

Gov 97 Week 8: Democratic Revolutions

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Q: When/why do countries change from authoritarian to democratic regimes?

(1) What contributes to the destabilization of authoritarian regimes? (Brownlee et al)

- Determinants of regime stability: loyalty, natural resources

(2) What contributes to democratic transition? (Fish, McFaul)

- Determinants of regime change: distribution of power, natural resources
- Background conditions for democratization: national unity (Rustow), socioeconomic conditions, religion/culture?

(3) What contributes to democratic consolidation? (Ziblatt)

(4) Can/should democracy be established democratically?

	Main argument	DV	IV	Causal pathways	Critique
McFaul (2002)	Q: What is the model of regime change in EE/ex-SU after 1989/1991? A: A <i>non-cooperative</i> model of transition (vs Rustow (1970) for e.g.) Scope: EE/ex-SU	Democratic institutions - Freedom House ratings from 2000 (The FH ratings of free, partly free, not free were converted into democracies, partial democracies, dictatorships)	Distribution of power between autocrats (old regime) and democrats (challengers). - Outcome of legislative elections in the immediate transition period (1989-92). Clear victory = at least 60% of the vote.	If the democrats won → hegemonic imposition of democratic institutions (e.g. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania). If the autocrats won → hegemonic imposition of autocratic institutions (e.g. Krygyzstan, Uzbekistan, Belarus) If no clear victor, the conflict was protracted, and the outcome could go either way. (e.g. Moldova → democracy; Russia and Ukraine → partial and unconsolidated democracy; Tajikistan → civil war, then unstable autocracy)	Should the distribution of power be the IV or the DV? How do democrats get a “decisive power advantage” over other parties? This might be the proximate cause of the kind of institutions set up, but are there structural forces at work? Too much a just-so story? E.g. for Russia and Ukraine: has the story only just ended? Why are the FH ratings from 2000 the right measurements to use? (FH: looks at pol rights, civil rights and economic rights.) Generalizable, but not very useful.
Fish (2005)	Q: What is the effect of natural resources (oil) on democracy in Russia? A: Negative,	Democracy - Voice and Accountability (VA) scores from the World Bank – capturing	Natural resources - Natural resources (incl oil, diamonds, metals) as % of exports	Alternative explanations rejected: - Rentier effect: but non-tax revenue is not disproportionately large in Russia (as % of central govt revenue or expenditure) - Repression effect: mil exp in Russia as a % of GNI is disproportionately higher than	On the alternative explanations: - So what would be a good measure of the repression effect? Is it plausible that mil exp is correlated to exp on internal security? - On the modernization effect: what about

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	<p>because of corruption</p> <p>Scope: Russia</p>	<p>perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in the selection of their govt, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media.</p>		<p>the global mean and for post-Communist countries, but mil exp may not be a good measure of exp on <i>internal</i> security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modernization effect: but Russia is fairly modern, measured in terms of TVs and telephones (per 1000 people), literacy rate, fertility rate <p>The causal pathway: corruption. The causal link between corruption and political regime/political openness runs both ways. Evidence: correlation btw natural resources and "control of corruption" score (by Kaufman and others) Corruption in Russia → diminishes elite dd for pol openness (people associate democracy with corruption) Natural resources → facilitates corruption (through "rigged privatization" of oil, gas and metals companies, and export licences for these fuels and metals Natural resources → greater economic intervention in the market. Correlated with lower economic freedom index scores. Thought to lead to less open politics.</p>	<p>other mechanisms, e.g. education? The rise of a middle class? Growing incomes and less income inequality? No evidence provided for these either way. More imp't mechanisms than consumer goods.</p> <p>On corruption:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only anecdotal/suggestive evidence that corruption lowers demand for democracy (inferred from Putin's popularity + his promise to clean up the govt) - Not clear that it was natural resources → corruption – yes the corruption is from monopolies of natural resources, but is that why fairer institutions couldn't be established? Couldn't fairer auctions of the oil, gas etc industries have been carried out? - No evidence that greater economic statism → less democracy, or how this causal mechanism might work (beyond positing that there's a correlation between economic and political freedom) - Using VA scores: measuring political openness rather than just the presence of political institutions – capturing something about the <i>quality</i> of democracy as well as the estbt of democratic institutions? (i.e. no-one really uses Schumpeter's parsimonious definition of democracy)
Brownlee et al (2013)	<p>Q: Why did the Arab Spring lead to democzn in some countries and not others?</p> <p>A: Depends on</p>	<p>Regime change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ousting of an authoritarian ruler and his inner circle 	<p>Oil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OPEC membership + Bahrain because it has high petrochemical 	<p>In non-hereditary regimes without oil: uprisings → elite defection → breakdown of despotic power → regime change</p> <p>In hereditary <i>or</i> major oil exporters: no regime change.</p>	<p>On the loyalty of the army: doesn't that sound a bit like post-hoc rationalization? Given a successful uprising in Egypt and an unsuccessful one in Syria (seems like it anyway), of course the army was more loyal in Syria. But why was it that Hafez el-</p>

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	<p>money and loyalty.</p> <p>Scope: ME countries/Arab Spring</p>		<p>rents even though its reserves are fairly small</p> <p>Loyalty - Instance of hereditary succession in the post-colonial period (1970s onwards)</p>	<p>Oil: autocratic regimes can buy quiescence (e.g. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia increasing public sector salaries/grants to citizens) or the means of suppression (oil exporters spend more on mil exp)</p> <p>Loyalty: command the loyalty of the army e.g. many Assad relatives among high-ranking army officers</p>	<p>Assad was able to pass the govt on to his son Bashar el-Assad (2000) and Hosni Mubarak wasn't (to Gamal Mubarak, 2011)?</p> <p>Are popular uprising caused by exogenous factors?</p> <p>Possibly not generalizable. Are the effects of oil the same as the effects of other natural resources? (The Michael Ross 2001 article: some of the causal mechanisms might work for minerals too.) The loyalty effect doesn't really appear generalizable (except as a truism: a regime with greater control of the means of violence will be more stable than a regime without).</p> <p>Other variables? What about religion/culture?</p>
Ziblatt (2009)	<p>Socioeconomic inequality → electoral fraud</p> <p>Scope: federal pmtary elections in Imperial Germany (1871-1912)</p>	<p>Electoral fraud - No. of complaints in federal elections in IG</p>	<p>Landholding inequality - Gini coeff of farm sizes in pmtary districts (also looked at the share of land held by the largest landowners and the ave. size of farms in the district)</p>	<p>- Traditional social power effect: patron-client relns</p> <p>- "Capture" effect: local elites "captured" local public officials, who manipulated election results</p> <p>Evidence: more complaints abt local officials than about landlords; local govt positions more likely to be staffed by prominent local nobility in districts with higher landholding inequality</p>	<p>- Fedl elns in IG a good case because there was a uniform national el system (vs Britain, for e.g.)</p> <p>- Why <i>landholding</i> inequality? Was it correlated with social position? (But tradl patron-client relns in the cty side were eroding.)</p> <p>- Control variables: partisanship, econ devt (% of people empd in the agric sector), share of the SPD's vote, relig polarization score,</p> <p>Generalizable? Ziblatt: socioeconomic conditions can affect the functioning of pol institutions.</p>

Taking apart a causal argument (from Emily Clough's handout):

1) Conceptual validity: did the author set up the puzzle properly?

- What question or puzzle is the author trying to solve? Is this a real puzzle in the literature?
- What is her main argument?
- Are her concepts clearly articulated and defined?

2) Methodology: how did the author try to solve the puzzle?

- Variables
 - What is the dependent variable chosen? What is the explanatory variable? Are they good measures of whatever it is the author is trying to test?
 - What are the control variables? Are they good measures of whatever it is the author is trying to test? Did the author omit any important (in your view) control variables?
- Cases
 - Which cases were chosen? (This includes the specific events/states chosen and the time period in which they occurred.) Are they representative of the overall universe of cases the author wants to theorize about?
 - How many cases were chosen? Is the number large enough to generalize from?
 - Is there sufficient variation in the dependent variable for the author to generalize about these cases? (E.g. investigating the impact of oil revenue in the Middle East alone.)

3) Correlation and cause: what is the relation between the dependent variable and the explanatory variables?

- Is there a correlation between the dependent variable and the explanatory variables?
- If the author is making a causal argument, what are the causal mechanisms proposed? Does she provide evidence for them?
 - Think about the timeframe for the causal argument. Are the explanatory variables too close in time to the dependent variable? (E.g. Dan Ziblatt's example: suicide is caused by X putting a gun to his head and pulling the trigger.) If the explanatory variables are very far removed in time from the dependent variable, what is the sequence of events that led from one to the other? Does the author establish a causal chain of events? (E.g. Acemoglu and Robinson's claim that the kinds of institutions established at the beginning of the American colonies by Spanish and English colonizers had an effect on the kinds of institutions and the economic performance of the countries today. Why and how did the effect of the colonial institutions persist through time?)
- Endogeneity problems: e.g. could the causal direction go the other way? Are there omitted variables?
- Alternative explanations: did the author rule out alternative explanations, e.g. through the selection of control variables? Did she explain why her theory was better than other theories?

4) Generalizability

- Is the author's theory generalizable to other cases? Which other cases?
- Does this theory advance our theoretical understanding of the political world? How?

- What are the normative implications?
- What are the policy implications?

Sent in advance:

We're talking about democratic revolutions this week.

One way to think about it: there are at least two different processes here: uprisings --> fall of authoritarian regimes --> establishment of democratic regimes. Which leads us naturally to the following questions:

1. When do uprisings lead to the fall of authoritarian regimes? Or, to put it another way, what are some factors which lead to the fall of authoritarian regimes? (Brownlee et al)
2. And what are some factors which lead to the establishment of democratic institutions, or inhibit the establishment of such institutions? (McFaul, Fish)
3. Are there necessary background conditions for democracy? Another way to put it: are democratic institutions sufficient for democracy? (Rustow, Ziblatt)
4. Rustow is applicable to all these questions in a way, because he has a four-stage model of the democratization process. Do you find his model convincing?



Source: <http://desertpeace.wordpress.com/2011/02/21/attempting-to-salvage-democracy-in-israel/>