

Democracy and Democratization Today

Section 6

Sima Biondi

Fall 2026

Gov 20: Foundations of Comparative Politics

- 1 Reminders
- 2 Discussion: explaining democratization waves
- 3 Discussion: democratic backsliding

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Housekeeping

- I will be out of town next week so Jean (our head TF) will lead section next week
- No class on Monday + my office hours will be on Zoom

⇒ Weekly recaps and section slides: tinyurl.com/gov20sb26

⇒ Sign up for office hours tinyurl.com/simab0H

Last week: **democratization**, or a type of regime change.

In this section, we continue to examine democratization, and in particular explanations for:

1. waves of democratization
2. incomplete democratization
3. democratic backsliding

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Huntington: Why the Third Wave?

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- Declining authoritarian legitimacy: global democratic ethos + negative legitimacy
- Global economic growth of the middle class + economic crises
- Changes in Christianity: Catholic Church's policy toward human rights and intervention, Christianity advances in South Korea
- Increased role of external actors (EU and US)
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- Emphasize role of domestic state institutions
- Prioritize the role of Western linkage vs. leverage

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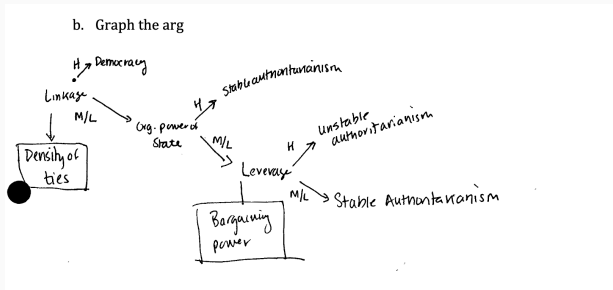
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Moments of sudden rise or fall of great powers, or **hegemonic shocks** create:

- Crests
- Crashes

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Mechanisms of crests and crashes

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What does Gunitsky's theory predict about the robustness of democratization reforms?

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Why do pro-democracy voters choose anti-democratic candidates?

Svolik: when voters' partisan preferences clash with their preferences for democracy voters are faced with a choice

⇒ punishing politicians for anti-democratic behavior is difficult when they are aligned with your political preferences

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Next week

Focus on these readings: Ross, Rosenfeld, Matovski,
either readings on China or MENA