

Authoritarianism

Section 7

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Fall 2024

Gov 20: Foundations of Comparative Politics

- 1 Reminders
- 2 Discussion: complicating explanations of democratization
- 3 Discussion: cases!

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Congrats on finishing the first paper and the midterm!



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Want to talk? → sign up for OHS (tinyurl.com/simaOH) or email me

Last week: we talked **democratization**.

In this section, we complicate drivers of democratization, in particular:

1. Economic growth → democratization?
2. Presence of strong middle class → democratization?

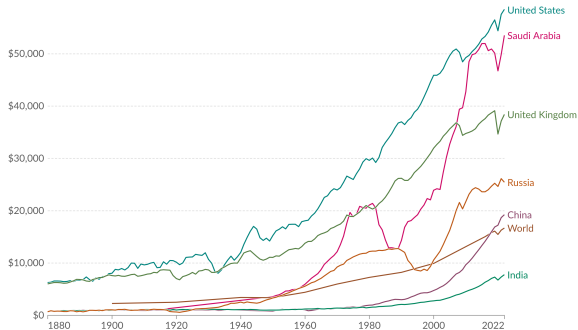
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Is economic growth driving democratization?

GDP per capita, 1880 to 2022

Our World
in Data

This data is adjusted for inflation and for differences in the cost of living between countries.



Data source: Bolt and van Zanden - Maddison Project Database 2023

OurWorldinData.org/economic-growth | CC BY

Note: This data is expressed in international-\$¹ at 2011 prices.

1. **International dollars:** International dollars are a hypothetical currency that is used to make meaningful comparisons of monetary indicators of living standards. Figures expressed in international dollars are adjusted for inflation within countries over time, and for differences in the cost of living between countries. The goal of such adjustments is to provide a unit whose purchasing power is held fixed over time and across countries, such that one international dollar can buy the same quantity and quality of goods and services no matter where or when it is spent. Read more in our article: [What are Purchasing Power Parity adjustments and why do we need them?](#)

So far: theories of democratization

Independent variable (IV)

Growth of middle class



Independent variable (IV)

Economic development



Dependent variable (DV)

Democratization

So far: theories of democratization

Independent variable (IV)

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Dependent variable (DV)

Democratization

Broadly modernization+ theory: Lipset, Dahl, Huntington, Boix

So far: theories of democratization + mechanisms

Independent variable (IV)

Growth of middle class

↓?

Independent variable (IV)

Economic development

↓?

Dependent variable (DV)

Democratization

So far: theories of democratization + mechanisms

Independent variable (IV)

Growth of middle class

↓ ?

Independent variable (IV)

Economic development

↓ ?

Dependent variable (DV)

Democratization

Discuss in groups:

- What theory or mechanism explains the relationship?
- How does Ross or Rosenfeld complicate the theory, or explain why the conventional relationship does not exist?
- What do other authors that we've read in this class have to say?

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Discussion: cases!



Within your group:

- Will this country democratize? Justify your answer?

Discussion: cases!



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- If you could wave a magic wand to encourage democratization which conditions would you change?

Discussion: cases!



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As a class: which of these countries will transition first and why?

- **Round 1:** Egypt vs. Russia AND China vs. Saudi Arabia

Discussion: cases!



As a class: which of these countries will transition first and why?

- **Round 1:** Egypt vs. Russia AND China vs. Saudi Arabia
- **Round 2:** Egypt vs. Saudi Arabia AND China vs. Russia

Discussion: cases!



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- **Round 1:** Egypt vs. Russia AND China vs. Saudi Arabia
- **Round 2:** Egypt vs. Saudi Arabia AND China vs. Russia
- **Round 3:** Egypt vs. China AND Saudi Arabia vs. Russia

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For next week, focus on these readings:

- Olson
- Skocpol
- Marx and Engels
- Davies