

Editorial

Benjamin Abrams and Giovanni A. Travaglini

This issue of *Contention* is definitively international, featuring data and cases from dozens of countries including Rwanda and China. We are proud to be a journal sought out by scholars working on diverse non-Western cases as well as by those conducting ambitious international analyses. As editors, we firmly believe that an interdisciplinary journal is best served by also being international, and as the journal continues to grow, we are looking to turn our attention toward building editorial teams featuring excellent scholars from around the world. We hope that the variety of international cases in our pages will one day be mirrored by a similarly international community of authors, reviewers, and editors.

The first article in this issue, “The Contribution of Social Movement Theory to Understanding Genocide: Evidence from Rwanda” by Aliza Luft, brings together several fields of study to offer an impressive and unique contribution. Luft draws together the violence turn in the study of contentious politics with the pressing question of genocide research, a notably thorny area in which little general theory has so far been generated. Luft makes a compelling case for the analysis of genocide using ideas with their origins in the social movements and contentious politics fields. She offers a thorough historical review of the literatures she recruits for this project before turning to a distinctive empirical analysis of civilian participation in the Rwandan genocide.

The second article in this issue, “Protest Events, Welfare Generosity, and Welfare State Regimes: A Comparative Analysis of Welfare States and Social Unrest” by David Pritchard, addresses an interesting puzzle: the question of whether social welfare really does forestall revolution, protest, and political violence. Using data from the Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive and the Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset, Pritchard demonstrates the existence of a link between the provision of extensive welfare and the rate of riots, demonstrations, general strikes,



political assassinations, and attempted revolutions, offering insightful explanations about the underlying mechanisms with recourse to theories from across academic disciplines.

This issue's third article, Matthew Schoene's "Institutional Distrust, Institutional Participation, and Protest Behavior in the European Social Movement Sector," draws on recent data on European protest movements (7th wave of the European Social Survey) to offer some highly insightful reflections on institutional distrust, institutional participation, and social protest. Schoene argues that institutional distrust and participation should be considered as highly important dynamics for European social movements, showing that institutional distrust exhibits a positive connection to some types of contention and that active participation in political institutions is an even more powerful predictor of contentious participation.

The fourth article in this issue takes us to China and reflects on the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 (of which this year is, correspondingly, the 30th anniversary). Rilly Chen and Fei Yan's "Dynamics of Multidimensional Interaction: The Beijing Upheaval of 1989 Revisited" offers carefully argued, insightful, and interesting historical contributions to the literature on Tiananmen Square, looking at how the complex interactions between elite student activists and Communist Party officials set the stage for brutal repression by escalating the stakes for both sides of the conflict.

The fifth article in this issue is "The (R)evolution Is Dead, Long Live the (R)evolution!" This provocatively titled piece by Daniel Ritter engages with the "Epoch of Revolution Debate" cultivated over the past few volumes of *Contention* with some remarkable insight and precision. Ritter contends that, rather than debating the veracity of strict definitions that harshly delineate between revolutions of the orthodox type and nonrevolutionary conflicts, scholars should take a more inclusive approach. Ritter proposes that current studies of revolution are too modest, anxious, and self-limiting. He argues convincingly that future research on revolution should turn its focus away from similarity-driven comparison and toward tackling seemingly unrelated cases, exposing the diverse and complex patterns that they share.

The final contribution to this issue, by Benjamin Abrams, is a short essay discussing the common pitfalls faced by reviewers for journals, which—like *Contention*—address interdisciplinary, generalist, or otherwise broad-scope audiences. "Reviewing for Interdisciplinary and Broad-Scope Journals: An Editor's Perspective" was written with the intention of providing both a straightforward resource for those new to the review process and a reflection on the concerns of a newer generation of editors for scholars who are old hands in a changing system.