Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci. 1999. 2:115–44
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WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT DEMOCRATIZATION AFTER TWENTY YEARS?

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KEY WORDS: democratization, transition, regime, authoritarian, military

ABSTRACT

This essay synthesizes the results of the large number of studies of late–20th-century democratization published during the last 20 years. Strong evidence supports the claims that democracy is more likely in more developed countries and that regime transitions of all kinds are more likely during economic downturns. Very few of the other arguments advanced in the transitions literature, however, appear to be generally true. This study proposes a theoretical model, rooted in characteristics of different types of authoritarian regimes, to explain many of the differences in democratization experience across cases in different regions. Evidence drawn from a data set that includes 163 authoritarian regimes offers preliminary support for the model proposed.

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INTRODUCTION

As the twentieth century ends, elected officials govern more countries than at any previous time in human history. Transitions to democracy have occurred with surprising frequency during the past 20 years, and a great deal has been written on the subject by enthusiastic and intrigued observers. This essay summarizes what we have learned about such transitions and proposes a theory that makes sense of a number of apparently disparate findings.

Since 1974, identified by Huntington (1991) as the beginning of the "third wave" of democratization, 85 authoritarian regimes have ended. These transitions have resulted in 30 surviving and mostly quite stable democracies (not including democracies in some of the new states created as a consequence of

1094-2939/99/0616-0115$08.00

regime change); 9 democracies that lasted only a very short time before being overthrown; 8 cases in which there have been elections and leadership changes but in which either democracy appears very unstable or important groups are excluded from competition; 4 descents into warlordism; and 34 new authoritarian regimes.[1]

Four regime changes led directly to the break-up of states, and 3 to the reunion of previously divided nations. Of the 21 new states created in the wake of regime changes, 5 seem at this point to be full democracies and 8 have held competitive elections but remain in important respects undemocratic. In 8, either elections have not been held or competition has been severely constrained. Six have been ravaged by civil war or impoverished by war with neighbors.

Thirty-two countries that either had authoritarian regimes in 1974 or have succumbed to them since then remain authoritarian, though most of them have taken some steps in the direction of political liberalization. In an additional 7 countries, long-ruling parties or rulers who had previously reinforced their dominance by fraud, limitations on competition, and selective repression have held competitive elections considered free and fair by observers, but have not been turned out of office. These regimes are hard to classify because well-entrenched incumbents have so many advantages with regard to control of state resources and the media that the lifting of restrictions on competition may not create a level playing field. Though several appear to have started irreversably down the road to democracy, it is impossible to know whether such long-ruling parties and leaders will really step down if voted out of office until we see them do so.

Nearly a quarter of a century has passed since the beginning of the third wave, so perhaps the owl of Minerva is waking up and readying its wings for flight. With all the years for study and all these cases to explore, what have we learned about late–twentieth-century regime transition and democratization?

[1]Figures here and elsewhere are drawn from a data set collected by the author, which includes all authoritarian regimes (except monarchies) lasting three years or more that either existed in 1946 or came to power after 1946, in countries that achieved independence before 1990 and have a million or more inhabitants. Regimes are defined as sets of formal and informal rules and procedures for selecting national leaders and policies. Using this definition, periods of instability and temporary "moderating" military interventions (Stepan 1971) are considered interregna, not regimes. The three-year threshold is simply a way of excluding such periods from the data set. This cut-off point was chosen, after considerable empirical investigation of very short-lived authoritarian interludes, as the one that introduced the least misclassification into the data. I counted an authoritarian regime as defunct if either the dictator and his supporters had been ousted from office or if a negotiated transition resulted in reasonably fair, competitive elections and a change in the party or individual occupying executive office. Cases in which elections deemed free and fair by outside observers have been held but have not led to a turnover in personnel are treated here as uncertain outcomes because, until they actually step down, we do not know if long-ruling parties such as the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) in Mexico or the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania (CCM) in Tanzania really will relinquish power.

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Scholars have greeted the increasing number of democratizations with delight, intense attention, and theoretical puzzlement. It seems as though there should be a parsimonious and compelling explanation of the transitions, but the explanations proposed thus far have been confusingly complicated, careless about basic methodological details, often more useful as description than explanation, and surprisingly inconsistent with each other. The basic problem faced by analysts is that the process of democratization varies enormously from case to case and region to region. Generalizations proposed have failed either to accommodate all the real-world variation or to explain it.

This essay first reviews several of the most prominent arguments about the causes of democratization and briefly considers the evidence supporting and challenging them. It then suggests that different kinds of authoritarianism break down in characteristically different ways and sketches the theoretical underpinnings for this difference. Many of the contradictory conclusions reached by analysts who focus primarily on one region or another make sense once we take into account the predominance of different forms of authoritarianism in different parts of the world and the systematic differences in the ways these different forms disintegrate. A study of 163 authoritarian regimes in 94 countries provides evidence that the differences in breakdown patterns hypothesized actually do exist.

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PAST RESEARCH

One of the few stylized facts to emerge from studies of regime transition is that democracy is more likely in more developed countries. The positive relationship between democratic government and economic development was empirically established beyond reasonable doubt by Jackman (1973) and Bollen (1979) and has been confirmed more recently by Burkhart & Lewis-Beck (1994). Several recent studies have increased our understanding of the process that results in this relationship. Using sophisticated statistical models to capture the complicated interaction between regime type and economic growth, Londregan & Poole (1990, 1996) have shown that the most important predictor of transitions to authoritarianism, whether from democracy or from other forms of authoritarianism, is poverty. Working in the same vein, Przeworski & Limongi (1997) show that once democratization has occurred, for whatever reason, it survives in countries above a certain level of economic development. Among countries below that threshold, the probability of a reversion to authoritarianism rises as the level of economic development falls.

Przeworski & Limongi interpret their findings as a challenge to modernization theory, though it seems to me a revisionist confirmation—in fact, the strongest empirical confirmation ever. Noting that transitions to democracy can occur for many reasons, they argue that the observed relationship between

democracy and development is caused not so much by the greater likelihood that more developed countries will democratize as by the improbability of authoritarian interventions in developed countries. This argument challenges all previous work on democratization; from Lipset (1959) and others associated with the early articulation of modernization theory to Moore (1966) and his descendants to those who have advocated a focus on contingent choices, *fortuna*, and *virtu* in the study of transitions (most notably O'Donnell et al 1986), all analysts have focused their attention on transitions *to* democracy. Przeworski & Limongi's findings do not, however, disconfirm the basic arguments made by any of these schools of thought unless it turns out that modernization, the class composition of society, or contingent choices have no effect on the probability of transitions to authoritarianism, which seems unlikely.

From a large number of studies based on large numbers of cases covering several different time periods, the best of which use very sophisticated statistical models, we can conclude that a positive relationship exists between economic development and the likelihood of democratic government. A useful way to think about this relationship is shown in Figure 1.

This graphic image of modernization theory helps to interpret both standard observations and those that might otherwise be puzzling. First, we note that

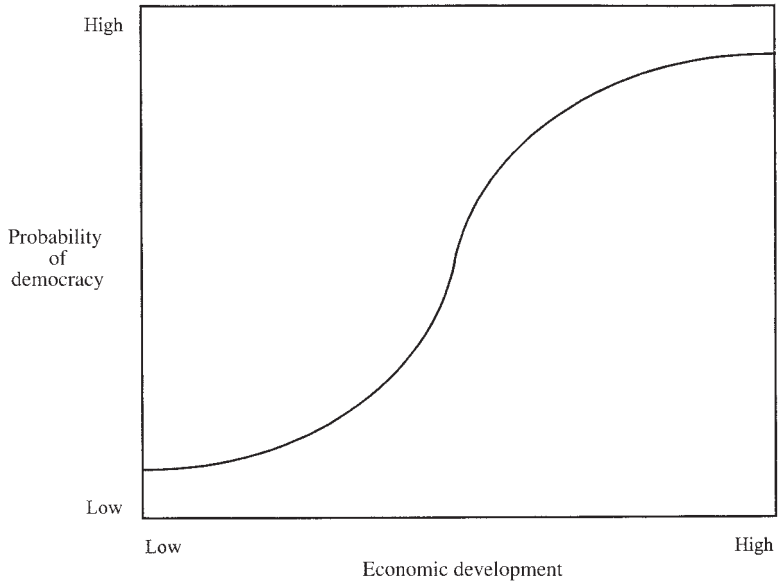

Figure 1 Modernization theory. The relationship between economic development (*horizontal axis*) and the probability of democracy (*vertical axis*) is nonlinear, taking on the standard "S" shape we expect when the dependent variable is a probability ranging between zero and one.

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among countries above a certain level of development, the probability of democracy is close to 100%, consistent with both casual observation and the findings of Przeworski & Limongi (1997). The probability of authoritarianism is similarly close to 100% below some threshold. Few countries currently remain below that threshold, but we can interpret it as consistent with the overwhelming historical prevalence of authoritarianism since the invention of states. The middle area of the graph is in many ways more interesting. Here, the probability of democracy is close to 50%, and we should not be surprised that countries at middle levels of development tend to alternate between different regime types. This is the group of countries in which transitions to both democracy and authoritarianism should be most common. It is also the group of countries in which human choices and serendipitous events—*virtu* and *fortuna*—could most easily affect outcomes, since underlying structural causes are fairly evenly balanced.

Of course, not all countries have the form of government this graph would lead us to expect. At the moment (summer 1998), Mongolia, Benin, and Madagascar have what appear to be viable democratic governments, and Singapore remains authoritarian. But we do not expect any social science theory to explain everything or predict perfectly, and certainly "modernization theory," whatever underlying process it actually reflects, does not.

In short, after 20 years of observation and analysis during the third wave of academic interest in democratization, we can be reasonably certain that a positive relationship between development and democracy exists, though we do not know why.

A second stylized fact is also reasonably well established. Virtually all transition specialists believe that poor economic performance increases the likelihood of authoritarian breakdown, as it increases democratic breakdown and defeat of incumbents in stable democracies (e.g. Diamond & Linz 1989, Bermeo 1990). Most quantitative studies support their view. Przeworski & Limongi (1997) find the expected relationship between low economic growth and transition. Haggard & Kaufman (1995) emphasize the effects of economic crisis on regime change.

I turn now to a consideration of some of the more controversial arguments proposed by scholars. The body of literature on transitions now includes hundreds, if not thousands, of case studies of particular transitions; dozens of comparisons among small numbers of cases; and at least half a dozen important efforts at theoretically informed general synthesis. Many of the finest minds in comparative politics have worked on the subject. Virtually every suggested generalization to arise from this literature, however, has been challenged. Should social scientists throw in the towel, or is there some way to integrate the findings of different specialists working on different parts of the world and different time periods?

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Until recently, one of the most widely accepted generalizations was that "there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence—direct or indirect—of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself" (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986:19). Carefully documented case studies of a number of Latin American transitions supported the idea that the first steps toward what eventually became democratization could be traced to splits within military governments. The transition from military rule in Greece also fit. Analogous studies of the roots of transition in Spain and Portugal showed the existence of similar splits within the old regimes and were thus not seen as challenging the argument, though they brought some anomalies to analysts' attention.

The democratizations that occurred in the wake of the Soviet collapse, however, could not in most cases be traced to splits within the old regime. Nor can most regime transitions in Africa. Bratton & van de Walle conclude from a study of 42 African countries that "transitions in Africa seem to be occurring more commonly from below.... [R]ulers are driven by calculations of personal political survival: They resist political openings for as long as possible" (1997:83).

In keeping with the argument about elite-initiated democratization, most observers of Latin American transitions assign little importance to popular mobilization as a cause of democratization. Popular mobilizations took place in many countries, but they usually occurred relatively late in the process, when democratization was well underway and the risks of opposition had diminished. Popular protest may have pushed democratization farther and faster than regime elites initially intended (Collier & Mahoney 1997; Bermeo 1997; R Collier, unpublished manuscript), but in most Latin American cases it did not cause the initiation of liberalization. In contrast, popular protest was the main reason old-regime elites agreed to begin negotiation in a number of East European and African cases (Bratton & van de Walle 1992, 1997).

Another often repeated claim is that pacts between elites facilitate successful transition to democracy (Burton et al 1992, Karl 1990). Pacts, as the term is used in the transitions literature, are agreements among contending elites that establish formulas for sharing or alternating in office, distributing the spoils of office, and constraining policy choice in areas of high salience to the groups involved, while excluding other groups from office, spoils, and influence over policy. Arguments about the usefulness of pacts have arisen from studies of Latin American and European cases of democratization, but, again, Bratton & van de Walle (1997) find no evidence of pacts in their African cases.

Yet another common argument is that "stronger" outgoing regimes are able to negotiate transition outcomes more favorable to themselves than those forced out by crisis. Agüero (1992, 1995), for example, argues that military governments that have ruled more effectively, such as those in Chile and Brazil, are able to secure a continuing role for officers in the policy process and

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safeguard themselves from prosecution for crimes committed in office, whereas those that lose wars or otherwise leave in disgrace, such as the Argentine and Greek militaries, have little leverage. Haggard & Kaufman (1995, 1997) concur with Agüero about military bargaining power, though they disagree about which regimes were stronger. Further, they maintain that regimes exiting during economic crisis have less ability to obtain opposition agreement to institutions that are conducive to the moderate future politics and policies they prefer. It has to be true that actors with more bargaining power can get more in negotiations, so this argument is highly plausible if not earthshaking. It has been challenged, however, not by evidence from a larger number of cases, but by the passage of time. Stronger outgoing leaders can certainly get more during negotiations, but what they get may only matter for a short time after the transition.

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THEORETICAL SYTHESIS

One of the reasons regime transitions have proved so theoretically intractable is that different kinds of authoritarianism differ from each other as much as they differ from democracy. They draw on different groups to staff government offices and different segments of society for support. They have different procedures for making decisions, different ways of handling the choice of leaders and succession, and different ways of responding to society and opponents. Because comparativists have not studied these differences systematically, what theorizing exists about authoritarian regimes is posed at a highly abstract level, and few authors have considered how characteristics of dictatorships affect transitions. These differences, however, cause authoritarian regimes to break down in systematically different ways, and they affect transition outcomes. Here I propose theoretical foundations for explaining these differences among types of authoritarianism.

As virtually all close observers of authoritarian governments have noted, politics in such regimes, as in all others, involves factionalism, competition, and struggle. The competition among rival factions, however, takes different forms in different kinds of authoritarian regimes and has different consequences.

To facilitate the analysis of these differences, I classify authoritarian regimes as personalist, military, single-party, or amalgams of the pure types. In military regimes, a group of officers decides who will rule and exercises some influence on policy. In single-party regimes, access to political office and control over policy are dominated by one party, though other parties may legally exist and compete in elections. Personalist regimes differ from both military and single-party in that access to office and the fruits of office depends much more on the discretion of an individual leader. The leader may be an officer and may have created a party to support himself, but neither the military nor

the party exercises independent decision-making power insulated from the whims of the ruler (see Bratton & van de Walle 1997:61–96, Linz & Chehabi 1998:4–45, Snyder 1998).[2]

Military regimes, as shown below, carry within them the seeds of their own disintegration; transitions from military rule usually begin with splits within the ruling military elite, as noted by much of the literature on Latin American transitions. In contrast, rival factions within single-party and personalist regimes have stronger incentives to cooperate with each other. Single-party regimes are quite resilient and tend to be brought down by exogenous events rather than internal splits (cf Haggard & Kaufman 1995, Huntington 1991). Personalist regimes are also relatively immune to internal splits except when calamitous economic conditions disrupt the material underpinnings of regime loyalty. They are especially vulnerable, however, to the death of the leader and to violent overthrow (Huntington 1991). The lower probability that internal splits will lead to regime breakdown in non-military forms of authoritarianism explains why observers of transitions in Africa and Eastern Europe usually find the beginnings of change outside the regime rather than inside. Below I elaborate these arguments.

To explain why military regimes are more susceptible to internal disintegration, I focus here on rivalries and relationships within the ruling entity of an authoritarian government: the officer corps, single party, clique surrounding the ruler, or some amalgam of two or more of these three. Action within the ruling entity, of course, tells only a part of the story of regime change. Opposition from outside the ruling group and exogenous shocks [e.g. Soviet collapse, international economic crisis, International Monetary Fund (IMF)-induced economic reform] affect, sometimes decisively, regime survival. However, by focusing on political dynamics within different kinds of authoritarian regimes, I aim to show precisely how exogenous shocks and popular mobilization affect different kinds of regimes and thus the likelihood of transition. Building a theoretical foundation for understanding different kinds of authoritarian regimes makes it possible to move beyond lists of causes that sometimes matter (found in many studies of transitions) and toward systematic statements about when particular causes are likely to matter.

Most authoritarian regimes are established through either military intervention or the elimination of competition by a party that has gained office via election. What I call personalist regimes generally develop after the actual seizure

[2]Many authoritarian regimes go through changes over time that affect their classification. It is common for officers who seize power in military coups, for example, to attempt to concentrate power in their own individual hands, to hold plebiscitary elections to legitimate their personal rule, and to create parties to organize their supporters. In these ways, they sometimes succeed in changing basic features of the regime. Where such changes occurred over time, I used the later, in most cases stabler, period as the basis for classification.

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of office, as a consequence of the struggle for power among rival leaders. In most military and some single-party regimes, struggles among factions, one backing the leader and others led by potential rivals, become visible to observers within the first few months after the seizure of power. When one individual wins such a struggle, successfully continuing to draw support from the organization that brought him to power but limiting his supporters' influence on policy and personnel decisions, I label the regime personalist. Winning the initial struggle is no guarantee of long-term security, but individual leaders sometimes achieve a position from which, with continuous monitoring and rapid, shrewd, and unscrupulous responses to incipient opposition, they can for a time prevent serious challenges from arising.

Coup plotters, especially those with past experience in power, can often foresee the possibility of regime personalization, and they attempt in various ways to prevent it. Institutional arrangements designed to insure power sharing and consultation among high-ranking officers can be very elaborate. It took months for the various factions within the Argentine armed forces to hammer out power-sharing arrangements before the 1976 coup, and the resultant complicated and cumbersome governing institutions all but immobilized decision making at various times (Fontana 1987). As another way to reduce the probability that one officer will succeed in consolidating personal power at the expense of his colleagues, plotters often choose an officer known for correctness, adherence to rules, fairness, lack of personal ambition, and low charisma to lead the junta or military command council. General Augusto Pinochet, for example, was chosen to lead what was supposed to be a collegial junta in Chile because he had the most seniority within the junta, and his colleagues thought him a safe choice precisely because of his professionalism, respect for rules, and wooden, uncharismatic demeanor. Their assessment of his character was mistaken, as many others have been before and since. But power does not always corrupt; General Humberto Castello Branco, chosen to lead the first military government in Brazil for much the same reasons, lived up to expectations and resisted the temptation to consolidate personal power. Groups that seize power extraconstitutionally often try to prevent the personalization of the regime, but pre-coup contracts are often unenforceable.

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Classification Issues

Although most authoritarian regimes are easy to classify, some are not. The criteria for classification used here emphasize control over access to power and influence rather than formal institutional characteristics. A military regime, in contrast to a personalist dictatorship led by a military officer, is one in which a group of officers determines who will lead the country and has some influence on policy. In an institutionalized military regime (many are not), senior officers have agreed on some formula for sharing or rotating power, and

consultation is somewhat routinized. Military hierarchy is respected, perhaps after an initial purge of supporters of the previous government. Examples of military regimes include the Brazilian (1964–1985), in which senior officers, in consultation with a small number of civilians, picked each successive president in keeping with rules specified by the institutions of the authoritarian regime; the Argentine (1976–1983), in which senior officers never completely lost the power to choose the president, despite intense factional struggle and the efforts of the first military president to renege on pre-coup agreements among the conspirators to rotate the office; and the Salvadoran (1948–1984), in which military manipulation of elections insured that the officer selected by the military as its candidate always won the presidency.

In contrast to these cases, many regimes headed by military officers are not in reality controlled by a group of senior officers. It is common for military interventions to lead to short periods of military rule followed by the consolidation of power by a single officer and the political marginalization of much of the rest of the officer corps. These are personal dictatorships, even though the leader wears a uniform. Regimes such as Rafael Trujillo's in the Dominican Republic (1930–1961), Idi Amin's in Uganda (1971–1979), and Jean-Bédel Bokassa's in the Central African Republic (1966–1979) are somewhat extreme instances of the transformation of military intervention into personal tyranny. Others, such as Pinochet's in Chile and Suharto's in Indonesia, are harder to classify because the military institution retained some autonomy and influence. Here I classify them in intermediate categories (on Chile, see Remmer 1989 and Arriagada 1988; on Indonesia, see Jenkins 1984, Liddle 1989).

Because many dictators form parties to support themselves, distinguishing between "real" and nominal single-party regimes involves the same careful judgments as distinguishing between military regimes and personalist ones led by officers. In the ideal-type single-party regime, a party organization exercises some power over the leader at least part of the time, controls the career paths of officials, organizes the distribution of benefits to supporters, and mobilizes citizens to vote and show support for party leaders in other ways. Holding regular elections in which there is some competition, either from opposition parties or within the dominant party, is a strong indication that a party has achieved a level of organization and influence sufficient to be taken seriously as a political actor. Examples of single-party regimes include that of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) in Mexico, the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania (CCM), and the Leninist parties in various East European countries. Regimes such as Juan Perón's in Argentina, in which the leader himself maintains a near monopoly over policy and personnel decisions despite having founded a support party, are personalist.

Area experts' criteria for distinguishing dominant-party authoritarian regimes from democracies vary by region. Latin Americanists generally consid-

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er Mexico authoritarian at least until 1996, but most African specialists consider Botswana, Senegal, and even Zimbabwe democratic. To compare across regions, the same set of criteria must be applied everywhere. In this study, regimes are considered authoritarian and labeled single-party if other parties have been banned or subjected to serious harassment or institutional disadvantage, or if the dominant party has never lost control of the executive since coming to power and usually wins more than two thirds of the seats in the legislature. Once a regime is labeled single-party, I do not consider it fully democratized until one turnover of executive power has occurred. Where it appears that conclusions might be affected by the considerable stringency of these criteria, I also show results using a less demanding rule.[3]

Theoretical Foundations

Standard theories of politics in democratic regimes begin with two simplifying assumptions: (*a*) Politicians want to get into office and remain there; (*b*) the best strategy for doing so is to give constituents what they want. Both of these assumptions need modification in the context of authoritarianism. Although even very coercive regimes cannot survive without some support, in the absence of routine ways for citizens to remove authoritarian leaders from office, questions of who exactly their constituents are, how satisfied they have to be, and what factors besides satisfaction with regime performance affect their level of acquiescence require empirical investigation and cannot be answered in the abstract. Moreover, before questions about the identity of constituents and how to keep them acquiescent can be relevant, we need to ask whether it is plausible to assume that potential authoritarian leaders always want to achieve office and, once having achieved it, always try to hold onto power. If they do not, we need a new theory to account for their behavior. One of the central arguments of this essay is that military officers, in contrast to leaders in single-party and personalist regimes, often do not.

The Interests of Military Officers

Research on the attitudes and preferences of military officers in many different societies shows that officers in different countries come from different socioeconomic, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. They have different ideologies and feel sympathetic toward different societal interests. No generalizations can be made about the interests or policies they are likely to support.

[3]These regime type classifications are similar to Huntington's (1991), and my "coding" judgments are very close to his. My decision rule for determining whether a political system had crossed the threshold to democracy is essentially the same as that of Przeworski & Limongi (1997). The biggest difference between my classification scheme and that of Linz & Stepan (1996) is that I collapse what they call sultanistic and civilianized regimes into one category, personalist. Which classification scheme is most useful depends on the purpose to which it is being put.

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There is, however, a consensus in the literature that most professional soldiers place a higher value on the survival and efficacy of the military itself than on anything else (Janowitz 1960, 1977; Finer 1975; Bienen 1978; DeCalo 1976; Kennedy 1974; Van Doorn 1968, 1969).

This corporate interest implies a concern with the maintenance of hierarchy, discipline, and cohesiveness within the military; autonomy from civilian intervention; and budgets sufficient to attract high-quality recruits and buy state-of-the-art weapons. Officers also value highly the territorial integrity of the nation and internal order, but they feel unable to pursue these goals effectively unless the military itself remains unified and adequately supplied (Stepan 1971, Nordlinger 1977, de Oliveira 1978, Barros 1978). In countries in which joining the military has become a standard path to personal enrichment (for example, Bolivia for a time, Panama, Nicaragua under Somoza, Guatemala, Ghana before 1981, Nigeria, Thailand, Congo), acquisitive motives can be assumed to rank high in most officers' preferences—highest for some, and second or third for most, if only because the continued existence of lucrative opportunities for officers may depend on the survival of the military as an effective organization.

Such preferences imply that officers agree to join coup conspiracies only if they believe that the civilian government prevents the achievement of their main goals, and that many, in fact, will only join if they believe that the military institution itself is threatened. These preferences are thus consistent with Stepan's (1971) and Nordlinger's (1977) observations about the importance of threats to the military as an institution in the decisions of officers to join coup conspiracies.

> Only a small proportion originally entered the military in the hope of attaining governmental offices. Many praetorians took up the reins of government with little enthusiasm. Most of them would probably have much preferred to remain in the barracks if their objectives, particularly the defense or enhancement of the military's corporate interests, could have been realized from that vantage point. (Nordlinger 1977:142).

The worst possible outcome for the military as an institution is civil war in which one part of the armed forces fights another. Consequently, the most important concern for many officers deciding whether to join a coup conspiracy is their assessment of how many others will join.

What Nordlinger, Stepan, and others are describing is similar to a classic Battle of the Sexes game. The insight behind Battle of the Sexes games comes from the following scenario: One member of a couple would prefer to go to a movie and the other would prefer the opera, but each would prefer doing something together to doing something alone. Going to either event together is a potential equilibrium, but no dominant strategy exists, since the best outcome for either player always depends on what the other does.

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The logic of decisions about seizing power or returning to the barracks is the same. Some officers are tempted to intervene, others have legalist values that preclude intervention except in the most extreme circumstances, and most are located somewhere in between—but almost all care most about the survival and efficacy of the military and thus want the military to move either in or out of power as a cohesive whole. Figure 2 depicts this set of preferences as a game.

In the game shown in Figure 2, the majority prefers to remain in the barracks. A minority would prefer to intervene, but would be far worse off if they tried to intervene without support from the majority than if they remained unhappily in the barracks. Participants in an unsuccessful coup attempt face possible demotion, discharge, court martial, and execution for treason, so their pay--off is shown as a negative number. The majority faction that opposed the coup is also likely to be worse off after the attempt, since the armed forces will have been weakened, and the government is likely to respond with greater oversight, reorganization, and interference with promotions and postings to try to insure greater loyalty, all of which reduce military autonomy. The final possible outcome is a successful coup carried out despite minority opposition. In this event the minority that remains loyal to the civilian government is likely to face the same costs as unsuccessful conspirators: demotion, discharge, prison, death. The winners achieve power, but a weakened military institution reduces their chances of keeping it. Future conspiracies supported by those demoted or discharged after the coup become more likely. Once factions of the military take up arms against each other, it takes years or decades to restore unity and trust.

This is a coordination game; once the military is either in power (*upper left cell*) or out of power (*lower right cell*), neither faction can improve its position unilaterally. Each faction must have the other's cooperation in order to secure its preferred option. When the military is out of power, even if the majority

		Minority Faction	
		intervene	barracks
Majority Faction	intervene	4, 5	0, -10
	barracks	3, -20	5, 4

Figure 2 Game between military factions. The two numbers in each cell represent the respective pay-offs to the two factions. *Upper left cell*: pay-offs of a successful intervention by the unified military. *Lower right cell*: pay-offs of remaining in or returning to the barracks. *Lower left cell*: pay-offs of an unsuccessful coup attempt by a minority faction. *Upper right cell*: pay-offs of a successful coup carried out despite minority opposition.

comes to believe it should intervene, it cannot shift equilibria without cooperation from the minority.

Where interventionists have wide support and an open political system makes plotting relatively safe and easy, coups are often preceded by extensive consultation among officers, delays until almost total consensus within the officer corps is achieved, and elaborate negotiations over power sharing and rotation in office. These consultations and negotiations aim to insure the cooperation of all major factions in the intervention. Such elaborate efforts to achieve coordination have been described, e.g. in Brazil leading to the 1964 coup (Stepan 1971), in Argentina prior to the1976 coup (Fontana 1987), and in Chile in 1973 (Valenzuela 1978).

Where interventionists have only minority support and plotting is more difficult, another, though riskier, strategy is available. Conspirators can keep the plot secret from all but a few key officers and hope that the rest will go along once key central institutions have been seized. (Often the presidential palace, garrisons in and around the capital city, radio and TV stations, central telephone and telegraph exchanges, and the airport will suffice.) This is the strategy Nordlinger (1977) identifies as most common. It often succeeds precisely because most of the officer corps cares more about military unity than about whether officers control government or not. It is a characteristic of games like Battle of the Sexes that the actor who succeeds in moving first can always get what he or she wants. In the real world, however, the first-mover strategy sometimes fails, usually because the first mover fails to persuade the rest that most other officers will support the coup.

The attempted Spanish coup in 1981 is an example of a failed first-mover strategy. Passive support for intervention was widespread within the Spanish military, mostly because of the threat to national integrity posed by the Suárez government's willingness to negotiate with Basque and Catalán nationalists. The small group of active conspirators believed that once they had seized control of the Cortes and key installations in Madrid, King Juan Carlos and the rest of the officer corps would go along with the fait accompli. The evidence available suggests that most of the officer corps would have gone along if the king had not immediately begun telephoning the captains-general and other high-ranking officers to inform them that he would resist the coup (Colomer 1995). For some officers, loyalty to the king was stronger than other values and led them to oppose the intervention. For others, the king's unequivocal opposition indicated which position the rest of the officer corps was likely to take, and this information led them to resist intervention in order to end up on the same side. The coup might well have succeeded if the king's access to telephones and television had been blocked. Colomer (1995:121) quotes one of the erstwhile conspirators as saying, "The next time, cut the King's phone line!"

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For some military leaders, the game changes after a successful seizure of power, but most officers always see their situation as resembling a Battle of the Sexes game, even in the most politicized and factionalized militaries. Repeated coups by different factions, as in Syria prior to 1970 or Benin (Dahomey) before 1972, would not be possible if most of the army did not go along with the first mover, either in seizing power or in handing it back.

The Interests of Party Cadres in Single-Party Regimes

The preferences of party cadres are much simpler than those of officers. Like democratic politicians, they simply want to hold office. Some value office because they want to control policy, some for the pure enjoyment of influence and power, and some for the illicit material gains that come with office in some countries. The game between party leaders and cadres, sometimes called Staghunt, is shown in Figure 3. (The insight behind the Staghunt game is that in a primitive stag hunt, everyone's cooperation is needed in order to encircle and kill the prey. If anyone wanders off, leaving a hole in the circle, all including the wanderer are worse off.)

The minority's pay-off in opposition is lower than when the party holds power because the opposition has fewer opportunities to exercise influence or line pockets. If the minority faction is excluded from office but the party continues in power, the minority continues to receive some benefits, since its policy preferences are pursued and party connections are likely to bring various opportunities.

Factions form in single-party regimes around policy differences and competition for leadership positions, but everyone is better off if all factions remain united and in office. This is why cooptation rather than exclusion is the rule in established single-party regimes. Neither faction would be better off ruling alone, and neither would voluntarily withdraw from office unless ex-

		Majority (Leader's Faction)	
		in office	out of office
Rival Faction	in office	8, 10	5, 1
	out of office	3, 9	0, 0

Figure 3 Staghunt game between factions in single-party regimes. The best outcome for everyone is for both factions to hold office (*upper left cell*). The worst outcome occurs when both are out of power (*lower right cell*). *Upper right cell*: the pay-off to the minority of holding office in the opposition (i.e. after the dominant party no longer rules), and to the majority out of office. *Lower left cell*: The minority faction is excluded from office, but the party continues in power.

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ogenous events changed the costs and benefits of cooperating with each other (and hence the game itself)—a possibility to which I return below.

The Interests of Members of Cliques

Membership in personalist cliques tends to be more fluid and harder to identify than membership in parties or the officer corps. During and after a seizure of power, personalist cliques are often formed from the network of friends, relatives, and allies that surrounds every political leader. In personalist regimes, one individual dominates both the military and state apparatus. As in single-party regimes, factions form around potential rivals to the leader, but during normal times they have strong reasons to continue supporting the regime and leader.

> [I]nsiders in a patrimonial ruling coalition are unlikely to promote reform.... Recruited and sustained with material inducements, lacking an independent political base, and thoroughly compromised in the regime's corruption, they are dependent on the survival of the incumbent. Insiders typically have risen through the ranks of political service and, apart from top leaders who may have invested in private capital holdings, derive livelihood principally from state or party offices. Because they face the prospect of losing all visible means of support in a political transition, they have little option but to cling to the regime, to sink or swim with it. (Bratton & van de Walle 1997:86)

In game-theoretic terms, this description means that the pay-offs to members of personalist cliques differ from the pay-offs in the game between factions in single-party regimes in two ways. First, the pay-off to members of a minority faction excluded from office is likely to be much lower, in part because this faction is unlikely to receive benefits from the leader's policy choices. Factions excluded from the inner circle by a personalist leader often face poverty, exile, prison, or the risk of assassination. Second, the majority faction may actually increase benefits to itself by excluding the minority from participation. Where the main benefits of participation in the government come from access to rents and illicit profit opportunities, benefits to individual members of the ruling group may be higher if they need not be shared too widely. It may also be easier to keep damage to the economy below the meltdown threshold, and thus increase the likelihood of regime survival, if the predatory group is relatively small. Despite these differences, however, the basic logic of the game is similar to that in single-party regimes. Neither faction would voluntarily leave office.

THE EFFECT OF CADRE INTERESTS ON REGIME BREAKDOWN

The interests described above determine whether the splits and rivalries that exist within all kinds of governments lead to regime breakdown. Because most

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military officers view their interests as following a logic similar to that of a Battle of the Sexes game, they acquiesce in continued intervention regardless of whether military rule becomes institutionalized, the leader concentrates power in his own hands, or a rival ousts the original leader. The officer corps will not, however, go along with disintegration of the military into openly competing factions. If elite splits threaten military unity and efficacy, most of the officer corps will opt for a return to the barracks.

Military regimes thus contain the seeds of their own destruction. When elite rivalries or policy differences become intense and factional splits become threatening, a return to the barracks becomes an attractive option for most officers. For officers, there is life after democracy, as all but the highest regime officials can usually return to the barracks with their status and careers untarnished and their salaries and budgets often increased by nervous transitional governments (Nordlinger 1977, Huntington 1991).

Leaders of single-party regimes also face competition from rivals, but most of the time, as in personalist regimes, the benefits of cooperation are sufficiently large to insure continued support from all factions. Leadership struggles and succession crises occur, but except in some extraordinary situations, ordinary cadres always want to remain in power. During leadership struggles, most ordinary cadres just keep their heads down and wait to see who wins. Thus, in contrast to military regimes, leadership struggles within single-party regimes do not usually result in transitions.

This difference explains why the early transitions literature, drawing insights primarily from the transitions from military rule in Latin America, emphasized splits within the regime as causes of the initiation of democratization. In other parts of the world, where rule by the military as an institution is less common, factions and splits could be identified within authoritarian regimes but did not seem to result in transition. Instead, observers emphasize the importance of economic crisis (Haggard & Kaufman 1995), external pressure (Huntington 1991), and popular protest (Bratton & van de Walle 1992, 1997; Casper & Taylor 1996) in bringing down long-standing dictatorships.

Because military regimes have more endogenous sources of instability than do personalist or single-party regimes, they are more fragile. Military regimes in existence at any time between 1946 and the present have lasted on average about 9 years.[4] Personalist regimes survived about 15 years on average, and single-party regimes (excluding those maintained by direct foreign occupation or military threat) endured on average almost 23 years. Even more dramatic

[4]The data set excludes regimes formed since 1995 (in keeping with the three-year rule) and all regimes in states formed since 1990. The vast majority of temporary authoritarian interludes excluded by the three-year rule are military. If they were included, the average duration of military regimes would be much lower. Nordlinger, who did not exclude them from his calculations, found that military regimes last five years on average (1977:139).

are the differences in the ages of currently surviving regimes of different types. The average age of military regimes still in existence in 1998 is 7 years; personalist regimes, almost 19 years; and single-party regimes, 35 years.[5] Table 1 shows the average duration and survival rates of all regime types, including hybrids.

Survival rates for different types of regime also differ markedly. Only about 11% of the military regimes that have existed since 1946 still exist in 1998. The proportion of surviving personalist regimes is not much higher (15%). In contrast, 50% of single-party regimes continue to exist. The proportion of each type of regime that ended during each five-year period after 1945 is shown in Table 2. This chronological presentation reveals the effects of exogenous shocks, such as the economic crisis of the 1980s, that affect all regimes. On average, the proportion of military regimes that fell during any particular five years between 1945 and 1994 was about 50% higher than the proportion of personalist regimes and about four times the proportion of single-party regimes .

Personalist regimes are less vulnerable to internal splits than are military regimes, but three characteristics make them less robust than single-party regimes. First, personalist regimes rarely survive long after the death of the leader, perhaps because, in their effort to defend themselves from potential rivals, leaders so assiduously eliminate followers who demonstrate high levels of ability and ambition. Of the 51 personalist regimes included in my data set, only four survived more than a short time after the dictator's death or ouster: Salazar's in Portugal, Somoza's in Nicaragua, Tubman's in Liberia, and Duvalier's in Haiti. These exceptions underscore the importance of the elimination of able potential rivals as an explanation for why personalist regimes so seldom last longer than their founders. Salazar was incapacitated two years before his death and personally chose Marcello Caetano as his successor, thus lending him the old man's personal protection during the initial stage of his administration. Caetano, who lasted six years, has been described as "a follower, not a leader. His caution, legalism, and indecision proved fatal to the regime he headed. He had stood too long in the shadow of a mentor who rewarded diligence but distrusted initiative" (Maxwell 1986:112). Somoza and Duvalier passed the scepter to their sons and Tubman to his son-in-law, perhaps the only potential successors likely to be tolerated for long by most personalist dictators.

Personalist regimes arise when the military and party are not sufficiently developed or autonomous to prevent the leader from taking personal control of decisions and the selection of regime personnel. The fear of potential rivals leads such rulers to undermine these and other institutions that might serve as power bases for challenges (Linz & Chehabi 1998, Snyder 1998). Personalist

[5]Figures were calculated using stringent criteria for democratization. Table 1 also shows regime lengths when less stringent criteria are used.

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Table 1 Durability of different types of authoritarian regime[a]

Regime Type	Average Length of Rule (years)[b]	Average Age of Surviving Regimes[c]	Percent of Regimes Surviving in 1998
Military	8.8 (31)[d]	7.3 (4)	11.4%
Military/Personal	10.3 (3)	12.3 (3)	19.8
Personal[e]	15.1 (43)	18.8 (8)	15.7
Single-Party/Personal	15.0 (8)	39.0 (3)	27.0
Single-Party (stringent transition criteria)[f]	22.7 (17)	35.1 (17)	50.0
Single-Party (less stringent criteria)	25.7 (22)	33.5 (11)	33.3
Single-Party/Military	23.8 (4)	— (0)	0.0
Single-Party/ Military/ Personal	31.0 (2)	37.3 (3)	60.0

[a]Regimes imposed and maintained by foreign occupation or military threat are excluded.
[b]Includes all regimes that had ended by 1998.
[c]Includes regimes in existence in 1946, or that have come into existence since then, that still survived in 1998.
[d]The number of regimes on which averages are based is shown in parentheses.
[e]One case classified as a surviving regime here is ambiguous: the Rawlings government in Ghana. Ghana held elections deemed free and fair by international observers in 1996 (and elections boycotted by the opposition in 1992), and voters reelected Rawlings. It might seem reasonable to classify Ghana as having made a transition to democracy at that time. The only reason not to do so is that some observers have expressed doubts both about whether Rawlings would have stepped down if he had been defeated and the levelness of the playing field. If Ghana were classified as having made a transition, it would increase the average age of surviving regimes by a tenth of a year.
[f]Six countries in this category have held elections deemed free and fair by international observers, but nevertheless returned the ruling party to power. The results if these countries are classified as having democratized are shown immediately below.

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rulers rely instead on informal and often quite unstable personal networks, sometimes based on kinship, ethnicity, or region, within which particularistic favors are exchanged for loyalty. Typically, regime personnel are rotated frequently to prevent them from developing autonomous bases of support, and erstwhile supporters who become rivals or dissidents are quickly and unceremoniously excluded from office, influence, and sometimes life (Bratton & van de Walle 1994, 1997). Currently, Saddam Hussein provides a vivid example of a personalist dictator in action. "[S]enior officers have been switched, fired, executed or so tarred with Mr. Hussein's brush that they have no future outside his orbit" (*Economist* 1995:46).

The second characteristic that affects the longevity of personalist regimes is the relative narrowness of their support bases. They distribute benefits and office to a smaller proportion of citizens than do single-party regimes, and the group of beneficiaries is more likely to be dominated by a single familial, clan, ethnic, or regional group. With both rewards for loyalty and penalties for

Table 2 Failure rate of authoritarian regimes

Date	Single-Party	Personalist	Military
1945–1949	0.14[a] (7)[b]	0.11 (9)	0.25 (4)
1950–1954	0.0 (8)	0.0 (12)	0.33 (3)
1955–1959	0.0 (11)	0.27 (15)	0.40 (5)
1960–1964	0.05 (21)	0.19 (16)	0.13 (8)
1965–1969	0.04 (24)	0.21 (24)	0.31 (13)
1970–1974	0.13 (24)	0.13 (24)	0.20 (15)
1975–1979	0.04 (27)	0.35 (26)	0.40 (15)
1980–1984	0.12 (26)	0.14 (22)	0.55 (11)
1985–1989	0.04 (23)	0.18 (22)	0.50 (8)
1990–1994	0.26 (23)	0.42 (19)	0.43 (7)
Average mortality rate per 5-year period	0.08	0.20	0.35

[a]Proportion of the total number of each kind of regime in existence, or that came into existence during the time period, that ended during each five-year time span.
[b]Number of regimes in each category during each five-year period.

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unsuccessful defection very high, internal splits become unlikely. But groups excluded from participation and benefits may be tempted to challenge the regime, even though the penalty for unsuccessful attempts is grave for them too.

Because personalist regimes sustain the loyalty of their supporters by providing access to material rewards, they are vulnerable to economic catastrophe—a salient fact in the current international economy. Poor economic performance does not destabilize them, since performance need not be good in order to reward those who benefit from inefficient policies. Disasters of such magnitude that public employees and soldiers cannot be paid, however, are another matter. Economic reforms that reduce state intervention and hence rent-seeking opportunities can also undermine regime support, though people are pretty inventive about finding ways to benefit from reforms.

Single-party regimes also have few endogenous sources of instability and, in addition, can usually weather the death of founders and leaders. Through their control over the allocation of educational opportunities, jobs, and positions in government, single parties can typically claim the loyalty (or at least acquiescence) of many of the most able, ambitious, and upwardly mobile individuals in society, especially those from peasant and urban marginal backgrounds whose social mobility might otherwise have been quite limited. Single parties are more likely to be open to all loyal citizens than are personalist regimes and are less likely to limit their clientele to particular clan, regional, or ethnic groups. In the absence of exogenous shocks, they are unlikely to be destabilized by either internal rivalries or external opposition, as shown by their remarkably low average five-year morbidity rate prior to 1990 (see Table

2.) Of the single-party regimes that either existed in 1946 or were formed after that date, 50% still exist in 1998.

Single-party regimes survive in part because their institutional structures make it relatively easy for them to allow greater participation and popular influence on policy without giving up their dominant role in the political system. Most single-party governments have legalized opposition parties and increased the space for political contestation. Six (in Botswana, Mexico, Taiwan, Tanzania, Angola, and Mozambique) have been certified by outside observers as having held free and fair elections, but in only two does the party seem to be in danger of losing its hegemonic position.

When faced with unexpected problems, military regimes tend to split, personalist regimes to circle the wagons, and single parties to try to coopt their critics. Consequently, violent overthrow is much more likely to end personalist than military or single-party regimes. The modal ending for personalist regimes is a coup, and insurgency, assassination, popular uprising, or invasion are important causes of breakdown in more than half (see Skocpol & Goodwin 1994). Such endings are relatively uncommon for military and single-party regimes. Coups are fairly common in military governments, but they usually do not end the regime. They are primarily a way of changing leadership while maintaining the regime itself.

Economic crises threaten the survival of all forms of government, democratic and authoritarian. Military governments are more vulnerable to economic downturns than are other authoritarianisms because poor economic performance is likely to precipitate or worsen splits in the officer corps. On average, military governments can survive only moderate amounts of economic bad news, whereas single-party governments are remarkably resilient in the face of disastrous economic performance. Among military regimes that fell between 1946 and 1993, per capita income grew on average 0.4% during the year prior to the fall.[6] Such low per capita growth is never good news, but neither is it an economic crisis. Per capita income declined by an average of 0.5% during the year before transitions from personalist rule, suggesting that personalist regimes are somewhat more resilient to economic decline than are military. In single-party regimes that broke down before 1993, in

[6]The most recent transitions had to be excluded from these calculations because of data limitations. The year before a transition seems to be the best indicator of relevant economic performance. Growth rates in transition years sometimes decline steeply as a consequence of chaos and violence associated with the transition itself and sometimes rise sharply in response to public euphoria and renewed optimism; both possibilities make them poor indicators of the old regime's economic performance. Przeworski & Limongi (1997) tested various longer-term and lagged indicators of economic performance on the probability of transition and found that only the preceding year had an effect. Tests of the effect of economic performance on US voting behavior have also shown that citizens have short memories.

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striking contrast, per capita income fell by about 4% on average during the year prior to the transition.[7]

Because military governments are more likely to decide to step down before conditions in the country have reached crisis, military governments are also more likely to negotiate orderly transitions. The modal pattern of transition from military rule is negotiation, sometimes preceded by a bloodless coup against the military faction in power by officers determined to return to the barracks (Huntington 1991). Democracies are created by negotiation. It is very rare for them to emerge directly from popular insurgency, rebellion, or civil war.

Thirty-one percent of transitions from military rule since 1945 have resulted in stable, long-lived democracies, and another 43% in short-lived, unstable, or exclusionary democracies. In contrast, only 16% of the breakdowns of personalist regimes have led to stable democracies. Forty-nine percent of transitions from personalist regimes have resulted in new authoritarianisms. The higher average level of economic development in countries with military regimes accounts for some of this difference, but the effect of type of authoritarianism on regime outcome, though reduced, remains statistically significant when level of economic development is controlled for.

Because negotiation is more likely to play an important role in transitions from military rule than in the typically more rapid and chaotic transitions from personalist rule, it might seem that pacts would be more likely during transitions from military rule. It turns out, however, that explicit pacts of the kind emphasized in studies of the Venezuelan, Colombian, and Spanish transitions (Karl 1986, 1990) are extremely uncommon in comparative perspective, and many successful democratizations have occurred without them. Efforts to form pacts usually fail, and the ones that succeed may be a reflection of underlying political and social conditions conducive to stable democracy rather than an independent cause of later stability.[8] Successful pact making seems to require the prior existence of well-organized parties able to make and keep commitments, whose membership encompasses most potential political elites. The ability to keep commitments implies a reasonable degree of party control over the rival factions within each party. Such prior party development is uncommon in countries with little democratic experience.

[7]As elsewhere in this essay, regimes maintained in power by direct foreign military threat are excluded from calculations.

[8]The study of the effects of pacts has been affected by selection bias. Most observers are only aware of the pacts that have lasted a reasonably long time. Those that failed, such as the Honduran pact, patterned explicitly after the Colombian National Front and expected to guarantee the success of the transition to democracy in 1971, are almost never studied. The Honduran democratic experiment of 1971 was overthrown in 1972.

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Although explicit pacts to share power, exclude others from office, and limit the policy space have been uncommon during transitions from all kinds of authoritarian regimes, negotiations and bargaining have played a role in most transitions from military rule. Some outgoing governments have been able to negotiate amnesties for themselves, limitations on future political competition, and changes in democratic political institutions designed to disadvantage leftist or extremist parties. These guarantees seemed very important at the time and may well have hastened the transitions. From the perspective of 1998, however, they seem less important. No democratic government has prosecuted more than a few people for crimes committed during authoritarian regimes, whether an amnesty was agreed to or not, and the majority have prosecuted no one. Korea, one of the countries in which the military was considered the most successful, has carried out more severe punishments of former military rulers than have most countries whose departing rulers were considered weak.

Similarly, efforts to manipulate the future political spectrum have proved both less effective (except in Chile) and less important than expected. Voters in the vast majority of new democracies have opted for centrist political leaders, and center-right parties have done better than expected (Bermeo 1990). Where democracies have survived, initial exclusionary arrangements have been allowed to lapse. During the third wave, threats to private property have arisen not from the left, but from ineffective economic policy, the breakdown of public order, and civil war.

Later transitions have faced different challenges than earlier ones. While military regimes, most but not all conservative, predominated among the early breakdowns, later breakdowns were much more likely to involve left-leaning regimes. In addition, the collapse of the Soviet Union simply changed perceptions; as the appeal of socialist options declined, so did the leftist threat and the apparent need for institutional arrangements to limit leftist influence.

The basic problem facing exiting dictatorships is that the agreements they make during transitions are usually unenforceable once the transition is complete. Much of their bargaining power disappears the minute they leave office. Militaries can enforce compliance with amnesties and other deals, but only if they can make credible threats to respond with violence if the new government reneges. The ability to make such credible threats does not depend on whether an amnesty was signed at the time of the transition; it depends on the condition of the military at the time the threat is needed (Hunter 1997). Former dominant parties and ruling cliques have even less ability to enforce agreements once out of power. Their only real resource is popular support.

The success of exiting dictators' efforts to lock in preferred policies or limit future political participation also depends on what happens after the transition (Pion-Berlin 1992, Zagorski 1994, Millett 1995, Hunter 1995, Ruhle 1996, Pion-Berlin & Arceneaux 1998). A number of dictators have imposed changes

in traditional political institutions aimed at creating long-term disadvantages for their opponents. Most of these efforts have been short-sighted and unsophisticated, leading either to the kind of strategic voting so elegantly described in O'Donnell's (1973) analysis of Argentine politics during the 1960s or to other unforeseen consequences. Furthermore, institutions can be changed, and once authoritarians have stepped down, democratic politicians have strong incentives to change any that truly disadvantage large groups of citizens. Authoritarian regimes have successfully locked in policies only where a substantial number of citizens benefits from them. Even in Chile, Pinochet's multiple reinforcing institutional innovations depend for their survival on about a third of the voters continuing to favor conservative parties.

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THE EFFECTS OF EXOGENOUS SHOCKS

Authoritarian governments need some support and a good deal of acquiescence to remain in power. A very cohesive dictatorship willing to use force can survive despite widespread opposition for a limited period but not indefinitely and not if deserted by its own cadres. Authoritarian governments, like others, need to be able to distribute benefits to active supporters and coalition partners, to achieve passable economic performance in order to sustain mass acquiescence, and to maintain adequate coercive capacity to get through the inevitable times when they fail to deliver. The exogenous shocks that undermine authoritarian regimes are those that prevent passable economic performance, impede the distribution of benefits to supporters and allies, and destroy coercive capacity.

As shown in Table 2, the rate of breakdown for authoritarian regimes rises in the context of external shocks. These shocks were both geopolitical and economic. Beginning with the second oil crisis in the late 1970s and worsened by the debt crisis, changes in the international economy made it increasingly difficult for governments to supply passable economic performance. This worldwide economic crisis hit the countries of Africa and Latin America hardest but also reduced consumption in communist Europe and elsewhere. Of the 14 military regimes in power just prior to the second oil crisis, all had fallen by 1988, about a decade later. I do not suggest that the economic crisis caused these breakdowns, but it worsened preexisting splits within the military, greatly increased popular protest against military regimes, and cast doubt on the competence of military governments, even in the eyes of officers. In the face of popular opposition and increasing internal factionalism, a return to the barracks became increasingly attractive to officers in many countries.

All kinds of authoritarian regimes were eventually affected by the economic crisis, as populations plunging into poverty blamed their governments and gradually took the risk of demanding change. As the crisis deepened,

IMF-induced economic reforms forced governments to reduce benefits to traditional supporters. By the late 1980s, regime stalwarts were losing their government jobs and facing wage cuts in many developing countries, trade liberalization was undermining the support of both labor and capital in the import-substitution sector in many economies (much of it previously nurtured by government subsidy), and various economic reforms were cutting profit opportunities out from under rent seekers all over the world. Economic reform reduced benefits to regime supporters at the same time that the crisis itself reduced acquiescence among ordinary citizens.

Personalist regimes began to fall at an increased rate in the early 1990s. As long as economies functioned well enough for personalist leaders to provide supporters with access to opportunities and resources, the supporters remained committed to the regime. During the 1990s, however, "the economic crisis undercut the material foundations of patrimonial rule: With ever fewer resources to distribute, political elites faced a growing problem of how to maintain control of clientelist networks" (Bratton & van de Walle 1997:100). Pressure from donors and lenders forced rulers to reduce precisely the kinds of state spending that had been most politically useful and to change state interventionist policies that had traditionally supplied politically necessary rents. Without these material inducements, allies and supporters deserted their leaders.

The timing of the big increase in the morbidity rate of African personalist regimes in the early 1990s suggests that these breakdowns were caused not by poor economic performance per se (which had begun in most countries at least 10 years earlier) but rather by the combination of external pressures and reforms that have cut benefits to regime cadres.[9] Although few African countries have made full transitions to democracy, many authoritarian regimes have fallen. At this point, one can feel confident that few African personalist regimes of the early 1980s will see the new century, but what is likely to follow them is not clear.

On average, single-party regimes have been remarkably resilient even in the face of long, severe economic crises. A few (in Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan) continued to prosper until very recently, but they are the exceptions. The collapse of the Soviet empire destroyed coercive capacity in Eastern Europe and caused a rapid rise in economic distress throughout the Soviet trading bloc. It is estimated that incomes in Cuba fell by 50% as a result of the withdrawal of Soviet subsidies (Pastor 1994). In response to the end of the threat of Soviet intervention, East European regimes fell like rotten fruit in late summer. However, many single-party regimes outside Soviet invasion dis-

[9]Bratton & van de Walle's (1997) statistical results might seem to challenge this conclusion, but they seek to explain democratization (defined as the occurrence of a founding election), not authoritarian breakdown.

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tance, both communist and non-communist, have shown greater robustness in the face of economic crises far worse than those in Eastern Europe—an indication that the regime type has great stamina when not dependent on an external power for enforcement. Eighty-five percent of the autonomous single-party regimes in power at the beginning of the second oil crisis still existed a decade later, and 59% still survive today. The games analyzed above help explain why single-party regimes are more resilient than military ones, and thus why even serious exogenous shocks may not bring them down.

CONCLUSION

This essay began by sketching several fairly widely accepted arguments about regime transition. It then considered the evidence supporting and challenging each argument. A few could be confirmed, a few could not.

Strong evidence supports the argument that economic development increases the likelihood of democratic politics. Available evidence also supports the claim that authoritarian regimes are more likely to break down during economic crisis, though some forms of authoritarianism are more susceptible to economic downturns than others.

I found little evidence in a set of 163 regime transitions, however, for the claim that pacts increase the likelihood of democracy. They may have had that effect in a few cases, but we cannot rule out the possibility that the likelihood of both pacts and stable democracy is increased by the existence of well established, coherent parties capable of making credible commitments to abide by pacts.

Although not enough time has passed to be certain, I also found little evidence to support the idea that amnesties and other implicit contracts between outgoing authoritarian rulers and opposition leaders have substantial long-term effects. All outgoing authoritarians face serious future contract-enforcement problems.

The primary original contribution of this study is to propose a theoretical innovation that subsumes a number of apparently contradictory arguments. I began this section with a simple game-theoretic portrayal of the incentives facing officers in military regimes as contrasted with the incentives of cadres in single-party and personalist regimes. If the incentives shown in the games are, on average, accurate, then we can understand why the process of transition from military regimes differs from that of single-party and personalist regimes. Because most officers value the unity and capacity of the military institution more than they value holding office, military regimes cling less tightly to power than do other kinds of authoritarianism and, in fact, often initiate transitions.

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This basic insight leads to explanations for many of the differences between early transitions, mostly from military rule, and later transitions, mostly from personalist rule. Most military transitions begin, as O'Donnell & Schmitter (1986) note, with internal disagreements and splits. Most personalist regimes, however, maintain their grip on power as long as possible. As a result, they are more likely to be overthrown by popular uprising or rebellion. Popular protest seems about equally likely to occur at some point during transition from any kind of regime, but it is often the first indicator of impending transition from personalist rule, whereas transitions from military rule are usually well underway before protests swell.

Most military regimes end in negotiation, which accounts for the emphasis on bargaining and the advantages of moderation in the early literature on transitions. Most personalist regimes, however, end in coups, many of them accompanied by widespread violence. If opposition to many personalist regimes had remained moderate, they might have survived until the dictator, or even his grandsons, died of old age. Leaders of personalist regimes also negotiate when under pressure from lenders or faced with widespread public protest, but the proportion who renege on the deals they make has been very high.

Transitions from single-party rule, though the subject of numerous case studies, have not played a major role in the comparative transitions literature because few have occurred besides those that resulted directly from the Soviet collapse. Single-party regimes under pressure from donors and popular opposition are more inclined to negotiation than are personalist regimes. Like officers, single-party cadres can expect life as they know it to continue after liberalization or even regime change. If they cannot avoid regime change, they are better off in a democracy than in some other form of authoritarianism. Previously hegemonic parties have remained important in political life wherever countries have fully democratized, but they have been outlawed and repressed in several that did not. Consequently, they have good reason to negotiate an extrication rather than risking a more violent ouster. Outside the area affected by the Soviet collapse, single-party regimes have tried to negotiate institutional changes that allow the opposition some participation and satisfy international donors and lenders, while not actually giving up control of the government and the resources attached to it. It is too soon to know whether most of these liberalizations will progress to full transitions or stabilize as mostly "free and fair" single-party dominant systems, as regime leaders hope.

Since the great surge from 1989 to 1992, the pace of transitions has slackened. Observers can catch their breaths and take stock of what they have learned. Democratization has compelled scholarly attention for at least the past 20 years but has resisted yielding up its theoretical secrets. Despite the high quality of much of the work cited here, our theoretical understanding remains thin. We have, however, amassed an astonishing amount of "data," mostly in

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the form of case studies. The time may have come to begin finding the patterns that were less obvious earlier. I have focused here on one hitherto obscure pattern that seems to make sense of several apparently contradictory observations from different regions. Other patterns await discovery.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My work on this project has benefitted from conversations with many colleagues over the years. I am especially grateful to David Laitin, Alan Ware, David Collier, and John Zaller for their insight and attention to detail. My thanks also to Dean Scott Waugh of UCLA, who provided the research funds that made the data collection for this project possible, and to my research assistants: Allyson Benton, Johanna Birnir, Kimberly Niles, Cathy Sweet, and John Quinn.

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Volume 2, 1999

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