

The (Meta)Politics of Subnational Democracy: Weaving a Thesis Together

Javier Pérez Sandoval

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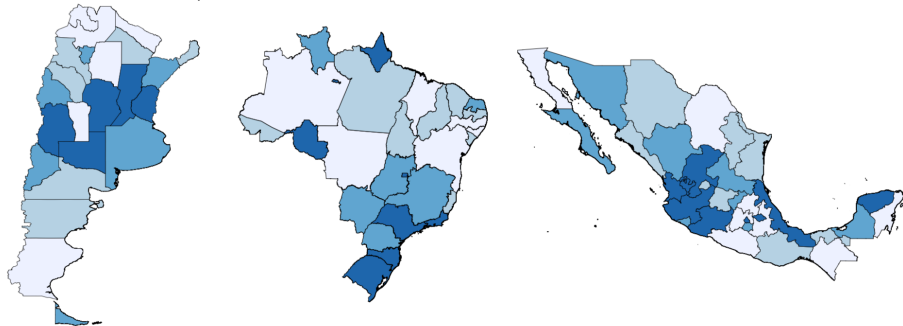
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The Puzzle

Post Third-wave, we see territorial democratic variation.

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The Existing Answers

What explains subnational regime heterogeneity?

The Existing Answers

Overview of the Literature on Subnational Democracy

Approach	Argument/Mechanism	Authors
Structural	Economic development enhances subnational democracy.	Montero (2007) McMann (2012) McMann & Petrov (2000)
	Fiscal transfers from federal/central government deter subnational democracy.	Gervasoni (2010)
Strategic	Subnational incumbents cannot repress opposition and enter a competing dynamic to set the stage of conflict.	Gibson (2012) Behrend (2011)
	Local elites increase their control by avoiding federal intervention.	Giraudy (2011)
Institutional	Nationalization of electoral competition pressures local political parties to acquiesce to democratic standards.	Borges (2016) Souza (2016)
	Universalization of social policies limit the patronage capabilities of local elites and enhances citizens' economic and political autonomy.	

The Existing Answers

What explains subnational regime heterogeneity?

My very short answer: Economic Development

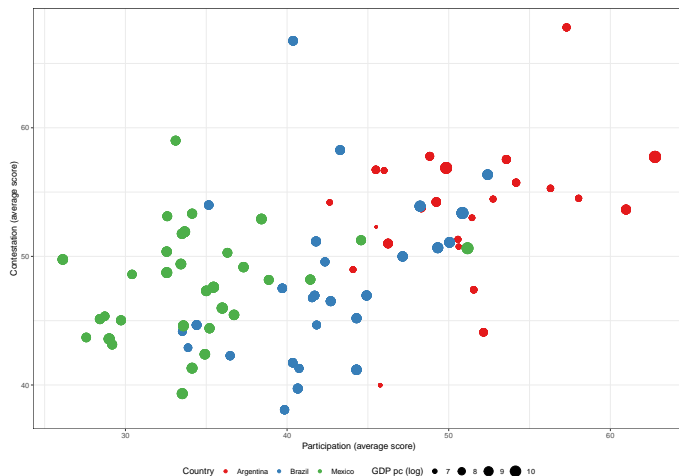
My (MPhil) Research

Countries: Argentina, Brazil and Mexico

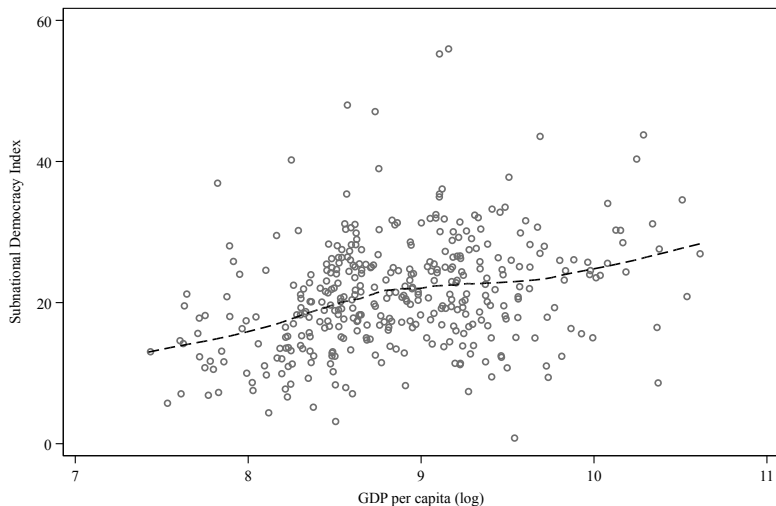
Unit of Analysis: States/Provincias

- Evidence
 - Quantitative
 - **Temporal Scope:** 1983-2017
 - **DV:** Index of Democracy (Electoral)
 - **Indep. Var:** GDP per capita
 - **Robust to:** RE, FE

Subnational Democracy across Latin American Federal Democracies



Subnational Democracy and Economic Development



Taking the Research Further

- Why do we see this pattern?
- Why are econ.development and sub.nat democracy linked?
- Endogeneity
 - 1980's-onwards but, what was it like before?
 - Could there not be a feedback loop between a state's level of development in the 70's and its levels of democracy today?

Taking the Research Further

- **Answer:** Historical in nature.
- **Two tasks:** Comparative Historical Analysis + Instrumental Variable approach

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Unpacking the Puzzle

- Look into:
 - Regional and National Historical Accounts (Political, Social and Economic)
 - State/Provincia Specific Historical Accounts

Unpacking the Puzzle

- Went back to a basic/classic factor:
 - Labor relations (Moore, RSS and Collier and Collier)

Unpacking the Puzzle: A Broad Hypothesis

- The two core junctures of capitalist development —Import Substitution Industrialization and Market-Oriented Reforms— by alternating labor relations, were key in shaping the territoriality distinct political dynamics across the states and provincias of the region.

Unpacking the Argument - Structuring the Thesis

- Antecedent Conditions: Colonial Legacies + National Consolidation
- Critical Juncture: Industrialization
- Aftermath: Market Oriented Reforms
- Writing-Up time

Unpacking the Argument: Antecedent Conditions: Colonial Legacies + National Consolidation

- Colonial Legacies
 - Slavery, Patterns of Conquest (Early vs Late Centers)
- National Consolidation
 - Impact of 19th Century Struggles
- By the late 19th early 20th Century variation is set -> Path Dependence.
- **Example:** North-West Argentina, North-East Brazil and Southern Mexico

Unpacking the Argument: (Re)Emerging Puzzles

- Is it the case that Collier & Collier misidentified the juncture? (i.e. not industrialization but an earlier period)
- Is it the case that they correctly identified the juncture but missed subnational variation?
- Would we expect MoR's —the most recent event— to significantly impact subnational variation?

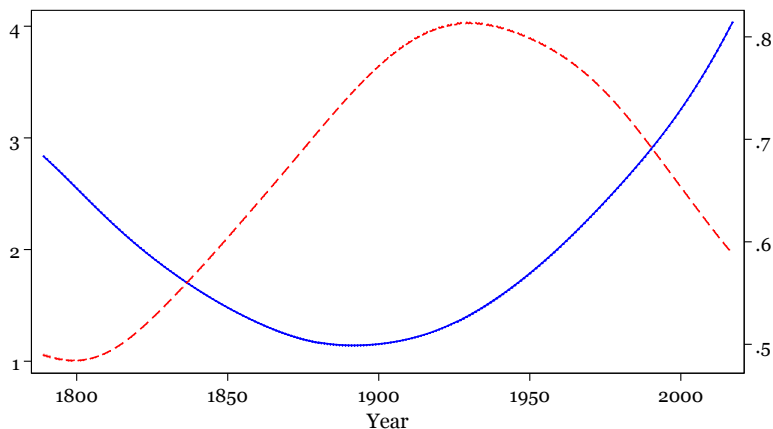
Unpacking the Argument: Things to Ponder

- What's my DV again? -> Subnational Variation
- How does it vary? -> Time and Space
 - Two Dimensions:
 - Relative - Horizontal: Between States
 - Internal - Vertical : Within each state

Unpacking the Argument: Things to Ponder

- Elephant in the Room: Authoritarian Past
 - I need to show heterogeneity through 19th and 20th century
 - Heterogeneity is “good” up until the 3rd wave.

Looking (Back) at the Big Picture



- Subnational Elections are Free & Fair
- - Subnational Heterogeneity: Civil Liberties and Fairness

(Re)Framing the Findings

- Colonial Legacies and National Consolidation -> Set the Relative positions.
 - Relative variation is more sticky than vertical one.
 - Bottom-Up democratic elements remain dormant.

(Re)Framing the Findings

- Since provincias face industrialization from different starting positions
-> They face pressures of incorporation with to varying degrees of intensity.
 - i.e. Really intense in the capitals (which is why they are across the board more democratic than other states) , Less or not at all in states with weak or no working class.
 - Industrialization and Incorporation struggles kick-start vertical variation.

Looking Ahead

- Dive-into industrialization period, then revisit.
- Revisit the Classics
- Think through:
 - Framing of the theory
 - Further evidence (?)
- Prep: Chapter and Paper.

Thank you! All your questions and feedback is welcome