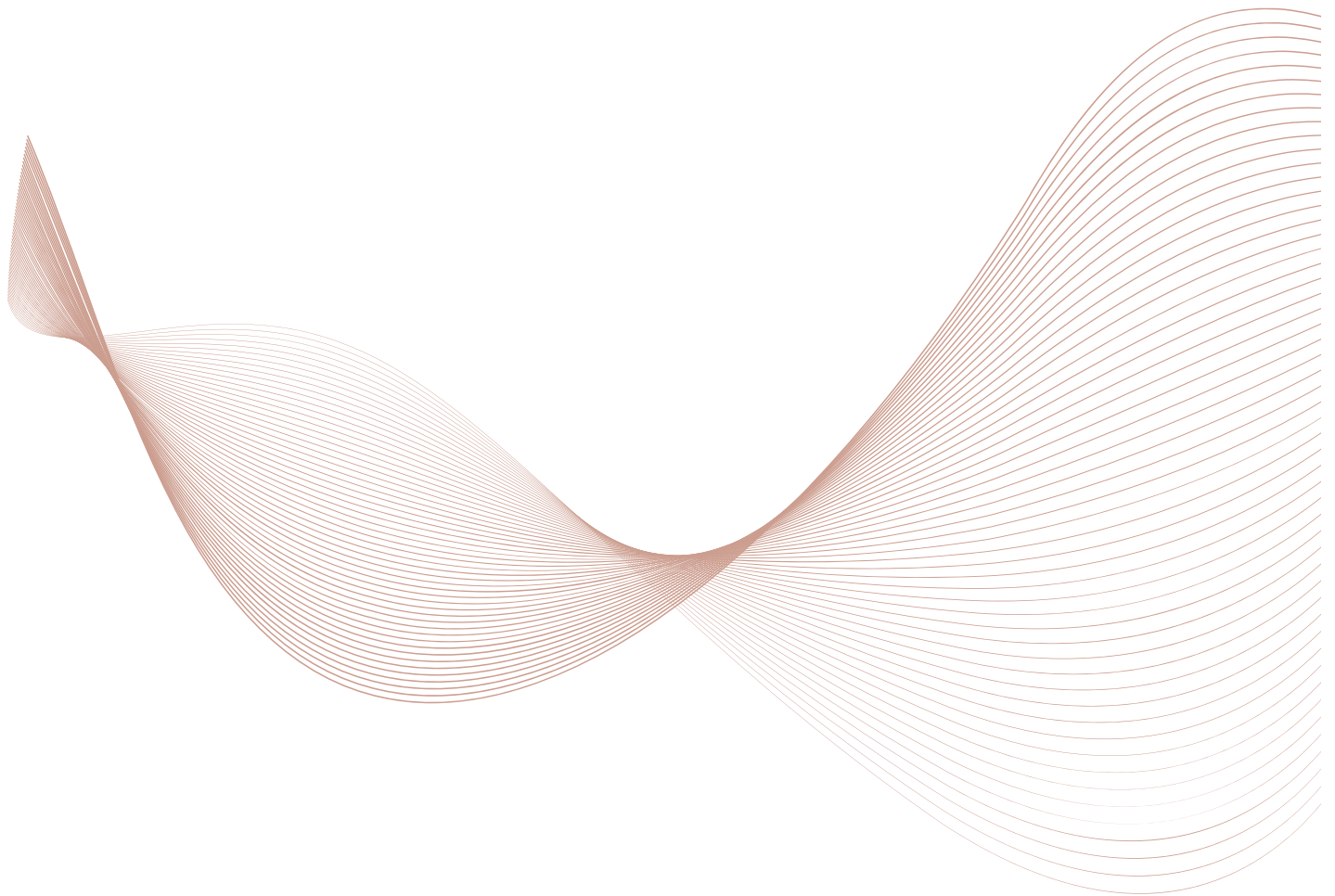

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In April 2022, Ricarda Hammer, Evelyne Huber, John Medearis, and John D. Stephens joined Dan Slater for a virtual WCED Roundtable on "Capitalism and Democracy Revisted." The recording is available on [Youtube](#).

Editor's Introduction

Brendan McElroy, University of Toronto

Since the global financial crisis in 2008, the question of capitalism's compatibility with democracy has once again come to the fore in comparative politics scholarship, not only in developing and middle-income countries—where this question, after all, never lost its relevance—but also in the rich democracies of Western Europe, East Asia, and North America. Critical and extensively debated interventions by Piketty (2014) and Streeck (2014) did much to revive an older discourse of capitalism as democracy's existential rival, and to recast the post-1945 "settlement" in Western Europe, which appeared to have reconciled these two social formations once and for all, as an historical anomaly to which there is no going back, even if one wanted to—a "shotgun marriage" in Streeck's (2014, 64) evocative phrase. Streeck's and Piketty's work, in turn, built upon previous warnings about the deleterious impact of unconstrained capital accumulation on democratic accountability and legitimacy, such as Colin Crouch's *Post-Democracy*, published in 2004 (though he coined this term in 2000). Thus, long before the dual shocks of Brexit and Donald Trump's election to the presidency of the United States gave birth to a veritable cottage industry of research on authoritarian populism and democratic "backsliding,"¹ a few analysts, mostly on the left, were sounding the alarm about the many causal pathways whereby unchecked capital accumulation might undermine the social foundations of apparently stable Western democracies.

Of course, it would be going much too far to speak of a scholarly consensus on this new (or, more accurately, old made new) interpretation of the relationship between capitalism and democracy. For one thing, there are competing—and in some respects more compelling—explanations for the rise of authoritarian populism than those centered on globalization and economic insecurity. More to the point, many analysts still maintain that capitalism and democratic politics are essentially allies rather than rivals (Iversen and Soskice 2019; Hall 2021). Iversen and Soskice (2019), for instance, place the blame for the failure of the rich democracies to maintain a high level of redistribution not on the machinations of capital-owning elites but

¹ Ding and Slater (2021) propose an alternative appellation and interpretation of global trends in regime change. Hanson and Kopstein (2022), meanwhile, have argued forcefully that "patrimonialization" is analytically distinct from democratic breakdown, and just as crucial to understanding current trends in regime development as well as the appeal of authoritarian populist leaders.

instead on democratic electorates themselves: highly skilled workers, in Iversen and Soskice's telling, have shown little interest in compensating the "losers" from ongoing economic transformations.

Studies like Piketty's, Streeck's, and Iversen and Soskice's are historically sweeping and far-reaching in their implications, but even these influential perspectives have significant limitations. Thus, it seems high time to reexamine the relationship between capitalism and democratic politics in historical perspective, drawing upon insights from political theorists, comparativists, and sociologists. The anniversaries of two agenda-setting works in this field of study—Joseph Schumpeter's *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1942) and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber, and John D. Stephens's *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (1992; hereafter RSS²)—present us with an excellent opportunity to take stock of the literature on democratic development, to critically examine some of its oversights and exclusions, and to shape the agenda for future research on how capitalism has shaped processes of democratization and de-democratization around the world.

“[I]t seems high time to reexamine the relationship between capitalism and democratic politics in historical perspective, drawing upon insights from political theorists, comparativists, and sociologists.”

John Medearis's contribution to this issue reexamines Joseph Schumpeter as a theorist of democratic development, the comparative historical study of how polities become democracies. Schumpeter's durable "elitist" conception of democracy, Medearis shows, was not a description of reality but instead an expression of Schumpeter's own political ideal. Schumpeter put forward his idea of an elite-led democracy as an attractive (for defenders of the *status quo*) alternative to a mass-based or "transformative" democracy which he saw as threatening to capitalism. For Schumpeter, transformative democracy does not stop with the political system; if not blocked or redirected, a mass democratic wave will sweep over and level other hierarchical structures as well, including the capitalist workplace. Interestingly, for Schumpeter, and in contrast to Marx and Weber alike,

² At time of publication in 1992, authors were cited as Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens.

the factory represented not the triumph of capitalist rationality but instead a sort of pre-modern holdover; factory discipline, in turn, constituted one of the pre-capitalist foundations of capitalist order. In the end, Medearis suggests, the widespread adoption of elitist definitions of democracy in American political science during the 1950s (even when Schumpeter was not expressly credited) marked the triumph of Schumpeter's ideological project—to make democracy safe for capital-owning elites, depriving the concept of much of its oppositional and hierarchy-challenging content.

Evelyne Huber and John D. Stephens offer a retrospective on RSS, three decades later. Although they emphasize the limited temporal scope of the study—it is "very much a book about democracy in the industrial age"—they maintain that some of their fundamental arguments still hold. Economic development, to review, makes democratization more likely inasmuch as it strengthens the position of the organized working class and of its (sometime) allies, the middle class and family farmers. Particularly important here is how Huber and Stephens think about class: in contrast to political economy models of democratization, which read off an individual's regime preference directly from her class position (or, more precisely, her position in the income distribution) and interest in redistribution, RSS devoted a great deal of interest to the inherently historical and context-specific process of class formation. Subsequent political economy theories of democratization would have gained much by adopting this approach. Ultimately, Huber and Stephens suggest, ongoing transformations of capitalism vindicate their contention that stable democracy rests on dense linkages between parties and unions, on the one hand, and the subordinate classes they claim to represent, on the other. The erosion of these linkages—by globalization, state repression of labor movements, and the failings of democratically elected governments themselves—opens the door for political entrepreneurs of an authoritarian populist inclination to make inroads among the groups left behind by globalization and the rise of the service economy.

Adam Dean succinctly glosses these developments as "the unraveling of the historical process that RSS identified." Reviewing the findings of his new book, *Opening Up by Cracking Down: Labor Repression and Trade Liberalization in Democratic Developing Countries* (Cambridge, 2022), Dean asks why only some newly established democratic governments in developing countries chose to open their economies to international trade during the 1980s and 1990s. In answering this question, he challenges the assumption that one option—labor repression—was off the table for new

democracies. In reality, democratic governments that actively suppressed labor rights were more likely to succeed in opening their economies to international trade. While doing so may have had short-term benefits in terms of delivering rising living standards and enabling democratically elected governments to claim credit for economic growth, over the long run the decline of unions in developing and middle-income countries has reduced these societies' capacity to resist the temptation of authoritarian populism.

Ricarda Hammer draws attention to the way in which much of the comparative politics scholarship on nineteenth- and twentieth-century democratization, arguably including RSS, has relegated issues of race and empire to the historical margins. Hammer maintains that, since the polities in which partial democratization occurred during the nineteenth century were not national states but instead colonial empires, the premise of "methodological nationalism" is inappropriate. Capitalism has been a global system since its inception, and empire the crucial political form associated with it during the age of nineteenth-century democratization (and perhaps beyond). Given the facility with which capital-owning authoritarian elites have deployed transnational networks to advance their interests—as detailed in the [March 2022 issue](#) of this newsletter—this intervention appears to be of more than just historical interest. More specifically, Hammer contends, "democracy" was made safe for the ruling elites of nineteenth-century colonial empires precisely by defining citizenship in terms of a subject population's willingness to accept its subordinate position in the global capitalist division of labor. Thus, French and British colonial administrators cast the reluctance of newly emancipated Black subjects to continue working on the plantation as evidence of "immorality" and "unpreparedness" for civil and political rights. In this way, Hammer draws attention to one of the most important ways in which the concepts of democracy and citizenship have been invoked to *justify* rather than to *challenge* continued exclusions from the democratic polity.

Finally, the author exchange features two recent books on political corruption in East and Southeast Asia: Yoshinori Nishizaki's *Dynastic Democracy: Political Families in Thailand* (Wisconsin, 2022) and Christopher Carothers's *Corruption Control in Authoritarian Regimes: Lessons from East Asia* (Cambridge, 2022). Both books problematize the relationship between economic development, political corruption, and regime type. With good reason, neither author sees democracy or competitive politics as an antidote to corruption. For Nishizaki, the expansion of electoral competition in

Thailand after 1973 increased the power of political families, particularly well-to-do commoners, and with it, the prevalence of clientelism and self-dealing. Carothers, likewise, denies that elite power-sharing arrangements and quasi-democratic institutions drive successful anti-corruption campaigns under autocracy. Instead, motivated autocrats who lack institutional constraints on their power are most likely to succeed in combating corruption. The two authors' joint statement makes the linkages between capitalist development and regime type in each argument more explicit by drawing attention to the working class of East Asia, which, they contend, contrary to the RSS thesis, has not behaved as the most consistently pro-democratic force in society.

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Reading Schumpeter as a Theorist of Democratic Development: Insights and Anomalies

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Joseph Schumpeter shaped midcentury political science, making it possible for elite-centered understandings of democracy to be absorbed into its mainstream. Yet there would seem to be no obvious connection between his spare “democracy as method” and the field of democratic development, in particular. So for all the breadth and depth of his influence in economics, sociology, and political science, Schumpeter is not generally understood as a contributor to that literature. I set out in this essay to explore what might come from thinking differently about Schumpeter’s relationship to democratic development. I argue that there are in fact good reasons to read Schumpeter as a theorist deeply interested in processes of political, social, and economic development. And bringing him into dialogue with democratic development, in particular, points us toward both insights and productive anomalies.

A couple of things motivate and underscore the relevance of re-reading Schumpeter as a theorist of democratic development today. One is the coincidence of the eightieth anniversary of Schumpeter’s *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* ([1942] 1976) and the thirtieth anniversary of a classic of the democratic development literature that resonates interestingly with Schumpeter—Rueschemeyer, Huber, and Stephens’s (RSS) *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (1992). Another is the obvious urgency in this moment of re-assessing what we know and think we know about democratization and democratic breakdown in light of the authoritarian and nationalist movements that have endangered democratic institutions, practices, and norms from the U.S. to Hungary and Israel. No doubt scholars of democratic development have always had a realistic respect for the fragility of democracy, or whatever measure of it a particular country may have attained. Not so for democratic theorists, who have too often been content to treat existing representative democracy not only as a target of much-deserved criticism, but also as a baseline whose perseverance can be taken for granted. Elsewhere I have argued that theorists should recognize that democracy is always a struggle against powerful countertendencies, so it makes little sense to distinguish sharply between a pure ideal of democracy and the constant exertion

of democratization (2015). Connecting democratic theory to the best work in democratic development—as I will try tentatively to do here—could be a step toward the right kind of realism for theorists. And the case of Schumpeter’s work on democratic theory and democratization turns out to be troublingly resonant at a time when it is again clear that anti-democratic forces and tendencies have remained interwoven in what not too long ago were seen as durably, irreversibly democratic polities.

1. In *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, the work most widely read by students of politics, Schumpeter argues that because of what he portrays as hard truths about voters’ political judgment, democracy could never be more than a minimalist institutional arrangement ensuring elite competition for popular support. We can begin with the first part of this, the disparagement of lay judgment—what I call the *behavioral thesis*. In developing and defending this thesis, Schumpeter posits an ideal standard of voter or citizen reasoning that he attributes to the “classical doctrine of democracy”—an ideal vision of voter reasoning as stable, individually autonomous, and proceeding from abstract principles. As against this supposed ideal, Schumpeter argues, from rather stylized evidence, that abstract political principles are not central to voters’ reasoning; that most people’s political preferences are unstable and indistinct, and that the instability is aggravated by voters’ inability to engage in reasoned deduction. Most people’s political “will,” then, is little more than an “indeterminate bundle of vague impulses loosely playing about given slogans and mistaken impressions” ([1942] 1976, 253). Their arguments, Schumpeter says, are often “infantile”—their thinking “associative and affective” (262).

The conclusion Schumpeter drew from this critique of lay judgment is that democracy could not possibly be what the “classical doctrine” held it to be—a system in which “the people itself decide issues through the election of individuals who are to assemble to carry out its will” (250). Democracy was instead just “an institutional arrangement...in which individuals”—meaning elite political professionals—“acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote” (269). I call this Schumpeter’s *institutional thesis*. On the basis of both the behavioral and institutional theses, he insisted that elite “competition for leadership” is the only realistic definition of democracy, the “essence of democracy,” as he understood it (271, 280). He denied that such electoral competition fulfilled any values such as equality or freedom. And he claimed that modern

elections were just a new, distinctive arena for the perpetual struggle of elites. Both components of this elite conception of democracy—both theses—have been deeply influential. Early contributors to rational choice theory praised Schumpeter for his focus on elite competition. And scholars of political behavior since the 1950s have drawn again and again on Schumpeter's definition of democracy and his doubts about lay democratic judgment.

Those who secured the stature of Schumpeter's elite theory of democracy passed over at least two matters that could be briefly and inadequately classified as "context" for the theory—who Schumpeter really was, and what else he had written about democracy in his career. The Harvard Economics professor of 1942 was regarded only as a witty, urbane, old-world émigré. The stridency of his response to contemporary American political developments seems hardly to have registered with readers, even though some of the invective was found in the same book from which the theory of democracy as method was extracted. But his angry fervor represents an important clue. Schumpeter was closely attuned to the politics of labor during the New Deal years—the militancy that led to sit-downs and general strikes, and the legislative and judicial responses to labor struggle, including the passage and dramatic court upholding of the Wagner Act. For him, these developments were parts of a process of social and economic democratization that threatened capitalism. The bitterness of his response to New Deal developments might have struck readers more forcefully had they known about the period more than two decades earlier, around the end of World War I, when Schumpeter was deeply immersed in the Central European politics of democratic development—first, as a professor of economics in the late Austro-Hungarian empire, moonlighting as a political advisor. It is in this period that Schumpeter's first writings outlining a form of democracy dominated by elites actually appeared—letters and memos directed to Austro-Hungarian aristocrats, urging them to form a conservative party and redirect the forces of democratic change, as he thought the English Tories had done in the late 19th century (Medearis 2001, 33–45).

“Schumpeter was closely attuned to the politics of labor during the New Deal years...For him, these developments were parts of a process of social and economic democratization that threatened capitalism.”

2. This biographical narrative is best understood in conjunction with writings most interpreters have missed, ones laying out what I term Schumpeter's "transformative" theory of democracy. The elite conception of democracy outlined in the few widely-read chapters of *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* seems entirely political—it has little to do with the economy—and it treats political democracy as a stable form of elite rule. But from the late 1910's onward, Schumpeter actually theorized about democracy in two distinguishable (though often textually adjacent) ways. In addition to the elite conception of democracy—which actually evolved over time—Schumpeter also developed a different one, a vision of democracy as a historical tendency implicated in profound social and economic transformation, albeit transformation he deplored. Schumpeter elaborated both his elite and his transformative conceptions of democracy into their final expression in the 1930s and 1940s (Medearis 2001, 83–96).

A key component of the transformative conception as it evolved was a theory of rationalization, seen as a long-term process in modern societies which tended to undermine many traditional social institutions. Rationalization meant for Schumpeter a process by which social groups, thinking for themselves, challenged existing social practices and relations. It corroded traditional, habitual, received practices and forms of social action and the social institutions that provided order and stability. And Schumpeter came to view democratization as one form, one effect of rationalization. Why? First, because rationalization, according to his account, took a toll on institutions and practices of all kinds that were undemocratic: inegalitarian, authoritarian, hierarchical, and traditional. Schumpeter also regarded democratic ideology itself as rationalist, embracing an idealized belief in the capacity for rational decision and action. This rationalist democratization was particularly corrosive of capitalism, Schumpeter thought, because the capitalist order rested on traditional forms of action and institutions and was undermined by rationalization.

There were several traditional buttresses of the capitalist order, according to Schumpeter, but perhaps the most important for our purposes was the hierarchical, disciplinary factory regime ([1942] 1976, 127, 135–36, 139–41, 157–61, 214). He saw the capitalist economy resting upon a kind of feudal discipline in the factory. Both the spread of elected factory councils in Central Europe immediately after World War I and the rise of labor militancy in the U.S. a few decades later—

followed by the establishment of collective bargaining rights in the New Deal United States—were for him signs of a lamentable democratization of the workplace that could lead only to socialism. Scholars who have drawn on Schumpeter have, almost uniformly, missed all this—not only the entire transformative conception of democracy, but also the conservative and anti-democratic ideology that is the guiding thread of all his writings on democracy, that determined his negative attitude toward democratic change, and motivated him to emphasize elite practices and institutions that could moderate such change.

3. Several features of Schumpeter's work support reading him as a theorist of democratic development. The first concerns the overall vision and approach of what I have termed his science of social transformation (Medearis 2001, 149–158). That science explored long-term processes of historical change, especially the evolution of institutions, social structures, and social relations. As against a sole reliance on “economic theory”—his term for the approach of neoclassical economics that derived predicted outcomes from the current behavior of rational agents—he advocated for other “techniques”: “economic history” and “economic sociology.” While economic theory was concerned, he wrote, with “how people behave at any time and what the economic effects are they produce by so behaving,” economic sociology was concerned with “the question [of] how they came to behave as they do” (1954). Presentism would not suffice. Schumpeter insisted that even the present economy could not be fully understood as a product only of present agents and behavior. “Social structures...are coins that do not readily melt,” he wrote; “once they are formed, they persist, possibly for centuries” ([1942] 1976, 12; cf. Rueschemeyer, Huber Stephens and Stephens 1992, 7). In all these ways, Schumpeter's work on political and social transformation—including his theory of transformative democracy—stands in relation to neoclassical economics much in the same the way that at least some work in democratic development stands in relation to a substantial portion of contemporary political science, especially, for example, research in political behavior.

Studying democratization as one form of social transformation involved for Schumpeter studying how democratic ideologies, cultural attitudes, and practices reshaped major social institutions. The most important facet of democratization was the democratic reshaping of the industrial order, i.e., the capitalist workplace, in Schumpeter's account. It is not surprising, then, that like some more socio-historical work on democratic development, Schumpeter's narrative of

democratization highlighted the roles played by crucial classes. In fact, in Schumpeter's account, somewhat like that of RSS (1992), the working class appears as a key democratizing agent. To be clear, Schumpeter was deeply skeptical of the political abilities of working-class agents. Nevertheless, in work published just after World War I, he emphasized the formation by workers of elected factory councils in Central Europe that attempted to take over industrial management as a tendency democratizing the economy (1920–21). And in the 1940s, he portrayed the working class's growing militance in the United States in a broadly similar way, as a kind of democratization. The bourgeoisie plays a much more ambiguous role in his narrative. Schumpeter regards members of the bourgeoisie as bearers, at times, of democratic ideology. But he dismisses the class generally as politically incompetent, a point strongly emphasized by Piano (2018). The European bourgeoisie, according to Schumpeter's analysis, long had to cede political power to remnant feudal elites: “The aristocratic element continued to rule the roost *right to the end of the period of intact and vital capitalism*,” he claimed ([1942] 1976, 136).

These broad similarities to the study of democratic development do not tell us, however, which school of democratic development, if any, shares the most and draws the most from Schumpeter. On balance, I think the answer is modernization theory. First, the latter shares with Schumpeter's explorations in economic sociology and history a strong emphasis on the influence of very broad social and cultural shifts attributed to capitalism, industrialization, or economic development. Seymour Martin Lipset's seminal 1959 contribution to modernization theory, for example, argues that democratization is supported by the cultural changes associated with education, itself viewed as one of the “indices” of economic development (75–79). But Lipset does not credit Schumpeter for this aspect of his theory of democratic development. Indeed, while he may have sensed some affinity with Schumpeter's broad approach, he seems not to have discerned Schumpeter's transformative theory of democracy. Lipset instead relies on Schumpeter for his definition of democracy: “a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials” and a “social mechanism” that “permits the largest possible part of the population to influence these decisions through their ability to choose among alternative contenders for political office” (71). Adopting a fairly lax, minimalist standard from Schumpeter allowed Lipset and his followers easily to classify a large number of countries in the late 1950s as democracies, despite serious restrictions to the franchise and to civil liberties.

This leads to the first anomaly concerning Schumpeter and his relationship to theories of democratic development. On the one hand, the elite theory of democracy from which this definition is plucked, the part of Schumpeter's work that has been most directly and explicitly influential to scholars of democratic development, is in itself not much concerned with development or social transformation at all. It is hard to see how constrained political competition among elites—competition that in no way challenges the position of elites in general—could itself be seen as significantly transformative. And the chapters in which Schumpeter defends his model of elite competition have very little to say about how democracy of this kind—democracy as elite competition for electoral support—came to be. On the other hand, the part of Schumpeter's work that is most focused on democracy and historical change—his transformative theory of democracy—was ignored by Lipset and subsequent scholars of democratic development and seems to have no influence on their work. Lipset, for one, far from seeing the New Deal labor order as evidence of ongoing radical democratic transformation, thought it indicated that such social conflict had abated. "The representatives of the lower strata are now part of the governing classes, members of the club," Lipset writes; "political controversy has declined in the wealthier stable democracies because... the incorporation of the workers into the legitimate body politic has been settled" (100).

There is a second anomaly in reading Schumpeter as a scholar of democratic development: neither his elite theory nor his transformative theory of democracy resembles most scholarship on democratic development in a very important sense. To simplify dramatically: for Schumpeter, democratization is most prominently the independent variable, rather than the dependent one. Schumpeter was concerned in his published work primarily with the transition to socialism—significantly caused by spreading democratic practices—and he says little about transitions to political democracy.

A third anomaly of reading Schumpeter as a theorist of democratic development is that the elite elements of his conceptualization are so pronounced as almost to undermine any claim that he has theorized democratization. The assumption undergirding his theory of democracy as elite competition is that elite dominance of society is ubiquitous and inevitable. Democracy represents for him not an end to elite dominance, but the emergence of a new form of it: "rule by the politician" ([1942] 1976, 285). And this surely limits how meaningful it can be for Schumpeter to talk about democratic transition. A fourth anomaly—a quite unique feature of Schumpeter's vision of

political and economic transformation, related to the previous point—is that Schumpeter could think of "no great objection" to viewing capitalism not as "a social form *sui generis*" but rather as "the last stage of the decomposition of what we have called feudalism" ([1942] 1976, 139). For Schumpeter, as we have seen, capitalism in its golden age in Europe was still dominated, at least politically, by remnants of the feudal aristocracy. In this sense, only socialism would represent a new form of society or of political economy, in which feudal holdovers would be banished from politics and individual entrepreneurs pushed out of their economic role. This may explain why the transition to political democracy—generally the focus of democratic development as a field—did not hold Schumpeter's attention for long. The decisive break with feudalism would only come with the advent of socialism.

So long as we simply assess Schumpeter as one scholar of democracy, capitalism, and historical transformation alongside others, these anomalies seem nothing more than that—oddities, deviations. But historically minded scholarship on democratic development offers a way of making sense of views that set Schumpeter far apart. Scholars of democratic development, beginning perhaps with Barrington Moore and certainly including RSS (1992, 58–61), have characterized the landlord class as the most implacable opponent of democratization. Schumpeter's earliest writings on democratization, as I said above, were not scholarly publications but memos and letters addressed to Austro-Hungarian aristocrats advising them on how to curb democratization. And even after the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Schumpeter retained many of the same attitudes he had during World War I. When we shift from treating Schumpeter solely as a detached observer of historical struggles over democratization to understanding him as a participant in those struggles, as someone who regretted democratization's erosion of social and political institutions he favored—first aristocratic politics and later the capitalist economic system aristocrats eventually came to defend—in this view, it becomes easier to understand the anomalies. His primary concern was not how political democratization was achieved or could be promoted, but how continuing democratization could threaten the institutions of capitalism he most valued. He remained convinced throughout his life that the continued political influence of aristocrats well into the early twentieth century represented not a fluke but an example of the inevitable dominance of capable elites over incompetent masses. It is not surprising that, despite some affinities—similarities in how Schumpeter and many scholars of democratic development see the scope and vision of a science of social transformation—and despite offering

a definition of democracy useful to modernization theory, the Austrian has continued to be difficult for the field of democratic development to digest. But the prestige and influence of Schumpeter's work in political science and philosophy more broadly lives on and has never adequately been reassessed in light of who he really was, and what he really meant. Now we are in a historical moment when we are forced to reckon again with the ability of antidemocratic groups and ideologies to persist, mutate, and re-emerge. We have a new chance to recognize Schumpeter as a troubling specimen—a resigned foe of democracy whose conceptions and assumptions have long been absorbed into much scholarly democratic analysis.

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Revisiting Capitalist Development and Democracy

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Reflecting on *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992) 30 years after its publication, we need to start with its limitations, before turning to what we think we got right. The main limitation is that we failed to make the temporal scope conditions explicit. The book was written between 1985 and 1990, in the early stages of globalization and before the transition to the knowledge economy and the rise of social media. Therefore, it is very much a book about democracy in the industrial age, and in hindsight (or more foresight at the time), we could have specified the scope conditions of our theory more clearly. Nevertheless, we contend that some of our key theoretical points still hold. We shall begin by recalling the book's main arguments, then we shall identify the theoretical points that we want to defend, and finally we shall discuss how these theoretical points help us shed light on the trajectory of democracy in the 21st century.

Core Arguments of the Book

Our goal was to explain the breakthrough to, breakdown of, and maintenance of full democracy, defined as a political system with free and fair elections with universal male suffrage, responsibility of the government to the elected representatives, and freedom of expression and association. Our theoretical frame was built on three clusters of power: the distribution of power in civil society, between civil society and the state, and in the international economy and system of states. We took a very broad comparative view, including all of today's postindustrial democracies plus Latin America and the Caribbean, and a long historical view covering the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, focusing on changes in power constellations as a result of capitalist development and international competition.

Our central arguments for today's postindustrial democracies were the following. Economic development changed power relations in two fundamental respects: it reduced the economic and therefore political power of large landowners, and it facilitated the self-organization of subordinate classes. Urbanization and the spread of literacy facilitated middle-class organization, and industrialization facilitated working-class organization through the concentration of workers in factories and cities. The working class was the most

consistently pro-democratic force, but democracy was by no means an exclusively working-class affair! First, there are cases of agrarian democracy where the working class played little role (Switzerland, Norway, the North and West of the United States); in these cases, small and medium farmers owned most of the land. Second, in order to achieve and stabilize democracy, the working class needed allies among small farmers or sectors of the middle class. These alliances took the form of coalitions between political parties linked to organizations of workers, farmers, or sectors of the middle class. The strength of democracy's enemies mattered as well. Where large landowners dominated the countryside and were dependent on a large pool of cheap labor, they were formidable enemies of democratization and worked to undermine democratic governments (Germany, Italy, Spain). Power constellations in the international system shaped chances for democratization insofar as defeat in war weakened authoritarian elites.

The situation in Latin America was very different from that in the North Atlantic world. The industrial impulse remained weaker than in Europe and North America, and accordingly large landowners remained more powerful while the working class remained smaller and weaker. This resulted in a more difficult process of democratization. Urbanization and economic growth did expand the middle classes, and they became the leading pro-democratic force. However, the middle classes fought primarily for their own inclusion and pushed for full democracy, including universal suffrage, only in the presence of a strong labor movement. Worker-farmer alliances were not an option because of the extreme concentration of landholding. The state's role in shaping the labor movement was generally stronger in Latin America than in Europe, but there was significant variation among Latin American countries. In some cases, the working class was incorporated into state-sponsored organizations (e.g., Brazil and Mexico). In some of these instances, corporatist structures were eroded in later phases by competitive party politics (e.g., Brazil); elsewhere, incorporation failed or was never attempted (Collier and Collier 1991). Nevertheless, the state still played a strong role in regulating labor organization and in mediating between organized labor and employers, thus reducing labor's capacity for autonomous organization and political action.

Regarding our third cluster of power, Latin America's position in the international economy and state system was particularly unfavorable for democratization, at least until the end of the Cold War. Economically, the location on the periphery of the world economic system retarded industrialization and entrenched dependence

on raw material exports, with its attendant cyclical fluctuations. Politically, the location in the American sphere of influence strengthened authoritarian elites and weakened organizations of subordinate classes through overt and covert interventions. The military invasions by the United States in Central America and the Caribbean in the early twentieth century left legacies of National Guards and dictators who used those Guards to stay in power, such as the Somozas in Nicaragua. Covert interventions during the Cold War split labor movements, branded reformist left parties as communist, and undermined or overthrew democratic governments whose reforms threatened American interests, from Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954 to Allende in Chile in 1973. Military assistance and training from the United States propped up military institutions and strengthened their autonomy from democratic governments, making the military susceptible to elite appeals for anti-democratic interventions in the name of national security.

It is important here to explain our conceptualization of class and classes as social actors, because this is what distinguishes us from more recent authors who read off interests from class position and use rational choice models to explain democratization (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Ansell and Samuels 2014). We conceptualize class, following Elster (1985, 330–331), as “a group of people who by virtue of what they possess are compelled to engage in the same activities if they want to make the best use of their endowments.” Thus, classes are shaped by the structure of capitalist economic production. However, we emphasize that one cannot read off subjective class interests and class action from an objective class position. Rather, class formation, or the formation of class consciousness, class organization, and collective action, is a historical and sociological process; there is nothing automatic about it. Working-class ideology was shaped by the main organizers; in Europe those were mainly socialists, though Christian Democrats and anarchists organized followers too. In Latin America, socialists and anarchists were active as well, but they often faced competition from charismatic leaders whose main interest was the construction of a personal power base. If the main organizer was such a charismatic leader, personalistic loyalty could substitute for ideology (e.g., Perón in Argentina). Our statement, then, that the working class was the most consistently pro-democratic force, is a comparative one; the working class was more consistently pro-democratic than the middle classes, but it was not invariably pro-democratic.

What Still Holds

So, which of our theoretical points still hold? Arguably the most fundamental point is that democracy is not a matter of writing a constitution, but rather a matter of power sharing that needs power constellations to sustain it: “Our most basic premise is that democracy is above all a matter of power. Democratization represents first and foremost an increase in political equality” (5). There needs to be a balance of power between classes and class coalitions; the have-nots need to be organized to achieve and stabilize democracy. These organizations are civil society organizations and political parties. Political parties matter; they need to provide representation, predictability, and accountability. They do that best when they are linked to strong organizations in civil society. They can also serve to protect the fundamental class interests of elites, preventing narrower groups of elites from undermining the economy and democracy itself.

“[T]he most fundamental point is that democracy is not a matter of writing a constitution, but rather a matter of power sharing that needs power constellations to sustain it.”

The state, as the set of institutions making and implementing binding collective decisions and holding a monopoly of organized force, is a crucial actor in society’s structure of domination. Consolidation of state power has been a prerequisite for the establishment of democracy (Rustow 1970). The survival of democracy is shaped by the relative autonomy of the state from power relations in society. Democracy needs a separation between the public sphere and the private interests of rulers; it is not compatible with patrimonialism. The state needs to be autonomous from elite interests so as not to serve as an instrument of repression of subordinate classes. On the other hand, too much autonomy from society works against democracy as well. Democracy is not compatible, for example, with an autonomous state controlled by a military supported from the outside.

The international system has a powerful influence on the establishment and survival of democracy, both by shaping the economy and through political pressures. The most obvious manifestations of political pressures were the undermining of leftist democratic governments and the propping up of authoritarian governments by the United States in Latin America

during the Cold War. After the Cold War, international pressures at times involved the influence of democratic governments on neighboring authoritarian rulers, such as external pressures on Fujimori in Peru.

Implications for Understanding Democracy in the 21st Century

Illiberalism and populism are threatening mature post-industrial democracies because the organizational infrastructure of democracy in the form of unions and parties has been weakened. In Europe and North America, deindustrialization has brought a marked decline of union membership and thus of union strength and the strength of union-party alliances. Globalization and the transition to the knowledge economy have created winners and losers and a polarization of the labor market. Accordingly, the working class is more atomized and differentiated in post-industrial societies, and unions are not able to serve as effective carriers of a solidaristic message for the bulk of the working class. The losers in the new economy are precisely those who also lack connections to unions, as organizations which provide not only material protection but a sense of community. These social strata feel equally distant from political parties which claim to represent their interests. Instead, unskilled workers in precarious labor market situations in the knowledge economy are targeted (and often successfully so) for mobilization by right-wing populist leaders who create a sense of identity and (false) solidarity of “us against them” and who promise a return to a presumably better past.

The example of Eastern Europe shows that international influences remain important, but democracy cannot be stabilized from the outside if domestic power relations are not supportive. The prospect and conditionalities of accession to membership in the EU pushed political elites in Eastern Europe to adopt democratic procedures (Vachudova 2005). Yet, where civil society organizations and pro-democratic parties were weak, external pressures have been ineffective in preventing democratic backsliding. Of course, one has to recognize that these pressures had remained rather weak until 2022 due to the EU’s inability to agree on an effective course of action. The point is that it is easier to undermine democracy from the outside than to stabilize it.

Latin American democracies in the 21st century have mostly been of low quality. Slater’s (2013) concept of careening captures their trajectories very well. In the most recent wave of democratization in Latin America, organized labor did not play a major role (arguably with

the exception of Brazil), as unions had been severely weakened by repression, deindustrialization, and a shrinking of the public sector in the wake of structural adjustment. In some cases, such as Argentina, the authoritarian regimes self-destructed, and to an extent, the debt crisis broke the alliance between the military and economic elites. Pressures from a variety of groups, including human rights groups rooted in the middle classes and social movements of the poor and minorities, also contributed to the region's democratic transitions. Haggard and Kaufman (2016) examined regime changes in the third wave, from 1980 to 2008, and found that 40–45% of democratic transitions were not motivated by distributive conflicts—that is, they were not a result of direct pressure from below inducing elite concessions. Rather, these transitions were initiated by incumbents due to intra-elite conflicts and/or external pressures. The end of the Cold War created a more favorable international environment for democracy, and the Latin American democracies attempted to protect each other, which was especially important in the early years of transition.

These new Latin American democracies have suffered from several weaknesses: vertical and horizontal accountability is often weak because of overpowering presidents and weak legislatures, parties, and judiciaries (O'Donnell 1998). Second, civil and, to a lesser extent, political rights are very unevenly protected across classes, genders, and territorial units (O'Donnell 2004). Third, patrimonialist practices continue to blur lines between the public and private realms (Giraudy *et al.* 2020). There are significant differences, of course. Central American and Andean countries from the beginning witnessed more careening than the Southern Cone countries, and some have made the transition to full-fledged authoritarianism (Venezuela, Nicaragua), but since 2016, even Brazil has joined the club of the careeners. The lack of organizational bonds linking large sectors of the population to each other and to parties that could represent them credibly underlies these weaknesses. As Adam Dean (2022) makes clear, this has in part been a result of the continued repression of labor by democratic governments in the pursuit of economic liberalization. There have been examples of major popular mobilizations that forced policy reversals or even forced governments from office (e.g., Ecuador and Bolivia), but these movements remained organizationally weak and lacked electorally strong allied parties that could push through positive agendas for change. Their impact remained confined to pressure on the streets and undermined rather than strengthened democratic institutions.

After transition, the informal economy continued to grow—at least until 2000—and this created larger groups that are very difficult to organize. Unions have declined in membership everywhere. The Pink Tide provided a decade of progress in some countries in terms of strengthening left parties and rebuilding or constructing alliances between parties and labor movements (e.g., Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia), but the end of the commodity boom and ensuing economic problems have weakened the electoral support for these parties and strained alliances. Even the strongest of these parties, like the Brazilian PT and the Bolivian MAS, have suffered from a loss of voters and internal splits.

Party system fragmentation and decline of established parties and party alliances are widespread in Latin America. There is great popular dissatisfaction with the way that democracy operates in reality, and there is a decline in popular support for democracy in principle. Our argument that a balance of power between the haves and the have-nots conditions the stabilization of democracy is still valid here. An underlying cause of the decay of parties and of support for democracy is the lack of organization of subordinate classes and of a link of these organizations to political parties, and thus the inability of subordinate classes to shape policy in a way that addresses their fundamental interests in food security, housing, and access to health care and education. If, in the past, elites turned to the military to overturn democracy when their interests were threatened by organized and mobilized subordinate classes, today the greater threat to democracy is the desertion of political parties by weakly organized subordinate classes. And as Schattschneider (1942) told us ages ago: “Political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties.” Whereas capitalist development in the late 19th and 20th centuries created the conditions for the self-organization of subordinate classes and thus for representative democracy, in the 21st century it has undermined the bases of organization and thus the infrastructure for stable democracy.

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Capitalism and the Rise and Fall of Unions and Democracy: How the Link between Democracy and Capitalism Runs through Labor Repression

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In *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, Rueschemeyer, Huber, and Stephens (RSS) challenged the widely held belief that capitalism automatically leads to democracy. While they agreed that capitalism potentially contributes to democracy, they showed that the relationship is highly contingent upon the balance of class forces, state structure, and transnational power constellations. In doing so, they developed a revisionist account of democratization that highlighted the crucial impact of labor unions and the working class as “the most consistently pro-democratic force.”

Fast forward thirty years, and my new book, *Opening Up By Cracking Down: Labor Repression and Trade Liberalization in Democratic Developing Countries*, challenges a similar shibboleth about the relationship between democracy and capitalism. While RSS' analysis of capitalism focused on the process of industrialization in Europe and Latin America from the late nineteenth century through the 1980s, my research on capitalism focuses on the process of trade liberalization in developing countries around the turn of the 21st century. Specifically, I demonstrate that democracy was more likely to lead to trade liberalization in developing countries when governments used labor repression to overcome union opposition. Like RSS, mine is a revisionist account that highlights the crucial, but often ignored, impact of labor unions and labor repression in the relationship between democracy and capitalism.

“Specifically, I demonstrate that democracy was more likely to lead to trade liberalization in developing countries when governments used labor repression to overcome union opposition.”

¹ This essay was adapted from *Opening Up By Cracking Down: Labor Repression and Trade Liberalization in Democratic Developing Countries* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), published with permission from Cambridge University Press.

In this short essay I will first review the contemporary debate on the relationship between democracy and free trade, a key policy through which capitalism has spread around the globe since the publication of *Capitalist Development and Democracy* in 1992. Second, I will introduce the argument and a summary of the evidence presented in *Opening Up By Cracking Down*. Last, I will argue that my new book can be read as documenting the unraveling of the historical process that RSS identified. Whereas RSS showed how capitalism can strengthen labor unions and thereby contribute to democracy, my new book shows how democracies committed to capitalism (free trade) needed to repress labor unions in order to implement such economic reforms. In doing so, democratic developing countries may have planted the seeds of their own destruction, weakening the labor unions needed to defend democracy against the threats of far-right authoritarianism.

Democracy and Capitalism

When RSS published *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, the conventional wisdom held that capitalism led to democracy. The paradigmatic cases were the advanced economies of Western Europe, where capitalist development in the late nineteenth century was followed by a wave of democratization in the early twentieth century. Roughly one hundred years later, a wave of political and economic transformations in the developing world renewed interest in the relationship between capitalism and democracy, albeit with the causal arrow reversed.

This time, transitions to democracy in the 1980s and 1990s were followed by a series of neoliberal economic reforms—most importantly trade liberalization and privatization—through which developing countries embraced capitalism. Scholars quickly developed theories of why and how democratic governments were implementing trade liberalization (Geddes 1995). One influential approach argues that democracy led to trade liberalization simply because it empowered domestic groups that favored free trade. According to some, international trade benefits society overall, and political leaders that are democratically accountable to the public therefore maintain lower trade barriers (Garrett 2000; Stokes 2001; Weyland 2002; Eichengreen and Leblang 2008).

During this period, many countries faced economic crises that helped to discredit protectionist policies and contributed to a growing public consensus that “there is no alternative” to trade liberalization and other neoliberal economic reforms (Rodrik 1992; Grinspun

and Kreklewich 1994; Blyth 2002; Fourcade–Gourinchas and Babb 2002; Sheppard 2005; Harvey 2005; Babb 2013). Others argue that the link between democracy and trade is especially strong in developing countries, where export-led growth may increase employment opportunities and wages for the majority of workers (O’Rourke and Taylor 2006; Milner and Mukherjee 2009; Mukherjee 2016; Zucker 2020). As Milner and Kubota explain, “in developing countries, workers and the poor tend to gain from trade liberalization...Democratization will thus enfranchise a new group of voters with preferences for lower levels of protectionism” (2005, 116). And it is true that many developing countries—from Bangladesh to Turkey, Nicaragua to the Philippines—transitioned to democracy and then rapidly moved toward free trade during the late-twentieth century.

Yet many other democratic developing countries maintained high tariffs or only gradually liberalized their trade policies. In the mid-twentieth century, India, Nigeria, and Malaysia, for example, all transitioned to democracy and then pursued the high tariffs and import-substitution industrialization supported by their countries’ labor unions and nascent industrial manufacturers.² Argentina and Bolivia both transitioned to democracy in the early 1980s, but maintained high tariffs after their government’s efforts at economic liberalization triggered massive labor-led general strikes (Murillo 2001; Dunkerley 1990). According to one estimate, 42 percent of developing countries that transitioned to democracy between 1978 and 2000 subsequently maintained high levels of trade protection (Mukherjee 2016).

Understanding how some democratic developing countries liberalized their economies more than others requires examining not only the ways in which democracies empowered pro-trade groups, but also how they overcame opposition from protectionist groups such as labor unions. Some asserted that economic crises simply weakened labor unions and reduced their ability to mobilize workers against neoliberal economic reforms (Nelson and Waterbury 1989; Geddes 1995). Others pointed to welfare benefits, such as unemployment insurance and job retraining programs, that democratic governments provided to compensate workers dislocated by globalization (Cameron 1978; Schamis 1999; Adsera, Boix *et al.* 2002; Etchemendy 2011). Still, others argued that partisan ties between

² For India and ISI following independence and democracy in 1947, see Kohli 1989. For Nigeria and ISI following independence and democracy in 1960, see Oyejide 1973. For Malaysia and ISI following independence and democracy in 1957, see Kuruville 1995.

labor unions and political parties led to union restraint and acquiescence to trade liberalization (Murillo 2001; Levitsky 2003; Teitelbaum 2011). Some even argued that democratic leaders implemented a “reform by stealth” strategy that confused labor union leaders and limited their mobilization (Jenkins 1999).

At the heart of these approaches, however, is the mistaken assumption that democracies cannot and do not use labor repression to reduce labor unions’ influence on trade policy. For example, Adsera and Boix explain that democracies compensate “trade losers” because the only alternative would be “excluding in a systematic manner—that is, through authoritarian rule—those sectors that may lose from increasing economic integration” (2002, 254). Similarly, Haggard and Kaufman’s work on democracy and economic reform starts from the assumption that “the freedom of association that allows interest groups to organize and press their claims on the state” is one of the “constitutive features of democratic rule itself” (2008, 13). Starting from these premises, scholars repeatedly overlook how democratic developing countries around the world often used a mix of strike bans, mass arrests, physical violence, and legislative restrictions to weaken labor union opposition and thereby facilitate the process of trade liberalization. While I share the normative belief that democracies ought to respect workers’ rights, the descriptive reality is that many countries that are widely seen as democratic regularly violated workers’ basic rights.

Opening Up By Cracking Down

My new book, *Opening Up by Cracking Down*, explains how democratic developing countries used labor repression—the violation of workers’ basic rights to act collectively—to overcome labor union opposition to trade liberalization. Some democratic governments brazenly jailed union leaders and used police and military violence to break the strikes that unions launched against whole packages of neoliberal economic reforms. Others weakened labor union opposition through more subtle tactics, such as restricting workers’ rights to organize, banning strikes, or threatening to retaliate against striking workers. Either way, the reality is that democracy and trade liberalization were more likely to go together when governments were willing to violate labor rights. Far from guaranteeing workers’ basic freedoms, democratically-elected governments routinely violated their rights to act collectively. My book presents a revisionist account—both theoretical and empirical—of the process through which many developing countries embraced free trade.

In brief, my book argues that democratic developing countries were more likely to open their economies during the late-twentieth century if they violated workers’ basic rights to organize and strike. The more democracies adopted such labor repression, the more likely they were to embrace free trade. The more democracies respected workers’ rights, in contrast, the more likely they were to maintain high tariffs.

To understand why, consider that most developing countries entered the late-twentieth century with autocratic governments in which trade policy was dominated by a small group of protectionist, import-competing businesses. The stable trade policy outcome was a closed economy walled off by high tariffs. When many of these autocracies transitioned toward democracy, they opened their political arenas to general publics that were more supportive of trade liberalization. Whether individuals were driven by the promise of lower consumer prices, higher rates of economic growth, and new employment opportunities, or by the growing ideological consensus that economic crises had discredited protectionist policies, the reality was that the majority of the public in developing countries often held favorable views of international trade (Przeworski 1991; Garrett 2000; Stokes 2001; Weyland 2002; Eichengreen and Leblang 2008; Baker 2009; Milner and Kubota 2005; Rodrik 1992; Grinspun and Kreklewich 1994; Blyth 2002; Fourcade-Gourinchas and Babb 2002; Sheppard 2005; Harvey 2005; Babb 2013). Democracy also often empowered the pro-trade demands of export-oriented businesses, which organized lobby groups and funded political parties that supported their economic policy agenda (Olson 1965; Grossman and Helpman 1994; Acemoglu and Robinson 2008; Ziblatt 2006; Albertus and Menaldo 2014). These new domestic demands for trade liberalization, from the general public as well as organized businesses, had the potential to push trade policy toward greater openness.

However, greater levels of democracy also increased the political influence of labor unions, which vehemently opposed free trade during this period (Geddes 1995; Kohli 2004; Spalding 2014; Dean 2016). The more a democratic government respected labor rights, the more likely workers were to organize powerful labor unions and to launch protests and strikes against trade liberalization. Such strikes informed governments about the salience of economic reforms, demonstrated the extent of public opposition, hinted at the political costs to which trade liberalization might lead, and made governments more likely to maintain high tariffs (Tarrow 1994; Burstein and Linton 2002; Uba 2005; Giugni 2008). In contrast, the less a democratic

government respected labor rights, the less likely labor unions were to counterbalance demands for trade liberalization. Limits on the right to organize reduced the size of labor unions, and restrictions on the right to strike reduced their ability to launch influential strikes against free trade (Freeman and Pelletier 1990; Godard 2003; Lindvall 2013; Gourevitch 2018). In other words, democracy empowered new domestic demands for free trade, and labor repression helped to overcome a major barrier to such reforms.

Among the many developing countries that combined democracy with labor repression, there were two different paths toward free trade. The first path started with labor repression followed by democracy. This path was taken by countries that transitioned to democracy while maintaining the high level of labor repression practiced by the previous autocratic regime. Turkey, for example, transitioned to democracy in 1983 but maintained the military dictatorship's strike bans and limits on union activities (Özkiziltan 2020). The new democratic government quickly liberalized trade policy while the country's union leaders were still imprisoned and put on trial facing the death penalty (Nichols, Sugar, and Demir 2002).

The second path toward free trade, however, started with democracy followed by labor repression. This path was taken by countries that transitioned to democracy and respected labor rights, only to later increase labor repression. Argentina and India, as discussed above, were both established democracies when their governments increased labor repression in order to weaken union opposition to trade liberalization in the 1990s. In both of these pathways, labor repression played a pivotal and previously overlooked role in the process of trade liberalization in democratic developing countries.

My book's focus on the interaction between democracy and labor repression sheds new and critical light on when and how a large swath of humanity joined the global economy. There were roughly sixty-five developing countries with democratic governments in 1992, and at the turn of the century, there were as many as one hundred. By 2000, more than 2.5 billion people lived in developing countries with democratic governments.³ When did developing countries open their economies? Trade liberalization was frequently triggered either by 1) an increase in democracy when the level of labor repression was high or 2) an increase in labor repression when the level of democracy was high. How did democratic developing countries

implement trade liberalization? Often, by repressing labor unions that demanded continued trade protection.

My book tests this theory by carefully revisiting the empirical evidence that supports the field's dominant theories of trade liberalization in developing countries. I begin by revisiting the cross-national quantitative evidence that suggests that democracy is associated with trade liberalization in developing countries and then demonstrate how these results are actually driven by the subset of democratic developing countries that aggressively repressed labor unions. Such revisionist research is most compelling when based on well-known cases that the extant literature explains without reference to the factors highlighted by a new theory (George and Bennett 2005, 253). My book, therefore, presents in-depth case studies of trade liberalization in India and Argentina in the 1990s, two cases with enormous literatures that are nearly silent on the role of labor repression (e.g., Levitsky and Way 1998; Murillo 2001; Levitsky 2003; Etchemendy 2011; Jenkins 1999; Teitelbaum 2011).

In both cases, I document that labor unions opposed trade liberalization and that governments' non-repressive tactics failed to stop unions from launching strikes and protests against such reforms. I then demonstrate how previously overlooked instances of labor repression weakened labor union opposition and thereby facilitated the implementation of trade liberalization. I further illustrate the mechanisms that link democracy and labor repression to trade liberalization through a series of cross-case and within-case comparisons of trade politics in India, Argentina, Mexico, Bolivia, and Turkey.

While labor repression was nearly ubiquitous in democratic developing countries that opened their economies, it is important to clarify that neither democracy nor labor repression were strictly necessary for trade liberalization. Many developing countries, such as Chile, South Korea, and China opened their economies without democratizing first (Fischer 2009; Deyo 1989; Ianchovichina and Martin 2001). Moreover, many democratic developing countries faced so many different pressures to lower their tariffs that they may have done so, albeit more slowly, even if they had not repressed labor unions. For example, many countries faced external pressure from international institutions and the United States, while others were heavily influenced by pro-trade government technocrats, multinational corporations, transnational networks, and the broader battle of ideas about economic policy (Chorev 2005; Gallagher 2007; Manger and Shadlen 2014; Kentikelenis, Stubbs and King 2016; Centeno

³ <https://ourworldindata.org/democracy>

1993; Blyth 2002; Harvey 2005; Margheritis and Pereira 2007; Chwieroth 2009; Fairbrother 2014; Kay 2011; Babb 2013). With these numerous explanations in mind, it is important to state clearly that my book's goal is not to develop an all-encompassing explanation for why developing countries opened their economies, but rather to highlight the important and often-overlooked ways in which democratic developing countries frequently used labor repression to facilitate trade liberalization.

The many instances of labor repression documented throughout my book clearly demonstrate that democracy is by no means a guarantee of respect for labor rights. Throughout the late-twentieth century, there were many developing countries that were commonly viewed as democracies—countries with competitive elections, broad suffrage, and basic constraints on executive authority—and yet regularly violated workers' rights to act collectively.⁴ In other words, democracies vary widely in their level of respect for labor rights and therefore differ in the political influence that they grant to organized labor (Korpi 2006; Western 1997; Davenport 2007, 2017; Albertus and Menaldo 2018). In theory, it may sound strange, but in practice, democratic governments regularly reduced labor union opposition to trade liberalization by resorting to labor repression.

Labor Repression, Free Trade, and Democratic Erosion

Opening Up By Cracking Down describes a process that weakened labor unions through both political and economic dynamics. In terms of politics, labor repression was a policy decision that governments made to limit the ability of workers and their unions to strike and protest. Arresting union leaders, firing strikers, and banning strikes all decrease the ability of unions to deliver material benefits and policy concessions for their members, thus disincentivizing union membership and shrinking the size of unions over time. Beyond these concrete measures, government repression also delegitimized unions and their demands. As Archer explains, for many public onlookers, the very act of repression “will trigger presumptions of illegitimacy, just as, when a policeman knocks on a neighbor's door, many people will assume that the neighbor has done something wrong” (2001, 212). And to secure support from more skeptical

⁴ This basic definition of democracy builds on the Polity IV Project, the most widely used measure of political regime type in the social science, see Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr 2002. My book demonstrates that despite definitional difference between Polity IV, the Unified Democracy Score, and Varieties of Democracy, all three of these common measures of democracy are weakly associated with respect for labor rights.

observers, the governments that repressed labor also joined the broader battle of interpretation, arguing that unions and their demands were irrational, backward, selfish, and, above all, illegitimate.

In terms of economics, labor repression enabled policy reforms that decimated employment in the industries where unions had previously been strongest. Millions of jobs were lost in import-competing industries and the public sector. In Argentina, for example, membership in the metalworker's union dropped from 300,000 to 60,000 over the course of President Menem's reforms in the early 1990s. As Antonio Caló, the president of the union told me, “Menem opened the economy, he tossed away everything that was manufactured in Argentina, privatized everything...He was a disaster, in my opinion, the worst president there was in Argentina.”⁵ There was a similar free fall in labor power in India, where Narasimha Rao's New Economic Policy quickly reduced union density from a peak of 36 percent in 1989 down to less than 12 percent by 1993 (Badigannavar, Kelly, and Kumar 2021). Overall, the political logic of labor repression weakened unions and enabled policy reforms that unleashed an economic logic that weakened unions further.

The problem, as RSS and many others have pointed out, is that these labor movements had once fought for and defended democracy. Unions historically fought for greater voting access, mobilized workers into politics, and increased voter turnout—in particular, among minorities and the poor (Flavin and Radcliff 2011; Leighley and Nagler 2007). The decline of unions undermines their ability to perform these crucial pro-democracy functions. And unions' diminished ability to deliver higher wages and economic equality has left society more vulnerable to mobilization around racism, xenophobia, and other exclusionary ideologies (Grumbach and Collier 2022). As Roberts explains, the recent trend of democratic “backsliding” around the world suggests that “with organized labor a diminished actor on the democratic landscape, democracy itself has become less robust” (2021, 46). In short, democratic governments may have implemented trade liberalization at the long-term cost of democracy itself.

If writing a book earns one the right to speculate, I would say that contemporary globalization marks the unraveling of the process documented by RSS in *Capitalist Development and Democracy*. In that book, the authors show how capitalism and industrialization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries built strong labor unions that subsequently led the struggle

⁵ Author interview with Antonio Caló, December 26, 2019.

for democracy. My book shows how, by the turn of the twentieth-first century, many democratic developing countries were unhappy with the stagnant economic growth associated with import substitution industrialization and turned to trade liberalization as a solution. But since free trade promised deindustrialization that threatened the survival of labor unions, democracies were only able to implement trade liberalization if they were willing to repress the labor unions originally fostered by industrialization. In short, RSS showed how capitalism, industrialization, and labor power combined to produce democracy. In contrast, my book suggests that capitalism, deindustrialization, and labor repression may have combined to undermine democracy.

“In short, RSS showed how capitalism, industrialization, and labor power combined to produce democracy. In contrast, my book suggests that capitalism, deindustrialization, and labor repression may have combined to undermine democracy.”

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Occlusions of Racecraft: Capitalism, Empire, and the Democracy Debate Revisited

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On August 22, 1791, the enslaved of France's most prosperous colony Saint Domingue—what is now Haiti—rose in revolt. Often known as the “voodoo rebellion” in Bois Caïman, the enslaved poisoned and killed their masters, and torched more than 200 plantations. “The Northern Province, source of so much wealth, is nothing more than a pile of ashes,” a desperate letter of the members of the Provincial Assembly of the North recounts.¹ News of the insurrection arrived in Paris, and in November 1791 eyewitness accounts of the rebellion were read to the National Assembly:

The plunderers continued to Clément's plantation, where they killed the owner and the refiner. Day began to break, which helped the miscreants to join up with one another. They spread out over the plain with dreadful shouts, set fire to houses and canes, and murdered the inhabitants.²

I begin with the early days of the Haitian Revolution because too often the struggle of the enslaved has been analytically bifurcated from our theories of democratization and rights formation. Sometimes the actions of enslaved or colonized people have been deemed to be pre-modern, existing in analytically sealed processes, separate from political modernity and the European wave of democratization (Buck-Morss 2009; Lowe 2015). Other times, we have considered the struggle for rights and freedom as only ever existing within the nation state. This methodologically nationalist assumption (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002) is historically inaccurate because the first wave of democratization did not take place in a world of nation states, but in a world of empires (Go and Lawson 2017). In assuming the “nation state” as a unit of analysis, we miss the fact that the main political protagonists and thinkers of the time were deeply engaged in debates over the “status” of colonial populations; and, of course, we miss how colonial populations themselves organized to claim these rights.

¹ John Carter Brown Library, Haiti Collection, 1791, <https://archive.org/details/messieursetchersooasse/page/n1/mode/2up?view=theater>

² Archives Parlementaires, 35: 460–61, in Geggus 2014, 81.

“I begin with the early days of the Haitian Revolution because too often the struggle of the enslaved has been analytically bifurcated from our theories of democratization and rights formation.”

Once the revolutionaries in Paris executed the king in January 1793, the new French Republic was born. This instantly produced a threat for the monarchies of other European imperial powers, including England and Spain. Despite the ongoing revolts in Saint Domingue, the island and its brutal system of chattel slavery—often euphemistically dubbed “the Pearl of the Antilles”—remained the source of great wealth and was a prized possession of imperial powers. Recognizing the threat of France’s revolution, European monarchies declared war on the new French Republic, and this war also enveloped the colonies. With Spain vying for control over Saint Domingue, the enslaved recognized an opportunity, and the famed leader of the army of the enslaved, Toussaint L’Ouverture, struck a deal with Spanish forces. In turn, planters, desperate to quell the rebellion, invited the British imperial army—France’s archenemy—to put down the slave revolt. By 1793, three empires fought for control of Saint Domingue. Amidst this war, two French commissioners, Sonthonax and Polverel, who were tasked to reinstall order in Saint Domingue, needed to maintain a war economy and sought to enlist the enslaved in the French army. Faced with these dilemmas of imperial governance, by September 1793, Sonthonax extended abolition throughout the colony. A delegation to France explained that Sonthonax had struck a deal with the enslaved to free them in exchange for their alliance against England and Spain, in an effort to win the war. Once this news arrived in 1794, the National Convention in Paris agreed with these political calculations and ratified the abolition act, which applied not just to Saint Domingue but to the French Antilles at large. As a result, almost one million Black enslaved people became French citizens (Dubois 2005; Semley 2017; Fick 1990).

Rueschemeyer, Huber, and Stephens’s (1992) *Capitalist Development and Democracy* was one of the most foundational books throughout my graduate school years. Offering a crucial corrective to elite-centric explanations for democratization, the book homed in on the importance of working classes in their struggle for democratic expansions. Where working classes were strongly organized, in conjunction with middle classes and independent farmers, Rueschemeyer, Huber, and Stephens noted that they ended up demanding and gaining greater voting rights. The importance of

working classes as a primary agent in the struggle for democratic gains has been confirmed the world over, often leading to redistributive effects (Acemoglu and Robinson 2000; Usmani 2018). And yet, despite its many merits, the book could not help me think through the Haitian Revolution and the racial politics of abolition throughout the Caribbean world. The problem was not that the enslaved or colonized did not rise in revolt or that they failed to organize. Rather, the problem was that they were confronted with a radically different form of rule and domination.

The literature on capitalism and democracy is of course aware of empire and colonialism. But the exclusion of racialized populations from democratic rights is often naturalized and taken for granted—denigrating the struggle of the enslaved and the denial of their freedom to the footnotes. However, if we take seriously the history of the Caribbean—which is so deeply entangled with the development of capitalism and European democratization—then we must begin to conceptualize the relationship between capitalism and democracy very differently. The colonized and enslaved populations of Europe’s colonial empires were central to the development of capitalism; and while metropolitan working classes achieved democratic inclusion, the colonized were met with further suppression and colonial rule. Put differently, given that the emergence of capitalism as well as struggles for citizenship inclusion did not occur within the nation but within the empire at large, we must escape this focus on the nation in our analytical models.

Capitalism developed as a global and racial system. In the opening pages of *The Black Jacobins*, C.L.R. James writes:

In 1789 the French West Indian colony of San Domingo supplied two-thirds of the overseas trade of France and was the greatest individual market for the European slave-trade. It was an integral part of the economic life of the age, the greatest colony in the world, the pride of France, and the envy of every other imperialist nation. The whole structure rested on the labour of half-a-million slaves (2001, ix).

Many writers in the Black Marxist tradition and, more recently, global historians have made the case that we cannot understand the emergence and reproduction of capitalism without understanding the role of racial slavery at its center (Williams 1994; Draper 2010; Beckert 2015; Robinson 2000; Du Bois 1935). As Walter Johnson (2016) put it, “[t]he history of Manchester never happened without the history of Mississippi.” How then does this shape our theories of democratization?

European democratization has come hand in hand with the colonial and racial project: underlying Western political grammars of liberty, equality, and rationality are a simultaneous construction of the colonial and racialized other as decidedly non-modern (Connell 1997; Gani 2017; Goldberg 2002; Hesse 2007; Mills 2014; Rana 2014; Wynter 1995). As Evelyn Nakano-Glenn (2009) explained, it was precisely citizenship legislations—couched in a language of freedom and independence—that helped to create the non-citizen, and with it defined what it meant to be a racialized and excluded subject. Her point is not that racialized subjects were excluded from democratic privileges, but rather, how political elites aimed to further a settler colonial and imperial project while using citizenship legislations as tools to construct populations as racialized and gendered, and thus to justify exclusions.

To understand this process, it is important to understand that “race” itself does not hold causal power. As Fields and Fields (2014) note, exclusions to the body politic are not “on account of skin color.” Race is not a variable or a descriptor, nor is it self-explanatory. In fact, as Fields and Fields make very clear, linguistic turns of phrase, such as people are excluded “because they are Black,” nullify the process at its heart—racism and the active process of racecraft that shapes who can be a rights-bearing person. Armed with these analytical tools, we can see how political elites—and often the same political elites who were central to democratic expansions in the metropole—crafted race; meaning, they imbued race with political salience and defined non-white populations as precisely those who were unable to hold political rights. Thus, the relationship between capitalism and democracy is mediated by racecraft: if metropolitan workingmen and white workingmen across Europe’s settler colonies—such as Australia or Canada—gained inclusion in the democratic body politic, the advent of capitalism denied these same rights to the empires’ nonwhite populations. For the vast majority of the world’s population, the advent of capitalism came hand in hand with racist domination and the denial of citizenship. This was not taken for granted, but instead was a carefully crafted instituted process. A closer look at the limited projects of abolition helps here.

Following the abolition of slavery in Saint Domingue, a question arose which laces itself across the colonial archive: what kind of person did the newly freed need to be to hold citizenship rights? At once, Sonthonax highlighted that the French Republic had brought freedom to the enslaved, while at the same time clarifying its logic: what it meant to be a good person was to continue to work on the plantation, as well

as to uphold the military logic of the war and the patriarchal ideals of the family. He ordered that the newly freed stay on plantations, and that citizen-soldiers were to gain active citizenship status as opposed to farmers (“cultivateurs”) (Fick 2000; Casimir 2020; Fick 2007). Abolition was also patriarchal: the commissioners emphasized the “spirit of the family” and the moral purity related to a productive work ethic of all French citizens. To be a “responsible citizen,” the commissioners proclaimed, the newly freed had to become dutiful husbands, fathers, and dedicated heads of the household, and this social position would in turn make them responsible citizens of the French Republic. Because of this, the abolition proclamation included a possibility for women to become free if they were to marry their husbands within two weeks of the passing of the proclamation. The marriage ceremonies then became ceremonies for the Republic of France (Semley 2017).

Racecraft following abolition also occurred in France’s other sugar colonies. In April 1848, France abolished slavery a second time, and again, the newly freed became citizens, winning civil and political equality, just like men in the metropole. However, only a year later, the minister of the colonies, Émile Thomas, wrote that the complete emancipation of the enslaved was a grave mistake: he declared that the colonies lacked “morality” and “religion” necessary to exercise French citizenship. By 1851, the council of state declared that the newly freed “barely out from a foreign state to civilization for three years, not only lack rationality (*lumière*), political spirit and family spirit, but also [have] the most vulgar notions of morality and religion.”³ Paradoxically, it was the experience of slavery itself that denied the moral and political capacities one would need to exercise French citizenship. Slavery brought with it the denial of personal autonomy, and colonial administrators argued that having been subject to the master’s will, the newly freed would doubtfully be able to express their autonomous political will through the vote. Successive colonial administrations of the French Antilles imposed restrictions which again disqualified freed people from exercising their civil and political rights (Larcher 2014 and 2015). Racecraft undergirds the question of self-government, and abolition did not lead to eventual inclusion—but in fact to contraction and disenfranchisement.

³ Rapport fait à l’Assemblée générale du Conseil d’État, au nom de la section de législation, sur un projet de loi organique du régime législatif, du gouvernement et de l’administration aux Colonies, Paris, Imprimerie nationale, avril 1851, p. 17. ANOM, Généralités, C.40-D.312., cited in Larcher 2015.

Abolition in the British Empire brought about similar questions (Holt 1992; Hall 2002; Shilliam 2018). Fearing the potential revolt of the enslaved, a parliamentary committee in London “examined” the potential consequences of the abolition of slavery, asking whether one could expect “such a progressive Improvement in the character of the Slave Population as might prepare them for a participation of those Civil Rights and Privileges, which are enjoyed by other Classes of His Majesty’s Subjects.”⁴ The committee was primarily concerned with whether the populations of the empire would work industriously and efficiently even without the violent imposition of slavery. Three decades later, at a time of great democratic expansion amongst white workingmen in England and throughout the Empire’s white colonies, the British colonial office decided that the empire’s non-white populations required rule by force. Given the many revolts of non-white subjects, from the Jamaican Morant Bay Rebellion to the Sepoy Revolts in India, the colonial office concluded that the empire’s non-white populations were “not ready” for political rights: if societies progressed on a civilizational ladder, the Conservative MP Arthur Mills suggested, Black people were the most stationary, and it was “hopeless to transplant institutions slowly grown in Europe to uncongenial places of people.”⁵ While white colonies already exhibited the characteristics needed for self-government, political autonomy for non-white colonies had to be deferred. By the 20th century, the denial of self-government through ascribing cultural characteristics did not only apply to individuals, but also shaped the debates over national independence throughout the era of decolonization (Griffith, Plamenatz, and Pennock 1956; Lipset 1959). Discourses of tutelage served as justification for continued colonial rule. This denial of rights did not occur in a different temporality than the democratization processes we usually associate with the 19th century. Instead, it was a careful work of racecraft that drew the boundaries over who can self-govern precisely with the idea to maintain a form of domination and capitalist exploitation. This reorientation towards the framework of empire fundamentally changes how we think about the relationship between capitalism and democracy.

But we do not need to reinvent the wheel. W.E.B. Du Bois’ magisterial work *Black Reconstruction in America* (1935) recounts precisely how the role of the enslaved was central to American democracy; how the relationship between capitalism and democracy

⁴ Select Committee on the Extinction of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, Report from: with the minutes of evidence, and general index ... August 11, 1832. London: J. Haddon.

⁵ Mills, Arthur. 1969. “Our Colonial Policy,” *Contemporary Review*, 11: 230, cited in Smith 1994.

is racialized; and how the limited project of abolition has shaped American democracy ever since. At heart, the book shows how Reconstruction presented a brief opportunity for how history could have unfolded differently—but that the failure of the Reconstruction period in the postbellum American South meant the failure of democracy in America. “[T]he slave went free; stood a brief moment in the sun; then moved back again toward slavery” (Du Bois 1935, 30). And while Reconstruction had brought a set of civil and political rights for the newly freed, political elites soon set out to dismantle these rights, disenfranchise populations, and thereby reimpose a new racial order (Foner 2013).

What is more, rather than recognizing a similar class position, white working classes in the United States held on to the notion of their psychological superiority over the newly freed (Roediger 2017). Racism has shaped the possibilities for working class solidarity, and the specific history of racial slavery was never addressed. A true abolition democracy could have included socio-economic redistribution—the forty acres and a mule—that would have made political rights meaningful. And yet, Reconstruction ended in lifting the legal framework of slavery, only to be followed by new forms of coercion, and the curtailing of freedom. Du Bois writes:

If all labor, black as well as white, became free—were given schools and the right to vote—what control could or should be set to the power and action of these laborers?...Was the rule of the mass of Americans to be unlimited, and the right to rule extended to all men regardless of race and color, or if not, what power of dictatorship and control; and how could property and privilege be protected? This was the great and primary question which was in the minds of the men who wrote the Constitution of the US and continued in the minds of thinkers down through the slavery controversy (1935, 13).

While white working men tended to find expression of their political and economic interests through the mechanism of democracy, this came hand in hand with the racial domination of colonial workers (Du Bois 1935; Fraser 2019; Williams 1994). Yet, without grounding the first wave of democratization in this larger colonial context, our understanding of the relationship between capitalism and democracy does not capture the vicissitudes of racecraft. Examining the story of European democratization through its actual history—that of empire—the record is much more mixed. But revisiting this history is not all doom and gloom because the archive of colonial struggles for freedom is rich and so far-reaching, much beyond the Haitian Revolution (Du Bois 2007; Brown 2020). But

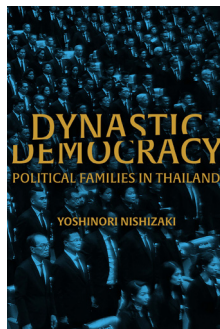
the centrality of this history to political modernity and the work of racecraft on the part of political elites and working classes have not been acknowledged. Once we begin to view the history of freedom through these struggles, we can better understand the persistence of racism and colonial structures today.

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Author Exchange



Dynastic Democracy: Political Families in Thailand. By Yoshinori Nishizaki. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2022. 308p. Cloth and paper.

Review by Christopher Carothers, Associated Scholar, Center for the Study of Contemporary China, University of Pennsylvania

Thailand’s democratic development has long been stalled, but why? The easy answer is that military coups, weak institutions, and intractable polarization—including over the appropriate role of the monarchy—have prevented democratic consolidation. Yet no analysis of Thailand’s challenges would be fully persuasive without accounting for a deeply-rooted but less eye-catching phenomenon: political family dynasties. In *Dynastic Democracy: Political Families in Thailand*, Yoshinori Nishizaki offers a smart and engaging study of modern Thai politics that places political families at the center of the action. Based on truly exhaustive research into the genealogies of hundreds of elite families, Nishizaki argues that Thailand has developed into a “dynastic democracy” since the overthrow of the absolute monarchy in 1932 and reinterprets the country’s modern political history as a struggle for dominance between two types of elite families—wealthy commoner families and old-guard upper-class families with ties to the Chakri dynasty—“both of which stifle representative democracy” (p. xi). The book provides a valuable corrective to existing scholarship on Thailand that downplays or misunderstands the significance of political families and contributes theoretically to the study of democracy and democratic breakdown.

The main task of the book is to explain how the prevalence of political families has had complex but ultimately harmful effects on democratic development. Nishizaki calculates that 41 percent of seats in Parliament between 1932 and 2020 and 53 percent of seats since 1988 have been won by individuals with consanguineous or affinal ties to a current or former MP. Dynastic candidates have many electoral advantages, including in finances, reputation, human resources, and even the use of coercion. Thailand’s political families are not a cartel—there are hundreds of families and often conflicts among them—but they make democracy less pluralistic and more patrimonial. Ironically, the expansion of electoral competition after

1973, when a student-led uprising dislodged a military-backed authoritarian regime, increased the power of political families. Many more commoner families took power, ending the narrow dominance of upper-class families. This could be seen as a positive for democracy except that it coincided with a boom in corruption, vote-buying, illegal campaign tactics, and violence in service of winning elections. The reaction from upper-class families, however, has been even more damaging to democracy. Drawing on public discontent with corruption and the perception that commoner MPs are anti-monarchic, many upper-class families have felt justified in throwing their weight behind repeated military interventions, including coups in 1991, 2006, and 2014. Citizens opposed to military rule have of course fought back, but Thailand continues to seesaw between political family-backed authoritarianism and political family-dominated democracy.

One question a critic might raise is how much Thai democracy's weakness can rightly be attributed to the prevalence of political families. Nishizaki convincingly argues that political families exacerbate commonly cited problems such as corruption, clientelism, and political party weakness. Yet even if Thailand outlawed political families, it would still suffer from an interventionist military, weak state institutions, polarization, and other major challenges. Moreover, some other countries, such as Japan, have an abundance of political families yet maintain what most experts consider healthy democracies. What factors make political families more or less threatening to democracy?

A second question that emerges from this book's analysis is about how to apply the concept of dynastic democracy. Nishizaki describes it as a "subtype" of democracy in which "ruling elites are drawn chiefly from political families," and therefore "the antithesis of vibrant representative democracy" (p. xi, 3). Yet if "chiefly" means the majority of MPs, then Thailand does not qualify until the late 1980s, and then only barely. Most countries have some political families but far fewer than Thailand—at what point do democracies become dynastic? Moreover, if political families operate differently in different countries, then how useful is it to lump these countries together? For example, describing the United States as a "rational-legal dynastic democracy" would seem to be of debatable analytical value (221).

I hope that these questions only serve to highlight that this is a successful study chock-full of insights about Thai politics and lessons about how the power of political families can distort democracy. It deserves to be read and debated not only by experts on

Southeast Asia but by all comparativists and scholars of democratic politics.

Response from Yoshinori Nishizaki

I am thankful to Dr. Christopher Carothers for his thoughtful review of my book.

He has raised some penetrating questions. The first concerns the causal relationship between political families and imperfect democracy. My book actually does not argue that all political families are inherently detrimental to democracy. In well-established democracies with robust and impartial legal institutions, political dynasties have not undermined the quality of political life. By contrast, in countries like Thailand, where such institutions are deficient, dynastic politicians notorious for graft, vote-buying, violence, and other seedy practices flourish. So, whether political families damage democracy depends on the broad institutional context or political culture. Japan's postwar democracy has more of a rational-legal foundation, so it has not been adversely affected by political dynasties, certainly not to the same extent as in Thailand. My broader argument is that political families' electoral dominance fundamentally militates against democratic pluralism because they constitute formidable structural barriers to entry into politics for non-dynastic candidates who have no powerful family connections.

If Carothers wants to see systematic, quantitative evidence that the ills of Thailand's dynastic democracy are caused by political families, I'm afraid my book offers little. Political scientists' future research could explore these important issues. The reason my book does not address them is that they are not quite central to my argument about the changing balance of power between two main types of political families and its broad implications for Thailand's fragile dynastic democracy. Specifically, the book highlights how commoner families, many of which represent the worst excesses of electoral politics, have dominated Parliament in recent decades, marginalizing moralistic upper-crust royalist elites bound by blood or marriage ties. Alarmed by this development, the latter elites have repeatedly upended Thailand's dynastic democracy to enforce top-down political reforms.

I agree with Carothers that a country qualifies as dynastic democracy if political families hold more than half the legislative seats, as with Thailand after 1988. Equally important is the number of prime ministers from political families. Four of Thailand's seven prime ministers in the 2000s have come from

political families. I would further argue that even though Thailand falls a little short of reaching the 50 percent threshold at some points in the past, “dynastic democracy” would not be a wholly misleading label; it captures one of the most distinctive features of Thailand’s democracy. Cross-national data on the world’s twenty-four democracies in 1995–2016 shows that Thailand has the highest proportion of dynastic legislators (slightly over 40 percent), followed by the Philippines (Smith 2018, 5). Although their proportion hovered around an even lower 30 percent before 1988, it is significantly higher than in most democracies at present, and I maintain that Thailand’s dynastic democracy, in its incipient form, appeared back then.

Carothers is right that different countries, including the United States, have different degrees of political dynasticism. My point is that to the extent that the United States has elements of electoral dynasticism (as shown by several scholars), it has a rational-legal basis and is qualitatively different from Thailand’s and the Philippines’ dynastic democracy rooted in patrimonial culture. “Rational-legal democracy” is offered as a heuristic concept for identifying the key differences between the two.

Carothers might ask: how do we know whether a particular democracy has a patrimonial or rational-legal foundation? Drawing inspiration from his book, I suggest scholars construct a system for measuring the degrees to which various countries’ legal institutions punish corruption cases. That might be another fruitful line of future research.

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Corruption Control in Authoritarian Regimes: Lessons from East Asia. By Christopher Carothers. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022. 293p. Hardback.

Review by Yoshinori Nishizaki, Associate Professor of Southeast Asian Studies, National University of Singapore

Christopher Carothers’s *Corruption Control in Authoritarian Regimes* is a thought-provoking book that breaks new ground in the study of authoritarianism. It convincingly debunks the received wisdom that autocrats rarely wage politically and economically costly wars on corruption and that only quasi-democratic institutions (QDIs) and coalitional power-sharing (“collective leadership”) incentivize autocrats to do so. Carothers presents a lucid counter-argument that some autocrats have undertaken far-reaching anti-corruption campaigns. These leaders’ success has little to do with QDIs or collective leadership; they have succeeded because they have taken a “distinctly authoritarian,” top-down approach.

Specifically, Carothers contends that successful corruption control requires a *motivated* autocrat with *discretionary power* and preexisting *state capacity*. If any of these three factors is absent, anti-corruption reforms will fail. This argument is based on Carothers’s careful examination of nine successful and unsuccessful anti-corruption campaigns in authoritarian Taiwan, South Korea, and China and is supported by evidence from various primary and secondary sources in Chinese, Korean, and English. Carothers also probes his theory’s generalizability to several other countries including Singapore.

This insightful book raises some questions. One question concerns the quantification of an anti-graft campaign’s success, for which Carothers has generated an innovative eight-point scoring system. In this system, an anti-corruption campaign receives one point if “at least 100 elites or high-level officials were ... dismissed” (235). Apart from 100 being an “arbitrary” number (as Carothers admits), I wonder if this or any other number is a good indicator of effective corruption control, since it does not factor in the enormous cross-national variation in the level of preexisting corruption or in national population. 100 dismissal cases in China, the world’s most populous country with a correspondingly high incidence of corruption, do not have the same significance as 100 such cases in Taiwan. A related tricky problem is that the proposed

measure does not isolate the short-term effects of anti-corruption reforms from their long-term effects. Going by this metric, Singapore, an icon of anti-corruption success, would receive no point at present, precisely because its *past* anti-corruption drive was so successful and has produced *long-lasting* effects.

Following up on the last point, I wonder if the proposed scoring rubric as a whole serves more as the proof that serious anti-corruption efforts are being made in the short term, rather than the proof of their fundamental “success” or effectiveness. If the campaigns launched by Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Zedong, and Park Chung-hee were as successful as Carothers asserts, one would expect to see corruption in their countries decrease over time, but it recurred and even increased once the autocrats were gone. This is arguably because the autocrats’ reforms had *failed* to transform their countries’ patrimonial political culture, the root cause of corruption. In Douglass North’s parlance, the enforcement of new formal rules failed to change “informal constraints”—the sum of historically transmitted values and beliefs—on public officeholders’ behavioral patterns. The East Asian autocrats, bent on exposing and punishing corruption, were less successful in changing the latter informal institutions in the long run. These autocrats contrast strikingly with Lee Kuan Yew (LKY) in Singapore. LKY brought about a revolutionary change in the consciousness of Singapore’s officeholders. This is why, even long after LKY is gone, corruption has not reared its ugly head. LKY accomplished what Park’s “mental revolution” was designed to do. According to Carothers’s calculation, Singapore is just one or two points ahead of the East Asian countries (40). I suspect the difference is much bigger.

What, then, explains the difference between Singapore and East Asia, when their autocrats, all faced with grave security threats, were equally motivated to tackle corruption and had as much discretionary power as each other? Simply, what explains the variation *among* the “successful” cases? One reason, I suggest, lies in the varying degrees of state capacity. Carothers defines “state capacity” as the ability to monopolize territorial control and conduct a national census (44). Given this minimalist definition, all but one of the forty-one cases in Appendix A tick the box for “state capacity,” rendering this variable less useful than it should be. A better measure of state capacity would be anti-corruption institutions’ autonomy from external pressure. Singapore stands out in this respect. LKY put the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) under his direct control and gave it sweeping powers to fulfill his mission. Its thorough investigations and

ruthless punishments have had the cumulative effects of disciplining the *minds* (besides bodily behaviors) of Singapore’s politicians and bureaucrats over time. The CPIB’s equivalents in East Asia were less shielded from vested interests, leaving room for high-level and local-level corruption to go unpunished.

Lastly, Carothers questions the conventional wisdom that “authoritarian regimes achieve better governance outcomes and greater durability by becoming partly democratic” (228). His claim may fit China under Xi, but not Taiwan and South Korea. If full-blown dictators can indeed enforce good governance and have popular support, they or their successors should have no reason to initiate democratic change, but that is exactly what Chiang Ching-kuo and Roh Tae-woo did in their respective countries to accommodate the vociferous demands of middle-class and working-class citizens. These citizens—the products of economic growth engineered by autocrats—called for not just *clean* governance but also *free* governance. They wanted civil liberties, which remained sharply restricted under dictatorship. We must give due credit to East Asia’s autocrats for their anti-corruption efforts, but I wonder if Carothers gives them more credit than they deserve.

These comments only go to show how inspiring it is to engage with Carothers’s book. This is a valuable contribution to the comparative politics literature.

Response from Christopher Carothers

I would like to thank Dr. Yoshinori Nishizaki for writing such a generous and probing review of my book.

The review raises several important questions about authoritarian corruption control and its consequences in East Asia. First, Nishizaki raises questions about aspects of my scoring system for anti-corruption campaigns. Is it a mistake to compare specific numbers of anti-corruption prosecutions across countries that vary so much in population size? I agree that such comparisons are tricky, but would point out that I only compare prosecutions of members of the national political elite (e.g., cabinet ministers, legislators, and judges), a group defined in such a way that its size varies far less across countries. Does my scoring system privilege short-term anti-corruption activity over lasting reform? While I do take into account the initial strength of anti-corruption crackdowns, most of the scoring system is geared toward measuring institutional reforms, such as whether anti-corruption organs were strengthened, new anti-corruption laws and party codes were enacted, and so on. In the main cases examined in the book, I carefully trace new reforms

to see if they became institutionalized and continued to constrain wrongdoing in later years. Relatedly, is it wrong to label an anti-corruption campaign a success if the government had to launch another anti-corruption campaign later on? I do not think so. Corruption is not static but rather an evolving governance challenge. It can be effectively curbed but then return in new forms as economic and political systems change. For example, anti-corruption reforms undertaken in the United States in the 1970s were highly impactful, but most experts would agree that new government integrity measures are needed today.

Second, the review probes the book's explanation for why authoritarian anti-corruption is more successful in some countries than in others. Nishizaki agrees that state capacity is an important variable but recommends a more stringent test for it—namely, whether an anti-corruption agency under an autocrat is independent from outside influence. This is a great idea, and I appreciate that it does not fall into the common trap of assuming that anti-corruption agencies must be completely free from political influence to be effective (which agencies created by autocrats never are). I agree with Nishizaki that more work remains to be done to differentiate among the anti-corruption cases that I label successful, but I am less convinced that the well-known Singaporean case is far superior to East Asian anti-corruption or that it is a useful case for theory-building. Singapore did undertake an impressive clean government campaign after 1959 under Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, but this was not the end of things. Many follow-up reforms have been necessary in later decades to keep the pressure on wrongdoers, and high-level scandals continue to emerge sporadically. More importantly, the Singaporean city-state has a unique set of features—a small and dense population, strong British colonial institutions, a lucrative international entrepôt status, and others—that make corruption control more achievable and render any lessons from the case less generalizable.

Third and finally, the review questions the book's account of the political consequences of authoritarian anti-corruption. Nishizaki asks why, if autocrats in South Korea and Taiwan led successful anti-corruption reforms, those two countries later democratized. But I do not argue that curbing corruption permanently prevents democratization. As Nishizaki notes, people want civic and political freedoms, not just clean government or growth. My argument is that curbing corruption strengthened KMT rule in Taiwan and military rule in South Korea, both of which outperformed nearly all other non-communist authoritarian regimes in terms of

economic development and longevity. Moreover, in both cases, a record of relatively good authoritarian governance smoothed the process of democratization and helped authoritarian successor parties to compete effectively in free elections. That said, I agree that we do not know enough about the relationship between corruption control and authoritarian regime durability, especially as publics in both authoritarian and democratic countries become more demanding of clean government. This could be an area for valuable future research.

Joint Commentary from Nishizaki and Carothers

We thank the editors for inviting us to participate in this author exchange. We have learned a lot from each other's work, and our exchange of ideas has been immensely fruitful.

While our books address different issues in different countries of Asia, it is possible to tease out some common insights from them for the theme of this issue—capitalism and democracy revisited. We do so with particular reference to two classic works in comparative politics that are featured in the issue: Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyn Huber, and John Stephens (RSS)'s *Capitalist Development and Democracy* and Joseph Schumpeter's *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*.

First, our country case studies from Asia—a region excluded from RSS's monumental work—somewhat complicate their class-centric theory of the relationship between capitalism and democratization. In Taiwan, South Korea, and Thailand, capitalism has caused rampant political and bureaucratic corruption, which has given autocrats a powerful justification for centralizing power in their hands, with support from some segments of subordinate classes. This is clearly the case with Chiang Kai-shek and Park Chung-hee, who viewed corruption as a serious impediment to economic growth and nation-building. While a case can be made that Taiwan and South Korea fell to full-fledged authoritarianism because industrial capitalism was not yet fully developed there, the Thai case casts doubt on the causal link between capitalist development and regime type. By the 2000s, Thailand's formerly agrarian economy had undergone substantial export-oriented industrialization, and this economic transformation had spawned large and restive working and middle classes. Yet the country's royalist elites including the military—a kind of "autocratic" elite in Carothers's terminology—have repeatedly overthrown democratically elected governments in the name of eradicating epidemic corruption that has accompanied

capitalist development. While some members of the working class (as well as the middle class) have opposed these democratic reversals, others have been (at least tacitly) supportive.

These historical experiences teach us two important lessons. One is that capitalist development can be a catalyst for democratic backsliding, if and when it causes widespread corruption that alarms conservative autocratic elites. In Taiwan and South Korea, it took these autocratic elites and their projects of authoritarian capitalism to produce what RSS identify as the essential conditions for democratic transition and consolidation: industrial deepening, a weakened agrarian landowning class, and a vocal urban working class. The fact that the autocrats eventually became the victims of their own creation may be consistent with RSS's thesis, but the cases of Taiwan and South Korea do show that capitalism and democracy do not always go hand in hand. The path toward democracy is complex; paradoxically, it may sometimes take democratic backsliding to achieve full democratization in the long run.

“[C]apitalist development can be a catalyst for democratic backsliding, if and when it causes widespread corruption that alarms conservative autocratic elites.”

Another lesson is that subordinate classes, including the working class, which RSS uphold as the most important driver of democratization, are divided politically; they do not have unified class interests or projects, contrary to what RSS's theory holds. While workers in South Korea and Taiwan may have occasionally resembled their militant counterparts in Latin America, it does not quite hold true for Thai workers, who display divergent political orientations. A sizeable number of Thai workers (as well as middle-class folks) are conservative royalist supporters and care more about politicians' integrity and social stability, rather than about whether there is a democratically elected government or not. The presence of these attitudes makes Thailand vulnerable to periodic democratic backsliding.

The case of China may be even more challenging to RSS's thesis. China is the product of an anti-capitalist revolution, yet it has introduced market economy and has generated the world's fastest capitalist growth. This industrial growth has produced a large working class, yet to the extent that Chinese workers are appreciative and supportive of President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption

efforts, the nominally “communist” autocratic regime can expect to stay firmly in power. China may be a litmus test for the applicability of RSS's theory to Asia.

Beyond the relationship between capitalism and democracy, a second insight from our studies is that the much-discussed issue of democratic quality remains salient in Taiwan, South Korea, and Thailand. These countries meet the minimalist Schumpeterian notion of democracy. In Taiwan and South Korea, the dark age of hegemonic authoritarianism is over, and free, competitive elections are firmly in place. Although electoral politics in Thailand is more unstable, it has become more institutionalized over time, as a general trend. In all three countries, however, the electoral process and elected governments have been afflicted, to varying degrees, by corruption, vote-buying, illegal campaign funding, violence, criminal gangs, and so forth. These ills are linked, in many cases, to elite political families, as is most apparent in Thailand. In Taiwan and South Korea, too, corruption cases have involved family members of political or economic elites, albeit on a lesser scale than in Thailand.

Pessimistic about ordinary people's ability to find the “common good,” Schumpeter argued against classical democratic theories, defining democracy as a mere institutional mechanism or procedure for electing these people's representatives and forming a government through such elected officials. He underestimated the distinct possibility that in some countries, elected politicians could use unscrupulous means to win office and use their power for private gains, and that political power could rotate among them. When autocrats intent on carrying out a house-cleaning mission oust these low-quality elite politicians from power, should they be criticized for undermining democracy, or should they be commended for their efforts to improve the quality of political life? Many authoritarian regimes in Asia have attempted to rest their legitimacy on the latter claim. Whether this is a viable and long-lasting source of legitimacy for autocrats is a matter of debate. Our books show that the age-old big question regarding the form vis-a-vis quality or ideal of democracy—a question raised by Schumpeter's book eighty years ago—remains unresolved in Asia to this day.

Meet the Authors



Christopher Carothers is a political scientist conducting research on authoritarian politics with a regional focus on China and greater East Asia. He is the author of *Corruption Control in Authoritarian Regimes: Lessons from East Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), and his research has been published in *Perspectives on*

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Yoshinori Nishizaki is an Associate Professor of Southeast Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore. Previously, he had a joint appointment in the Department of Political Science at NUS and was a Research Fellow in the Department of Political and Social Change at the Australian National University. He is

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Guest Editor



Brendan McElroy is an assistant professor of political science at the University of Toronto. After earning his PhD in government from Harvard in 2020, he received a WCED Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Michigan (2020–2022). His work examines the complementary processes of state formation and elite transformation in early modern Eastern Europe, with particular emphasis on the genesis of representative institutions, their evolution, and their consequences for state building and economic growth. He is currently preparing a book manuscript under the provisional title “Peasants and Parliaments: Agrarian Reform in Later Eighteenth Century Europe.”

About *Democracy and Autocracy*

Democracy and Autocracy is the official newsletter of the American Political Science Association’s Democracy and Autocracy section (formerly known as the Comparative Democratization section). First known as *CompDem*, it has been published three times a year since 2003. In October 2010, the newsletter was renamed *APSA-CD* and expanded to include substantive articles on democracy, as well as news and notes on the latest developments in the field. In September 2018, it was renamed the *Annals of Comparative Democratization* to reflect the increasingly high academic content and recognition of the symposia.

About WCED

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



Section News

Michael Albertus (Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago) was promoted this summer to full professor. His 2021 book, [Property Without Rights: Origins and Consequences of the Property Rights Gap](#), won honorable mention for the Democracy and Autocracy best book award this APSA.

Stephen Amberg (Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Texas at San Antonio) recently published the following book:

Amberg, Stephen. 2022. [A Democracy that Works: How Working-Class Power Defines Liberal Democracy in the United States](#). New York: Routledge.

Sarah Bush (Associate Professor of Political Science, Yale University) recently published the following book with co-author Lauren Prather:

Bush, Sarah Sunn, and Lauren Prather. 2022. [Monitors and Meddlers: How Foreign Actors Influence Local Trust in Elections](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Melani Cammett (Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs, Department of Government, and Chair of the Harvard Academy of International and Area Studies, Harvard University) recently published the following co-authored papers:

Cammett, Melani, and Aytuğ Şaşmaz. Forthcoming, 2022. “The IO Effect: International Actors and Service Delivery in Refugee Crises.” *International Studies Quarterly* (Pre-analysis plan 20170417AA available [here](#)).

Cammett, Melani, Dominika Kruszewska, Christiana Parreira, and Sami Atallah. 2022. “Commitment to the “National” in Post-Conflict Countries: Public and Private Security in Lebanon.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (Pre-analysis plan 20170907AA available [here](#)).

Barbara Ann Chotiner (Professor Emerita of Political Science, University of Alabama) co-edited the anthology [The Post-Communist World in the Twenty-First Century: How the Past Informs the Present](#) (Lexington, 2022) with **Linda J. Cook** (Professor Emerita of Political Science and Slavic Studies, Brown University). The anthology addresses foreign and military policy, domestic politics and policy, political development, transnational political and legal challenges, as well as the practical work of diplomacy

and development administration. Individual chapters interrogate developments in the USSR, East Central Europe and Asia. Contributors are Andrea Chandler; Gerald M. Easter; Michael S. Klecheski; Bruce Parrott; Cynthia Roberts; Mikael Sandberg; Kate Schechter; Andrew Sherlock; Thomas Sherlock; Peter H. Solomon, Jr.; Susan Gross Solomon; and Stephen K. Wegren. Jack Snyder contributed the foreword.

Martin K. Dimitrov (*Professor of Political Science, Tulane University*) has a forthcoming book with Oxford University Press, out in December. Read more about it [here](#).

Dimitrov, Martin K. 2022. *Dictatorship and Information: Authoritarian Regime Resilience in Communist Europe and China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vladimir Gel'man (*Professor of Political Science, European University at St. Petersburg and Professor of Russian Politics, University of Helsinki*) has a new book, [The Politics of Bad Governance in Contemporary Russia](#), published by the University of Michigan Press now available in open access e-book format.

Shamiran Mako (*Assistant Professor of International Relations, Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University*) was awarded a Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Global Governance, where she is spending 2022–2023 at the Balsillie School of International Affairs at the University of Waterloo in Canada. The Fulbright fellowship will give her time to complete her book manuscript on institutions, ethnic elite capture, and exclusion in Iraq. Shamiran also contributed to a symposium on subnational conflict dynamics for the APSA–MENA newsletter for Spring 2022. Her article, “Foreign Intervention, Contingent Sovereignty, and Areas of Limited Statehood: The Case of Iraq’s Disputed Territories,” can be found [here](#).

Didac Queralt (*Assistant Professor of Political Science, Yale University*) recently published the following book, featured in the Princeton Economic History of the Western World Series edited by Professor Joel Mokyr. The book models state capacity and democratic institutions today as a function of how government was funded in the nineteenth century—with domestic and/or external finance. A summary can be found [here](#).

Queralt, Didac. 2022. [Pawnd States: State Building in the Era of International Finance](#). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Jillian Schwedler (*Professor of Political Science, Hunter College and the Graduate Center, CUNY*) recently published the following books:

Schwedler, Jillian. 2022. [Protesting Jordan: Geographies of Power and Dissent](#). Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Schwedler, Jillian, Marc Lynch, and Sean Yom, eds. 2022. [The Political Science of the Middle East: Theory and Research since the Arab Uprisings](#). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Darin Self (*Assistant Professor of Political Science, Brigham Young University*) has the following article in pre-print:

Self, Darin Sanders. 2022. [“Bounded Democratization: How Military-Party Relations Shape Military-Led Democratization.”](#) *Comparative Political Studies*, OnlineFirst.

Fiona Shen-Bayh (*Assistant Professor of Government, William & Mary*) recently published the following book at Cambridge University Press in the Cambridge Studies in Law and Society series.

Shen-Bayh, Fiona Feiang. 2022. [Undue Process: Persecution and Punishment in Autocratic Courts](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

She also recently published the following article:

Choi, Donghyun Danny, J. Andrew Harris, and Fiona Shen-Bayh. 2022. [“Ethnic Bias in Judicial Decision Making: Evidence from Criminal Appeals in Kenya.”](#) *American Political Science Review* 116 (3): 1067–1080.

Erin A. Snider (*Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University*) recently published the following book:

Snider, Erin A. 2022. [Marketing Democracy: The Political Economy of Democracy Aid in the Middle East](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Geoffrey Swenson (*Associate Professor of International Politics at City, University of London*) recently published the following book:

Swenson, Geoffrey. 2022. [Contending Orders: Legal Pluralism and the Rule of Law](#). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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

Boese, Vanessa A., and Matthew C. Wilson.

2022. [“Contestation and Participation: Concepts, Measurement, and Inference.”](#) *International Area Studies Review*, OnlineFirst.

Boese, Vanessa A., Scott Gates, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Håvard Mokleiv Nygård, and Havard Strand. 2022.

[“Patterns of Democracy over Space and Time.”](#) *International Studies Quarterly* 66 (3): 1–19 (previously V-Dem Working Paper 96).

Eggleston, Julia, and Steven Lloyd Wilson.

Forthcoming. “Internet Policy in South Korea: Liberal Imperialism and Paradox.” In *Handbook of Security and Democracy*, edited by Nicholas Seltzer and Steven Wilson.

Gashi, Shpetim. 2022. “Balkans Democratic Trajectory Slowly Turning Upward.” In [Future of Emerging Europe: Sustainability Report 2022](#): p.84.

Gerring, John, Carl Henrik Knutsen, and Jonas Berge. 2022. [“Does Democracy Matter?”](#) *Annual Review Political Science*, vol. 25: 357–75.

Hashemi, Layla, Steven Lloyd Wilson, and Constanza Sanhueza Petrarca. 2022. [“Investigating the Iranian Twittersphere: Five Hundred Days of Farsi Twitter: An Overview of What Farsi Twitter Looks like, What We Know about It, and Why It Matters.”](#) *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*, vol. 2.

Keremoglu, Eda, Sebastian Hellmeier, and Nils B. Weidmann. 2022. [“Thin-Skinned Leaders: Regime Legitimation, Protest Issues and Repression in Autocracies.”](#) *Political Science Research and Methods* 10 (1): 136–152.

Lachapelle, Jean, and Sebastian Hellmeier. 2022, Forthcoming. “Pathways to Democracy after Authoritarian Breakdown. Comparative Case Selection and Lessons from the Past.” *International Political Science Review*.

Lundstedt, Martin, and Amanda B. Edgell. 2022. [“Electoral Management and Vote-Buying.”](#) *Electoral Studies*, vol. 79, 102521.

Ruth-Lovell, Saskia Pauline, and Sandra Grahn. 2022. [“Threat or Corrective to Democracy? The Relationship between Populism and Different Models of Democracy.”](#) *European Journal of Political Research*.

Sato, Yuko, and Moisés Arce. 2022. [“Resistance to Populism.”](#) *Democratization* 29 (6): 1137–1156.

Sato, Yuko, Martin Lundstedt, Kelly Morrison, Vanessa A. Boese, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2022. [“Institutional Order in Episodes of Autocratization.”](#) *V-Dem Working Paper* 133.

Spannagel, Janika, and Katrin Kinzelbach. 2022. [“The Academic Freedom Index and Its indicators: Introduction to New Global Time-Series V-Dem Data.”](#) *Quality & Quantity*: 1–21.

Vüllers, Johannes, and Sebastian Hellmeier. 2022. [“Does Counter-Mobilization Contain Right-Wing Populist Movements? Evidence from Germany.”](#) *European Journal of Political Research* 61 (1): 21–45.

Wilson, Steven Lloyd, Staffan Lindberg, and Kjetil Tronvoll. 2021. [“The Best and Worst of Times: The Paradox of Social Media and Ethiopian Politics.”](#) *First Monday* 26 (10).