

Comparative Government

Dr Chao-Yo Cheng



Week 4: Ruling



Today's plan

- ▶ Logistics: Attendance and assessment
- ▶ Recap from previous weeks
 - Nationalism and democracy (and varieties of democracy)
 - Reading exercise: "Constitutional Design and Quality of Democracy"
- ▶ Refresher lecture: Democracy versus autocracy
 - Political development and regime change
 - Comparative authoritarianism



Reading exercise summary: Nationalism and democracy

- ▶ Nationalism is one of the most important political ideologies in contemporary era as it is tied to the creation of nation-states
- ▶ Nationalism may or may not go along with democracy, as with a strong sense of shared identities
 - is crucial for a "healthy" democracy with strong civic culture; see Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work* (1993)
 - can pave the foundation for far-right movements against minorities (e.g., India under BJP) and political repression in dictatorships (e.g., North Korea)
- ▶ Nationalism could be categorized by (1) the narrative content (inclusive versus exclusive) and (2) the degree to which the narrative is open to contestation (open versus close)
- ▶ Further questions to reflect on "British nationalism"



Monkey Cage

How flawed constitutions undermine democracy

February 26, 2018 More than 7 years ago



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A replica of the Liberty Bell stands in front of Union Station in the District in 2013. (Bill O'Leary/The Washington Post)



Recap: Varieties of democratic constitutions

- ▶ Varieties of constitutional democracy
 - Executive system: presidential versus parliamentary
 - Electoral system: majoritarian/plurality, PR and mixed-member (and the resulting party system)
 - Legislative system: uni- or bi-cameral
 - Central-local relations: federal, unitary and decentralized
- ▶ Two visions of democracy: Majoritarian Model versus Consensus Model
 - Power concentration and dispersion (Lijphart 1999; Powell 2000), and the resulting design of judiciary
 - Rigid or adaptive constitutions (Levitsky and Murillo 2009)
- ▶ Democratic constitutional design is a response to "Madison's Dilemma" – creating a government strong enough to govern while limited enough to protect civil liberties



Refresher lecture

- ▶ Political development and regime change
 - By driving force
 - By starting point
- ▶ Comparative authoritarianism
 - Definition, terminology and typology
 - Tactics of authoritarian governance: Repression, co-optation and information control
- ▶ Regime type and development

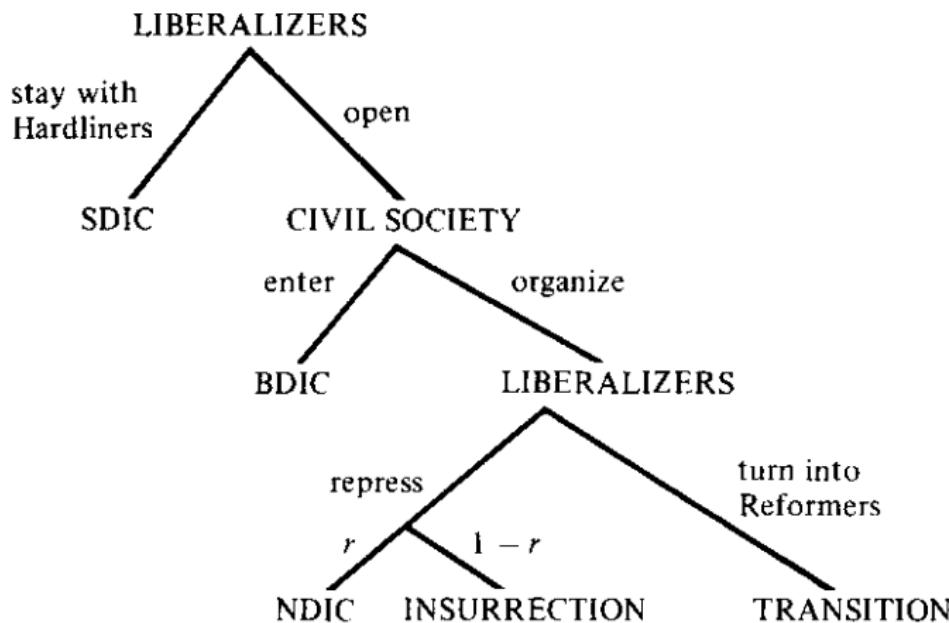


Regime change and political development

- ▶ "Modernization" as the key driving force
 - Economic modernization (?)
 - Cultural modernization (?)
- ▶ Regime change can start from anywhere
 - Internal: Top-down (elites) and/or bottom-up (civil society)
 - External: Foreign powers and/or diaspora



62 TRANSITIONS TO DEMOCRACY



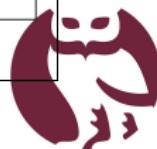
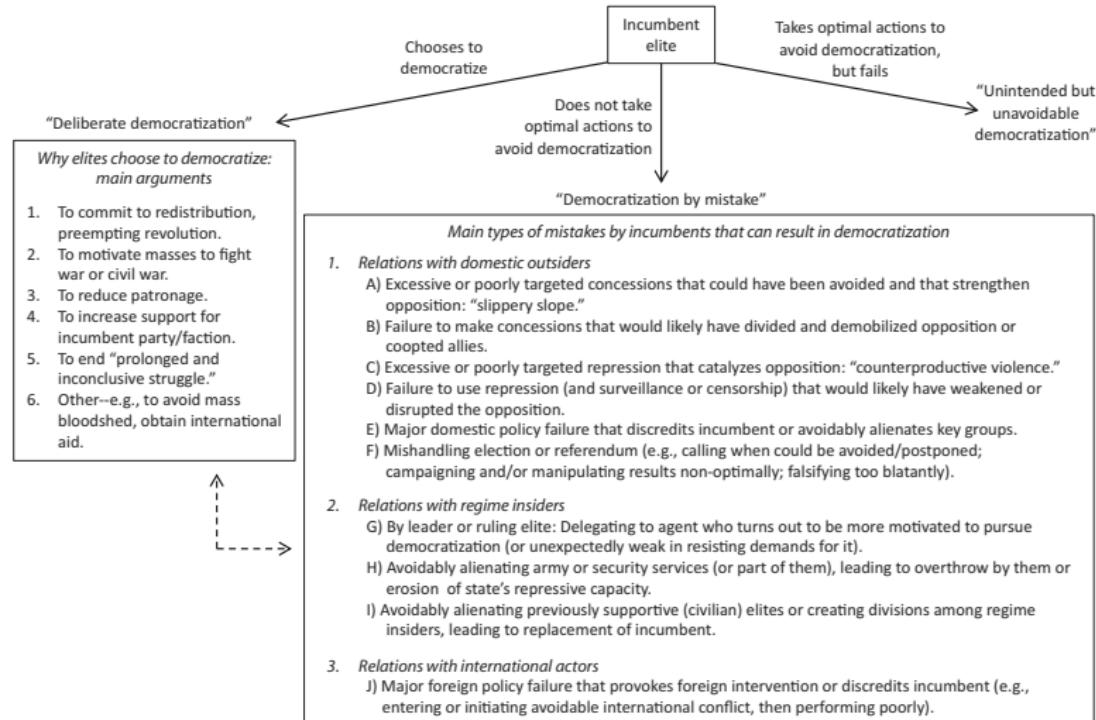
Democracy by Mistake: How the Errors of Autocrats Trigger Transitions to Free Government

DANIEL TREISMAN

*H*ow does democracy emerge from authoritarian rule? Certain influential theories contend that incumbents deliberately choose to share or surrender power. They do so to prevent revolution, motivate citizens to fight wars, incentivize governments to provide public goods, outbid elite rivals, or limit factional violence. Examining the history of all democratizations since 1800, I show that such deliberate-choice arguments may help explain up to about one-third of the cases. In more than two-thirds, the evidence suggests that democratization occurred not because incumbents chose it but because, while trying to prevent it, they made mistakes that weakened their hold on power. Rather than being granted by farsighted elites or forced on them by the rise of new classes, democracy appears to have spread most often because of incumbents' missteps that triggered previously latent factors.



FIGURE 1. Typology of Paths to Democracy





Monday demonstrations in East Germany (1989-1991)





Arab Spring and the fall of Mubarak in Egypt (2011)



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Abstract

References

Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic

Published online by Cambridge University Press: 13 June 2011

Sheri Berman

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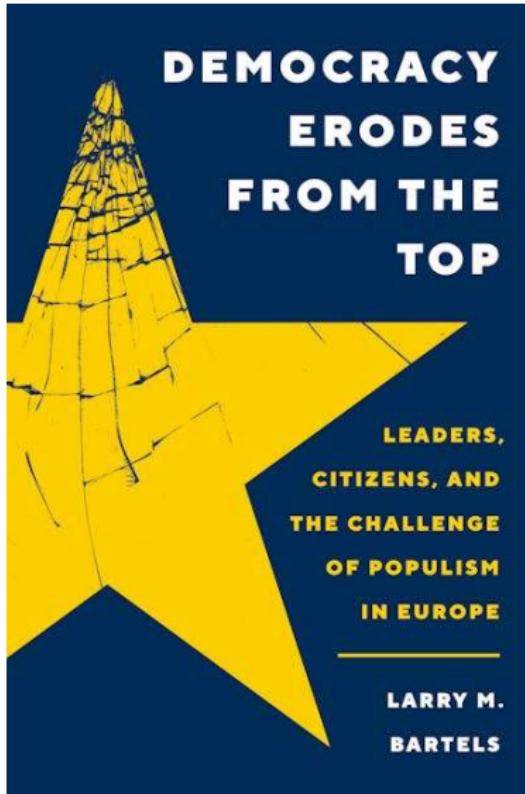
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Abstract

Practically everywhere one looks these days the concept of "civil society" is in vogue. Neo-Tocquevillian scholars argue that civil society plays a role in driving political, social, and even economic outcomes. This new conventional wisdom, however, is flawed. It is simply not true that democratic government is always strengthened, not weakened, when it faces a vigorous civil society. This essay shows how a robust civil society helped scuttle the twentieth century's most critical democratic experiment, Weimar Germany. An important implication of this analysis is that under certain circumstances associationism and the prospects for democratic stability can actually be inversely related. To know when civil society activity will take on oppositional or even antidemocratic tendencies, one needs to ground one's analyses in concrete examinations of political reality. Political scientists should remember that Tocqueville considered Americans' political associations to be as important as their nonpolitical ones, and they should therefore examine more closely the connections between the two under various conditions.





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HOW DEMOCRACIES DIE

**What History Reveals
About Our Future**

STEVEN LEVITSKY
& DANIEL ZIBLATT



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Further questions to think about

- ▶ By the underlying driving force and starting point, how many combinations are possible here?
- ▶ Do regime changes always lead to democratization? Democratic transition versus consolidation?
- ▶ Recent trend of "autocratization" and "democratic backsliding" – why?

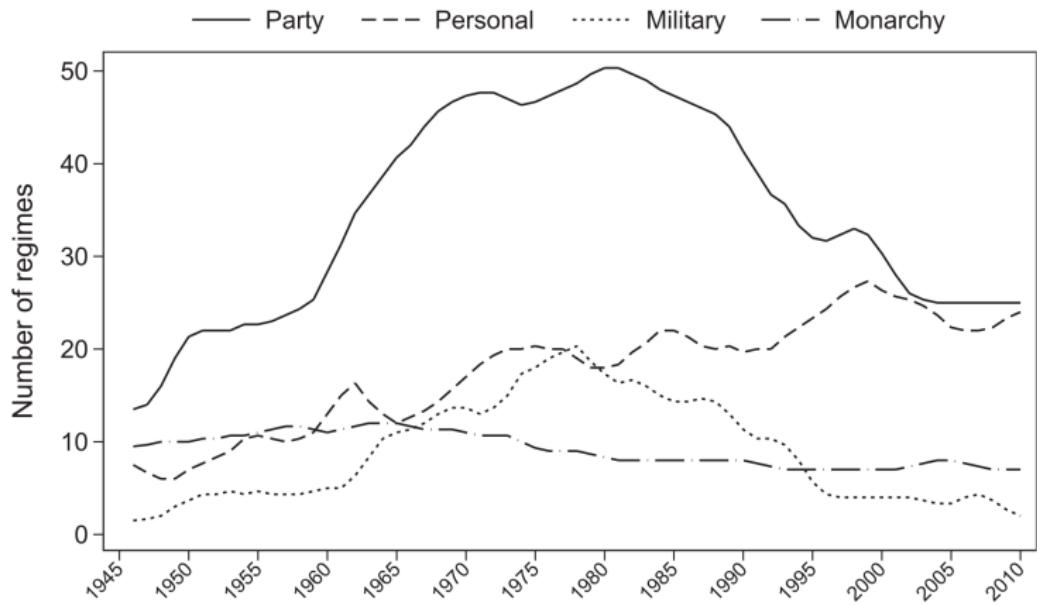


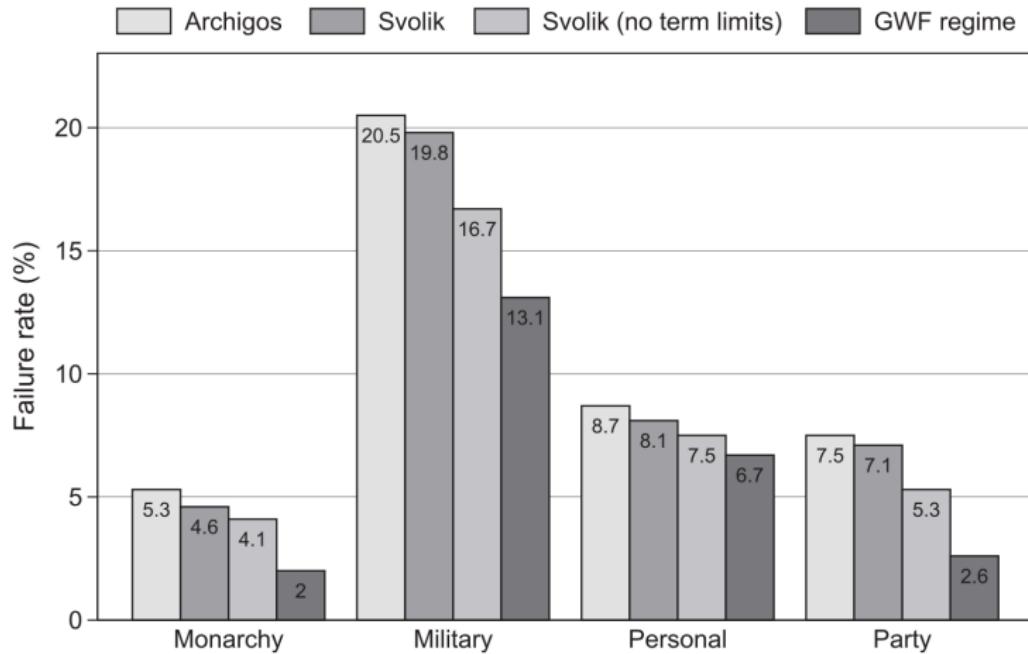
Comparative authoritarianism: Definition and terminology

- ▶ Cheibub et al (2010): For a regime to be democratic, both the **chief executive office** and the **legislative body** must be filled by regular and competitive elections (ex ante uncertainty, ex post irreversibility and repeatability)
- ▶ Geddes et al (2015)
 - An executive achieved power through undemocratic means; "**undemocratic**" refers to any means besides direct, reasonably fair, competitive elections
 - The government achieved power through democratic means, but subsequently changed the formal or informal rules
 - The military prevented parties that substantial numbers of citizens who would be expected to vote for from competing and/or dictated important policy choices
- ▶ Terminology: Dictatorships and autocracies; authoritarianism and totalitarianism



Varieties of authoritarianism (typology versus dichotomy)

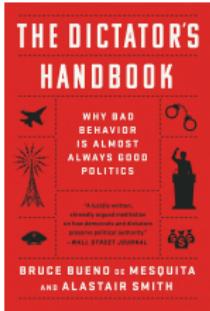




- ▶ Military regimes are most prone to collapse
- ▶ Monarchies and single-party regimes are the most resilient



Governing authoritarian regimes



- ▶ Physical repression and coercion
- ▶ Information control and censorship
- ▶ Co-optation and mobilization through institutions and patronage



A dictator's toolkit: Understanding how co-optation affects repression in autocracies

[Erica Frantz](#) and [Andrea Kendall-Taylor](#)  [View all authors and affiliations](#)

Volume 51, Issue 3 | <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343313519808>

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Abstract

A dictator's motivation for using repression is fairly clear, but why some repress more than others or favor particular types of repressive strategies is less obvious. Using statistical analysis, this article demonstrates that a dictator's reliance on co-optation fundamentally alters how repression is used. Specifically, it finds that co-optation through the use of political parties and a legislature creates incentives that lead dictators to decrease empowerment rights restrictions, like censorship, while increasing physical integrity rights violations, like torture and political imprisonment. This occurs because, by creating parties and a legislature, a dictator draws his potential opposition out of the general public and into state institutions, making it easier to identify who these opponents are, to monitor their activities, and to gauge the extent of their popular support. This reduces the need to impose broad types of repressive measures, like empowerment rights restrictions, that breed discontent within the overall population. At the same time, co-optation creates the risk that rivals, once co-opted, will use their positions within the system to build their own bases of support from which to seek the dictator's overthrow, generating incentives for dictators to increase physical integrity violations to limit the threat posed by these individuals.



- ▶ Against individuals versus general population
- ▶ Logistics of political repression
 - Information dilemma
 - Principal-agent delegation
 - Loyalty versus coercion





Lee Hsien Loong: "No one should be denied medical care because they cannot afford it and that is my commitment to you. I introduced the **Pioneer Generation Package** (PGP) in 2014. Now, the Government will be rolling out the 'Merdeka Package' to those in their 60s, who had just missed out on qualifying for the PGP."

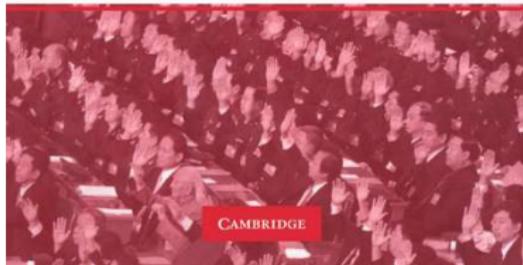




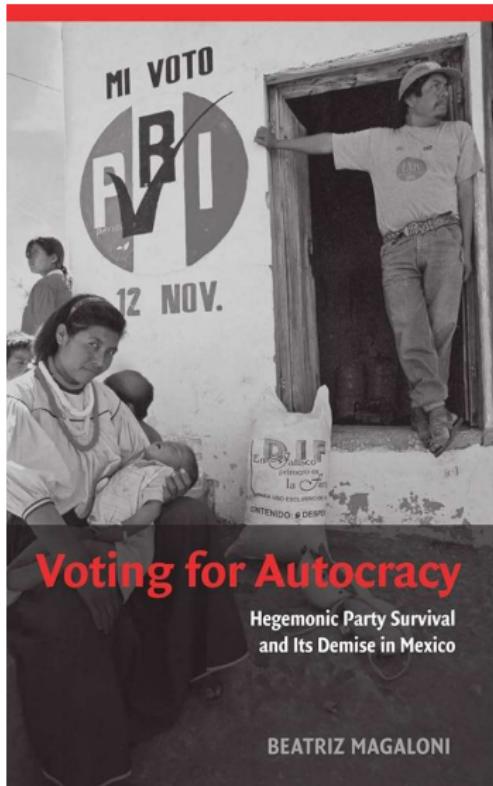
POLITICAL
INSTITUTIONS
UNDER DICTATORSHIP



Jennifer Gandhi



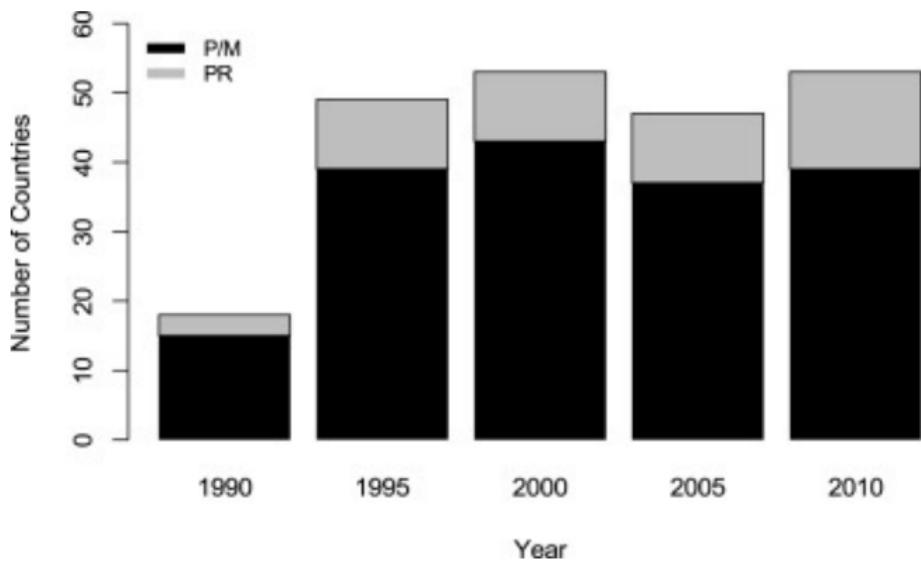
CAMBRIDGE





General elections in North Korea (2014)







Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Electoral Studies

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Electoral institutions and repression in dictatorships[☆]

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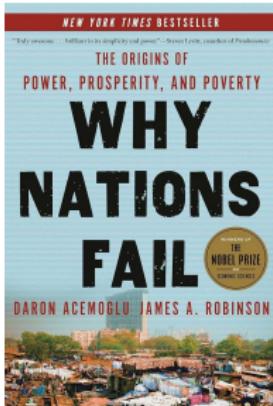
Authoritarian elections
Electoral systems
Repression
Human rights

ABSTRACT

We argue that the relationship between authoritarian elections and repression depends on the electoral system in use. Proportional representation (PR) systems co-opt more heterogeneous political groups to contest and receive seats in the legislature and thus, dictators are less likely to use broad-based repression. Under plurality rules, by contrast, the regime has more incentives to mobilize turnout and deter collective action. Examining electoral systems from 1990 to 2010, we find that elections only reduce broad-based repression under PR systems, which are less commonly used in non-democracies. Our results highlight the importance of formal institutions in shaping political outcomes even in dictatorships.



Recap: Regime type and economic development



- ▶ Rule of law, constraints on executive power and private property rights
- ▶ Electoral accountability and government responsiveness

