

Revolutionary Transitions - To What?

A quantitative analysis at the intersection of revolution and
democracy

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May 25, 2022

Abstract

Revolutions are historically recurring events, from the French Revolution to the Arab Spring. This thesis explores two plausible pre-revolution connections to post-revolution democracy levels, measuring democracy as a spectrum rather than a threshold. The first concerns the potential relation between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy. The second regards whether there is a pattern between pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy. This exploration is guided by a theoretical framework that draws upon previous research on these very connections and is conducted through a mainly quantitative analysis of 20 countries that experienced revolutions between 1960-2000. The data is primarily collected from V-Dem's *electoral democracy index* and the *Autocratic Regimes dataset*.

Finally, the result illustrates a non-existing pattern between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy; it suggests that most revolutions occurring in more autocratic settings lead to at least a modicum of democratization as compared to previous regimes; and, it provides preliminary evidence that different pre-revolution regime types have different prospects for post-revolution democracy. Based on its findings, the thesis argues that research should continue to be conducted at the intersection of revolution and democracy by measuring democracy as a spectrum.

Keywords: Autocracy, Democracy, Democratization, Electoral democracy, Regime type, Regime transition, Revolution

Words: 8508

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1. Introduction

Decades ago, the professor of political science and sociology, Dankwart Rustow, wrote the following reflections on democracy and democratization.

We need not assume that the transition to democracy is a world-wide uniform process, that it always involves the same social classes, the same types of political issues, or even the same methods of solution. On the contrary, it may be well to assume [...] that a wide variety of social conflicts and of political contents can be combined with democracy. [...] It also implies that, as among various countries that have made the transition, there may be many roads to democracy.

(Rustow 1970: 345)

This thesis seeks to examine one of these roads, namely, revolutions. Scholars have requested more research on specifically revolutions, transitions from autocracy, and democratization. This is not surprising, considering that democratic revolutions are historically recurring. From the French Revolution at the end of the 18th century (Acemoglu & Cantoni 2011), to the Arab Spring in the Middle East in 2011 (Goldstone 2011), to the Spring Revolution in Myanmar last year (ACLED 2021). Colgan (2013) states that a particularly pressing issue for scholars of international relations is how revolutions affect "pertinent variables affecting international conflict, such as incomplete democratization" (p. 687).

Yet, there is a lack of attention to exclusively revolutions as a distinct and potentially important phenomenon in the democratization processes. Additionally, the existing literature at the intersection of revolutions and democratization has conceptualized and measured democracy as dichotomous — see, for instance, Buchheim and Ulbricht (2020), Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014), and Tilly (2000). Here, I assume a view of democracy-autocracy as a spectrum rather than a threshold, intending to highlight fluctuations on this very spectrum.

As a contribution to this field of research, the thesis explores two plausible pre-revolution connections to post-revolution democracy levels, namely pre-revolution democracy level and pre-revolution regime type. According to Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014), autocratic regimes differ from each other as much as they vary from democracy. Thus, it is favorable to look at both democracy levels and autocratic regime types prior to revolutions in order to get the full picture. The first measures levels of democracy as a spectrum, and the second explores how different categories of autocratic regime types affect post-revolution democracy levels.

1.1. Purpose and Research Questions

Accordingly, there are two purposes of this project. First, to examine whether there is a pattern between a country's position in the democracy-autocracy spectrum before a revolution and the post-revolution position in the same spectrum, and to describe this potential pattern. Second, to discern the potential pattern between pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy. Hence, this project is of a descriptive character rather than explanatory. The aim is to illustrate existing or non-existing patterns, not to provide any causal explanations for the result. To adhere to these purposes, the following research questions will be answered.

- i. What does the relationship between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy look like?
- ii. What does the relationship between pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy look like?

This project employs a medium-N mixed-methods approach to test the potential pre-revolution connections to post-revolution democracy levels. First, I use data retrieved from V-Dem Institute to measure and compare the individual democracy levels. Second, I adopt regime types from the *Autocratic Regimes dataset* (by

Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2014) and categorically compare their respective post-revolution democracy. Third, I briefly conduct a case study of two outlier cases from the statistical result to provide more details and delineate potentially important mechanisms.

1.2. Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into six main sections. Following the introduction, my conceptualizations of revolution and democracy are presented. In the third section, the theoretical framework is outlined. After that, the methodology of the thesis is described, including research design and data analysis. Section five comprises, analyzes, and discusses the results. Finally, the conclusion is presented together with some suggestions for future research.

2. Conceptual Framework

This thesis is situated at the intersection of revolution and democracy, with a later-on emphasis on the potential importance of regime type. As the concepts of revolution and democracy can be ascribed to different meanings, this section conceptualizes them for this study.

2.1. Revolution

The concept of revolution typically indicates upheaval and change relative to previously existing institutions and practices (Colgan 2012a: 445), but has been defined in various ways by different scholars. For instance, Walt (1996) described a revolution as "the destruction of an existing state by members of its own society, followed by the creation of a new political order" (p. 12), while Huntington (1968) described a revolution as "a rapid, fundamental, and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, and government activity and policies" (p. 264). Thus, they emphasize different attributes. My definition is positioned closer to Walt's than Huntington's.

Parallel to Colgan (2012a), this study does not make violence an essential component of the concept of revolution, admitting that revolutions are commonly accompanied by violence. Revolution is instead defined in terms of its outcomes: the overthrow of existing (social, political, and/or economic) institutions and their replacement (p. 455). Thus, a revolution must be a change in regimes or different types of institutions but does not have to include a change in democracy level, even if that may be a consequence. A revolution is possible without causing a significant shift in a country's democracy level. Conversely, substantial changes in

a country's democracy level are possible without a revolution (p. 447). This definition allows me to examine revolutions and changes in democracy level as separate events. Lastly, revolutions are distinct from events such as coups, assassinations, and revolts, although these can be a component of a revolution (Colgan 2013: 658).

Due to this project's scope, it is not feasible to distinguish between different revolutionary processes, admitting that various characteristics of revolutions can impact the likelihood of post-revolution democratization. For instance, Koehler and Albrecht (2019) argue that "coups staged in the context of popular mass uprisings promote autocracy" as they trigger instability (p. 168). Coups refer to removing a regime leader by employing or threatening with violence, in which the army or security forces participate (Svolik 2015: 730). Another characteristic noted by scholars is that nonviolent protests increase the likelihood of democratization, whereas violent action makes transitions to new autocracies more likely — see, for instance, Chenoweth and Stephan (2014), and Celestino and Gleditsch (2013).

2.2. Democracy

The meaning of democracy is widely debated, varying in both quality and quantity across the debate (Shin & Kim 2017: 136). Reaching an agreement on the actual definition of democracy has been a great challenge among democracy scholars (Coppedge 2012: 11). Grugel (2002) has portrayed this as a debate between minimalists and maximalists (p. 6). The minimalists advocate a narrow definition, essentially positing that democracy is a system of governance where rulers are chosen through elections and held accountable by the citizens (Schmitter & Karl 1991: 76). Others conceptualize democracy more broadly, including a long list of features such as high suffrage, horizontal accountability, civil liberties, social rights and equality, and anticorruption laws (Boix, Miller & Rosato 2012: 1525-1527).

My approach is closer to the minimalists. I employ an electoral democracy definition following Coppedge et al. (2022). This is essentially constituted by political equality: clean elections; rulers being responsive to citizens, achieved through electoral competition for the electorate's approval under circumstances when suffrage is extensive; freedom of association; and freedom of expression (p. 43). Utilizing a more comprehensive definition, like liberal democracy that includes legislative and judicial oversight over the executive and the protection of individual liberties (Lührmann, Tannenberg & Lindberg 2018: 63), would allow for more nuance in the spectrum as it measures more indices. Yet, although proponents of broader definitions of democracy believe that contested elections are insufficient to characterize a political regime as democratic, all theories of democracy find them necessary (Cheibub et al. 2010: 74). As stated by Tilly (2000), a more process-oriented definition "captures much of what theorists of democracy from Aristotle onward have been trying to describe" while it also "locates democracy within a causally coherent and more general field of variation in characteristics and practices of regimes" (p. 4).

Additionally, in the spirit of Dahl (1998), this study assumes the view of democracy-autocracy as a spectrum rather than a dichotomy. Others, for instance, Boix, Miller, and Rosato (2012), prefer a dichotomous measure of democracy. Here, the argument is that it provides concreteness and transparency to the class of democracies by requiring a set of necessary, common characteristics compared to a continuous measure (p. 1528). However, Robert A. Dahl states that no state ever has achieved, and probably never will achieve, all the criteria for a democratic process. Accordingly, he advocates the view of democracy-autocracy as a spectrum rather than a dichotomy, since a state can be perceived as democratic without fully attaining all the criteria (pp. 42, 197-198). This also allows a political system to be more or less democratic, making minor fluctuations in the democracy level visible.

3. Theoretical Framework

This thesis explores two plausible pre-revolution connections to post-revolution democracy — pre-revolution democracy and pre-revolution regime type. This exploration is guided by a theoretical framework that draws upon previous research on these connections. The expected results of this study are lastly presented in section 3.3.

3.1. Pre-Revolution Democracy versus Post-Revolution Democracy

There is a disagreement about whether revolutions always lead to autocratic regimes (Buchheim & Ulbricht 2020), or if they may enkindle democratization (Geddes, Wright & Frantz 2014; Tilly 2000). Buchheim and Ulbricht (2020) have developed a quantitative model of various patterns of regime change, showing that revolts — including popular uprisings, power struggles between competing factions, and coups — establish autocratic regimes (pp. 1729-1731). While they refer to regime types, the result displays that all revolts result in a lack of democracy.

However, as Buchheim and Ulbricht (2020) are mostly discussing transition hazards in relation to regime maturity, they do not provide any explanations or causal mechanisms regarding revolts establishing autocracies. Neither do they explore the connection between pre-transition democracy and post-transition democracy. Consequently, they do not make any suggestions regarding the movement on the democracy spectrum. Yet, although these regimes remain autocratic, they could move along the spectrum toward more democracy as a

result of revolutions. Given that, there is more to explore in terms of the relationship between democracy and revolutions.

Looking at the other side of the spectrum, Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014) observe that fewer than one in five coerced regime breakdowns results in democracy (p. 325), indicating that it is possible to establish democracy through coercive means even though it is not common. Along these lines, Tilly (2000) found that while reflecting on the European experience over the last three centuries, revolution is one out of four recurrent circumstances that have set multiple democracy-promoting mechanisms in motion. Because revolutions involve abrupt shocks to existing social arrangements, they sometimes sweep away old networks that block democratization. He concludes that most revolutions over the last few centuries have been at least a modicum of democratization compared to previous regimes (pp. 13-14). However, his reflections draw upon European history, thus not being generalizable to the rest of the world. In this thesis, countries from both Europe and other continents are studied to test whether this is universally applicable.

In other words, previous research disagrees on the potential relation between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy. According to Buchheim and Ulbricht's (2020) findings, revolutions should not lead to more democracy. Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014) argue that we might find in rare cases that revolutions end with more democracy. Lastly, Tilly (2000) reasons that most revolutions lead to some degree of democratization. Yet, only Tilly (2000) provides causal explanations for the arguments. On the other hand, this study is descriptive, meaning that the focus will not be on the causal mechanisms.

Despite these separate but related suggestions, there have been few attempts to empirically test pre-revolution democracy versus post-revolution democracy using and looking at the whole democracy spectrum rather than a threshold. One reason for this could be that the results from such a study would seem ambiguous, as

there is already a vast literature arguing that specific characteristics in revolutions matter for the subsequent regime type and potential democracy — see, for instance, Koehler and Albrecht (2019), Svolik (2015), Chenoweth and Stephan (2014), and Celestino and Gleditsch (2013). I wish to argue that to gain deeper insights into the most important variables for revolutionary outcomes, all potential variables should be explored, including pre-revolution democracy.

3.2. Impact of Preceding Regime Type on Post-Revolution Democracy

Few revolutionary movements have succeeded in overthrowing a democratically elected government (Ryan 1994), but there is evidence of revolutions succeeding in autocratic settings (Geddes, Wright & Frantz 2014). Though, different kinds of authoritarianism differ from one another as much as they vary from democracy. According to Geddes (1999), competition among rival factions takes various forms in different kinds of authoritarian regimes, which cause authoritarian regimes to break down in different ways and lead to varying transition outcomes (p. 121).

Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014) note that coercion — including coups and uprisings — contributes to most ousters of dominant-single-party regimes and personalist dictatorships, whereas military dictatorships more often end with non-coerced, negotiated transitions (pp. 325-326). A group of officers rules military regimes, single-party regimes are dominated by one party even if other parties may legally exist and compete in elections, and, in personalist regimes, access to office and policy outcomes depend much more on the discretion of an individual leader (Geddes 1999: 121).

Further, as Geddes (1999) states that most single-party governments have legalized opposition parties and increased the space for political contestation (p. 135), reasonably, the probability for democratization should be best in those kinds

of single-party regimes. Personalist dictators are more likely than military and one-party dictatorships to face exile, arrest, or death after the end of their regime. Hence, they often resist negotiation if they think they can retain power. This increases the likelihood that the opposition will resort to force, reducing the prospects for democratization, according to Geddes, Wright and Frantz's (2014) descriptive study (p. 326). That being the case, personal dictatorships are least likely to democratize (p. 324), as are dictatorships forced from power and/or ended by violence (p. 314).

Looking instead at all autocratic regime breakdowns, Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014) illustrate that fewer than one in five coerced regime breakdowns results in democracy (p. 325), indicating that it is possible to establish democracy through coercive means even though it is not common. Being a descriptive study, they do not provide any explanations for their result. Nonetheless, they hypothesize that democratization is least likely after personalist dictatorships because of structural factors that gave rise to personalist rule in the first place, or if personalist rule undermines civil society and domestic institutions, which in turn reduces the prospects for democratization (p. 324).

Lastly, Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014) do not exclusively nor separately examine revolutions as coercive means. Yet, this study will build on their findings, looking at the different regime types outlined by them to test if their results of post-transition outcomes are coherent with post-revolution consequences. As my conceptualization of revolution does not designate whether violent action must be involved, all autocratic regime types are relevant to test.

3.3. Expected Results

To begin with, when democracy-autocracy is measured as dichotomous, revolutions are expected more often than not to lead to a new autocratic regime — see, for instance, Buchheim and Ulbricht (2020), and Geddes, Wright and Frantz

(2014). On the other hand, when measured as a spectrum, another result is to be expected. Tilly (2000) has found that most (European) revolutions are at least a modicum of democratization compared to previous regimes due to revolutions sometimes involving abrupt shocks to existing social arrangements, which sweep away old networks blocking democratization. This leads me to my first expectation. Regarding the connection between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy, I expect to find that most revolutions result in a modicum of democratization as compared to previous regimes.

Moreover, Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014) argue that different pre-transition regime types have different post-transition prospects. Personalist dictatorships are suggested to be least likely to democratize, whereas military regime breakdowns more often (than other regime types) result in a negotiated fluctuation towards democracy. Single-party regimes, being more welcoming of opposition parties and political contestation while maintaining their grip on power, can also be assumed to have a higher post-revolution democracy. Hence, I expect that military regimes have the highest post-revolution democracy, single-party regimes have the second-highest post-revolution democracy, and personalist dictators have the lowest post-revolution democracy.

4. Methodology

To explore the potential relationship between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy and whether there is a pattern between pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy, a descriptive mixed method is employed. In this section, the methodology is explained and motivated.

4.1. Research Design

A descriptive comparative research design is employed to answer the research questions, allowing an empirical examination of the theoretical assumptions by testing them in different countries and periods (Halperin & Heath 2017: 212). This is conducted through a mixed method. The analysis starts with a medium-N statistical comparison of 20 countries, presented through tables, graphs, and scatterplots to illustrate the two potential relationships. Then, two outlier cases are selected to be qualitatively described and compared to get a more detailed understanding of the said relations. Due to this project's scope, however, the qualitative part will only provide an overview of these.

To begin with, this project implements a comparison of 20 countries that have experienced revolutions, measuring their democracy levels five years before the revolution, one year before the revolution, five years post-revolution, and ten years post-revolution. Suppose a revolution occurred in, for instance, 1989. In that case, pre-revolution democracy is measured during the years 1984 and 1988, and post-revolution democracy is measured during the years 1994 and 1999. By doing this, the cases can be checked for democratization just before the revolution. At the same time, the result may illustrate whether the new (post-revolution) institutions and/or regimes result in a lasting (or non-lasting) change in

democracy. The selected cases run from 1960 to 2000, but all except one are from 1980-2000.

The countries are selected and the years decided through the dataset *Measuring Revolution* by Colgan (2012b), as my conceptualization of revolution parallels his. He initially designed the dataset to study the link between domestic revolutions and international conflict. Still, it can also be employed to isolate the effects of revolutions from non-revolutionary changes at the democracy level. Further, he measures revolutions as distinct events from shifts in democracy level (pp. 445-450). This is essential for this study to reach meaningful answers to the research questions, since the pre-revolution democracy level is an independent variable, the post-revolution democracy level is the dependent variable, and revolution is a constant variable. The selection of countries and the relevant years are outlined in the Appendix.

Furthermore, the quantitative part of the method facilitates the theory testing, allowing me to test its accuracy. Here, the aim is to discover any potential patterns between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy and between pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy. The quantitative approach facilitates high external validity for the result. On the other hand, a larger sample size would be preferable, as this increases the external validity when conducting comparative research (Halperin & Heath 2017: 174-175).

At the same time, the quantitative approach offers little detail and depth, resulting in findings with lower internal validity (Halperin & Heath 2017: 178). In an attempt to provide some detail and depth, a brief qualitative inquiry of two outlier cases, namely Hungary and Myanmar, is conducted. These are selected based on their positioning in the statistical result regarding post-revolution democracy. Here, the aim is to outline any apparent similarities or differences regarding the independent variables to get a better understanding of what mechanisms are essential for the above said connections.

4.2. Conceptualization and Operationalization

4.2.1. Pre-revolution democracy

The first independent variable is pre-revolution democracy, conceptualized as the level of democracy of a regime before a revolution. Following Dahl (1998), this study assumes the view of democracy-autocracy as a spectrum. This allows a regime to be more or less democratic, making visible minor fluctuations in the democracy level. As discussed in section 2.2., an electoral democracy measurement is used in this thesis. A country's placement on the democracy-autocracy spectrum is thus decided by electoral democracy indices, collected and aggregated by the V-Dem Institute (2022). This is done by taking the average of the weighted average of indices measuring a) freedom of association, b) clean elections, c) freedom of expression, d) elected officials, e) universal suffrage and inclusive citizenship (Coppedge et al. 2016: 582; Coppedge et al. 2022: 43).

Following the electoral democracy index by the V-Dem Institute's Research Project, democracy is measured as an interval from low to high (0-1) extent of which the ideal of electoral democracy in its most total sense is achieved (Coppedge et al. 2022: 43). Hence, V-Dem aggregates information on key features into a numerical scale, which can be criticized for simplifying very complex issues. However, they have a publicly available and regularly updated methodology manual — see Coppedge et al. (2021) — that provides detailed accounts of the data collection. Another comforting fact is that country experts code and evaluate the variables, and then ascribe their codings a certainty score set by how certain they are of their evaluation (Coppedge et al. 2016; Coppedge et al. 2021).

4.2.2. Pre-revolution regime type

The second independent variable consists of the pre-revolution regime type. This is conceptualized as the regime type in place directly before a revolution. Here,

regime refers to the form of rule (Carter, Bernhard & Palmer 2012: 440), as leadership groups. This project adopts the regime types from the *Autocratic Regimes* dataset by Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014). The dataset classifies the regime types as single-party, military, personalist, monarchic, oligarchic, indirect military, or a hybrid of the first three (p. 318), thus categorical. In this study, only the first three, including combinations of them, are present in the result. These are characterized as follows.

Single-party regime	Access to political office and control over policy are dominated by one party even if other parties may legally exist and compete in elections
Military regime	Ruled by a group of officers
Personalist regime	Access to office and the policy outcomes depends on the discretion of an individual leader

(Geddes, 1999: 121)

The dataset by Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014) identifies all autocratic breakdowns from 1946 to 2010 in countries with populations greater than one million (p. 317). However, not all my cases and relevant revolutionary years are present in the dataset. Fiji, Zimbabwe, and Venezuela were excluded, either altogether or not during the years relevant for this study. Accordingly, they are not part of the statistical analysis of the second research question.

4.2.3. Post-revolution democracy

The study's only dependent variable is post-revolution democracy, conceptualized as the level of democracy of a regime after a revolution. Similar to the first independent variable, this study defines democracy based on electoral democracy. Accordingly, the dependent variable is operationalized and measured in the same way as the independent variable *pre-revolution democracy* employing V-Dem's electoral democracy index — see section 4.2.1.

4.3. Data Analysis

The data is analyzed to illustrate the plausible connections between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy, as well as pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy. The independent variables are analyzed separately in combination with the dependent variable.

The data collection mainly draws upon three datasets, measuring revolutions, democracy, and regime types. First, my case selection is facilitated by the dataset on revolutionary governments and leaders created by Colgan (2012b). Second, an index on electoral democracy, collected and aggregated by the V-Dem Institute's Research Project (2022), is utilized to record pre- and post-revolution democracy. Third, pre-revolution regime types are adopted from the *Autocratic Regimes* dataset by Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014).

Initially, the variables are statistically analyzed and compared through the statistics program SPSS. Here, descriptive statistics outline the data's central tendencies, and scatterplots are constructed to illustrate the existing and/or non-existing patterns and connections of the collected data.

Lastly, a small qualitative inquiry of two of the most extreme post-revolution cases is conducted. Hungary and Myanmar are selected based on their positioning in the statistical result. They are analyzed in regards to the independent variables, pre-revolution democracy and pre-revolution regime type, following the conceptualization and operationalization outlined in section 4.2. This qualitative data is collected from V-Dem Country Reports and other articles by scholars with relevant country knowledge, in order to provide an overview of the two cases.

5. Empirical Analysis and Discussion

The results are presented and analyzed in this section, in accordance with the theoretical framework outlined in section 3. All data are presented as charts, tables, and diagrams to illustrate the potential patterns and correlations in the collected data. Detailed information regarding the cases can be found in the Appendix. Following the statistical analysis, a brief overview of two outlier cases, Hungary and Myanmar, is presented. Finally, section 5.4. offers a summarizing discussion.

5.1. Pre-Revolution Democracy versus Post-Revolution Democracy

The first purpose of this project is to examine whether there is a pattern between a country's position in the democracy-autocracy spectrum before a revolution and the post-revolution position in the same spectrum, and to describe this potential pattern. According to the theoretical framework presented in section 3, the post-revolution democracy is expected to be higher than the pre-revolution democracy in most cases.

Initially, it is helpful to get an overview of the collected material. Table 1 reveals that the lowest pre-revolution democracy recorded was .08, both one year and five years before a revolution. On the other hand, the lowest recorded post-revolution democracy level was .04. This was measured ten years after a revolution. The lowest democracy level five years after a revolution was .08. The maximum pre-revolution democracy, on the other hand, was .76 recorded five years before, and the maximum post-revolution democracy was .90 measured five years after a revolution. It is evident that the maximum democracy level was significantly raised during the ten-year-scope — from five years pre- to five years post-

Table 1. Descriptives of pre- and post-revolution democracy

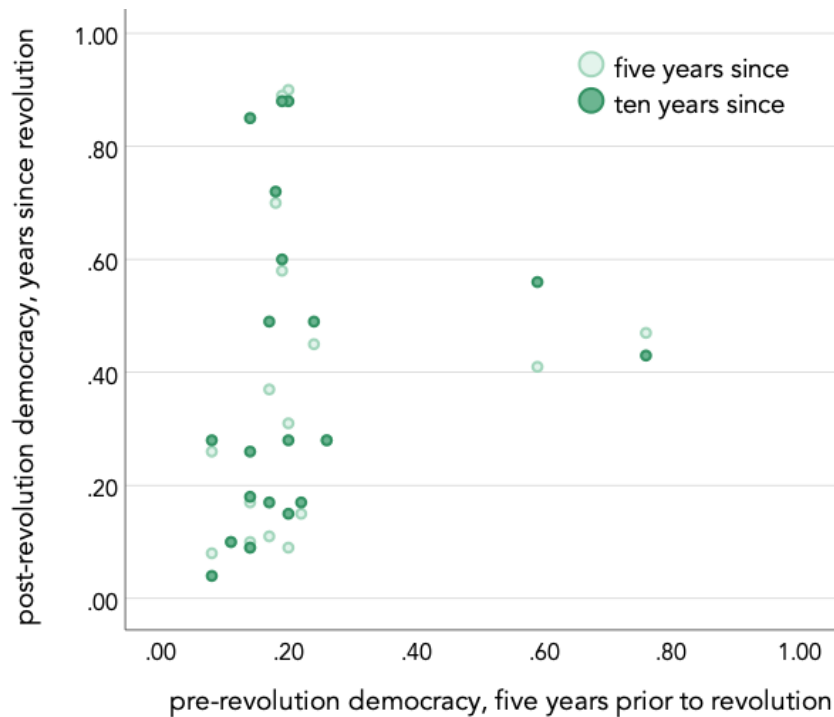
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Democracy five years prior	20	.08	.76	.22	.165
Democracy one year prior	20	.08	.74	.26	.178
Democracy one year since	20	.07	.85	.30	.256
Democracy five years since	20	.08	.90	.37	.283
Democracy ten years since	20	.04	.88	.40	.276

revolution. Accordingly, the result rejects Buchheim and Ulbricht's (2020) suggestion that all revolutions lead to autocracy or a lack of democracy.

Further, a view of the means provides an initial high-level look at, on average, how different pre- and post-revolution democracy levels are across the 20 countries. Table 1 displays that the average post-revolution democracy levels were higher than the average pre-revolution democracy levels. The lowest average democracy level, .22, was recorded five years before the revolutions, whereas the highest average democracy level, .40, was measured ten years after the revolutions. This validates my first expectation, suggesting that most revolutions result in a modicum of democratization as compared to previous regimes. However, the standard deviation for five years after a revolution was .283. Similarly, ten years after a revolution, the standard deviation was .276. This is more than a fourth of the spectrum which implies a wide dispersion, hence, looking at the average is not enough. Instead, it is necessary to examine the individual cases.

The earliest year examined is five years before a revolution. Figure 5.1. illustrates the relationship between democracy five years before a revolution versus

Figure 5.1. Democracy five years pre- vs. five/ten years post-revolution



democracy five and ten years after a revolution. Here, it is evident that most cases had a low pre-revolution democracy.

Only two countries had more than .50 pre-revolution democracy: Fiji and Venezuela. Interestingly, their post-revolution democracy was lower than their pre-revolution democracy. Fiji measured .59 five years before the revolution and .56 ten years after the revolution. Venezuela measured .75 five years before the revolution and .43 ten years after the revolution — see the Appendix. Seeing that these revolutions occurred in different decades, in Fiji in 1987 and Venezuela in 1999, it cannot be assumed that they shared time-sensitive causal mechanisms for their democratic decline. This evidence suggests that countries on the democratic side of the spectrum before a revolution will have a post-revolution democratic decline. However, as only two countries display this pattern, no decisive conclusions can be drawn.

The other revolutions occurred instead in countries with lower than .40 pre-revolution democracy, but had a broader dispersion in their post-revolution democracy: Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia had more than .80 post-

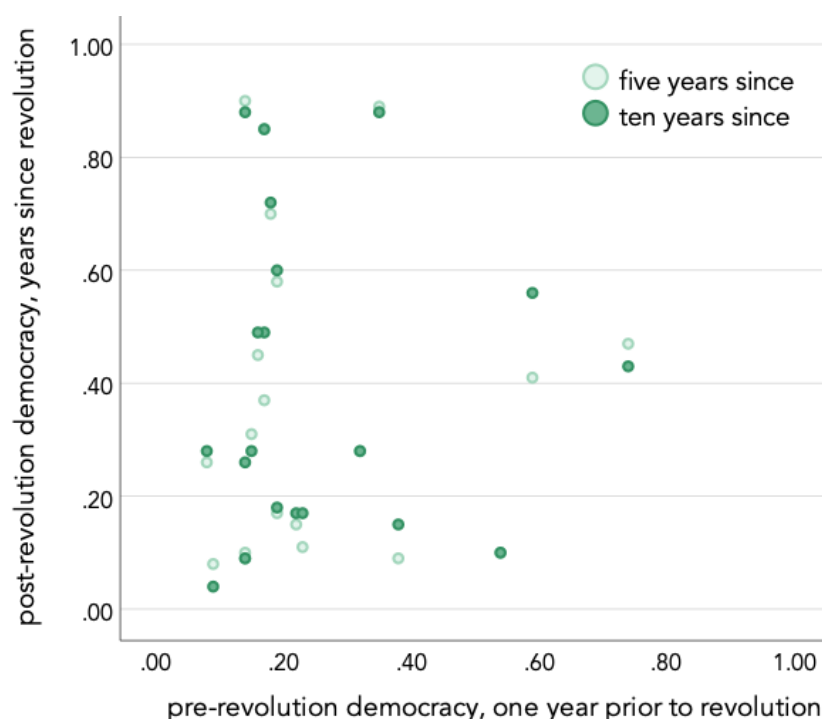
revolution democracy; Afghanistan, Ghana, and Myanmar had less or equal to .10 democracy ten years post-revolution — see the Appendix. The top three countries are all geographically situated in East-Central Europe and experienced revolutions in 1989-1990 after the Soviet Union had decided to remove its external guarantees of the political order in its client states (Ekiert 1991: 286). Accordingly, these countries went through a shift from being dependent on an external regime to being fully governed by themselves. The countries at the bottom, on the other hand, are situated in different regions of the world, and experienced revolutions in different years. Ghana in 1981, Myanmar in 1988, and Afghanistan in 1996 — see the Appendix.

The result suggests no apparent pattern or correlation between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy in the cases selected for this study. Although, it is clear that Buchheim and Ulbricht's (2020) suggestion, that all revolutions lead to autocracy or a lack of democracy, is rejected here. In a few cases, the post-revolution democracy was more than 0.7, which implies a somewhat high level of electoral democracy. Still, this does not make any generalizations possible. The most convincing evidence is that most countries have a pre-revolution democracy of around .20, and in the majority of cases, they increased their democracy from pre- to post-revolution. This holds especially true if only post-revolution democracy in countries with pre-revolution democracy of less than .40 is examined.

When comparing five years post-revolution with ten years post-revolution, some countries have developed their democracy but not in any significant manner. Mostly small fluctuations are discernible on the y-axis, implying that the most significant fluctuations occurred during the years close to the revolution in most cases. Again, the result validates my first expectation, illustrating that most revolutions result in a modicum of democratization as compared to previous regimes.

Next, figure 5.2. demonstrates one year before a revolution versus five and ten years after a revolution. Once again, the cases with the highest post-revolution

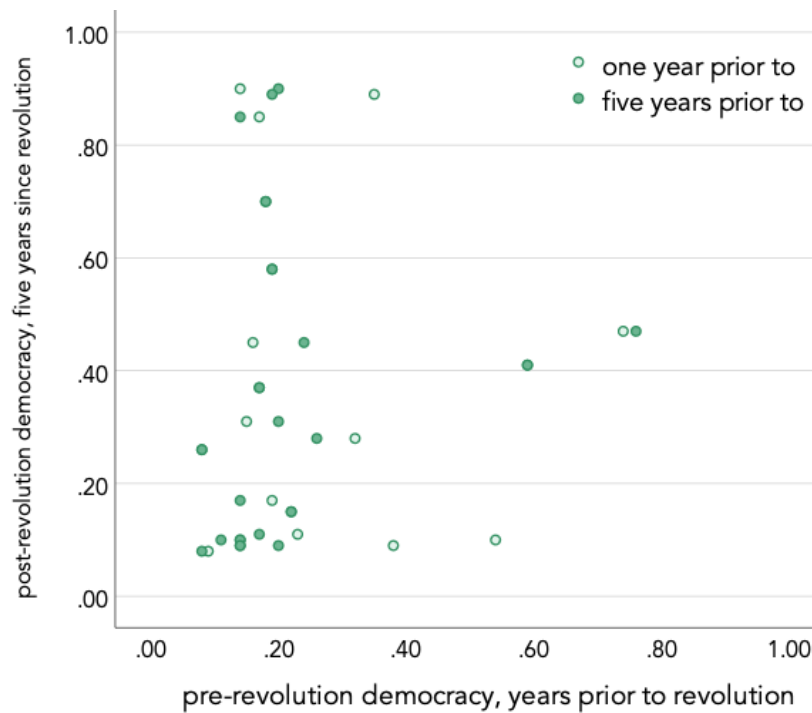
Figure 5.2. Democracy one year pre- vs. ten/five years post-revolution



democracy had low pre-revolution democracy. In contrast to figure 5.1., figure 5.2. displays a relationship similar to an L-shape. The L-shape illustrates that countries with higher pre-revolution democracy than .30 did not reach as high post-revolution democracy as some countries with a pre-revolution democracy lower than .20, except for one.

Moreover, when comparing figures 5.1. and 5.2., it is evident that several countries had gotten a higher democracy level during the five to one years before a revolution. In figure 5.3., the most noticeable are four countries, positioned between 0.3 and 0.6 on the x-axis. Three of these, namely Ghana, South Korea, and Sudan — see the Appendix, resulted in a post-revolution democracy of lower than 0.3, implying that a democratizing motion right before the revolution does not better the prospects for post-revolution democracy. Only one country, Poland, experienced evident democratization right before the revolution and resulted in an apparent increase in democracy after the revolution. This suggests that pre-revolution democratization has little impact on the outcomes of revolutions. However, in some cases, the higher the democracy levels before a revolution seem to correlate with lower levels of post-revolution democracy.

Figure 5.3. Democracy five/one years pre- versus five years post-revolution

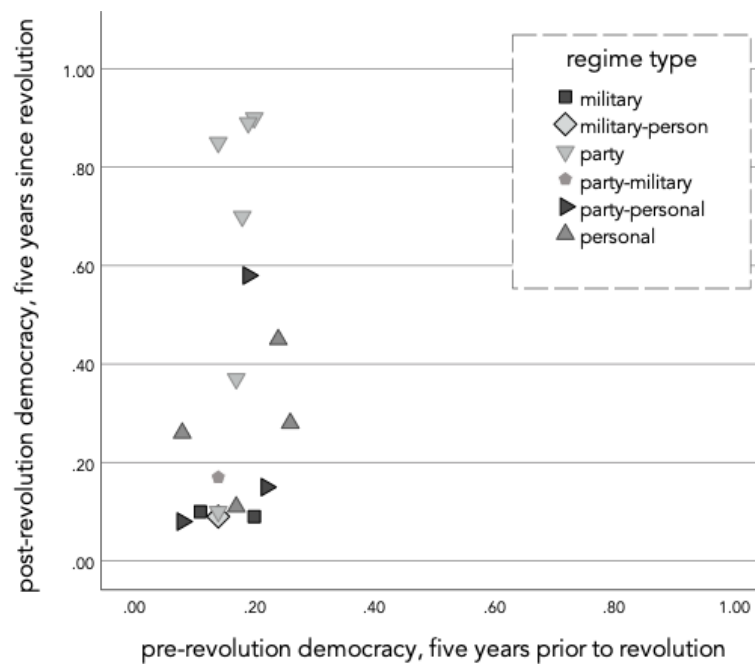


This result implies that it is not possible to map out a generalized theory of the relationship between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy. Given the wide dispersion of post-revolution democracy among the countries with a pre-revolution democracy of around .20, there is clearly another variable affecting post-revolution democracy. As many have pointed out before, different characteristics of revolutions create different outcomes — see, for instance, Koehler and Albrecht (2019), Chenoweth and Stephan (2014), and Celestino and Gleditsch (2013). These characteristics do not seem to be determined by the pre-revolution democracy level. On the other hand, according to Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014), autocratic regime types differ from each other as much as they vary from democracy.

5.2. Impact of Preceding Regime Type on Post-Revolution Democracy

The second purpose of this project is to examine whether there is a pattern between a country's pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution position in the

Figure 5.4. Democracy five years pre- versus post-revolution by regime type



democracy-autocracy spectrum. According to the theoretical framework outlined in section 3, the post-revolution democracy is expected to be highest for pre-revolution military regimes, second highest for pre-revolution single-party regimes, and lowest for pre-revolution personalist dictators.

Figure 5.4. illustrates the countries' pre- and post-revolution democracy and displays their regime types¹. The aim here is not to show a three-way interaction, but to illustrate the positioning of different regime types on the post-revolution democracy spectrum. As presented in section 5.1., Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland had the most post-revolution democracy of the studied countries. These were single-party regimes before the revolutions. The fifth highest post-revolution democracy was a pre-revolution party-personal regime. According to this result, single-party regimes seem to have the best prospects for post-revolution democracy. What is most striking, however, is that the two military regimes are among the cases with the lowest post-revolution democracy. These are Ghana and

¹ Fiji, Zimbabwe, and Venezuela were not part of the dataset by Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014), either at all or not during the years relevant for this study. Accordingly, they are not part of this section's statistical analysis.

Table 2. Descriptives of post-revolution democracy by regime types

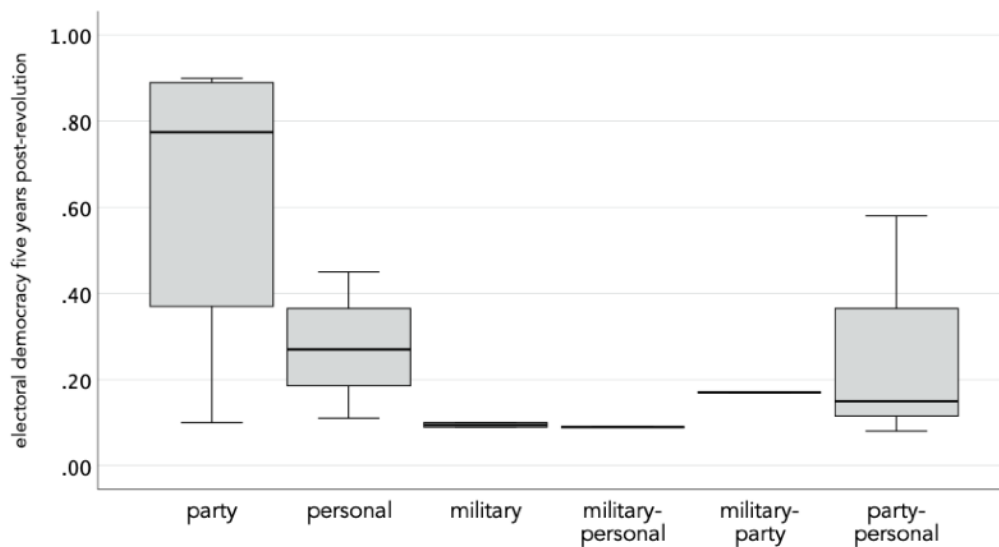
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Single-party regime	6	.10	.90	.635
Personalist regime	4	.11	.46	.275
Military regime	2	.09	.10	.145
Military-personalist regime	1	.09	.09	.09
Party-military regime	1	.17	.17	.17
Party-personal regime	3	.08	.58	.15

Sudan. Joining the military regimes at the bottom is a military-personal regime, namely Myanmar — see the Appendix.

Next, table 2 presents post-revolution democracy five years after a revolution by regime type. The most common pre-revolution regime type among the cases selected for this study was single-party regimes, and the least common was the military-hybrid regimes. Starting by looking at the three non-hybrid regimes — single-party regimes, personalist regimes, and military regimes — they had similar minimum post-revolution democracy. Regarding maximum post-revolution democracy, on the other hand, there is a significant gap between single-party regimes and all other kinds of regimes. Single-party regimes had a maximum post-revolution democracy of .90. The second-highest was party-personal regimes with a maximum post-revolution democracy of .58, hence, being a party-hybrid regime. The third-highest was personalist regimes with post-revolution democracy of .46.

Further, a view of the means provides an initial high-level look at how different post-revolution democracy levels, on average, are across the six regime types. The mean reaffirms that party-regimes had the highest post-revolution democracy, with an average of .635. The second highest post-revolution democracy average,

Figure 5.5. Democracy five years post-revolution by regime type



of .275, had personalist regimes. Least of all were military regimes and the military-personalist regime. Thus disproving my second expectation, namely, that military regimes would have the highest post-revolution democracy.

Lastly, figure 5.5. captures the range of post-revolution democracy by regime type and the black line illustrates the averages of every regime type. Again, post-revolution democracy is depicted as the highest among pre-revolution single-party regimes and depicted as the least among pre-revolution military regimes. The hybrid regimes present here, party-military, military-personal and party-personal regimes, are also at the bottom. Important to note, however, is that these cases were not selected based on their regime types, thus, the distribution of regime types is not even.

As outlined in table 2, most countries studied here are in fact single-party regimes, whereas only two are military and one military-personal. Thus, it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions from this result. Yet, the three military and military-hybrid regimes all have low post-revolution democracy, implying a correlation of pre-revolution military regimes and low post-revolution democracy. However, a large-N study would be required to draw a more generalizing conclusion.

While the result presented here suggests a confirmation of the argument by Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014a) that different pre-transition regime types have different post-transition prospects, it rejects another. The same authors stated that personalist dictatorships are least likely to democratize, while military regime breakdowns more often result in a fluctuation towards democracy. Along these lines, my second expectation of the results was that military regimes would have the highest post-revolution democracy. The result presented here illustrates the contrary.

Whereas single-party regimes were recorded in both Europe and other continents, the fact that the majority of the military regimes were geographically situated in Africa suggests a skewed case distribution. Here, the military regimes were Ghana, Sudan, Burundi, and Myanmar, three of which are geographically situated in Africa. On the other hand, other African countries were studied, for instance, Burkina Faso and Uganda, both being personalist regimes and having a higher post-revolution democracy than the military regimes — see the Appendix. Hence, this suggests that the geographical positioning in Africa was not the decisive factor for this result. Looking instead at multiple military and military-hybrid regimes located on different continents would provide a better foundation for conclusions to be drawn regarding the pattern between this pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy.

The single-party regimes with the most post-revolution democracy were Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, all of which are located in East-Central Europe. Single-party regimes, being more welcoming of opposition parties and political contestation while remaining their grip on power (Geddes 1999: 135), were assumed to have the second-highest pre-revolution democracy. Instead, they had the highest maximum and average post-revolution democracy.

Finally, this result implies that post-transition outcomes are different when they occur through revolutions as conceptualized in this thesis, rather than when measuring regime transitions as coercive or non-coercive, and violent or non-

violent, as in the study by Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014). Yet, due to the scope of this thesis and the limited case selection, it is difficult to draw any decisive conclusions from the results. Therefore, it is helpful to conduct a brief qualitative inquiry. This will provide a more detailed description of the pre-revolution regime types.

5.3. Two Extremes of Post-Revolution Democracy

To understand the results, it is helpful to look at some specific cases. Here, I will briefly outline the pre-revolution democracy and the regimes in two of the most extreme cases. These are Hungary, having a democracy of .14 five years before the revolution and .85 five years after the revolution, and Myanmar, having a democracy of .14 five years before the revolution and .09 five years after the revolution. The revolutions occurred in 1989 in Hungary and 1988 in Myanmar — see the Appendix.

5.3.1. Hungary

Firstly, Hungary was a client state of the Soviet Union before the revolution (Ekiert 1991: 286; Kumar 1993: 387). In 1947, the Communist Party won the strongly manipulated elections for parliament and gained control over Hungary. Although with different leaders, the Communist Party continued to rule Hungary until 1989. At the end of the 1950s, an opposition group to the regime formed. Not long after its emergence, its leaders were arrested and Soviet forces began patrolling the streets. The regime also suspended writers' and journalists' unions (Gabriel 2016: 4-6). Hence, Hungary was a single-party regime following the description by Geddes (1999): access to political office and control over policy was dominated by one party even if other parties legally could exist and compete in elections (p. 121). They had neither freedom of association, freedom of expression nor fair elections (eliminating also clean elections, elected officials, and universal suffrage). However, during the 1980s, there was a wave of opening up and of allowing more pluralism in the country.

Being a client state of the Soviet Union, Hungary was vulnerable to the Soviet Union's policies. When the Soviet Union, during the years of 1985-1988, implemented policies designed to open foreign relations and create a more tolerant society, these changes spilled over into Hungary. The combination of a more relaxed political atmosphere and deepening economic troubles led to the emergence of civil society organizations. In addition, the Hungarian Parliament passed laws allowing the right of association and freedom of assembly just before the revolution (Gabriel 2016: 5-6).

5.3.2. Myanmar

In Myanmar, the pre-revolution regime had been in office since 1962 when the military asserted control over the state (Schock 1999: 358-259). The regime was military-personalist, with the leadership centered on military commander Ne Win. According to Huang (2013), early internal challenges to Ne Win's authority were thoroughly eliminated. By the end of his rule, his ultimate authority as the head of the Myanmar regime was essentially unquestioned (p. 251). According to Geddes (1999), military regimes are ruled by a group of officers, while access to office and policy outcomes in personalist regimes depend on the discretion of an individual leader (p. 121). Hence, it may be argued that the Myanmar regime was more similar to a personalist than a military regime, still being a hybrid of both.

Moreover, the military regime in Myanmar had eliminated all forms of pluralism and established a single-party state apparatus that remained until 1988. The regime was especially ruthless in ensuring that opposition and criticism to its rule would be silenced (Huang 2013: 249-252), and the right to form political parties disappeared from 1974 to 1988 (Hliang et al. 2013: 14). They had neither freedom of association, freedom of expression nor elections (eliminating also clean elections, elected officials, and universal suffrage). Here, it is evident that Geddes, Wright and Frantz's (2014) hypothesis that personalist rule undermines civil society is correct (p. 324), at least in this military-personalist regime.

5.3.3. Post-revolution democracy in Hungary versus Myanmar

By no surprise, due to the disparate post-revolution democracy levels, post-revolution elections in Hungary and Myanmar had very different outcomes. In Hungary, democratic elections took place in 1990, establishing the foundations for a democratic system (Ekiert 1991: 287) with multiparty democracy, human rights, and national independence (Gabriel 2016: 6). In Myanmar, on the other hand, a promised multiparty election was held in 1990 but the landslide victory of another political party was never recognized. At the end of the revolution, Ne Win handed over his power to another military leader and this new regime refused to transfer its political power to the party that won the elections (Hliang et al. 2013: 9; Huang 2013: 250). Mainly because of the apparent victory of another party in 1990, the new regime was unable to enjoy political legitimacy (Huang 2013: 256).

According to Ekiert (1991), the transition process in East-Central Europe was, among other things, characterized by the rapid disintegration of existing political institutions and the proliferation of various political movements breaking into the political arena (p. 287). This example confirms Tilly's (2000) argument: revolutions can involve abrupt shocks to existing social arrangements, sweeping away old networks that block democratization (pp. 13-14). In Myanmar, on the other hand, they reformed the constitution, eliminating socialism from it, but the country was still ruled by a military regime that kept following the patterns of its predecessors: persecution of the opposition and strict media censorship continued (Hliang et al. 2013: 9).

To summarize, this brief inquiry provides preliminary suggestions that civil society and external factors matter. In Hungary, the revolution was triggered by the Soviet Union removing its external guarantees of the political order (Ekiert 1991: 286; Kumar 1993: 387), leading to the emergence of civil society. While in Myanmar, the revolution was both initiated and solved internally, without freedom of association (Hliang et al. 2013). Not to say that external involvement is universally necessary, but in Myanmar, the internal institutions did lead to a reproduction of more or less the same system as prior to the revolution. Conducting a deeper qualitative analysis would facilitate a more detailed

comparison of these, perhaps providing evidence for crucial causal mechanisms. Nonetheless, in this overview, there are no apparent nor convincing differences (besides pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy) except civil society (freedom of association/assembly), and external factors.

5.4. Summary of Findings

To clarify the results of the analysis, it is helpful to summarize the findings. Again, this project has been of a descriptive character, thus not providing any causal explanations for the result but has instead aimed at illustrating any existing or non-existing patterns between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy, as well as between pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy.

First, the result regarding the connection between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy suggested no evident relationship between the two. Consequently, it is not possible to map out a generalized theory of the relationship between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy. However, it is clear that not all revolutions lead to autocracy or a lack of democracy. Most countries had a pre-revolution democracy of around .20, and in most cases, they increased their democracy from pre- to post-revolution. Here, the result validates my first expectation: revolutions result in at least a modicum of democratization. This also proves that there is another variable than pre-revolution democracy affecting the post-revolution outcomes.

Second, there was an indication of a pattern regarding pre-revolutionary regime type and post-revolution democracy. It was expected that the post-revolution democracy would be highest for military regimes, second highest for single-party regimes, and lowest for personalist dictators. Instead, the post-revolution democracy was highest for single-party regimes, second highest for personalist dictators, and lowest for military regimes. The result suggests a confirmation of the argument that different pre-transition regime types have different post-

transition prospects. Looking at solely revolutions as transitions, the result is different from those of transitions in general: rather than military regimes having the most post-revolution democracy, they had the least. However, this study's dispersion of regime types was skewed, which prevented any convincing conclusions from being drawn. Instead, this should be seen as a sign that this is an issue to delve into further, to understand revolutions and their outcomes.

Due to the scope of this thesis, it was not feasible to conduct a deep qualitative analysis of any of the cases. Only a brief overview of two cases has been presented, suggesting that external factors and civil society matter. For example, in Hungary, the revolution happened in connection to the Soviet Union letting go of Hungary as a client state, and in relation to the emergence of civil society. In Myanmar, the revolution was initiated and solved internally without any pluralism. Still, no causal relationships have been explored as this is a descriptive study. Thus, the result has only displayed the connections between an emerging civil society and revolution, as well as the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the revolution in Hungary.

Now, this thesis argues that it remains interesting to examine the relationship between revolution and democracy with democracy as a spectrum. Many of the vague findings here can and should be explored further, either by large-N quantitative analysis or by qualitative case studies. For example, the result suggests that countries on the democratic side of the spectrum before a revolution will have a democratic decline after the revolution. Further, the study implies that exploring regime types in relation to revolutions as regime transitions, rather than general regime transitions, provides different results. This indicates that there is more to explore regarding this connection. Another interesting exploration would be the connection and potential causal relationship between civil society and post-revolution democracy.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this project has been twofold. First, to examine whether there is a pattern between a country's position in the democracy-autocracy spectrum before a revolution and the post-revolution position in the same spectrum. Second, to discern the potential pattern between pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy. A medium-N mixed method was employed to adhere to these purposes, and the following research questions were formulated.

- i. What does the relationship between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy look like?
- ii. What does the relationship between pre-revolution regime type and post-revolution democracy look like?

In short, this study makes two contributions with regard to my first research question. First, it illustrates the non-existing pattern between pre-revolution democracy and post-revolution democracy, implying that it is not possible to map out a generalized theory of this relationship. Second, it provides evidence of the statement made by Tilly in 2000, namely, that most revolutions lead to at least a modicum of democratization as compared to previous regimes. This holds especially true in this thesis if only countries with pre-revolution democracy of less than .40 are examined.

The exploration of the second question proved to be more difficult. Whereas the result suggests that post-revolution democracy is highest for single-party regimes, second-highest for personalist regimes, and lowest for military regimes, the dispersion of regime types among the cases was skewed. Despite this, the result provides a preliminary confirmation of the argument that different pre-transition regime types have different post-transition prospects.

Finally, this thesis argues that it remains interesting to examine the relationship between revolution and democracy by measuring democracy as a spectrum. Despite not resulting in any decisive conclusions, this study has proven the value of measuring democracy as a spectrum rather than a threshold. Due to the project's scope, the case selection was smaller than would have been wished for. Yet, it provides several insinuations. Most importantly that the majority of cases experienced fluctuations on the democracy spectrum in connection to the revolutions, which would not have been acknowledged if democracy had been measured as a threshold. With the help of either large-N qualitative analyses or more profound and more detailed qualitative case studies, this could promote the understanding of how pre-revolution conditions affect revolutionary outcomes.

For future research, this project has found several suggestions of patterns interesting to study. For instance, that countries on the democratic side of the spectrum before a revolution could be expected to experience a post-revolution democratic decline; and that exploring regime types in relation to revolutions as a distinct type of regime transition provides different results than when explored in relation to regime transitions in general. Following the case studies, examining the effect of external factors and domestic civil society on post-revolution democracy would also seem beneficial for understanding post-revolution outcomes.

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Appendix

Table A. Countries and revolution years

Countries	Regime Type	Onset	Offset	−5	−1	5	10
Afghanistan	Party-Personalist	1996	1996	.09	.09	.08	.04
Albania	Party	1990	1992	.17	.17	.37	.49
Bulgaria	Party	1989	1989	.18	.18	.70	.72
Burkina Faso	Personalist	1983	1987	.24	.16	.45	.49
Burundi	Party-Military	1987	1987	.14	.19	.17	.18
Czechoslovakia	Party	1989	1989	.20	.14	.90	.88
Fiji	-	1987	1987	.59	.59	.41	.56
Ghana	Military	1981	1981	.11	.54	.10	.10
Guinea	Party	1984	1984	.14	.14	.10	.26
Hungary	Party	1989	1989	.14	.17	.85	.85
Liberia	Party-Personalist	1980	1980	.22	.22	.15	.17
Myanmar	Military-Personalist	1988	1988	.14	.14	.09	.09
Pakistan	Personalist	1977	1977	.17	.23	.11	.17
Poland	Party	1990	1990	.19	.35	.89	.88
Romania	Party-Personalist	1989	1991	.19	.19	.58	.60
South Korea	Personalist	1961	1961	.26	.32	.28	.28
Sudan	Military	1989	1989	.20	.38	.09	.15
Uganda	Personalist	1979	1986	.08	.08	.26	.28
Venezuela	-	1999	1999	.76	.74	.47	.43
Zimbabwe	-	1980	1980	.20	.15	.31	.28