

The Long March

The Long March: Deep Democracy in Cross-National Perspective

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Over the last several decades, dozens of dictatorships have become democracies. Yet while each has held free and fair elections, they have varied in the extent to which their citizens realize the ideal of self-rule. Why do some democracies distribute power to citizens while other democracies withhold it? Existing research is suggestive, but its implications are ambiguous. Cross-national studies have focused on democracy's formal dimensions, while work on substantive democracy is case-based. We find that one of the most consistent and powerful explanations of substantive democratization is the length of unarmed pro-democratic mobilization prior to a transition. Through a case study of Brazil, we illustrate that these movements matter in three ways: first, because practices of self-organizing model and enable democratic reforms; second, because movement veterans use state office to deepen democracy; and third, because long movements yield civil societies with the capacity to demand the continuous deepening of democracy.

Introduction

Over the last two centuries, countries across the world have transitioned from authoritarian rule. By any of the long-run indices available, democracy has spread far and wide. Despite evidence of democratic erosion in recent years,¹ the world over the last few decades has never been more democratic than it is now.

Yet while democracies exist everywhere, they do not everywhere exist equally. Beneath the veneer of formal democracy lies substantial variation in the extent to which citizens realize the ideal of self-rule. This is puzzling. At its heart, the democratic ideal promises people equal influence over political decisions. Given this, why do some democracies distribute power to citizens while other

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democracies withhold it? What explains why formal democracies exhibit variation in substantive democratization?

The literature on democracy is enormous but marked by a disconnect. Cross-national studies of democracy have focused on its formal dimensions. By this we mean that scholars have studied the degree to which democracies hold fair and free elections, and the degree to which they safeguard individual rights. In doing so, they have neglected the other dimensions of the democratic ideal—the extent to which disadvantaged citizens have gained real equality and the ability to participate in the policy process. Conversely, those who have studied substantive democracy have relied on case studies or comparative analyses.

In this paper, we bring these studies together by presenting the first cross-national study of substantive democratization. We rely on recent advances in the measurement of democracy by the Varieties of Democracy project, which enable scholars to study patterns in substantive democracy directly. We derive our hypotheses from cross-national studies of formal democratization as well as qualitative work on substantive democratization. To test these rival explanations, we use a dataset consisting of formally democratic regimes observed after 1950, where a formal democracy is a regime in which executive power is transferred through fair and free multi-party elections.

We find that one of the most consistent explanations of variation in substantive democracy is the length of unarmed pro-democratic mobilization prior to a democratic transition. This is not the only explanation our evidence supports, but it is one of the most consistent and powerful. We build on recent work by [Klein and Lee \(2019\)](#) and a case study of Brazil to argue that these movements matter in three ways: first, because movement practices of self-organizing model and enable the reform of state institutions; second, because veterans of the pro-democracy movement are more likely to use state office to deepen democracy; third, because long movements give post-transition civil societies the capacity to demand the deepening of democracy. In an era of anxiety about the antidemocratic proclivities of the mass public, our results are a reminder that ordinary people have advanced the cause of democracy and not hindered it.

Literature Review

The rise of democracy is one of the most well-studied subjects in the social sciences. Scholars, ancient and modern, have long sought to understand why divided societies would grant otherwise unequal citizens equal standing. This is a puzzle of first-order importance, and we have learned a tremendous amount from the scholarship on this subject to date.

Yet there is an evident dichotomy in the literature. Cross-national research has focused on formal aspects of democracy. Indeed, even studies of democratic quality define quality in formal terms: competitive elections and laws safeguarding individual rights to free expression and assembly (for a critical review, see [Fishman 2016](#)).

Of course, not all formal democracies empower their citizens equally. And this fact cuts to the heart of why democracy matters. In their survey of

democratizations past and present, Rueschemeyer et al. observed that democracy is important because it defies the ordinary distribution of power in divided societies. As a rule, those with “less income, less wealth, less education and less honor” have had little power in human history. But democracy is a “counterintuitive state of affairs” which gives the disadvantaged “a real voice” (1992:41). Similarly, as Robert Dahl has argued, the ideal democracy achieves real political equality. In a fully democratic regime, citizens acquire equal capacities to shape the political agenda (Dahl 1972:8,90, 2006:2).

The scholarship that has focused on this aspect of democracy typically refers to this redistribution of power as democratic deepening. These scholars investigate whether the idea of popular self-rule is achieved, and specifically whether disadvantaged groups gain *leverage* over the policy process. In this view, representation is not sufficient. (Fishman 2016:303–5). Democracies also require institutions that promote the participation of citizens in decision-making (Barber 2004), and a public sphere through which citizens debate the major affairs of the polity (Gutmann and Thompson 2004). Accordingly, scholars emphasize the importance of participatory institutions (Fung and Wright 2003), deliberation in the public sphere (Baiocchi 2003), and redistributive programs that give voice to disadvantaged groups (Roberts 1998). Yet the empirical work on these is still thin, resting on case studies or comparative analysis of a few cases (Baiocchi, Heller, and Silva 2011; Heller 2000; Roberts 1998).

Given the state of the literature, we are left with some unknowns. We do not know if arguments developed at the cross-national level but limited to formal dimensions extend to substantive dimensions. Nor do we know whether qualitative work on democratic depth generalizes. Thanks to recent advances in the measurement of substantive democracy, we can now address these puzzles.

Accordingly, we gather hypotheses about substantive democratization in two parts. First, we use explanations of formal democratization to develop hypotheses about democratic depth. To formulate our expectations about democratic deepening, we assume here that substantive democratization is governed by the same dynamics as formal democratization. This is of course an assumption that we test in the analysis that follows, but it suffices for formulating our expectations a priori.

Second, we use qualitative work on democratic depth as well as a few cross-national studies of formal democratization to summarize contrasting expectations about the role of mass protest during regime transitions. We separate this set of hypotheses from the first to amplify the contribution of this paper, which is to propose and then show that sustained unarmed mobilization during regime transitions yields democratic dividends for post-transition regimes.

Standard Accounts of Democratization

Whence formal democracy? Standard accounts of the rise of democracy tie it to the rise of capitalism. The view from modernization theory is that capitalism catalyzes democracy because it raises standards of living, advances the division of labor and incubates a tolerant citizenry (Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Lipset

1959). This argument has been criticized by those who argue that democratization is contentious rather than conflict-free. This criticism was made first by an older, comparative-historical tradition which argued that democracy is the result of the new balance of class capacities that economic development introduces. The classic statement of this argument is Barrington Moore's (1966), but this tradition includes those who, unlike Moore, argue that it is specifically the rise of non-elite capacities that matter (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992). A related criticism has been made by recent work in economics and political science. These authors argue that it is not the size of the pie but conflict over its distribution that governs democratization (Acemoglu and Robinson 2005; Ansell 2014; Boix 2003). While these "redistributivists" all agree that democracy is the result of conflict between the classes, they each formulate the problem differently. These different formulations yield divergent expectations about whether it is high, low, or mid-dling levels of inequality that will catalyze democracy.

Note that all these views share the position that democracy is endogenous to the development and distribution of economic resources. They can thus be usefully contrasted to a different set of arguments, following Wejnert (2005), which maintains that many of the determinants of democratization are exogenous to the economy. The arguments in this tradition include the view that democracy diffuses across borders (Wejnert 2005), that colonialism shape democratization (Olsson 2009), that oil economies are less likely to democratize (Ross 2012), that only certain institutional settings can incubate democracy (Somers 1993), that a country's political history substantially governs its future prospects (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014), or that countries with large ethnic minorities will find democratization harder.

Elite-Led Transitions vs. Transitions from Below

In what follows we test how well these hypotheses explain substantive democratization in the post-1950 world. But we pay particular attention to a different set of hypotheses borne of an adjacent debate. Scholars of democratization have also debated how a regime's origins shape its subsequent outcomes, with specific attention falling on the character of transitions. This debate is rooted in the observation that not all transitions are made equal. Some are contentious and involve mass mobilization; some are initiated by elites (Haggard and Kaufman 2016).

An earlier, influential literature held a pessimistic view about the consequences of protest. These scholars argued that mobilization might force a "pivotal elite" to abort the transition (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986). Indeed, as Huntington (1984) argued, even if protest succeeded in installing democracy, the resulting regime was likely to be unstable. This negative view of mobilization had its lineage in Huntington's earlier work about stability and order in developing countries. Huntington (1968) had argued that in the absence of institutions to contain demands for participation, popular mobilization might overload the political system. Similarly, in a report about the governability of democracy to the Trilateral Commission, he and his co-authors warned that the increasing

participation of various groups in political activities had inhibited democracy, again by overloading the governing process and by fostering distrust in leadership (Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki 1975). In this tradition, a recent study of democratic consolidation finds that cooperative transitions produce more durable, higher-quality democracies (Guo and Stradiotto 2016).

Yet several other studies dispute this pessimistic view. These authors argue that democracies emerging from episodes of popular mobilization are *more* durable (Bayer, Bethke, and Lambach 2016; Kadivar 2018) and that they score higher in measures of electoral and liberal progress (Bethke 2017; Bethke and Pinckney 2016a; Haggard and Kaufman 2016). Specifically, Bethke and Pinckney (2016a) show that democracies that emerge from nonviolent campaigns have higher-quality electoral institutions because they improve the freedom of expression. This literature, nonetheless, remains in the realm of formal democracy. One of the contributions of this paper is to transport the insights of this developing view to a new puzzle.

Why might movements spur post-transition democratization? Those who argue that they do have so far given two kinds of reasons. First, they have argued that mobilization matters because movement veterans enter the post-transition regime. Movements thus furnish new democracies with a pro-democratic leadership. Second, scholars have argued that movements matter because they enhance post-transition civil society. Civil societies with a history of mobilization will be that much more likely to mobilize after transition, and thus better placed to hold officials of post-transition regimes accountable (Bethke 2017; Haggard and Kaufman 2016; Kadivar 2018).

In this paper, we seek to give the mechanisms by which movements matter a firmer foundation in the recent literature on how civil society shapes the state. Klein and Lee (2019) have recently identified three ways in which civil society can shape policy: first, by building parallel institutions for their own constituents (“the politics of substitution”); second, by influencing policies without entering policy-making institutions (“the politics of influence”); and third, by entering state institutions and reshaping them to their own ends (“the politics of occupation”). These three “modes of civil society infiltration” comprise what they call the “politics of forward infiltration”.

Here we argue that it is these three mechanisms that explain why longer pro-democracy movements result in deeper democracies. We corroborate this argument, later, in our case study of Brazil’s paradigmatic transition.

First, movements build stronger civil society networks. When community organizing has been a part of the pre-transition mobilization, civil society is more organized, and activists more adept. This corresponds to the “politics of substitution”. Activists rely on non-state networks to avoid regimes’ repressive measures. Why do these networks advance substantive democratization after a transition? First, internal practices of horizontalism and deliberative democracy provide a blueprint for activists to build participatory and deliberative institutions when they enter office.² Second, when participatory institutions are in place, previous practices of internal democracy within civil society mean that collective actors are equipped with skills and capacities to participate in

deliberative processes (Baiocchi et al. 2011), which in turn inoculates these institutions from paralysis and ineffectiveness.

Second, long movements produce an array of pro-democratic leaders. These movement veterans are embedded in pro-democratic political parties. Upon taking office, they are well placed to build institutions that empower disadvantaged groups. This is the “politics of occupation”. Parties borne of years of struggle will be disposed to deliver to the masses that they mobilized.

Finally, movements are likely to generate a strong “politics of influence” after the transition. Activism begets activism. A well-organized civil society also empowers excluded groups to organize themselves, articulate their interests, and to win inclusion and redistribution (Baiocchi, Heller, and Silva 2008; Wampler and Avritzer 2004). Furthermore, the past success of contention legitimizes contentious methods as a major means of claim-making (Fishman 2011). Movements do not always endure, after all, upon coming to power; they often betray their egalitarian ideals (Silva 2009). Under such conditions, contentious collective action supports redistribution (Roberts 1998). Strong movements can hold ruling parties to their promises (Ekiert, Kubik, and Wenzel 2017; Silva 2009).

Data and Methods

Our interest in this paper is to understand why formal democracies vary in the extent to which they empower their constituents. Our key hypothesis is that substantive democratization is in part driven by sustained, unarmed mobilization prior to transition, though we also evaluate other explanations in what follows.

We first approach this puzzle econometrically. We run panel regressions to assess determinants of substantive democratization in all countries that transitioned to democracy between 1950 and 2010. To define democratic periods, we followed Geddes et al. (2014:6), who classify as democracies all political regimes whose executive comes to power through “direct, reasonably fair, competitive elections”. These authors code the characteristics of different political regimes, providing extensive details about their coding. Table 6 in the Appendix lists details of all democratic regimes in our sample.³

Substantive Democratization

To measure substantive democracy, we use the Varieties of Democracy dataset (V-Dem 8.0) (Coppedge et al. 2018; Pemstein et al. 2018). Unlike existing datasets, V-Dem measures democracy in multiple dimensions: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian. The first two overlap with traditional indices, but the other three are new. Because they are the three ideals which recur in the literature on substantive democracy, they are our focus in what follows. Each index registers important changes on the road to deep democracy. Deliberative democracy is higher when political elites reach decisions via deliberation rather than appeals to solidary attachments or parochial concerns. Participatory democracy is higher when citizens are actively involved in the

political process, through direct democracy and local bodies. And egalitarian democracy is higher when ordinary people face fewer barriers in exercising their formal liberties due to a more balanced distribution of resources. See Table 1 for a summary of V-Dem's own definitions.

Contentious Mobilization

We have argued that sustained unarmed mobilization prior to a democratic transition should advance substantive democratization. To measure the duration of antecedent mobilizations, we use a dataset measuring anti-authoritarian mobilizations (Kadivar 2018). Based on a wide array of secondary sources (see Appendix C for details), this dataset codes all contentious mobilizations prior to all post-1950 transitions. Building on Chenoweth and Stephan's (2012) definition of a campaign and Tilly and Tarrow's (2007) definition of contentious politics, Kadivar (2018) defines contentious mobilization as collective action comprising at least 1,000 people making demands on a government.

The dataset measures sustained unarmed mobilization by the duration (in years) of consistent mobilization leading to the democratic period in question. This is the main independent variable in our analysis, but the dataset does also code the duration of *armed* mobilization preceding transition, which we include alongside. If no mass movement existed, then these variables are coded as zero. In total, there are 108 democracies in the dataset, since different democratic

Table 1. Main Outcomes as Defined by V-Dem

Variable	V-Dem Name	Definition
Deliberative Dimension	v2xdl_delib	The deliberative component is higher when decisions are judged to be reached via deliberation characterized by a commitment to the common good, and not by emotional appeals, solidary attachments, parochialism, or coercion. V-Dem measures the extent to which political elites justify their behavior by advertng to the public good, respecting counter-arguments, and the extent to which they consult other elites.
Participatory Dimension	v2x_partip	The participatory component is higher in countries which actively involve citizens in the political process. It measures the extent to which citizens have direct influence on policy decisions, through civil society, through direct democratic initiatives, and through subnational bodies.
Egalitarian Dimension	v2x_egal	The egalitarian component is higher in countries which reduce the barriers that ordinary people face, when trying to exercise their formal rights. It is thus higher in countries where resources and rights are judged to be distributed equally across social groups, and where this allocation meets their basic needs.

periods in the same country count as separate instances of democracy. Of these 108 democratic spells, 69 are in our final sample.⁴ Forty six of these 69 democracies were preceded by unarmed mobilizations lasting at least a year.

Of course, it is plausible that the duration of pro-democratic mobilization is endogenous to the quality of the regime in which it appears. Perhaps the character of the authoritarian regime explains the coincidence of contentious movements and any substantive democratization we observe. We thus control for two observable characteristics of the antecedent dictatorship in these models. First, we add a measure of the old regime's aggregate civil society score (from the V-Dem dataset) in the year prior to the start of the pro-democratic campaign. This score is formed from questions posed to country experts about the autonomy, influence, and membership of civil society organizations. As an example: by our coding, the campaign to unseat Poland's communist regime began in 1980, so we include the V-Dem civil society score from 1979 as a measure of that regime's permissiveness towards civil society on the eve of the campaign to depose the dictatorship. Second, we add a measure of the old regime's average civil liberties score (also from V-Dem) over the life of the pro-democratic campaign. Again, in Poland, this campaign lasted between 1980 and 1989, so we include the civil liberties score from these years in all models.

Standard Explanations

While we hypothesize that sustained mobilization advances substantive democratization, nothing in our review of the literature suggests that it is the only cause. Since our paper is among the first to examine variation in substantive democratization within formally democratic regimes, we are interested in testing other explanations, too. How well do theories of formal democratization explain democratic deepening?

The foremost of these explanations is the view that economic modernization catalyzes democracy. To test this hypothesis, we measure all the channels by which modernization is believed to matter. We include measures of GDP per capita and its growth rate in all models, to assess whether economic development itself leads to democratic deepening. Some believe modernization matters because development yields a middle-class, which demands democracy. To test this channel specifically, we also include measures of the share of the population living in large cities (Banks and Wilson 2013) and the average level of education (Barro and Lee 2013).

As noted earlier, the redistributivist challenge to the modernization view is that it is not wealth but its distribution that governs democratization. We test this by including a measure of income inequality in all models (Solt 2016). The related, major criticism of the modernization view is that it misunderstands why development matters—not because it yields a middle-class, but because it transforms the class capacities of ordinary people (who demand democracy) and landlords (who oppose it). To test this hypothesis, our models also include a measure of landlord power (Ansell and Samuels 2010), as well as a measure of the disruptive capacity of the working-age population (Usmani 2018).

As mentioned earlier, we also test several “exogenous” theories of democratization. To test whether colonial legacies influence present-day democratization, we include dummies for the identity of a country’s colonizer as well as the number of years that a country was colonized. To test the view that democratization is more difficult in oil-producing countries, we include a measure of oil production per capita (Ross 2012). To test the hypothesis that ethnic fractionalization makes institution-building more difficult, we include controls for both ethnic fractionalization and the size of excluded populations in a country (Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009). To establish how a country’s regional neighbors and the international context bear on democratic deepening, we include the lag of the average value of the dependent variable across all other countries in the region and the share of a country’s trade in GDP (World Bank 2012). Finally, to assess the importance of a country’s institutional and political history, we include a variable that counts the number of years a country has been democratic before the spell in question, and a set of dummies to measure the character of the antecedent authoritarian regime—whether personalistic, one-party or military.

Methods

To estimate the impact of these variables on subsequent democratic progress, we fit autoregressive distributed lag models (ADL’s), so-called because we include a lag of the dependent variable on the right-hand side. This specification allows us to estimate both the short-run and long-run effects of each independent variable on the outcome (De Boef and Keele 2008). Together with error-correction models, which are algebraically equivalent (*ibid.*), ADL’s have become conventional for analysis of time-series cross-sectional data such as these. In what follows, for the purposes of parsimony, we focus entirely on the long-run effects (Table 5 in the Appendix presents the original short-run estimates). In addition, we include year fixed effects to account for time trends and shocks common to all countries, regional fixed effects to account for any time-invariant, region-specific confounders, and we adjust our standard errors for clustering at the country level (Table 2).

In our preferred models, we further add country-level random effects, to capture country-specific heterogeneity not captured by the regional fixed effects or other variables. Given the constraints of our dataset, these are more appropriate than country-level fixed effects. While country-level fixed effects have inferential appeal (Firebaugh, Warner, and Massoglia 2013), they are better suited to a sample in which each country experiences several democratic transitions. This is far from the case in the post-1950 world. Over the life of our sample, most countries experience only a single democratic transition (46 of the 55), and thus only a single democratic spell. It is only in 7 countries in our sample that there is any variation in the length of antecedent campaigns. Moreover, a fixed-effects approach would greatly limit the variation being considered in our key independent variable. As Table 3 shows, the average in-sample standard deviation of this variable is about 2.6 years, but its average within-country standard

Table 2. Variables Testing Key Accounts of Democratization

<i>Endogenous</i>	
Modernization	GDP per capita, growth rate, urbanity, educational attainment
Redistributivist	Income inequality
Class-based	Landlord power, disruptive capacity
<i>Exogenous</i>	
Diffusion	Regional average of democracy score, globalization
Colonial legacy	Colonial dummies, colonial duration
Oil	Oil production per capita
Population	Population
Ethnic minority	Ethnic fractionalization, excluded population
Institutional and political history	Democratic experience, character of authoritarian regime
<i>Transition-based</i>	
Contentious mobilization	Years of pro-democratic mobilization leading to transition

deviation is only 0.12 years. In short: these are poor grounds for within-country inference. We expect much of the country-level heterogeneity to be accounted for by the country random effects, regional fixed effects and the history-specific dummies, but in robustness tests we discuss estimates from two supplementary models which include country-level fixed effects.

Results

Table 4 presents long-run estimates from our preferred specifications. We present three models, one for each of three main dependent variables in our analysis: deliberative democracy, participatory democracy, and egalitarian democracy.

Contentious Mobilization

Our main hypothesis finds strong support across the three models. All else equal, the duration of unarmed, contentious mobilization prior to transition is associated with subsequent substantive democratization. This is not true of armed mobilization,⁵ which suggests that it is not their contentiousness but specifically the mass, democratic character of unarmed campaigns that matters for democracy.

We report standardized estimates, for ease of interpretation. In the long-run, a hypothetical increase in the length of mobilization of roughly 2.6 years leads to discernible improvements in the level of democracy: 0.58 standard deviations in the deliberative dimension (95 percent CI: 0.29 to 0.99), 0.41 standard deviations in the participatory dimension (95 percent CI: 0.10 to 0.75), and 0.25

Table 3. In-Sample Descriptive Statistics

	Average	SD	Within SD
Dependent variables			
Deliberative dimension	74.70	18.43	6.49
Participatory dimension	54.60	11.95	4.05
Egalitarian dimension	61.86	20.95	2.95
Independent variables			
Unarmed mobilization	2.20	2.63	0.12
Armed mobilization	1.98	5.56	0.00
GDP per capita (log)	8.56	0.88	0.15
Growth rate	0.02	0.04	0.04
Educational attainment	6.82	2.60	0.66
Urbanity	29.72	14.59	1.52
Income inequality	41.66	9.14	1.91
Landlord power	24.26	15.17	5.03
Disruptive capacity	16.29	5.63	1.67
Oil production per capita	0.24	0.54	0.04
Population (log)	16.55	1.13	0.10
Globalization	61.49	32.88	11.30
Colonial duration	164.44	144.55	0.00
Democratic experience	7.87	9.51	0.53
Excluded population	0.13	0.15	0.01
Ethnic fractionalization	0.32	0.26	0.00
Post-military rule	0.52	0.50	0.02
Post-personalistic rule	0.38	0.48	0.03
Post-party rule	0.21	0.41	0.00
Civil society pre-mob.	29.23	20.97	1.21
Civil liberties during mob.	42.48	19.14	1.06

This table presents the average, standard deviation, and average within-country standard deviation ("Within SD") of each variable included in our preferred specifications. By average within-country standard deviation we refer to the average of the within-country standard deviations in our sample.

points in the egalitarian dimension (95 percent CI: 0.11 to 0.41). In summary, all else equal, when authoritarian regimes are toppled by prolonged, unarmed movements, they are replaced by democracies which tend to become more deliberative, more participatory, and more egalitarian than those which were born amidst quiescence.⁶ As the Appendix shows, these three estimates are robust to a wide array of robustness checks.

Table 4. Long-Run Estimates, Main Outcomes

	Deliberative	Participatory	Egalitarian
<i>Long-run multiplier</i>			
Unarmed mobilization	0.582** [0.29 to 0.99]	0.413** [0.1 to 0.75]	0.252** [0.11 to 0.41]
Armed mobilization	-0.144 [-0.37 to 0.05]	-0.010 [-0.18 to 0.22]	0.012 [-0.12 to 0.11]
GDP per capita (log)	-0.003 [-0.45 to 0.4]	-0.192 [-0.79 to 0.22]	-0.189 [-0.45 to 0.11]
Growth rate	-0.053 [-0.11 to 0.02]	-0.098+ [-0.21 to 0.01]	-0.007 [-0.08 to 0.04]
Educational attainment	-0.654** [-1.37 to -0.19]	-0.493* [-0.94 to -0.04]	0.237 [-0.15 to 0.52]
Urbanity	0.066 [-0.46 to 0.53]	0.267 [-0.16 to 0.84]	0.202 [-0.07 to 0.41]
Income inequality	-0.238* [-0.46 to -0.01]	-0.124 [-0.55 to 0.22]	-0.171+ [-0.4 to 0.03]
Landlord power	-0.207 [-0.48 to 0.07]	-0.255+ [-0.54 to 0.02]	-0.298** [-0.49 to -0.14]
Disruptive capacity	0.163+ [-0.03 to 0.4]	0.340** [0.1 to 0.69]	0.065 [-0.04 to 0.16]
Oil production per capita	0.365** [0.22 to 0.56]	0.406** [0.17 to 0.77]	0.283** [0.13 to 0.48]
Population (log)	-0.281* [-0.47 to -0.04]	-0.350** [-0.67 to -0.11]	-0.381** [-0.57 to -0.21]

Globalization	0.193* [0.02 to 0.43]	-0.125 [-0.39 to 0.14]	0.053 [-0.05 to 0.17]
Colonial duration	0.048 [-0.23 to 0.33]	-0.501** [-0.84 to -0.16]	-0.094 [-0.32 to 0.16]
Democratic experience	0.423* [0.17 to 0.79]	0.136 [-0.27 to 0.46]	0.094 [-0.09 to 0.35]
Excluded population	-0.155 [-0.4 to 0.06]	-0.285* [-0.6 to -0.01]	-0.018 [-0.1 to 0.07]
Ethnic fractionalization	0.235 [-0.07 to 0.55]	0.181 [-0.14 to 0.49]	0.005 [-0.12 to 0.16]
Post-military rule	-0.259 [-0.92 to 0.25]	-0.065 [-0.76 to 0.73]	0.092 [-0.35 to 0.53]
Post-personalistic rule	0.138 [-0.46 to 0.64]	-0.059 [-0.52 to 0.5]	0.128 [-0.2 to 0.48]
Post-party rule	0.947** [0.48 to 1.43]	0.422 [-0.14 to 1.02]	0.240 [-0.16 to 0.69]
Civil society pre-mob.	0.130 [-0.15 to 0.4]	0.701** [0.39 to 1.08]	0.050 [-0.17 to 0.31]
Civil liberties during mob.	-0.156 [-0.41 to 0.11]	-0.255+ [-0.56 to 0.05]	0.050 [-0.15 to 0.23]
Deliberative dimension (reg. avg.)	0.149 [-0.14 to 0.41]		
Participatory dimension (reg. avg.)		0.412 [-0.23 to 1.11]	
Egalitarian dimension (reg. avg.)			0.346* [0.05 to 0.81]

(Continued)

Table 4. continued

	Deliberative	Participatory	Egalitarian
<i>Model Info</i>			
Observations	944	944	944
Countries	55	55	55
Range	1957–2008	1957–2008	1957–2008
Avg. N_i	17.2	17.2	17.2
Colonizer dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country-level	RE	RE	RE
Region-level	FE	FE	FE
Year-level	FE	FE	FE
Adj. R^2	0.825	0.920	0.967

This table reports long-run estimates from our preferred models. As discussed in the main text and in Section C of the Appendix, the inclusion of a lag of the dependent variable on the right-hand side of our models permits calculation of the cumulative (and not just immediate) impact of a change in a given independent variable. Note that each of these estimates is standardized. It represents the impact of a SD-sized change in the independent variable on the relevant variable, also in standard deviations. Each column of this table presents estimates from models with a different dependent variable. Our favored specification thus includes each of the controls listed along the left-hand side of the table, as well as a variety of other controls indicated in “Model Info” (dummies for the identity of a country’s colonial ruler, country-level random effects, region-level fixed effects, and year-level fixed effects). As explained in Section C of the Appendix, due to the difficulty of calculating standard errors analytically, we report 95 percent confidence intervals (and we use 90 percent, 95 percent and 99 percent confidence intervals to compute the corresponding level of statistical significance).

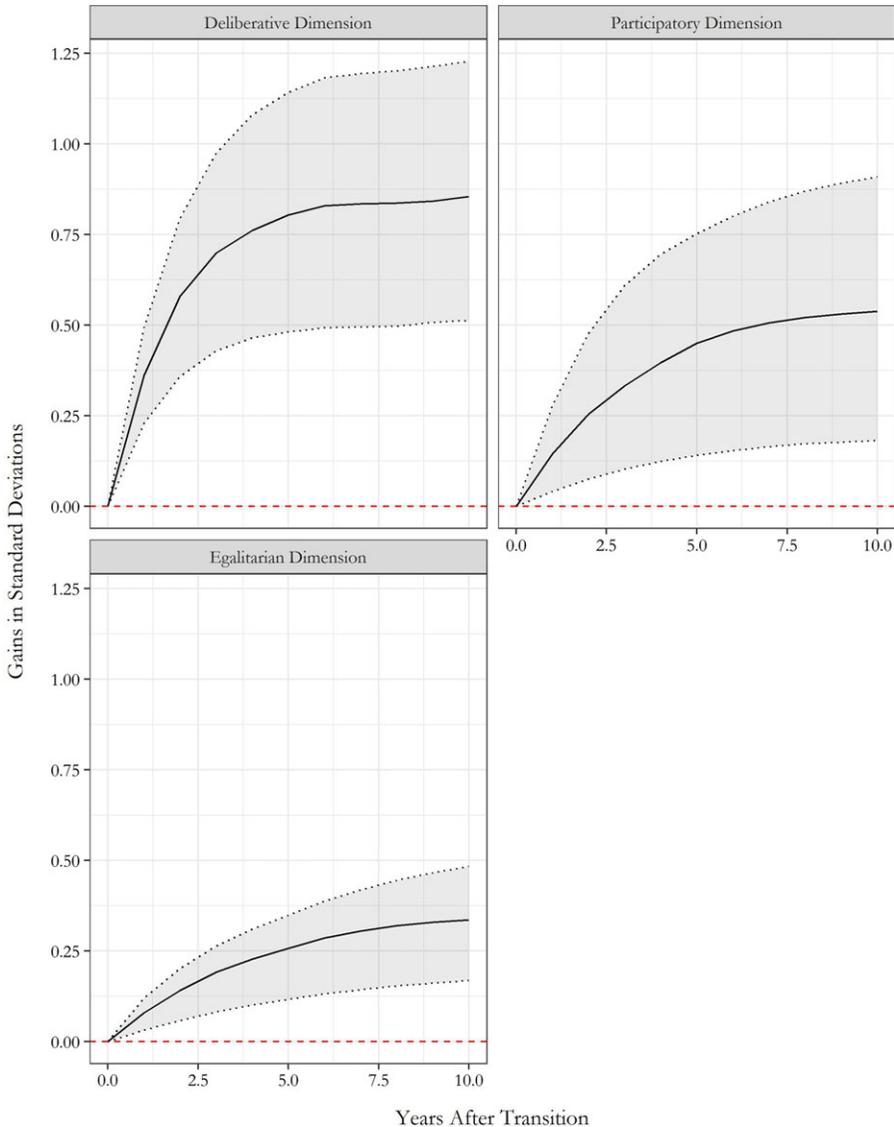
How large are these estimates? Had mobilization been more common, the post-1950 world would have been more democratic—but how much more?? We consider two counterfactuals which are distinguished by the size of the mobilizations involved. First, we estimate outcomes in a world in which all transitions unfolded amidst quiescence; where there was no mobilization prior to any democratic transition in our sample. Second, we estimate outcomes in a world in which all transitions were detonated by mass mobilizations of 4.0 years (the 90th percentile value of all post-1950 mobilizations). All other variables are held at their observed values. We loop through every regime and predict the level of each outcome under each scenario. Rather than discussing trends in an idiosyncratic country, we focus here on aggregate trends across all regimes, ordered by the number of years elapsed since antecedent transition. Since the level of any given dependent variable has no intuitive meaning, here we discuss progress rather than the predicted levels. In other words, for each democratic spell, we calculate the gains made under each counterfactual (i.e., the predicted democracy score in a given year in a given spell minus the actual democracy score on the eve of transition leading to that spell). Section B of the Appendix gives details.

The counterfactual impact of mobilization is best captured by the difference in gains made under the two scenarios—by the *additional* progress made in a world filled with mass mobilization as compared to a world of generalized quiescence. Figure 1 plots the magnitude of these additional gains, as a function of the number of years that have elapsed since transition. Gains due to mobilization are sizeable in all dimensions. Had all post-1950 democracies in our sample been preceded by 4.0 years of unarmed mobilization, they would have been significantly more democratic than in a universe in which the masses had never mobilized. Ten years out from transition, average additional gains amount to 0.86 standard deviations in the deliberative dimension (95 percent CI: 0.51 to 1.23), 0.54 standard deviations in the participatory dimension (95 percent CI: 0.18 to 0.91), and 0.34 standard deviations in the egalitarian dimension (95 percent CI: 0.17 to 0.48). A quiescent world would have been substantially less democratic, and a mobilized world substantially more.

Other Explanations

Granted, the fact that unarmed mobilization is a significant predictor of substantive democratization does not imply that it is its only explanation. We find that other features of a democracy's economic, political, and institutional history also help explain the observed variance in levels of substantive democracy. Since it is the puzzle of these patterns that animates this paper, we here review these results. Space constraints do not allow us to explore these findings in detail, but the results anchor our view that there is still much more to be learned about substantive democratization. We first consider standard explanations for democratization that identify factors endogenous to development and its distribution, before turning to the exogenous accounts.

Figure 1. This figure illustrates the estimated aggregate impact of mobilization on democratic deepening, as measured by the predicted gap in democratic gains made in a world in which all transitions unfolded amidst mobilizations of 4.0 years, which is the 90th percentile value of all post-1950 pro-democratic mobilizations, and a world in which all transitions unfolded amidst quiescence. Section D of the Appendix describes our methods and the results in more detail. The y-axis denotes the average difference in gains made under these two scenarios (in standard deviations of the dependent variable), and the x-axis denotes the number of years that have elapsed since transition. The solid line plots the average size of gains made across all spells that have survived a given number of years since transition, while the shaded area spans a 95 percent confidence interval for this average.



We find little evidence for the modernization view that economic development or any of its correlates detonate democracy. Neither GDP per capita, its growth rate nor levels of urbanization are obviously associated with levels of substantive democracy. (The one exception is in the participatory dimension, where higher growth is associated with *lower* democracy at $\alpha = 0.10$.) Moreover, in our sample, higher levels of education are associated with *less* progress in the deliberative and participatory dimensions. If it is right to interpret average levels of education as an index of middle-class growth, this may reflect the fact that a growing middle-class has incentives to lock the poor out of the political process.

If not modernization, what about the challenge to that modernization view that democratization is a contentious process? We do find that more unequal democracies are substantively less democratic in the deliberative and egalitarian dimensions. This aligns with Boix's older formulation of the puzzle, according to which lower levels of inequality make elites more willing to concede democracy to the poor (Boix 2003). It does not support the more recent argument made by Ansell and Samuels (2014) that higher levels of inequality should incubate democracy. Separately, we also find support for the class-centric account that stronger landlords hamper democracy while ordinary people advance it (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992; Usmani 2018). Landlord power is negatively associated with substantive democracy in the participatory and egalitarian dimensions, while disruptive capacity is positively associated with democracy in the deliberative and participatory dimensions.

What about those arguments which focus on factors exogenous to capitalist development? First, and surprisingly, we find that oil production per capita is *positively* associated with levels of substantive democracy in all three dimensions. This relationship survives several robustness tests. It is not obviously driven by patterns in outlying countries. Even in specifications in which we omit the biggest (Venezuela) or even the biggest three (Mexico, Ecuador additionally) oil producers, oil production per capita is positively associated with participatory and egalitarian democracy. Similarly, the result survives the addition of country fixed-effects (and extension of the sample to include all countries), as well as a sparser model which drops all variables testing other hypotheses. Finally, it is not just positively associated with democracy in these three substantive dimensions, but also with levels of electoral and liberal democracy (see Appendix). Previous work on the oil-democracy relationship has argued that oil hinders formal democracy (Ross 2012). What explains the discrepancy? Our suspicion is that it is explained by our choice of dependent variable. When we follow Ross and run our models on the Polity2 score, we find the expected negative association. Given that the Varieties of Democracy dataset represents a substantial improvement over the Polity2 score, this is surely a profitable area for future research.

Second, we find that larger democracies are less substantively democratic. This is the only other variable (alongside unarmed mobilization and oil production) which is a statistically significant predictor of all three dimensions of substantive democracy. Past work has not paid much attention to population size as inhibiting democracy, but it bears noting. We suspect this is explained by the

difficulty of coordinating political institutions and perhaps also collective action in larger societies, though establishing these mechanisms will require more evidence than we are able to gather in this paper.

Otherwise, no other variables are consistently significant across multiple dimensions. We find evidence of regional diffusion, but only in the egalitarian dimension. Higher levels of trade are positively associated with levels of deliberative democracy only. Democracies that were colonized longer have lower levels of participatory democracy, which is at odds with the findings in [Olsson \(2009\)](#). Countries that have a longer history of democracy or which emerge from rule by a single party exhibit higher levels of deliberative democracy. Finally, in line with [Wimmer et al. \(2009\)](#), we find that countries with a larger excluded population exhibit lower levels of participatory democracy.

Case Study: The Long March to Democracy in Brazil

The evidence above sheds light on substantive democratization in the post-war world. However, it is not well suited to establishing the mechanisms underlying the associations we have documented thus far. Here we seek to elaborate the mechanisms that link our key independent variable to substantive democratization. We do this by analyzing a paradigmatic case: Brazil. Paradigmatic cases illustrate an association at its extreme. They are thus fruitful places to identify mechanisms ([Gerring 2006](#)). That is to say, because Brazil experienced both a lengthy period of contentious mobilization under authoritarianism and a remarkable deepening of its democracy after the transition to formal democracy. Our statistical results suggest the two are linked, and we therefore expect Brazil to illustrate why. In the conclusion that follows this case study, we reflect on how our findings relate to recent political events in Brazil, in light of the election of Jair Bolsonaro in October 2018.

We draw on the “politics of forward infiltration” identified by [Klein and Lee \(2019\)](#) to explain democratic deepening in Brazil: substitution, occupation, and influence. In the Brazilian case, all three of these mechanisms are in evidence in the democratic period. And in fact, based on the case study, we propose an extension of [Klein and Lee’s \(2019\)](#) framework to consider an interaction between the politics of substitution and the politics of occupation. Substitution is important for producing autonomous spaces for movements to model alternative, democratic practices. As these movements later begin to occupy the state, they fuse the practices developed in the substitutive mode into formal institutions, thereby deepening their democratic character.

Contentious Mobilization Under Authoritarianism

Scholars have shown that contentious mobilizations were decisive to the Brazilian transition ([Keck 1995](#); [Seidman 1994](#)). As early as the mid-1970s, a broad front had emerged to demand elections. This constellation of movements linked together independent trade unions, neighborhood groups, an urban reform movement, Catholic churches, and cultural groups. Such “social

movement unionism” integrated demands for substantive democracy with calls for liberal and electoral reforms. Labor agitation gained force in 1977 and strikes in the industrial suburbs of São Paulo in the 1978 and 1979 made clear that these movements could challenge the military dictatorship.

The most significant party to emerge out of this period of struggle was the Worker’s Party (PT). The PT’s importance lay in its capacity to articulate social movement demands in the political sphere. The party participated in tightly-controlled parliamentary elections in 1982. After a poor showing, it returned to its base in trade unions and social movements. It was precisely this process of organizational renewal that explains the steady growth of the PT in later periods (Keck 1995).

In 1984, the “Diretas Já” movement for direct elections united this social movement-trade unionist alliance with more middle-class segments. These protests led to indirect presidential elections in 1985, the constitution of 1988 and the first direct elections of 1989. This transition opened avenues for expressing voice and building capacities in civil society. The participation of the PT in constitutional negotiations opened space for social movements to gain standing in the negotiations (Kingstone and Power 2008). Primarily, civil society associations influenced these negotiations by proposing popular amendments (Whitaker 1994). Key chapters on health, social assistance, and urban politics were all altered after such amendments (Avritzer 2012). The new constitution of 1988 ultimately carried some of the most significant socio-economic protections of any constitution in the world. This opened the possibility for deepening democracy in the years to come.

Democracy

The alliance of activist movements and party organizations which came together in the pro-democracy struggle was decisive in consolidating formal democracy once established. This is well documented in the literature. In this section, instead, we focus on the mechanisms that link the contentious mobilization that occurred under Brazil’s authoritarian regime to the deepening of Brazil’s democracy. What were these mechanisms? We note three. First, social movements had built autonomous spaces, free of the influence of authoritarian institutions. After the transition, these were progressively incorporated into formal governing institutions, first into municipal and then federal structures. This fusion of the politics of substitution to the politics of occupation deepened the participatory and deliberative dimensions of democracy. Second, movement activists that had taken office ensured that the Brazilian state was responsive to popular demands. In particular, this strengthened the egalitarian dimensions of democracy. Finally, civil society in the democratic era continued to renew itself, surfacing new organizations that anchored an enduring politics of influence.

From the politics of substitution to the politics of occupation

The ecosystem of social movements that birthed the PT during the dictatorship had yielded powerful forms of autonomous organization. These included

practices such as land occupations and self-help home construction. When amplified by the politics of occupation in the democratic era, these practices profoundly transformed Brazilian democracy.

How did this unfold? In the participatory and deliberative dimensions, the legacy of the politics of substitution were pivotal to subsequent deepening. After all, Brazilian democracy was remarkable for the extent to which the new PT regime established participatory institutions at the local level, undermining long-existing clientelist modes of governance (Hagopian 1996). Though the constitution of 1988 provided a legal framework for these councils, in and of itself this meant little. Research has documented instances where horizontalism has led to paralysis or ineffectiveness (Fish 1995; Freeman 1972). This was not the case in Brazil precisely because practices of participation and deliberation were already common to trade unions and social movements. The prior politics of substitution practiced by social movements in non-state spaces formed collective actors with the capacities to occupy these spaces. Movements were prepared with an understanding of public institutions and the ability to speak. And thus, these institutions delivered to the PT's working-class base without alienating the middle classes who also participated in the councils. Participatory and sectoral budgeting councils were a common attribute of PT-run cities as soon as they began to take over mayoral seats in direct elections in 1989 (Wampler and Avritzer 2004). Though these councils have exhibited some variation in the quality of participation and influence on policy, they are more effective at building citizenship than comparable institutions in other countries (Houtzager and Acharya 2011). Furthermore, the emergence of these participatory institutions incubated civil society associations in the cities where they were instituted (Baiocchi et al. 2008).

The legacy of the substitutive mode was felt not just in the participatory and deliberative dimensions. In cities such as São Paulo and Porto Alegre, following the wave of PT mayors in the first direct elections of 1989, local governments began supporting housing movements involved in land occupations to begin “self-construction” housing projects and to formalize previously informal “favela” settlements. These projects had first begun in the peripheries of Brazil's largest cities during the military dictatorship. Under authoritarian control, new housing movements used these projects to organize residents and initiate a culture of rights-claiming (Holston 2009). Under a democratic regime, armed with the power of the state, these projects delivered key public goods to poor citizens. Local control, increased bureaucratic capacity, the empowerment of social movements, and improved distribution of public services went together.

Consolidating the politics of occupation

The 2002 national election proved a watershed for the further development of the egalitarian dimensions of Brazilian democracy. The PT implemented redistributive policies in labor, healthcare, land and housing. These were not only responsive to movement demands, but often implemented through the occupation of

government offices by movement leaders. In this way, this era heralded an expansion of egalitarian democracy.

The link between the PT's roots and these new policies was clear. One of the main contributors to a reduction in inequality was the regular rise in the minimum wage (Ban 2013), which responded to the PT's origins in the labor movement. The provision of universal health care was a hallmark program of the PT government, which responded to a strong movement of health professionals known as the *sanitaristas* (Gibson 2019). The new Unified Health System was often staffed by *sanitaristas* and led to gains in life expectancy and drops in infant and maternal mortality (Gragnolati et al. 2013). The scaling up of the cash transfer program of Bolsa Escola, begun in the municipality of Belo Horizonte, to the national Bolsa Familia program is perhaps the most well-known instance of policy under the PT-controlled presidency (Sugiyama 2008). The link between redistribution and the move from clientelistic to programmatic welfare policies is most clearly exemplified by the administration of Bolsa Familia. Federal transfers went to beneficiaries, and not through local political bosses. Sugiyama and Hunter (2013) have cited this aspect of the program as a watershed in breaking the hold of clientelism.

The urban reform movement achieved a major victory around the same time with the passage of new laws, such as the City Statute in 2001. This legislation was designed to realize some of the key “aspirational” socio-economic rights recognized by the 1988 constitution. These legal and bureaucratic shifts were signals of federal support for decentralized management of public goods provision (Fernandes 2007). The Ministry of Cities that was created by the PT in 2003 included high-ranking positions for professionals associated with the urban reform movement. Furthermore, the PT pushed investments in infrastructure through the Growth and Acceleration Program (PAC) in 2007 and in low-income housing through the My House My Life (MCMV) program in 2009 (Pires and Gomide 2016).

The politics of influence

Like many poor and middle-income countries, policy space in Brazil is constrained by the whims of the global economy (Rudra 2002). But strong social movements exercised their influence to push for new reforms. The PT was pressured by its base to pursue egalitarian reforms (Lee 2016).

Movements continued to shape the political agenda well into Brazil's democratic period.⁷ The social movements that had organized for democracy faced a dilemma in the post-transition period. Rural land reform efforts—advocated by the Landless People's Movement (MST)—were formalized after many land occupations (Ondetti 2006). Urban reform movements achieved federal legislation in the form of the city statute and a ministry at which they could direct grievances (Fernandes 2007). Inevitably, challenges emerged. And yet, the coordination across local and national scales that had been so integral to the movements' successes made them remarkably resilient. Democratic consolidation also saw some existing movements rise to prominence in the democratic era. In particular,

movements for the rights of Afro-Brazilians, indigenous people, and LGBTQ, have deepened demands for egalitarian inclusion and representation (Paschel 2016).

Conclusion

Why do some new democracies deepen while others stagnate? Some regimes promote the participation of citizens and ensure equal access to the state. Others, however, remain democracies in procedure only. In this paper we derived hypotheses about substantive democratization from theories of formal democratization and the scholarship on democratic deepening. We exploited a new dataset which measures substantive dimensions of democracy—participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian. Previous cross-national studies of democratization have focused on the quality of electoral and liberal democracy (Boix 2011; Geddes et al. 2014; Jagers and Gurr 1995), but here we presented the first comprehensive cross-national analysis of democratic deepening.

What did we find? Our analysis suggests that substantive democratization is a contentious process. We found that one of the most consistent and powerful predictors of democratic deepening is the length of contentious mobilization prior to democratization. We further found partial support for inequality- and class-based explanations of democratization, both of which propose that democratization is conflict-filled rather than conflict-free, and no support for the modernization-based account they criticize. Granted, this is not to argue that democratization is driven only by contention between key actors. As discussed, the level of oil production and the size of a country's population were also consistent predictors of democratization across dimensions. We also found support for other hypotheses, though none were as consistent as these findings. All things considered, we believe that our evidence re-issues the argument made by McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001): because social movements, revolutions and democratization share contentious mechanisms, they belong together in the field of contentious politics.

To theorize the mechanisms that link contentious mobilization to substantive democratization, we drew on recent work on civil society and the state (Klein and Lee 2019). We argued that movements advance substantive democracy in three ways. First, they engage citizens in self-organizing, which provides a model and foundation for the deepening of democratic institutions (the politics of substitution). Second, they produce a political elite with the commitments to make government institutions participatory, deliberative, and redistributive (the politics of occupation). Third, they embolden civil society to make demands for inclusion after transition (the politics of influence).

We argued that the case of democratization in Brazil illustrates these mechanisms. Brazil owes its deeper democracy to a programmatic, redistributive political party, and an ecosystem of trade unions and social movements forged through lengthy mobilization under authoritarianism. The interaction between party, movement, and state institutions in the democratic period expanded democracy not only along liberal and electoral dimensions, but in participatory,

deliberative, and egalitarian dimensions as well. Our paper illustrated the mechanisms of substitution, occupation, and influence, and extended Klein and Lee's original formulation (2019) to show how the politics of substitution can evolve into the politics of occupation.

In recent months, of course, there has been a resurgence of right-wing authoritarianism in Brazil. Has contentious democratization backfired? In our view, the lesson of recent years is exactly the opposite. In fact, it is subaltern *demobilization* that has paved the way for the new right-wing. Recent literature suggests that, as the role of independent unions and other social movements receded, a personalistic "Lulismo" emerged (Singer 2018). This made the PT's project brittle. Moreover, Brazilian democracy has been buffeted by authoritarian developments beyond its borders. The wave of financial crises that began in the United States in 2008 and then in Europe have helped push large, middle-income countries with liberalized economies in an authoritarian direction (Bradlow 2018). Despite these developments, the duration and depth of democracy in Brazil today is noteworthy. In most other countries, the emergence of an aspirant strongman like Jair Bolsonaro would surely sound democracy's death knell. Brazil's history of contentious mobilization leaves its citizens well-placed to repel Bolsonaro's challenge.

The long march to democracy is full of conflict. In an age of challenges to democracy, we dare not avoid it.

Supplementary Material

Supplementary material is available at *Social Forces* online, <http://sf.oxfordjournals.org/>.

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Notes

1. The extent of this erosion depends on which index is used to assess it, but it is by no measure large. By V-Dem's electoral democracy index, which we introduce later in this paper, the decline between 2012 and 2017 amounts to just 2.5 percent of the progress made between 1789 and 2012.
2. There is thus an important link between the politics of substitution and occupation. [Klein and Lee \(2019\)](#) do not note this in their piece, but we find that it was pivotal to democratic deepening in Brazil.
3. Not all democracies remain democratic. These countries leave our sample upon their reversion to authoritarianism, though they re-enter our sample in the event of another democratic transition.
4. This is a function of data availability. As shown in the Appendix, our results are robust to considering sparser specifications in which we are able to study patterns in many more countries over many more years.
5. In fact, the estimated effect of armed mobilization is negative, though not statistically significant in our preferred specifications.
6. The V-Dem dataset also includes two measures of the formal dimensions of democracy: one electoral, and one liberal. One can use these data to pose a parallel question: does unarmed mobilization predict the extent of progress that formal democracies make towards competitive, free elections and towards securing individual liberties? This is not our focus in this paper, but in line with other work ([Bethke and Pinckney 2016b](#); [Kadivar 2018](#)), we find that the number of years of unarmed mobilization is a statistically significant predictor of formal democratization as well. Specifically, in the long-run, a counterfactual increase in the length of mobilization of 2.5 years is associated with a 0.40 standard deviation increase in the electoral dimension (95 percent CI: 0.08 to 0.69) and a 0.27 point increase in the liberal dimension (95 percent CI: 0.0 to 0.65). (This last estimate is only statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.10$, but the underlying short-run estimate is significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, and in a sparser specification which includes more countries and years the long-run estimate is statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.01$.)
7. To be clear, our paper relies on this case study of Brazil to establish the mechanisms that link mobilization to deepening democracy. It is beyond the scope of our paper to do this in detail for all variables and all cases. We note here that other paradigmatic cases also suggest that pro-democracy movements yield vibrant civil societies that exercise the politics of influence post-transition. In South Africa, union density increased after the transition ([Marais 2001](#)), and the rate of protest activities stayed the same ([Klandermans 2015](#)). In Argentina, human rights groups that emerged under the military dictatorship continued operating in the new democracy ([Levitsky 2005](#)). In Poland, Solidarity remained one of the two big labor unions in the country, played an important role in consolidation of democracy. And other forms of civil society organizations also grew after the transition ([Ekiert and Kubik 1999](#); [Ekiert, Kubik, and Wenzel 2017](#)). This last observation is challenged by [Grodsky \(2012\)](#), who argues, in fact, that the occupation of state office weakened the pro-democracy movement in Poland. But his argument has two major weaknesses. First, [Grodsky \(2012\)](#) relies mostly on interviews with veterans of the pro-democracy movement to substantiate his claims. These may not be the most reliable metric. Studies that rely on more dispassionate sources of data (such as surveys about participation in protest or registries of NGOs) come to different conclusions ([Ekiert et al. 2017](#)). Second, Grodsky's assessment of civil society's strength in these countries does not pose the

right counterfactual for our argument. Grodsky (2012) claims Polish civil society was weaker after Solidarity leaders took government positions in 1989. Here, his counterfactual is that civil society would have been stronger had Solidarity continued as a movement, while other politicians with democratic convictions had led the country. But this is not the counterfactual we consider in this paper. In arguing that stronger movements yield stronger civil societies, our implicit counterfactual is to a Poland in which Solidarity had never emerged. We thank a reviewer for pushing us on this point.

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