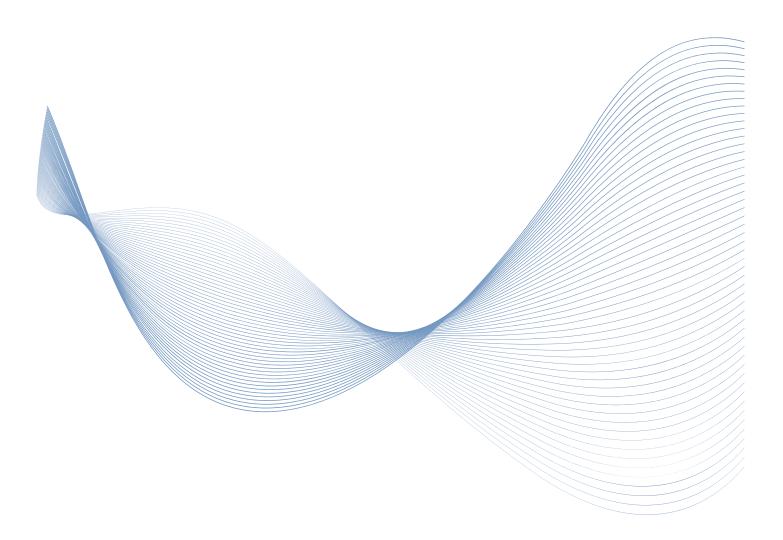
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Editors' Introductions: New Democratization Research Agendas

Michael Coppedge, *University of Notre Dame*

On March 5 and 6, 2023, the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at the University of Notre Dame hosted a conference on "Why Democracies Develop and Decline." This conference used a book with the same name (Coppedge et al. 2022) as a springboard to bring democratization researchers together to brainstorm about new research agendas. All of the book's editors—Amanda Edgell, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I. Lindberg, and I—and many of its contributors, including Svend-Erik Skaaning, John Gerring, Sirianne Dahlum, Michael Bernhard, and Allen Hicken, had worked together on the Varieties of Democracy project for years. We conceived of the book as an effort to mount the most comprehensive statistical testing yet of dozens of explanations for levels of democracy and changes in democracy, using V-Dem data. Publication of this book provided us with a fitting occasion to take stock of what we have learned from this approach, what remains uncertain, and what questions we have neglected to ask. The Kellogg Institute was an ideal host for the event given its early support for V-Dem and the intellectual contributions of its founding Academic Director, Guillermo O'Donnell, and of current faculty such as Scott Mainwaring, Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, and Karrie Koesel. The conference added to the Kellogg-V-Dem mix other prominent scholars such as Evelyne Huber, Carles Boix, Daniel Treisman, Richard Snyder, Jennifer McCoy, Olukunle Owolabi, Daniel Brinks, Deborah Yashar, David Altman, and others.

In lieu of conference papers, we invited the participants to write short memos proposing innovative research ideas. Seventeen of them responded, and their memos are collected into this symposium. I would like to highlight a few of the excellent proposals for future research that emerged during these conference discussions, many of which are also expressed in the memos. First, several participants recognized the value of the book's broad scope, covering almost all countries for more than a century, but called for it to be complemented by more middle-range analysis. The nature of democratization has surely evolved over this

long history. The process of expanding the suffrage to all adult men, to women, and to ethnic minorities was qualitatively different than the processes of making elections fairer and more representative, limiting executive power, protecting civil rights, bolstering free media, or ensuring an independent judiciary, struggles that have been more salient in some decades than in others. Similarly, the democratization—and autocratization—process has varied in important ways in Western Europe; Latin America; Sub-Saharan Africa; the Caribbean; Eastern Europe; the Middle East and North Africa; and South, Southeast, and East Asia. Testing the same hypotheses with the expectation that they work the same way in all these regions and historical periods can yield some very general tendencies, but there is much more to be learned from smaller, more focused studies. Such studies can employ qualitative and mixed methods using richer and more varied evidence and would be particularly useful for identifying the causal mechanisms that may underlie the macro-level quantitative relationships discussed in the book.

Second, the conference participants were generally enthusiastic about V-Dem data, but it left many of them wanting more. There was some yearning for data on more precise time scales of quarters, months, or weeks; one observation per year can be quite limiting! David Altman called for expanded measures of inclusiveness in order to properly recognize the growing numbers, in some countries, of non-resident citizens and noncitizen residents. Several participants urged the development of measures that apply to subnational organizations and actors such as unions, parties, religious organizations, civil society organizations, and executives and other individual leaders—especially measures that would tell users how they are positioned on dimensions of left to right, democracy to autocracy, and peace to violence. Despite the influence of actorcentered accounts of regime change such as O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986), lack of actor-level data has largely prevented large-sample quantitative testing of actorcentered hypotheses—the leading exception still being Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013).2

Third, the conference also served as a reminder of the need for theories that can weave together ideas adopted from different schools of thought. The book shows that, empirically, many factors matter, often in complex ways: geography, demography, international networks, economic development and growth, the rule

 $^{{\}it i}$ I thank Notre Dame's Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts for a Small Henkels Grant and the Kellogg Institute for a large Academic Conferences and Workshops grant that made this conference possible.

 $_{\rm 2}$ V-Dem made progress in this direction with the release of V-Party, which rates individual parties in election years rather than countries in all years.

of law, civil society, and social movement campaigns. However, we lack a theory that would explain how and why all these diverse elements work together to make democracy highly likely and to deepen, decline, or remain in a stable equilibrium. It is not that we have no clues: each chapter surveys the literature of various schools of thought and distills them into testable hypotheses. Furthermore, the concluding chapter proposes a theoretical framework that suggests how these factors are arrayed in causal sequences and why democratization is a punctuated equilibrium. Nevertheless, that framework is the result of an inductive exploration. We have good theoretical reasons to expect each of the factors to be in the model, but we have only empirical patterns, rather than systematic reasoning, to tell us why they are linked in a certain order in path diagrams. Theories that help us understand why democracy (and non-democracy) is a complex dynamic system and why it functions differently in different times and places would be major contributions.

Katherine Bersch, Davidson College

Over the past decades, the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project's carefully constructed and increasingly detailed panel datasets have helped transform the cross-national study of political regimes. Collaborative endeavors like these are important public goods, and the recent edited volume by the V-Dem team shows how this initiative has allowed scholars to examine democratic theories previously thought untestable (Coppedge *et al.* 2022). Cutting-edge quantitative studies validate some long-held hypotheses while calling others into question, contributing to our broad understanding of Why Democracies Develop and Decline. With this crowning achievement of the V-Dem Project in mind, scholars at a conference hosted by the Kellogg Institute asked what might come next. Memos featured in this edition of Democracy and Autocracy offer their thoughts on new directions in research that will deepen our understanding of democracy and autocracy as well as the ways features of political regimes shape governance.

Many of the memos explore how to improve research within the existing framework. Focusing on conceptualization, David Altman draws our attention to the ways democratic governments incorporate or exclude individuals within their sovereign territories as citizens (e.g., Switzerland is ranked a strong democracy but almost 30% of the permanent population has no political rights), arguing that V-Dem measures of Polyarchy ought to pay more attention to inclusion.

Jørgen Møller and Svend-Erik Skaaning also focus on definitional issues, highlighting the importance of careful conceptualization of democratic crisis, proposing four clusters of indicators: democratic institutions, restraints on executive power, acceptance of political opponents, and support for democratic norms and behaviors. Jennifer McCoy also underscores the importance of careful conceptualization of democratic regression to avoid alarmism. Turning to issues of democratic diffusion, Olukunle P. Owolabi calls for investigating how neighborhood networks influence democratization and the political consequences of remittance flows, while Thomas Mustillo suggests modeling approaches that may offer insights into the international dimension of diffusion.

Another set of scholars emphasizes that to understand the development and decay of democracy, we must consider how components work together, taking into account sequences and episodes. Evelyne Huber suggests scholars pivot toward more historically grounded configurative analysis, separating out time periods of analysis, highlighting causal sequences and pathways with a focus on intermediate variables. Amanda Edgell, Matthew Wilson, and Staffan Lindberg focus on how episodes of regime transformation invite a reassessment of factors associated with regime stability or change as well as the need to analyze how regimes evolve over time with varying outcomes. Lakshmi Iver also recognizes the importance of sequences for understanding the role of economic factors, offering several specific recommendations, including analysis of components within the index to compare rates of change over time.

In many cases, contextualization requires greater granularity. Jennifer McCoy, Carl Henrik Knutsen, and Benjamin Garcia Holgado each call for greater granularity in measures that characterize powerful actors, political agency, and elite norms and behaviors to understand how they interact with institutions to influence democratic erosion and regime change. Focusing on the role of social mobilization in democratic processes, Ann Mische advocates a more dynamic analysis of civic and contentious engagement with greater attention to interaction pathways and protest cycles. Victoria Tin-bor Hui offers an example of the importance of contextualization: Whereas cross national analyses in the book may support claims that civil society actors shape democratization, the state and individual leaders also affect the ability of civil society to protest. She reminds us that under certain conditions, institutional constraints can be bulldozed.

Some scholars emphasize the potential of "exploiting the decomposed indicator-level data" (Thomas Mustillo). Jacob Turner, for example, argues that we should move away from treating democracy as the outcome of interest and instead "move down the conceptual ladder" to consider how various subcomponents work together. Michael Coppedge's contribution advocates taking democracy out of its "hard shell" to examine causal relationships between indicators (e.g., the impact of competitive elections on limiting executive power). Considering features of democracy as causally related allows for further exploration of the idea of the "'protective belt' (e.g., institutionalized political parties, a vibrant civil society, and the rule of law) that tends to stabilize both democratic and undemocratic regimes" (Coppedge et al. 2022, 215).

Another set of scholars directs our attention to novel lines of inquiry that connect studies of democracy to governance and human development. Focusing on issues of election violence, Kimberly Peh pushes us to think about how attributes of democracy can influence human development. Knutsen highlights how regime supporters and opponents have distinct policy preferences, so understanding each group sheds light on democratic governance. My own contribution suggests that if we are to understand the causes of democratic erosion, we must examine how specific components of democracy shape the extent to which democracies deliver and how this, in turn, influences support for democracy and democratic stability.

Indeed, understanding how—and how well—democratic states can address such challenges as climate change proves central to our understanding of democratic stability and survival. As Bill Kakenmaster notes, questions about democracy in an age of runaway climate change are especially urgent. McCoy highlights the importance of two-way effects, arguing that political polarization may be both a cause and consequence of democratic development and decline. Many of these lines of inquiry put scholars who study political regimes in conversation with a broader set of scholars who focus on various aspects of governance (e.g., the judiciary, violence, and the state).

Taken together, these pieces reflect the many advances in research on political regimes and set out a vibrant agenda ahead. Much remains to be done to improve existing democratization research at a cross-national level—perhaps even more that might be accomplished by disaggregating V-Dem indicators and delving into sequences, processes, and episodes. By analyzing democracies and their configurations in relation to

democratic governance, we are likely to learn more about the causes of democratic erosion, polarization, and democratic decline.

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Some Reflections on New Directions in Democracy Research

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Why Democracies Develop and Decline represents the cutting edge in quantitative studies of democratization. The authors are able to make use of the most comprehensive and most carefully constructed dataset on the subject. They construct their analyses to provide critical evaluations of extant theories, thus contributing in an admirable way to the cumulative enterprise of social science. So what might be next?

Arguably, at this stage, a step back from the attempt to establish average effects of variables over centuries and all the countries in the world and towards more historically grounded configurative analyses might be most fruitful. This would enable a closer dialogue with theories dealing with institutions and social forces that vary over time and space. Bernhard and Edgell note that "the literature on social forces and democratization operates according to a radically different ontology than most large–N research" (190). I am suggesting at least to narrow the difference between the ontologies of quantitative and comparative historical studies. Quantitative analyses could establish different patterns for different regions and time periods and analyze more specific effects of key variables and their interactions

in various historical settings. To draw lessons for social actors aiming to protect democracy from erosion, we need such contextualized analyses.

Of course, a focus on particular regions and time periods will reduce the number of observations to the point where the sophisticated modeling of causal sequences with this many variables might become impossible. However, we could easily eliminate the distal variables from the analysis. They mostly influence intermediate variables, with which we can start our causal chain. From a pragmatic point of view, we cannot draw lessons on how to strengthen democracy from an analysis of these distal variables because they cannot be influenced anyway.

The next step here is to understand how favorable configurations emerge and how temporal sequences matter. If strong civil societies and parties precede independence, democracy tends to be resilient. If they are weak at the point of independence, economic elites are more likely to gain control of the state and prevent the emergence of strong parties and civil societies.

Another compelling reason for separating out time periods for analysis is that technologies for both social mobilization (through social media) and repression (e.g., through surveillance) have radically changed. Has this strengthened or weakened the effectiveness of protest movements in challenging autocratic regimes or defending democratic regimes against those trying to undermine them? Average effects over the past century are unlikely to answer these questions.

More differentiated regional and temporal analyses would also make it possible to pay closer attention to the role of political parties and of external actors. For instance, the presence of strong parties representing elite interests after initial democratization in Latin America was important to prevent elites from undermining democracy. In the recent past, strong parties representing elite interests have been more likely to support governments with autocratic tendencies. Under what kinds of historical conditions do parties representing elite interests play one or the other role?

In analyzing the trajectory of democracy in Latin America, the role of the United States cannot be ignored. Arguably, protest movements and civil society, including left-wing anti-system movements, would have been more effective in producing upturns in democracy in Central America during the Cold War in the absence of massive support to anti-left forces and governments and militaries from the United States. This

is true for Guatemala in 1954 and extends to Nicaragua and El Salvador from the 1970s to the 1980s. One needs to consider the historical context to properly understand the potential of civil society and protest movements to contribute to democratization. Measuring the effects of external influences on levels, upturns, and downturns cannot measure prevented upturns. Even estimating where democracy would have been based on internal variables only, without external influences, would not be sufficient; after all, U.S. intervention changed these very variables, such as strength and unity of left parties and civil society organizations.

Finally, in the analyses of upturns and downturns, I would separate out different regime types, going beyond the use of the continuous democracy index. Clearly, democracies that ranked high on this index for 20 years ("consolidated" democracies) have different vulnerabilities from newly established democracies ranking high on this index. And established autocracies will have different vulnerabilities from transitional governments (authoritarian governments following a regime change). This might help to sort out the conditions under which right-wing and left-wing anti-system movements contribute to upturns and downturns.

Advancing the Research Agenda on Democratic Health

Jennifer McCoy, Georgia State University

Three Research Questions to Advance the Agenda

1. How does extreme political polarization condition the effects of institutional and economic factors on democratic health?

The level of political polarization could be introduced into the very promising multi-level analysis to identify causal sequences in long-term democratic change begun in *Why Democracies Develop and Decline* (Coppedge *et al.* 2022). We need to better understand the two-way relationship between polarization and democratic decline. Likewise, how does polarization condition the effects of institutional factors such as majoritarian electoral systems, malapportionment, party system fragmentation, and of economic factors such as growth, inequality, or economic crisis on democratic health?

2. Bring back politics and political agency into the analysis of both polarization and democratic erosion.

Quantitative datasets have difficulty measuring elite norms and behavior, yet political agency is the predominant driver of extreme political polarization, which in turn contributes to democratic erosion (McCoy and Somer 2019). There is a proliferation of research at the micro-level on individual attitudes toward democracy and toward supporters of opposing parties. Yet political agency, elite norms and behavior, and macro-level political dynamics require comparative, qualitative research and thus need to be incorporated into long-term analyses of causal sequencing.

3. Focus on solutions, not just problems.

What opposition party strategies can best challenge autocratizing incumbents (Gamboa 2022)? What interventions may mitigate citizen-level antidemocratic attitudes, extreme partisanship, and affective polarization? Under what conditions is democratic recovery more likely?

A Call for Transparency and Clarity

The development of the Varieties of Democracy database provided a vast trove of longitudinal and cross-national data for democracy scholars that allows for significant advancements in our understanding of democratic development and decay. But along with the proliferation of data from this and other emerging democracy indexes comes responsibility in our reporting of findings based on them. The proliferation of terms, conceptualizations, and measurement of democratic backsliding, erosion, and breakdown can confuse the advancement of theory and explanation as well as public understanding.

The recent debates on whether democracy is advancing or receding globally, and which countries are at risk of breakdown, exemplify this problem. A multitude of scholars have lamented democratic regression since about 2005. Recent annual reports by both Freedom House and V-Dem continued to raise the alarm about a wave of autocratization (Papada *et al.* 2023; Gorokhovskaia, Shahbaz, and Slipowitz 2023). At the same time, Brownlee and Miao (2022) and Treisman (2023) caution against alarmist views, arguing that wealthy democracies in particular are not at risk, while Little and Meng (2023) and Treisman (2023) find little evidence of global democratic decline in the last decade.

These debates revolve in part around differences in measurement and testing, and different research questions they are addressing. But they also mask some general agreement: the major democracy indexes all show some decline in average global democracy scores in the last decade (Beatty Riedl *et al.* 2023), and even Little and Meng find a decline from 2018–2020. The skeptics also agree that backsliding within established democracies is occurring and is concerning.

One problem is that scholars highlighting that the United States is not at risk of complete breakdown are not reassuring those concerned about erosion in the quality of democracy, and the possibility that the gradual accumulation of democratic deficits characteristic of democratic backsliding could eventually cause a slide into authoritarianism. Worldwide, the fact that the largest democracies are perniciously polarized and backsliding is of concern, even if the overall number of democracies remains more or less constant because improvements in smaller democracies compensate for deterioration in larger ones (a point that Treisman recognizes).

Little and Meng counter the gloomy assessments by arguing that expert bias may account for the decline in V-Dem's global democracy averages in the last decade, in contrast to the stable average they find with more objective electoral competitiveness measures. Even here though, the interpretation of "objective" versus "subjective", and *de jure* versus *de facto* conditions,

is important. For example, Little and Meng use the National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy (NELDA) variables of whether multiple parties were legal and whether opposition parties could compete. Yet, as the NELDA codebook indicates, this only means there was at least one party running that was not officially in the government, not that these were functioning opposition parties. As comparative election experts know, autocratizing leaders often create the appearance of a competitive election by allowing multiple parties, but then disqualifying leading candidates with bogus corruption charges, or incentivizing pseudo-opposition parties through cooptation or outright bribes.

Claims from V-Dem, Freedom House, and others about the changing balance of autocracies and democracies in the world are more problematic because they must use categorical variables, with necessary cut-offs to distinguish the categories. Countries in the gray zone around a dividing line can be demoted or promoted rather strangely based on somewhat hidden criteria. For instance, after Tom Carothers pointed out at the 2023 V-Dem report launch how strange it was that Canada was demoted to Electoral Democracy, while the United States remained a Liberal Democracy, I looked closely at the Regimes of the World data. I found that Canada's demotion was due to a fall on a single criterion recently included in the Liberal Democracy category—access to justice for women. This fall was perhaps due to a major recent report about violence against indigenous women, yet on every other criterion of liberal democracy, Canada scored higher than the U.S.

Thus, some scholars are concerned about erosion in the quality of democracy, while others are more concerned about the probability of outright collapse. Both research questions, and emphases on different criteria within them, are legitimate. But we might better serve both the advancement of knowledge and a concerned public by acknowledging the overarching scholarly agreement on widespread evidence of democratic vulnerability in the current age, while also avoiding undue alarmism with our choice of terminology or the creation of false debates.

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Crisis of Democracy: Issues of Conceptualization and Operationalization

Jørgen Møller and Svend-Erik Skaaning, Aarhus University

As long as democracies have existed, there have been declarations that democracy is in crisis (Merkel 2018). However, it seems fair to say that there is today an unusual degree of agreement that democracy is deeply mired in crisis. The number of news articles on the topic has exploded, and governments, NGOs, and think tanks have been busy organizing public lectures, seminars, and summits about different aspects of the crisis of democracy. Meanwhile, the number of academic works mentioning crisis of democracy has been rapidly increasing, and the challenges are not confined to fledgling democracies in developing countries; the old, affluent democracies are also in peril (Ercan and Gagnon 2014; Merkel 2018). It has even been claimed that we are facing anti-democratic tsunamis and a revival of fascism (Horesh 2020).

But to what degree is the radical pessimism warranted? According to Przeworski (2019, 1–2), "It is easy to become alarmist, so we need to maintain a perspective. ... Not yielding to fears, a dose of scepticism, must be the point of departure." Seen from this vantage point, the debate about the crisis of democracy stands to benefit from two moves. First, we need more systematic reflections on what the crisis means. Second, these considerations should guide the identification of relevant indicators and thus pave the way for a systematic empirical assessment.

While the concept of crisis "in sociology and political science is nothing short of inflationary" (Merkel 2018, 12), we advocate a return to the traditional meaning of crisis, i.e., a situation where defining features of a phenomenon are under severe attack, meaning that there is a high risk of fundamental change in the defining elements and that the persistence of the regime is threatened (Przeworski 2019, 10). The crisis itself might be the product of political, economic, and social challenges, but these factors only amount to a crisis when core features of democracy are in real jeopardy.

Regarding the concept of democracy, an electoral, institutional understanding of democracy is advantageous, as it points out what is distinct about democracy compared to other aspects of (good) governance, and it allows us to focus on institutions

that make up a relatively undisputed core of democracy, which concerns rules determining access to political power (Munck 2016).

Against this backdrop, we observe that many crisis indicators miss the mark, including measures of satisfaction with democracy and trust in the government; support for populist parties, cartel parties, and new parties; the number of political parties; the effectiveness and ideological coherence of governments; voter turnout; membership of political parties and NGOs: and electoral volatility (e.g., Ercan and Gangnon 2014; Katz 2022; Kriesi 2020; Merkel 2018; Przeworski 2019). For instance, it is not a crisis for democracy per se that voters are less loyal to old parties, regularly shop parties, or vote for populist parties. Democracy only becomes challenged when votes back antidemocratic parties and candidates that do not follow the rules of the game. The real danger is when parties attempt to undermine or subvert electoral contestation for power.

Likewise, it does not undermine democratic institutions that some citizens decide not to vote, join political parties, or engage in civil society activities—or that they express lack of trust in the government, political parties, politicians, journalists, etc. Political passiveness might challenge ideals about equal representation and popular engagement, but the core democratic institutions can function and survive despite such passiveness.

What we thus need are indicators that capture direct threats to—and support of—core democratic institutions rather than government stability, the character of the party system, active participation, and/or trust and satisfaction. Indicators of democracy are only relevant for our purposes when they capture the status and trends regarding, first, core democratic institutions, and, second, restraints on executive power, acceptance of political opponents, and support for democratic norms and behaviours.

We suggest a distinction among four clusters of issues and indicators:

- 1. Defining features of electoral democracy (e.g., clean elections, freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of peaceful assembly);
- 2. Executive power concentration (e.g., judicial constraints on the executive, legislative constraints on the executive, or executive respect for the constitution);

- 3. Democratic norm transgressions by political parties and civil society (affective polarization, respect for counterarguments, anti-system movements, mobilization for autocracy, political violence); and
- 4. Popular support for anti-democratic alternatives (support for institutions associated with electoral democracy and rejection of alternatives, participation in regime opposition groups, vote share for outright antipluralist parties).

This approach reduces conflation and enables us to identify a genuine democratic crisis understood as a situation where core features of the political regime itself are imperiled.

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Thinking about Regime Transformation

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Explaining the emergence and survival of political regimes is perhaps the largest research agenda in comparative politics. Important strands in this vast literature include studies on democratization/democratic survival and autocratization/democratic breakdown. In this essay, we discuss two main challenges in this area of research. We argue that thinking about *regime transformation* as an episodic process helps to overcome these challenges. We then discuss how scholars may begin to address several puzzles concerning regime transformation using the Episodes of Regime Transformation (ERT) dataset.

Two Challenges in the Literature:

Challenge #1: Most research either focuses on discrete changes in regime *type* or embraces a more incremental approach to address annual year-to-year changes in *levels* of democracy. The former obscures more subtle but substantial changes that may occur over the lifecycle of a regime without changing its status from democracy to autocracy or vice versa. The latter avoids this issue but introduces problems of interpretation, particularly the degree to which equal changes in values on a multidimensional concept like democracy mean the same thing.

Challenge #2: Studies that simultaneously address democratic and autocratic changes remain uncommon (for exceptions, see Coppedge et al. 2022; Teorell 2010), though most scholars treat democracy and autocracy as resting at opposite ends of a continuum. The literature tends to have a democratization bias, but a recent wave of scholarship on democratic backsliding and resilience challenges this trend. The fact that few studies attempt to integrate questions of democratization and autocratization implies a degree of acceptance that these two processes have different predictors and causal mechanisms, although we lack empirical evidence to support this assumption precisely because we have structured our knowledge based on it.

Regime Transformation Helps to Overcome these Challenges:

Thinking about *regime transformation* as an episodic process that can occur in either a democratic or autocratic direction, with or without a discrete change in regime *type*, overcomes both of these challenges. Regimes are the bundle of institutions and practices that determine who has power and what they can do with it. Contemporary regimes can be arrayed along a spectrum from democracy to autocracy:



Democracy

Autocracy

Regime transformation, then, involves substantial changes in institutions and practices that cause the regime to shift along the spectrum in either direction. The Episodes of Regime Transformation (ERT) dataset operationalizes democratization and autocratization as two obverse processes of regime transformation using the Varieties of Democracy dataset.¹ Episodes are categorized based on their direction and the type of regime within which they originated. We also include information about the outcome of the episode, such as whether a democratic transition or breakdown occurred or was averted. Thus, the ERT allows researchers to systematically study processes of regime transformation, including the onset, duration, and outcome.²

Notwithstanding the merits of previous approaches, we argue that moving away from a disjointed model of regime change and toward a more holistic model of regime transformation presents new avenues of research. Thinking about regime transformation facilitates the reassessment of the factors associated with regime stability or change. For example, the explanatory variables for the onset of regime transformation may differ from those that determine its outcome (Boese et al. 2021; Wilson et al. 2022). Likewise, thinking about regime transformation allows us to engage in more systematic analyses of how regimes evolve over time with varying outcomes (Edgell et al. 2021; Sato et al. 2023). For qualitative research, thinking about regime transformation facilitates the use of process tracing to uncover causal mechanisms and historical

pathways in both likely and unlikely cases. Such research innovations can help us empirically evaluate assumptions about democratization and autocratization, particularly whether these dynamics unfold differently or share similar explanations.

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¹ The ERT dataset is the culmination of a years-long collaborative effort that includes all the authors listed in Maerz *et al.* (forthcoming), as well as several other contributors throughout the years, who can be found listed in the acknowledgements of that article.

² Elsewhere, we provide an extensive overview of this dataset (Maerz et al. forthcoming; Wilson et al. 2022; Boese et al. 2021).

Citizenship and Polyarchic Inclusion: A Necessary Revision

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One aspect of democracy that we need to tackle more systematically is citizenship and the Dahlian polyarchic dimension of inclusion.

Most contemporary measures of democracy take polyarchic inclusion nearly for granted. We should not be tempted by this practice, regardless of how well other aspects of democracy, such as political competition, are realized. Now that the V-Dem project has matured, there is enough room to tackle this issue, even though I perfectly understand why our primary focus was, up to this moment, elsewhere.

Contemporary migration flows affect virtually all aspects of the social fabric, democracy included. By focusing attention on the competitiveness aspects of the regime, comparative measurements of democracy—V—Dem's included—have shortchanged the complexity of the Dahlian dimension of inclusiveness, a sine qua non for defining polyarchy.

A cold view of the *Electoral Democracy Index* (EDI) reveals how—as in most of the comparative literature—we have paid much more attention to the competitiveness dimension of polyarchy than to inclusiveness. In fact, the number of indicators composing the contestation aspect of EDI is 39, while participation has only one (see Coppedge *et al.* 2023, 2.1.1)! I suspect Robert Dahl himself would agree with me; he argued that full polyarchies need to politically include at least 90% of the stable, permanent adult population of a country (Dahl 1971, Table A–1).

Regardless of how complex capturing this dimension is, it is critical to consider it. I do not believe that a society where almost 30% of the permanent population (even third-generation immigrants) have no political rights (such as Switzerland) could be defined as a robust democracy. Yet, probably the most extreme example comes from Luxembourg, a country that ranks in the top 10% of democracies in the world (Papada *et al.* 2023), where almost 50%(!) of its population consists of resident non-citizens and expats. This situation violates Dahl's criteria in different ways: expats can vote even though they are not subject to the laws, while resident non-citizens are subject to the laws

but have no say in making them. Indeed, from this perspective, one could question whether Luxembourg and Switzerland resemble competitive oligarchies rather than polyarchies.

As alternatives to the most-used ethnonational measures today, new measures should assess how large the overlap is between those who make the law and those who are subject to it. Some regimes—including some of those that have been systematically considered strong democracies—exhibit such a considerable gap between these two groups that their democratic credentials could be questioned.¹

We need to fine-tune the scope and measurements of democratic inclusion, regardless of how difficult suitable measures are, although I perfectly understand the path-dependent stickiness of V-Dem's High-Level Indices (HLI) once they were created. Indeed, our HLIs were an appropriate combination of realism and collective intellectual consensus. Still, I am positive a different understanding and operationalization of Dahl's polyarchic inclusion would change our complete picture of democracy and democracies.

Again, I firmly believe we must avoid any ethnonational bias in our conceptualization of democracy (as we implicitly do when enfranchising expats and ignoring resident non-citizens altogether), as the examples of Switzerland and Luxembourg suggest. Of course, I have selected these cases because they are the most extreme examples, but Latvia, Estonia, and Portugal accompany the previously mentioned instances in the cluster of the top 20% of democracies (see Altman 2022). Virtually all regimes, democracies included, suffer from the same problem to a greater or lesser degree.

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¹ Switzerland and Luxembourg rank 2 and 9 respectively in EDI 2023 (Papada *et al.* 2023), and 4 and 15 using the Liberal Democracy Index (LDI).

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Political Actors, Institutions, and Large-N Analysis

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The Varieties of Democracy Project (V–Dem) has opened up the possibility of testing a broad range of hypotheses and mechanisms derived from multiple "families" of theories about democratic stability and change. Indeed, in a recent collaborative volume (Coppedge *et al.* 2022), multiple authors use V–Dem data to test hypotheses from some of the most important theories on regime change and stability. However, this impressive book still overlooks the testing of hypotheses that put political actors center stage (Lust and Waldner 2015).

There are multiple authors who have stressed the role that specific actors' characteristics can play in explaining changes in democracy (Lust and Waldner 2015, 16–20). Fortunately, V-Dem has recently included variables regarding the levels of illiberalism and populism of political parties; this opens up the possibility of testing some "actor-centric" theories in large-N quantitative analysis. Having more systematic measures of "actor-centric" theories would be useful to verify whether they have an interactive effect with other "contextual" proximate causes on democratic upturns and downturns. For example, the impact of a strong economic crisis on democratic survival may be conditional on the level of democratic commitment of the president and main opposition actors. In particular, V-Dem may consider including questions that aim to measure actors' strategies and goals (Gamboa 2022), the personality traits of political leaders (Arana Araya 2022), the normative preferences of actors regarding different dimensions of democracy (Mainwaring and Perez-Linan 2013), and the level of policy radicalism of actors (Mainwaring and Perez-Linan 2013).

Incorporating questions about the role of actors in V-Dem is particularly necessary to test the impact of institutional variables on democratic stability. Formal institutions (i.e., "a set of officially sanctioned rules that structures human behavior and expectations") are different from the actors affected by them or who are in charge of enforcing them (Brinks, Levitsky, and Murillo 2020, 7–8). The effect of institutional variables, such as proportional or majoritarian electoral rules, parliamentary or presidential regimes, and federal or unitary systems, may be conditional on the specific actors who interact with them. For example, if a constitution stipulates that a constitutional court has the power to engage in judicial review, the ideology, political loyalties, or regime preferences of specific justices can be causally relevant to explain whether the Court decides to overturn a law or executive decree that endangers liberal democracy.

Understanding the relations between actors and institutions has become even more important in the study of democratic erosion. In contrast to military coups, executive aggrandizement occurs by forging and bending institutions without necessarily breaking them (Pirro and Stanley 2022). Executives systematically use formal institutions in bad faith against democracy, including abusing the law in order to increase their powers and neutralize opposition actors (Scheppele 2018). Since the effects of "autocratic legalism" on democratic erosion have already been documented in multiple case studies and comparative analyses, V-Dem should consider incorporating questions that refer to how actors use the law and institutions to undermine democracy from within. The fact that the same set of institutions can be used to maintain or undermine liberal democracy calls for a systematic coding of this illiberal practice over time and in different countries.

In conclusion, despite the considerable measurement and explanatory achievements that V-Dem has accomplished, there is still the need for V-Dem to include in future iterations of the dataset more indicators that measure various characteristics of actors that might be causally relevant to explain political regime dynamics, in general, and democratic erosion, in particular.

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The Influence of Regime Support and Opposition Groups on Policy Selection and Regime Change

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One important research frontier in the cross-national study of democracy and autocracy concerns the roles played by different social groups—both in power and in opposition—in shaping regime stability and change as well as what policies different regimes pursue. In this note, I also highlight how new data on regime support and opposition groups across the world will help enable studies into these important topics.

The last couple of decades have been a golden era for the cross-national study of political regimes. Extensive and increasingly detailed panel datasets on democracy (e.g., Coppedge et al. 2022) and other regime characteristics (e.g., Geddes et al. 2014) have allowed democracy researchers to assess many of the hypothesized causes and effects of regime change in a large-n set-up. The resulting studies have enabled democracy researchers to corroborate some long-standing hypotheses while casting doubt on others. Yet, one issue that has continued to impede our understanding of when, how, and why regimes change is the difficulty of assessing hypotheses concerning powerful actors, both among the regime's supporters and in opposition to the regime, in panel studies.

Support and opposition coalitions typically consist of different social groups. These groups have particular policy and regime preferences. They also differ in their access to various power resources and thus their capacities for organizing effective pro- or anti-regime collective action. Hence, who makes up the coalitions that support or contest the political regime shapes policy outcomes and regime change and stability. For example, influential theories and qualitativehistorical case studies have proposed that opposition groups that draw support from the urban middle- and working classes will destabilize autocratic regimes and increase the chances of subsequent transitions to democracy (e.g., Rueschemeyer et al. 1992; Collier 1999). While this particular notion has been corroborated in extensive cross-country tests (Dahlum et al. 2019), most propositions about the role of different social groups have not. Even for the propositions supported by careful qualitative case studies or small-n comparative studies, we typically do not know how general or contextsensitive the purported relationships are.

It has proven very hard to measure directly the politically relevant characteristics of actors—such as their regime preferences or influence—in a comparable manner. Extensive data exist on chief executives and cabinet members (Nyrup and Bramwell 2020), but these are only a small subset of relevant actors. Cross-country measures on broader sets of actors have largely been proxies that draw heavily on institutional features such as executive constraints (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003) or governments' party composition (Mattes et al. 2016). Other cross-national tests have used socio-economic variables, such as GDP per capita or Gini coefficients (Boix 2003: Ansell and Samuels 2015), to proxy for the preferences and capacities of certain regime support or opposition groups. More direct measurement strategies would help us further assess theories and understand how different actors influence regime change and policy selection.

Recent versions of the V-Dem dataset (Coppedge et al. 2022) include several measures pertaining to regime support and opposition groups. These data are global in scope and extend from 1789 to the present. Variables include the numerical size, geographical location and social composition of both support and opposition groups, and these characteristics are scored by several country experts per observation. Another ongoing data collection effort on political actor characteristics is Schulz and Kelsall (2021), who code "Leader and Opposition Blocs" for developing countries back to 1945. With these and other new data collection efforts, comparative social scientists will be able to conduct more direct and comprehensive large-n tests of many important hypotheses about the roles played by different types of actors in regime preservation and change.

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Movements in Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Analysis of Civic and Contentious Engagement

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In "Democracy and Social Forces," Michael Bernhard and Amanda Edgell provide a thoughtful and creative application of V-Dem measures to the role of social mobilization in democratic processes, with findings that are both reassuring and troubling. As a political sociologist working on similar issues, I would like to consider how to expand the conversation by complementing V-Dem measures with more contextual, dynamic, and episodic approaches.

The Bernhard and Edgell chapter provides a cogent overview and empirical test of three meta-approaches to the role of "social forces" in democratic origins and maintenance. This includes theories on incorporation of marginalized groups into electoral systems, on contentious movements as potential catalysts for democracy, and on the contribution of civic associations to democratic performance. The authors use measures of civil society organizational capacity (via a moving window of lagged CSO "stock") and anti-system movements to examine the association of social mobilization with levels of (or changes in) electoral and procedural democracy. They also innovate by connecting V-Dem measures with the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) dataset on violent and nonviolent resistance campaigns (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011), along with the Dahlum et al. (2019) dataset on the class composition of social mobilization

These are valuable contributions on their own merits, but they raise several questions that may be useful for future research.

First, can we expand the debates about civil society that the chapter uses V-Dem to adjudicate? The authors note differences between what they call "neo-Gramscian" approaches, focused on contentious challenges from oppositional actors, and "neo-Tocquevillian" arguments highlighting the role of civic associations and political culture. They find support for the latter: CSO organizational capacity contributes to higher procedural democracy scores and democratic upturns, while protecting against democratic backsliding. Active citizen engagement in civic

organizations does appear to be good for democracy. However, interesting political tension and stakes for democracy come from more contentious forms of mobilization, with anti-system movements contributing to both democratization and autocratization.

These findings made me wonder how we could expand this analysis by examining other varieties of civil society beyond neo-Tocquevillian and neo-Gramscian models. For example, the Habermasian model of political communication (Mische 2008) focuses on public deliberation and the autonomy of the civil sphere from state power. This model underlies the self-understanding of many radically autonomist and horizontalist movements that are explicitly "antisystem." In contrast, the Foucaultian model tends to see civil society organizations as a technique of "governmentality" by which citizens internalize mechanisms of state control. This perspective critiques the capture of Tocquevillian associationism by neoliberal free market advocates. How might V-Dem measures help us probe the relevance of these other models of civic engagement for understanding recent struggles around democracy?

Second, how can attention to interaction pathways and protest cycles help unpack the findings about anti-system movements? The chapter indicates that social movement mobilization can contribute to both democracy-supporting and democracy-eroding outcomes. Anti-system movements appear to have more negative associations with democracy in countries that are already relatively democratic, while contributing to democratizing change in highly authoritarian regimes. But the authors found ideological differences: rightwing movements are associated with more severe democratic downturns, while left-wing movements seem to provide protection against democratic backsliding.

To deepen these findings, we need to examine the diverse kinds of protests that are folded into the "antisystem" category. These range from left autonomist and neo-anarchist movements (like the anti-globalization or Occupy protests) to those focusing more explicitly on disillusionment with parties (as in the Spanish *Indignados*), along with massive anti-corruption or antiautocracy protests. Recent protest waves have had a confusing mix of claims and grievances, as in the June 2013 protest in Brazil (Alonso and Mische 2016). Does the "anti-system" category or the left/right dichotomy capture this range of actors and ambiguity of claims?

Moreover, these protests have contributed to markedly different political trajectories. These include the

emergence of factional insurgencies (e.g., Corbyn in the UK or Sanders in the U.S.), new challenger parties (Podemos in Spain or Syriza in Greece), antiincumbent coalitions (Cambiemos in Argentina), or extremist populist ascendance (Bolsonaro in Brazil or Duterte in the Philippines). In an analysis of 12 protest waves worldwide since 2008, Tomás Gold and I use V-Dem measures to analyze the structure of partisan competition in combination with processual analyses of party-movement interactions to show how antipartisan and anti-system protests can contribute to diverging pathways and outcomes. More generally, how might a focus on episodes, interactions, and mechanisms help us understand how anti-system protests can veer in directions that either support or undermine democracy?

Finally, how can we move beyond the dichotomous analysis of violent vs. nonviolent movements? The chapter finds support for Chenoweth and Stephan's (2011) finding that non-violent mobilization is associated with immediate and longer-term positive change in democracy, while violent campaigns are associated with long-lasting democratic declines. However, the NAVCO dataset is limited by its dichotomization of anti-regime insurgencies into "violent" vs. "nonviolent" movements. While this coding decision is based on extensive expert input, the researchers admit that many movements are a mix of both.

The broader field of social movement studies treats this not as a dichotomy, but as a dynamic spectrum. For example, Sidney Tarrow (2022) makes a threeway distinction between contained, disruptive, and violent repertoires of contention. Many protest cycles combine elements of all three, although relative proportions change over time. Particular combinations and sequences of repertoires contribute to different movement outcomes and impacts on the state. Moreover, the "choice" for violence or armed insurgency can develop over multiple protest cycles, experiences of repression, and the opening and closing of democratic opportunities (Almeida 2003). A less dichotomous and more dynamic approach would provide insight into the processes and mechanisms by which movements contribute to both democratization and autocratization.

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An Actor-Based, State-Centered Account of the Autocratization Wave

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Autocratization and democratization should be seen as two competing processes. Both inter-state and state-society relations should be conceptualized as strategic competition between opposing forces, with agency being blocked by or overcoming structural constraints (Hui 2005, 2; Hui 2020a). Autocratization is the triumph of the powerful over the powerless while democratization is the victory of resistance over domination.

Hong Kong, my home city, is a prominent case of the autocratization wave. Hong Kong was once a "city of protest" with Asia's most vibrant civil society (Dapiran 2017). During the 2019 anti-extradition protests, at least 1.6 million out of a population of 7.4 million turned out in the streets (Hui 2020b, 133). When Hong Kong professionals mobilized the largest wave of unionization in early 2020, Xi Jinping was preparing a total crackdown with the National (read "regime") Security Law. Since 2020, Hong Kong has become a "police state" (Hui 2021) with residents living in fear (CECC 2022).

A state-centered perspective is more illuminating of Hong Kong's autocratization. Tilly and Tarrow (201, 59) contend that the outcome of success versus failure is shaped by "the extent to which the regime represses or facilitates collective claim making." Instead of prioritizing the weaknesses of societal actors, analysts should identify the strengths of autocratic leaders.

State-centered analyses are often focused on institutions and long-term structural forces. In the current wave of autocratization, it is individual leaders—the likes of Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—who have turned the tide. It is necessary to "bring people back into the state" and examine their choices under constraints (Levi 1989). There is no need to make the extreme rational choice presumption that everyone is motivated by power maximization. All it takes is that some leaders seek power maximization. Once in power, they are tempted to do whatever it takes to stay. This phenomenon cuts across regime types. Both military juntas who come to power through bloody coups and leaders chosen through free and fair elections may refuse to transfer power. The question is which

autocratizing leaders can overcome the constraints on their paths.

Institutional constraints, often seen as structural, are like buildings. They shape daily lives in normal times but can be bulldozed or bombed to rubbles in minutes. It is not just Putin and Xi who have bypassed term limits and eradicated previously weak opposition. In India, Narendra Modi has speedily dismantled decades—old liberal institutions including the independent judiciary, the professional civil service, the neutral police force, and the free press (Ganguly 2020).

People power is the last check against autocrats' power-maximizing attempts. Yet, the people have been disempowered. Tilly and Tarrow (2015, 175) observe that, "When regimes are willing to repress as necessary and have the capacity to do so, they usually succeed in eliminating popular contention as a threat to their regime and often to their own rule as well."

The state-centered literature on contention offers a guide to autocrats' strengths. Scholars of democratization and autocratization often analyze only regime type. Students of contentious politics examine state capacity as well as regime type with the two-dimensional concept "political opportunity structure" (Tilly and Tarrow 2015, 58). Capacity is "the extent to which governmental action affects the character and distribution of population, activity, and resources within the government's territory" (57). High-capacity regimes that are effective in delivering economic performance and social services are relatively immune to challengers. They can further minimize the motivation for anti-regime mobilization with information control, propaganda, censorship, and patriotic education. They can also mobilize proregime protests to drown out anti-regime voices. For determined challengers, regime agents can divide-andrule with carrots and sticks. The remaining activists can be arrested and tortured with minimum backlash. In "high-capacity undemocratic regimes," therefore, there are only "clandestine oppositions and brief confrontations that usually end in repression" (58).

Migdal (1997, 223) argues that coercive capacity is always limited. However, by the 2010s, high-capacity autocrats have been armed with AI to wield much coercive capacity at low costs. In China in November 2022, "white paper" protestors were readily tracked down by data collected on their smart phones (Feng 2023).

When all domestic constraints are razed to the ground, activists take their causes to the capitals of Western democracies (Moss 2020). Hong Kongers, in the words of members of Congress, launched the most effective transnational advocacy in 2019–20. The U.S. Congress passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act in 2019 and the Hong Kong Autonomy Act in 2020. The administration decertified Hong Kong's autonomous status and imposed sanctions on top officials in 2020.

Autocrats are more limited in what they can do beyond territorial boundaries, but they are not without options. They can pursue "transnational repression" of exiles (Moss 2016), deploy "sharp power" campaigns to silence foreign criticisms (Cardenal *et al.* 2017), and create a firewall between the domestic society and international advocacy. In the current wave, autocrats have banned international NGOs, outlawed local NGOs that take foreign funding, and imposed heavy sentences of up to life imprisonment for "collusion" with foreign forces.

To resist further autocratization, democrats have to resist not just autocrats around the world but also those within democracies.

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Democracy and Governance

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Why Democracies Develop and Decline stands as an impressive achievement in the cross-national study of regimes, a testament to the progress made possible thanks to the data infrastructure developed by V-Dem (Coppedge et al. 2022). What's next? To deepen our understanding of why democracies develop and decline, and especially to understand democratic erosion, we must also consider when democracies deliver. Although democracy—the input side of politics—has so often been the focus, the output—what democracies produce—shapes trust in institutions and inspires faith in the democratic system or spurs citizens to "drain the swamp" by voting in populists. I propose that we ask how significant features of democracy influence governance, which in turn may inform our understanding of polarization and democratic decline.

We may have normative commitments to democracy, but we must also recognize that longstanding security issues, economic instability, the inability of states to provide basic services, and the prevalence of corruption or state dependency may tip the balance for citizens. What appear to be abrupt shifts (punctuated equilibrium) in democratic erosion may in fact not be abrupt at all, but rather an accretion of changes that have long gone unnoticed because the data infrastructure cannot capture what is happening. Although many were surprised by the rise of populism in the U.S., others—especially those who spend time in rural Wisconsin or upstate New York—were not surprised at all. Citizens may turn against democratic governance when it appears to have differential or even detrimental effects. The outcomes of democratic governance matter for the health of democracy, so we need to spend more time thinking about democratic performance.

Chapter 8 of Why Democracies Develop and Decline makes headway by defining a "protective belt"— fashioned from such factors as strong political parties and impartial bureaucracies—that stabilizes both democratic and undemocratic regimes. Future research might consider the disaggregated components of democracy to ask how the features of democracies enhance or hinder the development of a capable state that delivers on its leaders' promises. To what extent do certain types of party systems result in political corruption by creating incentives for patronage appointments and rent-seeking within the state? Do strong political parties increase state capacity? How do the type of causal sequences that allow democracies

to develop shape how democracies deliver over time or even lead to erosion? Analyzing democracies and their configurations in relation to democratic governance should help identify the causes of democratic erosion as well as the impact of political regimes on human development.

If the goal is to understand how certain features of democracies influence governance, we must recognize that within-country variation often trumps crossnational variation (Gingerich 2013). One effort to provide such detailed empirical data at the crossnational level and within countries is led by the Global Survey of Public Servants (GSPS), an international research initiative to generate survey data from public servants in government institutions around the world (Fukuyama et al. 2022). The GSPS Indicators are based on responses from over 1,000,000 public servants in over 1,000 government institutions in 23 countries, with more to come. Our core survey includes measures that capture key characteristics of patrimonialism, Weberian bureaucracy, and New Public Management, enabling scholars to understand to what extent governments and different institutions inside government blend different elements of these "ideal-types" (Schuster et al. 2023, 4). Such efforts are but a first step in expanding our data infrastructure to connect research on political regimes to that on governance.

Therefore, to understand deeply why democracies decline, we must understand when they deliver and to whom. Democratic polarization, erosion, or populism are the effects: The causes lie in why citizens see the democratic state as no longer representing their interests. Here, scholars of democratization can share common cause with those who have studied other aspects of democratic governments, even though many aspects of the methodological infrastructure are not there yet. But V-Dem proves that building the methodological infrastructure and developing detailed panel datasets can reveal research pathways otherwise impossible to envision.

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Memo on "Economic Determinants" by Carl Henrik Knutsen and Sirianne Dahlum

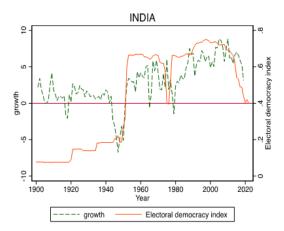
Lakshmi Iyer, University of Notre Dame

I enjoyed reading Chapter 5 of Why Democracies Develop and Decline, which uses the V-Dem database to empirically examine the role of economic factors in explaining three main outcome variables: the level of democracy, upturns in democracy measures ("democratization"), and downturns in democracy measures. The authors provide an excellent comprehensive review of the theoretical mechanisms discussed in the literature. The empirical analysis focuses on four main economic variables: economic development, structural economic factors, short-term economic changes, and economic inequality. Using a consistent regression specification throughout, the authors find that (a) higher levels of economic development increase the probability of avoiding downturns and avoiding upturns, (b) economic structure (% of GDP from agriculture) negatively predicts democratization, (c) economic growth increases the probability of democratic upturns and avoiding downturns, and (d) standard measures of economic inequality (such as the Gini coefficient) are not significantly associated with democracy measures.

The authors do realize that these regression analyses may be subject to common econometric biases. The time series for India on democracy measures and economic growth (Figure 1) finds that conclusion (c) above can be subject to the concerns of reverse causality, confounding events (omitted variables), and endogeneity:

- It is very clear that growth slowdowns happen *after* democratic downturns in India.
- The biggest instance of both negative economic growth and democratization was in 1950, which is likely the result of the aftermath of World War II and the partition of the country into the newly independent nations of India and Pakistan.

Figure 1: Economic growth rates and V-Dem electoral democracy index, 1900–2022



To make further progress on understanding the links between economic determinants and democracy, consider the processes involved in theoretical mechanisms linking economic downturns and democracy changes:

- (i) Economic downturn happens.
- (ii) Disgruntled citizens begin to oppose the regime in power (via protests, armed resistance, etc.).
- (iii) The regime in power then responds by paying off the opposition or by repression.
- (iv) These tactics may or may not work.
- (v) Regime change is likely to happen when these do not work.

Based on questions raised by the simple process outlined above, I suggest several directions for future research in this area:

- (1) Will all these contingencies be resolved in one or two years' time? This is the typical time frame used in the analyses, but the situation can be indeterminate for a long time. For instance, Syria's civil war has lasted more than a decade without any change in the V-Dem democracy indicator. If the political situation changes in the next year, should we really attribute it only to economic changes in the past one or two years or to the whole length of prior conflict? Econometric analysis should probably examine many different lagged specifications to get a better understanding.
- (2) Different components of the V-Dem polyarchy index may change at different speeds, e.g., freedom of expression and association components may be easier to change than suffrage rules which typically require constitutional amendments. So one way to extend the analysis would be to examine some components of the index.
- (3) What kind of data would we need to shed light on the intermediate processes involved? The current econometric analysis links (i) with (v). If we see no link between them, is it because (i) fails to lead to (ii), or because (ii) is nullified by (iii)? Similarly, if we do see a link between (i) and (v), is it because the response (ii) is really large, or because (iii) fails to happen or that there are some more complicated dynamics not reflected in the simple process above (such as repression leading to further, and more sustained, protests)?
- (4) Are the processes involved in big changes to the index just an extension of those involved in small changes? If not, do we need different theories to explain different types of changes?
- (5) As summarized by the authors, the theoretical literature suggests at least three reasons why (i) may lead to (ii) above: negative short-term economic changes may increase collective action among disgruntled citizens, result in a buildup of grievances against the regime, and/or lower the opportunity cost of opposing the regime. I propose including interaction terms in the regressions to see which of these channels is at work.
- (5a) For collective action, there needs to be a class of citizens already disposed towards regime change

- and willing to act as soon as they believe others will support them. Can we find measures of the existence of such citizens? This could be proxied either by opinion surveys or the record of prior protests or existing antigovernment organizations.
- (5b) Economic downturns are more likely to result in serious grievances against the government if they last for a longer time (so consider the length of recessions in addition to the depth of recessions), if government responses to the economic losses are inadequate, and if citizens are already poor so that they have a lower ability to weather short-term losses.
- (5c) Is a macroeconomic "% change in GDP" really the right measure to capture the opportunity cost for citizens? It may be useful to consider other measures such as average incomes going below some relevant threshold (which could vary by country circumstances or citizen expectations), which changes citizen choices between forbearance and outright opposition.

A Human-Centered Approach to Responsible Democracy Research

Kimberly Peh, University of Notre Dame

Democracy describes both an ideology and a set of institutions that facilitates the competition for power and citizens' meaningful participation in politics and governance (Schaffer 1998; Dahl 1971). As an ideal, democracy is widely seen by regime scholars as a normative good (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 3) or a desirable system because of its association with a variety of positive outcomes (Coppedge et al. 2022), such as domestic and international peace. Yet, while democracy may be valued for intrinsic or extrinsic reasons, the process of getting there, that is, democratization, is not always smooth or swift. More importantly, even where democratization occurs, states may stay as hybrid regimes (Zakaria 1997), which are extremely vulnerable to violence of various forms and scales (Hughes and Vorobyeva 2021; Arias and Goldstein 2010; Tarzi 2007).

The perils of democratization present democracy scholars with a dilemma. As Mansfield and Snyder (1995, 5) state, "It is probably true that a world where more countries were mature, stable democracies would be safer ... However, countries do not become mature democracies overnight." Thus, while advocating democracy, it seems that proponents are forced to accept violence as almost an inevitable cost. Here, I propose that more responsible democracy research may be possible if democratization scholars instead regard human development as the core of the agenda.

This proposition for a human–centered approach is not a radical one. As a regime, democracy may be the prized outcome for some. For others, however, democracy may be preferred because of what it can achieve—human development through its respect for "human dignity and individual freedoms" (Coppedge *et al.* 2022, 1). By prioritizing human development, democratization research would not be deviating from its substantive or normative goals, and findings may help practitioners better evaluate among paths to democracy.

What does human-centered democratization research mean in practice? Rather than studying democratization as the outcome of interest, scholars may instead see democratization as an attribute. Its complement would be nonviolence, with both forming the necessary features of the broader variable of human development.

To be sure, nonviolence is found in measurements of democracy, and in V-Dem's polyarchy score, it exists as a component of election cleanliness. However, by aggregating both dimensions and treating each as unsubstitutable features, research findings can mitigate some tradeoffs between peace and democracy since a high level of development cannot be attained with just one or the other (see Goertz 2020, 167–176).

Within this agenda, scholars interested only in the study of democratization will be contributing to the overall research as well by highlighting explanatory conditions that others may test against nonviolence, and vice versa. In this way, conversations may be had, too, between regime and conflict scholars, which may in turn, provide practitioners with more knowledge and frameworks to assess tradeoffs when promoting peace and democracy.

Democracy scholars may be passionate about democracy research for normative reasons or because of the broader good which democracy promises to offer. However, the path to democracy may be fraught with severe and negative consequences to peace. Keeping a critical eye on the dangers of democratization is, thus, crucial because it encourages scholars to reflect on whether the merits of democracy may extend, too, to democratization. If not, students of democracy must be particularly cautious when discussing policy implications, so that the halo effect of democracy is not extended to every bit of democratization.

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Climate Change and Long-Run Democratic Development

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Most comparative research on climate change and democracy examines how democratic governments can reduce carbon emissions through climate policy and environmental regulation.² In other words, previous research generally asks whether democracy affects climate change, not the other way round. But the opposite question seems increasingly prescient in light of the current climate crisis. What implications does runaway climate change hold for the quality, stability, and ultimately survival of democratic governments around the world?

I suspect that climate change poses severe risks to democracy both now and in the future. Democracy depends on specific patterns of behavior, such as meaningful political participation and tolerance of others' beliefs, as well as certain institutional arrangements, such as free and fair elections and constitutionally protected rights. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of evidence to suggest that climate

change threatens both. Increasingly extreme wildfires (Ballesteros et al. 2020) and hurricanes (Zelin and Smith 2022) related to rising temperatures decrease voter turnout, suggesting that climate change reduces opportunities for political participation in vulnerable areas. Election management bodies struggle to administer elections in the context of extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change throughout the world (International IDEA 2023). Climate migration contributes to partisan sorting (Bernstein et al. 2022), which in turn may contribute to polarization and the erosion of political tolerance. Asset revaluation and climate gentrification (Keenan, Hill, and Gumber 2018) stand to exacerbate economic inequality and undo the liberal international order (Colgan, Green, and Hale 2021). These examples and countless others not cited in this short memo suggest that climate change impacts the various forms of political behavior and institutions that are fundamental for existing forms of democratic governance. Thus, comparativists have laid out before them the important task of theorizing and analyzing empirically the potential impacts of climate change on democracy.

One way to begin might be to distinguish between the behavioral and institutional foundations of democracy, on the one hand, and the slow- and sudden-onset impacts of climate change on the other.³ In other words, how might the effects of climate change impact different components of democracy differently depending on the timescales over which they unfold? How might the slow-moving institutions of democracy respond to climate impacts in ways that differ from more agile behavioral responses? What concepts from existing research can comparativists apply to these questions? And, perhaps more importantly, what new concepts are needed?

Table 1 offers several potential research questions that relate the behavioral and institutional foundations of democracy to the slow- and sudden-onset impacts of climate change. These questions are illustrative, not exhaustive. They are also necessarily couched in contentious debates about definitions of democracy, uncertainty about the severity of climate impacts, and the relationship between theory and evidence in comparative politics. But these, too, might provide food for thought in future research on climate change and democracy.

¹ This article has benefitted immensely from conversations with Alice Hill, Debra Javeline, and Jason Maloy, to whom I am extremely grateful.

² See Bayer and Urpelainen (2016) and Aklin and Urpelainen (2014). More generally, see Bättig and Bernauer (2009), Li and Reuveny (2006), Bernauer and Koubi (2009), Chesler *et al.* (forthcoming), and many more studies too numerous to list here. Cf. Di Paola and Jamieson (2018) and Fischer (2017).

³ Slow-onset climate impacts, such as sea-level rise and biodiversity loss, occur gradually over the long run, whereas sudden-onset climate impacts, such as increasingly extreme heatwayes and tropical cyclones, occur rapidly over the short run.

Table 1: Research Questions for Climate Change and Democracy

	Slow-Onset	Sudden-Onset
Behavorial	 How does climate migration shape voter turnout and vote choice? How do rising temperatures affect the incidence, duration, and success of social movements? How might political attitudes and beliefs change in response to ecosystem degradation from climate change? 	- What conditions lead to more or less voter turnout in response to climate-related disasters? - How do climate-related disasters relate to other non-voting behaviors, like canvassing and campaign donations? - How might the geographical unevenness in climate vulnerability shape subnational variation in political participation?
Institutional	 Why do elites (not) respond to climate-related loss and damage in their constituencies? Does Arctic ice melt shift the balance of power among democratic and authoritarian regimes in the international system? How might party systems change in response to the increasing salience of climate change impacts? 	 How do institutions manage electoral and non-electoral political processes in the context of extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change? What patterns of executive and legislative policymaking arise in response to climate-related disasters? What implications does the unequal distribution of climate vulnerability hold for equal civil and political rights?

Finally, comparativists must be careful to distinguish between the historical effects of climate and the present and future effects of climate change. Gerring (2022) and his colleagues (Gerring et al. 2022) argue that climate has no meaningful impact on observed patterns of long-run democratic development. While plausible, the unprecedented changes in the planet's climate system caused by human beings' burning of fossil fuels portend a future that scarcely resembles the past. Climate change will almost certainly produce new distributions of political and economic power and, by doing so, will raise long-term challenges for democratic governments around the world. Climate may not have had an effect on democracy throughout the long stretch of history, but that is probably not true anymore. And it probably will not be true going forward, either.

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Do Transnational Associations and Neighbor Networks affect Democratization?

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To what extent do economic and political interactions among neighboring countries affect the level of democracy and democratization trends in individual countries? Chapter 4 of Michael Coppedge et al.'s (2022) most recent book, Why Democracies Develop and Decline, presents a rigorous empirical analysis of this question, using spatial-temporal autoregressive models to estimate the long-term and short-term effects of colonial networks, military alliances, and neighbor networks on democratization trends in more than 180 countries between 1900 and 2010. V-Dem's electoral democracy dataset provides a nuanced, interval-scale measure of these trends.

The statistical models in this chapter generate three important results that are worthy of further investigation. First, the statistical models suggest that military alliances only have a small contagion effect on democratization trends, and that the effect of colonial networks is statistically insignificant (Coppedge et al. 2022, 108). Second, the statistical results suggest that neighbor networks significantly impact levels of democracy, as well as democratic upturns and downturns. The annual impact of neighbor networks is very small, but it accumulates over time (102-104). These statistical results strongly corroborate the long-observed pattern of democracy expanding and contracting in "neighborhood clusters." Lastly, the contagion effect of democratization is strongest in highly democratic geographic regions like Western Europe and North America, and considerably weaker in less democratic "neighborhoods" like the Middle East and North Africa (see 81, 116).

Future research is needed to determine why the contagion effects of neighbor networks are stronger in some regions than others. Future studies might examine whether countries that primarily trade and invest with their neighbors (e.g., Canada, Switzerland, or the Netherlands) experience stronger contagion effects than countries that do not (e.g., Egypt, Angola or Nigeria). By disaggregating the effects of trade, investment, and migration flows, future research might shed light on the significant variation in democratic contagion effects across different neighbor networks.

Future research might also use V-Dem data to study the regime effects of cross-border migration and remittance flows. In 2020, foreign migrants remitted more than \$700 billion back to their home countries. In fact, remittance income exceeds the total value of overseas development assistance and foreign direct investment for many small economies in the Global South. Yet, little is known about the political impact of remittance flows in these countries. To date, most existing studies have primarily focused on the economic consequences of remittance income for developing countries (see Adida and Girod 2011; Doyle 2015; Easton and Montinola 2017; Garriga and Meseguer 2019), whereas much less is known about the political consequences of migration flows and remittance incomes.

Some recent empirical studies suggest that remittance flows promote democracy by undermining electoral support for authoritarian incumbents, but this notion is primarily derived from the study of remittance flows from wealthy and democratic countries like the United States to Mexico (Pérez-Armendáriz and Crow 2010) and from Western Europe to impoverished African states like Senegal and Gambia (Escribà-Folch, Meseguer, and Wright 2022). These studies do not examine the vast flow of remittance income from wealthy and autocratic Persian Gulf countries to South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. It seems reasonable to expect that remittance income from wealthy and autocratic countries might have different political consequences from remittance income from wealthy and democratic countries. Future research might use V-Dem data to examine the global political consequences of remittance income flows from autocratic, democratic, and semi-democratic wealthy countries to the Global South. This would greatly expand our knowledge of international factors as a "hidden dimension" of democratization.

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International Influence: Finding Cases and Mechanisms

Thomas Mustillo, University of Notre Dame

The scope of the chapter entitled "International Influence: The Hidden Dimension," is remarkable, and the findings are fascinating. Using an econometric approach and four different networks, Michael Coppedge, Benjamin Denison, Paul Friesen, Lucia Tiscornia, and Yang Xu estimate a partial average network effect on democracy across three different outcomes. Using a variety of other techniques, we also learn about the long-run steady-state effects of networks, including estimates that vary by global region. This chapter delivers insight upon insight, defying the cynical advice scholars sometimes hear to "publish the increments."

This essay will propose extensions of the chapter in two groups: those that are within the framework of the chapter, and those that lie beyond it. On the first, the authors have developed a theoretical framework (as noted beginning on p. 86) that is general and comprehensive, and that lends itself to the inclusion of novel hypotheses. This contribution allows for an accumulation of knowledge by way of comparisons of variants of models in the framework. The authors themselves have seeded the paper with tons of ideas (such as alternative specifications of the network matrices). Also in the vein of extensions, the chapter is at once difficult and technical, but also clear and

thorough. If combined with replication code and data, fellow scholars can extend this framework. Lastly, it seems likely that the extensions of the paper can arise from relaxing or altering one or more of the many assumptions, as for example about the aggregation of the outcome into two-year averages, methods for data imputation, instrumental variables, and more. These can be more than robustness checks; they can yield substantively interesting findings.

From within the large-N tradition, average and generalizability effects are the prized nuggets of knowledge production. The upshot, as the subtitle plainly states, is that the international dimension of diffusion is hidden. This may be a natural feature of the process—democratic diffusion may well be unobservable. It is also a choice explicit to the analytic approach.

What other research designs would offer up complementary insights, especially about mechanisms? Would any validate the spread of democracy from any one particular country to any other? In network science, the node-link (vertex-edge) diagrams beg for such specificity. When a deadly virus diffuses, we search for patient zero and trace contacts. Does the metaphor break down when we turn to democracy? Probably. At the very least, the probabilities (of "infection") are much lower and the pathways more diverse. Yet, the question I mean to raise remains: can we make use of other modeling traditions to inform a country-year specific notion of spread? I raise three ideas.

First, within a category that is to me a "known unknown," I've seen enough applications of (noneconometric) network science to suspect that there are designs that would yield network graphs showing which country is spreading what to which other country, and by what mechanism. Second, there are likely to be case-oriented ways to validate the existence of mechanisms. The authors ask this themselves on pg. 113: "We need more research on specific proximitybased channels of influences." I suspect that the data and models behind this chapter offer clues about where to look, and I encourage the authors to identify them. Is sub-Saharan Africa a place where mechanisms may be visibly operating in the short-term? Is a study of South Africa and its first and second order neighbors worth a closer look?

Third, I'm working on a project now that uses V-Dem data to identify democratizing policy cascades and to infer the existence of a latent network of democratic diffusion. Based upon two published models of policy diffusion among U.S. states (Harden *et al.* 2023;

Desmarais, Harden, and Boehmke 2015), it will describe who leads and who follows (in the short term). This approach will identify linked cases, but without offering insights on mechanisms. The project uses V-Dem data in a way that it was designed to be used: by exploiting the decomposed indicator-level data to construct something new.

I was almost ready to say that there aren't strong policy implications of this work, and that the prospects of finding effects that are large and certain enough to justify an intervention regime (analogous to mask wearing and quarantines) are slim. However, pause to consider how thorough-going the adverse effects of disinformation seem to be on democratic practices in certain cases today. For example, Esberg and Siegel (2022) examine the impact of online influence operations (including by foreign actors) on citizens in non-democratic and fragile states. These types of studies are about as far as you can get from a study reporting average effects over a century-long global set of observations, but it may just be the kind of thing we need to start understanding mechanisms. The world grows more—not less—connected.

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A V-Dem Theory of Democracy: Future Directions for Democratization Research

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The release of Why Democracies Develop and Decline (Coppedge et al. 2022b), the celebratory conference, and the recent launch of Version 13 of the V-Dem dataset have all brought fresh attention to the V-Dem project. This moment also allows us to reflect on the project's untapped potential. While most scholars using V-Dem data have used the electoral democracy index (EDI) as essentially a substitute for competing regime classification datasets, the future of democratization research informed by V-Dem data lies in moving down the conceptual ladder into the subcomponents and indicators. Changing the main outcomes of interest from the top-level indices to the subcomponents provides two advantages for future research. First, it allows for scholars to produce sharp conclusions about regime change processes without relying on specific, contested definitions of democracy. Second, understanding how the subcomponents influence one another represents an important advancement in our knowledge of how regimes function, acknowledging the complex relationships between norms, institutions, and actors commonly associated with democratic governance.

However, until now, the primary contribution of V-Dem has been precise measurements of how democratic a country is relative to its past and other contemporary countries. These top-level measurements tend to move in step with other democracy measurement enterprises (Baltz, Vasselai, and Hicken 2022), and so the impact of V-Dem in this regard has been somewhat muted and open to challenge from classic definitional debates surrounding "minimalist" or "maximalist" definitions of democracy (Schumpeter 1942; Przeworski 1999; Held 1996; Collier and Levitsky 1997). While the main outcome variable remains the EDI, V-Dem is simply one voice in a crowd. V-Dem's unique ability to directly compare subcomponents such as rule of law, checks on the executive, or the freeness and fairness of elections is where the future lies. Scholars investigating those indicators directly sidestep definitional issues. Since their conclusions will be about the indicators themselves, they can be accepted by scholars regardless of their preferred definitional approach.

The other advantage of focusing on the subcomponents is that we can gain a better understanding of how regimes operate and evolve. There is no "V-Dem theory of democracy," as Michael Coppedge pointed out in his introduction. However, implicit in the project's five-dimensional scheme is the core idea that democracy is not any single thing, but rather a complex collection of ideas, norms, and institutions. To best understand the causes and consequences of democratic rule, we need to understand the dynamics of this complex system, not simply movement along a single index.

The closest that the current volume comes to this goal is the concluding chapter, "Causal Sequences in Long-Term Democratic Development and Decline" (Coppedge et al. 2022a), where the authors describe a kind of homeostasis for democratic and autocratic regimes. Certain features of regimes such as institutionalized parties, rule of law, and strong civil society "form a 'protective belt' that tends to stabilize both democratic and undemocratic regimes" (215). While this chapter continues to use the electoral democracy index as the outcome of interest, it does begin to conceptualize democracy as more than a value on a single numerical index. Rather, the entire set of institutions, norms, ideas, and actors that comprise democracy must be studied jointly. When all these indicators are simplified into a single index, or a single type in a categorical scheme, important variation between cases is lost, and we may erroneously group together dissimilar cases and processes.

Future research on regime change informed by V-Dem should therefore directly study the subcomponents and indicators as the main outcomes of interest and investigate more fully how these components interact with one another. Both agendas will fully leverage the power of V-Dem and advance our knowledge of regimes and regime change in important ways, better informing scholars and policymakers.

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Causal Sequences within Democracy

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Chapter 8 of Why Democracies Develop and Decline (WDDD) proposes a theoretical framework that arranges hypotheses drawn from diverse schools of thought into causal sequences. This analysis stops at the boundary separating electoral democracy from the causal forces surrounding it, as though democracy were a hard, opaque sphere whose inner workings are unseen and unknowable. However, the Varieties of Democracy project teaches us that we can disaggregate democracy into components and subcomponents that we can measure and describe. Democracy is not an opaque sphere, but a complex system with many moving parts such as elections and participation, social movements and repression, party competition and freedom of information, and checks and balances.

V-Dem treats these moving parts as defining attributes of democracy. However, we could open up a novel set of research questions by re-conceiving them as causal relationships. How important are parties, civil society organizations, independent media, and a strong judiciary for ensuring that elections are free, fair, and competitive? What impact do competitive elections have on limiting executive power, safeguarding the

rule of law, and guaranteeing freedom of speech and the press? How effective are secondary associations, protests, and a broadened suffrage in promoting respect for civil liberties? Even at the level of the most general components of liberal democracy, there are dozens of possible questions. If we descended to specific institutions and practices such as campaign finance, party proscriptions, vote buying, harassment of journalists, access to justice, executive respect for the constitution, and legislative investigations, there would be hundreds. Before there were measures of specific attributes of democracy, it was hard to think systematically about all these relationships, but V-Dem data make this research agenda feasible.

Admittedly, there are already plenty of studies of the causes and consequences of voting rights, election turnout, coalition formation, party competition, judicial independence, women's suffrage, repression of protests, and many similar questions. However, many of these are studies of single cases during short time frames, such as the U.S. civil rights movement, and even the large-N studies tend to limit their attention to a single outcome in isolation from other attributes of democracy. The Failing and Successful Sequences of Democratization (FASDEM) research program at the V-Dem Institute has pursued a related agenda for several years (Boese et al. 2021, Lührmann et al. 2020, and Sato et al. 2022). However, its goal is to describe the patterns of change within regimes that distinguish successful transition episodes from various kinds of failure. What I am proposing would be more holistic. It would (1) integrate multiple features of democracy as interconnected endogenous outcomes, (2) employ rigorous quantitative methods to minimize bias from likely confounders such as parallel time trends, and (3) generalize beyond single cases and short time frames, while respecting regional differences and major historical periods.

This program would be methodologically challenging. Path-analysis Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) would probably be inadequate for identifying causal relationships among variables that are even more strongly correlated and time-trended than the variables used in the conclusion to WDDD. Two alternatives are vector autoregression and the principal component difference-in-difference estimator that Boese and Eberhardt (2022) used to estimate the impact of democracy components on economic growth.

Furthermore, many of the components of democracy are connected to causal forces outside of democracy. Treating the conceptual boundary between them as a wall may be a hindrance to understanding the causal

processes that create, sustain, or undermine democracy. This approach promises to help us understand the virtuous circles that tend to preserve democracy and the vicious circles and shocks that can erode it. Democracy and its upturns and downturns would no longer be the final outcomes to be explained; democracy could instead be reconceived as an emergent property of a complex system (although it could be modeled as a latent variable). Understanding the causal relationships inside of democracy could help resolve the problem inherent in combining multidimensional indicators into a single index. Understanding how the pieces of the puzzle fit together in practice—which ones carry a lot of weight and which matter less, which ones interact and which matter independently—could provide the guidance needed to develop an index of democracy with a firmer theoretical foundation.

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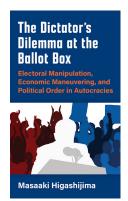
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Author Exchange



The Dictator's Dilemma at the Ballot Box: Electoral Manipulations, Economic Maneuvering, and Political Order in Autocracies. By Masaaki Higashijima. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, WCED Book Series, 2022. 366p. Hardcover and paper.

Review by Elvin Ong, Assistant Professor of Political Science, National University of Singapore

In *The Dictator's Dilemma at the Ballot Box*, Professor Masaaki Higashijima asks two major questions regarding autocratic elections. First, why is there variation in blatant electoral fraud and manipulation across autocratic elections? Second, under what conditions do autocratic elections lead to regime consolidation or destabilization? Higashijima argues that the autocrat's mobilizational power relative to that of other political elites, and their ability to pursue the optimal level of manipulated elections are two key variables that have been relatively neglected. The book provides an impressive four chapters of cross–national statistical analysis as well as a remarkable controlled comparison of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to buttress his arguments.

Specifically, where the mobilizational power of the autocrat is higher than that of other political elites (as in Kazakhstan), then autocrats are more likely to use economic redistribution to buy the support of the masses. In such a scenario, blatant electoral fraud is likely to be low. These confident autocrats may even adopt electoral systems with greater proportionality to boost the credibility of their elections. In contrast, when the mobilizational power of the autocrat relative to that of other political elites is low (as in Kyrgyzstan), then autocrats are less likely to use economic redistribution and more likely to use high levels of blatant electoral fraud. The electoral systems adopted will also be highly majoritarian to artificially bias the eventual outcome towards the autocrat.

Yet, autocrats frequently make mistakes. When autocrats make "mistakes of information" and "mistakes of calculation", then they are likely to undertake a suboptimal mix of economic redistribution and electoral manipulation (62). Specifically, Higashijima argues that the "oversupply" of electoral manipulation is more likely to lead to popular protests,

while the "undersupply" of electoral manipulation is more likely to lead to unexpected opposition victories and coup d'états. In both cases, autocrats only need to look into the mirror for the source of their own downfall.

The Dictator's Dilemma at the Ballot Box makes at least two important advances to the existing scholarship on autocratic elections. First, the book demonstrates how autocrats can mix strategies for victory. Historically, scholars have tended to study various factors surrounding autocratic elections on their own. Higashijima elegantly reveals how theoretical attention to an optimal mix of both electoral manipulation and economic redistribution can help an autocrat win with large margins. Second, the book takes seriously popular satisfaction with and popular legitimacy of an autocratic regime. As Adam Przeworski and Tom Pepinsky have emphasized elsewhere, most citizens in most authoritarian regimes lead routine, boring, and tolerable lives. If autocrats can spend their way and improve everyday governance to capture the hearts and minds of ordinary citizens, why should they not genuinely support the government? In such cases, delicately crafting electoral fraud and manipulation is the least of the autocrat's worries.

The book brings to my mind two areas of research which warrant further efforts from future scholars. At the outset, in Higashijima's retelling, the successful marshalling of natural resource wealth (oil and gas) to buy popular support is pivotal for autocrats who want to engage in less electoral fraud and electoral system manipulation. For non-resource rich autocracies, therefore, if an autocrat's fiscal power is so important for buying popular support, then why are they not all masters at pursuing economic growth with equitable mass redistribution? Instead, we see significant variation in the ability of non-resource rich autocracies to pursue equitable economic growth. Why every non-resource rich autocracy is not like Singapore is a puzzle that remains underexplored.

Second, the role of "mistakes" in autocracy and democratization is a fascinating one that generates all sorts of questions. The concept presumes that some actions are "correct" at the outset, and that some misinformation, miscalculation, or misperception resulted in a "mistake" in action or outcome. But if an intended correct action results in unintended suboptimal outcomes, are the original actions now a mistake in hindsight? Why do some autocrats commit more mistakes and some fewer? What sort of mistakes are deadly and which are negligible? How many negligible mistakes can an autocrat make before they

become deadly? Are mistakes in the eye of the beholder? In other words, if autocrats believe that their specific actions are correct but political scientists assess those same actions as mistakes, then whose perspective prevails?

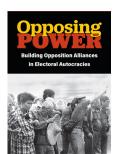
Response from Masaaki Higashijima

I sincerely thank Professor Ong for a highly thoughtful review of my book. In his review, he raised two questions for further discussion. The first concerns the measurement of autocrats' mobilization capabilities. Natural resource wealth is a primary source of discretionary resources which autocrats can use without fearing popular backlash (tax revenues) and accountability to foreign donors (international aid). The value of natural resources is less manipulable and less driven by the practices of electoral manipulation. Therefore, it is relatively easier to identify the causal effects of natural resource wealth on electoral designs via instrumental variables approaches, for instance.

That being said, it is a completely open question how we should better measure the scope of a dictator's mobilization capabilities. As Professor Ong suggested, measuring high levels of economic growth with equal distribution should definitely be one way to go because some successful electoral autocrats hold relatively free and fair elections without oil. Relatedly, some electoral autocrats use electoral fraud extensively under a proportional representation system (e.g., Russia until mid 2010s) whereas others rely more on majoritarian electoral systems with little fraud (e.g., Singapore). Seemingly, autocrats make a choice between blatant fraud and electoral system manipulation. Sources of mobilization power, as well as choices of electoral manipulation techniques, are two promising research agendas.

Professor Ong's second question is about the sources and consequences of "mistakes" by autocrats. I totally agree with his point. Future research should think more about when autocrats make mistakes and what contributes to their misperceptions and miscalculations. There are many promising possibilities. For example, how autocrats are likely to miscalculate may be influenced by how often they have held elections during their tenures: experienced electoral autocrats may be able to more correctly assess power distributions. To explore this hypothesis, theories of autocratic elections need to be dynamic beyond one-shot settings. Another possibility may be the nature of autocratic governance. If autocrats possess credible informationgathering institutions, then they may be more likely to optimally design electoral institutions with minimal

misinformation. Furthermore, it should be very useful to engage in archival research, interviews, and other methods of qualitative case studies to make sure that analysts' perspectives are in line with those of political actors.



Opposing Power: Building Opposition Alliances in Electoral Autocracies. By Elvin Ong. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, WCED Book Series, 2022. 312p. Hardcover and paper.

Review by Masaaki Higashijima, Associate Professor of Comparative Politics, University of Tokyo, Japan

In Opposing Power, Professor Elvin Ong tackles an important question that informs the core of thinking about democratic transitions from authoritarian rule: under what conditions do opposition parties successfully build pre-electoral alliances to challenge autocratic regimes? Ong argues that for the opposition to unite they need to meet two conditions. First, opposition leaders must perceive that the extant regime's vulnerability is high (regime vulnerability). Second, opposition leaders must also recognize that each of them is not strong enough to successfully challenge a weakening dictator (mutual dependency). When these two conditions are met, opposition parties can coordinate for their leadership selection and joint election campaigning in order to pursue the shared purpose of defeating the dictator at the ballot box. Electoral victory is more likely under such circumstances.

To test these theoretical expectations, Ong presents two fascinating sets of controlled comparison. The first comparison—the Philippines and South Korea demonstrates the importance of mutual dependence under the same levels of regime vulnerability. Under the weakened Marcos rule in the Philippines, two major opposition figures, Corazon Aquino and Salvador Laurel, had their own comparative advantages in mobilizing popular support. The recognition of mutual dependence resulted in coordinating for joint leadership and election campaigning, leading to the breakdown of the Marcos regime. In contrast, under the declining support for the Roh Tae Woo regime in South Korea, opposition leaders Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam held independent mass support bases. Consequently, the two Kims came to believe they could defeat the regime on their own without depending on each other, thereby failing to build a robust opposition alliance. The second comparison—Malaysia and Singapore —points to the

other condition, the importance of regime vulnerability, by exploiting its temporal variations in both countries. The Malaysian case demonstrates that successful coordination of opposition parties went hand in hand with increasing vulnerability of the Barisan Nasional regime. The Singaporean case tells us that opposition coordination can occur even under the condition of strong incumbent dominance, but only in highly limited ways.

Ong's book makes at least two significant contributions to the literature on democratization and the strategies of opposition parties in dictatorships. First, Opposing *Power* elegantly identifies the conditions under which opposition parties succeed in uniting by focusing on two dissimilar aspects of power perceptions in dictatorships: power disparities between the regime and opposition and those within the opposition camp. Ong convincingly shows us that how political actors perceive the political landscape matters. This is an important insight given the opaque nature of autocratic politics in which political actors strategically interact. Second, the book also highlights varieties of opposition parties' electioneering strategies and masterfully explores when opposition parties undertake one strategy over others. Opposition leaders have various options when participating in electoral battles, such as agreeing on a joint leadership, collaborating for election campaigning, coordinating for electoral districts, or declining to coordinate. Beyond the conventional binary perspective whether an electoral alliance is formed, Opposing Power conceptualizes opposition alliances more as a gradation, which makes it possible to draw a fine-grained picture of the opposition's electioneering strategies.

Ong's fascinating book leads us to a couple of important research agendas for future studies of democratization and dictatorships. First, whether electoral victory after successful opposition coordination leads to robust democratic consolidation thereafter might be an interesting research avenue to pursue. Opposition coordination is likely to involve diverse interests, and what is perceived as mutual dependency may become a vulnerability after the opposition grabs power. Alternatively, we can imagine a scenario wherein only one major opposition party defeats the autocrat without forming any alliances, thus producing more stable politics after electoral victory. Thinking about consequences of varying opposition alliance formation may lead us to confront a possible trade-off between democratic transition and democratic consolidation.

Second, it is intriguing to think about the conditions under which the gaps between perceptions and actual distributions of power between the regime and opposition, and within the opposition camp, may emerge. For instance, some opposition leaders may overestimate their capabilities and refuse to collaborate with other leaders. In contrast, other opposition figures may be strong enough to challenge the dictator on their own, yet their overestimation of the regime's strength results in them developing a successful electoral alliance with other opposition parties. How are perceptions formed? Exploring whether opposition leaders' perceptions are influenced by various factors like the engagement of international actors, historical relationships within the opposition camp, and the history of autocratic governance under the existing regime should be another promising topic for future research.

Response from Elvin Ong

I thank Professor Higashijima for his comprehensive and in-depth review, and for his useful suggestions for future research. He is correct to propose that we cannot assume that mutual dependency amongst opposition allies is binding both before and after elections. As we know in the case of Malaysia, although all opposition parties found it electorally advantageous to form the Pakatan Harapan alliance prior to 2018, their alliance soon frayed at the seams after their victory against the dominant incumbent Barisan Nasional. Stunned by the new opposition's rhetorical attacks and crippled by intra-alliance differences, Pakatan Harapan soon found themselves drained of mass public support. An internal split within the alliance led to new governments being formed in 2020 and 2021, whereby the Barisan Nasional once again found themselves in seats and corridors of power. I am unsure if there is a comparable counterfactual case of opposition victory against a dominant incumbent without an opposition alliance. Regardless, whether Pakatan Harapan's short term alliance for electoral transition will cripple Malaysia's long-term trajectory for democratic consolidation remains to be seen.

Professor Higashijima calls for scholars to study elite thinking more keenly and carefully under autocracy. I agree completely. Because power under authoritarianism is so heavily concentrated in specific elites or groups of elites, it is crucial for scholars to get their empirical analyses of elite thinking right so as to more robustly test models of elite behavior. Yet, access to autocratic elites is frequently almost impossible, or may take years to cultivate even when possible. Even when empirical evidence of elite thinking is obtainable via interviews, speeches, autobiographies, or archival records, they are difficult to take at face value due to a tendency for bluster, bias, or hubris. From this perspective, rigorous triangulation from multiple

perspectives and sources is more important than ever. To my knowledge, political science scholarship has yet to come to satisfactory terms with this methodological challenge.

Joint Commentary from Higashijima and Ong

We thank the editors for the opportunity to engage with each other. In this joint commentary, we highlight two particular themes that have emerged from our exchange, and briefly discuss prospects for future research.

In the first instance, unlike the subfield of international relations that has taken studying perceptions and misperceptions between nation states seriously, the subfield of comparative politics, particularly the more niche literature on democratization and autocratic politics, has yet to rigorously examine elite perceptions and misperceptions. We see our books' respective emphases on opposition perceptions and autocratic misperceptions as small steps towards a more comprehensive literature on elite behavior in autocratic regimes. Moving forward, studying the causes and consequences of elite perceptions and misperceptions is likely to be more important than ever. After all, it is elites who decide when and how to consolidate or decentralize power, how to structure their relations with each other, and how to challenge changes in power structures.

Second, while our books examine the narrow windows surrounding autocratic elections, they are relatively silent on everyday autocratic governance and its impact on democratization writ large. This partially reflects the political science discipline's focus on the more coercive and repressive outcomes of autocracy, and its relative neglect of everyday autocratic governance and its effect on popular support. Nevertheless, this topic represents a tremendous opportunity for future research. For instance, if an autocratic regime's mobilizational capabilities and performance legitimacy are so important to buy popular support, then how does an autocrat go about enhancing them? Why are some autocrats more successful than others? We can also ask similar questions for the opposition in dictatorships. How does autocratic governance influence the relationships within the opposition, and between opposition leaders and citizens? How can inexperienced opposition parties gain governance experience and cultivate public support? We urge budding scholars to take up the mantle of studying variation in everyday autocratic governance more seriously in future research.

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issues, including *Democracy* (Johns Hopkins University Press), *Democratic Stability in the Age of Crisis* (Oxford University Press), and a forthcoming textbook on democratization and autocratization (Routledge).



Victoria Tin-bor Hui is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. She examines the centrality of war in the formation and transformation of "China" in the long span of history, comparative state formation and state-society relations, contentious politics and resistance movements,

political culture, Asian and Confucian values, and Chinese politics. As a native of Hong Kong, Hui also analyzes Hong Kong's democracy movement and Beijing's crackdown. She is extensively interviewed by the media on Hong Kong politics and has testified in Congress. She maintains the blog "Hong Kong's Fight for Freedom" and co-founded the Washington, DC-based Hong Kong Democracy Council, which has successfully lobbied for legislations to support Hong Kong.



Jacob Turner is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. His research investigates the formation of public security policies and the police as political actors in the context of democratic regimes. His dissertation, "War in Words: Law, Order, and Iron Fist Politics in

Brazil", uses a combination of survey experiments, semi-automated text analysis of electoral platforms, and qualitative interviews to investigate why police officers increasingly run in elections, how they brand themselves, and why voters support them. His research has been published in *Party Politics* and *Teoria e Pesquisa*, and financially supported by an NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant.



Matthew Wilson is Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Political Science at the University of South Carolina. He is interested in explaining the impacts of political institutions and temporal dynamics in non-democratic settings. Some of his ongoing research projects focus on the

mechanisms that support legislative strengthening and elections in autocracies and their relation to conflict and regime change. His work has been published in the American Journal of Political Science, the British Journal of Political Science, International Interactions, Political Science Research and Methods, and Comparative Political Studies. He is currently a Research Fellow with the Varieties of Democracy Project.

Editorial Team

Executive Editors



Dan Slater specializes in the politics and history of enduring dictatorships and emerging democracies, with a regional focus on Southeast Asia. At the University of Michigan, he serves as the Ronald and Eileen Weiser Professor of Emerging Democracies, the Director of the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies, and the James

Orin Murfin Professor of Political Science. Previously, he served for 12 years on the faculty at the University of Chicago, where he was the Director of the Center for International Social Science Research, Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science, and associate member in the Department of Sociology.



Rob Mickey is Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Graduate Studies at the University of Michigan. His research focuses on U.S. politics in historical perspective. He is interested in American political development, political parties, racial politics, and policy responses to inequality.

Managing Editor



Derek Groom is an Academic Program Specialist with the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies. In this role, he manages the programming, administration, and research/ outreach activities of WCED. Before coming to U-M, Derek worked in Washington, DC at American Councils for International Education,

administering the Overseas Flagship Programs and Flagship Language Initiatives in Eurasia and Africa. In 2013, Derek completed the Russian Overseas Flagship Program in St. Petersburg, Russia as a Boren Scholar.

Guest Editors



Katherine Bersch is the Nancy Akers and J. Mason Wallace Assistant Professor of Political Science at Davidson College. She was a Visiting Fellow at the Kellogg Institute at Notre Dame for the 2022–23 academic year. She is also a co-founder of the Global Survey of Public Servants. Bersch is author of When Democracies

Deliver: Governance Reform in Latin America (Cambridge University Press, 2019), which won the Donna Lee Van Cott Prize (LASA), the Levine Prize (IPSA), and the Best Book in Public Administration Prize (ASPA). She has also published in Comparative Politics, Governance, Public Administration Review, Studies in Comparative International Development, Political Research Quarterly, Annual Review of Political Science, and the European Journal of Development Research.



Michael Coppedge is Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame and one of the Principal Investigators for the Varieties of Democracy project (V-Dem). He is coeditor of Why Democracies Develop and Decline (Cambridge, 2022), co-author of Varieties of Democracy: Measuring Two Centuries of Political Change

(Cambridge, 2020), and author of Democratization and Research Methods (Cambridge, 2012) and Strong Parties and Lame Ducks: Presidential Partyarchy and Factionalism in Venezuela (Stanford, 1994). He has published in the Journal of Politics, World Politics, Perspectives on Politics, Comparative Politics, Comparative Political Studies, the European Journal of Political Research, Democratization, and Party Politics.

About *Democracy and Autocracy*

Democracy and Autocracy is the official newsletter of the American Political Science Association's Democracy and Autocracy section (formerly known as the Comparative Democratization section). First known as CompDem, it has been published three times a year 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. In September 2018, it was renamed the Annals of Comparative Democratization to reflect the increasingly high academic content and recognition of the symposia.

About WCED

Housed in the International Institute at the University of Michigan, the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies (WCED) began operation in September 2008. Named in honor of Ronald and Eileen Weiser and inspired by their time in Slovakia during Ambassador Weiser's service as U.S. Ambassador from 2001–04, WCED promotes scholarship to better understand the conditions and policies that foster the transition from autocratic rule to democratic governance, past and present.



Section News

Kate Baldwin (Associate Professor of Political Science, Yale University) and Matthew S. Winters (Professor of Political Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) published "Foreign Aid and Political Support:

How Politicians' Aid Oversight Capacity and Voter Information Condition Credit-Giving" in the January 2023 issue of World Politics. The article uses original survey data from Uganda to show that the credit that politicians receive for foreign aid projects depends both on the information that voters have and the capacity of the politicians' offices to provide oversight. The results suggest that voters think realistically about how politicians might have contributed to the realization of aid projects.

Michael Bernhard (Raymond and Miriam Ehrlich Eminent Scholar Chair in Political Science, University of Florida) recently published the following journal article and book chapter:

Hellmeier, Sebastian, and Michael Bernhard. 2023. "Regime Transformation From Below: Mobilization for Democracy and Autocracy From 1900 to 2021." Comparative Political Studies, OnlineFirst.

Bernhard, Michael, and Amanda Edgell. 2022. "Democracy and Social Forces." In Why Democracies Develop and Decline, edited by Michael Coppedge, Amanda B. Edgell, Carl Henrik Knudtsen, and Staffan I. Lindberg, 185–214. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sarah Bush (Associate Professor of Political Science, Yale University) and Pär Zetterberg (Associate Professor, Uppsala University) organized a special issue of the journal Politics & Gender on the subject of "Gender Equality and Authoritarian Regimes." They wrote the following introductory essay for the issue:

Bush, Sarah, and Pär Zetterberg. 2023. <u>"Gender</u> Equality and Authoritarian Regimes: New Directions for Research." Politics & Gender, First View: 1–5.

Melani Cammett (Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs, Department of Government, and Chair of the Harvard Academy of International and Area Studies, Harvard University) was elected to the following honorary positions:

Honorary Professor, Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, U.K., February 2023–February 2026.

Corresponding Member, Tunisian Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts-Beit al Hikma, June 2022– present.

She also recently published the following co-authored papers:

Cammett, Melani, and Aytuğ Şaşmaz. 2022. <u>"The IO</u> Effect: International Actors and Service Delivery in Refugee Crises." International Studies Quarterly 66 (4).

Cammett, Melani, Dominika Kruszewska, Christiana Parreira, and Sami Atallah. 2022. "Commitment to the "National" in Post-Conflict Countries: Public and Private Security in Lebanon." Journal of Conflict Resolution 66 (7–8): 1234–1262.

John Chin (Assistant Teaching Professor, Institute for Politics and Strategy, Carnegie Mellon University) **recently published his first book:**

Chin, John J., Joseph G. Wright, David B. Carter. 2022. Historical Dictionary of Modern Coups D'état. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Paula Clerici (Associate Professor of Government and Politics, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella-CONICET) recently published the following article in The Journal of Legislative Studies. She asks the question: when will legislators assigned to the same committee cooperate with each other? She analyzes the committee system of a multi-party and multi-level legislature and tests the partisan and territorial determinants of committee collaboration. Her theory elucidates the inner workings of committee systems with competing principals and multiple parties to explain why we observe more active collaboration among supporters of the President and less active collaboration among those only aligned with the governor or with the opposition. She exemplifies this with the Argentine House of Representatives (1993-2017).

Clerici, Paula. 2023. <u>"Committee Collaboration, Competing Principals, and Partisanship in Argentina."</u> The Journal of Legislative Studies.

Jan Matti Dolbaum (Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Research Center on Inequality and Social Policy (SOCIUM), University of Bremen) would like to bring attention to a new research group on political parties in authoritarian and hybrid regimes of post–Soviet Eastern Europe. The group, consisting of himself and two doctoral researchers, will start its activities in October 2023 at LMU Munich and will work for six years. It will study the shape and function of political parties in Russia, Ukraine, and Moldova with a comparative perspective beyond the region. Further information can be found at http://janmatti.dollbaum.de/research-group.

He also recently published the following co-authored piece:

Dollbaum, Jan Matti, and Graeme B. Robertson. 2023. <u>"The Activist Personality: Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Opposition Activism in Authoritarian Regimes."</u> Comparative Political Studies, OnlineFirst.

Kenneth F. Greene (Associate Professor, Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin) recently published the following article:

Greene, Kenneth F. 2022. "Money Can't Buy You Love: Partisan Responses to Vote-Buying Offers." American Journal of Political Science, Early View.

Sebnem Gumuscu (Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Middlebury College) **recently published** the following book:

Gumuscu, Sebnem. 2023. <u>Democracy or</u>
<u>Authoritarianism: Islamist Governments in Turkey, Egypt, and Tunisia</u>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Henry Hale (Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, The George Washington University) **recently published the following co–authored book:**

Onuch, Olga, and Henry E. Hale. 2023. <u>The Zelensky</u> <u>Effect</u>. Oxford and London: Oxford University Press and Hurst Publishers.

Gregory Michener (Associate Professor of Government and Principal of the Public Transparency Program, Fundação Getulio Vargas, Rio de Janeiro) **recently published the following article:**

Michener, Gregory. 2023. <u>"Transparency Versus Populism."</u> Administration & Society, OnlineFirst.

Lynette Ong (Professor of Political Science, University of Toronto) recently won the ISA Human Rights Best Book Award for <u>Outsourcing Repression: Everyday State Power in Contemporary China</u> (Oxford University Press, 2022).

Heiko Pleines (Professor of Comparative Politics, Research Centre for East European Studies, University of Bremen) has received funding from the German National Research Council (DFG) for the Discuss Data project, an online platform for archiving, sharing and discussing research data on Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia (www.discuss-data.net). In the project, he has arranged for the open access publication of raw data of public opinion surveys of the Russian population about the war against Ukraine conducted by the independent Levada-Center. Discuss Data also hosts a number of representative surveys of the Ukrainian population during war time organised by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation. Read more here.

Jeremy Wallace (*Professor of Government, Cornell University*) **recently published the following book:**

Wallace, Jeremy. 2022. <u>Seeking Truth and Hiding Facts:</u> <u>Information, Ideology, and Authoritarianism in China</u>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro (Associate Professor of Political Science, Brown University), Virginia Oliveros (Associate Professor of Political Science, Tulane University), and Matthew S. Winters (Professor of Political Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) recently published the following co-authored article:

Oliveros, Virginia, Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro, and Matthew S. Winters. 2023. "Credit Claiming by Labeling." Comparative Political Studies, Online First.

Members of the **Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute** at the University of Gothenburg published the following policy briefs, working papers, reports, and peer-reviewed articles:

Angiolillo, Fabio. 2023. <u>"Introducing the One-Party Membership Dataset: A Dataset on Party Membership in Autocracies."</u> *Journal of Peace Research*, OnlineFirst.

Coppedge, Michael. 2023. <u>"V-Dem's Conceptions of Democracy and Their Consequences."</u> University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy Institute: Working Paper No. 135.

Hellmeier, Sebastian, and Michael Bernhard. 2023. "Regime Transformation From Below: Mobilization for Democracy and Autocracy From 1900 to 2021." Comparative Political Studies, OnlineFirst.

Kinzelbach, Katrin, Staffan I. Lindberg, Lars Pelke, and Janika Spannagel. 2023. <u>"Academic Freedom Index 2023 Update."</u> FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg and V-Dem Institute.

Lundstedt, Martin, Felix Wiebrecht, Vanessa Boese-Schlosser, Kelly Morrison, Natalia Natsika, Marina Nord, Evie Papada, Yuko Sato, and Staffan I. Lindberg, edited by Evie Papada, Martin Lundstedt, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2023. "Case for Democracy Report." University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy Institute.

Neundorf, Anja, Eugenia Nazrullaeva, Ksenia Northmore-Ball, Katerina Tertytchnaya, and Wooseok Kim. 2023. "Varieties of Indoctrination (V-Indoc): Introducing a Global Dataset on the Politicization of Education and the Media." University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy Institute: Working Paper No. 136.

Papada, Evie, David Altman, Fabio Angiolillo, Lisa Gastaldi, Tamara Köhler, Martin Lundstedt, Natalia Natsika, Marina Nord, Yuko Sato, Felix Wiebrecht, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2023. "Defiance in the Face of Autocratization." Democracy Report 2023. University of Gothenburg: Varieties of Democracy Institute (V-Dem Institute).

Papada, Evie, David Altman, Fabio Angiolillo, Lisa Gastaldi, Tamara Köhler, Martin Lundstedt, Natalia Natsika, Marina Nord, Yuko Sato, Felix Wiebrecht y Staffan I. Lindberg. 2023. "Resistencia frente a la autocratización. Informe sobre la Democracia 2023." Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile: Instituto de Ciencia Política / Varieties of Democracy Institute (V-Dem Institute).

Papada, Evie, Marina Pavlova, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2022. "Case for Democracy: Can Democracy Limit Corruption?" University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy Institute: V-Dem Policy Brief, No. 36.

Papada, Evie, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2022. "Case for Democracy: Does Democracy Promote Gender Equality?" University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy Institute: V-Dem Policy Brief, No. 37.

Tannenberg, Marcus. 2023. "Legitimacy as Congruence: Matching Expert-Coded and Public Opinion Data." University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy Institute: Working Paper No. 134.

Wiebrecht, Felix, Yuko Sato, Marina Nord, Martin Lundstedt, Fabio Angiolillo, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2023. "State of the World 2022: Defiance in the Face of Autocratization." Democratization.