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Global Democracy and Domestic Analogies¹

Mathias Koenig-Archibugi

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Introduction

As shown in the introductory chapter of this volume (Archibugi et al. 2011), for centuries intellectuals from Europe and other parts of the world have devised institutional blueprints aimed at ‘domesticating’ international politics – that is, at imbuing it with the alleged virtues of the domestic politics of well-functioning states, notably strictly controlled use of violence, rule of law, and/or democratic methods of conflict resolution. Critiques of such projects have also been heard for centuries. Often the targets of criticism have been not the blueprints themselves but the perceived lack of a realistic explanation of how to get from here to there, i.e. the features of possible transition paths towards the more peaceful and just world order envisaged by their authors. For instance, in his commentary on the ‘project for settling an everlasting project in Europe’ presented in 1713 by Charles-Irénée Castel, abbé de Saint-Pierre, Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote in 1756 that ‘though the scheme in itself was wise enough, the means proposed for its execution betray the simplicity of the author... this good man saw clearly enough how things would work, when once set going, but... he judged like a child of the means for setting them in motion’ (Rousseau 1756/2008: 126). Almost two and a half centuries years later, Philippe Schmitter berated proponents of cosmopolitan democracy such as Daniele Archibugi and David Held in similar terms: ‘What is even more discouraging

¹ I am grateful to Daniele Archibugi, Robert Goodin and Raffaele Marchetti for their useful comments and suggestions, while remaining responsible for any shortcomings.

than a credible idea of the end-product is the almost complete absence of any idea of the process whereby the world might get there' (Schmitter 1999: 940).

Militant cosmopolitan democrats may be tempted to respond in the spirit of Winston Churchill, who declared in 1946 that 'We must build a kind of United States of Europe... The process is simple. All that is needed is the resolve of hundreds of millions of men and women to do right instead of wrong and to gain as their reward blessing instead of cursing' (Churchill 1946/1988: 664). Of course, such an answer would be unlikely to satisfy most political scientists, whose job often consists in accounting for outcomes that do not seem to be really wanted by anyone and that are variously explained with reference to structural constraints, collective action dilemmas, psychological biases, and a range of other devices drawn from the analytical toolbox of the social sciences. If the case for global democratic blueprints such as those presented by Marchetti (2011, in this volume) and Murithi (2011, in this volume) is to be intellectually compelling, discussions about their feasibility should be firmly based on the knowledge of constraints on political choice that has been accumulated since Niccolò Machiavelli affirmed the importance of studying politics as it is and not just how we would like it to be.

But a careful examination of the conditions for, and pathways to, global democracy is equally necessary if the project is to be politically consequential, as sympathetic political actors need to be persuaded that it is worth pursuing. To provide a simple but pertinent concrete illustration of this point: a sample of the participants in the 2005 World Social Forum (WSF) was asked whether it was a good or bad idea to have a democratic world government. For 32 per cent it was a bad idea, for 39 per cent it was a good idea but not plausible, and 29 per cent responded that it is a good idea and plausible (Chase-Dunn et al. 2008). It would not be too farfetched to infer that, at present, a majority of WSF activists would be unwilling to campaign for democratic world government, but also that such a campaign would have a chance to gather majority support among them if the sympathetic but sceptical participants became persuaded of its feasibility.²

² Among the general public, support for global democratic institutions seems to be weaker but still sizeable. A 2007 international opinion poll commissioned by the BBC asked the following question to approximately 12,000 respondents in 15 countries: 'How likely would you be to support a Global Parliament, where votes are based on country population sizes, and the global parliament is able to make binding policies?' 14.4% responded 'Very likely—it is a good idea'; 23.1% responded 'Quite likely—but with reservations'; 14.9%

What can empirical social science contribute to such debates? Among the various directions of analysis that appear to be fruitful, this chapter considers two. It should be stressed that the focus here is on the transition to global democracy, rather than its consolidation and survival, although the latter are also very important questions. First, analysts can try to determine the *necessary conditions* for a transition to global democracy. Second, they can try to determine the various *paths* that could lead to global democracy. For instance, Kate Macdonald (2011, in this volume) offers a thorough analysis of one possible pathway to global democracy, which is based on the progressive democratization of non-state structures of transnational governance.

One way of thinking about transition paths is in terms of *sufficient* conditions. Whereas the necessity of a condition does not depend on the presence or absence of other conditions, conditions can be - and usually are - sufficient only in combination with other conditions; in other words, analysts should expect that (a) particular *combinations* of conditions, rather than individual conditions, are sufficient to produce an outcome ('conjunctural causation'), and (b) that *several different* combinations of conditions may be sufficient for the outcome to occur ('equifinality'). The identification of different *paths* to global democracy may be conceptualized as the search for particular combinations of favourable conditions that can be seen as reliably associated with the outcome. Conjunctural causation and equifinality make the study of potentially sufficient conditions significantly more complex than the study of potentially necessary conditions. This chapter does not aim to perform this more demanding task, and instead focuses on necessary condition hypotheses. The next section discusses their role in the context of global democratization and the third section draws some lessons from experiences of domestic democratization, which are analysed through a systematic method called fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis. A tentative research agenda on the identification of viable paths to global democracy is sketched in the final section.

responded 'Quite unlikely—but it might work'; and 19.1% responded 'Very unlikely—it is a bad idea'. Cross-national differences are very significant: an overwhelming majority of Indian respondents supported a global parliament, while U.S. and Danish respondents were the most opposed (BBC 2007).

Thinking about necessary conditions for global democratization

Robert Dahl expressed a widely held opinion when he stated that ‘the conditions required for the function of democratic institutions simply do not exist at the international level and are unlikely to develop within any foreseeable time’ (Dahl 1999a: 927). Hence, he concluded, ‘even if the threshold is pretty hazy... international systems will lie below any reasonable threshold of democracy’ (Dahl 1999b: 21). Statements such as these raise at least two important questions. First, and more generally, how can we *know* if a given condition is necessary for democracy or not? Second, and more specifically, *which* conditions should be regarded as necessary for democracy?

With regard to the first question, scepticism about the possibility of global democracy can be based on the belief that countries experiencing successful transitions to democracy did so because of the presence of certain prerequisites, and that these prerequisites are lacking at the international level, now and in the foreseeable future. The comparison between democratic and non-democratic countries is thought to provide insights into the possibility of democratizing global politics. In other words, not only optimists but also sceptics about global democracy may rely, implicitly or explicitly, on a ‘domestic analogy’, which in its broader definition is ‘presumptive reasoning [...] about international relations based on the assumption that since domestic and international phenomena are similar in a number of respects, a given proposition which holds true domestically, but whose validity is as yet uncertain internationally, will also hold true internationally’ (Suganami 1989: 24).

Diagnostic (as opposed to prescriptive) domestic analogies have been used to affirm as well as to deny the possibility of global democracy.³ An important recent example of the ‘possibilist’ use is Robert Goodin’s argument that ‘Similar things seem to be happening in today’s international order as happened centuries ago in the domestic sphere to curtail the arbitrary exercise of power and to make it accountable’ (Goodin 2010: 181). ‘Absence-of-conditions’ arguments against the possibility of global democracy often use the same logic in reverse, for they draw on what is known about the successful democratization of states to deny the possibility of democratization at the global level.

³ See Suganami (1989: 136) for the distinction between the diagnostic and the prescriptive use of the domestic analogy.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to examine the validity of this domestic analogy. It is sufficient that it is plausible enough to warrant an examination of its premises.⁴ Despite their numerous differences, both international systems and domestic political systems consist of a multitude of collective actors who engage in a variety of modes of interaction – from coercion and competition to negotiation and cooperation – on the basis of complex power relations, conflicting and compatible interests, and norms of appropriate behaviour. A rigid analytical separation is therefore unwarranted (Milner 1991). As those interactions can be considered more or less democratic within the context of individual states, it is legitimate to apply similar criteria to analyze political structures beyond that level (Moravcsik 2005). By extension, the question ‘under what conditions can a political system be democratized?’ can be legitimately asked with regard to international as well as intra-national interactions.

I thus accept that insights garnered from the study of domestic political processes may be relevant to arguments about potential international processes. But do sceptical conclusions follow from this premise? To provide an answer, we need to examine the experience of democratic countries in order to test claims that certain conditions were necessary for their democratization. If any condition is identified as necessary in the domestic context, we need to ask whether it can be found at the international level. If any necessary condition is identified that is not present and cannot be replicated at the international level, we would be left with strong reasons to believe global democracy – or at least forms of global democracy that resemble those realized within states (see Marchetti 2011, in this volume)⁵ – to be impossible. But such a conclusion hinges on the basic question: are there any such conditions?

The second question posed at the beginning of this section is exactly which conditions can plausibly be regarded as necessary for democratic transitions and thus deserve closer examination. Clearly a large number of conditions are necessary for any interesting social process to occur, but most of them are trivial – for instance, air is a necessary condition for

⁴ The domestic analogy could be expressed ‘*If x is necessary for domestic democracy, then x is necessary for global democracy*’ (to which sceptics add ‘*x is absent at the global level*’). This chapter focuses on the ‘*if*’ part of the argument, not the ‘*then*’ part.

⁵ Polycentric forms of global democracy, such as those advocated by K. Macdonald (2011), T. Macdonald (2011) and Bruno Frey (2011) in their contributions to this volume, are less vulnerable to this kind of argument.

freedom of speech.⁶ A first step is thus to discriminate among conditions and to select non-trivial conditions for closer analysis. A useful second step is to divide such conditions in two broad categories: those related to structures and those related to agency. The question of the relationship between agency and structure is at the core of many ontological debates in the social and political sciences, and cannot be addressed in any depth here.⁷ For the limited purposes of this chapter it suffices to say that approaches to the study of democratization are commonly distinguished on the basis of whether they emphasise structural ‘background’ conditions or rather the goals and strategic interactions of political actors.

A key forerunner of the ‘structuralist’ approach was Seymour Martin Lipset (1959), whose conjectures on economic development as requisite of democratization had a decisive impact on subsequent scholarship. The agency-oriented or voluntarist approach was propelled by Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter’s (1986) path-breaking volumes on ‘transitions from authoritarian rule’. Despite several attempts at integrating the two perspectives,⁸ the debate shows little sign of abating. A scholar who emphasizes structural factors has lamented that for actor-oriented scholars ‘democratization is ultimately a matter of political crafting. It seems that democracy can be crafted and promoted in all sorts of places, even in culturally and structurally unfavorable circumstances’ (Doorenspleet 2004: 301). On the other side, Larry Diamond has insisted that, ‘[c]learly, most states can become democratic, because most states already are. Moreover... the overwhelming bulk of the states that have become democratic during the third wave [of democratization] have remained so, even in countries lacking virtually all of the supposed ‘conditions’ for democracy.’ (Diamond 2003: 5).

⁶ A necessary condition can be considered trivial when it is present across all cases in the relevant universe of analysis. An in-depth discussion of the trivialness of necessary conditions is provided by Goertz (2006).

⁷ All action is ultimately determined by some kind of structure, but the reverse is not necessarily true. While this general point would support a ‘structuralist’ worldview, it is of little relevance for actual empirical research. Since no research agenda can capture all structures that may determine action, it is perfectly legitimate for research programmes to focus on some structures and neglect others, and the former may well ‘only’ constrain the behaviour of actors without determining or even affecting their desires and beliefs. This means that an agency-oriented research programme is legitimate even in the context of an ultimately structuralist worldview.

⁸ For a thorough examination of such attempts see Mahoney and Snyder (1999).

In sum, the search for necessary conditions in the context of domestic democratization provides a good starting point for reflecting about plausible necessary conditions for global democratization. This search should involve conditions highlighted by structuralist approaches as well as those stressed by voluntarist approaches, and this distinction can provide a useful framework for analysing democratic processes beyond the state as well. The next section singles out a number of conditions that are especially relevant in controversies about global democratization, and investigates whether they can be regarded as necessary in the domestic context.

Searching for necessary conditions for domestic democratization

In this section I look for necessary conditions for the transition of democracy within states by comparing systematically the experiences of a large number of countries with the aid of a method called ‘fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis’. Large-scale comparisons are easier with regard to structural conditions than with regard to agential and strategic conditions. This is mainly because the former are captured by a number of existing datasets, whereas to the best of my knowledge there is no dataset that provides a standardized description of the political strategies and interactions in all or most countries that have experienced a democratic transition. For this reason, only structural conditions are subject to systematic scrutiny in this section, while the necessity of agential conditions is addressed more cursorily at the end.

Which structural conditions should be included in the assessment of necessity? Some conditions are trivial, in the sense described above. Others, while not trivial, are not directly relevant to a discussion of global democracy. The analysis should include those conditions whose alleged weakness or absence at the global level has been invoked as reasons to be sceptical about the possibility of global democracy.⁹ Among those reasons are: (a) cultural heterogeneity in the world is an insurmountable obstacle to democracy; (b) most of the world

⁹ For instance Dahl (1999b), Doyle (2000), Nye (2002), Keohane (2003), and Christiano (2011, in this volume). See also Offe (2006).

is too poor to allow the emergence of democratic institutions; (c) democracy at the global level could not work because of huge differences in the economic conditions of the world's inhabitants; (d) the world is too large to allow the establishment of democratic institutions; (e) democracy can only emerge in the context of established statehood, i.e. within a polity where the monopoly of legitimate force by a central institution has deep historical roots and is taken for granted by the population. The question thus is which (if any) of the following conditions can be considered as necessary for democratic transitions in the domestic context: (a) cultural and ethnic homogeneity; (b) economic development; (c) relatively high levels of economic equality; (d) a small or moderate polity size; and (e) established statehood.

Condition (e) requires some elaboration. There are authors who maintain that '[d]emocracy is a form of governance of a modern state. Thus, without a state, no modern democracy is possible' (Linz and Stepan 1996: 17). As I argue elsewhere (Koenig-Archibugi 2010), there are reasons to believe that a degree of political centralization is a necessary condition for democracy, but it is debatable whether this requires a monopoly over legitimate violence.¹⁰ According to Chris Brown (2002: 246), 'Contemporary liberal democracies emerged from pre-democratic state-structures; by analogy, global democracy would require the existence of a global state-structure that could be democratized.'¹¹ But how can we test the hypothesis that democracy can only emerge after a relatively long experience and generalized acceptance of statehood? One way to do so is to ask whether democratic governance emerged after periods in which the key element of statehood – the monopoly over legitimate violence – was

¹⁰ Democracy requires ability to enforce collective decisions. But legal rules produced by a political unit are not enforced *only* when the unit possesses the key attributes of statehood, notably a monopoly of the legitimate use of force and bureaucratic control over a territorial jurisdiction. The most notable example of this disjunction is the European Union. For instance, J. H. H. Weiler (2003) interprets the EU as a combination of a 'confederal' institutional arrangement and a 'federal' legal arrangement. On the one hand, EU law is accepted as having direct effect in the jurisdictions of member states and supremacy over national law, without significant problems of compliance. On the other hand, EU institutions lack both the means of coercion and the bureaucratic apparatus to enforce EU law. 'There is a hierarchy of norms: Community norms trump conflicting Member State norms. But this hierarchy is not rooted in a hierarchy of normative authority or in a hierarchy of real power. Indeed, European federalism is constructed with a top-to-bottom hierarchy of norms, but with a bottom-to-top hierarchy of authority and real power.' (Weiler 2003: 9). Zürn and Joerges (2005) show systematically that the experience of the EU disproves the thesis that a central monopoly of force is *necessary* to ensure high levels of compliance with the law.

¹¹ See Nagel (2005) for a similar argument.

challenged by significant sectors of the population; more specifically: after civil wars. While ‘domestic anarchy’ and ‘international anarchy’ differ in significant ways, examining the former can provide insights into the context of global democratization.

A useful tool for answering the kind of questions stated above is Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), which is a configurational method that has been developed by Charles Ragin and other scholars over the past 25 years.¹² This method is particularly useful for the problem at hand because of three reasons. The first reason is that QCA is specifically aimed at testing hypotheses about necessary and sufficient conditions, rather than hypotheses about correlation among variables. QCA interprets statements about necessary conditions in logical and set-theoretic terms. To say that a condition is necessary for an outcome is equivalent to saying that cases where the outcome is present are a subset of the cases where the condition is present. This means that, if researchers find instances of the outcome that are not within the set of instances of the condition, then they can interpret this finding as contradicting the necessary condition hypothesis.

The second advantage is that QCA is specifically designed to test verbal hypotheses whose terms are not ‘given’ but require careful interpretation. For instance, the hypothesis that cultural homogeneity is a necessary condition for democratic transitions is inherently vague and makes little sense without a careful definition of thresholds between homogeneous and non-homogeneous countries and between democratic transitions and other instances of regime change or stability. Over the past ten years, QCA has incorporated sophisticated procedures for the systematic analysis of ‘fuzzy’ concepts such as ‘democratic transition’. QCA now exists in two versions. In the ‘crisp-set’ version, conditions and outcomes are recorded as being either present or absent. In the ‘fuzzy-set’ version, cases can be recorded as being either ‘fully in’ the set of cases displaying a certain condition or outcome, or ‘fully out’ that set, or ‘partly in’ the set, with various degrees of membership. In other words, fuzzy-set QCA (fsQCA) allows researchers to code cases as having not only full membership and full non-membership, but also degrees of membership.

The third advantage is that the notion of necessity and sufficiency embodied in fsQCA is compatible with a ‘probabilistic’ approach to social science data, which does not force researchers to discard necessary conditions hypotheses because of the presence of a relatively

¹² For descriptions of the method see Ragin (2000, 2008) and Rihoux and Ragin (2009).

small number of deviant cases (Goertz 2005). Statements about necessary conditions for democracy are rarely phrased in absolute terms with no allowance for exceptions.¹³ FsQCA takes this into account by providing ways to measure the strength of the set-theoretic relationship between conditions and outcomes. The key measure for the purpose of this chapter is ‘consistency’, which varies between 0 and 1 and measures the degree to which a set relation has been approximated, i.e., the degree to which the evidence is consistent with the argument that a set relation exists. If all cases where the outcome is present are found to be a subset of the cases where the condition is present, the consistency of that condition is 1, and that provides researchers with a strong reason to believe that the condition is necessary for the outcome. Perfectly consistent set relationships are rarely found in social research, and thus researchers may conclude that a condition is necessary even if its consistency is lower than 1. The lower the consistency score, however, the weaker are claims that a condition is necessary (Ragin 2006).¹⁴

The rest of this section describes the data sources and assignment of fuzzy-set scores before presenting the findings, i.e. the consistency of cultural and ethnic homogeneity, economic development, economic equality, and small size as necessary conditions for transitions to democracy.

¹³ The following statement by John Stuart Mill is typical: ‘Free institutions are *next to impossible* in a country made up of different nationalities’ (Mill 1991: 428, emphasis added).

¹⁴ FsQCA calculates the consistency of hypothesized necessary conditions according to the following formula:

$$\text{Consistency } (Y_i \leq X_i) = \sum(\min(X_i, Y_i)) / \sum(Y_i),$$

where X are the fuzzy-set values of the condition, Y are the fuzzy-set values of the outcome, and ‘min’ indicates the selection of the lower of the two values.

It should be noted that in the fsQCA literature there are no established conventions on the minimum level of consistency that is needed to support a necessary condition hypothesis, or even on the criteria for determining what level is most appropriate given the features of the research problem. Schneider and Wageman (2007: 213) make a rare attempt to identify such a threshold by suggesting that only scores of ‘at least’ 0.9 should be accepted in the case of *necessary* conditions.

The outcome is membership in the ‘set of countries experiencing a major democratic transition’ and it is based on Polity IV values.¹⁵ The Polity IV project defines a ‘major democratic transition’ as a six points or greater increase in Polity value over a period of three years or less, including a shift from an autocratic Polity value (-10 to 0) to a partial democratic Polity value (+1 to +6) or full democratic Polity value (+7 to +10) or a shift from a partial democratic value to a full democratic value. The Polity project defines a ‘minor democratic transition’ as a three to five point increase in Polity values over a period of three years or less, which includes a shift from autocratic to partial democratic or from partial to full democratic value (Marshall and Jaggers 2009). I assign to countries experiencing a major democratic transition a fuzzy-set score of 1 in the set of countries experiencing a major democratic transition, whereas countries experiencing a minor democratic transition are assigned a fuzzy-set score of 0.5 in that set.

I assign to each case of country experiencing a democratic transition one of four degrees of membership in the five causal conditions: ‘fully in’ (fuzzy-set score of 1), ‘more in than out’ (0.66), ‘more out than in’ (0.33), and ‘fully out’ (0.00).

Membership in the ‘set of ethnically homogeneous countries’ is based on the database compiled by James Fearon (2003). The database includes an ethnic fractionalization index for most countries in the world, which measures the probability that two individuals selected at random from a country will be from different ethnic groups. The index ranges from 0 to 1 and depends on the number of ethnic groups as well as their share of the total population. I consider countries with an ethnic fractionalization index between 0 and 0.25 to be fully in the ‘set of ethnically homogeneous countries’; countries with an ethnic fractionalization index between 0.25 and 0.50 are considered more in than out that set; countries with an ethnic fractionalization between 0.50 and 0.75 are considered more out than in the set; and countries whose ethnic fractionalization ranges between 0.75 and 1 are considered fully out the set.

Fearon (2003) argues that measures of ethnic diversity are not always adequate to capture the political effects of cultural differences. For that reason, he also provides an index of *cultural* fractionalization that uses the distance between the ‘tree branches’ of two languages as a proxy of the cultural distance between groups that speak them as a first language.

¹⁵ Polity IV scores suffer from a number of problems (see e.g. Munck and Verkuilen 2002; Treier and Jackman 2008), but they are probably more suitable than any other democracy measurement with comparable coverage of years and countries.

Fractionalization is lower when groups speak a related language (e.g. Byelorussians and Russians in Belarus) and higher when the languages are structurally unrelated (e.g. Greeks and Turks in Cyprus). I consider countries with a cultural fractionalization index between 0 and 0.25 to be fully in the ‘set of culturally homogeneous countries’; countries with an cultural fractionalization index between 0.25 and 0.50 are considered to be more in than out that set; countries with a cultural fractionalization between 0.50 and 0.75 are considered more out than in the set; and countries whose cultural fractionalization ranges between 0.75 and 1 are considered fully out the set.

Membership in the ‘set of economically developed countries’ is based on World Bank classification, which in turn is based on the GNI per capita of countries. I use the thresholds adopted by the World Bank in 1989, when it first introduced the four-fold classification on the basis of 1987 data (World Bank 2010a). Countries that, in the first year of the democratic transition, had a GDP per capita that exceeds the threshold used by the World Bank to identify ‘high-income’ countries (over \$6000), are considered fully in the ‘set of economically developed countries’; countries that would have qualified as lower middle income country according to the 1987 World Bank criteria (\$1,941-6,000) are considered more in than out the set; countries that would have qualified as lower middle income country (\$481-1,940) are considered ‘more out than in’ the set; and countries that would have qualified as a low income (less than \$480) are considered ‘fully out’.¹⁶ GDP per capita data come from World Bank (2010b).

Membership in the ‘set of economically equal countries’ is based on the Standardized World Income Inequality Database (SWIID) compiled by Frederik Solt (2009), which in turn is based mainly on the World Income Inequality Database created by the World Institute for Development Economics Research of the U.N. University. The SWIID provides Gini indices of gross and net income inequality for 153 countries between 1960 and the present. I consider countries with a net (i.e. after tax and transfers) Gini index below 0.20 in the year of the democratic transition to be fully in the set of economically equal countries; countries with a net Gini index between 0.20 and 0.35 are more in than out that set; countries with a net Gini index between 0.35 and 0.50 are more out than in that set; and countries with a net Gini index over 0.50 are fully out.

¹⁶ The country data I use are based on GDP per capita, whereas the World Bank thresholds refer to GNI per capita, but with a few exceptions (e.g. Ireland) the two indicators are similar.

Membership in the ‘set of small countries’ is based on population data collected by Angus Maddison (2008). Countries with a population of 10 million or less in the first year of their democratic transition are fully in the set of small countries; countries with a population between 10 and 50 million are more in than out that set; countries with a population between 50 and 100 million are more out than in; and countries with a population of over 100 million are fully out the set of small countries.

Membership in the ‘set of countries with established statehood’ is based on whether a country experienced a civil war at any time during the ten years preceding the democratic transition. A score of 0 is assigned if this is the case, otherwise 1. The data on civil wars are from Sambanis (2004). As noted above, a civil war in recent history is an indication that a significant share of the population does not take a monopoly of legitimate violence for granted.

The dataset on which the following analysis is based only includes countries that experienced either a major or minor democratic transition to democracy, as defined above. This is consistent with the general principle that cases not displaying the outcome of interest are not relevant for testing necessary condition hypotheses (as opposed to sufficient condition hypotheses).¹⁷ The Polity IV database includes 151 cases of major democratic transition and 34 cases of minor transition between 1800 and 2009.¹⁸ Because of issues of data availability, only a subset of these cases is included in the following analysis. First, only democratic transitions that occurred between 1945 and 2009 are considered. Second, a few cases from this period are excluded because of lack of data on one or more causal conditions. Other two limitations should be noted. First, since Fearon’s ethnic and cultural fractionalization index is not available for multiple years, the analysis is based on the assumption that the index approximates a country’s situation at the time of the transition, given the relatively slow changes in the ethnic composition of most countries and the low likelihood that such changes are substantial enough to shift countries across the four categories used here. Second, when data on per capita income and income inequality are not available for the year of transition, figures for the nearest available year are used.

¹⁷ Ragin (2000). This principle is not entirely uncontroversial: see for instance the debate between Seawright (2002), Braumoeller and Goertz (2002), and Clarke (2002).

¹⁸ Counting only the first year of a multiyear democratic transition, and counting democratic transitions in non-contiguous years in the same country as separate cases.

Table 1 summarizes which outcome and conditions are analysed, how they are measured and which sources are used.

Table 9.1: Summary of outcome, conditions, measurements and sources

Outcome	Measure	Source
Major and minor democratic transition	Change in Polity value (see text for details)	Marshall and Jaggers (2009)
Conditions	Measure	Source
Ethnic homogeneity	Ethnic fractionalization index	Fearon (2003)
Cultural homogeneity	Cultural fractionalization index	Fearon (2003)
Economic development	GDP per capita	World Bank (2010b)
Economic equality	Net Gini index	Solt (2009)
Small size	Population	Maddison (2008)
Established statehood	No civil war in previous 10 years	Sambanis (2004)

I conducted the analysis on 126 cases of democratic transition. Applying the procedures implemented in the fsQCA 2.0 software (Ragin et al. 2006) yields the following consistency scores for the five causal conditions of interest¹⁹:

Ethnic homogeneity: 0.500427

Cultural homogeneity: 0.716667

¹⁹ FsQCA provides a second criterion for assessing set-theoretic relationships – ‘coverage’ – but coverage values are not reported here, because none of the set relations examined in this analysis can be regarded as consistent. See Ragin (2006: 9) for details.

Economic development: 0.262735

Economic equality: 0.354274

Small size: 0.762393

Established statehood:0.653846

The consistency values for all six conditions are well below 1, which suggests that none of these conditions can be regarded as a necessary for democratic transitions. Size is somewhat more consistent than the others, but this is likely to be due to skewed membership scores (see Ragin 2006: 8), and in any case the consistency score is too low to support the conclusion that it is a necessary condition. The low consistency of established statehood (i.e. no civil war in the preceding 10 years) is especially notable, and the implication that democracy can emerge from ‘anarchy’ is consistent with Wantchekon’s (2004) finding that nearly 40 per cent of all civil wars that took place from 1945 to 1993 resulted in an improvement in the level of democracy.²⁰

In sum, the ‘structural’ conditions included in this analysis may perhaps increase the likelihood of a democratic transition, but the evidence does not support the contention that they are necessary, even taking into account the possibility of exceptions to the general pattern.

However, one further possibility should be considered: even if none of the conditions examined can be considered necessary for democratic transition, the presence of at least one of them – *any* of them – may be necessary for it. In other words, it could be that, in order to experience a democratic transition, a country needs to be ethnically/culturally homogeneous *or* economically developed *or* economically equal *or* small *or* with established statehood; the simultaneous lack of *all* these conditions may prevent a democratic transition. Elsewhere (Koenig-Archibugi 2010) I argue that India contradicts such a ‘conditional necessity’

²⁰ Since organized groups fighting each other in civil wars are often not internally democratic, this finding can also shed some light on an important question addressed by Archibugi (2008) and others: can a global democratic polity emerge only from the union of political units that are already democratic themselves? By using a domestic analogy, the fact that democracy can emerge from a condition of anarchy (and even war) among organized groups that are not necessarily democratic provides some reasons to answer that question in the negative. I am grateful to Daniele Archibugi for highlighting the importance of the question.

conjecture: India is a heterogeneous, poor, unequal and large country and yet it possesses stable democratic institutions. However, fsQCA allows us to test the conditional necessity conjecture more systematically.²¹ If we treat ‘cultural homogeneity *or* economic development *or* economic equality *or* small size’ as a possible necessary condition, then its consistency score is 0.881368, which appears still too low to support the conclusion that it is a necessary condition. On the other hand, an expression that includes established statehood achieves a higher score: ‘established statehood *or* cultural homogeneity *or* economic equality *or* small size’ has a consistency of 0.939231. Given that some authors suggest that consistency scores should be ‘at least’ 0.90 for a necessary condition hypothesis to be confirmed,²² that disjunctive expression may be seen as passing (just) the threshold required for an affirmative verdict.

The preceding analysis only considered ‘structural’ conditions, neglecting the agency-based and strategic conditions that are emphasised by a sizeable part of the democratization literature. As noted above, ascertaining the necessity of such agential conditions is difficult because of the absence (to the best of my knowledge) of a dataset that provides a standardized description of the political constellation of all or most countries that have experienced a democratic transition in their history. However, political scientists have accumulated a substantial amount of knowledge on the political processes and strategies that resulted in democratic transitions. Do any necessary conditions emerge from this literature? While this chapter cannot provide a comprehensive answer, there are reasons to believe that agential theories are no better than structural theories in uncovering *necessary* conditions across a large number of countries. Barbara Geddes (1999) notes that the initially proposed generalization that divisions within the authoritarian regime were an essential condition of transitions was disproved by later developments in the Soviet bloc. Conversely, popular mobilization was unimportant as a cause of democratization in early studies focusing on Latin America, but then appeared to be crucial in Eastern Europe. Studies of Latin America and Europe stressed the importance of pacts among elites, but there is little evidence of pacts in African cases of democratization. Geddes (1999: 119) notes that ‘[v]irtually every suggested generalization to arise from this literature [...] has been challenged.’ We can

²¹ I am grateful to Robert Goodin for suggesting this ‘disjunctive’ analysis.

²² See Schneider and Wagemann (2007) referred to in footnote

conclude that the agency-oriented research tradition has not found conditions that can be regarded as unambiguously necessary rather than merely supportive.

Thinking about paths to global democracy

The findings of the previous section appear to support the commonly held view that ‘there is no single path to democracy, and, therefore, no generalization is to be had about the conditions that give rise to it’ (Shapiro 2003: 80)²³. While Shapiro’s inference that no generalization can be made is questionable, the claim that there are multiple paths to democracy is now widely accepted. One of the challenges for analysts of domestic democratization has been to identify those paths theoretically and empirically, and to develop hypotheses on the causes and consequences of different paths. One of the challenges for analysts of global democratization is to extract the most relevant insights from this literature and apply them to actual instances of change in particular international institutional contexts (Uhlin 2010) or to stylized accounts of future large-scale transformations (Goodin 2010).

One way in which the literature on domestic democratization has tried to make the idea of multiple paths more specific is by developing typologies of ‘modes of transition’. Huntington (1991), for instance, distinguished between ‘transformations’, where the elites in power lead the transition, ‘replacements’, where opposition groups lead the transition, and ‘transplacements’, where elites in power and opposition groups cooperate in the transition. Karl (1990) distinguished between possible modes of transition to democracy on the basis of two criteria: first, whether democratic transitions result from strategies based primarily on overt force or rather from compromise; second, whether incumbent ruling elites or mass actors have predominant power. Intersecting these distinctions produces four ideal types of democratic transition: reform, revolution, imposition, and pact. Similarly, Munck and Leff (1997) classified modes of transition by asking two questions: whether the agent of change is the incumbent elite or a counterelite or a combination of the two; and whether the strategy of

²³ Shapiro continues: ‘Democracy can result from decades of gradual evolution (Britain and the United States), imitation (India), cascades (most of Eastern Europe in 1989), collapse (Russia after 1991), imposition from above (Chile), revolutions (Portugal), negotiated settlements (Poland, Nicaragua, and South Africa), or external imposition (Japan and West Germany)... Perhaps there are other possibilities’ (Shapiro 2003: 80).

the agent of change is confrontation or accommodation or a combination of the two. Various combinations of these criteria generate several modes of transition, notably four 'pure' modes – revolution from above, social revolution, conservative reform, and reform from below – and three 'mixed' modes – reform through rupture, reform through extrication and reform through transaction.

Mutatis mutandis, these typological exercises can provide useful building blocks for theorizing pathways to *global* democracy. But it should be noted that they do not (aim to) identify the conditions under which the actors' strategies will actually result in democratic transitions. This is partly a consequence of the high level of generality of the categories on which such typologies are based. Notably, the distinction between ruling elite and counterelite, or between ruling elite and mass actors, offers little information on the likelihood that actors' strategies will succeed or even on the relative amounts of power resources that those groups can mobilize in pursuit of their goals.

Analyses in the tradition of macrohistorical comparative sociology tend to display lower levels of indeterminacy. They usually start from structuralist premises about historically developing class structures and political structures and ascribe broadly defined (material and ideational) interests to members of particular classes and state elites. According to one of the most significant contributions to this tradition, Barrington Moore's *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, countries reach one or the other of three political outcomes – parliamentary democracy, fascist dictatorship, and communist dictatorship – depending on the relative strength of states, land-owning classes, peasants, and bourgeois classes. Moore argued that a strong bourgeoisie was a necessary component of all paths to democracy: 'No bourgeoisie, no democracy' (Moore 1966: 418). However, a strong bourgeoisie was not described as sufficient to produce democracy, and the paths to democracy of the three main cases studies by Moore - Britain, France and the United States – displayed significant differences. Adopting a similar macrohistorical comparative approach, Rueschemeyer et al. (1992) reached a different conclusion: the 'crucial' explanatory variable in the development of democracy is the relative size and density of the industrial working class, which had most to gain from and was most favourable to democracy. (Their case studies reveal several exceptions to the general pattern, notably the 'agrarian democracies' of the early United States, Switzerland, and Norway). They conclude that 'Significant working-class strength was a necessary condition for the installation and consolidation of full democracy, but it was not a sufficient condition' (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992: 282). Among the other relevant factors

are the ideologies of the groups leading working-class mobilization, and strong allies among the urban and rural middle classes.

For a number of reasons, these and other macrohistorical theories to domestic democratization cannot be applied directly to the analysis of actual and potential trends in the democratization of global politics.²⁴ One of those reasons is that the traditional class divisions highlighted by these theories are reflected only very weakly in a dimension that is arguably very important for the prospects of global democracy: the distinction between those holding ‘cosmopolitan’ identities and values and those who do not. Opinion surveys across a large number of developed and developing countries show that the degree of ‘moral cosmopolitanism’ and ‘political cosmopolitanism’ of individuals bears a very weak relationship to their income and education (Furia 2005). Furia notes that ‘Knowing a person’s educational attainment and income provides only a tiny hint about whether she will be favourably disposed towards ideals of global citizenship’ (Furia 2005: 348). Nor are cosmopolitan political orientations more common in richer countries than in poor countries, as the BBC poll cited above shows. A straightforward ‘class analysis’ of potential transition paths to global democracy is thus likely to miss important drivers of support for and resistance to global democratic projects.

However, macrosociological studies on domestic transitions can inspire analyses on global transitions with regard to two important elements. First, different transition paths to democracy are feasible depending on which social groups play a leadership role. Second, the success of those transition paths depends crucially on the ability of the leading group to build a broad coalition in support of the transition.²⁵ In other words, analysts may speculate on the various ‘minimum winning coalitions’. The identification of the various relevant groups is of course crucial to such an exercise. Some of them are predominantly based in individual states, whereas others have significant transnational dimensions. Among the former, ‘segmented’, groups are of course governments, but also sectoral bureaucracies, parliamentarians, political parties, domestic pressure groups such as trade unions and employers’ organizations, and – with less capacity for collective action – various groups of

²⁴ For an insightful discussion in the context of EU democratization see Schimmelfennig (2010).

²⁵ A further important ‘lesson’ of domestic democratization has been stressed by (Goodin 2010): *How* expansions of democratic accountability come about may be less important for the long-term prospects of democracy than the fact that, once it is expanded, accountability almost never contracts.

voters (defined in the basis of age cohorts, economic class, education, minority status, or degree of involvement in international economic or social networks). Among the transnational, ‘interlinked’, groups are transnational capitalists, networks of activists and NGOs, officials of international organizations, and a range of ‘epistemic communities’ (Haas 1990).

On the basis of a mapping of leading groups and their allies, as well as their opponents, it could be possible to identify several paths to global democracy, as well as the shifts in material, ideational, and institutional resources that could allow reformist coalitions to prevail over conservative coalitions. The following is a tentative and incomplete list of such paths:

- An intergovernmental path, possibly based on a government-driven reform and strengthening of the UN system, which would generate a need for democratic legitimacy that could be met by the establishment of a global parliamentary assembly and eventually the popular election of its members. This path would essentially replicate what happened in the EU (Rittberger 2005, Schimmelfennig 2010).
- A social movement path, where global networks of activists and civil society organizations create non-state democratic institutions (see K. Macdonald 2011, in this volume) and/or campaign successfully for the democratization of primarily intergovernmental institutions (see Tallberg and Uhlin 2011, in this volume, Uhlin 2010, Scholte 2011).
- A labourist path, where international labour unions lead a progressive coalition for the democratization of world governance (Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000: 239-246; Stevis and Boswell 2008). The role of the organized working classes would parallel their historic role in promoting domestic democratization (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992).
- A capitalist path, where transnational business demands and obtains strengthened global governance institutions, which then could then function as focal point for democratization efforts (Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000; 214-215).²⁶

²⁶ Two prominent proponents of a global parliamentary assembly note that ‘many of the leading figures in world business seem to find congenial the idea that some sort of democratizing improvisation along the lines we are suggesting is necessary to make globalization politically acceptable to more of the peoples of the world’ (Falk and Strauss 2003: 224). Marxist analysts such as Chimni (2011, in this volume) are of course sceptical that global capitalism and genuine global democracy can be reconciled.

- A functionalist path, where democratization follows the establishment of sectoral but increasingly dense governance networks among specialized bureaucracies (Slaughter 2005).
- Even an imperialist path, where a dominant power institutionalizes its dominance over the rest of the world and then eventually accedes to demands for democratic representation.

Some of these paths appear incompatible with others, while others may be complementary and converging. Arguably different paths may lead to different outcomes, although such varied outcomes may all pass the kind of ‘democratic threshold’ envisaged by Dahl. It could turn out to be impossible to estimate the likelihood that they will lead to successful global democratization, but researchers may well be able to assess their relative plausibility by extrapolating trends on the global distribution of various forms of power among state and non-state actors.

This is an extremely ambitious research agenda, but it would constitute a worthwhile – perhaps necessary – complement to the more prescriptively oriented approaches to global democracy that have been prevalent so far and that underpin several chapters in this volume.

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