

## Introduction

### *A Theory of Peasant Rebellions and Elite Victories*

I woke up to the bone-jarring sensation of the potholed Beitbridge-Harare highway, somewhere near the town of Masvingo in southeastern Zimbabwe, and witnessed the dazzlingly bright morning sunlight reflect over the Lowveld. This was a landscape I had seen many times in neighboring South Africa, but in Zimbabwe it appeared inexplicably unnatural. Chicken-wire fences and wooden posts were visibly separating nothing from nothing. There intermittently appeared hamlets of decrepit brick-and-mortar homes with battered tin or tiled roofs, usually accompanying an emaciated general store.

Cleared areas for cultivation sporadically appeared, with maize growing in small, irregularly shaped plots. These cornfields did not resemble their blandly lush counterparts in midwestern America; instead, they looked like gaunt products of hand-strewn seeds and little irrigation. I turned to my research assistant, Mr. Chikarara, and asked, “There’s something strange about this place, isn’t there?” He replied nonchalantly, “Those were the White farms.” At that moment, I was struck by the scale of what happened after the “fast-track land-reform programme” of 2000: the countryside looked like a postapocalyptic reversion of human progress. Abandoned by the government after hasty land redistribution from White farmers, poor Black peasants, without training and equipment, were attempting to grow crops in these miserable plots. The revolutionary promise of land reform had been ignored for two decades, only to be perversely fulfilled, and all of it to keep a coterie of leaders in power.

The fate of Zimbabwean peasants brings to the fore an often ignored question: why do rebellions in agrarian societies create state institutions dominated by elites, even as the peasants—the largest segment of the population—struggle and risk the most to rebel? The key to understanding the causes of peasants' remarginalization, I argue, lies in the roles that elites play during the rebellions and in the subsequent bargains that form new state institutions. Dissenting elites' participation in rebellions is critical, because, given their poverty and large population size, peasants face nearly insurmountable barriers to fostering and maintaining collective action. For individual peasants barely eking out a living, participating in rebellions is too costly and risky. Who will till their fields and herd the cattle? Where can they get weapons and food to sustain a rebellion? What about the inevitable retaliatory attacks on their lives, liberty, and property? And if non-rebels can also enjoy the freedom and wealth that may result from rebellion, then why bear the costs and risk it all?

I argue that the peasants' inability to bear the costs and risks of rebellion creates a window for participation by dissenting elites, who provide the resources peasants need, from food and finances to leadership and weapons, to overcome barriers to collective action. At times, such elites even use their resources to goad peasants into rebellion. Nevertheless, in both scenarios, elite participation is critical to rebellion's success. After rebelling, however, allied elites retain their advantage in resources, which, combined with their small numbers, facilitates intraelite cooperation. As a result, elites bargain among themselves, co-opt sections of the peasantry, and select or capture state institutions to best reflect their own interests. Peasants' interests are disregarded.

The comparative studies presented in *Undoing the Revolution* evaluate the processes of rebellion and state formation in three different agrarian societies during distinct time periods spanning the twentieth century: revolutionary Mexico from 1910 to 1930, late-colonial India from 1920 to 1947, and White-dominated Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) from the mid-1960s to 1980. To collect and present the evidence, I use a qualitative approach centered on historiographical sources, which are strongly supplemented with archival data from India, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as insights from local scholars acquired during visits to Mexico, India, and Zimbabwe.

I present regional rebellions thematically across different countries—for example, Chapter 2 compares rebellion centered on religion in northwestern Zimbabwe, southern India, and western-central Mexico. This comparative approach reveals both the need for elite participation and the variety of causes that incentivize elites to participate, extending from sharing ascrip-

tive identities such as religion with peasants to elites' own political and economic grievances.

These subnational-level studies of rebellions and subsequent national-level studies on conflict resolution and state formation reveal two major findings. First, the critical class for explaining the success of peasant rebellions is, paradoxically, not peasants but local elites, who join such rebellions for three primary reasons: shared religion, political exclusion, and economic grievances. Second, these allied elites capture rebel organizations, bargain among themselves, and entrench their interests within new and existing institutions. Furthermore, during the bargaining over state institutions, the preferences of the elites are contingent on whether they are domestic or foreign and whether they control mobile assets such as capital and high skills or fixed assets such as land and natural resources.

The subnational and national-level studies presented here contribute to research on both peasant rebellions and state formation in agrarian societies. The necessity of elite participation in overcoming collective-action barriers to peasant rebellion is counterintuitive. This approach challenges the established consensus on the causes and processes of rebellions, which focuses on how peasants attempt to overcome such barriers on their own (Scott 2009; E. Wood 2003). Instead, *Undoing the Revolution* underscores the need for coalitions among classes using a model of strategically rational action based on economic interests to reaffirm, at the subnational level, Barrington Moore's (1966) national-level theory of revolutions in agrarian societies, as well as its more contemporary rational-choice (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006) and historiographical extensions (Tudor 2013).

More important, perhaps, *Undoing the Revolution* deepens our understanding of a topic overlooked by scholarship on the outcome of peasant rebellions: conflict resolution and state formation that reempower elites and remarginalize peasants, a reality that characterizes revolutions from China and Russia to those studied here. Prominent scholars using both bottom-up, peasant rebellion-based (Scott 1977, 2009) and top-down, state institution-centric explanations (Skocpol 1979) ignore the outcome of revolutions. Even those who emphasize the critical role of "marginal elites" (Wickham-Crowley 1992, 41) and "middle peasants" (Wolf 1969) in fomenting and leading revolutions in agrarian societies ignore how these groups shape postrevolutionary institutions. The findings from the national-level studies presented here, however, demonstrate that postrevolutionary regimes in such societies disregard and exclude peasants because rebellions, paradoxically, empower elites.

Finally, *Undoing the Revolution* challenges the assumption of comparative studies of revolutions that classes arise from, and revolutions are moti-

vated by, factors at the domestic level (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Boix 2003; Moore 1966; Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992); the effects of export-oriented, cash-crop enclaves on class coalitions (Paige 1975); or the weakening of the state itself due to foreign wars (Skocpol 1979). Rather, the studies of rebellion and state formation presented here demonstrate that both international and domestic investors in cash crops, natural resources, and finance can ally with peasant rebels and, after threatened or actual state collapse, bargain with one another to select new state institutions. Consequently, my theory accounts for intralite differences centered on the types of assets they control, as well as their domestic and foreign origins.

In this vein, the next section defines the central concepts of the study before presenting the theory around which my analyses of subnational rebellions and national-level state formation revolve. Specifically, it addresses the question of why elite participation is critical to the success of peasant rebellions and how allied elites subsequently bargain to select institutions. The third section explains why revolutionary Mexico, late-colonial India, and White-dominated Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) were especially suitable for verifying the theory, along with the evidence and methods used to verify the theory. I conclude with an outline of the book, which shows how individual chapters verify the theory.

## Peasant Rebels and Elite Victors: A Theory

Despite extensive research, scholars who focus on peasant rebellions either ignore the subsequent stage of state formation (Popkin 1979; Scott 1977, 2009; Weinstein 2006; E. Wood 2003) or assume that institutions simply reflect the interests of victorious social classes (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Moore 1966; Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992; Skocpol 1979). The resultant gap in our understanding of the connections between rebellion and state formation in agrarian societies leaves an important question unanswered: why are peasants who risk everything to rebel unable to create postrevolutionary states that best reflect their class interests? This continued marginality is demonstrated repeatedly by elite-dominated state formation in diverse societies across time, from eighteenth-century France to late twentieth-century Mozambique.

To address the gap, this section presents a theory of rebellion and state formation that highlights the critical role of elite classes in helping peasants overcome barriers to collective action. After defining the main groups of actors and concepts, I present the theory in three broad segments: the causes of rebellions, especially the role of elites who deliver resources to peasants;

the effects of elite participation on peasant rebellions; and how subsequent intraelite bargains establish new state institutions.

The theory revolves around two social classes: peasants and elites. Peasants control their own labor; elites fall into two categories based on whether they control fixed assets such as land and natural resources, which cannot be moved out of their country of origin, or mobile assets such as high skills and capital, which can be moved abroad (Boix 2003). In addition to possessing different resources, these classes also differ in size: in agrarian societies, peasants are the most numerous, while elite classes are small. Also, while peasants belong to a particular society, elite classes can either originate in the society or be foreign actors with assets in the society.

A caveat: although an individual's class identity is primarily contingent on the type of assets he or she controls, empirical studies nuance the categorization of individuals or groups within a class through historiographical research and self-identification. Thus, in some areas groups that own small parcels of land can self-identify as peasants, while in other areas scholars classify only landless agricultural laborers as peasants. Similarly, owners of mobile assets referred to as the "bourgeoisie" or "middle classes" can extend from village moneylenders and storekeepers who also own land to merchants who export cash crops or own urban businesses and even banks. Owners of fixed assets can be landlords with seigniorial rights that span centuries; those who grow cash crops on vast tracts of land; or simply landed homesteaders. Because their wealth depends on particular locations—which, moreover, require buildings and equipment for extraction—owners of natural resources such as mines and oil wells are also classified as fixed asset owners.

In this book, I follow Doug McAdam and his colleagues' (2001) archetypal conceptualization of mobilizations, which centers on the characterization of participating actors and processes, to define rebellions. In terms of actors, rebellions involve governments as a "claimant," as an "object of claims," or "a party to the claims" (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 5). With regard to process, rebellions are "episodic, public, collective interactions among makers of claims and their objects" (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 7). The observable outcomes of rebellions, therefore, extend from peaceful protests, marches, tax withholding, and hunger strikes to social banditry and armed insurrections, all of which can be classified as spontaneous and organized rebellion (Lichbach 1994, 394–399). However, this classification excludes everyday forms of individual peasant resistance such as theft, gossip, and the shirking of work (Scott 1985) because they are discrete, uncoordinated, and secretive actions by individuals or small groups that frequently center on grievances against specific people.

States, which rebellions attack and rebels later seek to reestablish, comprise a combination of formal and informal institutions “that structure political, economic, and social interaction” (North 1991, 97). Formal institutions are created by written laws and regulations and enforced by individual bureaucrats and official organizations, which instantiate the state’s monopoly of legitimate coercion over a population in a given territory (Weber [1922] 1978, 54). Informal institutions consist of unwritten traditions; affective loyalties centered on ethnicity, language, and religion; patronage networks; and corruption (Bratton 2007). Formal and informal institutions can complement and interact with one another (Helmke and Levitsky 2004), with such “practices and alliances” acting “to promote a variety of sets of rules, often quite distinct from those set out in the state’s own official laws and regulations” (Migdal 2001, 20).

Extant research posits three different causes of rebellions against established state institutions and the incumbent elites therein: grievances against existing political and economic institutions; political opportunities; and resources to overcome barriers to collective action. Rebels’ grievances can center on a lack of political representation or economic advancement. Such grievances are frequently interrelated because state institutions and policies, such as taxation, affect the distribution of wealth across groups, and the distribution of wealth, in turn, affects groups’ capacity to influence politics. Therefore, rebels in agrarian societies can become aggrieved by a lack of political opportunities to make economic gains (Popkin 1979) or fight against the introduction of institutions that threaten their subsistence (Scott 1977, 2009).

In tandem with political and economic grievances, cultural identities motivate rebellions. Grievances related to ethnicity, language, and religion can act alone or in conjunction with grievances that arise from political and economic marginalization (Hasenclever and Rittberger 2003). By themselves, religious and ethnic grievances extend from demands against the state to practice a religion freely, speak a language, or demonstrate an ethnic identity to demands that a particular religious or ethnolinguistic group dominate state institutions. Religion can also be used to frame notions of injustice and tyranny; to assign responsibility to individuals and groups for these problems; and, subsequently, to provide resolutions such as rebelling to defend religious beliefs or capturing the state (Benford and Snow 2000, 615).

Theories of opportunity structures posit that people rebel when they perceive changes in political and economic institutions that affect “the degree to which groups are likely to be able to gain access to power and to manipulate the political system” (Eisinger 1973, 25). Specifically, apertures in formal

institutions, and consequent rebellions, occur when existing institutions are threatened by instability in alignments among incumbent elites, the development of multiple independent centers of power within a regime, and a decline in the state's capacity for repression (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2009, 263).

In contrast to these theories, *Undoing the Revolution* demonstrates that elite grievances and apertures in the incumbent institutions, and the fracturing of ruling elite coalitions therein, cannot in and of themselves explain successful rebellions. Local rebellions are difficult to carry out because they require resources to start and sustain themselves. Individual peasants should refuse to participate in rebellions. They not only might face significant opportunity costs, such as hours lost in terms of tending their land and cattle; they also risk property damage, injury, and even death from violent repression. Furthermore, the probability that an individual peasant's participation could affect the outcome of a rebellion is extremely low, while nonparticipation could still allow the individual to enjoy the public goods achieved by successful rebellion, such as social welfare policies and better infrastructure—a problem that is often called the “rebel's dilemma” (Lichbach 1994, 387).

Poor peasants, who make up the majority of agents carrying out rebellions (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006), consequently need elite entrepreneurs to provide collective and selective resources, such as information, leadership, and financial incentives, to make the benefits of rebelling outweigh the considerable costs (Lichbach 1994; McCarthy and Zald 2001; Popkin 1988; Wickham-Crowley 1992). Indeed, the need for resources—and therefore for elite allies—is apparent even in rebellions motivated by religion: religious organizations provide intangible and tangible resources that facilitate the initiation and sustaining of conflicts (De Juan 2008). Furthermore, religious and ethnic identities' cross-class appeal reduces prospective elite participants' fears that they will be attacked and their property expropriated by rebelling peasants. Also, religious organizations' provision of resources as well as monitoring and enforcement of participation reduce the cost burden for participating elites.

Elite-peasant alliances can form after a rebellion has broken out (Figure I.1), in which case resources help to sustain and expand the rebellion. Or elites can encourage peasant rebellions (Figure I.2) by providing resources that reduce the costs of peasant participation. Because the increased intensity of elite-peasant interactions centers on shared cultural identities (Walter 2002, 83–84) and lowers barriers to information and enforcement of participation (Olson [1965] 1971), the need for elite support necessitates cross-

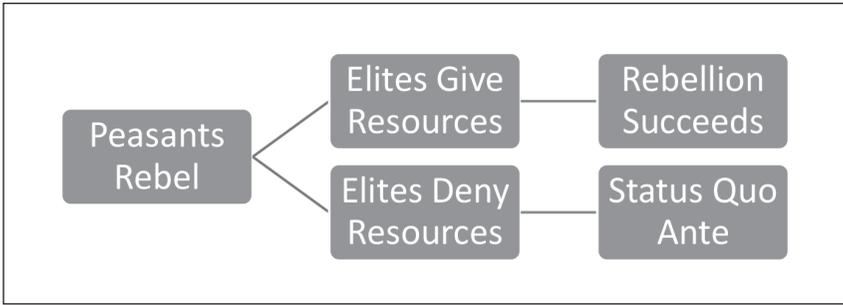


Figure I.1. Peasant uprisings followed by elite resources. (Created by the author.)

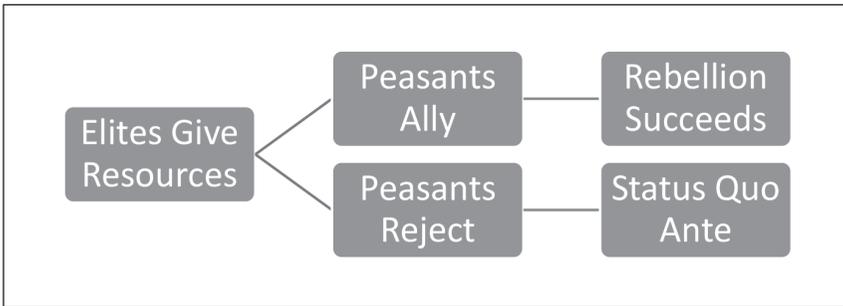


Figure I.2. Elite resources followed by peasant alliances. (Created by the author.)

class alliances at the subnational level, as opposed to the national level. The Janus-faced nature of revolutions portrayed in studies of regional rebellions—instantiated simultaneously in subnational rebellions and seeking nationwide social and institutional transformation—therefore, arises from this phenomenon of localization, compelled by peasants’ need for resources.

After allying with peasants, political leaders from or backed by the elite classes decide the rebels’ strategies and reshape peasants’ grievances to align with elite interests. To do this, the elites selectively offer goods and services to peasant members of political parties or client networks while monitoring and punishing recalcitrant peasants (Lichbach 1994). Even when the political leaders emanate from the peasant class, the resources needed to maintain political organizations and the strategies to acquire and sustain support make them dependent on economic elites. As a result, economic elites’ interests shape political leaders’ decisions, which, in turn, determines the fate of peasant rebels.

Therefore, unlike peasants, economic elites may not be visibly represented on the political stage. They may influence politics by contributing money to political leaders to sustain their popular organizations, or their share of

the economy may implicitly pressure politicians who seek to retain popular support. This phenomenon is present in all three countries I studied. The political-economic effects of the elites' ambitions and actions become evident only via the influence they exert in bargains struck among political leaders to select new state institutions.

When congeries of rebellions cause the prerevolutionary state to approach collapse, or to actually do so, the rebelling elites leverage their smaller numbers and greater resources to bargain among themselves and co-opt segments of the peasantry in order to select new state institutions that support their interests. As a result, postrevolutionary states are formed not by peasants but by elites, institutionalizing the "systematic tendency for 'exploitation' of the great by the small" (Olson [1965] 1971, 29).

Specifically, whereas repressive state institutions become the targets of rebellion, the central obstacle to reestablishing peace after successful rebellions is rebel leaders' fear that post-conflict institutions and incumbent elites will co-opt other groups and sections of their own groups to empower themselves and renew repression (Hartzell, Hoddie, and Rothchild 2001, 199). Underlying this fear is the view that new political institutions will be determinants of *de jure* political power, as well as *de facto* political power "possessed by groups as a result of their wealth, weapons, or ability to resolve collective action problems" (Acemoglu and Robinson 2008, 266–267). Agreements between belligerent groups to end conflict therefore evolve into informal and formal institutions to share or divide power "to limit the capacity of any one party to the conflict to dominate the postwar state and use its advantaged position to harm the interests or survival of its rivals" (Hoddie and Hartzell 2003, 306).

The local rebels are led by political leaders or political-military warlords, both backed by economic elites. Political leaders control political parties with recognized organizational structures and hierarchy of leaders. Political-military warlords extend from leaders of political parties with armed wings or charismatic leaders whose military prowess allows them to build personalist popular organizations. Unlike their political counterparts, economic elites control natural resources, are financiers and bankers, or are landlords producing cash crops for export.

The phase of competition and bargaining among different rebel factions to form new state institutions is influenced by the prerogatives of the political and economic elites who are empowered through rebellions. Thus, the willingness of rebel leaders to compromise is contingent on two necessary and jointly sufficient factors: (1) the increasing costs and risks of continued conflict and (2) whether agreements are preferred by the economic elites underwriting the popular organizations that support the rebel leaders.

Location of elites	Type of assets	Preference on peace
Foreign	Fixed	Oppositional
Domestic	Fixed	Conditional
Foreign	Mobile	Supportive
Domestic	Mobile	Supportive

Furthermore, peace agreements and the selection of state institutions by implication are shaped by three possible preferences of economic elites regarding the cessation of conflict between the rebel leaders that they support: opposition, conditional acceptance, and support for peace. These preferences are determined by the economic elites' origins (Reno 1998) and the specific assets that they control (Boix 2003). If the economic elites are foreign and control fixed assets, such as land or natural resources, they might continue to support rebel leaders and sustain or exacerbate conflicts because new state institutions could heavily tax, or even nationalize, their assets. Paying off local rebel leaders, however, would protect these holdings. In contrast, domestic elites who control similar fixed assets would prefer nationwide peace agreements that are contingent on those agreements' predicted effects—that is, agreements leading to institutions that secure their assets. Finally, domestic and foreign elites who control mobile assets, such as financiers and bankers, favor peace agreements that encourage macroeconomic stability, which benefits them. The alignment of elite location and asset type with their preferences regarding peace agreements is shown in Table I.1.

The elite preferences presented in the table highlight the internal contradiction of peasant rebellions: they are quickly co-opted by elites, and peasants' interests rarely shape new institutions. Rather, political leaders responding to economic elites create institutions that marginalize peasants and serve elite interests. Though peasants may share solidary bonds (Moore 1966) or inhabit moral economies (Scott 1977, 2009), their poverty and large population size render them “incapable of asserting their class interest in their own name” and “finds its final expression in the executive power which subordinates society to itself” (Marx [1852] 1954, 106).

## Comparing Mexico, India, and Zimbabwe: Their Relevance and Methods of Comparison

Comparing the selected cases confirms the critical role of elites in peasant rebellions—specifically, the factors that lead to their participation, their capture of such rebellions, and the elite competition and bargains that deter-

mine state formation. This section therefore allays concerns that the selected cases, comparative methods, and evaluation of evidence were undertaken arbitrarily or handpicked to confirm the posited theory. Specifically, it explains why revolutionary Mexico, colonial India, and White-dominated Zimbabwe are used to verify the theory. The comparative research design is subsequently presented to explain how it reveals the shared and distinct dynamics of rebellions and state formation of each society. The section concludes with a discussion of the types of evidence used and how such evidence is analyzed.

The proposed theory of rebellions and state formation is tested on Mexico from 1910 until the mid-1930s, India between 1920 and 1947, and Zimbabwe from 1965 until 1980. These cases were selected because they were very different in terms of their institutional systems and cultures; they are similar only in the factors of interest to the broader study. Such a combination is especially suitable to highlight the common factors that caused subnational rebellions and state formation that paradoxically benefited elites and marginalized peasants.

The three countries' institutions and cultures varied significantly. Mexico inherited Spanish state institutions as a colonial legacy. Its population was primarily of mixed-race European and indigenous ancestry and Catholic. India inherited British colonial institutions. Its population was divided by more than twenty languages; two major religions (Hinduism and Islam); and, within Hinduism, by caste. Zimbabwe also inherited British colonial institutions but of a variety that favored British settlers with special property rights and political representation. Its population was divided along racial lines between the minority Whites and Black Africans, a group that, in turn, was ethnically divided between the majority Shona and minority Ndebele.

With regard to shared preconditions, during the period under study all three societies were agrarian in that the majority of the people lived in rural areas and depended on agricultural and related activities, such as ranching, for their livelihood. Moreover, the subnational social and economic differences in these societies facilitated the tracking of "spatially uneven effects of processes of economic and political transformation" that characterize developing societies (Snyder 2001, 93). There were five distinct regions in Mexico: the relatively industrialized north; the southeast, centered on plantations; the variegated southwest, which had ranchers and landlords; the west, where homesteaders and ranchers predominated; and the center, where plantations competed with smallholders. The regions of colonial India directly administered by the British centered on the largest provinces: the United Provinces in the north and Bengal Presidency in the east, dominated by large landowners called *taluqdars* and *zamindars*; the Punjab in the northwest, character-

ized by prosperous homesteaders; and the peninsular south, dominated by the Bombay Presidency in the southwest and the Madras Presidency in the southeast, both characterized by smallholding farmers called *ryots*. There were also distinct subregions, such as the Malabar Coast in the southwest. Zimbabwe—or Rhodesia, as it was called during the period under study—was also divided into two major regions centered on indigenous ethnic groups. The north and east were primarily inhabited by the Shona, who composed approximately 80 percent of Zimbabwe’s indigenous populace. The region was characterized by a humid subtropical climate suitable for intensive and extensive agriculture, especially tobacco, but also maize and wheat. Thus, it became the center of the land grants for White colonial settlers. The warm semiarid south and southwest, mainly suitable for cattle raising, were dominated by the Ndebele, who composed the other 20 percent of the country’s indigenous population. The region’s economic activity centered on the city of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe’s economic and commercial capital.

In terms of the proximate causes and ultimate outcomes of rebellions, comparisons of subnational rebellions across the three countries demonstrate that resources garnered from elite participation were critical to their success. The first comparative study of rebellions in Mexico and India shows that elite participation itself is necessary and sufficient to cause successful rebellions. The second study, of religiously motivated rebellions, explains why shared religion propels elite participation in peasant rebellions. The third comparative study demonstrates that elite participation in peasant rebellions is also driven by combinations of political and economic grievances, as opposed to only economic or political ones. Furthermore, a common theme in the studies of regional rebellions is the co-optation of rebelling peasants by elite organizations, which provided the necessary resources to begin and sustain rebellions, whether these organizations were dominated by Mexican warlords, India’s Congress Party, or the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

Finally, the three national-level studies reveal that new state institutions were shaped by elite bargains: between domestic and foreign (primarily American) business and landed interests in Mexico; between rural middle class and domestic business interests in India; and between international (specifically, British) investors in natural resources across Africa in Zimbabwe. As a result, peasants’ interests became marginalized in all three societies: by the absence of political freedom in postrevolutionary Mexico, the denial of wealth redistribution in postcolonial India, and the lack of both in postindependence Zimbabwe.

The source materials for the study of nine regional rebellions and three cases of state formation combine primary and secondary sources. The sec-

ondary sources extend from economic, anthropological, and sociological to historiographical studies of the periods under analysis. The primary sources include public records and declassified government reports from various archives in Mexico, India, Britain, and the United States. Contemporaneous reports from private companies, newspapers, and monographs by relevant actors are also used. Evidence from these sources was contextualized through conversations and correspondence with local scholars in Mexico, India, and Zimbabwe.

## How Peasant Revolts Empower Elites: A Road Map from Rebellions to State Formation

The organization of *Undoing the Revolution*—from a comparative focus on subnational rebellions across countries to considering state formation in each country—aims to highlight that peasant rebellions cannot achieve substantive redistribution of power and wealth because the inequality of resources continues to favor elite classes. In this vein, the individual chapters answer specific research questions based on several broader inquiries. Why are coalitions between elites and peasants critical to successful rebellions? What are the effects of cultural values, such as religion, on elite participation? Do elites ally with peasants as a result of grievances caused by political and economic marginalization? What are the immediate effects of elite participation on these rebellions? Under what conditions do political, political-military, and economic elites agree to cease conflict? And finally, how do elite bargains shape new state institutions?

Chapter 1 compares an uprising in northern Mexico and two rebellions in colonial northern India to test four explanations for successful peasant rebellions: grievances caused by exclusionary political institutions; grievances caused by marginalizing economic institutions; new political opportunities; and collaboration between rebelling elites and peasants. The findings demonstrate that elite partnership with peasants in northern Mexico and the second rebellion in northern India was critical to the success of these rebellions because the elites delivered resources unavailable to the larger and poorer peasantry—including funds and organizing capabilities—that lowered barriers to collective action. In contrast, a lack of elite participation led to the failure of the first rebellion in northern India. The effects of economic and political grievances and of new opportunities in determining the success of rebellions are shown to be inconclusive.

Chapter 2 explains why elite classes participate in religiously motivated peasant rebellions. The chapter compares the Moplah Rebellion in colonial India, the Cristero Rebellion in revolutionary Mexico, and the Chimurenga

Rebellion in White settler-controlled Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) to test three common explanations for elite participation: low inequality between elites and peasants; moderate political repression or opportunity; and shared religious organizations with peasants. The findings reveal that elite cooperation is contingent on shared religion because it creates cross-class ideologies and lowers the costs of elite participation. The effects of inequality of wealth and political opportunities are, therefore, inconclusive.

Chapter 3 investigates the role of grievances in driving elites to participate in peasant rebellions. In the vein of the prior studies, the chapter compares northwestern, eastern, and peninsular southern India to southeastern, southwestern, and central Mexico to test three explanations for elite participation: low inequality between elites and peasants; political opportunities; and elite grievances against political and economic marginalization. The comparison demonstrates that elite cooperation was caused by grievances against political and economic marginalization, and such grievances could be distinct from those of rebelling peasants. The effects of lower inequality and political opportunities, however, remain inconclusive.

Chapter 4 evaluates the conditions under which political-military leaders create peace agreements to establish postrevolutionary state institutions. Using the case of Mexico from 1910 to 1930, the chapter presents an intuitive explanation centered on the co-optation of peasant rebels into elite-controlled organizations; the rising costs of continued conflict; and the dependence of political-military leaders on domestic and international economic interests. The findings demonstrate that Mexican warlords, called “caudillos,” joined peace agreements under two conditions: (1) when the costs and risks of competing to retain power became intolerable and (2) when their economic backers incentivized such agreements. The critical precondition was the absorption of peasants into caudillo-controlled organizations. Furthermore, the chapter highlights that the type of assets controlled by supporting economic elites determines whether they oppose, conditionally accept, or actively favor such peace agreements. Foreign investors whose investments in natural resources did not rely on domestic producers opposed such agreements. Landowners accepted peace agreements, but only if the agreements ensured their local dominance. Domestic financial and industrial elites favored peace agreements.

Chapter 5 resolves the important puzzle of why democratic leaders in developing countries choose economic strategies that profit elites and marginalize peasants whose support is needed to retain power. Using the case of India from the 1930s until decolonization in 1947, the chapter reveals that the outcome of the competition between dominant economic interests in late-colonial India led to the inauguration of policies benefiting domestic

industrialists, at the cost of foreign investors and landowners. In particular, the findings demonstrate how domestic capitalists, primarily centered in the western Indian city of Bombay, came to influence the anticolonial Congress Party, which subsequently dominated the postcolonial state institutions. Moreover, the account of the competition among economic elites provides a novel explanation for the partition of India: threatened by postcolonial land reforms, Muslim landowners from northern and northwestern India collaborated with a Muslim peasant rebellion against Hindu landlords in eastern India to exit the polity and form Pakistan.

Chapter 6 assesses how postrevolutionary institutions can deny peasants both political freedom and economic development. The chapter centers on the explanation that Britain's actions in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe through the period of conflict were contingent on its investments in Africa. Initially, Britain's dependence on South Africa pushed it to a policy of inaction toward Rhodesia's White minority regime. Subsequently, the rise of Nigeria, and South Africa's relative decline, led to Britain's renewed efforts to resolve the conflict in 1978–1980. Through the Lancaster Agreement of 1979 and the elections in 1980, Britain's primary interests were to avoid the costs of Whites' fleeing from Rhodesia to Britain and retain the sympathy of Black African countries and the support of South Africa. These aims led to parallel policies of inaction against voter intimidation by ZANU and covert machinations to forge a coalition government that included the Whites. The broader theory that domestic owners of fixed assets accept regimes that protect their local assets is also reaffirmed by a study of White Rhodesians, whose economic and political power was based on the racialized control of agricultural land and natural resources. Specifically, as the costs of continued conflict became intolerable, White Rhodesians unsuccessfully attempted a negotiated transition to Black majority rule with guarantees for the White minority.

The Conclusion begins with a summary of the findings, then discusses the book's core contributions to research on peasant rebellions and the formation of state institutions. The second segment addresses *Undoing the Revolution's* relevance to policy making. Most important, the findings imply that inequality of wealth in agrarian societies makes elites indispensable and renders peasants unable to avoid alliances, co-optation, and, ultimately, marginalization, even after successful rebellions. Consequently, international efforts to build responsive state institutions in such societies may be futile because states are inevitably captured by economic elites and their political interlocutors.