

Revolutions: A theoretical approach

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6845689>

Published Date: 16-July-2022

1. INTRODUCTION

Regarding the traditional repertoire, actions such as riots (different types), Luddism, destruction of crops, burning of effigies... All of them are normal actions in the 18th century both in Europe and in the colonies. These forms of action correspond to a culture of mobilization with some common characteristics:

1st local: occurs in a traditional world where social relations occur only in that area. There is no contact with other locations. In this way, social relations are based on the local community, which unites the entire community against the outside. There is a very high degree of self-sufficiency and the central authorities cannot manage to govern by delegating to local authorities. Organizations, conflicts, etc. they are local and only war can go beyond this area of locality.

The local is the fundamental scope; there are no extra-local organizations with the capacity to bring together different organizations in a common action.

2nd violent: the forms of action threaten with violence for success, but a violence derived from social relations and the behavior of the authorities. There are very dispersed means of coercion within society, just as there are privileged people in certain aspects without there being anything to prevent it (Church, army...). It serves to punish and exercise power throughout society. The execution rituals are public as a lesson. The collective action of the common society urges the action of the authorities. There is no punishment of crimes to try to rehabilitate the guilty. An important part of collective action is to punish the person responsible for the crime.

3rd direct: collective action occurs to directly achieve the resolution of the conflict. An exemplary case was the so-called "Bread Mutiny": collective action only makes sense if the objective is achieved after the mobilization. The bread is requisitioned directly. When you don't want scarcity, the solution is to destroy the methods of exporting bread or wheat. The same would be done with the destruction of the machines by the competition of workshops that used them. It was an illegitimate competition and therefore they were destroyed. That destruction was the direct way of resolving the conflict. Not all collective action is direct, but it can be said that it is for the most part.

4th rigid: it means 2 things:

- the collective action is related to a single conflict. To each conflict there corresponds a form of action. During the existence of the traditional repertoire there were as many forms of action as there were social conflicts.

- In addition, and in line with what was said above, each form of action is carried out by a social group and is not interchangeable. Tax riots were only used by taxpayers.

2. TRADITIONA APPROACH

The traditional repertoire was used by the different European social groups of the 18th, 19th and part of the 20th century, although in other places it was only from the 18th century. It was replaced depending on the circumstances by a new repertoire of collective action consisting of forms such as rallies, strikes, etc. This new repertoire has different characteristics from the traditional one:

a) supralocal: at other times called nationalist. Collective action goes beyond the local sphere due to the expansion of states and markets, which leads to the expansion of men's way of life. Thus, ideologies, religions and different aspects have a supralocal scope of action. The action is directed to the center of political decisions, which is the State in the form of Parliament, Government, etc. The demands are addressed to instances beyond the local. In this way, political parties with national implantation, neighborhood employer associations, etc. arise. This varies according to the territorial and administrative organization adopted by the State, but the locality ceases to be important for the people who live there. Politics and social life are nationalized and, therefore, collective action is also nationalized. This is a long process.

b) more peaceful: the character of most collective action has changed, not because society is more peaceful, but because of the changes that have made it possible for the action to be non-violent. Those changes affect different instances. According to which countries, there was a reflection in the response of the State. In England and France the idea of public order arose at the end of the 19th century. There was no possibility of attending to a facet of population life called security; The only important thing was the external security of the country with respect to the others in the face of a possible invasion.

When there were riots in the territory, since there was no police to act, there was only the army. Therefore, with the turn of the century wars between England, France and European countries, the police was created after the notion of public order. With this body, society was watched so that it did not intervene in the war. The first model of police force was the Anglo-Saxon: they had no weapons and were under the jurisdiction of the Civil Ministry (Bobbies). This police is responsible not only for repressing collective action, but also trying to prevent it with information exercises, secret police, etc. The creation of the police changed the state's response to collective action. This body replaced the army. Thus, as time passes, collective action is responded to by the State in a more peaceful manner.

Another example is the Latino police that reports to the military unit. It is a rural police due to the type of society in which it has been created. This is the case of the Spanish, French and Italian police. In these last cases, they become civilized when they pass to civil authorities. However, the Civil Guard continued to maintain its character as an army until 1970-1980. It is a professional troop. This process of substituting the army for the police leads to the pacification of collective action, but linked to another process due to the circumstances: legalization of collective action. When the action is legalized, the violent nature begins to be lost. The laws that regulate the right to collective action pacify it and channel it towards the new repertoire and marginalize, prohibit or rule out any legalization of another collective action.

The new forms are not violent. The demonstration is a human journey with slogans but without violence, they do not want to confront anyone. For the strike to have a certain presence, it requires a strike.

Something that has been in place recently is the strategy of non-violence. This strategy was used by Gandhi in 1920 consisting of public and open resistance to the use of violence. After its success, the impact of this experience was taken up by M.L. King, a defender of the movement for the civil rights of blacks in the United States. In general, this strategy was successful since it broke up the authorities since the demonstrations did not cause any kind of violence. The authorities were not prepared to respond to this situation. Hence, the strategy was adopted by many organizations in the 70s (feminist movement, pacifist movement, etc.).

c) indirect: the action is not directly related to the solution of the conflict. No one expects that a demonstration will put an end to the conflict.

d) flexible: the forms of mobilization are used for different conflicts. A single demonstration can serve to put an end to the government, to ask for a salary increase, to make products cheaper, etc. All social conflicts are likely to be answered with a demonstration or with any form of action according to the new repertoire, where there are very few actions for many conflicts. It is a revolutionary change because the characteristics or modalities are totally different and even opposite.

3. HISTORY OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND REVOLUTIONS

Definition and conceptualization of social movement.- Associations and collective identities.- A historical overview of the variety of movements.- Revolutions.- Definition and conditions of revolutionary political processes.

By revolution is meant a political process limited in time. It concerns who governs in the State. It can be produced in different ways, by different groups, but always with the reference that it is up to the control of the power of the State.

International Journal of Novel Research in Education and Learning

Vol. 9, Issue 4, pp: (28-32), Month: July - August 2022, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

Revolutions were previously thought to be rapid, political bursts into political routine that disrupted the evolutionary process of political stability. It was produced in those cities where there were problems.

One of the first experiences occurred in England in 1868 with the beheading of the King. Political revolutions did not occur again. Until that moment the term revolution was used in an astronomical sense; however, after the English revolution it is thought that a return to the renewal of the state of affairs.

According to the English, revolutions occur where the population has lost its rights. It is not about progressing, but about going back to lost time.

For its part, the American Revolution of 1776 is understood by the colonists as a repetition of La Gloriosa. Another example is the revolution in the Netherlands.

As for the French Revolution, it has a different conceptualization. The revolution means a step forward in human progress when the current forces prevent this process, this revolutionary sense is preserved as progressive events. They suppose the creation of the concept of the Old Regime, which is nothing more than a past time with certain characteristics. What comes, after the creation of the Old Regime, is the new regime, which means a new society, elimination of certain prejudices, etc. Revolutions have this meaning especially when the current state of affairs prevents it. The revolution is independent of the process; social changes can be predicted before revolutions. However, many times revolutions mean a step back, even if it is momentary.

Revolutions do not imply the use of violence. The deeper the conflicts, then the deeper the changes. But in reality there had been almost invisible revolutions that have not produced confrontations but have had a certain influence in his country.

Revolutions would be political processes in which there is a forced transformation of State power, in the course of which, at least 2 contending blocs claim, in an incompatible way with each other, control of the State or State power and some significant part of the population supports each of the 2 contending blocs.

In revolutions, the contenders are usually the government and those who aspire to power, although there are usually more blocks.

The revolutionary process is an alternative to other political procedures but it does not imply a change of power. In some States, the kings had the power and established the rules of action and succession to the head of the State. But the problem arose when there were no descendants to the throne, which led to wars, especially in the 16th-17th centuries. Those established rules were assumed by the most influential people. However, in other regimes, the council of influential people are the ones who determine who will be the successor of the deceased ruler.

In the contemporary world, increasingly extensive election systems are established. Different candidates are presented to be elected. They are mechanisms to gain access to State control. The revolution speaks of the same thing but differs in that it is not a regulated transformation but a forced one. It occurs when a group or population is not satisfied with those who hold power. When this situation occurs, it is said that it is time for revolution.

There are 3 possibilities of revolutionary processes:

1st forced transformation: it is the revolutionary result (transition with UCD, Bolsheviks, Primo's coup d'état, Mexico, etc.).

2nd existence of 2 blocks: does not imply the result; just the confrontation. There is talk of revolutionary situations (Civil War). When a confrontation occurs there are times when there is multiple sovereignty. This situation does not always occur. It is, fundamentally, when there are G.Civiles (Salvador, G.Carlistas, Milosevic's Yugoslavia, etc.).

3rd conjunction of the 2 previous cases: both confrontations and transformations of power take place (Rev.Francesa, Rev.Rusa, Cuba, Nicaragua, etc.).

The origin of these revolutionary situations is found in routine politics linked to non-routine politics, since revolutions are processes that have nothing to do with normal politics. Protestants do not know that they are facing a revolution. Between both policies there is no clearly established border. First, there is conflict, such as the issue of rivalry for power, but social conflicts can also be found. The normal thing is that there is a conflict accompanied by a mobilization, which can trigger a revolution, but this can also be produced by the processes of political crisis that begin with the modification of the relations

between the rulers and the ruled. It can also be caused by failing to cover certain important rights for the population. Even, the situation can also occur in which the demands of the people cannot be met, so they believe that they must seek a new government (as happened in 1808). Another possibility is that a significant part of the government tries to incorporate a new right and is denied it by the government itself. This modification between the rights, the governors and the governed can lead to different conflicts, being then when the process of delegitimization of the government takes place. The opinion about the inability of the rulers to do their job is generalized. This process has 2 simultaneous ingredients:

1st mobilization: strikes, riots, etc.

2nd interpretation: there is a parallel process with a more extended discourse on the delegitimization of the government.

If this process of delegitimization of the government is of some importance, then there will be people who will begin to think about the incapacities of the government, which is very dangerous (interpretation).

The next step in this delegitimization process would be the breakdown of the political system. The representative political instances in which elites from different political currents participated cease to function because one party decides not to continue participating. If they have participated so far, it is because they were, to a certain extent, of a moderate nature. However, if they stop participating it is because they understand that the population's protests are justified. This is how the system can enter into crisis. Once these situations have occurred, what can happen is that those who have stopped participating in the government form part of a revolutionary coalition, which is ready to seize power. This coalition would be made up of radicals, less radical people, even moderates who, although they have no political principle in common, come together to displace the rulers. In reality there is no union, but there is only a pact. Now, if the rulers are not capable of putting an end to that revolutionary coalition, that is when the problem appears, since what is called a revolutionary situation would begin. Everything that happened before that moment is defined as conflict, crisis, etc.

That revolutionary coalition makes claims that are impossible to meet with the current government. It demands power arguing different reasons and counting on the support of a part of the population, which manifests itself through mobilizations, etc. this serves to indicate the popular legitimacy that said coalition has. It is the prelude to the revolution. The solutions to this situation have to come at the initiative of the government. In the first place, he has to make the coalition disappear to avoid that revolution, and for this he can carry out 2 possibilities.

1° negotiate with the more moderate elements of that coalition (simultaneous with a possible repression). Thus, one speaks of a political crisis with certain results, which may be elections, a change of government, etc.

2° when the government cannot suppress that coalition is when the revolution occurs, since either it does not have enough power to negotiate with the revolutionaries or because the situation is overflowing and the government does not have the necessary and sufficient means to finish with the coalition. If this occurs, then it is possible that a revolutionary situation is beginning. In this situation, a more or less peaceful confrontation can occur, in which the coalition either does not have the necessary means to confront the government or does not want to use them all at the same time; but it must be taken into account that the government can also count on certain supporters that may decide to confront the revolutionary coalition, causing the conflict to become violent. The duration of these confrontations is determined by the time it takes for the solution to the conflict to arrive, or by the fall of one of the contending sides, etc. The results can be very different: that in reality, there is no result, negotiation after the start of the confrontation, etc.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, a revolutionary situation only occurs when the government cannot eliminate that coalition. One of the ways in which the revolutionary situation manifests itself is the Civil War, as is the case in Spain between 1936-1939, the Carlist wars, the American War of Independence...

In order to know why or how a revolutionary result is produced, it is necessary to go to a substantial element: the control of coercion. There is often a revolutionary outcome when a government that does not want to be displaced is not in control of coercion. For this reason, the army constitutes an important part of the State and it is assumed that, a priori, it is in favor of the Government. However, throughout history it can be seen how this fact has not always occurred. In general, if the government does not have military support, then that is when the revolutionary situation can occur.

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