“Democratization and Civil Conflict”

1 Editorial Board Note
Staffan I. Lindberg, Jørgen Møller, and Svend-Erik Skaaning

1 Democratization and Civil Conflict
Barış Ari, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, Håvard Hegre, and Tore Wig

1 Electoral Violence: The Emergence of a Research Field
Hanne Fjelde and Kristine Höglund

2 Sanctions, Autocratic Regimes, and Conflict
Abel Escribà-Folch and Joseph Wright

2 Striving for Democracy?
Michael Bang Petersen, Henrikas Bartuševičius, Florian van Laerwen

3 Putting the Civil Conflict Nexus in Historical Perspective
Jørgen Møller

26 New Research
35 Editorial Committee

I feel very gratified to introduce the first issue with a set of Guest Editors in a long while. We do our best at the editorial board to try to keep up with which issues in the discipline need attention to serve the membership. We have also been rotating members in and out of the editorial board to vary the competencies and areas we cover. I wish to extend a sincere and deepfelt gratitude to Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang, Kelly McMann, and Brigitte Zimmerman who are now leaving the editorial board after serving all of us in the best from the Editorial Board

That “institutions matter” is an article of faith for political scientists, and there are strong reasons to believe that the degree to which institutions are democratic should shape the prospects for violent conflict. First, democracy expands opportunities for political competition and prospects for inclusion. A lack of political access may by itself provide a possible grievance, motivation or justification for resort to violence, and unelected government is the “original sin” of all autocratic rulers. Second, democratic institutions provide avenues for actors to pursue their interest and thus reduce the obstacles to non-violent bargaining. They also help reduce uncertainty and resolve commitment problems between actors that otherwise might resort to conflict. Third, democracy is expected to induce compliance where individuals accept decisions even if they dis-agree with their content when reached by a process deemed to be fair. Such “losers' consent” is often seen a defining characteristic of successful democratic institutions.1


The introduction of competitive elections constitutes a fundamental component in the transition from authoritarian to democratic politics. However, the risk that electoral competition will degenerate into violence in countries emerging from authoritarian rule is significant and violence has been a pervasive feature of electoral politics across the globe. Threats, intimidation and violence directed against voters and political candidates, especially by the incumbent, accompanied as many as 58 percent of all elections held in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1998 and 2008.1 In the fifth round of the Afrobarometer survey, 48 percent of all voters across the 33 countries surveyed reported that they fear violence during elections.2

Violent elections hinder individuals from exercising their political rights, undermine the legitimacy of democratic institutions and polarize intergroup relations. Thus, election-


SANCTIONS, AUTOCRATIC REGIMES, AND CONFLICT
Abel Escribà-Folch, Universitat Pompeu Fabra
Joseph Wright, Penn State University

We explore the regimes-conflict nexus by discussing the potential impact of foreign economic coercion. Economic sanctions are a widely used instrument of international pressure. The decade of the 1990s was not only dubbed by some as the ‘sanctions decade’ but Western powers have since imposed over 50 new sanctions since 2000. In the past 25 years, sanctions have increasingly targeted autocratic rulers as well as military and rebel leaders involved in civil conflicts. Sanctions are perhaps the most widely-used and visible form of foreign pressure; and dictatorships are historically their main target. Despite their prevalence, however, many argue that economic sanctions are largely ineffective.

Many scholars have explored the conditions under which sanctions can be effective, with an initial focus on the features of the sanctions themselves: the economic costs sanctions imposed on targets, the degree of coordination among senders, and whether the sanctions focus on trade or financial transactions. This literature largely ignored differences – both economic and political – among the targets.

Research focusing on sanctions’ characteristics shows that they are most likely to coerce the target by credibly and effectively restricting trade or financial exchanges. However, for this to occur, the economic costs to the target country must have political consequences for the regime in power. Only then will target governments or other relevant actors consider changing policy. Most sanctions episodes, especially since the end of the Cold War, have been initiated with the goal of promoting regime change and democratization. Yet, conceding on policy demands is not the same as conceding to a highly salient issue such as regime change, which entails giving up a monopoly on political power. Because sanctions most often target dictatorships and do so with the goal of regime change or promote peace, assessing sanctions effectiveness and their impact on conflict requires

STRIVING FOR DEMOCRACY? A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON DEMOCRATIZATION AND CIVIL CONFLICT
Michael Bang Petersen, Aarhus University
Henrikas Bartusevičius, Aarhus University
Florian van Leeuwen, Aarhus University

Research has shown that democratization (or the transition from authoritarianism to democracy) increases the risk of civil conflict or civil war (hereafter conflict). This relationship has been explained in several ways. Some scholars highlight international factors and argue that external support or opposition to democracy plays the major role in conflict. Other scholars underline political institutions and claim that competitiveness of elections and the rule of law are the main variables accounting for conflict. Others emphasize group-level factors and argue that exclusion of particular social groups from democratic processes is the key to understanding violence.

In this essay, we offer a complimentary account on the democratization-conflict nexus that advocates analysis of conflict behavior at the individual level and focuses on the human mind. What are the psychological motivations for violence and why are they likely to be triggered in the context of democratization? What are, in other words, the psychological underpinnings of the democratization-conflict nexus? In turning the focus from the macro- to the micro-level, we follow advances in other fields. Consider, for instance, Beissinger’s study that has challenged the common claim that participation in protest is often motivated by the abstract notion of political freedom. His survey of Orange revolutionaries in Ukraine has shown that participants were largely motivated by general disdain for the incumbent


Putting the Civil Conflict-Regime Nexus in Historical Perspective
Jørgen Møller, Aarhus University

The social sciences are experiencing a “historical turn,” which in recent years has had a huge impact on the democratization literature. Conflict researchers are similarly beginning to probe deeper historical dimensions of present-day internal conflicts. Nonetheless, most of the recent large-N analysis addressing these two subjects has restricted its focus to the post-1945 world, and often only to a shorter part of it. It is therefore a propitious moment to carry out a more principled discussion of the ways in which the intersection between these two disciplines – that is, the civil conflict-regime nexus – might benefit from going historical?

This intersection concerns a relatively broad subject matter, namely internal conflicts which are fought over political issues, i.e., which concern the regime, as well as political changes that trigger internal conflicts. To focus my discussion, I will use as a foil from the editorial board, continue which concern the regime, as well as political changes that trigger internal conflicts. To focus my discussion, I will use as a foil This intersection concerns a relatively broad subject matter, namely internal conflicts which are fought over political issues, i.e., which concern the regime, as well as political changes that trigger internal conflicts. To focus my discussion, I will use as a foil

This newsletter on the civil conflict-regime nexus has restricted its focus to the post-1945 world, and often only to a shorter part of it. It is therefore unsurprising that scholars have realized that the study of regime breakdowns, and civil wars in modern territorial states. Moreover, since the third wave of democratization began in 1974, the death toll of such internal conflicts has far surpassed those of interstate warfare.

It is therefore unsurprising that scholars have found the civil conflict-regime nexus as long as there has been social science. However, in recent generations these attempts have tended to run up against disciplinary boundaries because conflict research has traditionally been part of International Relations whereas the study of regime change has belonged in the sub-field of Comparative Politics. Recent trends in the literature show that many scholars now trespass these disciplinary boundaries. This newsletter on the civil conflict-regime nexus can be seen as part of this development. It contains a series of attempts by researchers within conflict and democratization studies to probe the intersection between these two bodies of literature, and it brings novel psychological and historical perspectives to this fusion.

In the first article, Barış Ari, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, Håvard Hegre, and Tore Wrig sets the stage by critically reviewing recent scholarship on democratization and civil conflict. This is followed by an article on the emerging research field of electoral violence by Hanne Fjelde and Kristine Högland. Next, Abel Escriva-Folch and Joseph Wright discuss what we know about sanctions, autocratic regimes, and conflict, and Michael Bang Petersen, Henrikas Bartusevičius, and Florian van Leeuwen offer a psychological perspective on democratization and civil conflict. The newsletter ends with Jørgen Møller’s discussion about ways in which historical analysis of the conflict-regime nexus can shed light on contemporary processes. All five contributions share a common structure: They first take stock of recent developments in the literature and, on this basis, present arguments about how to move scholarship on the civil conflict-regime nexus forward.

Jørgen Møller and Svend-Erik Skaaning, Issue Editors
Few civil wars take place in fully developed democracies, but empirical studies do not support a simple relationship between greater autocracy and the frequency of violence. Many studies suggest an inverted U-shaped relationship, where semi-democratic regimes see more internal conflict than consistent autocracies or democracies. Semi-democratic regimes are often, but not always, in transition, and more likely to have recent institutions under pressure for further political change. Even though systematic ethnic exclusion increases the risk of civil war, opening democratic competition may fail to accommodate specific groups. Internal wars in democracies are less severe in terms of casualties overall and democratic governments engage in less violence against civilians and less repression, but rebel groups fighting democratic states use more violence against civilians. Possibly because of the stronger constraints on the use of violence against insurgents, democracies tend to have longer internal wars. Institutions often originate as power-sharing arrangements designed to terminate a civil conflict. Some see post-conflict power-sharing as inherently undemocratic and an obstacle to democratization, while others argue that power-sharing institutions can facilitate transitions in ways akin to elite political pacts and show that transition to democracy become dramatically more likely in the presence of power.


In this manuscript we emphasize how disaggregating democratic institutions conceptually and probing the temporal sequences in which different components of democracy can advance progress on this fascinating research problem. Furthermore, we point to recent and more detailed data sources that can help advance research.

**Unanswered questions**

The voluminous literature on democracy and civil conflict raises several questions where answers remain elusive. Although a number of robust empirical patterns have been established, we know less about the causal mechanisms tying specific aspects of institutions to conflict outcomes. Disentangling the highly aggregated categories of democracy and democratization, both conceptually and temporally, seems a promising avenue for progress.

**Disaggregating democracy concepts**

One potentially fruitful strategy is to unpack the “black box” of aggregated democracy measures and investigate which regime-type dimensions are conducive to peace. For example, consider the finding that intermediary regimes or “anocracies” are more likely to experience civil war. The result itself


tells us little about which specific aspects of semi-democracies are related to conflict. Indeed, semi-democracies can be very different and often have sharply divergent institutional characteristics. For example, some have relatively functional electoral institutions but weak civil-liberties protection (e.g., Indonesia), while others have restricted, rigged, or no elections yet with a well-functioning legal system that protects the rule of law and (some) civil liberties (e.g., Singapore). Distinguishing between different institutional combinations within anocracies can allow us to answer important questions. For example, is it the combination of political competition and weak executive constraints that is driving the anocracy-conflict relationship, or the presence of relatively greater scope for the opposition to mobilize against the regime, combined with a grievance-inducing lack of (other) civil liberties? In the former case, the “winner-take-all” nature of electoral competition, with few abilities for incumbents to credibly commit to not repress the opposition ex post, is causing rebellion, while in the latter case it is a combination of opportunity and a lack of regime-legitimacy that is crucial. Separating between these cases would allow us to make important inferences regarding closely related yet theoretically distinct mechanisms.

Disentangling aspects of democracy could also help breathe new life into the question of whether democracies are more pacific than autocracies by investigating a broader range of democracy conceptions than the existing literature. Applying more fine-grained and theoretically well-specified democracy conceptions (and corresponding measures) has a great potential to remove many of the ambiguities in the current literature on the relationship between democracy and civil conflict.

More disaggregated measures can also help us better examine whether the effects of democracy and democratization are conditional on other institutional aspects, such as those relating to good governance. One view asserts that democratization is only stable in countries with prior institutional consolidation prior to democratization. Such arguments have emphasized bureaucratic quality, a well-functioning judicial system with independent courts, and low corruption as aspects that need to be in place for democracy to take hold peacefully. New measures can allow us to drill down to whether specific aspects of “institutional consolidation” are related to peaceful democratization. For example, we can examine whether formal state institutions that enable elites to more credibly commit to democracy and prudent economic policies, such as judicial independence and independent central banks or strong informal institutions such as civil society organizations and parties are more important “pre-transition” institutions.

Trajectories of Institutional Change

Paths from autocracy to democracy take many shapes. Some democratization processes are almost instantaneous revolutionary upheavals, while others are long-winded punctured-equilibria-type processes, unfolding through a series of incremental reforms. Furthermore, democratization processes vary in their institutional content (suffrage reform, civil liberties etc.), and sequencing.

Democracy datasets that are multidimensional in conception and disaggregated in measurement allow researchers to explore such sequences of institutional reform in detail. For example, we can ask whether an initial expansion of participation (in the form of universal suffrage and multi-party elections for executive office) and subsequent build-up of constraints on the elected executive more likely to lead to conflict than a sequence where constraints precede a broadening of participation. Are reforms and measures taken to replace the individuals that occupy the leading offices in a state more likely to trigger violence than reforms that regulate more low-key political institutions, such as the representation of local elites or the transparency associated with public budgets? Several indicators in the Institutions and Elections Project (IAEP) and the Varieties of Democracies dataset (V-Dem) allow more careful operationalizations of these concepts than earlier datasets, and could fruitfully be combined with data on leadership transitions and legacies from sources such as the Archigos data.7

While the sequence of democratic change probably matters for conflict, the historical "starting conditions" of a country when navigating institutional reform should also matter. Institutional history and path dependence has received much attention in the literature on the causes of economic growth but has had little traction in the study of democracy and civil war. This is surprising, since the most stable countries on earth are very often also long-lasting democracies, with a high historical "stock" of democratic institutions and good governance. This suggests that democracy and peace might have common historical antecedents, such as particular historical institutional trajectories, and we should focus on which specific institutional components yield pacific legacies. Against this background, we see several prominent avenues of research. For example, we can investigate whether it is the "extractive" economic institutions that were introduced in some developing countries by European colonizers that matter for their conflict histories, or whether it reflects the early development of other institutional dysfunctional characteristics, such as executives with concentrated power with few checks and balances.8

Opportunities Provided by New Democracy/Regime Type Data Collections
A number of recent data developments will guide work on the unanswered questions we raise above. We focus here on two new data sources that will be useful for exploring the democratization-civil conflict link further. First, the IAEP dataset looks at the presence of a number of crucial formal institutions across democracies and autocracies, spanning the period 1960–2012. Second, the V-Dem dataset describes a long list of formal and informal aspects and features of political systems across democracies and dictatorship, covering the period 1900–2015.

The IAEP dataset includes data on over 120 variables, describing de jure institutional provisions and electoral events, for 170 countries, often coded from constitutions, constitutional amendments and other legal sources. This dataset covers important institutional information, not available in extant datasets. It describes the de jure relationships between the executive, judiciary and legislature, and the rules that regulate the promulgation of laws, constitutional amendments and leadership selection. It also provides a range of variables describing the formal make up of the electoral system, and the degree to which citizens can participate in elections and lawmaking. It also covers the status and role of the supreme court, central bank, and regional governments.

The V-Dem dataset is much more ambitious than any other democracy data-collection efforts. V-Dem introduces 265 indicators at the least aggregate level and by using these indicators it builds mid and macro-level indices. Some of these indicators are "factual in nature" and based on extant sources whereas most of them are coded independently by multiple country experts. An important feature is that based on its own measurement model, V-Dem provides a point estimate as well as a confidence interval for each data point coded by country experts. This allows V-Dem to report a level of certainty for the subjective indicators and indices, enabling users of the dataset to factor this uncertainty in when analyzing the data. Coupled with vast external sources compiled and incorporated into V-Dem, individual indicators as well as mid- and macro-level indices have potential to enable researchers to investigate linkages between macro-level concepts, before zooming in to focus on particular institutional features and pinpoint how they relate to civil conflict.

The V-Dem dataset will be particularly helpful when it comes to exploring how different aspects of democratic institutions relate to different conflict-drivers as hypothesized in the literature. At the highest level of aggregation, V-Dem conceptualizes and measures five Democracy Indices: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative and egalitarian. These conceptualizations can be potentially employed to investigate the theoretical arguments tying (democratic) institutions to civil conflict. If we grant that the fundamental causes of conflict can be traced to opportunities, grievances, commitment problems or lack of legitimacy, it stands to reason that different democracy conceptions – as embodied in institutions – should be more conducive to reducing specific kinds of conflict drivers. For example, if grievances relating to horizontal economic and political inequalities between social groups drive internal conflict, then democracy types enshrining the egalitarian conception of democracy should be particularly potent for reducing these kinds of conflict. Alternatively, if a lack of opportunities for influence is the predominant conflict-driver, then democracies instantiating the participatory conception of democracy

---

should be less conflict prone. If commitment problems is the conflict-generating mechanism at issue, then we would expect democracies with high scores on the liberal component of democracy – strong rule of law, checks and balances, protected civil liberties etc. – to be pacifying, since it will be easier for e.g., a majority to credibly commit not to abuse the disgruntled minority in the future. Hence, we can imagine different constellations of conflict-generating mechanisms and conflict-reducing democracy-conceptions, where each potential conflict driver has a corresponding democratic institutional “antidote.”

These datasets also allow us to unpack the “Anocracy” category, as discussed above; enabling important distinctions between the different institutional combinations that purportedly explain the “inverted-u curve” result. For example, since V-DEM includes extensive measures of the degrees to which elections are competitive, civil liberties are protected, and executives are constrained, it is possible to identify different kinds of anocracies, to gauge which combinations are more salient.

Furthermore, both V-Dem and IAEP will allow us to trace the trajectories of institutional change discussed above, linking these to conflict outcomes. For example, they will allow us to study whether specific kinds of democratization sequences are more conflict-prone than others. With the IAEP data, we can look for changes to formal institutions (such as suffrage reforms), and link this information to data on de-facto institutional aspects such as the degree of political competitiveness, executive constraints or bureaucratic quality. This would allow us to e.g., probe whether introductions of mass suffrage and participation is pacifying only in circumstances with (de-jure and de-facto) constrained executives. This work will also be aided by the forthcoming Historical V-dem dataset, coding V-dem data back to 1789, which will yield longer time-series capturing the many suffrage expansions and other institutional changes taking place before 1900.

**Future directions**

Empirical research on the relationship between democracy and civil conflict has unveiled a set of interesting patterns, but several theoretical and empirical ambiguities remain within the field. In this manuscript, we argue that the availability of new, disaggregated data on political institutions will allow the field to address these ambiguities and to put the inferences drawn from empirical research on a much stronger theoretical footing. The new datasets also allow asking new questions regarding democratization and conflict, such as how various temporal sequences of partial reforms affect the risks of large-scale violence.

Barış Ari is a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Essex’s Department of Government. Kristian Skrede Gleditsch is a professor of government at the University of Essex, director of the Michael Nicholson Centre for Conflict and Cooperation, and a research associate at the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO). Håvard Hegre is Dag Hammarskjöld Professor of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University and adjunct research professor at PRIO. Tore Wig is a postdoctoral fellow in the department of political science at the University of Oslo.
related violence defies democratic outcomes and the consolidation of democratic regimes.

While comparative politics as a discipline has had a longstanding interest in electoral politics, the past decade has seen a surge in research on the interlinkages between elections and political violence. Many studies have focused on elections as precipitants of armed conflict, violent ethnic riots, and conflict recurrence, particularly highlighting the precariousness of elections in post-war societies. In this essay we are, however, specifically concerned with violence that concentrates around elections and corrupts the electoral process, what we refer to as electoral violence.

**Defining Electoral Violence**

Over the past years, a growing body of research has emerged to probe the causes and dynamics of electoral violence. Underpinning the growth of this research field is the conceptualization of electoral violence as a distinct phenomenon in need of an explanation. Rather than merely asking whether electoral periods increase the risk of political violence generally, for example, by acting as trigger events for civil wars, studies within this field approach electoral violence as a particular sub-category of political violence intimately linked to the electoral contest. Its distinguishing features relate first and foremost to the motive and assumed instrumentality of the violence: it is intended to influence the outcome an impending election (voter, candidates or the polling more generally) or the trajectories following an electoral result. Electoral violence is also distinct in its timing (occurs in temporal proximity to elections), and its targets (e.g., voters, candidates and election observers). The conceptual definition – and empirical operationalization – of electoral violence oftentimes also include non-lethal or tacit forms of violence, for instance, threats and intimidation, assaults, arson attacks and protest. As such, it includes a diverse set of phenomena that partly has been studied in separate strands of literature. An underlying assumption when approaching electoral violence as a particular sub-category of political violence is the notion that the violence would not have occurred or would at least have manifested itself differently in the absence of an electoral contest. Importantly, this conceptualization of electoral violence does not limit the phenomena to violent crackdowns on voters by security forces or rioting party supporters, the popular images of how electoral violence would manifest itself. Electoral violence, according to this definition may include phenomena as wide ranging as coup d’êats, communal clashes and violent harassment by pro-government militias. The defining characteristic is that electoral contests become focal points that shape the targets and the timing of the violence. Even in countries with ongoing civil wars, elections may incentivize the armed contestants to engage in strategic electoral violence – for example attacking polling stations to hinder the conduct of free and fair elections. What defines electoral violence in a context where elections and conflict are intertwined is the assumed instrumentality of the threats and physical intimidation in affecting the electoral process and its outcome, rather than trying to influence policy formation or concessions more broadly.

The most explicit approach to electoral violence as a form of strategic manipulation is found in the literature on electoral malpractice, where coercive inducements in the form of threats and physical intimidation of voters and political candidates constitute one among several strategies to manipulate electoral outcomes that political elites will choose between (e.g. vote-buying or fraud). Whereas we know little about how state and non-state actors substitute between these different strategies, most of the quantitative literature approaches electoral violence as a form of strategic manipulation and studies the determinants under which such manipulation is most likely to occur. Theoretical explanations for the violence have partly centered on the institutional context in which elections are held, partly on characteristics of the electoral contest itself. Some find that electoral violence increases the more ethnic voting there is, the more competitive the elections are, and under winner-takes-all electoral rules. Electoral violence is also more prevalent when there are weak constraints on the executive, when political institutions are weakly consolidated. Also the presence of election observers influences the risk and timing of electoral violence, for example through their mandate to publicize electoral manipulation.

---


5. Stephanie M. Burchard, *Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa. Causes and Consequences* (Colorado:
Main Challenges

The study of electoral violence has made great progress in the past years. Yet, taking stock of the current quantitative literature we also see limitations in existing approaches, specifically linked to the challenges of delineating the phenomena.

A first challenge concerns how electoral violence relates to electoral cycles, especially its timing in connection to impending elections or a post-election period. Due to the lack of event data on electoral violence, one prevalent approach in the existing literature has been to rely on a temporal criterion: using available event tallies on political violence (e.g. the Armed Conflict and Location Dataset) and using a pre-defined period (e.g. 2 or 3 months before and after polling day) to delineate electoral violence. Yet, the appropriate time frame is difficult to ascertain, partly because the length of the electoral cycles differ across countries, partly because serious cases of electoral violence may take place both very early and late in the electoral cycle. Voter registration and internal party nomination often occur months ahead of the actual polling, representing highly contentious processes in many countries because they are decisive for the electoral outcome. Election-related riots in response to an incumbent's attempt to extend term limits or protests against the outcome of a court ruling on an electoral outcome are also events that may occur months away from polling day. Meanwhile, an extended time frame could weaken the assumed link to electoral dynamics. Since time frames will be established on a case-by-case basis, comparisons between studies are also more difficult. The temporal neatness is also challenged by overlapping election cycles where elections for different political institutions or at different levels are held at different times. Finally, a sole reliance on a temporal criterion, rather than an issue-based identification, means that much violence included may not meet the motivational criteria of being intended to shape the electoral process. Identifying the issue linkage is, however, also challenging, particularly in cases where political violence is widespread, such as during civil war.

A second challenge for many cross-case comparisons stems from the lack of clear and systematic cutoff points for establishing the prevalence of electoral violence across cases and over time. As an alternative to the reliance on temporal criteria, many studies have relied on datasets that classify elections as being more or less marred by violence. The National Elections across Democracy and Autocracy (NELDA), for example, includes an ordinal measure of whether there was “significant violence involving civilian deaths” during an election, whereas the African Election Violence Data (AEVD) classifies the level of violence into three categories: violent harassment, violent repression and large-scale violence. The V-Dem data similarly draw a continuum between “peaceful” elections and those characterized by “widespread violence” using a five-point scale. These data sources have the advantage of explicitly focusing on violence that meet the motivational criteria, i.e. being intended to influence the electoral outcome. Yet, the lack of very clear and transparent cut-off points raise concerns about the validity and reliability of the data: whereas overarching patterns are similar, elections are assessed differently across different datasets. In the absence of strict benchmarks against which cases are evaluated, there is also a risk that pre-conceived expectations regarding the intensity of electoral contention could bias the data generation process and what is considered to constitute significant levels of electoral violence. For instance, Nigeria was praised for the ‘peacefulness’ of the 2015 election, although the death toll was high, while reporting on the elections in Tanzania the same year was focusing on the volatility of the elections even though the contest was considerably less violent than Nigeria.

A third challenge concerns the high level of aggregation of most data sources, which makes it difficult to explore more nuanced dynamics of electoral violence. For instance, case-based analysis suggests that electoral violence ahead of the elections that serve to disenfranchise voters, or influence the choice of candidates at the ballot, may have very different manifestations than the electoral violence that follow.


on the announcement of electoral results. Analyses of countries like Côte d’Ivoire and Kenya testify to the large variations in the prevalence of electoral violence as we move to the sub-national level. The Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD) – available for Africa and Latin America from 1990 to 2014 – provides some opportunities for temporal and spatial disaggregation. The geo-referenced event data on the occurrence of protests, riots, strikes, inter-communal conflict, government violence against civilians, and other forms of social conflict is recorded by issue, thus allowing the researcher to focus on the sub-set of the data reported by the media source to be explicitly linked to electoral dynamics. A potential pitfall of the exclusive reliance on media reports for identifying electoral violence is that the angle of reporting may be shaped by the same factors that influence the risk of electoral violence, including the political contestation and the experience with electoral violence in the past. This is primarily a problem when studies compare electoral periods to non-electoral periods. It may also lead to other biases, for example, a clustering of election-related events around polling day as the media are more concerned with elections as elections come closer. Event data has potential to facilitate a move towards more disaggregated analysis in future research. A promising effort to provide event-level data on electoral violence is also undertaken by Ursula Daxecker at the University of Amsterdam with the Electoral Contention and Violence (ECAV) dataset.

A fourth challenge is to get at the individual level dimensions of electoral violence. There has been some advances in the use of survey data to examine individuals’ exposure to threats and physical intimidation and violence in association with an electoral contest. Several studies have drawn on data from the Afrobarometer and other surveys, to explore how voter characteristics influence the likelihood that voters are targeted with coercive inducements, relative to other clientelist strategies. Individual level data offers two significant contributions to the study of electoral violence. First, information about who is at risk of violent intimidation, for example, if swing voters are the primary targets, adds to our knowledge about the motivation of actors for using electoral violence. Second, survey data may capture voter intimidation and fear that could be significant enough to disenfranchise voters, but still not pass the intensity threshold to show up in media reporting and make it into other aggregate data sources. A problem with much of the survey data is, however, the scattered coverage and the lack of representative samples at the sub-national level to facilitate a more disaggregated analysis. Moreover, major surveys, such as the Afrobarometer, do not ask respondents if they have been subject to threats and violence, only if they fear being targeted. These are not necessarily the same.

**Moving Forward**

In advancing knowledge on electoral violence there are four main imperatives pertaining to the specification and disaggregation of theory and data. Generally, while data sources that include issue-based identification of election-related incidents of violence may be driven by fundamentally different forces than violent street protest after the announcement of electoral results considered fraudulent. With more temporally disaggregated data, we can also move to a more careful tracing of escalatory processes or other temporal dynamics.

Second, we need to pay closer attention to the interests of the actors and the perpetrators involved in electoral violence. Previous research has already made the important distinction between violence originating from the opposition and violence by the regime. Yet, these categories must be further disaggregated theoretically and empirically. Presumably it makes a difference in terms of the explanations for the phenomena who the opposition is. Staniland’s suggestion to distinguish between pro-systemic and anti-systemic opposition is one way forward to disentangle the various manifestations of election-intertwined violence that come closer to the motivational aspects of the phenomena, the intentionality of the violence is very difficult to capture. This is a problem especially in studies where the theoretical point of departure turns on the instrumentality of violence. Thus, more attention must be paid to the different manifestations of violence that may have different causes and dynamics and serve different purposes.


Third, more effort should be devoted to understanding the interconnections between national and local dynamics of electoral violence. Motives among national actors and mobilizing agents may more easily be linked to institutional contexts and characteristics of the electoral context. Yet these motives may be very different from those possessed by the individuals who partake in the violence. With existing data sources it has been very difficult to capture both the distinctiveness of national and local dynamics, and how they combine to produce violent elections. Data on individual level motivation for participating in electoral violence would be particularly useful. Studies that probe the variations in the prevalence of electoral violence across different sub-national units would also advance knowledge on the local conditions underpinning such violence. Relatedly, current scholarship focuses predominantly on national elections, but much electoral violence occurs during local elections. Yet, the absence of detailed and comparable data sources on the timing and characteristics of local elections makes it is difficult to move forward with these questions in cross-national studies.

Fourth, we need more research on the consequences of electoral violence. The main share of the existing literature focuses on the causes of the violence, including its characteristics, intensity or timing. There are a few studies exploring the effects of violent elections, but these mainly focus narrowly on how electoral violence influences the political attitudes and behavior of the voters, and issues such as voter turnout. Thus, research has not adequately addressed the extent to which violent elections condition the perceptions of what is at stake in future elections, how institutions evolve in the wake of violence, and how political actors develop after the experience of violence. These are factors that may very well be important in understanding if subsequent elections turn violent or not.

\textit{Hanne Fjelde and Kristine Höglund work at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University.}
understanding the inner workings and structure of the targets, namely, autocracies.

**Sanctions and Regime Change**

Our own research finds that some autocracies are more vulnerable to economic coercion than others: while economic sanctions have historically destabilized personalist dictatorships, they have little influence on the durability of party-based regimes and military juntas. More so than dominant party regimes or military juntas, personalist dictatorships rely on targeted patronage and repression for survival. Further, political power is more concentrated in the hands of the individual leader in these regimes, and thus neither a supporting political party nor the military effectively constrain the leader’s ability to make policy and personnel choices. These features of personalist rule not only shape how the dictator behaves while in office, but also increase the chances he faces a particularly nasty fate when he exits from power.

The fact that sanctions increase the likelihood of regime breakdown in personalist regimes does not necessarily mean that sanctions promote democratization. Regime change may yield two outcomes: either a transition to a new democracy or a transition to a new dictatorship. Since 1946, more than half of autocratic regime collapses have resulted in a transition to a subsequent dictatorship – and not a transition to democracy. Devoid of institutional means for regular turnover of leadership and unable to provide credible domestic guarantees that their life and assets will be preserved should they step down peacefully, personalist dictators often fight for survival when faced with international pressure to leave power. They are thus the most likely to be ousted in a coup or a violent rebellion. Consequently, while sanctions have historically destabilized personalist dictatorships, this generally leads to a transition to subsequent dictatorship (or a failed state).

This result reflects the survival strategies pursued by different dictatorships, which, in turn, shape how they respond to foreign economic coercion. Personalist dictators rarely concede to sanctions because their exclusive and under-institutionalized rule prevents them from controlling the transition process in an effort to protect the interests of regime elites via negotiated exit guarantees. However, even though personalist rulers rarely have an incentive to comply with sanction senders’ demands by making peaceful concessions, these regimes are nonetheless weakened by sanctions. With weak political institutions, these dictatorships are more likely to rely on external revenue sources (such as commodity exports) to fund patronage to retain power. Thus well-coordinated sanctions that target these revenue sources can often result in a steep decrease in state revenues in personalist regimes. This in turn translates into a sharp decrease in government expenditures, precluding increasing patronage as strategy to retain elite support. Moreover, personal rulers cannot credibly commit to institutional transformations offering power-sharing, and thus can rarely substitute policy concessions for rents or repression in the short term.

As several studies show, regimes also respond to sanctions by increasing political repression, particularly when sanctions fuel popular dissent or help opposition activists organize anti-regime protest. Yet, once we differentiate autocratic targets, we find that sanctions are most strongly associated with increased repression in personalist dictatorships. Unable to increase spending when revenues fall and incapable of offering credible power-sharing, personalist leaders tend to rely more intensively on coercion for survival when targeted by sanctions. Yet increasing political repression is also risky, for at least three reasons. A coercive response to sanctions is more likely to fail in regimes that deliberately weaken military effectiveness in an effort to marginalize potential coup plotters, as often occurs in personalist regimes. Second, sanctions may empower repressive agents – particularly if they capture valuable black-market trade – who, in turn, may use their new resources to turn against the regime. Finally, increasing government repression as a response to sanctions can ignite anti-regime collective action, escalating a violent conflict and thereby increasing the chances the regime is ousted in a rebellion or junior officer coup.


Sanctions, Regime Stability, and Conflict in Autocracies

Even when sanctions are economically costly, they are only likely to produce political change when these economic costs translate into political costs for the targeted regime.6 Public choice contributions to the analysis of sanctions point to sanctions costs directly harming the targeted government’s revenue sources or hurting groups that support the targeted regime. Approaching the study of sanctions from this perspective highlights the specific causal mechanisms through which sanctions may destabilize autocracies. Most autocratic regimes are ousted from power by domestic actors. Only foreign military intervention can directly remove a leader from power and externally impose regime change. Sanctions can only achieve political change by altering the domestic balance of power via a change in the incentives, preferences or capabilities of domestic actors, be it the regime supporters or the opposition.

In our work, we find that sanctions increase the likelihood of irregular regime breakdowns in personalist regimes. Such irregular ousters are generally the result of coups, civil wars or popular uprisings. These pathways of regime change inform how sanctions shape political change and civil conflict.

Destabilizing Mechanisms

Sanctions can potentially destabilize autocracies through two mechanisms. First, sanctions may weaken elite cohesion, prompting defections or the targeted regime. 6 Public choice contributions to the analysis of sanctions point to sanctions costs directly harming the targeted government’s revenue sources or hurting groups that support the targeted regime.

On the one hand, sanctions may signal international support to opposition’s goals (or the end of direct or tacit support for the regime). Sanctions often indicate that at least some foreign states oppose the existing regime.7 Signaling disapproval can be particularly influential if the sanction senders are former allies, patrons or superpowers and the sanctions signal the possibility of disrupting economic and military assistance. This, in turn, may encourage existing opposition groups or would-be rebels – and even foreign rivals – to consider attacking the regime. For example, sanctions emboldened Zairian rebels (a faction led by Laurent Kabila) and foreign rivals to oust Mobutu in 1997. Similarly, U.S. sanctions against Somoza’s regime in Nicaragua meant the end of the support of the regime’s main patron, which bolstered the Sandinista rebels. This mechanism might be most salient when existing opposition groups capable of using certain technologies of rebellion can benefit from the disapproval signal sent by foreign countries by imposing sanctions.8

Sanctions can also directly influence opposition behavior by deepening deprivation. Following the logic of grievance theories of political violence, deprivation can decrease the opportunity costs of rebelling and increase the mobilization capacity of existing opposition groups. Many studies of the structural correlates of civil conflict find that high poverty and inequality are strongly associated with civil war, especially if these factors are concentrated among specific excluded-population groups. Economically costly sanctions may increase the grievance posture theory of political violence suggests that economic sanctions can decrease the expected utility of elite defection and thus increase the likelihood of remaining in the regime.9 This can be achieved by reducing the regime’s ability to deliver rents, particularly if the sanctioning state is a key supporter of the regime. By reducing the regime’s ability to deliver rents, economic sanctions can decrease the probability of remaining in the regime and increase the likelihood of ousting the regime.

Secondly, sanctions can change the capacities and resolve of groups outside the regime coalition, such as in the case of South Africa under the Apartheid regime or India’s sanctions against Nepal under King Birendra in the late 1980s. Existing opposition groups may be emboldened by sanctions, particularly if sanction-induced economic pain breeds popular dissent, increasing the likelihood of uprisings and civil wars. The effect of sanctions on regime opposition can occur via (a) signaling or (b) by fostering anti-regime grievance.


effect, particularly if the targeted regime shifts the economic pain of sanctions onto excluded groups while shielding supporters from these costs. For example, when Western sanctions targeted Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War, Hussein’s regime faced armed rebellions in the Shi‘is south as well as by the Kurds in the north.

Alternatively, sanctions may increase the resources available to opposition groups if they can capture black markets or scarcity-created rents. While the rent-capture argument is most often examined for regime-supporters (see below), it is theoretically possible for opposition groups to benefit economically from sanction-induced market changes. A better understanding of the grievance mechanism would require future research to examine the distributional consequences of sanctions to explore whether and how governments shift the economic costs of sanctions among supporters and opposition groups. This line of enquiry would also require theorizing and analyzing the contextual and institutional characteristics of targets that make it possible for some governments to benefit from sanctions by capturing sanction-induced rents, while other governments appear unable to prevent the opposition from increasing their resources by capturing these rents.

Stabilizing Mechanisms
The literature on the political consequences of economic sanctions also posits mechanisms through which sanctions may stabilize target regimes. These mechanisms could influence the risk of conflict onset. First, economic pressure may reduce the economic pain of sanctions onto excluded groups while simultaneously increasing the resources available to opposition groups. Alternatively, sanctions may increase the resources available to opposition groups if they can capture black markets or scarcity-created rents. While the rent-capture argument is most often examined for regime-supporters (see below), it is theoretically possible for opposition groups to benefit economically from sanction-induced market changes. A better understanding of the grievance mechanism would require future research to examine the distributional consequences of sanctions to explore whether and how governments shift the economic costs of sanctions among supporters and opposition groups. This line of enquiry would also require theorizing and analyzing the contextual and institutional characteristics of targets that make it possible for some governments to benefit from sanctions by capturing sanction-induced rents, while other governments appear unable to prevent the opposition from increasing their resources by capturing these rents.

Second, sanctions might reduce conflict risk by increasing popular support for the regime if elites successfully shift blame for sanction-induced economic hardships to the sender. By mobilizing nationalistic sentiments in response to sanctions, targeted regimes may create a rally-around-the-flag effect. Using sanctions to galvanize popular support may be most effective in regimes with strong claims to legitimacy that can be used to create a plausible victimization narrative.9 The rallying consequences of sanctions are still poorly understood, however, because direct tests of this argument require accurately measuring public opinion about incumbent governments in non-democratic settings.

Sanctions and Civil Conflict Duration
Factors that contribute to the onset of civil conflict may differ from those that shape the duration of conflicts.

Civil Conflict after Autocratic Regime Collapse
We close by returning to the finding that economic sanctions have historically destabilized personalist dictatorships.


but have little effect in other autocracies. Like other tools of foreign pressure such as direct military intervention, international sanctions that help topple personalist rulers more often than not lead to a new dictatorship or a failed state. We reinforce this point by examining the incidence of civil conflict in dictatorships and democracies that arise after autocratic regimes collapse.

The table above shows the share of country-years in which a country experienced a high intensity civil conflict or the central government did not control the majority of the state's territory (warlord). The sample includes both democracies that follow the collapse of post-1946 dictatorships and subsequent dictatorships that follow autocratic collapse. The rows show the prior autocratic regime type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Democracies</th>
<th>Non-democracies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior military</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior monarchy</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior party</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior personalist</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column total</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Civil conflict data is from PRIO (high intensity civil conflict, including internationalized civil conflicts). Data on warlords is from GWF. This result holds in a logit model with controls for democracy, regime duration, and year fixed effects.

These descriptive patterns provide some initial evidence that the collapse of personalist regimes may increase the risk of civil conflict – particularly when we consider the fact that regime collapse events in these regimes are generally irregular and often followed by subsequent dictatorships. To the extent that economic sanctions destabilize personalist dictatorships, the former may therefore help foster conditions that lead to conflict.

Abel Escribà-Folch is an associate professor of political science at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra. Joseph Wright is an associate professor of political science at Pennsylvania State University.
administration. We suggest that analyses focused on conflict behavior at the individual level may similarly identify new factors that account for the link between democratization and civil conflict.

In our attempt to address this issue, we follow an approach within behavioral sciences that focuses on the evolved function of behavior—causing psychological mechanisms, or the so-called adaptationist approach.\(^3\) From this perspective, the human phenotype (including mechanisms regulating conflict behavior) is an aggregation of reliably developing adaptations that have evolved throughout our evolution as solutions to recurrent adaptive problems. Following this approach, we make an explicit distinction between proximate and ultimate causes of behavior. A proximate cause of why an individual engages in violence against a democratizing regime may be an increased opportunity to mobilize for potentially rewarding action (or a psychological mechanism sensitive to such an opportunity). But the ultimate cause of individual mobilization may be the individual incentive to accrue resources or status, which, in our evolutionary past, increased survival and reproductive success. Thus, whereas analyses of proximate causes focus on which (or how) particular environmental inputs (e.g., political openness) produce certain behavioral outputs (e.g., violence), analyses of ultimate causes focus on why such mechanisms evolved in the first place, or what adaptive function they served in the environment we have evolved. While we advocate the integration of proximal and ultimate analyses, in this essay we center on the latter. We posit that an adaptationist approach, focused on the evolved function of psychological mechanisms that regulate conflict behavior, may shed new light on the causes of political violence during democratization.

### Psychological Perspectives on Democratization and Violence

From one perspective, the co-occurrence of democratization and civil conflict does not seem surprising. Often, an autocracy with the ability and willingness to sustain itself using military power can only be overcome with brute force. From another perspective, this nexus is surprising. As noted by Keane, “violence is anathema to [democracy’s] spirit and substance.”\(^4\)

Democracy involves an equal dispersion of power in society. This notion of power parity is captured in the democratic catch phrase “one man, one vote”, is the core message in the American Declaration of Independence (“...all men are created equal...”), and is the focal point of most theories of democracy. For the democratic citizen, equality of power is an emotionally potent idea. However, understanding the psychology of the democratization-conflict nexus requires a theory that transcends culture and one that does not require that people develop positive attitudes towards the institutions of democracy at an early age. We are interested in understanding if some shared motivations drive people towards fighting for democracy (1) across different cultures, and (2) in societies with an authoritarian regime and an absence of early socialization into democratic institutions. An adaptationist approach—focused on human psychological universals behind cultural-specific practices—provides a starting point.

Why do people fight? According to the psychologist Steven Pinker, violence or aggression has over the evolutionary history of the human species served a host of different adaptive functions and, hence, people fight for a range of different reasons. Specifically, Pinker outlines five overarching reasons humans have for aggression: (1) predation, (2) revenge, (3) status-seeking, (4) sadism, and (5) ideology.\(^5\)

One might think of the democratization-conflict nexus as a reflection of the latter: A conflict over ideology with at least one group fighting for the ideals of democracy such as for power parity. However, the outcome of power parity in processes of democratization is confounded with at least two other outcomes. The transition towards democracy also involves an increase in power for the formerly oppressed and a decrease in power for the former oppressors. We argue that these other outcomes constitute crucial psychological motivators underpinning the democratization-conflict nexus. A large literature suggests that these motivations naturally spill over into violence. Thus, we suggest that the psychological drivers of violence in the democratization-conflict nexus are less about striving for democracy and more about violent forms of status-seeking and revenge.

### The Adaptive Functions of Violence

Revenge motivations are powerful.\(^6\) People may pay to punish an individual who exploited them. In contrast to what one would predict based on rational-choice theory, people even have such a desire for revenge when both they and the exploiter are anonymous (and hence, the punishment cannot deter the other individual from future exploitation). In fact, research has shown that such a desire for revenge is

---


If we understand revenge as A’s imposition of costs on (or withholding of benefits from) B following B’s imposition of costs on (or withholding of benefits from) A, revenge is ubiquitous among animal species and across human societies. It serves the crucial function of deterring others from imposing costs upon oneself or individuals in whom one has fitness interests (kin, friends, etc.). If B has imposed costs on A (e.g., via physical aggression) and A did not retaliate with cost imposition on B, A can expect repeated cost imposition in the future—not only from B but also from others observing A and B. Subsequently, if A is constantly targeted with cost imposition, she is disadvantaged against those who are not constantly targeted with cost imposition. Over evolutionary history, thus, organisms who have not responded with cost imposition to cost imposition should have been selected out. As a consequence, we now have animals (including humans) that are hypersensitive to bad treatment and ready to take revenge.

Evolved strategies typically rely on evolved tools. In the case of cost imposition, humans have a large repertoire of responses, including the curtailing of cooperative relationships and withholding expected benefits. Yet, as McCullough et al. note, revenge is “closely linked to violence” and is a cause of many forms of contemporary aggression, including homicides, school shootings, bombings, and terrorist attacks. Thus, while non-violent forms of revenge can be more optimal and are often practiced, it is likely that humans tend to revenge with aggression more readily than other means, in particular, if aggression itself is a cause of revenge.

Aggression, however, can also occur in the absence of prior instances of aggression, and, hence, is not just targeted at previous cost-impositors (or benefit withholders). To understand such forms of more pro-active violence, an understanding of hierarchies and their underlying psychology is required. The animal world is characterized by hierarchies and humans too differ in social status and privileged access to resources. High status is, essentially, a momentarily uncontested access to a higher share of reproductively relevant resources. Therefore, selection pressures likely have shaped human political psychology to search for opportunities to increase social status and guard against events that would lower it.

High status in humans can be achieved in at least three ways. One way is often labeled “prestige” and involves the conferral of benefits (e.g., in the form of specialized knowledge). The second way is often labeled “dominance” and involves threats of cost-imposition, i.e., using costs to incentivize better treatment and privileged resource access. For human males in particular, physical contest seems to have been a crucial way to establish who is dominating whom. The third way towards social status is an extension of the second: Strength can come from numerical advantage. Most human male dominance competitions are group-based: Males join together in groups to compete for status with rival groups. Consistent with this, psychologists have demonstrated how human males react physiologically and hormonally to changes in status not just for themselves but for the larger group they identify with (see footnote 10).

Dominance- and aggression-based striving for status arises more strongly in males than females and, in particular, in young males. The reason is that status-striving is—in terms of selection pressures—related to mating. Because of differences in parental investment between males and females (the latter invest more and can produce fewer offspring), males compete for opportunities to mate with females and are particularly oriented towards this during life stages in which pair bonds are created.

In sum, these theoretical considerations suggest the following: First, humans are highly attentive to (a) exploitation from others and (b) opportunities for status increase; and, second, humans—in particular, males—react to these situations with aggression-oriented motivations.

Linking Status-seeking and Desire for Revenge with Democratization

How do we link status-seeking and revenge adaptations to the democratization-conflict nexus? We claim that the breakdown of authoritarian regimes and the following political instability provides a fertile ground for the activation of the revenge- and status-oriented motivations. Autocratic states impose severe costs (and withhold benefits) from their ordinary citizens. People are denied access to political institutions, economic resources, and many other objects that they consider they are entitled to (security, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, etc.). In addition, in autocracies, many people suffer from direct violent repression, which includes imprisonment,
torture, and executions. This implies that authoritarian regimes have large pools of people who suffer severe cost imposition and severe benefit withholding. In other words, dictatorships have large pools of people who have an incentive for revenge.

Why do people not revenge in autocracies? The answer is “because they cannot”: Autocratic regimes with extensive security apparatuses are often too formidable to confront. This, however, changes when regimes start to democratize. While democratization is often a gradual process, in some sense, it can be understood as a “shock” to existing dominance hierarchies. In other words, democratization signals that the rulers are not as formidable as they were and that there are now opportunities to impose costs on those who have imposed costs on citizens in the past. This potentially explains the puzzle of why liberalizing regimes so often succumb to civil violence: Even if incumbents introduce political reforms, there may still be a significant proportion of population with grievances from the past. And these people constitute a propitious pool of recruits for those willing to confront the regime—who now have opportunities to do so.

As we suggested above, revenge motivation may not even be necessary for citizens to take up arms against their democratizing regimes. The disruption of hierarchies that follows initial democratization, itself, may generate confrontation—as it constitutes an opportunity for low-status individuals to attain higher status. Challengers of the status quo may not only confront those with the highest status (i.e., incumbents) but also those that simultaneously compete for power, which can lead to conflict both between opposition and regime and among parties within the opposition. Despite political reforms (which often are induced by external actors) those at the top of dominance hierarchies may also be unwilling to alter the status quo. This can result in “defensive” violence against the challengers of the status quo, motivating them, in turn, to retaliate in kind.

In this perspective, the psychological underpinnings of the democratization-conflict nexus is not necessarily the attainment of an egalitarian society that conforms to the textbook examples of Western democracies but simply the decrease in power of former oppressive groups and the increase in power of formerly oppressed groups. And in such contexts, violence is a behavioral tendency that facilitates these outcomes. These arguments imply that eruption of violence during the transition away from autocracy is not a pathology or a reflection of an anomic but the unfolding of universal psychological motivations.

**A Way Forward to Novel Insights?**

By shifting focusing to the psychological motivations for violence, we not only aim to facilitate interdisciplinary synthesis but also generate novel hypotheses. Based on the discussion above, we can formulate preliminary expectations on what we should observe in cases of co-occurring conflict and democratization. If autocratic regimes impose direct costs on (via repression) and withhold benefits from (via exclusion) their citizens, and if this generates desire for revenge, then democratizing regimes that have a history of repression should have higher risk of civil conflict than democratizing regimes without history of repression. In fact, our preliminary analysis of cross-national data suggests that mass campaigns are more likely to be violent in countries that have exercised repression in the past. Moreover, we find significant interaction between history of repression and democratization in predicting civil conflict, which suggests that democratization constitutes a hitherto absent opportunity for people to impose costs on regimes that have imposed costs on them in the past.11

11. These findings are based on standard country-year logit (or multinomial logit) regressions and conventional data sources such as the UCDP/PRIO

Assessing individual-level predictions at the cross-national level, however, is not our ultimate aim. Instead, the aim is to identify whether individuals who have experienced or observed repression in the past are more likely to take part in or support violent action against their regimes, once these regimes begin to democratize. This would provide more direct evidence for revenge motivations contributing to the democratization-conflict nexus, and potentially explain the puzzle of why people fight governments when they begin to liberalize.

As mentioned above, a desire for revenge may not be necessary for people to rise against their regimes. If political openness in itself constitutes an opportunity for people to improve their status, and if this creates a motivation to confront the regime, then we should observe low-status individuals constituting a significant proportion of opposition ranks confronting regimes.12

More specifically, if democratization leads to conflict by generating opportunities for low-status individuals to gain power, and not because of opportunities for all individuals to attain equal power, then we should observe that cues indicating attainment of equal power for all. In this regard, rumors and propaganda are likely important. The spread of negative, dehumanizing rumors and propaganda about other groups have been viewed as important precursors of the onset of violence.13 Hence, we might observe that propaganda specifically aimed at eliciting status-seeking (“we do armed conflict or NAVCO datasets. Full description of the analyses and data sources is available from the authors.

12. Indeed, there is cross- and sub-national evidence suggesting that countries with low-status groups have higher risk of civil conflict. See, for example, Lars-Erik Cederman, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Halvard Buhaug, *Inequality, grievances, and civil war* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

not have the position we deserve”) rather than democracy (“equal access to political power for all”) should be a more powerful mobilizing cue. Our hope is that a deeper understanding of psychological underpinnings of the nexus will allow specifying for whom and when democratization processes turn violent. In addition to illuminating how status-seeking and revenge contribute to political violence, the adaptationist approach may also help synthesize the many discoveries in the literature on political violence.

Michael Bang Petersen is a professor of political science at Aarhus University. Henrikas Bartusevičius is an assistant professor of political science at Aarhus University, and Florian van Leeuwen is a postdoc in the department of political science at Aarhus University.
a classical literature which was premised on the notion that by interrogating the past – particularly the empirical universe of early modern Europe – it would be possible to glean general insights about the causes such conflicts.3

Against this background, I present a number of arguments for why a historical perspective on the conflict-regime nexus is likely to advance research. The premise of these arguments is a simple one: that the aim of social science is not simply to elucidate the present but to generate broad theories that advance knowledge. My arguments for why historical analysis is relevant for those interested in probing the conflict-regime nexus can be summarized in three points: what I will term the problem of truncated samples, generic challenges in state-building, and the long shadow of the past. The examples I use mainly come from early modern Europe, that is, from the universe that used to be at the center of the study of internal conflicts but has been largely ignored in recent decades. But they are meant to make a more general case for the relevance of going historical in studies of the civil conflict-regime nexus.

The Problem of Truncated Samples
To probe the effect of explanatory factors, we need variation. One of the merits of solely analyzing short, contemporary periods, the ability to treat a number of potentially relevant variables as constants, is therefore also a liability. For instance, scholars have convincingly shown that a genuine test of the causal effects of modernization on democratization requires analyzing long time periods. The point here is two-fold. First, causal relationships can be suppressed in some time periods, for instance during the Cold War’s superpower rivalry. Second, some of the effect of e.g. modernization might be included in the baseline if the analysis starts too “late,” thereby hiding the effect.4

Of particular relevance to the study of the conflict-regime nexus is the idea that the international order might suppress or alternatively bolster the effects of certain “domestic” causes. There is today a big literature on how international influences and domestic conditions interact. It is rather obvious that such interactions are likely to affect both internal conflict and democratization.5 For this reason, it is problematical that much of what we know about empirical dynamics of civil conflicts and regime change is based on large-N analysis of what are probably two highly biased samples with respect to international influences, namely the Cold War (1949–1989) and the post-Cold War period (1991–). The first sample features a highly idiosyncratic superpower rivalry which is likely to have influenced power-relationships between central governments and rebel groups in many developing countries. The second sample features an equally idiosyncratic


Generic Challenges in State-Building
The notion – so prominent in the works of an earlier generation of students working on the civil conflict-regime nexus – that the European past may contain developments that are in some ways similar to what we see outside of Europe today contains at least a kernel of truth. Most important for our purposes, a number of aspects of state-building processes are likely to repeat themselves in different contexts, even across longer periods of time. One way of thinking about this is on the basis of causal mechanisms. Studying historical developments we often try to glean what Jon Elster has termed ‘exportable mechanism’, i.e., mechanisms that operate in different contexts.

An important insight of scholars working with mechanisms that are relevant for the conflict-regime nexus is that they are likely to have different effects depending on the context. To illustrate, we can turn to a mechanism that goes to the very heart of the regime-conflict nexus, namely what Tilly terms the “extraction-resistance-settlement cycle.” This is the most important mechanism identified by the voluminous literature on early modern European state-building. To understand how it works recall that the dominant challenge facing any would-be state-builders is this: How to centralize power in a situation where it is initially fragmented?

This was exactly the challenge facing early modern European state-builders. There is wide consensus that this episode of state-building – which after many twists and turns was to produce the modern, territorial state – was unleashed by the so-called “military revolution” between 1560 and 1560. In the centuries following the military revolution, European state-builders struggled with a host of strong corporate groups and “medieval” political institutions which resisted reforms that would strengthen the power of the center at the expense of the power residing in localities and among privileged groups. The attempt to increase state power and autocratize political regimes in order to mobilize the economy for warfare therefore sparked repeated bouts of internal conflicts.

The big difference to the contemporary world lies in the absence, today, of a similar external pressure unleashed by the persistent threat of war. This of course means that state-builders face different incentives. Nonetheless, they often operate in contexts that are strikingly similar with respect to the weakness of central power and the presence of fragmented power structures, often anchored at local levels.8 Another similarity is the fundamental lack of allegiance to the political unit which follows from the fact that modern nation-building has not been successful. In this situation, any attempt to increase the sway of central power is likely to spark local grievances that are similar to those we find in early modern Europe.

For this reason, the European past is well-placed to elucidate these processes, which are ongoing in Africa, Asia, and Latin America as states are being built. The past will not repeat itself as such but many of the dynamics of bottom-up resistance against state-building have analogies in the past. Here, it is also worth noting that Western European countries eventually reached a degree of political and administrative centralization where state-building no longer sparked internal violence; indeed, where it arguably worked to further pacify societies.9 One possibility is that this state-building result is only likely in a particular context, even though the mechanisms producing it are likely to repeat themselves today. That is, the absence of the kind of external threat that characterized early modern Europe might mean that regional elites are better able to resist the designs of state-builders – and, consequently, that state-building is unlikely to produce the concentration of political and administrative power which was necessary to pacify societies in Europe. Only by contrasting past and present is it possible to understand why the “extraction-resistance-settlement cycle” might have different consequences in today’s developing countries than in the European past.

The Long Shadow of the Past
The final reason for turning to history is probably the least controversial one. History often cast long shadows, which we need to understand in order to fully comprehend present dynamics and future possibilities. A very simple point here is that many developments take a long time to unfold, meaning that they only come clearly into view when scrutinizing longer periods. But more important is the standard insight of the path dependency perspective: That the effects of certain variables can be temporally lagged.

Accordingly, both internal conflict and regime change might have deep

---


“historical roots.” For instance, it can hardly be a coincidence that what may historically have been the region most probe to internal conflict, Western and Central Europe, has been a zone of internal peace since 1945. This probably has much to do with the large-scale experience of state-building after 1500, mentioned above, as well as the concomitant socio-economic modernization process. State-building served to pacify European societies by increasing the sway of central power and decreasing the potential resistance of the corporate locales described above. In the longer run, it also provided an institutional setting that has served to stabilize democracy. Meanwhile, modernization has contributed to internal pacification both directly by creating more equal and affluent societies and indirectly by fostering conditions for consolidated democracy. Finally, the devastating experience of the two world wars might also have had a direct effect, immunizing elites and masses against the lure of warfare and the lure of dictatorship.

Going further back, it seems obvious that the European processes of state building and regime change which have been touched upon above were themselves shaped by deeper factors, the origins of which lie in medieval Europe. Only by understanding this point de départ – as Tocqueville would have it – is it possible to understand European patterns of state-building and democratization. We can also adduce examples from other regions. For instance, scholars have argued that deeper legacies of state formation have impacted patterns of internal conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa after decolonization. The point here is that an inauspicious legacy of state formation can foster conflict today.

More generally, historical legacies can constrain contemporary actors in a number of different ways. Most important are probably structural constraints, such as the extent to which decentralized power structures have given way to centralized ones, the extent to which the state has created at least some measure of ethno-linguistic or religious homogeneity, and the extent to which state-formation has been conducive to socio-economic development, including both sustained economic growth and mass education. But legacies also affect actors in more immaterial ways. For instance, they enable actors to reinvent past achievements. Sometimes, they even affect the attitudes and identities of actors. We need to understand these shadows of the past to genuinely be able to explain contemporary patterns of internal conflict and regime change.

Advancing Knowledge via Historical Analysis

We should not foster any illusions about the extent to which history can inform us about the present. Researchers working on the civil conflict-regime nexus should not repeat the failure of the modernization theorists of the 1950s who assumed that today’s developing countries were the developed countries of the past.

That said, historical analysis of the conflict-regime nexus offers a series of advantages. Three have been emphasized in this short piece. First, a number of relevant explanatory factors have basically been constants for much of the period after 1945. The upshot of this is that many recent analyses of internal conflict and regime change in effect operate with truncated samples and that many findings might reflect a context where important causal relationships are suppressed due to a particular set of scope conditions. Only by enlisting historical variation is it possible to empirically remove these scope conditions and genuinely test causal relationships. Second, a number of aspects of especially state-building (but to a lesser extent also regime change) are generic, meaning that state-builders face similar challenges today as in the past. Though the context differs – similarity does not imply sameness as Giovanni Sartori might have put it – past responses to these challenges might tell us a lot about the mechanisms through which state-building stokes political contention in today’s developing countries. Third, historical legacies constrain present-day dynamics. Often these legacies are invisible to the eye that only studies contemporary processes.

More generally, I have argued that historical data are needed to develop and apply the kind of broad theories that genuinely advance knowledge. The past – particularly early modern Europe – can be likened to a quarry which social scientists interested in the causes of internal conflict and regime change would do well to start mining. This should not occur at the expense of the powerful quantitative analyses of the post-1945 period but it can serve to complement this literature in a number of important ways.

Jørgen Møller is a professor of political science at Aarhus University.
SECTION NEWS

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Claire Adidia is now associate professor of political science at University of California, San Diego. She published “The Spousal Bump: Do Cross-Ethnic Marriages Increase Support in Multiethnic Democracies?” with Nathan Combes, Adeline Lo, and Alex Verink in the April 2016 issue of Comparative Political Studies. The article explores the extent to which African political candidates may attract voters across varying ethnicities by appealing to a coethnic bond employed through their spouse.

Inken von Borzyskowski, assistant professor of political science, Florida State University, published “Resisting Democracy Assistance: Who Seeks and Receives Technical Election Assistance?” in the June 2016 issue of the Review of International Organizations. The article explores the different incentives which drive domestic and international actors to seek or receive technical election assistance.

Von Borzyskowski is the recipient of the Peace Studies Section of the International Studies Association and the US Institute of Peace's first Peace Dissertation Prize for “A Double-Edged Sword: The Effects of International Assistance on Election Violence,” which is currently being revised into a book manuscript; and the recipient of the 2015 Best Paper Prize of the European Consortium for Political Research's Comparative Political Institutions Standing Group for “Trust Us: Technical Election Assistance and Post-Election Violence.”

Paul Carnegie will begin a new appointment as associate professor of political science at The University of the South Pacific, Fiji beginning in July.


Arolda Elbasani, associate researcher, European University Institute, and New York-based independent consultant, published “State-organised Religion and Muslims’ Commitment to Democracy in Albania” in the March 2016 issue of Europe-Asia Studies, in which she discusses the factors contributing to the Albanian Muslims’ commitment to a pro-democratic, pro-European society.

Elbasani also published “Islam in the Post-Communist Balkans: Alternative Pathways to God” with Olivier Roy, chair in Mediterranean studies, European University Institute, in the December 2015 issue of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies. The article explores the emerging actors and mechanisms that trigger the bifurcation between Islam as a marker of national identity, on the one hand, and a source of religious beliefs, on the other.

John P. Entelis, professor of political science, Fordham University, published “Crafting Democracy: Political Learning as a Precondition for Sustainable Development in the Maghreb” in What is Enlightenment? Continuity or Rupture in the Wake of the Arab Uprisings (Lexington Books, 2016). In his chapter, Entelis argues that the absence of a democratic political culture virtually guarantees that authoritarian governance will be the default style in the Arab world more generally and North Africa more specifically.

Benjamin Goldfrank, associate professor and chair of diplomacy and international relations, Seton Hall University, is the recipient of the 2016 University Teacher of the Year Award.


Donald L. Horowitz, James B. Duke Professor of Law and Political Science Emeritus, Duke University, and senior fellow, International Forum for Democratic Studies, was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the National Endowment for Democracy.

Matthew C. Ingram, assistant professor of political science, University at Albany, recently published Crafting Courts in New Democracies: The Politics of Subnational Judicial Reform in Brazil and Mexico (Cambridge
University Press, 2016), where he explores the influence of political ideas in reforming the local courts of Brazil and Mexico.

Ingram also published “Mandates, Geography, and Networks: Diffusion of Criminal Procedure Reform in Mexico” in the Spring 2016 Latin American Politics & Society, where he suggests that federal mandates, the states’ spatial proximity, and political network affinities determine the rate at which a state reforms policy.

Mohammad Ali Kadivar, PhD candidate of Sociology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, published “Disruptive Democratization: Contentious Events and Liberalizing Outcomes Globally, 1990-2004” with Neal Caren in the March 2016 issue of Social Forces. The article undertakes a global survey of 103 non-democratic countries from 1990 to 2004 to find that protests and riots increase the probability that a country will liberalize in a given month.

Yuta Kamahara, assistant professor of urban innovation, Yokohama National University, and Yuko Kasuya, visiting scholar, Stanford University and associate professor of law, Keio University, copublished “Legislative Malapportionment in Asia” in Building Inclusive Democracies in ASEAN (Anvil Publishing, 2015).

Ekrem Karakoç, assistant professor of political science, Binghamton University, coauthored “Minorities in the Middle East: Ethnicity, Religion, and Support for Authoritarianism” with Ceren Belge in the June 2015 issue of Political Research Quarterly. The article discusses the levels of support of Middle Eastern minorities for autocratic governance, positing that those whose status is threatened by a transition to majoritarian decision-making institutions are less likely to be supportive of democratization.


Koinova has also issued a call for papers for a fall 2016 conference, “Unpacking the Sending State: Regimes, Institutions, and non-State Actors in Diaspora & Emigration Politics.” The focus of this workshop will be on the role of political regimes in international migration politics in regards to issues of statehood, conflicts and security, democratization, authoritarianism, political economy, and political geography. If you would like to be considered for an invitation to this conference, send an abstract and an updated, one-page CV to m.koinova@warwick.ac.uk or gt16@soas.ac.uk by June 15, 2016. More information regarding the Diasporas and Contested Sovereignty project may be found at http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/researchcentres/cpd/diasporas.

Joanna Didi Kuo, research associate of American democracy in a comparative perspective, Stanford University, and Jan Teorell, professor of political science, Lund University, copublished “Illicit Tactics as Substitutes: Election Fraud, Ballot Reform and Contested Congressional Elections in the United States, 1860-1930” in the forthcoming issue of Comparative Political Studies.

Carl LeVan is now associate professor of international service at American University.

Ellen Lust, professor of political science, University of Gothenburg, copublished “The Decline and Fall of the Arab State” with Ariel I. Ahram in the April 2016 issue of Survival: Global Politics and Strategy. The article argues that global changes in the nature of sovereignty made the malaise of Arab states possible, despite being triggered by domestic battles. She also published a new edition of her textbook, The Middle East, 14th Edition (Sage Press, 2016). She extends her thanks to a great set of collaborators.

Cas Mudde, associate professor of international affairs, University of Georgia, has become co-editor of the European Journal of Political Research (EJPR), the flagship journal of the European Consortium of Political Research. He is also now researcher in the Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX) at the University of Oslo in Norway. He recently published On Extremism and Democracy in Europe (Routledge, 2016).

Jennifer Brick Murtazashvili, assistant professor of international affairs, University of Pittsburgh, recently published Informal Order and the State in Afghanistan (Cambridge University Press, 2016), which explores the rules governing the largely autonomous and customary organizations maintaining the political order in rural Afghanistan to explain how they can provide public goods.


Monika Nalepa, associate professor of political science, University of Chicago, published “Party Institutionalization and Legislative Organization: The Evolution of Agenda Power in the Polish Parliament”
in the April 2016 issue of The Journal of Comparative Politics. The article uses quantitative analysis of roll call votes and bills to examine two aspects of party influence: negative agenda control and legislative success.


Sharon Rivera, associate professor of government, Hamilton College, published “Nemtsov and Democracy in Nizhny Novgorod” in the Winter 2016 Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization, in which she reflects on slain Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov’s legacy as governor of Nizhny Novgorod in the immediate aftermath of communism’s collapse.

Rivera also published “Is Russia Too Unique to Learn from Abroad? Elite Attitudes on Foreign Borrowing and the West, 1993-2012” in the January 2016 Srasviteľnaya Politika. The article demonstrates that Russian elites are still surprisingly willing to adopt political and economic models from the West despite a sharp rise in anti-Western sentiments emanating from the Kremlin over the past decade.

Ben Ross Schneider, Ford International Professor of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, published his book, New Order and Progress: Development and Democracy in Brazil (Oxford University Press, 2016). Focusing on Brazil’s development strategy, governance, social change and political representation, the book offers a sobering insight into why Brazil has not been the rising economic star of the BRICS that many predicted it would be, but also documents the gains that Brazil has made toward greater equality and stability.

Edward Schneier, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, The City College of New York, published Muslim Democracy: Politics, Religion, and Society in Indonesia, Turkey and the Islamic World (Routledge, 2016). Using case studies and statistical comparisons of forty-seven Muslim-majority countries and their regional counterparts, the book demonstrates that religion is more the tool than the engine of politics and that the so-called democratic deficit of the Islamic world is largely illusory.

Erica S. Simmons, assistant professor of political science and international studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison, recently published Meaningful Resistance: Market Reforms and the Roots of Social Protest in Latin America (Cambridge University Press, 2016). The book explores the origins and dynamics of resistance to markets through an examination of two social movements that emerged to voice and channel opposition to market reforms: the protests against water privatization in Cochabamba, Bolivia and the protests against the rising corn prices in Mexico City, Mexico.


Solingen also published “Critical Junctures, Developmental Pathways, and Incremental Change in Security Institutions,” with Wilfried Wan in The Oxford Handbook of Historical Institutionalism (Oxford University Press, 2016), in which they analyze the sources of resistance to historical institutionalism in security studies as applied to the divergent regional security paths in East Asia and the Middle East and the evolution of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Güneş Murat Tezcür, Jalal Talabani Chair of Kurdish Political Studies, University of Central Florida, published “Ordinary People, Extraordinary Risks: Joining an Ethnic Rebellion” in the May 2016 American Political Science Review. The article, combining one of the most comprehensive datasets about insurgent recruitment with extensive fieldwork, suggests that the decision to rebel is as much political as economic and social. The findings explain the durability of insurgencies with limited economic resources.
NEW RESEARCH

Journal of Democracy
The July 2016 (Vol. 27, no. 3) Journal of Democracy features clusters of articles on “The Danger of Deconsolidation,” “The Struggle Over Term Limits in Africa,” and “Delegative Democracy Revisited,” as well as a number of individual articles and case studies.

The Danger of Deconsolidation
I. “The Democratic Disconnect” by Roberto Stefan Foa and Yascha Mounk
Is democratic deconsolidation underway in the United States and Europe? In recent years, support for democracy, especially among millennials, has been dwindling in a number of established democracies.

II. “How Much Should We Worry?” by Ronald F. Inglehart
The evidence presented by Foa and Mounk is troubling, but it does not mean that democracy is now in long-term decline.

The Struggle Over Term Limits in Africa
I. “25 Years After the USSR: What’s Gone Wrong?” by Henry E. Hale
A quarter-century after the Soviet breakup, democracy has hardly fared well across the vast Eurasian landmass. Why has this seemingly promising gain for freedom produced such disappointing results?

II. “The Power of Protest” by Janette Yearwood
As more and more African presidents attempt to remove or circumvent constitutional term limits, African populations increasingly are mobilizing en masse, at great risk, to defend their constitutions.

III. “A New Look at the Evidence” by Filip Reyntjens
There is strong empirical evidence to support the correlation between effective term limits and the quality of democracy.

The Assault on Postcommunist Courts” by Bojan Bugaric and Tom Ginsburg
A number of countries in East-Central Europe are facing a grave crisis of constitutional democracy. As their governments seek to undermine the institutional limits on their power, constitutional courts have become a central target.

“Xi Jinping’s Maoist Revival” by Suisheng Zhao
Far from being a reformer, as some had hoped, President Xi Jinping has launched the most sweeping ideological campaign seen in China since Mao. Xi is mixing nationalism, Leninism, and Maoism in ways that he hopes will cement continued one-party Communist rule.

Delegative Democracy Revisited
To what extent can the concept of delegative democracy developed by Guillermo O’Donnell two decades ago be useful in analyzing the problems confronting democracy in Latin America today?

I. “More Inclusion, Less Liberalism in Bolivia” by Santiago Anria
II. “Ecuador Under Correa” by Catherine M. Conaghan
III. “Brazil’s Accountability Paradox” by Frances Hagopian
IV. “Chile’s Crisis of Representation” by Juan Pablo Luna
V. “Colombia’s Surprising Resilience” by Lindsay R. Mayka
VI. “Peru Since Fujimori” by Alberto Vergara and Aaron Watanabe
VII. “Latin America’s Problems of Success” by Juan Pablo Luna and Alberto Vergara

“Shadows in the Swiss Paradise” by Clive H. Church and Adrian Vatter

Long a standout example of consensus-based politics, prosperous Switzerland has now become a mixed democracy with a good deal of polarization and uncertain prospects.

The April 2016 (Vol. 27, no. 2) Journal of Democracy features clusters of articles on “Latin America’s New Turbulence” and “Burma Votes for Change,” as well as individual articles on the Chinese middle class, Turkey, and subnational democracy.

“The Puzzle of the Chinese Middle Class” by Andrew J. Nathan

Seymour Martin Lipset argued that economic development would enlarge the middle class, and that the middle class would support democracy. To what extent will this general proposition prove true of China?

Latin America’s New Turbulence

I. “Can Democracy Win in Venezuela?” by Benigo Alarcon, Angel E. Alverez, and Manuel Hidalgo

Venezuela’s competitive authoritarian regime now confronts a highly mobilized opposition with a large majority in the legislature. What are the prospects for successful democratic change amidst a deteriorating security situation and an economy in freefall?

II. “The End of the Kirchner Era” by Noam Lupu

With a skillfully conveyed message of managerial competence and an electorate disenchanted by a floundering economy and the outgoing incumbent’s confrontational style, Mauricio Macri demonstrated that a non-Peronist can win Argentina’s presidency.

III. “Crisis and Integrity in Brazil” by Marcus Andre Melo

Public anger at revelations of widespread corruption, along with the rising cost of coalition politics, has brought Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff to the brink of impeachment. Yet the crisis has also revealed the strength of the country’s law-enforcement and judicial institutions.

IV. “Mexico’s Stalled Reforms” by Gustavo A. Flores-Macias

The long-ruling PRI staged a comeback in 2012 behind a young president touting a reformist agenda, but Enrique Pena Nieto’s early successes have been eclipsed by government underperformance and a continued failure to restore public security.

V. “Trouble in the ‘Northern Triangle’” by Forrest D. Colburn and Arturo Cruz S. Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador are weighed down by high crime, sluggish economies, and heavy reliance on remittances. And when significant political change has taken place, it has results in frightening political fragmentation.

The Freedom House Survey for 2015

“Iranian Dictators, Wavering Democracies” by Arch Puddington and Tyler Roylance

In 2015, the tenth consecutive year of decline in global freedom, the world was battered by overlapping crisis, spurring harsh authoritarian crack-downs and revealing the leading democracies’ lack of conviction.

Burma Votes for Change

I. “The Challenges Ahead” by Igor Blazevic

Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy swept Burma’s November 2015 elections. Will the new NLD-led government be able to live up to high expectations that it will deliver better governance, national reconciliation, and some form of federalism?

II. “The New Configuration of Power” by Min Zin

Even though Burma’s military seems to have accepted the NLD’s stunning election victory, it can still use an array of constitutional provisions to hamstring the incoming NLD government.

III. “Clashing Attitudes Toward Democracy” by Bridget Welsh, Kai-Ping Huang, and Yun-han Chu

What does public opinion tell us about Burma’s longer-term prospects for democracy? The Asian Barometer Survey reveals contradictory attitudes regarding democracy and democratic values among the citizens of Burma.

“Turkey’s Two Elections: The AKP Comes Back” by Ziya Onis

In power since 2002, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) of Recep Tayyip Erdogan seemed as if it might be losing its hold when Turkish voters went to the polls in June 2015. Yet that “hung election” gave way to another contest in November, and the AKP came roaring back.

“The Struggle for Subnational Democracy” by Jacqueline Behrend and Laurence Whitehead

Ten of the world’s twelve largest countries are “electoral democracies.” Yet a look at politics beneath the national level reveals patterns of illiberalism that mark out a new frontier for democratic research and activism.

Democratization (Volume 23, no. 5, 2016)

“Gravity Centres of Authoritarian Rule: A Conceptual Approach” by Marianne Kneuer and Thomas Demmelhuber

“A Test of European Union Post-Accession Influence: Comparing Reactions to Political Instability in Romania” by Sergiu Gherghina and Sorina Soare

“Protest in South Africa: Motives and Meanings” by Tom Lodge and Shauna Mottiar
New Research

“Ethnopolitical Demography and Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa” by Andy Baker, James R. Scarritt, and Shaheen Mozaffar

“Attitudes towards Gender Equality and Perception of Democracy in the Arab World” by Veronica V. Kostenko, Pavel A. Kuzmuchevev, and Eduard D. Ponomarev

“How Does Democracy Influence Citizens’ Perceptions of Government Corruption? A Cross-National Study” by Hui Li, Min Tang, and Narisong Huhe


“The Sex of Participatory Democracy: An Analysis of the Theoretical Approaches and Experiences of Participatory Democracy from a Feminist Viewpoint” by Jone Martinez Palacios

Democratization (Volume 23, no. 4, 2016)

“Honeymoon or Consolidation, or Both? Time Dependence of Democratic Durability” by Ko Maeda

“Ideological Radicalism and Democratic Experience in New Democracies” by Willy Jou


“Public Confidence in the Judiciary: The Interaction between Political Awareness and Level of Democracy” by Aylin Aydin Cakir and Eser Sekercioglu

“Elections and ‘Sons of the Soil’ Conflict Dynamics in Africa and Asia” by Isabelle Cote and Matthew I. Mitchell

“The European Union and Belarus: Democracy Promotion by Technocratic Means?” by Elena A. Korosteleva

“When Actions Speak Louder than Words: Examining Collective Political Protests in Central Asia” by Dilshod Achilov

“Political Entrepreneurs, Clientelism, and Civil Society: Supply-Side Politics in Turkey” by Feryaz Ocakli

“Who Supports Democracy? Evidence from a Survey of Chinese Students and Scholars in the United States” by Donglin Han and Dingding Chen

Democratization (Volume 23, no. 3, 2016)

“Should Liberals Sometimes Prefer Dictatorships to Democracies? A Closer Look at the Hayek Thesis” by Tommy Andre Knutsen

“Democratization and the Secularization of Religious Parties: The Case of Mexico” by Luis Felipe Mantilla

“Immoderation: Comparing the Christian Right in the US and pro-Islamic Movement-Parties in Turkey” by Esen Kirdis

“Variation in Subnational Electoral Authoritarianism: Evidence from the Russian Federation” by Inga A.L. Saikkonen

“Democracy and Innovation: From Institutions to Agency and Leadership” by Ludger Helms

“Local Participatory Innovations and Experts as Political Entrepreneurs: The Case of China’s Democracy Consultants” by Oscar Almen

“Infrastructural State Capacity for Democratization? Voter Registration and Identification in Cote d’Ivoire and Ghana Compared” by Giulia Piccolino

“The Return of Censitary Suffrage? The Effects of Automatic Voter Registration and Voluntary Voting in China” by Gonzalo Contreras, Alfredo Joignant, and Mauricio Morales

“Regulating Party Politics in the Western Balkans: The Legal Sources of Party System Development in Macedonia” by Fernando Casal Bertoa and Dane Taleski

SELECTED JOURNAL ARTICLES ON DEMOCRACY


“State Intelligence and the Politics of Zimbabwe’s Presidential Succession” by Blessing-Miles Tendi

“Constitution-Making, Media, and the Politics of Participation in Somalia” by Nicole Stremlau

“Devolution and Corruption in Kenya: Everyone’s Turn to Eat?” by Michelle D’Arcy and Agnes Cornell

“Struggling over Land in Post-Conflict Uganda” by Matt Kandel

“Mobilizing the Faithful: Organizational Autonomy, Visionary Pastors, and Citizenship in South Africa and Zambia” by Amy S. Patterson and Tracy Kuperus


“The Politics of Development under Competitive Clientelism: Insights from Ghana’s Education Sector” by Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai and Sam Hickey

American Political Science Review, Vol. 110, no. 1, February 2016

“Experimentation and Persuasion in Political Organizations” by Alexander V. Hirsch
“Preventing and Responding to Dissent: The Observational Challenges of Explaining Strategic Repression” by Emily Hencken Ritter and Courtenay R. Conrad

“Gender Quotas and Women’s Political Leadership” by Diana Z. O’Brien and Johanna Rickne


“Deliver the Vote! Micromotives and Macrobehavior in Electoral Fraud” by Ashlea Rundlett and Milan W. Svolik

Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, no. 2, July 2016


“Regional Differences in Political Trust: Comparing the Vysocina and Usti Regions” by Daniel Čermák, Renáta Mikešová, and Jana Stachová

“On the (Non) Distinctiveness of Marxism-Leninism: The Portuguese and Greek Communist Parties Compared” by Dan Keith and Giorgos Charalambous

“Evaluations of Perestroika in Post-Soviet Central Asia: Public Views in Contemporary Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan” by Timur Dadabaev

Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol. 49, no. 1, March 2016

“Nationalism and Authoritarianism in Russia: Introduction to the Special Issue” by Taras Kuzio

“Putin’s Russia as a Fascist Political System” by Alexander J. Motyl

“Russian National Identity and the Ukrainian Crisis” by Paul Goble

“Russian Politics and the Soviet Past: Reassessing Stalin and Stalinism under Vladimir Putin” by Thomas Sherlock

“Triumphant Memory of the Perpetrators: Putin’s Politics of re-Stalinization” by Dina Khapaeva

“Ukrainians as Russia’s Negative ‘Other’: History Comes Full Circle” by Mykola Riabchuk

“Soviet and Russian Anti-(Ukrainian) Nationalism and re-Stalinization” by Taras Kuzio

“The Influence of Regime Type on Russian Foreign Policy toward ‘the West,’ 1992–2015” by Allen C. Lynch

Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 49, no. 8, July 2016

“Value Orientations From the World Values Survey: How Comparable Are They Cross-Nationally?” by José Alemán and Dwayne Woods

Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 49, no. 7, June 2016

“Sovereign Debt, Migration Pressure, and Government Survival” by William T. Bernhard and David Leblang

Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 49, no. 5, April 2016

“The Glass Ceiling in Politics: Formalization and Empirical Tests” by Olle Folke and Johanna Rickne

“Lying or Believing? Measuring Preference Falsification From a Political Purge in China” by Junyan Jiang and Dali L. Yang

“Putin’s Russia as a Fascist Political System” by Alexander J. Motyl

“Russian National Identity and the Ukrainian Crisis” by Paul Goble

“Russian Politics and the Soviet Past: Reassessing Stalin and Stalinism under Vladimir Putin” by Thomas Sherlock

“Triumphant Memory of the Perpetrators: Putin’s Politics of re-Stalinization” by Dina Khapaeva

“Ukrainians as Russia’s Negative ‘Other’: History Comes Full Circle” by Mykola Riabchuk

“Soviet and Russian Anti-(Ukrainian) Nationalism and re-Stalinization” by Taras Kuzio

“The Influence of Regime Type on Russian Foreign Policy toward ‘the West,’ 1992–2015” by Allen C. Lynch

Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 49, no. 8, July 2016

“Value Orientations From the World Values Survey: How Comparable Are They Cross-Nationally?” by José Alemán and Dwayne Woods

Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 49, no. 7, June 2016

“Sovereign Debt, Migration Pressure, and Government Survival” by William T. Bernhard and David Leblang

Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 49, no. 5, April 2016

“The Glass Ceiling in Politics: Formalization and Empirical Tests” by Olle Folke and Johanna Rickne

“Lying or Believing? Measuring Preference Falsification From a Political Purge in China” by Junyan Jiang and Dali L. Yang

“The Spousal Bump: Do Cross-Ethnic Marriages Increase Political Support in Multiethnic Democracies?” by Claire L. Adida, Nathan Combes, Adeline Lo, and Alex Verink

“Local Elections in Authoritarian Regimes: An Elite-Based Theory With Evidence From Russian Mayoral Elections” by Ora John Reuter, Noah Buckley, Alexandra Shubenkova, and Guzel Garifullina

Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 49, no. 4, March 2016

“An Index of Assembly Dissolution Powers” by Max Goplerud and Petra Schleiter

“Social Policies, Attribution of Responsibility, and Political Alignments: A Subnational Analysis of Argentina and Brazil” by Sara Niedzwiecki

Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 49, no. 3, March 2016

“Extraction and Violent Resistance in the Early Phases of State Building: Quantitative Evidence From the “Maji Maji” Rebellion, 1905-1907” by Alexander De Juan


“Demanding the Divine? Explaining Cross-National Support for Clerical Control of Politics” by David Buckley

“How State Support of Religion Shapes Attitudes Toward Muslim Immigrants: New Evidence From a Sub-National Comparison” by Marc Helbling and Richard Traunmüller
“Ideals and Actions: Do Citizens’ Patterns of Political Participation Correspond to their Conceptions of Democracy?” by Åsa Bengtsson and Henrik Christensen


“The Rights of Man and the Rights of the Man-Made: Corporations and Human Rights” by Turkuler Isiksel

*International Political Science Review, Vol. 37, no. 2, March 2016*

“Political Trust, Extra-Representational Participation and the Openness of Political Systems” by Daniela Braun and Swen Hutter

“Types of Outcomes in Factional Rivalries: Lessons from Non-Democratic Parties in Turkey” by Pelin Ayan Musil and Hasret Dikici Bilgin

“Beyond Rationalization: Voting Out of Duty or Expressing Duty after Voting?” by Carol Galais and André Blais

“Oil, Urbanization, and ‘Pacted’ Ethnic Politics: Indigenous Movements in Latin America” by Chi-hung Wei

“Factors of Party System Nationalization” by Grigorii V Golosov

“Political Values Count but Issue Ownership Decides? How Stable and Dynamic Factors Influence Party Set and Vote Choice in Multiparty Systems” by Rune Karlsen and Bernt Aardal

*International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 60, no. 2, June 2016*

“When the Great Power Gets a Vote: The Effects of Great Power Electoral Interventions on Election Results” by Dov H. Levin

“Diversity and Diversion: How Ethnic Composition Affects Diversionary Conflict” by Kyle Haynes

*Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 54, no. 2, June 2016*

“Ethnic Associations in Katanga Province, the Democratic Republic of Congo: Multi-Tier System, Shifting Identities and the Relativity of Autochthony” by Erik Gobbers

“Everything Changes to Remain the Same? State and Tax Reform in South Sudan” by Rens Twijnstra and Kristof Titeca

“Post-Conflict Women’s Movements in Turmoil: The Challenges of Success in Liberia in the 2005 Aftermath” by Petra Debusscher and Maria Martin de Almagro

*Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 54, no. 1, March 2016*

“Decentralisation in Kenya: The Governance of Governors” by Nic Cheeseman, Gabrielle Lynch, and Justin Willis


“Crisis of Governance in South Sudan: Electoral Politics and Violence in the World’s Newest Nation” by Johan Brosché and Kristine Höglund

“The Transformation of the South African Public Service: Exploring the Impact of Racial and Gender Representation on Organisational Effectiveness” by Sergio Fernandez and Hongseok Lee

“Neither Despotic nor Civil: The Legitimacy of Chieftaincy in its Relationship with the ANC and the State in KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa)” by Mario Krämer

*Latin American Politics and Society, Vol. 58, no. 2, Summer 2016*

“Can Anyone Stop the President? Power Asymmetries and Term Limits in Latin America, 1984–2016” by Javier Corrales

“The International Monetary Fund, Party System Institutionalization, and Protest in Latin America” by Sergio Béjar and Juan Andrés Moraes


“Conditional Cash Transfer Programs and Electoral Accountability: Evidence from Latin America” by Nara Pavão

“Presidential Approval and Public Security in Mexico’s War on Crime” by Vidal Romero, Beatriz Magaloni, and Alberto Díaz-Cayeros

“Business Power and the Politics of Postneoliberalism: Relations Between Governments and Economic Elites in Bolivia and Ecuador” by Jonas Wolff

*Latin American Politics and Society, Vol. 58, no. 1, Spring 2016*

“Renationalization in Argentina, 2005–2013” by Luigi Manzetti

“The Impact of Mixed-member Districts on Legislators’ Behavior: The Case of Bolivia” by Margarita Corral, Francisco Sánchez, and Cristina Rivas Pérez

“The Anti-Incumbent Effects of Conditional Cash Transfer Programs” by Diego Sanches Corréa and José Antonio Cheibub

“Clientelism and the Utility of the Left-Right Dimension in Latin America” by Saskia P. Ruth

**New Research**

**Party Politics, Vol. 22, no. 4, July 2016**
“Rewarding the ‘Traitors’: Legislative Defection and Re-Election in Romania” by Sergiu Gherghina

“Internal Party Democracy in Former Rebel Parties” by Gyda Marås Sindre

“Economy, Corruption or Floating Voters? Explaining the Breakthroughs of Anti-Establishment Reform Parties in Eastern Europe” by Seán Hanley and Allan Sikk

**Party Politics, Vol. 22, no. 3, May 2016**
“Party System Closure and Openness: Conceptualization, Operationalization and Validation” by Fernando Casal Bérgo and Zsolt Enyedi

“Which Matters More in the Electoral Success of Islamist (Successor) Parties – Religion or Performance? The Turkish Case” by Elisabeth Gidengil and Ekrem Karakoç

**Party Politics, Vol. 22, no. 2, March 2016**
“Mobilization, Participation, and Political Change” by John Mark Hansen


**SELECTED NEW BOOKS ON DEMOCRACY**

**ADVANCED DEMOCRACIES**


**AFRICA**

*Coping with Crisis in African States.* Edited by Peter M. Lewis and John W. Harbeson. Lynne Rienner, 2016. 235 pp.


**ASIA**


**EASTERN EUROPE AND THE FORMER SOVIET UNION**


LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN


MIDDLE EAST


Building Rule of Law in the Arab World: Tunisia, Egypt, and Beyond. Edited by Eva Bellin and Heidi E. Lane. Lynne Rienner, 2016. 311 pp.


COMPARATIVE, THEORETICAL, GENERAL


New Research


APSACD is the official newsletter of the American Political Science Association's Comparative Democratization section. Formerly known as CompDem, it has been published three times a year (October, January, and May) by the National Endowment for Democracy's International Forum for Democratic Studies since 2003. In October 2010, the newsletter was renamed APSA-CD and expanded to include substantive articles on democracy, as well as news and notes on the latest developments in the field. The newsletter is now jointly produced and edited by faculty members of the V-Dem Institute and the International Forum.

Executive Editor
Staffan I. Lindberg is professor of political science and director of the V-Dem Institute, University of Gothenburg; is one of four PIs for Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem); Wallenberg Academy Fellow; selected member Young Academy of Sweden; and a Research Fellow in the QoG Institute. He is author of Democracy and Elections in Africa and editor of Democratization by Elections: A New Mode of Transition?, and has also worked on women's representation, clientelism, voting behavior, party and electoral systems, democratization, popular attitudes, and the Ghanaian legislature and executive-legislative relationships.

Members
Adam Harris received his Ph.D. from New York University in August 2015. He specializes in ethnic and African politics. Adam has conducted research on ethnic identifiability (recently published in the Journal of Conflict Resolution), ethnic and immigrant prejudice, the determinants of political protests, ideological ideal point estimation among African legislators, and the effects of foreign aid in recipient countries. His research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, New York University, and Columbia University.

Kristen Kao is a Research Fellow with the Program on Governance and Local Development (GLD) at the University of Gothenburg and a PhD Candidate in Political Science at UCLA. In 2014, she ran a nationwide survey in Jordan in collaboration with Ellen Lust and Lindsay Benstead funded by the GLD program at Yale. She has served as a program consultant and election monitor for a variety of international organizations, including the Carter Center and the National Democratic Institute.

Anna Lührmann is a post-doctoral fellow at the V-Dem Institute, University of Gothenburg. Her doctoral thesis – completed in summer 2015 at Humboldt University (Berlin) – studies the causes and effects of United Nation's electoral assistance. She currently works on several research projects concerning electoral manipulation, regime legitimacy and the impact of democracy promotion.

Ellen Lust is the Founding Director of the Programs on Governance and Local Development at Yale University and at the University of Gothenburg, and Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg. She has authored Structuring Conflict in the Arab World as well as articles in Perspectives on Politics, Comparative Political Studies, and other journals, and edited The Middle East and several volumes. The Moulay Hicham Foundation, NSF, the Swedish Research Council and other foundations have supported her research on authoritarianism, political transitions, and local governance.

Kyle L. Marquardt is a post-doctoral fellow at the V-Dem Institute, University of Gothenburg. He studies identity politics and the politics of authoritarianism. His current project uses data from extensive field and survey research from Eurasia to examine the relationship between language and separatism. Other projects involve the use of list experiments to analyze support for authoritarian leaders and Bayesian latent variable analysis of the components of social identities.

Rachel Sigman is a post-doctoral fellow at the V-Dem Institute, University of Gothenburg and an Assistant Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. She studies African politics and the political economy of development. Her current research investigates the ways that political financing shape patronage practices and governing outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa. She is also working on projects that develop new measures of state capacity and revisits the relationship between state-building and democratization.

Managing Editor
Melissa Aten is the senior research and conferences officer at the National Endowment for Democracy’s International Forum for Democratic Studies and associate director of the Network of Democracy Research Institutes. She earned an M.A. from The George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs, where she focused on foreign policy and Central Europe.

The International Forum for Democratic Studies
1025 F Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20004