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RPPR Final Report

as of 30-May-2019

Agency Code:

Proposal Number: 65985LSMRI

Agreement Number: W911NF-14-1-0527

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Final Report for Period Beginning 01-Sep-2014 and Ending 28-Feb-2019

Title: Understanding the Origin, Characteristics, and Implications of Mass Political Movements

Begin Performance Period: 01-Sep-2014

End Performance Period: 28-Feb-2019

Report Term: 0-Other

Submitted By: Stephen Kosack

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STEM Degrees:

STEM Participants:

Major Goals: Systemic change in governance and political institutions often occurs when large numbers of citizens mobilize to press for it. But mass movements are rare, which constrains our understanding of how they influence political and policy responsiveness, inclusion, and change. Mass mobilization is the subject of a large, interdisciplinary academic literature, including some of the most influential scholarship on political and economic change. But studies of mass mobilization have typically focused on well-known movements and on mobilizations in one or a limited number of countries or historical periods, such as post-colonial struggles or the recent Arab Spring, and thus inevitably neglect less well-known mobilizations and less well-studied historical periods, limiting our general understanding of broader questions about mass mobilization that require a more comprehensive perspective—questions such as how movements and states interact in ways that shape their implications for their societies, or how political, economic, demographic, and other factors influence how movements organize and seek change. Thus at a time of increasing mobilization that is reshaping the political and economic landscape in much of the world, and of increasing interest among scholars, policymakers, and the general public in mobilization, we lack a comprehensive general understanding of how mobilization influences political responsiveness, inclusion, and change.

This project seeks to help fill this gap in two ways.

First, we use historical scholarship and texts to develop a comprehensive survey of movements over the last two centuries in which more than a thousand people were willing to engage in personally costly mobilization for at least a month around a shared political goal. Our survey contributes to a small but growing number of scholarly efforts to systematically document mass mobilizations, but our work differs in its focus on comprehensiveness: through thorough and systematic study of historical scholarship and texts, we try to understand every distinct enduring mobilization in a political area from 1800 to 2012. Over the last eight years, five with support from the Minerva program, we have been able to systematically survey mass mobilization from 1800 to 2012 in the areas currently governed by 49 modern nation-states; in all our survey includes 791 distinct mobilizations. In compiling this survey, researchers on the team spent tens of thousands of hours studying thousands of scholarly volumes, articles, news reports, and other historical texts; two researchers independently studied each movement and discussed the understanding they had developed in structured debates until the team reached consensus about any areas where their sources disagreed. Mobilization is often contentious and historical understanding of movements is often contested; the approach our team takes is designed to allow as thorough and rigorous a survey as possible of every large mobilization and any resulting political and policy changes.

Second, we use this historical survey to understand, more systematically than has been possible with more

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focused perspectives, how movements and governments in varied political-economic environments have interacted over time with varying implications, from destructive cycles of contention that can spiral into violence to meaningful increases in political responsiveness and inclusion that foster more accepted and legitimate political and economic orders.

Accomplishments: The final year of the project has concentrated on completing our checks for the quality and consistency of our historical survey. In particular, we have:

1. Completed minor additions to our earlier surveys of countries in the Middle East and North Africa, based on recently published historical sources which included more mobilizations, including: Iran, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Kuwait, Syria, and Turkey.
2. Completed minor re-surveying of earlier Brazil and Georgia, based on improved project methods that identified more mobilizations (see previous reports for details).

In addition, we have concentrated on finishing a paper examining our theoretical framework with the survey of mobilization in the Middle East and North Africa; finishing a basic analytical paper describing in the Middle East and North Africa to accompany the theoretical analyses; and preparing for analyses of all surveyed countries when quality checks of these surveys have been completed.

Secondary goals have included preparation for dissemination and outreach efforts to accompany the public release of the historical survey, including project summaries and blog posts to describe the project's approach and methods.

Training Opportunities: Like last year, the major training opportunity this year is for analysis and paper writing. We have worked hard over the last year to provide several opportunities for team members to undertake basic statistical and qualitative analyses and contribute to papers using the survey. As many of the team members had not engaged in this sort of academic research before, the project management team developed a mentorship approach, similar to the lab model used in many disciplines, in which a more advanced team member more familiar with paper writing (typically a PhD student) takes primary responsibility for each paper and divides responsibilities—literature reviews, analysis, case studies, writing, making tables—among team members interested in those roles. (No new project staff were added this year.)

Note that because the focus of the project has shifted from data gathering to data quality checks and analyses and paper writing, we did not hold a training workshop this year as we have in previous years, but team members have continued to participate in regular (normally weekly) remote conversations and collaborations on project work.

Results Dissemination: Dissemination is forthcoming; we will note future presentations and papers.

Honors and Awards: Nothing to Report

Protocol Activity Status:

Technology Transfer: Nothing to Report

PARTICIPANTS:

Participant Type: Non-Student Research Assistant

Participant: Raafi-Karim Alidina

Person Months Worked: 10.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Graduate Student (research assistant)

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Participant: Amy Beck Harris
Person Months Worked: 5.00
Project Contribution:
International Collaboration:
International Travel:
National Academy Member: N
Other Collaborators:

Funding Support:

Participant Type: Graduate Student (research assistant)

Participant: Cathleen Buzan
Person Months Worked: 14.00
Project Contribution:
International Collaboration:
International Travel:
National Academy Member: N
Other Collaborators:

Funding Support:

Participant Type: Non-Student Research Assistant

Participant: Alicia Erickson
Person Months Worked: 15.00
Project Contribution:
International Collaboration:
International Travel:
National Academy Member: N
Other Collaborators:

Funding Support:

Participant Type: Graduate Student (research assistant)

Participant: Ashley Fabrizio
Person Months Worked: 14.00
Project Contribution:
International Collaboration:
International Travel:
National Academy Member: N
Other Collaborators:

Funding Support:

Participant Type: Graduate Student (research assistant)

Participant: Alexander Farley
Person Months Worked: 3.00
Project Contribution:
International Collaboration:
International Travel:
National Academy Member: N
Other Collaborators:

Funding Support:

Participant Type: Graduate Student (research assistant)

Participant: Daniel Hemenway
Person Months Worked: 15.00
Project Contribution:
International Collaboration:
International Travel:
National Academy Member: N
Other Collaborators:

Funding Support:

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Participant Type: PD/PI

Participant: Stephen Kosack

Person Months Worked: 8.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Undergraduate Student

Participant: Anna Mikkelsen

Person Months Worked: 5.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Non-Student Research Assistant

Participant: Anja Nilsson

Person Months Worked: 2.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Non-Student Research Assistant

Participant: Shalini Rao

Person Months Worked: 5.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Non-Student Research Assistant

Participant: Paul Schied

Person Months Worked: 1.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Graduate Student (research assistant)

Participant: Sam Selsky

Person Months Worked: 10.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

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Participant Type: Postdoctoral (scholar, fellow or other postdoctoral position)

Participant: Evann Smith

Person Months Worked: 13.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Graduate Student (research assistant)

Participant: Kai Stern

Person Months Worked: 5.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Undergraduate Student

Participant: Eric Seely

Person Months Worked: 14.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Other Professional

Participant: Courtney Tolmie

Person Months Worked: 10.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Undergraduate Student

Participant: Lindsey Trimmer

Person Months Worked: 7.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

Participant Type: Graduate Student (research assistant)

Participant: Erika VanHorne

Person Months Worked: 14.00

Funding Support:

Project Contribution:

International Collaboration:

International Travel:

National Academy Member: N

Other Collaborators:

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Nothing to report in the uploaded pdf (see accomplishments)