobilize the African American community during the American CRM. A religious organization like the AAC is not necessary for a movement to succeed, though it can clearly contribute to success. It is

¹⁰² Williams, *African American Religion and the Civil Rights Movement in Arkansas*.

important, however, to ensure that the functions the church provides are present in any movement.

7. Conclusion

This case study is distinctive from the others in this thesis because of the prominent role that the African American Church played throughout the movement. The religious values espoused in the church facilitated the movement adopting and maintaining a non-violent approach throughout the movement. In addition, because the AAC provided leadership at various echelons, from the lesser-known community leaders to the more well-known SMOs like the SCLC, the leadership maintained the moral standing for choosing a non-violent approach.

Maintaining a non-violent approach is particularly crucial in a democratic society, as shown in the previous chapter. The American CRM leaders strictly adhered to this principle throughout the movement, though not always without receiving pushback from student activists. Student leaders began criticizing Dr. King's non-violent methodology in the later years of the movement.¹⁰³ However, Dr. King's leadership and influence kept most SMOs in line with the non-violent approach until his death in 1968.¹⁰⁴ It is no coincidence that the end of the civil rights movement coincides with the timing of his death. After his assassination, the movement's radical wing took hold, and applied more violent tactics.¹⁰⁵ Though the movement was already losing steam, the use of violence cemented the end of the movement. In Section C of this chapter, we observed a similar relationship in the study of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement. When a movement turns from a non-violent disposition to a violent one, it loses legitimacy for its cause, particularly in democratic societies. When evaluating the best method to influence social movements, one must account for this dynamic if the intent is to orient it toward success.

¹⁰³ Kirk, *Martin Luther King Jr.*

¹⁰⁴ Kirk; Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement"; Lewis, *King*.

¹⁰⁵ Kirk, *Martin Luther King Jr.*; Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement"; Lewis, *King*.

B. EUROMAIDAN MOVEMENT (2013-2014)

The Euromaidan movement (2013-2014) exemplifies a successful movement in an autocratic society. Furthermore, it highlights the potential for achieving unlimited objectives through relatively peaceful means. The protesters' pressure on a primarily Russian-aligned government caused the president to step down and make sweeping reforms to restore rights from a previous constitution. As part of a more extensive exploration of the utility of social movement theory for SOF, this chapter uses the previously mentioned components to analyze the movement. These components and considerations—particularly the ones that are present across various social movements—can be applied to future social movements in support of United States objectives. Furthermore, the movement illuminates the importance of awareness of the unintended consequences of social movements and mobilization.

1. The Events

The Euromaidan movement was a significant flashpoint in Ukrainian history. President Yanukovich initially signaled an intention to commit Ukraine to a more significant association with the European Union (EU) but then pivoted, expressing interest in membership in the recently formed Eurasian Economic Institution.¹⁰⁶ The sudden shift in policy signified to many Ukrainians and the world that Yanukovich desired to keep Ukraine in the Russian orbit of influence. Yanukovich's actions directly contradicted polls that demonstrated that most Ukrainians supported closer ties with the EU.¹⁰⁷

On the 24th of November 2013, primarily non-violent protests began in the streets of Kyiv. A series of missteps by the government and police further exacerbated the situation. Violence escalated between protestors and police, with the government also

¹⁰⁶ David Marples et al., *Ukraine's Euromaidan: Analyses of a Civil Revolution* (New York, United States: Ibidem Verlag, 2015), 9, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nps/detail.action?docID=1977200>.

¹⁰⁷ Maria Chayinska, Anca Minescu, and Craig McGarty, "We Fight for a Better Future for Our Country: Understanding the Ukrainian Euromaidan Movement as the Emergence of a Social Competition Strategy," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 58, no. 1 (January 2019): 45–65, <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12283>.

bringing paramilitary organizations and personnel to disrupt the protests through heavy-handed techniques.¹⁰⁸ The composition of the protestors shifted as well. The protests started with Ukrainians in their early twenties but became far more composed of established Ukrainians in their thirties and forties.¹⁰⁹ The majority of these protestors had full-time jobs and some level of education.¹¹⁰ The shift in protest composition demonstrated a more comprehensive mobilization effort and an enhanced level of commitment from individuals with more to lose. The violence continued to escalate from November 2013 to February 2014.¹¹¹ The shift in violence also contributed to a shift in goals. This protest was no longer simply about closer ties to the E.U. It was now a referendum on the Yanukovich-led government, corruption, and human rights issues that existed.¹¹² A change was critical at this juncture.

The EU and U.S. assisted in negotiating a peaceful settlement to the violence. EU and U.S. mediation efforts, stipulating Yanukovich remain in power, failed to satisfy protest leaders.¹¹³ Ultimately, the Ukrainian Special Police, Berkut, fired on the protestors, killing more than 100.¹¹⁴ Yanukovich and his cabinet fled, and Ukraine established a new government shortly thereafter. These events were followed by further conflict, including the Russian annexation of Crimea and the establishment of contested regions in Donetsk and Luhansk, which remain in dispute today. Ukraine has been a longtime symbol of the post-Soviet inability to control its former holdings. This event presented the necessary pretext to seize this territory and right a perceived wrong.¹¹⁵ The violence also provided Russia an excuse to inject itself into Ukrainian politics by

¹⁰⁸ Marples et al., *Ukraine's Euromaidan*, 11.

¹⁰⁹ Marples et al., 11.

¹¹⁰ Olga Zelinska, "Ukrainian Euromaidan Protest: Dynamics, Causes, and Aftermath," *Sociology Compass* 11, no. 9 (September 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12502>.

¹¹¹ Marples et al., *Ukraine's Euromaidan*, 11–12.

¹¹² Zelinska, "Ukrainian Euromaidan Protest."

¹¹³ Marples et al., *Ukraine's Euromaidan*, 12.

¹¹⁴ Marples et al., 14.

¹¹⁵ Fyodor Lukyanov, "Putin's Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 3 (June 2016): 30–37, <http://libproxy.nps.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=114537278&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

claiming their involvement to be in support of ethnic Russians and Russian-aligned government institutions in Eastern Ukraine.

Additionally, these events provided an opportunity to exercise their cyber and irregular warfare capabilities in a military capacity under the guise of an emergency.¹¹⁶ The key takeaway in this analysis is that the potential reaction of an adversary must factor into planning for any operation. Sophisticated opponents that the U.S. opposes on the global stage will not simply cede their interests to social movements without a counterreaction or retaliation.

Furthermore, in late February of 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine under the pretext of ridding the country of Nazis and protecting Russian citizens. As of this thesis's publication date, the Ukrainian conflict with Russia remains ongoing. For this study, the events in 2013 and 2014 are the primary focus, although the consequences receive a brief discussion. Despite the unintended consequences, the social movement ultimately achieved its goal. The following sections examine this success in relation to the four identified categories that are key to achieving success in a social movement.

2. Method of Network Diffusion

SMT suggests several preexisting issues are necessary for mobilization. These conditions fall into four broad categories: political, economic, social, or informational.¹¹⁷ In this case, significant economic and political reasons fueled the uprising. Although it started as a small movement in November of 2013, the Euromaidan protests quickly swelled with enthusiasm and vigor. This surge in support was partly due to the government's harsh countermeasures to deter and disrupt the demonstrations, but economic deprivation and human rights issues were equally important. As Ukraine moved towards a closer alliance with the European Union, leaders created expectations of more economic independence from Russia and enhanced prospects for prosperity. As the

¹¹⁶ Brandon Valeriano, Benjamin M. Jensen, and Ryan C. Maness, *Cyber Strategy: The Evolving Character of Power and Coercion* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 121.

¹¹⁷ Lee, "Resistance Dynamics and Social Movement Theory," n. Some or all of these conditions may exist. It is not limited to just one.

revolution evolved, human rights, political reform, and corruption arose as other major uniting issues that caused social mobilization.¹¹⁸ There are indications that although the EU association agreement was the start of the issue, there was a history of deep-seated existing grievances ignited because of this act.¹¹⁹

Social movements take time to evolve and grow. The movements did not immediately gain traction. The initial 1,000 protestors in the first several days did not significantly impact the government's operations and dissipated rather quickly. However, they achieved an ideological foothold that swelled over the next several months. Government miscalculations of response can cause these movements to get out of control and to counter-react. Violent repression of social movements can cause them to receive public sympathy, support, and legitimacy that they would not have otherwise gained.¹²⁰ Additionally, some of these grievances, particularly those related to human rights, festered beneath the surface since Yanukovich canceled certain constitutional protections early in his tenure, unlocking significant emotional investment into furthering the movement.¹²¹

Specific to network diffusion, it was clear that the ideas of the protest were spreading quickly. At its peak, over 800,000 protestors participated in Kyiv, and several other cities also saw substantial demonstrations. The movement called for many people to mobilize.¹²² With each attempt at repression, the network only continued to grow. Olga Onuch, a social movement researcher that conducted on-the-ground surveys during the protests, identified four distinct phases or waves of repression.¹²³ These phases were largely time and government-action-based, generally signaled by an increased intensity of

¹¹⁸ Zelinska, "Ukrainian Euromaidan Protest."

¹¹⁹ Zelinska.

¹²⁰ Gregory M. Maney, "The Paradox of Reform: The Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland," in *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change*, ed. Sharon Erickson Nepstad and Lester R. Kurtz (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2012), 3–26, [https://doi.org/10.1108/S0163-786X\(2012\)0000034005](https://doi.org/10.1108/S0163-786X(2012)0000034005).

¹²¹ Olga Onuch, "The Maidan and Beyond: Who Were the Protesters?," *Journal of Democracy* 25, no. 3 (July 2014): 44–51, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2014.0045>.

¹²² Olga Onuch, "EuroMaidan Protests in Ukraine: Social Media Versus Social Networks," *Problems of Post-Communism* 62, no. 4 (June 2015): 217–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2015.1037676>.

¹²³ Onuch.

pressure on the protesters. After each phase, the networks continued to grow through the fourth phase, which outlawed the protests altogether while also creating the diffusion from Kyiv to other cities in the south and east of Ukraine.¹²⁴

The network, built slowly over time, was initially led by university students and civic groups getting the word out.¹²⁵ According to on-ground surveys, many individuals who initially participated had prior experience with protests and civil activism.¹²⁶ As more civic groups and political operatives got involved, they released press releases encouraging potential participants to join the movement. This step is what really started to grow the movement.¹²⁷ According to Onuch's surveys, approximately 75% of the protestors were unaffiliated with any student organizations or protest groups after this point. More key to their decision to join was their friends' and family's willingness to participate in activism with them.¹²⁸ This willingness to join in collective activism with others they knew is a common finding in social movement research. Personal contact with someone active in the movement is a compelling motivating factor.¹²⁹ Multiple studies show that many successful social movements recruit members through what is sometimes referred to as kith-and-kin networks.¹³⁰ In layperson's terms, this means family or friends and acquaintances. As the movement grows, so does the depth and breadth of the network from which to recruit.

3. Leadership

Initially, the protests started with few firmly articulated goals. Much of this was the lack of solid political leadership to guide the movement. It was clear that tremendous dissatisfaction existed regarding the Yanukovych government, but it was unclear what it would take to end the protests. General goals such as reducing corruption in the

¹²⁴ Onuch.

¹²⁵ Onuch.

¹²⁶ Onuch.

¹²⁷ Onuch.

¹²⁸ Onuch.

¹²⁹ McAdam, "Recruitment to High-Risk Activism."

¹³⁰ Everton, *Networks and Religion*, 165.

Yanukovich family and amongst the oligarchs are certainly worthy ambitions. However, those are difficult to measure and even harder to enforce with any certainty. They are not tangible goals that are up for discussion at a negotiating table.

Early in the protests, it was challenging to establish a clear and cohesive leadership structure. The movement appeared to be led by students inspired by Yanukovich's refusal to align more closely with the EU. As previously mentioned, the violent crackdowns by the Berkut special forces of the government inspired more and more activists to join the movement. These crackdowns were by far the most brutal the public had seen in Ukraine and ignited standoffs throughout the square.¹³¹ With a lack of a clear leadership structure and a situation that was rapidly spiraling out of control, multiple powerful opposition political operatives stepped in to take a more active role in the situation.¹³² These individuals included Arseny Yatsenyuk, an opposition leader of Ukraine's second-largest political party, Vitaly Klitschko, leader of the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reforms (UDAR), and Oleh Tyahnybok, leader of Svoboda (which translates to Freedom in English).¹³³ Peter Poroshenko, a local media owner, and both Yulia Tymoshenko and Yuri Lutsenko of the previous administration, both of whom had done jail time under Yanukovich, later joined the movement.¹³⁴

The opposition leadership made a significant difference by understanding the challenges presented by inexact objectives. The leadership of the multiple organizations agreed on and clearly laid out the short and long-term goals. In the short term, the Berkut forces were to cease operations, and the minister of the interior was to resign. In the long term, the opposition wanted to agreement with the EU signed, parliament dissolved, and

¹³¹ Nadia Diuk, "Euromaidan: Ukraine's Self-Organizing Revolution," *World Affairs* 176, no. 6 (April 2014): 9–16, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43555086>.

¹³² Diuk.

¹³³ Sarah Dougherty, "Who's Who: These Are the Key Figures and Groups in Ukraine's Political Crisis," *The World*, February 21, 2014, <https://theworld.org/stories/2014-02-21/who-s-who-these-are-key-figures-and-groups-ukraine-s-political-crisis>.

¹³⁴ Diuk, "Euromaidan."

the resignation of Yanukovych.¹³⁵ The statement of these goals created an advantageous bargaining position and gave the protestors a set of firm, clear goals to strive for.

In other social movements that have failed, often one of the major issues is that the leadership did not clearly communicate the goals. The formulation of clear goals provides a pathway for both negotiation and mobilization.¹³⁶ The participants need to know what they are sacrificing their time and, more importantly, their physical well-being for. In order to justify the sacrifice, the leadership must have clear objectives that they appropriately prioritize to gain concessions and negotiate for favorable outcomes.

In this specific case, the involvement of so many high-level political operatives, many of whom the Yanukovych administration had personally wronged, gave tremendous credibility and direction to the movement. Their resources and organizational leadership skills provided valuable expertise to the growing number of protestors. These leaders provided visibility to the movement and frequently interacted with the protestors.¹³⁷ The leadership's talents are apparent in the success of the coordinating unit discussed in the next section.

4. Functional Coordinating Unit

The protests at Independence Square quickly swelled to over 800,000 protestors within a few short weeks. It is a testament to the potency of the political cause and the network diffusion it took to achieve such high levels of participation. Once the protestors were present, coordinating and directing their efforts was of critical importance. Coordination often took place between representatives of the political parties and the multitude of civic groups represented within the city.¹³⁸

The events on the square were both informative and engaging. The protestors treated some days as almost festivities. Bands played, multiple denominational leaders said prayers, and activists and scholars delivered speeches. The media even published a

¹³⁵ Diuk.

¹³⁶ Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, 81–82.

¹³⁷ Diuk, "Euromaidan."

¹³⁸ Diuk.

twice-daily newspaper to provide information to the more permanent protestors on the square.¹³⁹ Many middle-class citizens who could not participate full-time cooked and provided hot beverages for the protestors that remained on a more permanent basis.¹⁴⁰

Unlike the other movements analyzed in this study, this movement purposely filtered out provocative individuals from participating in protests. They conducted this screening through controlled access points to the protest areas.¹⁴¹ Sharp asserts that limiting or eliminating violence completely against repressive regimes ensures that they cannot engage in ways in which the state or government has the advantage: the monopoly on violence.¹⁴² This idea is just one of many examples of the coordination between the political leadership and social movement organizations on the ground.¹⁴³ These coordination efforts allowed the groups to take advantage of the beatings and retaliation levied by the government while minimizing the provocation on their side. Other cases our team studied demonstrate that splits within social movements are a common occurrence. Often, more moderate and more extreme members of the movement will splinter based on a difference in the method of protest. The radical members may favor more violent methods or attempts to humiliate the government. The moderates will attempt to provoke but do so through methods that will make any overreaction by the government seem unjustified.

This level of organization and awareness, combined with a self-policing mentality, was critical to the movement's success. By their very nature, protest movements are chaotic events. It is impossible to control every protestor's actions but attempting to moderate the most extreme of the participants lends more credibility to the protest action. Controlling them makes the protestors appear to be reasonable, and any violent government action against them appears to be a violation of their fundamental

¹³⁹ Diuk.

¹⁴⁰ Diuk.

¹⁴¹ Diuk.

¹⁴² Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, 49–49.

¹⁴³ Onuch, "EuroMaidan Protests in Ukraine."

human rights. This technique is not new; it was extensively used in the American CRM and other movements to induce a disproportionate response.

5. Collective Identity

The initial protests garnered very little support or, of equal importance, attention. However, pro-government forces' brutal beating of students and journalists in late November shifted the focus to not just an economic issue but one of the human rights and expression. As the Euromaidan protests and goals evolved, so too did the ability to organize effectively.¹⁴⁴ This movement is interesting because it initially did not revolve around an elite group of personalities leading it.¹⁴⁵ At its surface, the beginning of this movement appeared to be grassroots. This grassroots nature indicated some deeply seated dissatisfaction with the current government that the political operatives were later able to convert into concrete goals for the movement.

The protestors consisted of three relatively broad categories. These categories were youth and students, workers and voters, and grandparents and retirees. Onuch sometimes refers to these groups as post-Soviet people, the professional group, and the guardians.¹⁴⁶ For a movement to truly succeed, it needs all these components to work in concert. Each brings a unique component vital to the organization's success. The students bring youth and energy; they are almost the foot soldiers of a movement, with the fortitude to endure the day-to-day struggles. These students were globally connected and technologically intelligent. They were familiar with the concepts of genuine democracy and fair governance. The workers and voters contributed economic and political power. Finally, the elders, like in any society, cared for and nurtured the younger members. Onuch points out that they held institutional knowledge of past repressive regimes in this specific instance and would generally be eager to disassociate themselves from Russia.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Onuch.

¹⁴⁵ Onuch, "The Maidan and Beyond: Who Were the Protesters?"

¹⁴⁶ Onuch, "EuroMaidan Protests in Ukraine."

¹⁴⁷ Onuch.

Together, these three segments of society created a powerful identity around which the movement coalesced. As a general rule of thumb, elders want to see a better life for their children and grandchildren. This hope is certainly not a hard standard to achieve in a post-Soviet country such as Ukraine. The rampant nepotism and corruption directly affected most of the working class. The Yanukovich government created major issues to rally around, whether limiting opportunities for growth, unfair business practices, or inability to overcome the corrupt bureaucracy. The students, the most politically engaged of the groups, wanted a world where they did not need to struggle in the way that their predecessors did. These goals created a unique confluence of three groups with a singular vision for a very different Ukraine.

6. Outcome and Analysis

Ultimately, all of the criteria, network diffusion, coordinating unit, leadership, and collective identity, were present and successfully implemented. Although some movements may not be particularly enthusiastic about the involvement of established political operatives, they can bring a certain level of experience and authority to the process. Unique, in this case, was the number of high-profile political operatives that had personally suffered at the hands of the government. Their involvement gave them credibility and legitimacy that some might not find.

Grievances must be anchored in legitimate concerns. In this case, the economic and human rights issues presented during the protests certainly have the legitimacy required to mobilize a movement. The other question to consider if a foreign government intends to support a movement is the perceived legitimacy of the movement. The perceived legitimacy of a movement itself is not necessarily of concern regarding the effectiveness of the movement. Instead, the legitimacy of a movement is of primary concern if the U.S. is attempting to prop up or support the movement to achieve its own objectives. If that were to become public knowledge, the goals of the movement would be of utmost importance. In this specific case study, the pursuit of economic association with the EU, reduction in corruption, and human rights abuses are worthy causes that the U.S. would have been able to support politically.

The movement's goals are critical to discuss since, particularly in the context of military assistance, it affects the force package required. In this case, the involvement of opposition political leaders allowed the new government to establish itself and hold elections in a relatively short timeline. In movements with less experience with governance, a SOF civil affairs element may be a key consideration to assist.

7. Conclusion

Ultimately, this movement was an impressive success. No movement is perfect, but the leaders of Euromaidan secured a favorable outcome with fairly minimal bloodshed against a clearly violent and repressive government. They captured the attention of the world and the hearts of most ethnic Ukrainians. The four categories of our theory of success were sufficiently present; of particular note was the relative unity of three converging collective identities. The leadership articulated clear goals, albeit a little after the start of open protests and hostilities. Most of the criticism of this movement is the failure to foresee the potential for hostile actions after the fall of the prior government.

C. THE NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT (1967-1972)

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement (CRM) (1967-1972) is of particular interest for this study on the utility of social movements in irregular warfare because it represents a failed movement within a democratic-like state. McAdam and Tarrow contend that historically, democratic states are more tolerant of social movements and respond to them in less repressive ways.¹⁴⁸ Stormont's violent response to the reformative demands of the Northern Ireland CRM does not align with McAdam and Tarrow's notion that democratic states are more tolerant than authoritarian governments. Much like the American CRM, the Northern Ireland CRM is a case where a minority within a democratic nation is discriminated against and met with heavy resistance from the government. However, unlike its American counterpart, the movement in Northern Ireland was unable to achieve its objectives. Furthermore, as the Northern Ireland CRM

¹⁴⁸ McAdam and Tarrow, "The Political Context of Social Movements," 23.

progressed, it quickly transformed from a movement looking for civil rights reform to an insurgent movement seeking an independent and unified Ireland.

This chapter demonstrates that a functional coordinating unit, leadership, collective identity, and network diffusion were intermittently present during the Northern Ireland CRM. As an additional layer of analysis, it also evaluates the effects of employing violent versus non-violent tactics on the movement, the important role of trust, and how these factors contributed to the eventual transition from a reformist movement with limited objectives to an insurgent movement with maximalist objectives.

1. The Events

The history of the Northern Ireland CRM is quite extensive. The establishment of Northern Ireland by the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 created a division in Ireland that fueled armed conflicts between the minority Catholic and the majority Protestant population.¹⁴⁹ The religious largely resembled the divisions between the Nationalists, who sought a unified Ireland, and the Unionists, who wished to remain part of the United Kingdom (UK). This “us versus them” mentality paved the way for conflict from 1920 through 1998. The period from 1967 to 1972, however, is distinguished by the shift in mentality from nationalist to reformist demands. The nationalist’s aim was a unified Ireland, free from British rule. The reformist only wanted policy changes to improve the quality of life for all, not just the Catholic population. Furthermore, at the onset, the Northern Ireland CRM sought to achieve its objectives by employing non-violent civil disobedience to challenge the system.

The political environment began to shift in the early 1960s. In her Ph.D. dissertation, Irish historian Annie Berry notes that the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland sensed the need to adjust policies to better align with the changing Western world view that was beginning to place a higher value on equality for all.¹⁵⁰ According to McAdam and Tarrow six properties facilitate political opportunity: “(1) multiplicity of independent

¹⁴⁹ Tommy McKearney, *The Provisional IRA: From Insurrection to Parliament* (Pluto Press, 2011), chap. Introduction, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt183p4sb>.

¹⁵⁰ Annie Berry, “Sectarian Violence and the People’s Democracy 1968–1972” (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 2011), <https://ir.vanderbilt.edu/handle/1803/4847>.

centers of power within the regime; (2) its openness to new actors and movements; (3) the instability of current political alignments; (4) the availability of influential allies or supporters; (5) the extent to which the regime suppresses or facilitates collective claims; and (6) changes in these properties.”¹⁵¹ While not all properties are present in this movement, the shift in the political environment and the changing views from nationalist to reformist ideals created space for a new type of movement to emerge. The Northern Ireland CRM leadership likely perceived the evolving political environment as an opportunity to mobilize collective action to protest government discrimination.

In January 1967, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was founded. NICRA united the various other movement organizations that had formed during this time.¹⁵² NICRA’s original leadership was composed of members from 12 separate organizations. NICRA’s stated objectives were as follows:

- To defend the basic freedoms of all citizens.
- To protect the rights of the individual.
- To highlight all possible abuses of power.
- To demand guarantees for freedom of speech, assembly, and association.
- To inform the public of their lawful rights.¹⁵³

These objectives were intentionally broad enough to encompass all Northern Irish regardless of religious or political affiliation. The intent was to highlight that Northern Ireland’s policies discriminated against the Catholic population and the Protestant working class. With the approval of the NICRA constitution in April 1967, the Northern Ireland CRM was officially underway.¹⁵⁴

The Northern Ireland CRM slowly picked up steam after the founding of NICRA. However, frustrations within the movement started to build as it failed to achieve much,

¹⁵¹ McAdam and Tarrow, “The Political Context of Social Movements,” 21.

¹⁵² Berry, “Sectarian Violence and the People’s Democracy 1968–1972.”

¹⁵³ “*We Shall Overcome*”: *The History of the Struggle for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland 1968–1978* (Emporium, Pa.: Stella Matutina Publishing, 1997), <https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/crights/nicra/nicra78.htm>.

¹⁵⁴ Bob Purdie, *Politics in the Streets: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1990), <https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/crights/purdie/index.html>.

and the government routinely banned planned marches by civil rights activists. This suppression eventually led NICRA and its affiliated movement organizations to mobilize in defiance. The first march took place in August 1968. The protest was largely ineffective because local law enforcement provided little protection to the protestors when they encountered counter-protesters along the march route.¹⁵⁵ Though not particularly effective, the protestors remained committed to non-violence despite the protestant counter-protestors efforts to draw out a violent response.¹⁵⁶ The second march took place in Derry in October 1968, which the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) brutally repressed. The October march would prove to be an early turning point in the movement because the press documented the brutal response from the RUC towards a peaceful demonstration, which happened in the presence of UK Ministers of Parliament.¹⁵⁷ The relationship between an excessively repressive response and a subsequent surge in popular support for a movement is what Gregory Maney, a distinguished professor in the field of non-violent social change, calls the paradox of repression.¹⁵⁸

The march in Derry gave the Northern Ireland CRM a much-needed boost in support that enabled it to grow and pressure the government to propose reform changes rapidly. Conversely, the rapid influx of movement followers would later create some problems. With the movement's growth came more radical voices who established themselves under the umbrella of civil rights. Nevertheless, the movement continued to grow, activist participation at subsequent marches increased, and the NIA announced a series of reforms by mid-November.¹⁵⁹ Along with the proposed reforms, the NIA requested the Northern Ireland CRM halt future protests to allow time to diffuse the situation. NICRA and the Derry Citizens Action Committee (DCAC) agreed, but other

¹⁵⁵ *We Shall Overcome*.

¹⁵⁶ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, chap. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association.

¹⁵⁷ *We Shall Overcome*; Maney, "The Paradox of Reform."

¹⁵⁸ Maney, "The Paradox of Reform."

¹⁵⁹ Maney, 12–13.

organizations like the People’s Democracy (PD) refused.¹⁶⁰ Moving into 1969, NICRA maintained its position and did not endorse further protest but could not effectively dissuade other organizations from complying. Furthermore, marches organized by the PD often turned into violent struggles between the protesters, counter-protesters, and law enforcement.¹⁶¹ These unsanctioned marches and the sudden shift in tactics precipitated issues within the movement, such as the PD’s desire to move away from peaceful protests and respond to counter-protestors with violence.

Following the PD-led “Long March” from Belfast to Derry in January 1969, the Northern Ireland CRM entered a period of internal division that would result in the more moderate voices exiting the movement. As protests continued and violence escalated, leaders from NICRA and other movement organizations either resigned their posts or refused to participate in planned marches.¹⁶² With the moderate voices gone, there was little to restrain the use of violence in response to counter-protests or the RUC. As a result, hostilities continued throughout the year, with protests and counter-protests becoming more violent.

A second turning point came in August 1969 with the “Battle of Bogside.” The annual Protestant-led march near the Bogside of Derry triggered a three-day riot between the Catholic and Protestant communities.¹⁶³ During this time, the RUC could not reestablish order in the area. Eventually, the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, James-Chichester-Clark, requested British troops to assist in securing the area.¹⁶⁴ From this point on, it became clear that the civil rights movement was no longer centered on civil rights for all and had morphed into a sectarian issue.

¹⁶⁰ Maney, “The Paradox of Reform”; Landon E. Hancock, “We Shall Not Overcome: Divided Identity and the Failure of NICRA 1968,” *Ethnopolitics* 13, no. 5 (October 2014): 501–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449057.2014.912448>; *We Shall Overcome*; Berry, “Sectarian Violence and the People’s Democracy 1968–1972,” 39.

¹⁶¹ Hancock, “We Shall Not Overcome”; *We Shall Overcome*.

¹⁶² Maney, “The Paradox of Reform,” 13–14.

¹⁶³ Russell Stetler, *The Battle of Bogside: The Politics of Violence in Northern Ireland* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1970), <https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/battlebogside/stetler/stetler70.htm>.

¹⁶⁴ Stetler.

Due to these events, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) became involved and began to operate against the British and loyalist forces.¹⁶⁵ “Bloody Sunday,” which took place in January 1972, would bring an informal end to the Northern Ireland CRM. British troops fired on an unarmed civilian demonstration, resulting in 13 dead. While NICRA and other social movement organizations continued to advocate for civil rights, the movement as a civil rights campaign came to an end.¹⁶⁶

The following sections examine the movement’s effectiveness in four key areas: network diffusion, leadership, a functional coordinating unit, and collective identity. While the movement may be considered a failure, there are areas where it did well or could have been more effective under different circumstances. On the surface, it may appear that the switch from a non-violent to a violent movement led to the movement’s demise. While violent tactics certainly contributed to its failure, a closer examination reveals that the Northern Ireland CRM had organizational, leadership, and identity issues that influenced the conduct of the civil rights campaign.

2. Method of Network Diffusion

Assessing the Northern Ireland CRM’s effectiveness is challenging because very little literature focuses on the movement’s recruitment and information diffusion aspects. What can be ascertained is that, at least for the PD, the recruitment happened at the university because the organization was primarily composed of students from the Queen’s University of Belfast.¹⁶⁷ Additionally, sources indicate that the structure of the PD did not maintain a list of attendees, and everyone was welcome to come and go as they pleased. Moreover, the PD did not have a membership process or constitution; anyone present at a PD meeting was entitled to vote.¹⁶⁸ While this structure complicates the ability to analyze network diffusion, participation at PD meetings makes it evident that the organization had some mechanism to get the word out to the student body.

¹⁶⁵ McKearney, *The Provisional IRA*, chap. Introduction; Hancock, “We Shall Not Overcome.”

¹⁶⁶ Hancock, “We Shall Not Overcome.”

¹⁶⁷ Berry, “Sectarian Violence and the People’s Democracy 1968–1972,” 1.

¹⁶⁸ Berry, 36.

Additional sources indicate that, initially, NICRA got participants to attend the marches but may not have effectively communicated the events' purpose. For example, Bernadette Devlin, a leader within the PD, remarks, "Most of the people ... hadn't really thought about civil rights; they had come with a sort of friendly curiosity, to hear something."¹⁶⁹ Devlin's comments give the impression that while some participants may have been there to protest for civil rights, others came to see what the march was about. This implies that a diffusion method existed, but the extent and effectiveness remain in question.

Fred Heatley, treasurer for NICRA, makes it clear that NICRA, the PD, DCAC, and several other movement organizations met on several occasions to discuss the way ahead for the movement.¹⁷⁰ While Heatley does not provide information on how the leaders of the SMOs coordinated the meeting itself, the fact that the heads of these organizations were together and discussing dates for future marches provides sufficient evidence to establish that diffusion of information and ideas was taking place. The exchange of information and ideas among the movement's leadership is essential for success. The leadership, however, must be in unison and present a united front, which was not the case in this movement. The following section examines the challenges in the leadership component of the movement.

3. Leadership

The leadership aspect of this case study is interesting because it emphasizes how the lack of sustained leadership can undermine a movement and the importance of establishing a clear strategy. Landon Hancock, professor of peace and conflict studies, states, "scholars of non-violence have emphasized the necessity for strategic thinking and organization for non-violent movements, most especially the need for these movements to maintain organization and cohesion in the face of the expected violent repression by forces of the state or other oppressor."¹⁷¹ In the opening stages of the Northern Ireland

¹⁶⁹ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, chap. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association.

¹⁷⁰ Fred Heatley, "The NICRA Split," *Fortnight (Belfast, Northern Ireland)*, 1974.

¹⁷¹ Hancock, "We Shall Not Overcome," 503.

CRM, NICRA and the associated organizations enjoyed the benefits of more moderate leaders. These moderate leaders established limited reform objectives and understood that for a minority movement to succeed, it needed to appeal to the working-class society and not make it a sectarian issue.¹⁷² To accomplish this, they had to control the narrative and not appear as aggressors. Unfortunately, internal divisions and political opportunities interfered with the leadership structure of the movement.

The leadership of the Northern Ireland CRM began to fail following the moratoria on marches announced by NICRA and the DCAC in December of 1968. The more radical organizations opposed the decision to halt the marches and give the government a chance to implement the reforms announced the previous month. Fred Heatly, treasurer for NICRA, describes the events that led to his and three other executive committee members' resignations. Though impulsive, the cause for their resignation lay in the continued push for a march in an area that was sure to produce a violent outcome by PD members of NICRA.¹⁷³ To complicate matters further, John Hume and Ivan Cooper, two moderate and influential leaders within the DCAC, resigned after being elected to parliament.¹⁷⁴ The exiting of prominent movement leaders created favorable conditions for the movement's more radical and violent voices. Sharp warns against the employment of violence in these situations, "By placing confidence in violent means, one has chosen the very type of struggle with which the oppressors nearly always have the superiority."¹⁷⁵ Without moderate voices to steer the movement away from violent confrontations, the movement lost sight of the vision of civil rights for all and turned its attention towards political and religious divides.

Although intended to be a non-sectarian movement, the objectives' vagueness made them challenging to achieve. Furthermore, unclear objectives complicated the development of a strategy. Sharp stresses the importance of developing a strategy to

¹⁷² Graham Ellison and Greg Martin, "Policing, Collective Action and Social Movement Theory: The Case of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Campaign," *The British Journal of Sociology* 51, no. 4 (December 2000): 681–99, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071310020015325>.

¹⁷³ Heatly, "The NICRA Split"; Purdie, *Politics in the Streets; We Shall Overcome*.

¹⁷⁴ Maney, "The Paradox of Reform."

¹⁷⁵ Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, chap. 1.

achieve objectives.¹⁷⁶ Success in a movement requires the leadership to develop objectives and strategies to achieve them. However, if the objectives are not well defined, the strategy will not support it. Just as leadership is necessary to direct the movement, a coordinating mechanism is also required for success, especially when various organizations are involved.

4. Functional Coordinating Unit

As noted earlier in this chapter, the Northern Ireland CRM bears a resemblance to the American CRM. The American CRM's use of non-violent tactics to challenge social injustices influenced the Northern Ireland CRM's initial push to use civil disobedience in their fight for equality.¹⁷⁷ Unfortunately for the Irish, the Northern Ireland CRM did not replicate the organizational structure that enabled the American CRM to succeed. The American CRM case study discussed that large SMOs like the SCLC delegated event coordination responsibilities to African American churches.¹⁷⁸ The churches would then coordinate events with smaller SMOs on behalf of the larger organizations. In the case of the Northern Ireland CRM, the lead SMO, NICRA, served as the coordinating unit for the movement.

NICRA formed to bring together several smaller civil rights organizations. The original leadership of NICRA was composed of 13 members from 12 separate organizations that included: the Draughtsmen and Allied Trades Association and Communist Party, Campaign for Social Justice, Communist Party, Wolfe Tone Society, Belfast Trades Council, Republican Clubs, Liberal Party, National Democratic Party, Republican Labour Party, Ardoyne Tenants Association, and the Northern Ireland Labour Party.¹⁷⁹ By 1968, NICRA became one of the more prominent movement organizations and served to coordinate efforts for the CRM.¹⁸⁰ On paper, NICRA appears to be a well-

¹⁷⁶ Sharp, chap. 6.

¹⁷⁷ Hancock, "We Shall Not Overcome," 512.

¹⁷⁸ Morris, "Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement."

¹⁷⁹ *We Shall Overcome*.

¹⁸⁰ Hancock, "We Shall Not Overcome," 501.

established organization; it had a constitution, official leadership, a treasurer to administer its finances, and a list of stated movement objectives.

NICRA appeared to function as a coordinating unit early in the movement. NICRA noticed that smaller organizations began to take to the streets to protest, and though reluctant at first, by the summer of 1968, they acknowledged the need for direct action. As a result, NICRA coordinated its first sponsored march for August 1968. Though the march was not particularly effective at gaining any attention to promote their objectives, it displayed NICRA's ability to coordinate events and execute a peaceful demonstration. The events that followed the October 5th march in Derry propelled NICRA as the more influential voice of the CRM.¹⁸¹ However, it is important to note that the October 5th march was conceived by the Derry Housing Association Committee (DHCA). Unbeknownst to the NICRA leadership, the DHCA planned the route for the march with the intent of drawing a violent response from the RUC or the Protestant population.¹⁸² While a violent confrontation was not a NICRA objective, the aftermath of the march in Derry greatly benefitted the movement. The relationship between small SMO and the parent organization mirrors the relationship between the African American church and the SCLC during the American CRM. The smaller SMO developed innovative ways to protest and communicated the protest tactic to the larger organization, which then coordinated for more extensive mobilization.

As the coordinating unit, NICRA displayed early signs of success; however, as the movement progressed and more organizations joined, its effectiveness dissipated. The vagueness of the objectives NICRA established in its constitution enabled organizations with more finite purposes to join under the larger umbrella provided by NICRA without necessarily aligning with NICRA values. Bob Purdie notes that from the beginning, some members of NICRA envisioned civil rights as a steppingstone to an eventual unified

¹⁸¹ *We Shall Overcome*; Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, chap. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association.

¹⁸² Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, chap. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association; Hancock, "We Shall Not Overcome," 505.

Ireland.¹⁸³ As the movement progressed and the government proposed certain concessions, NICRA and its more moderate leaders called for a temporary halt to protest activities. Once marches resumed, they continued to advocate for non-violent protests. Unfortunately, the affiliated movement organizations were not on board with a pause in demonstrations, and as violence escalated, non-violent action became increasingly less appealing.¹⁸⁴ NICRA's weak structure became exposed, and the movement began to splinter.

The PD was the Queen's University of Belfast student-led organization formed in the aftermath of the October Derry march.¹⁸⁵ While initially in line with NICRA's stated objectives, the PD took a more aggressive approach to the movement. It defied the NICRA and DCAC pause on protest activities and initiated a march in January 1969 that resulted in a violent clash with the RUC and Protestant counter-protesters.¹⁸⁶ The march greatly exacerbated sectarian resentment on both sides and derailed the movement. Ellison and Martin, citing the well-known CRM activist Eamonn McCann, point to a weak organizational structure and the lack of clear goals for undermining the Northern Ireland CRM.¹⁸⁷ While functional at first, NICRA, as a coordinating unit, proved largely ineffective because it provided avenues for more radical organizations like the PD and DHAC to infiltrate and undermine the movement. Furthermore, the issues with coordinating multiple organizations with diverging goals create problems with solidifying a collective identity for the movement.

5. Collective Identity

The inherent divides within society and a history of violent movements made it difficult for the Northern Ireland CRM to form a sense of shared identity. In 1961, one-

¹⁸³ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, chap. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association.

¹⁸⁴ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*.

¹⁸⁵ Berry, "Sectarian Violence and the People's Democracy 1968–1972."

¹⁸⁶ Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, chap. The People's Democracy; *We Shall Overcome*; Martin Melaugh, "The People's Democracy March," January 17, 2022, Conflict and Politics in Northern Ireland (CAIN), accessed June 14, 2022, <https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/pdmarch/sum.htm>.

¹⁸⁷ Ellison and Martin, "Policing, Collective Action and Social Movement Theory."

third of Northern Ireland's population was Catholic, and two-thirds were Protestant.¹⁸⁸ Additionally, political ideals were divided along religious lines, with the Catholics aligning with the Nationalists and the Protestants with the Unionists. The Northern Ireland CRM leaders initially emphasized that the movement's goal was to provide civil rights for all and attempted to appeal to Protestants and Catholics alike. However, as the movement grew and acts of violence became standard on both sides, establishing a collective identity that transcended religious divides became increasingly difficult for the movement.

The movement's leaders did attempt to establish a non-partisan collective identity. As noted earlier, the founding leaders of the CRM understood that in order for it to succeed, they needed to bridge the political and religious gap. Because the movement focused on reforms and not a unified Ireland, the leaders had to win support from both sides of the political/religious divide. The difficulty in concentrating on reform is that the Nationalists had to accept the legitimacy of British rule. Similarly, the movement had to appeal to working-class Unionists predisposed to distrust the Nationalists. The need to appeal to both sides led to the leadership establishing the vague objectives described earlier. The lack of clear objectives created problems of its own and led to the fracturing of the movement. As the more radical leaders took control of the movement, the movement turned violent. The focus on civil rights for all shifted to highlight the discrimination faced by the Catholic population and evolved into a politically oriented movement. Once the in-group/out-group mentality took hold, there was no way to establish a shared collective identity for the CRM, not one that focused on ensuring equal treatment for all. The lack of trust between the parties involved and the increased focus on sectarian issues created a collective identity that was not conducive to the movement. Although social movements require a collective identity to mobilize collective action effectively, the identity formed in this case created divisions along religious and political lines rather than an identity that focused on reforms that promoted equality for all. The

¹⁸⁸ Government of Northern Ireland, "Census of Population 1961 General Report," 1961, <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/1961-census-reports>.

application of violent tactics undermined the movement's identity by resurrecting feelings of distrust from the Protestant population.

The history of Northern Ireland created low levels of trust between the movement organizations and the Protestant population. Interpersonal and category-based trust is vital in developing an expectation of how people or groups will behave in the future.¹⁸⁹ The loyalist population viewed the Northern Ireland CRM as a front for an eventual campaign to unify Ireland.¹⁹⁰ Because some members of the movement were previously associated with the IRA or Republican Clubs/Parties, the assumption was that the whole organization was corrupt and just a ploy to challenge the Northern Ireland government. Various sources contend that the Northern Ireland CRM never had reunification as its goal.¹⁹¹ Though there were smaller SMOs who viewed the CRM as a means to unify Ireland eventually, the movement as a whole did not have that as its objective.¹⁹² Trust, or the lack of it, contributed to separate collective identities forming. The lack of trust between groups created barriers for the CRM to extend the ideals of the CRM to the general population. Once an identity focused on religious and political difference formed, tensions escalated, and the middle ground disappeared.

6. Outcome and Analysis

Like most movements, the Northern Ireland CRM did not fail for only one reason. Instead, the movement had deficiencies in each component analyzed. Had these issues been addressed, the outcome may have been different. From August to December 1968, the movement trended upward. NICRA, as a coordinating unit, was functional; moderate voices guided the movement's leadership, and the movement focused on civil rights

¹⁸⁹ J. David Lewis and Andrew Weigert, "Trust as a Social Reality," *Social Forces* Vol. 63, no. No. 4 (June 1985): 967–85, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2578601>; Barbara D Adams and Robert D. Webb, "Trust in Small Military Teams" (Ontario, Canada: Human Systems Incorporated, 2002).

¹⁹⁰ McKearney, *The Provisional IRA*, chap. Introduction; Berry, "Sectarian Violence and the People's Democracy 1968–1972"; Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*, chap. The People's Democracy.

¹⁹¹ Hancock, "We Shall Not Overcome"; *We Shall Overcome*; Purdie, *Politics in the Streets*; Ellison and Martin, "Policing, Collective Action and Social Movement Theory."

¹⁹² Hancock, "We Shall Not Overcome."

issues. Despite violent protests from the Protestant countermovement, the momentum favored the CRM.

The movement began to head in a different direction shortly after the NAI announced its willingness to cooperate with the movement and proposed reform changes. The leadership of the two leading organizations, NICRA and DCAC, accepted the proposal and attempted to stall the movement as a show of faith in the government. The proposed reforms, however, were not significant enough to appease the masses.¹⁹³ In the months that followed, conflict within the leadership ensued, and eventually, the moderate leaders exited the movement. While moderate voices leaving may have contributed to the movement's failure, the lack of a clear strategy and objectives seems a more logical culprit.

The original NICRA leadership had the right idea in wanting to keep the movement non-violent and non-sectarian because, in doing so, they might have eventually brought the Protestant working class on board. However, by failing to establish a clear and coherent strategy, the more radical voices began to advocate for the use of violence in response to counter-protests and law enforcement. As the leaders began to falter, so did the movement's coordinating mechanism. Furthermore, by introducing violence into the equation, the CRM lost the high ground and reinforced Protestant distrust in the movement, which affected the movement's ability to establish a collective identity.

7. Conclusion

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement is unique in that the four components of a successful social movement are present but not fully developed. It showed promise in its beginning stages but quickly derailed when elements of the movement were removed or altered. Specifically, the leadership component played a significant role in the outcome. The introduction of violence to combat oppression exacerbated differences within the population, contributing to a non-inclusive collective identity. While SOF may not be capable of establishing the collective identity of a

¹⁹³ *We Shall Overcome.*

movement, SOF may be able to assist in advising the leadership of a movement and assisting with structural and organizational issues to increase the probability of success.

D. CHINESE DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT (1988-1989)

The final case study in this series examines the substantial pitfalls of the Chinese Democratic Movement of 1989, a failed social movement within the confines of an authoritarian regime. Several attempts at democratic reform followed the victory of Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). This case study refers specifically to the Chinese Democratic Movement of 1989, made famous by the incidents in Tiananmen Square, where a series of failed protests and government crackdowns cost an estimated several hundred to several thousand people their lives.¹⁹⁴ The protests and aftermath further entrenched the CCP in government and rooted out many of those in power who were sympathetic to the movement's demands. This specific event exposes the often-perilous risks social movements undertake. Regardless of the outcome of this movement, the insurrection looms heavily on the minds of those in power in the CCP. More than thirty years later, any public mention or remembrance of the event is sure to draw the ire and attention of the government.¹⁹⁵

Sharp asserts that non-violence is the solution that ultimately erodes the support of dictatorships. In his opinion, repudiation and defiance are the tools used to undermine the authority of a dictatorship.¹⁹⁶ Therefore, it is worth exploring cases in which even social movements with righteous intentions, non-violent means, and democratic goals can meet their ultimate demise when confronted with an autocratic government's overwhelming power.

¹⁹⁴ Jean-Philippe Béja, "The Massacre's Long Shadow," *Journal of Democracy* 20, no. 3 (July 2009): 5–16, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.0.0092>.

¹⁹⁵ Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh, "Thirty Years after the Tiananmen Protests and June Fourth Massacre: Requiem for a Chinese Dream - and Recharting the Path of Nonviolent Action and Civil Societal Movement to China's Democratic Future," *Contemporary Chinese Political Economy and Strategic Relations* 5, no. 2 (August 2019): 801–900, XVII–XVIII, <http://www.proquest.com/docview/2341735780/abstract/88735C8079434652PQ/1>.

¹⁹⁶ Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, 109.

There is little doubt that the movement's narrative and goals were compelling. As early as April 27th, 1989, more than 100,000 students took to the streets to protest corruption, inflation, and increasing crackdowns on democratic processes.¹⁹⁷ So why did it ultimately fail? Examining the failures of this particular movement to achieve democratic reforms may provide valuable insight for future movements that seek to overcome the stranglehold of a vicious authoritarian regime. It is worth noting that due to the strict controls of information by China, and the systematic bans on any mention of the June 4th Massacre and the events preceding it, some of the information analyzed in this case study is speculative in nature. Therefore, we relied on research from subject matter experts on social movements to guide our interpretations.

1. The Events

The events preceding the Tiananmen Square massacre date back to the transition to CCP leader Deng Xiaoping. Once he obtained power in the CCP, he made several reforms that undid many of the repressive transformations from the Maoist government of years past.¹⁹⁸ All indications were that China was entering a new era of increased democratization and freedom through this change in leadership. In 1986, several student demonstrations were greeted with very mild consternation from the government, but nothing indicated that they would display anything approaching the level of violence seen several years later.¹⁹⁹

Several events truly ignited the movement. First is the death of Hu Yaobang on April 15, 1989, widely considered a progressive reforms-oriented leader within the CCP.²⁰⁰ Yaobang's more progressive stance caused him to fall out of favor with the more traditionalist members of the CCP; however, he had broad support amongst the

¹⁹⁷ Jean-Philippe Béja, ed., *The Impact of China's 1989 Tiananmen Massacre*, 0 ed. (London: Routledge, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203842607>.

¹⁹⁸ Béja, "The Massacre's Long Shadow."

¹⁹⁹ Béja.

²⁰⁰ Frank Pieke, *The Ordinary and the Extraordinary: An Anthropological Study of Chinese Reform and the 1989 People's Movement in Beijing* (Routledge, 2012), 182.

younger student population, particularly in Beijing.²⁰¹ On April 26th, the official CCP newspaper, the *People's Daily*, published a harsh rebuke of the movement that caused further mobilization on April 27 and again on May 4.²⁰² Second, the combination of a quick mobilization and a splintering of opinion among top party members on how to confront the protests allowed the movement to pick up momentum and provided a significant challenge to the legitimacy of the CCP government. Third, the CCP's general secretary, in particular, Zhao Ziyang, is notable for his unusually high level of support for the movement and for urging the other high-ranking members of the CCP to negotiate with the students.²⁰³ However, the CCP leaders largely ignored his recommendation, preliminary negotiations made little noticeable progress, and the student protests escalated to roughly 2,000 students engaging in hunger strikes at Tiananmen Square.²⁰⁴ The hunger strike escalated both the support for the movement, but also intensified the conservative CCP faction's willingness to escalate the situation and unwillingness to entertain any further thoughts of negotiations. In the overall events of the movement, the hunger strike is the turning point that brought the movement from the possibility of peaceful resolution and moderate reforms to spiraling towards inevitable violent confrontation.

The hunger strikes moved the protests from principally Beijing to a series of national-level student protests. Thousands flooded to Beijing to support the hunger strikers. By the 18th of May, the fracture between Zhao and Deng had opened into a chasm, further splitting the party.²⁰⁵ By this point, the intellectual elite had already joined the students, attempting to salvage what little chance was left for an amicably negotiated settlement. By the 18th, the workers of Beijing joined the movement as well. Pieke described these events as a full worker's strike within the city.²⁰⁶ With this action,

²⁰¹ Pieke, 183.

²⁰² Béja, "The Massacre's Long Shadow."

²⁰³ Pieke, *The Ordinary and the Extraordinary*, 183.

²⁰⁴ Pieke, 183.

²⁰⁵ Pieke, 209.

²⁰⁶ Pieke, 210.

the government not only lost face but the economy suffered tremendously, which further escalated the pressure of the situation.

By the 19th, the more radical faction of students determined that it was necessary to seal off Tiananmen square and prepare for what ultimately turned out to be an extraordinarily violent confrontation.²⁰⁷ On this same day, the CCP declared martial law, tacitly signaling its cessation of negotiations or bargaining.²⁰⁸ Following this declaration, there was little need to continue the hunger strike, so the student movement terminated it. The army first attempted to clear the occupied areas of Beijing on the 20th and 21st of May 1989. This attempt was unsuccessful as very few within the military seemed comfortable with the notion of using violence to suppress their people.²⁰⁹ Finally, on the 3rd of June, factions of the army, led by the 27th Army, stormed the city and began to expel protestors violently. Up to this point, a thin veil of decorum and morality had existed between the protestors and the military. With this social contract now broken, the protestors also engaged in significant public violence against the soldiers sent to expel them.²¹⁰ After the attacks, the CCP attempted to create strawmen of a few small counterrevolutionaries that escalated the violence to the point it reached. They portrayed the army as heroically responding to these threats while not mentioning the students.

The total number of dead has been a matter of dispute since the events took place.²¹¹ Perhaps the most lasting and famous moment of the entire event occurred with tanks rolling into Tiananmen square when a man stood in the middle of the street and would not allow the tanks to pass. After some time, the authorities escorted him off the street. No one knows what became of him. This act stood as one final act of defiance at the end of the event.

²⁰⁷ Pieke, 213.

²⁰⁸ Pieke, 219.

²⁰⁹ Pieke, 183.

²¹⁰ Pieke, 228–29.

²¹¹ Johan Lagerkvist, “The Legacy of the 1989 Beijing Massacre: Establishing Neo-Authoritarian Rule, Silencing Civil Society+,” *International Journal of China Studies* 5, no. 2 (August 2014): 349–XII, <http://www.proquest.com/docview/1558845872/abstract/398D80B54B11401EPQ/1>.

Many of the activists, particularly the prominent ones, disappeared in the immediate aftermath of the event. Those able quickly fled into hiding, others were exiled, and some were imprisoned.²¹² The CCP moved to suppress any further demonstrations. After shutting down the Beijing protests, the government targeted activities in other cities around the country. Since most of the large demonstrations occurred in Beijing, the government accomplished this relatively easily. The CCP also purged the government of Zhao Ziyang and anyone they perceived to be loyal to him.²¹³ By publicly exiling or jailing prominent party members who supported Zhao and the democracy movements, the CCP reinvigorated their grasp on the traditionalist government and discouraged further progressive reformist public dissent from within their ranks.

Finally, the government banned any references to the incidents in the media and any Chinese-controlled online forums.²¹⁴ To this day, the CCP bans any public commemorations of the event and patrols the locations of the major events using undercover police and sophisticated surveillance to ensure compliance. This suppression of individual rights to demonstrate shows the extreme measures the CCP will use to maintain control of the population.

On the surface, it may seem natural to conclude that the uprising's failures were simply the result of violent government crackdowns. However, a more careful examination of the issues leads us to the idea that there was potential for the movement to achieve some measures of success. Now, having the necessary familiarity with the overall course of events, it is important to discuss the mechanisms behind the movement and analyze where the students and broader populations found success and, more importantly, where their efforts were unsuccessful.

²¹² Béja, *The Impact of China's 1989 Tiananmen Massacre*, 56.

²¹³ Béja, 56.

²¹⁴ Glenn Tiffert, "30 Years After Tiananmen: Memory in the Era of Xi Jinping," *Journal of Democracy* 30, no. 2 (April 2019): 38–49, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2019.0022>.

2. Method of Network Diffusion

Historically, colleges and universities are primary sources of recruitment and mobilization for social movements. In the case of China, at the time of the events, the typical university was surrounded by brick walls, and any streets within the brick walls were considered private property. This setup prohibits police and other non-university officials from entering the premises without the school's permission.²¹⁵ The result was that, despite the relatively strict control of the CCP, the students had an uninterrupted forum to share ideas and collaborate. This becomes important later when we turn to the discussion of the coordinating unit. Of further importance were the tight-knit communities created in the dormitories that allowed for open communication of ideas between the students. The dormitories provided an environment that strongly encouraged group participation such that it felt as if everyone was part of the movement. Feeling a sense of belonging is a powerful social motivation that shapes attitudes and behavior. Indeed, the intensely dense networks of the dormitories likely played a critical role in groupthink and mutual influence.²¹⁶

Once the demonstrations began, the network expanded as city residents became interested in the movement. The centrality and well-trafficked area of Tiananmen Square generated a large amount of publicity, particularly for the participants in the hunger strike. The hunger strikes presented an opportunity for the average Beijing citizen to support the movement without necessarily taking an official political stand. They could take a stand to support the hunger strikers and their plight without overtly denigrating the CCP.²¹⁷ The low initial cost of entry into participation with the movement is key to McAdam's recruitment model. The model demonstrates that initial low-risk activities can lead individuals into increasingly higher-risk activities later.²¹⁸ Once the hunger strikes

²¹⁵ Dingxin Zhao, "Ecologies of Social Movements: Student Mobilization during the 1989 Prodemocracy Movement in Beijing," *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 6 (May 1998): 1493–1529, <https://doi.org/10.1086/231399>.

²¹⁶ Zhao.

²¹⁷ Pieke, *The Ordinary and the Extraordinary*, 208.

²¹⁸ McAdam, "Recruitment to High-Risk Activism."

began, the network grew denser. The intellectuals and, finally, the worker's parties joined the cause, culminating in the demonstrations that led to the declaration of military law.

Chinese University students employed propaganda teams to spread their messages throughout the city, deliver public speeches, and invite support from other non-student protestors to protect those within the square when martial law was declared.²¹⁹ The propaganda teams were particularly effective once martial law was declared because they were more freely able to move throughout the city and interest in the movement was at an all-time high. In addition, they engaged with the bystander portion of the population and convinced many of them to assist in closing the square and setting up barriers and other obstructions to make it more difficult for the military to stamp out the protests.²²⁰ Another key advantage that this movement enjoyed was access to cutting-edge technology.

Internet and communication technologies' sophistication started to pick up in the 1980s. Although impressive in its already widespread control of communications in and out of China, the Chinese government did not have a full grasp on the newer technologies the students used. Consider the fax machine, for example. Students in universities across Beijing and throughout China had relatively widespread access to them.²²¹ They allowed students to communicate news and other information for public consumption outside China. In addition, students also communicated via video, television, computers, and radios.²²²

Although the students succeeded with many communication and diffusion efforts, they faced some challenges. For example, they attempted to mobilize on bikes at points in the protests. Although an efficient form of transportation, faster than walking or marching, the bikers failed to generate as much support for the protests. The bikers

²¹⁹ Pieke, *The Ordinary and the Extraordinary*, 219.

²²⁰ Pieke, 219.

²²¹ Yan Ma, "Chapter Six: Chinese Online Presence: Tiananmen Square and Beyond," *Counterpoints* 59 (2000): 139–51, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42976097>.

²²² Ma, 149.

moved too quickly past bystanders to have any meaningful interaction that might have helped to spread their message and recruit more participants in the movement.²²³

Overall, however, the density of the networks grew at an impressive rate. Before the declaration of martial law, more than one million people participated in the demonstrations. This level of participation in low and eventually high-risk activism shows that the students knew how to harness the power of the masses, spread a compelling message, and garner a significant following to establish an effective movement. The leadership of that movement played a key role and is discussed further in the next section.

3. Leadership

Two major factions played a significant leadership role in the student's organizational part of the movement. The Autonomous Students Union of Beijing Universities and the Dialogue Delegation constituted the more moderate block of students that led the early portions of the movement. It sought moderate levels of reform, and members were aware of the consequences of putting the CCP in a precarious position.²²⁴ They saw that one potential pitfall was placing themselves in the middle of party politics. Although they desired and needed the support of more moderate leaders such as Zhao, they could not risk the appearance of becoming a tool for the moderates to improve their positions within the party.²²⁵ As a result, high-level members of the Zhao faction and the Student Union leadership entered into several negotiations to secure a public dialogue with party leadership.

The concealed nature of these dialogues led to a general sense of discontent and restlessness from the larger student movement. Trust in the moderate leadership started to erode rather quickly and gave rise to a change. New leadership led by student Chai Ling

²²³ Pieke, *The Ordinary and the Extraordinary*, 201.

²²⁴ Pieke, 204.

²²⁵ Pieke, 202.

emerged in response to this growing sense of discontent and desire to see more rapid and aggressive change.²²⁶

By essentially usurping the leadership that initially set up the movement and upping the proverbial ante, the movement's fractured leadership structure was the first noticeable crack in a movement that, up to that point, appeared to have the potential to go the distance to achieve its limited objectives. What effect could this fractured leadership have on the social movement? First, hunger strikes, culturally understood as an indication that the government is illegitimate, set the movement on a more maximalist course than intended.²²⁷ Bear in mind that the movement's original goal was an increased voice for the students in their government. At no point was an overthrow of the CCP on the table.²²⁸ Nevertheless, the actions of the more aggressive Chai Ling-led faction made the government substantially more nervous about the course of events. As a result, they made any concessions much more unpalatable.

Leadership and common goals are critical to the movement's outcomes in any social movement. It is a delicate balance to plan actions that are effective but also non-provocative enough not to trigger an overreaction from the government. Until the hunger strike, the movement's events were undoubtedly inconvenient to the CCP. Still, they never rose to the level of an actual threat to the movement's legitimacy or existence. Part of leadership is weighing the pros and cons of maintaining secrecy within an organization. Often too much secrecy can result in unintended consequences.²²⁹ That was certainly the case in this instance. The informal leadership structure that is a part of social movements makes it difficult to control members of the groups operating with different methods, goals, and timelines.

²²⁶ Pieke, 204.

²²⁷ Pieke, 206.

²²⁸ Pieke, 186.

²²⁹ Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, 51.

4. Functional Coordinating Unit

The students had a largely effective coordination mechanism. They were exceptionally good at organizing their events early in the movement. Zhao asserts that the combination of the campus structure and the existence of physical walls blocking outside influence provided a perfect environment for the spread of ideas, information, and planning of events.²³⁰ This structure may have contributed to the student's decision to occupy Tiananmen square and to set up a similar closed system as part of their protest movement.

Following the occupation of Tiananmen square, little is known of the inner workings of the student leadership within the square. By all appearances, it seems that most of the coordination between the various student leaders occurred in that location.²³¹ The leadership's centralized structure within a confined space likely was intended to mirror the similar conditions they had grown accustomed to on campus.

The students and their coordination mechanisms made excellent use of several events to raise the movement's profile. As previously mentioned, the first was Hu Yaobang's death and the opportunity for a demonstration that his funeral provided. They also used the historical May 4th movement, the May 15th Gorbachev visit, and the declaration of martial law as further opportunities to raise the movement's profile and legitimacy.²³² Taking advantage of large symbolic events gave them a foundation to protest and meaningful opportunities to bring more publicity to the protests and interact with the public.

The coordination mechanism functioned well until the incidents on the 3rd and 4th of June. Following the violent expulsions of the protestors from Tiananmen Square, the leadership was forced to flee, many of the students were arrested or killed, and the coordination apparatus appeared broken apart. In September 1989, the many dissidents

²³⁰ Zhao, "Ecologies of Social Movements."

²³¹ Pieke, *The Ordinary and the Extraordinary*, 212–13.

²³² Pieke, 262.

who fled created the Federation for a Democratic China (FDC) in France.²³³ The attempt to effect a more pro-democratic China outside its borders led to many issues. However, the heavy-handed methods of the government left very little support on the ground to assist them or provide actionable information. As a result, the group devolved into multiple competing membership groups, such as former sympathetic party members loyal to Zhao, students, and other politically motivated intellectuals.²³⁴ Despite the coordinating unit's effectiveness during the duration of the movement, the CCP effectively tore it apart following their actions on the 3rd and 4th of June. Analysis of the events points to the existence of a coordinating unit, but the details of how exactly it functioned were not readily available. The last area of study for the movement is how well the movement holistically established a sense of collective identity.

5. Collective Identity

Most of the students had similar goals and desired outcomes. They were interested in promoting a more democratic and open government while reducing corruption within the CCP.²³⁵ The economic reforms of the 1980s brought with them hope that further progressive government reforms were on the horizon. The grievances appeared legitimate and communist governments worldwide were falling around this time. The evolving events around the world, coupled with the death of Hu Yaobang, provided the impetus for a collective identity to form among the students owing to their common shared outlooks with the disgraced politician. Key to this identity was the notion that governmental reforms should also come with increasing economic reforms intended to reduce corrupt practices, engage in more democratic processes, and expand opportunities for the average citizen.²³⁶

²³³ Béja, "The Massacre's Long Shadow."

²³⁴ Béja.

²³⁵ Lagerkvist, "The Legacy of the 1989 Beijing Massacre."

²³⁶ Pieke, *The Ordinary and the Extraordinary*, 184–85.

Something unique to Chinese society that may have further aided the original student protestors was the collectivist nature of large segments of society.²³⁷ Within groups, there is kinship and harmony according to Chinese beliefs, while outside of the groups, there only exists chaos and fearfulness. Although the hunger strikes fractured the movement's leadership, they were a unifying force between what had been a clear separation of students and mildly interested observers. The hunger strike brought others, such as intellectuals and worker's parties, into the movement. Pieke asserts that this galvanized the general population and gave them a relatively de-politicized vehicle for action.²³⁸ This strengthened the collective identity because average citizens felt they were now implicitly permitted to demonstrate in support of the hunger strikers rather than against the government. Although their shared collective identity existed between the students and the average citizen of Beijing, the hunger strikers shattered all progress that the moderates had made in establishing a collective identity with the sympathetic minority of the Zhao faction within the CCP. In our assessment, based on the firsthand accounts and historical information available, the failure of the movement was not for lack of identity but the failure of the leadership to use a strategy that was conducive to achieving their objectives. The highly politically polarizing activity of a hunger strike strengthened the movement while weakening its bargaining position with the CCP. While they chose an effective tactic for reinforcing identity, the tactic demonstrated an implied disdain that the decisive leadership would not endure.

6. Outcome and Analysis

Ultimately, the movement's failure rests on its leaders' miscalculations of how far the government was willing to go to stop them. They did not anticipate the harsh and swift way the CCP mobilized the military on their second attempt. The tipping point for the movement's collapse was the hunger strikes and the course that those actions set the movement on from that point forward. The hunger strikes changed the CCP's perception of the movement from ancillary annoyance to a significant threat to the party's

²³⁷ Pieke, 237.

²³⁸ Pieke, 208.

legitimacy. This transition terminated any possibility of productive negotiations and undermined their one strong ally within the government. Until the hunger strikes, the students made demonstrable progress by securing a dialogue with the government and could have potentially achieved some limited concessions from the top members of the CCP.

The social movement's failure resulted from a significant fissure between the moderate student leadership and the more radical hunger strike leaders. The high-stakes tactics of the hunger strike leaders alienated the moderate leaders and simultaneously deterred the government from engaging in negotiations. Including the change-oriented intellectuals and the worker's parties did not help the already tense situation between the populace and the CCP.²³⁹ The limitation of the student-led effort kept tensions down and allowed some room for the CCP to maneuver in handling the situation. However, once others joined, particularly the worker's parties, it essentially amounted to a city-wide strike. These actions forced the CCP to declare martial law and escalate the risk of violence between the military and the protestors.

Starting on the 20th of May and ending early the morning of June 4th, tensions escalated to the point of no return. In our analysis, the leadership issues were the primary cause of this unintended escalation on the side of the movement. However, the other three components we assert are necessary to make a movement successful were present. The group appeared to have an effective network throughout the movement that led more and more people to engage in the process of high-risk activism. Furthermore, the movement was well coordinated, with multiple events tied to it designed and timed to achieve maximum publicity and effect. One could argue that some of the events that escalated the situation resulted from dysfunction within the coordinating elements. However, an equally compelling explanation for the social movement's failure stems from a less cohesive, contradictory leadership structure.

²³⁹ Jacob Kovalio, "The 1989 Tiananmen Square Incident: Retrospective and Prospective Considerations," *Asian Perspective* 15, no. 1 (Spring-Summer 1991): 5-36, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42705291>.

7. Conclusion

Ultimately, it is difficult to say whether professional influence intervention may have tipped the movement toward success. If the goals were more limited and the negotiations more transparent, trust within moderate and extreme leadership factions may not have eroded as it did. The loss of trust within the leadership appears to have been the most significant issue on the student side, affecting the potential for the movement to succeed. At best, the movement had sufficient network diffusion, a functional coordinating unit, and a strong collective identity, achieving three of the four requirements. However, one could argue the coordination mechanism fell apart quickly after the massacre. Therefore, it is essential to remember that a government's potential responses to a movement affect success.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A. THE APPLICATION OF SOF AND INFLUENCE

1. The American Civil Rights Movement

The American CRM study is relevant to SOF and influence because it provides a framework from which to evaluate other movements. However, because all four components for success were present in this case study, it would be unnecessary to intervene or assist. The NSS highlights that U.S. adversaries will work to undermine and discredit democracy.²⁴⁰ If the movement has established the conditions necessary for success, SOF involvement may cause more harm than good. However, just as it was necessary for the U.S. to maintain credibility to promote democracy, our adversaries face a similar challenge to compete effectively today. Therefore, influence practitioners should still evaluate the movement and its goals and, when appropriate, amplify the movement and the government's response as it develops.

Furthermore, when a social movement like the American CRM is encountered, it would be noteworthy to examine the protest techniques used or developed. Social movement scholars credit the American CRM for providing a variety of techniques that have been applied in various other movements worldwide.²⁴¹ Therefore, it may be of value to analyze and evaluate the tactics employed under modern-day conditions and capture the results for future application.

The American CRM provides a plethora of value as a baseline for comparison. However, as discussed, intervention in a similar movement would not be conducive to U.S. interests or policy. Beyond its utility for comparative analysis, there is little good that can come from participation in like-movements; any value gained by attempting to drag the movement out would only undermine U.S. strategic objectives.

²⁴⁰ White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2017; White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2022.

²⁴¹ Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement."

2. Ukrainian Euromaidan Movement

Social movements such as Euromaidan have significant potential of utility for special operations. The goals do not have to align perfectly, but they must be of enough congruent purpose to make the relationship worthwhile. Second and third-order effects must also be anticipated and accounted for in planning. In the case of Euromaidan, the annexation of Crimea and the initiation of separatist movements in Eastern Ukraine were unintended but potentially foreseeable consequences of the movement. These left Ukraine in a frozen conflict that preclude them from being a part of NATO or the EU following the movement. They demonstrate that these situations are difficult to control and that the adversary, in this case Russia, will leverage assets to mount a counteraction. The movement directly threatened Russia's interests in the region and forced its hand. All these considerations are vital for consideration before attempting to support or co-opt a particular movement to achieve U.S. goals.

SOF integration in the movement would likely not have made a tremendous difference as this movement possessed all the theoretical criteria for success. However, where SOF could potentially have made the biggest difference was in posturing the interim government and forces to address follow-on retaliatory actions.

SOF personnel could have assisted the functional coordinating unit and the leadership with the transition to stable governance. Following the conclusion of the main events of the movement, the government was exceptionally weak, leaving open opportunity for Russian-backed separatists to create issues in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. Therefore, when dealing with movement's facing similar challenges, influence professionals should coordinate ahead of time with other SOF elements such as civil affairs and special forces to have a plan in place for contingencies. These contingencies should include plans for success and failure. Since that initial setback however, the Ukrainian military capability has improved since 2014.

Regardless of whether the goals ultimately aligned with U.S. objectives, there is no doubt it was incredibly disruptive. It forced Russia to expend significant resources supporting the separatist movements and further eroded their credibility on the public

stage. If degrading or disrupting an enemy is the goal, the events of 2014 certainly set the stage, pushing Ukraine further towards the western sphere of influence and undermining Russian credibility on the world stage.

3. Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement

It is no coincidence that the Northern Ireland CRM started as the American CRM was ending. The successful application of non-violent direct action to combat racial inequality in the South has served as a model for various movements.²⁴² Just as Gandhi's teachings influenced Dr. King and other civil rights leaders, so too did Dr. King and the American CRM influence John Hume, Ivan Cooper, and the other moderate leaders of the Northern Ireland CRM.²⁴³ However influential the American CRM movement was in Northern Ireland, many of the lessons learned from its American counterpart were not applied to in the Northern Ireland movement. SOF personnel can assist struggling movements by incorporating some of the lessons learned from previous case studies and applying them in a nuanced and focused manner to keep a struggling movement on track.

The leadership, for example, was not as coherent or durable in the Northern Ireland CRM as it was in the American CRM. The American CRM enjoyed the benefit of multiple strong moderate leaders that were committed to implementing a non-violent strategy with Dr. King at the helm throughout the entirety of the movement. As previously noted, the Northern Ireland CRM leadership began to splinter within the first year of the movement.

The leadership's fracture was partly due to key leaders leaving to take a more active role in the government and others choosing to distance themselves as the movement took a more aggressive approach. While having advocates for reform change within the movement is beneficial and desired, the leadership that remained within the social movement was not functional. Influence practitioners need to consider the effect that losses in leadership may have on a movement. Once it becomes evident that key leaders will exit to take on different responsibilities, planners and operators need to work

²⁴² Morris.

²⁴³ Morris; Hancock, "We Shall Not Overcome."

to ensure there is a smooth transition of power within the movement. This can be done by ensuring that clear goals for the direction of the movement are in place and that a strong organizational structure exists to carry the movement forward.

A second area where the Northern Ireland CRM failed was the role of the coordinating unit. This component is closely tied to the leadership aspect because the lead organization, NICRA, housed most of the CRM leadership and served as the coordinating unit. The NICRA leadership set broad, ill-defined goals and objectives for the movement. This situation creates two issues, first, while larger SMOs are necessary for a movement's success, they are best suited for diffusion and coordination at the macro level. Second, the leadership of the organizations need to narrow the scope of the goals and objectives of the movement. While inclusion is important, the goals cannot be so broad that organizations with ulterior motives can join. Taking the lessons from the American CRM, SOF can assist in establishing a more efficient coordinating unit and as well as assisting the leaders of the SMOs in crafting a strategy with finite and achievable objectives.

4. Chinese Democracy Movement

If present at the events or in contact with the leadership, SOF and influence professionals could have better managed the relationships on the ground and provided assessments of the potential reactions that the CCP could take in response to particular acts. This leadership structure was the weakest of the four components we analyzed. Subsequent issues, such as the struggles with coordination efforts following the violence can be traced back to the fractures within the student leadership structure. One of the critical mistakes made by the initial student leadership was the failure to keep the general population informed of the progress of the negotiations. The leadership's inability to keep other more radical factions informed of the positive progress the group was making led directly to more extreme behavior that drew the ire of the CCP.

As noted in the American CRM leadership section, movement leaders must be capable of fulfilling the role of a mobilizer and an articulator. In other words, someone who can inspire collective action and can communicate clear goals, objectives, and

progress of the movement to external audiences.²⁴⁴ The movement lacked leadership that could effectively accomplish this. While SOF may not necessarily be able to select the leadership of the movement, influence professionals can work with existing leaders to recognize how critical these roles are.

Psychological operations personnel, and SOF personnel more broadly, have some level of training in cultural awareness, negotiations, and are selected specifically for their adaptability. These characteristics and ability to work in a cross-cultural environment might have allowed them to foresee some of the fissures starting to form amongst the rank and file. This would have allowed them to better advise the leadership of some of the issues internal to their movement. Working with partnered elements is predominantly about relationship management. An observant outsider, not emotionally attached to the issues at hand may have been able to more deftly navigate some of the rifts between the moderates and the hard-liners. At minimum it is more likely that they could have sensed the rifts. More specifically, this could have reduced some of the tensions that existed within the group. Had some of the more radical students felt heard and included in the process, it is possible that the moderate students could have successfully negotiated some concessions from the government, and everyone could have walked away saying their side won and saved a little bit of face.

Furthermore, the idea of consequences is worthy of discussion. This uprising had wide-ranging consequences for China's political and social structures. Zhao Ziyang was removed from his position within the CCP and lived out the remainder of his life under house arrest.²⁴⁵ To this day, any references to the protests in either the media, online, or at the sites of the protests are strictly forbidden and harshly dealt with. It is possible to argue that the protests actually were counterproductive in achieving progressive political reforms. For example, it influenced the CCP's ongoing efforts today to implement surveillance and compliance mechanisms that deter dissidents from uniting at the scale of the Tiananmen Square uprisings ever again. Although not every consequence of

²⁴⁴ Gusfield, "Functional Areas of Leadership in Social Movements"; Morris and Staggenborg, "Leadership in Social Movements."

²⁴⁵ Tiffert, "30 Years After Tiananmen."

instigating or assisting a social movement can be anticipated, it is incumbent upon any planners to attempt to foresee the second and third order effects of any interference with foreign affairs.

Finally, the failure of the coordination mechanism, while not as pronounced as the leadership failure, contributed to the inability of the movement to maintain operations after the massacre at Tiananmen Square. In any movement, it is vital to plan for both success and failure. After the initial establishment of martial law, it was clear the government was intent on forcibly ending the protests. Although the first attempt was unsuccessful, there was no way the government would allow that embarrassment to stand. The time for negotiations was over and there should have been a better plan to disperse and regroup in the event of catastrophe.

B. BEST PRACTICES

Our analysis of the quantitative factors revealed that the protest tactic (violence v non-violence) is a critical factor to consider when crafting a social movement's strategy. The effect of using non-violence as the primary tactic, however, is more effective in democratic societies than autocratic ones. Though, much of this thesis focused on the value of non-violence as the preferred method of direct action, our data driven analysis suggests that this is not always the case and therefore, SOF personnel need to consider the type of government and the primary objective within the operational area. Following that initial analysis, the planners should then consider the factors from the case studies.

Based on our analysis of the four critical components of a movement, SOF can potentially influence three of the four. We find that collective identity is a difficult concept to manufacture because if a group of individuals is not highly "bought in" to whatever a movement is attempting to achieve, they are unlikely to engage in the types of high-risk activism described within previous sections of this document. However, identifying and grooming charismatic and influential leaders to articulate the goals of a movement and build a sense of collective identity is a realistic goal. Along the same lines, assisting with the organizational structure to create a functional coordinating unit

that taps into grass roots organizations can facilitate network diffusion and bring others into the movement.

Of the four critical components, evidence suggests leadership is the most critical. In the four case studies we analyzed, the major failures point back to significant leadership failures or miscalculations. Identification of existing and potential leaders and key communicators to represent movements is a critical piece of achieving success. As discussed, much of the political credibility of a movement flows through a leader's ability to articulate the goals of a movement upwards while motivating and shaping a shared collective identity within the group. Furthermore, leaders need to be able to generate a strategy that is consistent with the identity of the movement. Articulating clear, achievable, and concrete goals, sticking to them, and then knowing when they have been achieved to a satisfactory level is an essential component that we identified in the successful movements.

The coordinating unit does not have to be a grassroots organization, but it is most effective when it is one. The studies cited earlier highlight the need to create innovative ways of protesting in order for the movement to be successful. Grassroots organizations are best suited to identify which protest techniques will be the most effective in cultures, circumstances, or situations. Additionally, grassroots organizations can tap into mutually supporting local networks to ensure the movement is sustained. Therefore, when assisting leaders in crafting their movement strategy, influence practitioners need to keep this in mind and whenever possible, guide them according to that model.

Finally, to address network diffusion, it is vital to work with both the leadership and the coordinating unit to build a robust, redundant, and resilient network that can effectively communicate thoughts, ideas, and ultimately actions from the highest levels of a movement down to the local levels. A redundant network insulates parts of a movement from being isolated or cut off when the target of a movement inevitably attempts to disrupt the network. Therefore, it is important to ensure that diffusion is found at multiple levels, larger SMOs should be responsible for diffusing tactical innovations across the various movement organizations and then down to the coordinating unit. At the ground

level, movements should focus on organizing and mobilizing local networks to support the movement.

Based on this theory, the flow of information and ideas should be similar to what is depicted in Figure 10:

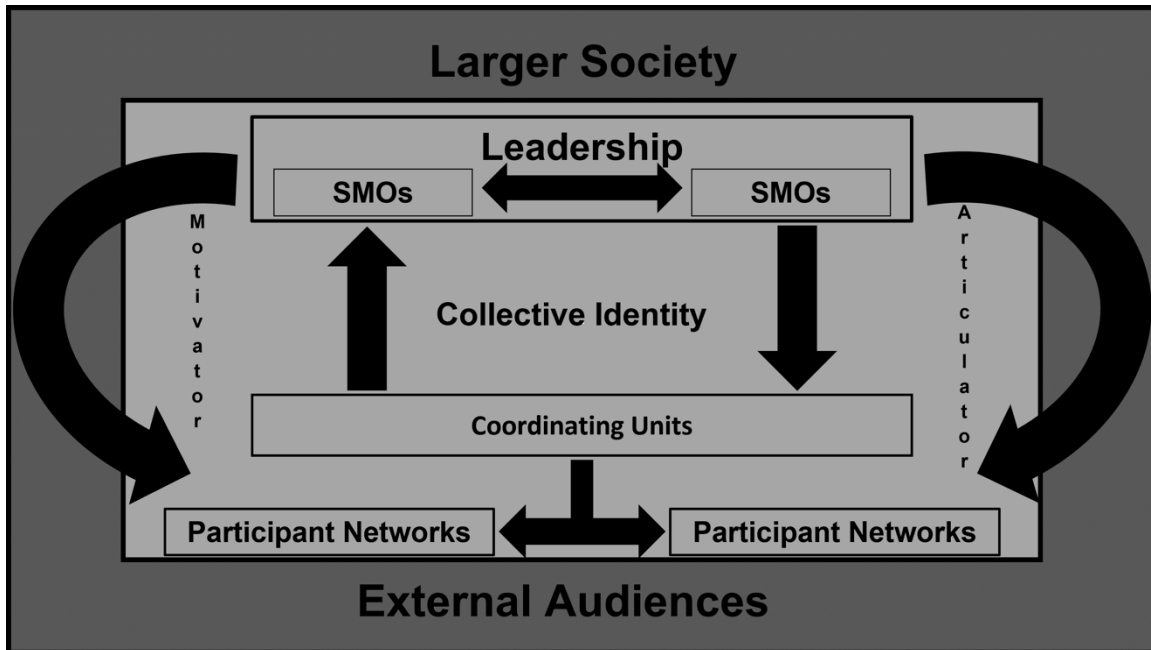


Figure 10. Best Practices Diagram

Although there are no concrete rules, our assessment of these pillars leads us to the conclusion that a minimum of two of the four critical components must be present for influence practitioners to choose to engage with a movement in the first place. Anything less than two of the four makes the movement unlikely to succeed and a poor investment of extremely limited SOF resources. Critical analysis must take place before any commitment of personnel or resources to a movement. Additionally, a thorough examination of potential second and third order effects is a critical component of any analysis. In the four case studies alone, the government and population responses to the social movements ranged from retaliation all the way to outright killing of participants. In all, even the successful ones, we have seen a violent and repressive response by the governments in power against the participants. Although at times this may be

unavoidable, an assessment of the risk versus reward is critical when weighing any involvement with these movements. Part of this analysis should always account for the current political climate and whether it is advantageous or counterproductive for the U.S. to provide overt support at all. With this in mind, planners would be wise to consider the other levers of the Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic (DIME) spectrum that may make more sense given the situation.

Of significance, we have also seen that in certain circumstances strategic competitors took action to counter the changes that movements achieved. In the specific instance of Euromaidan, the Russian response has had ongoing effects that have influenced the geopolitical sphere to this day. Planners need to understand that events do not happen in a vacuum. Competitors will also take advantage of periods of instability to shape the ongoing strategic competition in ways that are favorable to their objectives.

C. CONCLUSION

In this thesis, we reviewed numerous external quantitative variables that influence the likelihood of success for a movement. We closely examined the usefulness of non-violence as a technique, and found that in certain circumstances, it may present better results than supporting violent movements. Furthermore, we examined the four pillars that we believe are necessary for an individual movement to achieve success. Of these variables, we concluded that leadership is the most important, while network diffusion and a functional coordinating unit are two pillars in which influence professionals and SOF can contribute expertise and innovative thought to drive success. While collective identity is not a pillar that SOF can influence, we recognize that it is vital to a movement's success. While leadership may be the most important, it is dependent on the other pillars to succeed.

Our unique contribution to this research has been a new but relatively simple framework, derived from existing theoretical research and case study analysis, to examine potential movements and evaluate their potential to succeed. This research provides SOF elements a framework with which to evaluate existing conditions and better allocate resources. The framework simplifies the process for planners, by providing

a quantitative framework to determine if conditions for success are present, and a qualitative approach to determine specifically if the movement has the organic capability to succeed, whether it would need limited support, or whether to avoid engaging entirely.

Guidance from multiple strategic level documents highlight the need to be more innovative and dynamic in multiple environments in the geopolitical sphere. Social movements provide another avenue from which to contend with our competitors at a level that does not rise above the threshold of armed conflict. Finally, it allows persecuted people throughout the world to engage in activities that promote the values of democracy and freedom from the stranglehold of oppression.

D. SUGGESTED FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research can potentially focus on several areas we could not fully explore in our research. The first is replicating the case studies framework with others to test our claims' legitimacy further. The NAVCO dataset provides a robust list of case studies from which to select across various autocracies, anocracies, and democracies. Our qualitative assessment suggests that protest tactics may not have a significant impact in autocratic countries. Therefore, identifying violent movements with varying outcomes and analyzing them across our four key components would further expand the collective understanding of social movements in irregular warfare.

Furthermore, the research team did not explore how current communication mediums impact the method of network diffusion and the implication that they may now have on the coordinating unit and leadership. The speed at which information moves possibly plays a significant role in how social movements organize. While it is likely that the same overarching structure described in this thesis exists, future research should explore the role that modern communications platforms, particularly social media, play in mobilizing collective action.

Lastly, expanding our understanding of the political and diplomatic climate necessary for social movements to succeed is also important. The case studies analyzed in this thesis took place in the post-decolonization era. It would be interesting to see how the changing world climate affected the ability of marginalized groups to mobilize.

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