Democracy/Autocracy Data Set (DAD) Handbook

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1. Introduction

This handbook describes the origin and structure of a data set observing the onset and end of episodes of democratic and authoritarian government in countries worldwide between 1955 and 2010. This data set was constructed and then updated by the author for the Political Instability Task Force (PITF) during the years 2006-2010, while the author was employed by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) as research director for PITF. The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The views expressed herein are the author's alone and do not necessarily represent the views of the Task Force or the U.S. Government.[1]

This research was designed to support the development of statistical models that could be used to assess the likelihood of the onset and breakdown of democracy in countries worldwide one or two years in advance, and to help explain the forces shaping the likelihood of those events' occurrence. Results from this modeling work have been described in Ulfelder and Lustik (2007) and Ulfelder (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010). This data set is being made available to the public to facilitate independent research on regime transitions and to solicit feedback from other social scientists on the data and the results they have produced.

2. Definitions

Riley (1963, cited in Carmines and Zeller 1979: 10) defines measurement as "an explicit, organized plan for classifying (and often quantifying) the particular sense data at hand—the indicants—in terms of the general concept in the researcher's mind." The key general concept underlying this research is democracy. In the scholarly field of comparative politics, the debate over whether to treat democracy a binary concept or a continuous one remains unresolved. On one side of this debate are scholars such as Robert Dahl (1971) and Larry Diamond (1999),[2] who argue that the line distinguishing democracies from non-democracies is inherently fuzzy. In their view, the core procedural elements of democracy do not easily reduce to yes/no formulations, so efforts to classify political systems into two categories will mask important variations in political regimes. On the other side of the debate are scholars such as Sartori (1987), who argues that political systems are "bounded wholes" characterized by essential elements that are either present or absent, and Przeworski et al. (2000), who claim that difficulties in placing regimes on one side or the other of a dichotomy

[1] More information about PITF can be found online at http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/political-instability-task-force-home/.

[2] Dahl (1971: 8) labels the four corners of the two-dimensional space defined by his concepts of contestation and inclusiveness, but he also notes that, "Perhaps the preponderant number of national regimes in the world today would fall into the [unlabeled] mid-area. Many significant changes in regimes, then, involves shifts within, into, or out of this important central area, as these regimes become more (or less) inclusive and increase (or reduce) opportunities for public contestation."

distinguishing democracies from dictatorships can only result from bad rules or insufficient information.[3]

Following Collier and Adcock (1999: 539) who argue that "how scholars understand and operationalize [democracy] can and should depend in part on what they are going to do with it," I adopted a pragmatic approach to this question. My choice was driven primarily by the desire to focus the ensuing statistical analysis on moments of qualitative transformation, rather than incremental change. Statistical techniques can be used to address either of these processes, but analysis of the two processes calls for substantially different designs, so we have to make a choice that carries with it some trade-offs in the inferences we can draw from our results.

The decision to focus this research on transitions as events, and thus to use a categorical rather than continuous measure of democracy, was based in part on the observation that most statistical models which use a scalar measure of democracy as the dependent variable implicitly assume that the forces driving movement along that scale are the same at all points on the scale, and that movement down the scale is driven by the inverse of the factors driving movement up it. Unfortunately, these assumptions do not match conventional theories of democratization. I know of no theory suggesting, for example, that the factors which lead a ruthless dictatorship to liberalize slightly are the same ones (and in the same amounts) which push an established democracy to become more liberal. If transitions from authoritarian rule to democracy are driven by forces that differ in significant ways from the forces affecting the vulnerability of democracies to breakdown—and existing theory and research suggest they are—then we should obtain more accurate estimates of those effects by estimating separate models for each of those two change processes.[4]

By defining political regimes in dichotomous terms, I am, in effect, choosing to model the likelihood that a state will cross a qualitative threshold representing the presence or absence of the minimal conditions necessary to warrant the label "democracy." While proponents of continuous measures have reasonably argued that democracy itself is not an either/or proposition, the representation of transitions to and from democracy as events makes conceptual sense when we recall that institutional change in individual countries is usually a lumpy process, not a smooth one. Countries newly attempting democracy typically undertake these reforms as an ensemble, and democratic breakdowns often occur abruptly

[3] For a compelling critique of continuous measures derived from Freedom House and Polity and an intriguing effort to create a continuous measure linked to a binary definition of regime types, see James Vreeland, "A Continuous Schumpeterian Measure of Democracy," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA (2003).

[4] It is possible, of course, to design a statistical analysis that avoids this assumption about inverse effects by treating regime transitions as discrete events but includes more than two regime types; see for example Gasiorowski (1995) and Epstein et al. (2006). Even the addition of one category can significantly reduce the size of the samples available for estimating statistical models, however, and this problem quickly worsens as the number of categories increases, making it difficult to obtain reliable estimates of variables' effects.

as well, producing reversals on multiple dimensions at the same time. If the process of institutional change in individual countries often involves large and abrupt swings in the degree of democracy, then we can expect to obtain useful estimates of the forces effecting these changes with a design that treats those institutional changes as discrete events.[5]

Regime Types

Democracy. Competitive elections are the procedural core of contemporary democracy. The notion of democracy is rooted in principles of participation, responsiveness, and accountability, and in large, modern states, regular elections have emerged as the most efficient and most effective way to translate these principles into action. Democracy is rooted in the idea of the rule of the people—the notion that a government is established by, of, and for the citizens of a particular state. On the scale of the modern state, where citizens typically number in the millions, direct democracy is impractical, if not impossible, so citizens instead choose representatives who are empowered and expected to act on their behalf. Elections to select those representatives provide regular avenues for citizens to participate as voters, as partisan activists, and even as candidates. Elections also ensure that citizens have frequent opportunities to hold their representatives accountable for their actions in office. That mechanism of accountability, in turn, encourages representatives to be responsive to their constituents' concerns, and it ensures that citizens may replace them if they are not.

Some scholars have rightly cautioned against tying the concept of democracy too tightly to elections, a mistake Karl (1990) famously characterized as the "fallacy of electoralism." Nevertheless, nearly every major definition of democracy put forward in recent decades identifies elections as one of, if not the, critical procedural element of democracy today.[6] As Huntington (1991) puts it, "Elections, open, free and fair, are the essence of democracy, the inescapable sine qua non."

Of course, the occurrence of elections alone is hardly enough to make democracy. Some of the world's most oppressive regimes have held regular elections with high turnouts, yet governments such as the USSR's or Iraq's under Saddam

[5] Ideally, we would arrive at this dichotomous indicator through the aggregation of a series of reliable measures of the critical elements of democracy. This aggregative approach would increase our confidence in the content validity and reliability of the resulting indicator, and it would allow us to conduct sensitivity analyses based on adjustments to the mix of inputs and the method of their combination. Unfortunately, this approach poses substantial challenges for global, historical analysis. A data-making exercise on that scale would require tremendous resources, and the quality and comparability of information available across countries and over time is questionable. The former problem could be overcome, but the latter probably cannot. This problem undermines the reliability of the measures developed here; my point is that it's not clear that even a massive data-gathering exercise could overcome it.

[6] See especially Schumpeter (1962); Dahl (1971); Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1990); Karl (1990); and Przeworksi, Alvarez, Cheibub, and Limongi (2000).

Hussein could hardly be characterized as responsive or accountable. To judge the presence of democracy, we have to examine the qualities of the electoral process and, to some extent, the broader context in which those elections occur.

For purposes of this data set, democracy is understood to be a form of government in which *a free citizenry fairly chooses and routinely holds accountable its rulers*. In practice, this occurs when four general conditions hold:

- *Elected officials rule*. Representatives chosen by citizens actually make policy, and unelected individuals, bodies, and organizations cannot veto those representatives' decisions.

- *Elections are fair and competitive*. The process by which citizens elect their rulers provides voters with meaningful choice and is free from deliberate fraud or abuse.

- *Politics is inclusive*. Adult citizens have equal rights to vote and participate in government and fair opportunity to exercise those rights.

- *Civil liberties are protected*. Freedoms of speech, association, and assembly give citizens the chance to deliberate on their interests, to organize in pursuit of those interests, and to monitor the performance of their elected representatives and the bureaucracies on which those officials depend.

To identify whether these conditions obtain in a particular country at a particular time, I reviewed a variety of secondary sources to try to determine whether or not all of the criteria listed below were satisfied. According to my definition, only a country that meets **all** of these criteria is considered a democracy. In other words, I see each one of them as a necessary condition for democratic government. The moment a country fails to satisfy one of the criteria, it is considered a non-democracy.

1. Are the officials who actually rule chosen through elections?

    - The head of government is chosen directly or indirectly by popular election, or he/she is the constitutionally designated successor to an elected head of government who has resigned, died, or become incapacitated while in office.

    - The members of the legislature are chosen by popular election.

    - No unelected individual, body, or organization—domestic or foreign—wields veto power across a range of national policy issue areas.

2. Are those elections competitive?

- At least two independent political parties field candidates for most or all national offices, including the head of government in cases where that office is filled directly by election.
- Independent news media exist and are accessible to most citizens.
- Processes of voter registration and identification and lists of registered voters are not manipulated, restricted, or impeded on a large scale to partisan advantage.
- State resources are not used directly and extensively in political campaigns to the advantage of incumbent officeholders.
- The vote-tallying process is not subject to abuse or fraud that is widespread or sufficient to change either the balance of power in the legislature or the outcome of a direct election for head of government.

3. Is the political process broadly inclusive?

- Citizens may form independent political parties or associations without substantial interference or impediment by the state.
- Nearly all adult citizens may stand as candidates for office.
- Elections are based on the principals of universal and equal suffrage.

Democracies may choose their rulers directly or indirectly, and they may use a variety of electoral systems to convert votes into outcomes. Variations in these elements establish different types of democracy, but they do not determine whether or not democracy exists. Similarly, democracies may locate the boundaries of public authority in different places and by different means. For example, some might consider private property an inviolable right, while others might emphasize personal welfare instead. Again, these variations might give rise to different forms of democracy, but they do not determine if it exists in the first place.

Autocracy. As the term is used here, autocracy does not refer to a specific type of regime so much as a constellation of regimes defined by the absence of democracy. In other words, it is a residual category more accurately labeled non-democracy. In autocracies, who rules and how they may rule are determined by a self-appointed selectorate, usually a small subset of the population, and this means that these regimes lack the procedural basis for routine accountability to the citizenry.

Autocracies may or may not hold elections. If they do, however, either those elections do not determine who rules or they are not competitive or inclusive enough to provide meaningful popular accountability. Alone or together, these defects remove the democratic promise of popular government from the process of elections. In so doing, they locate public authority in the rulers themselves.

A growing and important literature in comparative politics is rooted in the idea that autocracies vary in regular ways, and those variations have important implications for the likelihood of regime breakdown and democratization.[7] While I am entirely sympathetic to those arguments at the theoretical level, I have found it exceedingly difficult to operationalize those ideas in the form of valid and reliable measures that could be used in a practical way in event history models. Based on this experience, I have chosen not to distinguish among types of non-democracies here.

Transition Events

In contrast to most contemporary work in the field of comparative democratization, I use the term "transition" to refer to a discrete change in regime type, not a gradual process of transformation. Transitions from autocracy to democracy and from democracy to autocracy are subsets of sets of events I call onsets and terminations of democracy. In addition to transitions from autocracy, onsets of democracy also include the birth of democratic regimes in new countries and countries emerging from state collapse or foreign occupation. Likewise, terminations of democracy include not only transitions from democracy to autocracy but also the result of foreign interventions (e.g., Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995) and state dissolution (e.g., Czechoslovakia in 1993 or Serbia and Montenegro in 2006).

A **transition from autocracy to democracy** occurs at the moment when a government chosen through competitive elections open to broad participation takes office (assuming the other conditions enumerated above continue to hold as well). The transition is dated to the installation of the new government, not the elections. This rule avoids treating aborted transitions, such as the one that occurred in Algeria in 1991, as equivalent to an onset of democracy. Conceptually, the idea is that the authoritarian regime remains in place until a new government is actually installed, and as such, that authoritarian government may veto the transition at any moment until that handover of power (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986). In most cases, so-called founding elections and the installation of the new government happen in the same calendar year, so this distinction between the timing of elections and the installation of an elected government usually has no effect on the annual data. In a few instances, however, competitive elections occur late in one year and the installation of the new government early the next, so the rule does make a difference at the margins.

[7] See especially Geddes (1999) and Hadenius and Teorell (2006).

In systems in which the chief executive is not chosen by the legislature, the transition is dated to the later of the two installations (chief executive or legislature). In most cases, presidential and legislative elections are held at or around the same time, and this rule has no impact on the timing of the transition event. In a few cases, however, one branch chosen through competitive elections coexists for some time with another branch that was not. Unless and until the other branch is similarly chosen, the regime cannot be considered a democracy according to my definition.[8]

A **transition from democracy to autocracy** occurs whenever a government that was chosen through competitive elections is replaced by an individual or body that was not. In many instances, this kind of transition involves an abrupt and overt event, such as a military coup, an autogolpe,[9] or a successful revolt. In some instances, however, a transition from democracy autocracy occurs through a more subtle process involving the creation of institutions that effectively guarantee electoral victory for the incumbent party or government. When this process involves direct manipulations of the electoral process, such as fraudulent vote-counting or the extensive use of state resources on behalf of one set of candidates over all others, the transition is dated to the year of those elections. When it involves significant restrictions on the civil liberties that are necessary for political competitors to organize effectively, the transition is dated to the year in which the government first imposed those restrictions, whether or not an election was held that year.

Countries

The break-up or combination of countries poses a special challenge for efforts to code regime histories. In cases where a country ceases to exist, such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, these events mark a clear break with the preceding regime, but in others, such as East Timor's successful bid for independence from Indonesia, the regime of the "parent" state continues to operate as it did before. A similar issue arises when countries merge. For purposes of this data set, I distinguish several such situations and assign coding rules to each of them. In all instances, the key consideration is continuity or change in the institutions that establish and define central state authority.

In cases where one state begets two or more states, we can distinguish between two types of events with different implications for assigning regime histories.

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[8] This occurred in Moldova, where a competitively elected legislature coexisted with a president who ran unopposed until the mid-1990s. In Belarus, the roles were reversed when Aleksandr Lukashenko was elected in 1995 to serve alongside a legislature that had been chosen through less-than-competitive balloting several years earlier. Lukashenko then enacted a series of constitutional changes and legislative reforms that ensured the next presidential and legislative elections would not be competitive, thereby preventing Belarus from ever experiencing a transition to democracy as defined here.

[9] I am using the term autogolpe, or self-coup, to refer specifically to situations where an elected chief executive suspends or dismisses an elected legislature and claims the power to rule by decree, as occurred, for example, in Ecuador in 1970, Peru in 1992, and Russia in 1993.

- *Failures*. When a state breaks up and the former central government ceases to exist, the event is treated as a complete break with the past; the "parent" state is coded as ending in the year of the break-up, and the successor states are treated as new states beginning in that same year. The major contemporary examples are the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in 1991. In the case of Czechoslovakia's so-called Velvet Divorce, the parent state is considered to have ended in 1992 and the successor states to have begun in 1993 because the agreement pegged the shift to midnight on 31 December.

- *Spin-offs*. When a portion of one state breaks off to become a sovereign entity but the core institutions of the "parent" state remain, the breakaway entity is treated as a new state but the regime history of the parent state is not interrupted. Contemporary examples include Pakistan (Bangladesh), Ethiopia (Eritrea), and Indonesia (East Timor).

In cases where two or more states combine to form a single state, we can also distinguish between two types of events.

- *Mergers*. A combination of states is treated as the end of the constituent states and the birth of a new one with a fresh regime history if it is accompanied by the creation of new central-state institutions explicitly linked to that combination. Yemen in 1990 is such a case.

- *Acquisitions*. A combination of states is treated as the end of one state but the continuation of another if the central institutions of the absorbing state are largely unchanged. Contemporary examples include the unification of Germany in 1989 (continuation of West Germany, end of East Germany) and of Vietnam in 1976 (continuation of North Vietnam, end of South Vietnam).

3. Sources and Procedures

I began the process of coding regimes as democracies or autocracies using dichotomized versions of two Polity component variables—EXREC and PARCOMP—that focus on the issues of contestation for office and inclusiveness of participation that my definition identifies as fundamental elements of democracy.

- *Executive Recruitment (EXREC)*. This Polity variable summarizes several elements of the process involved in choosing the effective chief executive, including the occurrence and competitiveness of popular elections. To qualify as a democracy in our scheme, a regime must score 6 or higher on this variable, meaning that the chief executive is chosen through elections that are competitive, even if they are not fully free and fair. This threshold places on the democracy side of the ledger some regimes where: an election was deemed free but not fair by independent observers; the outcome of an election was

influenced by, but not predetermined by, incumbent non-elected officials or foreign powers; major opposition parties faced significant but not insurmountable obstacles to effective electoral competition, and may even have carried out a boycott; or an election was held in the context of a civil war or secessionist movement. According to Polity's coding guidelines (Marshall and Jaggers 2002: 58), the key issue in deciding whether countries merit this "competitive" label is determining whether their elections were free—even if not entirely fair—and matched candidates from at least two independent parties.

- *Competitiveness of Political Participation (PARCOMP)*. This variable measures "the extent to which alternative preferences for policy and leadership can be pursued in the political arena" (Marshall and Jaggers 2002: 25). To qualify as a democracy, a regime must score 3 or higher on PARCOMP, or in the undefined category of 0. Regimes scoring in this range may make some efforts to undercut its opponents, and competition may be poorly organized or even involve some persistent and overt coercion, but—and this is the key point—the regime does not extensively and systematically limit political participation.[10] By contrast, a score of 1 or 2 on this variable indicate that the regime either successfully represses or suppresses popular participation, or that it systematically excludes certain large groups or certain types of peaceful competition—attributes we consider indicative of authoritarian rule.

These rules cannot be applied readily to country-years Polity codes as transitional (-88). As a result, all of these episodes were reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether a change in regime type had occurred according to my definition, and if so, when.

Once I had this Polity-based list in hand, I compared it to similar lists produced by other researchers, including Boix (2003) and Przeworski et al. (2000), as well as regional assessments, such as Mainwaring et al. (2001). In cases where my list diverged from theirs, I conducted more extensive research to allow me to reach an independent judgment about the appropriate coding and the timing of any transition, if one occurred. The major sources used in this research were the Library of Congress' Country Studies; U.S. Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices; reports published by election observers from

[10] The distinction between suppressed (PARCOMP = 2) and factional (PARCOMP = 3) participation is not always a sharp one in the real world, but it is an important one in our classification scheme, so it deserves some additional discussion. According to Polity, 'Suppressed competition is distinguished from factional competition by the systematic, persisting nature of the restrictions: large classes of people, groups, or types of peaceful political competition are continuously excluded from the political process', as might be evidenced by: prohibitions on certain kinds of political organizations, either by the type of group or the people involved, that affect more than 20 percent of the adult population; prohibitions on certain kinds of political actions, most notably competing in elections; or systematic harassment of the political opposition, although this may also occur under repressed or factional competition, depending on the character of the regime and the opposition and the persistence of political groups (Marshall & Jaggers 2002: 27).

international organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Carter Center, the European Union, and the Commonwealth; and Wikipedia. In addition to those sources, I also consulted scholarly case studies and comparative analyses published as monographs, in journals or edited volumes, and I read articles from the electronic archives of *The New York Times*.[11]

To code data on turnover in the office of chief executive and party in power, I relied on the *World Political Leaders* data set maintained by Roberto Ortiz de Zárate.[12]

Data on membership in international organizations were coded from information on the organization's web sites or on Wikipedia.

4. Variables

PITFCODE
PITF Country Code. Three-character country code matching those used by the Political Instability Task Force.

COWCODE
Correlates of War (COW) Country Code. Three-character country code matching those used by the Correlates of War project.

YEAR
Year.

RGJTYPE

Regime Type. Categorical variable indicating the nature of a country's political regime, understood as the institutions regulating access to control over national policy in a sovereign state, at the end of the calendar year.

= D Democracy

= A Non-democracy

= NS Not sovereign: a foreign government or international organization either sets national policy or wields formal veto power

= -99 Country termination (censoring event)

[11] After the first iteration of this data set was created in 2005–2006, they were updated annually using the same kinds of sources. The research involved in those updates has sometimes led to new information about historical periods that has caused me to revise previous coding decisions.
[12] Available online at http://www.terra.es/personal2/monolith/00index.htm.

RGJTRANS

Regime Change. Categorical variable indicating the occurrence (or not) of a regime change at some point during the indicated calendar year.

= 1 Transition from non-democracy to democracy

= 0 No change

= -1 Transition from democracy to non-democracy

= -9 Country termination or onset of non-sovereignty

RGJTDEM

Transition from Autocracy to Democracy. Dummy variable indicating occurrence of a transition from autocracy to democracy during the calendar year.

= 1 if a transition from autocracy to democracy occurred at any time during the calendar year

= 0 if the country ended the calendar year as an autocracy

= -6 if an episode of autocracy was ended during the calendar year by the onset of a period of non-sovereignty

= -9 if an episode of democracy ended during the calendar year when the country ceased to exist

= NA if the country was not an autocracy at any time during the calendar year

RGJTAUT

Transition from Democracy to Autocracy. Dummy variable indicating occurrence of a transition from democracy to autocracy during the calendar year.

= 1 if a transition from democracy to autocracy occurred at any time during the calendar year

= 0 if the country ended the calendar year as a democracy

= -6 if an episode of democracy was ended during the calendar year by the onset of a period of non-sovereignty

= -9 if an episode of democracy ended during the calendar year when the country ceased to exist

= NA if the country was not a democracy at any time during the calendar year

RGJTAUTTYPE

Mode of Transition from Democracy to Autocracy. A categorical variable indicating the nature of the event or process that led in an immediate way to the end of an episode of democracy during that calendar year.

= 1 Military coup: leaders of the state's armed forces claim power

= 2 Self-coup: incumbent officials claim dictatorial powers, cancel or rig elections, or substantially diminish civil liberties

= 3 Rebellion: opposition forces seize power by means other than largely free, fair, and competitive elections

= 4 Other: some other domestic actor—nearly always a monarch—usurps power from an elected government

= -6 Foreign intervention: a foreign government or international organization becomes the ruling authority or a formal veto player

= -9 State termination

= 0 No change (democracy persists)

= NA if the country was not a democracy at any time during the calendar year

RGJDURD

Consecutive Years of Democracy. Count in years since beginning of an episode of democracy. Coded as missing for countries currently coded as autocracies, interruptions, or interregna, with the exception of the year in which a transition to any of those conditions from democracy occurs.

RGJDURA

Time since Democracy. Count in years since last episode of democracy or birth of country, whichever is more recent. Coded as missing for democracies, with the exception of the year in which a transition from autocracy to democracy occurs.

RGJHD

History of Democracy. Dummy variable indicating any occurrence of any episodes of democracy in the country.

= 1 at least one episode of democracy (including current year)

= 0 otherwise

RGJHD2

History of Democracy (Restrictive). Dummy variable indicating that at least one episode of democracy in this country has spanned five or more consecutive calendar years.

= 1 yes (i.e., country has sustained democracy for at least five consecutive years at some point in its history)

= 0 no (i.e., country has never sustained democracy for at least five consecutive years)

RGJHD3

History of Democracy (Broad). Dummy variable indicating at least one episode of democracy in history of current country or parent country.

= 1 if at least one country-year is coded as democracy for the current country or, if current country is the result of a state break-up or partition or was itself sovereign at some previous time, for the "parent" country

= 0 otherwise (i.e., no prior country-years of democracy in current or parent country)

In most instances, this variable will match REGHD. Exceptions will arise for countries that have split, combined, or changed status in the international system in the modern era. For example, East Germany receives a coding of '1' on this variable due to the history of democracy in Germany prior to World War II; Bangladesh is coded '1' on this variable from its inception due to the democratic experience of Pakistan; and Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia are coded '1' on this variable due to the episodes of democracy that occurred there after they first gained independence after World War I.

RGJYRDT

Total Years of Democracy. Cumulative count of calendar years in which a country was a democracy for at least a portion of the year.

RGJEPDT

Total Episodes of Democracy. Cumulative count of all episodes of democracy for a given country, including current episode. An episode begins with any onset of democracy (REGDURD = 1); an episode ends with a transition from democracy to autocracy (REGTAUT = 1), an interruption (REGTAUT = -6), an interregnum (REGTAUT = -7), or the end of a country (REGTAUT = -9).

RGJTADT
Prior Transitions from Autocracy to Democracy. Cumulative count of all prior transitions from autocracy to democracy in the country in question, including transitions that occurred in the current year.

RGJTDAT
Prior Transitions from Democracy to Autocracy. Cumulative count of all transitions from democracy to autocracy in the country in question, including any transitions that occurred in the current year.

RGJEPDL
Longest Previous Episode of Democracy. Three-digit numeric variable indicating length in years of single longest episode of democracy since birth of country. Equal to 0 for countries with no democratic experience or in their first episode of democracy.

RGJEPD1
Year of Onset of First Episode of Democracy. Four-digit numeric variable indicating calendar year in which first episode of democracy began (e.g., 1962), including ongoing episode, if it is the first.

RGJEPD1A
Age at Onset of First Episode of Democracy. Three-digit numeric variable indicating age of country at time of onset of first democratic episode, including ongoing episode if it is the first. Equal to REGEPD1 minus birth-year of country, so equal to 0 for countries that were "born" with a democratic regime.

RGJALTL
Alternation in Leadership (Democracy Only). Dummy variable indicating whether or not there has been a change in the individual occupying the office of head of government since the start of the current episode of democracy, as of the end of the indicated calendar year. Coded as missing for country-years that ended with any non-democracy.

= 1 No change in chief executive so far

= 0 At least one change in chief executive

RGJALTLT
Alternation in Leadership "Clock" (Democracy Only). Numeric variable counting time until the first change in the head of government.

RGJALTP
Alternation in Party in Power (Democracy Only). Dummy variable indicating whether or not there has been a change in the party holding the office of chief executive since the start of the current episode of democracy, as of the end of the indicated calendar year. In presidential and mixed systems, the president is the reference point. In parliamentary, the premier is tracked. For democracies that start out with coalition governments, any change in the composition of the coalition is treated as a change in the party in power. Coded as missing for country-years that ended with any non-democracy.

= 1 No change in party in power so far

= 0 At least one change in the party in power

RGJALTPT
Alternation in Party in Power "Clock" (Democracy Only). Numeric variable counting time until the first change in party holding the office of chief executive.

EU
Membership in the European Union. Categorical variable indicating membership status in the European Economic Community (EEC), European Community (EC), and European Union (EU), as of 31 December of the listed year. The EEC was formally established in 1957 as the successor to the European Coal and Steel Community, which was formed in 1951. The EU was established in 1992 by the Maastricht Treaty.

= 2 Member

= 1 Formal applicant but not a member

= 0 Neither a member nor a formal applicant

NATO
Membership in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Categorical variable indicating membership status in NATO, as of 31 December of the listed year. NATO was established in 1949.

= 2 Member

= 1 Formally invited to join but not a member

= 0 Neither a member nor formally invited to join

NATOPFP
Participant in NATO Partnership for Peace. Binary variable indicating participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace program, as of 31 December of the listed year.

= 1 Participant

= 0 Non-participant

OSCE
Participant in Conference/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE/OSCE). Categorical variable indicating participation/membership in CSCE/OSCE, as of 31 December of the listed year. The CSCE was formed in 1973; it became the OSCE in 1995.

= 2 Full member/participant

= 1 Partner for Cooperation

= 0 Non-participant

OECD
Membership in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Binary variable indicating membership in the OECD, as of 31 December of the listed year. The OECD was founded in 1948 as the Organization for European Economic Cooperation; it was reorganized as the OECD in 1961.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

COE
Membership in Council of Europe (COE). Binary variable indicating membership in the COE, as of 31 December of the listed year. The Council was founded in 1949.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

COMNWLTH
Membership in the Commonwealth of Nations. Binary variable indicating membership in the COE, as of 31 December of the listed year. Suspended members are still identified as members; expelled members are identified as non-members. The Commonwealth was founded in 1931.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

GENEVA
Signatory to the Geneva Conventions. Binary variable identifying countries that are signatories to the Geneva Conventions, as of 31 December of the listed year.

= 1 Signatory

= 0 Non-signatory

GATTWTO
Signatory to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) or Member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Binary variable identifying countries that were signatories to GATT or are members of the WTO, as of 31 December of the listed year. Countries that were signatories to GATT but did not become members of the WTO in 1995, the year of its establishment, are continuously identified as members by virtue of their continued participation in GATT.

= 1 Signatory/member

= 0 Non-signatory/non-member

APEC
Member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Binary variable indicating membership in APEC, as of 31 December of the listed year. APEC was founded in 1989.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

ASEAN
Member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Binary variable indicating membership in ASEAN, as of 31 December of the listed year. ASEAN was founded in 1967.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

SEATO
Member of the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO). Binary variable indicating membership in SEATO, as of 31 December of the listed year. SEATO was formed in 1954 and was dissolved in 1977.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

OAS
Member of the Organization of American States (OAS). Binary variable indicating membership in the OAS, as of 31 December of the listed year. The OAS came into being in 1948, but it originated in 1890 as the International Union of American Republics.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

MERCOSUR
Member of the Southern Common Market (Mercado Común del Sur, or Mercosur). Categorical variable indicating status of membership in Mercosur, as of 31 December of the listed year. Mercosur was founded in 1991 under the Treaty of Asunción. Observer countries are coded as non-members.

= 2 Member

= 1 Associate member

= 0 Non-member

OPEC
Member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Binary variable indicating membership in OPEC, as of 31 December of the listed year. OPEC was formed in 1960.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

ARABLG
Member of the Arab League. Binary variable indicating membership in the Arab League, as of 31 December of the listed year. The Arab League was established in 1945.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

FRANC
Member of the International Organization of the French-Speaking World (OIF), or Francophonie. Categorical variable indicating membership status in Francophonie, as of 31 December of the listed year. OIS was formed in 1970.

= 2 Member

= 1 Observer

= 0 Non-member

OAU
Member of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) or African Union. Binary variable indicating membership in the OAU or AU, as of 31 December of the listed year. The OAU was established in 1963; it became the AU in 2001.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

ECOWAS
Member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Binary variable indicating membership in ECOWAS, as of 31 December of the listed year. ECOWAS was established in 1975.

= 1 Member

= 0 Non-member

ICCPR
Signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Categorical variable indicating status as signatory to this treaty, as of 31 December of the listed year. The covenant was opened for signature in 1996 and came into force in 1976.

= 2 Ratified, acceded, or succeeded

= 1 Signed only

= 0 No status

ICCPRP1
Signatory to the First Optional Protocol to the ICCPR. Binary variable indicating status as a signatory to the First Optional Protocol, which establishes the right of individuals to petition the Human Rights Committee, as of 31 December of the listed year. The Protocol came into force in 1976.

= 1 Signatory

= 0 Not a signatory

ACHR
Signatory to the American Convention on Human Rights (a.k.a. the Pact of San Jose, Costa Rica). Categorical variable indicating status as signatory to this treaty, as of 31 December of the listed year. The treaty was adopted in 1969 and entered into force in 1978.

= 2 Ratified, acceded, or succeeded

= 1 Signed only

= 0 No status

ACHPR
Signatory to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights. Categorical variable indicating status as signatory to this treaty, as of 31 December of the listed year. The treaty was adopted in 1981 and entered into force in 1986.

= 2 Ratified, acceded, or succeeded

= 1 Signed only

= 0 No status

ICJ
Declared Recognition as Compulsory the Jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Binary variable indicating whether the country has declared its recognition of the jurisdiction of the ICJ as compulsory, as of 31 December of the listed year.

= 1 Declared

= 0 No declaration

OIC
Member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Binary variable identifying countries that are members of the OIC, which describes itself as "the collective voice of the Muslim world and ensuring to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world." The OIC was founded in 1969.

= 1 Member state

= 0 Non-member (including observer states)

FHELCDEM
Freedom House electoral democracy. Binary variable identifying countries listed by Freedom House as electoral democracies. According to Freedom House's web site, "To qualify as an electoral democracy, a state must have satisfied the following criteria:

1. A competitive, multiparty political system;
2. Universal adult suffrage for all citizens (with exceptions for restrictions that states may legitimately place on citizens as sanctions for criminal offenses);
3. Regularly contested elections conducted in conditions of ballot secrecy, reasonable ballot security, and in the absence of massive voter fraud, and that yield results that are representative of the public will;
4. Significant public access of major political parties to the electorate through the media and through generally open political campaigning.

The numerical benchmark for a country to be listed as an electoral democracy is a subtotal score of 7 or better (out of a total possible 12) for the political rights checklist subcategory A (the three questions on Electoral Process). In the case of presidential/parliamentary systems, both elections must have been free and fair on the basis of the above criteria; in parliamentary systems, the last nationwide elections for the national legislature must have been free and fair. The presence of certain irregularities during the electoral process does not automatically disqualify a country from being designated an electoral democracy. A country cannot be an electoral democracy if significant authority for national decisions resides in the hands of an unelected power, whether a monarch or a foreign

international authority. A country is removed from the ranks of electoral democracies if its last national election failed to meet the criteria listed above, or if changes in law significantly eroded the public's possibility for electoral choice."

= 1 Electoral democracy

= 0 Not an electoral democracy

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