The role of international organizations in regime transitions: How IGOs can tie a dictator’s hands

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Abstract
The level of violence seen during transitions from authoritarian to democratic rule varies substantially. Recently, Tunisia experienced an almost bloodless transition, while in Libya the attempt to oust the Gadhafi regime ended in a civil war. This paper looks at the dynamics of democratic transitions, and attempts to explain why some become extremely violent while others progress peacefully. Specifically, the paper looks at the potential role of international governmental organizations (IGOs) for constraining or altering the behavior of non-democratic regimes, thereby influencing regime transitions. It argues that, by alleviating commitment problems between the outgoing regime and the new elites, and by imposing sanctions that reduce an incumbent regime’s ability to reap the benefits of office, IGOs increase the likelihood of seeing a peaceful transition to democracy. However, the paper also argues that non-democratic leaders should anticipate this, and therefore that regimes that are members of highly interventionist IGOs should be less likely to liberalize at all. The paper finds evidence in favor of the proposition that IGOs increase the likelihood of a peaceful regime transition, and that non-democratic regimes that are members of highly interventionist IGOs anticipate being constrained by these organizations, and therefore are more reluctant to liberalize in the first place.

Keywords
Autocratic survival, democratization, IGOs, regime change

Introduction
Regime transitions are, invariably, volatile periods. They often simultaneously involve civil society challenging incumbent power, and the appearance of tensions and fissures within a ruling coalition. Still, the amount of violence seen during transitions varies substantially. When challenged, quite a few authoritarian regimes simply pack up and leave. Yet other
transitions become violent, in the extreme disintegrating into full-scale civil war, as in Libya in 2011. This paper attempts to explain why some transitions turn violent, while others progress peacefully. In this, the paper seeks to contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of regime transitions by focusing on what role the international community, through international governmental organizations (IGOs), can play in them.

Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) show that non-violent movements seeking regime change succeed twice as often as violent movements. They argue that one important reason this happens is that non-violent movements induce military defection, which then leads to the downfall of the existing regime. The analysis presented here indicates that IGOs can influence key actors in such processes. IGOs can both tie the hands of a dictator and increase relevant actors’ belief in the likelihood that key actors will honor agreements made during the transition. The paper argues that IGOs, by constraining the behavior of present and future incumbent governments, make regime transitions less violent.

The paper draws on theories on the political economy of dictatorships, and on theories of regime transition, and argues that IGOs have the potential for influencing regime transitions primarily through two mechanisms: first, uncertainty and an often rapidly shifting balance of power are the hallmarks of transitions; they are situations of acute commitment problems. An authoritarian government might be willing to relinquish power if its members get some guarantees that their future life will be safe and comfortable; alternatively, as is often the case with military dictatorships, the military might want guarantees that it will continue to control certain industries. The commitment problem arises from the fact that, given the shifting balance of power, it is hard for the challengers to credibly commit to such a deal. What keeps them from simply reneging on it as soon as they are securely in power? Below I argue that IGOs, by acting as guarantors of such agreements, can alleviate commitment problems, inducing incumbent leaders to step down earlier and more peacefully.

Second, in response to repression, an interventionist IGO can introduce sanctions that severely curtail a government’s access to international markets and its ability to export goods, thereby drastically reducing the amount and variety of goods the incumbent can import and consume. This directly alters the utility for a dictator of staying in power. By limiting an incumbent’s ability to consume, IGOs can make it less lucrative to stay in power, thereby making an earlier and more peaceful exit more likely. However, non-democratic leaders that are members of highly interventionist IGOs should anticipate such actions. They should anticipate that, in the event of a popular uprising, to some extent they will have their hands tied, making them less likely to liberalize in the first place. This means that the decision to liberalize a regime and the decision of how to respond to a popular uprising demanding regime change are interlinked.

I analyze these questions by examining regime transitions from 1900 to 2008, and find evidence for the argument that IGOs increase the likelihood of seeing peaceful transitions. However, I find that only highly structured interventionist IGOs, IGOs that formally have a mandate that allows them to potentially both punish and reward member states, systematically reduce the expected level of violence seen during transitions. The paper is organized as follows: in the next section, I discuss the question of whether IGOs would have any interest in regime transition at all. The subsequent section reviews existing literature on regime change and IGOs. Next I propose a theoretical model linking IGOs with peaceful transitions, and the 1978–1979 democratic transition in Ecuador is used to illustrate the proposed theory. I then describe the data and the statistical model used, and discuss how issues of selection are resolved. Finally, I discuss the findings and conclude.
Do IGOs care about democratization?

According to chapter 1 of the charter of the Organization of American States, one of the goals of the organization is to “promote and consolidate representative democracy”. Similarly, the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU) states that the organization is “determined to ... consolidate institutions and culture, and to ensure good governance and the rule of law” and lists as a key objective to “promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance”. The League of Arab Nations says in its Charter on Human Rights that every citizen has the right to: “freely form and join associations with others”, and enjoys “freedom of association and peaceful assembly”. These and similar statements are found in the charters and acts of many IGOs. Indeed, von Borzyskowski and Vabulas (2015) report that roughly one-third of all IGOs reference the “promotion of democracy, human rights, or rule of law” directly in their charters. At least on paper, organizations such as the League of Arab Nations appear to be promoting democracy.

Democratic IGO members could also actively work to have the IGO promote democracy. Pevehouse (2002a: 522–523) argues that, through IGOs, existing democracies pressure non-democracies to liberalize for two reasons: “[1] as a way to boost their own international status and distance themselves from allies or neighbors, ... [2] expanding the number of democracies expands interaction opportunities for existing democracies. Given the opportunity, a democracy may well attempt to push a non-democratic neighbor or trade partner to liberalize”.

The clearest example of an organization that actively seeks to entice countries to democratize is the European Union. The European Union requires states to be fully democratic in order to be eligible to become members, and the EU actively sought to foster and shore up democracy in Central and Eastern Europe after the break down of the Soviet Union. Especially in the early 1990s, the European Union used the prospect of membership to influence politics in Eastern and Central European states. In these cases, the cost of not democratizing was clear. Not becoming a member meant you would be cut out of the world’s biggest free market zone. With the possible exception of the United Nations, few organizations can match the EU in its direct effect on current and potential member countries. Nevertheless, as the quotes above make clear, several organizations seem to ascribe to themselves at least some role in a process, democratic rule and democratization, which for the most part the existing literature has treated as a domestic process. The question that begs itself is whether there is any trace of IGO involvement in situations of regime change.

Regime change and intergovernmental organizations

Regime transitions and revolutions have for the most part been studied as internal processes, explained, in very broad terms, by grievances (Davies, 1962; Gurr, 1970) or by aspects of the regime (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2001; Przeworski, 1991; Skocpol, 1979). The impact of the international system, or of international actors such as IGOs, on revolutions has received less attention.

The focus in this paper is on why some regime changes turn extremely violent, while others do not. Below I argue that IGOs reduce the amount of violence seen during transitions by alleviating commitment problems and by decreasing uncertainty—in effect, IGOs both tie the hands of a sitting dictator and constrain the actions of regimes following regime
transitions. There is a large literature arguing that uncertainty and commitment problems play a critical role in explaining regime change. Before turning to the theoretical discussion of how IGOs affect regime change, it is useful briefly to review parts of this literature.

Looking at Latin-American transition, O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) argued that the best way to ensure a peaceful and stable transition to democracy was to go through a “pacted” transition. The central idea of such pacted transitions was that: “actors agree to forgo or under-utilize their capacity to harm each other by extending guarantees not to threaten each other’s corporate autonomies or vital interests” (O’Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 38).

Przeworski (1991) develops a similar argument and looks at regime changes as a, more or less, coordinated effort by a civil society and the liberalizing elites within the incumbent regime. The Przeworski (1991) transitions game is played out under different kinds of uncertainty. This uncertainty stems from two sources: firstly, liberalizers need to reveal their preferences strategically so as not to alarm hardliners. In effect, this means that liberalizers need to hide from hardliners that they prefer transition to repression. Secondly, liberalizers have a high estimate of the chance of successful repression should the opposition push for more than limited liberalization. The opposition, in contrast, have a lower estimate of the likelihood that the regime will be able to successfully repress the uprising. Uncertainty over how willing and able the incumbent is to repress civil society drives regime change in the Przeworski model—the repressive resolve and capability of the incumbents is unknown.

Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) develop a model of transitions to and from democracy where domestic institutions play a critical role. Conflict occurs between a rich elite that favors non-democracy and the poor masses who favor democracy. Through the threat of a revolution, which would be costly for the elites, democracy, under certain conditions, becomes the preferred option for elites. Institutions make it possible for the elites to commit credibly to democracy for the long run—convincing the masses that the elites will not be able turn back to a non-democratic regime as soon as conditions are more favorable for the elites again. Boix (2003) argues that inequality and asset specificity are the most important factors influencing the likelihood of democratization.

Turning to the role of the international system and international actors, Skocpol (1979) argues that economic and military competition between states can significantly affect a country’s ability and capacity to suppress movements advocating regime change, thereby increasing the likelihood of such change. Dahl et al. (2014) focus on systemic shocks, and argue that these are part of the explanation for why we observe waves of democratization.

Pevehouse (2002a, 2005) are seminal studies on the role of IGOs. Pevehouse studies the effect of IGO membership on the onset of democratization. He finds evidence that being a member of a democratic regional organization increases the likelihood of a transition to democracy. Building on this, Pevehouse (2002b, 2005) looks at the role of such organizations in fostering democratic consolidation. Arguing that IGOs decrease commitment problems by assisting “reformers in making a credible commitment to political reform when their own domestic options for credible commitments are limited” (Pevehouse, 2002b: 613), he finds that joining certain regional IGOs increases democratic longevity. Ulfelder (2008) expands on these studies and looks at how transitions to and from democracy are conditioned by IGO membership, ratification of human rights treaties and integration into the global economy. In line with what I find below, Ulfelder reports that IGO membership is not associated with democratization.
The existing literature has studied the effect of IGOs on civil conflict with respect to the potential conflict-reducing effects of peacekeeping operations. The literature has consistently found that having United Nations peacekeepers deployed significantly reduces the risk of conflict recurrence (Doyle and Sambanis, 2006; Fortna and Howard, 2008; Hegre et al., 2011). Karreth and Tir (2013) look at the effect of IGOs on the escalation of civil wars, and argue that IGOs increase the cost of escalating a conflict by imposing sanctions that decrease the present and future benefits of winning a war. They find strong evidence in favor of IGOs reducing the risk of conflict escalation when focus is restricted to highly institutionalized IGOs. Both Boehmer et al. (2004) for the international arena and Karreth and Tir (2013) for the domestic arena argue that international organizations have the potential for altering the bargaining game between the two opposing sides, alleviating both informational asymmetries and commitment issues.

Alleviating uncertainty and commitment problems in regime transitions

Some transitions from authoritarian rule, for example, the transition in Spain after the death of Franco, are completely bloodless and smooth, others, such as the failed uprising in Burma in 1988, turn exceedingly bloody. In this section, I look at the theoretical mechanisms by which IGO membership affects regime change dynamics. I outline a model of regime transitions that follows the Przeworski (1991) transition game. I expand on this model by bringing in the trade-off between repression and cooptation, and the role of commitments problems. These two expansions point towards a role for IGOs in regime transitions: IGOs can alleviate commitment problems and they can raise the cost of repression. These effects, however, crucially depend on the structure and powers of the specific IGOs. I therefore argue that we should only expect interventionist IGOs, in short IGOs that have the power to punish and reward member states, to substantively affect regime transitions.

Przeworski (1991: 51) writes that the “strategic problem of transition is to get to democracy without being either killed by those who have arms or starved by those who control productive resources”. This sums up the strategic problem facing the “people” in a revolutionary setting. The elites, on the other hand, face a different set of strategic challenges. At its most basic, they are interested in one of two courses of action: either (a) what do I need to do to stay in power, or (b) what do I need to do to make sure that losing power is not too costly? In the model of regime change studied by Przeworski (1991), initial regime liberalization as well as regime change hinge on the (perceived) likelihood that the incumbent will be able to successfully repress civil society (Blaydes and Lo, 2012; Gates and Humes, 1997; Przeworski, 1991).

Following this model, after a popular protest has started, the question for the incumbent is if the movement can be repressed or coopted. This model, however, tells us very little about why and therefore also when the incumbent would fight to stay in power. Wintrobe (1998: 108–117) studies that question by assuming that the incumbent derives his utility from the power he wields and his personal consumption. To increase utility the dictator can either increase power or increase private consumption. Power in turn is a function of expenditures on repression and/or cooptation, while the utility of consumption is the sum of the incumbent’s financial assets that can be used at his discretion. These two assumptions about what
a dictator derives utility from allow us to say something about the relative utility of fighting to stay in power or stepping down.

A popular uprising confronts a dictator with a dilemma. If he chooses to democratize, he in effect forfeits all of his power, but not necessarily his entire ability to consume—members of an ancien regime may still incur benefits after a new regime has come into power. In Egypt, for instance, the incoming regime guaranteed the outgoing military regime control over their own budget in return for stepping down (Stacher, 2012). If, in contrast, the incumbent chooses to repress, he has to give up a large portion of consumption goods. Repression is costly and will drain resources directly from the dictator’s purse. However, since repression also hurts the economy, the future consumption ability of the dictator is hurt as well.

The strategic dilemma facing the dictator is the difference in the utility derived from power and the utility derived from consumption. If he chooses to democratize he forgoes power but potentially keeps consumption goods; if he decides to repress he keeps more power but fewer consumption goods. The utility of staying in power when faced with a civil society challenge would require an investment in the violent repression of that civil society uprising. This investment in repression decreases present and future consumption. Consequently, under specific conditions this investment in repression can become so large that it ends up strongly reducing the utility of future consumption. Under such circumstances, the dictator could therefore prefer a deal that ensures future consumption to staying in power. However, this hinges on the incoming regime honoring the deal made during the transition, which in turn introduces a commitment problem into the regime change process. If the outgoing regime is to keep consumption goods, some kind of deal, implicit or explicit, between the outgoing and incoming regimes has to exist. Whether the incumbent regime believes that the new regime will honor the deal in the future becomes critical. Any mechanism that could alleviate this commitment problem could potentially increase the likelihood of a peaceful transition.

The uncertain outcome of repression compounds the dictator’s strategic dilemma. When repression fails, the dictator is left with nothing; if it succeeds, he is left with his wealth minus the cost of the repression. In determining the utility of holding on to office, the probability that the repression will succeed, as well as the cost of repression, is important (in general see e.g. Acemoglu and Robinson, 2000; Wintrobe, 1998). An increase in the cost of repression decreases the utility of staying in office, thus increasing the likelihood of a peaceful transition. This cost depends primarily on the direct cost of repression incurred through the shifting of resources from consumption to repression, and on the indirect cost of repression that the dictator incurs through, for instance, international sanctions.

The role of IGOs

The literature on pacted transitions has highlighted the role that “pacts” can play in ensuring a peaceful democratization (O’Donnell and Schmitter, 1986). In effect, transitional pacts reduce uncertainty. Several scholars have analyzed pacts that grant the outgoing regime some kind of immunity from prosecution, but pacts also cover provisions guaranteeing the outgoing regime consumption goods, for example, through control of sectors of the economy. Pacts reduce uncertainty, but they also make commitment problems starker: the opposition has every reason to bluff and to renege on a pact as soon as it finds itself firmly in power. By overseeing and acting as guarantors of such pacts, IGOs decrease commitment problems, thus making it less risky for incumbents to sign transition pacts and to step down peacefully.
Several of the Latin American pacted transitions included amnesty provisions, as well as provisions giving, for example, the military a prominent place in the new regime. Pacts potentially make it less costly to leave office, but by themselves, they cannot alleviate the commitment problem. The critical point is that an incumbent does not know if he is playing against a trustworthy or devious civil society, and vice versa. A trustworthy civil society will uphold any pact that leads to a transition, while a devious civil society might not. By acting as arbitrators and, more importantly, as guarantors, IGOs substantially decrease this uncertainty and thus increase the likelihood that a pact will be honored.

To some extent, most IGOs will be able to act as arbitrators between the incumbent and civil society actors. Interventionist IGOs are different in that they always have formal dispute settlement mechanisms. These mechanisms are designed precisely to deal with states that renege on agreements. Such a mechanism creates a situation where membership in the IGO forces the states to work within the rules set by the IGO. In addition, only interventionist IGOs can effectively act as guarantors of such agreements. Only interventionist IGOs have the power to punish and reward member states for their actions. These powers are crucial since they directly allow the IGO to leverage the incoming regime by, for instance, imposing sanctions, embargoing certain products or withholding or granting loans and aid, in ways IGOs without such power cannot. If both out-going and in-coming regimes believe the IGO is willing to use these powers against a regime that reneges on a pact, then both actors know that the cost of breaking the agreement would be considerable; this in turn alleviates the commitment problem.

Alleviating commitment problems is the carrot, but IGOs also have sticks. IGOs can decrease an incumbent’s ability to consume, thereby reducing the utility of staying in office. This is probably the most direct influence IGOs have on the actions of a regime. Interventionist IGOs can impose sanctions or in other ways isolate regimes from the wider community of states. Levitsky and Way (2010) argue for the importance of “international leverage” in transitions. Regimes or leaders that are more heavily “leveraged” can more easily be pushed to toe a non-violent line during a transition. The leverage that IGOs have over incumbent regimes is important in two ways: (a) IGOs have the ability to hurt a regime’s standing through censuring and through naming and shaming; and (b) they have the ability to influence a regime’s consumption. By imposing sanctions that have been found to destabilize leaders (Marinov, 2005), IGOs influence the utility of staying in office, making an exit relatively less costly.

Although most IGOs potentially can engage in censuring as well as naming and shaming, for the most part only interventionist IGOs have formal mechanisms for doing this. Interventionist IGOs are also alone in being able to impose sanctions on their member states. Interventionist IGOs are therefore likely to be much more effective at using the sticks in their toolkit than other types of IGOs.

In sum, by alleviating commitment problems and by their ability to reduce consumption, interventionist IGOs increase the utility for an incumbent of leaving office peacefully when faced with a challenge. I therefore expect that being a member of more interventionist IGOs reduces the level of violence seen during regime transitions.

**Anticipating IGO response**

If an IGO can constrain a regime during a transition period, this raises an interesting question: if IGOs, and especially interventionist IGOs, routinely attempt to pressure or constrain
the behavior of incumbent governments during transitions, then this should be anticipated and factored into the decision-making calculus by incumbents. Authoritarian leaders that anticipate that their hands will be tied if they attempted to suppress a regime transition should arguably be more reluctant to start a process of limited liberalization in the first place. This points to the potential of selection bias in studying the effect of IGOs on regime transition. In particular, it raises two questions: why would non-democratic leaders join IGOs at all, and how does being a member of interventionist IGOs influence the probability of any type of regime change?

The issue of why regimes join IGOs is outside the focus of this article. For this article, the crucial question is whether different regimes select themselves into different IGOs based on how they “plan” to tackle a mass uprising. Because this is ultimately an empirical question, I address this more thoroughly below by looking at the propensity for different regimes to join IGOs. I find no evidence in favor of a selection effect. Here I discuss the issue theoretically.

Clearly, IGO memberships are not randomly assigned to countries. Countries choose what IGOs to be members of, and in this, they weigh both the costs and benefits of joining a given organization. An objection to the identification strategy put forth so far is that the dictators who would be willing to use large amounts of violence to quell an opposition would not join the types of IGOs that could restrain such behavior. Alternatively, dictators that are members of interventionist IGOs would know that these IGOs potentially would react if the dictator brutally suppressed a dissident movement.

Knowing this, the dictator has to take into account that suppressing a rebellion will be extremely costly; the optimal course of action is to avoid uprisings all together. In other words, dictators who know that IGOs can tie their hands if they attempt full-scale repression of a large social movement should anticipate this and attempt to avoid any uprising at all. One way to do this is to attempt to coopt challengers into the coalition before they take to the streets. This strategy is preferable to regime liberalization for dictators since limited liberalization quickly can lead to calls for further and more substantial democratization (Przeworski, 1991). After cooptation, regimes are able to draw support from a wider portion of society, thus becoming more stable. Cooptation entails some kind of authoritarian power-sharing agreement, as analyzed by Svolik (2012), and if successful, such power-sharing agreements should lead to a lower propensity for regime change in general.

The initial proposition—that leveraged authoritarian regimes will coopt the opposition and create “broad dictatorships”—we lack adequate data to test. The second implication, however, can be studied empirically. I therefore expect that being a member of interventionist IGOs reduces the propensity for regime change in general. This argument implies that the authoritarian regime’s decision on whether to liberalize, and its decisions on how to respond to a popular uprising pushing for further democratization, to some extent are strategically linked. In the estimation below, I take this directly into account and estimate a strategic model where in the first stage I estimate the likelihood of seeing any regime change and in the second stage I estimate the likelihood of seeing a violent crackdown in a period of regime transition.

**IGOs and the democratic transition in Ecuador**

To illustrate the potential impact that an IGO can have on democratization, consider the case of Ecuador. Ecuador represents a case where the potential for IGO involvement was clearly present—making it more of a most likely than a least likely case. The regime
transition was precipitated by an economic crisis, which is relatively common (see e.g. Gasiorowski, 2008), but this also gave certain IGOs, especially the International Monetary Fund (IMF), more leverage over the incumbent regime. As I discuss further below, the Ecuadorian case exhibits many of the same characteristics as some of the Eastern European countries that democratized peacefully in the 1990s.

Ecuador experienced a decisive transition to democracy in 1978–1979. In the years before 1978, Ecuador was ruled by a lenient military regime, exhibiting both democratic and authoritarian traits—it was a semi-democracy or a hybrid regime (Knutsen and Nygård, 2015). Figure 1 plots the Scalar Index of Politics (SIP) regime score (Gates et al., 2006), described in more detail below, for Ecuador. The figure shows Ecuador’s transition in 1978–1979 from the lower half of the index to the top. Immediately following the Second World War, Ecuador had a period of more or less stable democratic rule. This ended in the 1950s when social unrest precipitated by economic instability resulted in a military take-over of political power (Rueschemeyer et al., 1992). The military came to power after a coup in 1962, but then handed power over peacefully to an elected government in 1979. Overall, the Ecuadorian transition to democracy happened almost entirely without the use of violence by any actor.

The political right were the ones pushing hardest for democratization in Ecuador. The military had attempted to reform the Ecuadorian economy in a way that benefited the labor movement; this, not surprisingly, was met by heavy opposition from the private sector and from right-leaning parties (Collier, 1999: 156). In the wake of an economic crisis in the mid-1970s, the military government attempted to carry out economic reforms favored by the labor unions. The political right strongly opposed the reforms and, in the end, a military junta ousted the sitting military regime of Rodriguez Lara. This started a 4 year-long transition that ended in elections and a new government in 1979 (Collier, 1999: 159–160).

During these 4 years, the incumbent government, right-leaning groups, business interests, military factions and the labor movement competed for influence over the structure of the new constitution, seats in the new parliament and what the new democratic regime should look like. Several groups, among them conservatives (right-leaning but not business
oriented), were strongly opposed to all forms of democratization (Bertelsmann Stiftung’s, 2012). The multitude of different groups competing for power, and the widely different preferences held by these groups, created a situation that could potentially have led to a very violent transition. Nevertheless, the Ecuadorian transition was remarkably smooth. Several powerful IGOs played an active role in the transition.

Severe economic crisis precipitated the Ecuadorian transition. Consequently, during the transition the regime was in need of loans and credit from international financial institutions such as the IMF. To an even greater extent than in periods without economic crisis the IMF, therefore, largely controlled the benefits for the military regime of being in office. Theoretically, this implies that the IMF could attempt to constrain the behavior of the regime by directly influencing its utility for staying in office. In the Ecuadorian case, this was not merely an abstract possibility. The IMF at one point threatened the regime with holding back funds (Huntington, 1991) if they did not “behave appropriately”. In this instance, the IMF seems to have been both aware of its influence and intent on using it. The closest analogy to the Ecuadorian case in this respect are the Eastern European countries that democratized and eventually joined the European Union in the 1990s. For these countries, the EU had the power to directly influence the countries’ economies.

The economic reforms proposed by the military regime were the primary reason why right leaning groups and business interests pushed for a regime change. During the transition process, the government set up civilian commissions tasked with proposing a new political framework (Collier, 1999: 159–160). The commissions consisted of representatives from all of the different groups vying for influence. As an added complicating factor, the negotiations took place in the shadow of shifting power, as at the time business interests were on the defensive because of the economic crisis. How was it possible for these groups to come to terms that they all agreed to at the time, and that they trusted all would honor in the long run?

The Organization of American States (OAS) was important in making this possible. The OAS discussed the Ecuadorian transition at several meetings as it unfolded, and, at least on paper, attempted to pressure the incumbent military government to carry out a peaceful transition to democracy (Bertelsmann Stiftung’s, 2012). The OAS does not have the same leverage over member countries as in some circumstances the IMF has, but it has clear rules for formal arbitration and is by no means a toothless organization. The year before the transition to democracy in Ecuador, the American Convention on Human Rights had also entered into force. The convention established a human rights court and a human rights commission as part of the OAS (Buergenthal, 1985). This gave the OAS much expanded ability and authority to both arbitrate and enforce agreements.

The OAS took a keen interest in the transition and repeatedly called for democratization. With its new powers of arbitration, the OAS could act as a guarantor of the agreement reached by the civilian commissions on a new political framework by ensuring that if the incoming government reneged on parts of the agreement, the OAS would act to punish the regime. The OAS could not, of course, guarantee an agreement to the same extent a United Nations Peace Keeping Operation could, but by investing some of its political capital in the transition, the OAS signaled that breaking the agreement could lead the OAS to impose sanctions or to censure the in-coming regime. The anticipation of this would have alleviated some of the inherent commitment problems the commissions faced.

In Ecuador international organizations, especially the IMF and the OAS, seem to have made a peaceful transition to democracy easier.
Empirical model

Conceptualizing and measuring regime change

Conceptually defining regime change in a way that makes it possible to study it statistically is far from trivial. Several definitions exist of the narrower concept of a revolution. Skocpol (1979: 4) defines a revolution as a “rapid, basic transformations of society’s state and class structures … accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below”. This definition is arguably too narrow. Specifically, it would fail to cover many of the “revolutions” seen in Latin America and Eastern Europe. As a response Goldstone (2001: 142) defines a revolution as “an effort to transform the political institutions and the justifications for political authority in a society, accompanied by formal or informal mass mobilization and non-institutionalized actions that undermine existing authorities”.

If we remove the mass mobilization part from Goldstone’s definition, a regime change can be defined as: an effort to transform the political institutions and the justifications for political authority in a society. I retain the “an effort” part of the definition since I am also interested in failed transitions. Notice that this definition says nothing about the amount of transformation needed to satisfy the inclusion criteria, making it still a somewhat vague definition. Critically though, the definition clearly only includes situations in which incumbent power is challenged, and their position threatened. In other words, the definition excludes gradual slow changes over time, and transitions that are completely uncontested. Excluding uncontested transitions does not mean that a transformation has to be violent to be included. Although some violence is common in regime transitions, completely non-violent regime changes also fall under the scope of the definition.

Data

To measure the dependent variable, I utilize two data sources: one identifying regime changes and one identifying the level of violence seen in these situations. Gates et al. (2006) and Dahl et al. (2014) build a measure of regime change that consists of three dimensions of political institutions: executive recruitment, executive constraints and popular participation. Their measure, the SIP, is continuous, meaning that researcher do not have to rely on arbitrary thresholds to distinguish different types of regimes from each other. The SIP ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 is an “ideal” autocracy and 1 an “ideal” democracy.

In order to use a continuous regime measure, the researcher has to define a threshold for what constitutes a regime change. To some extent, such a threshold will always be arbitrary. For the main model I follow Dahl et al. (2014) and define a SIP change of 0.03 as constituting a regime change. This creates a dichotomous variable that marks regime changes; I use this variable in the first stage of the strategic model discussed below.

There are good reasons to choose a low threshold for what defines a regime change. Having a low threshold makes it possible to capture minor but potentially important changes that happen in regimes in situations where a regime change movement fails. In these cases, we often observe a process of autocratization that does not fundamentally alter the regime, but further decreases, for instance, meaningful popular participation. Specifically, the 0.03 threshold implies that a regime change will be recorded if one of the following occurs: (a) a movement from one category to another in the Executive dimension (i.e. between ascription/designation, dual ascriptive/elective, and elective); (b) a change of at least two units in the Executive Constraints dimension; or (c) a 100% increase or 50% decrease in
the Participation dimension. Doubling the number of citizens with voting rights qualifies as a minimum change (Gates et al., 2006: 898). Nevertheless, this might seem like too low a threshold and I therefore run a series of robustness checks where I gradually increase the threshold from 0.03 to 0.30. The findings below are robust to this.

In 2012, Egypt conducted both legislative and presidential elections. Monitors deemed both these elections as adequately free and fair. The year 2012 will therefore have a SIP score that is at least 0.03 points higher than the score for 2011, and 2012 will hence be marked as a regime change. The process that led to this transition, however, started early in 2011. Since the object of interest here is how actors behave during transitions, both 2011 and 2012 should be included when evaluating how peaceful or violent the Egyptian transition was. Unfortunately, since a list of when transitions started is not available for the transitions identified here, both the year the regime change occurred and the year preceding it are coded as years of transition.

To further ensure robustness, the models are also estimated using the Cheibub et al. (2010) regime type measure that only marks substantial shifts from autocracy to democracy. For the Cheibub et al. (2010) dataset, regime change is a dichotomous variable marking any year where the country went from a non-democratic to a democratic system. The two different conceptualizations of regime change consist of, respectively, 543 regime changes using the SIP list, and 277 regime changes using the Cheibub et al. (2010) list. Results are substantively identical across the two definitions.

In any unstable situation, that is, any situation where civil society challenges the incumbent government, the regime can theoretically follow three paths: the regime can democratize, autocratize, or stay the same. For the purposes of this paper, which path the regime follows is not the primary concern. Ideally, what we would want is a variable that marks situations in which civil society challenges the incumbent government. As a reasonable proxy for such situations, I use the list of violent and non-violent regime change movements identified by Chenoweth and Stephan (2011).

To distinguish violent from peaceful regime changes, or attempts at regime change, the Banks (1979) measure of “volatile politics” is used. Banks (1979) is a widely used comprehensive data source covering issues ranging from developmental factors to situations of instability. Banks (1979) has a number of variables marking whether a country in a given year saw riots, purges, general strikes or conflict. I combine the set of these measures that pertain to actions taken by the government into a measure of violent transitions. This produces an index where country years with more government use of violence get higher scores. However, since the model I estimate only allows binary variables, I dichotomize the measure. The measure is 0 if a country year was peaceful, and a little over 56% of country-years are coded as stable. As a robustness check I run several models where I vary the threshold for what constitutes a peaceful year; the results are robust to a wide range of thresholds.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of government violence seen in regime change periods. The figure combines the regime change variable and the index from the Banks dataset by simply multiplying these. It shows that most transitions are peaceful, but many turn violent.

**Predictors**

The key explanatory variable is membership in an international IGO. Lacking a more fine-grained theory that allows one to distinguish between different kinds of IGOs or compositions of IGOs, the key variable utilized will be a count of the IGO memberships per year for
each country. However, variables simply giving the raw count of IGOs have been heavily criticized (see e.g. Boehmer et al., 2004). In effect, they lump together and give equal weight to the effect of being a member of NATO and being the member of the African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing, for example. This would inevitably either wash out any actual effect of IGOs on the dependent variable of interest, or massively inflate the role of some organizations and discount too heavily the effect of others. Boehmer et al. (2004) argue that one solution to this is to disaggregate IGOs according to their level of institutionalization.

They perceive of IGOs as lying on a continuum from low to high institutionalization. IGOs with little or no institutionalization have “nominal organizational structure”, agreements that seldom require the organization to implement policy and where the member states themselves are responsible for coordination and cooperation (Boehmer et al., 2004: 17). At the middle of the scale are organizations with a formal structure and codified procedures. At the highly institutionalized end IGOs “possess organs or mechanisms of mediation, arbitration, or adjudication aimed at conflict resolution and the enforcement of organizational decisions; or they may possess other benefits such as economic aid that can be withheld from states to influence decision making” (Boehmer et al., 2004: 17). Using the data on IGOs from Pevehouse et al. (2004), Boehmer et al. (2004) have coded all IGOs according to their institutionalization level. I code three variables, giving for every country-year the count of the number of IGO memberships across low, medium and highly institutionalized IGOs. The left panel of Figure 3 shows the mean number of IGOs a country is member of across years and across the three different institutionalization levels. The right panel shows the distribution, with 90% coverage, for highly institutionalized IGO memberships only, across

![Figure 2. Distribution of amount of violence seen during regime transitions.](image-url)
years. In the estimation, these three variables are log-transformed to take diminishing returns into consideration.

Development has been found to be robustly connected to regime change, and a country’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, in logged form, is therefore included (see e.g., seminal works such as Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006; Lipset, 1959). Balcells and Kalyvas (2014) find that countries with higher levels of GDP have less intense internal armed conflicts. GDP potentially is an important predictor for the level of intensity seen during regime transitions as well and I therefore include it as a control. Several papers have found that conflict increases the risk of regime change (see e.g. Walt, 1997), and having an on-going conflict could plausibly also lead the incumbent to more forcefully respond to an uprising. Two dummy variables are included that mark whether the country was involved in a conflict, or had a neighboring state with an on-going intra-state war. Both of these measures come from Sarkees and Wayman (2010). Countries with larger population are found to have more conflict (Hegre and Sambanis, 2006), but relatively fewer fatalities, and I therefore include log total population in the estimation.

Transitioning from a strongly authoritarian regime potentially is different from transitioning from a more democratic regime. Autocracies that are more consistent have a lower likelihood of regime breakdown in general, but when challenged may also be more willing to use force to suppress the uprising. A variable measuring the current regime type, as measured by SIP, is therefore included as well. To further guard against country-specific omitted variables, I add a random intercept for every country. Lastly, I add a set of fine-grained region markers. This is necessary since a number of highly interventionist IGOs are regional in character. Peru cannot join the Economic Community of West African States and Nigeria cannot join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

**Studying strategic processes**

The theoretical discussion above points to the importance of selection effects stemming from the strategic behavior of non-democratic rulers. Neglecting strategic interdependence by specifying a strategic theory but not considering this when estimating the model is equivalent to running a mis-specified statistical model (Signorino and Yilmaz, 2003). One solution to this
according to Signorino (1999) is to use the Logit Quantal Response Equilibrium solution concept, to incorporate a strategic model into a statistical model.

Bas et al. (2007) show how to use a series of logit estimations to analyze a strategic game. The method involves estimating a set of equations that give “a probability model for all of the actions and outcomes” and then use these results to estimate the maximum likelihood results. A common game tree illustrates this. A game tree shows all the possible actions the actors can take at each decision node. The method developed by Bas et al. (2007) involves estimating a set of equations for all of the possible decision nodes in the game tree, at each node taking moves at preceding nodes into consideration, and then estimating the maximum likelihood “path”. This path is the equilibrium or solution of the game. I use the R package games developed by Kenkel and Signorino (2012) to estimate such a model.

Specifically, a set of equations is specified that yields the difference in expected utility, at the different nodes, of the possible courses of action at that node considering earlier decisions. In my model, there are three decisions nodes: first, the dictator decides whether to liberalize, then civil society decides to mobilize or not, and at the terminal node the incumbent decides either to step down or to violently repress a mobilized civil society. At this terminal node the dictator is constrained by the earlier decision to join (or not) an IGO. At each node, the model weighs the differences in expected utility by a term that reflects the amount of uncertainty regarding the true utility of the action. This uncertainty stems from the fact that it is impossible for me to observe the actors’ utility of an action—the utility has to be proxied by the covariates. The uncertainty is the difference between the actual utility of an action for the actor and the utility we as analysts can observe and measure. If this is 0, if there is no uncertainty, the game is one of perfect and complete information (Signorino and Tarar, 2006).

Results: selecting into IGOs

In this section, I present the results for the model looking at how different regimes select themselves into types of IGOs. The next section discusses the results from the strategic model. Figure 4 presents the result of a logistic regression model where the dependent variable denotes whether a given regime joined a highly interventionist IGO. The explanatory variable is regime type, as classified by Gates et al. (2006). They distinguish between autocracies, hybrid regimes (or semi democracies) and full democracies. In the regression model, autocracy is the reference category, and focus is on the extent to which democracies and hybrid regimes are more likely to join interventionist IGOs. The model also includes covariates measuring gross domestic product per capita and population size as well as a set of region markers. Since the number of memberships a country has in its portfolio at any given time will influence which IGOs it can possible join, I also include a variable marking the interventionist IGOs the country was a member of prior to this point.

The point estimates for both the democracy and hybrid regime variables are positive, but the effect is small and the model cannot with any degree of certainty rule out that the effect is zero. This indicates that there are no significant selection effects in the data—dictators are just as likely to join highly interventionist IGOs as other types of rulers.

This test indicates that non-democratic regimes do not select themselves out of interventionist IGOs, but it cannot tell us whether a dictator that would potentially violently suppress a democratic uprising is intentionally selecting out of IGOs that could constrain such
actions. This selection problem, however, is likely to be somewhat mediated for one particular reason. IGOs evolve over time, and they have a tendency to broaden, and not narrow, their portfolios. In many situations, a given country will not be able to anticipate the influence an IGO will have some time down the road. When joining an IGO countries are likely unable to anticipate future power struggles between member states within the organization, and how this will influence the IGOs effectiveness. The League of Arab Nations offers a case in point. On 12 March 2011, The League of Arab Nations shocked observers when it publicly urged the United Nations Security Council to pass a resolution imposing a No-Fly zone over Libya. The call came in response to aerial attacks carried out by Gadafi’s regime against civilians. For the Arab League this was a dramatic departure from its normal modus operandi in such situations.

Nevertheless, to further guard against the potential for selection bias, I take advantage of the fact that countries very rarely leave IGOs. Once a country has become a member of an IGO, it has a tendency to stay a member, regardless of how that IGO evolves. This is especially true for the interventionist IGOs that are the focus here. By taking advantage of this temporal dynamic, the most pressing selection issues can be resolved. I use data on political leaders from Goemans et al. (2009), and only include in the estimation below the IGOs a country was or became a member of during the last leader’s time in office. For the Egyptian case, for instance, when assessing the role of IGOs under the reign of Hosni Mubarak, I only include those IGOs the country had become a member of by the time Anwar Sadat left

Figure 4. Parameter estimates for propensity for joining IGOs model, 1900–2005.
office. In a further robustness test, which yields identical results that are relegated to the Online Appendix, I take advantage of the continuous nature of the SIP index (Gates et al., 2006), and only include the IGOs a country was a member of before its last major increase on the SIP scale. This model should therefore sever most links between the regime under analysis at a given point in time, and the regime that joined the IGO.

Results: IGOs and transition dynamics

The strategic estimator employed here is somewhat involved. Before I proceed with discussing the estimation results, it is therefore useful to get a first glance at the “raw” patterns in the data. Table 1 shows the mean number of interventionist IGO memberships for countries experiencing, respectively, peaceful or violent regime transitions. On average, countries that went through peaceful transitions were members of more than twice as many IGOs as the countries that experienced violent transitions. This pattern clearly is in line with the hypothesized relationship.

Table 2 shows the results for the model using IGO portfolio of the last leader. The first column shows the probability of seeing regime change given IGO membership portfolio, the second column is the reference model that is not interesting here, and the third column gives the estimated amount of violence seen during a regime transition given IGO portfolio.

The analysis in column 3 supports the proposed theory. The estimate for the effect of membership in highly structured IGOs is negative and clearly different from zero. Being a member of more interventionist IGOs decreases the level of violence a country is likely to see on the violence measure during a period of regime transitions. The effect is shown more clearly in Figure 5, which plots the likelihood of seeing violence during a transition against the number of interventionist IGOs a regime is a member of. This supports the proposition that highly structured IGOs can tie dictators’ hands, and have a violence-reducing effect on countries. Of the control variables only GDP per capita, population size and regime type have a discernible effect on the violence seen during regime transitions. Wealthier countries experience, on average, more peaceful transitions, while countries that are more populous see transitions that are more violent.

This is broadly in line with the findings from the literature on civil war, where development and population size have been among the most robust predictors of the onset of civil war (Hegre and Sambanis, 2006). The fact that this analysis, which looks at a different but obviously related issue, comes to the same conclusions strengthens, I would argue, the plausibility of the overall results of the model. The model finds no discernible effect of conflict, lagged by one year, or conflict in a neighboring country on the level of violence seen during transitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean IGOs Memberships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. IGOs and violent regime changes
The model also finds that neither minimally nor medium structured IGOs affect the amount of violence seen during regime transitions. This implies that simply belonging to an international organization does not affect regime behavior by itself. There is, as stated above, clearly a big difference between a membership in NATO and membership in the African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing. Minimally and medium structured IGOs will conceivably affect other kinds of behavior, but they do not appear to influence regime transitions. The finding indicates that what matters are the incentives that leaders face when they find themselves challenged. Highly structured IGOs create different incentives, as argued above, in a way that less structured IGOs simply cannot.

Figure 6 shows the results for the first decision node in the game tree, the decision made by the dictator to liberalize or not. In accordance with the hypothesized relationship, the model shows that IGO memberships actually decrease the likelihood of a non-democratic regime liberalizing. The figure plots the likelihood of not seeing any liberalization against the number of interventionist IGO memberships a regime has—again only the ones inherited from the last regime are included—increases, the likelihood of not seeing any liberalization also increases. This lends some evidence to the proposition that dictators anticipate that highly interventionist IGOs will tie their hands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Effect of IGO membership on regime change dynamics, 1900–2008, non-democracies only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pr(No regime change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal IGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium IGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interventionist IGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log(GDP per capita)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regime type, SIP2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIP2²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighboring conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regime type, polity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighboring conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log(Population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log-likelihood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coefficients in bold are significant at p < 0.05.
Figure 5. Estimated likelihood of violent regime change (from Table 2, column 3).

Figure 6. Estimated likelihood of no liberalization (from Table 2, column 1).
The analysis so far supports the theory, but the question is how big an impact highly structured IGOs actually have. Figure 7 plots the effect of membership in highly structured IGOs across the number of memberships and the expected level of violence a regime would see during a regime transition. The possible range of the violence measure is 0–124, but very high values are rare in the data. The vertical bars in the figure correspond to the 97.5% high-probability-density regions. The figure gives the expected level of violence for a country that is at the mean of GDP and population size, and which does not have internal armed conflict or conflict in a neighboring country.

As is clear from the graph, such a country is already not likely to see the most violent regime transitions. The main reason for this is that the violence measure encompasses internal armed conflict as its highest measure of violence, and since civil war is a very low-probability event, the model, by and large, assumes that if you did not see a conflict last year you will not see a conflict onset this year either. Conditioning on this, though, the figure shows a clear and substantial effect of IGOs on the expected level of violence seen during regime transitions. For countries with few memberships in highly structured IGOs, the level of violence typically reaches from modest to relatively high. In sum, the more highly structured IGO memberships a country has, the less violence the regime on average will see during a regime transition, and the more certain it is that it will see such a low level of violence. Adding IGO memberships substantially increases the probability that a regime transition will be less violent. This again supports the theoretical hypothesis that being a member of highly structured IGOs changes the incentives incumbents face and alleviates commitment problems.

To dig deeper into the process by which IGOs could potentially tie a dictator’s hands, the next two sections examine two transitions in light of the predictions of the statistical model.
Poland

Poland represents a country were the statistical model predicts that IGO membership dampened the amount of violence seen during a transition. In 1991, Poland moved decisively from a semi-democracy to a “full” democracy on the SIP scale, having already gone from an autocracy to a semi-democracy 2 years before. Poland was at the time a member of 19 highly structured IGOs, placing it in the 95th percentile in terms of the number of memberships. During this transition, Poland saw very little violence, as recorded by Banks (2011). Poland saw some demonstrations, and had a governmental crisis, but the country saw little or no violence in terms of riots, purges or outright conflict (Banks, 2011). One exceptionally highly structured IGO seems to have played an important part in this process: the European Community (EC). In 1991, Poland signed—together with Hungary and Czechoslovakia—an association agreement with the EC. The European Commission was dangling membership in front of, amongst other countries, Poland and the European Commissioner for External Relations and Trade, Frans Andriessen, paid Poland a series of visits throughout the year. The Polish election that same year ended in deadlock, creating the potential for instability or violence. In this case, though, the European Commission, which would have voided the association agreement had the Polish government resorted to violence, seems to have played a very important role in ensuring a non-violent democratization.

Ukraine

Ukraine is an example of a country that saw more violence during the regime transition than the model expects. In 1994, Ukraine experienced a substantive move in a more democratic direction, moving from a semi-democracy to a “full” democracy on the SIP scale. The constitution introduced in 1996 consolidated the process of democratization (Colomer, 2000). At the time Ukraine was a member of 14 interventionist IGOs, placing it just outside the 75th percentile in number of memberships. In the transition period, Ukraine experienced both assassinations and riots (Banks, 2011). In addition, Ukraine experienced large-scale strikes, which prompted fears of possible ethnic conflict between the western Ukraine and Russian-speaking eastern Ukraine, in the coal mining industry in the eastern part of the country, as well as large demonstrations in Kiev. The strikers demanded political reform and the crisis did not end until the Supreme Council decided to hold a referendum. The country also saw defections from the ruling coalition, which openly backed these anti-government strikes (Levitsky and Way, 2010). The level of violence seen was more than the model can account for, implying that IGOs were less efficient in this case than the model assumes. One reason for this is that the model focuses on the amount of violence employed by the regime in power. When that regime experiences large-scale defection from the ruling coalition, as Ukraine did, it becomes at once both necessary for the incumbent to take measures to shore up what is left of the coalition, and also potentially harder for the government to keep control over different actors within the government. Both of these dynamics could plausibly lead to more violence but neither is included in the model, suggesting the need for more research on this.

Conclusion

There is a large literature looking at the causes and prerequisites of when regime change occurs, as well as when, how and under what conditions democratic rule consolidates. Still,
comparably little work has been done on the period in between—on the actual dynamics and process of regime changes.

Especially among less powerful countries today there is a strong belief in the importance of IGOs in providing peace and stability internationally, and protecting human rights domestically (see e.g. Kasoff and James, 2013). So far, little systematic work exists on the role that IGOs can play in processes of regime transition. This paper has argued that IGOs do play a role in such processes, and that they help make them less violent. During the recent uprising in the Arab world, several IGOs were much more visible and played, at least seemingly, a much more important role than earlier: chief amongst these was the Arab League. The outcome of the “Arab Spring” is still on many issues uncertain, but the fact that the Arab League asserted itself to a degree that took observers of the organizations by complete surprise is indisputable (Broning, 2014).

This paper has attempted to look systematically at whether or not IGOs can influence regime transitions. Regime transitions are inherently volatile. Some go smoothly, while others turn extremely bloody. Theoretically, IGOs could influence two important mechanisms explaining why some transitions turn violent while others do not: they (a) alleviate commitment problems connected to “pacted” transitions; and they can (b) punish violent dictators by way of sanctions that drastically reduce an incumbent’s ability to consume. However, only highly structured IGOs will conceivably be able to do any of this.

I tested the theory on regime transitions between 1900 and 2008. There is strong evidence supporting the claim that countries that are members of multiple IGOs have much less violent regime transitions. I interpret the findings to imply that IGOs in these circumstances do constrain incumbent regimes into acting less repressively. A question left unanswered here is what consequences particular modes of transition have for future regime stability and for democratic consolidation. This question deserves more attention than the literature has so far given it.

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Notes
1. For recent reviews of the vast literature on transitions and revolutions, see Geddes (1999) and Goldstone (2001).
2. Obviously, this is not a neat dichotomy and most transitions will fall somewhere in between, with the 2010–2011 transition in Egypt an example of this.
3. Blaydes and Lo (2012) expand the canonical Przeworski model in a different direction by looking at a situation where the incumbent does not know which type of civil society he is facing.
4. A third alternative exists: simply wait it out. Anecdotal evidence suggests that such a course of action is quite common, although the literature so far has not extensively studied it.


6. The proposition could probably have been studied either using data on changes in the size of the selectorate (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2005) or drawing on differences across specific types of authoritarian regimes (Geddes et al., 2014). This, however, would only allow a very indirect test of the proposition. Since it is not critical for the argument to establish this, I do not pursue this further here.

7. Neither measure, however, can account for situations where the government was challenged but no change at all occurred; using these measures therefore comes at the cost of some bias.

8. And later updated by Chenoweth and Lewis (2013).

9. Major increase is defined as a change of 0.20 points.


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