Explaining Social Revolution: Cases

Pablo Balán

GOV 20

October 12 2017
Some questions

- How do theories of revolutions apply to the Third World in general?
- How do the theories apply to the Russian Revolution?
- How do we explain the Iranian Revolution?

Key concepts:
- Leninist party
- Political opportunity structure
- Civil society
The menu
Trotsky’s paradox

“The mere existence of privations is not enough to cause an insurrection. If it were, the masses would always be in revolt”
This struggle must be organized, according to “all the rules of the art”, by people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity. The fact that the masses are spontaneously being drawn into the movement does not make the organization of this struggle less necessary. On the contrary, it makes it more necessary. Lenin, “What is to be done?”
Skocpol’s cube

The diagram illustrates Skocpol’s cube with axes labeled as follows:

- Revolution most likely
- Revolution least likely
- Bureaucratization
- Penetration
- Exclusionary
- Inclusionary

The cube visualizes the relationship between these variables.
The Iranian Revolution