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Democracy and the World System:

A case for the use of world systems analysis in democratization research

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Abstract

This paper examines the relevance of the world system as a structural condition to be considered in research on regimes and democratization. This is a pilot study in reformulating world systems analysis into the research topic of regimes, their creation and democratization. The methodology is statistical and covers most of the world for the time period 1980-1999. The study starts by formulating implications of the different world system positions (periphery, semiperiphery and core) for the likelihood of a series of political outcomes related to regimes: descriptive inferences of theoretically expected outcomes. The findings are that democratic regimes are far less common in periphery and semiperiphery than in the core, that democracies of the core have far higher levels of electoral democracy than the non-core, and that these have stayed relatively stable within their respective categories. Furthermore, successful coups were far more common in the periphery than anywhere else, and the average durability of regimes was lowest in the periphery, followed by semiperiphery and core, with some additional nuances for democracies and autocracies. The final chapter connects these findings to my theoretical reasoning of how the world system would fit into a more complete theory of regimes and democratization.

Keywords:

Regimes, Democracy, Democratization, Trade, World systems analysis

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1. Introduction

A common view among political theorists is that all societies follow a general path of development from primitive to more modern societies. Whether it is Smith's stadial historical view, Marx's historical materialism or even more contemporary liberal views, such as those expressed in Fukuyama's End of history, this type of reasoning is common in political science, although often not as explicitly as in the given examples.

Democratization research has a similar tendency, especially within the 'modernization theory' camp. This modernization theory of democratization, in the briefest terms possible, posits that economic development is a necessity for democratization (with some variation depending on the particular author). The starting point for this view in contemporary political science is Lipset's work "Some Social Prerequisites for Democracy" (1959), which examines how economic factors external to the purely political realm may -to differing degrees- support democratic systems (1959:1, 72).

This line of thinking has some valid points that should be highlighted before it is problematized. In the more general sense, societies tend to have some similarities in their development, and in some cases these common traits are strikingly similar and seemingly the probable causes for historical development. For instance, how industrialisation transformed the societies it first occurred in, with similar class formations, economic growth and political reforms taking place across a multitude of countries. Returning to the topic of democratization, a similar case can be made for the modernization theory. From previous research we know that the most developed and durable democracies are also historically wealthy countries, often concentrated geographically to Europe and North America.

However, we know that not all countries have followed the path of Europe and North America, an observation which is not particularly new. A prominent criticism and distinct theory-camp that has risen to prominence in response to these kinds of universalistic developmental theories, is that of world systems analysis, WSA (Denemark, Upadhyay:2023:1) . Though later Marxists reformulated their theory to account for imperialism, the original thought was that such an arrangement would lead to economic (and

therefore also political) development for societies of the imperial periphery as well (ibid:2). In contrast WSA takes into account global trade and how it determines production in any given country. Profit maximization means that if wages in one country become too high, the labor intensive production will move to a historically exploited and poorer country with lower wages. What will remain is the technologically advanced production requiring a higher skilled workforce with higher wages. This way global trade will yield an international division of labor and uneven power dynamic between countries. The countries that primarily rely on technologically advanced production and are the most powerful are considered the core of this system. The periphery consists of the weakest and poorest countries that rely on having low wages to attract labor intensive production. The semiperiphery is a smaller set of countries with a mix of both modi of production, acting as an intermediary between the core and periphery in the international economic system.

The modernization debate is still ongoing in contemporary political science. A vast body of research has been created with increasingly qualified arguments in favor and against modernization theory, such as development being a necessary but not sufficient condition for democracy (Rueschemeyer et al 1992), certain levels of development making democratic survival more likely (Przeworski et al, 2000), or differing types of inequality having different effects on the likelihood of democratization (Ansell & Samuels, 2010).

This study has two overarching ambitions. The first is an empirical examination of how democratization and various interrelated known causes and outcomes vary across the world system. As long as democracy remains a desired political outcome, studies examining what makes it possible will be justified. Furthermore, if we accept that economics affects the creation and sustaining of political systems, WSA becomes intuitively relevant. As such the first research question is:

How, and in what ways does world system position affect a country's likelihood of successful democratization?

The second and most central ambition is to attempt to recontextualize the modernization debate using world systems analysis. As previously mentioned, the modernization debate is

still ongoing, and its resulting research has become increasingly granular and centered on particular mechanisms, in conjunction with the universalistic tendencies implicit in the modernization debate a coherent grand perspective becomes an increasingly unlikely goal. Because of this I argue that it is a necessity to break this trend and re-examine the bigger picture of regimes and democratization from an alternative standpoint. My reasoning is that arguing whether or not particular economic factors make democracy more or less likely would lead research down the same path. If one were to start the formulation of a more general theory of the topic, universalistic assumptions of development should be set aside. The inclusion of WSA is a potential step toward such an understanding since it gives greater weight to the historical contingencies of development in its division of states along world system boundaries. The second research question is therefore:

What potential does world systems analysis show as a grand framework for regime research?

Though these are presented as separate questions, they are highly related to one another. Answering the second research question requires answering the first one too. Though evaluating the potential of a framework to some extent is a theoretical task, I still need to show that the theory has empirical bearing.

2. Literature Review

This literature has two primary ambitions: first is to present the relevant fields of research that precedes this study and have helped inspire it, the second is to highlight relevant findings from these. The two primary strands of research that this paper draws from are world systems analysis, and democratization and regimes research from more conventional political science. I will start by introducing the basics of World systems analysis followed by presenting the modernisation debate within democratization research. A literature review of all these research traditions could never fully cover all the work that precedes it, but the studies I have included should provide a sufficient overview of the debate this paper engages with and the theoretical frameworks that are used to this end.

There is a breadth of literature that could be used to introduce world Systems Analysis. I would like to highlight the work of Wallerstein as it is the foundation of the framework itself. The book, "World systems analysis, an introduction" offers a brief overview of the theory of world systems analysis (Wallerstein, 2004). Since this theory will be further explained within the theory chapter I leave its description here brief. The short gist is that profit maximization and trade over time leads to a global labor division where some countries engage in labor intensive production whilst others are geared towards technologically advanced production. This has major implications for the global power balance alongside the economic and political development of countries globally. There is much more to this theory, but this summary is sufficient for now. The following article I will present uses this framework to tackle the same topic, but with some important differences.

In my view the research closest to my study is "World system position and democracy, 1972-2008", by Rob Clark (2013). It examines the same central relationship between world system position and democracy, with methodological differences and similarities that will be explained more thoroughly in the methodology chapter. Clark does find that world system boundaries do remain relevant to hindering a global convergence on democracy, further cementing the relevance of the world system in these questions for further research. My study differs from Clark's work in that I seek an increased granularity in my examination of the effects of world system boundaries on democratization. My approach is the following: (1) a

partial disaggregation of democracy metrics for methodological reasons (2) An incorporation of relevant findings from comparative political research and and an examination of how these explanatory factors vary across world system categories, and if they do so in a way that is congruent with World Systems analysis as an overarching theory of the topic. Due to space constraints these points will suffice for presenting a brief overview of World systems analysis alongside highlighting how it has previously been applied on the topic of democratization.

Another related research camp is that of regime research which tackles similar topics, but instead does so by analyzing, categorizing and comparing democratic and nondemocratic regimes. What I argue differentiates this from more 'pure' democratization research is a heavy focus on differences between nondemocratic political systems, and typically a significant use of formal models, game and/or choice theory. To highlight this strand of research I present the work of Geddes in "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" (1999). An indicative passage of what I discuss here is "One of the reasons regime transitions have proved so theoretically intractable is that different kinds of authoritarianism differ from each other as much as they differ from democracy" (ibid:121). Geddes approaches the democratization puzzle from a standpoint which heavily focuses on the differences between nondemocratic regimes and identifies characteristics of these which make them more or less prone to democratization among other outcomes. Although I will not make use of her theoretical distinctions between nondemocratic regimes (monarchy, military, personalist, et cetera), regime research is a highly relevant building block for this study primarily as a source for data on regimes and transitions, apart from its theoretical progress in modeling group interests under differing political systems.

The remainder of the literature review is about presenting the modernisation debate and some of the more relevant contributions to the democratization research made therein. The starting point for our purposes is Lipset's "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy" (1959). The study examines multiple preconditions that may enable or prevent democracy. The most relevant of these is its view of economic development as a precondition, where Lipset argues that democracy is more likely sustained by well-to-do nations (ibid:75). He finds that industrialisation correlates with democracy, urbanization is related to the likelihood of democracy, and similar for education rates.

Carles Boix' "Democracy and Redistribution", rather than analyzing the aspects of development that Lipset did, focuses on inequality and its effects on democratization (2003). The reasoning is that autocrats will want to avoid the redistribution that democracy can bring about, and that increased inequality makes the risks of democratization larger from their perspective, meaning that democracy becomes less likely as inequality rises.

Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi further analyze the relationship between economic development and political regimes in *Democracy and Development* (2000). In their conclusions they state that while democracies can occasionally appear in poor countries, these democracies are very fragile because of poverty (ibid:269). Furthermore, they provide evidence against the thesis that development is in conflict with democratization, or the idea that nondemocratic systems provide better growth.

3. Theory

This study will use two distinct research traditions to answer the research question: Democratization and regimes research and world systems analysis. In order to ensure congruence between the two I will start the theory chapter by outlining the ontological and epistemological framework that underpins this study.

My ontological position is that there is an observer-independent world, and that knowledge of it can be obtained through observation. This more-or-less empiricist approach is shared by both of the traditions I mention in the previous paragraph. Both democratization research and World systems analysis use empirical data to make and strengthen their generalizations of how the world works. Their primary difference is in range, Democratization and regime research more commonly uses distinct mid-range theories to explain more particular phenomena, while world-system analysis is a grand theory spanning the entire world and its history. This is also how I intend to use them in this study. World systems analysis becomes the overarching framework, supplemented by different findings and assumptions from more conventional political science in order to adapt the theory to the subfield of regimes and democratization.

3.1 Democracy

Democracy is a highly contested and debated term both on the political as well as the theoretical level. There are several aspects to the term that I need to discuss here before I can formulate the rest of the theory. Collier and Adcock (2003) offer a good outline of the debate on whether democracy should be seen as dichotomous to nondemocracy, or as them existing on a continuum. I reject the gradation view, on similar grounds as the dichotomy camp does, because regimes in which offices are not contested should not be considered democratic at all (ibid:549). The dichotomy view does not preclude using gradations and comparisons between democracies, but it only permits doing so through a two-step procedure where one first checks if the countries fulfill a minimal definition before any comparison of their ‘democracy levels’. Adcock and Collier, while sympathetic, criticize the procedure by pointing out that it needs a precise argument as to why certain core attributes have to be present for a system to

be considered minimally democratic(ibid:549-550). What follows is my attempt at justifying this view and procedure.

I think this procedure has validity considering the inherent risks that using a loaded term like democracy carries. One identifiable risk is conflating normative/ideal and descriptive/historical understandings of the term. A question one can ask when presented with any ideal type is: What bearing does an ideal type have on empirical reality? Democracy is no exception to this question. If one seeks an empirical explanation of why a particular type of regime comes to be, our own moral arguments for said regime should not be allowed to adversely affect the empirical validity of the term. Societal development or history is not as simple as a movement along consistent moral lines. Such moralistic reasoning should in all likelihood be minimized in materially rooted empirical analysis.

Of course, both sides of the debate risk incorporating their own normative biases in their conceptualizations. The dichotomy view has to argue its minimum criteria is in fact reflective of democracy. However, the 'gradations' side of the debate is even further influenced by normative evaluations from the researchers. Since it not only has to select criteria, but also combine multiple criteria and weigh them, which means even more openings for arbitrariness. I argue this reaches absurdity around the cutoff point between democracy and nondemocracy, where one or more democratic attributes could technically compensate for an unacceptable lack in another, meaning some intuitively nondemocratic regimes could still be classified as democracies.

This is what I attempt to mitigate with the two-step procedure. By accepting a minimalistic democracy term we avoid additional procedures risking the term's empirical validity. However, being able to tell whether or not a country can be classified as a democracy or not does not provide us enough information about those societies. Here the advantages of the gradations view become quite clear, but with the two-step procedure we have a theoretically consistent way of making these comparisons without jeopardizing the empirical character of the democracy term.

It is with this background I invoke democracy in two different senses in both my theory and analysis. If a claim relates to the strength or level of democracy, it should be treated as a gradations claim with the caveat that it only applies to countries that meet the minimal dichotomous requirements. If a claim on the other hand relates to how common democracy is, instances of it compared to nondemocracy, or encompasses regimes beyond democracy it is done so with the dichotomous view in mind.

Another term that must be clarified is Democratization. I use the term as countries becoming democratic in the second sense of the previous paragraph or the dichotomous view. If free and fair elections are instituted a country is seen as having undergone democratization. I leave this definition minimal intentionally, in order to mitigate risks of conceptual stretching. As Collier and Mahon have shown, a term's extension (how many cases it includes) can only be increased by decreasing the intension (the amount of attributes in its definition) of the term (1993:846). Since every case of democratization is unique, every additional aspect that one were to include in the conceptualization would make it less applicable to different but relevant cases. Considering the global span of this paper I argue that a minimalistic definition is warranted. For some more detailed portrayals of particular democratizations I would refer to Acemoglu and Robinson's "Economic origins of dictatorship and democracy" which contains several more detailed descriptions of particular instances of democratization (2005).

3.2. Democratization and Regimes Research

The question of what makes democracy possible or likely within a country is central to Comparative politics, particularly within the subfields of democratization and regime research. This is also where a lot of the research into how non-democratic political systems work has been made and the starting point for the theory of this study. A regime is typically understood as the set of rules that determine who can become leader (Geddes, Wright, Frantz, 2014:3). The focus here on rules rather than particular leaders is important, since if a non-democratic leader dies, but their intended successor takes office the regime does not change.

I want to highlight three (generalized) potential endings to nondemocratic regimes. There are coups, revolutions and negotiated exits from power. Coups and revolutions are the violent endings a leader might face, and they are differentiated by who is performing them. Revolutions are rare, and rely on the general population being dissatisfied to the point of rising up against their leadership, despite the potential repercussions. Coups on the other hand are elite lead, most often performed by the wealthiest sections of a society and/or military leaders. Finally we have the negotiated exit, where incumbents realize their hold on power is untenable and as a result negotiate with their opposition to create a new regime where they no longer hold office, but with caveats like protections against redistribution or prosecutions for crimes committed while in office. Of the three, this is the scenario most likely to produce liberal democracy as its outcome (ibid:37).

When democracy is created it will not be completely safe from being dismantled or violently overthrown. The cold war period is perhaps the most striking example, where several democratically elected leaders around the world were overthrown by dictators. Since democracy allows for more input from the population than nondemocracy, dissatisfaction to the point of creating a revolution is much rarer in the former than the latter. Coups are more of a concern however. Elite support for democracy is contingent on which system better serves them. If significant redistribution is the likely result of democratization they are less likely to support the creation of such a system and may potentially come to support a coup in order to prevent or overthrow it (Huber et al, 1993:75).

With these general points out of the way I now turn to some highly relevant findings that were some of the primary sources of inspiration for this paper. Starting with Ansell and Samuels, in “Democratization: A Contractarian Approach” they find that land inequality prevents democratization, while income inequality seems to further it (2010). Income inequality furthers democracy by new economic groups gaining an increased share of national wealth, which will correspond with an increase in income inequality. Democracy does not mean high redistribution, and these newly wealthy classes tend to fear expropriation by the nondemocratic state more than any potential outcomes from democracy (ibid:1543-45). As for land inequality, Ansell and Samuels claim that a more equal land distribution increases the number of people who fear both taxation and expropriation of their

land or money by the autocratic elite: meaning equal distributions make pressures for democracy greater.

Huber et al instead approach the question from a historical perspective, but their findings seem prima facie congruent with those mentioned in the previous work, despite their different theoretical perspectives. They outline democratization as a result of the class formations of the industrial revolution, particularly those of the working class and bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie played an instrumental role in their pressure for parliamentary control (huber et al 1993:75). Despite this the right to vote in most countries was so significantly restricted that they could not be considered democracies. Here in Europe the main agent of 'full' democracy was instead the working class. The bourgeoisie only promoted full democracy in three countries, none of them having an organized working class.

With these two studies in conjunction, we can see that land inequality lessens the likelihood of democracy, reflecting the historical stage of the feudal classes. When land was concentrated under the aristocracy it should mean that there were fewer people who were concerned with expropriation, if we reason in the terms of Ansell and Samuels. This seems to intuitively strengthen the historical reasoning, since no democracies directly appeared from feudalism without some long period of transition before it. In the case of the west: as the bourgeoisie came to be, income inequality rose, but land inequality decreased since this new class also needed land. This in turn yielded an increased will to protect their property against expropriation and led to parliamentary control, which is a part of the groundwork that precedes democracy. (Huber et al, 1993:75).The working class was also formed as a result of the same process as the bourgeoisie, and created the pressures for democracy in terms of the rights we commonly associate with it.

3.3. World Systems Analysis

There are several potential starting points for World Systems analysis. I will start with the more abstract economic processes driving the historical process described by the theory and then subsequently explain how this has led to the current world system.

Producers in a country will seek to maximize their profits, in two ways: Lowering costs and increasing prices. Price increases are typically limited by competition and the wealth of the potential buyers of the product (Wallerstein, 2004:78-79). Thus in many cases the only way producers increase profits is by lowering costs. This can be achieved by several means, such as reduced remuneration for workers, costs of materials and resources, taxation etc. These costs also have a tendency to rise as time goes by. Workers will demand increased compensation as they organize, taxation may increase, and as resources are depleted they increase in price as well. One way to work around this for producers is to simply relocate their production to new places where labor costs and taxation are lower (ibid:79). Over time this yields a global division of labor, where some countries produce labor intensive goods and others more technologically advanced products (ibid:28).

If we now place this reasoning into the context of world history we get the following picture: The necessity for markets to expand into new frontiers as production costs rise becomes relevant in the period of industrialisation and imperialism. Since Europe was the first to reach industrialisation, it alongside North America became the core of the world system. Rather than having the workforce within the core perform labor intensive production and paying for it, producers opted to exploit slaves and colonial labor for such production, letting their respective states take control over large parts of the world by colonization in order to enforce their economic interests. Even if the formal subjugation of countries by the core is now over and they technically have attained independence, this underlying dynamic remains. Countries in a weak global position must rely on labor intensive production in order to export in the world system, while the core produces technologically advanced goods with much higher labor costs.

From this brief timeline we can now analytically distinguish between the core, periphery and semiperiphery. The core, as previously stated, consists of the countries that have undergone industrialisation and the processes of increasing labor costs. As such they rely on technologically advanced goods to export, typically have high living standards and in most cases have developed politically into liberal democracies. The periphery on the other hand, are the weakest countries within the world system. They compete in the world system by exporting labor intensive goods, typically requiring resource extraction. In order to sustain

such production, labor costs must remain lower than in the core, often in competition with other periphery countries which may be able to lower costs even more. I will return in a later section to the implications of this in terms of democratization and regime research.

Lastly there is the category of the semiperiphery. These countries have a mixture of core and periphery production processes, i.e they export both labor and capital intensive goods. Thus the countries' of the semiperiphery will benefit from unequal exchange in trade with periphery countries, while the core does the same to them (Grell-Brisk, 2021:2527). This category historically also employs highly restrictive trade policies in specific sectors to protect these exports from global competition to a higher degree than other countries. While it may seem like an "in-between" category relative to the other ones, the semiperiphery is a heterodox set of countries and is in many aspects more extreme than the others.

3.4. Combined Theory

What follows is my attempt at formulating a more grand-scope theory of democratization and development from the findings of democratization research and World systems analysis. As one might object, these two research camps generally stick to their own types of analysis, and already have more or less complete worldviews. What would be the value added of combining these theories apart from the general pursuit of theoretical novelty?

These two traditions offer different advantages and disadvantages. There is a potentially very rewarding research project in incorporating world systems analysis into that of regime and democratization research. These advantages and disadvantages should be apparent from a look at what I have highlighted in the previous sections. What I argue are their advantages and disadvantages primarily originate from the scopes of the theories, in that traditional political science is less general/abstract and (generally) creates highly specific theories for the topic. This makes for an advantage by helping to ground the theories empirically, but comes at the cost of a lessened overarching theoretical coherence between research projects. On the other hand, world systems analysis can offer a more complete holistic view, but is less suited for highly localized and non general research, and typically does not focus as heavily on proving specific instances of causality.

Recall where we are epistemologically within the modernization debate, where these highly specified theories have been the dominant mode of research. There are well backed findings from this work, some of which I have included in this paper. However, there seems to be little to no indication of this body of research ever converging on a coherent grand theory of the topic. This missing overarching coherence is what the inclusion of WSA could potentially bring to the table. As I can hopefully show, my formulation of world systems analysis could provide this in two ways:

(1) A priori incorporation of previous findings into the theory, perhaps best exemplified by the synthesis of Ansell and Samuels alongside Huber et al, and how the inequalities and historical processes described by them are not only potentially congruent with each other, but also with world systems analysis.
(2) By showing global variations along world systems boundaries in several central political outcomes that logically relate to democratization. The expectations to be tested are not an exhaustive set, but rather prima facie probable interactions between world system position and various aspects of democratization.

With World-System analysis as an overarching framework and the topic-specific theoretical elements of group incentives borrowed from democratization research we get the following theory. Countries early to join the core underwent the typical development of industrialisation, and the resulting class formations created the pressures for liberal democracy as we know it. From here the core producers expanded into the periphery in order to gain cheap labor/materials. This altered the trajectory of the subjugated countries in their political development. Rather than developing a national bourgeoisie to displace previous dominant classes, one was imposed from abroad. The national bourgeoisie that did arise was weaker and often focused on periphery production geared towards the core. With redistribution against the interests of both national and core international producers, what would be the difference between the two outcomes?

Let us outline a comparison between an idealized case with a periphery-autocratic leader with only a local national bourgeoisie vs one that is reliant on core producers. The former will deal with moderate pressures against expropriation since the producers are ultimately subject to the autocrat. Core producers operating in the periphery on the other hand possess a more

independent power basis, since they can simply relocate their business or potentially even pressure their own governments in the core to intervene in favor of them. They only operate in a periphery country on the understanding that their costs will be minimized. This also means that autocrats can stay unthreatened by them as long as they keep labor costs down, and that the only democratization that will go "unpunished" by the core producers is one which does not threaten this state of affairs.

What follows are the theoretical expectations I have formulated using the previous reasoning and terminology. Keep in mind that these are not hypotheses, as these merely assess the outcomes we measure and their correspondence to what the theory predicts, and they make no attempt at proving a full causal chain for each interaction between the theoretical elements.

1a: Democratic regimes will be significantly less common outside the core.
I accept the general explanation of democratization as one of class formation and the resulting political pressures. A core country will by definition have undergone those class formations, and is the most likely to arrive at a full democracy as a result. Periphery and semiperiphery countries have had their historical trajectories altered by the world system, compared to that of the core. This does not preclude them from being full fledged democracies, but makes it much less likely. It may seem common sense that 'poorer' countries are less likely to be democratic, but wealth is not an analogous concept to World system position. With this 'common knowledge' in mind, this prediction is not a bold claim, but it is necessary to examine using world system categories if we are to assess the theory's relevance. As stated, I expect the core to be consistently at a far higher share of democracies. While I expect the periphery to have the lowest share and semiperiphery a middle one, they should show less differences given that both categories have to rely on periphery production (albeit to differing degrees).

1b: Democratic regimes have become more common in all categories, but the periphery will have seen the biggest increase in its share of democracies.
We know that democracies have become increasingly common around the world. Since I expect there to be differences between the different world system positions based on their

structural conditions there should be differences in what growth these groups of countries have undergone. For instance, the 'conventional' core underwent its class formations and democratization at a far earlier point in time, and their democratizations are thus omitted from the data in this study. I expect the periphery to start at the lowest share of democratic regimes, but also to have undergone the biggest increase in this regard. This is because periphery production can coexist with minimally democratic regimes. In general the periphery has been historically prevented from democracy through imperialist subjugation, and when this more formal subjugation ends nothing else than their internal political dynamics prevents them from adopting minimally democratic regimes without threatening the most relevant economic interests. In other words this is the category where I see the most potential for an increased share of democratic regimes. The semiperiphery is a rather small set of politically heterodox countries, where I expect less of a uniform growth in one direction or another.

2a: Democracies of the core will be the "strongest", followed by semiperiphery and lastly periphery.

Since most of the periphery democracies that exist are the result of an autocratic leader's negotiated exit they will contain safeguards for the previous leader. These will typically protect private property and guarantee their safety from prosecution. Such conditions by necessity makes a system less democratic, and this ought to be reflected on a statistical level. Periphery production requires crackdowns on labor organization, an important vessel for making nominally democratic systems more substantially democratic if we recall the article of Huber et al. These factors which are more prevalent outside the core mean that we should expect democratic systems outside of it to be less consolidated or have "weaker" democracies.

2b: On average no increase in democratic strength will occur outside the democracies of the core

As one might surmise from the previous sections, periphery production is in direct conflict with higher levels of democratic consolidation. While its share of minimally democratic regimes may grow unhampered, there are limits as to the level of democratic consolidation that can coexist with periphery production. As such I expect no growth in democratic strength

for the periphery. While the core is expected to be at the highest level, I also expect its democracies on average to have undergone the most strengthening, followed by the semiperiphery.

2c: No democratic convergence over world system boundaries.

I approach this with previous research in mind since this is the core of Clark's work which found no convergence to have taken place when average scores of democracy are compared between world system categories. I will repeat this step in this study for purposes of replicability. However, because I split expectation 2 and 3 into two separate points this may have altered the data in significant ways, making another test of this expectation relevant. For the studied period I expect the democracies of the core on average to have undergone the most strengthening, followed by semiperiphery and lastly periphery. Consolidated democracy does go against World system dynamics for a periphery country by virtue of its periphery production, unlike the minimal free and fair elections that can still sustain the necessary levels of inequality.

3a: Coups will be most common within the periphery, followed by semiperiphery and least common in the core.

Coups as mentioned are elite led, which in most cases include some sections of the bourgeoisie. How likely they are can be seen as a result of a) How strong the elite is independently and b) how strong incentives they have for a coup. Core producers in a periphery country have extremely strong incentives to minimize costs at that location, and as mentioned their power is largely independent of the local government. Both autocratic and democratic governments run this increased risk by virtue of being periphery countries. This means for the semiperiphery that they also have a similar independent elite, but since the semiperiphery has its own periphery production as well they also have production that is fully subject to the state. In my view this should mean that the highest risk for coups should be within the periphery, followed by the semiperiphery with the core having the lowest risk.

3b: Regime durability is affected by world system position.

I expect the average durability of regimes to correspond to different levels for the core, semiperiphery and periphery. There are a plethora of reasons to expect some form of variation along these boundaries. First, production modi necessarily affect the internal power balance for a country, secondly state power itself is highly related to its available resources, meaning that core states can be expected to be more powerful in and of themselves. In my view this means that regimes should generally be more durable depending on how high in the world system hierarchy they are. At an abstract generalized level, the duration of a regime is determined by its power in comparison to the power of its opposition. In the total absence of core-production, as in the periphery, this typically means a very weak working class and population in relation to the regime. Therefore, in the case of the periphery, I expect its democratic regimes to be less durable than its non-democracies. To further clarify: The question of which groups are invested in the regime is central. Elite support for democracy is contingent on what kind of regime benefits them, which in the periphery almost always is autocracy. The people at large should favor democracy, but they are generally the weakest in periphery countries while elite power is at its strongest. Reformulate this into testable expectations we get the following:

3b1: The core will on average have more durable regimes, regardless of type.
3b2: Only in the periphery will the nondemocracies be more durable than democracies.
3b3: Though the regimes of the semiperiphery generally will be more durable than the ones of the periphery, the difference between the two is smaller than between core / non-core.

4: Inequality will be the highest in the countries of the periphery, followed by the semiperiphery and core

Inequality is an important concept and an explanatory variable in many accounts of regime change and democratization. To keep this study on track I will not delve too deeply into the directionality of inequality and democratization. My overarching ambition is to evaluate the relevance of the world system for regimes and democratization research. Rather the focus here is simply investigating whether this world system categorization corresponds to meaningful differences in inequality. There is also good reason to expect different world

system positions to correspond with different respective levels in inequality. Considering how the world system's trade arrangement basically functions as a global division of labor, one would expect to find not only differences in wealth between world system positions, but also in inequality. To maintain competition in periphery productions it is necessary to minimize labor costs, therefore increasing inequality. At a mathematical level, inequality is both driven by how low the incomes are at the lowest end, but also by how wealthy the richest in a country are. While the periphery is expected to have the lowest wages, the core typically has the wealthiest bourgeoisie. Although I do not expect this to mean the core will have higher inequality than the others, it would indicate that inequality is not absent in these societies. To formulate this in the terms of the other theoretical expectations, I expect the core to have the lowest inequality, followed by semiperiphery and lastly periphery. The difference between the core will be more significant vis-a-vis the non core compared to the difference between periphery and semiperiphery.

3.5. Further Theoretical Considerations

An objection to this paper could be based on a possible endogeneity in the theories. What exactly is the relationship between world-system-positions and democracy and development? Could not development and democracy affect a country's position? If not, what would determine it? A tempting answer might be a deflection by deferring to an ontological assumption of materialism, whereby political structures would by necessity be seen as an outcome of material economic structures. But this dilemma can perhaps be more satisfyingly answered without resorting to pure political philosophy.

First off: World-system-position as a theoretical element overlaps with economic development and cannot be treated as fully analytically distinct. In a sense it could be seen as a replacement term to economic development encompassing further dimensions. It captures economic development through the nature of a country's exports/imports, since their technological levels are by necessity reflected by the development of a country's own production, and its costs of labor. World system position also goes beyond economic development by capturing relative power and relevant aspects of a country's history. It captures power relations since periphery or core production modi determine whether the

country is the benefactor or not in unequal exchange with its trading partners. This measurement of relative power in turn captures whether a country historically has been exploited or was the exploiter. The length of time a country has been in a given world system category gives us the duration of that exploitation as well. As I see it, world system position as a term does not include any insurmountable endogeneity issues. In this study it is tested as a replacement for development within the modernisation debate, not in relation to development in and of itself. To quickly address where these positions originate: the material reality and development in a given country during the onset of the current world system determined their starting position. The system, though slow in change, is at some level dynamic and countries can move in their roles within it. The power balance resulting from the world system's creation will channel the 'natural' economic development of the world, and over time the current world order will be the result.

Another point to clarify is related to theoretical expectations *1* and *2:*
1a: Democratic regimes will be significantly less common outside the core.
2a: Democracies of the core will be the "strongest", followed by semiperiphery and lastly periphery.
I will treat them as two separate points to be examined on the basis of my definition of the term democracy. The question of how common particular systems are differs from the question of how strong these systems are on average. It is not meaningful to compare scores on a democracy index between a completely closed autocracy and a liberal democracy, due to the different natures of their systems. Such comparisons are more apt if contained to democracies of differing types.

There are some further theoretical elements from World systems analysis that could be fruitful for further research, for instance the role of the hegemon. It is common knowledge that the current world hegemon (The US) has played significant roles in both democratic and autocratic interventions globally, and has a complex relationship towards democracy around the world. A potential risk in this study could be that outcomes in regimes could be affected or mediated by the strategic behavior of the hegemon, meaning some outcomes are more historically contingent than the data might let on. I do not see it as necessary to include a control for this by including a variable for geopolitical alignment or similar. This is because

the role of hegemon is a structural position establishing the terms of engagement in the world system. As such we already have a simple overview of its interests; they are already crystalized in the system, and strategic behavior from the hegemon should typically seek to enforce it. World system position gives us information of what attitude the hegemon should have toward a country, and if we also have data over such political interventions this should give us a picture of what non-compliance with the World system leads to in terms of political regimes. Given the study's spatial and temporal scope the theory has to be left at a relatively simplified formulation. The theory as it stands might come off more Marxian, rather than derived from WSA, given its focus on production modi in its conceptualization. Since the world system hierarchy is determined by unequal exchange, which in turn is inextricably linked to production and the character of it, it is a given that the theory is formulated in these terms. In short, despite the narrowed focus vis-a-vis other work from WSA, this paper is still based on it. There are further factors that could also be included, but I will leave the discussion of them towards the end of this paper.

4. Methodology

From the previous overview on this study's philosophy of science it should be apparent that my research is firmly rooted within the positivist-tradition. As such the ambition is to empirically show that world system boundaries correspond with various political outcomes in the way that the theory predicts. Since the theory is global in span my data will need to be as well. In order to generalize from data on a topic of such a large scale, we therefore need a large number of cases spanning the entire world to provide any support for the theory. Due to these considerations the methodology of the study will be quantitative. This methodology chapter is divided into three sections: research design, data, followed by some critical reflections on the limitations of the research structure and the underlying reasoning for my methodological choices.

4.1 Research Design

The research design of this study is relatively simple. The theory offers expectations of how a series of political outcomes should vary between world system categories. Countries within the data are sorted along the lines of these boundaries. Once established it is easy to test whether the world system boundaries correspond with statistically significant variations in political outcomes in accordance with the overarching theory of the study. For further clarity I must highlight that this study does not make causal inferences in the strict technical sense. As King and co authors put it "the mean causal effect is the difference between the systematic component of a dependent variable when the causal variable takes on two different values" (1994:85). Since World system position in this formulation is at most an ordinal variable this relationship cannot be examined in direct causal terms. It is instead tested through descriptive inferences, which entails making descriptive comparisons and testing whether or not they align with what the theory would have predicted. Epistemologically, this is a weaker form of 'evidence' than causal inferences, but it can still show the suitability of the theory for further research, making it more feasible as a research project within the time and space constraints of this paper. The following section outlines how I aim to answer the two research questions. For purposes of clarity these bear repeating, the first reads as follows:

How, and in what ways does world system position affect a country's likelihood of successful democratization?

This first research question is more empirically oriented and in order to answer it I have created a series of theoretical expectations of how a variety of regime-related outcomes and phenomena varies across world system boundaries. What follows is how I will test and visualize these expectations.

1a: Democratic regimes will be significantly less common outside the core.
For this purpose I have created two subsets of variables, "WSP(1-3)_tot" and "WSP(1-3)_demos". The first is a group of three variables that simply counts the total of countries in a given world system position for any given year. The other does the same for the count of democracies within any given world system position over time. To test this theoretical expectation I create a line graph with three lines, one each for core, periphery, and semiperiphery, using the formula "WSP(1-3)_demos/WSP(1-3)_tot". This gives us the share of each world system position that is democratic in the dichotomous sense for every year and how it has changed over time.

1b: Democratic regimes have become more common in all categories, but the periphery will have seen the biggest increase in its share of democracies.
Examining this theoretical expectation can be based on the same data as the previous one. This can be calculated using the same formula "WSP(1-3)_demos/WSP(1-3)_tot" in 1980 and 1999, and then subtracting the 1980 values from the 1999 ones to arrive at a delta value. I choose using a table alongside a bar chart to visualize the delta values for each world system position and assess the degree of change within them.

2a: Democracies of the core will be the "strongest", followed by semiperiphery and lastly periphery.
Here the focus is on how 'developed' or 'strong' democracies are when divided along the world systems boundaries. The selection for this analysis consists of every country fulfilling the requirements of democracy within the dichotomous measure. Here the variable "gwf_nonautocracy" and its value "democracy" is used to eliminate any countries that are not

considered minimally democratic. I then create a variable calculating the annual average values in polyarchy scores for the countries that are minimally democratic within each given world system position. Within the dataset they are titled WSP(1-3)_mean_polyarchy_dem. These group averages are then charted over time in a line chart.

2b: On average no increase in democratic strength will occur outside the democracies of the core

This is simply a prediction of how the previous prediction will have varied over time. It can be assessed in the same procedure as 2a and I will evaluate the two in conjunction.

3a: Coups will be most common within the periphery, followed by semiperiphery and least common in the core.

This is another expectation that may seem like common knowledge, since coups typically seem to happen in poorer countries. Actually testing it using world systems' terminology is not groundbreaking work but still necessary if we are to see the actual distribution between the categories of the theory. To code coups I use the variable "gwf_fail" in conjunction with "gwf_next". The first points out that a regime failure has taken place, and the other tells us what followed. If a regime is seen as having failed, and what follows is not "foreign-occupied" or "democracy" I will code this as a coup. Using this manual coding I will go through the data and count instances of coups within each world system category for each of the studies years. Revolutions could potentially be coded as coups in this coding, at least if they do not produce democracies, but to the best of my knowledge there are few to none in the time period.

3b: Regime durability is affected by world system position:

Regime durability can be assessed using the variable gwf_durability, which is a variable containing the total years a given regime was in power. For each unique regime (note: not country) I will sort them on the basis of World system position alongside democracy or nondemocracy and then calculate average durability for periphery, semiperiphery and core. With these qualifications it should be possible to distinguish between differing effects on durability for democratic and nondemocratic regimes resulting from their world system positions. I consider the overarching prediction of 3b supported if there are noteworthy

differences across world system boundaries, and if these follow the order and levels predicted by 3b1-3b3.

4: Inequality will be the highest in the countries of the periphery, followed by the semiperiphery and core

The measurement for income inequality used is the gini coefficient (the variable "gini" in the dataset). However, there were some complications with data availability for gini scores for the countries covered in my dataset. To examine inequality I therefore created a second dataset that was originally derived from each row/observation in the original dataset that contained a gini-observation. The resulting dataset has the flaw that some countries have many observations across time while some only have a few or one. To counteract this I chose a selection principle to narrow this down to one observation per country; more concretely I chose the highest gini observation for any given country and omitted the remaining observations. This results in 89 observations of gini-coefficients across the three world system categories. I choose to visualize these in a bar-plot for the sake of simplicity.

This is a relatively narrow sample of the larger dataset. In order to complement and nuance this I choose to highlight a couple cases per world system category from the data as well. But these are instead selected on the basis of whether or not they have undergone a democratization and there are gini observations before and after the democratization. This part of the methodology is more exploratory, attempting to identify any patterns or commonalities that align the world system hierarchy.

This concludes the research design for how I test my empirical theoretical expectations. The second research question is:
What potential does world systems analysis show as a grand framework for regime research?

The focus of this research question is more intrascientific. There are two general aspects I focus on in answering this question. The first is taking a step back and critically evaluating the empirical relevance of the world system in light of my statistical findings.

The second would be to theoretically situate WSA and my own findings in relation to regime and democratization research and make my case for taking the world system into consideration when formulating theories of political regimes.

4.2 Data

The research question this study requires data on a wide array of topics, including: Political regimes, World system positions, democracy index scores, inequality. This section is structured so that I present each of the datasets I will use, their variables and span. More critical reflections over the limitations of the data are instead placed within the next section alongside the methodological reflections.

For political regimes I rely on the Geddes, Wright and Frantz dataset of political regimes. It contains many of the central variables for testing the theoretical expectations from previous chapters. It is the most expansive of all the datasets I rely on, starting in 1946 and ending in 2010. There is however some terminology from the dataset that bears explaining. Regimes in the data refers to rules of who can be selected into leadership. If the leader changes but these rules do not, the regime is not considered to have ended. The GWF dataset provides many of the other central variables for this study. Its coding for autocracy vs democracy is what will be used for the procedural democracy definition. The requirement here is that a country has reasonably fair direct elections in which 10 percent of the population participates at minimum (Geddes et al, 2014b:6). Another variable is Autocratic regime failure events, or "gwf_fail" in the dataset, where the value 1 means that a regime has failed in a given country and year. This can be supplemented with the variable "gwf_next" that tells us the nature of the regime that follows the one in question. Used in conjunction these variables can show us democratizations (ibid:9).

The world system categorization I rely on comes from Clark and Beckfield (2009). Their measure follows World systems orthodoxy in that it is trichotomous and is arrived at through network analysis and trade data. The blocks they have established for trade are divided into core, periphery and semiperiphery. The central assumption of these network relations is that the core shares ties with all other actors, and the periphery shares ties with the core, but not with itself (ibid:12). Using the continuous coreness procedure of UCINET 6 they sort 144 countries on the basis of how 'core-like' their connections are. What remains is simply

establishing the limits between the categories. The measurable difference between core and periphery is the intra-block density, which is measured as the ratio of observed ties in the block to the theoretically possible intra-block ties (ibid). These ratios are then compared to an ideal value of intrablock-density per category (values 1.000, .380, .000, respectively for core, semiperiphery and periphery). The authors then maximize the density of states in the core and periphery categories as far as possible without the intra-block density differing too far from the ideal values, yielding their final categorization of states into the three previously mentioned categories. This categorization was in turn repeated in Clark (2013) for the following time period (1990-2000).

To measure questions of democratic strength I rely on V-dems electoral democracy index by Coppedge et al. It takes into account the level of electoral democracy alongside the typical aspects assigned to it, such as civil liberties, rule of law and judiciary independence. (Coppedge et al, 2023:45). Using this dataset is another point of departure from Clark (2013) in which democracy indexes from Polity IV and Freedom house are utilized instead

Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy, Evaluating Alternative Indices by Munck and Verkuilen (2002) offers a good overview and critique of different popular democracy indexes. To briefly summarize their critique of freedom house's index, they find that it has problems of conceptual logic, measurement and an inappropriate aggregation principle. Similar criticisms are levied against the Polity IV index by Munck and Verkuilen (ibid:28). In comparison the primary critique against the polyarchy dataset by Coppedge was it taking participation for granted since it focuses on the post-world war two world. Similarly, the dataset from V-dem I use to compare levels of democracy focuses on polyarchy. Thus the same critique regarding participation could be levied against only using this dataset, but participation is a minimal requirement of democracy in the dichotomous conceptualization and classification, and is already taken into account for to some extent if the two-step procedure is adhered to. Thus using this dataset avoids some of the harshest criticisms directed against democracy indexes, whilst having its primary drawback mitigated by only being a supplement to the dichotomous democracy-term.

The measurement of inequality used is the Gini-coefficient, in order to show differences in income inequality. Many potential types of inequality could have been included, but what I want to focus on is income inequality since most of my theoretical reasoning is based on labor costs/wages. The most widespread measure of this is Gini-coefficients, and this data can be readily accessed through The World Bank. In simple terms it measures the degree by which income distribution in an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution (The World Bank, n,d).

For maximum transparency I want to further present how the data was aggregated and the resulting selection. The study's dataset is compiled through a series of merges of the previously mentioned datasets. First, I reformatted the data on world system positions into panel data, and added in the gini values that were available for those country-years. This dataset was then merged through an inner join in R with the GWF regimes dataset. This was done to remove those years in the GWF data that was not covered by the world system data. Finally I supplemented this data with the V-dem democracy index through a left-join, yielding the final dataset. This includes 136 unique countries for a total of 2465 country-year observations between the years 1980-1999. These are split 1117, 515, and 823 respectively for the periphery, semiperiphery and core.

4.3 Critical Reflections

First in this section are my reflections on the validity of the measurements this study uses. Starting off with the measurement for World System Position, there are some potential critiques. This measurement is based on what density of the connections countries have in trade, not explicitly on the character of their production. This is a theoretically sound way of approximating a classification on World systems boundaries, especially considering the nearly insurmountable issues with data availability if one were to attempt a classification of a similar scale based on more detailed export/import data. However, for transparency's sake it needs to be emphasized that there may be a discrepancy between the classification versus what would be considered 'common knowledge'. Some striking examples are China, India and Brazil, which are commonly associated with the semiperiphery, but here are classified as part of a newly ascendant core for the years 1980-1999. This is not a critical flaw, but it is

worth keeping in mind when extrapolating any findings based on this classification, to not uncritically accept the categorizations at face value.

A second term and classification that warrants evaluation is Democracy. The most important operationalization to evaluate is the dichotomous term from Geddes, Wright and Frantz. They code a country as democratic if it has free and fair elections with a minimum of 10% participation among the adult population. Democracy in this field is to be understood as a regime, or in other words, the selection principles for leadership. This definition is a convincing formulation of democracy in these exact terms. Recalling the historical development of democracy we know that legislatures, elected bodies and similar institutions typically precede the full set of rights we associate with such regimes. This definition successfully captures a regime fulfilling the necessary baseline of democratic institutions, and that there has been some expansion of who can vote besides the narrowest of elites. It does perhaps not fit our ideals of what democracy ought to be, but makes for a convincing threshold for identifying democratic regimes in the more descriptive sense.

The second part to this is to critically evaluate the gradations-based democracy measurement I use to compare democratic strength. It is not particularly relevant to argue whether or not V-dem's electoral democracy index accurately reflects its name, since this study makes no predictions on electoral democracy. What I use it for is as a proxy for democratic strength or consolidation, for which it suffices. Since my dichotomous operationalization of democracy is highly electoral in nature, this index is congruent with it. Making comparisons on how well the electoral democracy functions gets at the very core at the dichotomous definition, alongside being a convincing way of showing variations of its strength in similar terms. Further, given the relative little ontological and epistemological weight I give to this index (and the gradations view in general) in the theory, I do not see any significant issues enough to warrant the use of an alternate democracy index.

Another aspect that bears evaluating is the specific time period covered. The original reason for the years that are covered is data availability. But fortunately the time period 1980-1999 is a very suitable time period for the purposes of the study. WSA was originally formulated in the 60's and 70's as a response to the dominant theories of the cold war era (Denemark,

Upadhyay ,2023:1). As such it is of interest to see how the theory fares within the cold war era as well as after it, which the chosen timespan gives us the tools to do. If the theory were to be supported in one decade and not the other it would potentially reveal a limitation across historical periods for the theory, which is relevant for the second research question in particular.

Claims on a grand scale such as these are notoriously difficult to prove, and trying to prove all causal claims of world systems analysis to the standards of contemporary political science would be far beyond what is feasible given the time and word count constraints. This is however not what this article offers to add to the current body of research. Rather, it should be seen as an attempt at recontextualising the modernisation debate within democratization research. Depending on how many of the theoretical expectations do line up with empirical reality, this could test the suitability of applying world systems analysis on the topic of democratization. The stronger variation that can be established between categories, and the extent to which the data aligns with my expectations, the more salient world system boundaries become for understanding several central outcomes related to democratization. It is important to keep in mind that even if all of the expectations would be borne out empirically, it would not conclusively prove the theory, instead it simply makes a stronger case for the use of it, giving a potential new direction for further research on the topic.

5. Results & Empirical Analysis

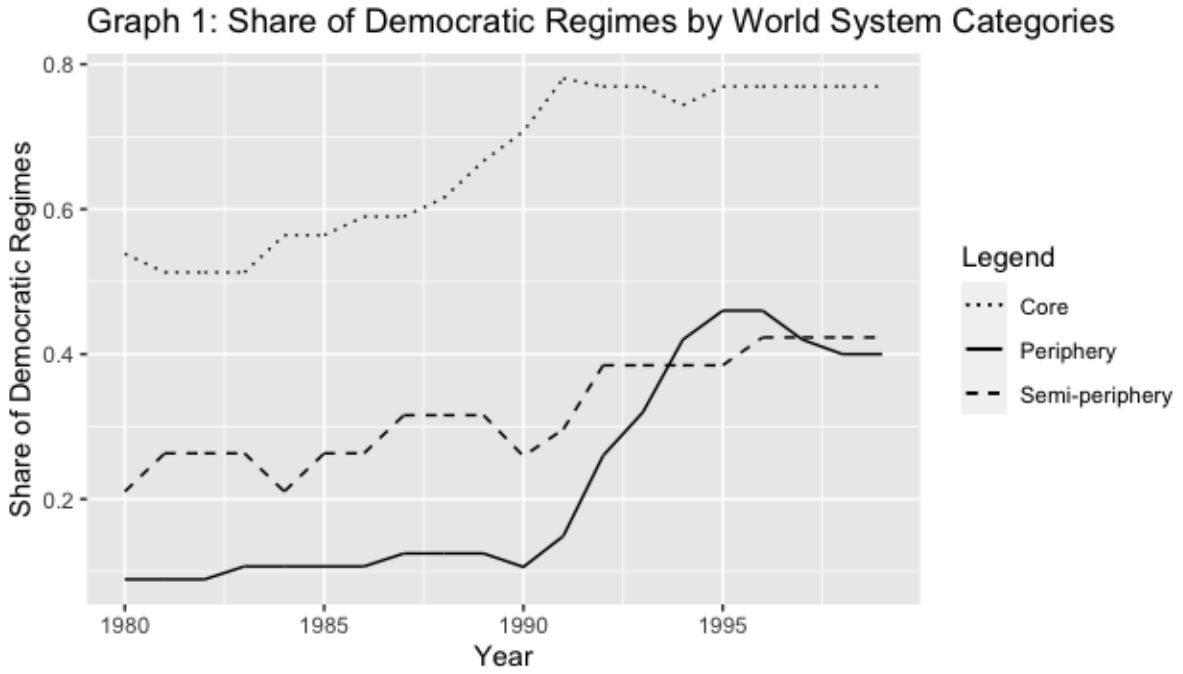
The following chapter explores the theoretical expectations as outlined in the theory and methodology chapters and attempts to discern to what extent the predictions of WSA can be supported on a very generalized statistical level.

5.1. The Prevalence of Democracies Across World System boundaries

We now return to the question of what makes democracy possible or more likely. The focus is on identifying what share of each world system position can be classified as minimally democratic. The two related theoretical expectations to be tested from previous chapters are:

1a: Democracy will be significantly less common outside the core.

1b: Democratic regimes have become more common in all categories, but the periphery will have seen the biggest increase in its share of democracies.



Starting at expectation 1a we do find support in the data. The core remains at a much higher share of democracies in comparison to the other two at all examined points in time. Furthermore, if we compare the difference between core and non-core it is larger than the one

between periphery and semiperiphery. For a potential explanation one could refer back to my reasoning of core-periphery production modi, and how I expect periphery-production (which is most prevalent in periphery and semiperiphery) to significantly reduce the likelihood of a country developing into a democracy.

However, let us not overlook what has happened within the semiperiphery and periphery during the studied period. Though the periphery started at the absolute lowest share of democracies of the three, it rose to similar levels as the semiperiphery during the 90's. This also makes it the category that grew the fastest in this regard, even more remarkable by the fact that it is the largest category in terms of number of countries.

Table 1: % of Democracies	**1980:**	**1999:**	**Change:**
Periphery	8.9%	40%	Δ 31.1%
Semiperiphery	21.0%	42.3%	Δ 21.3%
Core	53.8%	76.9%	Δ 23.1%

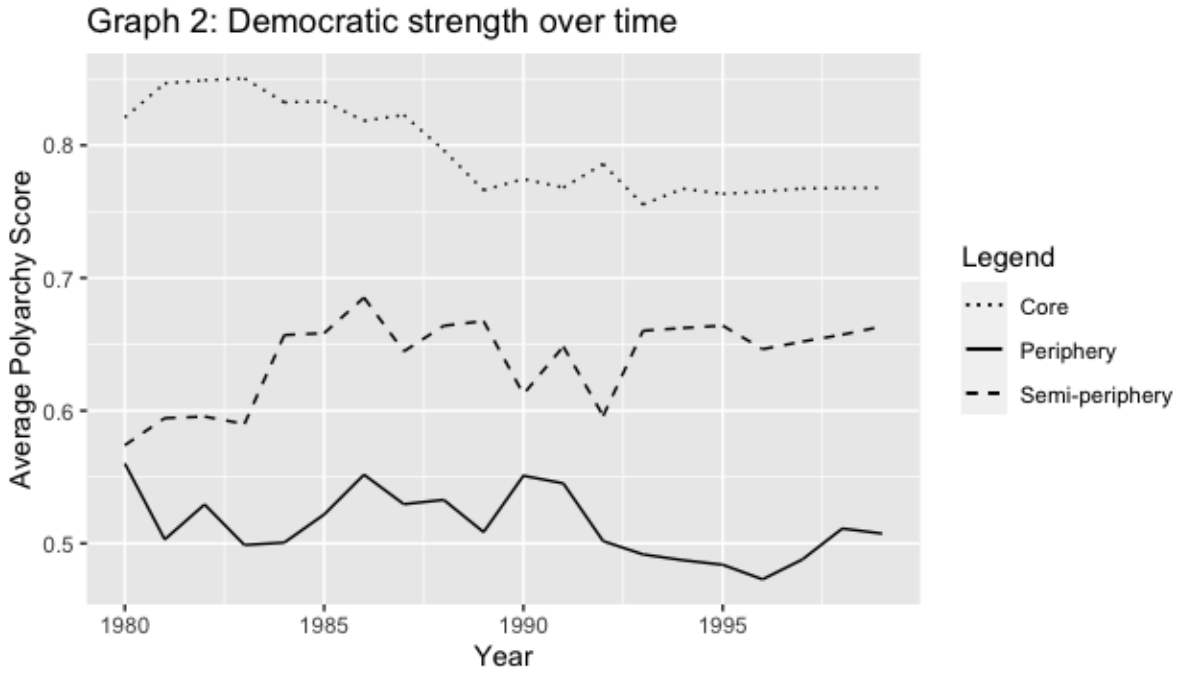
If we are to assess expectation 1b then, it also finds support. In the minimal sense, democracy has become increasingly common outside the core, but this has also occurred within the core. My expectation that the periphery would have undergone the biggest growth finds support as well. What is unexpected is the degree of growth shown in the core. My reasoning for why the core would not grow was that I expected the typical core country to have become democratic before the 80's. Given that the data includes countries in the newly ascendant core this finding is not completely out of the blue, though it could potentially reflect a conceptual gap for the measurement in question, this is a point I return to in the final chapter. One event that could explain this unexpected finding is the collapse of The Soviet Union. However, consider that the resulting newly formed states in eastern europe for the most part became core countries, and many of the former Soviet states eastward would be part of the semiperiphery. The fact that the periphery had the biggest increase despite this historical contingency would point toward the reasoning preceding expectation 1b being valid.

5.2. Democratic Strength Across the World System

Here the focus is instead on the strength of the democratic regimes of the world system. What I want to highlight is that 'how democratic' a system is is a somewhat separate question from the incidence of democratic regimes in the descriptive sense.

2a: Democracy will be "weaker" outside of the core
2b: On average no increase in democratic strength will occur outside the core's democracies.

For the reasons previously outlined, any comparisons of 'how democratic' countries are should adhere to the two step procedure. The following graph is how polyarchy or electoral democracy values have on average varied, limiting the comparison to democracies within the different world system categories.



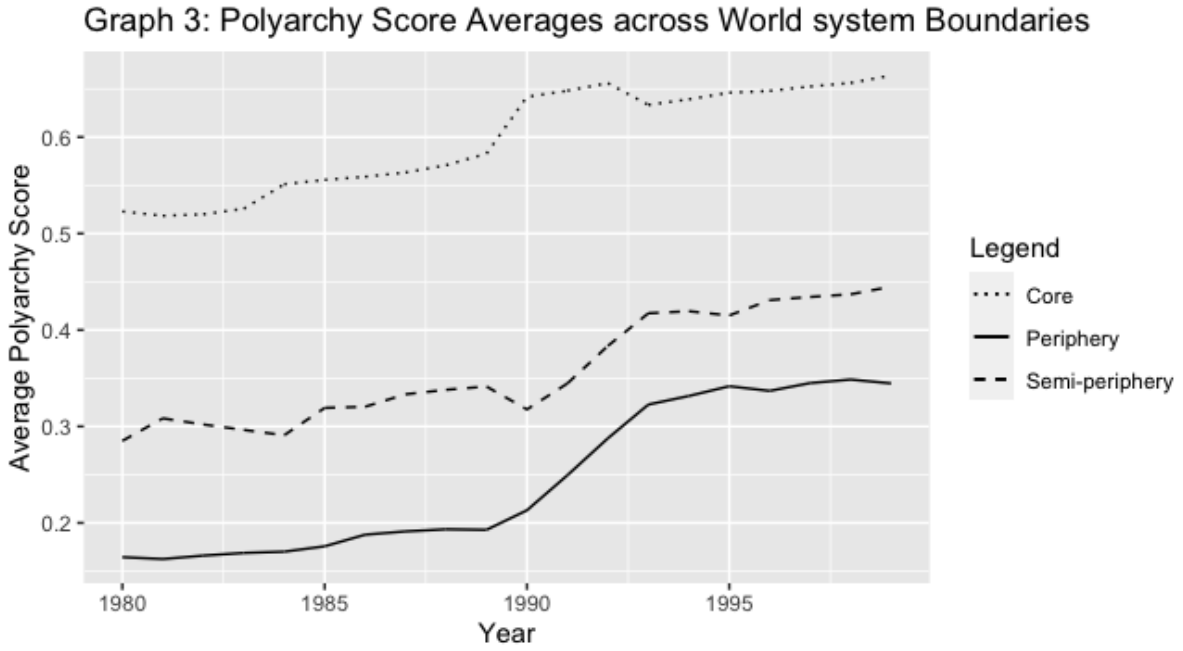
Here things start to divert from common knowledge. Rather than the expected uniform growth globally, the data shows the contrary. The semiperiphery is the only category in which its democracies have on average become stronger. First of all, this highlights the importance of separating questions of how common a certain type of political regime is from ones about the strength of such regimes, alongside the two-step procedure in general since this nuance in

development would have gone unnoticed otherwise. The weight given to this finding must be taken carefully, since the changes in polyarchy values could be driven by new countries entering different world system positions. However, since this classification only shifts once between 1989 and 1990 without any major variations occurring directly around that point in time it seems unlikely that this would be the driving factor in these changes.

Returning to my theoretical expectations, we find convincing support for 2A, since the core democracies generally remain at a far higher level of electoral democracy than their semiperiphery and periphery peers. Interestingly, 2b was not proven wrong in that the periphery overperformed vis-a-vis expectations, with the core's democracies instead on average becoming less electorally democratic. Recall that the semiperiphery is a much smaller set of countries compared to the other two, so the seemingly higher volatility for the semiperiphery could prima facie be understood in this light. Furthermore, even though my theoretical expectations did not accurately predict the historical development over the 80s-90s in electoral democracy it has shown something similarly interesting from the perspective of WSA. Since the three categories convincingly reflect distinct levels in the same order as the world system hierarchy, we have good reason to see these boundaries as empirically relevant. Trying to make sense of this finding from the standpoint of the theory one could theorize that something inherently in a country's position in the world system creates some form of 'boundary' as to which character their democracies can take. To be clear, this graph is not conclusive proof of this being the case, but the data does not disprove such a claim and would be congruent with such an explanation. Consider that all three positions have distinct levels, and across the studied time period they remained relatively stable around the same values on average. The theoretical expectation and the reasoning behind it was primarily wrong in that it expected the core to be more of an exception to this.

2c: No democratic convergence across world system boundaries

The graph shows average polyarchy values for each world system category on the Y-axis over time, but without the caveat of the two step procedure. While I would argue against the continuum view of democracy (and therefore the validity of this comparison), it is worth examining for two reasons: Controlling whether the findings from Clark hold up if examined through different datasets, and to nuance/contextualize my theoretical expectation 2b.



This section marks a return to the central claim of Clark's article, that of no democratic convergence occurring across world system boundaries. This is purposefully done without the two step procedure to ensure some congruence between the arguments of the two papers. Even though his study uses the Polity IV and Freedom House datasets, this points toward the argument holding up even when using the datasets I do. The core remains at a similar distance from the closest category (semiperiphery) at the end of the timespan. Interestingly the periphery and semiperiphery start with a larger difference between them which does seem to trend towards a convergence. We can further nuance this with the findings of 2b and add that the democracies of the periphery and semiperiphery started from a lesser difference than they ended at, meaning there was no convergence between the two in this sense.

However, recalling graph 2, these changes do not reflect democracies becoming more democratic. If the comparisons are delimited to democracies fulfilling a minimum threshold, little to no growth can be shown in the data. To reiterate what we know so far:

1. Democratic regimes have become more common
2. No growth can be shown in democratic strength averages for those countries that already did qualify as democracies.
3. The scores in polyarchy metrics have grown on average globally.

This means that the growth in polyarchy values could potentially be explained in two ways. By the increased prevalence of minimally democratic systems, which should reflect higher values than the average nondemocracy (given the interconnectedness of the two terms). Or potentially autocracies implementing changes that would reflect higher scores in terms of electoral democracy indexes without satisfying the criteria to be considered democratic regimes in the dichotomous sense.

Since we now have the distribution of democracy and democratic strength throughout the world system, it is now time to turn to the final topic, regime change and other related political outcomes.

5.3. Regime change & Survival within The World System.

3a: Coups will be most common within the periphery, followed by semiperiphery and least common in the core.

When counting each instance of regime failure which was not followed by a foreign occupation or by democratization we get the following results for the time period 1980-1999:

Table 2: The Distribution of Coups Along World System Boundaries

World System Position:	**Periphery**	**Semiperiphery**	**Core**
Successful coups:	43	9	5

As we can see, theoretical expectation 3a finds strong support in the data. Regimes within the periphery are far more likely to be deposed in a coup than their peers within the semiperiphery and core. Given the relatively small sample size one should perhaps be careful in making claims comparing the semiperiphery and core. However, analyzing the data manually, the cases included for the core become interesting. Rather than being the more "established" core countries of for instance North America or western Europe they for the most part belong to the aforementioned newly ascendant core. The coups that affected the

core occurred within Pakistan, Turkey, Thailand, Russia and Romania. Most of these countries are commonly seen as semiperiphery or periphery in more orthodox or conventional world systems analysis. Taking this into consideration the differences between core and non-core become even starker.

Even when considering the degree of differences between the three categories, this is still not the entire picture. Recall that this data is derived by coding regime failures, meaning that unsuccessful coups are not shown in the data. Furthermore, coups are but one concrete mechanism by which regimes end, they by no means constitute the full set of potential endings for a regime. There is however more that can be done extracted from the data at hand to further contextualize this finding.

(3b) World system position has an effect on regime durability.

Here I examine how regime durability varies across world system boundaries. Seen in a vacuum this relation is not very interesting, given the potential amount of confounding variables between world system position and years in power. However, in its proper context this data unlocks a variety of potential analytical entry points related to my other findings.

Table 3: Average Regime Durability (in years)	**Periphery:**	**Semiperiphery:**	**Core:**
Democracy:	16.46	24.37	54.37
Non-democracy:	22.62	20.24	35.45
All Regimes:	19.54	22.31	44.91

*All metrics rounded to two decimals.

Before analyzing this, the more specific predictions of regime durability bear repeating:
3b1: The core will on average have more durable regimes, regardless of type.
3b2: Only in the periphery will the nondemocracies be more durable than democracies.
3b3: Though the regimes of the semiperiphery generally will be more durable than the ones of the periphery, the difference between the two is smaller than between core / non-core.

Starting at 3b1 we find it is supported. Regardless of regime type, the core had far more durable regimes than the non-core. This is not very unexpected considering the relative strength of core regimes and their resources. 3b2 also finds support with the periphery according to the data being a more favorable setting for nondemocratic regimes than democracies. In contrast, both in the semiperiphery and core, democracies are typically more durable than nondemocracies.

Before moving on to what these findings mean in conjunction with the others 3b3 also finds some support. The regimes of periphery and semiperiphery are much closer to one another in duration than the ones of the core, though the semiperiphery is not at a consistently higher level of durability across both regime types. Rather the democracies of the semiperiphery are more durable than any periphery regime type, but on average the nondemocracies of the periphery outlast those of the semiperiphery.

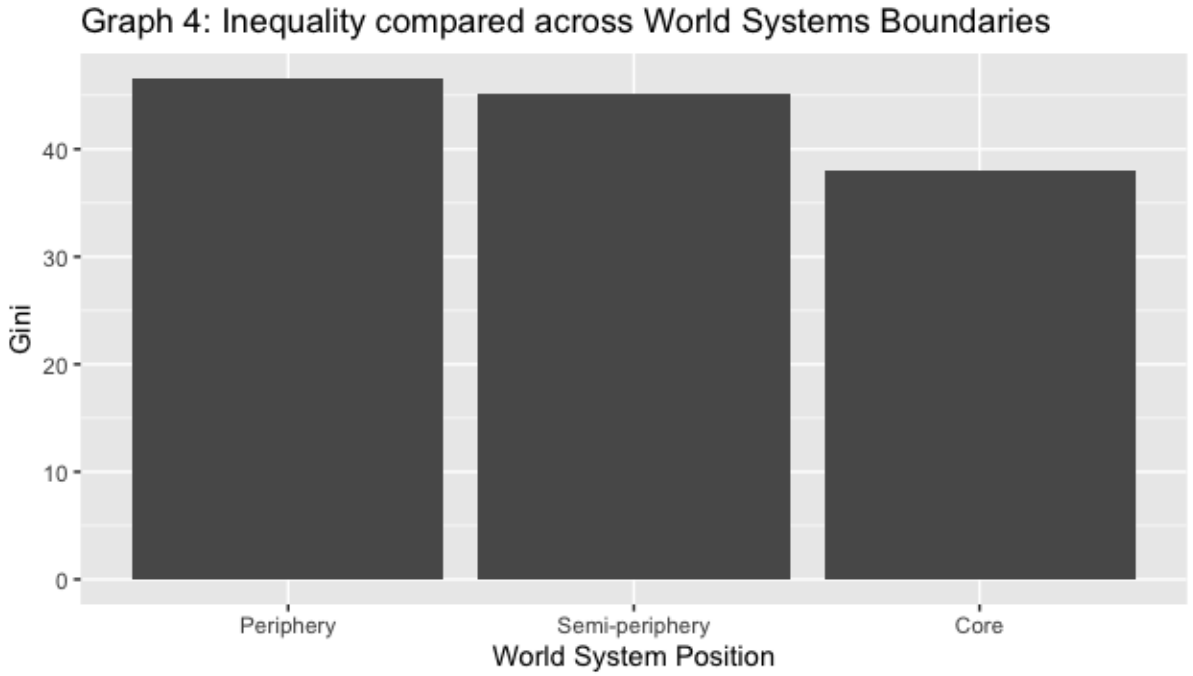
What makes the periphery a more suitable ground for autocracy than democracy? It is not the power of the state itself, since core and semiperiphery have stronger and more well resourced states in comparison. Returning to the conceptualization of democratization as elite vs non elite interests and power makes this more comprehensible. A country in the periphery can only compete in production by keeping wages and labor organizing to a minimum. Since this is a question of resource allocation this carries necessary implications for the country's internal power balance as well. The periphery arrangement means very little power in the hands of the non elite, which is the only group with somewhat consistently pro-democratic interests. On the other hand elites can support democracy or nondemocracy depending on what best serves them. Recall the three ideal type regime endings; Negotiated exits, coups and revolutions. Negotiated exits are driven by the elites expecting a revolution or popular

opposition, which in the periphery is made much less likely. Since this is the primary means of arriving at democracy we have a plausible reason to believe the periphery is less likely to arrive at democratic regimes in general.

Connecting this to the findings on how coups are distributed throughout the world system an even fuller picture starts to emerge. Coups are elite lead, and by far most commonly occurring in the periphery where the elite is expected to be the most powerful vis a vis the non elite. I argue this might be a significant part of what makes the periphery's regimes overall less durable, and a major factor that favors autocracy instead of democracy. Coups rarely produce democracies, instead simply shifting who is in control of the autocratic system or its constitutive rules. Another central aspect is what type of regime is better equipped to deal with coups. A highly developed democracy can potentially through civil organization and popular support dissuade or prevent coups, but as we know from the data, the democracies of the periphery are generally not of this type. In the generalized case of the periphery, the comparison rather becomes one between a weak democracy or a weak autocracy and their capacity for dealing with coups. In such a comparison an autocracy should be more able to handle coup attempts since they have fewer constraints on what actions they can take.

There is also information in findings 3a and 3b complicating this potential explanation. While it is reasonable to claim that the periphery is uniquely vulnerable to coups compared to the other two, that vulnerability can not explain the majority of the variations in regime durability between the three. The periphery has undergone more than four times the amount of coups than the semiperiphery, but the average difference in duration of the regimes between the two is less than 3 years. Furthermore the regimes of the core are twice as durable as the ones of the semiperiphery, with half of the amount of successful coups. Prima facie there is no proportionality between these. This does not mean that coups and their distribution do not alter the average durations, but it points to the fact that more data and information is necessary to address this new question. With a larger sample size of coups for instance, one could potentially disaggregate the regime types affected by them to discover any unaddressed nuances of how coups are distributed in the world system.

3c: Democratization and Inequality



In this section I analyze the data and my findings on inequality as compared across world system boundaries. Graph 4 shows the average scores of the three world system categories in terms of gini-coefficients. In line with my expectations, there are differences in income inequality that correspond with the world system hierarchy. The most unequal category is the periphery, followed by semiperiphery and lastly core. Another point to highlight is that the difference between core and semiperiphery is relatively speaking much larger than that of periphery-semiperiphery, which also is in line with my expectations.

Before we situate this in relation to the other findings, it is also worth mentioning that the most unequal countries of the core were Brazil, South Africa and Chile. In the Clark categorization these would be seen as the newly ascendant core since they are not the typical core countries. There is therefore plenty of reason to believe the differences between conventional core countries and non-core countries is even more drastic than what can be shown from this data.

As already mentioned, these observations of Gini-coefficients are somewhat sparse in comparison to the other variables, and also unevenly distributed with some countries having

many observations and others none. To counteract this I chose the selection principle of taking the highest observed value for any given country and omitting any others. This means that there is very little statistical or historical certainty in these results. In order to nuance this I also want to highlight some specific individual cases from the dataset. As previously mentioned, these are selected by the criteria of having undergone a democratization and also by having gini-observations before and after the fact. This only makes up a cursory glance at what actually happens to inequality during democratization. Later discussion sections will discuss more critically what needs to be done to this point for more generalizable findings.

For the periphery I would like to start with Madagascar, which at the final year of its autocratic regime 1975-1993 measured 45.3 in its gini coefficient. After the democratization the inequality was reduced to a 39.5 in 1997, ending at a gini value of 38.6 in 1999. At a surface glance this does seem to be a case of democratization preceding significant redistribution. This can be contrasted with El Salvador, also a periphery state, which measured a gini-coefficient of 54 in 1992. Its democracy began in 1994, and in 1995 its gini was at a level of 49.9, before subsequently rising to 51 in 1996, 54.5 in 1998 and finishing at 52.2 in 1999. From this cursory glance it would seem that inequality has been relatively unaffected by democratization. The biggest drop in inequality from 54 to 49.9 occurred during the last years of the country's autocratic governance, and upon democratizing inequality would seem to be rising instead.

In the semiperiphery one interesting case is Panama. At the final year of its nondemocratic regime 1989 its gini-coefficient was at an extreme of 58.9. Panama has had gini measurements performed at five points after the democratization as well, where they measured 58.2 in 1991, 57.8 in 1995 and ultimately ending at 56.5 in 1999. Though technically this is a decrease in economic inequality, Panama remains at a very high level of economic inequality post-democratization. Another case from the semiperiphery is Bangladesh where a relatively low score of 25.9 was documented in 1983, followed by 28.8 in 1985. In 1990 when the country democratized the inequality was 27.6, and subsequently inequality rose to a level of 32.9 in 1995. There does not seem to be any common directionality within the semiperiphery for the relationship between democratization and inequality.

Most of the core democratizations are in the so-called newly ascendant core. This means that there is only a relatively loose distinction between these countries and the semiperiphery at a conceptual level. The first of these countries is Brazil. In 1981 they had a gini coefficient of 57.9, which gradually sank to 55.6 in 1985 (the final year of the dictatorship). When they democratized their inequality stopped shrinking and instead grew to its highest level of 63.3 in 1989 before subsequently hovering around values of 59-60 for the remainder of the time period. A similar story can be observed in Argentina, where the military regime in 1980 scored a gini value of 40.8. Upon democratizing in 1983, the gini coefficient had risen to 42.8 in 1986 and consistently kept increasing throughout the time period, ending at 49.8 in 1999. In both of these cases from the newly ascendant core, democratization preceded large increases in inequality.

Admittedly, this anecdotal section of the methodology probably provides the weakest evidence in favor of any claim in the study, but I still consider it relevant for the purposes of casting a wide net of possible entry-points for WSA onto the topic. If, for instance, the different world systems categories would have had internally consistent changes to inequality around at the time of their democratizations, the finding could have motivated other future research.

There seems to be little in the way of indicating that democratization in and of itself necessarily leads to a lowered inequality. For the most part the countries that democratize tend to stay at similar levels of inequality in relation to their preceding regimes. In both -Brazil and Argentina- two cases from the newly ascendant core, democratization preceded very drastic increases in inequality. Why democracy would yield even higher inequalities than an autocracy is not a complete mystery. The generally accepted reasoning is that elites favor whatever regime arrangements best protect their interests. It thus makes sense that the elite of an autocracy is more likely to agree to democratization if safeguards against redistribution are put into place, or if it leads to market liberalization (two outcomes that are necessarily linked to income inequality). Interestingly the only places where I could observe democratization directly preceding a lowered inequality is in the periphery and semiperiphery.

If we connect this to the contractarian reasoning of Ansell and Samuels, they claim that democratization is favored by income inequality, since it reflects new groups becoming wealthier and therefore more fearful of expropriation, hence wanting the protections of democracy. This seems to be backed by my findings in this section (albeit weakly), since this reasoning would be significantly weakened if democratizations were to consistently lead to redistribution significant enough to lower gini scores. However, this is further complicated if we connect back to graph 4, and graph 1. The contractarian reasoning states that income inequality should favor democratization, but the most unequal category of these three was found in the periphery, which also is the least likely to have democratic regimes. This observation should not be taken to disprove that reasoning since I did not disaggregate inequalities of different types, more specifically into income and land inequality.

To be clear, even if democratizations turn out to have no effect of their own on inequality on an empirical level, this does not rule out the role of inequality in explaining the creation and strength of regimes. As should be clear from the conceptualization of these interactions it is about the incentives and expectations in actors that arise as a result from inequality that explain political actions, not the underlying empirical phenomenon of inequality itself. However, if I had found that democratization consistently led to lowered inequality, one would need to theoretically account for the disparity between various groups' expectations of democratization and what democratization empirically leads to. Why would elites for instance tactically support democratization if there was no proof of democratization being in their direct self interest?

With all the statistical findings of the study presented it is now time to answer research question one:

How, and in what ways does world system position affect a country's likelihood of successful democratization?

The answer seems to be that world system position corresponds with distinct levels of a series of variables and political outcomes which in turn are either directly or indirectly linked to democratization and democracy. The picture from my data is that core countries are much

more likely to be democracies than the non-core countries and that their democracies in comparison typically function at a significantly higher level of electoral democracy. Furthermore, the levels of electoral democracy tend to stay relatively stable if the comparison is constrained only to democracies within the three world system categories, indicating that a world system position acts as some form of boundary as to what character its democratic regimes can take. We know that these differences across world system boundaries have for the most part remained intact over the studied time period of 1980-1999, further implying WSA is applicable for historical periods outside the cold war. These findings also provide an interesting nuance to the common conception that the countries of the world are generally becoming more democratic, since this development seemingly is primarily driven by the increased prevalence of democratic regimes fulfilling the minimal requirements rather than democratic societies becoming increasingly strengthened in their electoral democracies. We also have found that regime duration has distinct but varying levels if compared between regime types and world system positions. Most important here is probably the fact that the periphery seems to be a more favorable environment for nondemocracy than democracy, if one simply compares their average durations of their regimes. The uniquely precarious situation of the periphery can be further highlighted by pointing out the distribution of coups throughout the world system. Since the large majority of all successful coups took place within the periphery it is clear that these countries are uniquely susceptible to such threats. On the flip side it also highlights the relative stability of the core. Since the data used does not include attempted coups we do not know if this is because the periphery has more coups in general, is more susceptible to them, or some combination of the two is in play.

Another interesting finding can be derived from combining graphs 1 and 2. Throughout the entire time period the general levels of electoral democracy remained relatively stable for each world system category, but around the decade shift of the 80’s and 90’s democratic regimes became more common across the board. The obvious explanation is of course the end of the cold war, but there is more to be said on this point than simply pointing it out since it should not have had uniform effects if only analyzed in the terms of WSA. The resulting growth in democratic regimes within the core should probably be understood in the light of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, where much of eastern Europe became core democracies. It also makes sense that this would lead to less autocracy in the semiperiphery and periphery,

since these countries and their alignment no longer was contested by the larger geopolitical blocs.

There are some things to be said about inequality as well. There is weak evidence pointing towards the world system categories reflecting different levels of inequality on average, though the sample size is small. It could also be said that in context this finding presents a contradiction to the previous research outlined, particularly to the contractarian reasoning of Ansell and Samuels. Since the most unequal category of countries in terms of income was the periphery, and their reasoning predicts that income inequality favors democratization, the fact that the periphery was the only category where autocracies typically last longer than democracies makes things more complicated. However, since I had no data on land inequality this should not count towards disproving their reasoning, at least until research on land inequality as distributed throughout the world system has been done.

Furthermore, democratization, from the cases I could identify, does not seem to have uniform effects on income inequality. Nor did this change in a comparison between world systems categories. Democratizations varied in the direction inequality took after they occurred in all categories. Of all the potential effects I have examined throughout this paper, this is the one where the world system boundaries seem to have no clear differentiating effect at a generalized level.

In summary, world system position seems to have very important effects on a country's likelihood of democratization. Not by simply uniformly determining the political trajectories of all countries, but by the effects by which the world system necessarily distributes political outcomes that in turn affects regimes. However, given the sheer scale of the phenomena/outcomes I examined, and the very noticeable variations on such macroscopic topics points at least to the world system as a structural condition to take into consideration in further theorization and research.

6. The case for WSA in Regime Research

In this concluding chapter I will summarize all the previous parts of the paper to evaluate the potential of world systems analysis as a grand theory of democratization and regime research. This discussion will start by outlining what the results of the empirical analysis means if read through the context of research question two, as shown below. The second aspect to an answer is my attempt to theoretically situate where the world system would fit into a more 'holistic' or 'complete' account of regimes and democratization, and why such an account would even be desirable. To start off, the second research question bears repeating:

What potential does world systems analysis show as a grand framework for regime research?

This study is to a large extent an experiment in formulating a new understanding of the subfields of democratization and regime research, derived from world systems analysis. Given that particular ambition and level of abstraction, the focus is not to provide the most conclusive or cutting edge contributions in statistical methodology. Rather, I have chosen several central topics from the subfield of democratization research which are consistently given a role in explaining regime changes and democratization. From there my goal has been to highlight how these central explanatory topics vary across world system boundaries. If the world system would have turned out to be irrelevant for the research puzzle at hand, one would expect variations along world system boundaries to follow a more arbitrary order. If on the other hand they align with the theory, there is a strong case to be made for world systems analysis as a guiding framework for further democratization research.

What empirical bearing does the world system have on the phenomenon of regimes and democratization? Two aspects of this I want to highlight are: The congruence of all variations I have examined with the order of the World system hierarchy and the importance of these outcomes in general. To fully drive home how striking these variations are, all the 'positive' outcomes such as the share of democratic regimes, polyarchy scores and regime durability have levels that follow (in descending order) the order of core, semiperiphery and periphery. The exact inverse order can be observed looking at the more 'negative' outcomes, such as inequality and successful coups. In these variables the core were the least affected countries,

followed by semiperiphery, and the periphery being the most vulnerable to coups and also having the highest levels of inequality on average. My theory section also succeeded in that it mostly correctly predicted which of these variables would follow the world system hierarchy in descending or ascending order.

The incorporation of the two step procedure for comparing democracies also finds a solid justification in the results shown in Graph 2. Had I not delimited this graph to only democracies in the dichotomous sense we would have been left with the impression from graph 1 and 3 that the three world system categories simply became more democratic over time, without the caveat that little to none of this democratic growth occurred within the democracies of the world system on average. Since this methodological choice is nothing exclusive to WSA I do not want to linger on this point for too long, but it is a finding that future research should take into consideration when deciding whether to adapt the continuous or dichotomous stance. At this point I want to highlight the importance of the variations I discussed in the preceding section and in chapter 5. But without the proper ontological explication of the world system and how it would relate to the phenomena of regimes and democratization alongside their related outcomes we still lack the theoretical tools to properly discuss this topic.

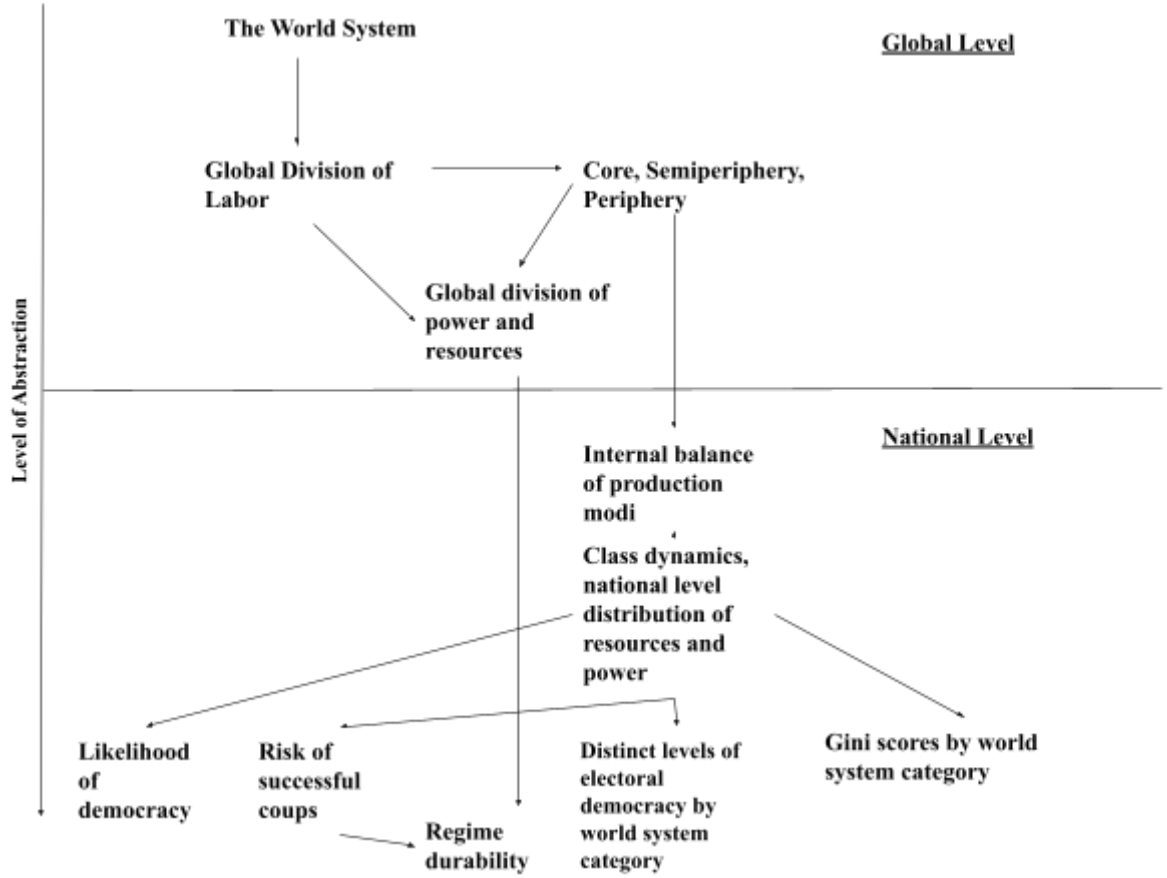
Moving onto the topic of ontology (and epistemology), it is worth addressing potential objections to the relatively barebones statistical methods used in this paper. Recall that this study only deals with descriptive inferences and not causal ones. The ambition is to create a 'new' theory, or at the very least a new formulation of a theory into a narrower subfield. The introduction of the paper has hopefully shown the intuitive reasoning for adapting WSA to the subfield of regime and democratization research in the first place. My goal with the methodology is not to show the precise causal effect of world system position with the greatest statistical certainty. Had it been, the omission of significance tests, confidence intervals, et cetera would have been a completely critical flaw undermining any value in the results.

There are a couple of reasons as to why I kept the inferences of the study at the descriptive level. First, since this is something of a pilot study, the primary focus is to simply establish

that there are real differences in those factors I have analyzed across world system boundaries. Even in light of Clark's article preceding this one in looking at democracy scores across the same world system classification, the outset of this study is still justified. This is because I reject the continuum view of democracy, for the reasons the 'democracy' section in the theory chapter outlined. This necessarily has significant effects on the data, and therefore the results as well. Additionally, this article has a second purpose geared toward arguing in favor of world systems analysis in this particular subfield of political science.

Secondly, there would be an inherent clash in trying to reformulate WSA to the format of causal statistical research. Regime research typically attempts to formulate understandings of political regimes from the most barebones models of group interests (something I have frequently done in formulating this paper's theory and expectations) or through identifying common mechanisms. As such, the resulting theories of democratization and political change become very universalistic in character, far more than WSA would deem acceptable. It would be incorrect to view periphery, semiperiphery and core countries as following the same set of rules. Furthermore, since WSA rejects these universalistic theories of development, there is little reason to believe (from the standpoint of the theory), that the same mechanisms, power dynamics and political logics are relevant for different world system positions. My reasoning for why this clash is, is that such a methodology is at a lower level of abstraction, whilst WSA is a theory on about as high of a level of abstraction as political science can encompass. If I were to illustrate a hypothetical causal chain between all of the concepts and phenomena introduced in the theory it would look as follows:

Illustration 1: Conceptual Roadmap



My formulation of WSA mostly operates at the global generalized level, which is clear from how most reasoning stems from the core, semiperiphery and periphery classification. The theory moves from world system classification onto generalized assumptions of production modi, which in turn affect class dynamics and power relations, and it is in this complex set of results from the world system that the empirical variations at the bottom of the illustration arise. WSA rejects universalistic theories of development, and this rejection occurs already at the level of the global division of labor and world system. Looking at causal mechanisms would instead require approaching the research puzzle at the opposite end of the scale of abstraction. Assuming that WSA is correct in rejecting a universal trajectory of development, and one approaches this field from the ground up with the intention of finding such a trajectory one will eventually reach an impasse at the theoretical level. This is the crux of my recontextualization of the modernization debate. Questions of political regimes from the standpoint of WSA are ontologically secondary to the economic processes that drive history.

Even if two different countries have completely identical values in economic variables no two regimes can logically occupy the same position in space and time, meaning that historical contingencies will always modify the 'mechanistic' outcome from economics. Therefore even categories such as the world system boundaries are not 'deterministic' in the sense that they would only yield one type of political outcome. Of course, this is not to completely discount the work done in the regime and democratization subfields, since their granular studies provide necessary information and theoretical links to the empirical world. We can also flip my critique of the modernization debate onto world systems analysis as well. If one can only describe very general trends and without proving the mechanisms by which these are produced, the explanation remains lacking in some regard. In the upcoming further research section I will return to what could be done in order to synthesize these fields of research and to move beyond their respective weaknesses in doing so.

With the more abstract theoretical reasoning finished, I will now return to reflect over the relevance of the empirical variations discussed earlier in this chapter. The first thing to point out about these is that the illustration presented above, may be deceptive with regards to the scale of phenomena and the variations I have studied. The scale of abstraction that is included remains at what is still a very high level of abstraction and generalizability. All of these variables such as shares of democratic regimes, polyarchy scores, gini coefficients, et cetera are gathered from data points at the country level. Seemingly small numerical differences between categories and units of observation at this high level of abstraction reflect quite big differences in the real world.

After all these caveats, what exactly is the potential role of WSA in regime research? It should be clear that what WSA can potentially offer is not more mechanisms, but the most macroscopic structural trends across the world. It is a theoretical account of historical progress and the uneven ways it occurs. The general thesis I want to forward is not that future research should simply keep the regime research formula but replace their terminologies and nomenclatures with those of WSA. Rather, it is that regime research cannot be sufficiently contextualized if constrained to exclusively dealing with regimes and their mechanisms. In my view this is even more intuitively convincing in the case of the modernization debate in particular. Even if a hypothetical researcher were to find the hypothetical constellation of

economic variables always preceding democratization, or convincing statistical correlations for an economic variable and democracy, the question of what in turn yielded those economic conditions remains. Because of this I argue that a grand framework is a necessary but neglected part of a complete theoretical account of regimes and democratization.

Simply claiming a grand framework is necessary would be a somewhat vacuous statement without actually taking a more substantive stance in the question. Why I argue in favor of world systems analysis is because of its non-universalism. Now, WSA is not the only theory that could be described in this sense, but it has unique advantages I want to highlight. The world system classifications are multi-facetted terms with a significant degree of historicity, given their direct link to the economic historical processes that are thought to drive the world system. Through such a classification in conjunction with chronology one gains insight into a country's role in a system of unequal exchange, at what stage it entered the world market, and to some extent under what conditions (for instance as the colonizer or colonized). The complexity of such a categorization does limit the usefulness of trying to use it in a more causal statistical sense, which is also reflected in how statistical data is used in this study. It more or less acts as a heuristic or general view of trends within these categories, since these categories are not even meant to be thought of as deterministic in terms of political regimes to begin with.

As a contextualizing framework for the modernization debate, world systems analysis has obvious analytical connections to several relevant factors, such as class formations, inequality, wealth and the power of regimes at large. These make it intuitively relevant, whilst the non-universalism makes it an ideal ground to radically break with the modernization debate.

There are quite a few potential entry points for new research that one could get from this paper. One relatively central topic that would require further attention is that of inequality and democratization. This is an important topic for a multitude of reasons. Enough has been said on the topic of various disaggregated forms of inequality and their statistical relationship to democratization and other related outcomes. Rather, from the standpoint of WSA, one would need to outline how these inequalities are distributed and produced by the world system.

Consider for instance how the theory section could incorporate both the differentiated effects of land and income inequality on democratization alongside the class formation based theory without any major ontological incongruities. The world system is a highly probable candidate for explaining these inequalities as well, given how inextricably linked both land and income inequality is to class formations, production modi and the overall trading position of a country.

Another aspect to consider is of course the world system classification. As mentioned in previous chapters there are some intuitive oddities to some of the classifications of countries. The current classification has merit, as the world system positions do reflect differing levels of integration into global trade. From the standpoint of the theory of this study, this does present one potential objection, since my reasoning primarily stems from production moduses as inspired by Wallerstein, and not density of trading connections. Coding how labor/capital intensive exports from a country are would be the ideal method for resolving this conceptual gap if one were to continue to research this topic. The obvious problem with this is data availability further back in time, and that some countries, primarily in the periphery might not have the data required. However, if one is not concerned with the 20th century and instead wants to continue this research into contemporary time, there ought to be more detailed data to base such a classification on.

I mentioned previously that I would provide a prescription for research which could further unify these research traditions. Apart from refining the formula of this study with my suggestions in the previous two paragraphs, or widening the scope in terms of time, one could also approach the questions of political regimes and the world system from a country level. By this I mean on a case by case basis, identifying the mechanisms by which particular democratizations occurred and critically examining whether or not they were related politically and economically to the world system. This is the best way I can identify to circumvent the issues I highlighted in connecting mechanistic reasonings with highly general and abstract concepts such as the world system that do not uniformly dictate these mechanisms. While such an approach could help bridge the theoretical gaps, the downside would be a loss in generalizability.

In conclusion, the empirical analysis of chapter 5 highlighted significant variations at a macro level between the three world system categories, and that these typically followed the order of the world system hierarchy as predicted. This data is not sufficient to prove any causal relations, but given the empirical scale of these outcomes and their rather distinct averages within these it points towards the validity of the world system as a grand framework for the topic. Though I do not provide the statistical checks to prove that the world system affects these outcomes and not vice versa, there is plenty of reason to believe in the directionality this study assumes. I motivate this both by the ontology of WSA itself where regimes are products of larger processes, alongside the 'fixedness' of the world system in comparison to the more localized phenomenon of regimes and changes in them. In the final chapter I instead focused on critically examining how the world system would fit into a theoretical account of regimes and democratization. With the empirical findings of chapter 5 in mind I highlighted the sheer scale of the empirical variations I examined alongside their prima facie congruence with the theory. Upon illustrating how most of the theoretical components of this study would relate to one another in terms of ontological primacy and abstraction I also provide my overarching objection against the modernization debate; that of working towards a general theory of democratization from the ground up, when the existence of such a universalistic theory is doubtful at best. In this procedure I also describe how the world system could be incorporated in a more complete account of regimes and democratization.

Given the sheer scale of variation between world system categories, I am confident in its relevance for the topic, but considering the level of abstraction of such a system any direct causality is difficult to prove using this methodology. As such, the world system shows promise as a structural condition in a theoretical account of regimes. The theoretical gap between WSA and regime research still remains. The primary reason for this is the difference in abstraction between the two research camps and their respective theories. A theoretical problem this complex and large scale can in all likelihood not be conclusively resolved in a single study at a global level, I would instead argue the primary means of overcoming this, is in my view research on a case by case basis in order to be more capable of encompassing historical and local contingencies. Bridging the theoretical gap by these means would require a large body of research, but would seem to be the most feasible way toward synthesizing the

macro level development of world systems analysis with concrete mechanisms of how regimes come to be and change.

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