Supplementary Material (SM)

Who Gets Targeted with Soft Power?

Evidence from Henry Kissinger's International Seminar

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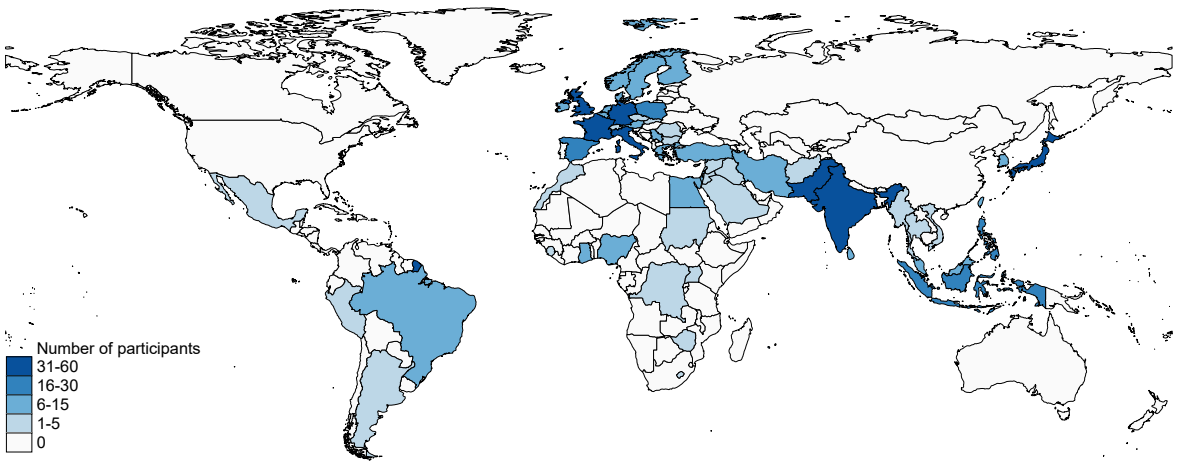
SM.1 Descriptive statistics

This section provides descriptive visualizations and statistics of the analysis data.

1) **Dependent variable.** Figure SM.1.1 depicts the aggregate global participation numbers of the International Seminar using a world map. The graph shows the geographic variation in seminar attendances and the broad targeting by Kissinger.

2) **Summary statistics.** Table SM.1.1 contains summary statistics for all variables used in the main analyses, robustness checks, and mechanism tests. Table SM.1.2 gives summary statistics for all variables used in the tests on Kissinger's travel patterns.

Figure SM.1.1. Global participation



Note: Graph shows aggregate number of seminar participants for each country.

Table SM.1.1. Summary statistics

	Type	Obs.	Mean	Std. dev.	Min.	Max.
Participants	Count	2541	0.268	0.722	0.000	5.000
Participants^a	Continuous	2541	0.150	0.361	0.000	1.792
Particpation	Binary	2541	0.165	0.371	0.000	1.000
Liberal democracy	Continuous	2504	0.219	0.229	0.011	0.872
Electoral democracy	Continuous	2540	0.280	0.252	0.007	0.901
Participatory democracy	Continuous	2523	0.159	0.180	0.007	0.724
Deliberative democracy	Continuous	2540	0.197	0.224	0.004	0.845
Closed autocracy	Binary	2540	0.547	0.498	0.000	1.000
Electoral autocracy	Binary	2540	0.263	0.440	0.000	1.000
Electoral democracy	Binary	2540	0.078	0.268	0.000	1.000
Liberal democracy	Binary	2540	0.112	0.316	0.000	1.000
Regime difference	Continuous	2504	-0.337	0.230	-0.607	0.346
Age of democracy	Continuous	2541	0.194	0.457	0.000	1.900
Age of democracy^2	Continuous	2541	0.246	0.694	0.000	3.610
Age of democracy^3	Continuous	2541	0.353	1.149	0.000	6.859
Freedom of academia	Continuous	2540	-0.299	1.434	-3.427	3.525
Freedom of state administration	Continuous	2540	0.079	1.463	-3.254	4.006
Freedom of media	Continuous	2540	-0.382	1.543	-3.135	3.383
Universities^a	Count	2387	1.578	1.510	0.000	6.244
Fuel production p.c.^{a}	Continuous	1788	2.119	2.417	0.000	10.446
GDP p.c.^{a}	Continuous	1750	7.867	0.880	5.717	10.210
Relative military power^a	Continuous	1688	1.142	1.086	0.000	5.291
Marxist insurgency	Binary	2540	0.015	0.123	0.000	1.000
Leftist regime	Continuous	2472	0.248	0.323	0.000	1.000
Human rights record	Continuous	1745	-0.161	1.223	-2.915	4.716
CIA-backed government	Binary	1721	0.233	0.423	0.000	1.000
KGB-backed government	Binary	1721	0.099	0.298	0.000	1.000
Agreement with US foreign policy	Continuous	1371	3.174	1.167	0.000	4.793
$_{\triangle}$Agreement with US foreign policy	Continuous	1261	-0.032	0.464	-1.683	1.666
Trade dependency on USA	Continuous	1748	18.177	19.640	0.000	89.529
Population size^a	Continuous	1750	8.899	1.470	4.990	13.534
Trade dependency of USA	Continuous	1750	0.971	2.535	0.000	25.385
Anti-system organization (communist)	Continuous	2535	-0.072	0.652	-2.705	3.080
Neighbor regimes (communist)	Continuous	2489	0.283	0.227	0.000	1.000
Distance to country^a	Continuous	2541	9.011	0.510	6.596	9.701
Non-communist regime	Binary	2472	0.909	0.288	0.000	1.000
Rightist leader	Binary	1691	0.495	0.500	0.000	1.000
Centrist leader	Binary	1691	0.088	0.284	0.000	1.000

Note: ^{a} Variable logarithmized.

Table SM.1.2. Summary statistics on effects

	Type	Obs.	Mean	Std. dev.	Min.	Max.
Visits National Security Advisor^a	Count	1211	0.015	0.104	0.000	1.099
Visits Secretary of State^a	Count	1211	0.088	0.308	0.000	2.197
Travels w/o US President^a	Count	1211	0.078	0.289	0.000	2.079
Participants	Count	1211	4.496	10.927	0.000	55.000
Participants Education	Count	1211	1.202	3.022	0.000	15.000
Participants Media & Culture	Count	1211	1.513	4.473	0.000	28.000
Participants State & Politics	Count	1211	1.453	3.414	0.000	16.000
Liberal democracy	Continuous	1192	0.227	0.253	0.006	0.879
Relative military power^a	Continuous	1063	0.919	1.020	0.000	4.953

Note: ^{a} Variable logarithmized.

SM.2 Robustness checks

This section provides results from checks that probe the robustness of the main empirical results.

1) **Using alternative regression models.** This test checks whether the results are robust to the choice of regression method. I re-run the main analysis using linear regression models with the logarithmized version of the dependent variable (Models 1-3) as well as a Poisson regression models as the raw counts of the dependent variable are not over-dispersed (Models 4-6). Table SM.2.1 shows that the coefficient of *Liberal democracy* is positive and statistically significant across specifications. The findings remain consistent across different regression methods and specifications.

2) **Using different fixed effects.** This test probes whether the results hold when employing more fine-grained fixed effects specifications. The relatively short period of time that Kissinger run the International Seminar prevents me from using country-specific fixed effects. To nevertheless probe whether the results are driven by structural differences across countries, I re-run the analysis including fixed effects that distinguish 10 and 19 different regions, respectively. The specifications allow me to account for structural differences across relatively small groups of geographically and culturally similar countries. Table SM.2.2 shows that the coefficient of *Liberal democracy* is positive and statistically significant across all specifications. Differences between regions do not seem to confound the results.

3) **Using a binary dependent variable.** This test checks whether the results are driven by the exact raw counts of the dependent variable. The test thus probes how sensitive results are to potential reporting biases in the participation numbers. To this end, I dichotomize the dependent variable by re-coding all positive count values to 1, and 0 otherwise. I estimate linear probability models (Models 1-3) and logistic regression models (Models 4-6). Table SM.2.3 shows that the coefficients of *Liberal democracy* are positive and statistically significant throughout. Findings are robust to potential reporting biases in the dependent variable.

4) **Using alternative independent variables.** This set of tests checks whether the results are robust to when employing different measures for free and open regimes. I undertake three tests. First, I re-run the main analysis replacing the original independent variable with VDem's *Electoral democracy* (v2x_polyarchy), *Participatory democracy* (v2x_partipdem), and *Deliberative democracy* (v2x_delibdem) variables, respectively (Coppedge et al. 2021). Table SM.2.4 shows that the coefficients of all three alternative variables are positive and statistically significant. Second, I replicate the main analysis using categorical regime indicators based on the Regimes of the World classification scheme (v2x_regime) by Coppedge et al. (2021). Table SM.2.6 shows that *Electoral democracy* and *Liberal democracy* are positively correlated with the number of seminar participants, while *Electoral autocracy* and *Closed autocracy* are not. Third, I re-run the main analysis with a relative regime measure capturing how open and liberal a country was vis-à-vis the United States. The variable subtracts the United States' liberal democracy score from the score of each country in each year, with positive (negative) values indicating that a country was more democratic (autocratic) than United States in a given year. As expected, Table SM.2.5 shows that the coefficient of *Regime difference* is positive and statistically significant across all models. Taken together, the results lend further support to that Kissinger targeted open, liberal societies.

5) **Measuring age of democracy.** This test checks whether Kissinger considered the stability of open and democratic regimes in his targeting strategy. The variable *Democracy age* measures the years since a given country became democratic, i.e. being classified at least as an electoral democracy by VDem's Regimes of the World classification scheme (v2x_regime) (Coppedge et al. 2021). I also include the squared and cubed version of the variable to give the regression models full functional form flexibility. As expected, regression results, shown in Table SM.2.7, and substantive effects, visualized in Figure SM.2.1, demonstrate that Kissinger targeted established and stable open regimes.

6) **Controlling for countries' political importance.** This test checks whether results are confounded by how politically important countries were to the United States. I re-run the main analysis with control variables for the countries' *Population size* (Gleditsch 2002), the degree to which governments in neighboring countries had a communist ideology, *Communist neighbor regime* (Coppedge et al. 2021), and the *Trade dependency of USA* on each country (Gleditsch 2002). As can be seen in Table SM.2.8, the estimates for *Liberal democracy* remain positive and statistically significant, while all coefficients except *Population size* fail to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. The political importance of countries does not confound the relevance of open and liberal regimes in Kissinger's targeting logic.

7) **Controlling for regime threats.** This test checks whether the results hold when accounting for anti-regime threats. I include three variables in the analysis that measure the existence of *Anti-system organizations* with communist ideologies, attacks by communist *Insurgent organizations*, and the degree to which governments in neighboring countries have a communist ideology, *Communist neighbor regime*. To find out whether Kissinger reacted more strongly to these actors and activities when they threatened open societies, I interact each variable with *Liberal democracy*. Table SM.2.9 shows that neither the interaction terms nor the threat variables themselves are statistically significant. In contrast, the coefficient for *Liberal democracy* remains positive and statistically significant across all specifications. Threats posed by communist organizations or neighbors do not influence the original results.

8) **Dropping one country at a time.** This test checks whether the results are robust to potential outliers. To this end, I re-run our main analysis seven times. In each run, I drop one country with a particularly large number of participants and all of its years from the sample (all countries colored in dark blue in Figure SM.1.1). The results must therefore withstand a significant drop in observations. Table SM.2.10 shows that the main results remain robust independent of which country is dropped from the sample. Results are not driven by outliers.

9) **Checking endogeneity.** This test checks whether the main results suffer from reversed causality. To this end, I fully replicate the main analysis with purely cross-sectional data. I aggregate the dependent variable to each country, and measure the independent and control variables in 1950—two years before the International Seminar was first held. Note that this data structure rules out reversed causality by design. I estimate both linear regressions (Models 1-3) and also negative binomial regression models that take care of over-dispersion in the aggregated counts (Models 4-6). Results in Table SM.2.11 show that *Liberal democracy* is positive and statistically significant across all models, with coefficient sizes being clearly larger due to the aggregated data structure. Together, this suggests that results do not suffer from reversed causality.

Table SM.2.1. Count measure of attendance

	Linear regression (logged)			Poisson regression (count)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal democracy	0.646***	0.830***	0.821***	3.318***	4.131***	3.766***
	(0.161)	(0.163)	(0.182)	(0.517)	(0.582)	(0.545)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.001	−0.006		−0.023	−0.035
		(0.011)	(0.012)		(0.077)	(0.075)
GDP p.c.		−0.079*	−0.020		−0.436*	−0.266
		(0.040)	(0.038)		(0.177)	(0.191)
Relative military power		0.187***	0.168***		0.664***	0.511***
		(0.040)	(0.048)		(0.103)	(0.110)
Marxist insurgency		−0.119†	−0.156†		−0.794†	−1.127**
		(0.062)	(0.091)		(0.412)	(0.429)
Leftist regime		−0.195*	−0.232*		−0.891*	−0.993**
		(0.075)	(0.108)		(0.399)	(0.373)
Human rights record		−0.019	−0.025		−0.308*	−0.356**
		(0.025)	(0.024)		(0.146)	(0.131)
Constant	0.011	0.476†	0.167	−2.412***	0.220	−0.273
	(0.025)	(0.285)	(0.285)	(0.246)	(1.330)	(1.424)
AIC	1586.70	999.77	962.09	3008.24	1967.89	1887.88
R^2	0.17	0.39	0.41			
Pseudo R^2				0.17	0.33	0.36
Observations	2504	1605	1605	2504	1605	1605
Clusters	148	121	121	148	121	121
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.2. Different region fixed effects

	10 Regions		19 Regions	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Liberal democracy	1.261**	1.633***	1.492***	1.972***
	(0.406)	(0.440)	(0.431)	(0.499)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.005		0.041
		(0.025)		(0.025)
GDP p.c.		−0.027		−0.034
		(0.064)		(0.064)
Relative military power		0.372***		0.323***
		(0.110)		(0.093)
Marxist insurgency		−0.211		−0.217
		(0.172)		(0.155)
Leftist regime		−0.449*		−0.495**
		(0.207)		(0.184)
Human rights record		−0.050		−0.039
		(0.054)		(0.052)
Constant	−0.450**	−0.245	−0.337*	−0.124
	(0.153)	(0.489)	(0.137)	(0.500)
AIC	4754.53	3160.24	4599.78	2950.19
R^2	0.27	0.42	0.31	0.50
Observations	2504	1605	2504	1605
Clusters	148	121	148	121
Region Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.3. Binary measure of attendance

	Linear regression			Logistic regression		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal democracy	0.594***	0.714***	0.680***	3.506***	5.122***	5.099***
	(0.124)	(0.137)	(0.157)	(0.637)	(1.103)	(1.256)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.006	−0.010		−0.047	−0.061
		(0.011)	(0.012)		(0.108)	(0.099)
GDP p.c.		−0.052	0.010		−0.394	0.108
		(0.036)	(0.036)		(0.324)	(0.316)
Relative military power		0.172***	0.146***		1.003***	0.830**
		(0.037)	(0.042)		(0.263)	(0.276)
Marxist insurgency		−0.110	−0.163†		−0.880	−1.148
		(0.067)	(0.098)		(0.635)	(0.698)
Leftist regime		−0.149*	−0.168		−0.958	−1.092
		(0.072)	(0.108)		(0.610)	(0.737)
Human rights record		−0.019	−0.024		−0.349†	−0.378*
		(0.023)	(0.022)		(0.207)	(0.190)
Constant	0.037	0.327	0.025	−2.583***	−0.598	−3.324
	(0.025)	(0.266)	(0.269)	(0.255)	(2.325)	(2.221)
AIC	1818.34	1293.50	1239.56	1983.45	1308.08	1236.47
R^2	0.13	0.30	0.33			
Pseudo R^2				0.12	0.28	0.33
Observations	2504	1605	1605	2504	1605	1605
Clusters	148	121	121	148	121	121
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.4. Different democracy measures

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Electoral democracy	1.144***	1.476***				
	(0.318)	(0.350)				
Participatory democracy			1.597***	2.061***		
			(0.468)	(0.563)		
Deliberative democracy					1.332***	1.653***
					(0.372)	(0.422)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.002		−0.000		−0.007
		(0.025)		(0.026)		(0.025)
GDP p.c.		−0.050		−0.078		−0.066
		(0.081)		(0.084)		(0.082)
Relative military power		0.342***		0.345**		0.341**
		(0.101)		(0.103)		(0.103)
Marxist insurgency		−0.292		−0.298†		−0.294†
		(0.177)		(0.177)		(0.172)
Leftist regime		−0.484*		−0.521*		−0.554*
		(0.216)		(0.229)		(0.226)
Human rights record		−0.037		−0.025		−0.035
		(0.046)		(0.048)		(0.047)
Constant	−0.052	0.241	0.016	0.570	0.005	0.462
	(0.057)	(0.591)	(0.046)	(0.619)	(0.044)	(0.603)
AIC	5118.10	3210.68	5105.94	3235.29	5085.21	3216.16
R^2	0.16	0.40	0.16	0.39	0.17	0.40
Observations	2540	1607	2523	1607	2540	1607
Clusters	150	121	149	121	150	121
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.5. Measures on regime difference

	Liberal democracy			Electoral democracy		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Regime difference	1.289***	1.658***	1.679***	1.148***	1.467***	1.447***
	(0.366)	(0.364)	(0.405)	(0.323)	(0.327)	(0.349)
Fuel production p.c.		0.002	−0.006		0.002	−0.004
		(0.023)	(0.025)		(0.023)	(0.025)
GDP p.c.		−0.171*	−0.049		−0.141†	−0.028
		(0.084)	(0.080)		(0.079)	(0.081)
Relative military power		0.366***	0.349***		0.377***	0.347***
		(0.084)	(0.102)		(0.084)	(0.102)
Marxist insurgency		−0.212†	−0.249		−0.203†	−0.261
		(0.122)	(0.172)		(0.116)	(0.177)
Leftist regime		−0.408**	−0.483*		−0.423**	−0.470*
		(0.152)	(0.215)		(0.155)	(0.216)
Human rights record		−0.031	−0.044		−0.018	−0.036
		(0.048)	(0.049)		(0.043)	(0.046)
Constant	0.707***	1.939**	1.238†	0.697***	1.662*	1.025†
	(0.165)	(0.719)	(0.636)	(0.161)	(0.675)	(0.618)
AIC	5055.57	3220.51	3192.12	5116.67	3248.95	3208.56
R^2	0.17	0.39	0.41	0.16	0.38	0.40
Observations	2504	1605	1605	2540	1607	1607
Clusters	148	121	121	150	121	121
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.6. Regime types (Reference category: Closed autocracy)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Electoral autocracy	0.044	0.133†	0.146†
	(0.053)	(0.075)	(0.081)
Electoral democracy	0.495†	0.715**	0.748**
	(0.287)	(0.255)	(0.255)
Liberal democracy	0.905**	1.198***	1.265**
	(0.293)	(0.292)	(0.402)
Fuel production p.c.		0.008	−0.002
		(0.024)	(0.024)
GDP p.c.		−0.196*	−0.083
		(0.095)	(0.083)
Relative military power		0.364***	0.347***
		(0.084)	(0.101)
Marxist insurgency		−0.211†	−0.246
		(0.120)	(0.184)
Leftist regime		−0.471**	−0.564*
		(0.163)	(0.225)
Human rights record		−0.028	−0.038
		(0.048)	(0.047)
Constant	0.117***	1.337†	0.687
	(0.033)	(0.699)	(0.613)
AIC	5090.33	3219.74	3192.77
R^2	0.17	0.40	0.41
Observations	2540	1607	1607
Clusters	150	121	121
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.7. Age of democracy

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Age of democracy	2.441^{**}	3.138^{**}	3.054^{**}
	(0.913)	(0.987)	(1.029)
Age of democracy^2	-2.124^{*}	-2.947^{*}	-2.903^{*}
	(0.979)	(1.178)	(1.217)
Age of democracy^3	$0.527^{\dagger}$	0.790^{*}	0.776^{*}
	(0.288)	(0.370)	(0.380)
Fuel production p.c.		-0.004	-0.007
		(0.022)	(0.025)
GDP p.c.		-0.128	-0.015
		(0.078)	(0.088)
Relative military power		0.373^{***}	0.342^{**}
		(0.086)	(0.103)
Marxist insurgency		-0.106	-0.176
		(0.109)	(0.189)
Leftist regime		-0.474^{**}	-0.519^{*}
		(0.159)	(0.225)
Human rights record		-0.006	-0.024
		(0.042)	(0.045)
Constant	0.131^{***}	0.908	0.287
	(0.028)	(0.582)	(0.628)
AIC	5130.40	3263.98	3228.47
R^2	0.16	0.38	0.40
Observations	2541	1607	1607
Clusters	150	121	121
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.8. Additional controls for country's political importance

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Liberal democracy	1.526***	1.726***	1.696***	1.555***
	(0.352)	(0.413)	(0.414)	(0.369)
Fuel production p.c.	−0.022	−0.002	−0.007	−0.016
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.023)
GDP p.c.	−0.025	−0.080	−0.076	−0.026
	(0.073)	(0.081)	(0.081)	(0.077)
Relative military power	0.180†	0.337***	0.341**	0.171
	(0.108)	(0.099)	(0.104)	(0.106)
Marxist insurgency	−0.227	−0.250	−0.281	−0.194
	(0.150)	(0.166)	(0.171)	(0.150)
Leftist regime	−0.520*	−0.514*	−0.486*	−0.553*
	(0.206)	(0.215)	(0.216)	(0.212)
Human rights record	−0.003	−0.015	−0.044	0.026
	(0.049)	(0.045)	(0.047)	(0.044)
Population size	0.184**			0.191**
	(0.055)			(0.061)
Communist neighbor regimes		−0.193		−0.128
		(0.347)		(0.340)
Trade dependency of USA			0.008	−0.011
			(0.055)	(0.048)
Constant	−1.339*	0.646	0.495	−1.302
	(0.647)	(0.665)	(0.599)	(0.807)
AIC	3128.02	3152.16	3193.75	3087.66
R^2	0.43	0.42	0.41	0.44
Observations	1605	1588	1605	1588
Clusters	121	120	121	120
Region Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.

† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.9. Communist threats in liberal democracies

	Communist movement		Communist insurgency		Communist neighbors	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal democracy	1.678***	1.739***	1.293***	1.721***	0.998†	1.162*
	(0.489)	(0.417)	(0.364)	(0.416)	(0.550)	(0.518)
Anti-system organization	−0.037	−0.019				
	(0.054)	(0.074)				
Liberal democracy X Anti-system organization	0.478	0.078				
	(0.340)	(0.387)				
Insurgent organization			−0.072	−0.306†		−0.228
			(0.072)	(0.179)		(0.160)
Liberal democracy X Insurgent organization			0.203	0.167		
			(0.410)	(0.749)		
Neighboring regimes					0.149	−0.942*
					(0.177)	(0.393)
Liberal democracy X Neighbor regimes					1.137	1.870
					(1.445)	(1.365)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.006		−0.004		−0.001
		(0.026)		(0.026)		(0.024)
GDP p.c.		−0.066		−0.073		−0.094
		(0.078)		(0.082)		(0.077)
Relative military power		0.354***		0.344***		0.337**
		(0.100)		(0.102)		(0.100)
Leftist regime		−0.495*		−0.499*		−0.513*
		(0.235)		(0.216)		(0.209)
Human rights record		−0.037		−0.046		0.006
		(0.050)		(0.050)		(0.047)
Constant	−0.056	0.385	−0.011	0.475	−0.051	1.043
	(0.060)	(0.595)	(0.049)	(0.605)	(0.065)	(0.634)
AIC	4983.73	3194.42	5057.69	3194.81	4866.64	3119.79
R^2	0.19	0.41	0.17	0.41	0.21	0.43
Observations	2499	1603	2504	1605	2453	1588
Clusters	148	121	148	121	145	120
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.2.10. Leave-one-out outlier test

	Pakistan	India	Italy	France	Japan	United Kingdom	Germany (West)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Liberal democracy	1.692***	1.533***	1.697***	1.653***	1.454***	1.626***	1.608***
	(0.420)	(0.405)	(0.417)	(0.421)	(0.378)	(0.419)	(0.415)
Fuel production p.c.	−0.005	−0.008	0.005	−0.003	−0.005	−0.011	−0.010
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.022)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.024)
GDP p.c.	−0.047	−0.023	−0.072	−0.063	−0.104	−0.062	−0.058
	(0.078)	(0.069)	(0.081)	(0.080)	(0.078)	(0.080)	(0.079)
Relative military power	0.341***	0.323**	0.310**	0.305**	0.336**	0.304**	0.336**
	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.102)	(0.097)	(0.104)
Marxist insurgency	−0.210	−0.215	−0.303†	−0.312†	−0.237	−0.316†	−0.288
	(0.164)	(0.166)	(0.174)	(0.174)	(0.174)	(0.171)	(0.175)
Leftist regime	−0.441*	−0.553**	−0.467*	−0.432*	−0.418*	−0.488*	−0.452*
	(0.207)	(0.203)	(0.214)	(0.211)	(0.209)	(0.214)	(0.218)
Human rights record	−0.039	−0.056	−0.047	−0.044	−0.041	−0.047	−0.038
	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.047)	(0.046)	(0.047)	(0.046)	(0.046)
Constant	0.216	0.128	0.517	0.475	0.644	0.495	0.405
	(0.547)	(0.509)	(0.588)	(0.584)	(0.579)	(0.586)	(0.582)
AIC	3106.16	3061.15	3068.22	3082.62	3059.29	3011.07	3117.67
R^2	0.40	0.39	0.39	0.37	0.38	0.38	0.39
Observations	1588	1588	1588	1588	1589	1588	1592
Clusters	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Region Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

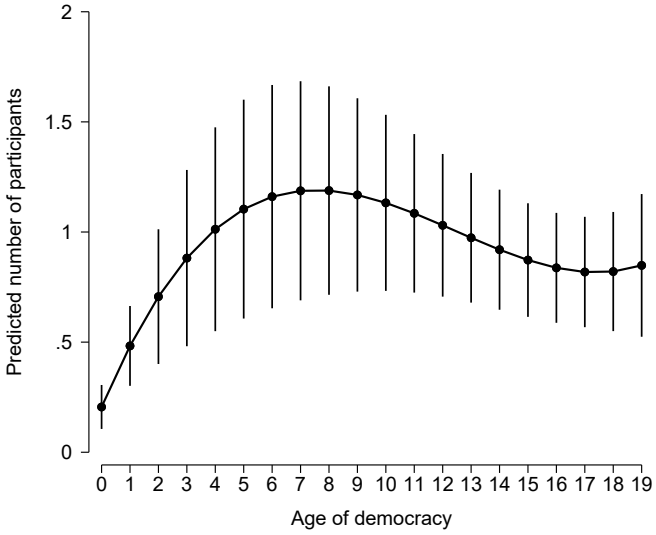
Table SM.2.11. Endogeneity test

	Linear regression			Negative bionomial regression		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal democracy	21.678***	25.551**	22.035**	4.612***	5.466***	3.558***
	(6.376)	(7.554)	(7.616)	(0.843)	(0.947)	(0.993)
Fuel production p.c.		0.414	0.322		0.038	−0.027
		(0.703)	(0.730)		(0.109)	(0.097)
GDP p.c.		−3.980	−2.383		−0.630*	0.224
		(2.777)	(2.118)		(0.285)	(0.366)
Relative military power		5.234**	4.877*		0.753***	0.821***
		(1.825)	(2.052)		(0.175)	(0.210)
Marxist insurgency		1.427	0.698		−0.151	0.797
		(7.062)	(7.331)		(0.768)	(0.914)
Leftist regime		−5.791†	−6.584		−0.801	−0.713
		(3.415)	(6.123)		(0.502)	(0.717)
Human rights record		0.520	0.579		−0.631*	−0.272
		(1.626)	(1.634)		(0.251)	(0.244)
Constant	0.435	24.436	17.323	0.205	3.436†	−1.524
	(0.798)	(20.309)	(16.037)	(0.268)	(2.060)	(2.640)
AIC	1091.32	532.81	541.34	562.52	353.04	345.84
R^2	0.18	0.44	0.45			
Pseudo R^2				0.03	0.11	0.16
Observations	146	71	71	146	71	71
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses.

† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure SM.2.1. Substantive effect of age of democracy



Note: Graph marginal effect of democracy age, measured in years, on the predicted number of seminar participants. Control variables are held at observed values. Calculations are based on Model 3 in Table SM.2.7.

SM.3 Alternative explanations

This section provides results from checks that probe the plausibility of alternative explanations.

1) **Applications and self-selection.** This set of tests examines whether the results are driven by self-selection. It expands and complements the results presented in the manuscript. Problems with self-selection would arise if potential participants from autocracies were not able to apply or travel to the International Seminar. Problems would also exist if Kissinger only received applications from specific regions with many democracies, such as Western Europe.

   The first test focuses on attendances. If self-selection took place, the Seminar should have been heavily dominated by individuals from democracies. Figure SM.3.1 shows that this is not the case. While there were more seminar participants from democracies—as one would expect from the theoretical argument—there were also 258 participants from autocracies. Furthermore, Figure SM.3.2 shows that around 5% of all participants came from countries of the Warsaw Pact or communist regimes. This speaks against a pure self-selection process dominated by democracies.

   The second test focuses on applications. It draws on an unique archival record that lists all countries from which the Seminar had received applications for its 1956 edition. Table SM.3.1 summarizes the record's key information (Henry A. Kissinger Papers 2011*a*). It shows that i) the country-level applicant pool was equally split between autocracies and democracies (47% vs. 53%), ii) the Seminar did receive applications from the Communist Bloc (Poland and Yugoslavia), iii) there were applications from across the world, and iv) the Seminar would ultimately include a significantly higher number of students from democracies (Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea) and fewer students from autocracies (Iran) than what would be expected based on the preliminary admission stage. This underscores Kissinger's control of the selection process and his targeting of liberal democracies.

   The third test checks whether there are systematic differences in the countries from which the Seminar received applications. The test is based on the assumption that Kissinger was able to obtain at least one application from a country that he would then accept. This is a plausible assumption. As described in the manuscript, Kissinger went great lengths to attract applications. In addition, the Seminar covered travel and accommodation expenses and offered the unique opportunity to spend some time at one of the best universities in the world, which should have been a strong incentive for people to apply. The dependent variable employs a binary measure of seminar participation. It is 1 for a given country in a given year in which at least one person attended the Seminar, and 0 otherwise. The key independent variables are *Distance to country*, which measures the geographic distance between each country and the United States, as well as *GDP p.c.*, which measures each country's economic development, and *Population size*. Data stem from Gleditsch (2002). In each model, I interact the distance variable with one of the other two variables. Tables SM.3.2 and SM.3.3 show that neither the coefficient estimates of the interaction terms nor the estimates of the constituent variables reach any conventional levels of statistical significance. There do not seem to be any systematic differences in applications and ultimately in the participation between rich and poor, large and small countries, and where these countries were located in the world.

   The final test models the selection process with a two-stage model. It estimates Heckman sample selection regressions. The first stage tests whether there was at least one

application and subsequent attendance from given country in a given year, using the binary dependent variable of the previous test. Independent variables are, among others, *Distance to country* as well as binary variables controlling for different world regions. The second stage tests whether the level of democracy influences the number of attendances from a selected country in a given year. Results in Table SM.3.4 offer two insights. First, the location of a country does not influence eventual attendance (1st stage). Coefficient estimates for *Distance to country* and all region variables, except *Latin America & the Caribbean*, are statistically insignificant. This underlines the argument that Kissinger could attract applications even from countries far away from the United States, confirming the findings of the previous test. Second, for those countries selected, being more democratic is correlated with a higher number of attendances (2nd stage). The coefficient estimates of *Liberal democracy* are positive and statistically significant across all models. This is fully in line with the main finding and the argument that Kissinger targeted pre-dominantly democratic countries with the International Seminar.

2) **Fostering anti-communism.** This set of tests checks whether the results are confounded by some kind of ideological goal behind the Seminar's targeting. To test whether regime and government ideologies influenced the seminar's participation patterns, the first test excludes first one and then all three dominant communist states (i.e., China, the Soviet Union, and North Korea) from the sample. This provides the regression analysis with a narrower set of autocracies. If the results are simply a function of Kissinger's anti-communist targeting, the main results should be visibly weaker. However, as can be seen in Table SM.3.5, the results remain unchanged. The *Liberal democracy* coefficient estimates are positive and statistically significant across all models. The second test controls for regimes without communist or socialist ideologies. The *Non-communist regime* variable identifies such states based on data from Bjørnskov and Rode (2020). As shown in Table SM.3.6, the results again remain unchanged. The third test takes into account the right-wing, centrist, and left-wing ideologies of government leaders in different regimes, drawing on data from Herre (2023). I interact the variable *Liberal democracy* with the ideology variables *Rightist leader* and *Centrist leader*, respectively. The ideology variables are coded to be mutually exclusive, with the reference category identifying leaders with leftist ideologies. The results in Table SM.3.7 show that neither the coefficient estimates of the ideology variables nor the interaction terms are statistically significant. The coefficient estimates of *Liberal democracy* are consistently positive and statistically significant. While ideologies did not influence seminar attendance in any discernible way, more liberal regimes were more heavily targeted by Kissinger's seminar.

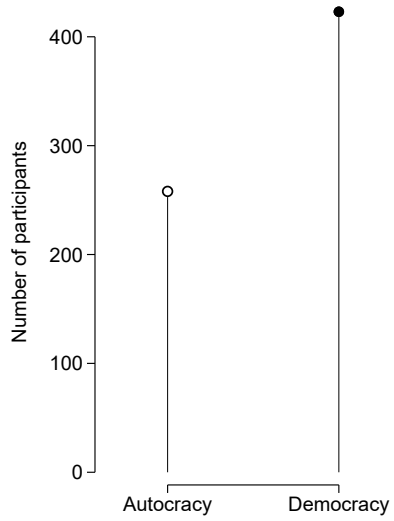
3) **Pre-existing relations with the United States.** This test checks whether the targeting of the International Seminar was a function of countries' pre-existing relations with the United States. I re-run the main analysis including the variable *Agreement with US foreign policy*, which measures how close a country's foreign policy stance was to that of the United States, and the variable *Trade dependency on USA*, which measures the extent to which a country's total trade was determined by imports from and exports to the United States. Data stem from Bailey, Strezhnev and Voeten (2017) and Gleditsch (2002), respectively. As is shown in Table SM.3.8, the coefficient estimates for both variables are statistically indistinguishable from zero and do not alter the main result. Kissinger's Seminar targeted liberal democracies independent of how close they had been to the United States.

4) **Shifts away from the United States.** This tests checks whether the Seminar targeted not just liberal democracies, but those that internationally shifted away from the United

States. I re-run the main analysis with an interaction term between each countries' regime type in a given year and its changes in foreign relations with the United States. I employ two measures for regime type to assess the results' robustness. *Liberal democracy* is the continuous variable employed in the main analysis. *Democracy* is a binary variable that broadly identifies countries with free and fair elections. Data stem from Coppedge et al. (2021). I measure changes in relations with the United States through the variable $_{\triangle}$*Agreement with US foreign policy*, which measures annual changes using data by Bailey, Strezhnev and Voeten (2017). Negative values indicate a shift away from the superpower. As is shown in Table SM.3.9, the coefficient estimates for the interaction term are statistically indistinguishable from zero across the board. This speaks against a nuanced targeting logic. The coefficient estimates of *Liberal democracy* and *Democracy* are positive and statistically significant, which strongly supports the argument that Kissinger's Seminar targeted democratic countries independent of their relations with the United States.

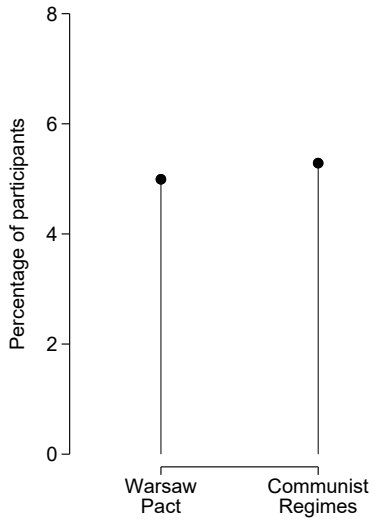
5) **Extension of hard power.** This test checks whether the International Seminar was simply an extension of US hard power in general, and given its sources of funding, of the CIA in particular. I re-run the main analysis and include the variables *CIA-backed government* and *KGB-backed government* using data provided by Berger et al. (2013). The variables identify governments installed and supported by the CIA or the KGB, respectively. As is shown in Table SM.3.10, the coefficient estimates for both variables fail to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. The results for liberal regimes remain unaffected, suggesting that Kissinger was not simply replicating the hard power targeting of the US government.

Figure SM.3.1. Seminar attendance across regimes



Note: Graph shows the total number of seminar participants from autocratic and democratic countries.

Figure SM.3.2. Seminar attendance from Communist Bloc



Note: Graph shows the percentage of seminar participants from countries of the Warsaw Pact and communist regimes.

Table SM.3.1. Selection process of the 1956 International Seminar

	Country	Democracy	Applications received	Preliminary admission	Students admitted	Final admission	Students admitted	Added	Removed
1	Austria	X	X						
2	Belgium	X	X	X	1	X	1		
3	Denmark	X	X			X	1	X	
4	Egypt		X						
5	Finland	X	X			X	1	X	
6	France	X	X	X	4	X	4		
7	West Germany	X	X	X	4	X	4		
8	Greece		X						
9	India	X	X	X	4	X	4		
10	Indonesia	X	X	X	1	X	1		
11	Iran		X	X	1				X
12	Iraq		X	X	1	X	1		
13	Ireland	X				X	1	X	
14	Israel	X	X						
15	Italy	X	X			X	1	X	
16	Japan	X	X			X	4	X	
17	Myanmar		X	X	1	X	1		
18	Netherlands	X	X	X	1	X	1		
19	Norway	X	X						
20	Pakistan		X	X	3	X	3		
21	Philippines		X	X	2	X	2		
22	Poland		X						
23	South Korea		X			X	1	X	
24	South Vietnam		X	X	1	X	1		
25	Spain		X	X	2	X	2		
26	Sri Lanka	X	X	X	2	X	2		
27	Sweden	X	X						
28	Switzerland	X	X	X	1	X	1		
29	Taiwan		X	X	1	X	1		
30	Thailand		X						
31	Turkey		X	X	1	X	1		
32	United Kingdom	X	X	X	4	X	4		
33	Yugoslavia		X	X	1	X	1		
	Total	18	32	19	45	24	44	6	1

Note: Based on hand-coded information provided in Henry A. Kissinger Papers (2011*a*, 30) and the Seminar roster.

Table SM.3.2. Geographic distance, economic development, and applications

	Linear regression		Logistic regression	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Distance to country	−0.405	−0.271	−1.868	3.455
	(0.431)	(0.452)	(4.194)	(4.736)
GDP p.c.	−0.395	−0.234	−1.693	3.807
	(0.483)	(0.536)	(4.301)	(4.966)
Distance to country X GDP p.c.	0.051	0.036	0.238	−0.333
	(0.055)	(0.060)	(0.476)	(0.542)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.014		−0.104
		(0.012)		(0.090)
Relative military power		0.151**		0.850**
		(0.046)		(0.262)
Marxist insurgency		−0.119		−0.947
		(0.131)		(0.862)
Leftist regime		−0.094		−0.582
		(0.120)		(0.724)
Human rights record		0.013		0.029
		(0.023)		(0.190)
Constant	3.595	2.065	13.387	−38.762
	(3.799)	(4.041)	(38.306)	(43.572)
AIC	1650.07	1357.58	1594.48	1335.93
R^2	0.17	0.28		
Pseudo R^2			0.17	0.27
Observations	1750	1607	1750	1607
Clusters	133	121	133	121
Region Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.

† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.3.3. Geographic distance, population size, and applications

	Linear regression		Logistic regression	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Distance to country	−0.316	−0.659*	2.959	0.277
	(0.326)	(0.317)	(3.831)	(3.599)
Population size	−0.247	−0.590†	3.132	0.641
	(0.336)	(0.345)	(3.506)	(3.462)
Distance to country X Population size	0.040	0.076†	−0.256	0.020
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.397)	(0.379)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.020†		−0.171†
		(0.012)		(0.098)
GDP p.c.		0.113*		0.963**
		(0.045)		(0.351)
Relative military power		0.067		0.179
		(0.053)		(0.331)
Marxist insurgency		−0.082		−0.432
		(0.087)		(0.659)
Leftist regime		−0.152		−0.787
		(0.106)		(0.794)
Human rights record		0.025		0.115
		(0.022)		(0.181)
Constant	2.114	4.558	−35.481	−17.852
	(2.813)	(2.758)	(33.960)	(32.972)
AIC	1403.16	1288.95	1369.51	1271.96
R^2	0.28	0.31		
Pseudo R^2			0.29	0.31
Observations	1750	1607	1750	1607
Clusters	133	121	133	121
Region Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.

† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.3.4. Two-stage selection process

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Among all countries: Selection for Seminar			
Distance to country	0.199	0.030	0.191
	(0.170)	(0.327)	(0.336)
Fuel production p.c.			−0.016
			(0.048)
GDP p.c.			0.278
			(0.188)
Relative military power			0.542***
			(0.141)
Marxist insurgency			−0.321
			(0.440)
Leftist regime			−0.415
			(0.376)
Human rights record			0.027
			(0.108)
Eastern Europe & Central Asia		−0.516	−0.973†
		(0.420)	(0.590)
Latin America & the Caribbean		−1.345*	−1.389**
		(0.558)	(0.488)
Middle East & North Africa		−0.541	−0.617†
		(0.333)	(0.356)
Sub-Saharan Africa		−1.439***	−0.607
		(0.293)	(0.394)
Western Europe		0.267	−0.314
		(0.415)	(0.501)
Constant	−2.772†	−0.748	−4.641
	(1.535)	(3.139)	(3.520)
Among selected countries: Number of participants			
Liberal democracy	1.376**	1.052*	0.882*
	(0.498)	(0.468)	(0.445)
Constant	1.371***	1.726***	1.935***
	(0.345)	(0.280)	(0.288)
Selectivity effect			
atanh ρ	−0.223	−0.479**	−0.923***
	(0.215)	(0.168)	(0.232)
AIC	3380.78	2960.09	2301.70
Observations	2541	2541	1607
Selected observations	419	419	397
Clusters	150	150	121

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
Region reference category is Asia & Pacific.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.3.5. Excluding core communist regimes

	China		Soviet Union		North Korea		Combined	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Liberal democracy	1.294***	1.638***	1.294***	1.713***	1.294***	1.682***	1.312***	1.663***
	(0.364)	(0.387)	(0.364)	(0.400)	(0.365)	(0.411)	(0.370)	(0.393)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.003		−0.016		0.000		−0.001
		(0.025)		(0.024)		(0.025)		(0.025)
GDP p.c.		−0.097		−0.047		−0.078		−0.111
		(0.076)		(0.077)		(0.080)		(0.081)
Relative military power		0.401***		0.413***		0.341**		0.497***
		(0.104)		(0.102)		(0.102)		(0.098)
Marxist insurgency		−0.353*		−0.228		−0.322†		−0.467*
		(0.177)		(0.168)		(0.188)		(0.180)
Leftist regime		−0.352†		−0.513*		−0.444†		−0.274
		(0.198)		(0.219)		(0.239)		(0.223)
Human rights record		−0.036		−0.043		−0.048		−0.088†
		(0.051)		(0.047)		(0.049)		(0.047)
Constant	−0.011	0.612	−0.011	0.178	−0.012	0.532	−0.023	0.552
	(0.049)	(0.565)	(0.049)	(0.540)	(0.049)	(0.593)	(0.053)	(0.559)
AIC	5036.52	3096.56	5036.53	3108.02	5036.54	3166.63	4713.29	2655.26
R^2	0.17	0.44	0.17	0.43	0.17	0.41	0.17	0.50
Observations	2487	1588	2487	1588	2487	1588	2273	1375
Clusters	147	120	147	120	147	120	137	108
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.3.6. Controlling for regimes without communist ideology

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Liberal democracy	1.312***	1.486***	1.460***
	(0.369)	(0.345)	(0.362)
Non-communist regime	−0.092	0.455**	0.714*
	(0.081)	(0.155)	(0.301)
Fuel production p.c.		0.005	−0.004
		(0.023)	(0.025)
GDP p.c.		−0.160*	−0.035
		(0.080)	(0.083)
Relative military power		0.389***	0.366***
		(0.085)	(0.102)
Marxist insurgency		−0.339*	−0.451*
		(0.135)	(0.180)
Human rights record		−0.026	−0.041
		(0.048)	(0.047)
Constant	0.071	0.429	−0.505
	(0.076)	(0.592)	(0.728)
AIC	4979.20	3190.67	3152.31
R^2	0.17	0.40	0.42
Observations	2436	1591	1591
Clusters	144	120	120
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.3.7. Ideologies across regimes

	Rightist regimes		Centrist regimes		Both regimes	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal democracy	0.916**	1.708***	1.383**	1.771***	0.956**	1.850***
	(0.317)	(0.437)	(0.446)	(0.423)	(0.337)	(0.444)
Rightist leader	−0.091	0.074			−0.057	0.154
	(0.099)	(0.117)			(0.102)	(0.123)
Centrist leader			0.729	0.632†	0.693	0.734†
			(0.497)	(0.368)	(0.508)	(0.383)
Liberal democracy X Rightist leader	0.765	0.164			0.725	0.005
	(0.658)	(0.517)			(0.663)	(0.496)
Liberal democracy X Centrist leader			−1.443	−1.260	−1.016	−1.236
			(0.920)	(0.797)	(0.896)	(0.776)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.004		−0.005		−0.004
		(0.026)		(0.026)		(0.026)
GDP p.c.		−0.081		−0.076		−0.089
		(0.083)		(0.083)		(0.083)
Relative military power		0.346**		0.349***		0.347***
		(0.104)		(0.102)		(0.102)
Marxist insurgency		−0.284		−0.263		−0.266
		(0.181)		(0.172)		(0.176)
Leftist regime		−0.422†		−0.514*		−0.384†
		(0.237)		(0.212)		(0.213)
Human rights record		−0.044		−0.042		−0.044
		(0.051)		(0.051)		(0.050)
Constant	0.099	0.462	0.029	0.480	0.065	0.434
	(0.060)	(0.619)	(0.064)	(0.613)	(0.052)	(0.608)
AIC	3928.87	3097.81	3940.23	3086.75	3916.57	3079.99
R^2	0.17	0.41	0.16	0.42	0.17	0.42
Observations	1689	1537	1689	1537	1689	1537
Clusters	130	120	130	120	130	120
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.

Reference category of leader ideology: Leftist.

† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.3.8. Country's pre-existing relations with the United States

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal democracy	1.288***	1.323***	1.721***	1.732***	1.290***	1.321***
	(0.323)	(0.333)	(0.408)	(0.413)	(0.322)	(0.333)
Fuel production p.c.	0.002	0.004	−0.005	−0.005	0.001	0.003
	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.021)	(0.023)
GDP p.c.	−0.093	−0.091	−0.073	−0.074	−0.090	−0.088
	(0.072)	(0.075)	(0.080)	(0.083)	(0.073)	(0.076)
Relative military power	0.404***	0.393**	0.344***	0.343**	0.406***	0.394**
	(0.119)	(0.123)	(0.101)	(0.103)	(0.118)	(0.122)
Marxist insurgency	−0.572**	−0.600**	−0.275	−0.283	−0.562**	−0.592**
	(0.202)	(0.212)	(0.171)	(0.175)	(0.201)	(0.214)
Leftist regime	−0.038	−0.004	−0.482*	−0.500*	−0.033	−0.006
	(0.179)	(0.193)	(0.217)	(0.222)	(0.176)	(0.190)
Human rights record	−0.045	−0.060	−0.045	−0.048	−0.043	−0.059
	(0.047)	(0.050)	(0.049)	(0.051)	(0.045)	(0.049)
Agreement with US foreign policy$_{t-1}$	0.000				−0.006	
	(0.039)				(0.044)	
Agreement with US foreign policy$_{t-2}$		0.010				0.006
		(0.048)				(0.053)
Trade dependency on USA$_{t-1}$			0.001		0.001	
			(0.004)		(0.004)	
Trade dependency on USA$_{t-2}$				0.001		0.001
				(0.004)		(0.004)
Constant	0.743	0.694	0.445	0.474	0.714	0.676
	(0.569)	(0.586)	(0.585)	(0.601)	(0.572)	(0.591)
AIC	2417.14	2345.58	3193.55	3143.89	2418.19	2344.81
R^2	0.45	0.45	0.41	0.41	0.45	0.45
Observations	1317	1259	1605	1560	1317	1258
Clusters	115	115	121	121	115	115
Region Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.

† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.3.9. Democracies tilting away from the United States

	Continuous regime measure			Binary regime measure		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal democracy X $_{\triangle}$Agreement with US foreign policy	0.011	0.091	0.076			
	(0.117)	(0.119)	(0.120)			
Liberal democracy	1.019**	1.640***	1.315***			
	(0.363)	(0.357)	(0.325)			
Democracy X $_{\triangle}$Agreement with US foreign policy				0.020	0.053	0.040
				(0.086)	(0.089)	(0.085)
Democracy				0.613**	0.822***	0.615***
				(0.220)	(0.184)	(0.159)
$_{\triangle}$Agreement with US foreign policy	−0.012	−0.043	−0.030	−0.012	−0.026	−0.017
	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.032)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.003	0.005		−0.012	0.003
		(0.023)	(0.022)		(0.021)	(0.022)
GDP p.c.		−0.261**	−0.107		−0.206**	−0.068
		(0.085)	(0.074)		(0.078)	(0.079)
Relative military power		0.416***	0.400***		0.415***	0.390**
		(0.102)	(0.117)		(0.104)	(0.115)
Marxist insurgency		−0.353*	−0.566**		−0.213*	−0.504*
		(0.145)	(0.203)		(0.104)	(0.195)
Leftist regime		−0.282†	−0.024		−0.298†	0.010
		(0.161)	(0.173)		(0.165)	(0.168)
Human rights record		−0.042	−0.044		−0.011	−0.031
		(0.044)	(0.048)		(0.040)	(0.047)
Constant	0.097	1.645**	0.840	0.211***	1.467*	0.758
	(0.064)	(0.618)	(0.562)	(0.047)	(0.591)	(0.581)
AIC	2870.14	2289.34	2232.18	2860.65	2330.04	2248.92
R^2	0.11	0.42	0.45	0.11	0.40	0.44
Observations	1260	1209	1209	1261	1210	1210
Clusters	121	115	115	121	115	115
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.3.10. Controlling for hard power

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal democracy	1.354***	1.724***	1.831***	1.409***	1.771***	1.833***
	(0.398)	(0.354)	(0.398)	(0.415)	(0.388)	(0.409)
CIA-backed government	0.260†	0.230†	0.239†	0.286†	0.232†	0.239†
	(0.156)	(0.131)	(0.125)	(0.164)	(0.131)	(0.125)
KGB-backed government				0.151	0.104	0.010
				(0.119)	(0.240)	(0.198)
Fuel production p.c.		0.007	−0.007		0.005	−0.007
		(0.022)	(0.022)		(0.021)	(0.022)
GDP p.c.		−0.178*	−0.077		−0.183*	−0.077
		(0.079)	(0.075)		(0.079)	(0.074)
Relative military power		0.404***	0.404***		0.402***	0.404***
		(0.087)	(0.100)		(0.088)	(0.100)
Marxist insurgency		−0.287*	−0.265		−0.282*	−0.264
		(0.128)	(0.177)		(0.129)	(0.178)
Leftist regime		−0.268†	−0.413†		−0.318	−0.416†
		(0.159)	(0.216)		(0.221)	(0.239)
Human rights record		−0.029	−0.043		−0.032	−0.043
		(0.047)	(0.046)		(0.046)	(0.046)
Constant	−0.027	0.907†	0.265	−0.063	0.951†	0.266
	(0.088)	(0.543)	(0.535)	(0.105)	(0.544)	(0.533)
AIC	4017.60	3107.60	3076.94	4014.55	3107.71	3078.93
R^2	0.16	0.43	0.44	0.16	0.43	0.44
Observations	1719	1587	1587	1719	1587	1587
Clusters	129	120	120	129	120	120
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

SM.4 Mechanism and effects tests

This section offers tests on key parts of the proposed theoretical mechanism.

1) **Credibility of seminar content.** In the manuscript, I have argued that Kissinger should have particularly targeted countries where the critical voices of intellectuals and academics could lend credence to the Seminar's message. To test this expectation, I replace the independent variable *Liberal democracy* with three variables measuring *Freedom of academia* (v2clacfree), *Freedom of media* (v2clacfree), and *Freedom of state administration* (v2mecenefm) in the analysis. Data stems from Coppedge et al. (2021). As expected, results in Table SM.4.1 show that only the coefficient for academic freedoms is positively and statistically significantly correlated with the number of seminar participants. This indicates that Kissinger saw scientists and academics in particular as credible carriers of pro-US sentiments.

2) **Dissemination of seminar content.** I have also argued that Kissinger saw in academic participants important multipliers of soft power, with academic institutions offering an important channel for the far-reaching transmission of ideas and opinions. To test whether this is also reflected in the targeting pattern of the International Seminar, I interact the variable *Academic freedoms* (v2clacfree) with the logarithmized variable *Number of universities* (v2canuni), taken from Coppedge et al. (2021). Table SM.4.2 shows that the interaction term is positive and statistically significant. The participation effect of free academics becomes stronger as the number of universities in a country increases. This suggests that Kissinger particularly focused with the Seminar on countries where numerous liberal institutions, such as a high number of universities, would enable scientists and intellectuals to widely disseminate pro-US opinions.

3) **Kissinger's travels abroad.** To probe the effects of the International Seminar, this test focuses on Kissinger's political life and whether the Seminar opened channels that could be exploited by the US government. I hand-code all of Kissinger's trips as National Security Adviser (January 1969 to September 1973) and Secretary of State in the Nixon administration (October 1973 to December 1976). Data stem from the Henry A. Kissinger Papers (2011*b*) and the Office of the Historian (2022). Note that Kissinger made these trips after the Seminar had ended in 1968. Kissinger's position as National Security Advisor serves as a placebo test, as he had little discretion over the itinerary and mostly accompanied the US President.

   The analysis dataset contains all independent countries between 1969 and 1976. The dependent variable is the logarithmized number of visits by Kissinger in his respective role. The time-invariant independent variables are *Participants*, which measures the total number of seminar participants for each country. The variables *Participants Education*, *Participants Media & Culture*, and *Participants State & Politics* measure the total number of participants from each sector. I estimate linear regression models that include the relevant pre-treatment control variables of the main analysis, *Liberal democracy* and *Relative military power*, as well as year and region fixed effects to account for temporal and geographic idiosyncrasies. Results in Table SM.4.3 show that the coefficients for *Participants* and *Participants Education* are positive and statistically significantly correlated with the number of visits by Kissinger when he served as Secretary of State. As expected, for the time he served as National Security Advisor, all coefficients are statistically indistinguishable from zero. Taken together, the results suggest that Kissinger, when

he could decide on where to travel, visited countries where he had 'academic friends' of the Seminar, probably expecting that they might be particularly receptive to his messages.

Table SM.4.1. Distinguishing freedom in education, state, and media sector

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Freedom of academia	0.114*	0.143**	0.139*
	(0.053)	(0.053)	(0.055)
Freedom of state administration	0.084†	0.097†	0.059
	(0.043)	(0.058)	(0.067)
Freedom of media	−0.011	0.028	0.040
	(0.034)	(0.041)	(0.047)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.008	−0.006
		(0.020)	(0.022)
GDP p.c.		−0.081	−0.038
		(0.081)	(0.089)
Relative military power		0.401***	0.354***
		(0.093)	(0.103)
Marxist insurgency		−0.176	−0.285†
		(0.109)	(0.169)
Leftist regime		−0.371*	−0.417†
		(0.154)	(0.214)
Human rights record		−0.039	−0.048
		(0.051)	(0.052)
Constant	0.292***	0.695	0.579
	(0.058)	(0.626)	(0.653)
AIC	5232.87	3257.31	3242.90
R^2	0.12	0.38	0.39
Observations	2540	1607	1607
Clusters	150	121	121
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.

† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.4.2. Academic freedoms and institutional context

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Universities	0.264***	0.204**	0.258***	0.138**
	(0.056)	(0.071)	(0.033)	(0.042)
Academic freedoms			−0.108***	−0.139**
			(0.028)	(0.043)
Universities * Academic freedoms			0.115***	0.144***
			(0.019)	(0.019)
Fuel production p.c.		−0.025		−0.021
		(0.023)		(0.020)
GDP p.c.		0.068		−0.073
		(0.091)		(0.062)
Relative military power		0.170		0.287***
		(0.115)		(0.084)
Marxist insurgency		0.044		−0.141
		(0.183)		(0.153)
Leftist regime		−0.273		−0.183
		(0.233)		(0.146)
Human rights record		0.047		−0.002
		(0.045)		(0.029)
Constant	−0.133*	−0.424	−0.150***	0.489
	(0.053)	(0.670)	(0.039)	(0.488)
AIC	4530.45	3311.34	3797.49	2785.33
R^2	0.29	0.36	0.48	0.54
Observations	2387	1599	2387	1599
Clusters	141	120	141	120
Region Fixed Effects	✗	✓	✗	✓

Note: Coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table SM.4.3. International Seminar participation and state visits by Kissinger

	National Security Advisor		Secretary of State		Travels w/o US President	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Participants	0.001		0.004*		0.004*	
	(0.001)		(0.002)		(0.002)	
Participants Education		−0.000		0.016*		0.015*
		(0.003)		(0.007)		(0.007)
Participants Media & Culture		0.002		0.004		0.007
		(0.002)		(0.005)		(0.005)
Participants State & Politics		−0.000		−0.005		−0.008†
		(0.002)		(0.005)		(0.005)
Constant	0.039	0.039	−0.013	−0.009	−0.066	−0.060
	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.075)	(0.075)	(0.070)	(0.070)
AIC	−1721.30	−1719.09	385.13	384.93	289.64	285.55
R^2	0.11	0.11	0.25	0.26	0.22	0.23
Observations	1063	1063	1063	1063	1063	1063
Control Variables	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region Fixed Effects (19 regions)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses.
† p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

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