

The Global Wave of Democratization

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+ difference between
wave & cycle

Overview

In the early 1970s, there were several non-democratic countries in Western Europe, most of Latin America was under military or other forms of authoritarian rule, the eastern half of Europe was ruled by communist parties, much of Asia was undemocratic, and in Africa colonial rule was largely being succeeded by authoritarian regimes. By the early twenty-first century the picture had changed radically, although to

different degrees in different places. A great wave of democracy had touched every continent. This chapter provides a brief tour of the regions of the world. It explores what was distinctive about each region's democratization and what they had in common as well. The chapter concludes with a quick look at challenges faced by democracy in the early twenty-first century.

Introduction

How wrong we social scientists can be! In the early 1970s many of us were extremely pessimistic about the future of democracy in the world. It would be hard to point to many serious students of politics who expected a global wave of democratization that would dwarf earlier ones. That moment's pessimism was rooted in disappointed expectations forged a quarter century back. At the end of World War II there had been considerable hope for a democratic

future. The murderous Nazi regime and its European and Asian allies had just been decisively defeated by an alliance of the Western democracies, the Soviet Union, and China. In the Western half of Europe, the victorious democratic powers brought democracy back or supported its establishment on a firmer footing than before. The military occupation of the defeated countries was an opportunity to democratize them. A democratic Western Germany, Austria,

Italy, and Japan seemed a good barrier against a renewal of aggressive militarism. The USA, moreover, shielded by oceans from the war's devastation, emerged as the buoyant leader of the global economy, poised to spread its products, ideas, and institutions far and wide.

Equally important, the end of the European colonial empires was at hand. The war had deeply wounded these empires as Japan seized Asian colonies of Britain, France, the Netherlands, and the USA. Asians who had fought the occupying Japanese were not always eager to have their former European rulers back. And colonial troops who had fought to defend, let us say, French democracy against fascist aggression and returned home with military experience, were not always eager to see European rule continued in their own homeland. As for the post-war USA, it tended to see its own interests enhanced by dismantling, rather than restoring the empires of its wartime partners, and ended its own colonial rule in the Philippines. So, over the next generation, colonies attained self rule and many hoped for democratic government for these new Asian and African states.

As post-war social scientists turned to the study of the social conditions that promoted democracy, they often focused on economic development or appropriate cultural values as key (Lipset 1983). This led to a lively debate among those who thought one or the other more important. But either thesis had a variant that was very optimistic about the future. As economic development spread, so would democracy; as modern Western values spread, so would democracy. The USA and its Western allies could even actively help these processes through development aid programmes and diffusing their democratic values.

By the mid-1970s, however, students of politics were a great deal less optimistic. The eastern half of Europe remained firmly under Soviet-dominated communist rule. Not only did few foresee an imminent collapse

Indonesia

of communism, but many thought that in the long struggle with the USA known as the Cold War, Soviet- or Chinese-allied communists were gaining ground because they seemed to many intellectuals in poorer and post-colonial countries to offer a plausible route out of impoverished misery. The democratic hopes of former colonies were dashed as some underwent military coups, while in others presidents successfully claimed expanded powers, and in still others antidemocratic revolutionary forces fought their way to power. Whether antidemocratic revolutionaries or antirevolutionary militaries came out on top, the prospects of stable democracy in many poorer countries looked dim.

Most dismaying of all, some of the more economically developed countries of Latin America underwent coups, including Uruguay and Chile, despite their own longstanding democratic traditions. Reflecting on coups in Brazil in 1964 and Argentina in 1966, Guillermo O'Donnell (1973), came to the disturbing conclusion that economic development in poorer countries might actually generate social tensions that would bring democracy to an end rather than promote it. As for the notion that the wealthy countries might help out by promoting their democratic values, the most powerful and wealthy among them, the USA, turned out with some frequency to support authoritarian rule, including coups in Brazil (1964) and Chile (1973). By the time the Argentine military staged a second coup in 1976, ushering in a period of extreme brutality, many social scientists were sceptical of the future of democracy beyond the already democratic rich countries. One eminent scholar in 1984 deployed his considerable expertise in an essay entitled 'Will More Countries Become Democratic?' and concluded that 'the prospects for the extension of democracy to other societies are not great' (Huntington 1984: 218).

Democracy Ascending

From a vantage point a generation later, in the early twenty-first century, we can see that the Chilean and Argentine coups of the 1970s were at the tail-end of a global antidemocratic wave. From the mid-1970s, a

government

new advance of democracy in the world had begun. We will first show something of the scale of this great wave, then describe it in more detail. Table 5.1 lists countries that became significantly more or less

Table 5.1 Countries with Significant Change in Democracy between 1972 and 2004

Countries Significantly More Democratic

Polity IV		Freedom House	
Albania	Mali	Albania	Philippines
<i>Algeria</i>	<i>Mexico</i>	<i>Andorra</i>	Poland
Argentina	Moldova	Argentina	Portugal
<i>Armenia</i>	Mongolia	Benin	Romania
Benin	Mozambique	Bosnia	Senegal
<i>Bolivia</i>	<i>Nicaragua</i>	Brazil	<i>Serbia & Montenegro</i>
Bosnia	Niger	Bulgaria	Slovakia
Brazil	<i>Nigeria</i>	Cape Verde	Slovenia
Bulgaria	Panama	Congo (Brazzaville)	South Africa
<i>Croatia</i>	<i>Paraguay</i>	Czech Republic	South Korea
Czech Republic	Peru	Estonia	Spain
<i>Djibouti</i>	Philippines	Georgia	Taiwan
<i>Dominican Republic</i>	Poland	Ghana	Tanzania
Ecuador	Portugal	Greece	Thailand
Estonia	Romania	Hungary	Uganda
<i>Ethiopia</i>	Russia	Latvia	Ukraine
Georgia	Senegal	Lesotho	Uruguay
Ghana	Sierra Leone	Lithuania	
Greece	Slovakia	Macedonia	
Hungary	Slovenia	Malawi	
<i>Indonesia</i>	South Korea	Mali	
Kenya	Spain	Moldova	
Latvia	Taiwan	Mongolia	
Lesotho	Thailand	Mozambique	
Lithuania	Ukraine	Namibia	
Macedonia	Uruguay	Niger	
<i>Madagascar</i>	Zambia	Panama	
Malawi		Peru	

Countries Significantly Less Democratic

Polity IV	Freedom House
<i>Gambia</i>	<i>Lebanon</i>
<i>Zimbabwe</i>	<i>Maldives</i>
	<i>Swaziland</i>

Note: A country is listed as being significantly more or less democratic if there is a change of at least 10 in the difference of the Polity IV autocracy and democracy scores or at least 2.5 in the mean of the Freedom House political rights and civil liberties scores. Countries that appear on one list only are indicated with italics.

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Antidemocracy

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Agree

Democracy Ascending

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democratic over the three decades since 1972. For this purpose, we employ the Polity IV data and Freedom House scores. Because democracy is such a complex phenomenon, a country might have democratized considerably as measured by one index but not the other. Using Polity IV, we construct an overall measure of Democratization by considering the change that had taken place in the difference of 'democracy' and 'autocracy', that is, how strongly a country had advanced toward the first and away from the second. Likewise, for the Freedom House scores we ask how much closer countries were to the free end in 2004 than they had been three decades earlier.

The list makes a number of things clear. First, a large number of countries—64—had moved significantly toward democracy since 1972 by at least one of these measures. This does not mean that all such countries were democratic by all measures, only *strikingly more democratic* by one or two measures. Second, a majority of those had done so by both measures, something that is telling us that they had become more democratic in many ways. Third, very few countries had become and remained significantly less democratic during the same period (and none by both measures). Fourth, democratization was occurring in Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. We can see why one could summarize this as a 'worldwide wave' although this is in a sense an exaggeration since some countries are not included in these lists while in the case of others the tide was running in the other direction.

Most of the remainder of this chapter will describe this *wave* of democratization, and we will have many questions about why some countries democratized to a great enough degree to appear in the box, while others did not. Figure 5.1 presents the levels of democracy from 1972 to 2004 for major world regions. It shows quite a number of interesting things. First of all, let us look at the countries of Western Europe, North America, and Oceania. This was the world's most democratic region in 1972 and has remained so. We can also see that it the first region in which the democratic wave took off. Three Mediterranean states with authoritarian regimes underwent major democratizing change, starting with Portugal, and despite difficulties have remained stably democratic. So some of the very big questions about the history

of democracy are about why precisely this group of countries was mostly well ahead of most of the rest of the world on democratization and why and how Portugal, Greece and Spain began to follow suit in the 1970s.

In Latin America, the democratization began later. It was actually still declining into the 1970s, but then the tide of authoritarian rule in Latin America began to recede. The period of major change extended from the late 1970s for a dozen years. Not only did the militaries who had made coups in the 1960s and 1970s return to their barracks over the next decade in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile, but older authoritarian regimes began to open up as well. So Latin America saw not merely the 'restoration' of democracy, but moved to a general level of democratization beyond that which had ever characterized the region as a whole.

Asia began the 1970s with mean levels of democracy only slightly below Latin America's, but entered the twenty-first century much lower, despite significant democratizations. The timing in Asia resembles that in Latin America, with a dip in the mid-1970s followed by an ascent that ended in the early 1990s. At the beginning of the period, Asian authoritarian regimes were a very varied group, with little in common: some countries were ruled by communist parties, some by presidents who had shut down opposition parties and parliaments, some by militaries. But by the mid-1980s very significant democratic movements emerged in the Philippines, in Taiwan, and in South Korea that played major roles in effecting political transformation, while democratic movements were contained in Burma and China. The great variety of political regime types in Asia alone raises many questions about the roles of economics, culture and history in nurturing democratic institutions or other arrangements.

The Soviet bloc in 1972 was resolutely authoritarian, with average scores much less than Latin America or Asia—quite the lowest of any of our regional categories, in fact. But starting in 1989, in rapid succession one after another of the European communist regimes were swept into history's dustbin. What is most distinctive about the regional pattern is how closely clustered in time the changes occurred. If the communist regimes, despite some very interesting

*Authoritarian
History's return
(New left?
Fascism)*

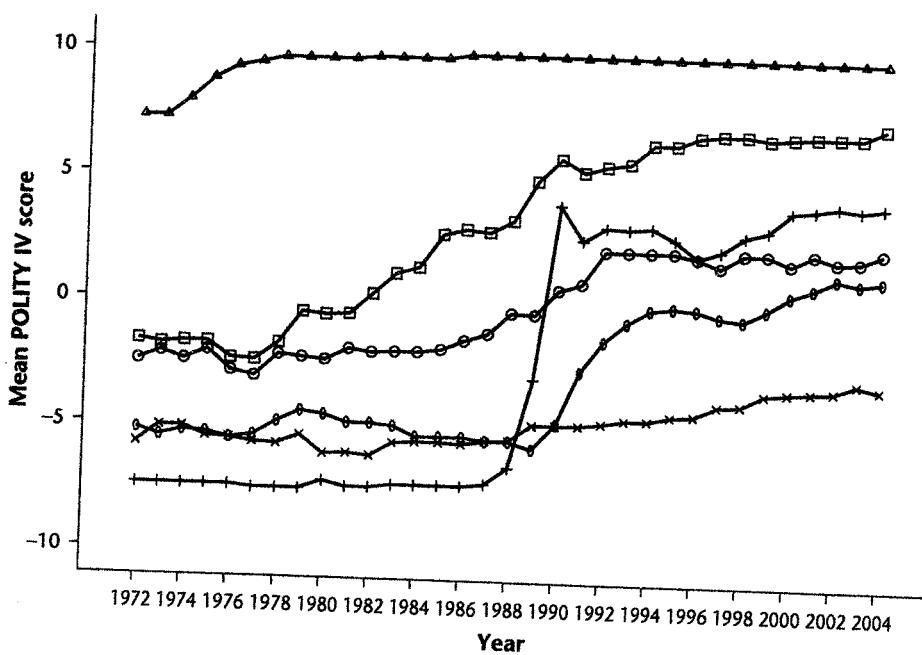


Fig 5.1 Mean level of democracy by world regions, 1972–2004

World region

- △ North America, Western Europe, and Oceania
- Latin America and Caribbean
- + Soviet/communist bloc
- Asia
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- X Middle East and North Africa

Sources: Polity IV Project (2007) and author's regional classification.

differences among them, were all deeply undemocratic political orders, the postcommunist regimes were varied indeed, with some in short order becoming about as democratic as their West European neighbours and others developing highly authoritarian regimes. Why did so much change happen so fast in so many places at more or less the same time? Why did countries that had for decades been organized in such similar ways move in such different directions?

Sub-Saharan Africa also started at an even lower mean level of democratization than Latin America or Asia, and its democratic upturn began later. But from 1990 into 1994 there were significant advances in a democratic direction in a wide array of countries, and more modest advances after that. In noting

that the period of rapid change in Africa followed immediately upon the rapid change in the Soviet bloc, one asks whether this is simply a coincidence or whether there were some transnational processes taking place.

Finally, the Middle East and North Africa: Middle Eastern countries began the period with the same low mean level of democracy as much of Africa, but despite some democratization, ended it notably lower. Of the major geocultural regions shown on this graph, it had participated least in the democratic currents of the time. This raises fascinating questions, too.

But the big story revealed by these graphs is the combination of a global trend toward democratization,

and great variety in the timing, and even occurrence of democratic change. Is there some common cause or causes underlying the global trend? Is there some process of mutual influence with earlier instances of democratization making later ones more probable? As subsequent chapters will make clear, the answers to these questions are far from obvious and are likely to be debated by scholars for some time to come. It is far from evident that the same answers will apply in all places and at all points within the general trend.

Other ways of organizing the data raise different questions. One of the best established of all generalizations about national differences in democracy has been that it is particularly characteristic of the richer countries. In Figure 5.2 countries of the

economy //

world are divided into four groups according to their levels of gross national income (GNI) per capita. We do indeed see that the levels of democracy and the recent trend vary considerably by levels of wealth with the richest countries entering the 1970s as the most democratic group, the poorest countries as the least democratic, and the countries in between in wealth being in between in democracy as well. We can also see that democratization was taking place at all levels of national income, although the ascent began later among the 'low income' group.

Geography does not only suggest differences in wealth, but also in *cultural* traditions. Numerous scholars have argued that certain cultural traits favour, and others disfavour, democratic politics (e.g. Inglehart and Welzel 2005). We may very broadly

culture

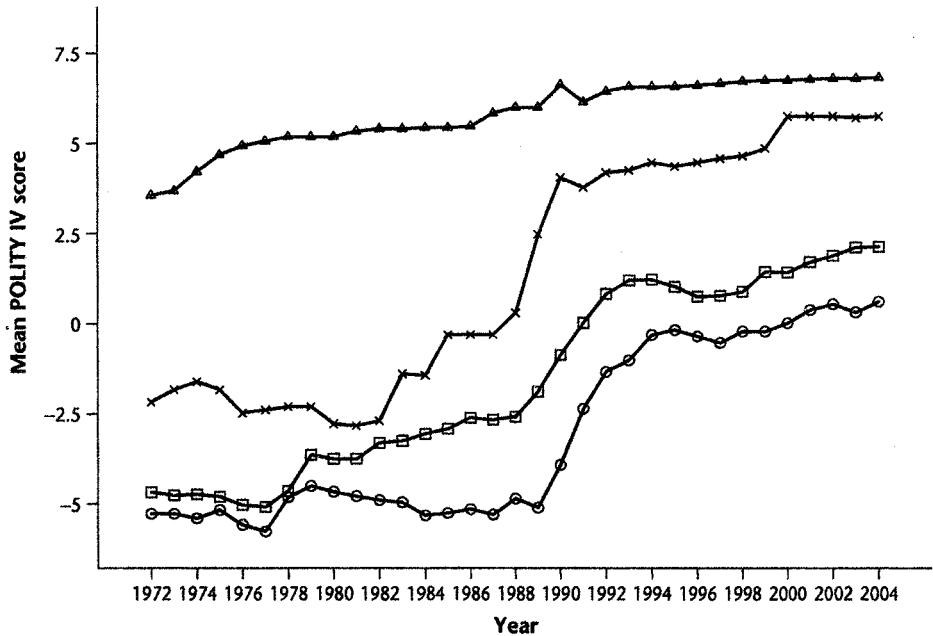


Fig 5.2 Mean level of democracy by gross national income per capita, 1972–2004

Income group (2006)

Δ High income (GNI per capita > US\$11,115)

X Upper middle income (US\$3,595 < GNI per capita ≤ US\$11,115)

□ Lower middle income (US\$905 < GNI per capita ≤ US\$3,595)

○ Low income (GNI per capita ≤ US\$905)

Sources: World Bank (2007) and Polity IV Project (2007)

indicate cultural affinities by classifying countries by their historically dominant religious traditions, grouped into a few broad categories. This is far too crude for a fine-grained analysis of the richness and variety of cultures but adequate for posing some vital questions.

What Figure 5.3 shows plainly is that in the early 1970s it was historically ~~Protestant~~ countries that were especially likely to have high scores for democracy (but remember that some high-scoring countries like Japan, India in most years, and Israel are in our 'Other' group). The graph also shows that over the subsequent decades it was especially the countries with other Christian traditions that democratized, and Muslim countries were especially unlikely to have done so.

This graph is simple, but the very big questions it raises are not. Are there cultural traits that favoured early democratization, others recent democratization, and others still little democratization? Perhaps. But now consider that many other things are highly associated with these religious affiliations. A very large number of these Catholic countries were at one point ~~colonies~~ of particular places in Europe, Spain and Portugal, which also means that they were colonized at the heights of those countries' imperial expansion, beginning in the fifteenth century and continuing into the eighteenth. Similarly, a very large proportion of Muslim majority countries were until recently subject to imperial rule, for example, Pakistan by Britain, Morocco by France, Indonesia by the Netherlands, Libya by Italy, and Uzbekistan by

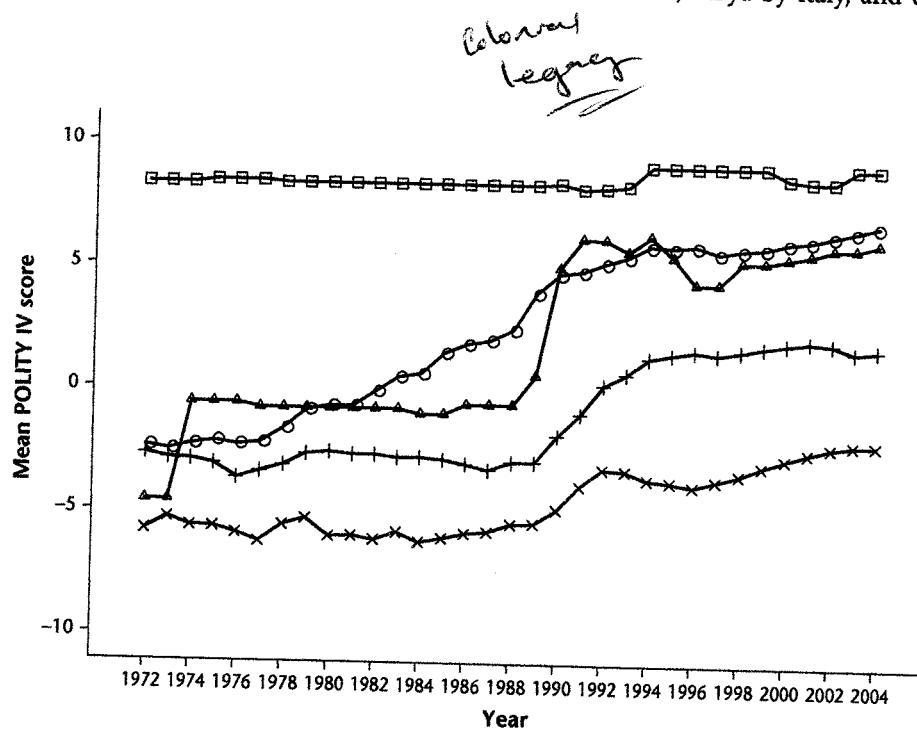


Fig 5.3 Mean level of democracy by historically predominant religious tradition, 1972–2004
Historically predominant religion

- Protestant
- Catholic
- △ Eastern Orthodox
- + Other
- ✗ Muslim

Sources: Author's classification of religious traditions and Polity IV Project (2007).

Russia. In consequence, there is a great deal of history countries with particular religious traditions have, that distinguishes them from other places—not just the way their citizens have learned to pray. And for a largely secular Europe one ought to speak of the way their citizens used to pray. So whether there is any connection of Protestantism, Catholicism, and Islam to democratization is a question demanding a good deal of thought. Subsequent chapters will explore this further.

Box 5.1 Key points

- Democratization has been on the rise on a global scale from the early 1970s onward.
- The growth of democratization is different in different geographic regions.
- Democratization is also different for poor and rich countries, respectively, and for countries with different cultural systems.

National, Regional, and Global Processes

The timing differences of major world regions suggests that democratization came about in different ways in Southern Europe, Latin America, the Soviet bloc, Asia, and Africa. A closer look will show important differences even in neighbouring countries: between Portugal's democratization and Spain's, Argentina's and Brazil's, Poland's and Czechoslovakia's, South Korea's and Taiwan's. To invoke specific places is to be reminded how idiosyncratic particular national experiences might be. Yet the fact that so many geographically distant places significantly democratized so close in time strongly suggests that processes came into play that were not simply nationally, or even regionally, idiosyncratic, but that operated on a truly trans-continental scale to move multiple countries in the same general direction. There are a variety of imaginable processes that might produce change in so many different countries in such a short space of time. For clarity, we will classify such processes into four kinds:

- *Internal* processes unfolding in similar ways in a number of countries, producing similar outcomes, without any coordinating mechanisms across those separate cases.
- *External* processes affecting in similar ways a group of countries, but not involving actions deliberately aimed at encouraging democracy.
- *Emulative* processes, in which changes happening in some countries have an impact on other countries later on.

- *Supportive* processes in which one or more countries or other powerful actors set out to encourage democracy elsewhere.

While later chapters will analyse the distinctive characteristics of the great wave of democracy in major world regions separately, we will now take a closer look at how these classifications work out in a comparative perspective. Note that these are not mutually exclusive categories. And as we shall see, particular processes were not equally important at all moments nor in all countries.

Mediterranean Europe, 1970s

To understand the transformations of Portugal, Greece, and Spain in detail, one must understand the very particular and distinctive unfolding of events in each. A colonial war going badly against revolutionary guerrillas in Portugal's still extensive African colonies led some officers, in *emulation* of their determined foes, to favour a revolutionary overthrow of the Portuguese state, an action carried out in 1974. A few months later, Greece's military rulers seemed likely to bring on a war with Turkey, a prospect that led frontline officers who anticipated disaster to prefer to drive their tanks to Athens and terminate military rule. The following year Spain's long-time ruler, Francisco Franco, died, which opened new

*class notes
1 Periodisation*

possibilities for political party leaderships, for organized workers, and for rural people to work out new political arrangements. Such elements, and more, were deeply idiosyncratic.

But there were common *internal* and *external* processes, in play as well. All three Mediterranean countries were a lot poorer than their Western European neighbours and would have benefited mightily from full membership in the European Community (which later became the European Union), but the Community staunchly refused to countenance membership for avowedly antidemocratic states. So when these countries faced major crises, although each crisis was highly distinctive, their common poverty in comparison to wealthy neighbours gave those neighbours influence, and the pressure from those neighbours to democratize was strong.

There also was an element of *emulation*. Although some approved, for many it was an embarrassment to live in a country whose rulers tried to make one look different than the other Europeans one could see every day on television, as when Greece's colonels outlawed long hair or Spain's laws enforced dress codes. And once Portugal began its democratic journey, it was an extra embarrassment to many in Spain that Portugal, sometimes experienced as a sort of backwards country cousin, was actually moving faster to be more like the rest of Europe. For Greeks, resentful of their rulers' attempts to keep them from participating in contemporary European culture, the absence of democracy was all the more poignant in that Greeks could lay claim to their country having been the place that, a great while ago, coined the word the rest of Western Europe used to describe the only form of political life under which they would care to live.

Latin America, 1980s and early 1990s

At first glance, nothing connects Latin American and Southern European processes. Indeed the histories of antidemocratic politics in different countries in Latin America were different from each other. Mexico's early twentieth century revolution led to the congealed rule of the Institutional Revolutionary

Party that dominated political life for decades. Central America and the Caribbean, except for democratic Costa Rica, and revolutionary but not democratic Cuba, were dominated by a variety of military or non-military strongmen, and prey to intermittent military intervention by the US Militaries which, with a variety of purposes, ruled most of South America (except for Colombia and Venezuela). Yet during the 1980s and early 1990s every military regime withdrew, and in the 1990s the Mexican system began to open.

Latin American countries had long been noted for oscillations between more or less democratic, and more or less authoritarian forms. Against that background, a big part of the story is not just that the political pendulum swung toward democracy but that it has swung back again so little. In 1974 only three countries in the region could reasonably be called democratic; a quarter century later all but Cuba could (although a closer analysis would want to take note of something of a democratic recession in some places in the early years of the twenty-first century). The non-Spanish speaking Caribbean was mostly democratic too, except for turbulent, troubled Haiti. Not only did most countries democratize but those democracies, while sometimes very troubled, did not collapse altogether, a great contrast with the past. By one measure, the likelihood of democratic breakdown in a given year had been 20 times greater in the years preceding 1978 than in the two decades that followed (Mainwaring and Pérez-Lifian 2005: 20).

What accounts for the new democratic durability? Let's look back a generation. Latin America is the world region with the most unequal distribution of income (Hoffman and Centeno 2003), generating great fearfulness on the political right about the potential appeals of leftist revolution, and leading the right repeatedly, often with the support of the USA, to foster military coups. In the 1960s and 1970s, Cuban-inspired threats, some real and some not-so-real, made such fears especially plausible to the Latin American right and to US governments as well. But by the late 1970s in much of the region, apart from Central America, a plausible revolutionary threat was fading for several reasons. Success in revolutionary guerrilla warfare had turned out to be far more difficult than proponents imagined (Wickham-Crowley 1992). In some countries, the Latin American revo-

Military coup is internal?!

lutionary left had been decimated and demoralized by post-coup repression. And on a global scale, the appeals of revolutionary solutions were fading as the Soviet Bloc lost any lingering propensity to inspire. Finally, after 1989, in the wake of the collapse of European communist rule, military or other support for left revolution from that quarter—even for Cuba—dried up. In short, global *external* processes and parallel *internal* processes greatly weakened support for Latin American revolution on the left.

Reduced fear of a revolutionary left joined several forms of *supportive* change to weaken the cause of antidemocratic politics on the right as well, something even more important since it was the right that actually carried out the coups (Markoff 1997). First of all, beginning in the late 1970s the USA became a less reliable supporter of coups and authoritarian rule claiming the anticommunist mantle, which had been an extremely important element in the coups of 1964 and 1973 in Brazil and Chile. By the 1980s it became engaged in what was called 'democracy promotion'—through such organizations as the Agency for International Development and the National Endowment for Democracy. This policy combined support for certain democratic practices and economic liberalization, a body of policies known among its critics as 'neoliberalism' (Cox *et al.* 2000).

But it was not only the US Government that seemed less skittish about democracy in Latin America. The Catholic Church had undergone a dramatic transformation from a key moral support of right wing authoritarians, as in Portugal and Spain (and earlier in Italy), to a supporter of democratic politics, as signalled in the convening of a Vatican Council (known as Vatican II) in 1962. This shift was of considerable significance in helping stabilize Catholic Iberia's new democracies, and in easing the path for Catholic Latin America's as well.

There was another important cluster of parallel *internal* and *external* processes. The coups of the 1960s and 1970s had been justified not only as anticommunist defensive measures, but also to protect the nation against the corruptions of democracy itself—since the political class was seen as caving in to the irrational demands of those whose votes they sought, thereby bringing on economic disaster. The developmental programs of the 1950s and 1960s were financed by enormous foreign borrowing and often seemed to

be going nowhere. By the 1960s it was rather widely believed that getting rid of democracy would improve economic performance. Distinguished US economists advised Pinochet's brutal regime. But, apart from Chile, the 1980s were to show that antidemocratic state brutality was hardly a guarantee of hopeful patterns of economic progress. When criticism of economic affairs emerged again in the troubled 1980s, it was the generals who were accused of bungling and corruption. One of the causes of coups had been the mounting foreign debt in country after country. But under the military the debt generally grew even more. Democracy, by comparison, had come to look efficient.

That skyrocketing debt was embedded in another *external* process that unfolded on a transcontinental scale. In the early 1970s the oil-exporting countries radically raised the price of oil. Oil-rich countries then invested their vast new profits in Western banks. The Western banks in turn began to lend their new resources like crazy. In other words, the enormous debt expansion of Latin America happened not only because there were ready borrowers on a continental scale, but ready wealthy lenders as well. Sooner or later, there would be trouble as nervous banks sought to recover their investments and powerful financial bodies like the International Monetary Fund played a pivotal role. This took the form of demands on Latin American states for what were taken to be sound economic practices, which is one of the important mechanisms by which the political crises that ended military rule also led to the collection of policy shifts often labelled neoliberal: downsizing the public sector, controlling inflation, selling state-owned resources to the private sector, and reducing or ending tariffs.

Finally, there was a significant regional *supportive* process (Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán 2005). As countries began to democratize, they joined together for collective action to keep their own recent democratizations in place and encourage others to join. The Organization of American States authorized intervention in the event of democratic breakdown and took action on a number of occasions. In addition, members of the important common trade area, the Mercosur, eventually embracing half a dozen countries, agreed to expel any of its members that broke with democracy. Moreover, the new practice of

international election monitoring and the threat of UN-backed economic sanctions, have also helped to discourage antidemocratic revivals. In the judgment of Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2005), without such supportive practices, no fewer than four countries would have experienced antidemocratic coups following initially shaky democratizations. This mutual support for democracy is without precedent in Latin American history.

Soviet/Communist Bloc, 1989 and beyond

Despite great differences in language and history the various states of Communist Europe in the early 1970s had much in common: similar institutional structures under the command of ruling parties making ideologically similar claims. This was even true of states with hostile relationships with the Soviet Union, like Yugoslavia or, later, Romania. When people meet for the first time who had lived before 1989 in different Soviet bloc countries, they swiftly discover how similar many aspects of daily life were. Even the same gray concrete housing blocs dominated urban landscapes throughout the region, widely taken by Soviet Bloc intellectuals as a material metaphor for a dreary political regime (although dreary urban vistas were hardly unknown in Glasgow, or the suburbs of Paris, or the south side of Chicago). Beyond the common institutional mould, a large part of the region was linked to the Soviet Union via economic specializations, largely organized for Soviet benefit and tied in militarily to the Warsaw Pact—the Soviet Union's response to the West's North Atlantic Treaty Organization. And the threat, or even actuality, of Soviet military action to rein in straying neighbours was palpable. Under its openly announced Brezhnev Doctrine, in fact, the Soviet Union would simply not permit any dilution of Communist rule.

One very important consequence of so much in common was that dramatic events in one country had ready resonance throughout the region, and the opening of some new opportunity anywhere might suggest there were opportunities everywhere. So there were many *emulative* processes at work, as patterns of dissent in one place quickly suggested possibilities or impossibilities elsewhere. Stalin's death

in 1953 and the denunciation of Stalin's crimes (in a supposedly secret but soon widely known speech by Soviet head of state Nikita Khrushchev) in 1956 helped galvanize revolt in East Germany, Poland, and Hungary, the latter taking an especially violent turn. The bloodily successful suppressions were taken by future dissenters to demonstrate the futility of armed resistance. When a reform movement inside the Czechoslovak ruling party in 1968 was also met by the Soviet occupation of that country, the message to future dissenters was that reform inside the ruling party was hopeless. Up to that moment some dissenters had acted in the name of Marxism against Soviet tyranny, and had hoped for a national and reformed socialism—as opposed to post-Stalinism backed up by Soviet tanks. After 1968 dissent was about creating a new social order.

In the Soviet Union itself, in Czechoslovakia, in Hungary, and in Poland, small groups of intellectuals mastered the art of evading censorship and circulated clandestine manuscripts, all in supportive contact with each other. A transcontinental *external* process provided some additional cover. Impelled by the limitations of its economic growth, the Soviet Union sought increased trade with the West. US manufacturers and farmers sought increased trade with the Soviet Union, something that was politically difficult for the US Government to support without the appearance of political concessions. The result was the Soviet Union's entry into the Helsinki Accords in 1975, providing for international monitoring of human rights abuses. This provided limited protection for some limited forms of dissent, especially if those dissenters campaigned for peace and disarmament, since the Soviet Union hoped for pressures against the US military presence in Western Europe. Other dissenters organized around religious institutions. Still others moved into environmental causes, avoiding overt head-on challenge to the regimes. But for many others, listening to Western radio, hanging out at basement jazz concerts, laughing at official statements that no one believed—not even the officials—dressing like Western young people, or joining a strolling crowd at precisely the hour the TV played the official news program, diffused a sense of widespread rejection, even if a positive course of action was unclear. In Budapest, or Prague, or Warsaw, things were similar.

In the economic realm, another *external* process played its part. Just as banks were eager to lend to Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s, but got skittish eventually, so they were eager to lend to the states of communist Europe, which faced the very real problems of maintaining standards of living while pursuing goals of socialist development through heavy industry. Apart from Romania, which rejected the path of national indebtedness (and thereby impoverished its people), East European governments borrowed heavily, leading down the road to the problem of how these loans were to be paid back, just as in Latin America. By the 1980s few believed any more that the Soviet bloc had some alternative path to economic growth that would eclipse the West, morally or materially, and extensive borrowing from Western banks or food purchases from Western farmers rubbed the failure in. So, despite the vast dissimilarity of their ways of not being democratic, part of what brought down communist rule in Poland and military rule in Brazil was being prepared unintentionally in the offices of Western banks.

As a general tactic Central and Eastern Europe's intellectuals had worked out the notion of reviving civil society through non-violent construction of a realm of freedom. In Poland, uniquely, this turned into a vast mass movement as a strike at the Gdańsk shipyard in August 1980 sparked the Solidarity movement in which millions participated, demonstrating how utterly the regime had lost the people, and emboldening countless everyday acts of routinized defiance even after the great mass displays were crushed under martial law and the threat of Soviet military action. All over Central and Eastern Europe, people had in Poland a model of a land of defiance, though how to move forward was not obvious, not even in Poland.

In the Soviet Union itself, the premier, Mikhail Gorbachev, confronted a sense of economic and political ossification and ruinous military commitment to a failing Afghan war. In the course of restructuring Soviet institutions and reordering priorities, Gorbachev was not only an important promoter of change at home, but an enabler of change elsewhere. In a UN speech in December 1988 he abandoned his predecessor Brezhnev's commitment to block change throughout the region by force. A

year later communist regimes had been brought to an end in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany, and Romania, followed over the next few years by the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Albania.

Out of uniformity came diversity: ex-Communist states to the west of the ex-Soviet Union democratized; the Soviet Union disintegrated and some of its fragments, now separate states, also democratized, while others erected new forms of authoritarian rule. Poland, for example, is listed in Table 5.1, but Belarus is not. Yugoslavia fragmented, entered a period of warfare, and to some extent democratized. The divergent political histories since 1989 pose many very interesting questions about the sources of such different paths.

Asia, 1980s and 1990s

At the beginning of the 1970s, Asian patterns of government were an extremely diverse collection and its democratizations from the mid-1980s into the early 1990s correspondingly idiosyncratic (Diamond and Plattner 1998). India is frequently called the world's largest democracy but it entered a crisis in which democratic practice considerably contracted in 1975 ('the emergency'), a state of affairs that lasted until 1977. China was, and remains, the world's largest authoritarian state, with a ruling communist party that successfully suppressed enormous protests in 1989, and maintained its political domination while enacting major economic reforms. While in the Soviet Bloc 1989 stands for the year everything changed, in China it is the year the ruling party demonstrated its capacity to participate in the global economy without democratization when it crushed major protest in Beijing.

Other Asian states were ruled by communist parties in the early 1970s and, with one exception, they have not travelled any great length toward democracy since then. North Korea remains under the rule of its Great Leader. South Vietnamese revolutionaries and their North Vietnamese allies, at war with the USA and the government of South Vietnam, won their war, and the newly reunified country of Vietnam has remained under one-party rule. Cambodia's Khmer Rouge carried out killings

on an extraordinary scale but was overthrown by the neighbouring Vietnamese. Despite a great deal of international attention, that country has not moved far toward democracy.

Located between China and Russia, Mongolia proved quite exceptional. Encouraged by the events of 1989, protest demonstrations were mounted in the capital, and the party leadership debated between following the Chinese or East European course. They chose the latter, rewrote the constitution, held multi-party competitive elections in 1990, did very well in electoral politics, surrendered parliamentary power peacefully after electoral defeat in 1996, but captured the presidency in elections in 1997 (Ginsburg 1995). Although its scores on various measures of democratization are less than those obtaining in Western Europe or North America, they are not only well ahead of China, North Korea, or Vietnam, but well ahead of the former Soviet Central Asian republics, too (Fish 2001).

Other places of Chinese heritage travelled different paths. Singapore was and has remained a wealthy former British colony whose undemocratic rule has been justified as being in accord with 'Asian values' that stress community over individual freedoms. Hong Kong was a British colony with little of a democratic character into the 1980s. As the date approached at which that prosperous coastal city was to be turned over to the People's Republic of China, as one of the very last dramas of terminating the formerly vast British Empire, the departing British rulers set up a democratic process. The first elected Legislative Council of the colony took office in 1985, and other posts became elected ones over the next several years. The result was that when China assumed sovereignty in 1997, it had acquired a small, rich place with significant democratic elements whose future was deeply uncertain.

Taiwan was under martial law until the late 1980s and ruled by the Kuomintang, a party still claiming itself the rightful ruler of all of China, despite US recognition of the People's Republic in 1979. Many Taiwanese experienced this as an alien occupation and the KMT sought to contain potential challenges by ending martial law in 1987, displaying symbols of Taiwanese culture, language and history, disbanding a legislature representing mainland

provinces, organizing a multi-party contested election in 2000, and accepting electoral defeat that same year (Tien 1997).

Beyond the Chinese orbit, dramatic developments took place in the Philippines and South Korea. In the early 1970s, the Philippine government was headed by Ferdinand Marcos, who was elected President in 1965 and then went on to rule under martial law since 1972, justified as defence against Communists and Muslims. In the mid-1980s, as Marcos proved ineffective in fighting genuine insurgents and a mass protest movement formed around the widow of an assassinated opposition figure, military leaders removed him, initiating a period of democratization widely taken to demonstrate the effectiveness of 'people power'.

In South Korea military rule endured into the 1980s, long justified as a response to the threat from the North. Regional disparities and mobilized students fuelled protest movements and even insurrection. Korean politics were so turbulent that the current authoritarian period was the 'Fifth Republic'. In the face of an enormous anti-regime petition campaign of 1987 and losing US support, the government and opposition began to negotiate an opening of the system, inaugurating the Sixth Republic and a democratic process (Diamond and Kim 2000).

With democratic models all around, with a decreasing likelihood of enlisting US support for militaries claiming the mantle of anticommunism, with foreign sources of funds seeing in democracy an antidote for authoritarian corruption, and with the increasingly general acknowledgment on the international stage of democracy as the sole legitimate form of government, democratic currents took heart in other places as well—in Nepal, in Burma, in Pakistan, places where they faced considerable resistance—but the most spectacular development in the next decade was the collapse of the Indonesian regime in 1998 and its replacement by one with democratic claims.

As of the early twenty-first century, Asia was politically very varied, as it had been thirty years before. While there are some *external* and *emulative* elements in play that have made democratic outcomes more probable than in the past, the national political trajectories seem extremely idiosyncratic.

Africa, early 1990s

We saw in Figure 5.1 that from the 1970s until the end of the 1980s the mean democracy scores for sub-Saharan Africa were very close to those for the Middle East and markedly lower than for Asia or Latin America. Indeed, after a brief small ascent in the mid-1970s, the scores were actually declining slightly for the next decade. The early 1990s, however, were years of considerable change. By 2004, the mean democratization score had departed markedly from that of the Middle East. Bratton and van de Walle (1997) suggest that for much of the continent there was a typical sequence running from protest and political liberalization, through competitive elections and, sometimes, on to further democratization.

At the beginning of the 1970s much of the continent was ruled by what journalists were apt to call 'strongmen', academics 'neopatrimonial' rulers, and observers of official titles 'presidents for life'. South Africa had its distinctive system in which the great majority of its citizens lacked political rights. During the 1960s and 1970s, the region as a whole had experienced some economic growth and per capita national income had risen modestly. The 1980s, however, were disastrous, with average incomes falling. Widespread poverty led to overgrazing and deforestation, which in the worst-hit places generated massive famine. The decline in per capita income grew larger each year from 1990 to 1992, then eased off (while remaining negative) in 1993 and 1994 (Mkandawire 2005). So the local impact of the global economy helped bring about rising rates of protest in the early 1990s.

The protests, however, seem not to have been simply the direct consequence of local economic disaster. African governments, desperate for financial aid, signed numerous loan agreements with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund that came with a variety of harsh conditions. Bratton and van de Walle (1997: 132–3) have shown that the more such agreements a country negotiated, the more protests its government endured. On top of protests triggered by economic difficulty in themselves, or by the harshness of the loan conditions, it seems that entering into repeated humiliating arrangements with the world of international finance seriously

sapped support for the governments in place. In coping with these crises, at once economic and political, governments moved to open up their political systems, and 29 African countries held contested multiparty elections for president, legislative office, or both between 1990 and 1994. Protests peaked in 1991, liberalizations in 1992, elections in 1993 (Bratton and van de Walle 1997: 4–5) and democratization, as we have measured it, was still rising a decade later.

For its part, South Africa, long an icon of racial exclusion, under pressure from social movements at home and condemnation abroad, and threatened with disinvestment by foreign sources of capital increasingly worried about social turbulence and decreasingly inclined to see antidemocracy as the best bet to protect investments, began its own democratization process leading to the elections of 1994, the first ever in which the black majority could vote. It didn't hurt that after 1989, it was hard to persuade Washington to prop up an ally in a global struggle against communism.

A parallel cluster of national cases were seen as failures *internally* and *externally*. They had failed to produce growth and they had failed to protect against the demands of foreign bankers. Parallel political processes of negotiation led to liberalization, both in national politics and economic policy in a large number of separate countries, to contested elections, and to increased but not unchallenged democratization since personalism and corruption proved durable. Democratization scores actually dropped, on average, late in the 1990s, but then resumed their upward climb.

We see *external* processes as well. Global financial institutions began to rethink their view of authoritarianism as a defence of investments against the irrationalities of democracy since autocrats were proving at least as corrupt as vote-seeking politicians. Latin America had democratized during the 1980s without threatening transnational finance. In addition, as in Latin America the US was less inclined to support tyrants with anticommunist claims and more inclined to the promotion of neoliberal democracy, especially after 1989. Finally, there is the effect of *emulation* as African movements and African governments learned from each other.

The movements saw the rising possibilities of challenge and the governments saw democratization as a way to manage the challengers.

In the decade and a half since 1990, African governments had moved very different distances from the authoritarianisms of the recent past, some significantly democratic like Cape Verde and some like Swaziland as authoritarian as ever. Most places were somewhere in between. Bratton *et al.* (2005: 17) call the modal African variant 'liberalized autocracy'.

Middle East and North Africa?

This region entered the 1970s with a very low mean democracy score and entered the twenty-first century with very little change, despite several very turbulent decades that included civil warfare, foreign occupations, interstate warfare and a lot of political upheaval. Although toward the end of our time-frame the USA claimed to be promoting democracy in the region, and had gone to war and occupied two countries, the results were not only unimpressive, but widely taken to be discrediting democracy-promotion and perhaps democracy itself. On the other hand, Turkey entered a new period in its long history of oscillation between more democratic and more authoritarian politics, as a new party both repudiated the long-dominant commitment to militant secularism and staved off the threat of military intervention.

Box 5.2 Key points

- Democratization in Southern Europe, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa was driven by internal and external processes.
- In addition, supportive processes played a part in Latin American democratizations.
- East Asian democratization followed more idiosyncratic processes.
- Democracy has made few notable inroads in North Africa and the Middle East.

Hopes of entering the European Union may have been playing something of the same role in Turkey as such hopes did in the democratizations of Southern Europe in the 1970s. But the general regional absence of effective democratization raises many very interesting comparative questions. When we listed democratizing countries in Table 5.1, few countries with majority Muslim populations appeared, but some did, like Mali. While some were inclined to attribute this to the legacy of a particular cultural tradition, others could point to a regional mix of recent colonial rule and anti-colonial struggle, poverty in some countries and oil-based wealth in others, each in its own way hampering democratic development.

Conclusion

By the early twenty-first century, more people in more countries lived under political arrangements with some reasonable claim to the label 'democracy' than ever before in human history. Figure 5.4 shows the number of people living in countries with differing levels of rights and freedoms, following the Freedom House classifications. Lower numerical scores indicate more extensive rights and freedoms. The countries at the far right, where rights and freedoms are most extensive, are places like Canada, Denmark,

Spain, Uruguay, and the US. But many more people are in countries scoring 2.5, places like Brazil, India, Senegal, and Thailand. And many more are at a very low 6.5, in places like Belarus, China, Haiti, Somalia, or Uzbekistan. It is evident after more than two centuries of democratization and even after the great wave explored in this book, that many people live under very undemocratic circumstances and many others under circumstances less than fully democratic by the standards of the day. Since many countries had

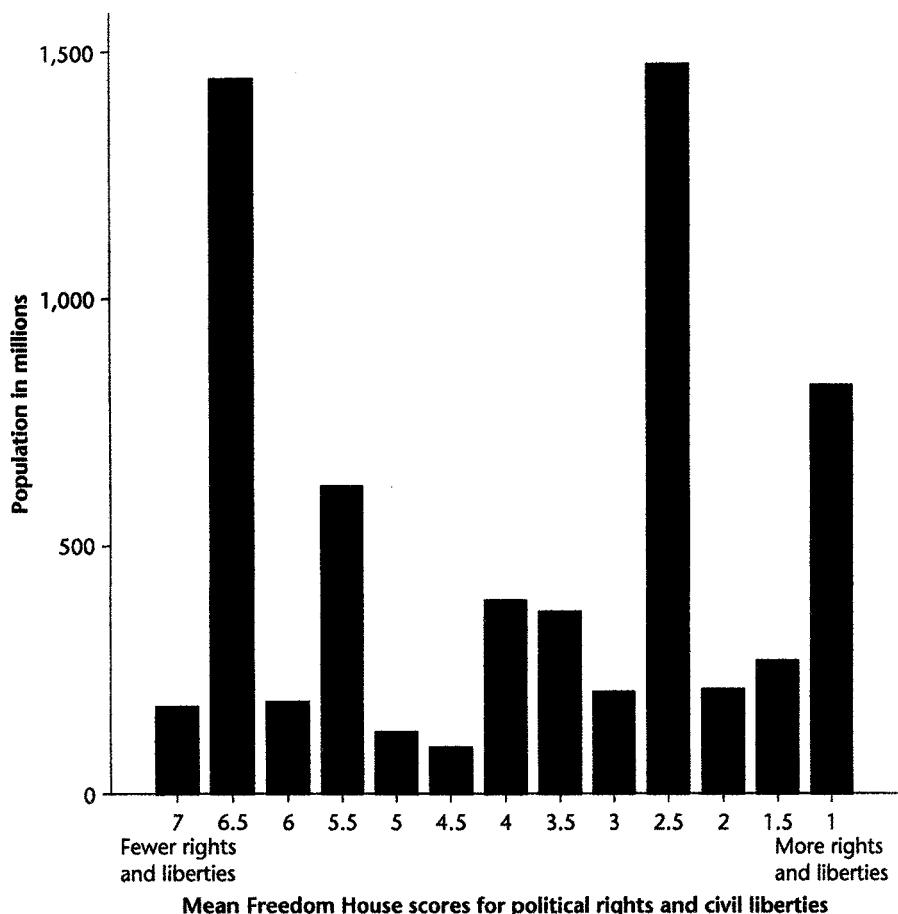


Fig 5.4 Population of countries with different levels of political rights and civil liberties, 2004

Source: Freedom House 2005.

not democratized, like China or much of the Middle East, significant scholarly attention was directed at understanding why not and at speculating about the future in such places.

But the very extent of the great wave was throwing into dramatic relief a new set of questions. In light of dashed hopes occasioned by past waves, the theme with which this chapter began, scholars wondered about a future antidemocratic counterwave and tried to understand the conditions under which democracy might not merely be brought into existence, but would endure, or as the literature would have it, be 'consolidated' (Diamond 1999). We have suggested, with special reference to Latin America, that the staying power of democracy could be as significant as getting it launched. One might wonder

whether new forms of polarization could or would emerge in large regions like Latin America (Seligson 2007) or whether the US-led 'global war on terror' might have some of the democracy-destroying consequences of the long confrontation with the Soviet Union that ended in 1989. And not just in poorer countries: some were noting with alarm the degree to which the rich countries were curtailing rights and freedoms in the name of security (Chebel d'Appollonia and Reich 2008).

Beyond durability, already by the mid-1990s the widespread achievement of significant democratization focused scholarly attention on the inadequacy of some of the newly democratized states. While many of these states were meeting accepted democratic standards, some were not, and yet others were

disappointing in other ways. Were their democratizations complete or had they stalled somewhere on the way? Were they able to effectively provide the services citizens had come to expect of governments? Had they merely adopted the outward trappings of democracy, like elections, while avoiding some basics, like the rule of law? A new theme was emerging in the scholarly literature around the theme of 'the quality of democracy' (O'Donnell *et al.* 2004) as scholars variously identified such phenomena as 'illiberal' (Schedler 2006) or 'broken back' democracy (Rose *et al.* 1998).

These are complex issues and public opinion surveys in recently democratized countries of Latin America, the former Soviet bloc, Asia, and Africa revealed that citizens' judgments on the democracies that have emerged since the 1970s so far are also complex. Almost everywhere such surveys have been carried out (and these tend to be in the more democratic countries where such research is a lot easier), the majority—often the overwhelming majority—of citizens claim to favour democracy and reject authoritarian alternatives. At the same time, in some places significant numbers think some authoritarian variant is appropriate under some circumstances, very large numbers think democracy is not working well in practice, and enormous numbers are deeply critical of central political institutions like parliaments, courts, and parties. Indeed, deep reservations about democracy in actual practice turn out to be not simply a characteristic of democracies that are new, or illiberal, or broken back, but of the established wealthy democracies as well (Bratton 2007; Seligson 2007; Pharr and Putnam 2000). Some would argue that reservations about democracy in practice are part of the essential fabric of democracy.

The very extent of the new democratic wave, uneven as it has been, and incomplete as some of its democratizations have been, also raises some new

questions altogether. One of the reasons democrats at the end of World War II could hope for a more democratic world was the combination of democratic restoration in Western Europe, democracy promotion by military occupation of the defeated Axis powers, and the looming end of colonialism. With the demise of the globe spanning empires, one could anticipate that economic development or the spread of democratic values would ultimately mean the successive democratization of the new states, one by one. But in the twenty-first century, on the crest of the greatest wave of national democratizations in history, can we expect that future movements for democracy will continue to think of democratization within this framework? If the separate states are enormously different in their wealth and power, can we continue to think of a more democratic world as simply a further enlargement of the number of states that govern themselves in more or less the ways the Americans or British or French do? And if there are global institutions with which those states must engage (let us say, the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund) but which are not accountable to the citizens of those states, can we continue to think of a more democratic world as simply some sort of addition of the democracies of the separate states (Markoff 2004)?

Such questions have suggested to some that the early twenty-first century ought to be called the era, not of democracy, but of 'post-democracy' (Crouch 2005), to others that we need to consider the possibility of democracy beyond the states (Held 1995) and to others yet again that we need to rethink democratic institutions at various scales from the local community, through the national states, to the planet (Held and Pollitt 1986). One collection of essays triggered by the great wave was entitled 'Democracy's Victory and Crisis' (Hadenius 1997). But perhaps, as one of its leading students has it, democracy has always been in crisis (O'Donnell 2007).

QUESTIONS

1. How might you explain that in the early 1970s, just before the global wave of democratization, countries in different world regions were on average very different in how democratic they were (as shown in Figure 5.1)? Come up with at least two possible reasons.

2. How might you explain that since the 1970s, just before the global wave of democratization, countries in different world regions tended on the average to democratize to different degrees (as shown in Figure 5.1)? Come up with at least three possible reasons.
3. In what ways did countries that were already very democratic at the beginning of the 1970s contribute to the democratization of other countries in the years since then?
4. Are there ways in which countries that were already very democratic at the beginning of the 1970s hindered democratization in other countries?
5. Would you say that in any of the world regions external processes were much more important than in the other regions? Explain your answer.
6. Would you say that in any of the world regions internal processes were much more important than in the other regions? Explain your answer.

Visit the Online Resource Centre that accompanies this book for additional questions to accompany each chapter, and a range of other resources: <www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/haerpfer/>.

FURTHER READING

- Bratton, M. and van de Walle, N. (1997). *Democratic Experiments in Africa. Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Shows why democratization occurred in the 1990s in some very poor countries and shows the limits of that democratization as well.
- Held, D. (2006), *Models of Democracy*, 3rd edn (Cambridge: Polity Press). Thought-provoking account of different ways we might imagine democracy in the future.
- Huntington, S. (1991), *The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press). Rich in ideas about how and why so many countries democratized in such a brief time span. Interesting speculation about the future.
- Linz, J. J. and Stepan, A. (1996), *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation. Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press). A broad, comparative treatment of transitions in three regions.
- Markoff, J. (1996), *Waves of Democracy. Social Movements and Political Change* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press). Sets the late twentieth century wave of democratization within the history of democracy over the centuries. Considers the role of social movements in pushing democratization forward.
- Morrison, B. (2004) (ed.), *Transnational Democracy in Critical and Comparative Perspective: Democracy's Range Reconsidered* (London: Ashgate Publishing). Essays commenting on the possibility of thinking about democracy beyond the national state.
- Pharr, S. and Putnam, R. (2000), *Disaffected Democracies. What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press). Shows the range of discontents within the best-established democracies.

Theories of Democratization

Christian Welzel

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Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the factors that have been proposed as determinants when, where, and why democratization happens. Several of these factors are synthesized into a broader framework that

describes human empowerment as an evolutionary force channelling the intentions and strategies of actors towards democratic outcomes.

Introduction

The question: which political regime prevails in which society, and why, has been at the heart of political science since Aristotle's first treatment of the problem. And so is the question as to when and why societies democratize.

Democratization can be understood in three different ways. For one, it is the introduction of democracy in a non-democratic regime. Next, democratization can be understood as the deepening of the democratic qualities of given democracies. Finally,

democratization involves the question of the survival of democracy. Technically speaking, the emergence, the deepening, and the survival of democracy are strictly distinct aspects of democratization. But they merge in the question of *sustainable democratization*, that is, the emergence of democracies that develop and endure. Democratization is sustainable to the extent to which it advances in response to pressures from within a society.

There are many different explanations of democratization processes. Provided a grain of truth is in most of these explanations, researchers have too often tried to take sides, favouring one particular factor over all others. But the real challenge is to theorize about how different factors *interplay* in the making of democracy. This is what this chapter aims to achieve.

The Nature and Origin of Democracy

Before one can think about the causes of democratization one has to have an understanding of what democracy means—for one needs to have an idea of the nature of the phenomenon one wants to explain.

In its literal meaning, 'government by the people', democracy is about the institutionalization of people power. *Democratization* is the process by which this happens. People power is institutionalized through *civic freedoms* that entitle people to govern their lives, allowing them to follow their personal preferences in governing their *private* lives and to make their political preferences count in governing *public* life.

In the history of states, the institutionalization of people power has been an unlikely achievement. As power maximizing actors, power elites have a natural tendency to give as little power away as possible. There is a natural resistance among elites to grant civic freedoms to the wider public because such freedoms limit elite power (Vanhanen 2003). To acquire civic freedoms, ordinary people had usually to overcome elite resistance and to struggle for their cause (Foweraker and Landman 1997). This is no easy achievement. It requires wider parts of the public to be both *capable* and *willing* to mount pressures on power elites.

Quite logically then, the conditions under which democracy becomes likely must somehow affect the power balance between elites and masses, placing control over resources of power in the hands of the people. Only when some control over resources of power is distributed over wider parts of the public, are ordinary people capable to coordinate their actions and to join forces into social movements that are capable to

mount pressure on elites (Tarrow 1998). Under these conditions, bargaining power is vested in wider parts of the public as elites cannot access people's resources without consent. And if elites try to extract resources from people, they have to make concessions in the form of civic freedoms. Such was the case when the principle of 'no taxation without representation' was established during pre-industrial capitalism in North America and Western Europe (Downing 1992).

To be sure, no democracy in pre-industrial history would qualify as a democracy under today's standards because one defining element of *mature* democracies, universal suffrage, was unknown. All pre-industrial democracies were *nascent* democracies that restricted entitlements to the propertied classes. But nascent democracy was necessary to create mature democracy, encouraging yet disempowered groups to also push for civic freedoms, until universal suffrage created mature democracies early in the twentieth century in parts of the Western world (Markoff 1996). Since then people's struggles for empowerment have continued and expanded. Within established democracies, civil rights and equal opportunity movements did and do fight to deepen democracy's empowering qualities. Beyond established democracies, people power movements did and do pressure to replace authoritarian rule with democracy.

It is impossible to understand the driving forces of democratization without understanding why and where democracy first emerged. So we must have a closer look at the origin of nascent democracy in pre-industrial times and the factors giving rise to it. Without exception, all nascent democracies are found in agrarian economies of the freeholder type. Most

Nascent - developing
emerging

freeholder societies organized defence in the form of a militia, the citizen-army (Finer 1999). In a freeholder-militia system, all men owning a slot of land provide military service and, in return, are entitled with civic freedoms. In pre-industrial times, a citizen army could only be sustained in a freeholder system. Only the yeoman who could sustain a family on his own could afford the armoury necessary for military service. In a freeholder-militia system citizens had bargaining power against central authorities—for citizens could boycott taxes and military service. Without a standing army at their exclusive disposal, rulers lacked the means to end such boycotts, disabling them to deny or abrogate civic freedoms (McNeill 1968).

Nascent democracy limited participation to the propertied classes. Still, compared to other pre-industrial regimes, nascent democracy is characterized by relatively inclusive civic freedoms. This constellation reflects relatively widespread access to basic resources, such as water, land, and armoury, and lack of central control over these resources. These conditions vest action capacities and bargaining power into the wider society and limit the state's repressive potential. The absence versus presence of democracy is about the absence versus presence of centralized control over resources of power (Dahl 1971).

Democracy and resource distribution

Freeholder systems not only gave rise to nascent democracy but also to pre-industrial capitalism. The combination of freeholdership, pre-industrial capitalism, and nascent democracy is hardly the result of an ingenious act of social engineering, such that some wise men decided at one point in history to create freeholdership, capitalism, and democracy. Instead, this constellation evolved in a cumulative process that was favoured by certain natural endowments. Freeholder systems only emerged where there was lack of centralized control over the resource that makes land valuable: water (Jones 1985). This was the case only where continuous rainfall over the seasons made water so generally available that a centrally coordinated irrigation system was unnecessary (Midlarsky 1997). Continuous rainfall over the seasons is only found in certain climatic zones, especially in North-West Europe, North America, and parts of Australia/New

Zealand (Midlarsky 1997). These are the areas where we find the threefold constellation of freeholdership, pre-industrial capitalism, and nascent democracy.

Besides the continuity of rainfall, another natural endowment was conducive to nascent democracy. This condition, too, favours democracy by limiting centralized control over resources—in this case not over water but armoury. When a territory is, by means of its topography, shielded from the continuous threat of land war, there is no necessity to sustain a standing army at the exclusive disposal of a monarch (Downing 1992). With no standing army at hand, a ruler's control over coercion is limited. Hence, the proportion of sea borders (an island position in the optimal case) has been found to be positively related with the occurrence of nascent democracy (Midlarsky 1997). Iceland, the UK, and Scandinavia are examples. A functional equivalent of the shielding effect of sea borders are mountains. Shielded by the Alps from war with neighbours, Switzerland never needed a standing army. It sustained a freeholder-militia system, and is hence among the prime examples of nascent democracy.

Since democracy is about people power, it originates in conditions that place resources of power in the hands of wider parts of the populace, such that authorities cannot access these resources without making concessions to their beholders. But when rulers gain access to a source of revenue they can bring under their control without anyone's consent, they have the means to finance tools of coercion. This is the basis of absolutism, despotism, and autocracy—the opposite of democracy. The sixteenth-century Spanish monarchy turned more absolute after the crown gained control over the silver mines in South America. From then on, the Spanish Habsburgs did not have to ask for consent in the *cortes* to finance military operations (Landes 1998). This is a pre-modern example of what is today known as the 'resource curse'. It is a curse for democracy when a country is endowed with immobile natural resources that are easily brought under central control, giving rulers a source of revenue that requires no one's consent (Boix 2003). These revenues allow rulers to invest into the infrastructure of their power. Thus, 'oil hinders democracy' as Michael Ross (2001) put it.

So, we find both prosperity and democracy to be associated with climate. The more temperate the climate of a country, the more likely it is both to be rich and democratic (Landes 1998). According to Acemoglu

and Robinson (2006), the geographic pattern of both prosperity and democracy simply reflects that white Europeans embarked early on a path of both capitalist and democratic development. They brought with them the institutions of capitalism and democracy wherever they could settle in larger numbers, that is, wherever they found a European-like climate. And when they settled in hotter climates, such as the Southern states of the USA or Brazil, they brought slavery and other exploitative institutions with them and resisted democracy. In this view, the global geographic distribution of capitalism and democracy simply reflects where climate 'required' European settlers to introduce slavery and exploitative plantation economies.

But why did Europeans embark on a path of capitalist-democratic development? Simply viewing this as a smart historic choice of Europeans is unsatisfactory. Following Jared Diamond (1997), the more likely reason why Europeans embarked on a course of capitalist-democratic development is that some unique natural endowments made this a more likely 'choice' in Europe than elsewhere.

Capitalism, industrialization, and democracy

One of the reasons why the duo of pre-industrial capitalism and nascent democracy emerged in Europe, is that, among the major pre-industrial civilizations, Europe was the only one that sustained rainfed free-holder societies on a larger scale (Jones 1985). But within Europe, this feature varies on a geographical gradient, becoming ever more pronounced as one moves north-westward, culminating in the Netherlands and England.

As one approaches Europe's north-west, the continuity of rainfall increases as a result of the influence of the Gulf Stream. In late medieval times, this led to an increasing agrarian surplus towards the north-west (Jones 1985). From this followed an entire chain of consequences, as shown in Figure 6.1: a larger urban population, a denser network of cities, a more commercialized economy, more advanced capitalism, and bigger and economically more powerful middle classes. Capitalism vested bargaining power in the wider

society. In the liberal revolutions and the liberation wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the middle classes used this bargaining power against monarchs to establish the principle 'no taxation without representation' (Tilly 1997). This is the birth of nascent democracy, and capitalism preceded it.

However, two qualifications of the claim that capitalism led to democracy are due (see also Ch. 9). First, capitalism led to democracy only where propertied groups, such as rural freeman and urban merchants, represented broad middle classes—not tiny minorities (Moore 1966). This condition was limited to the hubs of the pre-industrial capitalist world economy, centring on North-West Europe and its overseas colonial offshoots in North America (Wallerstein 1974). Colonies that were unsuited for large-scale European settlement were kept under an exploitative regime. Democracy was not imported by Europeans where the colonial interest was focused on extraction rather than settlement (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006). Second, pre-industrial capitalism only established nascent democracy, limiting civic freedoms to the propertied classes. The establishment of mature democracy with universal (male) suffrage was a product of industrialization and the working class's struggle for political inclusion (Huber, Stephens, and Rueschemeyer 1992). Yet, industrialization did not always lead to mature democracy, at least not to *enduring* mature democracy. Mature democracy in a stable form followed industrialization only where royal absolutism was prevented or abandoned and where nascent democracy was established already in pre-industrial times (Huntington 1968).

There is no uniform connection between industrialization and democracy. In fact, the fierce class struggles connected with the rising industrial working class often operated against democracy. Of course, industrialization almost always led to the symbolic integration of the working class by granting universal suffrage. But universal suffrage was as often organized in authoritarian ways as in democratic ones. Communist, fascist, and other forms of dictatorship all adopted universal suffrage in the industrial age. And while the working class almost always fought for universal suffrage, it often sided with populist, fascist, and communist parties that aborted the civic freedoms that define democracy (Lipset 1960).

Achieving mature democracy in a stable form at an early stage was neither the achievement of the middle

Nascent v. Mature

DEMOCRACY

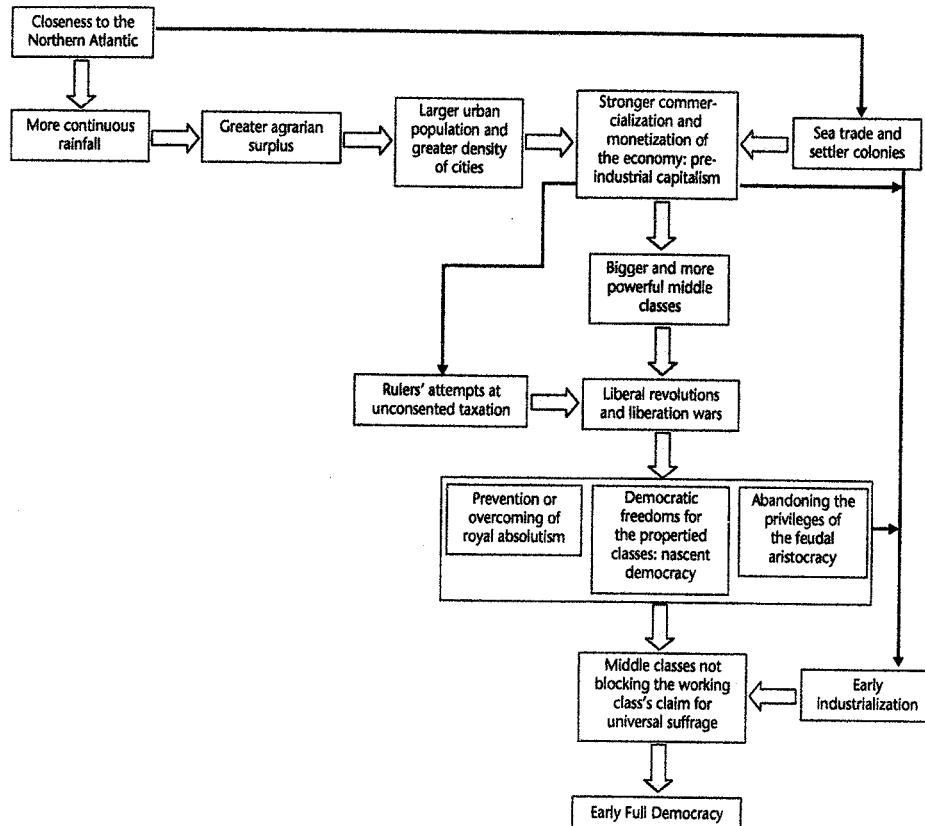


Fig 6.1 Factors explaining the northern Atlantic origins of capitalism and democracy

classes nor the working class alone. It appeared when the middle classes did not take sides against the working class (Collier 1999). This in turn only happened when the middle classes' victory over the aristocracy and royal absolutism was so decisive that neither an alliance with the aristocracy, nor reliance

on state repression was an option in dealing with the working class. Partly for reasons originating in natural endowments, these conditions were historically unique to North-West Europe and its overseas offshoots (Moore 1966).

Social Divisions, Distributional Equality, and Democratization

Except under conditions found in North-West Europe and its overseas offshoots, the social class struggles associated with industrialization did not generally work in favour of democracy. This can be turned into a more general point. When class

cleavages and group distinctions turn into enmity, political camps fight for the monopolization of state power in order to become capable of repressing the claims of rival groups. This pattern works against democracy (Dahl 1971).

Class cleavages turn easily into enmities when classes are segregated into separated milieus, when political parties are single-class parties, and when the distribution of economic resources between classes is extremely unequal. Under such circumstances, class coalitions and compromises are unlikely. Rivalry and enmity between groups will prevail (Lipset 1960). In European countries with a tradition of royal absolutism and continued privileges of the aristocracy, industrialization regularly produced such class divisions, polarizing an impoverished rural and urban working class against a privileged class of land owners, industrialists, bankers and office holders in the state apparatus and the army (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Outside Europe, industrialization had the same effect in areas the Europeans colonized out of 'extractive interests' rather than for reasons of settlement (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006).

Wherever industrialization produced class polarization of this kind, the privileged classes would fear working class parties to be voted into office. Once in office, these parties might use their power to enforce land reforms and other redistributive measures that deprive the privileged classes of their privileges. Thus, the privileged classes would rely on state repression to prevent working class parties from gaining power. Confronted with state repression, working class activists would, in turn, radicalize and embrace revolutionary goals, aimed at a total reversion of the existing social order (Collier 1999). This is pretty much the pattern that explains Latin America's long lasting capture between right-wing military regimes and leftist guerrilla warfare (see Ch. 19).

Democratic countries in the 'centre' of world capitalism would often support the repression of working class interests in the 'periphery' in order to be able to outsource labour into cheap-wage regions and in order to prevent communism from taking over countries in the capitalist periphery. During the Cold War, and before the Washington consensus, the capitalist world system favoured democracy in the centres of capitalism, but authoritarian rule in its periphery (Wallerstein 1974). In any case, it can be said that extreme social polarization is detrimental to democracy because group polarization turns easily into violent fights for the monopolization of

the state (Dahl 1971). Peaceful power transfers from one group to another, as democracy foresees them, are not accepted under these conditions. Instead, military coups and civil wars that end up in the dictatorship of one group over others are the regular result of polarized societal cleavage structures (Huntington 1968).

The logic of group enmity does not only apply to social class. Societies can also be segregated into hostile groups on the basis of religion, language, and ethnicity, and the chances for this to happen increase with a country's religious, linguistic, and ethnic fractionalization, especially when fractionalization goes together with spatial group segregation (Rokkan 1983). Spatial segregation facilitates the stabilization of group identities, and this is an important precondition for the development of group hostilities. Sub-Saharan Africa, as the region with the highest ethnic fractionalization, exemplifies the latter type of group enmity and its negative effect on the chances of democracy to flourish (see Ch. 22). These insights can be turned into positive conditions for the emergence and survival of democracy. The presence of a large middle class, in whom economic differences do not go beyond a certain range, is a condition that eases group enmity, which in turn increases the acceptance of democratic power transfers between groups. Seen in this light, the transition of industrial to post-industrial societies is a positive development because it overcomes the sharp division between the working class and the privileged classes that characterized the industrial age (Bell 1973).

When resources are more equally distributed across socioeconomic, religious, ethnic, and other groups, this can diminish existential hostilities, making groups more inclined to accept each other as legitimate contenders for political power. If there is less at stake in the power game, all groups can be more relaxed about others winning the game for just one electoral round. Relative equality in the distribution of resources has thus a diminishing effect on hostilities for all sorts of groupings, be they class-related or ethnicity-related. In models explaining democratization, measures of income distribution are often used and have many times been found to significantly increase the chances of democracy to emerge and survive (Muller 1995; Vanhanen 2003).

Center
periphery

Colonial Legacies, Religious Traditions, and Democracy

In its northern Atlantic origins, democracy is intimately connected to two traditions: Protestant religion and British descent (Lipset 1959). But this does not mean that Protestantism and British descent per se favoured democracy. They did so insofar as they were situated in the northern Atlantic centre of pre-industrial capitalism (Bollen and Jackman 1985). Neither Protestantism nor Britishness created pre-industrial capitalism. Countries such as the Netherlands, Iceland, and Denmark, were located at the northern Atlantic and so they embraced pre-industrial capitalism and nascent democracy, despite the fact that they were not British. Vice versa, Protestant Prussia was far off the northern Atlantic, so it neither embraced pre-industrial capitalism nor nascent democracy (Tilly 1997). Belgium, by contrast, was mainly Catholic but it is located at the northern Atlantic, so it adopted pre-industrial capitalism and nascent democracy. Contrary to Max Weber (1958 [1904]), who claimed that Protestantism created capitalism, it is just as plausible to argue that societies that were already capitalist adopted Protestantism as the religion granting the most legitimacy to the capitalist system (Landes 1998).

The relationship between Protestantism and capitalist democracy is as easily misunderstood as the fact that many of the early democracies are still monarchies today (e.g. UK, The Netherlands, Scandinavian countries). Monarchies survived until today in some of the oldest democracies because these monarchies did not insist on royal absolutism. Instead, they negotiated social contracts by which civic freedoms

have been granted, creating constitutional monarchies that are anchored in society rather than being absolute from it (Lipset 1960).

Similarly misunderstood is the relationship between Islam and democracy. It has often been said that Islamic traditions are unfavourable to democratization (Huntington 1996). And indeed, the belt of Islamic countries from North-West Africa to South-East Asia is still the least democratized region in the world. However, this might not reflect a negative influence of Islam per se. Instead, for reasons of natural endowments, an unusual proportion of Islamic societies have based their economies on the export of oil. This places revenues in the hands of rulers without requiring anyone's consent, which is what explains the absence of democracy. As Michael Ross (2001; 2008) argues, Islam has little negative effect of its own on democracy, once one controls for oil exports. The same logic that explains why the capitalist development of Protestant societies favoured democracy explains why oil exports in the Islamic societies hinders democracy. Capitalist development tends to spread control over resources of power among wider parts of the society. Oil exports, by contrast, tend to concentrate control over resources of power in the hands of dynasties (see also Chs 8 and 21). On a more general note, explaining certain countries' affinity or aversion to democracy by criteria that simply group them into 'cultural zones,' 'civilizations,' or 'families of nation' is inherently unsatisfactory as long as one cannot specify what exactly it is about these grouping criteria that creates these affinities and aversions.

Modernization and Democratization

Because of democracy's obvious link to capitalist development, 'modernization' has been most often championed as the decisive driver of democratization (Lerner 1958; Lipset 1959; Burkhardt and Lewis-Beck

1994). The thesis that modernization favours democratization has been repeatedly challenged, but time and again it has been re-established against these challenges. Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi

(1997), for instance, thought to demonstrate that modernization only helps existing democracies to survive but does not help democracy to emerge. However, Carles Boix and Susan Stokes (2003) used the same data to show that modernization operates in favour of both the emergence and the survival of democracy. As of today, the fact that modernization operates in favour of democracy is beyond serious doubts.

The reasons as to exactly what it is about modernization that operates in favour of democracy are less clear. Modernization constitutes a whole bundle of intertwined processes, including productivity growth, urbanization, occupational specialization, social diversification, rising levels of income and prosperity, rising literacy rates and levels of education, more widely accessible information, more intellectually demanding professions, technological advancement in people's equipment and available infrastructure, including means of communication and transportation, and so on. Which of these processes does exactly what to increase the chances of a country to become and remain democratic is an unresolved problem, and most likely these effects are not isolable. Perhaps, it is precisely the fact that they are so closely intertwined that makes them so powerful.

One thing, however, seems clear that all these processes do together. They enhance the resources available to ordinary people, and this increases the masses' capabilities to launch and sustain collective actions

Resource mobilization

for common demands, mounting effective pressures on state authorities to respond. Given that state authorities, by the nature of their positional interest, aim to preserve as much autonomy from mass pressures as possible, democratization is an unlikely result, unless the masses become capable to overcome the authorities' resistance to empower them (Vanharen 2003). The major effect of modernization, then, is that it shifts the power balance between elites and the masses to the mass side. Democracy certifies this process institutionally.

Box 6.1 Key points

- Social divisions that foster group enmities hinder peaceful power transfers that are necessary for democracy to function.
- Democracy is anchored in social conditions in which resources of power are widely distributed among the population so that central authority cannot access these resources without their beholder's consent.
- Certain natural conditions have been favourable to a more widespread control over resources but modernization can happen everywhere and it is important because it tends to distribute the control over resources in the ways that favour democracy.

International Conflicts, Regime Alliances, and Democratization

The fact that scores of countries have democratized in distinctive international waves suggests that processes of democratization cannot be considered as isolated domestic events (see Chs. 4 and 7). They are influenced by international factors, especially the outcome of confrontations between opposing regime alliances. Therborn (1977) noticed that countries democratize as much as a consequence of wars as of modernization.

Whether, and when, countries democratize has often been decided by the outcome of international

Vicopman

confrontations between the enduring alliance of Western democracies and shifting counter-alliances of antidemocratic empires. Thus, regime changes towards and away from democracy are not only a matter of power struggles between pro-democratic and antidemocratic forces *within* countries. Instead, power struggles between opposing regime forces take also place on the international stage, in confrontations between democratic and antidemocratic regime alliances. Indeed, three waves of democratization followed precisely such confrontations. Western

democracies defeated the alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire in World War I; this led to a (later reversed) wave of democratization in Central and Eastern Europe. Western democracies again, together with the Soviet Union, defeated the fascist axis powers in World War II and this led to another wave of democratization, including, for the first time, countries outside the West, such as India and Japan. Finally, Western democracies triumphed over communism in the Cold War, leading to the most recent and massive wave of democratization throughout Eastern Europe and parts of Africa and Asia (Huntington 1991, McFaul 2002).

Part of the explanation as to why democracy has been spreading is the technological and military superiority of democracies, and their tendency to join forces against antidemocratic empires. Together, these two factors have enabled democracies to free societies from the tyranny of antidemocratic empires—when necessary, Western democracies have used their power to install democracy by military intervention, as in Grenada or Iraq. Since the 1980s, they have also used their economic power to press countries depending on Western credits to adopt electoral democracy.

This was a dramatic paradigm shift. During the Cold War, the capitalist world system was favourable to democracy in the centres of capitalism and to authoritarian rule at its periphery. But since the Washington consensus, Western countries promoted electoral democracy throughout the globe. Installing a system of electoral accountability seemed to be a better safeguard of investment security than the arbitrary rule of eccentric dictators, especially after communism and socialism lost their appeal. In addition, rich Western democracies dominate the global entertainment industry and images of the living conditions in Western countries spread around the planet. Consequently, people associate everywhere democracy with

the freedom and prosperity of the West. And insofar as people find freedom and prosperity attractive, democracy has become the preferred type of regime in most populations of the world (Fukuyama 1990; Klingemann 1999; Inglehart 2003).

The economic, technological, and media dominance of Western democracies are important explanatory factors in the recent spread of democracy. Democratization is hence, to some extent, an externally triggered phenomenon. But whether externally triggered democratization leads to viable and effective democracy still depends on domestic conditions within a country. External influences can open important opportunities for democratic forces in countries where such forces exist. But external influences cannot create democratic forces where they do not exist. And without democratic forces growing strong inside a country, democracy will not be socially embedded. It remains a socially aloof, and hence, hollow phenomenon. Even if most people in a country associate positive things with the term democracy, this does not necessarily mean that people understand the freedoms that define democracy nor that they have the means and the will to struggle for these freedoms.

Externally triggered democratization has led to a spread of electoral democracy, but not necessarily effective democracy (Welzel and Inglehart 2008). Many new democracies have successfully installed competitive electoral regimes but their elites are corrupt and lack a commitment to the rule of law that is needed to enforce the civic freedoms that define democracy (O'Donnell 2004). These deficiencies render democracy ineffective. The installation of electoral democracy can be triggered by external forces and incentives. But whether electoral democracy becomes effective in respecting and protecting people's civic freedoms depends on domestic factors. Democracies have become effective only where the masses put the elites under pressure to respect their freedoms (Welzel 2007).

Elite Pacts, Mass Mobilization, and Democratization

Besides mass-level factors, actor constellations at the elite level are widely considered decisive for democratization processes. Considering transitions from

authoritarian rule to democracy, scholars distinguish two opposing sets of actors: the regime elite and the regime opposition. The regime elite is usually not

a monolithic bloc but a coalition of forces that can split under certain circumstances into an orthodox status quo camp and a liberal reform camp. The regime opposition, too, is often divided into a moderate bargaining camp and a radical revolution camp (Casper and Taylor 1996).

The early transition literature argued that a regime opposition in an authoritarian system cannot achieve a transition to democracy unless a split in the regime elite occurs and a liberal reform camp becomes visible (O'Donnell *et al.* 1986; Higley and Burton 2006). Such a split is likely to occur after a major economic crisis, a lost war or other critical events that undermine the legitimacy of the regime. Such critical events lead to the formation of a liberal reform camp that aims to regain legitimacy by initiating a liberalization process. If in such a situation the regime opposition is dominated by a moderate camp whose proponents are willing to bargain with the reform camp in the regime elite, a negotiated transition to democracy becomes

possible. This interpretation sees negotiated transitions via elite pacts as the ideal path to democracy. Mass anti-regime mobilization is not only unnecessary for democratic regime transitions from this point of view; it even endangers their success by prompting the regime elite to close its ranks and tempting it to issue repressive measures (Casper and Taylor 1996).

The recent democratization literature has altered these views rather decisively, emphasizing the positive role of non-violent mass opposition in knocking over authoritarian regimes and establishing democracy (Karatnycki and Ackerman 2005; Ulfelder 2005; Welzel 2007). These studies show that democracy is in most cases achieved when ordinary people struggle for it against reluctant elites. Democratization processes of recent decades have been most far-reaching and most successful where the masses were mobilized into democracy movements in such numbers and so ubiquitously that state authorities could not suppress them easily.]

No coercion

State Repression and Democratizing Mass Pressures

* Why do people revolt?

Recent studies on the positive role of mass opposition have altered our view on the survival of authoritarian regimes. Usually it was held that authoritarian regimes can use repression to silence opposition and that this allows them to endure, even if the masses find their regime preferences 'falsified' (Kuran 1991). However, most authoritarian regimes did not survive because of their ability to repress mass opposition (Wintrobe 1998). In fact, most authoritarian regimes did not have to deal with widespread mass opposition most of the time (Francisco 2005). This might partly be so because a credible threat of repression alone can keep people from opposing a regime. Yet, for the credibility of repression to become the key factor in stabilizing authoritarian rule, there must be a widespread belief in the illegitimacy of authoritarian rule in the first place. And this does not always seem to be the case. In fact, as Samuel Huntington (1991: 143) notes [most of the authoritarian regimes that were swept away by mass opposition movements late in the twentieth century, were initially 'almost always popular and widely supported'] It is only

when people come to find appeal in the freedoms that define democracy that they begin to consider dictatorial powers as illegitimate. Only then does the threat of repression become a relevant stabilization factor of authoritarian rule. And yet, there is ample evidence from the non-violent, pro-democratic mass upheavals of recent decades that when a population begins to long for freedoms, mass opposition does emerge—in spite of repressive threats (Karatnycki and Ackerman 2005; Schock 2005; Welzel 2007).

Once opposition becomes manifest, the success of attempts at repression does not only depend on the extent of coercion used; it depends as much on the size and scope of the mass opposition itself. Indeed, mass opposition can grow so wide that repression becomes too costly, overwhelming the power holders' repressive capacities. In such cases power holders are forced to open the way to a regime change. This happened quite often during the last three decades. Huge mass opposition swept away authoritarian regimes in scores of countries, including some strongly coercive regimes. The point here is that the desire for

? Where

Where?

populism
is modern

utopia's
in Egypt

democratic freedoms and the corresponding belief in the illegitimacy of dictatorial powers are variables, not constants. When these variables grow strong, they provide a powerful motivational force for the mobilization of mass opposition in authoritarian regimes as soon as opportunities occur (Oberschall 1996). And no regime has the power to foreclose the rise of opportunities. Repression cannot isolate authoritarian regimes from the destabilizing effect of eroding legitimacy and rising mass demands for democracy.

Mass beliefs and democratization

Socioeconomic modernization and the emergence of mass democracy movements are not necessarily contradictory explanations of democratization. They are simply located at different stages in the causal sequence. By enhancing ordinary people's available resources, modernization increases collective action capacities on the part of the masses and thus makes mass democracy movements possible, be it to achieve democracy when it is denied, to defend it when it is challenged, or to advance it when it stagnates. But even if we link modernization with democracy movements, there is still something missing. As social movement research has shown, powerful mass movements do not simply emerge from growing resources among the population. Social movements must be inspired by a common cause that motivates their supporters to take costly and risky actions (McAdam 1986). This requires ideological frames that create meaning and grant legitimacy to a common cause so that people follow it with inner conviction (Snow and Benford 1988). Successful frames are not arbitrary social constructions and not every frame is equally appealing in every population. Instead, frames must resonate with ordinary people's prevailing values to generate widespread and passionate support. This is why values are important. To advance democracy, people have not only to be capable to struggle for its advancement; they also have to be willing to do so. And for this to happen, they must value the freedoms that define democracy. This is not always a given, and is subject to changes in the process of value transformation.

Structural approaches implicitly assume that the masses do always anyways want democracy, so this is

a stable and constant factor that does not vary across populations (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006). But ample evidence from the major cross-national survey programmes shows that the extent to which ordinary people value democratic freedoms varies widely across populations (Dalton, Shin and Jou 2007; Shin and Tusalem 2007). Hence, to make plausible that modernization favours democracy, one has not only to show that it increases people's capability to struggle for democratic freedoms but also that it increases their willingness to do so.

This seems unlikely from the perspective of institutional learning theory. Dankwart Rustow's (1970) 'habituation model', for instance, maintains that people learn to appreciate democracy's freedoms only if they have gathered experience with the practice of these freedoms. This requires democratic institutions to be in place for democratic values to emerge. In this view, people's valuation of democratic freedoms is endogenous to the presence of democratic institutions and does not cause them. Since an intrinsic valuation of democratic freedoms among the populace can only occur under enduring democratic institutions, modernization cannot give rise to pro-democratic values, unless it advances under democratic institutions.

By contrast, Christian Welzel and Ronald Inglehart (2008) argue that people's valuation of democratic freedoms reflects how much utility they see in these freedoms. And perceived utility is not only depending on first-hand-experience with the practice of these freedoms. It depends primarily on the resources that people command, for the more resources people have, the more they need freedoms to make use of them (Rostow 1961). Hence, growing and spreading resources increase the utility of democratic freedoms in ways that are easily becoming obvious. Accordingly, Figure 9.3 in Chapter 9 demonstrates that, under mutual controls, the endurance of democracy has no effect on people's valuation of democratic freedoms while modernization has. Emphasis on democratic freedoms is more driven by the utility of these freedoms than by the experience of them. This makes it possible that an intrinsic desire for democracy emerges in authoritarian regimes and that pro-democracy activists can create civic rights frames that resonate with people's emerging valuation of freedoms.

People's valuation of democratic freedoms becomes manifest in emancipative beliefs that emphasize the

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power, freedom, agency, equality and trustworthiness of ordinary people (Welzel and Inglehart 2008). As these values emerge, they motivate elite-challenging collective actions (Welzel 2007). In fact, emancipative beliefs motivate elite-challenging collective actions on every level of democracy (or lack thereof). And on all levels of democracy, emancipative mass actions operate in favour of democracy, helping to achieve democracy when it was absent and to sustain it when it is present.

Counter-intuitively, at first glance, the type of mass beliefs tapping public support for democracy in a most direct way is irrelevant to democracy, both to its survival and its emergence (Inglehart 2003). The percentage of people in a country who say they support democracy strongly and reject authoritarian alternatives to democracy strictly, has no effect whatsoever on subsequent measures of democracy, once one controls for the dependence of these attitudes on prior democracy (Welzel 2007). What matters is not whether people support democracy but *for what reasons* they do so (Schedler and Sarsfield 2006). Only when people support democracy for the freedoms that define it, are they ready to mount pressures on elites to introduce these freedoms when they are denied, to defend them when they are challenged, or to advance them when they stagnate. Thus, people's explicit support for democracy advances democracy if—and only if—this support is motivated by emancipative values. Devoid of these values, support for democracy has no effect.

Elite-conceded versus mass-pressured democratization

Two recent approaches link modernization to actor constellations and by doing so claim to have found the reason why modernization favours democratization. The two approaches are in direct contradiction to each other.

Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) interpret democracy as the result of a struggle over economic redistribution between propertied elites and impoverished masses. In this view, democracy is a struggle for universal suffrage in which both sides are motivated by conflicting interests in economic redistribution. The masses want democracy because universal suffrage would enable them to redistribute income from the

elites, and the elites oppose it for precisely the same reason. Consequently, the elites will only concede universal suffrage if they have reason to believe it will not lead to extensive ~~redistribution~~—otherwise, they will suppress mass demands for suffrage. The reason why modernization is important in this model is that it is assumed to close the income gap between the elites and the masses, tampering the masses' interest in extensive redistribution and the elites' fear of it. Suppressing the masses' demands for democracy becomes then more costly than conceding democracy and so the elites concede democracy. An additional reason why elites have less to fear from conceding democracy is when their capital is so mobile that they can move it out of the reach of taxation into other countries (Boix 2003).

Several strong assumptions underlie this model (these assumptions are not always made explicit but without them the model would not work). First, variation in mass demands for democracy cannot account for the emergence and survival of democracy, since the model assumes that the masses are always in favour of democracy. Second, the decision to democratize is always fully in the hands of the elites; they decide whether to repress mass demands for democracy or whether to concede democracy. Third, modernization increases the chances to democratize by changes in income equality and capital mobility that make universal suffrage more acceptable to the elites.

The human empowerment approach of Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel (2005) favours the exact opposite assumptions. First, these authors find a great deal of variation in the degree to which given publics desire democratic freedoms. Second, the decision to expand democratic freedoms

Box 6.2 Key point

- The global diffusion of democracy resulted partly from the military defeat of anti-democratic empires by allied democratic powers.
- Mass-pressed democratization is the more frequent and more successful type of democratization as compared to merely elite-conceded democratization.

remains exclusively an elite choice only as long as ordinary people's action resources are meagre. But this is precisely what modernization changes. It greatly increases ordinary people's action resources, enabling them to mount more powerful collective actions, putting increasingly effective pressure on elites. Third, the survival of authoritarian regimes is not simply a question of whether elites choose to repress the masses—it reflects the balance of forces between elites and masses, which tends to shift to

the mass side with ongoing modernization. The recent waves of democratization were, in large part, a story of effective mass mobilization, motivated by strong emancipative beliefs among people who had become increasingly skilled and ambitious at organizing social movements. In this view, the major effect of modernization is not that it makes democracy more acceptable to elites. It is that modernization increases ordinary people's capabilities and willingness to struggle for democratic freedoms.

Institutional Configurations and Democracy

Beside socioeconomic modernization, social divisions, international regime alliances, elite constellations, social movements and mass beliefs, institutional factors have been claimed to influence democratization. Barbara Geddes (1999) argues that the type of authoritarian regime shapes the chances of democracy to emerge. She differentiates three types of authoritarian regimes: personalistic regimes, military regimes, and single-party regimes. By means of their institutional variation, these regimes are supposed to be vulnerable to different degrees to democratizing forces, as they offer different opportunities for regime opponents and command different resources to restrict their radius. Indeed, these three types of authoritarianism are vulnerable in different degrees to mass regime opposition (Ulfelder 2005). But the point is that all three of them are more likely to break down and to transit to democracy under the pressure of anti-regime mobilization.

The level at which regime type and other institutional variables operate is what is commonly called 'political opportunity structure' (Tarrow 1998). Any authoritarian regime, even the most powerful one, has some sort of a control deficit, depending on institutional structures. Depending on the nature and extent of these control deficits, authoritarian regimes offer democratic forces different opportunities to merge into

a democratic mass movement. But one should not forget that opportunity structures do not by themselves create these mass movements and that no authoritarian regime has the power to foreclose opportunities forever. Once the resources and values that make people capable and willing to struggle for freedoms have emerged, people will find and create opportunities to join forces in mass democracy movements. Provided such movements grow strong enough, no authoritarian regime can resist them forever, regardless what institutional type of authoritarian regime it is.

Institutional variation plays also a role when it comes to existing democracy's malfunctions, which can be an important factor of their stability and survival. There is a large literature on the deficiencies of presidential democracies, as opposed to parliamentary democracies, and it is widely believed that presidential democracies are more vulnerable to antidemocratic challenges (Linz and Valenzuela 1994; Mainwaring and Shugart 1997; Lijphart 1999). Again, the argument is about opportunity structures. By means of their institutional structures, presidential democracies might offer antidemocratic challengers better opportunities to operate. But institutional opportunities do not create these challengers. Other, more deeply rooted societal factors are responsible for this.

The Human Empowerment Path to Democracy

Synthesizing the above discussion, we can now identify a 'master sequence' towards sustainable democratization. Modernization enhances the action resources of

ordinary people, making them more capable to struggle for democratic freedoms in launching popular movements that sustain elite-challenging activities.

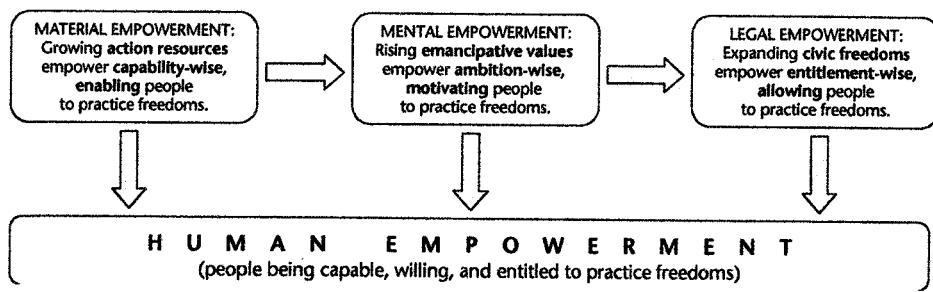


Fig 6.2 The human empowerment path towards democratization

*metaphysical
relativism*

By increasing people's action resources, modernization increases the utility of democratic freedoms and it does so in ways that are easily made perceptible through frames, so that people's valuation of these freedoms grows. This gives rise to emancipative values, making publics more willing to struggle for democratic freedoms.

Popular struggles for democracy become manifest in social movements whose activists frame democratic goals and mobilize the masses in support of these goals in campaigns that sustain elite-challenging actions (Foweraker and Landman 1997). If elites do not voluntarily give in, in anticipation of these mass pressures, these pressures can grow too strong to resist, forcing elites to give in, either by introducing democracy when they have denied it or by advancing it when they were to bloc its further advancement. This sequence is what Welzel and Inglehart (2008) call the 'human empowerment' path to democracy, as shown in Figure 6.2. It follows a sequence such that (1) growing action resources empower people *materially* by making them more

capable to struggle for freedoms, (2) rising emancipative beliefs empower them *mentally* by making them more willing to struggle for freedoms, and (3) democracy empowers them *legally* by allowing people to practice freedoms.

The more human empowerment has advanced in its material and mental dimensions, making people capable and willing to practice democratic freedoms, the more sustainable the legal component of human empowerment—democracy—becomes. The human empowerment path to democracy is not the only path to democracy. But it is arguably the only path producing socially embedded and hence sustainable democracy.

Putnam's (1993) social capital theory of democracy represents a specific aspect of the general human empowerment framework (see also Ch. 11). As human empowerment advances in its material and mental dimensions, it makes people more capable and more willing to initiate and sustain collective action. In doing so, human empowerment creates social capital as a by-product.

A Typology of Democratization Processes

The human empowerment path to democracy is responsive to mass pressures for democracy. This path constitutes *responsive democratization*. This has been the dominant type of democratization in the emergence of nascent democracies and in the global wave of democratization of recent times. But there are other types of democratization processes that do not respond to mass pressures. These types can be classified as *enlightened democratization*, *opportunistic*

democratization, and *imposed democratization*. In each of these types, the power elites' vested interest in monopolizing power is overcome by reasons other than mass pressures. In each of these types this leads to socially detached rather than embedded democracy, the latter of which can only result from mass responsive democratization.

One of the reasons why power elites might overcome their natural resistance to democratize is

Elites do not
respect democracy

when negative historical experiences have discredited alternative forms of government. The adoption of democracy in post-World War II Germany, Italy, and Japan partly fall into this category. This type of *enlightened democratization* is the only type in which elites effectively respect democratic standards even in absence of mass pressures to do so. But this model is very rare in history as it is at odds with power elites' natural tendency to resist democratization.

Another reason why elites concede democracy even in the absence of mass pressures is when these elites depend on the will of external powers and when these powers are pushing for democracy. This case of *imposed democratization* is again typical of post-war democracies such as West Germany, Austria, Italy, and Japan after World War II. The US-led attempts to install democracy in post-war Afghanistan and Iraq fall into the same category of externally imposed democratization, though it is far from clear whether the latter cases will be successful.

Still another and increasingly widespread case in which elites concede democracy in the absence of mass pressures is when they believe they can easily corrupt democratic standards in practice and when the pretence of democracy is perceived as a useful means to open the doors to the international community, especially donor organizations. This case of *opportunistic democratization* has become more likely since the Washington consensus, as a result of which western credits have been tied to conditions of 'good governance.'

In the enlightened, imposed, and opportunistic types of democratization, elites concede democracy despite absent mass pressures to do so. Among these three types, elites respect democratic freedoms effectively only in the enlightened type but this type is rare. In the imposed and opportunistic types of democratization, elites do not effectively respect democratic freedoms. Responsive democratization is the only type of democratization in which democracy becomes socially embedded and hence socially sustainable.

Conclusion

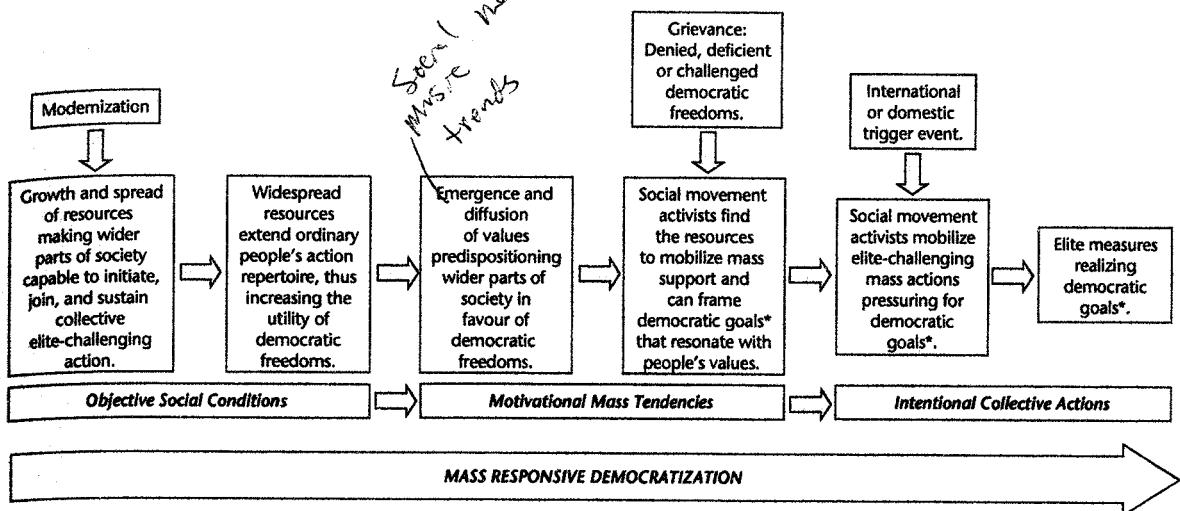
Some approaches to understand democratization focus on societal conditions, such as modernization or distributional equality. Other approaches emphasize the role of collective actions, including elite pacts or mass mobilization. Conditions and actions are often portrayed as contradictory explanations of democratization when in fact a full understanding of democratization needs to highlight the interplay between conditions and actions.

It is self-evident that democratization is not an automatism that guides itself without agents. Instead, it is the outcome of intentional collective actions, involving strategies of power elites, campaigns of social movement activists, and mass participation. Thus, any explanation of democratization intending to illuminate the role of social conditions must make plausible how these conditions shape actor constellations. On the other hand, it is just as self-evident that actions leading to democratic outcomes are the result of choices that are socially conditioned. Thus, it is the task of action-centred approaches to illuminate how concrete actions respond to social conditions.

Collective
actions

Figure 6.3 suggests *motivational mass tendencies* as the intervening force that helps translate *objective social conditions* into *intentional collective actions*. Motivational tendencies are based on shared beliefs and values. They are shaped, on one hand, by social conditions because what people believe and value is not a context-free given but reflects objective circumstances. On the other hand, motivational tendencies direct intentions towards goals that inspire actions.

The path in Figure 6.3 focuses on mass responsive democratization because this is the socially most sustainable type of democratization process. For this type of democratization to become possible, people must have the resources that enable them to act jointly for democratic freedoms, and this is where social conditions become relevant. Socioeconomic modernization, for instance, places more resources into the hands of ordinary people, enhancing their capacity for collective action. But in order to take the risks and costs to act jointly for democratic freedoms, people must passionately believe in these freedoms. This is where emancipative values become important. Where these values develop, they provide a



*Goals aiming at the introduction, deepening or defence of democratic freedoms.

Fig 6.3 Causal path toward mass-pressed democratization

motivational force that predispositions people in favour of democratic freedoms. If people have acquired both the capability and the willingness to join forces in struggling for democratic freedoms, and if there is reason for grievance because these freedoms are denied, deficient or challenged, at some point a critical event will prompt people to actually act together for these freedoms, be it to establish, to deepen or to defend them. Provided these actions grow strong enough, power elites will be forced to give in to their demands. When this happens we witness mass responsive democratization.

Mass responsive democratization is the joint result of objective social conditions, motivational mass tendencies, and intentional collective actions, triggered by critical events, in the context of enduring grievances. The role of objective social conditions in

this causal interplay is that they determine a society's capabilities for collective action. The role of motivational mass tendencies is that they shape the intentions that inspire collective actions. The role of grievances is that they provide a reason to become active for the sake of given goals. The role of critical events is that they provide a trigger for collective actions. And the role of collective actions is that they constitute a challenge that, when becoming strong enough, leads to a political change.

Again, mass responsive democratization is not the only path to democracy. For democracy can be imposed by foreign powers or adopted by unilateral elite actions. But mass responsive democratization is the only path to democracy that creates socially embedded democracy. And only socially embedded democracy is sustainable democracy.

QUESTIONS

1. What is nascent democracy?
2. Which structural factors favour democratization?
3. Which structural factors impede democratization?
4. Why did democracy and capitalism co-evolve in Western Europe and North America?
5. Why did industrialization not always favour democratization?
6. What is the role of mass motivational tendencies in democratization?

East Asia

Doh Chull Shin and Rollin F. Tusalem*

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Freedom House
World Bank
Asian Barometer

Overview

This chapter offers a comprehensive and dynamic account of democratization in East Asia over the past two decades. It first traces the history of democratic transitions in the region, and thereafter examines their contours, modes, and sources from a comparative perspective. It then considers the extent to which third-wave democracies have consolidated by appraising the quality of their performances. Finally it explores the prospect of democratic regime change in China and Singapore. Analyses of Freedom House and the World Bank data reveal

that the East Asian region has been slow in responding to the surging wave of global democratization in terms of not only transforming authoritarian regimes into electoral democracies, but also consolidating electoral democracies into well-functioning liberal democracies. Analyses of the Asian Barometer surveys, on the other hand, suggest that the mass citizenries of China and Singapore endorse their current regime as a well-functioning democracy, and are not much in favour of democratic regime change in their country.

Introduction

Asia, the world's largest continent, is also the most populous continent on earth. More than 60 per cent of the world's population lives on the mass of land stretching from the Middle East to the South Pacific islands and as many as 60 countries have their

Religious Diversity
homes there. Asia's cultural contributions include the birth of Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Shintoism, and Daoism, and it is also home to the largest Muslim population in the world. Economically, Asia encompasses countries of great

wealth, including Japan and Singapore, and countries of extreme poverty, including Bangladesh and Myanmar. Politically, it covers a startling range of regimes, from the oldest non-Western democracies of India and Japan to the world's most oppressive regimes of Myanmar and North Korea. All in all, it is hard to overstate the enormous differences among countries in Asia in terms of their natural resources, cultural and religious heritages, socioeconomic development, and political legacies.

Indeed, Asia is so large and so diverse that it is difficult to compare all of its countries and identify even a few general patterns of Asian democratization. In an attempt to ascertain such patterns, we follow the customary practice of separating the continent into regions and focus on the region known as **East Asia**, which covers the **north-eastern and south-eastern** parts of the continent. In this chapter, we analyse the process of democratization that has taken place within this particular region since the mid-1970s. Of the 14 countries in the region, much of our analysis presented below focuses on the seven countries that have undergone democratic regime change over the past two decades, namely Cambodia, Indonesia,

Mongolia, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand. In addition to these countries, we examine the prospects of democratic regime change in China and Singapore, two of the world's most notable non-democratic countries.

To offer a comprehensive and dynamic account of democratization in East Asia, the chapter begins with a brief discussion of the three forces—**economic development, Confucianism, and elite conceptions of democracy**—that have shaped the contours of democratization in East Asia, followed by an overview of the diffusion of the global wave of democratization in East Asia, which began with the demise of the personal dictatorship in the Philippines in 1986. In the following three sections, we analyse how East Asian countries have democratized institutionally and substantively. After these multi-dimensional analyses of democratization in East Asia, we examine the prospects China and Singapore have of joining in the global wave. The final section highlights the distinguishing characteristics of East Asian democratization and discusses their implications for the ongoing debate about the sources and consequences of democratization.

East Asia as a Region of Democratization

A multitude of forces, including domestic and international contextual factors, shape democratization, and political leaders and ordinary people participate in its process. In the words of Samuel P. Huntington (1993), the former constitute **causes** and the latter **causers** of democratization. Of the various causes reported to have shaped the process of democratization in East Asia over the past two decades, economic development and Confucian Asian cultural values constitute the two most unique contextual forces. Of the people involved in the democratization process, political elites are known to be the most powerful **causers** (Friedman 1995). In this section, we explore how these two structural and cultural forces shape the actions of political leaders and ordinary people in the context of democratic regime change.

Economically, East Asia is vastly different from the rest of the democratizing world. Unlike their peers in other regions, a number of countries in this region achieved unprecedented economic growth and social modernization under authoritarian rule. Prior to their transitions to democracy, East Asian countries, with a few exceptions such as Mongolia and the Philippines, experienced rapid and sustained economic growth for decades and freed millions of people from poverty and illiteracy. This pattern of rising economic prosperity and expanding social modernization under authoritarian rule contrasts sharply with that of incessant economic stagnation and social decay that Central and Eastern Europe experienced under communist rule, and Latin America under military rule (Haggard and Kaufman 1995; Linz and Stepan 1996). Growing prosperity under authoritarian rule

meant ordinary citizens of new democracies in East Asia had fewer incentives to abandon authoritarian rule in favour of democracy than their counterparts in other authoritarian regimes.

Culturally, East Asia is a region infused with the core values of Confucianism, even in Malaysia and other countries in non-Confucian South-Eastern Asia (Inoguchi and Newman 1997). These Confucian values, once promoted as Asian values', have historically played a significant role in prioritizing and justifying the rights and duties of individual citizens and the power and authority of their political leaders (Bell 2000). Besides the distinct makeup of political institutions and their practices, these values have also shaped the formulation and implementation of political order and national security as goals of national development. They are also known as the major source of delegative democracy with the concentration of powers within the executive (Im 2004).

TCP - DWN

As Huntington (1993) and many others point out, these values emphasize family and community over individuals, discipline and hierarchy over freedom and equality, and consensus and harmony over diversity and conflict. Many theorists have argued that these cultural values of collectivism, hierarchism, and conformism are likely to detract from the process of cultural democratization by discouraging East Asians from rejecting the norms of authoritarian rule and accepting those of democracy (e.g. Chang, Chu, and Tsai 2005; Linder and Bachtiger 2005; Park and Shin 2006).

The same Confucian authoritarian values are also known to have affected East Asians' intellectual understanding of democratization by promoting non-liberal or undemocratic conceptions of good government and politics, especially among political leaders in these countries. Specifically these values motivated some East Asian political leaders, such as former Prime Ministers Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia, to develop a model of authoritarian governance under the name of 'Asian democracy' (Neher 1994). Placing the peace and prosperity of the community above the rights and freedom of its individual citizens, these leaders equated democracy with benevolent or soft authoritarian rule and defended it as a viable

alternative to western liberal democracy, which is based on the values of individualism and pluralism. By invoking East Asia's cultural differences from the west, they sought to fend off pressure for the democratization of their authoritarian political systems (Foot 1997).

Confucian values have not only affected the leaders of East Asia's authoritarian regimes but also the first-generation leaders of new democracies in the region (Shin 1999). As democratically elected Presidents, for example, Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung of South Korea recognized the installation of free, fair, and competitive elections as an essential component of democratic politics. Being inculcated in the Confucian norm emphasizing virtuous leadership above the rule of law, however, they themselves oftentimes failed to obey the basic laws and rules of democratic politics. Kim Dae Jung secretly transferred 500 million dollars to North Korea for the first summit meeting between the two Koreas, which earned him a Nobel Peace Prize. In the other East Asian countries too, leaders are known to have a minimal conception of democracy, limited to free and competitive elections (Kurlantzick 2007).

The global wave of democratization reached the shores of East Asia in 1986 with the removal of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos through the bloodless people power movement in the Philippines. One year later, South Korea ended military rule and elected a new President in a free and competitive election for the first time in nearly three decades. In the same year, after ending more than three decades of the Kuomintang's one-party rule, Taiwan lifted martial law and ushered in an era of highly competitive multi-party democracy. In 1990, Mongolia became a third-wave democracy by abandoning its 60-year-old communist one-party system and holding competitive multi-party elections. The October 1991 Paris Accord made it possible for Cambodia to begin its transition to democracy. In 1992, Thailand re-established democratic rule after massive protests ousted the military-backed Government. In 1999, Indonesia ended three decades of Suharto's personal dictatorship and thereafter held democratic elections to become the largest democracy in the region. By the end of the 1990s, the global wave had brought about seven new democracies in East Asia.

Philippines
S. Korea
Taiwan
Mongolia

As this history shows, democratization in East Asia has been a gradual movement. Today, more than three decades after democratization began to spread from Southern Europe, nearly half the countries in East Asia have yet to undergo democratic regime change (see Table 23.1). Moreover, two of these new democracies, Cambodia and Thailand, have reverted to authoritarian rule. The Philippines, also, is no longer rated an electoral democracy due to political killings targeting left-wing political activists. As a result, the 2008 report by Freedom House (2008) designates a minority of five countries in the region as liberal democracies: Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, Indonesia, and Taiwan. All in all, the democratic transformation of authoritarian regimes in East Asia has virtually stalled for more than a decade.

Why has East Asia been slower than other regions in responding to the surging wave of global democratization? One reason is lack of precedent for change. In most of East Asia's history, governmental or regime change, not to mention democratic regime change, has been rare. In Singapore, for example, the People's Action Party has ruled since 1959. In Japan, except for a brief span of 11 months in the early 1990s, the Liberal Democratic Party has ruled since World War II. In Malaysia, the United Malays National Organization of former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammed is still in power after more than 50 years. Indonesia's Golkar party ruled from

Box 23.1 Key points

- Material improvements under authoritarian rule restrained ordinary East Asians from endorsing new democratic governments unconditionally until these began to deliver tangible benefits.
- Confucian notions of good government and leadership in terms of harmony and the virtuous example were likely to have motivated the old generation of political leaders to embrace the notion that democracy brings chaos.
- These notions are also likely to have dissuaded leaders from accommodating citizen demand for democratic regime change and for expanding partial democracy into full democracy.
- Democracy in the region spread late, and slowly, and democratization came to a halt in the late 1990s.

1967–2001, and Taiwan's Kuomintang governed for more than 40 years. Many scholars attribute East Asians' unyielding allegiance to one-party rule and their general aversion to political turnovers to a Confucian value system that emphasizes deference to authority and antipathy to political change (Robinson 1996).

Democratic Transition

Modes of democratic regime change

The first step in transforming authoritarian governments into full democracies is to exchange the authoritarian regime for a democratic one, even a limited democratic one. What role did ordinary East Asians and their political leaders play in this transition process? Huntington (1993) classified transition processes into three broad types in terms of who plays the leading role in those processes. When opposition groups play such a role, *replacement* occurs. When ruling elites play the lead role, *transformation* occurs.

When ruling elites and opposition groups together play an equally important role, *transplacement* occurs. Of these three modes, replacement and transformation represent, respectively, the most radical and least radical modes of democratic transition.

Table 23.2 lists the recently democratized East Asian countries with their modes of transition and their combined Freedom House ratings of political and civil rights at the cusp of transition and their most recent score in 2007. Also included in this table is an indication of what forces drove each Asian country's transition, and whether the transition involved significant violence between the state and opposition

Table 23.2 Modes of Transition and Democracy Ratings in East Asia

Country	Method of Transition	Year of Transition	Strength of Non-violent Civic Associations	Level of Violence	Source of Violence	Force Driving the Transition	Pre-Transitional Rating	2007 Rating	Change in Composting Rating
Cambodia	Intervention/ Transplacement	1991	Weak	Significant Violence	State and Opposition	External Intervention	7	5.5	+1.5 (increase)
Indonesia	Transplacement	1998	Strong	High Violence	State and Opposition	Civil Society and Political Elites	6	2.5	+3.5 (increase)
Mongolia	Transplacement	1990	Strong	Non-violent	None	Civil Society and Political Elites	7	2	+5.0 (increase)
Philippines	Replacement (unpacked)	1986	Strong	Significant Violence	State	Civil Society	3.5	3	+0.5 (increase)
South Korea	Transplacement	1987	Strong	Significant Violence	State and Opposition	Civil Society and Political Elites	4.5	1.5	+3.0 (increase)
Taiwan	Transformation	1992	Moderate	Non-violent	None	Civil Society and Political Elites	5	1.5	+3.5 (increase)
Thailand	Transplacement	1992	Moderate	Significant Violence	State	Civil Society and Political Elites	2.5	5.5	-3.0 (decrease)

Sources: Transition data obtained from Karatnycky and Ackerman (2005); Freedom House data obtained from <www.freedomhouse.org>. Mode of transition is classified according to Huntington's (1993) classification scheme.

where is Burma?

forces. In East Asia, the Philippines was the only case of installing democracy by violent replacement, while Taiwan was the only transformation case of gradual democratic regime change in which the ruling elite played the initial and leading role.

The Philippines

The Philippines' move to democracy began with the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos, who ruled for more than two decades, from 1965 to 1986. During this period, he suspended and replaced the 1935 democratic constitution so that he could be elected for a term of six years with no term limits. He entrusted key positions in the Government to his wife, children, and relatives or close friends. He also imposed martial law to solidify his power and allowed state security agencies to torture and kill more than 30,000 people, including Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr., the main opposition figure, in 1983. At the same time, Marcos and his family were enriching themselves through open and widespread corruption. During his entire tenure as a civilian dictator, Marcos legally earned no more than an annual salary of US\$5,700. When he left the country in 1986, his personal fortune was estimated to be in excess of US\$5 billion.

Increasingly rampant corruption and widespread political violence alienated every segment of the population, including Marcos's former supporters. In February 1986, he ran against Corazon Aquino for his fourth term. Though declared the winner of the highly fraudulent Presidential elections, Marcos was forced to leave the country for Hawaii on the day of his swearing in by a people's uprising known as the 'People Power Revolution', which involved as many as 500,000 ordinary Filipinos as well as a number of religious, political, and military leaders. With Marcos's departure, Corazon Aquino, the leader of the opposition movement, became the President of the first third-wave democracy in East Asia.

South Korea

From the Philippines, the global wave of democratization spread to other countries in East Asia and triggered a negotiated transition in South Korea.

For nearly two decades beginning in 1961, General Park Chung Hee ruled the country ruthlessly, while developing its economy rapidly by promoting export industries. Less than two months after Park was assassinated, on 26 October 1979, General Chun Doo Hwan assumed power through another coup to suppress the awakening of the democracy movement after the death of Park Chung Hee. On 17 May 1980, Chun extended martial law over the entire country and disbanded the National Assembly. On 18 May he dispatched troops to quell growing protests against martial law in Kwangju; those troops killed 207 people and injured 987. This event is symbolic of despotism and to this date is remembered as the infamous Kwangju massacre.

From 10 to 29 June 1987, street demonstrations, often referred to as the 'June Popular Uprising', drew increasingly larger crowds and overwhelmed police forces. The Chun Government confronted a painful choice. Should it bring in the army to quell those demonstrations just a few months before the scheduled Summer Olympics, or accept the demands of anti-Government forces for the direct election of the President by the people? After 17 consecutive days of demonstrations and under intense pressure from the USA and the International Olympic Committee, the Government agreed to popular demands for democratic reforms. This agreement, dubbed as the 'June 29 Declaration of Democratic Reform', served as the foundation for South Korea's peaceful transition to democracy. It also served as a transplacement model of democratic transition in other East Asian countries.

Taiwan

Taiwan became a third-wave democracy after five years of gradual liberalization initiated by Chang Ching-Kuo, the leader of the ruling Kuomintang (KMT). Since Taiwan's break from China in 1949, the KMT ruled the island as a one-party state under martial law. For nearly four decades, opposition parties were banned and political dissidents were not allowed to contest national elections. From 1980 onward, however, the opposition movement against martial law gradually gained momentum, especially in the aftermath of the Philippines' People Power

Revolution and South Korea's June Popular Uprising. In September 1986, the movement illegally formed the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) as the first opposition party in Taiwan to counter the KMT. On 12 June 1987, the DPP sponsored a rally to protest against the National Security Law in front of the Legislative Yuan. Realizing unmanageable consequences of growing protests and under increasing pressure from the US Congress to build a framework for democracy, President Chiang Ching-Kuo lifted martial law on 14 July 1987, more than a year after he informally indicated the need to lift it.

With the lifting of martial law, the Taiwanese were formally allowed to engage in protests and demonstrations against the KMT Government. More new political parties, like the Chinese New Party and the Taiwanese Independence Party, were formed to demand the end of one-party rule. These parties demanded more political liberalization and challenged the KMT in every important policy arena, as well as about its close relationship with mainland China. Finally, the KMT and opposition forces agreed to a series of constitutional amendments, which provided for holding free, fair, and competitive elections to the national assembly in 1992, and the election of a President and Vice President by direct popular vote in 1996. Compared to South Korea's transition, Taiwan's democratic regime change moved more slowly and gradually while the leaders of the ruling party played greater leadership roles.

Thailand

Thailand followed a path similar to South Korea's in that the country had been under military rule for decades prior to its democratization. Beginning with a 1932 coup that transformed the absolute monarchy into a constitutional monarchy, the army ruled periodically. In 1986, General Prem, who was once the junta leader, began to liberalize the political system by allowing civil society forces and opposition groups to form. In 1988, the country conducted fully democratic parliamentary elections and formed a coalition Government under General Chatichai Choonhaven. While the economy was booming under his Government, Prime Minister Choonhaven was arrested in

a military coup on 23 February 1991 on charges of corruption and incompetence.

The new military junta led by Generals Sunthorn and Suchinda initiated draconian measures aimed at undoing the political liberalization reforms of Generals Prem and Choonhaven. This led to massive demonstrations in the streets. The junta responded with aggressive force, shooting protesters in Bangkok who demanded the return of civilian rule. This did not deter the public from massing in the streets. After three weeks of significant violence in May 1992, the military junta and opposition forces entered into a binding agreement that the constitution would be amended to minimize the role of the military in politics. It was also agreed that the Prime Minister should be elected from among the members of the parliament instead of being selected by the military establishment. The 'People's Constitution' of 1997, the region's most democratic constitution, created three new democratic institutions and mandated the direct election of the Senate; as a result, Thailand was well on its way toward the consolidation of its nascent democratic regime. However, the military staged another coup to oust the democratically elected Thaksin Government on 19 September 2006, claiming as a reason endemic corruption in his Government.

Mongolia

Mongolia began its transition to democracy as the Soviet Union began to fragment. In early 1989, civic groups, mostly led by members of the middle class, began to demand democratic reforms and formed opposition parties such as the Mongolian Democratic Union. In response, soft-liners of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the former communist party known as the MPRD, entered into protracted negotiations with the opposition forces to pass democratic reforms and to draft a new democratic constitution. In July 1990, Mongolia held its first free and fair parliamentary elections, which led to the restoration of the MPRD to power under a democratic system. In July 2003 the first election was held under the new constitution guaranteeing political rights and civil liberties. To date, Mongolia has the distinction of being the only country outside

Eastern Europe to have made a successful transition from communist rule to a highly competitive multi-party capitalist democracy.

Cambodia

Like Mongolia, Cambodia began its transition to democracy from communist one-party rule. But unlike Mongolia, its history was blighted by an ongoing conflict with Vietnam, which necessitated the international community to play a major role in its transition to democracy. In October 1991, four rival groups (the Khmer Rouge, the royalist Funcinpec, the pro-Vietnamese CCP of Hun Sen and a very small republican-bourgeois faction) together with 18 countries, signed the Treaty of Paris, which began the transition process. The goal of the treaty was to make Cambodia a truly sovereign state with limited Vietnamese influence in its domestic politics. The installed democracy, therefore, did not emanate from a strong grassroots movement of middle-class segments. With the consociational agreements among pro-monarchy and pro-Hun Sen forces, the May 1993 parliamentary elections created a multi-party democracy, which became highly unstable. In July 1997 a bloody and brutal coup restored the dictatorial power of Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge soldier. Cambodia is unique among newly emerging Asian democracies primarily because its democratic constitution and free elections resulted from a peace settlement and the direct involvement of the United Nations.

Indonesia

Indonesia's transition to democracy marks the most recent civilian authoritarian regime to collapse in the East Asian region. The transition, which began in 1998, was mostly a result of a protracted economic crisis fuelled by the Asian economic crisis which broke out in late 1997. Food and medicine shortages led university students and other ordinary citizens to wage waves of protests against President Suharto, who ruled the country for more than 30 years from 1967 to 1998. On 21 May 1998, facing growing mass mobilizations against his regime, Suharto handed his

*Lack of
stable
consensus*

power over to Vice President Habibie, a loyalist who also belonged to the Golkar party. For months, the new Golkar party negotiated with opposition parties and the military about a new democratic constitution and the holding of free, fair, and competitive elections. The successful negotiations between the ruling and opposition forces led to Indonesia's first democratic parliamentary elections in 1999 and a Presidential election in 2004, which created the largest Muslim democracy in the world.

As we have documented above, six of the seven democratic transitions in East Asia involved a series of negotiations between the ruling and opposition forces and required compromises from each of them. The only exception to this mode of transplacement was the Philippines, where the people forced the authoritarian leaders to depart. Five of the seven transitions overturned authoritarian regimes that were not ideologically based (The Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Indonesia). Only two were transitions from states built on the ideology of communism (Cambodia and Mongolia).

The literature on the global wave of democratization shows that the mode of transplacement, which required political pact-making before the advent of transition, has consistently produced stable democracies that are less susceptible to reversals or breakdowns than those that follow other modes (Linz and Stepan 1996). In Portugal, Spain, and Greece, for example, such pacted transitions produced stable and consolidated democracies in less than a decade by facilitating conciliation, compromise-building, and consensus-seeking between the democratic opposition and authoritarian elites. In sharp contrast, unpacted transitions, from either above or below, have yielded either authoritarian reversals or unstable democratic regimes because either democratic or authoritarian forces were excluded from the process of installing a new democratic system.

The Philippines fit this pattern. As a case of replacement, the Philippine transition to democracy has been highly unstable. The country has seen a series of unsuccessful coup attempts and mass protests. However, all other new democracies in East Asia, which were built on pacts, have also been unstable. In Indonesia, the National Assembly impeached President Abdurrahman Wahid and elected Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri as his successor. In South

Korea, the National Assembly impeached President Roh Moo Hyun and suspended his executive powers. In Taiwan, the loser of a Presidential election tried to bring down the democratically elected Government through the extralegal means of mass protests. Coups overthrew the democratically elected Governments in Cambodia and Thailand. By dissolving parliaments and banning all political activities, these two countries reverted to authoritarian rule. Regardless of the mode of transition, new democracies in East Asia have been unstable. Evidently, the mode of transition is not determinative in the process of democratic consolidation in East Asia.

Causes of democratic transitions

What propelled seven East Asian countries to join the global wave of democratization? The existing literature has identified two sets of facilitating factors as the most probable causes of the worldwide current wave. The first set concerns political and other changes that occurred within each country, whereas the second set deals with developments in neighbouring or other foreign countries (Diamond 2008; Huntington 1993). The particular mix of these two sets of factors varies significantly from region to region and from country to country (Shin 1994). The domestic set played a more powerful role in Latin America, while the international set predominated in Europe. In East Asia, as in Latin America, domestic factors have been more influential than international factors in propelling democratic transitions.

In Europe and Latin America, region-wide international organizations and individual governments promoted democracy. In East Asia, there were no such organizations or governments. The USA remained the single most powerful external actor. Until the collapse of the Berlin Wall, moreover, the international context of the Cold War severely constrained democratic development in East Asian countries by giving their authoritarian governments a rationale for repressing political opposition. The USA supported those repressive regimes to stop the spread of communism and thus 'created an unfavourable balance of power between the state and civil society for democratization' (Shelley 2005: 143). Only after dec-

ades of rapid economic development did civil society actors become powerful enough to challenge those in power. Then the USA intervened directly to constrain authoritarian regimes from using force against the budding democracy movement.

There is no doubt that the interventions of the USA contributed to peaceful democratic transitions especially in the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan. As Diamond (2008) and others point out, it is also clear that the desire of authoritarian rulers to see their countries accepted as developed countries in an international event, such as the Summer Olympics, contributed to peaceful transitions in these countries. The Philippines' transition by the 'People Power Revolution' also affected subsequent transitions in other East Asian countries by spreading methods and techniques of democratic change across borders (Diamond 2008, Ch. 5). With the exception of Cambodia, however, such international interventions or snowballing effects cannot be considered the direct or primary cause of democratic transitions in East Asian countries.

As in other regions, a variety of domestic factors facilitated democratization in East Asia. Among these factors, which included the rise of the middle class and shifts in cultural values in favour of democratic rule, the expansion of civil society is generally considered the direct and primary cause of East Asian democratization (Alagappa 2001; Quadir and Lele 2005). The growth in civil society groups alone produced the balance of power between authoritarian rulers and democratic opposition. In six of the seven recent democratizations in East Asia, such a power balance led to successful negotiations between the two rival forces and produced democratic transition by the mode of transplacement or transformation. In South Korea, for example, religious institutions played a prominent role by promoting human rights and civil liberties. In Taiwan and Thailand, a variety of social movements organized by civil rights and environmental groups mostly from the urban middle class challenged repressive regimes and demanded democratic reforms.

According to Junhan Lee (2002), colonial legacies and external factors had no direct influence in spurring democratic regime change. It is the civic movements that spurred democratic changes in East Asia. Across the region, these movements weakened

authoritarian elites by engaging in waves of demonstrations, boycotts, and strikes, and inculcated the spirit of democracy in ordinary citizens by demanding the election of new rulers and the establishment of their political rights. From Catholic Philippines to mainly Buddhist Taiwan and Thailand and multi-religious South Korea, civic movements were the most decisive and powerful force that drove authoritarian rules in a democratic direction.

The activities of civic organizations during the process of democratic transition are known to have long-term consequences for deepening and expanding limited democracy. A recent analysis of the Freedom House data by Karatnycky and Ackerman (2005) has confirmed the long-term beneficial effect of civic activism on liberal democratization in the world. According to this analysis, of 67 countries that underwent democratic transitions over the past three decades, 75 per cent of the transitions driven by strong civic coalitions became liberal democracies. Only 18 per cent of the transitions that lacked active involvement of civic coalitions turned into liberal democracies. [The more vigorous civil society is, the likelier the progress toward full democracy is.] Where there is violence and less vigorous civil society, reversal to non-democratic rule is more common. Is this generalization applicable to the East Asian region?

Contrary to inferences from the analysis of the Freedom House data, improvements in political rights and civil liberties in post-transition East Asia have little to do with either the levels of civic activism

Box 23.2 Key points

- The importance of civil society associationalism in increasing freedoms and liberties is not as highly salient in East Asia as it is in other regions.
- Almost all of the pacted, transplacement transitions received improved Freedom House ratings for many years after the transition.
- In East Asia, transitions based on replacement hurt more than help the subsequent stage of democratic consolidation.
- In East Asia, the mode of transition matters more than the level of civic activism.

or those of violence (see Table 23.2). For instance, the Philippines had strong civic associations pre-transition, but their political systems failed to enlarge freedom even after more than a decade of democratic rule. Taiwan had only a moderate level of civic activism but formally became a liberal democracy. Indonesia and South Korea also formally became liberal democracies despite the fact that they experienced significant levels of violence during their processes of democratic transition. Of the seven third-wave democracies in East Asia, only Mongolia fits the earlier finding that strong non-violent civic activism leads to liberal democratization.

Substantive Democratization

Democratic governance

All new East Asian democracies, except the collapsed one in Cambodia, hold competitive and free elections regularly to choose political leaders for the national and local levels of government. In institutional terms, therefore, they have been successfully transformed into electoral democracies. In substantive terms, however, they became well-functioning, full democracies only when electoral and other political institutions perform according to the rules and norms of democratic politics, and as these institutions become

increasingly responsive to the preferences of the citizenry (Diamond and Morlino 2005). To monitor progress in this dimension of substantive democratization an increasing number of scholars have attempted to evaluate improvements in democratic regime performance in other regions. Francis Hagopian (2005), for example, has analysed the World Bank (2007) Governance Indicators (WBI) to assess and compare the changing quality of democratic governance in 12 Latin American countries.

How well do new East Asian democracies perform? How much progress have they made in consolidating

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democracies, therefore, there is no single dimension of democratic governance that performs consistently better or consistently worse as compared to the other dimensions considered in the WBI study. In every dimension, the quality of democratic performance is of a mixed nature.

Each country's average ratings, when compared across the six dimensions, reveal the three patterns of fully negative, mixed, and fully positive ratings. Cambodia and the Philippines belong to the fully negative pattern, while South Korea and Taiwan belong to the fully positive pattern. Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand, meanwhile, belong to the mixed pattern of positive and negative dimensional ratings. In East Asia as a whole, the countries that scored positive ratings in all six performance dimensions constitute a small minority of less than one-third. Moreover, even the two countries with fully positive ratings failed to score above +1.0 on the 5-point scale ranging from -2.5 to +2.5 in all or most of the performance dimensions. Only in the governmental effectiveness dimension did South Korea and Taiwan score above +1.0. In this respect, the recently democratized East Asian countries contrast markedly with Japan, Spain, and other fully consolidated democracies, which score above +1.0 in all or most of six performance dimensions.

Altogether these findings make it clear that the new democracies in East Asia are far from being well-functioning consolidated democracies.

How much progress did these countries make in improving the quality of their democratic governance over the 10-year period between 1996 and 2006? To address this question, we examined changes in each country's dimensional ratings as reported in the second panel (B) of Table 23.3. The panel shows that over the 10-year period, more performance dimensions changed for the worse in a majority of the seven countries—Cambodia, Mongolia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Only in one country, South Korea, did more performance dimensions change for the better. In Indonesia and Taiwan, an equal number of dimensions experienced negative and positive changes. On balance, a larger number of new East Asian democracies did not substantially improve their performances over the past decade.

Their failures appear to have little to do with any of the independent variables considered, including the

mode of transition, the magnitude of civic activism, the form of government, and the level of socioeconomic development.

We now compare scores indicating changes in each dimension of governance across the seven countries. In a majority of four performance dimensions—political stability, regulatory quality, the rule of law, and corruption control—more countries experienced negative changes than positive changes. Only in the dimension of governmental effectiveness did more countries experience positive changes than negative ones. By a large margin of four to one, deteriorations outnumber the improvements. In the case of the rule of law dimension, all countries except South Korea experienced negative changes. Also in controlling corruption, five of the seven countries registered negative changes. These negative changes indicate a clear trajectory toward illiberal democracy during the past decade.

The mostly negative current ratings of the six dimensions indicate that a majority of the seven East Asian countries do not perform as well as most of the other countries examined by the World Bank. Meanwhile, declines in their average ratings over the past 10 years indicate that a large majority of these

Box 23.3 Key points

- According to World Bank Governance indicators measuring the rule of law and corruption control, most East Asian third-wave democracies remain illiberal or malfunctioning liberal democracies.
- Their movement to broaden and deepen limited democracy into well-functioning liberal democracy remains stalled.
- Only South Korea and Taiwan maintain consistently positive ratings in the realm of rule of law, control of corruption, regulatory quality, voice and accountability, political stability, and governmental effectiveness over the past 10 years.
- Higher levels of socioeconomic development and longer experiences with democratic rule together contribute to the improved quality of democratic governance.

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democracies have failed to improve their performance over the period. When these findings are considered together, it is evident that stalled progress in democratic governance is a notable characteristic of substantive democratization in East Asia (Chang, Chu, and Park 2007). The relatively poor quality of democratic governance and its downward trend have

very little to do with the modes of democratic transition, the forms of government, or the levels of civic activism prior to the transition. The distinguishing factors of relatively better performing democracies are high levels of socioeconomic development and longer periods of democratic rule, as shown in South Korea and Taiwan.

Prospects of Democratization in China and Singapore

In the world today, China and Singapore represent two of the most notable non-democratic regimes. China is the largest and most populous autocracy that has successfully mixed capitalism with authoritarian rule. Singapore, on the other hand, represents the most affluent of all authoritarian regimes in the world. For all remarkable socioeconomic development in recent decades, these two countries have failed to democratize. What are their near-term prospects of joining the current wave of global democratization?

For millennia, China has been the centre of Eastern civilization. As the birthplace of Confucianism, it constitutes the core state of this civilization. Economically, this country has outperformed other so-called 'Asian tigers' to become the world's fastest growing economy and in so doing has freed nearly half of its population from extreme poverty. Today, more than 90 per cent of the population is able to read and write. Internationally, as well, China has successfully integrated into the global economy. As the third largest trader, it holds more than US\$1.4 trillion in foreign currency reserves. Despite these structural changes that are known in the literature to facilitate democratization, China remains the largest and most dynamic one-party dictatorship in the world, defying the long standing theory that links modernization and globalization to democratization.

Situated at the apex of East Asian civilization and atop a long stretch of undemocratic countries from Myanmar through Vietnam to North Korea, China's transition to democracy could trigger similar transitions in North-East and South-East Asia. China's

continuing rise as an economic and military powerhouse under authoritarian rule, on the other hand, could inspire other non-democratic countries in the region and elsewhere to follow its model of capitalism without democracy (Dickson 2007). As the centre of East Asian civilization and a rising economic and military powerhouse, China unquestionably holds the key to further democratization of the region and other parts of the world (Diamond 2008).

In 1988, the National People's Congress passed a law requiring all villages to hold competitive elections for their village committees, and all candidates were to be nominated by villagers. Since then, China has experimented with competitive elections at the lowest level of its civil administration to introduce the so-called 'four democracies': democratic election, democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic supervision. Members of all village committees have been elected directly by their residents, and experiments with direct elections have occurred at the township and other high levels of civil administration on a selective basis. At the same time, people's congresses at various levels have become increasingly competitive and independent as their deputies have been allowed to assert their own views in deliberating policy and personnel matters, independent of the ruling party (Guo 2007).

All of these changes can contribute to building electoral democracy in China. Nonetheless, it is fair to say that after more than two decades of electoral experiments, China is still in an early stage of political liberalization, not to mention democratization.

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are not members of the party have 'little interest in challenging the status quo that has allowed them to prosper' (Dickson 2007: 243). To date, China's growing capitalist and middle class as a whole has failed to become an agent promoting democratic regime change (Solinger 2006).

Are other groups in Chinese society more interested in democratizing the country than the conservative wealthier segments? To explore this question, we analysed the first round of the Asian Barometer Survey (ABS) conducted in China in 2003. The survey asked Chinese respondents to rate their current regime on a 10-point scale, where a score of 1 indicates complete dictatorship and a score of 10 indicates complete democracy. It also asked them to rate on a 4-point scale the extent to which they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the regime was performing. We considered positive responses to these two questions to determine the proportion of the Chinese who endorsed the current regime as a well-functioning democracy. We compared this proportion across five levels of socioeconomic resources, composed of the respondent's own education and family income. Table 23.4 reports the results of this analysis.

As expected, given a lack of experience with democratic politics and limited exposure to a college education, a relatively high proportion (25 per cent) of the Chinese respondents failed to answer one or both questions evaluating their country's democratization. Of those who answered the questions, a large majority

can directly their political leaders, beyond the village and township levels, on the basis of free and competitive multi-party elections (Fewsmith 2004). Through a continuing crackdown on political dissent and independent associations, these leaders seem determined to avoid the fate of the Soviet Union. What continues to concern these leaders most is 'political order and technocratic governance rather than popular participation and regime transformation' (Yang 2007a: 251). Consequently, China's one-party dictatorship, often called 'democracy with Chinese characteristics', is not likely to be transformed into a fully electoral democracy unless the leaders are forced to meet an increasing demand for democratization from the people.

There is no doubt that the rapid growth of China's economy has expanded the capitalist or middle class known to have played a key role in the development of democracy in the West. This has led to expectations that China's capitalists or middle class would become the leading agent of democratic regime change (Gilley 2007). Contrary to these expectations, an increasing number of these capitalists have been co-opted into the process of one-party rule and became 'red capitalists'. Even those who

Table 23.4 How the Chinese Assess the Current Regime and its Performance

Assessments of the Current Regime	Entire sample	Socioeconomic Resources Levels					Test of highest	Difference (eta)
		lowest	low	middle	high			
As a democracy	82	86	85	82	80	82	(.00)	
As satisfying	79	90	84	81	77	73	(.01)	
Both (WFD)	70	81	76	70	68	67	(.08)	
None (MFA)	10	6	7	9	11	12	(.07)	
N	3,180	291	592	829	778	690		

Note: Cell entries are percentages of respondents classifying their country as democratic, satisfying, both or none. WFD = well-functioning democracy; MFA = malfunctioning autocracy

Source: Asian Barometer (I)

of more than four-fifths (82 per cent) rated their current regime as a democracy. A near equal proportion (79 per cent) also expressed satisfaction with its performance as a democracy. When positive responses to both questions are considered together, a substantial majority of 70 per cent embraced the current regime as a well-functioning democracy. Only a small minority, 10 per cent, of Chinese fully rejects the current regime as an ill-functioning dictatorship.

Equally notable is the finding that democratic perceptions of the current regime vary little across different segments of the Chinese population. In each of the five segments, defined by respondents' levels of formal education and family income, a large majority of more than 80 per cent classifies the current regime as a democracy. As is the case in other Asian countries, the level of satisfaction with the regime's performance is significantly lower among those better-off than those worse-off. In classifying China as a democracy rather than a dictatorship, however, the former are not much different from the latter. Regardless of their exposure to social modernization, the overwhelming majority of Chinese people perceive their country as democratic. This can be considered one piece of evidence indicating a low level of popular demand for democratization (Shi 2008).

Thanks to rapid socioeconomic development over the past three decades, China today stands on a structural foundation that has been expected to favour democratic regime change (Rowen 2007). Yet elite and mass political cultures remain highly unfavourable to such regime change. A lack of basic knowledge about democracy among the mass public and the unwillingness of the ruling elite to embrace the democratic norms of public participation and competition in the political process is keeping China in an equilibrium between low levels of popular demand for and institutional supply of democracy. Given this low-level equilibrium and its proven ability to adapt to various predicaments (Nathan 2003), the existing authoritarian regime is likely to endure for many years to come. This view does not accord with the claim that China will become a liberal democracy with the next 15 to 20 years (Inglehart and Welzel 2005).

Another notable democratic holdout in the East Asian region is Singapore. Since it was granted independence by the British in 1951, Singapore has been ruled by the People's Action Party (PAP) as a de facto

one-party dictatorship. Even if opposition parties like the Worker's Party of Singapore and the Singapore Democratic Party are allowed to compete in periodic elections, there is no chance for an alternation in power. Opposition parties who are vocal about the perceived clientelism, cronyism, and corruption by the PAP are usually slapped with libel and slander charges. Individual citizens critical of the PAP's corrupt or malfeasant activities face imprisonment. Public protest and demonstrations are banned, and there is rigid press censorship. As a result, there are no effective opposition parties that can make Singapore democratic. In 2006, the Economist Intelligence Unit typified Singapore as a hybrid democracy, while Freedom House has continuously classified Singapore as a 'partly free' country.

Despite increasing modernization and the growth of a robust middle class, Singapore, like China, has remained an illiberal polity, defying the theory that economic development spurs democratic transitions. The PAP has maintained its dominance of the political system by capitalizing on the fear that, if the PAP is out of power, Singapore's ethnic fragmentation would produce a weak and unstable regime like the one in place during the early 1960s. The emphasis that Lee Kuan Yew and other leaders of the PAP have placed on public order and social virtue may have emanated from the country's historical experience with ethnic violence. On the other hand, many believe that the Singaporean focus on law and order, morality, and ethics (for example, banning chewing gum, public lashings for those who commit vandalism, and the death penalty for transporting illegal narcotics), stems from the Asian value system that places a high premium on collectivism and the preference of greater communal good rather than on the Western values of individualism and liberalism.

To determine the extent to which Singaporeans support the current authoritarian regime, we analysed responses to the questions from the second round of the ABS survey that tap the democratic perception of the current regime and satisfaction with it. Nearly three-quarters perceived the current regime as a democracy, and a larger majority of 85 per cent expressed satisfaction with it (see Table 23.5). When these two ratings of the current regime are considered together, two-thirds endorsed the current regime as a well-functioning democracy while

Table 23.5 How Singaporeans Assess the Current Regime and its Performance

Assessments of the Current Regime	Entire sample	Socioeconomic Resources Levels					Test of highest	Difference (eta)
		lowest	low	middle	high			
As a democracy	73	70	74	77	76	69	(.01)	
As satisfying	85	85	87	84	85	89	(.00)	
Both (WFB)	67	63	65	67	65	69	(.00)	
None (MFA)	8	6	7	9	8	0	(.00)	
N	933	114	205	249	278	87		

Note: Cell entries are percentages of respondents classifying their country as democratic, satisfying, both or none. WFD = well-functioning democracy; MFA = malfunctioning autocracy

Source: Asian Barometer (II)

less than one-tenth reject it as a malfunctioning non-democracy. Supporters of the existing authoritarian regime outnumber its opponents by a large margin of more than eight to one. As in China, there is little variance in the percentages of such regime supporters and opponents across respondents' levels of education and income. Regardless of their exposure to social modernization, Singaporeans appear to see little need to transform their authoritarian regime into a democracy.

Recent developments indicate that there is little change in the illiberal conceptions of politics and governance among the leaders of the PAP. On 12 August 2004, Lee Hsien Loong, the oldest son of Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, took over as the Prime Minister of Singapore from Goh Chok Tong. Since then, the PAP has lost none of its dominance. In the May 2006 parliamentary elections, the younger Lee led the PAP to win 82 of the 84 seats by a variety of means including the handing out of cash bonuses to the electorate. Although he expresses an international outlook, he remains steadfastly attached to the Asian values of maintaining law and order and national consensus. In Singapore, recent leadership change is not likely to democratize de facto one-party rule in the foreseeable future. Nor is a majority of its citizens likely to demand its transformation into a competitive multi-party democratic system. These assessments also run counter to the prediction that Singapore will become a liberal democracy before 2015 (Inglehart and Welzel 2005).

Majorities of ordinary Chinese and Singaporeans are alike in perceiving their country's regime as a democracy and in expressing satisfaction with its performance. Besides remaining attached to the Confucian value of political stability, they prefer the illiberal and authoritarian to a more liberal and democratic mode of governing. From these findings, it is apparent that the mass citizenries of the two countries demand as little democracy as their elites provide. Trapped in the low-level equilibrium of democratic supply and demand, the near-term prospects for democratic regime change in these two countries are not bright.

Box 23.4 Key points

- Even after two decades of electoral experiments at the local level, China still remains at an early stage of political liberalization.
- In China today there is a low-level equilibrium between popular demand for democracy and elite supply of democracy.
- Even in Singapore, one of the richest non-democracies in the world, there is a low-level equilibrium between democratic demand and supply.
- The continuous presence of such an equilibrium trap poses a serious obstacle to democratic regime change in these countries.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the East Asian contribution to the global wave of democratization. For the past two decades, this wave has transformed seven of the thirteen autocracies in the region into democracies. Of these seven, two were driven back to autocratic rule by the military. Even with the election of a civilian government in one of these two (Thailand) on 23 December 2007, there are more autocracies than democracies in the region. Included in this group of autocracies is the largest and most populous country and the core state of Confucian civilization. In view of the slow pace of democratic regime change and its limited range, it is fair to conclude that there has been no truly region-wide movement towards democracy. It is also fair to say that, together with North Africa and the Middle East, East Asia remains a region markedly resistant to the global wave of democratization. On the whole, democratization in East Asia has been more like an ebb-and-flow tide than a surging wave. Moreover, there is little prospect for the further democratization of authoritarian regimes in the near term, mainly because citizens of East Asian countries and their political leaders are trapped in an equilibrium of low levels of democratic supply and demand.

Why is it that a region blessed with rapid economic development remains cursed with a democratic deficit? Prominent theories of democratic transitions contribute little to the explanation of this conundrum. The theories of modernization and culture cannot explain why South Korea and Taiwan successfully transitioned to democracy while Singapore and Malaysia failed to do so. Likewise, past regime experience cannot explain why Mongolia joined the global wave, while China, North Korea, and Vietnam failed to do so. And diffusion theory cannot explain why Indonesia and Mongolia became liberal democracies, while neighbouring Malaysia and China failed to become even electoral democracies. Unquestionably, these domestic contextual factors, known to be democratic regime facilitators in other regions, all fail to solve the democratic puzzle set forth in East Asia.

As a region, East Asia is different from Europe and Latin America in that there is no regional organization promoting democracy and human rights (Shelley 2005). The region is also geographically distant from the clusters of powerful democracies in the West. Even within the region, its core state of Confucian civilization remains a powerful authoritarian state resisting the spread of democracy. Authoritarian states in the region have been, by and large, immune from democratic reform impulses generated from the external environment. Due to the absence of such external impulses, democratic transitions have primarily had to emerge out of democratic demand from the mass citizenry in the form of a vigorous civic movement. This may explain why East Asia remains a democratically underdeveloped region. Another possible explanation points to the illiberal conceptions of democracy and good governance among both citizens and political leaders and their unwillingness to submit to the democratic norms of pluralism and diversity. The illiberal cultural values and norms do not prevent the birth or emergence of democratic regimes, but they do determine how its institutions function on a daily basis. For this reason, democracies in East Asia may never resemble the liberal democracies of the West.

Substantively, despite growing experience with democratic politics, all new democracies in East Asia have failed to become effective liberal democracies. While the new democracies in southern Europe became consolidated within the first decade of democratic rule, new East Asian democracies remain defective or illiberal even in their second or third decade of democratic rule (Croissant 2004).

East Asian experiences to date provide a number of insights into the ongoing debates about the contours, dynamics, sources, and consequences of current global democratization. Contrary to modernization theory, which claims democracy is economically preconditioned, democracy has blossomed in one of the world's poorest countries (Mongolia). Contrary to the notion that democracy requires a Judeo-Christian or liberal political culture, it has also successfully emerged in Buddhist (Mongolia and Thailand),

Confucian (South Korea and Taiwan), and Muslim (Indonesia) countries. The successful emergence of democracies in culturally, economically, and politically diverse countries appears to support the *universalist* claim that the whole world can become democratic (Diamond 2008; Friedman 1995).

Nonetheless, the failure of nearly two-thirds of East Asian countries to become and remain fully democratic appears to support more strongly the *preconditionalist* claim that democracy is not suitable for any and every type of society (Dahl 1971; Huntington 1993; Sartori 1995). Moreover, the enduring illiberal mode of democratic governance in all of the remaining democratic countries in East Asia supports the *sequentialist* claim that the introduction of democracy prior to the establishment of modern political institutions, such as the rule of law and multiple groups of civil society, leads to incomplete democracy (Rose and Shin 2001). The persistent and pervasive embrace of illiberal political norms by the East Asian mass citizenries also supports the widely discredited

Asian values thesis in the West that the liberal mode of democratic governance will not become a universal phenomenon (Bell *et al.* 1995; Zakaria 1994). It also undermines the characterization of Asian exceptionalism as an illusion (Fukuyama 1997).

Over the next two to three decades, East Asia is not likely to become a region of liberal democratic miracles. Instead, this region of amazing economic progress is likely to unfold the illiberal or a-liberal patterns of democratization hidden by Occidentalism, a tendency of the West to see other parts of the world from the perspective of its own values. The democratic transformation of authoritarian regimes and the enrichment of illiberal democracies will continue to evolve very slowly and in different ways in the various nations of East Asia. The specific evolutionary paths the different countries will take will depend upon how political leaders and the mass citizenries understand and perceive democratic politics and how they interact through democratic institutions.

QUESTIONS

1. What constitutes democratization? Why is it often conceptualized as a multi-level and multi-dimensional phenomenon? In what specific level and dimension of democratization do you think the East Asian region is most deficient?
2. What contextual factors distinguish East Asia from other regions in democratization?
3. Much has also been said about the influence of Confucian values in promoting conflict avoidance during the transition process. Is this a unique feature in Asia or have other regions also been influenced by predominant cultural forces?
4. In East Asia, modes of transitions, either pacted or unpacted, have had relatively little effect in promoting democratic stability and consolidation. Is this the same for other regions?
5. The Asian values thesis argues that some East Asian countries may not be amenable to democracy because their Confucian value system promotes a mindset of deference to authority and the preservation of political order at all costs. Do you agree or disagree with this thesis? Why?
6. Why is civil society viewed as essential to democratization? What specific roles has civil society played in the processes of transition and consolidation in the region?

Visit the Online Resource Centre that accompanies this book for additional questions to accompany each chapter, and a range of other resources: <www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/haerpfer/>.