

**From Shocks to Waves:
Hegemonic Transitions and Democratization in the Twentieth Century**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
2011

ABSTRACT

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What causes democratic waves? This dissertation argues that sudden shifts in the distribution of power among major states can help explain the wave-like spread of democracy over the past century. These hegemonic shocks lead to bursts of regime change by creating unique incentives and opportunities for domestic reforms, and do so through three sets of mechanisms – hegemonic coercion, influence, and emulation. Namely, shocks produce windows of opportunity for external regime imposition, enable rising great powers to expand networks of trade and patronage, and inspire imitators by credibly revealing hidden information about regime effectiveness to foreign audiences.

I find strong statistical support for the idea that shifts in hegemonic power have shaped waves of democracy, fascism, and communism in the twentieth century. The statistical analysis is supplemented by case studies of three hegemonic shocks: World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. The First World War produced the century's first democratic wave by demonstrating democracy's effectiveness to rulers on the battlefield and the factory floor, creating new states on the ruins of autocratic empires, and increasing the organizational power of women and working-class men. The wave also sowed the seeds of its own demise as rulers and coalitions, swept up in the postwar momentum, adopted liberal institutions in

countries that lacked the social cohesion, political pre-conditions or economic stability necessary for democratic consolidation. Pro-reform coalitions that welcomed the reforms dissolved as the crisis passed. The economic rise of Nazi Germany and the crisis of liberal capitalism in the Great Depression inaugurated a fascist wave in the 1930s. In this period, fascist institutions penetrated the governments of many self-proclaimed authoritarians but also left a lasting legacy on the structure of modern democratic regimes. Growing fascist power and influence inspired a number of imitators, culminating in a series of fascist regime impositions at the outset of World War II. The outcome of that war produced not one but two rising great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Reflecting this duality, the war's aftermath witnessed two distinct waves of institutional reforms that embodied the competing visions offered by the two superpowers. Despite the profound differences in their content, both regime waves diffused through a mixture of coercion (through occupation and nation-building), influence (via the expansion of trade, foreign aid, grants, and newly-forged international institutions), and emulation (by outsiders impressed with the self-evident success of the two systems).

Departing from theories that focus on the internal determinants of domestic reforms, this dissertation argues that regime success in the twentieth century is deeply tied to rapid changes in the global distribution of power, a relationship often obscured by the vivid particularities of local transformations.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks must go first of all to my advising committee – Jack Snyder, Ken Waltz, and Tanisha Fazal. Jack Snyder has overseen this project from the very beginning; his guidance and encyclopedic knowledge of democratization has greatly improved the dissertation along the way. Ken Waltz has been an enormous influence on my views about theory in international relations, and that influence suffuses these pages in ways that citations cannot capture. The clarity and richness of his work sets a standard for all scholars of political science. Tanisha Fazal has been instrumental in helping me deal with theoretical objections and developing my knowledge of statistical procedures. Between the three of them they have provided just the right mixture of coercion, influence, and emulation.

The department of political science at Columbia University has been a great place to write this dissertation. Valuable conversations with Richard Betts, Virginia Page Fortna, Robert Jervis, and Pablo Pinto helped me to frame and augment the arguments. Without their help and the generosity of my advisors this work would not be possible. Since debt, as Disraeli warned, is the prolific mother of folly, I hasten to claim sole credit for the shortcomings, weaknesses, and omissions found in these pages.

This project owes an intellectual debt to Samuel Huntington. A disagreement can be a dead end or a point of departure. Despite my disagreements with aspects of his work on the Third Wave, the high quality and originality of his scholarship ensured that these disagreements always produced fruitful points of departure and made the dissertation possible in the first place.

Parts of the dissertation, in various stages of development, have been presented at the Millennium Journal of International Studies Annual Conference, the Midwest Political Science Association, the American Political Science Association, and the International Studies Association. I am grateful to the discussants and anonymous audience members who have provided valuable comments and criticisms. Participation in the Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research at Syracuse University helped me in thinking about my case studies. Kurt Weyland at the University of Texas at Austin and Jim Mahon at Williams College offered extremely useful and detailed comments on draft chapters.

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, who has probably looked forward to its completion almost as much as I have. Her support has been responsible for much more than these pages, and no dedication can adequately capture the value of that support.

"The winds and waves are always on the side
of the ablest navigators."
Edward Gibbon, 1776

"World history strides on from catastrophe to catastrophe,
whether we can comprehend and prove it or not."
Oswald Spengler, 1932

"No one copies a loser."
Samuel Huntington, 1982

Sources:

Edward Gibbon (1776) *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chap. 68

Oswald Spengler (1932), *Man and Technics*, London: Allen and Unwin, p.37

Samuel Huntington (1982) "American Ideals versus American Institutions" *Political Science Quarterly* 97.1:1-37

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: A Century of Shocks and Waves

The nations wax, the nations wane away
And in a brief space the generations pass,
And, like runners, hand on the torch of life

-- Lucretius¹

“Anyone desiring a quiet life has done badly
to be born in the twentieth century.”

-- Leon Trotsky²

“Serious accidents are a major cause of change in safety,
even though the change is not always sustained.”

-- Trevor Kletz³

The rise and decline of democracy over the past century has been marked by turbulent bursts of reform that swept across many countries in a relatively short time – what Samuel Huntington famously called “democratic waves”.⁴ Moments of great upheaval, not steady and gradual change, have been the hallmark of democratic evolution. This dissertation seeks to explain the causes of these

¹ Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, 50 B.C.E

² Quoted in Isaiah Berlin (1958/69) *Four Essays on Liberty*, p.1

³ Trevor Kletz (1993) *Lessons from Disaster: How Organizations Have no Memory and Accidents Recur*, Gulf Professional Publishing, p. 70

⁴ Samuel Huntington (1991) *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, University of Oklahoma Press

transformative waves by focusing on the role of sudden hegemonic transitions in the international system. While many explanations for democracy have looked at domestic factors like economic growth, civil society, and class relations, I argue that the real push for democracy comes from volatility in the international system. My central thesis is that periods of sudden rise and decline of great powers create unique incentives and opportunities for domestic reforms. These “hegemonic shocks” have a crucial and often-ignored effect on the spread and retreat of democratic reforms, and can explain the waves of democratization that have shaped the twentieth century.

Since Huntington introduced the concept to political scientists, the presence of waves has often been noted, but not easily explained. Huntington himself did not seek to provide a theory of democratic waves, but only to describe what he thought were the varied causes of the last bout of reforms. As he wrote in the introduction, the book was “an explanatory, not a theoretical, work.”⁵ Though the argument is “enticing in its scope and seductive in its pretense,” one scholar noted, “its eclecticism does not give way to theoretical integration.”⁶

This dissertation builds on Huntington’s insight by proposing a theory for the timing, intensity, and content of democratic waves in the twentieth century. It outlines specific causal mechanisms that lead to their appearance, and tests the argument using both statistical analysis and case studies of the first three

⁵ Huntington 1991:xiv

⁶ Gerardo L. Munck (1994) “Review: Democratic Transitions in Comparative Perspective” *Comparative Politics* 26.3, p. 357

hegemonic shocks of the twentieth century – World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. The puzzle I seek to answer is: what explains the causes of democratic waves? In other words, why do democratic transitions cluster together in space and time? (See Figures 1.1 and 1.2) For that matter, why do regime transitions of all types seem to occur in waves, including communism and fascism? (Figures 1.3 and 1.4) And finally, why do the reforms associated with democratic waves often fail to consolidate, leading to democratic rollback in their aftermath? Why do the waves collapse?

The wave-like pattern of democratic development is especially prominent when the spread of democracy is charted over time. Figure 1.1 (following page) tracks the average annual level of democracy between 1900 and 2000.⁷ As the graph shows, the path of democratization is characterized by waves and counter-waves, with democratic peaks following the two World Wars and the Soviet collapse.

⁷ Measured as an average of the Polity IV index of democracy and SIP, the Scalar Index of Politics, combines the executive restraint components of the Polity IV score with Vanhannen's measure of popular participation See Scott Gates, Håvard Hegre, Mark P. Jones, and Håvard Strand (2006) "Institutional Inconsistency and Political Instability: Polity Duration, 1800-2000" *American Journal of Political Science* 50.4:893-908

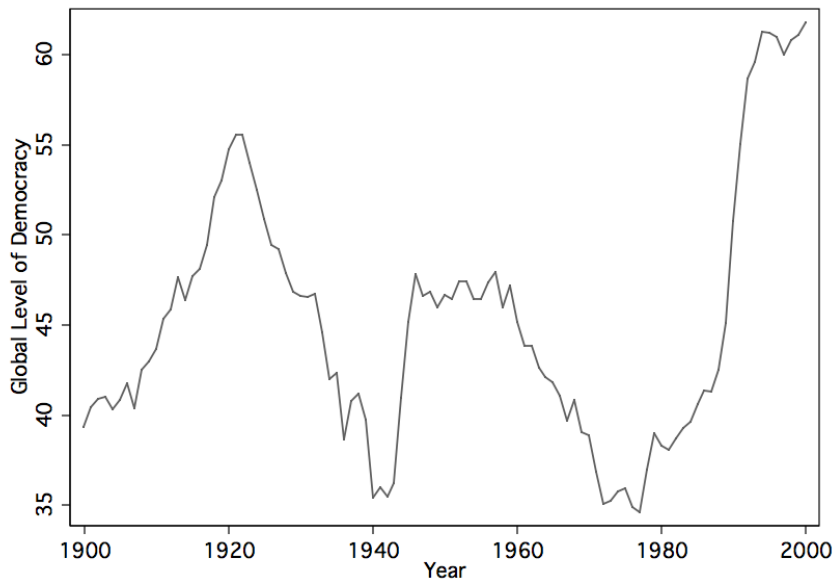


Figure 1.1 Average global level of democracy, 1900-2000

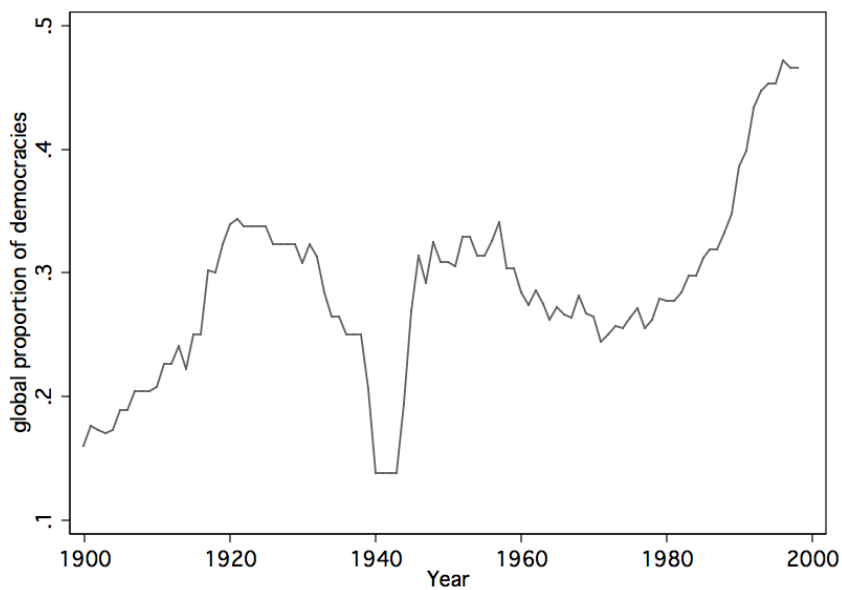


Figure 1.2 Number of democracies as proportion of all states in the international system, 1900-2000

The two major alternatives to democracy in the twentieth century – fascism and communism – have also spread and retreated in wave-like patterns. A fascist wave swept Europe in the 1930s, and a wave of Communist transitions followed the

Soviet victory in World War II. Although non-democratic regimes lack well-developed quantitative indices like Polity, the global spread of fascism and communism can be estimated by charting the percentage of world power held by fascist and communist states since 1900.⁸

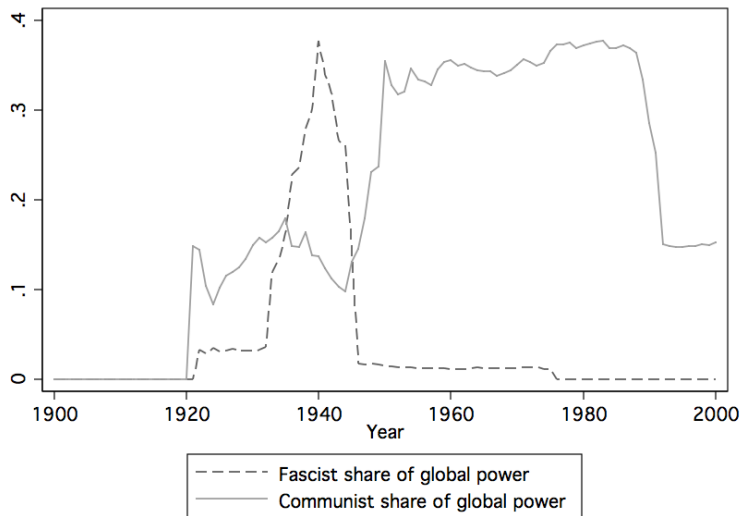


Figure 1.3 Communist and Fascist shares of global power.

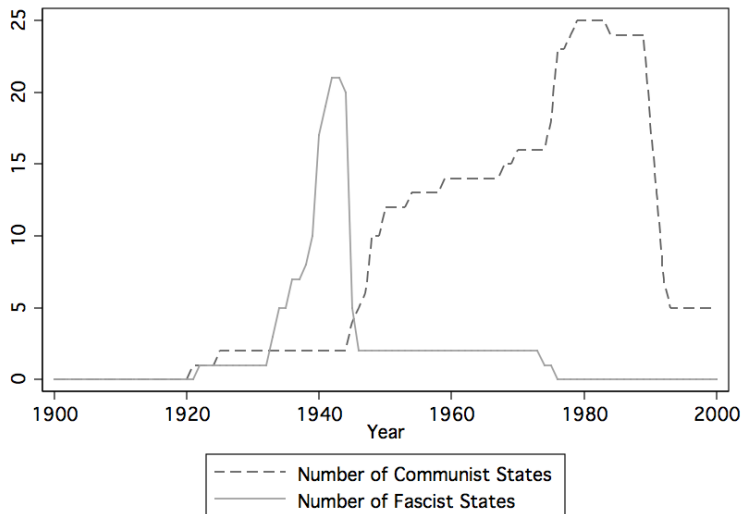


Figure 1.4 Number of fascist and communist states.

⁸ See Appendix 1 in Chapter 2 for classifications of fascist and communist regimes. The share of power was calculated using the Composite Index of National Capabilities, or CINC, discussed in Chapter 2.

Examining the causes of these waves is essential not only for understanding how democracy spreads, but also for judging the efficacy of external regime promotion pursued by the United States and other great powers. Much of U.S. policy during the Cold War was guided by the fear of a Communist wave that would begin in Asia and eventually wash up on the shores of California. More recently, the 2003 invasion of Iraq by the U.S. and its allies was sparked at least in part by the Bush Administration's belief in their ability to spark democratic waves through forced regime change.⁹ When domestic reforms are embedded in the dynamics of global or regional power shifts, it may be useless or even counterproductive to focus purely on the needs and preferences of pro-reform domestic actors inside any single country. Policies that attempt to influence democratization would therefore benefit from examining the spread of democracy as a process embedded in global cycles of democratic advances and retreats.

The Argument in Brief

This dissertation makes three related arguments about the causes of institutional waves. First, I argue that abrupt hegemonic transitions in the international system – that is, the sudden rise and decline of dominant countries – create unique incentives and opportunities for waves of domestic reforms. These critical junctures

⁹ As George Bush said in a speech several months after the fall of Baghdad. "Iraqi democracy will succeed – and that success will send forth the news, from Damascus to Tehran – that freedom can be the future of every nation...The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution." President's remarks at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy, United States Chamber of Commerce, Washington DC, November 6, 2003.

not only alter the hierarchy of great powers, but also shape the evolution of domestic regimes. Namely, a sudden shift in the distribution of relative power that favors a particular hegemon creates a wave of domestic reforms that reproduce the institutional features of that hegemon's regime. The outcomes of these shocks have been powerful drivers of domestic transformations, affecting even those countries that have little direct contact with the great powers themselves. I find powerful support for this idea in both large-n statistical analysis and detailed case studies of twentieth-century hegemonic shocks. The waves of democracy and autocracy that have defined the past century are the products of these geopolitical cataclysms.

Second, the paper outlines three causal mechanisms through which hegemonic shocks create waves of domestic reforms. First, hegemonic shocks create temporary windows of opportunity for military interventions and regime impositions. For example, the Communist wave in eastern Europe in the late 1940s would not have been possible without a Soviet victory in the Second World War, accompanied by the country's rapid increase in relative power on the European continent. Second, hegemonic shocks allow rising hegemons to expand their networks of trade and patronage and to extend their influence via the construction of international institutions. By contrast, countries that suffer sudden relative decline as a result of the shock will be diminished in their ability to exercise influence beyond their national borders. The Soviet collapse, for example, disrupted patronage networks in many African states in the mid-1990s, leading their citizens to question the legitimacy of their rulers. "The wind from the east," said Gabon's ruler Omar

Bongo in 1990, “are shaking the coconut trees in Africa.”¹⁰ Shocks thus create opportunities to significantly alter the institutional preferences and power dynamics of coalitions within many countries at once, even in those countries not directly affected by the shock. Third, hegemonic shocks reveal information about relative regime efficiency to foreign audiences. By demonstrating which regimes perform better under duress, shocks legitimize certain regimes and make them more attractive to would-be emulators. Hegemons whose fortunes suddenly decline due to a hegemonic shock will find their regimes discredited and abandoned by former followers or sympathizers. Success is contagious, in other words, but only failure demands inoculation.

Because hegemonic competition is a game of relative gains and losses, the rise in status of one great power is necessarily accompanied by the decline of another. Through the mechanisms described above, the rising hegemons are able to impose their regimes on others through brute force, to influence the institutional choices of these states more indirectly through patronage and trade, or to simply sit back and watch the imitators climb onto the bandwagon. The declining hegemons, meanwhile, face an equally powerful but countervailing set of factors: their capacity to coerce erodes, their ability to influence and maintain allies through trade and patronage declines, and the legitimacy of their regime as a model of emulation evaporates, revealed to be inadequate under duress. These are the mechanisms of coercion, influence, and emulation that produce waves of regime

¹⁰ Quoted in Eric S. Packham (2004) *Africa in War and Peace*, Nova Publishers, p. 209

change in the wake of hegemonic shocks.

A third set of arguments examines why so many democratic reforms that take place within these waves fail to consolidate, creating anti-democratic rollbacks. All three waves of democracy experienced reversals shortly after their peak – a catastrophic reversal after 1918, a severe one after 1945, and a partial but persistent one after 1991. The reasons for these failed consolidations, I argue, stems from the dynamics that create the wave in the first place. The outcome of a shock in which a democratic hegemon emerges triumphant – as was the case with the United States in the three cases above – creates extremely strong but temporary incentives for democratization, including within states that would not have made such a transition otherwise. These states adopt democratic institutions despite the absence of structural conditions generally needed to sustain and consolidate democracy – a well-established middle class, economic stability, ethnic cooperation, and past experience with democratic “rules of the game”. New elites, driven by a spirit of prevailing optimism or misleading cognitive biases that cause them to over-emphasize recent and dramatic events, adopt institutions ultimately unsuitable for their country’s level of social, economic or political development. Meanwhile, extraordinary ad hoc coalitions that push for democratic reforms in a moment of crisis dissolve as the crisis fades away. Like a victorious international alliance that disintegrates once its purpose has been served, these domestic coalitions struggle to hold together after the initial post-shock period – as was the case, for example, in Germany after 1918. As a result, the shock produces a case of

“democratic over-stretch”, an institutional version of a stock market bubble in which states that are unlikely to consolidate a democracy try to adopt it regardless of structural domestic conditions. The causes of failed consolidation that occur after waves, therefore, are linked to initial transitions that create the wave in the first place.

Relevance

The dissertation contributes to the literature on democratization in several ways. First, it offers a theory for the temporal and geographic clustering of domestic reforms. Although institutional waves have been a central feature in the evolution of modern regimes, there are surprisingly few attempts to explain their causes. This omission stems partly from the way democracy has been studied in the past. Most theories of democratization emphasize the influence of domestic variables such as economic development, class coalitions, or civil society. Domestic factors alone, however, cannot account for the rapid and simultaneous bursts of reform that have shaped democratic development. Departing from theories that focus on the internal determinants of domestic reforms, I argue that regime success in the twentieth century is deeply tied to rapid changes in the global distribution of power, a relationship often obscured by the vivid particularities of local transformations. Untangling the details of this relationship requires a systemic theory of democratization – that is, a theory that examines how linkages among states and changes in the international system shape and constrain the incentives and opportunities for domestic reforms. Because it steps outside the

state to examine the influence of the international environment, the approach employed in this dissertation takes the form of a “second-image reversed” theory.¹¹ It is not my goal, however, to claim that domestic factors are irrelevant in explaining democratic transitions. Domestic explanations get a lot of things right, and in some instances they are essential for understanding regime reforms. But there are times when systemic pressures have important and long-lasting effects on the evolution of domestic regimes. At such times, the interaction of external and domestic factors becomes crucial for explaining regime change. It may well be true, as modernization theory argues, that a country’s economic development influences democratization. At the same time, economic development cannot explain simultaneous transitions unless it can be shown that a number of countries experienced a sudden rise in economic development at the same time. Moreover, economic development itself is subject to a variety of external influences, especially when the international system undergoes dramatic changes. My goal, therefore, is not to explain away internal factors but to examine how they interact with often-ignored external influences in creating domestic transformations.

No theory can explain all instances of regime reform; this is an inherent limitation of social science theories that operate in a complex and contingent world. The beginnings of the third wave in Southern Europe and later Asia and Latin America were not associated with sudden shifts in hegemonic capability. The wave of democratization in eastern Europe in 1989 was directly tied to changes in

¹¹ Peter Gourevitch (1978) “The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics” *International Organization* 32.4: 881-911

great power politics that were motivated by fear of Soviet decline and Gorbachev's attempts to reverse that decline. Yet it was a precursor to the Soviet collapse rather than a symptom of it. Hegemonic shock dynamics are clearly visible, however, in the African wave of democratization after 1991. The so-called Color Revolutions in the post-Soviet space or the ongoing wave of popular protests in the Arab world also represent instances of waves that were not produced by shocks. Scholars have focused on various mechanisms of diffusion to explain connections among these protests, but the sudden rise or decline of great powers has not played a major role in their explanations.

Not all waves, then, are caused by hegemonic shocks. At the same time, every hegemonic shock of the twentieth century has produced a wave of domestic reforms. Shocks are therefore a sufficient but not a necessary cause of institutional waves. Moreover, the waves produced by hegemonic shocks have had an enormous impact on the evolution of domestic regimes. Whether it was the democratic waves that followed World War I and the Soviet collapse, the fascist wave of the 1930s, or the two waves toward democracy and communism after World War II – in each instance, shifts in the distribution of hegemonic power have produced bursts of transformation that affected many countries around the world.

This dissertation also contributes to the literature on democratic consolidation by providing a novel explanation for the frequent failures of democratic transitions. Many countries undergo democratic transitions, but far fewer are able to sustain the reforms that accompany these transitions. As Przeworski et al. (2000) have argued,

consolidations are easier to explain – countries are much more likely to sustain democratic institutions if they are wealthy, well-educated, ethnically homogenous, relatively equal, and have a sizeable middle class. By contrast, transitions occur in countries at all levels of income and education, with a variety of ethnic compositions, and with many different types of class coalitions.¹² While there seems to be a magic formula for democratic consolidation, no such formula exists to explain democratic transitions. Transitions are easy to do, but hard to explain; consolidation is hard to accomplish, but easy to explain. As a result, some scholars have argued that factors leading to democratic transitions may be different from factors that sustain democracy over the long run.

My argument both builds upon this literature and departs from it in some ways. Hegemonic shocks create immense incentives for reforms, I argue, leading countries of all stripes and all levels of socio-economic development to attempt a democratic transition. This leads to institutional over-reach that creates a number of failed transitions. Failed transitions can thus be explained as instances of democratic overstretch. At the same time, I argue, the wave sows the seeds of its own demise, creating incentives that disappear as the shock fades. Thus the factors that create an artificially high number of transitions also create the failed consolidations that follow. The causes of transitions and consolidations are indeed causally linked, if counterintuitively so, rather than produced by separate causal

¹² Adam Przeworski, Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi (2000) *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*, Cambridge University Press

processes.

Finally, the dissertation seeks to integrate the literature on hegemonic transitions from international relations with the literature on democratization from comparative politics – two strands of theory that share common affinities but rarely intersect. The study of hegemonic transitions has generally neglected their influence on domestic transformations, focusing instead on the causes of hegemonic wars and their effects on war propensity and foreign policy.¹³ The study of the causes of democratization, by contrast, has traditionally been the province of comparativists who explore the internal dynamics of domestic political evolution. As I hope to show, the intersection of these fields can usefully illuminate the causes of domestic transformations. How democracy spreads can tell us about the nature of democracy itself.

Defining Hegemonic Shocks

The word “hegemon” is used ambiguously in the international relations literature. It can refer to a single paramount state, one associated with the provision of global public goods and control of the commons. But it can also refer to one of several great powers.¹⁴ I adopt the latter definition – in this dissertation, a hegemon refers

¹³ The classic texts are A.F.K. Organski (1958) *World Politics*, Knopf and Robert Gilpin (1981) *War and Change in Global Politics*, Cambridge University Press. For two more recent edited volumes, see Jonathan Friedman and Christopher Chase-Dunn, eds. (2005) *Hegemonic Declines: Present and Past*, Paradigm Publishers and William R. Thompson, ed. (2009) *Systemic Transitions: Past, Present, and Future*, Palgrave-Macmillan.

¹⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary maintains this ambivalence, defining a hegemon as “a leading or paramount power,” where “leading” implies the possibility of

to a leading power, or a state that comprises a “pole” in the international system. In that sense a hegemon as used here is a more exclusive term than the Correlates of War definition of a “major power”, but more inclusive than the single-state definition adopted by, for example, Gilpin (1981) or Mearsheimer (2001).¹⁵ The salient characteristic of a “pole” is that it is not merely a major power, but a leading state with the capacity to impose regimes, influence other great powers, and inspire institutional imitators. Following the general view that the system was multipolar until World War Two and bipolar until the Soviet collapse,¹⁶ hegemons between the years 1816 and 2000 were labeled as: US 1898-2000; Russia/USSR 1816-1991; Great Britain 1816-1945; France 1816-1945; Germany 1871-1945; and Japan 1905-1945.

I define a hegemonic shock as a sudden shift in the distribution of relative power among the leading states in the international system. The term expands on Gilpin’s notion of a “hegemonic war” to include non-military shocks such as economic crises or imperial collapses – any period in which the power of one hegemon rises or declines significantly against the others. Gilpin saw hegemonic wars as “the ultimate test of change in the relative standing of the powers in the

multiple such states, while “paramount” implies a single all-powerful entity.

¹⁵ John Mearsheimer (2001) *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, W.W. Norton and Company, p.40. Robert Gilpin (1981) *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, p.29. See Chapter 2 for an extended discussion.

¹⁶ See, e.g., Kenneth N. Waltz (1979) *Theory of International Politics*, McGraw-Hill or Paul Kennedy (1989) *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, New York: Random House: “The multipolar world of 1885 was replaced by a bipolar world as early as 1943.” (p.197, orig. emphasis)

existing system,” and the same applies to hegemonic shocks in general.¹⁷ By producing clear winners and losers, hegemonic shocks clarify the balance of power and allow opportunities for the creation of new global orders. In doing so, they also become the graveyards and incubators of competing regime types, as described in the mechanisms above.

Hegemonic shocks are critical junctures in the development of domestic institutions. They are rare and relatively brief, but they play a pivotal role in shaping the evolution of political and social institutions. Karl Polanyi, for instance, contrasts “critical periods” with “connecting stretches of time” and consciously focuses his attention on the former.¹⁸ The notion of critical junctures parallels the concept of punctuated equilibrium, introduced by Stephen Jay Gould and subsequently borrowed by social scientists to describe dynamics wherein periods of relative stasis are punctuated by bursts of sudden and dramatic changes. Stephen Krasner, for example, notes that political development of states often follows an uneven course: “Crisis situations tend to become the watersheds in a state’s institutional development...During periods of crisis politics becomes a struggle over the basic rules of the game rather than allocation within a given set of rules.”¹⁹

¹⁷ Gilpin 1981: fn.80

¹⁸ Karl Polanyi (1944/2001) *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Boston: Beacon Press, p.4

¹⁹ Stephen Krasner (1984) “Approaches to the State: Alternative conceptions and historical dynamics.” *Comparative Politics* 16, p. 234. See also Stephen Krasner (1988) “Sovereignty: An institutional perspective” *Comparative Political Studies* 21, p. 66-94; Paul Pierson (2004) *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*, Princeton University Press; Peter J. Katzenstein (1985) *Small States in*

Similarly, in American politics, scholars of elections and political parties have underlined the importance of “critical realignments” in voting behavior, “where at moments of crisis deep partisan attachments are formed which persist over long periods of time”.²⁰ In an analysis of the development of the American state, Skowronek defines such moments as “a sporadic, disruptive event that suddenly challenges a state's capacity to maintain control and alters the boundaries defining the legitimate use of coercion.”²¹ According to this view, periods of quotidian

World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe, Cornell University Press; Frank R. Baumgartner, Christian Breunig, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Bryan D. Jones, Peter B. Mortensen, Michiel Nuytemans and Stefaan Walgrave (2009) “Punctuated Equilibrium in Comparative Perspective” *American Journal of Political Science* 53(3), 603–620; Gary Goertz (2004) *International Norms and Decision Making: A Punctuated Equilibrium Model*, Rowman & Littlefield. Finnemore and Sikkink note that “world historical events such as wars or major depressions in the international system can lead to a search for new ideas and norms. Ideas and norms most associated with the losing side of a war or perceived to have caused an economic failure should be at particular risk of being discredited, opening the field for alternatives.” Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change” *International Organization* 52.4:909; See also J. Samuel Barkin and Bruce Cronin (1994) “The State and the Nation: Changing Norms and the Rules of Sovereignty in International Relations” *International Organization* 48.1, p.107-130.

²⁰ Peter Gourevitch (1986) *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises*, Cornell University Press, p.222. Scholars commonly divide American political history into five periods separated by (in V.O. Key's formulation, American political history can be divided into five periods separated by “critical elections” that drastically realign political allegiances. V.O. Key (1955) “A Theory of Critical Elections” *Journal of Politics* 17:3-18. Likewise, Walter Dean Burnham refers to long-term American political development as a process of punctuated equilibrium. He describes American politics as characterized by periods of “long-term inertia” during which “politics as usual” prevails, regularly interrupted by “concentrated bursts of change”. Walter Dean Burnham (1999) “Constitutional Moments and Punctuated Equilibria” *Yale Law Review* 108: 2237-77.

²¹ Stephen Skowronek (1982) *Building A New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1920*, Cambridge University Press, p.10;

politics are periodically interrupted by crises that shape the content and likelihood of reforms. Like all instances of punctuated equilibrium, hegemonic shocks create enormous incentives and opportunities for change; in doing so they disrupt the flow of politics as usual and define the parameters of future reforms. As rare but crucial events, they have left a deep imprint on the evolution of domestic regimes in the past century.

Selecting cases of hegemonic shocks requires some measure of hegemonic volatility. I measured hegemonic volatility by looking at the average annual change in relative power among the hegemons. This was operationalized by summing the absolute values of annual changes in CINC (Composite Index of National Capabilities) scores among great powers, yielding the graph below.²² This variable captures hegemonic shocks by tracking how quickly the distribution of relative power among major states changes over time. It improves on existing measures that use dummy variables for pre-designated shock years.

See also Stephen Skowronek (1995) "Order and Change" *Polity* 28.1:91-96; Sheldon D. Pollack (2010) *War, Revenue, and State Building: Financing the Development of the American State*, Cornell University Press, p. 33. In sociology, Ann Swidler distinguishes between "settled" and "unsettled" time. Ann Swidler (1986) "Culture in Action: Symbols and strategies" *American Sociological Review* 51.2, p. 273-86. Stinchcombe 1965:153ff examines a variety of social organizations like college fraternities, banks, and trade unions. He notes that organizations of a particular type tend to be established in bursts, and that the forms they adopt tend to persist for a long time. Arthur Stinchcombe (1965) "Social Structure and Organizations" in James G. March, ed., *Handbook of Organizations*, Chicago: Rand McNally

²² See Chapter 2 for an extended discussion.

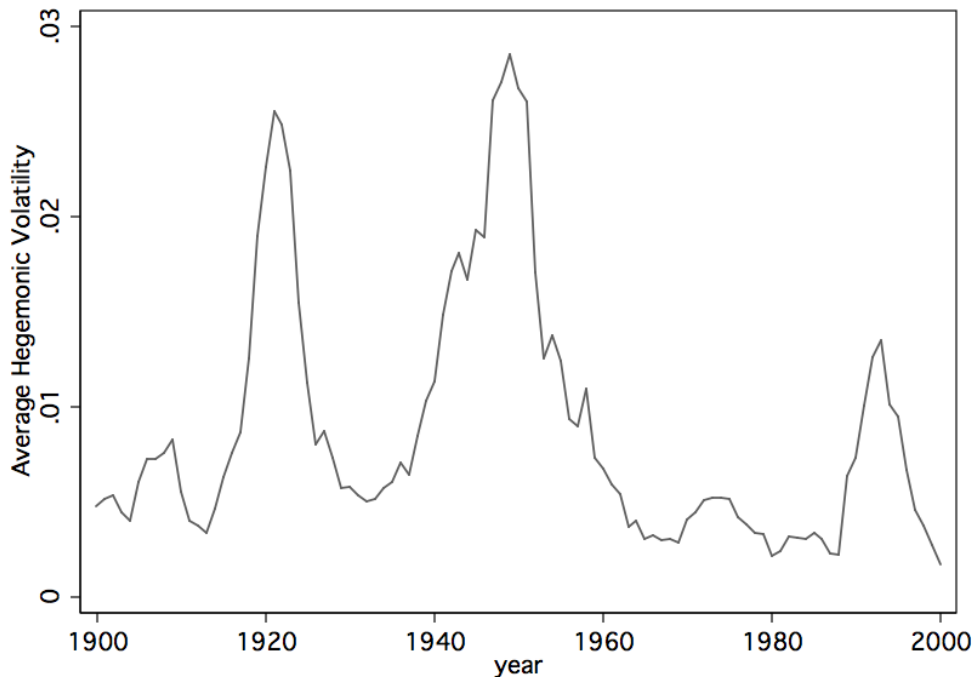


Figure 1.5: Average Hegemonic Volatility, 1900-2000

There are three immediately visible spikes: 1917-1922, 1940-1947 (with some reverberations continuing into the 1950s), and 1989-1995. These represent my case selections of World War I, World War II, and the Soviet Collapse (a future case study not included in this dissertation). Although it does not appear on the graph above, I have also added a case study of the Great Depression, for the following reasons. First, due to the way the CINC index is constructed, it is likely to underestimate economic change in favor of military and geopolitical factors. Second, consistent with the demands of the theory, even when measured via CINC relative U.S. power begins to decline beginning in the mid-1920s and especially after 1929, while German power increases dramatically after Hitler's ascent to power in 1933. The period of the Great Depression thus provides an important and

unique case of a democratic hegemon in decline, offering greater variation on my dependent variable.²³

The table below identifies the winning and losing hegemons in the wake of each shock. Identifying their regime types also makes a prediction about what type of institutional wave we should expect. For example, the joint victory by the US and USSR in World War II would lead us to expect two waves of reforms, one toward democracy and another toward communism – which is indeed what happened, even while the waves occurred under different circumstances.

<i>Hegemonic Shock</i>	<i>Rising hegemons</i>	<i>Rising regime type</i>	<i>Declining hegemons</i>	<i>Declining regime type</i>
<i>WWI</i>	US	democracy	Germany	monarchy
<i>Great Depression</i>	Germany	fascism	US	democracy
<i>WWII</i>	US, USSR	democracy communism	Germany, Japan	fascism
<i>Soviet collapse</i>	US	democracy	USSR	communism

Table 1.1: Hegemonic shock outcomes.

In each of the four cases the content of the waves produced by the shocks are consistent with the expectations of the theory. The sudden rise of a great power produced waves of reforms that reflect that state's regime, while periods of sudden decline produced waves away from the hegemon's regime. The outcomes of these shocks consecrate the regimes of winning hegemons and discredit the losing regimes. They do so through the mechanisms of hegemonic coercion, influence, and emulation - and it is to a description of these mechanisms that I now turn.

²³ See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the case selection.

Mechanisms in International Relations Theory

The emphasis on mechanisms stems from the limitations of social science theory. Systemic theories are bound to encounter exceptions and anomalies; as Jervis points out, their biggest weakness is underestimating the power and autonomy of even weak states.²⁴ In pursuing a systemic explanation of institutional waves, my goal is not to formulate a universal theory of democratization but to highlight the recurring mechanisms through which shocks consistently lead to waves. Each wave examined in this dissertation has contained common patterns that have recurred across time. History does not repeat itself, as Mark Twain declared, but it does rhyme, and these rhymes reveal themselves in the mechanisms that produce institutional waves. Jon Elster defines mechanisms as “frequently occurring and easily recognizable causal patterns” that are less general than laws but more general than descriptive case studies.²⁵ Residing at the middle level of explanation between universal laws and descriptive case studies, mechanisms open up the black box of causation by providing “a continuous and contiguous chain of causal or intentional links”.²⁶ As Charles Cameron puts it:

²⁴ Robert Jervis (1997) *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life*, Princeton University Press, p.103

²⁵ Jon Elster (1998) “A Plea for Mechanisms” p.45-73 in Peter Hedstrom and Richard Swedberg, eds., *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory*, Cambridge University Press, p. 24. Paul Pierson likewise argues for the study of mechanisms as the goal of social science. See Pierson 2004:5-6, 99.

²⁶ Jon Elster (1983) *Explaining Technical Change: A Case Study in the Philosophy of Science*, Cambridge University Press, p.24.

We are interested in something less than natural laws, because there aren't any natural laws in social science - just people making decisions and trying to live their lives. But even if there aren't any natural laws, things are not completely random. There is a logic to campaigning for office, voting in legislatures, directing bureaucracies, offering and accepting bribes, making revolutions and initiating wars, and so on....The causal mechanisms are the little engines driving the empirical regularities.²⁷

As Gleditsch and Ward point out, "Merely attributing democratization or autocratization to some 'international context' ... explains little without clarifying the relevant international context and how this influences prospects for democracy."²⁸ Mechanisms move beyond aggregative empirics to elucidate the concrete ways in which hegemonic shocks produce institutional waves.

Hegemonic Shocks and Mechanisms of Coercion

The first way in which shocks lead to waves is by increasing opportunities for external impositions. By producing stark but temporary disparities in relative power, shocks create windows of opportunity for rising hegemons to impose their regimes on other states. By contrast, in instances of hegemonic decline shocks weaken the hegemon's ability to sustain foreign regimes upheld by force. Examples of coercive transformations that contributed to institutional waves include the Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe and North Korea after World War II, or the American occupation of Japan and Germany until 1952 and 1955, respectively.

²⁷ Charles Cameron (2010) "What is Political Science" p.216 in Andrew Gelman and Jeronimo Cortina, eds., *A Quantitative Tour of the Social Sciences*, Cambridge University Press.

²⁸ Kristian Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward. (2006) "Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization" *International Organization* 60.4, p.916

Shocks lower the costs of occupation, in two ways. In cases of military shocks, when the army has already been mobilized, the fixed cost of mobilization required for foreign occupation has already been met. Interventions after major wars occur at a time when the rising hegemony is not only at their most powerful and most committed to changing the global order - but also when they are most able to do so. Second, since shocks suspend the normal rules of the international order, they may provide a window of legitimacy for foreign military occupations. In his book *Embracing Defeat*, the historian John Dower has argued that the success of the U.S. occupation of Japan after World War II was shaped at least in part by the nature of the war that preceded it, and the decisive defeat that brought the war to an end.²⁹ The U.S. occupation of Germany encountered no native opposition at least in part due to the nature of the war and the total defeat that accompanied its conclusion. Likewise, the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe in the early aftermath of World War II was legitimized in part by the nature of the Soviet victory in that conflict. These factors simply do not come into play with interventions that occur in the absence of major interstate wars.

Stalin's remark about the division of Europe after World War II is a distillation of the coercive aspect of post-shock reforms: "Whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it its own social system. Everyone imposes his system as far as his army can reach. It cannot be otherwise."³⁰

²⁹ John Dower (1999) *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, W.W. Norton & Company

³⁰ Stalin made the remark to the Yugoslavian military mission to Yalta in 1944, as

An obvious objection is that democracies have not always sought to impose their own regimes through the use of outside interventions. As Peceny puts it, “the practice of the liberal great powers over the past century is filled with illiberal behavior...The United States has backed dozens of dictatorial regimes over the past century and only made active efforts to promote democracy during a third of its 20th century military interventions.”³¹ Likewise, Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003) have argued that democracies prefer to establish stable and friendly regimes - rather than democratic ones - in the countries that they have occupied.³²

These studies, however, do not distinguish between impositions that occur in the wake of hegemonic shocks and those that occur in the course of “normal” politics. If the above arguments are correct, military hegemonic shocks should create a marked increase in instances of hegemons imposing their own regimes on other states (“mimetic” imposition). In other words, we would expect to see spikes in mimetic regime promotion by great powers in the closing months and immediately following both world wars. This effect can be tested directly by looking at the rate of coerced regime promotions after military shocks. As I show in the next chapter, the data in fact confirms that great powers act differently after shocks. Using a dataset by John Owen (2010), I examined the rates of mimetic

later recalled by one of its members. See Milovan Djilas (1962) *Conversations with Stalin*, Harmondsworth, p. 90-1.

³¹ Mark Peceny (2010) “Democratizing During Hard Times: Germany’s Transition to Democracy in the Wake of the First World War” Paper presented at the 106th Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 2-5, 2010, Washington, D.C, p.5-6

³² Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow (2003) *The Logic of Political Survival*, MIT Press

imposition by great powers. As Figure 1.6 shows, mimetic regime impositions by great powers are much more likely to occur in the wake of military hegemonic shocks.

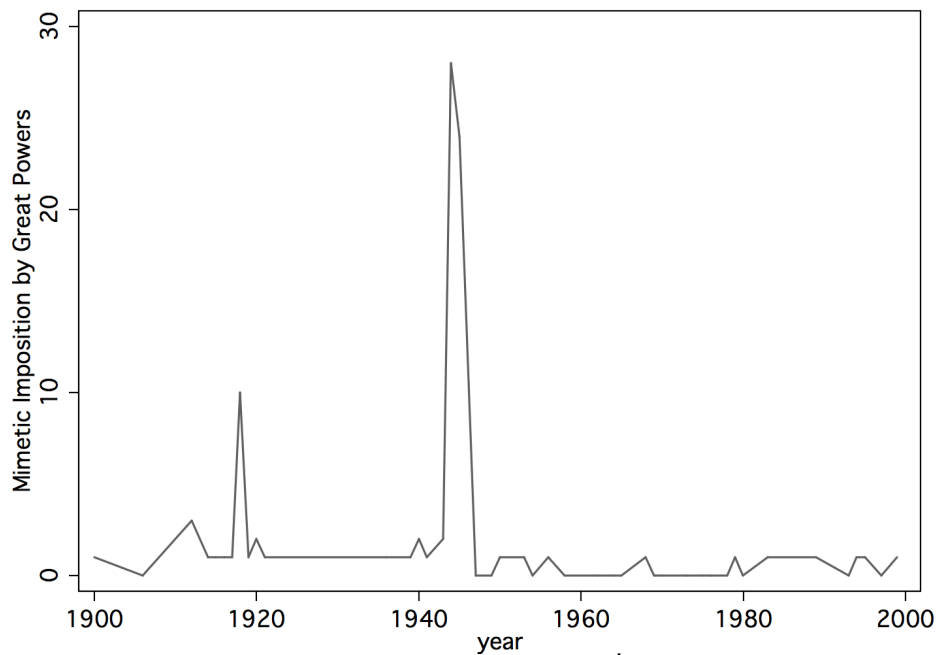


Figure 1.6: *Mimetic regime imposition by great powers, 1900-2000.*

An empirical analysis of twentieth-century interventions show great powers are much more likely to promote their own regimes in the wake of shocks – of the 31 cases of hegemonic intervention during shock years, in 29 of them they promoted their own regimes (about 94 percent) of the time.³³ Of the 41 cases of hegemonic intervention during non-shock years, they imposed their own regime in 27 cases (about 66 percent). In other words, in an average shock year there were 4.8 mimetic impositions by a great power, and only 0.28 such impositions in an

³³ Shock years are counted as the last year of the war and the following two years, or 1918-1920 and 1944-1946, for a total of six shock years. The two exceptions are Japan in Russia (1918) and the USSR in Austria (1945).

average non-shock year.³⁴

In short, great powers do act differently after hegemonic shocks. They are more likely to impose regimes during hegemonic transitions, and when they do so they are much more likely to impose their own regimes than during non-shock years. The reasons for this, as suggested above, stem from the temporary decrease in the costs and changed conditions for regime impositions that occur in the wake of hegemonic shocks.

Recent studies suggest important causal links between external impositions, interstate wars, and systemic peace. Lo, Hashimoto and Reiter (2008), for example find that peace is more durable following interstate wars in which the loser experience a foreign-imposed regime change.³⁵ Future studies about the democratizing effects of foreign interventions will benefit from distinguishing interventions that take place in the wake of hegemonic shocks from those that do not.

Hegemonic Shocks and Mechanisms of Influence

Another mechanism by which shocks produces institutional waves is by changing the institutional preferences and power bases of domestic actors within the affected countries. Immediately after World War II, for example, Communist parties appeared to be gaining ground in France and Italy. The US Marshall Plan

³⁴ A difference-of-means test between mimetic hegemonic impositions in shock vs. non-shock years reveals (unsurprisingly) that the difference is statistically significant.

³⁵ Nigel Lo, Barry Hashimoto, and Dan Reiter (2008) "Ensuring Peace: Foreign-Imposed Regime Change and Post-War Peace Duration, 1914-2001" *International Organization* 62.4:717-36

shifted the institutional preferences of Western European voters away from communism and toward liberal democracy, so that by 1948, with the influx of American money and institutional infrastructure, Communist parties had lost much of their support. "The United States spent little of its hegemonic power trying to coerce and induce other governments to buy into American rules and institutions," notes Ikenberry. "It spent much more time and resources trying to create the conditions under which postwar European governments and publics would remain moderate and pro-Western."³⁶

The Marshall Plan became the most prominent way in which the United States exercised its influence and promoted liberal democratic regimes in the years following the war. It was an unprecedented use of post-shock economic dominance to secure the democratization of west European regimes that followed the American institutional model. By the end of the program in 1952, the United States had spent \$13 billion, more than all previous American foreign aid put together. The largest impact of the Marshall Plan resided not with the amount of the disbursements but with the conditions attached to them. Along with collaborators in western Europe, U.S. aid officials sought to prevent national politicians "from being tempted to fall back on state intervention, planning, and closed economies."³⁷ In doing so, Marshall aid nudged center-left parties toward social democracy rather than communism. It was "an economic program but the crisis it

³⁶ G. John Ikenberry (2000) *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, Princeton University Press, p.202

³⁷ Victoria de Grazia (2005) *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe*, Harvard University Press, p.345-6

averted was political," writes Tony Judt.³⁸

The impact of Marshall aid on the consolidation of democracy in western Europe was both immediate and long-lasting. In Austria, for example, local communists (supported by Soviet forces, who still occupied the eastern half of the country) "never made any dent in the popularity of Americans and their aid," notes Judt. "[T]he latter put food in people's mouths and this was what mattered most." In Greece, the \$649 million in aid extended in the spring of 1948 "made the difference between survival and destitution." It "supported refugees and staved off hunger and disease," and provided half of the country's gross national product in 1950.³⁹ Across Europe, it reduced the attraction of Soviet-style reforms and communist institutions by providing a means for general economic recovery. The democratic wave in western Europe was made possible by the rare combination of American influence and commitment (both political and economic) in the years immediately following the war.

The aftermath of World War II also provided a dramatic illustration of how rising great powers can take advantage of hegemonic shocks to advance the construction of global institutions which act as conduits for their influence. While institution-building is normally a slow and inertia-driven process, the brief period after hegemonic shocks facilitates the creation of new international institutions. By

³⁸ Tony Judt (2005) *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, Penguin Press, p.97. As Kennedy notes, "it took no genius to see that the *raison d'etre* for the plan was to convince Europeans everywhere that private enterprise was better able to bring them prosperity than communism." Kennedy 1989:377

³⁹ Judt 2005:96

establishing dramatic new hierarchies in international politics, shocks create opportunities for great powers to create new global and regional orders. Thus in the wake of the war, both the Soviet Union and the United States used their enormous power and influence to construct a new institutional architecture that helped them perpetuate control and influence over the states embedded within it.

Conversely, in cases of hegemonic decline, shocks undermine the hegemon's ability to wield influence in other states through aid, patronage networks, or international institutions. In doing so they shifted the institutional preferences of domestic groups in those states. For example, the collapse of the Soviet Union led to the demise of communism as a viable path for state development in Africa. The collapse of the Soviet Union undercut the legitimacy of its institutions and its ability to attract fellow travelers. International financial institutions and bilateral donors became more interested in supporting accountable government, and the stoppage of Soviet patronage damaged the neo-patrimonial elite networks. Governments were faced with shrinking funds, and were forced to cut social spending, which led to an increase in popular protests, which (along with elite defection) led to political liberalization and multiparty elections.⁴⁰ In this way, systemic and domestic factors interacted to produce a wave of African democratic reforms in the mid-1990s:

⁴⁰ Previous work has shown that the stability of autocratic states often rests on the rulers' ability to maintain clientelist networks through selective patronage. When potential rivals can be co-opted, there is no incentive to deviate from the status quo; but the disruption of these patronage networks paves the way for democratic reforms. See Barbara Geddes (1999) "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2:115-44.

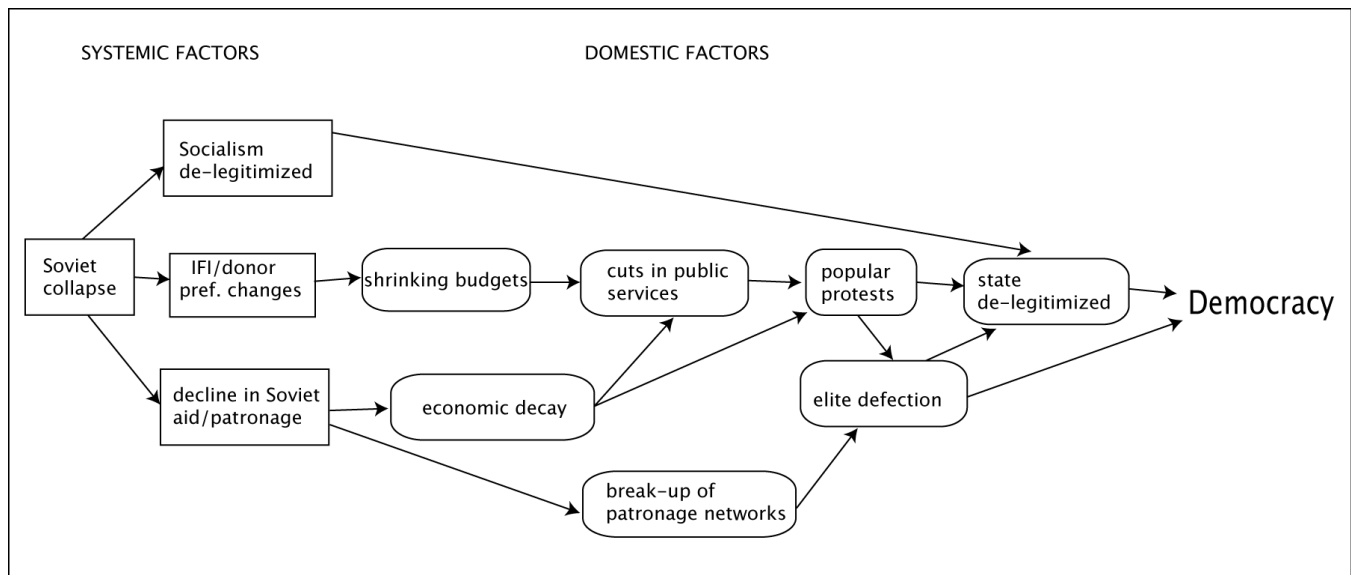


Figure 1.7: Soviet collapse and African democratization in the mid-1990s

In other cases, shocks may produce shifts in institutional preferences even without direct hegemonic involvement. The very existence of a global crisis can influence some states to undertake serious internal reforms by mobilizing domestic groups and lowering the barriers to collective action. They may discredit incumbent elites, forcing them to bargain with the masses, or encourage states to look for new institutions to deal with future problems.⁴¹ In a case study that I examine in more detail in Chapter 3, the outcome of World War I led to organizational gains by women and laborers because their cooperation was essential for the victorious outcome, leading to a wave of suffrage expansion after the war.

⁴¹ The logic of hegemonic shocks suggests that the effect of interstate war on domestic institutional reforms is mediated by war outcomes, rather than a universal impulse toward democracy, which is perhaps why the literature has not found consistent links between war and democracy. Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder (2010) "Does War Influence Democratization?" p.23-49 in Elizabeth Keir and Ronald Krebs, eds., *In War's Wake: International Conflict and the Fate of Liberal Democracy*, Cambridge University Press.

Hegemonic Shocks and Mechanisms of Emulation

A third way through which shocks create institutional transformations is by encouraging states to deliberately imitate the domestic institutions of the winning hegemons. I define institutional emulation as the process whereby a state deliberately and voluntarily imitates particular domestic institutions of successful and powerful states.

Although emulation has long been associated with norms, institutional emulation is driven by the logic of competition in the international system. While this aspect of neorealism has rarely been explored, emulation is one of the major predictions of neorealist theory. Because the international system is competitive and anarchically structured, it will select for states that are able to successfully ensure their own security. Those who do not will fall by the wayside.⁴² In addition, the international system shapes behavior through socialization, and the two processes are mutually reinforcing – “statesmen learn because they see the misfortunes of those who do not conform”.⁴³ The anarchy of the international system creates competitive pressures that over time select for domestic institutional arrangements that appear successful to other states. In a competitive world, we would expect to see institutions that increase the state’s chances of survival (by fostering economic growth, increasing internal stability, or winning wars) to spread, while institutions that perform poorly and endanger the state’s chances of survival will lose credibility. To employ Waltz’s own oligopoly metaphors: saying that the

⁴² Waltz 1979: 71, 91, 118-119

⁴³ Jervis 1997:104. See also Waltz 1979:74-77, 92, 127-128

insides of states don't matter because structure dominates decisions is akin to saying that a firm's internal organization does not matter because the market dominates decisions. When it comes to rewarding or punishing state institutions, the international structure will select certain institutional features of states over others.

The few materialist accounts of emulation in international relations have focused on military emulation. For example, Resende-Santos examines the causes of military emulation in South America in the 19th century.⁴⁴ Starting in the 1880s, South American countries began imitating various elements of the German army system. In seeking an explanation for this imitation, Resende-Santos rejects domestic factors. The cultural, political, historical or institutional features of those states were too diverse to explain such convergence. Instead, he argues, the causes of military emulation can be located in the international system, specifically in the external security environment that all states must face. Cross-national emulation, he argues is "a product of the underlying nature of the international system, not the peculiar characteristics or aims of individual states."⁴⁵

Emulation is thus a strategy that can increase the adopting state's security. It does so in two ways, through internal strengthening and external bandwagoning. (Resende-Santos focuses only on the first element and, as I will argue shortly, does

⁴⁴ Joao Resende-Santos (2007) *Neorealism, States, and the Modern Army*, Cambridge University Press. See also Colin Elman, *The logic of emulation: The diffusion of military practices in the international system*. PhD dissertation, Columbia University.

⁴⁵ Resende-Santos 2007:4

so for the wrong reasons.) First, emulation can be used to strengthen the state against both internal and external threats. Emulating states hope to repeat some of the rising hegemon's dramatic success and in doing so improve their own institutional fitness. Discussing the adoption of free trade policies based on the British model during the 1850s, a deputy in the French National Assembly asked: "When such a powerful and enlightened nation not only puts such a great principle into practice but it is also well known to have profited by it, how can its emulators fail to follow the same way?"⁴⁶ In that sense institutional emulation is a strategy of internal strengthening.

Second, imitating a more powerful peer can allow a state to curry favor with it and to participate in the international system that the hegemon creates and maintains. From that perspective, emulation is a strategy of external bandwagoning, though a looser one than signing treaties or forging official alliances. As Markoff puts it, "Weak states depend on stronger ones and may bid for favor by mimicking their political structures."⁴⁷ The unique advantage of emulation is that it can enable the adopting state to balance and bandwagon simultaneously.

But emulation, as the diffusion of best practices, is an ongoing fact of history.

Why should hegemonic shocks make such emulation more likely? Shocks

⁴⁶ Quoted in William J. Bernstein (2008) *A Splendid Exchange: How Trade Shaped the World*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, p.314. Or, as William McNeil puts it "Any human skill that achieves admirable results will tend to spread from its place of origin by taking root among other people who encounter the novelty and find it better than whatever they had previously known or done." William McNeil (1992/1994) *The Pursuit of Power*, University of Chicago Press, p.147

⁴⁷ John Markoff (1996) *Waves of Democracy: Social Movements and Political Change*, Pine Forge Press, p. 32

temporarily intensify the dynamics of emulation by removing uncertainty about the relative effectiveness of competing regime types. Despite the potential benefits of reforms, leaders face considerable uncertainty when choosing to rebuild their domestic institutions. Shocks encourage institutional emulation by dramatically demonstrating which regime types perform better under duress. In bargaining theory, war is said to reveal private information about actors' capability and resolve, information that cannot be credibly verified through bluffs and cheap talk before the fight. Similarly, hegemonic shocks reveal information about the relative strength of competing regime types, information not credible through cheap talk.⁴⁸ Hidden vulnerabilities become obvious; failed institutional models lose their legitimacy; the giant's clay feet are revealed for all to see.

During the Cold War, for example, both sides extolled the virtues of their regimes to encourage third-world converts. But the true condition of Soviet domestic institutions, and the country's ability to uphold a communist system outside its borders, did not become apparent to world audiences (and most scholars) until after the system's dramatic collapse in 1989. Similarly, both world wars offered a large-scale test of war-fighting effectiveness between democratic and

⁴⁸ The information revealed through hegemonic shocks cannot be said to be "private" in the conventional sense, since actors want to keep private information hidden, while hegemons actively attempt to convince outsiders of the effectiveness of their regimes in order to gain influence and followers. What the two ideas share in common is the concept of "cheap talk" – regime efficacy cannot be credibly conveyed by persuasion alone, and it takes a shock to convincingly show which regimes perform better under duress, regardless of what the hegemons claim beforehand. Part of the importance of hegemonic shocks is that they credibly – and dramatically – reveal this information to foreign audiences.

non-democratic states. In both cases the democratic side (and in one case the communist side as well) triumphed, despite de Tocqueville's oft-repeated assertion that democratic regimes would prove inferior to centralized ones on the theater of battle.⁴⁹

Emulation does not guarantee success. As Resende-Santos puts it, "borrowed best practices may or may not prove effective... because of faulty copying, failure to copy ancillary practices, inability to integrate properly and utilize methods, or simply the lack of the necessary human skill and know how."⁵⁰ Another source of failed emulation, I would argue, is the skewed incentives that arise as a result of hegemonic shocks. Emulation is in some sense the least "rational" mechanism through which hegemonic shocks contribute to institutional waves. Institutional mimicry after shocks can be driven by a number of misleading cognitive heuristics. Research in political psychology has repeatedly shown that statesmen and political actors tend to over-emphasize dramatic events (availability bias), over-estimate the importance of recent events in lieu of a "historical" perspective (recency bias), and

⁴⁹ While democratic victory in World War I temporarily put this argument to rest, the rapid ascent of fascism in the 1930s (accompanied by democracy's decline) resurrected old concerns. Thus Aldous Huxley argued in a 1936 essay that "A democracy which makes or even effectively prepares for modern, scientific war must necessarily cease to be democratic. No country can be really well prepared for modern war unless it is governed by a tyrant, at the head of a highly trained and perfectly obedient bureaucracy." Aldous Huxley (1936) "Ends and Means: An Inquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for Their Realization"

⁵⁰ Resende-Santos 2007:7

misjudge their own effectiveness at bringing out the desired political reforms.⁵¹

These cognitive biases contribute to the emulation of winning regime types in the wake of hegemonic shocks. But they also lead to the failed consolidations that follow, as leaders optimistically adopt democratic regimes even when the domestic pre-conditions (economic development, class coalitions) are not conducive to democratic consolidation.⁵²

The outcomes of hegemonic shocks serve as signals about the effectiveness of competing regimes. Whether the signals are correctly interpreted, or whether they accurately reflect the factors that created the outcome, is a different matter. As Markoff puts it, "If organizations that have done well have accounting departments, soon all will, even if no one is sure that accounting departments made the leaders do well."⁵³ It is in this regard that I depart from the neorealist explanations of emulation. Resende-Santos, for example, argues that external threats make emulation more likely. "In the face of major threats, military emulation is the quickest and most dependable way to increase power and bolster security," he writes. "Timing, pace, and scale will correspond with the timing and magnitude of external threats...the higher and more intense the threat level, the deeper and more

⁵¹ See Thomas Gilovich, Dale Griffin, and Daniel Kahneman, eds. (2002) *Heuristics and Biases*, Cambridge University Press. On the last bias, see Robert Jervis (1976) *Perception and Misperception*, Princeton University Press, p.344-8

⁵² Exploring the role of institutional emulation in the wake of hegemonic shocks presents a fruitful area of research that connects the micro-foundations of diffusion mechanisms with macro-historical structural shifts in the international system.

⁵³ Markoff 1996:32. See also John Meyer, John Boli and George Thomas (1997) "World Society and the Nation-State" *The American Journal of Sociology* 103:144-81.

sustained the adverse shift in the external security environment, the more rapid and large scale the emulation."⁵⁴ But his own evidence suggests that emulation takes place immediately *after* major wars, not in the period preceding them. "In the military sphere, large-scale emulation often, but not exclusively, accompanies major wars", he writes.⁵⁵ "Accompanies" is slippery word, but Resende-Santos makes clear in the next sentence that he's talking about the aftermath of wars: "...such wars often trigger significant changes in the local or international balance of capabilities, as well as alterations in the relative standing of states."⁵⁶ If "states emulate on the basis of proven effectiveness"⁵⁷ as he argues, then that proof emerges only after the crisis is resolved. The specific timing and content of military emulation discussed by Resende-Santos suggests that states imitate winning techniques. Prussia, Austria and Russia copied the French after Napoleon's victories. France emulated Prussia after its victory in the Franco-Prussian wars.⁵⁸

My argument about emulation thus rejects a purely constructivist account based

⁵⁴ Resende-Santos 2007:8

⁵⁵ Resende-Santos 2007:13

⁵⁶ Resende-Santos 2007:13

⁵⁷ Resende-Santos 2007:6

⁵⁸ Resende-Santos 2007:13. In one paragraph Resende-Santos makes a similar argument that curiously undercuts his main thesis: "Given their preoccupation with competitive effectiveness, states prefer to emulate only practices and technologies demonstrated to be the most effective among synchronic alternatives. In the area of military emulation, states use battlefield performance, especially victory in war, as the truest observable measure of effectiveness. *States thus emulate the military system that emerges victorious in great power wars....* Proven success in war provides states with a closer approximation of the true utility of certain military practices. It reduces the uncertainties that surround such practices." (Resende-Santos 2007:7; emphasis added)

on persuasion or socialization, but it also takes a slightly different view about its causes than the standard neorealist view. It is the reduction of uncertainty and the demonstration effects which accompany hegemonic shocks that spur waves of emulation, rather than the increased competition in the international system that precedes them. And while the outcomes of hegemonic shocks reveal information about which systems function more effectively under duress, that information may not be applicable to other states. Nevertheless, the dramatic nature of hegemonic shocks encourages emulation in cases where regime consolidation is unlikely.

Although democracy has been the central model of emulation in recent decades, states have admired and mimicked a variety of other regimes, particularly those that had emerged triumphant in periods of hegemonic transition. The Soviet Union, for instance, inspired followers after World War II because “the Soviet Union’s victory over Nazi Germany, a country most observers had seen in 1939 and 1940 as an industrial giant, suggested that the Soviet system had considerable real-world vigor.”⁵⁹ Likewise, the decline of liberal capitalism in the 1930s led many states, including the United States, to move closer to the statist policies of the national socialists, who thrived and attracted followers during this period. As Schivelbusch notes:

In the wake of global economic disaster, there was no particular reason to prefer the political system most closely associated with capitalism - liberal democracy - to new systems that promised a brighter future. On the contrary, people were more inclined to ask themselves whether democracy was inevitably doomed by the

⁵⁹ Gale Stokes (1993) *The Walls Came Tumbling Down: The Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe*, Oxford University Press, p.8

economic breakdown of liberal capitalism.⁶⁰

The triumphant narrative of democracy's ascent in the twentieth century ignores those periods when capitalist democracy really did seem destined for the dustbin of history.

From Transition to Consolidation

Why are waves of democracy often followed by counter-waves or reversals? As I've argued, the answer has to do with the dynamics of waves themselves. The unique circumstances that allow the wave to occur in the first place also sow the seeds of the wave's decline. Hegemonic shocks create immense but temporary incentives and opportunities for regime transformations. Shocks bring together extraordinary pro-reform coalitions motivated by the desire to imitate the rising power or to ingratiate themselves in the international system it creates. Alternatively, they may have unsteady procrustean institutions imposed upon them by the winning hegemon. Motivated by rhetoric, fear, or gain, leaders adopt democratic institutions in states that lack the socio-economic pre-requisites for a stable democracy. In the immediate aftermath of the shock, these domestic pre-requisites become less important, allowing for the creation of a wave of democratic transformations.

But the relative importance of systemic and domestic factors changes as the new regimes move toward consolidation. The international incentives that created

⁶⁰ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Three New Deals: Reflections on Roosevelt's America, Mussolini's Italy, and Hitler's Germany, 1933-1939*; transl. from German by Jefferson Chase, Henry Holt and Co., 2006, p.11

a strong push for democratic reforms disappear as the shock passes:

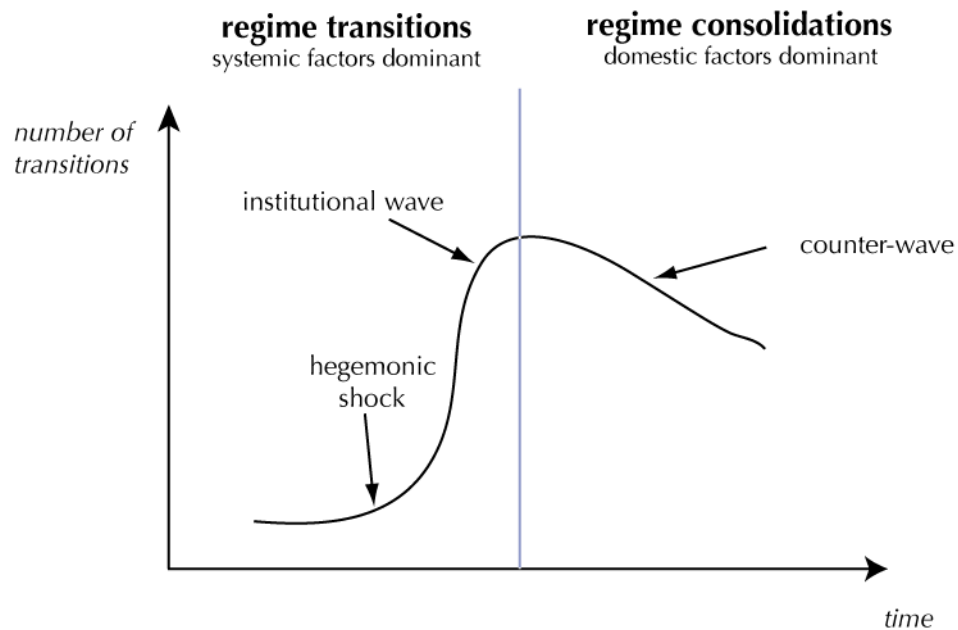


Figure 1.8 From transition to failed consolidation .

As time goes on, domestic factors increasingly begin to matter in maintaining these institutional reforms. The nature and composition of social coalitions, the domestic economy, and other factors traditionally associated with democracy begin to play a more important role. At least some of the transformations begin to fail as idiosyncratic, country-specific internal factors start to take hold. Such failed consolidations are particularly likely in the fragile new states created by the hegemonic shocks. Democratizing regimes face a number of obstacles that their more mature counterparts do not. They lack well-established traditions of democratic governance and are often plagued by fragile institutions that buckle under the weight of political tensions. They can fall prey to ethnic violence, to populist unrest, to cycles of civil war or government coups. Mansfield and Snyder

argue that new democracies are more prone to nationalism and aggression. This occurs because elites in democratizing states have an incentive to use nationalist rhetoric to shore up the support of the masses, and the fragile new institutions frequently collapse under their weight.⁶¹ In new states created by World War I, for instance, the spirit of compromise and consensus required for parliamentary governance could not be sustained in an environment of quarreling ethnic and social groups brought together in artificially bounded territories. The initial shock, in short creates the institutional equivalent of a stock market bubble, a period of “democratic over-reach” that produces an artificially high number of transitions.

This dynamic appears unique to cases of democratic waves. The consolidation of Communist regimes in eastern Europe, for example, was made possible only by the continued maintenance of the threat of coercion, occasionally reinforced by physical occupation. As soon as the coercive grip loosened, the unwilling members of the Soviet bloc dismantled communist institutions. In the case of fascism, it is difficult to discuss failures of consolidation because the entire wave crested and fell so rapidly in a space of less than fifteen years. But a large number of fascist regimes were also created and upheld by outside coercion - namely, the creation of a *Festung Europa* by German armies and the East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere by their Japanese equivalents.

⁶¹ Jack L. Snyder (2000) *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*, W.W. Norton and Company; Edward M. Mansfield and Jack L. Snyder (2007) *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War*, The MIT Press

Alternative Explanations

As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, given the vast literature on democratization there have been surprisingly few attempts to explicitly examine the causes of democratic waves. Part of the problem stems from the literature's focus on domestic variables, which tends to downplay the importance of factors like the international system or diffusion among states in shaping regime outcomes. Domestic theories of regime change have at various times focused on economic development, elite pacts, mass movements, civil society, party coalitions, electoral systems, national culture, federalism, ethnic and linguistic diversity, class relations, and civil-military relations – to name just a few of the more prominent explanations. As a result, while the trend of democratization has provided much fertile ground for theories of institutional change, democracy's relationship with the international system remains largely unexplained, even if often noted. As a result, proponents of systemic explanations of democracy have often charged comparativists with neglect the international causes of democratization - what Pridham called the “forgotten dimension” of democratization.⁶²

⁶² Geoffrey Pridham (1995) “Democratic Transition and the International Environment” in Geoffrey Pridham, ed., *Transitions to Democracy: Comparative Perspectives from Southern Europe, Latin America, and Eastern Europe*, UK: Dartmouth Publishing Group, p. 445. “The literature of sociology and political science, with its overriding stress on why democratization has advanced in some places more than others, has obscured the profoundly transnational dimension of democratization.” Markoff 1996:20. Similar lamentations about theories of democracy ignoring external forces can be found in more recent articles as well: see Jon C. Pevehouse (2002) “Democracy from the Outside-In? International Organizations and Democratization” *International Organization* 56.3, fn. 15; Michael McFaul, “The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship:

The domestic variable bias in democratization studies stems partly from the history of the field itself. The first comparative studies of political development were rooted in the early democratic experiences of a few countries in Western Europe, particularly England and France. A common criticism of the early democratization literature was its implicit treatment of Europe as the “default” course of long-term institutional development.⁶³ Later scholars expanded their European scope or else abandoned the continent entirely and focused on democratization around the world after the mid-nineteen-seventies, first in Latin America and later in Asia, Eastern Europe, and Africa. But while the subject area expanded, the method of examining the phenomenon remained the same – comparativist and reductionist, breaking down the global phenomenon of democratization into individual cases by country, or in some cases by region, and then attempting to find commonalities or patterns within those cases, while at the same time emphasizing the differences that set their country or region apart from others.

By century’s end democratic theory had become increasingly divided even as the number of democracies climbed to an all-time high. A 1994 review article accused comparative theories of producing unclear dependent variables, making it

Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World” *World Politics*, Vol. 54.2, January 2002, p. 212-244. Beissinger notes: “...much of the comparative politics literature on democratization continues to treat cases as if they were entirely independent of one another and has failed to probe the consequences that might flow from change through example.” Mark R. Beissinger (2007) “Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions” *Perspectives on Politics* 5, p.260

⁶³ Munck 1994

hard to compare results across studies. Their efforts at causal theorizing had generated a number of explanatory variables but few clearly specified general causal models. In some cases their empirical tests relied on a small set of variables, raising questions about generalizability and validity of the causal claims.⁶⁴ An acerbic 1999 review of the literature by Barbara Geddes noted that “scholars have greeted the increasing number of democratizations with delight, intense attention, and theoretical puzzlement. It seems as though there should be a parsimonious and highly compelling explanation of the transitions, but the explanations proposed thus far have been confusingly complicated, careless about basic methodological details, often more useful as description than explanation, and surprisingly inconsistent with each other.”⁶⁵

But within the past decade, partly as a response to this theoretical fragmentation, a small but growing body of literature has moved away from the comparative method. These studies build on the assumption that “democratization is driven at least partly by forces originating outside a country’s borders, rather than being a self-contained domestic process”.⁶⁶ These “systemic” theories, as I have called them, emphasize the influence of the international environment and links among states in shaping domestic reforms. They sought to link external factors to domestic actors, who would not disappear from the analysis but serve as important

⁶⁴ Munck 1994:122

⁶⁵ Geddes 1999:117

⁶⁶ Daniel Brinks and Michael Coppedge (2006) “Diffusion Is No Illusion: Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy” *Comparative Political Studies* 39:463-89

intervening forces between external influences and internal reforms. The fundamental assumption of a systemic approach, therefore, is that democratization often cannot be understood apart from examining the influence of the international system upon the choices of domestic actors in an environment of strategic and continuously interacting states characterized by competition, learning, and emulation.

Yet even most systemic theories of regime change do not address the puzzle of institutional waves directly. There exists, for example, a healthy debate on the merits and drawbacks of foreign aid as an external tool of domestic regime promotion. But the influence of foreign aid alone cannot explain the clustering of regime transitions without recourse to some other variables. In other words, even if foreign aid is indeed an important factor in regime transitions, the presence of waves suggests that the influence of foreign aid varies widely over time – and this itself is a puzzle that must be explained.

At the same time, hegemonic shocks are clearly not the only existing explanation for democratic waves. Alternative explanations that most closely fit the description can be divided into three categories: historical, bellicist theory, and diffusion models.

Historical Explanations

The historical explanation denies (or at least does not engage) the possibility of a generalizable *theory* of democratic waves. This is the view taken by many historians, who stress the contingency and uniqueness of historical events. “Men

wiser and more learned than I have discerned in history a plot, a rhythm, a predetermined pattern. These harmonies are concealed from me," writes H.A.L. Fisher in the preface to his "History of Europe. "I can see only one emergency following upon another...and only one safe rule for the historian: that he should recognize in the development of human destinies the play of the contingent and the unforeseen..."⁶⁷

The historical type of explanation was also put forth by Huntington in the *The Third Wave*. Huntington argued that the famous "third wave" of democratization resulted from a combination of factors, both internal and external. These included actions by the Catholic Church and other powerful external actors, the loss of legitimacy among autocratic elites due to poor economic performance, economic modernization, and "demonstration effects". I will not repeat the criticisms put forth in the very beginning of the chapter except to reiterate that Huntington, though no stranger to theorizing, did not seek to propose a theory of democratic waves as such, only to examine the causes of the last wave.

There is no doubt that history stubbornly resists the straitjacket of theory. "Many a beautiful theory," wrote Thomas Huxley, "was killed by an ugly fact." And the search for law-like regularities is indeed a fruitless one, since human society is far too complex to submit itself to nomological principles. But this does not mean that all attempts to theorize about the social world must be abandoned. Jon Elster invokes the French historian Paul Veyne's objection against grand theory. Suppose,

⁶⁷ H.A.L. Fisher (1970) *A History of Europe*

says Veyne, we wanted to provide a nomological explanation for the unpopularity of Louis XIV by invoking a general social science theory. We might start by looking for factors that seem most salient, beginning perhaps with the generalization “kings who impose high taxes become unpopular”. But in order to take care of counterexamples from other reigns and eras, the general statement will have to be saddled with numerous caveats, exceptions, and qualifications, the final result of which is “a chapter in the history of the reign of Louis XIV with the amusing feature of being written in the present and the plural” rather than in the past tense and the singular.⁶⁸

Yet Veyne conflates theory with nomological, covering-law statements, which is simply not the case in social science. As Waltz writes:

Theories are qualitatively different from laws. Laws identify invariant or probable associations. Theories show why those associations obtain. Each descriptive term in a law is directly tied to observational or laboratory procedures, and laws are established only if they pass observational or experimental tests.⁶⁹

Because laws establish relations between variables (and in the natural sciences, often to a very precise degree), they can be obtained through induction alone and buttressed by the empirical evidence of repeated observations. But “theories cannot be constructed through induction alone, for theoretical notions can only be invented, not discovered”⁷⁰ “No laws are possible in sociology, for the number of cases is far smaller than the number of variables effecting the outcome,” writes

⁶⁸ Jon Elster (1999) *Alchemies of the Mind*, Cambridge University Press

⁶⁹ Waltz 1979:5

⁷⁰ Waltz 1979:7

Michael Mann.⁷¹ In short, Veyne makes the mistake of thinking that facts determine theories, whereas in fact a number of theories can fit a given set of facts. Henri Poincaré made this point about the primacy of theory when he wrote in *Science and Hypothesis*: “Science is built up with facts, as a house is with stones. But an accumulation of facts is no more a science than a heap of stones is a house.”⁷²

Laws and theories are tightly connected in the natural sciences precisely because laws allow the creation of theories – a repeated observation leads to an attempt to explain it. But because there are no laws in the social sciences, theories can only be generated through carefully crafted assumptions, and then seeing if they hold up through creating testable hypotheses. Because social science theories always encounter exceptions and anomalies, their real test, as Waltz argues, is whether they tell us something useful about the world. If not, they should be rejected as a weak explanation of outcomes (as in fact almost all social science theories are).⁷³

The question then becomes not whether a theory is realistic, but whether it’s useful. In that sense, “theory is fruitful because it goes beyond the necessarily barren

⁷¹ Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 1; quoted in “Delving into Democracy’s Shadows” by Scott McLemme, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Sep. 17 2004. <http://chronicle.com/free/v51/i04/04a01001.htm>

⁷² Henri Poincaré, *Hypothesis and Science*. Online at http://spartan.ac.brocku.ca/~lward/Poincare/Poincare_1905_10.html. Stanley Hoffman makes a similar point: “Collecting facts is not enough...it is not helpful to gather answers when no questions have been asked first.” Stanley Hoffman, “International Relations: The Long Road to Theory” cited in John Lewis Gaddis (1992) “International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War” *International Security* 17.3, p.14

⁷³ See also Imre Lakatos (1970) “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes” in Lakatos and Musgrave, *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, Cambridge University Press

hypothetico-deductive approach."⁷⁴

The result is that social science theories can only make general predictions. A theory of hegemonic shocks cannot predict individual cases of transition. As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, it cannot account for all instances of democratization. It does, however, point to factors that make domestic reforms more likely in the wake of shocks. It makes testable predictions about the consequences of these shocks, and describes the concrete mechanisms that connect shocks to waves. It can be tested (as I do in this dissertation) through both empirical analysis and careful examination of case studies. A state that fails to democratize in the wake of a shock presents an anomaly but does not invalidate the theory. If, however, a sudden hegemonic transition in which a democracy emerges as a winner fails to create a wave of democratization, that would present a major – possible fatal – problem for the theory. In that sense, social science theories are falsifiable, but in a different sense than natural sciences theories, which can be invalidated with the discovery of a single black swan. Social science theories simplify the world by isolating the most salient factors. As such, they require both boldness and humility – the boldness of a simplifying assumption, and the humility of recognizing it as such.

With this aside in mind, I now move on to the two alternative theoretical explanations for democratic waves – bellicist theory and diffusion models.

⁷⁴ Waltz 1979:11

Bellicist Theory

Bellicist theories examine the influence of interstate conflict and military competition on domestic institutions. Through their primary emphasis is on state-building, they have direct implications for the evolution of domestic regimes. Because I discuss bellicist theories in detail in Chapter 3, here I limit myself to a few summary remarks.

First, bellicist theories ignore the effect of non-military crises on the propensity for institutional reforms. Second, explanations that focus on the influence of major wars upon state development are ambiguous about their effects on regime outcome. Much of the bellicist literature is concerned with the effects of mobilization on state development. An early example is the writings of Otto Hintze, who stressed that a country's geopolitical environment affects its mobilization strategy, which in turn shapes its regime type. Hintze, a scholar of the Prussian state, argued that constant preparation for war led to a standing army and a centralized state, while relative safety within the international system, geographically defined by mountains and oceans, created the internal opportunity for democracy.⁷⁵ According to this argument, then, mobilization for war – conflict or constant threat thereof – leads to centralization of authority and despotism, with the corollary that relative isolation from interstate conflict produces democracy.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Otto Hintze (1975) *The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze*, Felix Gilbert, ed., Oxford University Press

⁷⁶ See also e.g., Brian M. Downing (1992) *The Military Revolution and Political Change: Origins of Democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Europe*, Princeton University Press; William R. Thompson (1996) "Democracy and Peace: Putting the

But an opposing school of thought argues that mobilization for war produces democratic institutions. "Throughout history, warfare has been a major democratizing force," argues Dankwart Rustow, "because it has made necessary the marshalling of additional human resources."⁷⁷ North and Weingast, for instance, have argued that warfare led to the need for increased revenue, which forced the monarchy to cede important political rights to the Parliament.⁷⁸ In general, then, mobilizing for war can force states to grant rights to previously-excluded social groups in exchange for their cooperation and increased revenue.

Finally, the extensive literature on democratic peace reverses the causal arrow by arguing that democracy creates peace through various institutional and normative mechanisms. And other studies find no visible connection between war and regime change.⁷⁹

It may be that all of these arguments are true to some extent, but there is not much room for a coherent theory of institutional waves among the confused and endogenous causal arrows. In short, while bellicist theories can help explain the *timing* of waves (they happen in the aftermath of major wars), they cannot account

Cart before the Horse?" *International Organization* 50.1, p. 141-174.

⁷⁷ Dankwart A. Rustow (1970) "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model" *Comparative Politics* 2.3, p.348.

⁷⁸ Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast (1989) "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutional Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England", *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol.49:803-832

⁷⁹ Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder (2010) "Does War Influence Democratization?" p.23-49 in Elizabeth Keir and Ronald Krebs, eds., *In War's Wake: International Conflict and the Fate of Liberal Democracy*, Cambridge University Press

for the waves' *direction* toward or away from democracy or other regime types. To account for the content of the waves, we must turn to the incentives produced by the outcome of the war.

Diffusion Models

By far the most common factor used to explain democratic waves involves some variant of institutional diffusion. The study of diffusion in political science began in American politics, with Walker's (1969) foundational work on the spread of policy innovations across American states.⁸⁰ Later work has examined the spread of state lotteries tax policy, pre-legalization abortion policies, and education reforms. In international relations, diffusion is posited to be some factor that enables institutions or regimes to carry over across borders. Huntington's "demonstration effects" fall into this category of explanation. Much of this literature is empirically driven, and focuses on factors like networks, neighborhood effects and positive feedback.⁸¹

These theories are systemic at heart because they refuse to treat individual cases of reform as isolated instances. Instead democratization is seen to take place in an environment of strategic and continuously interacting units. In some instances

⁸⁰ Jack L. Walker (1969) "The Diffusion of Innovations among the States" *American Political Science Review* 63.3:880-99.

⁸¹ See, e.g., Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward, "Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization", *International Organization* Fall 2006, p. 911-933; Peter T. Leeson and Andrea M. Dean (2009) "The Domino Theory: An Empirical Investigation" *American Journal of Political Science* 53.3:533-51. Harvey Starr (1991) "Democratic Dominoes: Diffusion Approaches to the Spread of Democracy in the International System" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35.2:356-81.

democratization can become a self-reinforcing process, creating waves of reforms. Much of this literature focuses on examining the patterns of democratic diffusion via regional and global effects, often through very sophisticated quantitative techniques and spatial models. In a typical finding, Loughlin et al (1998) report “strong and consistent evidence of temporal clustering of democratic and autocratic trends as well as strong spatial association (or autocorrelation) of democratization.”⁸² And while statistically plausible, this result does not tell us much about the specific mechanisms that lead to diffusion. As Narizny points out, “These works focus on the spatial-temporal dynamics of regime transition, not on the agents, methods, or motives of change. As a result, their causal mechanisms are severely undertheorized.”⁸³

The current literature on diffusion in some ways resembles the early literature on democratic peace – an empirical regularity seeking a theoretical explanation. The most recent trend in studies of diffusion has been to move away from aggregative empirics and toward the concrete mechanisms that produce these cross-border effects.⁸⁴ In a direct sense, that is also the goal of this dissertation. I thus don’t view diffusion theories as a competing alternative, but as a broad category of explanations that subsumes a variety of explanations for the cross-

⁸² John O’Loughlin, Michael D. Ward, Corey L. Lofdahl, Jordin S. Cohen, David S. Brown, David Reilly, Kristian S. Gleditsch, Michael Shin (1998) “The Diffusion of Democracy, 1946–1994,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 88.3:545–574

⁸³ Kevin Narizny (2006) “Democratization, Capitalism and Hegemony”, unpublished manuscript, p.3

⁸⁴ See, e.g., the discussion of elite learning in Beissinger 2007.

border spread of domestic institutions, including my own. The theory described in this dissertation is also a theory based on diffusion – although a specific type of diffusion that stems from the effects of hegemonic shocks. To explain the dynamics of this diffusion I focus on the causal mechanisms that lead to the spread of regimes associated with the rising hegemon. While diffusion may explain the direction of institutional reforms (neighbors follow neighbors, etc), it cannot explain the timing of institutional waves. To do so requires recourse to a more specific mechanism of diffusion – in this case, the timing is shaped by outcomes of hegemonic shocks. Diffusion is too broad a concept to suffice as an explanation for democratic waves. Theories of waves should connect external influences to domestic reforms via concrete causal mechanisms, and show specific instances in which these mechanisms operate. That is my goal in the remainder of these pages.

The Plan of the Dissertation

The rest of the dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 empirically tests the relationship between hegemonic shocks and domestic institutional change through large-n statistical analysis. This chapter will begin by defining and operationalizing my variables, stating hypotheses, and then testing them with OLS and fixed-effects regressions. The goal of this chapter is to examine the general patterns of the relationship between hegemonic volatility and institutional waves at the systemic level, and domestic reforms at the country level. I then compare how my systemic explanation fares next to purely domestic statistical models.

Next, chapters 3 through 5 offer case studies of the first three hegemonic shocks

of the twentieth century – World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II. Each of these shocks produced waves of reforms that differed in their duration, intensity, and content. The three chapters employ process-tracing and comparative historical analysis to trace the effects of each shock on specific institutional changes in countries around the world. While there is a large secondary literature on the causes and effects of these shocks, and likewise a large literature on the evolution of domestic regimes over the twentieth century, there is surprisingly little overlap between the two. One of the goals of this dissertation is to bring the two together in order to re-examine the domestic transformations of the past century through the prism of hegemonic shocks. Chapter 3 examines the short-lived democratic wave that followed World War I. Chapter 4 examines the crisis of Western capitalism in the Great Depression, and the shift away from liberal democracy it produced in Europe and elsewhere. Chapter 5 examines the two institutional waves following World War II, when both the US and the USSR oversaw two distinct waves of transformations toward their respective regime types.

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes and summarizes, and discusses the theory's implications for the current and future state of international relations. The financial crisis that began in 2008 re-awakened many of the same fears that observers expressed in the 1930s. Does state capitalism, as exemplified by the rise of China, present a new institutional bundle, and a new challenge to democracy similar to the earlier challenges of communism and fascism? And how would a future shock affect the pattern of regime transformations, particularly if the 2008-9 financial

crisis undermines the strength and legitimacy of democratic capitalism? This chapter will also discuss the implications for the U.S. policy of external regime promotion and offer avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2

TESTING THE EFFECTS OF HEGEMONIC POWER

This chapter examines the relationship between hegemonic power and the spread of democracy using large-n statistical analysis. Serving as a complement to the case studies, the goal of this chapter is to examine the general patterns of the interaction between hegemony and regime change across the international system in the years between 1900 and 2000. A multivariate regression model that tracks changes in the hegemonic power of the United States reveals that it has a strong positive effect on democratization both at the systemic level and within individual countries, even

when controlling for other factors traditionally associated with democratization¹. Additionally, sudden changes in the hegemonic power of fascist Germany and communist Soviet Union are strongly and negatively associated with decreases in the average level of democracy within countries and in the international system as a whole. These results are robust to a number of specifications, model variations, and measures of democracy.

I begin by defining my main dependent and independent variables, democracy and national power. I also discuss the definition and measurement of the salient transformations of these variables, namely democratic waves and shares of hegemonic power (and shifts in the levels of hegemonic power). After a brief overview of systemic patterns (which show very strong support for an association between hegemonic power and levels of global democracy), I introduce other control variables commonly associated with democratization. This allows for the creation of a multivariate model that tests domestic arguments on their own terms while adding a new variable suggested by hegemonic shock theory. Changes in hegemonic power are shown to have a substantively and statistically significant effect on democratization both inside countries and around the world as a whole. In short, this chapter suggests that the comparative literature on democratization often suffers from an omitted variable bias, and that future studies of democracy and other regime reforms should take into account the effects of the rise and decline of hegemonic power.

¹ In the model, these include economic development, cross-border diffusion effects, regime history, geographic region, colonial history, and national culture.

Defining Democracy

Robert Dahl (1971) has influentially argued that the two core attributes of democracies are contestation (competitive elections for political leaders) and participation (broad and inclusive access to voting).² This is the definition I adopt here.³ Given the above, the first question is whether democracy should be measured as a dichotomous or a continuous variable. Przeworski et al (2000) offer a high-spirited defense of a dichotomous measure.⁴ Their argument can perhaps best be summarized by the words of writer Amiri Baraka (1962): “A man is either free or not. There cannot be any apprenticeship for freedom.”⁵

There is, however, a wide variation among democracies in the level of individual freedom and electoral participation. Donnelly (2000) suggests a three-point checklist for when a dichotomous variable may be preferable to a continuous one: when the dividing line is sharp and clear, when the grey area between the two

² Robert Dahl (1971) *Polyarchy*, Yale University Press. See also Michael Coppedge, Angel Alvarez, Claudia Maldonado (2008) “Two Persistent Dimensions of Democracy: Contestation and Inclusiveness” *The Journal of Politics* 70.3, p. 632-647.

³ For a partial list of conceptualizations and measurements of democracy, see Gary Goertz (2006) *Social Science Concepts: A User’s Guide*, Princeton University Press, p.8-9.

⁴ Adam Przeworski, Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi (2000) *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*, Cambridge University Press. For another argument in favor of a dichotomous measures of democracy, see Mike Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, Fernando Limongi and Adam Przeworski (1996) “Classifying Political Regimes” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 31:3-36

⁵ “Tokenism” in *Kulchur*, Spring 1962

cases is small, and when few important cases fall into that grey area.⁶ On these criteria, democracy fails to qualify on all three grounds. Likewise, Elkins (2000) empirically investigates whether democracy should be measured as a dichotomous or continuous variable. He concludes that overall, graded measures have “superior validity and reliability”.⁷ Since I am interested in domestic reforms rather than clear-cut cases of democratic transitions, a continuous measure of democracy is appropriate for both theoretical and empirical reasons.

Measuring Democratization

I use the Polity IV index to measure the level of democratization. It is a continuous, internally consistent, and frequently-used measure of autocratic and democratic regimes which (unlike Freedom House, for example) covers the time span examined in the argument. Polity codes annual information on regime and authority characteristics for all independent states (with a population over 500,000) from 1800 to 2004. Regimes are measured on a scale from -10 (strongly autocratic) to +10 (strongly democratic), as measured by four components: regulation, competitiveness, and openness of executive recruitment and constraints on the

⁶ Jack Donnelly (2006) *Realism and International Relations*, Cambridge University Press, p. 88. Epstein et al reject a dichotomous measure of democracy on similar grounds. See David L. Epstein, Robert Bates, Jack Goldstone, Ida Kristensen and Sharyn O'Halloran (2006) “Democratic Transitions” *American Journal of Political Science* 50.3: 551-569. Kellstedt and Whitten (2009) likewise argue that continuous variables are more appropriate in the case of democracy. Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten (2009) *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*, Cambridge University Press, p. 96.

⁷ Zachary Elkins (2000) “Gradations of Democracy? Empirical Tests of Alternative Conceptualizations” *American Journal of Political Science* 44.2:287

chief executive. (To make analysis easier, I have recoded it on a scale from 0 to 20). At the systemic level, I measured democratization as the total global average of Polity IV scores in a given system-year. At the level of regions or countries, democratization is measured by the region's or country's Polity IV score in a given year.

A common criticism of Polity is that it focuses on the competition dimension of democracy at the expense of participation.⁸ The United States, for example, has received a perfect score since 1871, despite the enfranchisement of women (1920), African-Americans (de jure in 1869, but de facto in 1965), and citizens aged 18-21(1971) since that period. For this reason, and as a check on the robustness of the results, I also include a measure of democratization called SIP, or the Scalar Index of Politics. SIP combines the executive restraint components of the Polity IV score with Vanhannen's measure of popular participation, and is scaled from 0 to 1.⁹ Since non-democratic regimes lack well-developed quantitative indices, and regime dummies were used to classify individual states as communist or fascist, and global levels of fascism and communism in the system were measured using the total power (as measured by CINC; see below) of communist and fascist states. (See Appendix 1 for regime classifications.)

⁸ Geraldo Munck and Jay Verkuilen (2002) "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices" *Comparative Political Studies* 35.1:5-34

⁹ SIP is described and employed in Scott Gates, Håvard Hegre, Mark P. Jones, and Håvard Strand (2006) "Institutional Inconsistency and Political Instability: Polity Duration, 1800-2000" *American Journal of Political Science* 50.4:893-908.

	Variable	Description	Obs	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
country-year	pol	Polity score	9596	9.68	7.30	0	20
	polch	1-year change in Polity score	9341	0.04	1.75	-19	16
	sip	SIP score	9392	0.43	0.38	0	0.98
	sipch	1-year change in SIP score	9084	0.00055	0.087	-0.95	0.96
system-year	sipglobal	Average annual global SIP level	101	0.4233	0.0748	0.3106	0.6055
	polglobal	Average annual global Polity level	101	0.9.60	1.38	7.30	12.90
	totfascinc	Fascist share of global power	86	0.046	0.090	0	0.377
	totcomcinc	Communist share of global power	87	0.233	0.121	0	0.378

Table 2.1: Measures of domestic regimes (dependent variable), summary statistics

Measuring Institutional Waves

Following Huntington's definition of a democratic wave, I define an institutional wave as a group of transitions between two regime types that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction during that period.¹⁰ Although frequently equated with democratization,

¹⁰ Huntington defines a democratic wave as "a group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction during that period." (Huntington 1991:15) I define institutions as mechanisms employed by states to deal with problems of enforcement, security, coordination, and credible commitment. They are public rules that organize relationships among individuals, groups, and states. This definition follows the historical-institutionalist approach. See Kathleen Thelen (1999) "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2:369-404. On credible commitment via legislatures, see Douglass North and Barry R. Weingast, "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England." *Journal of Economic History* 49:803-832. States employ and reform institutions to increase their external security and internal stability, not always successfully. Central banks, courts, electoral rules and social welfare programs are all examples of various state institutions. Institutions are not "normally distributed" across states in the system. Instead, certain combinations of

institutional waves have been associated with a variety of regimes throughout history. Some examples include the revolutionary Latin American wars of independence between 1810 and 1825, the communist wave in Asia following World War II or, reaching deeper into time, the spread of parliamentarianism across Europe during the thirteenth century.¹¹

Since Huntington first described them, the notion of democratic waves has become widely accepted in the literature.¹² Przeworski et al (2006) constitute the

institutions occur more frequently than others. A regime, then, is defined as a bundle of inter-related institutions bound by an overarching ideology of the state.

¹¹ The Latin American wave included the South American Wars of Independence (1810-25), the Mexican War of Independence (1810-21), and the Central American Declaration of Independence (1821). The post-WWII communist wave included the Chinese civil war, the Korean War, the First Indochina War, the Huks' uprising in the Philippines, and the Malayan War. The parliamentary wave followed the rapid rise in European population and long-distance trade between the 11th and 13th centuries. As Palmer et al note, "nothing shows better the similarity of institutions in Latin Christendom, or the inadequacy of tracing the history of any one country by itself." R.P. Palmer, Joel Colton, and Lloyd Kramer, *A History of the Modern World to 1815*, 9th edition, Knopf, 2002, p.35.

¹² E.g. Kristian Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward. (2006) "Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization" *International Organization* 60(4): 911-933. Daniel Brinks and Michael Coppedge (2006) "Diffusion Is No Illusion: Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy" *Comparative Political Studies* 39:463-89 and many others in the growing literature on democratic diffusion and clustering (see chapter 1 for a brief overview); David Collier and Steven Levitsky (2009) "Democracy: Conceptual Hierarchies in Comparative Research" in David Collier and John Gerring, eds. *Concepts and Method in Social Science*, Routledge. As with many ideas in social science, it would be more correct to say that Huntington re-introduced rather than introduced the concept: an article from 1887, for example, mentions "the second European democratic wave, which first became visible in 1830 and culminated in the general upheaval of 1848." Anson D. Morse (1887) "The Cause of Secession" *Political Science Quarterly* 2.3: 482. (The first wave refers to the cluster of liberalization following 1789 in the United States, France, Poland, Netherlands, and Haiti).

most prominent dissenters.¹³ They criticize Huntington for using a measure based on the percentage of democratic states, and find no evidence for waves when using the criterion of transitions rather than institutional changes. However, their analysis is problematic for two important reasons: first, they employ a dichotomous measure of democracy that conceals more subtle changes in levels of democratization; transitions measured with dichotomous variables are sensitive to where one makes the cut.¹⁴ Two, most importantly, their time of analysis is limited to the years 1950-1990. Since two of the three democratic waves occur before their period, the failure to find evidence of waves is understandable.

Figure 2.1 tracks the average annual Polity IV and SIP scores since 1900. In both instances the path of democratization is characterized by waves and counter-waves, with democratic peaks following the two World Wars and the Soviet collapse. (The two measures are highly correlated, as expected, but Polity consistently over-estimates the level of democracy in the system.) The waves also appear when using other metrics, such as the proportion of countries that are democratic, or the absolute number of democracies in the international system (See Figures 2.2 and 2.3; in the latter case, the rollback of the second wave disappears).

¹³ *Democracy and Development*, p.40-45

¹⁴ Other measures (notably, Huntington's) do find waves even when using a dichotomous variable.

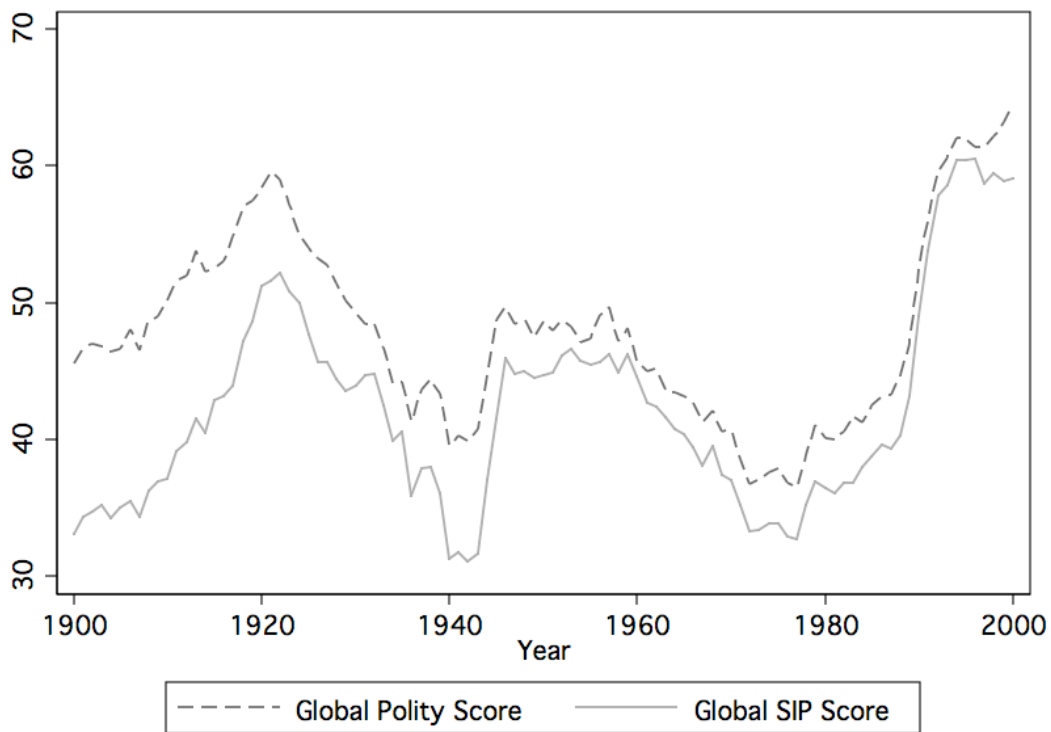


Figure 2.1 Average global democracy, Polity and SIP scores, 1900-2000 (standardized to 0-100)

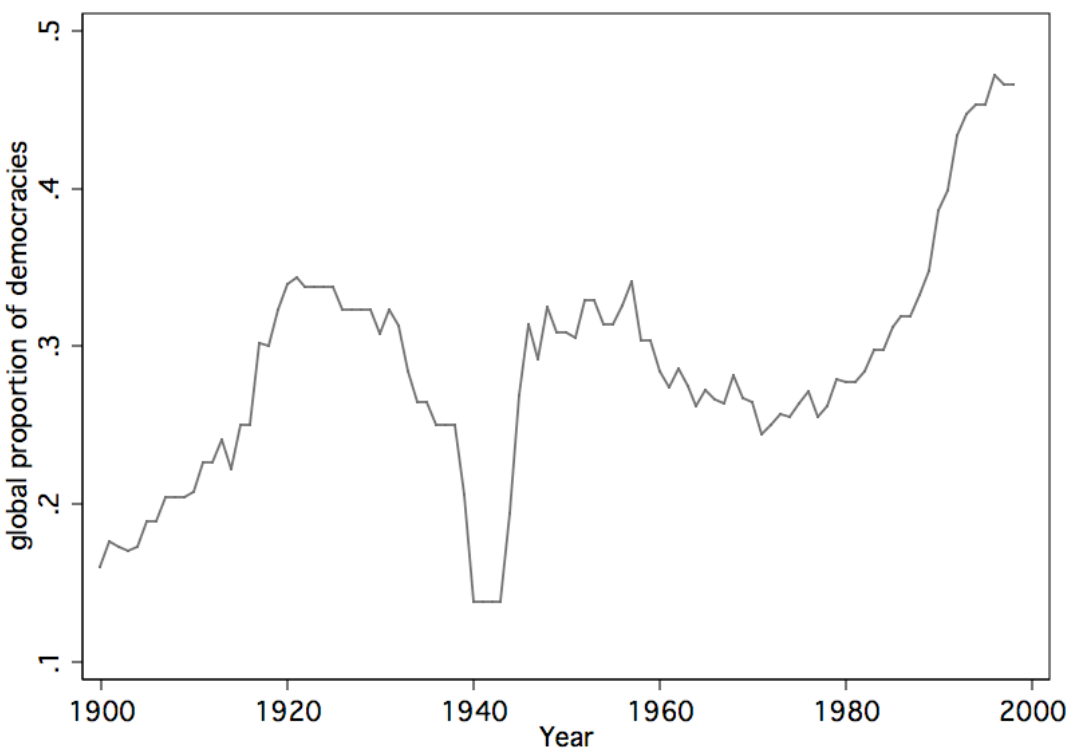


Figure 2.2 Democracies as a proportion of all states (with democracies defined as states with a Polity score of 7 or more)

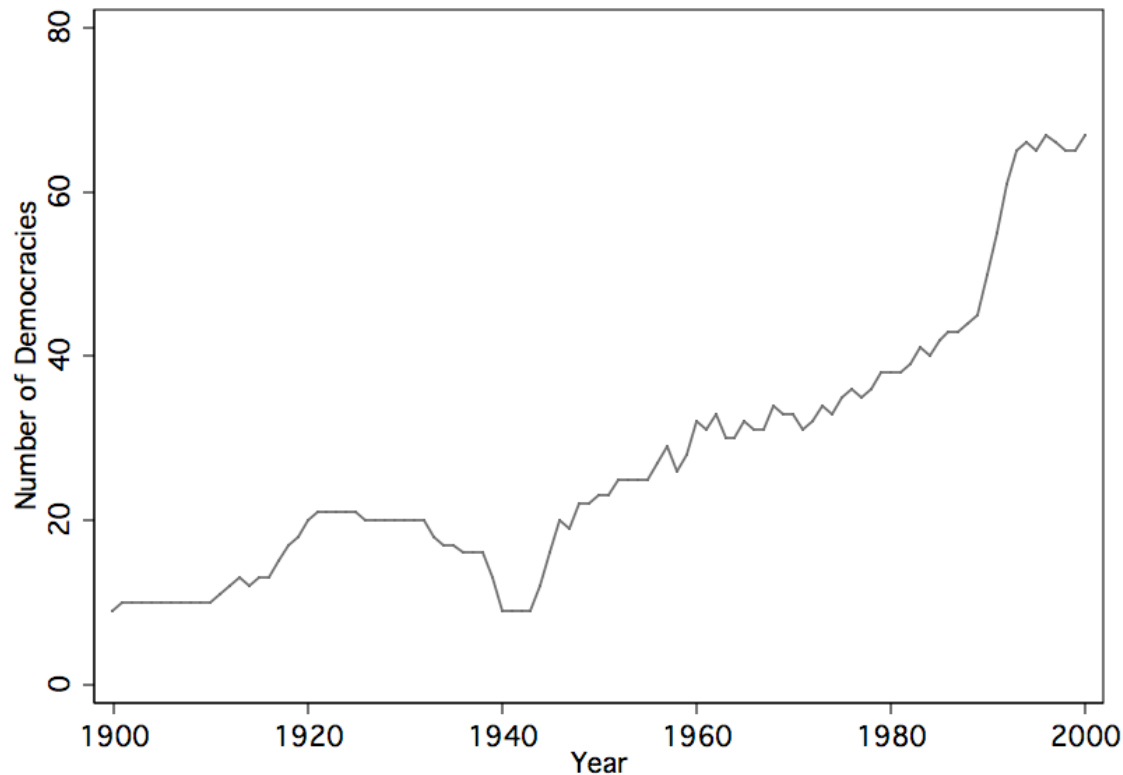


Figure 2.3 Total number of democratic states (with democracies defined as states with a Polity score of 7 or more)

The two major regime alternatives to democracy in the twentieth century – fascism and communism – have also spread and retreated in wave-like patterns. (Figures 2.5, 2.5, 2.6) A fascist wave swept Europe and other parts of the world in the 1930s, and a wave of Communist transitions followed the Soviet victory in World War II.

Although non-democratic regimes lack well-developed quantitative indices like Polity, the global spread of fascism and communism can be estimated by charting the percentage of world power held by fascist and communist states since 1900. (The share of power was calculated using CINC, discussed below.)

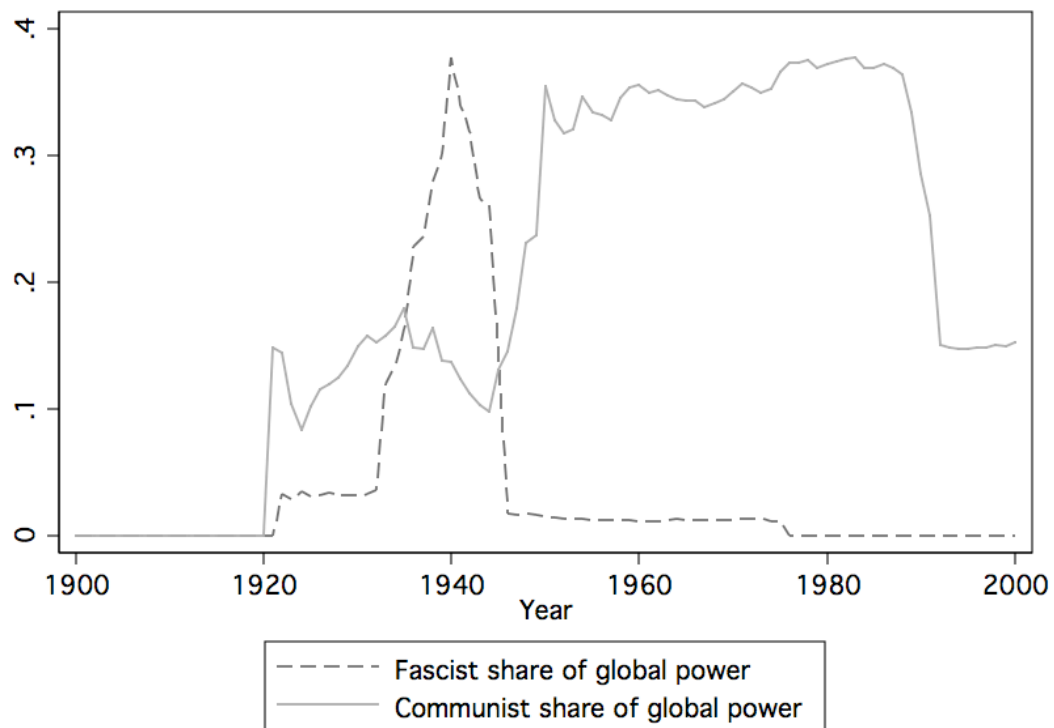


Figure 2.4: Communist and fascist shares of global power, 1900-2000 (measured by CINC)

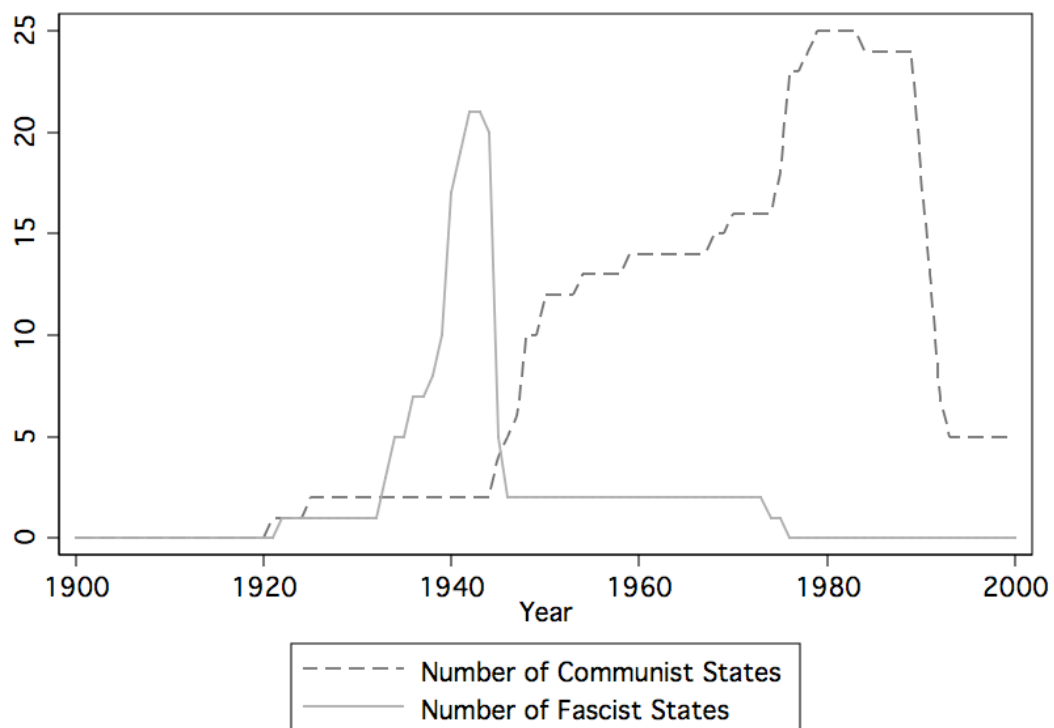


Figure 2.5: Number of fascist and communist states, 1900-2000

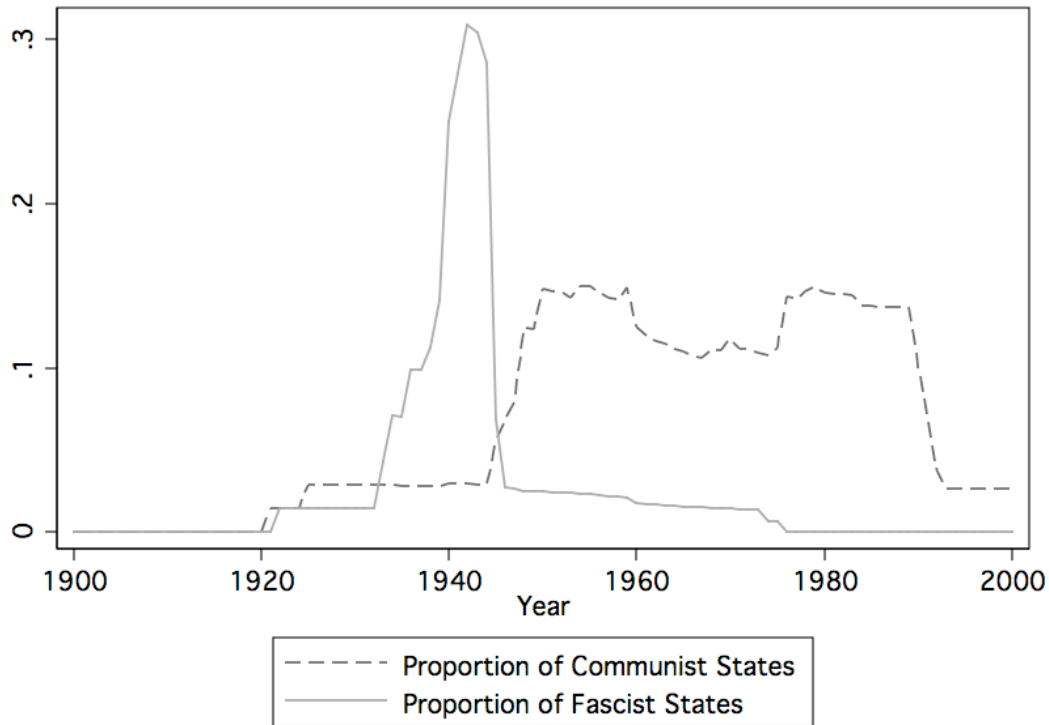


Figure 2.6: Number of fascist and communist states, as a proportion of all states in the international system

The existence of these waves presents the central puzzle to be explained. I now turn to a discussion of a variable that offers such an explanation – shares of relative power held by hegemons of competing regime types.

Defining National Power

Power has remained a contested term in political science, even when confined to the narrower domain of relative national power.¹⁵ “The concept of political

¹⁵ There is an extensive literature in international relations on the meaning and measure of national power. See Gregory F. Treverton, Seth G. Jones (2005) “Measuring National Power” RAND Conference Proceedings; available online at http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/2005/RAND_CF215.pdf; Ashley J. Tellis, Janice Bially, Christopher Layne, Melissa McPherson (2000) “Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age”, RAND; Kelly M. Kadera and Gerald L. Sorokin (2004) “Measuring National Power” *International Interactions* 30, 211-230; David Baldwin (1989) *The Paradoxes of Power*, Basil Blackwell; Richard J. Stoll

power,” wrote Hans Morgenthau, “poses one of the most difficult and controversial problems of political science.”¹⁶ As with other essentially contested concepts, a measure of relative national power should capture the features salient to the particular theory under consideration.¹⁷ In this case, relative national power means the power to coerce (to successfully impose regimes upon others), to influence through trade and patronage, and to inspire institutional imitators, which assumes a degree of success and attractiveness in the international arena. A suitable measure of relative national power would then focus on material resources that proxy for military and economic prowess.

Both military and economic measures of national power are flawed in their own way.¹⁸ Economic measures underestimate the brute strength of highly militarized

and Michael D. Ward, eds. (1989) *Power in World Politics*, Lynne Rienner; Michael Handel (1981) *Weak States in the International System*, Frank Cass; Kjell Goldmann and Gunnar Sjöstedt, eds. (1979) *Power, Capabilities, Interdependence: Problems in the Study of International Influence*, Sage Publications. For non-materialist approaches to the study of national power, see Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall (2005) “Power in International Politics” *International Organization* 59.1:39-75; Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, eds. (2005) *Power in Global Governance*, Cambridge University Press; Felix Berenskoetter and M.J. Williams, eds. (2007) *Power in World Politics*, Routledge; Rodney Bruce Hall (2003) “Moral Authority as a Power Source” *International Organization* 51.4:591-622.

¹⁶ Hans Morgenthau (1948) *Politics Among Nations*, Ch.1, New York: Alfred A. Knopf

¹⁷ David Collier and Robert Adcock (1999) “Democracy and Dichotomies: A Pragmatic Approach to Choices about Concepts” *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 537-565. On the primacy of concept analysis and case selection for choosing methods of statistical inference, see Gary Goertz (2006) *Social Science Concepts: A User’s Guide*, Princeton University Press. On “essentially contested” concepts, see Walter Gallie (1956) “Essentially Contested Concepts” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56:167-98.

¹⁸ On the importance of the link between economic growth and military power, see Paul Kennedy (1987) *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Economic Change and*

regimes such as nineteenth-century Prussia. Military measures in turn underestimate economic powers like Japan or conceal potential economic inefficiencies within militarily powerful states like the Soviet Union.¹⁹ Thus a measure of state capability appropriate for measuring hegemonic capacity should capture the multi-dimensional nature of power in hegemonic transitions.

I use the Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC) to measure relative national power. CINC defines power as “the ability of a nation to exercise and resist influence”. Stipulating that power and material capabilities are not identical, the codebook nonetheless argues that “given their association it is essential that we try to define the latter in operational terms so as to understand the former.”²⁰ CINC includes all states from 1816 to 2001 and incorporates six variables: total population, urban population, iron and steel production, energy consumption (after 1859), number of military personnel, and military expenditure. The variables fall into three categories of two variables each - demographic, industrial, and military.²¹

Military Conflict From 1500 to 2000, Random House. See also Emilio Casetti (2008) “The Long-Run Dynamic of the Nexus between Military Strength and National Power: An Econometric Analysis” *Discrete Dynamics in Nature and Society* vol. 2008

¹⁹ This is particularly the case when military technology relies on technological and economic investment. The historian Martin Walker has persuasively argued that the lack of mass consumption in the USSR blunted the incentive for technological advancement, which in turn prevented the country from successfully competing with the United States in military technology. See Martin Walker (1995) *The Cold War: A History*, Henry Holt and Company.

²⁰ CINC Codebook, p.1; David J. Singer, Stuart Bremer, and John Stuckey (1972) “Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965.” p. 19-48 in Bruce Russett, ed., *Peace, War, and Numbers*, Beverly Hills: Sage

²¹ Total population reflects the idea that “a large population can have a larger army, maintain its home industries during times of war, and absorb losses in wartime

Where data was missing and the change rate could reasonably be assumed to be uniform, figures were interpolated using linear regression.²² Each of these categories are subject to criticism, particularly, as Wohlforth puts it, the “implicit assumption that the wellsprings of national power have not changed since the dawn of the industrial age”.²³ But while Wohlforth correctly proposes to expand the concept to include such measures as the number of patents granted or the number of internet hosts per 1000 people, these additions are inappropriate for the time frame of my analysis. Besides being an internally consistent measure that spans the required range of time, CINC is a widely-used measure in international politics, which aids in replicability. It is a multi-dimensional measure, capturing both the military and economic aspects of power inherent in my approach. Its emphasis on *relative* power is also conducive to the theoretical analysis of hegemonic transitions.

easier than a state with a smaller population.” (Codebook p.21) Urban population is a proxy for modernization: it is associated “with higher education standards and life expectancies, with industrialization and industrial capacity, and with the concentrated availability of citizens who may be mobilized during times of conflict.” (p. 27)

²² CINC Codebook, p. 2. Geographic components of power (island, peninsular, and land-locked states) were deemed too dyad-specific to be useful for cross-national comparison, because they look at the relationships among states instead of national characteristics. (p.3) Natural resources like arable land, climate, and other variable availability are, according to the authors, already reflected in the indicators. (p.3)

²³ William C. Wohlforth (1999) “The Stability of a Unipolar World” *International Security* 24.1: 5-41. See also William C. Wohlforth (1987) “The Perception of Power: Russia in the Pre-1914 Balance” *World Politics* 39.3:353-381.

Defining Hegemons

As I mentioned in the first chapter, the word “hegemon” is used ambiguously in the international relations literature. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a hegemon as “a leading or paramount power,” where “leading” implies the possibility of multiple such states, while “paramount” implies a single all-powerful entity. I adopt the former definition – in this dissertation, a hegemon refers to a state that comprises a “pole” in the international system.²⁴ In that sense a hegemon as used here is a more exclusive term than the Correlates of War definition of a “major power”, but more inclusive than the single-state definition adopted by, for example, Gilpin (1981) or Mearsheimer (2001).²⁵

²⁴ The first recorded usage in the OED, in 1904, implies several such states: “The hegemon of the western hemisphere is the United States.”

²⁵ The COW coding of major powers also omits countries during “shock years”, the very period when their fortunes would shape institutional waves. The full COW coding is USA 1898-2000; UK 1816-2000; France 1816-1940, 1945-2008, Germany 1816-1918, 1925-1945, 1991-2008, Austria-Hungary 1816-1918, Italy 1860-1943, Russia 1816-1917, 1922-2008, China 1950-2008, Japan 1895-1945, 1991-2008. Mearsheimer (2001), on the other hand, defines a hegemon as “a state that is so powerful that it dominates all the other states in the system”. John Mearsheimer (2001) *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, W.W. Norton and Company, p.40. (At the same time, Mearsheimer’s list of “the five dominant great powers of the past 150 years” (p. 169) is very similar to mine, so this may be a matter of semantics: United States 1800-1990; USSR 1917-1991; United Kingdom 1792-1945; Germany 1862-1945; and Japan 1868-1945.)

For other single-state definitions, see Robert Gilpin (1981) *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, p.29 and William C. Wohlforth (1993) *The Elusive Balance: Power and Perceptions During the Cold War*, Cornell University Press, p.12-14. William Fox (1944) defined superpowers as countries that possessed great capabilities and could challenge and fight each other on a global scale. In his view, in 1943 the US, the UK, and the USSR were superpowers. See William Fox (1944) *The Super-Powers: the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union—their responsibility for peace*. Harcourt, Brace Co. In the dissertation I use the term “hegemon” and “great power” interchangeably.

The salient characteristic of a “pole” is that it is not merely a major power, but a leading state with the capacity to impose regimes, influence other great powers, and inspire institutional imitators. Following the general view that the system was multipolar until World War Two and bipolar until the Soviet collapse²⁶, hegemons between the years 1816 and 2000 were labeled as: US 1898-2000; Russia/USSR 1816-1991; Great Britain 1816-1945; France 1816-1945; Germany 1871-1945; and Japan 1905-1945.²⁷ When testing the effects of hegemonic shocks in the multivariate model below, fascist hegemons (Germany and Japan) are restricted to the period 1933-1945, while the communist hegemon (that is, the USSR) is restricted to the period 1923-1990 – after all a hegemon cannot inspire institutional wave unless it possesses that set of institutions itself.

Defining Shocks and Shares of Hegemonic Power

Shocks clarify the balance of power, and in doing so reveal the leaders of the international system. Theorists have argued that the balance of power is most transparent after major wars, since, as Gilpin writes, “a hegemonic war is the ultimate test of change in the relative standing of the powers in the existing system.”²⁸ I expand on Gilpin’s idea of a hegemonic war to include non-military

²⁶ See, e.g., Waltz (1979) or Kennedy (1987) “The *multipolar* world of 1885 was replaced by a *bipolar* world as early as 1943.” (Kennedy 1987:197, orig. emphasis)

²⁷ A dataset extending beyond 2000 will have to grapple with the rise of China and (to a lesser extent) India, but I consider the period between 1991 and 2000 to be one of unchallenged American unipolarity.

²⁸ Gilpin (1981) fn.80

shifts in the balance of power. I define a hegemonic shock as a sudden shift in the distribution of relative power among the leading states in the international system.

Since the definition of a hegemon was discussed above, here I will focus on the concept of a “sudden shift” in relative power. In the international relations literature, “shocks” have traditionally been defined in the same way that Justice Potter Stewart defined obscenity – we know them when we see them. In practice, this has meant defining certain pre-designated years as “shock years” and using dummy variables to separate them from non-shock years for the purposes of regression analysis. For example, Gates et al (2007) define shock years in their dataset as lasting from 1914–23, 1939–49, and 1989–96.

To get a better grasp on sudden shifts in hegemonic power, I measured hegemonic volatility by summing the absolute values of annual changes in CINC scores among the hegemons. More precisely, hegemonic volatility (HV) for a given year t is defined by the formula:

$$HV_t = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n |CINC_{i,t} - CINC_{i,t-1}|}{n}$$

where n is the number of hegemonic states in a given year. This variable captures hegemonic shocks by tracking how quickly the distribution of relative power among major states changes over time. It is also an improvement on existing measures that use dummy variables for pre-designated shock years. The figure below shows hegemonic volatility smoothed over time (an average of that year’s volatility and the previous four years):

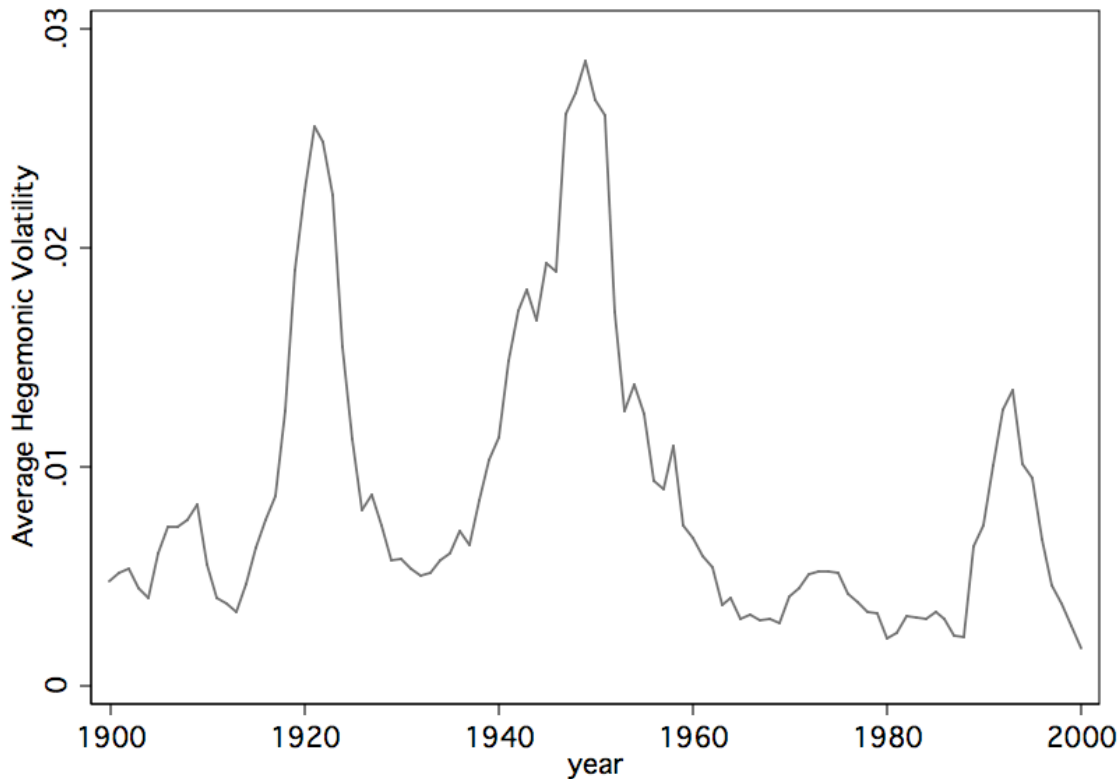


Figure 2.7: Average Hegemonic Volatility (smoothed), 1900-2000

There are three immediately visible spikes, falling approximately between 1917-1922, 1940-1947 (with some reverberations continuing into the 1950s), and 1989-1995. These represent my case selections of World War I, World War II, and the Soviet Collapse (a case study to be completed at a later date). Although it does not appear on the graph above, I have added another case, the Great Depression, for the following reasons. First, due to the way the CINC index is constructed, it is likely to underestimate economic change in favor of military and geopolitical factors. Second, consistent with the demands of the theory, even when measured via CINC relative U.S. power begins to decline beginning in the mid-1920s and

especially after 1929, while German power increases dramatically after Hitler's ascent to power in 1933. (See Figure 2.8) The period of the Great Depression thus provides an important and unique case of a democratic hegemon in decline, offering greater variation on my dependent variable.

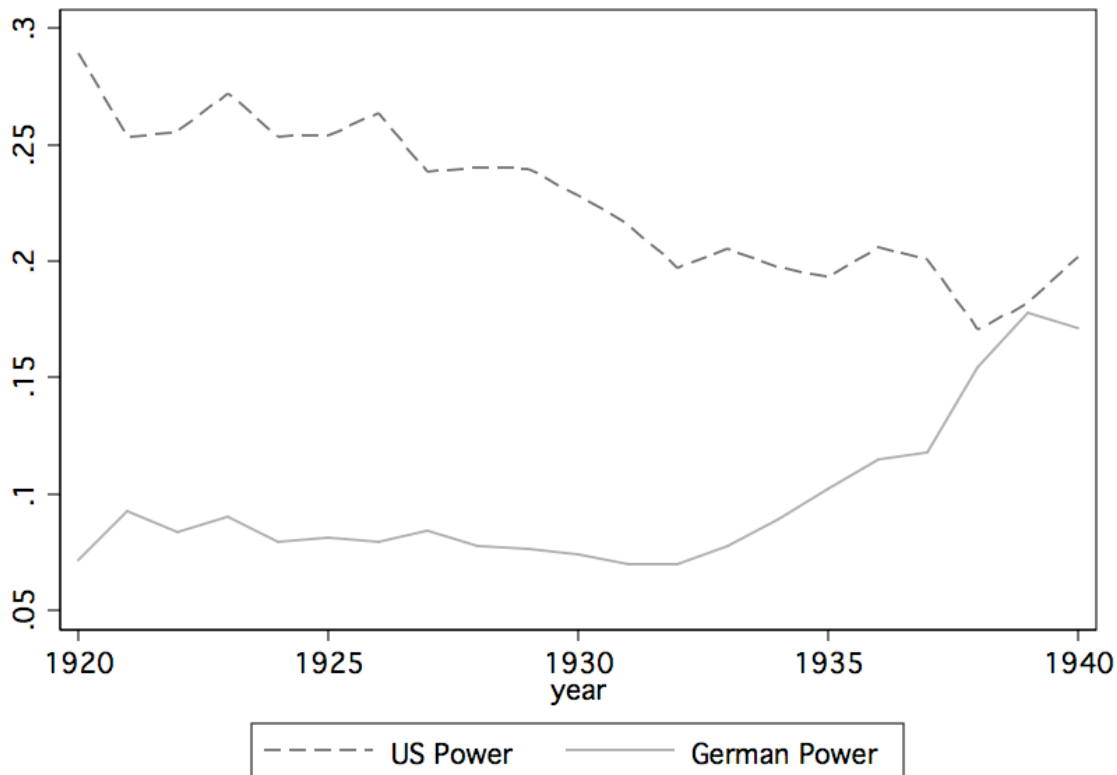


Figure 2.8: US and German Power (measured by CINC), 1920-1940

Total hegemonic volatility, however, is not an appropriate measure to account for the spread of democratization. While clarifying the case selection, hegemonic volatility conceals the upward and downward movements of different hegemonic regime types. The testable hypotheses that flow from examining hegemonic shocks focus on the rise and fall of individual great powers. Namely, we would expect a

rise in power of a democratic hegemon (in this case, the United States 1900-2000) to lead to increased democratization at the systemic and within-country levels. A decline in the power of the democratic hegemon, on the other hand, should lead to a decrease in democratization. Similarly, the rise and fall of the communist and fascist hegemons should lead to a rise and fall in the spread of communism and fascism.

H1: Decline in relative power of a hegemon leads to a retreat in the hegemon's regime type around the world.

H1.1: The intensity of the decline affects the magnitude of regime retreat.

Conversely:

H2: A rise in the relative power of a hegemon leads to the spread of the hegemon's regime type around the world.

H2.1: The intensity of the hegemonic rise affects the magnitude of regime spread.

To test these hypotheses, I created a measure called the hegemonic share of power for the state representing each regime type – democratic (the United States), fascist (Nazi Germany) and communist (Soviet Russia). In the case of the U.S., the share of hegemonic power was measured as a proportion of American power and total hegemonic power in a given system-year. In the case of Germany and the USSR, their hegemonic share was calculated similarly, but only for those years in which the hegemons actually represented the alternative regime types (USSR 1922-1991, Germany 1933-1945), since these are the time periods salient to the theory at hand. I used a single hegemon to represent each regime type, since they were the leading representatives of their regimes that inspired others to follow suit, and

since it was their sudden rise and decline, as documented in the case studies, that drive the waves. As a robustness check, the regression results were also tested with an expanded definition of hegemonic shares – all democratic great powers (Britain, France, and the U.S.) instead of only the United States, and all fascist great powers (Germany and Japan). This operationalization was highly correlated with the one used here, and produced very similar results. (See footnote 33, below.)

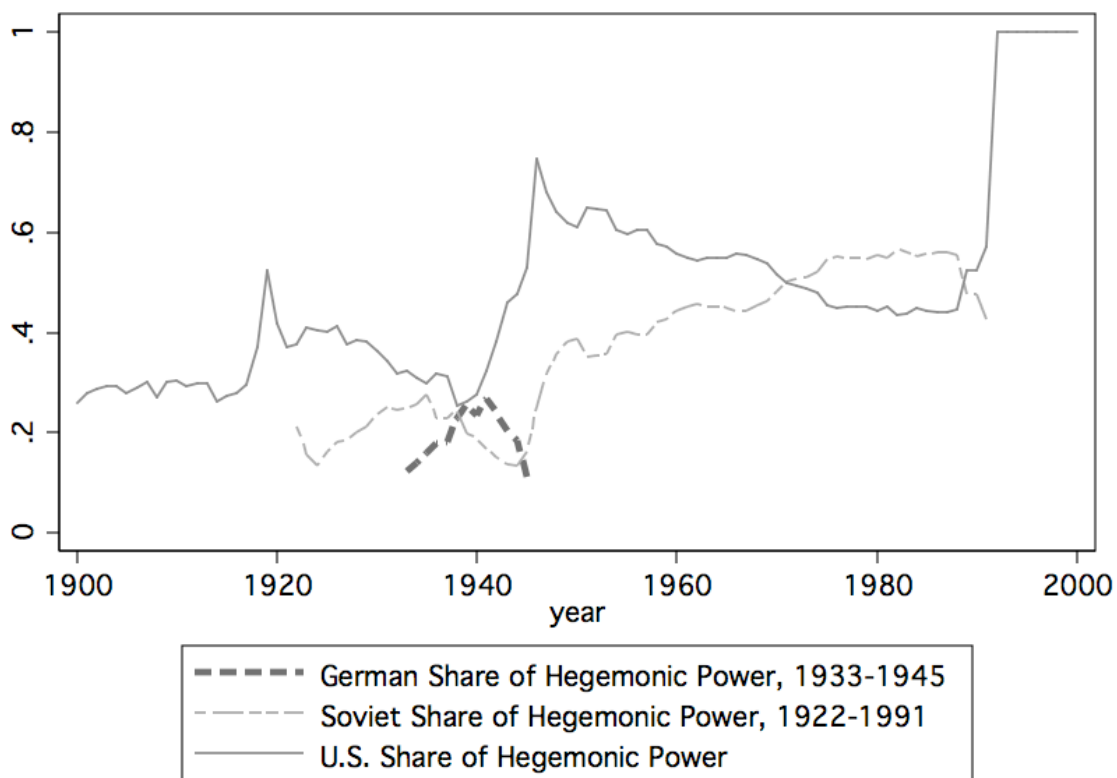


Figure 2.9: Shares of hegemonic power bounded by salient regime spans, United States (1900-2000), Soviet Union (1922-1991), and Germany (1933-1945).

	Variable	Description	Summary Statistics			
			Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
United States	US share of hegemonic power (<i>usshare</i>)	U.S. CINC score as a proportion of the total CINC of hegemonic states in a given system-year	0.4868	0.1997	0.254	1
	Average US share of hegemonic power (<i>avusshare</i>)	A 5-year average of the U.S. share of hegemonic power (current year plus the four previous years).	0.4726	0.1800	0.2725	1
	Change in US share of hegemonic power (<i>cgusshare</i>)	1-year change in the U.S. share of hegemonic power	0.0073	0.0563	-0.105	0.427
	Average change of US share of hegemonic power (<i>avchusshare</i>)	A 5-year average of change in the U.S. share of hegemonic power (current year plus the four previous years). Captures the overall trends associated with hegemonic shocks.	0.0070	0.0274	-0.024	0.112
Nazi Germany	German share of hegemonic power, 1933-45 (<i>grshare</i>)	German CINC score as a proportion of the total CINC of hegemonic states in a given system-year	0.193	0.051	0.111	0.269
	Average German share of hegemonic power (<i>avgrshare</i>)	A 5-year average of German share of hegemonic power (current year plus the four previous years).	0.185	0.047	0.117	0.245
	Change in the German share of hegemonic power (<i>chgrshare</i>)	1-year change in the German share of hegemonic power	-0.0002	0.034	-0.075	0.047
	Average change in the German share of hegemonic power (<i>avchgrshare</i>)	A 5-year average of change in the German share of hegemonic power (current year plus the four previous years).	0.006	0.014	-0.025	0.023
Soviet Union	Soviet share of hegemonic power, 1922-1991 (<i>rushare</i>)	USSR CINC score as a proportion of the total CINC of hegemonic states in a given system-year	0.374	0.143	0.133	0.566
	Average Soviet share of hegemonic power (<i>avrushare</i>)	A 5-year average of the USSR share of hegemonic power (current year plus the four previous years).	0.365	0.145	0.143	0.559
	Change in the Soviet share of hegemonic power (<i>chrushare</i>)	1-year change in the USSR share of hegemonic power	0.003	0.025	-0.078	0.088
	Average change in the Soviet share of hegemonic power (<i>avchrushare</i>)	A 5-year average of change in the USSR share of hegemonic power (current year plus the four previous years).	0.005	0.014	-0.026	0.050

Table 2.2: Measures of hegemonic power, 1900-2000 ($n=101$ for US variables, 13 for German variables, and 70 for Soviet variables).

Bivariate Model

A system-level analysis of the effects of hegemonic shocks suggests a strong relationship between the amount of relative power wielded by the hegemons and the spread of democratic, fascist, and communist states around the world. The U.S. share of hegemonic power is a strong predictor of global democracy at the systemic level. It has a strong and statistically significant effect on spread of democratization; for example, a 10% increase in the share of U.S. hegemonic power is associated with an increase in the global democratization average by nearly 0.7 points. (See Appendix 2 for a discussion of the regional effects of hegemonic power.)

<i>IV</i>	<i>DV</i>	<i>Coefficient (std error)</i>
U.S. share of hegemonic power (1900-2000)	Total average global Polity IV score, excluding the US	6.95 (0.22)***
U.S. share of hegemonic power (1900-2000)	Total average Sip score, excluding the US	0.272 (0.026)***
Russian share of hegemonic power (1918-1991)	Global proportion of power, communist states (excluding the USSR)	0.314 (0.05)***
German share of hegemonic power (1933-1945)	Global proportion of power, fascist states (excluding Germany)	0.033 (0.01)***

Table 2.3. Systemic effects of hegemonic power.

Multivariate Model

The bivariate results are suggestive, but they cannot account for the influence of other factors on democratization, nor can they provide much evidence of a causal relationship between the two variables. Including GDP data in the results above, for example, has some significant effects on the coefficients. To account for such effects I constructed a multivariate model that incorporates variables commonly employed in major democratization datasets. The most significant finding of this chapter is that changes in hegemonic power have a substantively and statistically strong effect on democratization within individual countries, even when common covariates of democracy are taken into account.

The first of these is economic development. The relationship between economic growth and political development is among the most robust findings in political science, although scholars continue to debate the precise mechanisms that connect the two. Economic development was measured by two factors – the log of per capita GDP, and the level of urbanization. Per capita GDP data was taken from Angus Maddison’s dataset of historical statistics. Urbanization was measured by as urban population (living in cities above 500,000 people) as a proportion of total population. Both population measures were obtained from the CINC dataset. In the regression model the two economic development variables were lagged by a year.

Diffusion – the tendency for states to adopt the institutions of their neighbors – has also frequently been identified as a spur to democratization. Since diffusion forms an alternative explanation to hegemonic shocks, it is particularly important to

account for its influence in a statistical model. Diffusion was measured in two ways – as the country’s proportion of democratic neighbors for any given country-year, and a dummy variable coded as 1 if a country’s neighbor had transitioned to a democracy over the previous year. This data was obtained from the replication dataset by Gleditsch and Ward (2006).²⁹ The diffusion variables, like the economic development variables, were lagged by a year.

A state’s institutional history is also an important factor in shaping democratic development. The state’s institutional history was measured by two complementary variables – the number of years a country had existed with a democratic regime, and the number of years it had existed with an autocratic regime. This data was also obtained from Gleditsch and Ward (2006).

A number of other factors have traditionally been associated with shaping democracy. The spread of democracy has varied with geographic regions (see Appendix 2 for a more detailed discussion). Regional data is important to capture because they control for “false diffusion.” As Brinks and Coppedge put it: “Any variable that favors countries being, becoming, or remaining democratic would, if regionally concentrated, lead to a region that appears to be more likely to be, become, or remain democratic; and this regional tendency could appear to be the product of democratic diffusion within the region.”³⁰ Geographic data was coded by hand. Finally, colonial history and national culture were also coded by hand as

²⁹ Kristian Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward. (2006) "Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization" *International Organization* 60(4): 911-933. Replication archive available at <http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/publ.html>.

³⁰ Brinks and Coppedge (2006)

dummy variables. Five dummy variables were created to distinguish among former British, French, Portuguese, Spanish or Dutch colonies. (Of these, former British colonies are thought to have a consistently higher propensity for democracy.) A country was coded 1 if it had been one of those colonies, and 0 otherwise. Five dummies were also created to distinguish among predominantly Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Greek Orthodox, and Buddhist countries, the country's religion serving as a proxy for national culture. (Of these, predominantly Muslim countries are thought to have a consistently lower propensity for democracy.) Since the British colony and Muslim variables are the most theory-relevant, most regressions included only those two variables to avoid including variables less salient for testing the theory. Data for colonial history and national culture was coded using data from the CIA World Factbook. Table 6 provides the summary statistics for these control variables (excluding the geographic and national culture dummies.)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Obs</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Per capita GDP (pcgdp)	8116	4211	4592	218	42916
Urbanization (urban)	9860	0.170	0.16	0	1
% democratic neighbors (pnbdem)	9338	0.31	0.31	0	1
Number of neighbor transitions to democracy (nbtld)	9226	0.078	0.34	0	6
Length of autocratic rule (autdur)	9573	26.1	30.8	0	123
Length of democratic rule (demdur)	9573	8.4	19.5	0	123

Table 2.4: Summary statistics, control variables. Geographic and national culture dummies are excluded.

Multivariate Regression Results

Because my dependent variable is continuous, and the relationship between democracy and hegemonic power is posited to be linear, I employ an OLS model to examine the effects of hegemonic shocks. My independent variable in these models is the U.S. share of hegemonic power. The first model uses just one additional control variable, the log of per capita GDP in thousand of dollars, lagged by one year. The main independent variable is statistically and substantively significant (as it is in the other model variations). A ten percent increase in the share of US power is associated with a 0.68 rise in the average country's Polity score.

The second model adds variables that control for regional and neighborhood diffusion. These include two measures of neighborhood diffusion: a dummy variable that measures whether a neighbor transitioned to a democracy in the previous year, and the percent of a country's democratic neighbors (also lagged by a year). It also includes regional dummies to account for regional diffusion (not shown; see Appendix 2 for an expanded discussion of regional variation). Model 3 adds regime duration to the control variables in Model 2, in order to account for institutional inertia within countries. Previous research has shown that experience with democracy affects the success of democratization. Institutional history is measured by the number of years a country has experienced democracy and autocracy. Model 4 adds variables that account for colonial history (a series of dummies for British, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch colonies; not shown)

and a measure of political culture (proxied by dummies that indicate a Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Greek, or Buddhist/Confucian religious dominance; not shown). Finally, Model 5 uses the control variables in Model 4 but uses *change* in US share of hegemonic power as the main independent variable (the derivative of the level of the US share of hegemonic power). As before, an increase in the change of share of US power is associated with an increase in the average global level of democracy.

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Model1</i>	<i>Model2</i>	<i>Model3</i>	<i>Model4</i>	<i>Model5</i>
US Share of Hegemonic Power	6.75 (.39)***	4.94 (.38)***	3.20 (.31)***	3.52 (.32)***	4.02 (.91)***
Economic Development	0.65 (.017)***	0.27 (.018)***	0.87 (.09)***	0.78 (.09)***	0.88 (.09)***
Democratic Diffusion 1		6.38 (.29)***	0.64 (.17)***	0.68 (.16)***	0.67 (.17)***
Democratic Diffusion 2			3.4 (.25)***	3.13 (.26)***	3.90 (.25)***
Regime Duration - DEM			0.07 (.003)***	0.07 (.003)***	0.07 (.002)***
Regime Duration - AUT			-0.08 (.002)***	-0.08 (.002)***	-0.08 (.002)***
r-sq	0.18	0.45	0.59	0.60	0.60

Table 2.5: *Country-level effects of hegemonic power*. All variables measured 1900-2000. DV is Polity score, rescaled to 0-20. * significant at the 90% level; ** significant at the 95% level; ***significant at the 99% level

As the below results show, the share of U.S. hegemonic power, and changes within it, have a significant effect on democratic development under a number of different specifications, and using a variety of control variables. The U.S. share of hegemonic power appears to have an effect at the individual country level, and this effect remains significant even when all other variables are included. In line with expectations, economic development and diffusion effects are also consistently significant, as is regime history. Regime duration, under both autocracy and democracy, is statistically significant and with the expected coefficient signs. Geographic dummies, colonial history and national culture vary in significance (they have been omitted from the display to simplify the presentation.)³¹ The share of US power, and changes within that power (whether on a year-to-year or five-year basis), remains significant under a number of robustness checks, including robust standard errors, and when a lag of the dependent variable is included in the analysis.³² It remained significant for both measures of democracy, the Polity and the SIP score. The models were also run using an alternative measure of hegemonic change – instead of focusing on a single hegemon to represent each

³¹ In general, French, Spanish and Portuguese colonies have negative coefficients; British and Dutch colonies have positive but statistically insignificant coefficients.

³² Including a lag of the dependent variable is not generally recommended because it is highly correlated with the DV and inflates the r-squared. It can be used as a robustness check, however, since it “soaks up” a lot of the variance and can reveal which variables remain significant when the lag is included.

regime type, measures of hegemonic shares were expanded to include other great powers with that regime type.³³

To control for the persistent institutional inertia within individual countries, Model 5 was re-run with fixed effects, yielding the results below.

	Democracy Model (US share of hegemonic power)	Communism Model (Soviet share of hegemonic power)	Fascism Model (Nazi Germany share of hegemonic power)
Change in the share of hegemonic power	4.89 (.71)***	-4.4 (.69)***	-7.9 (3.1)***
Economic Development	1.50 (.11)***	2.16 (.18)***	-4.0 (1.0)***
Democratic Diffusion 1	0.40 (.13)***	0.45 (.14)***	0.79 (.28)***
Democratic Diffusion 2	4.48 (.27)***	3.49 (.33)***	0.91 (1.1)
Regime Duration (Democracy)	-0.005 (.005)	0.025 (.006)***	0.17 (.03)***
Regime Duration (Autocracy)	-0.08 (.002)***	-0.08 (.003)***	0.24 (0.05)***

Table 2.6: Model 5 from Table 2.2 with fixed effects.

³³ To do so I created a variable called *demshare*, which included the share of hegemonic power of the democratic great powers – the U.S., Britain, and France; and *fascshare*, which included the share of hegemonic power of Germany and Japan between the years 1933-1945. Since the USSR was the only communist great power during this period, this variation was not necessary for communist regimes. *Demshare* had a similar effect on the average level of democracy as the U.S. share, and was substantively and statistically significant in the model variations used above. (Not surprisingly, since the correlation coefficients between *ussshare* and *demshare* was 0.67) Likewise, when *fascshare* is substituted for *grshare* in the fixed-effects model, the coefficient is negative (as expected) and statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

As in the previous results, the salient independent variable remains substantively and statistically significant. Similarly, when the shares of Soviet or German hegemonic power are substituted as the main independent variable, their coefficients are large and statistically significant but *negative*, as the theory predicts.³⁴

Testing the Effects of Hegemonic Coercion

The effects of hegemonic shocks on the likelihood of regime coercion can be tested directly by looking at the rate of coerced regime promotions after military shocks. In theory, military hegemonic shocks should create a marked increase in instances of hegemons imposing their own regimes on other states (“mimetic” imposition). In other words, we would expect to see spikes in mimetic regime promotion by great powers in the closing months and immediately following both world wars.

To test this hypothesis empirically requires some measure of coercive regime promotion (CRP). Measurement is slightly complicated by the fact that there are two equally valid ways to count these cases – the number of promoters or the number of targets. First, we might add up the number of states imposing regimes upon others, then see how many of those states are hegemons, and then see how many of those hegemons were imposing their own regimes. Second, we might add

³⁴ As a robustness check, the fixed-effects models were run with two variations of the main independent variable: a one-year change in the level of hegemonic power, and the average five-year change in the share of hegemonic power. These models were also run with a lag of the dependent variable on the right-hand side. In all cases, the main independent variable remained statistically significant.

up the number of states *experiencing* or undergoing CRPs, then see how of those cases involve hegemons, and how many cases in that subset were countries undergoing mimetic CRP by a hegemon. Although the two numbers correspond, they are not always equivalent – a number of states may try to impose a regime on a single state (Albania in 1912 for example); conversely, a single state may try to impose a regime on more than one state during the same year (USSR in 1945).

The list of promoters and targets was taken from Owen 2002 and 2010 and supplemented by a few cases left out of the dataset.³⁵ To obtain a rough measure of overall regime promotion intensity, I multiplied the two measures together, so that, for example, if two countries were promoting a regime in three other states, the total intensity score was six. The total regime promotion intensity for all states is shown in Figure 2.10:

³⁵ See John Owen (2002) “The Foreign Imposition of Domestic Institutions” *International Organization* 56.2:375-409 and John Owen (2010) *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change 1510-2010*, Princeton University Press. I have added four omitted cases: USSR in Mongolia (1921); US in Nicaragua (1954), US and Britain in Iran (1953), and US in Chile (1973). These do not significantly affect the results since all but the first instance were not mimetic impositions.

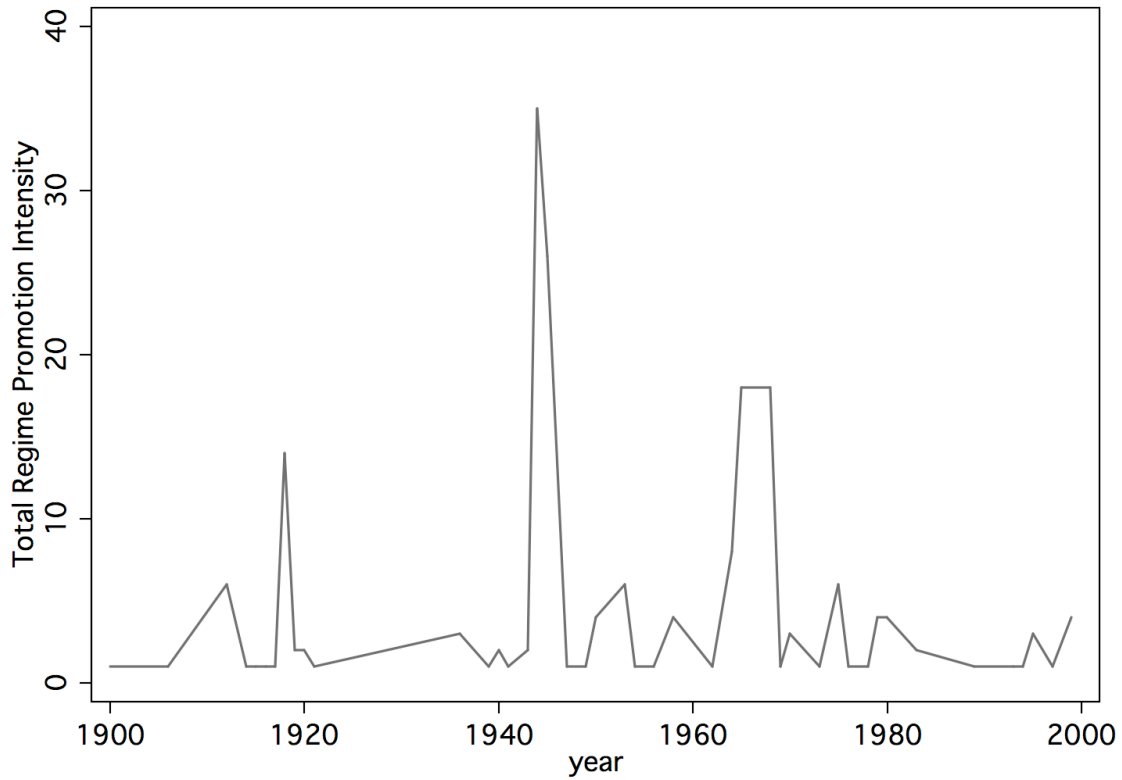


Figure 2.10: Total regime promotion intensity, 1900-2000.

There are three visible spikes (after the two world wars and another in the late 1960s.) The next step is to isolate those instances of regime coercion in which great powers are promoting their own regimes. The frequency of mimetic impositions by great powers is shown in Figure 2.11:

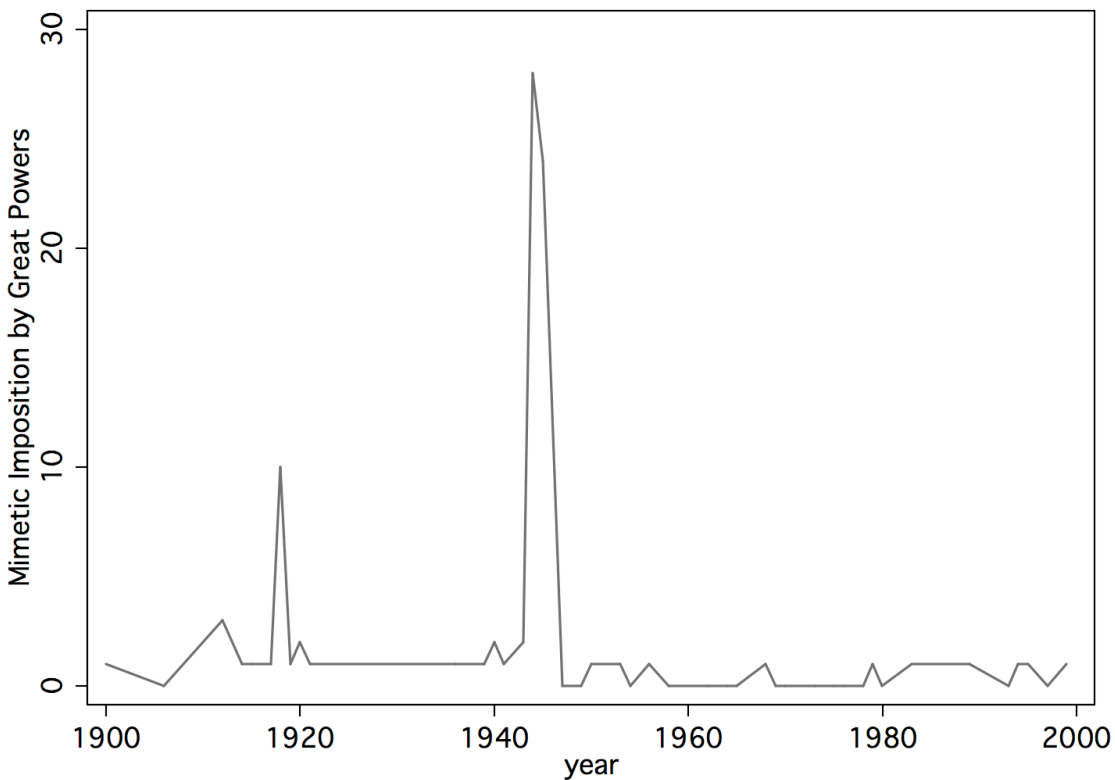


Figure 2.11: *Mimetic regime imposition by great powers, 1900-2000.*

Graphing the salient variable yields the posited results: mimetic regime impositions by great powers are much more likely to occur in the wake of military hegemonic shocks.³⁶ The table below breaks down the number of promotions by the relevant categories (“shock” years are counted as the last year of the war and the following two years, or 1918-1920 and 1944-1946, for a total of six shock years):

³⁶ Great power impositions in general are much more likely after hegemonic shocks. The graph of total regime impositions (mimetic and non-mimetic) by great powers is virtually identical to Figure 2.11. It is displayed in Appendix 4.

Type of Promoter	Shock years	Non-shock years	TOTAL
Hegemon, Mimetic	29	27	56
Non-hegemon, Mimetic	2	29	31
Hegemon, Non-mimetic	2	14	16
Non-hegemon, non-mimetic	1	17	18
TOTAL	34	87	121

Table 2.7: External interventions, promoter types 1900-2000, classified by shock vs. non-shock years

As the table demonstrates, great powers dominate but do not monopolize regime coercion in the twentieth century: of the 121 instances of regime coercion during this period, great powers were promoters in 72 of the cases. However, great powers nearly monopolize regime promotion during hegemonic transitions. During transition years, countries attempted to impose their regimes on others 34 times, and in 31 of those cases the promoter was a great power.³⁷ Moreover, great powers are much more likely to promote their own regimes in the wake of shocks – of the 31 cases of hegemonic intervention during shock years, in 29 of those cases they promoted their own regimes (about 94 percent).³⁸ Of the 41 cases of hegemonic intervention during non-shock years, they imposed their own regime in 27 cases (about 66%). Dividing by the number of years, in an average shock year there were

³⁷ The number of impositions is higher than the number of countries promoting regimes because in many instances the same country (particularly the US and the USSR) attempted to impose its regime on multiple countries.

³⁸ The two exceptions being Japan in Russia (1918) and the USSR in Austria (1945).

4.8 mimetic impositions by a great power, and only 0.28 such impositions in an average non-shock year.³⁹

In short, great powers act differently after hegemonic shocks. They are more likely to impose regimes during hegemonic transitions, and when they do so they are more likely to impose their own regimes than in non-shock years. The reasons for this, as suggested in the previous chapter, stem from the temporary decrease in the costs and increased likelihood of success in the wake of hegemonic shocks.

These findings both complement and build upon the recent literature on external regime impositions. Over the past decade or so, perhaps inspired by the American experience in Afghanistan and Iraq, the literature on regime promotions has been pessimistic about the effect of coerced regime imposition on domestic stability. For example, Pickering and Peceny (2006) examine regime promotions by the U.S., Britain, France, and the U.N. Between 1946 and 1996.⁴⁰ “Most scholars doubt that military intervention can lead to democracy,” they write. “Many are skeptical because they see the fundamental causes of democracy as internal.”⁴¹ They find that UN interventions are more likely to result in democracy than intervention by the democratic great powers, and find a strong statistical association between hostile intervention by the United States and democratization.

They argue, however, that this relationship is driven by three cases in the

³⁹ A difference-of-means test between mimetic hegemonic impositions in shock vs. non-shock years reveals (unsurprisingly) that the difference is statistically significant.

⁴⁰ Jeffrey Pickering and Mark Peceny (2006) “Forging Democracy at Gunpoint” *International Studies Quarterly* 50:539-559

⁴¹ Pickering and Peceny 2006:539

Caribbean, only one of which (Panama in 1989) created a stable democracy. They conclude that there is “little evidence that military intervention by liberal states helps to foster democracy in target countries” and argue that “the evidence presented here offers a cautionary tale for those determined to forge democracy at gunpoint.”⁴² Bueno de Mesquita and Downs (2006) reach a similar conclusion.⁴³ Their analysis is based on an extension of selectorate theory, focusing on the implications for the survival of the intervening leader and the type of government institutions in the target states that interventions are most likely to produce. Examining state and UN interventions between 1946 and 2001, they find that external military intervention “does little to promote democracy and often leads to its erosion and the substitution of largely symbolic reforms”.⁴⁴ Likewise, in a study of superpower interventions during the Cold War, Easterly et al (2008) find that intervention by either the United States or the USSR both decreased the likelihood of democracy by about 33 percent.⁴⁵ Peic and Reiter (2010) examine forty-two cases of regime imposition since 1920 and find that interventions increase the risk of civil war because they damage the infrastructural power of the state.⁴⁶ They

⁴² Pickering and Peceny 2006:539,556

⁴³ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George W. Downs (2006) “Intervention and Democracy” *International Organization* 60:627-49

⁴⁴ Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2006:647

⁴⁵ William Easterly, Shanker Satyanath, and Daniel Berger (2008) “Superpower Interventions and their Consequences for Democracy: An Empirical Inquiry” NBER Working Paper 13992, p.1

⁴⁶ Goran Peic and Dan Reiter (2010) “Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920-2004” *British Journal of Political Science*

conclude that interventions that follow interstate wars and change the target state's political institutions increase the risk of civil war eightfold.⁴⁷

Examining the effects of foreign interventions on regime transformations is complicated by the problem of selection effects - since outsiders are more likely to intervene in states that are experiencing problems, these targets of intervention are also more likely to experience failed consolidations and civil wars afterwards, exaggerating the negative connection between intervention and regime failure.⁴⁸ In an unpublished working paper, Downes (2011) accounts for these selection effects through matching procedures, and finds that foreign interventions can promote regime stability when outside powers are seeking to restore previous rulers. However, when they are seeking to depose the current ruler and install a new government, civil war becomes more than three times as likely. This happens because disrupting a sitting government "disrupts state power and foments grievances and resentments."⁴⁹

Finally, John Owen (2010) takes a longer view of foreign interventions, examining instances of external regime promotions since 1500.⁵⁰ He argues that impositions of domestic regime occur in waves, and describes three such waves

⁴⁷ Peic and Reiter 2010:22

⁴⁸ For a similar approach to examining the effects of peace-keeping on civil wars, see Virginia Page Fortna (2008) *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents' Choices after Civil War*, Princeton University Press

⁴⁹ Alexander B. Downes (2011) "Catastrophic Success: Foreign-Imposed Regime Change and Civil War" Working Paper, draft March 29, 2011, p.1

⁵⁰ John M. Owen (2010) *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change 1510-2010*, Princeton University Press

since 1500, each accompanied by an ideological struggle between competing regime types - the first between 1520 and 1650 (catholics vs. protestants); the second between 1770 and 1850 (republics vs. constitutional monarchies vs. absolute monarchies; and the third between 1917 and the present day (democracy vs. fascism vs. communism. Owen argues that the incidence of foreign regime promotion “rises steeply during periods of great-power struggle, either hot or cold wars”.⁵¹ The waves of imposition occur because in the presence of competing ideologies, particularly during times of relative insecurity, states find strategic significance in regime imposition or view them as relatively costless.⁵²

Although my analysis is based on John Owen’s dataset, his data leads me to a different conclusion about the causes of the waves of regime impositions. These bursts of interventions are indeed the products of competition between competing regime types, but they occur in the immediate aftermath of the struggle rather than during its course. In particular, mimetic regime impositions by great powers occur once the struggle has been decisively concluded via interstate war. Great powers do undertake non-mimetic impositions during the course of the struggle itself - most notably, during the Cold War - but these interventions are far less concentrated in time. At least for the twentieth century, Owen’s argument requires an important refinement: non-mimetic impositions occur *during* ideological struggles, but mimetic impositions occur directly *after* these struggles, and tend to be more clustered in time. These latter sorts of imposition are what produce the

⁵¹ Owen 2010:24

⁵² Owen 2010:27

waves of foreign-imposed regime changes, and contribute (along with influence and emulation) to the larger waves of regime change that follow hegemonic shocks.

These results also have some implications for the study of state death and the dynamics of international norms. Fazal(2007) has argued that state death is associated with buffer states caught between states with enduring rivalries.⁵³

Hegemonic shocks have also frequently been associated with the death and birth of states – World War I, for instance, destroyed the continental empires of central and eastern Europe and created a number of new nation-states from their remnants. The fascist wave culminated in the forced annexation and death of a number of states across Europe. Hegemonic shocks, in other words, may create unique conditions that intensify the normal mechanisms of state death.

Fazal has also argued that violent state death has virtually ceased after 1945 because of a norm against conquest. This suggests that while shocks create incentives for hegemonic coercion, the nature of that coercion (that is, whether it takes the form of dismemberment of rivals, forcible annexation or regime imposition through occupation) is mediated by the shifting structure of norms in the international system – and that these shifts are guided by the changing behaviors of the rising hegemons. The same mechanisms that lead to institutional waves may also create cascades of norm change. Because norms are inherently social constructs, and because they are associated with persuasion instead of power,

⁵³ Tanisha Fazal (2007) *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation*, Princeton University Press

material factors are assumed to be less important or even irrelevant in shaping changes in global norms. However, there is a tendency in the constructivist literature to conflate power with coercion – and since social constructs cannot be coerced, material power does not play an important role in these discussions. Yet power can and does influence normative changes in complicated ways, some of which may have nothing to do with brute force. States may imitate the norms of rising hegemons for similar reasons that they imitate their institutions – to copy their success, to attract allies, or to gain legitimacy in the eyes of their peers. Hegemonic shocks can thus shift the normative preferences of domestic actors and groups in many states simultaneously, leading to a norm cascade. To take one prominent example, the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union discredited the normative basis for communism among its fellow travelers in the developing world, contributing to a normative shift toward democracy. Today, illiberal states pay lip service to the importance of national elections even when the elections themselves are subject to a variety of political constraints. In this case, the sudden decline in the power of a communist hegemon directly contributed to a normative shift away from communism as an alternative institutional bundle. To equate norm change with persuasion while conflating power with coercion ignores the complexity of these influences.

Overall, the above analysis suggests that the literature on regime impositions would benefit from a closer look at its interaction with interstate war and the international environment as a whole. Recent studies suggest important causal links

between external impositions, interstate wars, and systemic peace. Lo, Hashimoto and Reiter (2008), for example find that peace is more durable following interstate wars in which the loser experience a foreign-imposed regime change.⁵⁴ Pessimistic conclusions about the democratizing effects of foreign interventions may be warranted, but they may benefit from distinguishing interventions that take place in the wake of hegemonic shocks from those that do not. Interventions after major wars occur at a time when the rising hegemons are at their most powerful and most committed to changing the global order. Post-shock interventions may also be legitimized by the outcome of a major war in a way that peacetime interventions are not. The U.S. occupation of Germany encountered no native opposition at least in part due to the nature of the war and the total defeat that accompanied its conclusion. In his book *Embracing Defeat*, the historian John Dower has argued that the success of the U.S. occupation of Japan after World War II was shaped at least in part by the nature of the war that proceeded it, and the decisive defeat that brought the war to an end.⁵⁵ As I will argue in Chapter 5, the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe was legitimized in part by the nature of the Soviet victory in that conflict. These factors simply do not come into play with interventions that occur in the absence of major interstate wars. In short, the effect of hegemonic shocks on

⁵⁴ Nigel Lo, Barry Hashimoto, and Dan Reiter (2008) "Ensuring Peace: Foreign-Imposed Regime Change and Post-War Peace Duration, 1914-2001" *International Organization* 62.4:717-36

⁵⁵ John Dower (1999) *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, W.W. Norton & Company

the propensity for external impositions to produce lasting regime change requires future consideration.

Conclusion

The empirical tests suggest that quantitative literature on democratization should pay close attention to a particular systemic influence that shapes and constrains domestic regime outcomes – the hegemonic share of power, and sudden changes within the level of that power. This variable remains significant under a number of model specifications and measures of the dependent variable. In the case studies that follow, I will examine the effects of hegemonic power in more detail, focusing on the specific mechanisms that drive this relationship.

APPENDIX 1: Regime Classifications

States Classified as Fascist:

Austria - 1933-1944
 Bulgaria - 1934-1944
 Germany - 1933-1944
 Hungary - 1938-1944
 Italy - 1922-43
 Japan - 1936-1945
 Portugal - 1934-73
 Romania - 1940-44
 Spain - 1936-75
 Albania - 1939-1944
 Belgium – occupied May 28 1940 to end of 1944 (1940-44)
 Czechoslovakia - 1939-1944
 Denmark - 1940-44
 France May 1940 to December 1944
 Greece April 1941 to October 1944 (1941-44)
 The Netherlands - May 10 1940 to beginning of 1945 (1940-44)
 Norway - 1940-44
 Poland October 1939 to early 1945 (1940-44)
 Yugoslavia (incl independent state of Croatia 1941-43) – April 17, 1941 to May 1945 (1941-44)
 Philippines - April 1942 to December 1944 (1942-44)
 Thailand - December 1941 to June 1944 (1942-44)

States Classified as Communist:

Afghanistan - 1978-1991
 Albania - 1946-1991
 Angola - 1976-1992
 Benin - 1976-1989
 Bulgaria - 1947-1990
 Cambodia - 1976-1991
 China since 1950
 Congo - 1970-1991
 Cuba since 1959
 Czechoslovakia - 1948-1989
 Ethiopia - 1975-1990
 Eastern Germany - 1950-1990
 Greece - 1948-49
 Grenada - 1979-1983

Hungary - 1950-1989
Laos since 1976
Mongolia - 1925-1991
Mozambique - 1975-1990
North Korea since 1948
Poland - 1945-1989
Romania - 1948-1989
Somalia - 1976-1990
USSR - 1921-1991
Republic of Vietnam - 1954-1975
Yemen's People Republic - 1968-1989
Vietnam since 1976
Yugoslavia - 1945-1991

APPENDIX 2: Regional Effects of Hegemonic Power

Scholars have noted significant variation in the spread of democracies across geographic regions.⁵⁶ Figure 6, below, charts the spread of democracies across different regions, measured by that region's average Polity score.

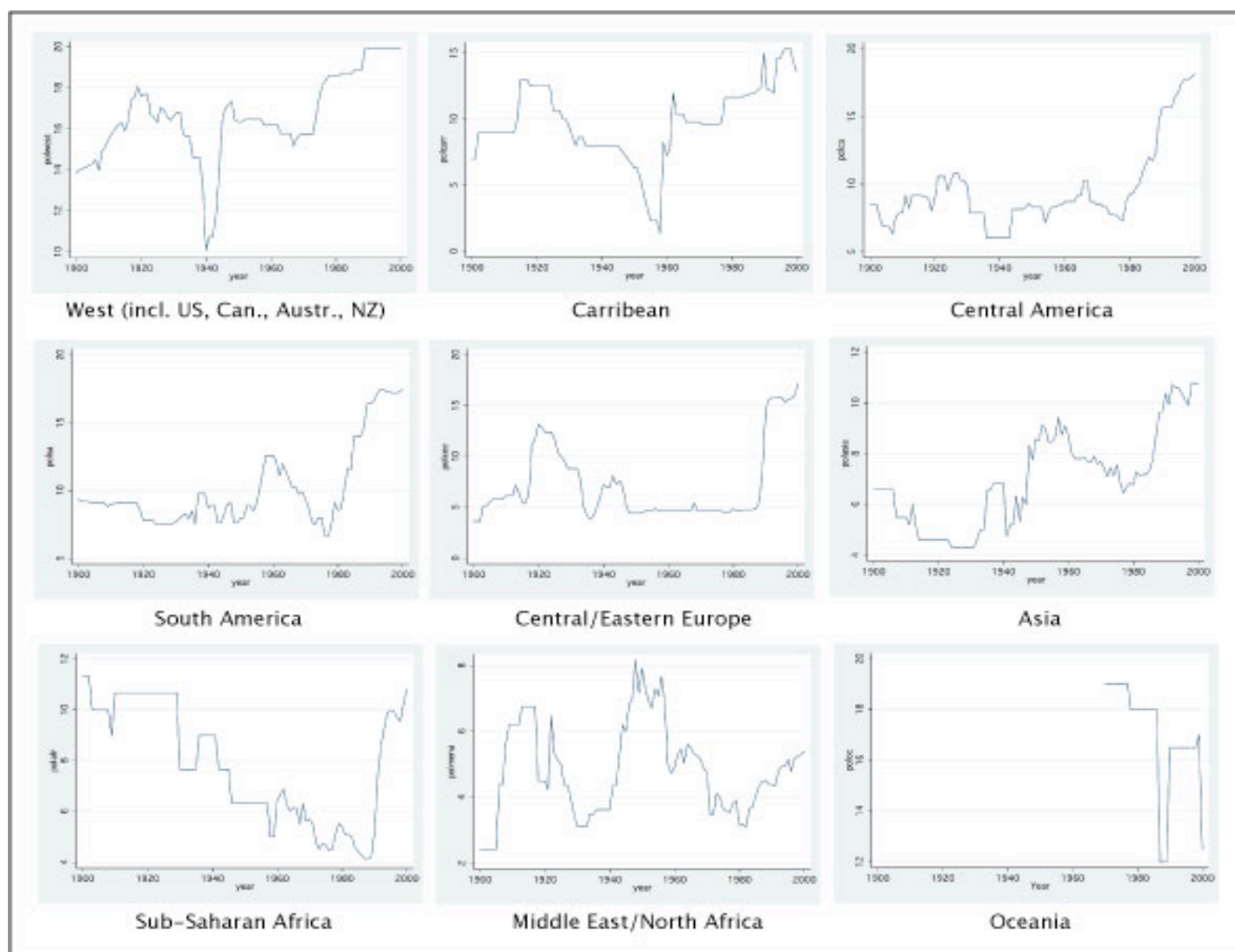


Figure A1: Regional variations in the spread and retreat of democracy, 1900-2000.

⁵⁶ See, e.g. John O'Loughlin, Michael D. Ward, Corey L. Lofdahl, Jordin S. Cohen, David S. Brown, David Reilly, Kristian S. Gleditsch, Michael Shin (1998) "The Diffusion of Democracy, 1946-1994" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 88.4:545-574

Despite the differences, at least some of the waves are present in all the regions. In the Western countries, which democratized earliest, there is a peak around World War I and a trough in the 1930s, culminating in an all-time low in the early years of World War II and a rapid democratic recovery at the end of the war. Central and Eastern Europe experiences a rapid increase, followed by rollback, after both wars; the period of Soviet rule is marked by democratic stagnation, followed by a rapid spread of democracy in the early 1990s. Sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, begins as fairly democratic (due to a small number of states of relatively democratic states at the beginning of the century) and declines throughout most of the twentieth century as new states enter the region, but experiences a rapid wave in the 1990s. Asia experiences bursts of democratization after World War II and during the 1990s. Central and South America stagnate during much of the twentieth century, and experience democratic waves in the 1990s; the Caribbean sees a short-lived burst of democracy after World War I, followed by a rapid decline and recovery in the 1960s. The Middle East shows distinct waves, with rollbacks, in the early years of the twentieth century and after World War II, followed by a smaller wave in the 1980s and 1990s.

Table A1 presents the relationship between regional democracy and US hegemony (measured in two ways: the level of U.S. hegemonic share, and the change in the level of US hegemonic share averaged over the preceding five years). The first two columns show the results of a simple bivariate regression for each

region. The last two columns show regression results that include a measure of the regional per capita GDP.

Region	US hegemonic share	Change in US share (5-year average)	US hegemonic share, controlling for regional per capita GDP	Change in US share, controlling for regional per capita GDP
West ⁵⁷	6.16 (0.85)***	24.2 (7.27)***	1.95 (1.0)*	11.4 (5.5)**
Central and Eastern Europe	10.2 (1.6)***	73.9 (11.68)***	11.2 (2.1)***	70.5 (12.6)***
Caribbean	3.47 (1.4)**	28.0 (10.9)***	1.32 (1.2)	20.0 (7.2)***
Central America	10.7 (1.0)***	47.1 (9.8)***	8.25 (1.2)***	37.1 (7.9)***
South America	10.5 (1.1)***	45.1 (10.1)***	7.27 (1.5)***	33.0 (8.9)***
Sub-Saharan Africa	-1.85 (1.1)	14.4 (8.4)*	7.65 (.85)***	30.8 (7.1)***
Asia	7.28 (.6)***	18.8 (6.7)***	6.57 (.73)***	5.8 (6.4)
Middle East and North Africa	2.3 (0.66)***	10.5 (5.0)**	3.9 (0.58)***	11.8 (4.4)***

Table A1. Regional Effects. Columns 1 and 2 are bivariate results. Results in columns 3 and 4 include regional per capita GDP data in the regression. N = 101. DV is Polity.

The results show a strong relationship between the two variables, with some variation. The American share of hegemonic power (and changes therein) is strongly correlated with levels of democratization in all regions except Sub-Saharan Africa, although the effect is weaker in the Caribbean. When regional wealth is

⁵⁷ Includes Western Europe, Scandinavia, and the settler colonies: U.S., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

taken into account, the relationship remains strong everywhere except in Asia (and becomes significant in Sub-Saharan Africa).

APPENDIX 3: Replication of Gleditsch and Ward (2006)

This appendix replicates the results found in Gleditsch and Ward (2006) and adds a variable associated with hegemonic shocks as a particularly tough check of the robustness of my results. Gleditsch and Ward analyze the spatial diffusion of democracy and the effect of neighborhood contagion on autocratic breakdown.⁵⁸ I first replicate Model 1 (found on page 925) of the article, then replicate the same model with the addition of a variable that captures changes in the level of American hegemonic power. They employ a Markov chain model that looks at factors such as democratic transitions in neighbors and the global proportion of democracy. A replication of their results thus offers a direct test of the idea that hegemonic power has an effect on the spread of democracy distinct from diffusion processes as a whole. It also biases the results against a positive finding for my variable, since the variables they use (see table below) are likely to correlate very closely with variables associated with the effects of hegemonic power. Second, the independent variable used in the model is dichotomous, which doesn't capture the effects of hegemonic power on democratic reforms that do not lead to clear-cut transitions. For these two reasons, the replication is thus a "hard case" for my theory, since the model is biased against positive results for my variables.

As a brief preview, the results are mixed. Of the three operationalizations of my variable used in the replication, two are not statistically significant. A third, however (measuring a five-year average of the change in U.S. hegemonic power) is

⁵⁸ Kristian Skrede Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward (2006) "Diffusion and the International Context of Democratization" *International Organization* 60.4:911-933

statistically significant, and shows that increases in the rate of U.S. hegemonic power make democracies less likely to break down, consistent with the predictions generated by the theory. The result is substantively large – the coefficient of this variable is bigger than any of the other independent variables used in their model. These results suggest that at the very least levels of hegemonic power deserve a closer look in further empirical studies of democratization.

Covariates	Beta Coefficient	Gamma Coefficient
Constant	2.46 (0.81)***	3.856 (0.317)
Logged GDP per capita	-0.500 (0.089)***	-0.065 (0.004)
Proportion of Neighboring Democracies	-0.550 (0.264)**	-0.687 (0.467)
Civil War	0.369 (0.223)*	-0.016 (0.025)
Years of Peace at Territory	0.002 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.0001)
Economic Growth	-0.024 (0.012)*	0.003 (0.0001)
Global Proportion of Democracies	-0.621 (1.05)	-2.570 (0.467)***
Neighboring Transition to Democracy		-0.436 (0.138)

Table A2: Replication of Model 1 from Gleditsch and Ward 2006, page 925

Here, the beta coefficient represents the likelihood that a democracy will endure, while the gamma coefficient represents the likelihood that an autocracy will break down.⁵⁹ Thus, for example, a higher proportion of neighboring democracies significantly increases the likelihood that democracies will break down (contrary to their prediction, with $\beta = -0.550$) but also significantly decreases the likelihood that autocracies will endure (with $\gamma = -0.687$)

⁵⁹ The gamma coefficient is calculated by adding the beta coefficient and the alpha coefficient (the coefficient of the interaction term for that variable).

Next, I replicated this model with the addition of a measure of U.S. hegemonic power. I used three variations: a lag of the U.S. share of hegemonic power (*lusshare*), change in the share of U.S. hegemonic power (*chusshare*), and a running five-year average in the change in the U.S. share of hegemonic power (*avchusshare*). Ex ante, the last measure appears to be the most likely candidate, since it measures changes in the rate of change over a five year-period and thus is closest to capturing the dynamics of a hegemonic shock. In fact, this variable is significant at the 10% level and more importantly, possessed the expected signs:

<i>Covariates</i>	<i>Beta Coefficient</i>	<i>Gamma Coefficient</i>
Constant	3.309 (0.966)***	3.731 (0.365)
Logged GDP per capita	-0.509 (0.090)***	-0.066 (0.004)
Proportion of Neighboring Democracies	-0.537 (0.267)**	-0.689 (0.046)
Civil War	0.364 (0.225)	-0.017 (0.025)
Years of Peace at Territory	0.002 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.000)
Economic Growth	-0.021 (0.012)*	0.003 (0.0001)
Global Proportion of Democracies	-3.283 (1.936)*	-2.120 (1.09)
Neighboring Transition to Democracy		-0.434 (0.138)***
Average change in US hegemonic power share	5.867 (3.317)*	-1.070 (3.40)

Table A3: Model 1 with the addition of *avchusshare*, a measure of change of US hegemonic power

Here, a sudden increase in the US share of power increases the likelihood that democracies will endure. (The other two measures were not statistically significant, although substantively they had the expected signs.) The coefficient (in bold) is very large (5.867) and statistically significant. Substantively, the magnitude of this coefficient is larger than all the other variables except the global proportion of

democracies. It also decreases the likelihood that autocracies will endure, but the effect is not statistically significant. Given the aforementioned factors that bias the model against finding a significant relationship, it seems plausible that future quantitative studies should further examine the effects of hegemonic power on the propensity for domestic reforms.

APPENDIX 4: Total Regime Impositions by Great Powers

This graph shows the intensity of regime impositions by great powers. It is virtually identical to Figure 2.11, but includes both mimetic and non-mimetic impositions. The graph demonstrates that all hegemonic interventions cluster *after* hegemonic shocks, contra Owen (2010).

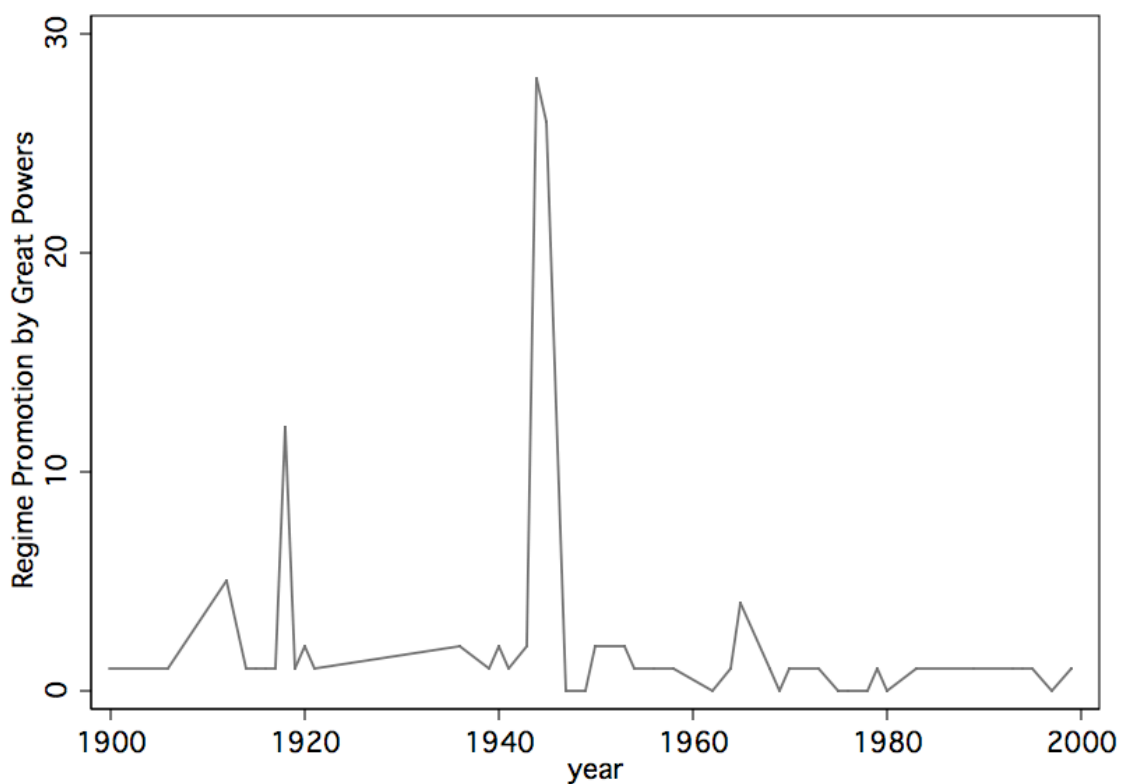


Figure A2: Total Regime Promotion Intensity by great powers, 1900-2000

CHAPTER 3

THE ALCHEMY OF WAR

“The year 1918 marked a bright and conspicuous date in the annals of our history. After a series of successes which seemed to forecast their eventual triumph, our aggressors suddenly foundered in a cataclysm which at a single blow destroyed the oldest monarchies of Europe.”

-- Gustave Le Bon (1921)¹

“Purged and humbled, democracy presents itself for revision.”

-- T.V. Smith (1927)²

The first democratic wave of the twentieth century found an unexpected origin in the immense destruction of the Great War. The postwar flowering of democratic regimes on the European continent was a period of hope born from tragedy, a moment of crisis transformed into opportunity. The wave of reforms that accompanied the end of the war was intense, widespread, ambitious – and

¹ Gustave Le Bon (1921) *The World in Revolt: A Psychological Study of Our Times*, transl. by Bernard Miall, New York: The Macmillan Company, p.9

² T.V. Smith (1927) “Review of *Democracy Under Revision* by H.G. Wells” *The Social Service Review* 1.4:665

ultimately unsuccessful. Between 1917 and 1922, over a dozen newly-born European states emerged from the ruins of collapsed empires (See Figure 3.1) and adopted democratic institutions like parliaments, civil liberties, and universal suffrage. At the same time, semi-democracies like Britain and Belgium expanding voting rights to previously excluded groups like women and working-class men. The spirit of postwar democratic optimism was so strong that a year after the armistice, British politician and historian James Bryce wondered whether the “trend toward democracy now widely visible is a natural trend, due to a general law of social progress”.³

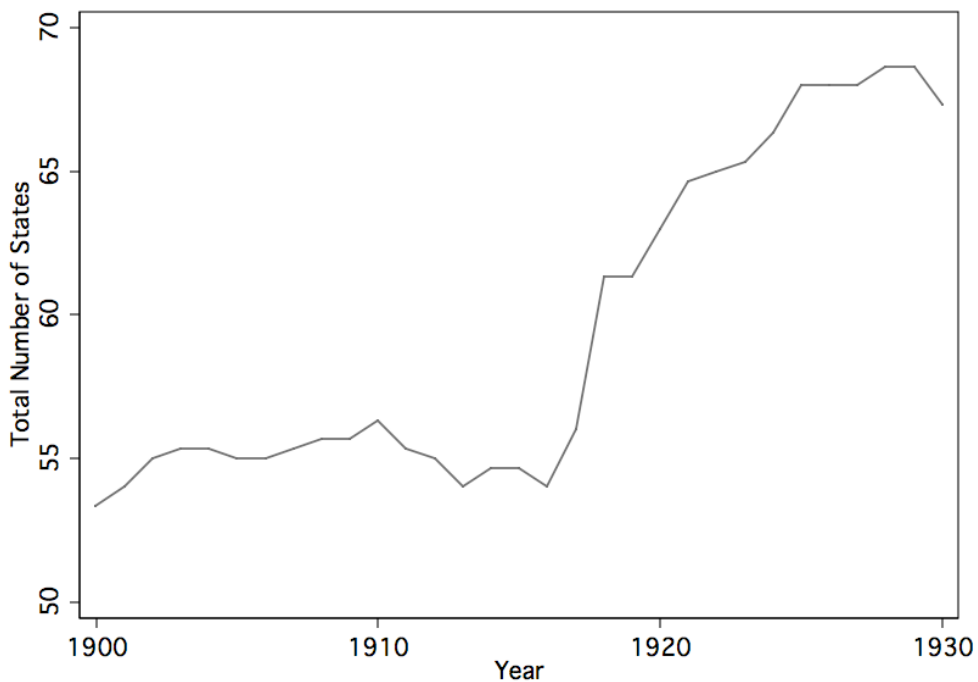


Figure 3.1: Total number of states in the international system, 1900-1930

³ James Bryce (1921) *Modern Democracies*, Vol.1, New York: Macmillan, p.24.

Surveying the wreckage of collapsed European empires, it was tempting to believe that an era of democracy had indeed dawned on the continent. The outcome of the war appeared to vindicate democracy while exposing the deficiencies of its competitors. Absolutist empires, defeated and disgraced, had been refashioned in a democratic mold, however precariously, all across Europe. A poet writing in 1919 could not “dare to speak of kings and queens / Democracy is now the card”.⁴ Returning to the United States after his triumphant European tour, Woodrow Wilson proclaimed that democratic principles had “penetrated to the heart and understanding” of both masses and rulers, and imagined the Founding Fathers “looking on with a sort of enraptured amazement that the American spirit should have made conquest of the world.”⁵

The wave of postwar democratization was driven by two factors related to the outcome of the war. First, the collapse of ill-glued⁶ monarchical empires created a number of new states in central and eastern Europe. Inspired by democracy’s ability to mobilize masses and triumph over powerful enemies, the leaders of these new states looked to democratic institutions as the way to harness the postwar spirit of national self-determination, modernize their societies, and acquire both

⁴ Richard de Gallienne (1919) “Ballade of the Modern Bard” *Harper’s Magazine*, October, p. 761

⁵ Woodrow Wilson, Speech of September 6 1919, quoted in G. John Ikenberry (2000) *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, Princeton University Press, p.158

⁶ To borrow Jacques Barzun’s description of Austria-Hungary. Jacques Barzun (2000) *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life from 1500 to the Present*, Harper Perennial, p.690

international and domestic respectability. “Four great empires in Europe, all ruled by ancient dynasties, crash to the ground,” wrote Bryce, “and we see efforts made to build up out of the ruins new States, each of which is enacting for itself a democratic constitution.”⁷ American power proved decisive in the European theater and now loomed large across the continent. By joining the democratic camp, the new states also hoped to secure American financial assistance and security guarantees. At the same time, the “ostentatious purity”⁸ of Woodrow Wilson’s democratic vision provided the ideological basis for the reforms. Europeans “who had been long tried, confused, bereaved,” write Palmer et al, “were stirred by Wilson’s thrilling language in favor of a higher cause.”⁹ In the new states, material and ideological factors converged to bolster democracy’s appeal and legitimacy.¹⁰

Second, the war led to democratizing reforms via the mobilization of women and labor in partial democracies. As leaders of the Allied countries soon realized, uninterrupted industrial production was a necessary ingredient for waging a

⁷ Bryce 1921:4-5. These were the Hohenzollern, Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman empires.

⁸ J.M. Roberts (1999) *Twentieth Century: The History of the World, 1901 to 2000*, Viking, p.283

⁹ R. R. Palmer, Joel Colton, and Lloyd S. Kramer (2002) *A History of the Modern World*, 9th edition, McGraw-Hill, p.687-8

¹⁰ In an empirical analysis, Gates et al find that states created by the war were much more democratic than the average pre-war regime. Scott Gates, Håvard Hegre, Mark P. Jones, Håvard Strand, “Democratic Waves? Global Patterns of Democratization, 1800-2000,” paper prepared for delivery at the National Political Science Conference, January 2007, Trondheim, Norway, p.14. For similar arguments, see Palmer et al 2002:746 and Raymond Sontag (1970) *A Broken World: 1919-39*, HarperCollins, p.66.

prolonged, materiel-heavy war. For the first time since the wars of Napoleon, victory hinged on mobilizing the disenfranchised. The modern battlefield demanded mass armies, and industry absorbed massive amounts of labor. Triumph would require the cooperation of the labor class. For workers, this newfound importance offered an opportunity to generate political concessions and led to an expectation that a higher standard of living “must emerge with the coming of peace.”¹¹ Warfare strengthened labor’s organizational power and forced the working and ruling classes to strike a reciprocal bargain – if workers’ acquiescence led to victory, they would be rewarded with political freedom and welfare measures. As the hostilities ended, labor was more unified, better organized, “and in a position to back its demands with threats.”¹² The Allied victory cemented the wartime bargain and made the expansion of political rights inevitable in the short term.

In the space of a few years, the alchemy of war had transformed the laborer into a union worker, the housewife into a suffragette, the emperor into a relic. At the onset of the conflict, Europe had only three states that could be called democracies; by the end, the number had grown to sixteen. (See Figures 3.2 and 3.3)¹³

¹¹ Dietrich Rueschmeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens (1992) *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, University of Chicago Press, p. 91-2; See also Sandra Halperin (2004) *War and Social Change in Modern Europe: The Great Transformation Revisited*, Cambridge University Press, p.154

¹² Halperin 2004:171

¹³ Norman Davies (1996) *Europe: A History*, Oxford University Press, p. 943. The precise numbers vary with differing definitions of democracy, but the overall trend

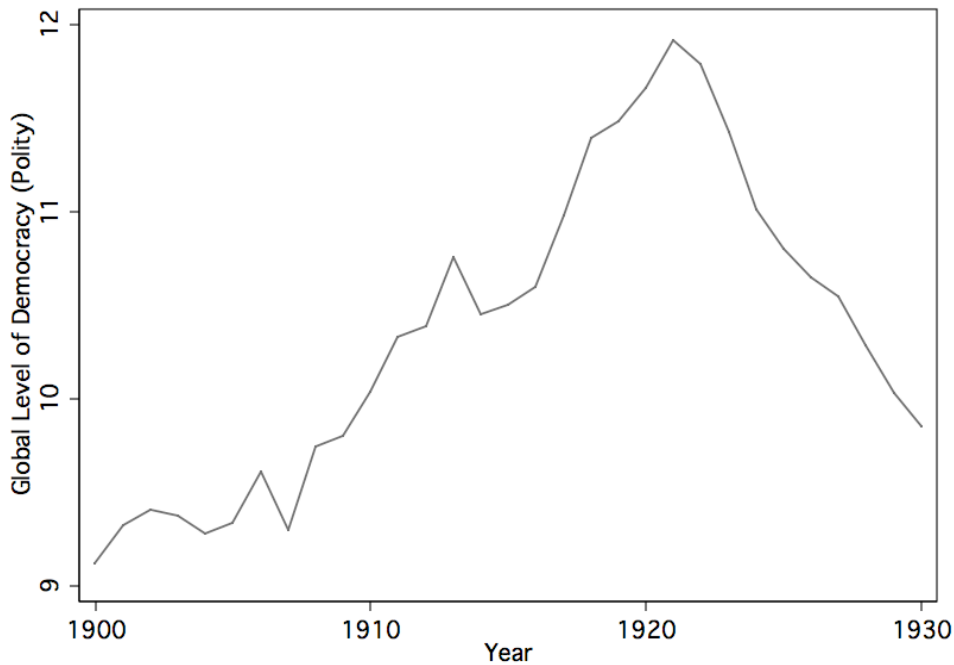


Figure 3.2: The postwar democratic wave, as measured by Polity, 1900-1930.

remains the same. According to Nancy Berneo, by 1920 twenty-six out of twenty-eight European states were parliamentary democracies. (She notes that by 1938, thirteen of these democracies had become dictatorships.) Nancy Berneo (1997) "Getting Mad or Going Mad? Citizens, Scarcity and the Breakdown of Democracy in Interwar Europe" Center for the Study of Democracy, paper 97.06. Huntington (1991:17) writes that 17 countries had adopted democratic institutions between 1915 and 1931, but only four of these had retained them through the 1930s. Peceny notes that the number of democracies "nearly doubled" in 1919, although almost all of these new democratic regimes collapsed by the end of the 1930s. Mark Peceny (2010) "Democratizing During Hard Times: Germany's Transition to Democracy in the Wake of the First World War" Paper presented at the 106th Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 2-5, 2010, Washington, D.C., p.1.



Figures 3.3: The postwar democratic wave, as measured by SIP, 1900-1930.

But the countries that formed the democratic wave of 1918-1923 pursued two distinct trajectories. New states formed from imperial ruins adopted radically democratic institutions but saw failures and reversals in the late 1920s and the 1930s. The causes for this failure, as I argue later in this chapter, were embedded in the dynamics that created the wave in the first place. The outcome of the war had brought together a number of short-lived pro-democracy coalitions, creating a number of transitions in countries where the structural conditions for long-term democratic consolidation were simply not in place, whether due to a sustainable parliamentary majority to consolidate initial reforms, or the absence of economic and social conditions for democratic consolidation were absent. Optimistic leaders, swept up in the tide of national self-determination and democratic rhetoric after the

war adopted institutions that their countries had little chance of sustaining. These states attempted to democratize despite the absence of structural conditions that generally serve to sustain democracy – a well-established middle class, economic stability, ethnic cooperation, and past experience with democratic “rules of the game”. Europe’s democratic reversal is often linked to the crisis of confidence caused by the Great Depression. But even inside countries where economic collapse was the final nail in democracy’s coffin, problems began well before 1929. “The new states hatched at Versailles,” writes Tony Judt, “were fragile and somehow impermanent from the very start.”¹⁴ Parliamentary coalitions everywhere were short-lived, unstable, and ineffective. Interwar Romania, for example, saw coalitions fall on average every sixteen months.¹⁵ “A kind of economic, political, and cultural illiteracy prevailed,” writes Fritz Stern. “[T]here was an insufficient understanding of the preconditions for democracy and of the connections between economic and social conditions and democratic politics.”¹⁶ The defeat of the Central Powers, writes Huntington, “produced democratic institutions in central and eastern European countries that socially and economically (except for Czechoslovakia) were not ready for them and hence they did not last long.”¹⁷

Unlike the newly-formed states, countries that had been semi-democratic

¹⁴ Tony Judt (2005) *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, Penguin Press, p.195

¹⁵ Andrew C. Janos (1970) “The One-Party State and Social Mobilization” in Samuel Huntington and Clement Moore, eds., *Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society: The Dynamics of Established One-Party Systems*, Basic Books, p. 207

¹⁶ Fritz Stern (1997) “The new democracies in crisis in interwar Europe” in Axel Hadenius, ed., *Democracy’s Victory and Crisis*, Cambridge University Press, p.17

¹⁷ Huntington 1991:86. I discuss Czechoslovakia as an exception that proves the rule later in this chapter.

before the war – many in western and northern Europe – successfully expanded their suffrage and developed the first elements of the welfare state. In contrast to their east and central European peers, states like Canada, Belgium, and Great Britain managed to consolidate their postwar democratic gains with few internal reversals. These states, Frieden notes, “faced fewer postwar difficulties than eastern and central Europe.” Even territories most affected by fighting like Belgium and northern France saw the rapid resumption of economic activity. Despite a recession in 1920-21, by the following year “business conditions were returning to normality,” writes Frieden. “Despite difficulties and disappointments, by 1924 Europe had essentially recovered.”¹⁸ Most of these states also had substantial experience with democracy and a large middle class that moderated political volatility. In these countries, the major shift toward autocracy came two decades later, during the Nazi occupation at the beginning of World War II. By contrast, “the little countries that emerged from the collapse of the old land empires in 1918 were poor, unstable, insecure – and resentful of their neighbors.”¹⁹ The main long-term effect of the war, therefore, was to make proto-democracies more democratic without creating any sustainable new democracies. It did, however, give many countries a preview of democratic institutions that would return later in the century with World War II and the Soviet Collapse.

The remainder of the chapter is divided into four sections. I first examine the

¹⁸ Jeffrey A. Frieden (2006) *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century*, W.W. Norton, p.138-9

¹⁹ Judt 2005:4

hegemonic transition that occurred as a result of the war, focusing on the decline of monarchical Germany and the victory by democratic great powers – Britain, France, and particularly the United States. I then turn to a study of the mobilization of labor and postwar expansion of suffrage in Europe’s partial democracies. The next section examines the creation of new democracies out of the ruins of European empires. Finally, I examine the failed consolidations and the democracy backlash of the mid-1920s.

The Postwar Power Transition

The war’s outcome raised the prestige of democratic institutions for old and new states alike. The postwar shift in the distribution of power (see Figure 3.4) made democratic regimes more powerful, more able to exercise global influence, and more appealing all at once. It was the Great War, argues Fritz Stern, “that saw the elevation of democracy into a universal ideal.”²⁰ By defeating autocracies on the battlefield and on the factory floor, it suggested that democratic institutions were an effective way to organize modern society.

²⁰ Stern 1997:15

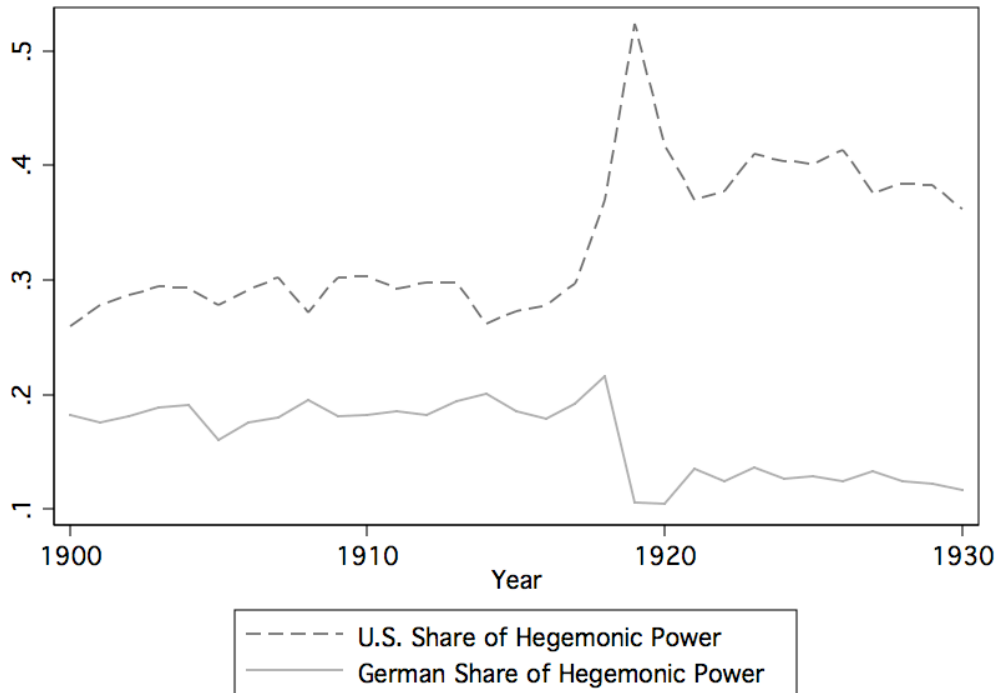


Figure 3.4: US and German shares of hegemonic power, 1900-1930. The period between 1918 and 1923 shows a rapid hegemonic transition with a German decline and an American surge.

This outcome seemed far from inevitable in 1914. The conventional wisdom of the day argued that democracy was paralyzed by checks and balances and stymied by fickle public opinion. As a result, it would prove inferior to autocracy in mobilizing men and resources for a major conflict. This idea of “democratic defeatism” persisted since the earliest writings on politics.²¹ In his account of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides attributed the victory of authoritarian Sparta over democratic Athens to the democratic impediments faced by Athenian leaders.²²

Alexis de Tocqueville, E.H. Carr, George Kennan, and Walter Lippmann all shared

²¹ Michael Desch (2002) “Democracy and Victory: Why Regime Type Hardly Matters” *International Security* 27.2, p.5

²² See especially the discussion of the Sicilian debate. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, book 7

the belief that democratic institutions failed to adequately prepare countries for wars. Even democracy's supporters admitted that its benefits "are not secured without very considerable sacrifices," as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of War for Industrial Relations wrote in 1916. "As a political system it is clumsy and inefficient in all material ways..."²³ A 1917 article in *Harper's* magazine voiced a widespread concern when it wondered whether democracy could compete with autocratic rule:

In an age dominated by science and dependent upon the scientific method, are the democratic masses capable of intelligent self-direction, or must they in self-defense surrender the control of government to the superior ability of the trained and exceptionally gifted few? There is no time to enlighten or consult the electorate. ...Does democracy then stand discredited? Has it been demonstrated that national efficiency and popular government are irreconcilable?²⁴

"Today the great war is being waged between German autocracy and English science under democratic control," concluded the author. "We shall not know until after the terms of peace have been announced which of the two is the more efficient."²⁵ This view reflected the perception of many political leaders. As Senator Henry Cabot Lodge noted in 1915, "if democracy is not both able and ready to defend itself it will go down in subjection before military autocracy because the latter is then the more efficient."²⁶ The vital test of any regime, wrote the historian

²³ Ernest Martin Hopkins (1916) "Democracy and Industry" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.65, p.60

²⁴ Robert W. Bruere (1917) "Can Democracy Be Efficient?" *Harper's Magazine* 195.2, p. 821. This idea has a long history, stretching back to Aristotle's *Politics*, and made a forceful return in the Great Depression.

²⁵ Bruere 1917, p. 825

²⁶ Henry Cabot Lodge (1915) "Force and Peace" *Annals of the American Academy*

and diplomat George Beer in 1916, is not the character of its internal politics but its ability “to survive in a struggle imposed by others. Were European democracy to fail in this crisis, its fate would be sealed and America would become the last bulwark of free government.”²⁷ President Wilson too saw the war as a test for democracy and a struggle between two competing visions of the future. In a 1918 speech, he described the United States as the “practitioner of the new creed of mankind” and Germany as the “most consistent practitioner of the old”. The war, he said, was a “battle to determine whether the new democracy or the old autocracy shall govern the world.”²⁸ As the United States entered the fight, American sociologist Franklin Giddings summed up the stakes:

So, at last, the giant democracies of western Europe and the giant absolutisms of central Europe confronted each other on the fields of France and Flanders in life and death grapple....Democracy or dynasty will be sovereign, from this time on.²⁹

The war provided the century’s first Manichean confrontation between two rival ideologies of the state. Now that monarchy has passed into the realm of anachronism, it is difficult to imagine that it once presented a viable and legitimate challenge to democracy. But at the start of the century, conservative autocracy still held sway in much of Europe and “dynasty” was the default form of government for

of Political and Social Science, Vol.60, p.210

²⁷ George Louis Beer (1916) “America's International Responsibilities and Foreign Policy” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.66, p.80

²⁸ Woodrow Wilson (1918) Message to Teachers, June 28; quoted in Ikenberry 2001:127

²⁹ Franklin H. Giddings (1917) “The Bases of a Just and Enduring Peace” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.72, p.86

new states. Norway chose a king after gaining independence from Sweden in 1908, as did Albania when it seceded from Turkey in 1913. With the exception of France and Switzerland, until 1914 continental Europe remained monarchical; despite the spread of parliaments, “parliamentary control over political life was far from guaranteed; emperors and kings still ruled through their chancellors and prime ministers.”³⁰

In pre-war Europe, Imperial Germany represented the epitome of such enlightened monarchy. As the historian Paul Kennedy notes, on the eve of the war Germany was the only great power that combined “the modern, industrialized strength of the western democracies with the autocratic...decision-making features of the eastern monarchies.”³¹ It was widely admired even by democracy-minded contemporaries as the model of a scientific and highly organized state.³² Urging the U.S. to prepare for a tough fight, a journalist in 1916 described Germany as typifying “the greatest military efficiency the world has ever seen.”³³

³⁰ Palmer et al 2002:587

³¹ Paul Kennedy (1989) *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, New York: Random House, p.214

³² The widespread American admiration of Imperial Germany, and particularly its administrative efficiency, is documented in Ido Oren (2003) *Our Enemies and US: America's Rivalries and the Making of Political Science*, Ch 1, Ithaca: Cornell University Press. As Oren notes, prominent pre-war American political scientists like John Burgess and Woodrow Wilson admired elements of the German regime, and the decisive break with the Germanophile tradition came as a result of the conflict between the two countries.

³³ Oswald Garrison Villard (1916) “Preparedness Is Militarism” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol.66, p.217. In a study of pre-war military reforms, Resende-Santos notes that Imperial Germany provided the model of military emulation for Japan, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Brazil. Joao Resende-Santos (2007) *Neorealism, States, and the*

Beyond its military reputation, Germany's prestige extended into the management of economic affairs. As the U.S. Secretary of Commerce William Redfield argued in 1915, Germany had become one of the three great global traders of the day, along with Great Britain and the United States.³⁴ Moreover, the country's trade was "distinguished by the application of science to business to an unparalleled degree," argued Redfield. "She presented a spectacle of organized competence, utilizing her resources in men and material more effectively than anyone else." British commerce, by contrast, "lacked the application of science to work. It was not highly organized in the German sense." And while he was optimistic about American's entrepreneurial and innovative spirit, Redfield conceded that the United States "did not use the scientific methods of Germany, and our commerce as a whole lacked organization."³⁵

This Teutonic capacity for organization was often linked to the centralized nature of the German state. Thorstein Veblen, in his 1915 book *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution*, sought to explain Germany's "industrial advance and high efficiency".³⁶ How, Veblen asked, did the country achieve such a dominant economic position on the continent in so brief a time? The answer was to be found in Germany's late adoption of industrialization and the "dynastic" nature of its

Modern Army, Cambridge University Press

³⁴ William C. Redfield (1915) "America's International Trade as Affected by the European War" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. 60:1-16.

³⁵ Redfield 1915:1-2

³⁶ Thorstein Veblen (1915) *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution*, New York: The Macmillan Company, p.v

system. England's industrialization was achieved slowly, haltingly, and with the accoutrement of wasteful cultural practices like conspicuous consumption by the elites. As a latecomer, Germany was able to borrow proven practices and technology, quickening the pace of economic development. Moreover, its centralized state was able to "concentrate and push forward the economic development" and prevent the wasteful consumption of output by the leading classes.³⁷

Germany's pre-eminence before the war made its defeat all the more momentous, its disgrace all the more visible. It lost the war, the empire, and any prestige it had gained during its rise over the past five decades. Its economy was in ruins, its political leadership discredited. Just before the war "German commerce had reached a stage of wonderful development," wrote the president of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce in 1920. But the war "brought the powerful machinery of our commerce to a sudden stop.... On account of the war and the subsequent peace treaty of Versailles our commerce has lost its means of subsistence to a great extent."³⁸ In the same year, an advisor to the German government reported that the country's agricultural production had dropped to 40 percent of its pre-war levels. The loss of the Saar region and Alsace-Lorraine deprived it of 75 percent of its pre-war ore supplies, while the physical

³⁷ Walter Gurian (1939) "Review: Aspects of German Policies" *The Review of Politics* 1.4, p.495

³⁸ F.H. Witthoefft (1920) "Our Commercial Situation" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. 92, p.96

deterioration of plants in wartime reduced industrial efficiency by half.³⁹ In the course of a few years, Germany “plunged from a position on the world market that was second only to Britain, and threatening to replace it,” wrote the economic historian Paul Hehn, “to almost a second or third-class power.”⁴⁰ Its political transformation epitomized the sudden extinction of monarchical legitimacy. For decades “the center of resistance to the Western democracies,” it was now transformed into the democratic Weimar Republic.⁴¹

If the war offered a powerful test of rival regimes, its outcome supplied a clear and dramatic answer. Germany’s precipitous decline dealt “a last blow to the ancient institutions of monarchy and aristocratic feudalism.”⁴² Democracy, on the other hand, emerged as the clear winner. Only democracies had endured the conflict with their political systems intact, and “now stood alone in appearing to maintain political continuity,” notes Markoff.⁴³ France, Britain, and the United States “towered over the world,” writes Sontag. “Very quickly, it became usual to speak of the Big Three – Woodrow Wilson, David Lloyd George, and Georges Clemenceau – as the peacemakers who would shape a new and better world on

³⁹ M.J. Bonn (1920) “The Main Features of Germany’s Economic and Financial Situation” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.92, p.106

⁴⁰ Paul N. Hehn (2002) *A low dishonest decade: the great powers, Eastern Europe, and the economic origins of World War II, 1930-1941*, Continuum, p.395)

⁴¹ Sontag 1970:1

⁴² Palmer et al 2002:696

⁴³ John Markoff (1996) *Waves of Democracy: Social Movements and Political Change*, Pine Forge Press, p. 74

the ruins of the old."⁴⁴ At Versailles, they dominated the negotiations to a remarkable degree, producing the only postwar settlement in history made exclusively by democracies.⁴⁵ In the wake of the war, "the power and prestige associated with democratic institutions were greatly enhanced."⁴⁶

Among the victors, the United States was the greatest beneficiary of the war – in fact, the only great power besides Japan to benefit from the fighting.⁴⁷ "The new postwar distribution of power," wrote Ikenberry, "left the United States as the preeminent state."⁴⁸ This shift in the global hierarchy was widely noted by contemporaries. "The change since 1914 in the international position of the United States," wrote the financial editor of the *New York Times* in 1926, "[is] perhaps the most dramatic transformation of economic history."⁴⁹

The war forced Europe to rely on American capital, loans, technology, supplies, and political leadership. "The war devastated Europe but made the United States the world's principal industrial, financial, and trading power."⁵⁰ The volume of American exports increased sharply. As the volume of exports increased, the United States became a capital-exporting nation and the center of international finance shifted from London to New York. As Keynes reported to the British

⁴⁴ Sontag 1970:2

⁴⁵ Roberts 1999:271, 283.

⁴⁶ Markoff 1996: 74

⁴⁷ Kennedy 1987:327

⁴⁸ Ikenberry 2000:119-20

⁴⁹ Alexander Dana Noyes (1926) *The War Period of American Finance*, New York: Putnam, p. 436-7, quoted in Frieden 2006:129.

⁵⁰ Frieden 2006:132

cabinet shortly after the war: "It is hardly an exaggeration to say that in a few months' time the American executive and the American public will be in a position to dictate to this country on matters that affect us more dearly than them."⁵¹

Between 1914 and the end of the war the country's stock of gold almost doubled, and now amounted to nearly half of the world supply.⁵²

The economic power of the United States, already apparent by the turn of the century, increased dramatically during the hostilities, becoming "a determining factor in world prosperity."⁵³ The country "seemed to have all the economic advantages which some of the other great powers possessed in part, but none of their disadvantages."⁵⁴ Manufacturing production nearly tripled during the war. In 1913 Germany, Britain, France, and Belgium produced "substantially more" than the United States; by the late 1920s the U.S. "was outproducing these countries by nearly half."⁵⁵ It produced almost 40 percent of the world's coal and more than half of the world's industrial production.⁵⁶ Untouched by the deprivations of the war, it had a relatively high standard of living. In addition, the U.S. enjoyed the

⁵¹ John Milton Cooper (1976) "The Command of Gold Reversed" *Pacific Historical Review* 45.2, p. 219-21, quoted in Frieden 2006:134. See also Halperin 2004:32

⁵² Arthur Walworth (1977) *America's Moment, 1918: American Diplomacy at the End of World War I*, New York: Norton, p.4

⁵³ Roberts 1999:340

⁵⁴ Kennedy 1987:243

⁵⁵ Frieden 2006:132

⁵⁶ Roberts 1999:340. Kennedy notes that in the 1920s the U.S. had a larger output than the other six great powers combined. Kennedy 1987:328, citing Hillmann, "Comparative Strength of the Great Powers" in Toynebee, ed. *World In March 1939*, p.421-22.

advantages of “a large domestic market which allowed for efficiencies of scale.”⁵⁷

In population, agricultural and industrial output, available investor capital, raw resources - “in all these areas, the United States was unrivaled in size and efficiency.”⁵⁸

America’s industrial base allowed it to quickly catch up to Europe in military strength, which had been relatively small compared to a Europe at the end of a decade of enormous military spending. The country’s “underlying economic dynamism allowed it quickly to match the Europeans once it was drawn into the war.”⁵⁹ During the time of its direct involvement in the war, between April 1917 and November 1918, the United States produced an immense supply of munitions and materials. Production of war materials peaked at 270,000 rifles, 35,000 machine guns, 410 artillery units, 2700 tons of toxic gas, and 3850 airplane engines *per month*.⁶⁰ In 1915, the American army comprised 100,000 soldiers and 112,000 National Guardsmen, one-twentieth the size of the German Army. By the end of the war, it managed to mobilize over 4.2 million people through universal conscription. Of those, just over 2 million reached France and 1.4 million saw active combat.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Kennedy 1987:327

⁵⁸ Ikenberry 2000:120

⁵⁹ Ikenberry 2000:120

⁶⁰ Leonard P. Ayres (1919) *The War with Germany: A Statistical Summary*. Washington DC: Government Printing Office.

⁶¹ Colin Nicholson (2001) *The Longman Companion to the First World War*, Longman, p. 248

Through its armies, loans, and supplies of material, the United States had determined the outcome of the war and now appeared poised to shape its aftermath. “Victors, vanquished, and neutrals admitted that American intervention had decided the conflict.”⁶² Its power loomed large on the continent; the American model appeared to offer a potent combination of stability, legitimacy and strength. “The American republic had risen to a position of power as Europe consumed itself” and its role shifted “from a passive observer of the slow collapse of the classical order to an active leader of attempts to reconstitute it.”⁶³

The rise in U.S. material capabilities complemented and reinforced Woodrow Wilson’s democratic rhetoric. He was “confident of the adequacy of America’s material power to command the acquiescence of the exhausted combatants in Europe” and saw America’s dramatic rise as an opportunity to spread its institutions to the Old World.⁶⁴ “When the war is over we can force them to our way of thinking,” he told Colonel House in 1917, “because by that time they will, among other things, be financially in our hands.”⁶⁵ American power inspired democracy by its success, and the prospect of American financial support encouraged other converts. Where these were insufficient, pro-democracy rhetoric provided an additional impetus for reforms. “The world looked with awe and expectation to one man – the president of the United States,” writes Palmer. “Wilson occupied a lone

⁶² Palmer et al 2002:687

⁶³ Walworth 1977:4

⁶⁴ Walworth 1977: 17

⁶⁵ Quoted in Arthur S. Link (1979) *Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War, and Peace*, Harlan Davidson, p.80; quoted in Ikenberry 2000:122

eminence, enjoyed a universal prestige." On his European tour in January 1918, he was received "as the man who would lead civilization out of its wasteland."⁶⁶

Interstate War and Democratic Reforms

The Great War created a number of new states that adopted democratic institutions, but it also furthered democratization in a number of states that existed before the war, among both former autocracies like Germany and partial democracies like Britain. Explanations that focus on the influence of major wars upon state development are ambiguous about their effects on regime outcome. This ambiguity can be clarified somewhat if the effects of war are separated into two categories – military *mobilization* and military *outcomes*. These influences can diverge even within the same war – preparing for major conflict can lead to increased autocracy, while the conflict's outcome may unleash democratizing forces. Much of the bellicist literature is concerned with the effects of mobilization on state development. An early example is the writings of Otto Hintze and John Seeley, members of the so-called German historical school. They stressed that a country's geopolitical environment affects its mobilization strategy, which in turn shapes its regime type. Hintze, a scholar of the Prussian state, argued that constant preparation for war led to a standing army and a centralized state, while relative safety within the international system, geographically defined by mountains and oceans, created the internal opportunity for democracy.⁶⁷ Seeley likewise argued

⁶⁶ Palmer et al 2002: 687-8

⁶⁷ Otto Hintze (1975) *The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze*, Felix Gilbert, ed.,

that the hostility of the external environment shaped the state through the need for universal military conscription. A threatening environment, as in the case of Prussia or Russia, led to universal military service and an absolutist state; a relatively secure, thalassocratic state like Britain or the United States avoided universal service in the formative years of their history, and therefore adopted relatively democratic institutions.⁶⁸ Mobilization for war, Raymond Aron writes, is inevitably autocratic:

[T]he citizen-soldier is part of a vast machine over which he has no control. Group autonomy and liberty of opinion and expression become a luxury that a country in danger cannot easily afford. It fritters away material wealth amassed during the years of peace while stinting on the individual rights once generously granted. The liberal bourgeoisie fades away; the masses are ruled by soldiers and organizers. Total mobilization is close to totalitarianism.⁶⁹

According to this argument, then, mobilization for war – conflict or constant threat thereof – leads to centralization of authority and despotism, with the corollary that relative isolation from interstate conflict produces democracy.⁷⁰ Yet an opposing

Oxford University Press

⁶⁸ John Seeley (1896) *An Introduction to Political Science*, London and New York: Macmillan and Co. Accessed online at <http://www.archive.org/details/introductiontopo00seel>. See Hristina Dobрева (2006) “*Second Image Reversed*” *Reexamined*, unpublished dissertation, Simon Fraser University, p. 42-53 for an extended discussion and critique of the “Seeley-Hintze law”.

⁶⁹ Raymond Aron (1951/2002) “From Sarajevo to Hiroshima” p.151 in *The Dawn of Universal History: Selected Essays from a Witness to the Twentieth Century*, Basic Books, transl. by Barbara Bray

⁷⁰ See also Brian M. Downing (1992) *The Military Revolution and Political Change: Origins of Democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Europe*, Princeton University Press. Mark E. Pietrzyk (2002) *International Order and Individual Liberty: Effects of War and Peace on the Development of Governments*, University Press of America. Kelly M. Kadera, Mark J. C. Crescenzi, and Megan L. Shannon (2003) “Democratic Survival, Peace, and War in the International System” *American Journal of Political*

school of thought has long argued that mobilization for war produces democratic institutions. "Throughout history, warfare has been a major democratizing force," wrote Walt Rustow, "because it has made necessary the marshalling of additional human resources."⁷¹ North and Weingast, for instance, have argued that warfare led to the need for increased revenue, which forced the monarchy to cede important political rights to the Parliament.⁷² Despite this limitation on his sovereignty, the king was soon able to raise much more war revenue than in the pre-Parliament days. With their property rights credibly secured, wealth holders felt comfortable to lend and invest their capital.⁷³ As North and Weingast suggest, this credible commitment to property rights greatly increased England's mobilization capacity and set it on the long path toward global hegemony.⁷⁴ The overall effect of

Science 47.2: 234-247. Michael Colaresi and William R. Thompson (2003) "The Economic Development-Democratization Relationship: Does the Outside World Matter?" *Comparative Political Studies* 36.4: 381-403. Karen Rasler and William R. Thompson (2005) *Puzzles of the Democratic Peace Theory: Theory, Geopolitics, and the Transformation of World Politics*, New York: Palgrave. William R. Thompson (1996) "Democracy and Peace: Putting the Cart before the Horse?" *International Organization* 50.1: 141-174.

⁷¹ Dankwart A. Rustow (1970) "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model" *Comparative Politics* 2.3, p.348. He cites Bertrand de Jouvenel (1948) *On Power* as an example of this view.

⁷² Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast (1989) "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutional Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England", *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol.49:803-832

⁷³ On credible binding through constitutions, see Jon Elster (1984) *Ulysses and the Sirens*, Cambridge University Press

⁷⁴ Montesquieu long ago noted that freer states were able to levy more taxes. "It is a general rule that taxes may be heavier in proportion to the liberty of the subject," he wrote in *The Spirit of the Laws*. "In moderate countries there is an indemnity for the weight of the taxes, which is liberty. In despotic countries there is an equivalent for liberty, which is the lightness of the taxes." Baron de Montesquieu (1748/1949) *The Spirit of the Laws*, vol.1, bk.13, ch.12: "Relation between the Weight of Taxes

England's wars in the seventeenth century, therefore, was to shift the locus of power from king to parliament. Similarly, French wars in the next century eventually forced the bankrupt king to gather the Estates-General, sparking the events that led to the French Revolution. In general, then, mobilizing for war can force states to grant rights to previously-excluded social groups in exchange for their cooperation and increased revenue.

Cooperation of the masses became particularly important in modern warfare, where industrial production and mass conscription requires the willing participation of the nation as a whole. Gianfranco Poggi, in his study on the development of the state, argued that the wars of 1792-1815 helped create a century of great power peace in Europe because they had demonstrated to European rulers the "threatening connection" between sustained, large-scale modern warfare and social revolution.⁷⁵ This was undoubtedly true in World War I. Across Europe, the necessities of wartime mobilization gave women and working-class men an unprecedented opportunity to gain political power and press for social reforms. In return for their participation in the trenches and on the factory floors, these groups were able to extract political concessions like voting rights and

and Liberty", transl. by Thomas Nugent, New York: Hafner Publishing Company, p.214. Absolutist regimes were forced to compromise with local power-holders, leading to unequal tax burdens and inefficiencies. See Perry Anderson (1974) *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, London: NLB; Hillay Zmora (2001) *Monarchy, Aristocracy, and the State in Europe 1300-1800*, Routledge. The idea that taxation follows representation is more than a revolutionary slogan; Montesquieu called it "a rule derived from nature that never varies." (Montesquieu 1748/1949:214)

⁷⁵ Gianfranco Poggi (1978/2004) *The Development of the Modern State: A Sociological Introduction*, Stanford University Press, p. 91

welfare provisions. The postwar expansion of suffrage, the growth of unions, and the rise of labor parties in these countries was made possible by mass conscription and the wartime economy, which shifted the balance of power within European societies toward the working classes. Mass mobilization produced what Hobsbawm called the “strange democratization of war”.⁷⁶

The war indeed ushered in a period of social change. As Barzun notes, “Class barriers lost rigidity; conventions were relaxed. The soldier was cut loose from his nine-to-five at the office or six-to-four at the factory, as well as from home and its constraints.”⁷⁷ For the well-off, Palmer writes, “it became embarrassing to show their comforts too openly. It was patriotic to eat meagerly and to wear old clothes. War gave a new impetus even to the idea of economic equality, if only to enlist rich and poor alike in a common cause.”⁷⁸ Writing in 1921, a journalist described the wartime period in Britain as a “social revolution”: “Caste was for a time abolished. University professors were acting as field laborers. Patrician women were making munitions with factory girls. A great, strong, spiritual wind seemed to have swept through all classes of English life.”⁷⁹

These egalitarian impulses produced an atmosphere that encouraged social reforms. Working-class soldiers in Sweden demanded suffrage with the slogan:

⁷⁶ Eric Hobsbawm (1994) *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991*, Vintage Books, p.49

⁷⁷ Barzun 2001:699

⁷⁸ Palmer et al 2002:681

⁷⁹ Philip Gibbs (1921) “The Social Revolution in English Life” *Harper’s Magazine*, April, p. 561. The war had, Gibbs writes, empowered the “small traders, little manufacturers, business adventurers without capital or power” (Gibbs 1921:562)

“one man, one gun, one vote”.⁸⁰ In Canada, the mass mobilization for war was a critical catalyst in the post-war introduction of universal suffrage.⁸¹ As in the Napoleonic conflicts a century before, the mass mobilization of society required to wage it created a leveling impulse in all aspects of social and political life. Meanwhile, the necessities of industrial production meant that the support of ordinary men and women was needed if the war was to go on.

Mass conscription for the trenches drained workers from the factories and created constant labor shortages. At the same time, the voracious consumption of new and deadly firepower led to chronic shortages of supplies, producing a tremendous increase in demand for factory labor.⁸² Like never before, war had “extended its tentacles deep to the rear, spreading from the trenches into the fields, the mines, and the factories.”⁸³ The American industrialist Howard E. Coffin wrote in 1916: “Twentieth century warfare demands that the blood of the soldier must be mingled with three to five parts of the sweat of the man in the factories, mills, mines, and fields of the nation in arms.”⁸⁴ In short supply and high demand, workers gained more bargaining leverage, and the need for a steady supply of ships and cannons meant that labor unrest and industrial strikes could become

⁸⁰ Downing 1992:253. Downing also notes that throughout history mass conscription has acted as a catalyst for liberalization and franchise expansion.

⁸¹ Rueschmeyer et al 1992:279

⁸² Markoff 2006: 84

⁸³ Martin van Creveld (1989) *Technology and War: From 2000 B.C. to the Present*, Free Press, p. 163.

⁸⁴ Quoted in Elizabeth Keir (2010) “War and Reform: Gaining Labor’s Compliance on the Homefront” in Elizabeth Keir and Ronald Krebs, eds., *In War’s Wake: International Conflict and the Fate of Liberal Democracy*, Cambridge University Press, p.139.

“potentially as damaging to the war effort as military mutinies.”⁸⁵ Mass conscription and the wartime economy strengthened the unity and organization of labor, men and women alike, shifting the balance of power within European societies in its favor.⁸⁶ “In fighting for democracy abroad we are gaining two of the biggest democratic principles at home,” wrote J. Borden Harriman, a member of the Council of National Defense in 1918. “The first is the recognition of the rights and dignity of labor, and the other is women's freedom, because never before have we so clearly realized that the output of the machine is just as essential to victory as the gun at the front.”⁸⁷ This process was even more pronounced in England, Harriman argued. “At this moment 1,413,000 women are replacing men in industry in England,” she wrote. “Women, with the help of improved automatic machinery, are able to do the work previously done by fully skilled workers.”⁸⁸ The need for mass armies also contributed to the push for democratization. “Conscription has made a vital difference,” wrote an American observer in 1919. “The State demanded the men it chose and sent them to Europe; it cannot deny them a fair measure of freedom and happiness.”⁸⁹ As a result of these forces, writes Halperin, “powerholders became increasingly sensitive to the continued allegiance

⁸⁵ Keir 2010:139 in Keir and Krebs, eds.

⁸⁶ Halperin 2004:71. Rueschemeyer et al (1992:92) likewise argue: “The war and its outcome changed the balance of power in society, strengthening the working class and weakening the upper classes.”

⁸⁷ J. Borden Harriman (1918) “How England Meets Her Labor” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol.78, p.80

⁸⁸ Harriman 1918:81

⁸⁹ Lindsay Rogers (1919) “The Literature of Reconstruction” *The Sewanee Review* 27.1:112

of the men in the trenches and the women and men in the factories. Talk about extending the right to vote flourished.”⁹⁰ In Britain, a Lord Landsdowne became so concerned that continuing the war with Germany might release democratic forces (or in his words, “spell ruin for the civilized order”) that in 1917 he urged a peace settlement to stop this process.⁹¹

The reciprocal bargain forged by the war undermines the often-repeated claim that working-class participation in the war effort demonstrated the triumph of nationalism over class solidarity.⁹² During the war, labor conflicts “continued unabated and, in many places, increased in both number and intensity.”⁹³ The war in fact proved to be a turning point in the evolution of organized labor in Europe. Far from demonstrating labor’s submission to nationalism, working-class participation in the war offered an opportunity to generate political concessions and reflected a growing desire “that a better standard of living for the masses must emerge with the coming of peace.”⁹⁴ In Britain and other countries, it was widely recognized that the war could not be won without the support of the workers. Their participation had been “for the first time the critical condition for victory,” and it had been “felt to be so by politicians, civil servants, trade unionists, and the press.”⁹⁵ At the end of the war, labor was more unified, better organized, “and in a

⁹⁰ Markoff 2006:85

⁹¹ Quoted in Keir 2010:161 in Keir and Krebs, eds.

⁹² Halperin 2004:154; see Halperin 2004:154 fn. 14 for examples of this fallacy.

⁹³ Halperin 2004:154

⁹⁴ Rueschemeyer et al 1992:91-2. See also Halperin 2004:154

⁹⁵ P. Abrams (1963) “The Failure of Social Reforms: 1918-1920” *Past and Present* 24, p.43-64; Cited in Halperin 2004:151

position to back its demands with threats.”⁹⁶ Given their new status, Halperin notes, workers had reason to believe – and in some cases were promised – that “through their patriotism and sacrifices, they might win the rights for which they had struggled for over a century.”⁹⁷ The postwar democratic reforms, argues Charles Tilly, came about when “citizens (including female citizens) who bore the terrible costs of war bargained with war-battered states for rights they had previously lacked, which their military and civilian service visibly justified.”⁹⁸

From Mobilization Strategies to War Outcomes

The two opposing views on the effects of mobilization can be partially reconciled by recourse to different time horizons. The “mobilization leads to autocracy” argument appears to fit wars before the nineteenth century, and describes long-term institutional development of states before the advent of modern mass warfare. The “mobilization leads to democracy” argument, then, applies to wars since Napoleonic times, and deals with war’s effects on institutional development immediately before and during wars.

But mobilization still tells only a part of the story about the effects of warfare on domestic development. While the scholars noted above stress the role of worker mobilization, they tend to ignore the all-important factor of the *outcome* of the war. Though mobilization opened up opportunities for reform, whether those reforms

⁹⁶ Halperin 2004:171

⁹⁷ Halperin 2004:154-5. See also Eric Hobsbawm (1990) *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge University Press, p.120-30

⁹⁸ Charles Tilly (2007) *Democracy*, Cambridge University Press p. 64-65

were adopted was contingent on which regime actually won. A German victory, in other words, would have made postwar democratization – whether inside Germany or in Europe as a whole – much less likely.⁹⁹ In the case of World War I, it was the interaction of the states' mobilization strategies and the eventual victory of one particular mobilization strategy over another. As Elizabeth Kier has argued, states pursue different strategies to mobilize the people during war. They can coerce workers into participation through martial law and harsh enforcement of labor regulations, closing off opportunities for democratic reform. Another strategy, however, is to bargain with labor by offering them political rights and including them in wartime decision-making.¹⁰⁰

Where outcomes matter – and where the bellicist theories of the state connect to the theory of hegemonic shocks – is the ex post vindication or discrediting of the mobilization strategies chosen in wartime. “The workers in the mass,” wrote the editor of the *Observer* in 1919, “had to be assured a thousand times than *in the event of victory of their freely-accepted discipline over the more forced and serf-like drill of the German system*, unprecedented efforts would be made to raise the common people to an altogether higher level of intelligent, responsible, and well-conditioned citizenship.”¹⁰¹ In other words, the granting of political rights was contingent on a favorable outcome for those states that adopted the bargaining

⁹⁹ “[I]t is difficult to imagine a more democratic outcome,” writes Peceny, “had Germany emerged victorious from the war.” Peceny 2010:5. See also Fritz Fischer (1967) *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, New York: W.W. Norton.

¹⁰⁰ Kier 2010 in Kier and Krebs, eds.

¹⁰¹ J.L. Garvin (1919) *The Foundations of Peace*, London: Macmillan, p.323-4; quoted in Halperin 2004:159; emphasis added

strategy of mobilization. Had the Central Powers won the war, this strategy would have been discredited, confirming the often-repeated suspicion that democracies are less effective at mobilizing their populations for major war. The outcome of the war provided a demonstration effect about the efficacy of competing strategies and the institutional choices that accompanied those strategies. The bargaining strategy was vindicated by the victory of the democratic great powers, while the coercive strategy was discredited through the defeat of the autocrats.

A second, closely related path through which the outcome of the war affected domestic reforms was by putting pressure on losing regimes. As other scholars have pointed out, defeat can discredit losing elites, forcing them to bargain with the masses or risk being thrown out of office entirely.¹⁰² Shocks such as revolutions and military defeats, argues Tilly, “undermine self-reproducing systems of control over states and thereby weaken the elites that have the most to lose from democratization. They open up room in which ordinary citizens can negotiate consent to newly emerging systems of rule.”¹⁰³ In Germany, wartime political leaders found themselves replaced in 1918 via a popular rebellion backed by the army. Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria also adopted democratic institutions at the end of the war. The democratic great powers, on the other hand, found their regimes strengthened by the victory. As mentioned above, only democracies

¹⁰² Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder (2010) “Does War Influence Democratization?” p.23-49 in Keir and Krebs, eds. They do not find a link between war and democratization. Skocpol (1979) has also argued that defeat in war creates internal pressures for reform, and is in fact a necessary pre-requisite for revolutionary regime transformations.

¹⁰³ Tilly 2007:40

maintained political continuity during and after the war – and their ability to do so further enhanced the prestige of democratic institutions in the period following the war. The crisis of defeat dislodged existing regimes, while the triumph of victory solidified them.

In short, mobilization for war produced great hopes for social and political change, and its outcome led to increasingly vehement demands for it.¹⁰⁴ By the early 1920s, their participation vindicated through democratic triumph, labor movements and socialist parties found themselves in a position of unprecedented power. In Weimar Germany, Austria, Sweden, and other states, socialist parties and coalitions led their people's transitions to new governments; Labour took power in Britain in 1923, and the left won in France in 1924. In many cases, socialist parties

¹⁰⁴ There is a large literature on *why* war outcomes favor democracy. My main concern here, however, is not the *why* but the *how* – that is, not why democracy won, but how this democratic victory vindicated certain mobilization strategies, discredited autocratic rulers, and created incentives for democratic reforms. On why major wars result democratic victories, see Mitchell et al (1999), who argue that the dominant systemic effect of war is to increase democratization because “non-democracies are more likely to experience regime change than democracies as a result of war.” Sarah Mitchell, Scott Gates and Håvard Hegre (1999) “Evolution in Democracy-War Dynamics.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43.6, p. 789. See also Ricardo Sanhueza (1999) “The Hazard Rate of Political Regimes” *Public Choice* 98.3-4, p. 337-367. Bueno de Mesquita et al (1992) argue that regime transformations are twice as frequent during and immediately after wars, and that most of these transformations affect autocracies. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Randolph Siverson, Gary Woller (1992) “War and the Fate of Regimes: A Comparative Analysis” *American Political Science Review* 93.4, p. 638-46. See also Dan Reiter and Allan C. Stam (2002) *Democracies at War*, Princeton University Press. As Gates et al 2007:11 put it, “Given democracies’ general propensity to win wars and autocracies’ greater propensity to expire in defeat, war is associated with greater democratization.” See Desch (2002) for a dissent.

maintained their presence as coalition partners through the 1920s.¹⁰⁵ By bringing labor parties to the forefront of political action, the war helped usher in a number of social reforms. Government insurance schemes, eight-hour workdays, and other elements of the welfare state were becoming more common. Belgium introduced its first welfare legislation after the war, and Britain expanded its unemployment insurance provisions in 1922.¹⁰⁶ In Sweden, the German defeat in the war led to the capitulation of the Swedish Conservatives, who had been stalling political reforms. Unlike their counterparts in Germany, Swedish conservative did not have the option of allying with a powerful landed upper class, and were politically isolated. After the war they agreed to the introduction of universal suffrage and a parliamentary government, in return for the preservation of the monarchy.¹⁰⁷ In Belgium, workers had organized several major strikes in support of universal suffrage in the three decades before the war. All of these had been put down, often with force. During the war, however, the government needed labor's support and gave the Socialist party a ministry. By the end of the war Belgium had adopted universal male suffrage.¹⁰⁸

The War and Female Suffrage

Only two European countries had allowed female suffrage before World War I,

¹⁰⁵ Sheri Berman (2006) *The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe's Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, p. 97; Frieden 2006:170

¹⁰⁶ Halperin 2004:156-7

¹⁰⁷ Rueschemeyer et al 1992:93

¹⁰⁸ Markoff 2006:73-4

Finland in 1906 and Norway in 1913. But between 1917 and 1924, over two dozen countries adopted female suffrage at least temporarily. The enfranchisement of women, writes Palmer, was the “most conspicuous innovation” of the postwar period.¹⁰⁹ Charles Beard, writing in 1927, noted that World War I, “supposed to demonstrate manly valor at its highest pitch, accelerated the movement for woman suffrage. Nearly all the new states created after that conflict conferred on women the right to vote.” He concluded: “The feminist genie is out of the bottle.”¹¹⁰

Women received the right to vote in all the new states created by the war except Yugoslavia, as well as in Great Britain, Canada, United States, Sweden, Belgium, and other countries. (see Table 3.1, below) As with other forms of postwar reforms, the role of the war was crucial in furthering their cause; its influence is particularly visible, for example, in Canada’s expansion of the franchise, where the vote was first extended to women in uniform, then to women with close male relatives in the military, and finally, at the end of the war, to all female citizens.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Palmer et al 2002:744

¹¹⁰ Charles Beard (1927) “Democracy Holds its Ground”, *Harper’s Magazine*, November, p. 681

¹¹¹ Markoff 2006:85

<i>Year</i>	<i>Country</i>
1917	Canada, Russia
1918	Austria, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Great Britain ¹¹²
1919	Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden, Ukraine, Albania, Isle of Man, Belarus
1920	Czechoslovakia, United States
1921	Burma, Sweden, Armenia
1922	Ecuador, Ireland
1924	Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Saint Lucia, Tajikistan

*Table 3.1 Female Suffrage Expansion, 1917-1924*¹¹³

The war had drawn women into the labor force and demonstrated their capacity to do “jobs which it had been thought only men could do.”¹¹⁴ The insatiable need for troop replacements meant that women now streamed into offices and factories. In the United States, the Council of National Defense appointed a Women’s Committee to advise the government on how to use women in the workplace, prompting journalist Ida Tarbell to write that “this was the first time in history that a government had called a country’s woman-power into co-operation. The summons made its impression. It was ‘recognizing’ women. The women rose to the recognition.”¹¹⁵

¹¹² Suffrage extended to women over 28; full female suffrage extended in 1928.

¹¹³ Iceland and Denmark extended suffrage in the 1910s; Greece also extended female suffrage in the 1920s.

¹¹⁴ Palmer et al 2002:682. As Vinen notes, “The idle wife or daughter was one aspect of the bourgeois rentier society that the First World War destroyed.” Richard Vinen (2000) *A History in Fragments: Europe in the Twentieth Century*, Da Capo Press, p. 113

¹¹⁵ Ida M. Tarbell (1917) “Mobilizing the Women” *Harper’s Magazine*, p. 842

The number of women in the labor force was bound to fall after the war, as veterans made their way back to the job market.¹¹⁶ But this experience in both world wars was part of a social process in which women's work was redefined and women's daily lives were reoriented around the national economy.¹¹⁷ Just as the demand for labor empowered common laborers, it gave women a first chance at an independent living. A journalist noted in 1921: "Any girl with her hair hanging down her back or tied into a pigtail could get a wage that her father would have envied before the war."¹¹⁸ Jacques Barzun writes:

Women were indispensable to 'war work' and not solely as nurses and entertainers of the troops, but as chauffeurs, bureaucrats, factory hands, and '*farmerettes*'. They showed that they could perform as well as men – often more conscientiously – in the reserved precincts of the male. It was impossible after the war to deny them the vote by arguing their incapacity.¹¹⁹

The increasing influence of labor also made female voters an appealing source of conservative moderation. The immediate postwar period saw widespread labor unrest, rapid social changes, and explosive union growth. "For those conservative politicians who believed that women were intrinsically more conservative than men," writes Markoff, "enfranchising women suddenly seemed more appealing. If

¹¹⁶ Vinen is skeptical about the effects of war on female political empowerment at the workplace and the voting booth. Although female employment increased as a result of the war, this was always meant as a temporary measure: "Women's jobs were often in industries such as munitions, where workers were bound to be laid off after the war...It was part of the wartime consensus eventually established in most countries between unions, employers and government that the employment of women should not be continued in peacetime." (Vinen 2000:110)

¹¹⁷ Palmer et al 2002:682

¹¹⁸ Gibbs 1921:561

¹¹⁹ Barzun 2000:699-700

the working classes had to be given the vote, it seemed to some to be safer to give it to women, too.”¹²⁰ Vinen in fact argues that female enfranchisement was not a direct outcome of the war itself but a moderating counterweight to the postwar labor movement, and that “the women who were most readily enfranchised – the relatively old, property owners and war widows – were all welcomed into the political fold precisely because they seemed to offer a counterbalance to the revolutionary male proletariat” who was gaining his suffrage around the same time.¹²¹ The historical evidence suggests that women did support center-right parties; in the Weimar Republic, for instance, women strongly supported the Centre Party but rejected the “boisterous and aggressively masculine” Nazi Party.¹²² The war thus spurred female suffrage both by mobilizing women in the workplace and creating an incentive for a counterweight to the post-war labor vote.¹²³

From the Ashes of Empires: World War I and the New Democracies

As the Great War neared its conclusion in the fall of 1918, a group of dignitaries from central and eastern European nations, calling themselves the Mid-European Union, gathered in Philadelphia’s Independence Hall. To the peal of a replica Liberty Bell, the group’s chairman proclaimed a new Declaration of

¹²⁰ Markoff 2006:87

¹²¹ Vinen 2000:116

¹²² Vinen 2000:117

¹²³ Jacques Barzun suggests another, more general factor – the disruption of normal social routines brought by the war: “Watchful neighbors having scattered, each spouse, now separated, gained sexual freedom if it was wanted, or at least escape from a bad marriage...These freedoms, soon taken for granted, furthered the feminist movement.” Barzun 2000:699

Independence for Middle Europe, which promised “that the sufferings of the world war shall not have been in vain” and that the principles of liberty, democracy, and popular sovereignty will be “incorporated in the organic laws of whatever Governments our respective peoples may hereafter establish.”¹²⁴

The declaration’s optimistic message, coming in the closing months of a conflict that had killed millions and devastated a continent, reflected the high hopes for new democracies in the immediate aftermath of the war. The great European empires of Germany, Austro-Hungary, Russia, and the Ottomans had collapsed. In their place rose a number of new states that saw democracy as a way to modernize their societies and harness the spirit of national self-determination. “The war broke the old land empires of Europe, while inspiring dreams of new ones,” wrote the historian Timothy Snyder. “It replaced the dynastic principle of rule by emperors with the fragile idea of popular sovereignty.”¹²⁵

¹²⁴ *The New York Times* (1918) “Independence Hall Sees Nations Born” October 27, p.6.

¹²⁵ Timothy Snyder (2011) *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, New York: Basic Books, p.1

New State	Formed from the...	Democracy?	Principal successor state?	Failure of democracy?
Hungary	Austro-Hungarian Empire	Partial	Yes	1919
Austria	Austro-Hungarian Empire	Yes	Yes	1933
Czechoslovakia	Austro-Hungarian Empire	Yes		--
Yugoslavia	Austro-Hungarian Empire	Yes		1929
Turkey	Ottoman Empire	Partial	Yes	
Bulgaria	Ottoman Empire	Yes		1923
Germany	German Empire	Yes	Yes	1933
Russia/USSR	Russian Empire	Yes	Yes	1917
Finland	Russian Empire	Yes		--
Latvia	Russian Empire	Yes		1934
Estonia	Russian Empire	Yes		1934
Lithuania	Russian Empire	Yes		1926
Poland	Russian, German Empire	Yes		1926
Armenia	Russian, Ottoman Empire	Yes		1920
Azerbaijan	Russian Empire	Yes		1920
Georgia	Russian Empire	Yes		1921

Table 3.2: New Democracies created by WWI

The resurrected Poland, its boundaries expanded into historically German, Ukrainian, and Lithuanian regions by the post-war settlement, emerged from the outset as a multi-ethnic state in which a third of the population was not ethnically Polish. Like its neighbors, Poland began with a constitution “which contained almost every conceivable guarantee of democratic government and almost every promise of social reform.”¹²⁶

For the long-suffering Ottoman Empire, the war had been disastrous. Romania, Bulgaria, and especially Greece received most of its European territory, which was now reduced to a toehold on the Bosphorus. Its Arab lands were taken away to become League of Nations mandates (only the Hejaz, now known as Saudi Arabia, became independent.) Kurdistan was to become autonomous, and Armenia independent, while Italy received islands in the Aegean. Only Istanbul and the

¹²⁶ Sontag 1971:67

Anatolian interior remained. Beyond territorial concessions, Europe re-established strict financial controls that had so angered the Ottomans in the previous century. The defeat, culminating in the embarrassing Treaty of Sévres, discredited the country's pre-war elites and led to the swift rise of Mustafa Kemal, who launched a successful campaign for Turkish independence. Within two years, and with Soviet help, the Ataturk drove off the Greeks and their western allies. Armenia was reconquered and split with the Soviet Union. A secular Turkish republic was declared in 1923.

Kemal was first and foremost a modernizer rather than a democratizer, but in democracy's brief glory days of the early 1920s, the two concepts could not help but overlap, and his reforms reflected this temporary fusion. The 1924 constitution provided for a Grand National Assembly, elected directly by universal male suffrage via proportional representation (women received the vote in 1934). Religion was purged from public and political life, though personal freedom of religion was protected by the state. The law was secularized in a code based on the Swiss model, the caliphate being officially abolished in 1924. To Kemal and his followers, "the war demonstrated just how calamitous delay had been".¹²⁷ Here as in central Europe it took the shock of a war for old elites to become discredited, and for reforms to take place.

The defeated Russian Empire, like an old map peeling at the edges, shed a number of territories along its periphery. The February revolution revealed the full

¹²⁷ Frieden 2006:97

weakness of the imperial government and inspired a number of independence movements. In the north, Finland finally gained full autonomy and all three Baltic states declared independence. Poland was reconstituted as a democratic republic after more than a century of absence. In the Caucasus, the Russian collapse created the democratic republics of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. The latter became the first Muslim nation to grant political rights to women, and adopted a Parliament that was elected through proportional representation and included representatives of Jewish and Armenian minorities.¹²⁸

Within Russia itself, the war led to a moderate regime “made up of liberal noblemen and middle-class leaders, generally democrats and constitutionalists”.¹²⁹ It lasted only eight months, from February to October 1917, when a Bolshevik coup pre-empted what would have been the Russian Republic’s founding elections. The Russian case represents a compressed version of the sequence, where the period of democratic transition was exceptionally short, and the failed consolidation occurred very quickly. As in Germany, the transition itself was only made possible by the extraordinary shock of the war, which brought together a coalition of domestic actors that would not have ordinarily shared the overthrow of monarchy as a common goal.¹³⁰ The role of the army in this improvised coalition

¹²⁸ Armenia adopted female suffrage in 1921, three years after Georgia and Azerbaijan.

¹²⁹ Palmer et al 2002:674

¹³⁰ As Skocpol writes: “Born and tempered in warfare, insulated from, and supreme against, the forces of society, the Russian state could only succumb through massive defeat in total war. Thus World War I was to be a necessary cause – as well as the occasion – of the revolutionary crisis that brought Imperial Russia to its

was particularly decisive. In the failed 1905 revolution it was used to suppress revolts, but after the battlefield defeats of 1917, “the dissolution of the army and the deepening of agrarian revolt became intertwined. Former soldiers returned to the villages to join in, and often lead, the land seizures.”¹³¹ A magazine article from the time noted the broad assent for reforms at all levels of the army, where the revolutionary movement made unexpected headway among officers as well as the rank and file: “[T]he ease with which aristocratic regiments were won over to the cause of democracy, and more especially the responsive attitude of officers of the court battalions and of the General Staff, was as much of a surprise to the revolutionists as it was to the Czar.”¹³²

In February 1917 the troops in St. Petersburg mutinied, accompanied by strikes and riots throughout the city, and the Provisional Government was established. It made attempts “to stabilize the Russian Revolution in liberal-democratic form,” introducing “the full panoply of civil liberties and setting in train the democratization of local government.”¹³³ A 1917 observer described the Duma committee that had assumed power as “composed chiefly of Liberals and Moderates and includes only two Socialists,” while the ultra-conservatives, the so-

demise.” Theda Skocpol (1979) *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*, Cambridge University Press, p.94

¹³¹ Skocpol 1979:136

¹³² Abraham Cahan (1917) “Living Landmarks of the Russian Revolution” *Harper’s Magazine*, June 1917, p. 47

¹³³ Skocpol 1979:207, Philip Bobbitt (2003) *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History*, Anchor Press, p. 27-8

called Blacks, were not represented at all.¹³⁴ Western observers welcomed the revolution as a triumph of democracy. “Does not every American feel that assurance has been added to our hope for the future peace of the world by the wonderful and heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia?” asked Woodrow Wilson in an April 1917 speech to Congress.¹³⁵

But the war would undermine the provisional government just as it did the monarchy that preceded it. Urban workers demanded industrial reform, national minorities demanded greater self-determination, farmers demanded the seizure of estates and land redistribution, and the military pushed for a peace treaty. “On all these issues the Provisional Government had to repudiate the wishes of the people, and by so doing, it forfeited all popular support for its authority.”¹³⁶ Because the government failed to exit the war, the army left the pro-government coalition. Because it failed to undertake industrial and land reforms, it lost the laborers and the farmers. “Because it was unwilling and unable to abandon the war and to sanction or stop the agrarian revolts, the Provisional Government could not escape having its flimsy political bases swept away, as social conflicts deepened and disorder spread in the cities, at the fronts, and in the countryside.”¹³⁷ By November the situation became so untenable that Lenin and the Bolsheviks were able to seize the shards of power on the street.

¹³⁴ Cahan 1917:47

¹³⁵ Woodrow Wilson (1917) The President’s Address to Congress, April 2, 1917; reprinted in *The New York Times*, April 3 1917, p.1

¹³⁶ Bobbitt 2003:28

¹³⁷ Skocpol 1979:210

In Finland, after a four-month civil war and a brief experiment with monarchy, a democratic republic was established in early 1919. A century of semi-autonomy within the tsarist empire had provided the country with an aristocratic leadership, mostly Swedish in origin, that “had learned to lead rather than dominate the mass of Finnish people” and now did so as “representatives of a political and social democracy in which the condition of the lower classes was steadily improved” through land redistribution, cooperative movements, and agricultural development.¹³⁸ The republic’s founding elections were held in December of 1918 at the local level, followed by a parliamentary election several months later.

The three Baltic states all declared independence in 1918 and quickly moved to put in place constitutions, parliaments, and universal suffrage (all three granted women the right to vote the same year). Their constitutions provided for proportional representation, legal equality, minority rights, and weak executives.¹³⁹ The state supported the cooperative movement, and the private estates of Baltic Germans were transferred to landless peasants.¹⁴⁰ By 1925, for example, more than 70 percent of rural Latvians were landowners. The economic trajectory in these states appeared to be toward capitalism “based on private ownership and

¹³⁸ Sontag 1971:67

¹³⁹ Daina Stukuls Eglitis (2007) “The Baltic States: Remembering the Past, Building the Future” in Sharon L. Wolchik and Jane L. Curry, eds., *Central and East European Politics: From Communism to Democracy*, Rowman and Littlefield, p. 234

¹⁴⁰ Sontag 1971:67

entrepreneurship.”¹⁴¹

The Austro-Hungarian empire was shorn of territories and separated into two principal successor states, Austria and Hungary, as well as two new multi-ethnic states: Czechoslovakia for Northern Slavs (Czechs and Slovaks), and Yugoslavia for Southern Slavs (Slovenians, Croats, and Serbs). Austria became a democratic socialist republic after the Entente powers blocked German-Austrian unification. Free elections in February 1919 brought together a coalition of urban Socialists and rural Christian socialists, though support for Communist representatives was negligible.¹⁴² Hungary lost portions of its lands to Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Serbia as punishment for allying with the Axis powers. In November 1918, the Chrysanthemum Revolution brought to power Mihály Károlyi, a liberal count who established the Hungarian Democratic Republic. As in Russia, the moderate democratic government was unable to deal with demands from competing groups and was replaced five months later by a Bolshevik “Republic of Councils”. Five months after that, Admiral Miklos Horthy led a counter-revolutionary offensive by the Hungarian military, installing himself as regent of a permanently vacant monarchy. The system that emerged under Horthy was semi-authoritarian, outlawing the Communist Party and limiting Jews’ access to universities (anti-Semitism was permitted partly because so many Communists had been Jews). Sontag suggests that the 1920s was a period “of rule for and by the old agrarian

¹⁴¹ Federigo Argentieri (2007) “Hungary: Dealing with the Past and Moving into the Present” in Sharon L. Wolchik and Jane L. Curry, eds., p. 234

¹⁴² Sontag 1971:62-3

aristocracy, behind the forms of popular rule," in which dissent from aristocratic government was suppressed.¹⁴³ Palmer argues, however, that Hungary possessed at least the "machinery of democracy" until the 1930s, meaning it had a constitution, a parliament, elections, and political parties.¹⁴⁴

Germany's transformation from a monarchy to a republic symbolized the changes sweeping across central and eastern Europe. Wilhelmine Germany was a monarchy in which a small number of citizens elected two-thirds of the legislature. The new Weimar Republic, by contrast, adopted universal suffrage for all male and female citizens over twenty. In July 1919, after several months of deliberation, a constitution was adopted that established a democratic republic. It included not only "universal, equal, direct, and secret"¹⁴⁵ suffrage, but also proportional representation, and procedures for recalls, referenda, and ballot initiatives. The Kaiser was replaced by a popularly elected president, and a national legislature, the Reichstag.¹⁴⁶

In sum, nearly all of the new states that were created (or resurrected, in Poland's case) by the war adopted democratic institutions like parliaments, universal suffrage, and proportional representation. The war not only drastically undermined the power and legitimacy of monarchy, but also demonstrated that democratic institutions could be efficient and resilient in a crisis, and that they could challenge

¹⁴³ Sontag 1971:62

¹⁴⁴ Palmer et al 2002:746

¹⁴⁵ Beard 1927:682

¹⁴⁶ Palmer et al 2002:749; Richard J. Evans (2004) *The Coming of the Third Reich*, Penguin Press, p.80, 83

and even defeat modern centralized autocracies both on the battlefield and the factory floor. At the end of the war, power and ideology combined to create a moment when democracy appeared to be the way forward. The dramatic shift in the distribution of power among the major states was accompanied by a shift in public rhetoric.¹⁴⁷ The sudden collapse of monarchical regimes “made many people optimistic about the prospects for democratic government.”¹⁴⁸ The alternatives appeared either moribund (in the case of monarchical absolutism) or volatile (in the case of Communism). A fledgling communist regime had appeared in Russia after the country’s brief flirtation with liberal democracy, but it was the product of a war-born minority-forged coup facing a bitter civil war and foreign invasion, a “tyranny nourished by misery” rather than a viable path for economic and political development.¹⁴⁹ The outcome, as is generally the case with hegemonic shocks, seemed unambiguous. The “obvious victors has been the major western democracies of the day, and the great losers were what politicians called “autocracies”Beyond its inherent normative appeal, democracy now appeared

¹⁴⁷ For other surveys of the post-1919 balance, see Anton W. DePorte (1977) *Europe Between the Superpowers: The Enduring Balance*, Chapter 3, Yale University Press; David Thomson (1967) *Europe Since Napoleon*, New York: Alfred Knopf, p. 622ff; Graham Ross (1991) *Great Powers and the Decline of the European State System, 1914-1945*, Chapters 3-6, New York: Longman

¹⁴⁸ Roberts 2008:283. Thomas Mann’s intellectual trajectory in this period reflects the growing acceptance of democratic ideals. His 1918 *Confessions of an Unpolitical Man* typified the way German politicians and intellectuals, in the words of Fritz Stern, “denounced democracy as bourgeois hypocrisy and insisted that their own system of politics was morally and pragmatically superior.” Stern 1997:16. While he supported the Kaiser and denounced liberalism during World War I, his 1923 *Von Deutscher Republik* encouraged Germans to support the new Weimar Republic and became an ardent opponent of the Nazis during the 1930s.

¹⁴⁹ Sontag 1970:1

“desirable in itself, or the mark of respectability in the international arena”.¹⁵⁰ Such widespread consensus on the attraction of democracy would not resurface until the Soviet collapse seven decades later. It seemed to offer a path to both domestic and international legitimacy, and for those rulers who saw little value in such trifles, it was seen as a way to modernize, strengthen, and stabilize their own fragile new states and societies, and ingratiate themselves with the new democratic hegemon. Part of the motivation for new states to undertake liberalizing reforms was the prospect of economic incentives and security guarantees from the United States, the ostensible champion of the new democratic order. But in the aftermath of the war, the United States offered little more than inspiring rhetoric, choosing to turn inward during the isolationism of the 1920s. As Peceny puts it:

...the post-World War I democratic transitions should not be considered examples of efforts to impose democracy through force. The victorious Allies made almost no explicit efforts to insist upon the development of democratic institutions and practices in target states. None of the architecture of democracy promotion so common today was present in 1919 Europe.¹⁵¹

Wilson’s rhetoric, Ikenberry writes, “was not backed up by offers of economic and military assistance that might have made his settlement ideas more attractive and credible”¹⁵² – and, perhaps, more durable. This was a mistake that American policy-makers explicitly sought to correct after World War II. The consolidation of

¹⁵⁰ Markoff 2006:87.

¹⁵¹ Peceny 2010:2-3

¹⁵² Ikenberry 2001:155

fragile regimes was made all the more difficult by the absence of material support from the rising hegemon.

The Democracy Backlash, 1922-1928

The post-WWI democratic wave was unprecedented both in the audacity of its political aspirations and the near-complete failure of these aspirations in the face of later crises and reversals. Even before the Great Depression produced an authoritarian wave in the 1930s, despots and dictators began ascending to power across Europe and around the world. Fledgling democracies fell in Russia (1917), Hungary (1919), Italy (1922), Bulgaria (1923), Poland (1926), Portugal (1926), Lithuania (1926) and Yugoslavia (1929). In addition, the new states of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, which had also adopted democratic institutions, were reabsorbed back into the Russian empire by 1922, this time under a Communist aegis. The optimistic period after the war, Ikenberry writes, “was a democratic high tide rather than a gathering flood.”¹⁵³

The causes of these failed democratic consolidations stemmed from factors inherent in the dynamics of the initial wave. First, the shock of the war had brought together extraordinary domestic coalitions that supported democratic reforms. These ad hoc domestic alliances could not be sustained once the immediate crisis had passed. Like a victorious international alliance that dissolves once its purpose is served, these domestic coalitions struggled to hold together after the initial transition period. As the pro-reform class coalitions and party alliances forged by

¹⁵³ Ikenberry 2001:155

the shock of the war faded, Europe entered what Karl Polanyi called “the counter-revolutionary phase of the postwar period”:

When, in Central Europe, the social structure broke down under the strain of war and defeat, the working class alone was available for the task of keeping things going. Everywhere power was thrust upon the trade unions and Social Democratic parties: Austria, Hungary, even Germany, were declared republics although no active republican party had ever been known to exist in any of these countries before. *But hardly had the acute danger of dissolution passed and the services of the trade unions became superfluous than the middle classes tried to exclude the working class from all influence on public life.*¹⁵⁴

A second, related reason for the failure was the overexpansion of democratic institutions into countries that lacked the domestic preconditions normally associated with democratic consolidation – factors like a large and powerful middle class, economic stability, or previous history with democratic governance. Caught up in the wave of democratic optimism and Wilson’s democratic rhetoric, leaders of new states adopted institutions that had little chance of being consolidated in an atmosphere of economic uncertainty, political fragmentation, and ethnic strife.¹⁵⁵ As Roberts writes, “Initial optimism only intensified dissatisfactions and disappointment felt with constitutional and liberal government

¹⁵⁴ Karl Polanyi (1944/2001) *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, Boston: Beacon Press, p. 196; *emph. added*

¹⁵⁵ As Markoff notes, some postwar leaders likely “sought merely a democratic appearance, in order to appease challenging social movements and appear respectable within the international community.” (Markoff 2006: 87) In these “Potemkin” cases, some backsliding was inevitable since the democratic institutions were a temporary façade for placating domestic challengers and foreign peers. The overexpansion of democratic institutions as a byproduct of powerful (but temporary) pro-democracy global norms echoes the backsliding of democratic movements after the end of the Third Wave in the mid-1990s.

in Europe when it seemed to fail..."¹⁵⁶ The spirit of postwar democratic enthusiasm inflated unrealistic expectations in countries whose prospects for its maintenance faced a number of tough challenges. As Raymond Aron writes:

In countries restored or created by diplomatic decision, the model was the Western-type democracy that had needed a century to take root even in France. But these new countries were riven by nationalist conflicts. Their middle classes, with the sole exception of Czechoslovakia, were small and had no experience of power. So it was not surprising that the large number of parties, adding parliamentary quarrels to the underlying causes of division, soon proved inimical to the survival of the state.¹⁵⁷

The spirit of compromise and consensus required for parliamentary governance could not be sustained in an environment of quarreling ethnic and social groups brought together in artificially bounded territories. The newly-created states were "to a large extent accidents of the war." None of them, with the exception of Poland, represented "a deeply felt, long-maturing, or widespread revolutionary settlement."¹⁵⁸ Croatians complained of Serbian mistreatment in Yugoslavia; Magyars of Romanian mistreatment in Transylvania, and so on. States born from the war "were as divided within their new frontiers as they had been within the old, and were separated from one another by even greater hostility than they had experienced under German or Hungarian domination," writes Francois Furet. "The

¹⁵⁶ Roberts 2008:312

¹⁵⁷ Aron 1951/ 2002:146

¹⁵⁸ Palmer et al 2002:745

Allies had miniaturized national hatred in the name of the principle of nationhood.”¹⁵⁹

Walter Bagehot, writing about France’s Third Republic, once noted that parliamentary government often fails because it requires “that a nation should have nerve to endure incessant discussion and frequent change of rulers.”¹⁶⁰ For the states of interwar Europe, such nerve required, in the words of Fritz Stern, “a psychological stamina for ambiguity and uncertainty,” an attitude that that could not sustain enough adherents in the interwar period.¹⁶¹ With the disappearance of strong pro-democracy class coalitions and the absence domestic pre-requisites conducive for its consolidation, the momentum for democratization could not be sustained.

Russia, for example, began its revolutionary path in 1917 with a turn to moderation and democratic rule, personified by the liberal, centrist figure of Alexander Kerensky, leader of the Provisional Government. “Six weeks ago Russia was an autocracy,” announced David Lloyd George in a speech in spring 1917. “She now is one of the most advanced democracies in the world.”¹⁶² But liberal democrats (represented by the Kadet party) could find no natural constituency

¹⁵⁹ Francois Furet (1999) *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, University of Chicago Press, p.58

¹⁶⁰ Walter Bagehot (1874/1965) *Bagehot’s Historical Essays*, edited by Norman St. John-Stevan, New York: Anchor Books, p. 449-50. Quoted in Fritz Stern (1992) *The Failure of Liberalism: Essays on the Political Culture of Modern Germany*, Columbia University Press, p.xxiv.

¹⁶¹ Stern 1997:20

¹⁶² Quoted in James L. Slayden (1917) “Disarmament and International Courts Prerequisites to a Durable Peace” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.72, p.100

among the largely agrarian population. Russia's lack of a stable middle class meant that anti-system parties like the Bolshevik could take advantage of peasant anxieties to undermine support for the Provisional Government. Promising peace for soldiers (Kerensky's government unwisely decided to continue Russia's involvement in the unpopular war) and bread for peasants, the Bolsheviks were able to manipulate public opinion to a sufficient extent to undertake a successful – and largely bloodless – coup d'état in November of 1917. The democratic coalition that formed Russia's government in February dissolved in the face of uncertainty, poor decisions, and lack of middle-class support, replaced only nine months later by a radical faction that praised democracy in theory and immediately began to dismantle it in practice.

The collapse of the Russian empire created a temporary vacuum of power along its peripheries. As a result, a number of new states sprung from its periphery that proclaimed the universalist ideals of democracy and national self-determination. In February 1918, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the eastern (Russian) portion of Armenia formed the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic. Though each nationality had wanted its own state, Wilson told the Azeri delegation at the Paris Peace Conference that he wanted to avoid territorial fragmentation, and advised them to form a union in order to achieve international recognition. When the union split apart after only three months later, its constituent members created three Democratic Republics. These states aspired to adopt the best practices of democratic rule such as suffrage and a parliament based on proportional

representation. Azerbaijan, for instance, set up a parliament elected on the basis of universal suffrage (including female suffrage – the first Muslim country to do so). In January 1920 the Allied Supreme Council formally recognized the new states, but by that point the Bolshevik state was re-asserting its former territorial claims. The Red Army occupied Azerbaijan in April 1920, Armenia (with Ottoman forces) in December 1920, and Georgia in March 1921, ending their brief attempts at democratization. These failed consolidations revealed another way in which the crisis of the war created self-destructing democracies. The war had temporarily weakened a losing hegemon to such an extent that sovereign states began peeling from its peripheries. But as the country stabilized itself after a civil war, these new territories were rapidly re-absorbed into the old empire, which had by now transformed itself into a communist state.

Across eastern and central Europe, new countries were plagued by weak and fragmented parliamentary system. Party “factionalism” – the bugbear of the 1930s and a catalyst for the autocratic turn of that decade – was a problem for many of these states from the start. In the Baltics, fragmented legislatures composed of a number of small parties led to ephemeral governing majorities and short-lived coalitions. In Estonia between 1919 and 1933 an average government lasted eight months.¹⁶³ The lack of political leadership was made worse by the absence of unifying native figures during the period of Russian domination.¹⁶⁴ Lithuania was the first to falter, when in 1926 Antanas Smetona established an authoritarian

¹⁶³ Eglitis 2007:234-5

¹⁶⁴ Sontag 1971:67

presidential regime. Latvia and Estonia managed to sustain democratic governance through the 1930s, however, and cannot be considered part of the post-war democratic rollback. The demise of democracy in these states (both succumbed in 1934) can be more properly attributed to the Great Depression and the accompanying authoritarian wave of the 1930s.¹⁶⁵

Poland also experienced paralyzing party factionalism in the postwar years, and the country increasingly came to be ruled by Marshal Józef Pilsudski, widely admired for his role in restoring Polish independence and in the war with the new Soviet Union. Pilsudski acted as the country's Chief of State until 1922, withdrew from politics in the following year and seized dictatorial power in 1926, ruling until his death in 1935.¹⁶⁶ Hungary was another country in which a weak parliament created the space for an authoritarian turn, although in this case the collapse was much quicker. In October 1918 the liberal leftist count Mihaly Karolyi led the largely bloodless Chrysanthemum Revolution in October 1918. The Hungarian Democratic Republic, with Karolyi as president, was established on November 16. Once again, the domestic conditions inside the country were not conducive for democratic consolidation. The parliamentary government generated widespread discontent among the elites by preserving a prewar-size civil service that operated on a greatly reduced budget.¹⁶⁷ Karolyi's governing coalition ruled in parallel with

¹⁶⁵ Eglitis 2007:234

¹⁶⁶ Sontag 1971:67

¹⁶⁷ Stanley G. Payne (1995) *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945*, University of Wisconsin Press, p.26

local revolutionary councils, composed of Social Democrats, which resembled the Russian Soviets, creating a condition of dual power similar to Russia's fatal *dvoevlastiye* in 1917 that inhibited the parliament from exercising its authority and undermined its rule in both cases. Hungary's Social Democrats, for instance, prevented Karolyi's initiative of transferring land to peasants on the grounds that it would promote capitalism. Mass unemployment, inflation, refugee flows and a punitive armistice quickly drained public support for the new regime, until a revolutionary Communist dictatorship was established in March of 1919, only five months after Karolyi's revolution. This in turn led to foreign intervention and a counter-revolution by the conservative forces led by Admiral Horthy, who established a conservative monarchy that governed the country until 1944.

In Bulgaria, postwar politics were dominated by the Agrarian Union until its overthrow by a military revolt in 1923. The Union was a movement led by Alexander Stamboliyski that pursued economic and political policies on behalf of the peasants, who comprised nearly eighty percent of the population.¹⁶⁸ Despite his popularity with the peasants, Stamboliyski found no support among either the small middle class or the military. His party formed its own militia, called the Orange Shirts, who intimidated the political opposition. As one of the Central Powers in the war, Bulgaria was subject to a harsh peace treaty that reduced its territory, limited its army to twenty thousand men, and forced it to pay a hundred million pounds in reparations. As executor of the treaty, Stamboliyski became

¹⁶⁸ Payne 1995:133

increasingly unpopular with right-wing factions and the army, who finally carried out a coup in June 1923. While Stamboliyski pursued a peaceful foreign policy and genuinely sought to secure the political rights of the Bulgarian peasantry, his rule exhibited a heavy hand in dealing with those who disagreed with his policies. As with other countries in the region, Bulgaria's political atmosphere was too volatile to maintain even a semblance of democracy, though in this case the downfall came from a rather low starting point.

Democracy failed not only in new states but also in places like Portugal, which had some history with liberal constitutional rule, although of the oligarchic rather than democratic sort. For a few years after the war, the Republican parliamentary regime plodded along, "registering the greatest cabinet instability of any state in Europe, accompanied by high inflation, a massive public debt, and only minimal economic growth."¹⁶⁹ As in Bulgaria, Poland and Lithuania, a weak and fragmented parliamentary system in combination with a lack of social and economic pre-conditions for democratic development led to an intervention by the military, who seized power in a nearly bloodless coup in May of 1926.

Nationalist tensions in new multi-ethnic states also undermined the consolidation of democratic rule. The system of parliamentary democracy, reliant on consensus and compromise, was not suited for the fractious, multi-ethnic politics of Yugoslavia after 1919. It had existed since that time under the name of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes as a multi-ethnic parliamentary

¹⁶⁹ Payne 1995:143

state (though not a true democracy) dominated by Serbs. Despite Croatian resistance, it “managed a chaotic semblance of parliamentary rule until 1929,” when King Alexander – himself a Serb who found governing increasingly difficult as the decade wore on – renamed the country Yugoslavia and established a dictatorship.¹⁷⁰ In retrospect it was surprising that the system managed to last as long as it did, with political compromise so difficult to achieve in “so complex and divided a polity.”¹⁷¹

If Yugoslavia exemplified the absence of domestic conditions needed to sustain democracy, the failure of democracy in Germany showed the immense but temporary power of the war to create pro-democracy coalitions that dissolved as the crisis passed. In his push for making the world safe for democracy, Woodrow Wilson made the end of hostilities contingent upon German democratization (unlike the French, who demanded unconditional surrender). As German defeat began to seem more inevitable, the country’s leaders began backing democratic reforms in the hopes of securing a more favorable agreement with the Allies, particularly from the United States. In September 1918, General Erich Ludendorff proclaimed his support for a German parliamentary government. Ludendorff was far from a typical liberal. As Quartermaster General of the country’s army he oversaw the daily operations of General Hindenburg’s government, a military

¹⁷⁰ Charles Tilly (2004) *Contention & Democracy in Europe, 1650-2000*, Cambridge University Press, p.230-31

¹⁷¹ Payne 1995:144

dictatorship that ran the country during the last two years of the war.¹⁷² He anticipated that the hegemonic influence exerted by the United States would allow Germany to conclude a more favorable postwar settlement if it made a transition to democracy. Along the same lines, in October 1918 the Kaiser asked the liberal Prince Max of Baden to take up the chancellorship and begin settlement negotiations with the Entente powers. (As a signal of his democratic intentions, the Prince appointed a government that included representatives from the Social Democrats for the first time in German history.) During this period, Wilson continued to push for democracy as a pre-condition for an armistice. As Peceny notes, “this external pressure helped generate the incremental steps” taken by the Max von Baden government to liberalize Germany in October of 1918, so that power shifted to the elected Reichstag while the Chancellor, the Cabinet and the executive branch no longer reported to the Kaiser.¹⁷³ These steps were taken with the hope that American influence would lead to more tolerable surrender terms for a democratic Germany. The fragile alliance of army officers, aristocracy, and liberal parties hinged on a successful postwar agreement dominated by the United States. After the war ended, however, Wilson lost his bargaining leverage both with the Allies (and with France in particular) and among the United States congress, who accused Wilson of leniency and pushed for a harsher peace. France insisted

¹⁷² Peceny 2010:9, See also Evans 2004:61; Martin Kitchen (1976) *The Silent Dictatorship: The Politics of the German High Command under Hindenburg and Ludendorff, 1916-1918*. London: Croom Helm; Klaus Schwabe (1985) *Woodrow Wilson, Revolutionary Germany, and Peacemaking, 1918-1919*, transl by Rita and Robert Kimber, University of North Carolina Press

¹⁷³ Peceny 2010:11

upon punitive indemnities and the dismemberment of the Reich as a way to prevent another attempt at German hegemony. (Moreover, the insistence on democratization in central and eastern Europe fell by the wayside as France began to advocate strong alliances in the region to prevent the expansion of German influence, regardless of their internal regime.) Britain's Liberal Party was more sympathetic to Wilson's cause, but the December 1918 elections brought in a conservative coalition that demanded a much more punitive peace. Wilson lost even the support of his own Congress, as the Republicans won both houses in midterm elections held days before the signing of the Armistice in November 1918. During the election, the Republicans had accused Wilson of being soft on Germany, and campaigned for unconditional surrender.¹⁷⁴

The Allied victory thus not only destroyed the legitimacy of Germany's authoritarian regime and created a window of opportunity for political reform in November of 1918, but also created incentives for erstwhile German conservatives to adopt pro-democratic views. German transition to democracy immediately before the end of the war resulted from "the contingent commitment to democracy by elements of the authoritarian regime in the somewhat mistaken hope that a republican Germany would earn a more lenient peace agreement than one governed by Kaiser Wilhelm."¹⁷⁵ This embrace of democracy, however, hinged on a favorable outcome in postwar negotiations with the Allies. When that outcome

¹⁷⁴ Peceny 2010:14. See also Arno J. Mayer (1967) *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918-1919*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf

¹⁷⁵ Peceny 2010:1

failed to materialize, the incentive for democratization among the army and the conservative elites faded as well, providing another blow to the uneasy pro-democracy coalition created by the crisis of the war.¹⁷⁶ Germany's governing "Weimar coalition" – the Majority Social Democrats, the catholic Center party, and the liberal German Democratic party – was saddled with blame for the punitive judgment brought upon the country at Versailles. These three parties had been the foremost proponents of democratization before the war, and their failure to secure a tolerable peace crippled their ability to govern through the 1920s. Between 1919 (the last time the Weimar coalition gained an electoral majority) and 1933, the Reichstag did not sustain a majority government and was constantly challenged by anti-system parties from both the extreme left and the extreme right. The initial popularity of the Social Democrats stemmed in large part from middle-class voters who saw a strong Social Democratic party as a defense against labor unrest and a potential Bolshevik revolution. Germany's military officers supported the democratic reforms offered by the Weimar Coalition for that reason, as the historian Richard Evans argues:

[T]he General Staff agreed with the Majority Social Democrats under Friedrich Ebert that the threat of the revolutionary workers' and soldiers' council would best be warded off if they worked in tandem to secure a stable parliamentary democracy...this was an act of expediency, not of faith....Within a short space of time, however, the workers' and soldiers' councils had faded from the political scene, and the need for compromise with the forces of democracy seemed to many leading officers to have lost its urgency.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Peceny 2010:12. See also F.L. Carsten (1972) *Revolution in Central Europe: 1918-1919*, University of California Press

¹⁷⁷ Evans 2004:97.

Business interests likewise stood behind democratic reforms for reasons that were bound to disappear as the Communist threat receded. "Like other elements of the Wilhelmine establishment," writes Evans, "big business accepted the Republic because it seemed the most likely way of warding off something worse."¹⁷⁸ But as the threat of a Communist revolution faded, the temporarily parallel interests of industrialists, the aristocracy and the forces of democracy began to diverge. The Social Democrats' representation in the Reichstag fell from an all-time high of 38% in the 1919 elections to around 25% over the next decade.¹⁷⁹ "The widespread feeling after 1923 that the threat of a Bolshevik revolution had receded," writes Evans, "meant that the bourgeois parties were no longer so willing to compromise with the Social Democrats in the interests of preserving the Republic as a bulwark against Communism."¹⁸⁰

Between 1919 and 1933 the country saw twenty different cabinets, each lasting on average less than eight months. Unstable coalitions created constant squabbles and weakened the parliament's ability to govern, "since all they could settle on was the lowest common denominator and the line of least resistance."¹⁸¹ While the anticipation of beneficial American influence provided an additional incentive for reforms, this influence did not materialize in the aftermath of the war and fatally

¹⁷⁸ Evans 2004:112-3, citing Henry Ashby Turner, Jr. (1985) *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler* and Gerald D. Feldman (1966) *Army, Industry, and Labor in Germany, 1914-1918*, Princeton University Press

¹⁷⁹ Evans 2004:88. After gaining 163 votes in the 1919 founding elections, the Social Democrats received 102 votes in 1920.

¹⁸⁰ Evans 2004:96

¹⁸¹ Evans 2004:83

crippled the governing Weimar Coalition. In short, the crisis of the war generated two incentives for liberalization – fear of Communism and hope for an American-led settlement – that disappeared in the postwar years, undermining the effort to sustain German democracy.

In the interwar period, Czechoslovakia was the exception that proved the rule. Created in 1918 and expanded to include Ruthenia in 1919, the Czechoslovak Republic “brought together regions at very different levels of development populated by people with very different experiences.”¹⁸² It adopted a constitution based on the French and American models, with proportional representation, a dual executive designed to keep the president weak, guarantees of individual rights and freedoms, and an elected National Assembly that enjoyed a monopoly on legislative initiative. The First Czechoslovak Republic was “a comparatively modern, well-functioning democracy.”¹⁸³ Despite tensions between Czechs and Slovaks, it stood apart as the only east European state that retained democratic institutions through the 1930s.¹⁸⁴ In the second half of the 1930s it was an island of democracy in a sea of despotism, finally succumbing to a German takeover in 1939.

The survival of Czechoslovakian democracy can be directly traced to the nature

¹⁸² Sharon L. Wolchik (2007) “The Czech and Slovak Republics: Two Paths to the Same Destination” p.192 in Wolchik and Curry, eds

¹⁸³ Lloyd Cutler and Herman Schwartz (1991) “Constitutional Reform in Czechoslovakia: E Duobus Unum?” *The University of Chicago Law Review* 58.2, p. 513

¹⁸⁴ For an opposing view, see Andrea Orzoff (2009) *Battle for the Castle: The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914-1948*, Oxford University Press; Mary Heinmann (2011) *Czechoslovakia: The State That Failed*, Yale University Press

of the party coalitions. The so-called *petka*, a five-party coalition that ruled the country for most of the interwar period, created a government “dominated by disciplined political parties” and provided a measure of continuity and stability.¹⁸⁵ While its neighbors experienced short-lived governments or takeovers by anti-system parties, Czechoslovakia managed to maintain a degree of political coherence and internal stability through the *petka*. Its members met regularly to advise the prime minister and shape cabinet policies. These sessions ensured that internal disagreements did not spiral out of control, prevented cabinet crises at times of unrest (such as during the period of hyper-inflation in 1922-23), enabled the government to maintain unity in the eyes of public opinion, and created rigid discipline and a locus for political action when necessary.¹⁸⁶ As a result, the governing coalition never faced a significant challenge from anti-system parties. The domestic conditions in Czechoslovakia, in short, were uniquely adopted to maintaining democratic institutions in spite of general instability across the continent.

For Czechoslovakia’s neighbors, however, the outcome was very different. As E.H. Carr later wrote in *The Twenty Years Crisis*: “The liberal democracies scattered throughout the world by the peace settlement of 1919 were the product of abstract theory, stuck no roots in the soil, and quickly shriveled away.”¹⁸⁷ Across much of

¹⁸⁵ Wolchik 2007:193

¹⁸⁶ R. J. Crampton (1997) *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century – And After*, New York: Routledge, p.63

¹⁸⁷ E.H. Carr (1939/1964) *The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939*, Harper Perennial, p.27.

Europe, democracies “had to operate in a world in which it had many enemies, old and new,” writes Roberts. “It had not been a widespread form of government before 1914 and many Europeans were soon regretting the passing of the regimes under which they had previously lived.”¹⁸⁸ The political and economic instability in the newly-created states further undermined democracy’s chances. As Frieden writes:

The successor states started from scratch, the spawn of defeated autocracies. They scrambled to turn former provinces into modern nation-states in the midst of famine and economic collapse. The new governments typically had few ways to pay their bills other than to print money. The result was a wave of inflation that destroyed the value of currencies, disrupted economies, and in extreme cases threatened the social fabric of nations.¹⁸⁹

While the outcome of the war propped up democracy on the podium of universal acclaim, reality soon showed that these hopes had created the democratic version of a stock market bubble on the European continent, one that was bound to burst as the decade set in. Extraordinary ad hoc domestic coalitions that came together to create the initial wave dissolved as the immediate crisis of the war passed. In the absence of strong pro-democracy coalitions, domestic circumstances in economically and socially undeveloped states could not sustain the push for democratization.

¹⁸⁸ Roberts 2008:284

¹⁸⁹ Frieden 2006:134

Conclusion

The First World War produced the century's first democratic wave by demonstrating democracy's effectiveness to rulers, creating new states on the ruins of autocratic empires, and increasing the organizational power of women and working-class men. With its reliance on industrial production at home and mass armies at the front, the war made the support of workers and conscripted soldiers crucial for waging the war. The connection between mass mobilization and democracy was not predetermined, but mobilization did open up opportunities for reforms whose outcome hinged on the outcome of the war.

The defeat of autocracies and the emergence of the United States as a new global hegemon produced a brief moment when democracy appeared to be the only way forward. It was, in retrospect, an ill-fated victory. The fundamental premise of the Versailles treaty – the idea of democracy as the answer to the problems of modernity – was not established by the outcome of the war. The democracies that emerged from the war were “never secure in their claims of legitimacy in those states where this legitimacy was most closely tested.”¹⁹⁰ The Soviet Union after 1923 and Germany after 1933 – two states excluded from the negotiations at Versailles – would in time offer their own visions of the modern state. By the end of the 1930s, democracy appeared discredited and moribund. Given the general tenor of that period, can we separate the democratic backlash of the 1920s from the authoritarian, fascist-inspired wave of the 1930s? These

¹⁹⁰ Bobbitt 2003:40

distinctions are not always easy to draw, but one essential difference was the revolutionary mentality of the anti-democratic movements. In the 1920s, classic conservatives moved away from democracy to preserve the old order and exclude the masses from political life. By the next decade, revolutionary conservatives sought to demolish the old order, to bring the masses into politics, and to fundamentally transform relations among social and economic classes – as detailed in the next chapter.

The postwar democratic wave sowed seeds of its own demise as rulers and coalitions, swept up in the post-war momentum, adopted liberal institutions in countries that lacked the social cohesion, political pre-conditions or economic stability necessary for democratic consolidation. Pro-reform coalitions that initiated the changes dissolved as the crisis passed. In addition, those rulers who saw democratization as a way to ingratiate themselves with the United States were met instead with empty rhetoric instead of economic assistance and security guarantees. In the beginning, those who “lacked a principled commitment to liberal democracy embraced the liberal creed because they thought Wilson and the victorious Allies would provide material benefits to those who jumped on the democratic bandwagon,” writes Peceny. “Over time, the failure of the liberal great powers to reward other states for embracing liberal institutions...led those who only had a contingent commitment to democracy to abandon that commitment.”¹⁹¹ Wilson had hoped that Europe would accept his vision for the world “more by

¹⁹¹ Peceny 2010:3

moral and ideological appeal,” as Ikenberry puts it, “than by the exercise of American power or diplomatic tact.”¹⁹² In the end, that hope proved elusive. The failure of the post-war wave can therefore be explained in part by the rising hegemon’s reticence to use coercion or influence to promote democratic regimes, relying instead on the expectation that emulation alone would create a world safe for democracy.

In failing to resolve the major dilemma of the twentieth century – the design and legitimacy of the modern nation-state – World War I was the first a series of confrontations between democracy and alternative institutional arrangements. The outcome of these confrontations were shaped in large part by sudden shocks to the global distribution of power and the incentives for reform they created in states around the world. In the end, the war was “indeed a victory for democracy, though a bitter one,” writes Palmer. “For the basic problems of modern civilization, industrialism and nationalism, economic security and international stability, it gave no answer.”¹⁹³ Its outcome inaugurated a struggle for influence and legitimacy that ended only when the last remaining alternative imploded in 1991. But in the late 1920s, Europe’s first democratic experiment teetered on the edge of failure. It was the Great Depression that sent it into the abyss of the interwar years.

¹⁹² Ikenberry 2001:155

¹⁹³ Palmer et al 2002:696

CHAPTER 4

A LOW DISHONEST DECADE

“We are at the present time passing through a certain
disillusionment about democracy.”

--A.D. Lindsay (1929)¹

“As the clever hopes expire
of a low dishonest decade:
Waves of anger and fear
Circulate over the bright
And darkened lands of the earth”

--W.H. Auden (1939)²

In 1942, Joseph Schumpeter published his *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. Now remembered chiefly as a paean to the “creative destruction” of capitalism, the book was actually a eulogy for what Schumpeter saw as a dying system. Although it was the ever-evolving nature of capitalism that made it the best system for increasing productivity and standards of living, Schumpeter did not believe that

¹ A.D. Lindsay (1951) *The Essentials of Democracy*, Oxford University Press, p.7, quoted in Fritz Stern (1997) “The new democracies in crisis in interwar Europe” in Axel Hadenius, ed., *Democracy’s Victory and Crisis*, Cambridge University Press.

² W.H. Auden (1939) “September 1, 1939” in *Another Time*

either capitalism or liberal democracy would be able to survive in the face of fascism and socialism. Capitalism, he argued, “produced [an] atmosphere of almost universal hostility to its own social order.” The replacement of the *petit bourgeois* by giant corporations took “the life out of the idea of property....Dematerialized, defunctionalized and absentee ownership does not call forth moral allegiance as the vital form of property did.” And even as the progress of capitalism corroded its own moral legitimacy, it spurred an alienated and hostile class of intellectuals who further undermined the system’s appeal and incited movements that would call for its replacement.³

Moreover, since democracy for Schumpeter was a “product of the capitalist process” and therefore associated with its failure, their decline would be simultaneous and mutually reinforcing. Like many of his contemporaries, Schumpeter did not believe that the fractious nature of democracy was equipped to handle the conflicts of complex modern societies, since “the democratic method never works at its best when nations are much divided on fundamental questions of social structure.” The real struggle, Schumpeter argued, would be between socialism and fascism, in which socialism would eventually emerge as the winner. He concluded with a “pessimistic prognosis” about capitalist democracy – not only because of the system’s inherent inability to resolve serious class conflict, but also because as more countries became socialist, democracy’s power and legitimacy

³ Joseph A. Schumpeter (1942) *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, p.143,142, 151. Page numbers refer to the third edition, New York: Harper and Row, 1950.

would fade by comparison.⁴

Written in the late 1930s, the nadir of liberal democracy, Schumpeter's predictions echoed the views of many of his contemporaries. The growing legitimacy and acceptance of fascist institutions reflected the hegemonic transition that followed the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 and accelerated with the Nazi ascent to power in 1933. Moreover, this reversal of fortune was directly tied to the differences between fascist and democratic institutions. All across Europe, writes Sheri Berman, "the political and economic policies and appeals offered by fascists and national socialists proved to be widely popular. Tapping into the widespread longing for some alternative to the reigning capitalist system and for an end to class conflict and social divisions, fascists and national socialists managed to achieve a surprising degree of support."⁵ As Jeffrey Frieden writes:

Governments in central, eastern, and southern Europe invoked a new fascist ideal as they stamped out labor, the Left, and eventually all opposition in the march toward militaristic self-reliance. The upper tier of developing countries in Latin America, the Middle East and Asia rejected Europe and North America to build national economies on nationalist principles; the colonies prepared themselves to do the same.⁶

The wave of fascism that swept the world after 1933 was the result of a growing disparity between the declining democratic powers – Britain, France, and especially the United States – and their vibrant non-democratic rivals, Nazi

⁴ Schumpeter 1942:297-8

⁵ Sheri Berman (2006) *The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe's Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, p.151

⁶ Jeffrey A. Frieden (2006) *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century*, W.W. Norton and Company, p. 228

Germany and the Soviet Union. Amid the decay and fear of the 1930s (Auden's "low, dishonest decade") the latter two stood as beacons of hope and models of growth for leaders and masses alike. They had loudly rejected the conventional politics and economics associated with the Great Depression, and presented themselves as viable institutional alternatives to the failure of liberal democracy. Electoral triumphs in 1933 and a fascist victory in the Spanish civil war three years later "showed that fascists could win both in the polling booth and on the battlefield. For many people, democracy did not seem up to the dynamic new challenge."⁷ The years of the Great Depression were a time "when the idea of Parliament as a fraud and a folly, a slow-footed relic of a dying age, was a standard faith of intellectuals on left and right alike."⁸

This chapter traces the growth in influence of authoritarian movements and the proliferation of institutions borrowed from Germany in Europe and around the world in the decade between 1933 and 1943. Since Soviet relative power grew less slowly in this period, and the adoption of Communist institutions did not reach critical mass until after the war, in this chapter I focus primarily on the influence of fascism.

In its timing and content, the wave of reforms conformed to the expected patterns of the hegemonic transition. As the relative power of democratic regimes declined, democracy increasingly became seen as stagnant, outdated, and

⁷ John Markoff, *Waves of Democracy: Social Movements and Political Change*, Pine Forge Press, 1996, p.77

⁸ Adam Gopnik (2010) "Finest Hours" *The New Yorker*, August 30, p.81.

inefficient. At the same time, as Germany began to increase its share of relative power and eliminated the pernicious scourge of unemployment, other states began to look toward fascism as a model for emulation. German economic expansion, particularly into South America and Eastern Europe, also drew states into its orbit. Germany and Italy also attempted to extend their influence through the financial support of a number of fascist movements in Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. The onset of World War II began the final, coercive phase of the fascist wave, as Germany and Japan set up a number of puppets and tutelary regimes across Europe and Southeast Asia.

Thus all three mechanisms of emulation, influence, and coercion (in that general order) contributed to the fascist wave between 1933 and 1943. In this period, a number of states adopted fascist institutions and expressed admiration for fascist innovations in the field of political economy. Fascist influence is easiest to trace in states whose leaders proclaimed themselves as such – Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain, Hungary, Romania, and Japan, and to a lesser extent Portugal and Greece. The list expanded greatly during Nazi takeovers between 1938 and 1943. At its height in the summer of 1942, the fascist order – fascist states, its occupied territories, colonies, satellites, puppets and tutelary regimes – included half the world's population, or “virtually all of Europe and the Middle East and much of Asia and Africa.”⁹ Hitler's empire alone “stretched from the Mediterranean to the

⁹ Frieden 2007:215

Arctic, from the English Channel to the Black Sea and almost the Caspian.”¹⁰

The timing of the fascist wave also demonstrates the importance of hegemonic shocks in influencing institutional reforms. Mussolini seized power in 1922 (although his regime was not consolidated until several years later and opposition newspapers continued until 1925). But as with the Russian revolution of 1917, a new ideology alone could not inspire a fascist wave without an accompanying hegemonic transition. Although a number of minor imitators sprung up in Mussolini’s wake, very few of these movements achieved any measure of popularity until after 1933. Stanley Payne, a prominent historian of fascism, noted the paucity of philofascist groups in the 1920s, concluding that “the major diffusion of fascist movements throughout Europe occurred during the following decade, in the aftermath of Hitler's triumph.”¹¹ Codreanu’s Legion of the Archangel Michael in Romania, for example, was formed in 1927 but did not develop any significant following until the mid-1930s. Likewise in Hungary, fascist mass mobilization efforts failed during the 1920s but succeeded in the following decade, encouraged both by foreign example and the deepening frustrations of Hungarian society.¹²

The growing power of Germany meant that it could also exercise influence in more direct but not coercive ways. This took the form of increasing trade ties with regions that did not have established relations with Western colonial powers,

¹⁰ Randall Schweller (1998) *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler’s Strategy of World Conquest*, Columbia University Press, p.1

¹¹ Stanley G. Payne (1995) *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945*, University of Wisconsin Press, p.290

¹² Payne 1995:138, 268

particularly in Latin America and central Europe. In Latin America, for example, Germany's share of imports grew from 7.3% to 16.2% between 1932 and 1938.¹³ This enabled Germany to intervene in the economic affairs of its trading partners; in Eastern Europe, for example, it forced Romania to reserve its mineral oils for German export and sought to prevent the region's economic integration.¹⁴ As German power revived, neutrality became much more difficult for its neighbors, who were forced to move closer toward a regime they may not have wished to imitate otherwise.

But focusing on the overt expansion in influence and territory omits the more subtle channels through which fascist influence manifested itself in nominally non-fascist states. Beginning in the early 1930s, political leaders all over the world began looking to Nazi institutional innovations without necessarily wishing to borrow the accompanying ideological baggage. National labor services designed to relieve unemployment, state-directed economies, systems of social welfare, mass political mobilization and strong executive rule were all hallmarks of statist innovations that took hold in the 1930s and later became essential components of modern mixed economies. Berman, in her study of the evolution of social democracy, concludes: "Several critical "innovations" championed by fascists and national socialists – such as the notion of a "people's party" and an economic order that aimed to control but not destroy capitalism – became central features of

¹³ Hartmut Elsenhans (1991) "The Great Depression of the 1930s and the Third World" *International Studies* 28.3, p.279

¹⁴ Elsenhans 1991:279

Europe's postwar order."¹⁵

Because fascist expansion in the 1930s often proceeded by piecemeal borrowing of fascist institutions, it is important to define what constituted a fascist regime. More than any other regime type of the twentieth century, fascism eludes a concise definition. The historian Stanley Payne calls it "the vaguest of the major political terms" while Furet describes it as "a fuzzy, autodidactic amalgam".¹⁶ Defining fascism is a difficult task; although during the height of its appeal it drew many intellectuals into its orbit, it lacked the theoretical and intellectual tradition of either communism and democracy. Hitler "never quoted anyone, so convinced was he of the absolute originality of his pronouncements."¹⁷ During the 1930s, certain leaders called themselves fascists without embracing any of its institutional features. Others rejected the label even as they assiduously imitated elements of fascist regimes. At the same time, and particularly after World War II, "people of every political persuasion, and especially socialists and communists, have tended to attach the label of fascism so freely to whoever happens to oppose them as to obscure all distinctions."¹⁸

A single definition is complicated by the absence of a well-defined fascist "program". There were important differences even within the two archetypal states,

¹⁵ Berman 2006:151

¹⁶ Payne 1995:3; Furet 1999:3

¹⁷ Furet 1999:187

¹⁸ Peter H. Merkl (1980) "Comparing Fascist Movements" in Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Bernt Hagtvet, and Jan Petter Myklebust, eds., *Who Were the Fascists: Social Roots of European Fascism*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, p. 752

Italy and Germany. The German authoritarians were, strictly speaking, Nazis rather than fascists. Whereas for fascism economy and society existed to exalt the state, for Nazis the state was the paramount instrument through which culture, politics and economics served to exalt the Aryan race. Its apotheosis was the Volk and the Volksgemeinschaft rather than the government - and although this distinction was more than cosmetic, its practical consequence in both cases led to the total subjugation of the individual to the state apparatus. In this chapter I use the term "fascism" to refer to both variants, following Payne's advice to treat the word as "as a general type or generic phenomenon for heuristic and analytic purposes." The fascist regime, he writes, "is an abstraction which never existed in pure empirical form but constitutes a conceptual device which serves to clarify the analysis of individual political phenomena."¹⁹

In the 1930s, fascism was a broad but nevertheless distinct family of authoritarian institutions bound by a shared philosophy of the state's relation to the economy and the individual. It arose as a response and a challenge not only to communism and liberal democracy but also to classical conservative authoritarianism. It rejected the autonomy of the economic sphere and the individual inherent in liberal democracy, and subordinated both to the general political will. In this it overlapped with communism, its sworn enemy. But while it rejected the primacy of capitalism over politics, it never went so far as to abandon the idea of private property or national tradition. (Indeed, it fetishized the

¹⁹ Payne 1995:4

protection of private property as a defense against both communism and large-scale finance capitalism, and found many supporters among small landowners. As fascism portrayed it, communal ownership and collectivization of the land presented threat from the left, while monopolies and large landowners threatened the small property-owners from the right.)²⁰ Also unlike communism, fascism saw the basic divisions of human communities shaped by national boundaries rather than socioeconomic classes. And while Communism sought to break free from the chains of the past, fascists sought a return to a mythical, prelapsarian age, free of the diseases of modernity. In this they resembled the classic conservatives of yesteryear, but this resemblance was only partial. As documented in the previous chapter, democratic breakdowns began to occur soon after World War I. Given the general authoritarian bent of the period, how does one separate democratic breakdowns from the influence of fascist institutions? The distinction is indeed difficult to trace in some cases. But with the exception of Italy, until 1933 what replaced democracy in these states was traditional conservative rule. It is here that the difference between fascist authoritarianism of the 1930s and traditional authoritarianism of the 1920s becomes instructive. The crisis of the Great Depression meant that authoritarian leaders could no longer remain content with

²⁰ William Brunstein and Marit Berntson (1999) "Interwar Fascist Popularity in Europe and the Default of the Left" *European Sociological Review* 15.2, p. 174. As they put it, "no fascist movement became a major political party without having mobilized the class of small property-owners....where the left abandoned small property-holders by taking a maximalist stand on defence of small property, an opening occurred for another party to defend small property rights (e.g. fascist parties). By contrast, where the left took up the defence of small property, new parties could not establish a foothold." Brunstein and Berntson 1999:162

the classical authoritarian model. Instead of merely defending the status quo, the government now had to step in to stimulate the economy with welfare programs and deficit spending. The mobilization of popular support replaced the innate classical-authoritarian distrust of mobs and rallies; staid hierarchy gave way to charismatic, energetic leadership that promised action.

In short, the populist authoritarian regimes of the 1930s moved away from their conventional law-and-order counterparts of previous years by borrowing elements of fascist institutions. "The 1930s and 1940s were the period of fascist success," writes the historian Hugh Seton-Watson. "Inevitably fascist policies and institutions were aped by others."²¹ Germany's growing power "stimulated rightist movements and right-wing authoritarian regimes to adopt varying degrees of "fascistization" – certain outward trappings of fascist style-to present a more modern and dynamic image, with the hope of attaining broader mobilization and infrastructure."²² This process was not synonymous with fascism – but, Payne notes, "it would be grossly inaccurate to argue that this process proceeded independent of fascism."²³ It had borrowed the public aesthetics, the choreography, and the semiotics of fascism, along with a new approach to political economy that emphasized the primacy of

²¹ Hugh Seton-Watson (1979) "The Age of Fascism and its Legacy" in George L. Mosse, ed., *International Fascism: New Thoughts and New Approaches*, Sage Publications, p.365. He cites as some "obvious examples" Gombos' Hungary, Stojadinovic's Yugoslavia, and King Carol's Romania.

²² Payne 1995:290. Harold Macmillan in 1933 euphemistically named this selective imitation "orderly capitalism" (quoted in Schivelbusch 2006:12)

²³ Payne 1995:15. Even when authoritarianism did not mean fascism, "it became common for authoritarian regimes to imitate certain aspects of the fascist style." Payne 1995:290

political will over the national economy.²⁴ Fascists and authoritarians had common enemies – big business, liberalism, Jews, and communists – categories that often overlapped in the muddled rhetoric of the times. Common goals led to “numerous instances of tactical alliances...between fascists and right authoritarians, and sometimes even cases of outright fusion, especially between fascists and the radical right...”²⁵ When traditional authoritarian leaders sought inspiration for domestic reforms, the fascist model presented a natural path for development. The kings of Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia “ruled with the support of local fascists,” and this relationship was symbiotic, writes Frieden: “Traditional conservatives needed the fascists' mass base; the fascists needed the conservatives' credibility with big business.”²⁶ And although the new authoritarians of the 1930s rarely approached the Third Reich's “total coordination of all political, economic, intellectual and biological activities in a revolutionary mass-based dictatorship,” they nevertheless “borrowed features of fascism, establishing a corporative state, outlawing independent labor organizations, and forbidding strikes.”²⁷

Unlike the classic conservatives who fetishized tradition, fascists sought a break

²⁴ This process parallels the creation of hybrid democracies of the past two decades. These are states that have adopted the outward trappings of democracy without undergoing more fundamental government reforms. In both instances such adaptation shows the increasing power and legitimacy of a winning regime type after a hegemonic shock. Fascism in the 1930s and democracy in the 1990s (as well as in the early 1920s) had appeared so dominant and ascendant a regime that political leaders felt compelled to imitate their institutions even when they did not wish to actually transform their governments.

²⁵ Payne 1995:16

²⁶ Frieden 2006:210

²⁷ Palmer et al 2002:800

from the old authoritarian ways of rule. Masses would be mobilized rather than shut out of politics. The sentiments that led to mass uprisings in nineteenth-century Europe would now be vented into new channels of discontent through spectacular rallies. Even though they were not always successful in this pursuit, fascist movements “always sought to transcend the elitist parliamentary cliquishness of poorly mobilized liberal groups or the sectarian exclusiveness and reliance on elite manipulation often found in the authoritarian right.”²⁸ In doing so they combined modern mass politics with a reactionary mindset. Fascist leaders promoted traditional values through the untraditional mobilization of popular discontent. “In their original ideas they often closely resemble old-fashioned conservatives, but their methods of struggle, indeed their whole notion of political organization, belong not to the idealized past but to the modern age,” writes Hugh Seton-Watson. “Their outlook may be nostalgic, and it is certainly elitist, but as a political force they are more democratic than oligarchic.”²⁹ As Rothermund points out, the fascist cult of the leader “was more primitive and barbarian than the Italian and German monarchies of prewar times. On the other hand it was very modern in its use of the mass media and in its support of science and technology.”³⁰ Frieden concisely sums up its contradictory impulses:

Fascists celebrated agrarian traditionalism but accelerated industrialization. Their rhetoric trumpeted individualism and

²⁸ Payne 1995:12

²⁹ Seton-Watson 1979:357-8

³⁰ Dietmar Rothermund (1996) *The Global Impact of the Great Depression, 1929-1939*, Routledge, p.139

independence, but their policies championed monopolies and cartels. Fascist rallies gloried in the splendor of supposed imperial pasts while demonizing the imperialist powers. Fascism concurrently embraced both reaction and radical change, preached a return to the moral certainties of a preindustrial idyll, but promised a rapid advance to modern industrialism.³¹

Fascism was thus both a refutation of the past and the embrace of a pastoral, idealized simulacrum of that past. It rejected a vulgar and decadent modernity even as it sought to forge its own version of a hyper-modern state. Revolutionary conservatives, nihilistic utopians, pastoral industrializers, elitist populists - in such contradictions resides fascism's paradoxical, ill-defined nature. It was above all a negation of the world in which it resided (Hitler was, in the words of lapsed Nazi writer Hermann Rauschning, "a prophet of nihilism")³² that existed to create the world anew. It was a particularistic, national creed that sought - and found - imitators in countries and colonies spread widely around the world. (In 1928 Mussolini famously declared that fascism was "not for export" before embarking, a few years later, on an ambitious program to do exactly that.)³³ It managed to combine a broad populism with a belief in the power of a select oligarchy: "The appeal to the entire people and nation, together with the attempt to incorporate the masses in both structure and myth," writes Payne, "was accompanied by a strong formal emphasis on the role and function of an elite, which was held to be both

³¹ Frieden 2006:211

³² Quoted in Furet 1999:187

³³ Payne 1995:463. By 1934 Mussolini was promoting the ideology of "universal fascism".

uniquely fascist and indispensable to any achievement."³⁴ Sorting through these contradictions, Rothermund stresses "the rather eclectic and diffuse character of fascist 'ideology' which attracted all kinds of people – often for very different reasons. In this respect," he argues, "fascism shared many traits with other populist movements which also drew strength from diffuse sets of ideas rather than from intellectual clarity."³⁵

But even if the ideas were diffuse, even if fascism is best conceptualized as a loose family of institutions united by an overarching philosophy, what were some of its family traits, and what was that philosophy? One distinguishing feature the glorification of war and the militarization of party politics. For fascists "war was an act of creation that determined everything that followed"³⁶– appropriately enough, since it was born out of the failure of peacemaking of World War I. Martial virtues suffused daily politics, finding expression in militia and paramilitary groups (the so-called "shirt movements") that formed an integral element of party organization); in the military insignia, terminology, and rituals that reinforced the idea of national struggle; and even in the "male chauvinism and the tendency to exaggerate the masculine principle in almost every aspect of activity."³⁷ Another feature was the exaltation of youth as the cynosure of racial perfection and the encouragement of

³⁴ Payne 1995:14

³⁵ Rothermund 1996:140

³⁶ Wolfgang Schivelbusch (2006) *Three New Deals: Reflections on Roosevelt's America, Mussolini's Italy, and Hitler's Germany, 1933-1939*, Metropolitan Books, p. 39

³⁷ Payne 1995:13

youth movements. Charismatic leaders - exemplified by Hitler, Mussolini, Belgium's Leon Degrelle, or Spain's Antonio Primo de Rivera - and the accompanying cults of personality were another recurring theme. While a strong authoritarian leader and a cult of personality are obviously not limited to fascist regimes, "there was nonetheless a general tendency to exalt leadership, hierarchy, and subordination," writes Payne, "so that all fascist movements came to espouse variants of a *Führerprinzip*, deferring to the creative function of leadership more than to prior ideology or a bureaucratized party line."³⁸

Fascism displayed its greatest influence in the way it reorganized relations between the society and the economy, and this was its other distinctive trait that would later be adopted and absorbed by liberal democracy - transforming it, in the process, into the social democracy of today. Fascists sought to subordinate industrial capital to the needs of the state and the nation, in the process "creating a new communal or reciprocal productive relationship through new priorities, ideals, and extensive governmental control and regulation."³⁹ The managed political economy of fascism combined Keynesian finances, state guidance of industry, welfare schemes and labor programs that aimed to create full employment. Trade unions and powerful industrialists were crushed, which provided an excellent short-term solution to the problems of economic depression: "social frictions were eliminated, wages were kept down, production stepped up and full employment

³⁸ Payne 1995:14; See also Seton-Watson 1979:368

³⁹ Payne 1995:10

was quickly achieved."⁴⁰ Fascists' relationship with business was not entirely antagonistic; while they placed controls on the economy and encouraged autarky, they also suppressed wages and supported heavy industry.⁴¹

Given the above elements, which countries in the 1930s would qualify as fascist? The answer is not found in a simple enumeration of who converted and who resisted. The division was never that clear-cut. As Payne puts it:

[A] rigorous "either-or" approach toward the problem of generic fascism is fundamentally misleading. That is, the common reduction of all putative fascisms to one single generic phenomenon of absolutely common identity is inaccurate, while a radically nominalist approach which insists that all radical nationalist movements of interwar Europe were inherently different, though correct in the narrow technical sense that not one was a carbon copy of any other, has the opposite defect of ignoring distinctive similarities.⁴²

A strict definition would limit the list of fascist states to one - Italy. At the same time, "there was a certain family relationship between a number of political movements which played a leading part in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, and which historians ought to see in their relations to each other."⁴³ More expansive definitions would also include Germany, Austria, Japan, Hungary, Romania, Spain, and Portugal. In addition, Falangist movements saw a growth in power across in Latin America, and philofascist movements expanded their influence in the Middle East.

⁴⁰ Rothermund 1996:139

⁴¹ Frieden 2006:213

⁴² Payne 1995:462

⁴³ Seton-Watson 1979:357

In interwar democracies, by contrast, the diffusion of fascist institutions manifested itself not in the often small vote shares of fascist movements, but in the absorption of their ideas by mainstream political parties. In these countries, German ability to solve the problems of unemployment and social unrest through state planning attracted a great deal of interest and admiration, and spurred imitation driven by the need to compete in the international arena. Wrote Karl Manheim in 1940: "Competition with [the totalitarian] states compels the democracies to make use of some, at least, of their methods."⁴⁴ In many cases, political leaders adopted features of fascist regimes while simultaneously rejecting the ideological underpinnings that shaped their creation. The most widely adopted feature was some degree of corporatism, or a state-directed economy. Whereas liberal capitalism viewed politics and economics as separate spheres, Germany injected political control into the national economy. This subordination of the economic by the political took the form of extensive regulation, state planning committees, industrial subsidies, price and wage controls, job creation programs, and deficit spending.

A major difference between the fascist regimes and countries like France, Sweden and the United States was that they chose to co-opt the labor movement rather than destroy it. But the fundamental goal and the method by which the goal was reached was still borrowed from fascist innovations – the establishment of a mixed economy in which the state would regulate economic activity in order to

⁴⁴ Karl Manheim (1940) *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*, New York, p. 338; quoted in Wolfgang Schivelbusch 2006:190

avoid the vices of capitalism. As Schivelbusch notes, the policy discussions in the world's remaining democracies "show how willing many people within the liberal camp were to try to save the situation by jettisoning liberal ballast. Some suggested reintroducing state-directed economies, like those during World War I; others proposed imitating various Fascist models."⁴⁵ Even Britain, a bastion of free enterprise, succumbed to the allure of authoritarian institutions. Late interwar Britain "was a uniquely gloomy and fearful era, a morbid age that saw the future of civilization in terms of disease, decay, and death" and experienced a loss of faith in the free-market system.⁴⁶ Central planning seemed to be the answer, and held much appeal in the 1930s: "The successes of the planned economies in the 1930s confirmed what many believed instinctively: market forces could not go unregulated after the chaos of the slump."⁴⁷ These fears extended to issues of everyday governance, such as public infrastructure; "There was much angst in the 1930s...about the speed with which fascist Italy and Germany were building [roads], leaving muddled, democratic Britain in the dust."⁴⁸ "The mere *efficiency* of such a system, the elimination of waste and obstruction, is obvious," wrote George Orwell about fascism in 1939. "However horrible this system may seem to us, it

⁴⁵ Schivelbusch 2006:11-12

⁴⁶ *The Economist* (2009) "Britain between the wars: A sense of dread" April 25, p.86, citing Richard Overy (2009) *The Morbid Age: Britain Between the Wars*, Allen Lane. Kennedy (1987:316) notes that Britain's "ailing economy was shaken to its roots by the world-wide slump after 1929."

⁴⁷ Alan Booth (1999) "The British Reaction" in W.R. Garside, ed., *Capitalism in Crisis: An International Perspective on the 1930s*, Palgrave Macmillan, p.47

⁴⁸ *The Economist* (2009) "Review of Joe Moran (2009) *On Roads: A Hidden History*," June 20, 2009, p. 89

works."⁴⁹

The United States represents a paradigmatic case of fascist influence that manifested itself in institutional imitation. The only categorically fascist party in the country was the German-American Bund, a tiny and uninfluential organization whose ranks peaked at fifteen thousand and whose members, many of whom German immigrants, never stood the chance of winning actual political office. Instead, fascist influence manifested itself through open interest in successful German institutions by the New Dealers. In a case study of the United States presented later in the chapter, I document the many ways in which American intellectuals, civil servants and politicians expressed admiration for Nazi reforms while rejecting the racial, authoritarian, and aggressive aspects of that regime. For now a few examples will suffice. Rexford Tugwell, a member of Roosevelt's brain trust, openly expressed his admiration for Soviet planning and fascist corporatism. Decrying the ideological foundation of fascism, Tugwell nevertheless described it as "the cleanest, neatnest [sic], most efficiently operating piece of social machinery I've ever seen. It makes me envious."⁵⁰ As late as 1938, Roosevelt ordered a report on the *Reichsarbeitsdienst*, the German labor service, "not to procure propaganda material against the Third Reich, but as a source of information and inspiration".⁵¹

⁴⁹ George Orwell (1941) "The Lion and the Unicorn", original emphasis

⁵⁰ Michael Vincent Namorato, ed. (1992) *The Diary of Rexford G. Tugwell: The New Deal, 1932-1935*, New York, p. 139. Quoted in Schivelbusch 2006:32.

⁵¹ Norbert Gotz and Kiran Klaus Patel (2006) "Facing the Fascist Model: Discourse and the Construction of Labour Services in the USA and Sweden in the 1930s and 1940s" *Journal of Contemporary History* 41.1, p.62-3

Thanking the American ambassador in Berlin for the report, he wrote: "All of this helps us in planning, even though our methods are of the democratic variety!"⁵²

Unsurprisingly, such syncretic imitation proved politically toxic after the beginning of the war, and particularly after the Axis defeat in 1945. Any hint of German influence was expunged from official statements. For example, when the administration publicly discussed the adoption of Nazi labor institutions in 1938, and actually integrated some of its elements into the Civilian Conservation Corps, "there was no public outcry...By 1941 that would have been unthinkable." Instead, "The openness that had marked the late 1930s had vanished. In the face of the second world war...anything that was or seemed to be German was unacceptable to the American public."⁵³ The surprising extent of fascist institutional influence has remained mostly ignored in American consciousness and historiography, for predictable if self-serving reasons. After the war, "memories of the New Deal's common roots with its enemies were repressed, and postwar America was free to enjoy a myth of immaculate conception of the liberal-democratic welfare state."⁵⁴

"Despite the horror of the Nazi period, or rather because of it, the parallels between the German experience and those of other countries are important," writes Peter Gourevitch in a comparative study of political responses to the economic crisis of the 1930s. "The economic policy experimentation of the early years of the Nazi period is an enhanced form of what Sweden, the United States, and France

⁵² Quoted in Gotz and Patel 2006:63

⁵³ Gotz and Patel 2006:65, 71

⁵⁴ Schivelbusch 2006:14

were groping toward in the 1930s and what most of Western Europe and North American pursued after World War II: a mixed economy, with fiscal stimulus, regulated markets, and some public ownership of production."⁵⁵ Countries seemingly as diverse as Sweden, Germany, and the US "all experimented with demand stimulus and corporatist market regulation in the 1930s."⁵⁶ The fact that Germany's influence did not extend beyond corporatist institutions in Sweden or the United States does not diminish the fact that it served as an institutional model for those states that loudly rejected Nazi ideology.

Decades later, with the benefit of hindsight and an instinctual moral revulsion to fascism, it is difficult to appreciate how much sway this ideology had held in the 1930s. Here the prism of history can distort just as it clarifies. The historian Raymond Sontag writes:

When we read of Lloyd George returning from a talk with Hitler filled with praise for his host; when we recall the kind words Churchill had for what Nazism was doing within Germany even while he was warning of the menace of Nazi foreign policy; when we reconstruct the many laudatory things Lord Halifax, so kindly and decent a man, said in his conversations with Hitler in 1937; and when we note that the same enthusiasm can be found in supposedly discerning observers from other countries, then we marvel, because we see, marching endlessly to their death, the millions of victims of Nazi racism.⁵⁷

Yet until the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Sontag notes, the Nazi revolution was a largely bloodless affair. Until the late 1930s it had only a "few easily ignored

⁵⁵ Peter Gourevitch (1986) *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises*, Cornell University Press, p.140

⁵⁶ Gourevitch 1986: 25

⁵⁷ Raymond Sontag (1971) *A Broken World, 1919-1939*, Harper and Row, p.265

victims"; few inside Germany had actually been killed or imprisoned and even for Jews physical persecution was "sporadic" until the *Kristallnacht* of November 1938.⁵⁸ This relatively peaceful rise stood in stark contrast to Stalin's Great Purges, which took the lives of millions. Culturally, "the surface of German national life had a color and enthusiasm absent from Russian life". Geopolitically, "the shift in the international position of Germany was more obvious than the rise of Russian national power."⁵⁹

As a result of these factors, the Soviet Union was slower to attract imitators. Most political leaders sought to contain capitalism in the fascist style, not to destroy it in the Soviet one. Although Communism exerted increasing influence in this period, its real moment of triumph did not arrive until the defeat of fascism in World War II. And while the defeat of Axis powers led to an abrupt rejection of fascist ideology in all but a few "risible backwaters", in the late 1930s fascism "was a serious contender for international economic supremacy...Neither communism nor liberal democracy had had anything like the reproductive and expansionary success of fascism."⁶⁰ Across Europe, there was implicit agreement among all but the hardcore communists that "if a choice must be made, Nazi rule would be less horrible than Soviet rule" – a view shared not only by the middle and upper classes, but even the workers and peasants, who "found little to envy in the convulsive changes going on in Russia. So, increasingly, it was the deepening

⁵⁸ Sontag 1971:266

⁵⁹ Sontag 1971: 268

⁶⁰ Frieden 2006:215

shadow of German power which lay on central and southeastern Europe.”⁶¹ For all these reasons, the majority of this chapter focuses on the diffusion of fascist institutions, while the expansion of communist influence is detailed in the chapter that follows.

The Hegemonic Transition After 1929

The sudden onset of an economic crisis in 1929 discredited the capitalist-democratic model championed by Britain and the United States. Originating in the U.S., the Great Depression was seen as “the inevitable result of international, free-market capitalism – a labile, accident-prone, uncontrollable, and irresponsible system.”⁶² Not only did the U.S. play the leading role in the financial crisis, it also suffered more from it than other leading powers. According to Paul Kennedy, punitive tariffs and the relatively unconstrained nature of American capitalism meant that the downturn “hurt it much more than any other advanced economy.”⁶³ Between 1929 and 1933 money income fell by 53 percent. The country’s GNP was below 1929 levels throughout the decade, and remained there until 1941. Unemployment, measuring 1.5 million people in 1929, reached a peak of 12.8 million just four years later, bringing with it a serious threat of social destabilization.⁶⁴ Industrial production also suffered - by the time of Munich, U.S.

⁶¹ Sontag 1971: 269-70

⁶² Schivelbusch 2006:105

⁶³ Paul Kennedy (1987) *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, Random House, p.329

⁶⁴ P. Fearon (1993) “Hoover, Roosevelt and American economic policy during the

share of global manufacturing had dropped to its lowest level since 1910.⁶⁵ For the first time in the country's history, more people were leaving the United States than entering it.⁶⁶

At the same time, the 1930s witnessed a rapid revival of German power. Examining the shifts in national power during the interwar period, Kennedy concluded that the relative power of the United States in the 1930s was "in inverse ratio to that of both the USSR and Germany. That is to say, it was inordinately strong in the 1920s, but then declined more than any other of the Great Powers during the depressed 1930s."⁶⁷ Between 1933 and 1939 "Europe lived under the shadow of Russia and Germany."⁶⁸ The relative decline of democracies was exacerbated by their domestic politics, which favored disarmament. Both Britain and France were hurt badly by World War I, and public opinion pressed for peace. In the mid-1930s Britain and France were decreasing military expenditures, even as Germany and other authoritarian states were rapidly expanding theirs.

1930s" in W.R. Garside, ed., *Capitalism in Crisis: An International Perspective on the 1930s*, Palgrave Macmillan, p.114-5

⁶⁵ Kennedy 1987:329

⁶⁶ Tim Tzouliadis (2008) *The Forsaken*, Penguin Press, quoted in Richard Pipes (2008) "Banished: 'The Forsaken' by Tim Tzouliadis" *The New York Sun*, July 30

⁶⁷ Kennedy 1987:327

⁶⁸ Sontag 1971: 269

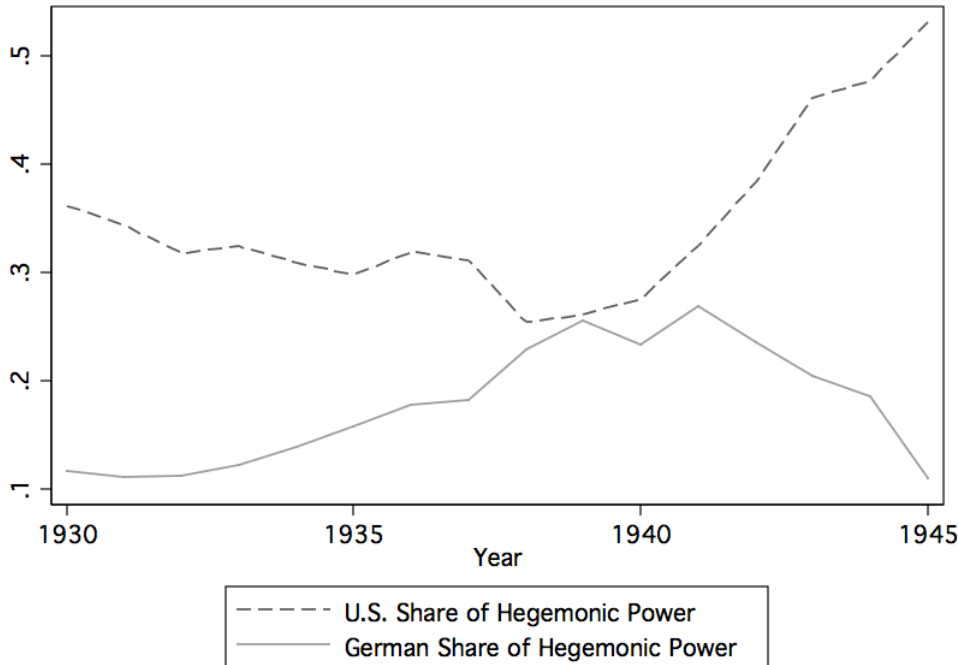


Figure 4.1: Germany vs. the United States. German relative power increases steadily between 1933 and 1943, while American power decreases until the later 1930s, before recovering and increasing quickly in the early 1940s

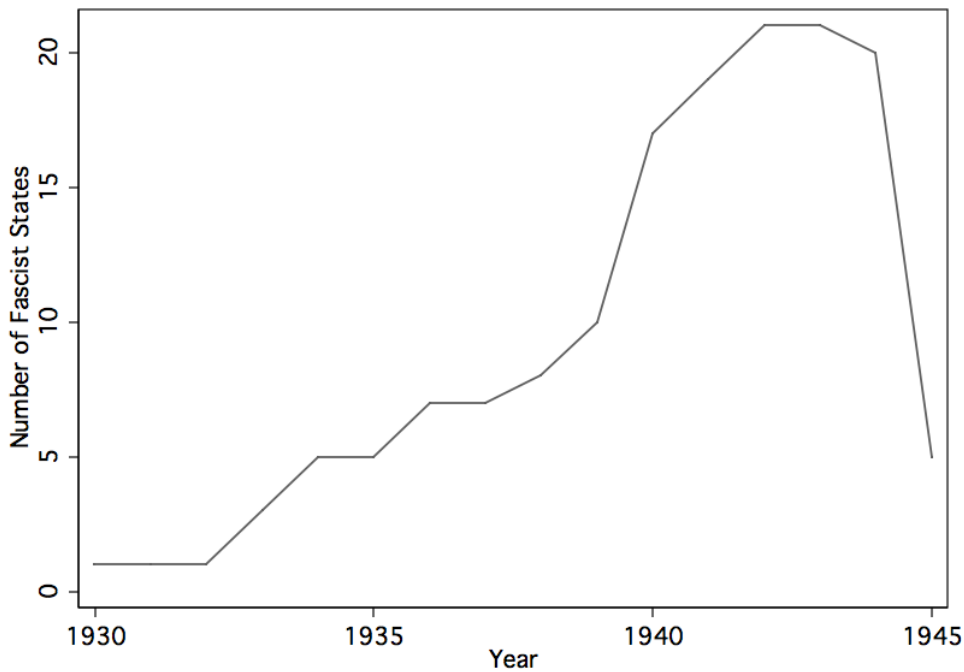


Figure 4.2: Number of fascist states, 1930-1945. The number rises steadily between 1933-1939, then quickly increases with the onset of the war, and begins to collapse as the war nears its conclusion.

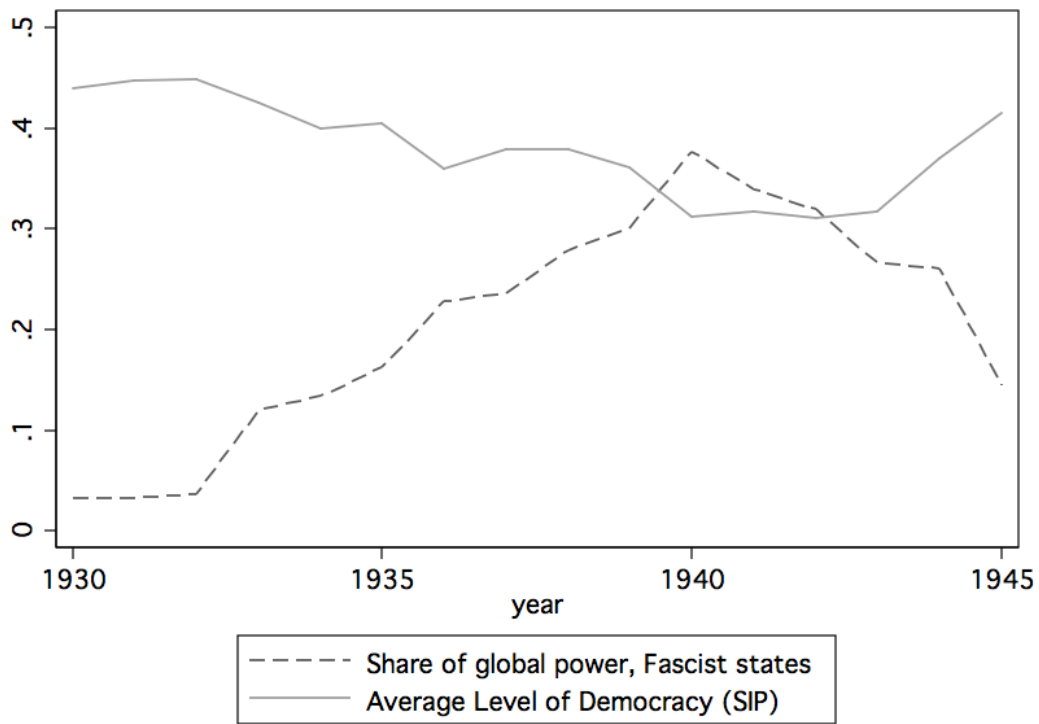


Figure 4.3: Annual global democracy score (measured by SIP) vs. percent of global power (measured by CINC) under fascist regimes, 1930-1945. As the share of power held by fascist states increases, the global average democracy score declines.

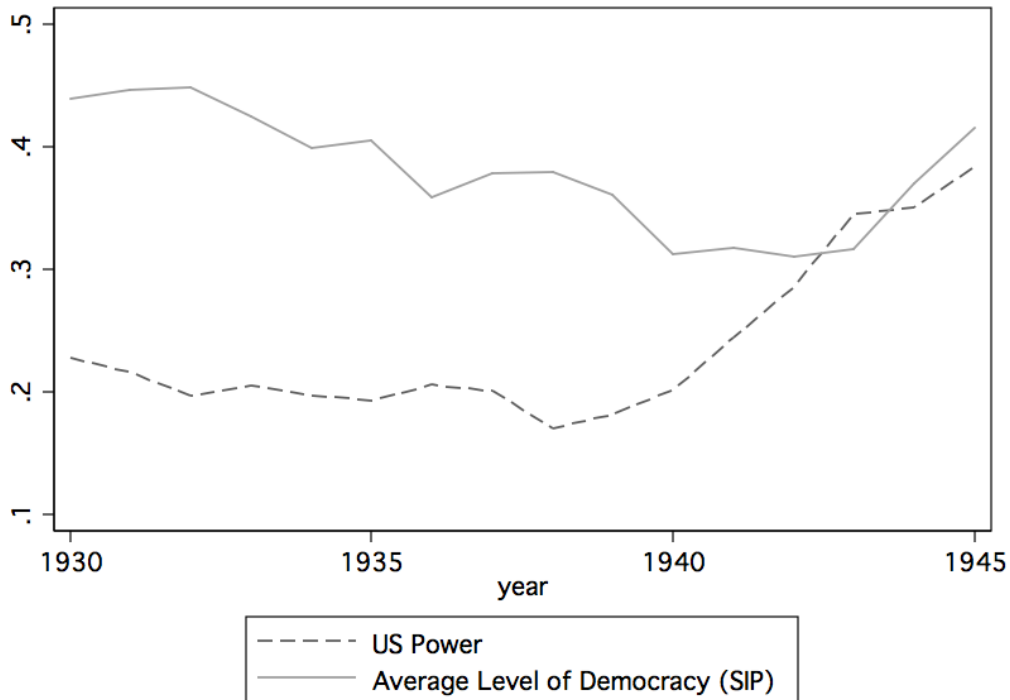


Figure 4.4: US Power (measured by CINC) and the annual global democracy score (measured by SIP), 1930-1945. Both fall until the late 1930s; US power begins to recover in the early 1940s, and global democracy begins to increase toward the end of the war.

There were no immediate winners in the aftermath of 1929. Like most of Europe, Weimar Germany was mired in unemployment and discontent; the Soviet Union had just barely survived a civil war, foreign invasions and economic collapse, and spent most of the 1920s retreating from socialism through its New Economic Plan, which sought to establish market relations between the cities and the countryside. The crisis of 1929 “hit Germany particularly hard.”⁶⁹ Between 1929 and 1933, industrial production declined by nearly a half and national income by a third; the collapse of the stock market depressed both savings and

⁶⁹ Berman 2006:141

investment.⁷⁰ In 1933, with Germany on the verge of economic collapse, more than six million Germans – over a third of the labor force – were unemployed.⁷¹

Germany's decline in the late 1920s made its rise after 1933 seem all the more spectacular. If 1989 was the great turning point for modern democracy, 1933 would prove to be the fascist *annus mirabilis*. The ascent of the National Socialists to power in 1933 inaugurated a long period of national recovery, economic expansion, and the quick end of unemployment. Between January 1933 and July 1935, employment rose from 11.7 million to 16.9 million.⁷² By 1939, policies of full employment resulted in a labor *shortage* of approximately two million people. Meanwhile, industrial production had more than doubled. "In 1933 Germany was a disarmed and isolated power; by 1939 all Europe trembled in fear of German power."⁷³

Germany's rise was closely associated by contemporary observers with Nazi policies and institutional reforms, and particularly with their eagerness to abandon the economic and political orthodoxies associated with liberal democracy. "The pursuit of new paths was a point of pride rather than a difficult break from tradition. This allowed them to try out program after program until they figured out what worked."⁷⁴ While Britain and France concentrated on cutting public spending,

⁷⁰ Berman 2006:141

⁷¹ Sontag 1971: 261

⁷² Harold James (1993) "Innovation and conservatism in economic recovery: the alleged 'Nazi recovery' of the 1930s" in Garside, ed., p.70

⁷³ Sontag 1971: 261

⁷⁴ Frieden 2006:212; Dissatisfaction with orthodox politics and economics

Goering declared: "We do not recognize the sanctity of some of these so-called economic laws."⁷⁵ Instead, the Nazis pursued an active policy of massive state intervention in the economy, including deficit spending and mass employment.

The novelty of these programs consisted in redefining the government's relationship with the economy. Under the new policies, and in stark contrast with the laissez-faire approach of liberal capitalism, "the economy would be made subject to the primacy of political and social goals as defined by the national leadership." The Nazis shared "an ideological conviction that economic policies should be integrated with an overall concept of the role of the state. For Hitler economic problems were not insuperable constraints; they were issues to be overcome by political will."⁷⁶ In early 1935, the *Volkischer Beobachter*, the official propaganda outlet of the National Socialists, proclaimed: "all these capitalist institutions have received a new foundation. The system is an instrument in the hands of the politicians. Where capitalism still believes itself untouched, it has already been harnessed to politics."⁷⁷

Unemployment was ended with a vigorous program of jobs creation - in the first year, half a million farm and community jobs were created for young adults,

encouraged many fascist converts. Marcel Deat and Jacques Doriot of France and Paul de Man of Belgium joined the fascists after becoming frustrated with the left; Oswald Mosley, founder of the British Union of Fascists, founded his group after leaving both the Conservative and the Labor Party. Richard Vinen (2000) *A History in Fragments: Europe in the Twentieth Century*, De Capo Press, p.167

⁷⁵ Quoted in Vinen 2000:179

⁷⁶ W.R. Garside (1993) "The search for stability: economic radicalism and financial conservatism in 1930s Europe" in Garside, ed., p. 20

⁷⁷ Quoted in James (1993:90) in Garside, ed.

another half a million to build public works like roads and bridges. Employees were ordered to cut wages and received subsidies for new hires.⁷⁸ The destruction of labor unions was an important step in this process. While gaining security, the German workers lost their freedoms. Collective bargaining ended in 1933, and even switching jobs became difficult by the end of the decade.⁷⁹ After the Nazis “destroyed the labor movement and instituted a reign of terror in the workplace,” businesses did not have to worry about inflationary wage increases.⁸⁰ The destruction of labor helped stimulate recovery by sending a strong signal to businessmen that its problems were over: “no more strike waves; no more Bolshevik threat; no more political instability. All this gave capitalists strong reasons to catch up on a backlog of profitable investments. They brought money out of mattresses and foreign bank accounts and sank it into a now-hospitable business climate.”⁸¹

An often forgotten aspect of the National Socialist reforms was that they were truly socialist. Hitler’s policies “benefited around 95 percent of all Germans. They did not experience National Socialism as a system of tyranny and terror but rather as a regime of social warmth, a sort of ‘warm and fuzzy’ dictatorship.” Social reforms and the “real possibility for social advancement” account for the regime’s

⁷⁸ Frieden p. 203

⁷⁹ Sontag 1971: 264

⁸⁰ Frieden p. 203

⁸¹ Frieden p. 212

high level of mass support.⁸² These social reforms included free higher education, help for families and children, pensions, health insurance, and a general expansion of the welfare state.⁸³

The overall result was the emergence of a command economy - government controls over prices, wages, jobs, foreign trade, and the money market. As a result of these measures, government spending rose from 18 to 27.5 percent of national income between 1928 and 1938.⁸⁴ Such aggressive stimulus policies would not have been possible in a liberal democracy without threatening serious inflation, but as Germany's finance minister wrote with understatement, "National Socialism introduced in Germany a state-regulated economy which made it possible to prevent price and wage increases."⁸⁵ The Nazis consciously avoided a Communist-like attack on private property. Capitalism would be tamed, not destroyed; capitalists would be allowed social status and a measure of profits, as long as they continued to abide by the rules set by the political leadership and submitted themselves to the greater national good.⁸⁶

The rapid recovery thus took on a peculiarly Nazi-inspired path in the view of

⁸² Gotz Aly (2005) "Die Wohlfuhl-Diktator" *Der Spiegel*, Oct 2005, p.56; quoted in Berman 2006:147

⁸³ Berman 2006:147

⁸⁴ Garside in Garside 1993:21

⁸⁵ Quoted in Frieden 2006:203

⁸⁶ Peter Hayes likens capitalism in Nazi Germany to a game of poker in which "the house shuffles, deals, determines the ante and the wild cards, and can change them at will," a game in which "there is a ceiling on winnings, which may be spent only as the casino permits and for the most part only on the premises." Peter Hayes (1987) *Industry and Ideology*, quoted in James (1993:91) in Garside, ed.

contemporaries, who dubbed it the *Wirtschaftswunder*. The Nazis themselves encouraged this perception, which served to legitimize their regime and increase its attractiveness to foreign leaders searching for a way out of the Depression. Foreign observers, in turn, concluded that these policies worked best in a system that abandoned the chaos of democracy for the order and stability of fascism. In the preface to the 1936 German edition of his *General Theory*, Keynes himself suggested that his policies were "much more easily adapted to the conditions of a totalitarian state" than to a democracy.⁸⁷

The Great Depression was the only hegemonic shock of the twentieth century in which democracy did not emerge as one of the winners – instead, it was widely perceived to be its culprit. Democracy “seemed to have spent its vitality and devolved into an economic order that increasingly polarized society into rich and poor,” a system that appeared as unsuited for modern mass society as feudalism had become for industrializing states a century earlier.⁸⁸ The Depression “not only challenged America’s economy and its political system, but also undermined the central myths and beliefs on which the system was founded.”⁸⁹ This sentiment

⁸⁷ Quoted in Frieden 2006:212

⁸⁸ Schivelbusch 2006:44.

⁸⁹ Morris Dickstein (2009) *Dancing in the Dark: A Cultural History of the Great Depression*, W.W. Norton. Peter Gourevitch notes: ““In its ability to disrupt existing political alignments, the Depression rivaled war.” (Gourevitch 1986: 160) Not only did the crisis begin in the United States, but it was the widely acknowledged lack of U.S. economic leadership that both made the Depression worse and further undermined the legitimacy of the American system. In 1939, E.H. Carr wrote: “In 1918 world leadership was offered, by almost universal consent, to the United States...[and] was declined.” Carr (1939) *The Twenty Years’*

extended far beyond America itself. "The panic which seized Europe west of Russia in 1931 was not simply a financial panic," wrote Sontag. "It was a crisis of confidence. The accepted precepts for directing the life of man in society seemed suddenly not to work."⁹⁰ The shock of the Great Depression "disproved cultural paradigms of institutional rationality" and led to a more statist conception of a modern democracy.⁹¹ "It was obvious that laissez-faire capitalism was finished," wrote George Orwell in 1940, "and that there had got to be some kind of reconstruction."⁹² A *Los Angeles Times* article from 1935 declared: "All Europe is swinging either to the Communist or Fascist side, with the old parliamentary government in eclipse..."⁹³ In the same year, *New Yorker* editor E.B. White wrote: "The experts say that capitalism is out," and sardonically offered three alternatives:

Crisis, 1919-39, London: Macmillan, p. 234. Charles Kindleberger similarly argued that a global economy needed a global stabilizer, as Britain had done until the Great War; but after 1929, "the British couldn't and the United States wouldn't." Charles Kindleberger (1986) *World in Depression 1929-1939*, second edition, University of California Press, p. 292

⁹⁰ Sontag 1971:172. See also Frieden 2006:196: "[T]he Depression convinced almost everyone of the bankruptcy of traditional economics and politics...during the 1930s international markets collapsed, governments were forced to intervene to save national economies, and people everywhere looked to replace failed traditionalism." Or: "People no longer looked to liberal democracy, which they held responsible for the Depression, for protection and guidance. Instead, they placed their trust in a new type of authoritarian state." (Schivelbusch 2006:106)

⁹¹ Frank R. Dobbin (1993) "The social construction of the Great Depression: Industrial policy during the 1930s in the United States, Britain, and France" *Theory and Society* 22.1:1-56

⁹² George Orwell (1940) "Inside the Whale", p. 236

⁹³ Los Angeles Times (1935) "Democracy Wane Seen: Europe Declared in Two Camps" September 21, p. A8

“communism, fascism, and a lively state called chaos.”⁹⁴

The remainder of this chapter focuses on tracing fascist influence and emulation in Europe and around the world. The case studies focus in turn on Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and the United States. I conclude with a brief discussion of the coercive phase of the fascist wave, beginning roughly in 1938.

Fascist Influence in Europe

Europe served as the locus of fascist imitation, and has thus received the most attention from scholars of comparative fascism. By the middle of the decade, “most continental European states were in the process of converting themselves into syncretic national authoritarian systems, some of them following the Italian example of creating a state party and introducing corporative economic regulations.”⁹⁵ Even before the beginning of Nazi conquests and annexations, “countries across southern, central, and eastern Europe – from Portugal to Latvia and from Germany to Greece – adopted some variant of autarkic fascism.”⁹⁶ In eastern and central Europe, the Depression led to a collapse in of international lending and a fall in commodity prices. This resulting budget crises and restive populations opened the door to right-wing authoritarians who often adopted elements of fascist institutions, particularly a state-managed economy characterized by price controls, the suppression of labor, autarky. In Western Europe (particularly

⁹⁴ E.B. White (1935) “Notes and Comment: The Talk of the Town” *The New Yorker*, March 9, p.9

⁹⁵ Payne 1995:264

⁹⁶ Frieden 2006:196

in Scandinavia) European democracies “began to find an alternative in the middle 1930s” by imitating the interventionist economic policies, state planning measures and social welfare programs of the fascists.⁹⁷

Hungary

Fascism arrived later in eastern Europe, allowing governing elites in the region to learn from the Italian and German experiences. This allowed them to keep revolutionary fascists “at bay by alternately repressing them and stealing their ideas.”⁹⁸ A 1939 report to the British Foreign Office noted that the popularity of fascist ideas in Hungary has led the government to borrow elements of their political program.⁹⁹ While both Hungary’s and Romania’s radical fascists established total control only after German occupation (the Arrow Cross in Hungary, the Iron Guard in Romania), “they also penetrated and influenced” previous interwar governments in both countries, so that starting in the mid-1930s these regimes “were pervaded by fascist ideas and practices, blended into more conservative authoritarianism.”¹⁰⁰

Among all the states in interwar Europe, “Hungary probably took the prize for the largest assortment per capita of fascist-type, semifascist, or right radical

⁹⁷ Frieden 2006:229

⁹⁸ Michael Mann (2004) *Fascists*, Cambridge University Press, p.238. See also Vigo (1975) for an edited collection of reports by British diplomats that elaborate on this strategy.

⁹⁹ John Keyser (1939), in Vigo (1975:354)

¹⁰⁰ Mann 2004:238

movements.”¹⁰¹ It suffered territorial and demographic losses following the war, was governed briefly by a revolutionary Communist dictatorship in 1919, and generated great discontent among the elites by preserving a prewar-size civil service that operated on a greatly reduced budget. Anti-Semitism also became a significant political force for the first time. As a result, by the 1930s Hungary possessed a variety of groups supporting rightist anti-liberal nationalism, which included (starting with the most moderate) the old conservative upper class, the right radicals who championed a single-party authoritarianism, the radical national socialist movements who advocated imitation of fascist elements, and the fascist Arrow Cross movement of Ferenc Szalasi, which became the country’s largest political movement in 1939.¹⁰²

At the grass-roots level, a number of fascist organization with the label “national socialist” proliferated in Hungary. The National Socialist party of Work was founded in 1931, seeking to introduce Nazi social reforms into Hungary. In 1933, three other national socialist parties appeared: the Hungarian National Socialist Agricultural Laborers and Workers Party, the Hungarian National Socialist People's Party, and Count Fidel Palffy’s National Socialist Party, whose attempts to form a Hungarian SA and SS were banned by the government. The leaders of the three movements formed a national socialist “directorium” in 1934, which quickly fell apart over disagreements about the treatment of Jews. The infighting continued through the mid-1930s, and none of the movements failed to make an impression

¹⁰¹ Payne 1995:267

¹⁰² Payne 1995:267-9

on a national scale.¹⁰³

As in other European countries, fascist movements that looked to Mussolini's Italy for inspiration appeared in the early 1920s but failed to capture the public's imagination during the relative stability of the decade. Gombos, the leader of the so-called Szeged fascists (named after the city of the communist counter-revolution), was forced to moderate his views to such an extent that Miklos Horthy, the country's regent for most of the interwar period, felt comfortable in co-opting him as the Defense Minister in 1929, whereupon Gombos dissolved the main political arm of the Szeged fascists, the Party of Racial Defense.¹⁰⁴

The most significant (and also the most radical) Hungarian fascist movement was the Arrow Cross or Hungarist organization founded by Ferenc Szalasi. Szalasi's concept of "Hungarism", developed in the early 1930s, aimed at the creation of a quasi-federal, multi-ethnic state ruled by Hungarians, a Carpathian-Danubian Great Fatherland with Magyar as its official language. This design, however, required a great leader to carry it out, and somewhat like his Romanian counterpart Codreanu, Szalasi possessed a "mystical conviction" that he was supremely qualified to fill that role. This grand vision also required a war to bring it to life, necessitating the emphasis on martial virtues in daily life that came to define other fascist regimes of the period. Like other revolutionary autocrats, Szalasi viewed war as "a utopian cataclysm" that would "introduce the new millenarian world order to be led by Hungarism". The Arrow Cross stood for corporatism in economic life and a

¹⁰³ Payne 1995: 270-1

¹⁰⁴ Payne 1995:269

national socialist economy in which large-scale banking and industry would be nationalized, but private property and small businesses retained.¹⁰⁵

The impact of the Great Depression led to the proliferation of the above-mentioned groups and forced Horthy to abandon the moderate conservatism of the past decade. He appointed Gombos as prime minister in 1932 (though requiring him to first publicly denounce anti-Semitism). Gombos immediately made an official visit to Italy, “establishing a pro-Italian tilt for the remainder of his administration.”¹⁰⁶ He commandeered the main government party, changing its name and extending its reach throughout the country. He also established a youth organization and a political militia, the Advance Guard, with a membership of sixty thousand. This trend was accelerated by Hitler’s ascent to power in 1933, after which, as in other states in Europe and around the world, “Nazi influence quickly increased.”¹⁰⁷ Gombos moved both the party and the state closer toward fascism, and the country as a whole “into the orbit of Hitler’s Germany.”¹⁰⁸ He visited Hitler within a month of his election. Economic agreements that followed tied Hungary closer to Germany, also increasing Nazi influence. In 1934 Gombos began introducing a corporative system in Hungary; in 1935 he told Goring that “within

¹⁰⁵ Payne 1995:272-3

¹⁰⁶ Payne 1995:269

¹⁰⁷ Payne 1995:269

¹⁰⁸ Federigo Argentieri (2007) “Hungary: Dealing with the Past and Moving into the Present” p.216 in Sharon L. Wolchik and Jane L. Curry, eds., *Central and East European Politics: From Communism to Democracy*, Rowman and Littlefield

three years Hungary would be reorganized into a national socialist state."¹⁰⁹ His plans were disrupted, however, by a sudden illness and death at the end of 1936. His successor, Kalman Daranyi, was a right-wing radical who stopped short of revolutionary fascism.

The focus on Nazi activity in Hungary thus shifted away from the state, and toward Szalasi after Gombos' death. He visited Germany in 1936, and a few months later "national socialist activity became even more visible in Hungary."¹¹⁰ Szalasi's followers began organizing militias and calling for a coup, which led to Szalasi's brief arrest in 1937 and a forcible dissolution of his party, but this only raised his status among the national socialists. In the same year his reconstituted movement was joined by nine other like-minded off-shoots, merging into a greater Hungarian National Socialist party. By 1938 his movement, generally known as the Arrow Cross, had become an obvious threat to the state, and Horthy moved to protect himself by strengthening the powers of the executive. He gave himself the power to unconditionally veto new legislation and dissolve parliament; he was now regent for life, and the country's regime as a whole moved to the right. To appease the radical right, the government increased military spending and restricted Jewish rights. The government also formed a political party designed to outflank the Arrow Cross from the right, the called the Movement of Hungarian Life

¹⁰⁹ Payne 1995:270

¹¹⁰ Payne 1995:273

(MEM).¹¹¹

In the elections of 1939, “the nearest thing to a democratic contest in Hungarian history,” the Arrow Cross formed a coalition ticket with other national socialist parties, although it had officially been dissolved by the government earlier in the year.¹¹² Despite the disenfranchisement of younger voters (men under twenty-five and women under thirty) who formed the bulk of Nazi support, despite fielding candidates in only half of the electoral districts, and despite “more than a little government interference”, the national socialists officially received nearly a quarter of the popular vote. The national socialists were now the largest political force in Hungary, with the Arrow Cross as the country’s largest independent party. By that point it claimed over a quarter million members in a country of seven million people, numbers comparable to the popularity of Germany’s Nazi Party in 1932. Germany had in fact sent funds to assist the Arrow Cross electoral campaigns, having seen its ideological influence increase in 1938-9.¹¹³

Despite the electoral success, the Arrow Cross was now deadlocked with the government, which remained fully in control and would not countenance radical experimentation. Szalasi, now in jail, tried to set his party on a legal path to power,

¹¹¹ MEM was a typical example of a common ploy used by right-wing regimes to forge a top-down political movement “that would employ some of the trappings of fascism to rally support but would in fact be controlled by the state from above.” (Payne 1995:275)

¹¹² Payne 1995:275. The number of enfranchised voters had increased by nearly 50 percent in the last elections.

¹¹³ Payne 1995:276

but this path “was now effectively blocked by a semi-authoritarian government.”¹¹⁴ As in Austria, Romania, Baltics, and other states, the state’s move toward the right prevented the takeover by a revolutionary fascist movement, but did so by adopting the authoritarian trappings and ideology of its most dangerous opponents. The rapid rise of German power on the continent meant that “Hungarian revisionists came to favor a German alliance,”¹¹⁵ and the country entered the war on the side of the Axis in June 1941.

Austria

As in other European states, the Depression led to an increase in support for Austrian fascism. In the 1930 elections the Nazis received 3 percent of the vote, while the radical right Heimwehr movement received more than 6 percent. In that year Heimwehr leaders adopted the Korneuburg Oath, which called for a corporative authoritarian regime influenced by the ideas of Othmar Spann, the country’s chief ideologist of corporatism.¹¹⁶ In a 1930 speech, the leader of the Styrian Heimwehr Walter Pfrimer, speaking about the reasons behind the manifesto’s adoption, said: “On all sides the conviction was evident that here in Austria only fascism could now save us.”¹¹⁷

In the 1932 elections the Nazis amassed 16.4 percent of the vote, drawing

¹¹⁴ Payne 1995:276

¹¹⁵ Mann 2004:245

¹¹⁶ Payne 1995:247

¹¹⁷ quoted in Ludwig Jedlicka (1979) “The Austrian Heimwehr” p. 223-40 in George L. Mosse, ed., *International Fascism: New Thoughts and New Approaches*, Sage Publications, p.234

support away from more moderate right-wing movements. With none of the parties receiving a plurality of votes, the new Christian Social leader Engelbert Dollfuss was forced to bring the Heimwehr (increasingly influenced by the Nazis) into his coalition government to form a parliamentary majority. But after growing political fissures and the resignation of parliamentary officers in March 1933, Dollfuss established a dictatorship based on the Christian Socials in partnership with the Heimwehr. Both the extreme right (the Nazis) and the extreme left (the Socialists) were outlawed. After the defeat of a Socialist coup in February 1934, the Austrian Nazis, who now were the chief opponents of the regime, launched a campaign of terrorism that culminated in an attempted coup and the murder of Dollfuss in July 1934. The end result was a total suppression of the Nazis, but the government had already shifted toward a corporatist, proto-fascist regime “copied from the Italian model.”¹¹⁸ As in other cases in central and eastern Europe, the ruling government pre-emptively suppressed revolutionary Nazis while simultaneously adopting elements of their institutions. The German historian Ulrich Eichstädt wrote that Austria had already begun the path toward fascism after March 1933.¹¹⁹ In that year, both Dollfuss and the Heimwehr leader Stahremberg promised Mussolini that they would move toward fascism. Hoping to become the regime’s protector, Mussolini encouraged Austria’s “conversion into a kind of satellite fascist state.”¹²⁰

Austria’s new constitution, adopted in May 1934, was a thoroughly corporatist

¹¹⁸ Seton-Watson in Mosse, 365

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Jedlicka 1979:233

¹²⁰ Payne 1995:247-9

one, the second such document to be adopted in Europe (after Portugal's charter of 1933). Parliament was replaced with a system of advisory councils composed of seven corporate bodies. Independent political groups were outlawed; the only legal political party was the Fatherland Front, a totalitarian government-created body formed by Dollfuss in 1933 along "the lines of the fascist and national-socialist parties."¹²¹ In the following few years, Austria's regime acquired "some of the outer trappings of fascism common to most other dictatorships in the 1930s."¹²² The Fatherland Front organized a paramilitary group called the Frontmiliz in 1936, and the following year created an elite militia called the Sturmkorps, modeled after Germany's SS. While the regime "copied from the methods used in Germany and Italy" it was closer in form to the Catholic corporatist-authoritarian fascism of Spain and Portugal (following the maxims of the papal encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*) rather than the militant, pagan, racist-biological variant of Nazi Germany.¹²³ With the *Anschluss* of March 1938, Austria was incorporated into the greater Third Reich, and a number of former Heimwehr leaders were given high positions in the SS.¹²⁴

Romania

Like Hungary, Romania by the late 1930s was home to one of the largest native fascist movements on the continent, the Legion of the Archangel Michael, also

¹²¹ Jedlicka 1979:237

¹²² Payne 1995:250

¹²³ Jedlicka 1979:237-8

¹²⁴ Payne 1995:250-2. Jedlicka 1979:235

known as the Iron Guard. Romania was a territorial beneficiary of the Great War, whose settlement doubled the country's size. This expansion, however, created a newly multiethnic state that faced enormous social and economic problems. Divisions within the ruling Peasant Party after 1926 produced an ineffective government that was unable to carry out reforms, and when the Depression struck, a group of army officers engineered the return of King Carol, who had abdicated in 1925 after a series of romantic scandals. Though he promised to uphold the constitution, Carol was an admirer of Mussolini and quickly moved to eliminate the Peasant Party. In the following years, internal party divisions, prompted in part by "the machinations of an increasingly authoritarian king", created a fragmented and unreliable political system. By 1933, in Romania as in most of its neighbors, "the postwar democratic breakthrough seemed now to be leading toward a political breakdown."¹²⁵

A number of philo-fascist authoritarian movements emerged in the early 1930s. The more significant included the radically anti-Semitic National-Christian Defense League (LANC) and the National Agrarian Party led by the poet Octavian Goga. The National Socialist Party of Romania, founded by Colonel Stefan Tatarescu in 1932 was a direct attempt to emulate the Nazis.¹²⁶ But the major new political movement to appear after the collapse of the Peasant Party was the fascist Legion of the Archangel Michael. It was led by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, who left the LANC for not being sufficiently revolutionary. In 1930 the group formed a youth

¹²⁵ Payne 1995:278

¹²⁶ Payne 1995:279

movement called the Iron Guard, and it was under this name that the group has become more commonly known. The Legion's leadership "had a strong sense of affinity with (as well as differences from) the Italian and German movements and occasionally used the term *fascist* to refer to themselves."¹²⁷ The Romanian version of fascism embraced the Orthodox Church and declared it a crucial part of the national organism, while Codreanu himself took on the role of a mystic warrior who would lead the rebirth of Romania through spiritual and physical war. Other than this religious component, the Legion "is generally classified as fascist because it met the main criteria of any appropriate fascist typology," while its leaders felt a "common identity and partially parallel goals with other fascists."¹²⁸ The exaltation of self-sacrifice in Codreanu's theological heterodoxy brought it closer to secular fascist movements. The Legion pursued the replacement of parliament with a corporative assembly, and sought a more collective basis for the national economy.

For several years after its founding in 1927 it remained "a tiny sect, a common experience for most fascist movements in the 1920s."¹²⁹ But 1932-33 brought increasing Nazi influence and popular support. After the rapid growth in the Nazi vote in Germany's 1932 elections, links with Romania quickly increased. The 1933 elections brought a wave of intimidation and assault from the Legion, and the party was banned by the government, its leaders arrested. But their popularity was now growing rapidly, and Payne estimates their support at two hundred thousand votes,

¹²⁷ Payne 1995:138

¹²⁸ Payne 1995:280

¹²⁹ Payne 1995:282

which would have made them the third largest political movement in the country. The following year the group reconstituted itself as the All for the Fatherland movement.¹³⁰

As in other states in the region, the threat of revolutionary fascism led the moderate, semi-liberal government to move to the right. Corrupt elections gave the government party a parliament majority, but the Romanian regime increasingly functioned “as a controlled polity with only limited representation.”¹³¹ In the mid-1930s, the government attempted to co-opt the Iron Guard by forming a parafascist youth group, the *Straja Tarii* (Guards of the Fatherland), but its artificiality made popular support nearly impossible. By 1936 the government gave up trying to co-opt Codreanu and dissolved all political militias in 1936, membership in the Legion continued to grow steadily, with over two hundred thousand members by the end of 1937. At that point “German influence reached a new level.” Though the Legion’s leaders noticed the differences between themselves and Nazism, they were convinced that both their country’s and their party’s future lay with the “national revolutions” of Hitler and Mussolini.¹³²

In Romania’s last elections before the war, in December 1937, the Fatherland Front received nearly 16% of the vote, with unofficial counts at 25%, despite the corrupt and partially manipulated elections. This result would have entitled them to 66 seats, but King Carol dissolved the parliament via a royal coup in February

¹³⁰ Payne 1995:286

¹³¹ Payne 1995:284

¹³² Payne 1995:284-6

1938.¹³³ Other political parties were outlawed; Codreanu and his top Legionnaires were executed. The Legion's new leaders hoped to inflame an insurrection against the king, but the Army's loyalty held firm. The irony that had played out in Austria, Hungary, the Baltics, and other places repeated itself in Romania: "the Legion, which despised democracy, the bourgeoisie, and capitalism, required at least a degree of bourgeois democracy to have the opportunity to build greater support and/or to achieve power."¹³⁴

The government's victory was short-lived, however. In September 1940 the king appointed General Ion Antonescu to the position of prime minister, who quickly forced the king's resignation and assumed control. Antonescu ruled as the head of the National Legionary State, a Legion-dominated regime in cooperation with prime minister Antonescu. At this point the Legion became the only legal political movement in the country, with key positions staffed by former members of the Iron Guard. Several months later, Antonescu suppressed an attempted coup and suppressed the movement, which became "a rump of voluble exiles squabbling over the causes of their failure."¹³⁵ Romania formally joined the Axis alliance in June 1941 and Antonescu continued to govern Romania until his arrest in 1944.¹³⁶

¹³³ Giovanni Capoccia (2005) *Defending Democracy: Reactions to Extremism in Interwar Europe*, Johns Hopkins University Press, p.8

¹³⁴ Payne 1995:289

¹³⁵ Eugen Weber (1979) "The Men of the Archangel" p. 317-43 in George L. Mosse, ed., *International Fascism: New Thoughts and New Approaches*, Sage Publications, p.319

¹³⁶ Cyprian Blamires, Paul Jackson (2006) *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia*, Vol.1, ABC-Clio, p.49

Spain

For the first two decades of the twentieth century, Spain remained a feeble but stubborn institutional monarchy, with a parliament alternating between two major parties. Between 1909 and 1923 the country witnessed a succession of thirty-four governments, until General Primo de Rivera took power in a coup, inaugurating a military dictatorship that lasted for the next eight years. Lacking a clear program or a coherent response to the onset of the Depression, the dictatorship collapsed along with the monarchy in April 1931, resulting in the creation of the Second Spanish Republic. It was the only new European regime to move “against the tide of authoritarian and fascist politics” of the 1930s.¹³⁷ Between 1931 and 1933 the governing alliance of middle-class Republicans and Socialist reformers introduced a number of controversial institutional reforms (such as the elimination of church subsidies and the constitutionally-permitted secession of Catalonia), prompting a conservative backlash. The election of 1933 produced a victory for the center-right, after which disillusioned Socialists undertook an abortive insurrection in 1934. In the elections of February 1936 a “Popular Front” of left-wing parties (including the much-resented Marxists and anarcho-syndicalists) won a clear victory, setting the stage for a civil war that began five months later.¹³⁸

Fascist movements had been percolating in Spanish political life several years before the war. Calvo Sotelo, the spokesman for the rightist opposition whose

¹³⁷ Payne 1995:254

¹³⁸ Roberts 1999:318

murder triggered the start of the war, had been calling for an authoritarian monarchy, state regulation of the economy, and the replacement of parliament with a corporate chamber. He “admired Italian Fascism...and did not object if critics referred to his goals as fascist.”¹³⁹ But the more successful and ultimately more durable fascist movement in Spain was the Falange Espanola (Spanish Phalanx). Hitler’s triumph in Germany stimulated interest among right-leaning businessmen, who “went shopping during the summer of 1933 for the leader of a potential counterrevolutionary, demagogic Spanish fascism.” The outcome was the emergence of Jose Antonio Primo de Rivera, oldest son of the former dictator. Over the previous few years, de Rivera had shifted away from conservative monarchism and toward Italian-style fascism, which served as “the vehicle for giving form and ideological content to the national authoritarian regime attempted so uncertainly by his father.”¹⁴⁰

The Falange’s program, released at the end of 1934, called for a thoroughly corporatist state and “exhibited all the main points of fascist doctrine”.¹⁴¹ De Rivera was occasionally ambivalent about the violence associated with fascism, and stopped designating himself as such in 1934; nevertheless, he represented a classic case of an interwar leader who rejected the fascist label yet “never renounced the fascist goals in [his] politics.”¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Payne 1995:256

¹⁴⁰ Payne 1995:256, 259

¹⁴¹ Payne 1995:261

¹⁴² Payne 1995:263. As he emphasizes, despite certain unique features Spanish

The outcome of the civil war led to the establishment of a nationalist military regime headed by Francisco Franco and based on Falangist principles; its 1934 program now became official state doctrine. The choreography of Franco rallies imitated Hitler and Mussolini, as did a number of institutions and party agencies, such as the Auxilio de Invierno (Winterhilfe) or the Directorate of Popular Culture (MinCulPop).¹⁴³

The regime began to move away from categorical fascism as Hitler's fortunes began to ebb, though Payne notes that if Hitler had succeeded, "there seems little doubt that Franquism would have become...more radical and overtly fascist in form."¹⁴⁴ After 1943 it increasingly resembled "a Catholic, corporative, and increasingly demobilized authoritarian regime."¹⁴⁵ By the 1960s it resembled less a fascist state and more "an old-fashioned military dictatorship with bureaucratic and capitalist support."¹⁴⁶

Portugal

Early interwar politics in Portugal were dominated by a series of attempted coups that succeeded in establishing a rightist authoritarian regime by the military in 1926. Dr. Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, a corporatist economist, became prime minister in 1932, four years after the military dictatorship installed him as finance

Falangism shared "nearly all the general qualities and characteristics that would compose an inventory of generic fascism." Payne 1995:261

¹⁴³ Payne 1995:267

¹⁴⁴ Payne 1995:267

¹⁴⁵ Payne 1995:267

¹⁴⁶ Seton-Watson in Mosse 1979: 365

minister. He remained in office until 1968, after a stroke led to his retirement. Salazar introduced a corporative constitution in 1932, creating a chamber to represent economic interests. A directly elected national assembly was also put in place, with regular elections that were carefully controlled by the state.

This sort of moderation frustrated the more radical elements in Portuguese politics, who formed a movement called Portuguese National Syndicalism in 1932. The Syndicalists (also known as the Blue Shirts from their adopted uniform) identified themselves with fascism and experienced a rapid growth in popularity after the Nazis ascent to power in 1933. In that same year, Salazar began his Estado Novo (New State) project, modeled after Mussolini's Italy. He attempted to eliminate the Blue Shirts through a combination of coercion and co-option. He created his own student youth movement, the *Accao Escolar Vanguarda* (Student Action Vanguard, or AEV), closed the Blue Shirt newspaper offices and removed their leaders from government positions. At the same time, its moderate members were invited to join the regime, where for the rest of the decade they "constituted a sort of de facto fascistic pressure group within the state syndical system."¹⁴⁷ By 1934 Salazar had succeeded in splitting the movement, and it was officially dissolved later in the year. Its remnants attempted a failed revolt against the regime in 1935, which led to arrests and general suppression of the movement.

As in Austria, Hungary, and Romania, the governing regime outflanked a takeover by fascist radicals by adopting fascist institutions. By the mid-1930s,

¹⁴⁷ Payne 1995:315

Salazar “indicated a willingness to consider a few of the trappings of fascism”; the civil war that began in 1936 “carried his Estado Novo a little further in that direction.”¹⁴⁸ Wartime radicalization led to the establishment of a youth movement and a paramilitary auxiliary, which both used the Nazi salute. Some scholars have argued that Salazar’s regime cannot be considered truly fascist because it avoided marches, rallies, and mass mobilization in general. But as David Raby argues, “this, in a sense, can be seen as the other side of the coin of fascism” – fascist regimes pursued intense mobilization when they faced a real threat from the radical left or were preparing for a mass wartime effort – neither of which applied to the Salazar regime.¹⁴⁹ The Estado Novo persisted in an increasingly deteriorating form until a bloodless coup in 1974 paved the way toward Portuguese democracy.

Greece

Between 1917 and 1936 Greece was “more similar to a Latin American country than to anything else in Europe,” alternating between short-lived civilian and military governments.¹⁵⁰ This instability stemmed from the persistent polarization between conservative monarchism and liberal republicanism. The restoration of the monarchy in 1936 began a period of intensified discord, and after the main parties failed to reach an agreement the king appointed as prime minister the nationalist,

¹⁴⁸ Payne 1995:316

¹⁴⁹ David L. Raby (1991) *Fascism and Resistance in Portugal: Communists, Liberals and Military Dissidents in the Opposition to Salazar, 1941-1974*, Manchester University Press, p.4

¹⁵⁰ Payne 1995:318

authoritarian General Ioannis Metaxas, who established a dictatorship in April 1936.¹⁵¹ Metaxas had not been popular – his party had received only 3% of the votes in a national election three months earlier. His appointment led to a series of strikes that Metaxas used to issue an emergency decree and seize absolute power. He abolished parliament and proclaimed a “New State” in its place. Political parties were abolished; trade unions came under state control and a corporative structure was introduced, complete with price controls and extensive economic regulations. The economic reforms also included a number of social welfare measures, including unemployment insurance, minimum wages and limited work hours, maternity leave, and stricter work safety standards. In November 1936, Metaxas also created a mass youth movement called the National Youth Organization (EON). His regime employed the fascist salute and occasionally described itself as totalitarian (although it differed from traditional fascism in lacking mass mobilization, and Metaxas told a British official that Salazar’s Portugal rather than Nazi Germany provided the closest model for emulation). Nevertheless, Metaxas aspired to join the nationalist, anti-liberal wave of the period, loosening ties with Britain while moving closer to Italy and Germany.¹⁵² Nevertheless, Hitler proceeded to invade Greece in April 1941 after a failed Italian offensive.

Finland

Fascist expression in Finland took the form of the Lapua movement, founded in

¹⁵¹ Capoccia 2005:8

¹⁵² Payne 1995:319-20

1929.¹⁵³ This was a religious, anti-communist, anti-democratic movement that called for a more nationalist, pious, and authoritarian state, and a restructuring of the economy along corporatist lines. It employed political violence against opponents as a way to destroy communism by any means necessary. Between 1929 and 1932, Lapua had an “enormous impact on the choices and strategies of the governmental parties.”¹⁵⁴ It pressed the cabinet and the parliament to pass anti-Communist legislation, and succeeded when communist groups were disbanded in 1930. Lapua then moved on to attacking the more centrist Social Democratic party, and in its 1932 Tampere program declared itself ready to use violence to achieve this goal. While it did not compete in elections, it exerted a strong influence on the country’s main conservative party, the National Coalition (NC). The NC, a founding party of the Finnish republic, had always displayed a hesitant attitude toward parliamentary democracy and were enthusiastic supporters of Lapua’s goals. This support continued even while all other conservative parties distanced themselves from Lapua after its turn against the Social Democrats. As a result, between 1929 and 1932 Lapua had “a substantial impact on Finnish democratic institutions from within, and more specifically on party interplay in parliament.”¹⁵⁵

The party was banned after a failed 1932 coup, but quickly reorganized itself as the People’s Patriotic Movement (IKL), which was similarly nationalist and anti-

¹⁵³ Its precursor, the anti-Bolshevik Academic Karelia Society, never had more than a few thousand members. (Payne 1995:311) As in many countries, it took the Great Depression and the rise of Nazi Germany to bolster a sizeable fascist following.

¹⁵⁴ Capoccia 2005:43

¹⁵⁵ Capoccia 2005:44

democratic. IKL modeled itself directly after Nazis, taking as its core tenet the idea of *kansakokoinasuus*, a literal translation of the German *Volksgemeinschaft*. IKL advocated the banning of political parties; individual freedoms and class interests would be replaced by a powerful central authority and subsumed into the organic body of the nation as a whole. Political representation would continue through a corporatist system rather than electoral democracy. IKL members wore military uniforms and had a youth organization modeled after the *Jugend*, but were careful to avoid political violence due to the very real risk of a government ban.¹⁵⁶

At its peak in the 1936 elections the IKL received 8.3 percent of the vote, but was never able to achieve mass popularity; by the end of the decade its vote percentage remained at 6.6%.¹⁵⁷ Like its Lapua predecessor, however, IKL exercised a disproportionate influence on party politics through the National Coalition. In fact, it went further than Lapua in actually taking control of the NC shortly after its creation in 1932; the NC did not return to classical pro-parliamentary conservatism until 1935. Until then, the IKL's influence "went well beyond what its own parliamentary representation...would have allowed."¹⁵⁸

Poland

In Poland, a center-right regime dominated by Josef Pilsudski persisted until his death in 1935. Pilsudski had taken power in a 1926 coup after a period of

¹⁵⁶ Capoccia 2005:45

¹⁵⁷ Payne 1995:311-2. Capoccia 2005:45 puts the peak figure at 7 percent.

¹⁵⁸ Capoccia 2005:46

hyperinflation and short-lived coalition governments, but never intended to establish a full dictatorship. In 1928 he founded the the Nonparty Bloc for the Support of the Government, an umbrella organization that won a plurality of the vote in that year's semi-free elections.¹⁵⁹

Like other multinational countries of the period, Poland experienced a growth in minority nationalist movements that displayed protofascist features. In the east, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), formed in 1929, preached the need for political violence and a strong central leader. Its moderate members looked to Mussolini as a model, while the more radical (usually younger) members were influenced by Nazism.¹⁶⁰ The OUN received material support from Germany, although extensive cooperation was precluded by the Nazis' racial views of Ukrainians. The other significant fascist organization of the period was the Polish Falanga. Formed in 1935, the group advocated a catholic totalitarianism based on the Spanish model from which it took its name and influenced by the political theology of Romania's Codreanu. The movement advocated the "radical subordination of the economy to a program of national socialism."¹⁶¹

After Pilsudki's death in 1935, the government was controlled by the so-called "Colonels" - members of the Polish army and Pilsudski allies who emphasized authoritarianism and state control over the economy. Political repression increased,

¹⁵⁹ Payne 1995:321

¹⁶⁰ Paul Robert Magocsi (1996) *A History of Ukraine*, University of Toronto Press, p. 621

¹⁶¹ Payne 1995:322

especially toward ethnic minorities. The 1935 constitution gave the president increased powers while limiting the role of parliament. While direct elections were maintained, that year the opposition parties boycotted the regime. Meanwhile, government investment in the economy quickly increased - by the end of the decade the state owned 40% of the country's banking capital and 20% of the industrial capital.¹⁶²

In 1937 the Colonels constructed another national unity party to replace BBWR, called the Camp of National Unity (OZN), a "crypto-fascist government party" that attracted nationalists and university students with its program of clericalism, anti-Semitism, and nationalism.¹⁶³ Colonel Adam Koc, placed in charge of building this party, was impressed by the Falanga and placed one of its leaders in charge of the League of Young Poland, OZN's youth section. OZN also began to advocate a corporate authoritarian regime, but its increasing radicalism (which by 1937 included the call for a one-party state and purge of opposition leaders) displeased some of the moderate Colonels, who forced Koc's resignation and ended OZN's ties with Falanga in early 1938.¹⁶⁴

The Baltics

In Lithuania, the main fascist movement was the Iron Wolf Association, the radical wing of the nationalist Tautinninkai movement. Tautinninkai's leader,

¹⁶² Payne 1995:322

¹⁶³ Paul N. Hehn (2002) *A low dishonest decade: the great powers, Eastern Europe, and the economic origins of World War II, 1930-1941*, Continuum, p.65

¹⁶⁴ Payne 1995:322

Augustinas Voldemaras, was appointed prime minister in 1926, when a military coup brought to power president Antanas Smetona of the more moderate National Christian Democratic Party. After 1931 Smetona tried to co-opt the Wolves by nudging the government in an authoritarian direction and giving Tautinninkai increased power. But in 1934 Voldemaras and Iron Wolf members attempted an insurrection, leading to increased efforts at co-optation by Smetona. A new 1936 constitution introduced a corporatist reorganization of the economy and strong presidential controls; Tautinninkai was given “a virtual monopoly” on political organization.¹⁶⁵ The Iron Wolves had been suppressed, but as in other European cases, the state had achieved this only by adopting some of the institutional reforms they had advocated.

Like Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia managed to avoid fascism through pre-emptive authoritarianism that co-opted the corporatist features of fascist regimes. In Estonia, the elected president Konstantin Pats seized power in 1934 after an authoritarian-nationalist movement called the Estonian War of Independence Veterans League (EVL, a paramilitary holdover from the 1917-8 war with the USSR) won absolute majorities in major cities. Pats assumed emergency powers, disbanded the EVL and arrested its leaders. The following year political parties were replaced by a National Association, and the government introduced a number of corporatist institutions such as the Chamber of Labour, which took over the

¹⁶⁵ Payne 1995:323-4

functions of the labor unions, curtailed since 1934.¹⁶⁶ After 1938 Estonia managed a partial return to democracy with a new constitution that limited presidential power and restored some civil liberties.¹⁶⁷

Likewise in Latvia, prime minister Karlis Ulmanis seized power in 1934, ostensibly to prevent a coup by the Thunder Cross, a fascist movement formed in the previous year. Ulmanis. Political parties were outlawed and opposition newspapers ordered to shut down. Like Pats, Ulmanis introduced corporatist institutions based on the fascist model in Italy, but did not pursue the partial re-liberalization that occurred in Estonia.¹⁶⁸ Both regimes, which Georg von Rauch called “authoritarian democracies,” enjoyed popular support and maintained a high level of economic growth; according to Payne, “their preemptive strategies may indeed have averted worse ills,” but they did so through adapting the corporatist features of the fascist economy.¹⁶⁹

Yugoslavia

In Yugoslavia, King Alexander established a personal dictatorship in early 1929, dissolving the parliament and abolishing the constitution. After his assassination in 1934, the country returned to a semi-parliamentary regime under monarchist regency. Milan Stojadinovic, prime minister from 1935 to 1939, made an attempt

¹⁶⁶ Georg von Rauch (1974) *The Baltic States: the years of independence: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, 1917-1940*, University of California Press, p.155

¹⁶⁷ Payne 1995:324

¹⁶⁸ Rauch 1974:155

¹⁶⁹ Rauch 1974:154; Payne 1995:325

at authoritarian mass mobilization by forming the Yugoslav Radical Union in 1935. Its members wore green shirts and called Stojadinovic "Vodja", or "Leader". In 1938 he assured Galeazzo Ciano, the Italian foreign minister, that his movement would develop along the lines of Italian fascism, although in general he tried to pursue a policy of neutrality.¹⁷⁰

A number of nationalist groups operated in Yugoslavia in the 1930s, most of them catering to the specific interests of Serbs, Croats, or Slovenes (although a few attempted to promulgate a general Yugoslavian nationalism). Of these, the most radical group was Yugoslav Action, which called for a state-directed economy and authoritarian corporatism. It grew increasingly radical, was repressed by the government in 1934, and reconstituted itself the following year as *Zbor* (Convention). Like its predecessor, *Zbor* preached nationalism and corporatism, but received only about one percent of the vote in both the 1935 and 1938 elections. By the end of the decade it developed contacts with Nazi Germany, attempted several insurrections, and was again suppressed by the government at the end of 1940.¹⁷¹

The most protofascist and consequential of the Yugoslav nationalist groups was the *Ustasha* (Insurgent) movement of radical Croat nationalists, formed in 1929. In partnership with Macedonian terrorists, the group was responsible for the assassination of King Alexander in 1934. It wished for an independent and authoritarian Croatia, and during the 1930s "developed increasingly ambitious

¹⁷⁰ Payne 1995:325

¹⁷¹ Payne 1995:325-6

goals and protofascist characteristics". Like *Zbor*, the movement was repressed by the Yugoslav government, but after the German takeover in 1941 it was given the reigns of power in Croatia and developed "into one of the most destructive of all the fascist-type movements."¹⁷²

Bulgaria

In postwar Bulgaria politics were dominated by the peaceful Agrarian movement until its overthrow by a military revolt in 1923. Until 1934, the country "lived under a nineteenth-century-style oligarchic parliamentary regime" in which land distribution promoted internal stability.¹⁷³ That year, a radical right-wing group of military officers called *Zveno* (the Link) took power in a short-lived coup, but were soon thrown out by the royalists, who inaugurated "a controlled but still semi-pluralist parliamentary regime" that lasted until the death of King Boris in 1943.¹⁷⁴

Bulgarian fascist movements included the Nationalist Fascist *Zadruga*, the Bulgarian National Socialist Party, and the Bulgarian National Legions. But the only fascist group to achieve any measure of popularity was the *Ratnitsi* (Warriors), a quasi-military youth organization founded in 1936 and dissolved by King Boris in 1939. Although the king moved to suppress both the Communists and the radical right, the rapid rise and menacing territorial ambitions of Nazi Germany forced him

¹⁷² Payne 1995:325, 326

¹⁷³ Payne 1995:326

¹⁷⁴ Payne 1995:327

to adopt a pro-German foreign policy by the end of the decade.¹⁷⁵ In Bulgaria as elsewhere, a fascist movement was suppressed by an initially moderate authoritarian regime, but at the price of moving further to the right. Restrictions on Jewish economic activity appeared in 1939. When the Iron Guard took control of Romania the following year and instituted a number of anti-Jewish measures, the Bulgarian government adopted the Law of the Defense of the Nation, “so as not to be behind Rumania in the expression of loyalty to Hitler,” wrote socialist politician Dino Kazasov in scornful opposition.¹⁷⁶ After early Nazi military victories in Europe, King Boris took to calling himself *Vozhd* (Leader) in imitation of the Fuhrer. All in all, the country was “unable to create an original and effective ideology that could mobilize the people, and had instead committed itself to following the fascist patterns more closely.”¹⁷⁷

Minor European Movements

Ireland

The new Irish Republic lacked a real fascist movement. One contender was the National Guard, a group formed in 1932, but this was “essentially a chowder and marching society pressure group that never went beyond a moderately authoritarian corporatism” and was quickly co-opted by the conservative party.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Payne 1995:327

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in Marshall Lee Miller (1975) *Bulgaria During the Second World War*, Stanford University Press, p.94-5

¹⁷⁷ Miller 1975:92

¹⁷⁸ Payne 1995:306

In 1935 General Eoin o'Duffy, a former national police chief, founded the National Corporate Party (NCP, aka the Blueshirts) that was modeled more explicitly along Nazi lines. The NCP tried to establish links with continental fascists and even sent a pro-Nationalist battalion to fight in the Spanish civil war. For a time it even attracted the support of W.B. Yeats, who wrote a series of marching songs for the group.¹⁷⁹ But the party never developed a durable following, and disappeared after o'Duffy's retirement from political life in 1937.

Switzerland

Switzerland had three philofascist movements, one for each of the country's ethnic group: the Union Nationale for French speakers, the Lega Nazionale Ticinese for Italian speakers, and the National Front for German speakers. Of these, the latter was the most genuinely fascist, although it remained small. Its stronghold was the Schaffhausen district, where the party received 27 and 12.2 percent of the vote in 1933 and 1935, respectively (in 1935 it succeeded in electing a deputy to the Swiss National Council, the only time it was able to do so).¹⁸⁰ Switzerland was officially neutral during the war, but remained friendly toward Germany and accepted German loot.

Denmark

Denmark never developed a popular fascist movement, although a Danish National Socialist Workers Party (DNSAP), modeled on Nazism, appeared in 1930.

¹⁷⁹ Cyprian Blamires, Paul Jackson (2006) *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia*, Vol.1, ABC-Clio, p.344

¹⁸⁰ Payne 1995:309

Despite internal disputes, the party received 1.8 percent of the vote and three parliament seats in the 1939 elections.¹⁸¹ Denmark did not join the fascist wave until the Nazi takeover in April 1940.

Netherlands

The main Dutch fascist movement was the National Socialist Movement (NSB), founded in 1931. It developed “the full panoply of fascism, with elaborate rituals and a party militia,” but rejected racism and welcomed Dutch Jews into the party. “It proposed a corporate economic system and upheld freedom of religion as a Dutch national principle. The NSB was able to take advantage of the depression to gain nearly 8 percent of the vote in the Dutch provincial elections of 1935, the largest vote for a new party in Holland under universal suffrage.”¹⁸²

After this high point, the group began to acquire more fascist elements and its popularity went into decline. “Conservative supporters were alienated, while the democratic Dutch parties banded together to block any further growth. As economic conditions improved, the NSB went into steady decline, gaining only 4.2 percent of the vote in the national elections of 1937 and losing most of that in the provincial elections two years later.”¹⁸³

Iceland

Since Iceland’s economy depended almost entirely on fish exports, the decline

¹⁸¹ Payne 1995:307-8

¹⁸² Payne 1995:302

¹⁸³ Payne 1995:302

of export prices brought about severe unemployment and social disruption. The Icelandic Nationalist Movement (INM), the country's fascist party, saw itself as the solution to these problems. Established in 1933, it published a party platform that showed unambiguous Nazi influence. The INM demanded a powerful state to maintain order, protection of national health through racial selection and breeding, end of class warfare, compulsory labor duty for all citizens, and, above all, the elevation of the national interest above individual or group needs. Other political parties would be abolished, with the Icelandic Communist Party (founded in 1930) as its main target. The *Allting*, the country's national parliament, would likewise be dissolved and replaced by a corporate state. This state would then provide full employment through industrial subsidies and loans and ensure a decent standard of living for each citizen. The INM used the swastika as its emblem, and its members frequently expressed their admiration for Hitler, "the poor common man who rescued Germany from her enemies."¹⁸⁴

Despite the country's economic problems, the INM failed to attract many followers. It received only 0.7 percent of the vote in 1934 (proportionally much less than even its Danish and Norwegian counterparts) and failed to gain a single seat. By 1937 it did not even bother to participate in elections; its quasi-military marching squad made their final appearance in May 1938, and in that year the

¹⁸⁴ Asgeir Gudmundsson (1980) "Nazism in Iceland" in Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Bernt Hagtvet, and Jan Petter Myklebust, eds., *Who Were the Fascists: Social Roots of European Fascism*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, p. 743-5

party's official propaganda outlet was published only three times.¹⁸⁵

Norway

Vidkun Quisling's Nasjonal Samling (National Unity) party in Norway, founded in 1933, was "by far the most important of the Scandinavian proto-Nazi movements."¹⁸⁶ It had a party militia, called the Hird, and called for a corporative system. The party received 2.2 and 1.8 percent of the vote in the 1933 and 1936 elections, respectively. Throughout the decade it grew closer to Germany, which provided the party with financial support.¹⁸⁷ Norway became part of the coercive phase of the fascist wave in April 1940, whereupon it remained a Nazi puppet regime until May 1945.

Belgium

"If I had a son," Adolf Hitler told Leon Degrelle, the founder and leader of Belgian Rexism, "I would wish him to be like you."¹⁸⁸ The Rexists represented the major expression of fascism in interwar Belgium. Degrelle became disenchanted with the moderation of Belgian Catholicism, founding Christus Rex in 1935. It was a corporatist, authoritarian, and Catholic movement. As in other fascist movements, both communists and finance capitalists were its sworn enemies. Financial capitalism would be tamed, central banks tightly controlled; class solidarity would

¹⁸⁵ Gudmundsson (1980) in Larsen, ed., p. 749; Payne 1995:308

¹⁸⁶ Payne 1995:308

¹⁸⁷ Payne 1995:308

¹⁸⁸ Quoted in Pierre-Henri Laurent (1979) "Belgian Rexism and Léon Degrelle" p. 295-315 in George L. Mosse, ed., *International Fascism: New Thoughts and New Approaches*, Sage Publications, p.295

be established via corporatist order founded on traditional Catholic values. Political parties, which had led to factionalism and corruption, would be outlawed; parliament's functions would be severely curtailed and executive power strengthened. The Rexists advocated support for the middle and working classes and small businesses, and the establishment of new industries to fight unemployment.¹⁸⁹

Degrelle's rhetoric was "its most fascistic characteristic...heavily male, bluntly frank and openly provocative."¹⁹⁰ His leadership led the movement to an early electoral success - in the 1936 elections his party "stunned the Belgian electorate" by winning 37 (of 202) parliamentary seats.¹⁹¹ This included about a third of all right-wing votes and a quarter of the votes in the Walloon cantons (its main source of support) and Brussels.¹⁹² This success was short-lived, however. The following year, an overly confident Degrelle lost his bid for prime minister by a humiliating margin. The movement never regained its previous popularity; the multi-ethnic nature of the Belgian state precluded a national following, since Flemish nationalists drained off right-wing support. After 1936 Rexism moved increasingly toward fascism and received substantial foreign subsidies from Hitler and Mussolini; Degrelle visited Hitler and Germany and expressed support for the conservatives in the Spanish civil war. By 1940 Degrelle was an active Nazi collaborator and led a

¹⁸⁹ Capoccia 2005:41

¹⁹⁰ Laurent 1979:309

¹⁹¹ Brustein and Berntson 1999:159

¹⁹² Laurent 1979:297

volunteer brigade (the *Volksführer de la Belgique*) on the Eastern front.¹⁹³

Fascist Influence in Asia

Japan represents the most familiar instance of non-European fascism, although scholars continue to debate whether the regime was truly fascist or simply a developmental dictatorship forged by emergency wartime expedients, some of which were fascist in nature. Gregory Kasza, a historian of Japanese authoritarianism, argued that “both the similarities and the differences” between European and Japanese fascism were “substantial, and whatever conceptual apparatus is employed, it should not lose sight of either.”¹⁹⁴ One distinguishing characteristic of Japanese fascism, Kasza points out, is its inversion of goals. Whereas in Europe fascism’s significance was first as a political movement, second as an ideology, and third as an institutional regime, in Japan this equation was reversed – fascism, and particularly imitation of German institutions, shaped the country’s institutions to a much greater degree than its political movements or political thought. Given the institutional focus of my approach, and the instances of direct institutional emulation discussed below, it seems appropriate to safely add Japan to the roster of interwar fascist regimes and fascist imitators.

Japan had greatly profited from World War I, when Allied munition contracts, demands for Japanese shipping, and the opening of markets previously accessible only to Western colonial powers combined to give the country a rapid boost of

¹⁹³ Laurent 1979:295

¹⁹⁴ G.J. Kasza (1984) “Fascism from below? A Comparative Perspective on the Japanese Right, 1931-1936” *Journal of Contemporary History* 19.4, p.607-27

industrialization.¹⁹⁵ But after a period of democracy in the 1920s, Japan began on a steady path toward authoritarianism sparked by the Depression and the concomitant rise of nationalism. The Depression had led to the collapse of silk exports, and millions of farmers suffered from the decline in demand for their goods. Manufacturing was also affected, and by 1932 half of Japanese factories stood idle; working-class living standards fell accordingly.¹⁹⁶ Nationalist groups proliferated - Lebow estimates their number at 750 by 1936.¹⁹⁷ Like their European counterparts, Japanese intellectuals began to desert democratic principles in favor of a fascist solution. "These intellectuals were drawn to European fascist ideas because of their repugnance for contemporary party politics and the free market economy", wrote Richard Ned Lebow. "They imagined that fascism would be more efficient, avoid debilitating clashes between unions and companies and strengthen Japan internationally."¹⁹⁸ Japanese theorist of fascism Nakano Seigo argued that democracy had "lost its spirit and decayed into a mechanism which insists only on numerical superiority without considering the essence of human beings," insisting that the Italian and German models offered "a form of more democratic government going beyond democracy."¹⁹⁹

In 1931, a group of right radical army officers called the Land-Loving School

¹⁹⁵ Kennedy 1987:299

¹⁹⁶ Roberts 1999:358

¹⁹⁷ Richard Ned Lebow (2008) *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, Cambridge University Press, p.406

¹⁹⁸ Lebow 2008:406

¹⁹⁹ Nakano Seigo (1995) "The Need for a Totalitarian Japan" in Roger Griffin, ed., *Fascism*, Oxford University Press. p.239

launched a wave of assassinations, hoping to trigger the collapse of what they saw as a corrupt state that was abandoning traditional Japanese principles. Though quickly repressed, this marked the beginning of the destabilization of Japanese democracy. Nationalism and militarism gained ground; parliamentary leadership was replaced by “national governments” ruling in coalitions.²⁰⁰

After the 1936 assassination of Korekiyo Takahashi, a respected finance minister who rallied against imperial expansion, the militant nationalists’ hold on political and economic power was secure, and “the Japanese government took on many fascist features”²⁰¹ Remaining democratic elements of the system were discarded, and the state began pursuing a policy of rapid industrialization and the consolidation of large-scale industry and finance.²⁰² The beginning of full-scale war with China in 1937 was the last nail in democracy’s coffin. State authority was rapidly expanded; the National Mobilization Law of 1938 gave it unprecedented control over the economy and society.²⁰³ Thus, unlike its Italian or German counterparts, Japanese fascism did not sweep into power via a mass movement; instead, it was adopted by the state “from above”, and imposed upon the country by the “existing political forces, military organizations and the bureaucracy.”²⁰⁴

Just as Prussia had served as a model of military reform after the Meiji restoration, Nazi Germany was “a major inspiration to Japanese bureaucrats and

²⁰⁰ Payne 1995:332

²⁰¹ Frieden 2006:214

²⁰² Frieden 2006:215

²⁰³ Payne 1995:333

²⁰⁴ Lebow 2008:407

ideologues" who wanted to regulate the economy and eliminate autonomous interest groups. Japanese trade associations were structured after German state cartels, as was the state women's association, the state youth organization, and the state agricultural association. The German Ministry of Propaganda also provided a direct model for the Japanese Cabinet Information Bureau.²⁰⁵

China

Chinese fascism was spurred by the Japanese invasion of 1931, which led to the emergence of several nationalist groups. The most prominent of these were the Blue Shirts (aka the Kai-tsu P'ai faction), who can be described as the fascist wing of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang (KMT), a populist movement that governed China for most of the interwar period. Created in 1932, the Kai-tsu P'ai were originally a left-wing group but came to admire Nazi economic and social policies. They sought to mobilize nationalist sentiment and accelerate the country's industrialization, and thus they "admired European fascism and were influenced by it".²⁰⁶ A Blue Shirt newspaper in 1933 welcomed Hitler's rise to power, characterizing it as a response to international oppression and predicting (mostly correctly, as it turned out) the spread of fascism across the entirety of Europe.²⁰⁷ In 1936 their leader, Wang Jingwei, visited Germany and upon his return wrote that

²⁰⁵ Payne 1995:335

²⁰⁶ Payne 1995:337-8

²⁰⁷ William C. Kirby (2001) "China" in Stein Ugelvik Larsen, ed., *Fascism Outside Europe: The European Impulse against Domestic Conditions in the Diffusion of Global Fascism*, Boulder: Social Science Monographs, p.247

fascist states "have already expanded their national vitality and augmented their people's strength, and are no longer afraid of foreign aggression."²⁰⁸ Another leading spokesman for the group argued in 1937 that "Whatever we may think about fascist and Nazi methods and policies, we must recognize the fact that their leaders have secured the enthusiastic support of their respective nations, and while these regimes may have done "foolish, unwise, and even cruel things," Hitler and Mussolini had done "more in a few years than many countries have done in decades."²⁰⁹ These sentiments found support among the general public - as early as 1933 a newspaper editorial argued that "fascism is the only tool of self-salvation of nations on the brink of destruction...China cannot but imitate the fascist spirit of...Italy and Germany."²¹⁰ The Nazis' organic view of the nation fit nicely with Chinese political tradition; as the Chinese newspaper People's Tribune stated in 1936, the country's leadership ought to "do very much the same sort of work as has been achieved by Hitler" in terms of subordinating individualism to the communal interest of the nation.²¹¹ In 1937 the group helped mobilize resistance to the Japanese invasion of the mainland, but were soon dissolved by Chiang, who saw them as potential rivals.²¹²

²⁰⁸ Quoted in Kirby (2001:255) in Larsen, ed.

²⁰⁹ Quoted in Kirby (2001:255) in Larsen, ed.

²¹⁰ Quoted in Kirby (2001:246) in Larsen, ed.

²¹¹ Quoted in Kirby (2001:256) in Larsen, ed.

²¹² Payne 1995:337

Fascist Influence in the Middle East

Radical Arab nationalists of the 1930s “were at least as much influenced by European fascism as movements in any other part of the world.”²¹³ This was strongly encouraged by both Germany and Italy as a way to expand fascist influence in a region sympathetic to both anti-Semitism and western anti-colonialism. Mussolini presented himself, ludicrously but sometimes successfully, as a “defender of Islam” in Libya, where a Libyan Arab Fascist Party had emerged.²¹⁴ Both German and Italian propaganda machines were active in the Arab world. In Payne’s view, “European fascism was taken more seriously in the Middle East than anywhere else in the world” save for Japan, South Africa, and Bolivia.²¹⁵ In Saudi Arabia, King Abdul Aziz sought and received German arms and contacts. Syrian and Iraqi delegations attended Nuremberg party congresses. *Mein Kampf* was published in several Arabic translations.²¹⁶ At least seven different “shirt movements” appeared in the region by the end of the decade (white in Iraq, tan in Lebanon, blue and green in Egypt, and white, gray and iron in Syria). The three most prominent movements in the region inspired by fascism were Syria’s Socialist Nationalist Party, Iraq’s *Futuwa* movement, and the Young Egypt movement. All

²¹³ Payne 1995:352; see also Lukasz Hirszowicz (1966) *The Third Reich and the Arab East*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Pubs

²¹⁴ Payne 1995:352

²¹⁵ Payne 1995:353; this influence proved to be more durable in that region than in any other. By the 1980s “the regimes of Gadhafi in Libya and of Saddam Hussein in Iraq would have more characteristics of a classic fascist regime than any others in the world.” Payne 1995:353

²¹⁶ Payne 1995:352

three believed in their nation's superiority; all three stressed self-sacrifice, martial virtues, and territorial expansion; all three praised both German Nazism and Italian Fascism.²¹⁷

Syria and Palestine

Interwar Syria saw a flowering of radical pro-fascist youth groups like the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party (PPS) and the Iron Shirts. The PPS, founded in 1932, was a true anti-system party, rejecting parliamentarism in all forms and advocating totalitarianism with a strong leader at the helm. The party adopted the Hitler salute, a curved swastika (*zawba'a*) as their symbol, and even sang their anthem to the tune of "*Deutschland über alles*".²¹⁸ It's worth noting that while the party's founder, Antun Saadeh, professed admiration for Hitler, he argued that his was not a fascist organization. In a 1935 speech he proclaimed "The Syrian Social Nationalist Party is neither a Hitlerite nor a Fascist one, but a pure social nationalist one. It is not based on useless imitation, but is the result of an authentic invention."²¹⁹ Of course such rejection was incompatible with the party's explicit adoption of Nazi symbolism, organizational methods, and political program. But like many of his contemporaries, Saadeh was motivated by two related needs - appealing to their

²¹⁷ Payne 1995:352. See also E. Marston (1959) "Fascist Tendencies in Pre-War Arab Politics: A Study of Three Arab Political Movements," *Middle East Forum*, 35:19-35. Martin Kramer (1986) "Congress of Collaboration: Islam and the Axis, 1938-1945" in *Islam Assembled: The Advent of the Muslim Congresses*, p.157-165

²¹⁸ Daniel Pipes (1992) *Greater Syria*, Oxford University Press, p.100-101; Ehud Yaari (1987) "Behind the Terror" *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1987.

²¹⁹ Quoted in Gotz Nordbruch (2009) *Nazism in Syria and Lebanon: the ambivalence of the German option, 1933-1945*, Taylor & Francis, p.45

natural constituencies by shedding foreign links, and avoiding being portrayed as a tool of foreign influence, which would lead to attacks from the country's traditional conservatives. Where fascist parties were banned by the country's rulers, foreign infiltration was usually the pretext.

In Palestine, pro-Nazi activity centered around Mufti al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who founded the Palestinian national movement and supported the 1941 coup in Iraq. Amin al-Husayni fled to Nazi Germany and "actively assisted" the German war effort.²²⁰ In nearby Lebanon, the political leader Pierre Gemayel founded the Kataeb Party in 1936 after being inspired by the order and discipline of German political life, which he witnessed first-hand during that year's Olympic games.²²¹ The country's Tan Shirts (whose outfits were, confusingly, white, according to some accounts) were also influenced by fascist ideology and organizational techniques.²²²

Iraq

In interwar Iraq, political conflict centered around the rivalry of the pro-British Hashemite group and a number of pro-fascist movements such as the White Shirts, who viewed Nazi Germany as the sole power capable of challenging British colonial rule in the region. This view was particularly strong among the Iraqi

²²⁰ Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski (2009) *Confronting Fascism in Egypt: Dictatorship versus Democracy in the 1930s*, Stanford University Press, p.274

²²¹ Robert Fisk (1990) *Pity the Nation: The abduction of Lebanon*. New York: Nation Books, p.65

²²² Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:273-4, see also fn2 p. 321

military elite, culminating in the pro-Nazi coup of April 1941. Even before the takeover, the country's radical youth movement *al-Futuwwa* was explicitly based on Hitler's *Jugend*.²²³ In 1938 the movement sent a representative to the Nuremberg Nazi rally, and soon after hosted the Hitler Youth leader Baldur von Schirach.

Leading Iraqi intellectuals like Sami Shawkat praised the success of martial patriotism instilled among the German youth; Shawkat himself advocated violence as a means to Arab unity, and was a leading force in *al-Futuwwa*. The pan-Arabic *al-Muthanna* club in Baghdad hosted speeches that praised fascist ideology and institutions. In June 1941, members of *al-Muthanna*, together with *al-Futuwwa*, staged a pogrom in Baghdad that killed approximately 180 of its Jewish residents. Throughout this period, Germany made a concerted propaganda push among Iraqi outlets; Germany's representatives had direct contacts with three of the country's major newspapers, while two others subscribed to a German news agency.²²⁴

The Iraqi regime itself established close ties with Nazi Germany; Rashi Ali al-Gailani, the country's prime minister between 1933-35 and again in 1940, was the country's leading advocate for rapprochement with fascism and staffed his cabinets with extreme nationalists. In his first term as prime minister he undertook an

²²³ A British report from 1946 documented the reorganization of the *al-Futuwwa* along the lines of its German counterpart. See Matthew Elliot (1996) *Independent Iraq: The Monarchy and British Influence, 1941-1958*, London: I.B. Tauris, p.46

²²⁴ Orit Bashkin (2008) *The other Iraq: pluralism and culture in Hashemite Iraq*, Stanford University Press, p.58. For overviews of Nazi influence in Iraq, from which I have drawn for the above, see also Robert Lewis Melka (1966) *The Axis and the Arab Middle East: 1930-1945*, University of Minnesota, p. 62; Walter Laquer (1956) *Communism and nationalism in the Middle East*, Praeger, p.179; Phoebe Marr (1985) "The Development of Nationalist Ideology in Iraq, 1921-1941" *The Muslim World* 75.2:85-101

intense campaign of pan-Arab nationalization; in 1940 he attempted to establish direct links with Nazi Germany via Italian intermediaries. By this point Great Britain was concerned about al-Gailani strong anti-British views, threatened trade sanctions, and forced him to resigned in early 1941, although he recaptured power in a coup only two months later. Germany was now providing direct material support to his regime, leading the British to invade.²²⁵

Iran

Reza Shah's regime in Iran shared numerous similarities with European fascism. Dubbed "the Mussolini of Islam" by the home press, he welcomed Hitler's rise to power and undertook a wide-sweeping campaign of nationalization in 1935, changing the country's name from Persia to Iran - "Land of the Aryans". He praised the Nuremberg Race Laws of 1936, and the country witnessed sporadic pogroms in 1938. In 1936 the Germany finance minister Hjalmar Schacht made a state visit, followed by the leader of the German youth movement the following year, which resulted in an exchange program between the Hitler youth and its Iranian counterpart. As the country began moving into the German economic sphere, relations with the previously dominant Britain quickly deteriorated. In 1937 Iran, along with Turkey and Afghanistan, signed the Saadabad Friendship Pact, which gave Germany preferential treatment in trade and access to Iranian raw materials; Iran in turn received German credits, trade concessions and (beginning in 1938)

²²⁵ Cyprian Blamires, Paul Jackson (2006) *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia*, Vol.1, ABC-Clio, p.343

weapons and military planes. A secret agreement in 1939 made Iran a provider of food and natural resources for the Third Reich. At the end of 1939 Iran also signed a Treaty of Friendship with Japan, although it remained officially neutral during the beginning of World War II and entered the war on the Allied side in September 1943.²²⁶

Egypt

Egypt was another state where fascist influence was profoundly felt during this period. As Payne notes, “there was much pro-German sentiment in Egypt.”²²⁷ Egypt has also attracted the most attention from scholars of Arab fascism, possibly due to its vibrant intellectual life in the 1920s and 1930s. For this reason, and because it stands as such a representative case of fascist influence outside Europe, the rest of this section is devoted to a more detailed case study of Egyptian politics during this period.

The historian Nadav Safran argued that 1920s Egypt experienced a “progressive phase” during the 1920s, when leading intellectuals advocated the social and political values of Western liberalism and democracy.²²⁸ As mentioned in the previous chapter, the country had established a constitutional parliamentary regime

²²⁶ Cyprian Blamires, Paul Jackson (2006) *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia*, Vol.1, ABC-Clio, p.342-3

²²⁷ Payne 1995:352; see also Shimon Shamir (1976) “The Influence of German National Socialism on Radical Movements in Egypt” in J.L. Wallach, ed. (1975) *Germany and the Middle East, 1835-1939*, Tel Aviv, p. 200-204

²²⁸ Nadav Safran (1961) *Egypt in Search of Political Community*; summarized in Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski 2009:6-7

in 1923 and elected a prime minister the following year. But a decade later, Safran argued, a “crisis of orientation” took place, manifesting itself in the rejection of parliamentary politics and a turn toward authoritarianism, religion and nationalism. By depressing agricultural prices world-wide, the economic crisis had severely undermined the country’s exports. In addition, the country felt a strong sense of disillusionment with the corruption and factionalism of parliamentary rule. In this Egypt mirrored the ideological evolution of many states between the wars. As Safran writes:

The great depression had given credence to the claims of Fascism, Nazism, and Communism that liberal democracy was a decaying system. The contrast between the misery, despair, and social discord that pervaded the Western democracies and the discipline, orderliness, and aggressive confidence that appeared to characterize the totalitarian regimes made a deep impression on Egyptians, who had seen in their own country a record of unmitigated failures of democracy.²²⁹

The historian P.J. Vatikiotis similarly argues that “the temporarily successful challenge Fascism and Nazism presented to the Western European democracies undermined constitutional government as a model of emulation by non-European societies....The echo in Egypt was quite resounding.”²³⁰ This echo was expressed

²²⁹ Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:7, citing Safran (1961:192); see also p. 187-193

²³⁰ P.J. Vatikiotis (1991) *The History of Modern Egypt*, Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 315, see also p.187-193. The Egyptian scholar Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid-Marsot likewise writes: "the crisis of democracies in the West had shaken the faith of many in the value of democracy. Admiration for Fascism grew when Mussolini made the trains run on time and forced the slackers to swallow castor oil. Some Egyptians believed that these methods might have more success in Egypt than those of the democratic institutions." (Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:8, citing Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid-Marsot (1977) *Egypt's Liberal Experiment, 1922-1936*, University of California Press, p. 229; see also p.227-31)

by the rapid rise of political groups that advocated the rejection of liberalism, the use of violence, and the adoption of a fascist regime to deal with democratic corruption. The most prominent of these was the Muslim Brotherhood and the Young Egypt movement.

The Muslim Brotherhood manifested its fascist influence in a number of ways - the cult of a leader, the rejection of democratic divisiveness in favor of national unity, the demand for autocratic politics, a quasi-military and uniformed youth movement, a program of official anti-Semitism, and a general dedication to social discipline and class solidarity.²³¹ Lest these features appear to be political conveniences that were only incidentally fascist, evidence of Germany's influence can be found directly in the writings of its members. Hasan al-Banna, the group's founder, wrote an essay praising the "militarism" and "masculinity" of the Nazis, which he argued would serve as a model for the Muslim Brothers. Banna was also impressed by the centralized nature of the Fascist and Nazi regimes, their obedience to a central leader, and their ability to impose order.²³² Al-Banna rejected what he saw as the divisive partisan bickering of democracies. At the movement's Fifth Congress, he argued that the country's political parties were artificial creations that divided the nation and produced self-serving factions.²³³ He repeated this view in an editorial, arguing that "the existence of the party system

²³¹ Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:211

²³² Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:211; the text is Hasan al-Banna, "Hal Nahnu Qawm Amaliyun?" JIM, Jumada al-Ula 19, 1353, as quoted in Zakaria Sulayman Bayumi (1979) *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun*, Cairo, p. 192-3

²³³ Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:227

has become an obstacle on the road of revival and progress."²³⁴

Nazi influence was also found in the movement's direct links with its European counterparts. The Muslim Brothers' involvement in the conflict over Palestine brought them into contact with Germany, which sought to influence the movement through financial support. Documents seized by the British in 1939 showed that the Brotherhood had received secret subsidies from the German News Agency in Cairo through Palestinian intermediaries.²³⁵

Young Egypt, the country's other prominent fascist movement, was also directly influenced by Nazi symbolism and quasi-military organizational structure. In their political outlook, use of public violence, and fealty to a central leader they "bore an unmistakable similarity to contemporary European Fascist movements."²³⁶

Although the two groups shared similar outlooks, Young Egypt went even further than the Brotherhood in its denunciation of parliamentary rule and embrace of dictatorship. In a representative essay, Hamada al-Nahil, a Young Egypt activist at the Egyptian University, portrayed democracy as a disease, the deadly malady of partisanship upon the body politic. The cure, for al-Nahil, was a dictatorship. This was "the medicine of salvation as represented by discipline, and as brought by an

²³⁴ Quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:228

²³⁵ Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:213

²³⁶ Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:238. Describing the group's features, they add that they "closely paralleled the practices of Italian Fascism, German Nazism, and the other fascist movements found on the northern side of the Mediterranean by the 1930s."

excellent doctor.... This excellent doctor is the dictator.²³⁷ Al-Nahil gave the examples of Hitler and Mussolini as doctors par excellence who had restored national confidence after a period of weakness.

After the tainted elections of March 1938, Young Egypt intensified their rejection of democracy. Three months later, Young Egypt's Secretary-General Fathi Radwan wrote an essay titled "Are We Propagandists of Dictatorship?" Radwan agreed with his contemporaries that the system had failed to provide for the nation's needs:

We despise the parliamentary system that prevents and hinders action that turns the country into a stage for oratory and theatrics...²³⁸ If it is dictatorship that will place a limit on the anarchy that has been disclosed about our high officials, then we will be among the supporters of dictatorship.... If it is dictatorship that can instill the youth with strength and the nation with a militant spirit, filling the people with electricity, vigor, and dynamism, then we will be dictators to the bone.²³⁹

The leader of Young Egypt, Ahmad Husayn, also expressed repeated and open admiration for the Fascist political system. In 1938, he referred to the "miracles" of Germany and Italy in glowing terms, as examples of national recovery to be emulated. Moreover, Husayn argued that fascism and Nazism "were the bearers of much the same values as those that Young Egypt was trying to instill in the Egyptian

²³⁷ Quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:246

²³⁸ He elaborated: "The people are starving, yet the deputies wax eloquent; the country is threatened with danger from within and without, yet the minutes of the sessions contain only idle debates that delay more than they expedite affairs."

²³⁹ Quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:247-8

people – faith and action."²⁴⁰ Their miracles had been achieved because of "a creed, a faith, a belief in themselves; this is what Young Egypt summons you to emulate."²⁴¹ By the late 1930s, the movement's propaganda explicitly presented itself as following the political trajectory of its German and Italian counterparts.²⁴²

While Young Egypt denied connections with outside fascist powers, British reports from 1935 state that the movement had accepted Italian money passed through a magazine that served as the outlet for Italy's state propaganda in Egypt. The British also report that the group had accepted Italian money for a propaganda trip to Europe in 1935. When Egypt's prime minister pursued a partial ban of the group the following year, he justified it on the grounds that the movement was working for foreign interests.²⁴³

In short, fascist influence in interwar Middle East found many adherents among those frustrated with democratic incompetence and impressed with Germany's economic revival, internal stability, and projection of national unity. Many of the leaders were forced to publicly renounce their connections to European fascism, which perhaps explains why historiography has generally downplayed its influence in the region. Nevertheless, the hegemonic transition of the 1930s was expressed here in a wave of popular movements that imitated fascist ideology. Emulation and influence (in the form of Nazi-sponsored subsidies and propaganda trips) were the

²⁴⁰ Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:249

²⁴¹ Quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:249

²⁴² Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:249

²⁴³ Gershoni and Jankowski 2009:239-40

two mechanisms by which the hegemonic shock manifested itself in the region.

Fascist Influence in Latin America

In Latin America, the decline of the export-import development model associated with the Depression allowed philofascist military dictatorships to replace traditional oligarchs.²⁴⁴ Within a year after 1929, exports fell on average by 40 percent, and foreign investment declined sharply. As national incomes fell, the traditional Europeanized political classes suffered loss of support. Nearly all political regimes in Latin America fell between 1930 and 1934; between 1930 and 1933 the continent experienced the largest number of coups, uprisings, and aborted insurrections since the wars of independence a century earlier. The Depression “compromised liberal constitutional government as much in Latin America as in Europe.”²⁴⁵ In the 1920s, Latin America had fourteen semi-democratic (though elitist) regimes and six dictatorships. By the end of the following decade, the region had fifteen dictatorships and five democracies.²⁴⁶

The fundamental causes of this authoritarian turn were the onset of the Depression and the growth of anti-democratic sentiment that followed it, intensified by the appearance of successful alternative models in Europe. The result was a wave of right-wing, anti-Communist, populist new dictatorships, headed by

²⁴⁴ Peter H. Smith (2005), *Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective*, Oxford University Press, p.28.

²⁴⁵ Roberts 1999:374-5

²⁴⁶ Paul W. Drake (1994) “International Factors in Democratization” paper presented at the Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Juan March Institute, Madrid (November 4, 1994), p.4

military strongmen who rejected the liberal economic policies of agrarian oligarchies and landowners. A lack of territorial ambitions, the multi-ethnic composition of most states, and low levels of mass mobilization dampened the spread of fascist ideology. But as in other regions, leaders of Latin American states were able to borrow institutional elements of fascist and communist states without implementing their ideological or racial policies, although some of the new dictatorships of the 1930s “were favorably disposed toward Italian Fascism or Nazism and permitted or occasionally even encouraged pro-fascist propaganda.”²⁴⁷ I hastened to add that the above-quoted Payne does not consider the similarities sufficient to consider these regimes fascist (with the partial exception of Argentina), but as with the rest of the chapter my interest is in sources of institutional inspiration and not nomenclature.

Like their European counterparts, the new *caudillos* rejected democracy and looked toward fascist solutions for their problems. Borrowing from Italian and German corporatism, they promoted import-substituting industrialization, which took the form of protecting domestic markets and, inevitably, a greater role for the state.²⁴⁸ Although Soviet planning was also a source of admiration, its influence remained limited not only because the leaders were instinctively anti-Left but also because preventing a slide toward communism ensured the cooperation of the old

²⁴⁷ Payne 1995:340.

²⁴⁸ Elsenhans 1991:284. Roberts 1999:375

oligarchies.²⁴⁹

Brazil

After a decade of instability, Brazil underwent a military coup in 1930. For the next fifteen years, the country was ruled by Getulio Vargas, “a nationalistic dictator with semifascist leanings.”²⁵⁰ Vargas did not develop his own national party, but preferred to govern by balancing competing groups, among the most important of which were the Acao Integralista Brasileira (Brazilian Integralist Action or AIB). Founded in 1932, the Integralists were the country’s main fascist movement and the first popular mass movement in the country’s history. It was a highly centralized and hierarchical group headed by a charismatic leader named Plinio Salgado, who cultivated a Hitler-like appearance. Its members wore green shirts and used the Nazi salute; they advocated a corporatist (“integral”) and authoritarian state. The Integralists contained “most of the distinguishing characteristics of European fascism,” and in the mid-1930s they “generated more support than any other protofascist movement in Latin America,” numbering between two and four hundred thousand members.²⁵¹

Throughout the 1930s, Germany expanded its influence in Brazil by increasing trade ties with the country. In the five years after 1933, it became the second-largest importer of Brazilian coffee and cocoa, and the largest market for the

²⁴⁹ Roberts 1999:376

²⁵⁰ Frieden 2006:226

²⁵¹ Payne 1995:345-6

country's cotton. In 1937, Vargas announced the creation of an Estado Novo, modeled after the Italian and Portuguese regimes of Mussolini and Salazar. Vargas dissolved the parliament, curtailed presidential elections, abolished political parties, and substantially increased his decree powers. He also cultivated good relations with Nazi Germany.²⁵² As in many European cases, the Integralists came to an end when a moderate authoritarian regime moved closer to fascism and suppressed its more radical competitors (as had been the case, for instance, with the Portuguese National Syndicalists after Salazar's shift to the right). The movement was officially dissolved in 1937, and after two failed coup attempts was decisively suppressed.²⁵³

Argentina

General Jose Uriburu's takeover of Argentina in 1930 marked the country's first dictatorship of the century. He has been preceded by General Irigoyen, who came to power in 1928 and represented the export-oriented agrarian oligarchy. This meant opposition to any interference with free trade and a refusal to deal with the Great Depression through political measures.²⁵⁴ His inaction allowed Uriburu to take control with the help of the far-right Argentine Patriotic League, a nationalist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Communist paramilitary movement. Uriburu launched reforms that included a corporatist regime and a state militia called the Legion

²⁵² Rothermund 1996:141-2

²⁵³ Payne 1995:346

²⁵⁴ Rothermund 1996:141

Civica.²⁵⁵

A profascist military group, the Grupo de Oficiales Unidos (GOU), brought a new regime into power in 1943. They imposed a dictatorship and pursued a foreign policy more favorable to the Axis; during the war, the government “was more sympathetic to Germany and Italy than was any other major government in the Western Hemisphere.”²⁵⁶ The defeat of the Axis two years later forced them to moderate their policies, and in the 1950s this moderation eventually took the form of Peronism, a mix of populism, nationalism, and industrialization.²⁵⁷

Chile

In Chile, fascist influence found expression in the National Socialist Movement (MNS, aka the Nacis). Founded by the half-German Jorge Gonzales von Marees in 1932, the Nacis argued for a corporatist economy and a stronger, more centralized executive. In that year Chile began a return to liberal democracy after years of political unrest that followed the onset of the Depression. Rising unemployment and declining exports led to the resignation of dictator Carlos Ibanez del Campo in 1931, after which the Nacis “became a small but important actor in the political development of the country.”²⁵⁸ Naci militias clashed with left-wing radicals and their political leaders successfully stood for public office; in the 1935 municipal

²⁵⁵ Payne 1995:347

²⁵⁶ Payne 1995:347

²⁵⁷ Frieden 2006:226

²⁵⁸ Mario Sznajder (1993) “A Case of Non-European Fascism: Chilean National Socialism in the 1930s” *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol.28, p.270

elections the party elected two candidates to city councils, and in the 1937 parliamentary elections three of its candidates entered the parliament. In the following year, twenty-nine Nacista municipal council members were elected into office, mainly in large cities. Thus in just six years, the movement “became a political force to be taken into account, not only because of its electoral competitiveness but also because of its activism and violence “ which resembled its European counterparts.²⁵⁹ In April 1938 the Nacis attempted to overthrow the government through a violent insurrection and were harshly suppressed by parliament; the attempt mobilized anti-fascist sentiment and helped the formation of a left-wing Popular Front take the elections in October 1938.

Mexico

Mexico saw a number of violent nationalist movements emerge in the wake of the Depression. At the grass-roots level, the most important Mexican philo-fascist movement was Union Nacional Sinarquista (National Synarchist Union), which started in the 1920s as a peasant movement but began to attract middle-class supporters by the following decade. The Sinarquistas advocated non-violence (despite attacks from the state), land and income redistribution, and a corporatist state.²⁶⁰ At their peak in 1943 they reached a membership of over half a million, making them the country’s largest mass party.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ Sznajder 1993:271-2

²⁶⁰ Roger Griffin (1993) *The Nature of Fascism*, Routledge, p.149

²⁶¹ Payne 1995:343

The most prominent fascist movement in Mexico were the Gold Shirts, founded in 1934 by General Nicolas Rodriguez, who were pro-authoritarian, anti-Semitic and anti-Communist, and who “directly aped German and Italian styles”.²⁶² In this period Mexico itself was evolving into a one-party corporatist state and the leadership was thus able to co-opt much of the Gold Shirts’ support. In the early 1930s, president Plutarco Elfas Calles “toyed with the idea of fascistizing aspects of the Mexican regime” and encouraged the creation of a quasi-military force, the Accion Revolucionaria Mexicana (ARM).²⁶³ President Lazaro Cardenas, who took office in 1934, pursued a program of social reforms that focused on employment programs and guarantees of living standards. In 1938 he nationalized foreign (that is, British and American) oil wells and placed the public sector at the center of his industrial policy. “[I]n part to defuse American concern, [he] invoked Roosevelt's New Deal as a model.”²⁶⁴

Peru

The most prominent fascist movement in Peru was the Union Revolucionaria (UR), which used the fascist salute and developed a party militia called the Black Shirts. The UR, modeling themselves after Mussolini’s Italy, were anti-democratic, populist, and nationalist, but after a failed bid in the 1936 elections the party

²⁶² Payne 1995:342

²⁶³ Payne 1995:342

²⁶⁴ Frieden 2006:226

gradually lost support.²⁶⁵ Following its demise, the Peruvian Fascist Brotherhood became the major outlet of Peruvian fascism, led by the former prime minister Jose de la Riva-Aguero y Osma. While the group initially received some support, it quickly faded after Peru entered the war on the side of the Allies.²⁶⁶

Bolivia

Bolivia was one of the least developed countries in the region, and had lost a war with Paraguay in 1935, making it one of the likelier candidates for supporting frustrated nationalists. The economic crisis led to a search for institutional alternatives, and the fascist option received increasing support. The influence of Italian and German ideas “was often admitted by Bolivian leaders” and a radical coalition came to power in 1936 advocating a corporative state.²⁶⁷

The country had its own version of the Falange, the Falange Socialista Boliviana (FSB). The group was founded in 1937 and looked toward Spain and Italy as models; as a result, its fascist leanings were corporatist, anti-Communist, and Catholic in orientation. Another significant fascist movement was the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionaria (MNR), founded in 1940 and open in its admiration of European fascism. It sought nationalization of industry and a corporatist state; in its foreign policy it leaned toward Germany and Italy, seeing them “as allies in revolutionizing the international division of power and wealth.” A military junta

²⁶⁵ Payne 1995:343

²⁶⁶ Philip Rees (1990) *Biographical Dictionary of the Extreme Right Since 1890*, Simon and Schuster, p.324

²⁶⁷ Payne 1995:343-4

that took power in 1943 “immediately adopted a pro-Axis policy and included three of the most fascistic leaders of the MNR in its cabinet.”²⁶⁸

Fascist Influence in the United States

As a country that has always posed itself as the antithesis of authoritarian values, the United States seems to offer a difficult case for the theory of hegemonic shocks. But as Kenneth Waltz argued in *Theory of International Politics*, because a social science theory can always find confirming instances, its real test is how it deals with the hard cases – that is, those cases where we would not expect the dynamics predicted by the theory to be present.²⁶⁹ (The classic case is the 1894 Franco-Russian alliance conforming to the predictions of balancing theory.) If hegemonic shocks are an important factor in domestic institutional reforms, we should expect to see a growing acceptance of fascism in the United States, and the adoption of fascist or fascist-inspired institutions by American policy-makers.

At the mass level, the increasing support for fascist ideas in the United States was reflected in the growth of pro-German organizations and the rise of nationalist movements like the Black Legion, an offshoot of the Klan. Anti-semitism was also institutionalized in university quotas and admission policies to social organizations. This sentiment reflected a major plank of the Nazi platform, the elimination of class conflict and the creation of an organic national community. A contributor the *American Review*, a major intellectual outlet espousing the virtues of fascism in the

²⁶⁸ Payne 1995:344

²⁶⁹ Waltz 1979

1930s, wrote: "If the State as to be the symbol of an organic folk then it followed that divisive opposition within the nation could not be tolerated."²⁷⁰ In practice this led to a strong undertone of anti-Semitism. The infamously anti-Semitic T.S. Eliot, writing in the *Review* about the dangers of "free-thinking Jews", argued: "The population should be homogenous; where two or more cultures exist in the same place they are likely to be either fiercely self-conscious or both become adulterate....A spirit of excessive tolerance is to be deprecated."²⁷¹

Populist pro-German discourse is reflected perhaps most clearly in the radio career of Father Coughlin. Coughlin, who blamed the Jews for the Depression and enjoyed the second-largest radio audience in the country (after Roosevelt's fireside speeches), frequently quoted Goebbels and praised the Nazis' quest for full employment and racial purity. He broke with Roosevelt in 1934, forming a National Union for Social Justice whose 1936 candidate received nearly 900,000 votes. After the mid-1930s, Coughlin became the country's foremost public apologist for Franco, Mussolini and Hitler, while his followers organized local Christian Front paramilitary groups. He was finally silenced by the Church in early 1942.²⁷²

The only other significant and ideologically fascist grass-roots movement in the United States was the German-American Bund, "which aspired to be a slightly

²⁷⁰ Albert E. Stone, Jr. (1960) "Seward Collins and the *American Review*: Experiment in Pro-Fascism, 1933-37" *American Quarterly* 12.1, p.10

²⁷¹ Quoted in Stone 1960:11

²⁷² Payne 1995:351

watered-down Nazi Party for the United States.”²⁷³ Despite bizarre attempts to “cross over” by juxtaposing images of the Founding Fathers with swastikas, the movement failed to attract American nationalists. Its membership peaked at approximately fifteen thousand, made up almost completely of German immigrants and naturalized Germans. An Italian equivalent was the Fasci all'Estero, an even smaller and less significant group organized by Italian-Americans.²⁷⁴

While the anti-Semitic ideology prevalent in the 1930s contributed to the acceptance of fascism, policy-makers at the elite level tended to separate fascist ideology (seen as hateful and aggressive) from its institutions (seen as novel and effective), emphasizing their desire to discard the former while emphasizing the latter. The bulk of the evidence for fascist emulation comes from the openly admitted admiration of fascist reforms by the American political and social elite in the 1930s. During this period, fascist institutions attracted praise not only from American scholars and intellectuals, but also from policy-makers, government bureaucrats, and senior political leaders including Roosevelt himself. Although this admiration and desire for emulation was often tempered by the need to preserve American liberties, the influence of European authoritarians was crucial in shaping the reforms of the Roosevelt revolution. In tracing this influence, I will focus first on the scholars and intellectuals, and then discuss imitation of fascist institutions at the elite policy level.

In 1933, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* published an article on the decline of

²⁷³ Payne 1995:351

²⁷⁴ Payne 1995:351

democracy around the world. "Democracy is waning before the steady stride of dictatorships," it began, citing William Ogburn, a professor of sociology at the University of Chicago who until recently had been a member of Roosevelt's consumer advisory board. More surprising than this oft-repeated observation was Ogburn's reaction to it. "I look forward to the decline of democracy and to the rise of a system of government that will utilize some of its principles, but will nevertheless be an entirely different system of government," he said. "I look forward to a system of representation in accordance with social and economic grouping." Ogburn predicted "a greater intimacy" between business and government, and advocated price fixing boards to keep price increases from overtaking purchasing power. "The government that is speediest is the one that will survive," he continued. "An executive with the power to act such as that given President Roosevelt will meet requirements of speedy action and will be able to cope with rapid changes. A dictator can represent better than a legislature..."²⁷⁵

Surprising as these comments seem today, they represented a very common sentiment among American scholars and intellectuals of the 1930s. In his history of the discipline of American political science, Ido Oren repeatedly demonstrates how US scholars and other intellectuals encouraged the US to borrow elements of Nazi and Soviet institutions during the 1930s. The reformist mood of the period, which "diagnosed America as seriously but not terminally ill" led political scientists to search for solutions in the authoritarian success stories. During the Depression,

²⁷⁵ Chicago Daily Tribune (1933) "Democracy Giving Way to New Government Plan, Says Ogburn", August 26, p. 4.

Germany and the USSR represented “models of administrative efficiency and social planning,” and in a time of deep social and economic crisis, American intellectuals “were understandably curious about political and social forms emerging elsewhere in the world as they earnestly (though not always critically) searched for remedies...”²⁷⁶ These were not marginal radicals, but successful mainstream political scientists, APSA presidents, and journal editors. The vast majority were not actual fascists or communists – they did not call for a proletarian revolution or a nationalistic dictatorship, and often hastened to point out the regimes’ more objectionable aspects. Nevertheless, they sought to study these regimes in a scholarly, detached, value-neutral fashion, and to distinguish between efficient institutions and hateful ideology.²⁷⁷ They favorably portrayed Nazi and Soviet regimes as laboratories for economic, social, and political experiments, and urged the US to “emulate what they regarded as the more positive aspects of the Fascist and Communist states.”²⁷⁸

These “positive aspects” commonly included administrative reform, centralized leadership, and greater state involvement in the national economy. An unwieldy administrative structure was one of the chief vices commonly attributed to American democracy of the period. Since German public administration had long

²⁷⁶ Ido Oren (2002) *Our Enemies and US: America’s Rivalries and the Making of Political Science*, Cornell University Press, p. 18, 48. In doing so, they “expressed positive curiosity about, and even downright admiration of, certain Nazi policies and practices” (Oren 2002:47)

²⁷⁷ Oren 2002:87

²⁷⁸ Oren 2002:58. See also Robert Allan Skotheim (1971) *Totalitarianism and American Social Thought*, Holt, Reinhart, and Winston.

been held up as a model of effective a rational bureaucracy, scholars naturally turned to Nazi Germany as a model of emulation. At a 1934 philosophy conference, Columbia University professor William Pepperell Montague used the phrase “Fabian Fascism” to describe his proposals for the future of the New Deal. The “Fabian” component implied gradual and evolutionary reform, a “civilized version of Fascism”. Montague foresaw a dual system of “fascistic communism and democratic capitalism...capitalism for those who can afford it accompanied by communism for those who need it.”²⁷⁹ Professor Roger Wells, in a 1935 APSR article, “commended the Nazis for rescuing German municipal government from the “excesses of the multi-party [Weimar] system.”²⁸⁰ In a 1936 book, former APSA president W. F. Willoughby urged Americans to “make a searching examination” of the revolutionary institutions erected in Italy, Germany, and Russia, with an eye toward “the possible incorporation in popular government of the advantage of autocracy”. One such advantage, according to Willoughby, was the Nazis’ ability “at a stroke” to attain “the superior advantages of the unitary over the multiple [federal] form of government.”²⁸¹ A 1936 APSR article, noting the shift in power from American states to the federal government, proposed that “this process of the

²⁷⁹ Quoted in Schivelbusch 2006:37, citing W.P. Montague (1934) in *Actes du huitième congrès international de philosophie á Prague, 2-7 septembre 1934*, Prague, 1936, p. 481.

²⁸⁰ Oren 2002:80, citing Roger Wells (1935)

²⁸¹ Oren 2002:82, citing W. F. Willoughby (1936) *The Government of Modern States*, rev. ed., New York: D. Appleton, vi, p. 111

internal balance of power may be fruitfully examined in Nazi Germany today."²⁸² The Nazis "have acted where others have merely planned and studied," the author concluded. "They have converted Germany from a federal to a centralized unitary state."²⁸³ Similarly, James Pollock, a prominent scholar of German politics, thought that adopting Nazi institutions would increase the effectiveness of American government. At its worst, he argued, America's doctrine of the separation of power "simply means stopping action. One thing we can learn from the dictatorships which are springing up all over the Europe is that there are times and emergencies when we must have action," he told a newspaper. "We have reached a stage in our government when we need a system a little more conducive to the development of leadership."²⁸⁴

Seward Collins, editor of the *American Review*, became one of the more prominent advocates of American-style fascism in the mid-1930s, and his publication attracted contributions from a number of scholars and intellectuals. "The question of politics," he wrote in the inaugural issue, "resolves itself, broadly, into a discussion of the succession of Fascism to parliamentarism; or at least some form of authoritarian government supplanting pluto-democracy..."²⁸⁵ For Collins, fascism was "the revival of monarchy, property, the guilds, the security of the

²⁸² Albert Lepawsky (1936) "The Nazis Reform the Reich" *American Political Science Review* 30.2, p.324

²⁸³ Lepawsky 1936:348

²⁸⁴ Quoted in Oren 2002:77

²⁸⁵ Quoted in Stone 1960:3

family and the peasantry, and the ancient ways of European life."²⁸⁶ His contributors, reflecting the mood of the times, expressed a profound disenchantment with liberal capitalism and democracy after the Great Depression. For them, the economic collapse was deeply connected to the "pluto-democratic" political order.²⁸⁷ New York University professor J.S. Hoffman, a frequent contributor to the Review, wrote: "Obviously there is no solution but a revolutionary solution, for the tottering American political system of today is perhaps the best demonstration of those anti-authoritarian principles which have brought about the wreckage of modern society. There must be a revolution – a constructive revolution in behalf of authority, order, and justice..."²⁸⁸ Centralization of government authority was a central component in such a revolution. "My aim right now is to get more and more power for the President, whoever holds the office," Seward wrote. "I hope it may be Roosevelt for some time to come."²⁸⁹ American-style monarchy, in the words of another contributor, "would provide a continuing authority, within which tradition might grow. Democracy lives from day to day. Dictatorship thinks only of the immediate future. Monarchy can both guide the present and foresee what's ahead."²⁹⁰

Related to the desire for monarchy was a need to limit suffrage, which was

²⁸⁶ Quoted in Stone 1960:9

²⁸⁷ One contributor summarized this view in one sentence: "Democratic institutions are, in fact, the political expression of the phase of capitalism economics." Quoted in Stone 1960:7

²⁸⁸ Quoted in Stone 1960:6

²⁸⁹ Quoted in Stone 1960:7

²⁹⁰ Quoted in Stone 1960:8

portrayed as a return to the ideals of the Founding Fathers. "If we are to retain any sort of free, representative government that guarantees liberty and justice with decency and effectiveness in operation," wrote a contributor in 1936, "universal suffrage will have to be abandoned in favor of some restricted, selective scheme such as was in force and held to be a desideratum by the statesmen of 1787."²⁹¹

Soviet ideas also found admirers during this period. Imitation of Soviet practices found fewer supporters than its German counterparts, since the country's complete rejection of capitalism (in contrast to Germany's attempts to tame it) was anathema to American political culture. Nevertheless, during the 1930s Marxism gained a significant following on U.S. college campuses, which have remained its strongest bastions to this day. Gabriel Almond, whose friends fought in the Lincoln brigades during the Spanish civil war, wrote his 1938 dissertation as a critical examination of America's "plutocratic class".²⁹² Robert Dahl, David Easton, Seymour Martin Lipset, Herbert Simon, Ithiel de Sola Pool, and other scholars who rose to prominence after World War II displayed an interest in communism that ranged from brief flirtation to deep commitment.²⁹³ In a 1931 textbook on civic

²⁹¹ Quoted in Stone 1960:10

²⁹² Oren 2002:18. Almond's dissertation was published sixty years later; see Gabriel Almond (1938/1998) *Plutocracy and Politics* in New York City, Boulder: Westview. In it, Almond argues that because of the disproportionate political influence of the very wealthy, "it was an error to speak of the American political system as a democracy." p. xxii.

²⁹³ Oren 2002:18. Transcripts of Robert Dahl and David Easton interviews, APSA Oral History Collection, University of Kentucky Library; Herbert Simon (1991) *Models of My Life*, New York: Basic. Seymour Martin Lipset (1999) "Out of Alcoves" *Wilson Quarterly* (winter 1999); biography of Ithiel Pool in *American*

engagement, Charles Merriam avoided mentioning the elimination of civil rights in the Soviet Union and noted with admiration that Soviet reforms had produced "a form of democratic nationalism."²⁹⁴

It was only after America's entry into World War II and the onset of the Cold War that the discipline of political science discarded its infatuation with German and Russian models and shifted toward nationalist conservatism. Once these regimes became direct rivals to the United States, political scientists "developed amnesia regarding their past accommodationism and reached a consensus that these regimes were antithetical to American democracy."²⁹⁵ As noted above, accommodationist reviews and articles were featured in APSR as late as the end of 1939. The discipline's flagship journal ceased publishing such items only after the outbreak of the war.²⁹⁶

An interest in emulating fascist institutions was not limited to scholars or public intellectuals. In seeking to break from the liberal orthodoxy of the past, the Roosevelt administration also looked toward solutions within Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Roosevelt came into office determined to reshape the structure of

National Biography Online, www.anb.org.

²⁹⁴ Quoted in Oren 2002:61, citing Charles Merriam (1931) *The Making of Citizens: A Comparative Study of Methods of Civic Training*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 222. See also Peter G. Filene (1978) *Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917-1933*, Harvard University Press.

²⁹⁵ Oren 2002:18-19

²⁹⁶ Oren 2002:87. One consequence of this shift, Oren notes, was the subsequent stigma attached to the study of public administration, which entered "a prolonged period of institutional decline and estrangement from political science" after the war. (Oren 2002:88) After the 1930s, it was no longer possible to argue that an efficient bureaucracy could be studied in a value-neutral way, or that it would always lead to rational and positive outcomes.

American government. "The nation was more than ready," writes the historian Arthur Schlesinger. "Many people had an anguished sense of crisis. For some, society itself seemed confronted by the specter of dissolution."²⁹⁷ Many policy-makers saw unchecked capitalist competition as the source of the country's problems, and sought to use state planning and corporatist institutions as the logical solutions to the economic crisis. Both fascism and the New Deal relied on strong, charismatic leadership to pursue these reforms. To their contemporaries, "Hitler and Roosevelt were both charismatic leaders who held the masses in their sway – and without this kind of leadership, neither National Socialism nor the New Deal would have been possible."²⁹⁸ Roosevelt wholeheartedly rejected the ideology of fascism, but his decision to breach the long-standing norm of presidential term limits was but one small manifestation of a growing acceptance of the need for a strong (and if necessary, long-lasting) central executive.

Beginning in 1933, the New Deal transformed a highly decentralized economy with limited social insurance into a regulated mixture of public and private programs, complete with massive public works, government deficit management, collective bargaining, and business regulation. Many of these reforms, particularly their corporatist elements, bore an unmistakable similarity to fascist and communist institutions, a fact that the administration did not seek to hide. They did stress, however, that this imitation was pragmatic and policy-oriented, not ideological. In October 1933, Roosevelt told his Secretary of the

²⁹⁷ Arthur Schlesinger (2003) *The Coming of the New Deal*, Vol.2, Mariner Books

²⁹⁸ Schivelbusch 2006:49

Interior, Harold Ickes: "What we are doing in this country were some of the things that were being done in Russia and even some things that were being done under Hitler in Germany. But we are doing them in an orderly way."²⁹⁹ The racial and totalitarian aspects of Nazi policy did not find mainstream admirers across the Atlantic, but in politically more neutral areas such as a labor services and business cartelization, argued Gotz and Patel, "the USA was interested in Germany's experiences."³⁰⁰

Coming into office, Roosevelt quickly abandoned the orthodox policies of fiscal tightening. The dollar was taken off the gold standard and devalued. Within a hundred days, the new administration adopted programs to support agriculture, build large-scale public works, regulate industrial prices, and encourage businesses to cartelize and set prices. "These early measures smacked to many of fascism," according to Frieden, and led to opposition in the Supreme Court, which declared the more controversial measures to be unconstitutional.³⁰¹ Nevertheless, government regulation entered new spheres of business life, from electric utilities to banking and monetary policy. "The consensus among political scientists and economists of the time," writes Schivelbusch, "was that the United States under Roosevelt in the spring and summer of 1933, had, in a process of voluntary

²⁹⁹ Quoted in Lewis S. Feuer (1962) "American Travelers to the Soviet Union, 1917-32: The Formation of a Component of New Deal Ideology" *American Quarterly* 14, p.147

³⁰⁰ Gotz and Patel 2006:63

³⁰¹ Frieden 2006:233

consolidation, transformed itself into a postliberal state."³⁰² The fixing of prices and production in the oil and airline industries; the establishment of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Wagner Act of 1935, and the National Labor Relations Act of 1936 – all these were parts of an effort, according to Peter Gourevitch, to inject corporatism into a liberal political economy. "Agriculture, labor, and some elements of business were allowed to organize their markets, providing some shelter from unrestrained market forces."³⁰³ Arthur Schlesinger, in *The Coming of the New Deal*, recounts an anecdote about Roosevelt's second fireside chat, in which the president talked about "a partnership in planning" between government and business. While preparing the speech, an aide said to him, "You realize, then, that you're taking an enormous step away from the philosophy of equalitarianism and laissez-faire?" After a moment of silence, Roosevelt replied: "If that philosophy hadn't proved to be bankrupt, Herbert Hoover would be sitting here right now. I never felt surer of anything in my life than I do of the soundness of this passage."³⁰⁴

Economic planning by the state thus became a major element of New Deal reforms. "By 1933 the advocates orderly planning, who had been gaining converts as the Depression worsened, were listened to with respect."³⁰⁵ The Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) and the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of 1933 were two major elements of early New Deal recovery programs. Both sought to use

³⁰² Schivebusch 2006:14

³⁰³ Gourevitch 1986:152

³⁰⁴ Quoted in Schlesinger 1993:98

³⁰⁵ Fearon in Garside 1993:127

central planning to create a measure of stability that could not be accomplished through traditional capitalism. A 1933 study of American Agriculture concluded: “[T]he competitive system is breaking down ... The comfortable theory of the identity of mass prosperity with the unrestricted pursuit of private gain no longer serves.”³⁰⁶ Centralized planning could be used to curb destructive competition between businesses, balance supply and demand, and resolve problems of overproduction in industry and agriculture. The AAA thus introduced price and production controls to farmers, who “had always believed that their task was to grow as much food and fibre as possible.”³⁰⁷ The NIRA, AAA’s industrial counterpart, also sought to set prices, output and employment levels by encouraging special committees to draw up codes of “fair” competition.³⁰⁸ During the public unveiling of NIRA, “when Roosevelt referred to the industrial associations that had been reconstituted by the codes as ‘modern guilds,’ those fluent in the jargon may well have recognized the reference to the corporatist system associated with Fascism.”³⁰⁹

Many of these major reforms took Italy and Germany as a source of inspiration. James Whitman notes that “a startling number of New Dealers had kind words for

³⁰⁶ E.S. Mead and B. Ostrolenk (1933) *Voluntary Allotment. Planned Production in American Agriculture*, University of Pennsylvania Press, p.1, quoted in Fearon in Garside 1993:127

³⁰⁷ Fearon in Garside 1993:129

³⁰⁸ Fearon in Garside 1993:133. By early 1935, 546 basic codes and 185 supplementary codes covered about 95 per cent of the industrial work force.

³⁰⁹ Schivelbusch 2006:30

Mussolini” – as did, of course, a number of American conservatives.³¹⁰ Rexford Tugwell, a member of Roosevelt’s brain trust, openly spoke out about the virtues of the fascist order, as did internal NRA studies.³¹¹ Decrying the ideological foundation of fascism, Tugwell nevertheless described it as “the cleanest, neatest [sic], most efficiently operating piece of social machinery I’ve ever seen. It makes me envious.”³¹² An NRA bureaucrat wrote in 1935: “The Fascist Principles are very similar to those which we have been evolving here in America and so are of particular interest at this time.”³¹³

The similarities between the early New Deal reforms and fascist corporatism were widely noted by contemporaries. *Fortune* magazine declared that “[t]he Corporate State is to Mussolini what the New Deal is to Roosevelt...”³¹⁴ Such comparisons were made not only by Roosevelt’s opponents (although they often sought to draw unflattering parallels), but also by observers and policy-makers who considered themselves allies of the administration. Writing in the *Spectator*, liberal journalist Mauritz Hallgren noted: “We in America are bound to depend

³¹⁰ James Q. Whitman (1991) “Of Corporatism, Fascism, and the New Deal” *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 39.4, p. 747. See also John Diggins (1966) “Flirtation with Fascism: American Pragmatic Liberals and Mussolini’s Italy” *American Historical Review* 71, p.487-506

³¹¹ Whitman 1991:747

³¹² Michael Vincent Namorato, ed. (1992) *The Diary of Rexford G. Tugwell: The New Deal, 1932-1935*, New York, p. 139. Quoted in Schivelbusch 2006:32

³¹³ Janet C. Wright, “Capital and Labor Under Fascism” National Archives, Record Group 9, Records of the National Recovery Administration, Special Research and Planning Reports and Memoranda, 1933-35, Entry 31, Box 3. Quoted in Schivelbusch 2006:203-4

³¹⁴ Quoted in Whitman 1991:748

more upon the State as the sole means of saving the capitalist system. Unattended by black-shirt armies or smug economic dictators – at least for the moment – we are being forced rapidly and definitely into Fascism...”³¹⁵ A 1934 article in the *North American Review* noted: “The New Dealers, strangely enough, have been employing Fascist means to gain liberal ends. The NRA with its code system, its regulatory economic clauses and some of its features of social amelioration, was plainly an American adaptation of the Italian corporate state in its mechanics.”³¹⁶ Liberal journalist and civil rights leader Oswald Garrison Villard wrote in the *Political Quarterly*: “No one can deny that the entire Roosevelt legislation has enormously enhanced the authority of the President, given him some dictatorial powers, and established precedents that would make it easy for any successor to Mr. Roosevelt, or for that gentleman himself, to carry us far along the road to fascism or state socialism.”³¹⁷ A 1934 article in *Haper’s* noted: “It is in the very nature of planned recovery, its methods and its objectives, that we find the tendency which, if developed to its logical conclusion, arrives at the fascist stage of economic control. Mild measures have failed and by their failure have prepared the way for accentuating the tendency toward fascist control.”³¹⁸ And George Soule,

³¹⁵ Mauritz Hallgren (1933) *Spectator*, August 18, p. 211. Cited in Schivelbusch 2006:28

³¹⁶ Roger Shaw (1934) “Fascism and the New Deal” *North American Review* 238, p. 559. Quoted in Schivelbusch 2006:28).

³¹⁷ Oswald Garrison Villard (1934) *Political Quarterly* 5, p. 53-54. Cited in Schivelbusch 2006:29).

³¹⁸ J. B. Matthew and R. E. Shallcross (1934) “Must America Go Fascist?” *Harpers Magazine* 169, p. 4. Cited in Schivelbusch (2006, p. 29)

the liberal editor of *The New Republic*, wrote in his 1934 book *The Coming American Revolution*: “We are trying out the economics of Fascism without having suffered all its social or political ravages”³¹⁹

Beginning in about 1935, the administration also began a program of welfare expansion, sometimes called the second New Deal, which included social insurance and job-creating government programs. In that year Congress passed the Social Security Act, creating the country’s first system of national insurance.³²⁰ It also approved a five billion dollar allocation for unemployment relief, the largest peacetime allocation in the country’s history. When Roosevelt described mass unemployment as “the greatest menace to our social order” in 1934, he was echoing the concerns of many political leaders around the world.³²¹ And like many other leaders, Roosevelt was intensely interested in the German solution to this problem – *Reichsarbeitsdienst*, a labor service that organized the unemployed into work projects that required little or no skills. After 1933, “it was Hitler’s government in Germany that offered the prime example of a labour service in practice. Even more problematic was the fact that the Third Reich advertised the idea of the labour service as a true symbol of National Socialism...international perception of the German labour service was largely shaped by this

³¹⁹ George Soule (1934) *The Coming American Revolution*, New York, p. 294. Cited in Schivelbusch 2006:29).

³²⁰ Frieden 2006:234

³²¹ Gotz and Patel 2006: 57

propaganda.”³²² The Nazi success in quickly eliminating mass unemployment made the *Reichsarbeitsdienst* a focus of global interest throughout the 1930s, stimulating intense interest and discussion among policy-makers in other countries, who “scrutinized its various functions as a public works scheme, an educational institution and a pre-military organization. The German institution was regarded as influential, and some experts saw it as a model for other, similar organizations throughout the world.”³²³ As a result, the German labor service “left a deep imprint” on the minds of American policy-makers.³²⁴ When the administration sought to train air mechanics for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), they looked to the Reichsarbeitsdienst and the Flieger-HJ, a branch of Nazi youth devoted to aviation, as organizational models. The *New York Times* reported on the administration’s interest in these institutions, and when aviation classes were introduced into the CCC, “the Nazi experience had obviously been a source of inspiration”.³²⁵

All these measures dramatically increased the power of the federal government. By 1936, federal expenditures outweighed state and local spending combined, when they had been only a third of these in the late 1920s.³²⁶ The New Deal “provided the most important extension of the power of the federal authorities over

³²² Gotz and Patel 2006:57, 59

³²³ Gotz and Patel 2006:59

³²⁴ Gotz and Patel 2006:59. They conclude (p.62-3) that “these developments show an unexpected willingness to study the Third Reich as a source for policy ideas.”

³²⁵ Gotz and Patel 2006:63

³²⁶ Frieden 2006:235

American society and the states that had ever occurred in peacetime and one that was to prove irreversible."³²⁷ In their reliance on the power of the state, American policy-makers borrowed institutional elements from the rising authoritarian states. "Commentators freely noted areas of convergence among the New Deal, Fascism, and National Socialism. All three were considered postliberal state-capitalist or state-socialist systems, more related to one another than to classic Anglo-French liberalism."³²⁸ Social planning, a state-directed economy, public works projects, and strong central leadership and a growing acceptance of collectivism were all common features of these institutional bundles, although the American version had retained far more individual civil liberties than its European counterparts.

The reforms of the hegemonic transition of the 1930s demonstrated that democracy could still solve difficult problems of political and economic organization – but that it could do so only by adopting institutional elements of non-democratic regimes. When the Republicans returned to power in 1953, they continued to oppose the expansion of government power but preserved the major reforms of the 1930s, "a tacit admission that the New Deal had not intended to destroy capitalism but to preserve and revive it."³²⁹ Democracy had survived only by imitating elements of successful authoritarian regimes, reflecting the institutional dynamics of the hegemonic shock of the Great Depression.

³²⁷ Roberts 1999:369

³²⁸ Schivelbusch 2006:13

³²⁹ Palmer et al 2002:777

The Coercive Phase of the Fascist Wave, 1938-1943

The final phase of the fascist wave was characterized by territorial conquests, annexations, and the creation of satellites, puppets, and tutelary regimes. It was at this point that the wave reached an all-time peak. In the summer of 1942 the fascist order encompassed half the world's population, or "virtually all of Europe and the Middle East and much of Asia and Africa."³³⁰ Fascist territories in *Festung Europa* "stretched from the Mediterranean to the Arctic, from the English Channel to the Black Sea and almost the Caspian."³³¹ In Asia, Japan had established puppets in China and all over Southeast Asia.

Institutional waves that spread via coercion are the most dramatic and least theoretically interesting mechanisms by which hegemonic shocks create sweeping domestic changes. The coercive fascist wave spread via the sheer, newly-acquired power of hegemonic fascist states – Germany, Japan, and to a lesser extent Italy. It was the first such attempt since Napoleon's bid for European hegemony, which had left a deep imprint on the institutions of affected states. Like other coercive authoritarian waves (for example, the postwar Communist wave in eastern Europe), its consolidation dynamics differ from those of democratic waves. Coercive waves tend to fail because other states eventually balance against the coercive hegemon, as was the case with the Napoleonic wars. The end of the fascist wave came not from failed consolidation but from external forces; namely, defeat by the Allied

³³⁰ Frieden 2006:215

³³¹ Randall Schweller (1998) *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest*, Columbia University Press, p.1

forces. In the rare case where a coercive wave endures, as in postwar Eastern Europe, it must be continuously held together by the hegemon or risk falling apart from its sphere. Autocratic and democratic regime consolidations in the wake of shocks therefore proceed along different paths.³³²

Fascist Italy was the first to use direct annexation to spread its regime via coercion. Mussolini envisioned his regime as a return to the glory of Ancient Rome, complete with grand visions of territorial expansion. In October 1935 Italy invaded Ethiopia; the following year the new colony was merged with Somalia and Eritria (Italian possessions since 1889) to form Italian East Africa, an entity that lasted until 1941.³³³ In April 1939 Italy took over Albania (until its liberation in November 1944). With the onset of general war, Italy made attempts at Egypt, Tunisia, and Greece between 1940 and 1943. It added British Somaliland to its conquests in 1940, only to have the British liberate it a year later.

Germany's attempts were far more successful, in line with its far greater share of military power. At the peak of Nazi success in Europe, only Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Britain, and Ireland remained free. Hitler's victories between 1938 and 1941 "gave him control of the greater part of continental Europe, something

³³² In rare cases a coercive wave maintained by a hegemonic actor *can* consolidate, but it does so only by becoming a single political entity, as in the case of China or Japan. These are cases in which the balancing mechanisms fail. See Victoria Hui (2005) *War and State Formation in Ancient China and Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge University Press. John A. Ferejohn and Frances McCall Rosenbluth, eds. (2010) *War and State Building in Medieval Japan*, Stanford University Press.

³³³ Vaclav Smil (2010) *Why America is Not a New Rome*, MIT Press, p.10

unprecedented since the height of Napoleon's power."³³⁴ The conquest was part of a plan to establish a fascist order all over Europe, with a dominant Germany greatly expanded to the east.

Direct expansion began with the Austrian *Anschluss* in March 1938. In September 1938, the Munich agreement gave Germany Sudetenland, the German region of Czechoslovakia. A few months later, Hitler offered Poland satellite status, and after a refusal signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact that carved up Poland and the Baltics between the two rivals. Poland was invaded and taken over in a matter of weeks in August-September 1939, setting the stage for the lull of the "phony war" that lasted until the following April.

In May 1940, Hitler invaded and defeated France. Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg were also conquered that spring. Three small territories taken by Belgium in 1919 were re-annexed, as well as bits from western Poland and northwest Czechoslovakia. Luxembourg and French Alsace-Lorraine became incorporated into the Reich. In April 1941, the Germans over-ran Yugoslavia and Greece. Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were both dissolved, split between German and Italian military occupation, a puppet regime in Serbia, and a satellite state governed by the Ustashi in Croatia. Further east, in the Baltic states, Ukraine and western USSR, Nazi occupation led to the creation of "overarching military

³³⁴ Payne 1995:375. "The Germans controlled almost exactly the same geographical area as Napoleon. Organizing a new "continental system," they made plans to govern, exploit, and coordinate the resources, industry, and labor of Europe.... In every country they found sympathizers, collaborators, or "quislings"..." (Palmer et al 2002:812)

occupation authorities, special German economic agencies, and the SS racial and police administration.”³³⁵ The initially successful invasion of the Soviet Union in June of 1941 marked the apogee of Hitler’s power and the peak of the fascist wave. In November of that year Japan launched a series of its own invasions and a raid on Pearl Harbor.

By the beginning of 1941 Hitler had “blackmailed or, by territorial concessions, cajoled” Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary into joining the Axis and became junior partners in the fascist coalition.³³⁶ Yugoslavia and Greece were occupied in April 1941 after Italy’s troops were repelled in the latter.

The Axis also pushed into North Africa. An Italian campaign eastward from Libya crossed into Egypt in September 1940, but a British counteroffensive swept them out a few months later; the British also took over Ethiopia and dismembered Italian East Africa. But the elite Afrika Korps under the command of General Rommel reversed Italian losses, attacking Libya and forcing their way through Egypt, where the British made a final stand with the Suez Canal at their back.³³⁷

Hitler “recognized the need for certain allies, for acquiescent satellite states, and for friendly neutrals,” and this produced :a new configuration of states under German leadership and/or domination that the Nazi press sometimes hailed as the new “united states of Europe.” (see Table 4.2)³³⁸

³³⁵ Payne 1995:377

³³⁶ Palmer et al 2002:815

³³⁷ Palmer et al 2002:816

³³⁸ Payne 1995:376

Direct Annexation	Austria Czech Sudetenland Danzig Polish West Prussia, Poznan, and Silesia Luxembourg Belgium (Eupen and Malmedy) Alsace and Moselle (France) Northern Slovenia Banat (Yugoslavia)
Direct German Administration (civil)	Polish government general "Ostland" (Baltics) Ukraine Norway The Netherlands
Direct German Administration (military)	Belgium and part of northern France Forward military districts in the USSR
Tutelary Satellite or Puppet Regime	Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia Croatia Serbia Montenegro Greece Italy (1943-45)
Satellite	Denmark Finland Hungary Romania Slovakia Bulgaria Vichy France Italy (1941-43)
Friendly Neutral	Spain, Switzerland, Sweden
Distant Neutral	Portugal, Ireland, Turkey

Table 4.1: The Fascist Order in Festung Europa. Adopted from Payne 1995:376

Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 inaugurated a new stage in the expansion of the war, aided by Romania, Hungary and Finland in the side of

the Axis. Bulgaria was friendly to Germany, providing economic cooperation and free transit for German troops, and receiving a slice of Yugoslavia as a reward. New fascist satellite states included Slovakia (1939), Vichy France (1940) and Croatia (1941).³³⁹ Of the five official neutrals, three collaborated with the Fascist regime in some capacity (Spain, Switzerland, Sweden). Spain could not be completely neutral, given Franco's fascist sympathies. The Nordic countries received the most "lenient" treatment out of all occupied states – Denmark was permitted to retain its autonomy until later in 1943, and the Netherlands were governed by a civilian Nazi administration "who created a simulacrum of internal Dutch autonomy."³⁴⁰

Meanwhile, in the Pacific the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in December 1941 as they launched a simultaneous attack on the Philippines, Guam, Midway, Hong Kong, and Malaya. Moving over land through Malaya, they captured Singapore two months later. By 1942 they conquered the Philippines, Malaya, the Netherland Indies, New Guinea, the Aleutians, and Burma. They controlled the Indian Ocean and threatened both India and Australia. The goal was the creation of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere under Japanese leadership and without European interference, and "everywhere they found ready collaborators among enemies of European imperialism."³⁴¹

But the defeat and unconditional surrender crushed any hopes for fascism as an alternative regime path. Not only had Germany's share of relative power collapsed

³³⁹ Payne 1995:376

³⁴⁰ Payne 1995:377

³⁴¹ Palmer 2002:817

in the wake of the defeat, but the decline was the result of a dramatic military confrontation. This was especially damaging since

Nearly all fascist movements, with only a few minor exceptions, had appealed to war as the ultimate test, the nation's most validating mission. To have failed in the final test of what was largely even though not exclusively – a fascist war put the seal on the inviability and self-destructiveness of the fascist enterprise...the final defeat was so thorough and unconditional that fascism was itself discredited to a degree unprecedented among major modern political movements...³⁴²

In the aftermath of the next hegemonic shock, the United States and the USSR had emerged as winners, while Germany was utterly defeated and its regime lost all legitimacy among former imitators. The century's third hegemonic shock had left only two institutional bundles competing for influence – democracy and communism. Because both had proven victorious, both regimes experienced waves of domestic reforms in their favor in the years following the end of the war – a subject for the next chapter.

Conclusion

The rapid growth of Germany and the USSR in the 1930s was directly tied to their institutional innovations – the same innovations that vividly set them apart from the stagnating liberal democracies of the same period. As a result, the statist features of their economies became increasingly attractive to observers. As Sheri Berman observed:

With economic collapse and social chaos threatening much of Europe, publics began to renew their demands for the stability,

³⁴² Payne 1995:436-7

community, and social protection that modern capitalist societies seemed unable to provide. At this point fascism and national socialism charged onto the stage, offering a way out of the downward spiral, a new vision of society in which states put market in their place and fought the atomization, dislocation, and discord that liberalism, capitalism, and modernity had generated.³⁴³

The dynamics of the hegemonic transition of the 1930s were thus a direct influence on the timing and content of the wave of institutional transformations during this period. Even would-be liberals were persuaded by the seemingly miraculous German recovery. "In my view what China needs is an able and idealistic dictator," wrote a Chinese political scientist in 1934. "There are among us some people, including myself, who have undergone long periods of liberal education. These people naturally find undemocratic practices extremely distasteful. But if we want to make China into a strong modern nation, I fear there is no alternative except to throw aside our democratic conviction."³⁴⁴

Besides attracting countless overt and covert imitators, fascism expanded its influence via increasing economic power, and coerced a number of territories into fascist rule. Under attack from both the extreme left and the extreme right, capitalist democracy survived by emulating the successful elements of both of its competitors. In doing so it demonstrated a degree of institutional adaptation unanticipated by either its critics or by many of its supporters. Democracy had now defeated its second great competitor of the twentieth century, after the triumph over monarchy failed to establish a stable democratic world. But another alternative still

³⁴³ Berman 2006:5

³⁴⁴ Quoted in Charles Kurzman (2008) *Democracy Denied, 1905-1915: Intellectuals and the Fate of Democracy*, Harvard University Press, p.253

remained, and in the wake of World War II this final challenger seemed poised to offer both a dangerous challenge and a legitimate alternative to democratic governance and economic management.

CHAPTER 5

TWO WAYS OF LIFE

“At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life.”

-- Harry S Truman (1947)¹

“Whether the Marxist situations all over the world become Communist preserves depends mostly on the relative strength and policies of the Western and the Soviet camps.”

-- Adam Ulam (1960)²

For Germans the year 1945 became known as *stunde null* – zero hour, the period when Europe’s history was fundamentally altered by forces outside of itself.

Cleaved by the force of two messianic powers, Germany became the symbol of a struggle between competing visions that offered two mutually exclusive utopias.

This chapter examines the aftermath of the largest military conflict of the twentieth century, the power transition that came in its wake, and the waves of institutional

¹ "Address to Joint Session of Congress on Aid to Greece and Turkey," 12 March 1947. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, January 1 to December 31, 1947* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 176-80.

² Adam Ulam (1960) *The Unfinished Revolution: An Essay on the Sources of Influence of Marxism and Communism*, Vintage Books, p.10.

reforms that flowed from that transition.

Alone among the hegemonic shocks of the twentieth century, World War II produced not one but two rising great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Each emerged with its military, economy and global reputation greatly strengthened by the joint triumph over the Axis. Reflecting this duality, the war's aftermath witnessed two distinct waves of institutional reforms that embodied the competing visions proffered by the superpowers. Despite the profound differences in their content, both regime waves diffused through a mixture of coercion (through occupation and nation-building), influence (via the expansion of trade, foreign aid, grants, and newly-forged international institutions), and emulation (by outsiders impressed by the self-evident success of the two systems).

The aftermath of World War II also provided a dramatic illustration of how rising great powers can take advantage of hegemonic shocks to advance the construction of international institutions that act as conduits for their influence. In normal political life, the reform of institutional architecture is a slow, complex, inertia-laden process; hegemonic shocks, however, offer a temporary window of opportunity to wipe the slate clean. In the wake of the war, both the Soviet Union and the United States used their enormous power and influence to construct a new institutional architecture that helped them perpetuate control and influence over the states embedded within it.

This chapter first examines the power transition that took place in the years immediately following the war, and the resulting forces that promoted waves of

regime change in its wake. I then turn to the mechanisms of coercion, influence and emulation through which the Soviet Union and the United States pursued regime reforms and attracted regime imitators in countries around the world in the wake of the war.

The Transition to Bipolarity

The war had profoundly altered the international distribution of power. Europe had ended the war shaken and defeated, even within the victorious allied members. Postwar per capita GDP among the continental Allies was less than 80 percent of its 1939 levels, and in most it was lower than in the early 1920s.³

“Morally and economically Europe has lost the war,” wrote the British writer Cyril Connolly in 1945. “The great marquee of European civilization in whose yellow light we all grew up...has fallen down; the side-ropes are frayed, the centre pole is broken, the chairs and tables are all in pieces, the tent is empty, the roses are withered on their stands...”⁴

France and Britain, first-rank European powers for centuries, were reduced to supplicants reliant on American intervention – financial in the case of Britain, physical in the case of France. The descent of the latter from the ranks of great powers was made clear by the humiliating defeat of June 1940, followed by four years of subservience and occupation. As late as 1938, British military strategy

³ Jeffrey A. Frieden (2006) *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century*, W.W. Norton and Company, p. 261

⁴ Cyril Connolly in the journal *Horizon*, September 1945; quoted in Tony Judt (2005) *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, Penguin Press, p.206

positioned France as the continent's pre-eminent military power, the bulwark against German aggression and perhaps even the Soviet menace further east. But, as historian Tony Judt writes in his history of postwar Europe, "in six traumatic weeks, the cardinal reference points of European inter-state relations changed forever. France ceased to be not just a Great Power but even a power, and despite De Gaulle's best efforts in later decades it has never been one since."⁵

Britain fared little better. Its victory "revealed Britain's decline, and Roosevelt did nothing to halt it," notes Francois Furet. "Britain emerged with honor but in a weakened condition, heroic but anemic, less and less sure of its mastery over the Commonwealth and lacking its traditional capacity as referee in Europe."⁶ Alone among the former European powers it was perceived as something of an equal to the two superpowers, at least in the closing stages and immediate aftermath of the war.⁷ But fighting had left the country nearly bankrupt and no longer able to maintain its far-flung empire. Great Britain "emerged from six years of total war exhausted, impoverished, and numb."⁸ It had become the largest debtor nation in the world, and in the process shed approximately a quarter of its national wealth.⁹

⁵ Judt 2005:113

⁶ Francois Furet (1999) *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, University of Chicago Press, p.362

⁷ A 1944 book by political scientist William T.R. Fox, *Superpowers*, which introduced the term, carried the subtitle "the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union – their responsibility for peace". Similarly, in the following year political scientist David J. Dallin published a book titled *The Big Three: United States, Britain, and Russia* (New Haven: Yale University Press).

⁸ Paul Johnson (2009) *Churchill*, Viking Press, p.143

⁹ G. John Ikenberry (2000) *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, Princeton University Press, p.167

In doing so, it “fell to secondary status after World War II: America and Russia eclipsed her; she was shorn of empire; her economy suffered; and she no longer exerted decisive influence upon the structure of the international system,” write van Wingen and Tillema.¹⁰ “Great Britain's moment was past,” writes Roberts. “Her eminence was illusory and temporary, though morally enhanced by recollection of her stand almost alone in 1940 and 1941.”¹¹

For the defeated Axis states, feared conquerors only three years earlier, the decline was far more dramatic. Their industries were in ruins, their people scattered, the reputations of their regimes irretrievably damaged not only by their defeat but also by their conduct during the war. Per capita industrial output in the postwar Axis countries was less than half of its prewar levels; in Italy and Japan this set output back to its 1910 levels, in Germany to roughly 1890. German living standards, roughly equal to those of Great Britain before the war, were barely one-third of British levels in 1946, on par with Peru.¹²

Nor were the conditions in western Europe propitious for recovery. Economic revitalization required imports of industrial equipment, food, and raw materials, at a time when Europe had lost its ability to pay for these imports. Its empires, which had provided access to markets and materials at favorable rates, were

¹⁰ John Van Wingen and Herbert K. Tillema (1980) “British Military Intervention after World War II: Militance in a Second-Rank Power” *Journal of Peace Research* 17.4, p.291

¹¹ Robert 1999:440

¹² Frieden 2006:261; as Frieden puts it, the war “had thrown back the winners' economies twenty-five years, while those of the losers had lost forty, fifty, even seventy-five years.”

disintegrating. At the same time, the Cold War had pushed them out of markets in central and eastern Europe. Compounding the damage was the fact that the continent had also lost the ability to raise money from foreign investments, which had been sold to pay for the war.¹³ By 1945, western Europe, the former locus of the international system, was dependent “on a dangerously contingent source to fund its imports” – UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) expenditures, lend-lease, and direct spending by American troops and government agencies.¹⁴

The Rise of Soviet Power

The war’s outcome demonstrated that the attempt to modernize through fascism had failed.¹⁵ That regime, so recently a paragon of efficiency and order, was now in the words of a 1945 New York Times editorial “a beaten and discredited system.”¹⁶ In its place stood two rival ideologies whose representative countries emerged victorious from the war. The United States and the Soviet Union began the postwar period with the strength and reputations greatly enhanced. Militarily, the Red Army had achieved a stunning victory over Germany. The defeat of Nazi Germany, a country that many pre-war contemporaries viewed as an industrial goliath, “suggested that the Soviet system had considerable real-world vigor.”¹⁷ This triumph played a key role in the attraction exerted by Communism in the years

¹³ Frieden 2006:261

¹⁴ Roberts 1999:448

¹⁵ Schivelbusch 206:189

¹⁶ The New York Times (1945) “Democracy on the March”, October 14, p.E8

¹⁷ Gale Stokes (1993) *The Walls Came Tumbling Down: The Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe*, Oxford University Press, p.8.

following the conflict. Despite the importance of American participation, the war had been won on the Eastern Front – the graveyard of 506 Nazi divisions and 10 million German soldiers (compared to 3.6 on the Western Front). With its victory, the Soviet Union annexed territory from Finland in the north, Poland in the center, and Bessarabia from Romania; Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were re-absorbed after a German-imposed interlude. The addition of Ruthenia at the expense of Czechoslovakia and the occupation of Sakhalin, Manchuria, and North Korea gave the USSR direct access to Hungary and China.¹⁸

More importantly, the Red Army dominated the continent and occupied an unbroken *cordon sanitaire* from the Baltic to the Black Sea. By the middle of 1945 every country east of the USSR except Greece had governments led either by communists or coalitions in which communists shared power. The Red Army occupied Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, and Czechoslovakia; it was the first to enter Berlin. Only the quick advance of General Montgomery blocked the Red Army from moving north through Germany toward Denmark; by this point it “constituted the greatest military force Europe had ever seen.”¹⁹ The military triumph “had proved its military strength, its social cohesion, the patriotism of its population. It lent Stalin an unassailable negotiating position at the end of the war.... Communism had won the war and thus a new lease on history.”²⁰ Its armies “had proved far better instruments for the extension of international communism than

¹⁸ Kennedy 1987:361-2

¹⁹ Judt 2005:117

²⁰ Furet 1999:350

revolution had ever been."²¹ The end of the war "inaugurated the short period – a dozen or so years – during which Soviet Communism exercised its greatest fascination over the twentieth-century political imagination."²² The collapse of the German juggernaut left a power vacuum in central and eastern Europe, which the USSR rushed to fill.

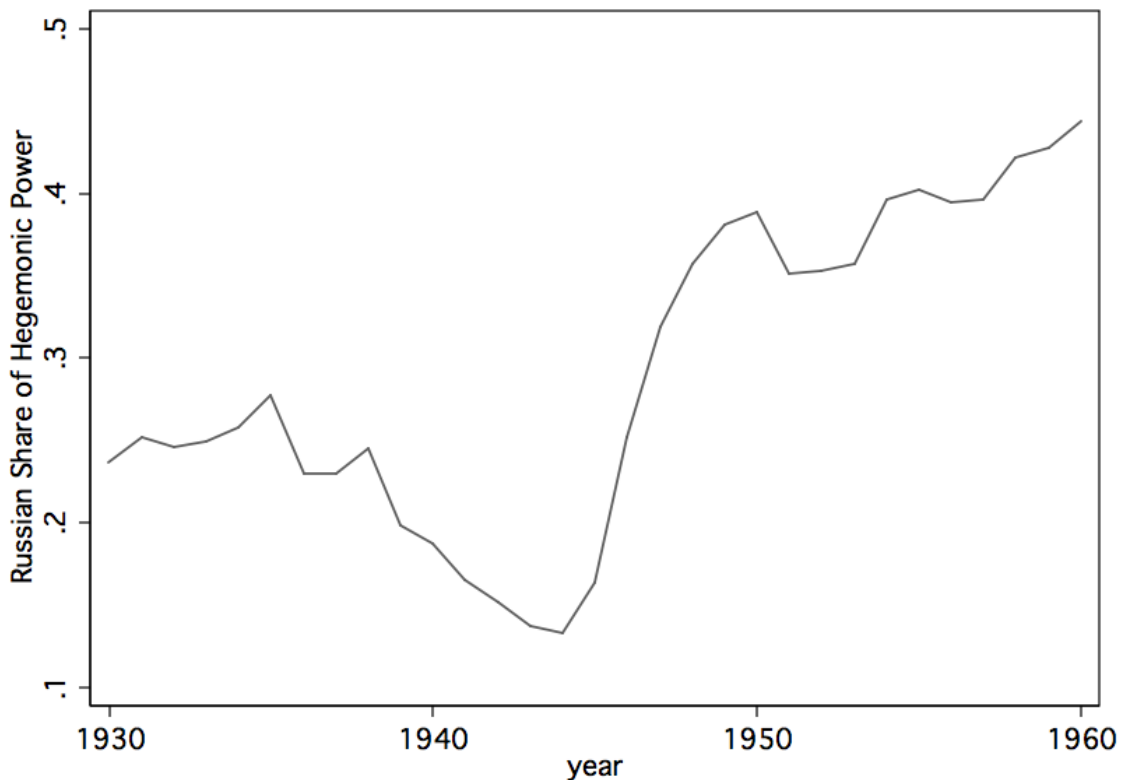


Figure 5.1: Soviet share of hegemonic power, 1930-1960. Soviet power increased rapidly in the second half of the 1940s.

The Soviet economy, though shaken by the war, was recovering rapidly; living standards improved (albeit from a very low point), and between 1945 and 1950

²¹ Roberts 1999:440

²² Furet 1999:361

industrial production doubled, exceeding prewar levels.²³ The economic trends were especially important since they signaled the viability of the system to audiences in the developing world. "The USSR now is one of the mightiest countries of the world," declared Molotov in 1946. "One cannot decide now *any* serious problems of international relations without the USSR."²⁴ The defeat of the Nazis "more than reversed the disastrous post-1917 slump in Russia's position in Europe," writes Paul Kennedy. "Indeed, it actually restored it to something akin to that of the period 1814-1848, when its great army had been the gendarme of east-central Europe."²⁵ Despite the devastation of the war, the Soviet Union emerged as the most formidable military power (in conventional weapons) on the European continent. At the end of the war it had four million active soldiers and the control of territories far larger than its pre-war or even pre-Soviet boundaries.²⁶ Even skeptics who protested against the values of communism expressed begrudging admiration for its success. "No one can deny...[that] the ruthlessness of the Soviet leaders paid dividends," wrote Granville Hicks, a lapsed Marxist who had renounced Communism after the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. "I grow impatient with those who argue that the Soviet regime must be virtuous because it triumphed in war, but there can be no argument about its power."²⁷

²³ By 1949 industrial production also exceeded prewar levels everywhere in Eastern Europe. Frieden 2006:274-5

²⁴ Quoted in Kennedy 1987:365

²⁵ Kennedy 1987:361

²⁶ Palmer et al 2002:835-6

²⁷ Granville Hicks (1946) "The Spectre that Haunts the World" *Harper's Magazine*, June, p.537

The war had proven to be Communism's greatest challenge and, through the very magnitude of that challenge, its savior. The victory "combined the two gods that make or break historical times: power and ideas," allowing the USSR to credibly present itself as a viable alternative to capitalist development.²⁸ "The usual arguments against capitalism—the tyranny of trusts, the scandal of poverty in the midst of plenty – remain in the forefront of people's minds," wrote Raymond Aron in 1944. "At the same time, the efficiency of the Communist regime's performance during the war has refuted some classical arguments on the inevitable decadence inherent in a bureaucratic economy."²⁹ A rise in power meant not only the power to coerce, but also the power to attract, both through the allure of communism and the perceived deficiencies of the alternative. "Millions of people do live in insecurity or downright poverty," wrote Granville Hicks in 1946, "and whether capitalism is responsible or not does not matter so long as it is on capitalism that they put the blame."³⁰ If capitalism represented the past, communism held the promise of a bright future, particularly for European intellectuals who witnessed the decay of the old bourgeois order. It "excited intellectuals in a way that neither Hitler nor (especially) liberal democracy could hope to match," writes Judt. It was "exotic in locale and heroic in scale"; it was "directed towards impeccably universal and transcendent goals. Its crimes were excused by many non-

²⁸ Furet 1999:349

²⁹ Raymond Aron (1944/2002) "The Secular Religions" in *The Dawn of Universal History: Selected Essays from a Witness to the Twentieth Century*, Basic Books, transl. by Barbara Bray, p.194

³⁰ Hicks 1946:537

Communist observers as the cost, so to speak, of doing business with History."³¹

This potent combination of material success and ideological appeal enabled the USSR to both coerce its neighbors and to attract admirers within them, sometimes at the same time. "Say what you will – the Communists were more intelligent," wrote Milan Kundera, recalling how he, along with half the nation, cheered the Soviet takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948 (the half, he writes, that was "the more dynamic, the more intelligent, the better half.") Communism managed to capture the imagination through its promise of a universal utopia. It presented "a grandiose program, a plan for a brand-new world in which everyone would find his place. The Communists' opponents had no great dream; all they had was a few moral principles, stale and lifeless, to patch up the tattered trousers of the established order."³² This attraction was bolstered by its pronounced anti-fascist stance, exemplified by "the extraordinary prominence of communists in the resistance movements."³³ During the war years, communism had acquired a strong association with anti-fascism and partisan movements; with the exception of Poland, anti-fascist resistance politics leaned to the left.³⁴ For that reason, the end of the war was "even more of a political victory for the Communist idea than for

³¹ Judt 2005:216

³² Milan Kundera (1979/1999) *Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, New York: HarperCollins, p.11

³³ Eric Hobsbawm (1994) *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991*, Vintage Books, p.166

³⁴ As Hobsbawm puts it: "In each country the fascist and radical Right and conservatives, the local rich and others whose main terror was social revolution, tended to sympathize, or at least not to oppose, the Germans..." Hobsbawm 1994:165.

the democratic idea."³⁵

More generally, as Raymond Aron pointed out shortly before war's end, the appeal of communist ideology stemmed in part from its quasi-religious outlook on human destiny, cloaked in the scientific and bureaucratic patina required of twentieth-century faiths. The idea that "the postcapitalist economy would give birth to a new, egalitarian human order transcends knowledge and derives from an act of faith," wrote Aron in 1944.³⁶ He continued:

As long as men see politics as the vehicle of their fate, they will actively worship the regimes that, dangling before them an illusory future, reflect their desires and console them for their disappointments. As long as troubled masses think themselves betrayed or exploited, men will dream of liberation, and the image of their dream will be the face of their god.³⁷

Communism embodied that dream in the image of the Soviet Union and its wartime triumphs. A decade after introducing the metaphor, Aron elaborated on the idea of communism as a "Christian heresy":

As a modern form of millenarianism, it places the kingdom of God on earth following an apocalyptic revolution in which the Old World will be swallowed up. The contradictions of capitalist societies will inevitably bring about this fruitful catastrophe. The victims of today will be the victors of tomorrow. Salvation will come through the proletariat, that witness to present inhumanity.³⁸

The United States held an undeniable advantage over the Soviet Union in economic and industrial development (more on that below). But when it came to cultural appeal, "the Communists did not even need to take the initiative," wrote

³⁵ Furet 1999:356

³⁶ Aron 1944/ 2002:181

³⁷ Aron 1944/ 2002:193

³⁸ Aron (1954) "From Marxism to Stalinism" in Aron 2002:203

Judt. "Fear of American domination, of the loss of national autonomy and initiative, brought into the 'progressive' camp men and women of all political stripes and none...America seemed economically carnivorous and culturally obscurantist: a deadly combination."³⁹

This element of the post-war Soviet appeal is often lost in the focus on Soviet coercion in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union exerted its influence not only through the armies camped out on the banks of the Elbe, but also through the cultural and ideological prestige magnified by its victory. Communism "seemed to be imparting to all the secret of what made humanity divine after God had receded – namely, humanity's capacity to act in history while avoiding its uncertainties..." wrote Francois Furet. "To possess both liberty and knowledge of that liberty: now here was an intoxicating brew for moderns deprived of God...If the Soviet political economy evoked such infatuation, it was not only because it formed an almost providential contrast to the spectacle offered by the collapse of capitalism. It was because it revealed a moral idea, a regenerated humanity, delivered from the curse of profit."⁴⁰

Yet without the wartime triumphs, Communism might have shared the fate of other alluring and failed prophecies of modernity, and indeed seemed to be on the way to doing so in the 1930s. After all, the ideological attractions of communism were in place well before 1945, having been set down by Marx and Engels a century earlier. The appeal of these ideas had brought forth a swathe of Communist

³⁹ Judt 2005:220

⁴⁰ Furet 1999:26,154

parties and sympathizers across Europe even before 1917. But the expected wave of revolutions after the Bolshevik victory never materialized, despite Lenin's expectations. As in the case of fascism, an ideological innovation alone was insufficient for catalyzing an institutional wave. Ideology required strength in the form of a hegemonic shock. "[T]he postwar years constituted exceptionally good vintages for the Communist idea," wrote Furet, "because they were accompanied by the most powerful god in history – that of victory."⁴¹ Despite initial setbacks, "the USSR had out-produced and out-fought the Nazi colossus, ripping the heart from the magnificent German military machine," writes Judt. "For its friends and foes alike, the Soviet victory in World War Two bore witness to the Bolsheviks' achievement. Stalin's policies were vindicated, his pre-war crimes largely forgotten. Success, as Stalin well understood, is a winning formula."⁴² In short, it was the rise of the Soviet Union and its ascent to superpower status after World War II that paved the way for a credible communist alternative around the world. This path was forged both by force and sincere, hopeful imitation. Stalin had "won the war, transformed the Soviet Union into an empire and a superpower, and made the Communist idea more influential than it had ever been," wrote Furet. "His government gained the respectability conferred by victory and strength."⁴³

As Raymond Aron pointed out, "The divisions of the Red Army would inspire less apprehension if they were not seen to act in the service of an idea. It is the

⁴¹ Furet 1999:361

⁴² Judt 2005:165-6

⁴³ Furet 1999:439)

combination of an empire risen suddenly on the ruins of the European nations and an apparently universal message that spreads a kind of terror throughout the non-Communist world."⁴⁴ The post-WWII period was thus a moment when ideological and material power came together to give communism both an aura of normative attraction and the prestige of a triumphant victor. "The image of the Soviet Union, when decked out in all the prestige of power and ideology," wrote Furet, "had never cast a more potent spell."⁴⁵

The Rise of American Power

The other major beneficiary of the war was the United States. Spurred by vast increases in military expenditures, its gross national product rose from \$88.6 billion in 1939 to \$135 billion in 1945 (in constant 1939 dollars). Between 1940 and 1944, U.S. industrial production expanded by over 15 percent per year, a faster rate than at any other period in its history.⁴⁶ The continental United States had been untouched by the war, its oceans providing immunity from physical destruction; "America's fixed capital was intact, her resources greater than ever."⁴⁷ Output of goods grew by over 50 percent during the war, while the country's manufacturing base expanded by nearly 50 percent.⁴⁸ At the end of the war, the U.S. owned \$20

⁴⁴ Aron 1954/2002:203

⁴⁵ Furet 1999:350

⁴⁶ As Kennedy notes, among the great powers the United States "was the only country which became richer – in fact, much richer – rather than poorer because of the war." Kennedy 1987:357-8

⁴⁷ Roberts 1999:448

⁴⁸ W. Ashworth (1975) *A Short History of the International Economy Since 1850*, London, p.268. Quoted in Kennedy 1987:357

billion of the world's \$33 billion of gold reserves. It was the world's largest creditor country and biggest source of international liquidity, with the ability to provide capital to countries that needed it desperately.⁴⁹ It was the home of over half of the world's economic production, the globe's biggest exporter, supplier of half of the world's shipping, leader in advanced technologies, and held a surplus in both petroleum and food production.⁵⁰ Its merchant fleet, a third of the size of Europe in 1939, was more than twice as large by 1947.⁵¹ Domestic standards of living actually rose during the war.⁵² "Economically," Kennedy writes, "the world was its oyster."⁵³ Of the three major winners of the war, the United States "remained far and away the most powerful economically."⁵⁴

Such economic might inevitably translated into military dominance: by 1945 the United States had 12.5 million servicemen, 7.5 million of them abroad; sixty-nine divisions in Europe and twenty-six in Asia and the Pacific. With the landing on Normandy, it had organized and executed "one of the most spectacular military operations in history."⁵⁵ After the occupation of Italy, American forces had liberated France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, and conquered half of Germany. Outside of the sphere of Soviet dominance, the United States possessed total command of the global commons, on the water and in the air. It maintained 1200 major warships,

⁴⁹ Roberts 1999:448

⁵⁰ Ikenberry 2001:167

⁵¹ Frieden 2006:261

⁵² Roberts 1999:448

⁵³ Kennedy 1987:358

⁵⁴ Furet 1999:362

⁵⁵ Furet 1999:362

significantly more than the Royal Navy. "In both its carrier task forces and its Marine Corps divisions," writes Paul Kennedy, "the United States had amply demonstrated its capacity to project its power across the globe to any region accessible from the sea."⁵⁶ It also had an overwhelming command of the air, with over 2000 heavy bombers and over a thousand long-range B-29s. Most importantly, it had a monopoly on nuclear weapons, "which promised to unleash a devastation upon any future enemy as horrific as that which had occurred at Hiroshima and Nagasaki."⁵⁷ This image of superiority was "reinforced by the pleas of so many nations for American loans, weapons, and promises of military support."⁵⁸

In short, the power dynamic between European and American economies shifted dramatically over the course of the war. In 1939 the combined economies of Europe, Japan and the USSR were twice the size of the United States; by 1946 the U.S. was larger than all of them together. The steel production of Germany, Britain and the USSR combined totaled less than half of the U.S., having been 15 percent larger only seven years earlier.⁵⁹ "The United States emerged from the war unusually powerful in relation to the European great powers and Japan," writes Ikenberry:

America's allies and the defeated axis states were battered and diminished by the war, whereas the United States grew more powerful through mobilization and war. The American government

⁵⁶ Kennedy 1987:358

⁵⁷ Kennedy 1987:358

⁵⁸ Kennedy 1987:358-9

⁵⁹ Frieden 2006:261-2

was more centralized and capable, and the economy and military were unprecedented in their power and still on an upward swing. In addition, the war itself had ratified the destruction of the old order of the 1930s, eliminated the alternative regional hegemonic ambitions of Germany and Japan, and diminished the viability of the British imperial order.⁶⁰

The American victory had proven democracy's ability to triumph over a feared and heretofore successful autocracy. "When a convulsed humanity is beginning to find a new level of existence," wrote the New York Times, "it becomes apparent that democracy has not only held its own, but is stronger than ever and carries a greater appeal to more people than ever before."⁶¹ In his defeat Hitler joined the long list of those who had dismissed the ability of democratic states to effectively manage an economy and win sustained, large-scale wars. He "persistently, and dramatically, underestimated the capacity for action, not to mention the economic and technological potential, of the U.S.A.," writes Hobsbawm, "because he thought democracies incapable of action."⁶² As John Kenneth Galbraith noted: "During World War II it was widely believed that the ruthlessly exercised power of the German dictatorship was a major source of strength and one manifestation was its ability to command more than seven million workers from all the races of Europe...Closer examination revealed no advantage."⁶³

By demonstrating the efficiency of democracy, the American victory reinforced the lessons of World War I documented in Chapter 3, but in an even more convincing fashion. At the end of the Great War, German territory had never been

⁶⁰ Ikenberry 2001:167

⁶¹ The New York Times (1945) "Democracy on the March", October 14, p.E8

⁶² Hobsbawm 1994:41

⁶³ John Kenneth Galbraith (1967) *The New Industrial State*, New York: Houghton Mifflin, p.142-3

occupied by foreign troops. In 1945, military defeat was total, and widely acknowledged by both German citizens and outside participants. Unconditional surrender and lasting post-war occupation were accepted conditions for ending the hostilities. And unlike in 1919, the United States played a more visible and vital role in ending the war. “[I]ts resources and technology were vital for winning,” notes Ikenberry. “Its political leadership was more critical than it had been during World War I.”⁶⁴ By providing crucial military assistance to both Great Britain and the USSR, it secured itself a position of strength in bargaining over post-war goals and reforms. Moreover, the expansion of American influence was encouraged by the very target of that expansion, Europe itself. European leaders were willing to pay the price of American hegemony in exchange for avoiding the perils of American isolationism that followed the Treaty of Versailles.⁶⁵ American assistance to the Allies powers, its own military participation, its economic dominance and the threat of Soviet occupation all meant that it could dictate the terms of the post-war settlement to a much greater degree than in 1919. Frieden writes:

The fact that American power had grown and European flagged made it clear that the United States would have its way with the rest of the world. At Versailles and after, Woodrow Wilson and his colleagues had faced European intransigence on issue after issue and had been forced to conciliate on such important matters as German reparations. Now America's Western Allies were at the mercy of the United States.⁶⁶

The rapid rise of American power and its defeat of Nazi Germany served as a

⁶⁴ Ikenberry 2001:169

⁶⁵ Ikenberry 2001:193

⁶⁶ Frieden 2006:262

vivid demonstration of the efficiency and effectiveness of modern democracy. It “proved that America could defeat evil on a global scale....Victory in World War II was therefore a victory not just for an alliance, but also for the American way of life itself. It had outproduced and outgunned its enemies; now the time had come to transform both enemies and friends in one's own image.”⁶⁷ Its position meant that it would be instrumental in deciding the future course of Europe and the developing world. “Europe and Japan were crushed or exhausted,” writes Frieden, “the United States was wealthy and powerful, and its involvement would determine the speed of recovery.”⁶⁸ As America’s erstwhile rivals struggled under the weight of post-war recovery, their economies looked toward the United States as a source of capital, resources, and even food, leading to “a worldwide surge of indirect American power, its beginnings visible even before the war ended.”⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Odd Arne Westad (2005) *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge University Press, p. 20-21

⁶⁸ Frieden 2006:262

⁶⁹ Roberts 1999:448



Figure 5.2: American share of hegemonic power, 1930-1960. U.S. relative power increased rapidly during the war, peaking in the late 1940s.

Both American policy-makers and outside observers recognized the extraordinary dominance of the U.S. position. "The U.S. is in the position today where Britain was at the end of the Napoleonic wars," wrote British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin in June 1947.⁷⁰ "Today literally hundreds of millions of Europeans and Asiatics know that both the quality and the rhythm of their lives depend upon decisions made in Washington," wrote British scholar Harold Laski

⁷⁰ "The Chargé in the United Kingdom [Gallman] to the Secretary of State," 16 June 1947, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947*, Vol. 3, pp. 254-55. Quoted in Ikenberry 2000:168. As Kennedy points out, "simply because much of the rest of the world was either exhausted by the war or still in a stage of colonial 'underdevelopment,' American power in 1945 was, for want of another term, *artificially* high, like, say, Britain's in 1815." Kennedy 1987:357, orig. emph.

that same year. "On the wisdom of those decisions hangs the fate of the next generation."⁷¹ U.S. policy-makers anticipated and actively planned for the post-war world. As a wartime policy memo put it: "The successful termination of the war against our present enemies will find a world profoundly changed in respect of relative national military strengths.... After the defeat of Japan, the United States and the Soviet Union will be the only military powers of the first magnitude."⁷² In a 1948 State Department review of American foreign policy, George Kennan wrote: "We have about 50% of the world's wealth but only 6.3% of its population.... Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security."⁷³

Power Transition – Conclusion

In sum, the outcome of the war both transformed and clarified the distribution of power in the international system. "Their starting-point is different, and their courses are not the same," wrote Alexis de Tocqueville of Russia and the United States in 1835, "yet each of them seems marked by the will of Heaven to sway the

⁷¹ Harold J. Laski, "America – 1947", *Nation*, Vol. 165 (December 13, 1947), p. 641. Quoted in Ikenberry 2001:168

⁷² Quoted in Kennedy 1987:357, citing M. Matloff (1959) *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943-1944*, Washington, D.C., p.523-4.

⁷³ "Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff [Kennan] to the Secretary of State and Under Secretary of State [Lovett]," 24 February 1948, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Vol. 1, p. 524. Quoted in Ikenberry 2001:169

destinies of half the globe."⁷⁴ A hundred and ten years later, his prediction was swiftly coming true. The Soviet Union and the United States were the only two states that had risen in stature because of the war, and now towered in strength and prestige above the rest of the world. "It became common to speak of the two countries as superpowers – continental land giants possessing enormous resources, overshadowing all other states, including the nations of western Europe long dominant in the modern centuries."⁷⁵

The nature of the power transition and the ensuing competition between the victors dictated active global involvement by the two emerging superpowers. Fear of economic decay and European instability required the United States to prop up capitalist export markets. Fear of future military invasions required the Soviet Union to establish a buffer zone of friendly communist regimes on its western border. Moreover, the internal legitimacy of both superpowers depended on successfully exporting their regimes to other countries, and their universalist and messianic visions further encouraged global involvement. According to historian and Soviet expert Adam Ulam, the best characterization of the competition between the United States and the USSR is "a race between the social and economic dynamisms of the two societies."⁷⁶ A key element of that race was each hegemon's ability to convince outsiders of the value of their regimes, which led to an inherently expansionist, global, and interventionist foreign policy. The success of

⁷⁴ Alexis de Tocqueville (1834) *Democracy in America*

⁷⁵ Palmer et al 2002:835-6

⁷⁶ Adam Ulam (1960) *The Unfinished Revolution: An Essay on the Sources of Influence of Marxism and Communism*, Vintage Books, p.299

communist regime expansion was uniquely tied to the welfare of the Soviet Union, both because it required the unceasing coercion of eastern European satellites and because only Soviet power and continued growth could credibly demonstrate the appeal and potential of communism.⁷⁷ As a result, a major goal of Soviet policy, and a source of its aggressiveness, was “an assertive policy designed to illustrate the viability and missionary significance of Communism.”⁷⁸ Likewise, the acceptance of American democracy depended on both the revival of bourgeois Europe from the destruction of the war and the ability to demonstrate its applicability as a path to modernization in the developing world. Both the United States and the USSR thus “needed to change the world in order to prove the universal applicability of their ideologies, and the elites of the newly independent states proved fertile ground for their competition,” writes Arne Westad. This compunction lent a messianic tinge to their foreign policies and further catalyzed the spread of regime waves in war’s wake:

By helping to expand the domains of freedom or of social justice, both powers saw themselves as assisting natural trends in world history and as defending their own security at the same time. Both saw a specific mission in and for the Third World that only their own state could carry out and which without their involvement would flounder in local hands.⁷⁹

Both superpowers could make a convincing case to potential converts. Both had demonstrated military effectiveness and economic resilience in the face of a

⁷⁷ As Frieden puts it, “Economic trends in the Soviet Union and its allies were especially important because the Communist world was expanding outside Europe.” (Frieden 2006:275)

⁷⁸ Ulam 1960:292

⁷⁹ Westad 2005:4-5

crisis, and both offered a vision for political and social development that transcended national boundaries. The United States made a transition from the arsenal of democracy to the incarnation of its highest potential. "Though the international skies are still dark with the clouds of disagreement among the war's victors, there is one encouraging sign which is unmistakable, and that is the continued strength and spread of democracy," proclaimed a New York Times editorial in October 1945. "[W]hen a convulsed humanity is beginning to find a new level of existence, it becomes apparent that democracy has not only held its own, but is stronger than ever and carries a greater appeal to more people than ever before."⁸⁰ When Turkey ended a long period of single-party rule in 1945 and began a stormy transition to multi-party democracy, future premier Adnan Menderes explained the shift in terms that clearly revealed the demonstration effects of hegemonic shocks:

The difficulties encountered during the war years uncovered and showed the weak points created by the one-party system in the structure of the country. The hope in the miracles of [the] one-party system vanished, as the one-party system countries were defeated everywhere. Thus, the one-party mentality was destroyed in the turmoil of blood and fire of the second World War. No country can remain unaffected by the great international events and the contemporary dominating ideological currents. This influence was felt in our country too.⁸¹

⁸⁰ The New York Times (1945) "Democracy on the March" October 14, page E8.

⁸¹ Adnan Menderes, *Cumhuriyet*, 18 July 1946, quoted in Kemal H. Karpat, *Turkey's Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 140, n. 10. Quoted in Samuel Huntington (1982) "American Ideals versus American Institutions" *Political Science Quarterly* 97.1, p.33

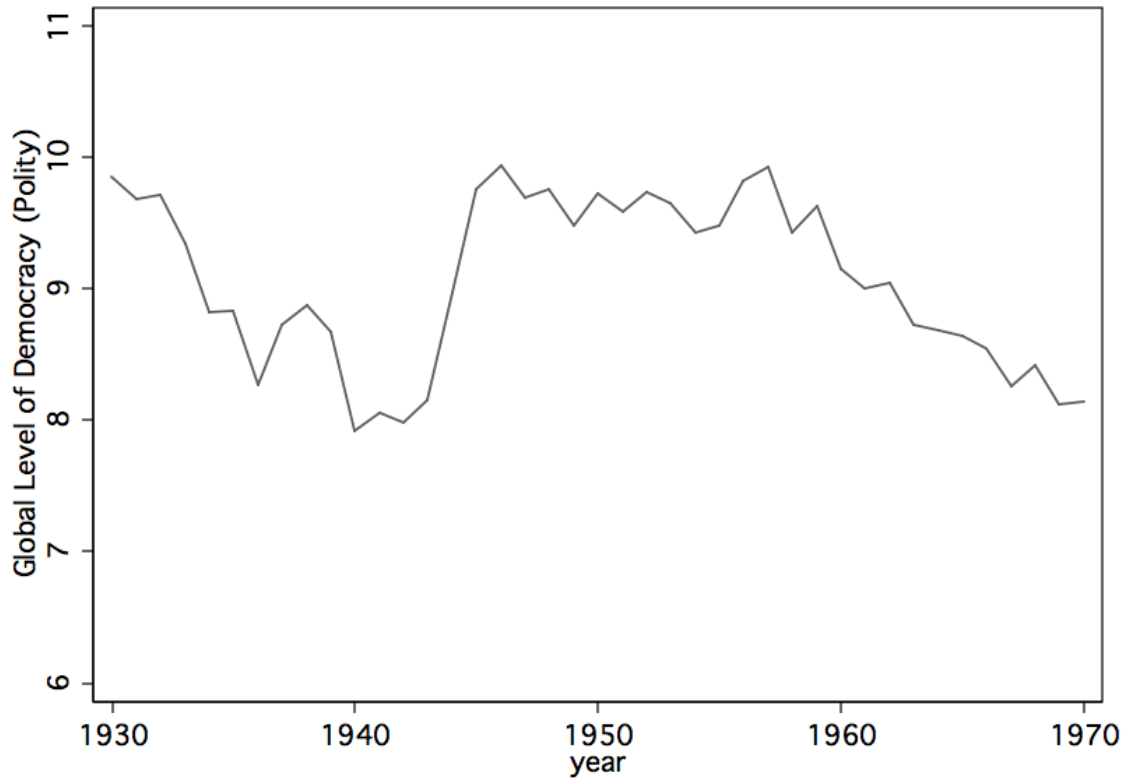
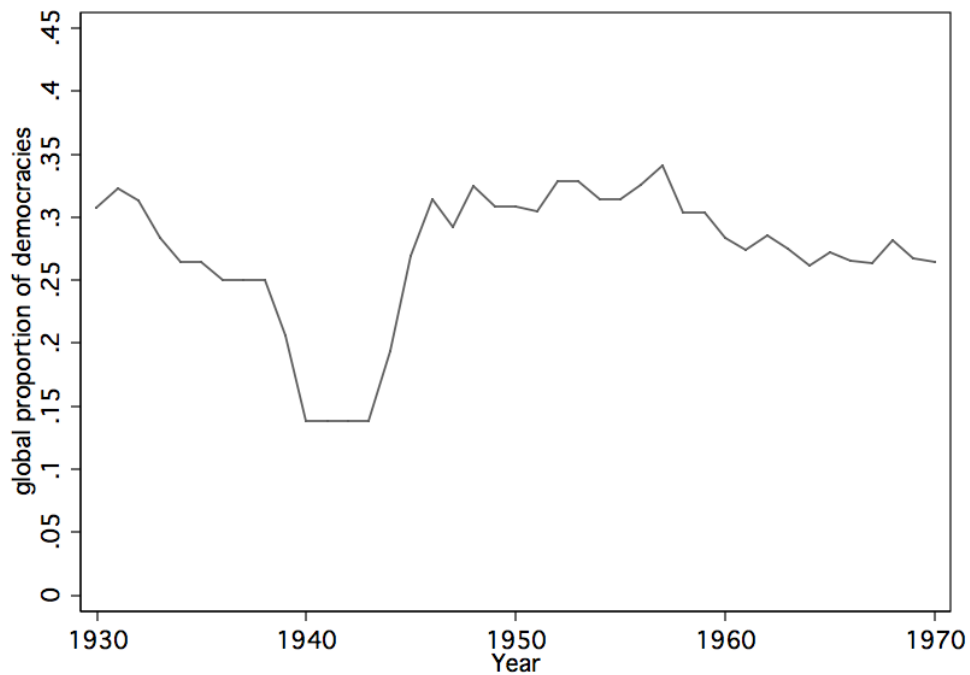
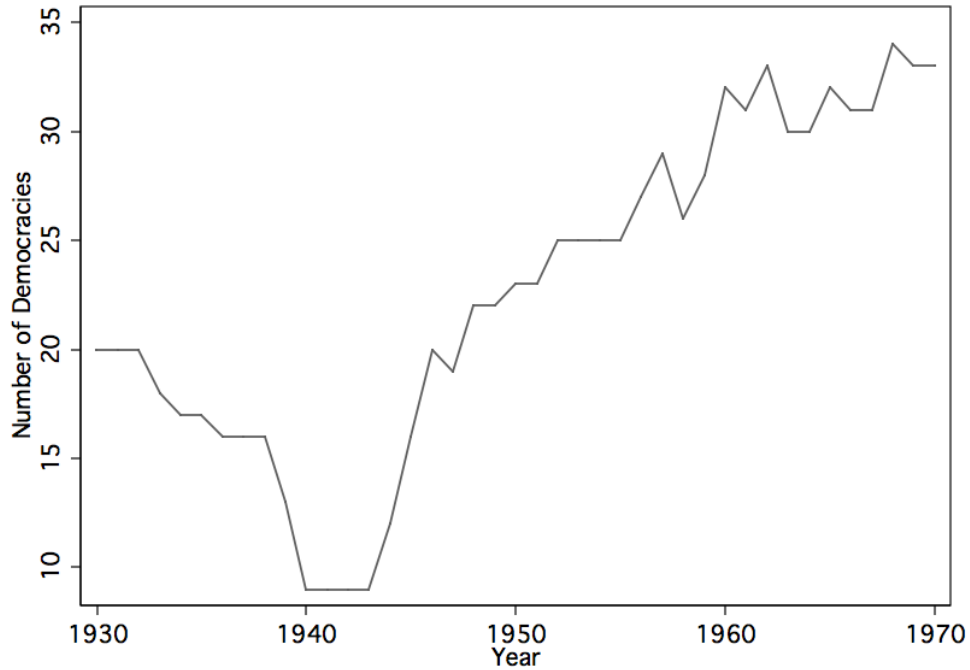


Figure 5.3: Average global level of democracy (1930-1970, using Polity IV). The graph shows the century's second democratic wave. The global level of democracy rose rapidly in the second half of the 1940s and began to decline in the late 1950s.



Figures 5.4 and 5.5: Another measure of the postwar democratic wave. Figure 5.4 shows the total number of democratic states (states with a Polity score of at least 7) while Figure 5.5 shows the number of democratic states as a proportion of all states in the international system. Both the absolute and the relative number of democratic states increases rapidly in the mid-1940s.

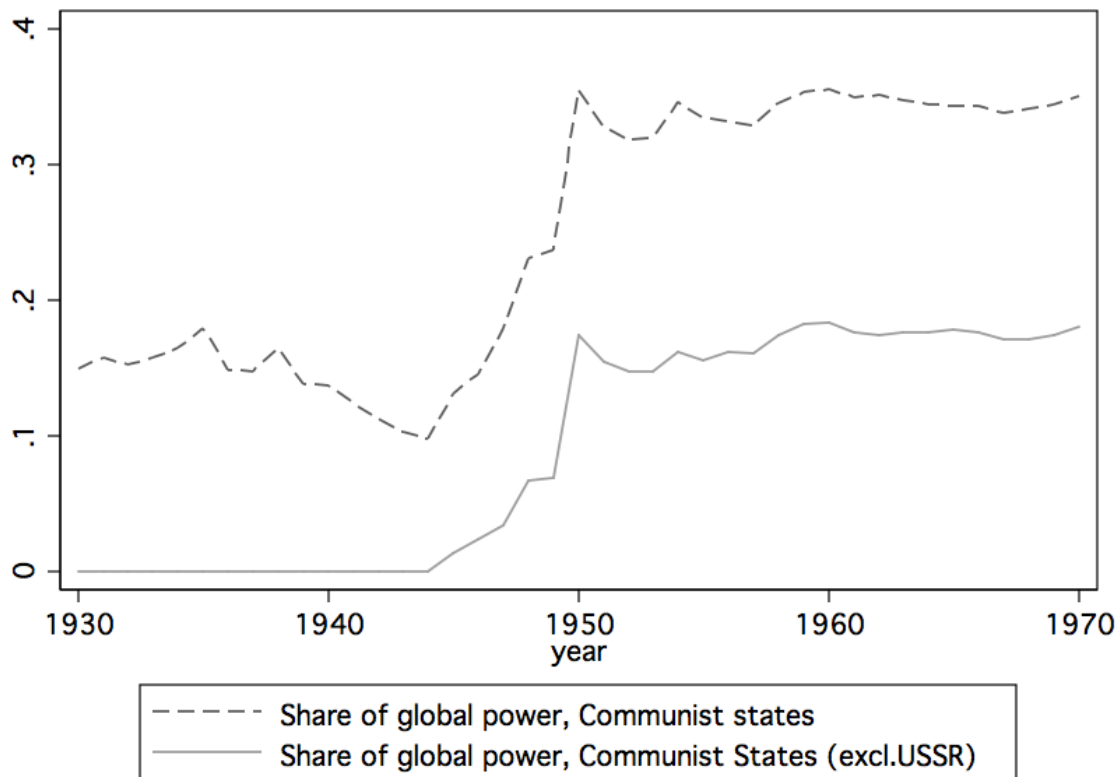
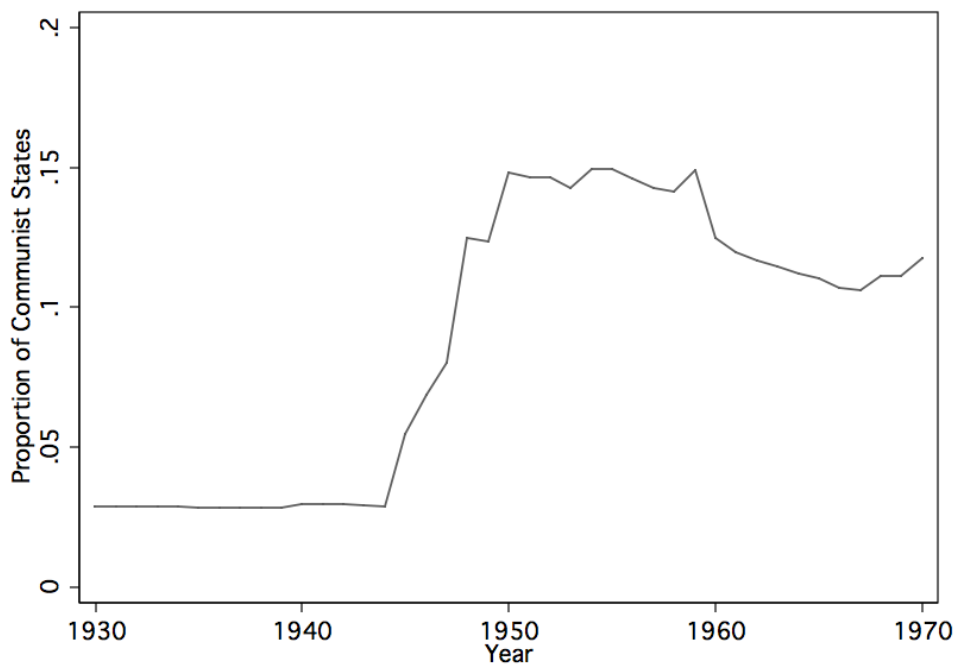
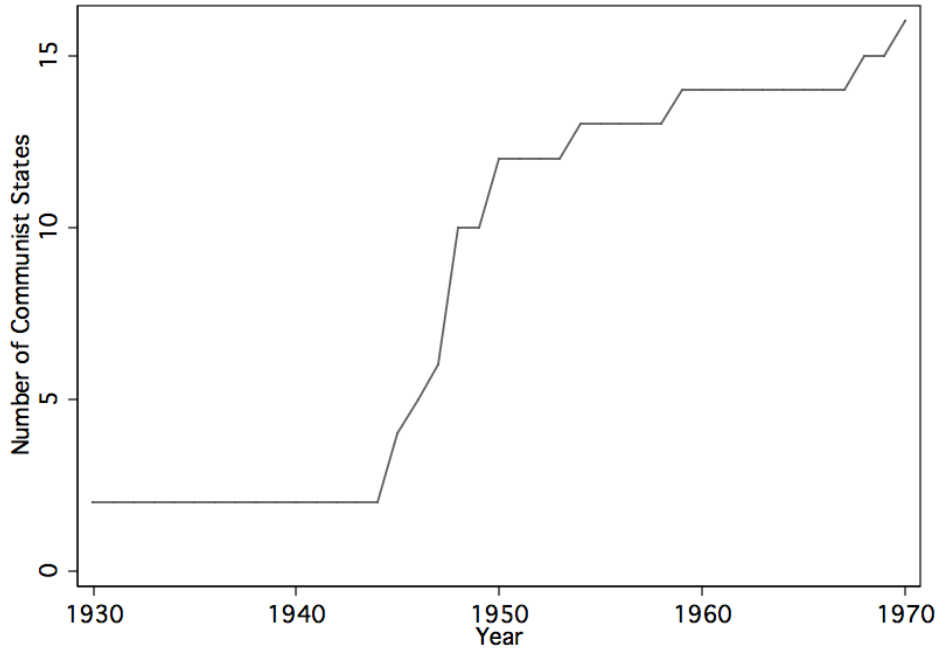


Figure 5.6: Communist share of global power. The chart shows the communist wave beginning in the mid-1940s. The dashed line represents total global power (measured in CINC) held by all communist states; the solid line below represents global power held by communist states excluding the Soviet Union. The communist share of power increases rapidly between the mid-1940s and the early 1950s.



Figures 5.7 and 5.8: Another measure of the postwar communist wave. Figure 5.7 shows the total number of communist states, while Figure 5.8 shows the number of communist states as a proportion of all states in the international system. Both the absolute and the relative number of communist states increases rapidly in the mid-1940s.

The Soviet Union, meanwhile, offered a radically different and (to many) an equally compelling path to development and modernity. "Soviet society had suffered terribly from the war, but its military successes left it dominant east of the Rhine, and by the end of the war Soviet industrial plant was going strong," writes Frieden. Communists "also emerged from the war with a vastly improved reputation. While many Socialists, Christian Democrats, and others had behaved nobly, there were enough exceptions to cast shadows on non-Communist movements and parties."⁸² Thus in the period immediately after the end of the war, "Stalinist Communism, victorious over the Fascist dictators, reached its greatest influence."⁸³ Moreover, the Soviet economic system "seemed to deliver rapid growth, egalitarianism, and social improvements....the rise and consolidation of a socialist world of Communist-led countries gave hope to millions that there was indeed a way to avoid the impersonality of capitalism's market forces and their tendency to work against the interests of the poor and powerless."⁸⁴ It is the rise of this world that I examine in the next section.

The Communist Wave

The coerced Sovietization of Eastern Europe was the most visible aspect of the postwar communist wave. It was a clear manifestation of newfound Soviet power and the direct result of Red Army occupation and control of the region. As such, this coercive aspect of the communist wave was both crucial in increasing the number of communist states

⁸² Frieden 2007:263

⁸³ Furet 1999:160

⁸⁴ Frieden 2006:275-6

around the world and least interesting in terms of theoretical analysis. "It would be foolish to ask what secret affinity – perhaps it was the peasant majority or the Slav community, for example – predisposed the countries of Eastern Europe to follow in the path of the Communists," wrote Raymond Aron in 1954. "Any country liberated by the Russian army, even France, Britain, or Spain, would have met the same fate."⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the forced conversion of Eastern Europe was not a monolithic or instantaneous process. The native popularity of communism varied widely from one country to the next, and in some places it was embraced by a substantial part of the population (as Kundera's aforementioned memoirs testify). Even those who rejected communist ideology saw opportunities in the rapid growth of institutions of the state and the party. The creation of new jobs meant that "men from humble backgrounds suddenly had powers and privileges that they could not previously have dreamed of."⁸⁶ Even the postwar purges in Eastern Europe provided a macabre means of social advancement, as aspiring functionaries could outmaneuver potential rivals with denunciations both fantastic and readily accepted – a grim replica of USSR's Great Purges barely a decade earlier. "Astonishing as it seems in retrospect, the period when communist rule in eastern Europe was at its most brutal was also the period during which many intelligent and well-meaning individuals thought that it was a good thing," writes Vinen. "This partly explains how it was possible to bring about rapid transformations in the societies of eastern Europe..."⁸⁷

And indeed the changes wrought in Eastern Europe between 1945 and 1948

⁸⁵ Aron 1954/ 2002:226

⁸⁶ Vinen 2000:341

⁸⁷ Vinen 2000:339

(when Tito's break with Stalin marked the end of the first stage of the post-war wave) were dramatic and all-encompassing. The reforms of this period, writes Gale Stokes:

swept aside private property, wiped out the middle class, collectivized agriculture, brought millions of country people to work in the city, dramatically increased the number of working women, brought entirely new people to power, reorganized and repopulated all levels of government, created new systems of education and scholarship, eliminated freedom of expression, turned East European trade away from its natural partnership with Western Europe toward the Soviet Union, propagated a new public ethic, built a strong military, and, in general, seized control of all aspects of public life.⁸⁸

About a hundred million people had passed into Soviet jurisdiction in the years following the war. The Soviet bloc, as it came to be known, included Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet-occupied half of Germany that became the German Democratic Republic. These rough replicas assimilated the salient features of the Soviet state: a one-party dictatorships constituted by a rigidly hierarchical authority structure; a centralized, state-planned economy (in this case doubly distorted by state-determined quotas and the requirements of Soviet import markets); obedience to an official ideology propagated by the political leadership; show trials and purges of local communists (in those states where the Red Army exercised direct influence); and "the most obvious relic of the Stalinist heritage, strongly profiled supreme leaders."⁸⁹

The political subordination of a territory began with the arrival of the occupying

⁸⁸ Stokes 1993: 8

⁸⁹ Hobsbawm 1994:394-5. These features also re-appeared in China, Cuba, and a number of short-lived imitators in Africa, Asia, and Latin America during the 1970s.

army, so that the Red Army began exercising control over many of these states well before the end of actual hostilities.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, in few cases did the communist come to power through sheer force and intimidation. Hobsbawm, for example, notes that while the regime transformations in Europe “all were made possible by the victory of the Red Army,” in only four cases – Poland, East Germany, Romania, and Hungary – were the reforms “imposed exclusively by the force of that army.”⁹¹ In Yugoslavia and Albania, on the other hand, communist resistance fighters enjoyed widespread indigenous support (which later enabled them to break away from the Soviet sphere of dominance).⁹² Nowhere did the communists constitute the majority of the electorate, “but what they lacked in numbers, they made up for in fervor.”⁹³ The genuinely free 1946 elections in Czechoslovakia – the only country in the region with a large and organized mass of industrial workers – communists received 38 percent of the vote, while the Social Democrats received another 12 percent.⁹⁴ Bulgarian communists, meanwhile, enjoyed widespread Russophile sentiment.⁹⁵ Everywhere the old elites had been discredited, the upper classes removed from state bureaucracies; in the former Axis states of Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria the quisling and philofascist governments were overthrown; and in many countries around the region “the Soviet occupiers were at first

⁹⁰ Palmer et al 2002:837

⁹¹ Hobsbawm 1994:395

⁹² Hobsbawm 1994:395-6

⁹³ Vinen 2000:342

⁹⁴ Halperin 2004:253

⁹⁵ Hobsbawm 1994:170

welcomed as liberators and harbingers of change and reform."⁹⁶ The youth and the intelligentsia drew inspiration from "building a new world on what was so visibly the total ruin of the old."⁹⁷ The arrival of Communist regimes, "whether they came mainly or partly with the support of the Soviet bayonets, were led by people who...were neither in a position nor in a mood to offer the slightest resistance to the Kremlin and were only too glad to avail themselves of the help, advice, and command of the Russians."⁹⁸

Moreover, the Soviets did not immediately appear to pursue hard-line policies – bound partly by his wartime alliances, Stalin had assured the West that the region would follow neither Soviet-style socialism nor Western capitalism, but a "people's democracy" – a third way constituted by an alliance of workers, peasants, and the bourgeois who would build mixed economies.⁹⁹ An echo of the social democracy model in the West, it sustained the hope of Soviet-American postwar cooperation, and made the initial push for reforms more palatable to both the West and cautious observers in Eastern Europe. This also meant that the early period of Soviet influence enjoyed the unspoken assent of the United States. And in many ways, its strategy "really was reassuringly moderate."¹⁰⁰ Just like inside Russia itself after the 1917 revolution, the communists tread lightly at first – agrarian reforms focused on land redistribution to peasants rather than forcible collectivization. Private property

⁹⁶ Judt 2005:130

⁹⁷ Hobsbawm 1994:396

⁹⁸ Ulam 1960:262

⁹⁹ Frieden 2006:274

¹⁰⁰ Judt 2005:131

was for the most part left alone (except for the confiscation of “fascist” property, especially in eastern Germany) and the USSR did not pursue a policy of economic nationalization. Overall, “there was very little talk of 'Socialism' as a goal.”¹⁰¹

Even in countries where coercion played a greater role, and where a communist government was imposed by the army, “the new regime initially enjoyed a temporary legitimacy and, for a time, some genuine support. ... However unpopular party and government, the very energy and determination which both brought to the task of post-war reconstruction commanded a broad, if reluctant, assent.”¹⁰² In addition, the Soviet emphasis on industrialization resonated with people in the backward agrarian states of the region who sought a quick path to modernity.¹⁰³ “[T]he Soviet economic recipe also seemed to suit them, and their new rulers launched themselves into the task of economic construction with genuine enthusiasm,” writes Hobsbawm. “Indeed, the success of the new regimes in this task was hard to deny....Who could doubt that countries like Bulgaria or Yugoslavia were advancing far more rapidly than had seemed likely, or even possible before the war?”¹⁰⁴ One of the paradoxes of postwar eastern Europe was that between 1945 and 1948, a time of great repression, political intimidation, show trials, and executions, was also the time when “enthusiasm for communism was most intense and in which some eastern Europeans, often those who had

¹⁰¹ Judt 2005:131

¹⁰² Hobsbawm 1994:396

¹⁰³ Exceptions to this rule included the future East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and to a lesser extent Hungary.

¹⁰⁴ Hobsbawm 1994:377, 396

suffered for their beliefs under earlier regimes, made the deliberate choice to attach the fate of their countries to that of the Soviet Union.”¹⁰⁵ The dynamics that drove the expansion of communism into eastern Europe included an undeniable degree of coercion but (particularly in the earliest stages) also reflected the increased influence of the Soviet hegemon and an indigenous desire to emulate Soviet successes. “It is true that the Communist part dictatorship was brought to the small East European countries by the victorious troops of Stalin,” wrote Hungarian dissident Gaspar Miklos Tamas, “but we should admit that we were ready for it.”¹⁰⁶

The consolidation of Soviet control over the region thus proceeded in steps. Elections in 1945 elections brought forward a communist majority only in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia¹⁰⁷; elsewhere, Communist parties entered into coalition governments. The standard tactic was to form an alliance with other left-wing or anti-fascist parties – a Worker’s Front, a People’s Front, a Unity Government, or a Fatherland Front. In cases where those parties refused to join a fictitious coalition, the communists allied with dissident factions, which could be “created, if necessary, by a process of infiltration.”¹⁰⁸ This cautious approach echoed the Popular Front tactics of the 1930s in France, Spain and elsewhere. The coalitions “would exclude and punish the old regime and its supports but would be cautious and ‘democratic’, reformist rather than revolutionary.”¹⁰⁹ Within a few months of

¹⁰⁵ Vinen 2000:338

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Stokes 1993:7

¹⁰⁷ Roberts 1999:451

¹⁰⁸ Hicks 1946:540

¹⁰⁹ Judt 2005:130-1

war's end, such coalition governments ran every country in eastern Europe. Crucially, Soviet military occupation enabled local Communist leaders to dominate these ill-glued creations.¹¹⁰ This dominance enabled them to hold key positions in the army, the courts, and the policy, as well as the crucial ministries of justice and the interior. As opposition leaders realized too late, political control rather than specific policies would shape the outcome. "The Communists secure the critical positions in the united front and in the government that it organizes," wrote Granville Hicks in 1946. "The ministry of the interior, for example, which usually controls the censorship, and the ministry of justice, which has charge of the police, are held by Communists in half a dozen countries."¹¹¹ Communists also gave themselves positions in the agricultural ministries (where control of land reforms allowed them to buy the loyalty of the peasants) as well as positions in trade unions, district commissions, and denazification committees.¹¹²

From the start, power-sharing was a tactical, temporary choice. As East German Communist leader Walter Ulbricht told his followers in 1945: "It's quite clear – it's got to look democratic, but we must have everything in our control."¹¹³ Control of the security forces – the army and the police – enabled Communists to use political violence against their opponents; purges, intimidation and disfranchisement soon

¹¹⁰ Palmer et al 2002:872

¹¹¹ Hicks 1946:540. This tactic, as Hicks noted, was doubly advantageous: "it gives Communists greater influence than their numbers warrant, and at the same time saves them from the assumption of full responsibility – and saves Russia, as well."

¹¹² Judt 2005:131. By contrast, Judt notes, they gave their socialist, agrarian and liberal coalition allies offices of the president, prime minister, and foreign minister, which "reassured Western observers."

¹¹³ Quoted in Judt 2005:131.

“made a mockery of Stalin's pledge at Yalta to hold “free and unfettered elections” in eastern Europe.”¹¹⁴ Command of Ministries of the Interior also meant control of electoral rules; in the January 1947 Polish elections, for example, Peasant Party candidates were disqualified in ten of fifty-two electoral districts.¹¹⁵ It quickly became apparent that coalition governments “could, in fact, do little more than behave as Soviet puppets. Something like a communist bloc was already appearing in 1946.”¹¹⁶ By the middle of that year, an observer could write that the Soviet Union “can not only assert, as any great power might do, that it has a right to intervene in the affairs of neighboring states on grounds of national security; it can exercise direct control over certain of the individuals who rule those countries. That is to say, high-placed officials in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria and so on have long disciplined themselves to accept Soviet decisions as their ultimate authority...”¹¹⁷

Regardless of indigenous support or tactical attempts at coalition-building, the Soviet need for a buffer zone meant it could not trust previously hostile East European states to set up their own regimes. “The only acceptable outcome for Stalin was the establishment...of governments that could be relied upon never to pose a threat to Soviet security.”¹¹⁸ By 1947, non-Communist parties were expelled from the governments of Hungary, Romania and Poland (all three had been

¹¹⁴ Palmer et al 2002:872)

¹¹⁵ Vinen 2000:251

¹¹⁶ Roberts 1999:451

¹¹⁷ Hicks 1946:540

¹¹⁸ Judt 2005:130

particularly unfriendly to Moscow during the war); a Communist regime was established in Czechoslovakia in March 1948. Covert pressure quickly morphed into outright intimidation and persecution. Between 1945 and 1947 political opponents were “maligned, threatened, beaten up, arrested, tried as 'Fascists' or 'collaborators' and imprisoned or even shot.”¹¹⁹ In January 1945 the head of Bulgaria’s Agrarian Union, deemed insufficiently compliant, was forced from office. By the following summer, seven of the twenty-two members of the party’s Presidium and thirty-five of its eighty-member governing council were jailed.¹²⁰ In Hungary, the secretary the Smallholders’ Party was arrested by Soviet authorities in February 1947.¹²¹

Non-socialist leftist parties were the easiest targets, since they could be always be smeared with pro-fascist or anti-national accusations. The last rivals to be eliminated were the socialist and social-democratic parties, whose agendas overlapped with the communists and who had also suffered under fascist rules. These parties could not be credibly accused of fascist collusion and enjoyed the allegiance of the region’s working class, and so had to be handled in more delicate ways. They were urged to join communist-socialist “union” governments under the direction of the communists. “In the circumstances of post-liberation eastern Europe this seemed to many socialists a sensible proposition.”¹²² Many of these leftist unions came to power in 1948: Romania in February, Hungary and

¹¹⁹ Judt 2005:132

¹²⁰ Judt 2005:132

¹²¹ Vinen 2000:251-2

¹²² Judt 2005:132

Czechoslovakia in June, Bulgaria in August, and Poland in December. Even coming into the fold did not protect the socialist partners from criticism – during Romania’s February congress marking the fusion of the two parties, the Communist leader denounced the Socialists of sabotage, cooperation with reactionaries, and anti-Soviet smears. By the end of year, the Socialist parties were hopelessly divided, “so that long before they disappeared they had ceased to be an effective political force in their country.”¹²³ Between 1945 and 1948 Communist parties replaced coalition governments throughout the region.

Elections during the following two years were increasingly characterized by voter fraud and political intimidation. Policies shifted to reflect more hard-line communist policies. Soviet-style constitutions were hoisted upon the countries in the region, the first in Bulgaria, in December 1947 and the last in Poland in July 1952. They were turned into police states, ruled by local Communist parties under the control of their Moscow equivalent. In economic policy, “the irrational, occasionally surreal quality of Soviet economic practice was faithfully reproduced throughout the bloc.”¹²⁴ The countries adopted Five-Year plans, with wildly ambitious goals. By 1948 the state had nationalized large firms and companies, took total control over economic planning (which emphasized heavy industry), restricted external trade, and took over (through force or taxation) any private business employing more than fifty people.¹²⁵ Starting in 1949, the policy of land

¹²³ Judt 2005:133

¹²⁴ Judt 2005:169

¹²⁵ Frieden 2006:274

redistribution that had briefly mollified the peasants was replaced by land collectivization, complete with attacks on “kulaks” that echoed Stalin’s forced collectivization of the Russian and Ukrainian countryside two decades earlier.¹²⁶ The establishment of Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) in January 1949, itself a response to the Marshall Plan, further speeded up the Sovietization of eastern economies. By 1952, “only traces of private enterprise remained outside agriculture.”¹²⁷

In a few short years, Stalin succeeded in populating the region with what Kenneth Jowett called “geographically contiguous replica states”.¹²⁸ This transformation was driven primarily by the enormous power of the Soviet Union, manifested most directly by the lengthy occupation of the region by the Red Army. Aiding these reforms in the beginning was a measure of indigenous pro-Soviet sentiment that drew upon the successes of the Soviet regime in liberating the region from Nazi occupation. But the heavy hand of the occupation was bound to alienate native Communist supporters, just as German cruelty a few years earlier drove off potential allies in Ukraine and elsewhere. Defaulting to the use of force was ultimately counter-productive to Soviet purposes. Adam Ulam notes:

The disproportion in power between the European satellites and the USSR, the fact that their Communist leaders had nowhere to look for support against the West or their own peoples, would have undoubtedly secured their general following of the Russian wishes, provided they had been given some leeway and opportunity to dictate themselves the tempo of economic and social transformation

¹²⁶ Judt 2005:167-9

¹²⁷ Halperin 2004:256

¹²⁸ Quoted in Judt 2005:167

of their countries.¹²⁹

Often these desires for transformations ran parallel with Soviet goals. The Yugoslavian Communists, for example, were initially even more committed to industrialization, agrarian collectivization, and communist social policies than the Soviet Union had intended. But the spread of communist regimes in the region entailed “a boundless belief in the power of coercion,” writes Ulam. While overwhelming Soviet power prevented the defection of all satellites except Yugoslavia, “the general tenor of Soviet policies toward Tito was having a discouraging effect, especially on pro-Soviet radical movements in Asia.”¹³⁰ The consolidation of Soviet regimes was accomplished by continuous coercion, occasionally reinforced by popular protests and Red Army interventions. Once the source of that coercion was removed in the late 1980s, communist regimes disappeared from the region in a wave as swift as the one that installed it in the first place.

In a pattern typical for hegemonic shocks, communist ideology enjoyed a heightened but temporary period of influence and approval. The period offered a window of opportunity for increased influence and emulation, some of which was squandered by an over-reliance on coercion in eastern Europe. “The respect and admiration, gained from the Red Army's victory over Hitler, that haloed the Communist idea immediately after World War II did not long remain intact,” wrote Furet. “That moment of confused respectability so foreign to Communism was

¹²⁹ Ulam 1960:263

¹³⁰ Ulam 1960:264

merely ephemeral capital with uncertain returns; the history of Communism was soon to enter a new phase."¹³¹

Communism and the Developing World

While the communist wave in Eastern Europe advanced largely through coercion, the appeal of communism and its subsequent spread in the developing world was based to a much larger degree on the desire to emulate Soviet success and to benefit from the superpower's largesse and expanded influence. The Soviet story – the modernization and industrialization of a backward, agrarian state, the dramatic defeat of a feared military juggernaut, the swift rise to the status of an anti-imperialist, anti-Western superpower – was particularly alluring to people in poor rural countries who had just thrown off the shackles of colonial bondage. Soviet-style communism offered “a harsh method of industrialization especially suited to the needs of so-called underdeveloped countries.”¹³² The USSR's dramatic rise “exemplified a historical short circuit that promised the non-European world a rapid catching up,” writes Furet. “It furnished a body of Western ideas capable of unifying antibourgeois emotions in Europe and beyond...In our century, no European doctrinal corpus would be so avidly adopted outside of Europe than Marxism-Leninism.”¹³³

In most places this adoption took place without the support (albeit often with the tacit or explicit encouragement) of the Soviet Union. Communist ideas found

¹³¹ Furet 1999:396

¹³² Aron (1957) “Nations and Empires” in Aron 2002:54

¹³³ Furet 1999:370

fertile ground in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East – regions in which nationalism, wrote Raymond Aron, was “weak against the attraction of a universalist ideology like that of communism.” He contrasted the spread of communism in Eastern Europe, which proceeded “thanks to advances by the Red Army” with China, where the communist party won with very little direct Soviet support – less than the Kuomintang had received from the United States. “In Southeast Asia and in the Middle East, China and the Soviet Union, respectively, are capable of eliminating Western influence, inflaming nationalist feeling, and putting Communist parties in power without any direct intervention.”¹³⁴

The communist wave outside Europe achieved its most visible successes in Asia. A communist, Soviet-occupied zone was established in North Korea in 1945 (while the Americans occupied the south of the country, recreating the division of Germany in an Asian setting). The People’s Republic of China was created in 1949, following years of fighting between the Kuomintang and the communists, led by Mao and supported by Soviet arms. The First Indochina War (1946-1954) created a communist-led North Vietnam after fighting by Ho Chi Min with the support of the Soviets and the Chinese. The Hukbalahap (Huk) communist-led rebellion in the Philippines made a serious bid for power during the late 1940s before being defeated in 1954. In Indonesia, the local communist party staged a rebellion in 1948 that was put down by the nationalists. In Malaysia, communist forces fought a war with the colonial government from 1948 until 1960. And all over the region,

¹³⁴ Aron 1957/2002:54

the appeal of communist parties surged as national liberation movements waged anti-colonial battles against a weakened West. Ideologically, the leaders of these movements “tended to see themselves as socialists, engaged on the same sort of project of emancipation, progress and modernization as the Soviet Union.”¹³⁵

Democracy, on the other hand, came with the baggage of history and colonial yoke, as Laqueur noted in 1955:

Capitalism is identified with imperialist rule and democracy is something the imperialist powers allegedly practice at home. Democracy has not been a militant creed and it has not provided the answers to many questions of Asia. Democracy could not inspire the masses and has not given firm spiritual support to the elite. It has not been able to promise a much better life in the immediate future, or make a spectacular effort in which everybody was to be told what to do; on the other hand, Communism has had all the force of a secular religion – in Asia even more than in Europe.¹³⁶

In the Middle East, too, communist ideology began to attract a much greater degree of support after the war, especially among nationalists and intellectuals. Communist parties made large gains in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and to a lesser extent in Turkey.¹³⁷ At the founding conference of the Cominform in September 1947, while welcoming Indonesia and Vietnam into the “anti-imperialist camp,” Chairman of the Union Soviet Andrei Zhdanov labeled Egypt, Syria and India as “sympathizing” with it.¹³⁸ For the secular intellectuals within the

¹³⁵ Hobsbawm 1994:435

¹³⁶ Walter Z. Laqueur (1955) “The Appeal of Communism in the Middle East” *Middle East Journal* 9.1, p.21

¹³⁷ Laqueur 1955:17-18

¹³⁸ Hobsbawm 1994:227. The address was notable, as Hobsbawm notes, for a complete lack of reference to China.

region, communism provided an appealing promise of the future. "The power of attraction of Communism as a creed should never be underrated," wrote Laqueur in 1955, "and it is nowhere so strong as in underdeveloped countries, such as those of the Middle East."¹³⁹ Explaining its draw for Arab intellectuals, the Lebanese foreign minister Charles Malik listed the following in a 1957 interview: "Its social vision, its total character, its total interpretation of life – its messianic idea, namely, that it is the wave of the future. Also, the promises it holds – that it will solve all these economic and social injustices."¹⁴⁰

For similar reasons, the communist creed resonated with the masses in developing nations far more than democratic or capitalist ideals. "Without having read a word of Marx or Lenin," wrote Adam Ulam, "an illiterate peasant who is being squeezed economically...experiences almost instinctively the feelings that Marxism formulates in a theoretical language: a sense of alienation springing from his loss of property and status, and an antagonism toward the people and authority personifying the mysterious forces that have made his previous social existence impossible..." To them, Ulam wrote, communism was not an intellectual exercise or an abstruse theory, but "a systematic expression of their own feelings and reactions, something which again makes sense out of an apparently senseless world." On the other hand, Western democracy, "the product of a long industrial

¹³⁹ Laqueur 1955:25

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Charles Malik, Foreign Minister of Lebanon, "How to Beat Communism in the Middle East," *U.S. News and World Report*, March 29, 1957, p. 88. Quoted in Marver H. Bernstein (1957) "Review: The Appeal of Communism in Arab Countries" *World Politics* 9.4, p.624

development and a *consequent* democratic habituation appears to them, in contrast, as something infinitely more complicated and unnatural." Communism offered, in Ulam's felicitous phrase, "a convincing demonology" of a modernity whose evils could be attributed to the impersonal forces of capitalism. But it also offered something in exchange beyond a *bête noire*: "Just as it exploits the nostalgia for a past ruined forever by the capitalists, it appeals to the impatience for the future, which cannot be appeased by democratic and liberal phraseology."¹⁴¹

The appeal of communism in the developing world thus depended on a mass of disenfranchised, poor, bewildered proletariat. As countries developed economically, Aron argued in 1954, communism's ideological base would shrink accordingly: "Professional agitators will raise more recruits among the poverty-stricken crowds of Asia than among the workers of General Motors. The Bolsheviks' technique, born in Tsarist Russia, is naturally better adapted to Far Eastern societies shaken by the influence of industrial civilization....The less capitalistic a society is, and the less developed its productive forces, the more favorable are the conditions it offers to Bolshevism."¹⁴²

An ideological panacea for the masses and the intellectuals, communism also provided the elites of the developing world a convincing justification for absolutism. "Fortified by the Soviet precedent, the tyrant of the second half of the twentieth drew his legitimacy from an emancipatory ambition," wrote Furet. "He led his country to socialism via a new version of modern democracy freed of its

¹⁴¹ Ulam 1960:284-5, orig. emph.

¹⁴² Aron 1954/2002:210, 228

capitalist liabilities."¹⁴³ Through this unusual conjunction of mass emancipation and elite domination, communism found resonance among a large swath of social groups – the public, the intelligentsia, and the political elite – in the developing world. It became, Ulam wrote, “the *natural* ideology of underdeveloped societies in today's world.” By contrast, “liberalism as practiced and preached in the West can appeal to a much narrower range of interests and sentiments and is at a disadvantage in competition.” He concluded: “In large areas of the world, Communism has proselytizing powers superior to liberalism.”¹⁴⁴ Democracy, Laqueur noted in 1956, “could not inspire the masses, and it did not give firm spiritual support to the elite”.¹⁴⁵

And yet, the ideological attraction of communism in the developing world, as in Eastern Europe, had been in place well before 1945. The surge of communist influence and emulation in the developing world could take place only once ideology had become coupled with power and success. Noting that World War II “brought a great upsurge in Middle Eastern Communism,” Laqueur noted that “one of the main reasons for this growth in influence appears to be, in retrospect, the emergence of the Soviet Union as one of the two great world powers and the downfall of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.”¹⁴⁶ In the Middle East as elsewhere, “Communist support has been further strengthened by the example of the Soviet

¹⁴³ Furet 1999:371

¹⁴⁴ Ulam 1960:285, 287, orig. emph.

¹⁴⁵ Walter Z. Laqueur (1956) *Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., p. 275. Quoted in Bernstein 1957:627.

¹⁴⁶ Laqueur 1955:17

Union, which has demonstrated that a backward and underdeveloped country could transform itself within a single generation into a world power of great industrial strength.”¹⁴⁷

Alone, ideas could inspire movements and set the groundwork for changes to come, but were less successful in transforming regimes and upending institutions in countries around the world. As the case of fascism between 1922 and 1933 and communism between 1917 and 1945 demonstrated, ideas were more than abstractions – they could introduce new regimes and set very real-world precedents (in the form of the Bolshevik Revolution and the March on Rome) – but, crucially, in isolation they did not lead to institutional waves. The immense impact of hegemonic shocks on domestic institutional reforms, in the case of World War II as in others, stemmed from a potent combination – the strength of ideas combined with the strength of example. An example that was recent and dramatic, one that led to the collapse and ruin of some great powers while uplifting others, held that much more sway. The power shifts that accompanied the aftermath of hegemonic shocks served as indisputable proof that some examples were worth following more than others, and fundamentally (if temporarily) transformed both the opportunities and incentives for domestic reforms. For the developing world of the postwar era, the hegemonic shock of the war transformed communism from an appealing if abstract vision to a concrete, viable model for economic and political

¹⁴⁷ Bernstein 1957:628

development.¹⁴⁸

This was particularly true in the case of economic reforms. The post-war economic climate favored the adoption of state planning and government intervention in industrial development. Central planning ceased to be a Russian curiosity; elements of state intervention in the economy, driven partly by government expansion during war, diffused into the politics of much of the developing world, notably in France but also in Britain and the United States. In offering a new option for development, it had replaced the fascist alternative which found some adherents among populists and nationalists but was discredited by the outcome of the war. The western European option of social democracy, with its promise of “incremental” reform, was “too modest for those looking for a radical solution to the grinding poverty of the poor regions...” The people of these nations could now “examine the differences between centrally planned socialism and market capitalism to see which better suited their conditions. Up to then the principal division of the world had been rich industrial countries and poor agrarian countries. Now there was a second dimension and two possible paths toward advanced industrial status: capitalist and Communist.”¹⁴⁹

Beyond ideological and spiritual deliverance, then, communism also offered a path to economic transformation – and to many in the developing world, this path was superior to the one offered by capitalism. “Moscow was not only a more

¹⁴⁸ As Hobsbawm (1994:350) notes, “the example of the U.S.S.R. provided an alternative model of “development.” Never did that example look more impressive than in the years after 1945.”

¹⁴⁹ Frieden 2006:275

attractive model than Detroit or Manchester because it stood for anti-imperialism, but it also seemed a more suitable model, especially for countries lacking both in private capital and a large body of private and profit-oriented industry.”¹⁵⁰ The economic appeal of communist institutions in the developing world thus drew from some of the same sources of strength as its ideological appeal. Leaders in newly-formed nations “believed only public action could lift their economies out of backwardness and dependency,” Hobsbawm notes. “In the decolonized world, following the inspiration of the Soviet Union, they were to see the way forward as socialism.”¹⁵¹ For them communism served as a model for emerging out of an agrarian past through state planning – a process that, moreover, had been stamped with the imprimatur of science and rationality. The adoption of communist-style planning did not even require a full-fledged belief in the political ideology of Marxism. Both central planning and the import-substitution model required a strong government hand in the economy. Import-substituting industrialization (ISI) was adopted first in Latin America during the 1930s and later in newly liberated colonies in Asia in the 1940s, the Middle East and North Africa in the 1940s and 1950s, and sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1950s and 1960s.¹⁵² This strategy implied protection of infant industries from outside competition, discouragement of foreign direct investment, and an active industrial policy that promoted domestic markets. In Asia and Africa, with little native manufacturing, local industries needed even

¹⁵⁰ Hobsbawm 1994:376. He notes that some ex-colonies adopted Soviet economic planning without necessarily embracing its political program.

¹⁵¹ Hobsbawm 1994:177

¹⁵² Frieden 2006:320

more protection and encouragement from the state than in Latin America. In these regions, ISI “was commonly promoted as part of a local form of socialism.

Supporters of Indian socialism, Arab socialism, Burmese socialism, and African socialism all presented them as a combination of central planning and social democracy, bundled together with rapid industrialization and nation building.”¹⁵³

Governments nationalized major industries and developed a large public sector that approached the Soviet Union in its scope. India, for example, “emulated aspects of Soviet planning, using a series of five-year plans to guide the country's industrialization.”¹⁵⁴ Jawaharlal Nehru, who governed the country between 1947 and 1964 and had spent time in the USSR during the 1920s, encouraged extensive state investment in manufacturing. Between 1951 and 1966, during the country's three five-years plans, the state accounted for half of all industrial investment. In Egypt, after Nasser's socialist government took control in the 1952 revolution, the state nationalized the country's banks and insurance companies as well as most industry (the state owned ninety percent of factories employing more than ten workers, and accounted for nearly half of industrial output and a third of the labor force.¹⁵⁵

In Europe, as described above, the appeals of communism were limited by its coercive nature. “Incapable of being associated with liberty, Communism's only chance for survival lay in coexisting with the nationalist sentiment,” wrote Furet.

¹⁵³ Frieden 2006:318

¹⁵⁴ Frieden 2006:314

¹⁵⁵ Frieden 2006:318

But by the late 1940s, “it had exhausted the credit it had drawn from the generalized hatred of Germany. It was all very well for Soviet propaganda to denounce the allegedly vengeful West Germans, but the time had passed when anti-Germanism could serve to make people in the liberated territories accept or like the Red Army.”¹⁵⁶ Just as Communist expansion rolled to a stop in Eastern Europe against the borders of American influence, the developing world “now became the central pillar of the hope and faith of those who still put their faith in social revolution,” wrote Hobsbawm. “It seemed to be a global volcano waiting to erupt, a seismic field whose tremors announced the major earthquakes to come.”¹⁵⁷

The spread of non-European communism achieved its greatest triumphs in the years following the war. But as the attraction of Communism faded, and the Soviet Union’s capacity to coerce more governments into its mold had been contained, the wave crested. The communist bloc “showed no sign of significant expansion between the Chinese revolution and the 1970s,” by which point China had split from the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁸ There were several more expansions of the communist world, notably in Cuba in 1959 and Africa in the 1970s, “but substantially the socialist sector of the globe had taken shape by 1950.”¹⁵⁹

The Democratic Wave

The postwar expansion and consolidation of democratic regimes in Western

¹⁵⁶ Furet 1999:410

¹⁵⁷ Hobsbawm 1994:436

¹⁵⁸ Hobsbawm 1994:227-8

¹⁵⁹ Hobsbawm 1994:373

Europe served as an example of how a rising hegemon can take advantage of the post-shock window of opportunity to exercise its influence through economic incentives and international institutions. “The single biggest extension of democratic liberties in the history of the world,” argued Samuel Huntington, “came at the end of World War II.”¹⁶⁰

As in Eastern Europe, the wave proceeded through a combination of coercion, influence, and emulation – but in the case of Western Europe direct coercion played a much less prominent role. This did not necessarily imply a more benign motivation on the part of the United States. First, its economy was in far better shape than the Soviet Union’s, giving it more room to use financial incentives to convert countries into its camp. Second, it faced a different set of motivations in doing so. Both superpowers sought followers to legitimize the universalist nature of their respective regimes. But beyond that basic goal, they had a very different set of concerns and priorities. Unlike the Soviet Union, the U.S. did not seek a protective security buffer, within which the incentives of the populace would take a back seat to the necessity for a *cordon sanitaire* governed by pliable, unquestioning and loyal regimes. The United States emerged from the war with a large and competitive economy; exports were twice as important to American manufacturing compared to the 1930s, and in Europe it saw a large potential market for its wares.¹⁶¹ Its physical security was assured; but its economic well-being depended on securing export markets. A European dollar shortage prevented the continent from buying

¹⁶⁰ Huntington 1982:26

¹⁶¹ Frieden 2006:262

American goods, endangering the recovery and opening the way to Communist-led discontent.¹⁶² America's turn outward after 1945 can thus be explained as much by its rise in power (and the corresponding decline of its former rivals) as by the determination to avoid the turmoil of the interwar years or fear of Soviet power. The price for its unmatched dominance was a danger of diminished export destinations. American officials agreed, noted the historian Melvyn Leffler, that "long-term American prosperity required open markets, unhindered access to raw materials, and the rehabilitation of much-if not all-of Eurasia along liberal capitalist lines."¹⁶³

Coercion, of course, was not entirely absent from the spread of democracy. The U.S. occupied Germany, and Japan. Particularly in the latter two cases, the U.S. played a crucial role in designing and overseeing the installation of democratic institutions. As the title of a 1957 book declared, these countries were "forced to be free."¹⁶⁴ With the partial exception of South Korea, Huntington writes, "where American armies marched, democracy followed in their train."¹⁶⁵ Army occupation was the most direct way in which the United States wielded its influence. The U.S.

¹⁶² Victoria de Grazia (2005) *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe*, Harvard University Press, p. 346. As she explains, "This shortfall was blamed on the trade gap between the two areas, which in turn was blamed on Europe's perennially flagging economic output." The first goal of U.S. aid was therefore to raise productivity through investments in industrial infrastructure (power plants, electric grids, ports and the like).

¹⁶³ Melvyn P. Leffler (1984) "The American Conception of National Security and the Beginning of the Cold War, 1945-48," *American Historical Review* 89.2, p. 349-56. Quoted in Ikenberry 2001:180

¹⁶⁴ John D. Montgomery (1957) *Forced To Be Free: The Artificial Revolution in Germany and Japan*, University of Chicago Press

¹⁶⁵ Huntington 1982:26

established bases and stationed military personnel throughout Western Europe. Its military authorities made crucial decisions about institutional reforms and policies, including forcibly opening the former Axis countries to global trade.¹⁶⁶

Other means of influence were less direct. The CIA, for example, funded the Christian Democrats in the 1948 Italian election to help ensure their victory over the left-wing Popular Democratic Front and the Italian Socialist Party.¹⁶⁷ While emphasizing the generally non-coercive nature of American influence in post-war Europe, Ikenberry notes that the U.S. “did attempt to use its material resources to pressure and induce Britain and the other industrial democracies to abandon bilateral and regional preferential agreements and accept the principles of a postwar economy organized around a nondiscriminatory system of trade and payments.” Aid was tied to specific conditions that conformed to policies pursued by the U.S. For example, an (ultimately failed) 1946 agreement “obliged the British to make sterling convertible in exchange for American assistance....The United States knew it held a commanding position and sought to use its power to give the postwar order a distinctive shape.”¹⁶⁸

Still, outside of Germany and Japan, influence rather than coercion was the

¹⁶⁶ Even so, Vinen argues, its power to coerce was self-limited. “Even in Germany in 1945, the American army was subject to the constraint of a civilian government and the rule of law.” (Vinen 2000:259)

¹⁶⁷ “We had bags of money that we delivered to selected politicians, to defray their political expenses, their campaign expenses, for posters, for pamphlets,” a CIA operative told CNN in a 1998 documentary. The New York Times (2006) “F. Mark Wyatt, 86, C.I.A. Officer, Is Dead”, July 6. A secret CIA report detailing these activities was presented to the Pike Committee in 1975 and appeared in their report, published two years later.

¹⁶⁸ Ikenberry 2001:200

order of the day in Europe. "The United States spent little of its hegemonic power trying to coerce and induce other governments to buy into American rules and institutions," notes Ikenberry. "It spent much more time and resources trying to create the conditions under which postwar European governments and publics would remain moderate and pro-Western."¹⁶⁹ The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were the two primary instruments for creating these favorable conditions. Both were announced in the spring of 1947, and both sought to assert American leadership while rolling back the spread of communist regimes. (Other American agencies also supported democratic institutions in Europe on a smaller scale; these included the CIA, private corporations, and U.S. trade unions.)¹⁷⁰ Officially, only Turkey and Greece would receive American assistance, but Truman's address committed the United States to helping all "free peoples" of the world fight communist influence, "primarily through economic and financial aid".¹⁷¹ Following the announcement of the Truman doctrine, the U.S. used foreign aid to provide anti-Soviet military assistance to the developing world, intended to help national elites resist Communist pressure (military aid comprised 95 percent of all Third World aid in 1954.)¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Ikenberry 2001:202

¹⁷⁰ Vinen 2000:260

¹⁷¹ See *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States - Harry S. Truman, 1 January to 31 December 1947* (Washington, 1963), PP.176-80, for the full text of Truman's speech. For a discussion of how the Truman Doctrine signaled an unprecedented U.S. involvement in global politics, see Michael Cox and Caroline Kennedy-Pipe (2005) "The Tragedy of American Diplomacy? Rethinking the Marshall Plan" *Cold War Studies* 7.1:97-134.

¹⁷² Westad 2005:26

The Marshall Plan, proposed by Secretary of State George C. Marshall after a visit to Europe, became the most prominent way in which the United States exercised its influence and promoted liberal democratic regimes in the years following the war. It was an unprecedented use of post-shock economic dominance to secure the consolidation of regimes that followed the American institutional model. By the end of the program in 1952, the United States had spent \$13 billion, more than all previous American foreign aid put together. Germany, Britain and France received the largest absolute amount, but for smaller countries like Italy and Austria it amounted to a larger relative share of the economy (between July 1948 and June 1949, 14 percent of Austria's income came from Marshall Aid).¹⁷³ In some of these smaller states, the aid amounted to more than a tenth of national income.¹⁷⁴

The largest impact of the Marshall Plan resided not with the amount of the disbursements but with the conditions attached to them. Along with collaborators in western Europe, U.S. aid officials sought to prevent national politicians "from being tempted to fall back on state intervention, planning, and closed economies."¹⁷⁵ In doing so, Marshall aid nudged center-left parties toward social democracy rather than communism. As State Department official Charles Bohlen argued in 1946: "It is definitely in the interest of the United States to see that the present left movement throughout the world, which we should recognize and even

¹⁷³ Judt 2005:91. In 2009 dollars, the aid amounted to about \$113 billion.

¹⁷⁴ Frieden 2006:268

¹⁷⁵ de Grazia 2005:345-6

support, develops in the direction of democratic as against totalitarian systems."¹⁷⁶ Through financial assistance, Ikenberry argues, American officials hoped to create "a socioeconomic environment in Europe that would be congenial to the emergence and dominance of moderate and centrist governments."¹⁷⁷ The postwar disorder created a palpable fear of Soviet encroachment beyond the occupied zones. "U.S. policymakers knew the Kremlin was not the cause of postwar turbulence, but they feared that Moscow would exploit it," writes Christopher Layne. "In particular, Washington feared that Communist parties would come to power by taking advantage of Western Europe's postwar malaise, and that nationalists in colonies throughout the world would harness Communist ideology to throw off Western rule."¹⁷⁸

The push for democratic regimes in Western Europe was never explicitly presented as a program for imitating American institutions. An ostentatious display of American influence was neither productive nor necessary for achieving its goals, since "post-war Europeans were so aware of their humiliating dependence upon American aid and protection that any insensitive pressure from that quarter would certainly have been politically counter-productive."¹⁷⁹ As a State Department document from 1946 put it, pro-American policy in Italy "would be a judicious mixture of flattery, moral encouragement and considerable material aid...It could not be a one-shot cure, but should consist of a kind word, a loaf of bread, a public

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in Ikenberry 2001:202

¹⁷⁷ Ikenberry 2001:202

¹⁷⁸ Layne 2006:56

¹⁷⁹ Judt 2005:97

tribute to Italian civilization, then another kind word, and so on, with an occasional plug from the sponsors advertising the virtues of democracy American style.”¹⁸⁰ As befitting the purposes of the plan, countries with strong communist parties received the most generous financial assistance. The attempts by Ireland to secure Marshall aid funds, on the other hand, were “undermined by the fact that Ireland was the most right-wing democracy in Europe.”¹⁸¹

In short, the Marshall Plan “was an economic program but the crisis it averted was political.”¹⁸² As Kennedy notes, “it took no genius to see that the *raison d’etre* for the plan was to convince Europeans everywhere that private enterprise was better able to bring them prosperity than communism.”¹⁸³ Indeed, the impact of Marshall aid on the consolidation of democracy in western Europe was both immediate and long-lasting. In Austria, for example, local communists (supported by Soviet forces, who still occupied the eastern half of the country) “never made any dent in the popularity of Americans and their aid,” notes Judt. “[T]he latter put food in people’s mouths and this was what mattered most.” In Greece, the \$649 million in aid extended in the spring of 1948 “made the difference between survival and destitution.” It “supported refugees and staved off hunger and disease,” and provided half of the country’s gross national product in 1950.¹⁸⁴ Across Europe,

¹⁸⁰ A State Department document from 1946; quoted in John Lamberton Harper (1986) *American Influence and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1948*, Cambridge University Press, p.109; quoted in Vinen 2000:258

¹⁸¹ Vinen 2000:259

¹⁸² Judt 2005:97

¹⁸³ Kennedy 1987:377

¹⁸⁴ Judt 2005:96

it reduced the attraction of Soviet-style reforms and communist institutions by providing a means for general economic recovery. Economic growth surged in the second half of the 1940s, inaugurating a golden age for western Europe that lasted for the following two decades. Dutch industrial and agricultural production surpassed 1938 levels by 1948, while France, Austria and Italy reached the same milestone in 1949, and Greece and West Germany in 1950.¹⁸⁵

The democratic wave in western Europe was built on a desire for postwar stability and (in some cases) a history of democratic government, but it was made possible by the rare combination of American influence and commitment (both political and economic) in the years immediately following the war. In pursuing the consolidation of democratic reforms in the region, the United States achieved several goals simultaneously: it created markets for American exports, secured European commitment to democratic institutions, and stopped the spread of communism beyond the Elbe. But the economic and geopolitical success of the United States extended beyond Western Europe, leading to a wave of democratization (however short-lived) in Latin America, Asia, and other countries around the world whose leaders sought to capture a piece of American largesse, ingratiate themselves into the emerging institutional infrastructure, and emulate the successes of the most powerful country in the world.

¹⁸⁵ Judt 2005:96. See also Kennedy 1987:377 for a similar appraisal.

Spread of Democracy outside Western Europe

Outside of Western Europe, the spread of democratic institutions extended to Latin America and (to a lesser extent) to Asia. In neither region was democratization an unqualified success. Much like in Europe after World War I, democratization was in some cases short-lived, lacking the structural domestic pre-conditions or U.S. support for democratic leaders. As the Cold War went into full swing, democratic institutions took a back seat to stability and loyalty to U.S. interests.

In the few years immediately following the war, however, a number of states adopted democratic institutions and underwent democratic reforms. As in western Europe, coercion was an element of the wave, most prominently in Japan but to a lesser degree in South Korea. The American occupation of Japan, which lasted from 1945 to 1952, resulted in a number of fundamental democratic reforms. In October 1945, General MacArthur ordered the abrogation of the Peace Preservation Law of 1925, which had been used to arrest and silence critics of the government. Restrictions on political expression and assembly were eliminated; the Special Higher Police (sometimes known as the “thought police”) was dissolved, and political prisoners were released from jail. The Japanese cabinet resigned in protest, but a week later the new premier Shidehara Kijuro, “met MacArthur for the first time and received a succinct order that made the previous directive seem mild.” The government was ordered to promote liberal education in schools and labor unions in industry, to extend suffrage to women, to dismantle monopolistic

industrial controls “and in general eliminate all despotic vestiges in society. Suddenly, abstract statements about promoting democracy had become exceedingly specific.”¹⁸⁶ The first general election under universal suffrage (including female suffrage) took place in April 1946.¹⁸⁷

After 1947, gnawing fear of communist influence in Japan led U.S. occupation forces to curb some of the more radical pro-democracy measures undertaken immediately after the end of the war. While democratic institutions survived, in this pattern Japan mirrored the trajectory of many developing states in the postwar years. As long as cooperation with the Soviet Union was possible, democratization became the first priority. But as the confrontation hardened, “protecting” countries from communist influence (whether foreign or domestic) became more important than maintaining a fragile, messy, potentially disloyal democratic regime. As Harvey put it, when forced to choose between democracy and stability “the US always opted for the latter.”¹⁸⁸ Less than two years after his election in July 1948, South Korean president Syngman Rhee began assuming dictatorial powers in a fight against communism, backed by the United States. The Korean War allowed him to consolidate his grip on power, and a democracy was not introduced in South Korea

¹⁸⁶ John Dower (1999) *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, W.W. Norton & Company, p.81

¹⁸⁷ The voting age was lowered from 25 to 20, and the total electorate had more than doubled. Roberts 1999:517

¹⁸⁸ David Harvey (2003) *The New Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 39-40. Quoted in Kathleen Weekley (2006) “The National or the Social? Problems of Nation-Building in Post-World War II Philippines” *Third World Quarterly* 27.1, p.90

until 1987.¹⁸⁹ As Fareed Zakaria notes, “after brief flirtations with democracy after World War II, most East Asian regimes turned authoritarian.”¹⁹⁰

The same scenario was played out in Latin America with a marginally better rate of success. In fact, the postwar wave of democracy in Latin America represents a classic example of the model presented in Chapter 1. Scholars of Latin American democratization generally distinguish between two phases in post-war Latin American development. The first stage, which took place between 1944 and 1946, was marked by democratization – the collapse of dictatorships, mass mobilization, and elections with high levels of participation. In the second phase, which spanned the years between 1946 and 1948, democracy suffered setbacks as the upper classes and military leaders, alarmed by the political gains made by the lower and middle classes as a result of political liberalization, began pushing back. By 1947, the onset of the Cold War made stability and anti-Communism a higher priority than democratization.

The initial period of 1944-46 saw the introduction of a number of democratic reforms, via both popular rebellions and elite reforms. Suffrage was expanded in Colombia, Brazil, and Peru. Though it was not always universal, since literacy qualifications excluded people in poor rural areas, postwar suffrage was in general more democratic than in the 1920s. Ecuador and Costa Rica also turned to democracy in the late 1940s, as did (briefly) Bolivia. In Argentina, Colombia, Peru

¹⁸⁹ Although Huntington optimistically argues that throughout the mid-1950s, “a moderately democratic system was maintained.” Huntington 1982:30

¹⁹⁰ Fareed Zakaria (1997) “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy” *Foreign Affairs* 76.6, p. 27

and Venezuela, elections in 1945-6 brought in, according to Huntington, “popularly chosen governments.”¹⁹¹ Venezuela held the country’s first free election in 1947, won by the centrist *Accion Democratica* candidate Romulo Gallegos, inaugurating the country’s first experience with democracy (until a military coup d’etat a year later.) A popular uprising in Guatemala in July 1944 brought the removal of the thirteen-year dictatorship of Jorge Ubico. Brazil carried out its “first relatively democratic elections in the country’s history”¹⁹² in December 1945, after Getulio Vargas announced electoral reforms earlier that year. In the same year, Argentina witnessed growing opposition to the military regime of Edelmiro Farrell and Juan Peron, a large (several hundred thousand strong) demonstration in the capital, followed by democratic elections in February 1946. In Bolivia, a mass revolt removed the nationalist military government in the summer of 1946 and scheduled democratic elections for January 1947.

In short, as one observer noted in 1946, the last year of the war and its immediate aftermath “brought more democratic changes in more Latin American

¹⁹¹ Huntington 1991:18. The inclusion of Argentina is debatable, although the country did expand suffrage. For instance, between 1943 and 1946 Peron’s government shut down 110 publications. David Williams Foster, Melissa Fitch Lockhart, Darrell B. Lockhart (1998) *Culture and Customs of Argentina*, Greenwood Publishing Group, p. 62. Peter Smith does not include it among his list of countries that belonged to the second wave in Latin America - Costa Rica, Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador. Peter Smith (2005) *Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective*, Oxford University press, p.32

¹⁹² Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough (1992) *Latin America Between the Second World War and the Cold War, 1944-1948*, Cambridge University Press, p.5

countries than perhaps in any single year since the Wars of Independence.”¹⁹³ By mid-1946, only five governments in the region “could not claim to be in some sense popular and democratic in their origins” – Paraguay, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic.¹⁹⁴ Of these, both Honduras and El Salvador experienced upheavals in the spring of 1944; an uprising in May succeeded in overthrowing El Salvador’s authoritarian ruler, General Martínez, but a dictatorship was restored seven months later.

Scholars of Latin America frequently point to the changing international context as the driving force for the region’s postwar democratization. After 1944, “the redistribution of international power was the general framework in which many Latin American countries undertook democratizing institutional reforms”, argues Soledad Laezza.¹⁹⁵ “The second democratic wave across South America was essentially the result of the Allied victory in the Second World War,” argues George Philip.¹⁹⁶ The American victory in the war and its dramatic rise to superpower status encouraged democratization in a number of ways. Countries like Mexico pushed to accommodate themselves to America’s foreign policy of promoting democratic

¹⁹³ William Ebenstein (1946) “Political and Social Thought in Latin America” in Arthur P. Whitaker, ed., *Inter-American Affairs 1945*, New York, p.137. Quoted in Bethell and Roxborough 1992:5

¹⁹⁴ Bethell and Roxborough 1992:5.

¹⁹⁵ Soledad Laezza (2009) “Too close for conflict: Mexican authoritarianism as a response to US power, 1944-1949” Paper Presented at the 2009 APSA Annual Meeting. Toronto, Canada, September 3-6, 2009, p.2

¹⁹⁶ George Philip (1996) “Democratic Institutions in South America: Comparative and Historical Perspectives” *Third World Quarterly* 17.4:713. On this point, see also Paul W. Drake (1989) “Debt and Democracy in Latin America, 1920s-1980s” in Barbara Stallings and Robert Kaufman, eds., *Debt and Democracy in Latin America*, Westview Press.

institutions, an example of “emulation as bandwagoning” described in the first chapter. (During the war Washington began to withdraw its support of authoritarian governments in the region – support that returned with the onset of the Cold War.) Countries also hoped to profit from America’s increased economic influence, leading to “the widespread hope for a postwar bonanza.”¹⁹⁷ Finally, the democratic victory, the postwar settlement, and U.S. emphasis on democratization encouraged a general spirit of political liberalization. As Hal Brand notes, starting with the Atlantic Charter in 1951 the notion of a New Deal for the world “had a pronounced ideological impact in Latin America....Latin America’s movement toward democracy was inextricably linked to the broader democratic optimism of that period. Internal pressures and external encouragement came together between 1944 and 1946 in a remarkable wave of democratization.... The degree of ambitiousness varied from country to country, but the general trend was unmistakable.”¹⁹⁸

As in Asia, however, these democratic gains were not consolidated. “The new order was fragile, though, and as it turned out, temporary.”¹⁹⁹ Not a single country in South America experienced uninterrupted democracy after 1945.²⁰⁰ In the

¹⁹⁷ Paul W. Drake (1994) “International Factors in Democratization” paper presented at the Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Juan March Institute, Madrid (November 4, 1994), p.5

¹⁹⁸ Hal Brands (2010) *Latin America’s Cold War*, Harvard University Press, p.13-14. As he notes, “In Guatemala and El Salvador demonstrators read from the UN charter. Honduran protestors invoked the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter and wore headscarves bearing the UN emblem.”

¹⁹⁹ Brands 2010:14

²⁰⁰ Philip 1996:713

decade following 1946, anti-democratic domestic forces violently pushed back any gains made in the wake of the war. The region's economic and military elites felt severely threatened by reforms that tended to empower the lower and middle classes, and by the end of the decade "the conservative classes mobilized to check the progressive tendency."²⁰¹ Democratic movements were smashed in Bolivia, Paraguay, El Salvador, Peru, Venezuela, Panama, Cuba, Haiti, Colombia, and Argentina. In Brazil and Chile the civilian government drifted in a conservative direction without coups.

The political evolution of Mexico between 1944 and 1949 provides a typical example. Between 1944 and 1946 the government of Avila Camacho introduced a number of major reforms. The military was pushed out of politics and electoral reforms were introduced that seemed to signal the emergence of a multi-party system and "the beginning of a new age for Mexico, characterized by civilian governments, political stability, sustained growth, and international prestige."²⁰² These reforms were taken to "prepare the country to meet the challenges of a new distribution of world power....They sought to accommodate the country to the post war transformation of the United States" to superpower status.²⁰³ But as the Cold War ramped up, U.S. priorities shifted toward encouraging domestic stability. Mexico's anti-democratic forces no longer needed to fear possible American intervention, and began to re-assert themselves. The PRI re-institutionalized itself as

²⁰¹ Brands 2010:14

²⁰² Loaeza 2009:13

²⁰³ Loaeza 2009:3-4

the nation's official party. The single-party state had returned, and the moment of democratization had passed.

Chile offers another clear example. As historian Corinne Antezana-Pernet argues, Chilean women's movements experienced sudden growth immediately after the war as part of the general trend of democratization in the region. Given the conservative nature of the country's domestic politics, it was World War II that acted as a "necessary catalyst" for creating "a broad, ambitious women's movement committed to the defense of democracy and its extension to women."²⁰⁴ But the later years of the decade marked a period of reversal for the women's movement, which experienced the disintegration of women's associations and the exclusion of their progressive elements. With Chile's lurch to the right in 1947, "the progressive wing of the women's movement came to be viewed as a political liability by the centrist and right-wing women's groups. They now began to exclude the leftist feminists. These internal conflicts eventually led to the dissolution of the women's movement."²⁰⁵

The rise and decline of the Chilean women's movement was thus intimately linked to shifts in the international system. As elsewhere, the end of the war led to a swell of democratic reforms and the empowerment of pro-democracy movements, while the onset of the Cold War and the reassertion of power by right-wing elites ruptured the fragile alliances that were forged in the early period.

²⁰⁴ Corinne Antezana-Pernet (1994) "Peace in the World and Democracy at Home: The Chilean Women's Movement in the 1940s" in David Rock, ed., *Latin America in the 1940s: War and Postwar Transitions*, University of California Press, p.166-7

²⁰⁵ Antezana-Pernet 1994:167

In sum, the postwar reforms in Latin America, driven by the American victory and the spirit of democratic optimism, created a democratic overstretch. Changing internal dynamics, the reassertion of power by the region's elites, and the onset of the Cold War pushed the wave back and reversed many of these democratic gains.

Conclusion

The postwar redistribution of power, while not the only catalyst for domestic transformations, influenced many of the regime reforms that took place in the war's aftermath. The hegemonic shock that discredited the fascist alternative and replaced an ailing multipolar system with a bipolar one also had a momentous impact on the evolution of regimes in many countries around the world. The dramatic Soviet victory allowed it to impose communist regimes in Eastern Europe and spurred a number of followers, most notably in China but also in a number of developing countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. In Latin America, too, communist and socialist powers temporarily increased in popularity after the war, participating in leftist democratic governments before being driven out by the region's rightward turn later in the decade. "Stalin had emerged from his victory over Hitler far stronger than ever before," writes Judt, "basking in the reflected glory of 'his' Red Army, at home and abroad."²⁰⁶ As Raymond Aron noted in 1944, communism "profits from and will go on profiting from the enormous prestige reflected on the Soviet regime and people by the victories of the Russian armies."²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Judt 2005:174

²⁰⁷ Aron 1944/2002:194

The United States also greatly increased in influence and prestige in the years immediately following the war. It used its unprecedented wealth to secure democratic institutions in Western Europe, and inspired a wave of democratization in Latin America. Both countries used its military might to impose their own regimes on others through coercion (though the Soviet Union came to rely on force to a greater extent than the United States). Both countries used their economic influence to exert political pressure and encourage other states to copy their institutions (and here the roles were reversed, with the U.S. relying on its economic prowess more than the recovering Soviet Union). Both countries benefited from the prestige endowed to them by their victory and the emulation it inspired in leaders and movements around the world. Both created and used international institutions to shape and direct their power.

Where the outcomes differed was in the consolidation of their respective regimes. Here the record was mixed. The communist regimes in eastern Europe were maintained through communist control, usually implicit but periodically manifesting itself in brutal invasions to put down attempts at reform – “tanks before teatime” in the case of the 1968 Prague Spring. When the source of that coercion was removed with the changes in Gorbachev’s foreign policy, the regimes collapsed like a house of cards. In the case of the United States, democratic institutions were successfully consolidated in Western Europe. In contrast to the aftermath of World War I, an intense and long-term commitment by the U.S. ensured economic revival and political stability. Yet states in Latin America failed

to sustain their brief move toward democracy in the mid-1940s. Once again, the dynamics of consolidation differed between democratic and non-democratic waves. In the latter, consolidation was secured through continuous military force; in the former, a democratic overstretch produced a wave that was bound to roll back as the incentives and opportunities associated with the hegemonic shock began to fade away.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Beyond the Great Plateau

“We see long dim vistas stretching in many directions of the forest,
but of none can we descry the end.”

-- James Bryce (1921)¹

“There was no certainty; only the appeal to that mocking oracle they called
History, who gave her sentence only when the jaws of the appellant
had long since fallen to dust.”

-- Arthur Koestler (1941)²

“So two cheers for Democracy: one because it admits variety
and two because it permits criticism. Two cheers are quite enough:
there is no occasion to give three.”

-- E.M. Forster (1951)³

As this dissertation has argued, the twentieth century has been shaped by a series of confrontations between great powers, and the competing visions of the state embodied by these great powers. Hegemonic shocks challenge and transform accepted notions of legitimate regimes and institutions. They change perceptions of

¹ James Bryce (1921) *Modern Democracies* Vol.1, p.11

² Arthur Koestler (1941/2006) *Darkness at Noon*, transl. by Daphne Hardy, New York: Scribner

³ E.M. Forster (1951/1976) “What I believe” in *Two Cheers for Democracy*, Penguin Books, p.84

what a modern state *ought* to look like. In this they are, to borrow Marx's description of revolution, the midwives of history. The period between 1919 and 1991 marked a series of struggles between the three modern conceptions of the state. Each culminated with a shock to the political landscape, each shock leaving in its wake a wave of domestic transformations. These transformations were piecemeal and often unsuccessful, but the very undertaking showcased the brief power of the rising hegemon in the immediate aftermath of the shock. World War I set the stage by marking the last breath of the monarchical empires of eastern and central Europe. Around the world, the war's outcome signaled the end of monarchy as a model for development, and – for a brief moment – thrust democracy into the spotlight as a panacea for nationalism and other vices of modernity.

But the disappointing and tentative aftermath of the war led to a search for new alternatives. Its outcome displayed a “total lack of consensus among the three great victors about the new international order they were imposing,” writes Furet. “At Versailles, the Allies imposed a Carthaginian peace without a consensus as to its ends, or even its means.”⁴ The Great War not only opened an opportunity for a Communist ascent in one of the ailing empires, but also planted the seed for a fascist revolt against the shortcomings of liberal democracy. Democracy was the war's short-lived offspring, but communism and fascism were its enduring progeny. These challengers – the two “great totalitarian temptations” of the century, in the

⁴ Furet 1999:58-9

words of Fritz Stern⁵ – offered alternative paths to modernity that at various points seemed poised to overtake an ailing, stagnant, and corrupt democracy.

Yet less than five decades after helping democracy expunge the fascist alternative, communism itself left the world stage with a quiet implosion. Both challengers exited from the world stage defeated, discredited, and ready to adopt the institutions of their former rival. Neither fulfilled its self-appointed destiny to forge a new world on the ruins of the old. “Today it is hard to realize that they are such recent ideologies,” writes Furet, “for they seem outmoded, absurd, deplorable, or criminal, depending on the case. Nonetheless, they permeated the twentieth century.”⁶

The Work Ahead

The study of hegemonic shocks and institutional waves offers a number of enhancements and extensions of the theory. The most obvious is expanding the universe of cases to include the last hegemonic shock of the twentieth century – the Soviet collapse. The analysis of this shock can help shed some light not only on the wave of democratization in the mid-1990s, but also on the rise of hybrid regimes since that period. As the post-Soviet democratic wave crested and subsided, a number of states settled into a pattern best described as a competitive or electoral autocracy. The dynamics of failed transitions inherent in democratic waves can offer a new perspective on the proliferation of these hybrid regimes. These

⁵ Stern 1997:21

⁶ Furet 1999:23

competitive autocracies are characterized by the formal institutions of democracy, particularly multi-party elections, but as Levitsky and Way put it, these are elections in which "incumbents routinely abuse state resources, deny the opposition adequate media coverage, harass opposition candidates and their supporters, and in some cases manipulate electoral results."⁸ In such regimes, rulers faced real electoral challenges, "despite the opposition contesting a lopsided political arena."

Such institutional fusion is not an entirely new development. As Larry Diamond pointed out, some autocratic regimes in the 1960s and 1970s also incorporated elements of democracy, including multiparty elections. But the new competitive autocracies, Diamond argued, differed from these predecessors by using methods

⁷ Brownlee 2009:518

⁸ Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way (2002) "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism" *Journal of Democracy* 13.2, p.53. See also Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way (2010) *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War*, Cambridge University Press. Earlier writings on hybrid regimes include Fareed Zakaria (1997) "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 76.6: 22-43; Thomas Carothers (2002) "The End of the Transition Paradigm" *Journal of Democracy* 13.1:5-21; Larry Diamond (2002) "Thinking About Hybrid Regimes" *Journal of Democracy* 13.2:21-35; Andreas Schedler (2002) "The Menu of Manipulation" *Journal of Democracy* 13.2:36-50; Marina Ottaway (2003) *Democracy Challenged: The Rise of Semi-Authoritarianism*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Later writings include Andreas Schedler, ed. (2006) *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner; Marc Morjé Howard and Philip G. Roessler (2006) "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes" *American Journal of Political Science* 50.2:365- 81; Jason Brownlee (2009) "Portents of Pluralism: How Hybrid Regimes Affect Democratic Transitions" *American Journal of Political Science* 53.3:515-532

more subtle than banning and imprisonment to outmaneuver opposition groups.⁹

As Schedler noted:

Since the early days of the 'third wave' of global democratization, it has been clear that transitions from authoritarian rule can lead anywhere. Over the past quarter-century, many have led to the establishment of some form of democracy. But many others have not. They have given birth to new forms of authoritarianism that do not fit into our classic categories of one-party, military, or personal dictatorship.¹⁰

The sheer number of these regimes is also unique in the history of political development. By 2001 more than two-thirds of all autocracies held multi-party elections.¹¹ By the end of the century it was becoming clear that these hybrid regimes were a new and stable form of modern autocracy rather than a transitional stage.¹²

The Soviet collapse created a powerful motivation for autocrats to adopt the formal institutions associated with democracy. As Levitsky and Way note, "Western liberalism's triumph and the Soviet collapse undermined the legitimacy of alternative regime models and created strong incentives for peripheral states to adopt formal democratic institutions."¹³ But in many places domestic conditions could not sustain actual democratization. A history of authoritarianism, lack of a middle class, poverty, and absence of civil society all contributed to these incomplete democratizations. From this perspective, competitive autocracies are

⁹ Diamond 2002:23-4

¹⁰ Schedler 2002:361

¹¹ Schedler 2002:47

¹² Levitsky and Way 2002:52; Brownlee 2009:517

¹³ Levitsky and Way 2002:61

the results of failed democratic transitions sparked by the Soviet collapse. A study of the post-Soviet wave could help illuminate the dynamics that led to emergence and continued existence of competitive autocracies.

The universe of cases need not be confined to the twentieth century. I have chosen to focus on this period because hegemonic shocks propagate through *systems* of states. A system is a connected network of political actors that have, in Hedley Bull's definition, "sufficient contact between them, and have sufficient impact on one another's decisions, to cause them to behave – at least in some measure – as parts of a whole."¹⁴ By these criteria, Bull argues a world system did not really emerge until World War One. "Throughout human history before the nineteenth century there was no single political system that spanned the world as a whole." But since the late nineteenth century, "order on a global scale has ceased to be simply the sum of the various political systems that produce order on a local scale; it is also the product of what may be called a world political system."¹⁵

English geographer Halford Mackinder proclaimed the birth of a "closed political system" of "world-wide scope" a decade before World War I.¹⁶ "From World War I onward," writes Tilly, "it becomes increasingly difficult to separate the European

¹⁴ Hedley Bull (1977/2003) *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 3rd ed, Columbia University Press, p.9

¹⁵ Bull 1977/2003:19-20

¹⁶ Harold Mackinder (1904) "The Geographical Pivot of History" *The Geographical Journal* 23.4, p.422. "Every explosion of social forces," he wrote, "will be sharply re-echoed from the far side of the globe..." Mackinder 1904:422

system from the world system of states that was forming rapidly.”¹⁷

But even if the world was not a unified system until World War I, the study of hegemonic shocks does not require a global unit of analysis. By the earlier definition, Europe had become its own state system at the end of the 17th century if not before. The hegemonic shock of the Napoleonic Wars and its reverberations throughout Europe thus offers another case study of an early institutional wave. As Furet notes, the clash between revolutionary France and monarchical Europe “initiated the era of democratic war”.¹⁸ For decades before the French revolution, statesmen warned that it would become necessary to bring the majority of the population under the control of the state, to replace patronage with centralized authority mediated by the rule of law and financed by a far-reaching tax system. The revolution confronted European rulers with these facts. At its peak, Napoleonic France “looked like a country where modern representative institutions, the rule of law, and universal military service had engendered an unprecedented level of patriotism and effectiveness on the battlefield,” writes Hosking. And while this dominance was partly illusory, “contemporaries were impressed.”¹⁹ The spread of republican institutions during the wars was partially reversed by the Holy Alliance,

¹⁷ Charles Tilly (1990) *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992*, Blackwell, p. 179. Likewise, Schweller describes the creation of the international system as a process that “subsumed the entire earth, such that nothing remained outside of it. This process began roughly one hundred years ago, after the Age of Discovery that witnessed European expansion across the oceans to new lands.” Randall L. Schweller (2010) “Ennui Becomes Us” *The National Interest* 105, p.28

¹⁸ Furet 1999:48

¹⁹ Geoffrey Hosking (2001) *Russia and the Russians: A History*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, p.240-241

but the lessons of popular mobilization for democratic reforms remained in place. After a century of relative peace during which European energy was directed toward industrialization and colonization, 1914 brought both mass mobilization and democracy to new levels.

The analysis of shocks and their effects on domestic reforms can also be extended to non-Western regional systems, such as the Chinese Period of Warring States (481-221BC) or pre-Meiji Japan.

At the end of the twentieth century democracy appeared to have decisively defeated its challengers. The number of democracies around the world stood at an all-time high. Yet since 1995, and despite occasional outbursts, the level of democracy in the world appears to have reached a Great Plateau. And after a period of unchallenged unipolarity during the 1990s, the hegemon that has embodied democracy around the world once again finds itself facing the prospect of a new ideological struggle over the prevailing archetype of a modern state. The Great Recession that began in 2008 revived the possibility of a search for alternatives. A slew of observers began to suggest that democratic capitalism was in the process of being replaced by state capitalism – an institutional bundle embodied by China and characterized by a capitalist system of production undergirded by state ownership and guidance.²⁰ If the lessons of past hegemonic

²⁰ Azar Gat (2007) "The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers" *Foreign Affairs* 86.4:59-69; Joshua Kurlantzick (2008) "State Inc" *The Boston Globe*, March 16; Joshua Kurlantzick (2008) "Democracy on the Wane" *The Boston Globe*,

shocks can tell us anything about the future, it's the fact that a gradual Chinese ascent poses a much lesser challenge to liberal democracy than a sudden rise of relative Chinese power. The greatest danger facing the future of democracy is therefore a sudden decline in American power, influence, and prestige. For better or for worse, the future of democracy is tied to the future of American power.

Far from being buried in the old struggles of the past century, the lessons of hegemonic shocks continue to resonate today. Understanding the causes and dynamics of democratic waves is crucial for understanding the effectiveness of regime promotion by external means. As the case of World War I demonstrates, the lack of U.S. commitment in promoting democratic institutions throughout postwar Europe contributed to the collapse of new democracies and paved the way for the rise of fascism in the 1930s. Those mistakes were corrected in the settlement following World War II. Yet during the Cold War American foreign policy had an ambivalent relationship with democracy, often preferring reliable autocrats over unpredictable democrats. Whatever direction future U.S. policy takes toward promoting democratic development, understanding how changes in the

September 14; Larry Diamond (2008) *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies Throughout the World*, Basic Books; Larry Diamond (2008) "The Democratic Rollback: The Resurgence of the Predatory State" *Foreign Affairs* 87.2:36-48; Ian Bremmer (2009) "State Capitalism Comes of Age: The End of the Free Market?" *Foreign Affairs* 88.3:40-55; Marcus Walker (2009) "After the Wall: A Debate Over Democracy's Reach" *Wall Street Journal - Eastern Edition*, October 29, p. A17; Azar Gat (2009) *Victorious and Vulnerable: Why Democracy Won in the 20th Century and How it is Still Imperiled*, Rowman & Littlefield; Stefan Halper (2010) *The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century*, Basic Books. See Wolfgang Merkel (2010) "Are Dictatorships Returning? Revisiting the 'democratic rollback' hypothesis" *Contemporary Politics* 16.1:17-31 for a dissent.

international system shape this development will remain an important aspect of the success of these policies. Given the importance of external democracy promotion in contemporary foreign policy, the causes and dynamics of democratic waves can provide important insights into the effectiveness of these policies, whether they are pursued through sanctions, foreign aid, or forced regime change. Policies that attempt to influence democratization should keep in mind that democracy has often moved in cycles of transnational advances and retreats. It may be insufficient or even counterproductive to focus on the needs and preferences of domestic actors inside any single country if domestic reforms are embedded in a larger framework of global or regional power shifts.

The lessons of hegemonic shocks also warn against the triumphalist reading of modern history as one of steady democratic progress. Though the metaphor of waves suggests a powerful inexorable force, democracy's success has been predicated upon the ability of powerful democracies to weather military and economic crises and to emerge triumphant in their wake. When democracies fail to do so, as during the Great Depression, the tide of popular and elite opinion shifts just as readily and just as naturally against democratic institutions. The consecration of democratic triumph is forged by the outcomes of grim struggles. The fragility of democratic success is the ultimate lesson of hegemonic shocks.

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