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Classifying Political Regimes

Mike Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub,
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This study presents a classification of political regimes as democracies and dictator-
ships for a set of 141 countries between 1950 or the year of independence and 1990. It
improves existing classifications by a better grounding in political theory, an exclusive
reliance on observables rather than on subjective judgements, an explicit distinction
between systematic and random errors, and a more extensive coverage.

> This state is not
> subject to one man's will, but is a free city.
> The king here is the people, who by yearly office
> Govern in turn.
> Euripides, *The Suppliant Women.*

To study systematically issues concerning both the origins and the consequences
of political regimes, we need valid and reliable classifications. And while sev-
eral classifications of regimes, covering different periods and sets of countries, are
now available, we think that they can be improved by 1) a better grounding in
political theory, 2) an exclusive reliance on observables rather than on subjective
judgements, 3) an explicit distinction between systematic and random errors, and 4)
a more extensive coverage. The purpose of this article is to introduce to the schol-
arly community a new classification of political regimes guided by these objectives.

The article is organized as follows. Part 1 covers conceptual issues. Part 2 spells
out the three basic rules we use to classify regimes. Part 3 focuses on the treatment
of systematic error and offers an additional rule that applies to a particular class of
cases. Part 4 summarizes these rules and shows their effect on regime classification.
Part 5 considers distinctions among democratic and among authoritarian regimes.

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institutions and economic performance.

Part 6 enumerates some criteria we did not include and shows how users can modify our classification. Part 7 compares our approach with alternative measures. Appendix I lists all the regimes. Appendix II compares expected errors of polychotomous and dichotomous classifications of political regimes, such as the one presented in this article. Appendix III is a separate document, available on request, which provides historical details for each country and year.

1. Democracy and Dictatorship

Our purpose is to classify political regimes observed in each country during each year either as democracies or as dictatorships, a term we use interchangeably with "authoritarian regimes." While we distinguish between different types of democracy and of dictatorship, the basic classification is dichotomous.

Our general stance is minimalist. Perusing the innumerable definitions, one discovers that democracy has become an altar on which everyone hangs his or her favorite ex voto.[1] Almost all normatively desirable aspects of political, and sometimes even of social and economic, life are credited as definitional features of democracy: representation, accountability, equality participation, dignity, rationality, security, freedom—the list goes on. Indeed, the set of really existing democracies enclosed under many definitions is empty. And from an analytical point of view, lumping all good things together is of little use. The typical research problem is to examine relations between them. Thus, we may want to know if holding repeated elections induces governmental accountability, if participation generates equality, if freedom imbues political systems with rationality. Our own research program is to examine whether democracy in the political realm affects variously defined performance in the political, social, and economic realms and whether performance of various kind affects the durability of political arrangements. Hence, we want to define democracy narrowly.

Three major distinctions dominate modern political thought concerning forms of government.[2] Montesquieu's (1949) legacy is the distinction between limited and despotic regimes. Kelsen's (1945) contribution, going back to Rousseau and Kant, was to distinguish between "autonomy"—systems in which norms are made by those to whom they apply—and "heteronomy"—systems in which the legislators are distinct from those subject to laws. Finally, Schumpeter's (1942) innovation was to emphasize competition or, in Dahl's (1971) term which we prefer, "contestation," as the essential feature of democracy.

We focus on contestation. Our purpose is to distinguish regimes that allow some, even if limited, regularized competition among conflicting visions and interests from those in which some values or interests enjoy a monopoly buttressed by a threat or the actual use of force.

Democracy, for us, is thus a regime in which some governmental offices are filled as a consequence of contested elections. This definition has two parts: "offices" and "contestation."

In no regime are all governmental offices filled by elections. Outside classical

Greece, generals, who are public officials, never were. Judges rarely are. What is essential to consider a regime as democratic is that two kinds of offices are filled, directly or indirectly, by elections—the chief executive office and the seats in the effective legislative body—and that the office holders are responsible only to the electors, not to any non-elected powers.

The importance of specifying these offices becomes apparent when we confront the issue of whether one should apply the same criteria to the early and the late democracies. In most Western European countries, democracy emerged only gradually, in a sequence of steps. The first step was taken when legislatures, elected on a non-partisan basis and under highly restricted suffrage, divided among partisan lines, typically toward the end of 1880s when the issue of protectionism became highly divisive because of the massive inflow of California wheat. Then followed extensions of political rights, which were sometimes very gradual, as in Norway, and at times instantaneous, as in Finland in 1906. The last step, typically in the immediate aftermath of World War I, was the transfer of governmental responsibility from the Crown or a non-elective upper chamber to the Parliament.

The struggle for democracy in Western Europe concerned suffrage primarily: the right to participate. In contrast, in those countries which only recently confronted the eventuality of establishing democratic institutions, suffrage is not an issue: it is taken for granted that it will be "universal."[3] Neither is governmental responsibility an issue.[4] In the recent cases, the only focus of conflict is contestation: whether divergent political forces will be able to compete for governmental offices and to assume office if they win elections.

If we were to use only contestation as the criterion for democracy, we would date democracy in Western Europe to the period in which legislatures were still not autonomous from the Crown, well before World War I. But since we require that the offices that are being filled by contested elections grant their occupants the authority to exercise governance free of a legal constraint of having to respond to a non-elected power, governmental responsibility either directly to voters or to a parliament elected by them is a defining feature of democracy.

Contestation occurs when there exists an opposition that has some chance of winning office as a consequence of elections. We take Przeworski's (1991,10) dictum that "Democracy is a system in which parties lose elections" quite literally: whenever in doubt, we classify as democracies only those systems in which incumbent parties actually did lose elections. Alternation in office constitutes prima facie evidence of contestation. Contestation, in turn, entails three features: 1) ex ante uncertainty, 2) ex post irreversibility, and 3) repeatability.

By "ex ante uncertainty," we mean that there is some positive probability that at least one member of the incumbent coalition can lose in a particular round of elections. Uncertainty is not synonymous with unpredictability: the probability distribution of electoral chances is typically known. All that is necessary for outcomes to be uncertain is that some incumbent party could lose.[5] The best illustration of such uncertainty is the surprise expressed by an editorial in the Chilean right wing newspaper, *El Mercurio*, in the aftermath of Salvador Allende's victory in the first

round of the presidential elections of 1970: "No one expected that a marxist candidate could win elections through a universal, secret, bourgeois franchise." The franchise may have been "bourgeois" and the chances skewed, the victory of a marxist candidate may have been known to be unlikely, but it was possible, and the eventual outcome was not certain ex ante.

This feature of democracies has practical consequences. Most people think that Argentina under President Arturo Illia (1963–66) was democratic, even though the largest party in the country was prohibited from competing in the elections of July 1963. In turn, most agree that Mexico is not democratic even though no party is legally banned from contesting elections. The reason is that Illia won narrowly, with 26.2 per cent of votes cast, and he may have lost. In contrast, in Mexico it was certain that the PRI would win.

By "ex post irreversibility" we mean the assurance that whoever wins elections would be allowed to assume office. The outcome of elections must be irreversible under democracy even if the opposition wins. In 1929, the then dictator of El Salvador, General Romero, announced that the country was about to join the family of civilized nations by celebrating the first free and honest election. He issued a *decreto-ley* which specified when the elections would take place, who would be qualified to vote, what the ballots would look like, and when the polling places would be open. The last point declared that "Army contingents will be stationed in the polling places in case the Opposition wins." This was not a democratic election.

The practical consequence of this feature is to exclude sham elections as well as periods of liberalization. Liberalization is typically intended by dictatorial regimes to be a controlled opening of the political space. When it fails, that is, when the opposition does win, a clamp down sometimes follows. Hence, there is no certainty that the opposition would be able to celebrate its victory.

The final feature of contestation is that elections must be expected to be repeated. Whoever wins the current round of elections cannot use office to make it impossible for the competing political forces to win next time. Democracy, as Linz (1994) put it, is government *pro tempore*. All political outcomes must be temporary: losers do not forfeit the right to compete in the future, to negotiate again, to influence legislation, to pressure the bureaucracy, or to seek recourse to courts. Even constitutional provisions are not immutable; rules, too, can be changed according to rules.

The practical consequence of this last feature is that we should reserve judgment about elections, since an electoral victory may serve only to establish an authoritarian rule. This has been true in several African countries following independence. Unless the losers are given political guarantees that their ability to contest future elections will be protected, the mere fact that elections were held does not suffice to qualify the regime as democratic. Only if the losers are allowed to compete, win, and assume office, is a regime democratic.

Throughout this discussion, we have focused on democracy. We treat dictatorship simply as a residual category, perhaps better denominated as "not democracy." Our procedure is to establish rules that disqualify a particular regime as democratic, without worrying about the nature of the regimes eliminated in this manner. Only

then do we introduce some features that distinguish among different non-democratic regimes.

2. Operational Rules: Filling Offices by Contested Elections

Democracy is thus a system in which government offices are filled by contested elections. The first part of this definition is easy to operationalize: it is relatively simple to observe which offices, if any, are filled as a result of elections. But whether these elections are contested, in the sense defined above, is not always apparent. The existence of more than one independent party is a sine-qua-non of contestation but it may not be sufficient.

The rules we used to classify regimes are specified below, first those that were applied to assess whether the relevant offices were filled via elections, then those that were used to assess whether elections were contested. To observe whether offices are filled by elections, we revised and updated Arthur S. Banks' *Cross-National Time Series Data Archives* (1993).

Our rules are the following:

Rule 1: The Chief Executive must be elected.

The Banks variable is EXSELEC and it assumes the values of

$$EXSELEC = \begin{cases} 1 \text{ if DIRECTLY ELECTED} \\ 2 \text{ if INDIRECTLY ELECTED} \\ 3 \text{ if NOT ELECTED} \end{cases}$$

The "Chief Executive" may be the president, the prime minister or, in rare cases, a collegial body. Following Banks, we defined the "Chief Executive" as the occupant of the office formally designated as that of the head of government, thus excluding *éminences grises:* strongmen who effectively rule the country but do not occupy a formal position.[6] In dubious cases, we consulted historical materials to check Banks's coding.

For a regime to be qualified as democratic, the executive must be directly or indirectly elected in a popular election. Indirect elections qualify as popular only if the electors are themselves elected. Elections by bodies which are themselves nominated are not qualified as popular elections.

Rule 2: The Legislature must be elected.

The Banks variable is LEGSELEC:

$$LEGSELEC = \begin{cases} 0 \text{ if NO LEGISLATURE} \\ 1 \text{ if NON-ELECTIVE} \\ 2 \text{ if ELECTIVE} \end{cases}$$

The legislature can be a Congress, an Assembly, or a Parliament. Only the lower

house is considered. We departed from Banks's coding by considering that a constituent assembly that does not have ordinary legislative powers is not a legislature. Our rule is that the legislature must be elective for a regime to qualify as democratic.

Rule 3. There must be more than one party.

In some cases, there were no parties: either there were no elections or elections were conducted but all political parties were banned. In other cases, there was only one party. We consider such regimes authoritarian.[7]

By "party" we mean an independent list of candidates presented to voters in elections. In communist Poland, for example, three parties and a number of Catholic groups were represented in the *Sejm* but until June 1989 voters were offered only one list, a National, or Patriotic Front, or whatever else it was called at the moment. Hence, in cases where the share of seats of the major party in the legislature was less than 100 per cent, we checked to see if there was more than one list in legislative elections. For example, although the ruling Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution (Arema) did not control all the seats in the parliament in Madagascar after 1976, according to the Freedom House (1992, 318), "Until March of 1990, when a High Constitutional Court decree permitted multipartyism, political associations had to operate within the FNDR as the nation's sole legal political entity." FNDR (National Front of the Malagasy Revolution) was thus the only list offered to voters, one party by our definition.

Applying this rule we classified as dictatorships all regime years during which legislatures were elected but parties were banned, or during which a single party held 100 per cent of the seats in the legislature, or in which only one list was offered to voters in elections.

We also extended this rule to disqualify as democratic those regimes in which incumbents used an electoral victory to establish either 1) a non-party rule, or 2) a one-party rule, or 3) a permanent electoral domination. This is called the "*consolidation*" rule.

Consolidation of no-party or one-party rule occurred whenever incumbents either banned all parties, or all opposition parties, or forced all parties to merge with the ruling one. If the incumbents consolidated during their current tenure in office a one-party rule or a non-party rule, then the regime is considered to have been authoritarian from the moment at which the present incumbents assumed office. Note that we are not examining intentions: if they tried and failed, the regime is democratic.

Consolidation of incumbent rule also applies whenever there was more than one party, but at some time the incumbents unconstitutionally closed the legislature and rewrote electoral rules to their own advantage.[8] The entire period preceding the closing of the legislature during which the same party was in office is then considered authoritarian.

To understand how this rule was applied, consider Malaysia, a country where

three elections were held between independence in 1957 and 1969. The incumbents won an absolute majority of votes in the first two elections but not in the third. They then declared a state of emergency, closed the Congress, and changed the rules in such a way as to make this unpleasant experience unrepeatable. According to Ahmad (1988, 357), "the better showing by the opposition caused a temporary loss of confidence and even the conclusion by some in the ruling party that it had lost its mandate." The parliament was dissolved in 1969, a state of emergency was proclaimed, and a tough internal security law, still in vigor, was adopted. The constitution was rewritten to assure that no more electoral defeats would occur. Ahmad (1988, 358) comments on this event: "What is more interesting about the conduct of elections as part of the democratic process, however, was probably the unstated notion that losing an election meant virtually total political defeat. Therefore 1969 served notice to the Alliance leadership that it might have to one day face the prospect of an electoral defeat. . . . The rules of the game of Malaysian democracy were therefore set for modification after 1969 because the prospect of a zero-sum electoral result would be unacceptable if Malay political supremacy was not to be assured." As a result, "the fear of an electoral defeat has been diminished under the Barisan Nasional coalition concept. The parties that have not succumbed to the taste of power by joining the BN cannot pretend to be able to form the national government at any time in the foreseeable future."

In South Korea, President Park held elections once and won enough votes, then he held them again and became dissatisfied with the result, closed the Congress, and assumed dictatorial powers. Five years later, he reopened the Congress under new rules. President Marcos in the Philippines won elections twice cleanly and assumed dictatorial powers when he could not amend the Constitution to enjoy more terms.

Since, in these cases, we have prima facie evidence that incumbents were not prepared to yield office as a result of elections (although one could argue that while the Malays were not willing to do it in 1969, they might have been willing to accept defeat earlier), we classify these regimes as dictatorships.

Note that this part of the consolidation rule applies only up to the moment of the unlawful change of electoral rules. If a regime had unconstitutionally changed rules in its favor and subsequently yielded office under these new rules, then the regime is considered authoritarian up to the time of the openly dictatorial interregnum and democratic subsequently. This is why we classified the Figueredo term in Brazil as democratic: although his predecessor temporarily closed the Congress and made it more difficult for the opposition to win, Figueredo's successor, Tancredo Neves, won the election against the candidate supported by the military under the same rules as Figueredo.

The "party" rule is thus that *if 1) there were no parties, or 2) there was only one party, or 3) the current term in office ended in the establishment of a non-party or one-party rule, or 4) the incumbents unconstitutionally closed the legislature and rewrote the rules in their favor, then the regime is a dictatorship.* This rule is operationalized by a combination of two variables. The PARTY variable is coded as follows:

$$\text{PARTY} = \begin{cases} 0 \text{ if there were no parties or (3) applies} \\ 1 \text{ if there was one party or (3) applies} \\ 2 \text{ if there were more than two parties} \end{cases}$$

The INCUMB variable serves to apply sub-rule (4) to the cases where there were more than two parties. This variable is

$$\text{INCUMB} = \begin{cases} 1 \text{ if (4) applies} \\ 0 \text{ otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Hence, the "party" rule disqualifies a regime as democratic if PARTY = 0 or PARTY = 1 or PARTY = 2 and INCUMB = 1. As shown below, the absence of opposition is the most frequent reason for classifying regimes as dictatorships.

These three rules appear to us to be non-controversial, and they are easy to apply. The first thing we learned from applying them is that the great majority of cases are unambiguously classified by these three rules. There is, however, one particular class of regimes that could not be classified one way or another.

3. Botswana and the Type II Error Rule

Thus far we have classified as democracies regimes in which the chief executive and the legislature are elected in multi-party elections. But we do not know if all regimes that satisfy these criteria are in fact democracies.

Consider Botswana. Government offices in Botswana are filled by elections, more than one party competes, there is little repression and no exceptional allegations of fraud. Hence, by the rules introduced thus far, Botswana is a democracy, and, indeed, it is generally considered to be one. Yet, the same party has ruled Botswana since independence, always controlling an overwhelming majority in the legislature. Thus, the question arises whether elections are not held in Botswana only because the ruling party is certain to win them and whether the ruling party would yield office if it ever lost. These are not moot questions: looking into the future, a specialist on this country speculates that "The resulting conflict could well force the BDP to choose between losing in parliamentary elections and abandoning elections as a method of leadership selection. Given the paternalistic attitude of the BDP from President Masire down, the latter choice would not be surprising" (Holm 1988, 208). Hence, if democracy is a system in which elections are held even if the opposition has a chance to win and in which the winners can assume office, then the observable evidence is not sufficient to classify Botswana one way or another.

Botswana is an ideal type: no constraints on the opposition, little visible repression, no apparent fraud. But the issue is more general. If the same party or coalition of parties won every single election from some time in the past until it was deposed by force or until now we do not know if it would have held elections when facing the prospect of losing, or if it would have yielded office had it in fact lost. We must thus decide which way to err: whether we prefer to commit the error of excluding

from democracies systems that are in fact democracies (Type I) or of including as democracies systems that are not in fact democratic (Type II). Err we must: the question is which way.

In some cases, either antecedent or subsequent events did provide additional information. In the United Kingdom, we know that Conservatives lost elections in the past and allowed their opponents to assume office. In Japan, after a long tenure in office the incumbent party finally lost elections and allowed the opposition to assume office. Since this is the only information we have, we use it—not without a leap of inference—to conclude that these regimes are or were democratic. The same is true when we know that the incumbents unconstitutionally prevented the opposition from winning elections or assuming office. In all these cases, we use this information retroactively. This is clearly not a very satisfactory solution: one might easily imagine that even if the incumbents were willing to allow a peaceful alternation in office later on, they might not have been willing to tolerate it earlier or, conversely, that even if they suppressed the opposition later on, they might have not done so earlier. But this is the only information we have: we do not observe what would have happened. The only alternative would be to attempt to assess the degree of repression, intimidation, or fraud for each election but, in our view, such assessments cannot be made in a reliable way.

Japan is a paradigmatic case of a long tenure in office that ended with a lawful alternation. The LDP was in office continually until the last election. Yet when the incumbents finally lost, they allowed the opposition to assume office. The same was true in Mauritius, the Bahamas, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and Solomon Islands. In all these countries the same party stayed in power for at least two terms, yet, eventually it lost an election and gave up office peacefully. We use this information retroactively: whenever a ruling party eventually suffered an electoral defeat and allowed the opposition to assume office, the regime is classified as democratic for the entire period this party was in power under the same rules. Alternation thus overrides the party rule: In Jamaica at one point, one party controlled all the seats in the legislature. Yet it lost the subsequent election and relinquished office. We therefore consider Jamaica to have been democratic even during the period of one-party rule.

We already discussed cases in which incumbents, facing the prospect of an electoral defeat or having actually been defeated, unconstitutionally closed the legislature, introduced a state of emergency, and rewrote the rules in their own favor. In such cases, we evoke the rule about the consolidation of incumbent advantage and classify the regime as authoritarian during the entire period before the openly dictatorial interregnum. In South Korea, President Park won the 1963 elections, and had he not instituted a dictatorial rule nine years later, we would never have known if he was ready to ever relinquish office. A Korean student of military politics (Kim Se Jin, cited by Han 1988, 275) commented with regard to the 1963 elections that "Park's victory was in fact a blessing for the future of democracy in Korea. Had the military lost, it can be safely assumed that the military would have ignored the electoral outcome and continued to rule even though such rule would have meant a

total destruction of constitutionalism." But Park did close the Congress later and changed the rules, and we use this information to infer that he would not have been ready to yield office during the preceding nine years.

Even when incumbents hold elections only because they expect to win, they sometimes make mistakes. They hold an election and lose. Then they have to decide whether to accept the popular verdict or override it. They can revert to a post-election fraud: Somoza is purported to have said to his electoral opponent, "You poor s.o.b., perhaps you won the voting, but I won the counting," a recipe apparently applied by PRI in 1988. Blatant fraud constitutes prima facie evidence that the incumbents were not predisposed to permit a lawful alternation in office. Or they can publish voting results and still not allow the opposition to assume office.

Yet, to return to Botswana, in some cases history has not been kind enough to provide even the information that we have for Japan or Malaysia: all we know is that the incumbents always win. Presumably, we would want to think that if Botswana is like Japan, it should be considered democratic, but if it is like Malaysia, it should be considered authoritarian. But we do not know if Botswana is like Japan or like Malaysia. Elections may be held in Botswana only because the ruling party is sure to win, but how are we to know what would happen if they expected to lose or in fact lost?

To provide more intuition, consider Turkey between 1950 and 1960, another period generally considered democratic. The Democratic Party (DP) came to power in 1950, holding 83.8 per cent, of seats. It won in 1954 with 93.0 per cent of seats and in 1957 with 69.5 per cent until it was ousted by the military in 1960. After the 1957 elections "the DP responded to its declining support by resorting to increasingly authoritarian measures against the opposition. . . . The last straw in the long chain of authoritarian measures was the establishment by the government party in April 1960 of a parliamentary committee of inquiry to investigate the 'subversive' activities of the RPP (main opposition party). . . . " (Ozbudun 1988, 200). Would the DP have yielded power peacefully had it not been deposed by force?

We decided to take a cautious stance, that is, to avoid Type II errors. While examining the histories of particular countries, we were impressed that the dream of many political elites is to rule perpetually and to rule with consent: politicians are just PRIstas by nature. The Mexican system has been the ideal of many politicians in Latin America and, until the recent defeat of the LDP, the Japanese system in Asia. Attempts at creating a hegemonic system, in which some or even all opposition would be allowed but the ruling party would not be threatened with losing office, have been made at various moments in Botswana, Gambia, Senegal,[9] Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia,[10] Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras,[11] Guyana, Bangladesh, Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan,[12] Philippines,[13] South Korea,[14] Singapore, Turkey, Taiwan, and most likely many other countries where the evidence is not that direct. Indeed, it seems that many dictatorships and some democracies are just failed attempts at creating a Mexico or Japan: sometimes the ruling party overdoes it, and the result is a naked dictatorship, sometimes the ruling party is forced to compromise, and the result is democracy.

Suppose that politicians want power but also want to be admired and adored. Ideally, they would hold office as a result of elections. Yet the hunger for power overwhelms other motivations: they prefer to keep office by force rather than lose it. Incumbents have some notion of how likely it is that they would win the next election. If they think they will win, they hold it. If they think they will lose, they do not. If these assumptions are correct, then the observed sample of regimes that hold regular elections is biased in favor of "democracies," that is, regimes that look like democracies, in the sense that they permit contestation and fill offices by elections, yet are not democracies in the sense that the opposition has a chance to assume office as a result of elections. Among the observed democracies, there are some that hold elections only because the opposition cannot win and some in which the opposition would not be allowed to assume office had it won. Hence, holding elections is not sufficient to classify a regime as democratic.

We thus need one more rule, *Type II Error*. This rule is applicable only to cases which pass the previous three rules and in which in the immediate past either the incumbents held office by virtue of elections for more than two terms or initially held office without being elected. If these conditions are satisfied and if the incumbents subsequently held but never lost elections, we consider such regimes authoritarian.

In making this decision, we are buttressed by an empirical observation. Among those cases in which alternation in office via elections did occur, except for some Caribbean islands, the share of seats of the incumbents was almost always smaller than two-thirds. Hence, the conditional probability that the seat share is larger than two-thirds given that alternation occurs is very small. Since alternations via elections are generally less frequent than seat shares in excess of two-thirds, Bayes's rule implies that the conditional probability that an alternation occurs given that seat share is larger than two-thirds is also very small: 12.1 per cent.[15] Countries in which one party wins an overwhelming share of seats are not likely to be democracies: this rule should classify regimes accurately about 7/8 of the time.

While there are some countries where the ruling party had been winning by very large margins and yet subsequently left office via elections, the striking finding is that we could have used this ex post criterion to eliminate almost all the cases in which the same party continually held office. If we were to decide that a regime in which the ruling party always wins more than two-thirds of seats is not democratic, Malaysia (where the share of seats after 1971 was always larger than 68.1). would fail by this criterion as well as Botswana (Seats>75.0), Egypt after 1976 (Seats>75.0), Gambia (Seats>69.7), Senegal after 1978 (Seats>82.0), South Africa (Seats>66.6). Mexico (Seats>72.2 or fraud in 1988), Guyana (Seats start at 56.6, go to 83.1), Singapore (Seats=74.1 in 1965, all or all but one after 1968).[16] In South Korea, the share of seats fell from 74.3 in 1967 to 55.4 in 1971, sufficient to prompt President Park to dissolve the Congress and when the legislature was opened again in 1973, the ruling party controlled 66.7 per cent.

The cases distinguished by the Type II Error rule constitute systematic error. Those readers who prefer to err in the other direction can reclassify them. But the error is unavoidable.

4. Summary of Rules.

A regime was classified as a democracy if it did not fail under any of the four rules. That is, to be classified as a democracy a regime had to pass all the four criteria. For convenience, we restate our rules. A regime is classified as a dictatorship during a particular year if at least one of these conditions holds:

Rule 1. "Executive Selection." The Chief Executive is not elected.

Rule 2. "Legislative Selection." The Legislature is not elected.

Rule 3: "Party." There is no more than one party. Specifically, this rule applies if 1) there were no parties, or 2) there was only one party, or 3) the current term in office ended in the establishment of a non-party or one-party rule, or 4) the incumbents unconstitutionally closed the legislature and rewrote the rules in their favor.

Rule 4. "Type II Error". A regime passes the previous three rules, the incumbents will have or already have had continuously held office by virtue of elections for more than two terms or without being elected for any duration, and until today, or the time when they were overthrown, they have not lost an election.

Finally, a word is needed about our timing rules. In all cases of regime transitions, we code the regime that prevailed at the end of the year, even if it came to power on December 31, for example, Nigeria in 1983. Transitions to authoritarianism are signalled by a coup d'état. Transitions to democracy are dated by the time of the inauguration of the newly elected government, not of the election. In the few cases, like those of the Dominican Republic in 1963, where a democratic regime lasted six months, or Bolivia in 1979, where the situation changed several times, the information about regimes that began and ended within the same year is lost.

Our data set currently covers 141 countries between 1950 or the year of independence and 1990. Altogether, during this period we found 239 regimes: 106 democracies and 133 dictatorships. They are listed, by country and period, in Appendix I.

Table 1 shows the number of cases in the sample that was disqualified as democracy by each of the respective rules alone and by their combination:

5. Distinguishing among Democracies and Dictatorships

Obviously, neither democracies nor dictatorships are all the same. Thus, further distinctions are required.

Unfortunately, systematic institutional descriptions of democracies are scarce. Our data set includes only one way of distinguishing among democracies: by the form of executive-legislative relations.

Given the recent popularity of this issue, we classified democracies as parliamen-

tary, mixed, or presidential. The variable which summarizes this information is INST, which assumes the values of

INST =
0 if DICTATORSHIP
1 if PARLIAMENTARY
2 if MIXED
3 if PRESIDENTIAL

These values are defined as follows. Systems in which governments must enjoy the confidence of the legislature are "parliamentary;" systems in which they serve at the authority of the elected president are "presidential;" systems in which governments respond both to legislative assemblies and elected presidents are "mixed."

In parliamentary systems the legislative assembly can dismiss the government, while under presidential systems it cannot.[17] Some institutional arrangements, however, do not fit either pure type: they are "premier-presidential," "semi-presidential," or "mixed," according to different terminologies. In such systems, the president is elected for a fixed term and has some executive powers but governments serve at the discretion of the parliament. These "mixed" systems are not homogeneous: most lean closer to parliamentarism in so far as the government is responsible to the legislature; others, notably Portugal between 1976 and 1981, grant the president the power to appoint and dismiss governments (Shugart and Carey 1992).

TABLE 1
Number of Cases in the Sample Classified as Dictatorship on the Basis of:

EXSELEC		1464
LEGSELEC		940
of which	NO LEGISLATURE	789
	NON ELECTIVE	151
PARTY		2250
of which	NO PARTY	651
	ONE PARTY	1599
INCUMB		76
TYPE II ERROR		389
EXSELEC AND PARTY		1244
EXSELEC AND LEGSELEC		897
LEGSELEC AND PARTY		767
EXSELEC, LEGSELEC AND PARTY		731
TOTAL DICTATORSHIPS		2990
TOTAL DEMOCRACIES		1740
TOTAL REGIME YEARS		4730

While we observed 106 democratic regimes, three countries changed institutional arrangements without breaking the continuity of democracy: Brazil twice and France once. Hence, altogether there were 109 institutional types of democracies. Of these, 55 were parliamentarian, 8 mixed, and 46 presidential. Of the total 4730 years, 2990 (63%) were spent under authoritarian regimes, 1094 (23%) under parliamentary democracies, 145 (3%) under mixed democratic regimes, and 501 (11%) under presidential democracies.

To distinguish among dictatorships, we developed three alternative typologies and examined the relations among them.

First, some dictatorships are "mobilizing" while others are "exclusionary." The former organize permanent political participation through a single or dominant party and regularly hold acts of popular mobilization which they call "elections." They require individuals to manifest loyalty to the regime by participating. The latter form of dictatorship may or may not hold elections but they do not promote any kind of political participation of the masses. They only require that individuals not engage in acts oriented against the regime.

Our variable is MOBILIZE, defined as follows:

$$
\text{MOBILIZE} = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if REGIME} = 0 \text{ (Democracy)} \\ 1 & \text{if PARTY}{>}0 \text{ AND (LEGSELEC} = 2 \text{ OR EXSELEC} = 1 \text{ OR } 2) \\ 2 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}
$$

Altogether we observed 146 mobilizing and 127 exclusionary dictatorships. Of the 2990 dictatorial years, 1974 (66%) were spent under mobilizing dictatorships and 1016 (34%) under exclusionary ones.

Secondly, we distinguish regimes according to the number of *formal* powers: executives, legislatures, and parties. Our intuition is derived from Machiavelli: Whenever decision making is collective, there must exist some rules organizing the functioning of the government (Bobbio 1989). Hence, even if the legislature is a rubber stamp or the chief executive obeys dictates of the single party, the mere existence of such bodies means that there must exist some formal rules allocating functions and specifying procedures. We are not claiming, as Kavka (1986) would, that divided governments are necessarily limited: under dictatorship some of these bodies may have no autonomous power and do not provide checks and balances. But the existence of rules distinguishes such regimes from monolithic dictatorships, in which the operation of government need not be organized by any formal rules.

The variable that classifies regimes according to the division of formal powers is DIVIDE, defined as follows:

$$
\text{DIVIDE} = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if REGIME} = 0 \text{ (Democracy)} \\ 1 & \text{if a dictatorship has at least two powers,} \\ 2 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases}
$$

where "powers" are always the chief executive and, if they exist, legislatures or

parties. Hence, a "divided" dictatorship is one that in addition to the chief executive has a legislature or a party. "Monolithic" dictatorships have no legislatures and no parties. We observed 166 divided and 91 monolithic dictatorships, with 2390 (80%) years spent under the former and 600 (20%) under the latter.

Finally, another distinction, in the spirit of Montesquieu, is whether the dictatorship codifies and announces the rules it intends to apply to its subjects or governs without such rules. In the first case, rule is exercised *by* law, whereas in the second case it is exercised by the will, or whim, of the despot. Our variable is LAWS, and it simply distinguishes between dictatorships which have or do not have legislatures:

$$\text{LAWS} = \begin{cases} 0 \text{ if REGIME} = 0 \text{ (Democracy)} \\ 1 \text{ if REGIME} = 1 \text{ (Dictatorship) and LEGSELEC} = 2 \\ 2 \text{ otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Note that we require that the legislature be elected rather than appointed. One hundred sixty dictatorships had legislatures and 138 did not, with 2050 (69%) years spent under the former and 940 (31 %) under the latter.

The two last distinctions, between divided versus monolithic systems of government and between rule by law versus rule by will, add up to Montesquieu's differentiation between despotism, the government "in which a single person directs everything by his own will and caprice," and monarchy, the government "by fixed and established laws." The DIVIDE classification indicates whether relations within the government are regulated by laws; the LAWS variable indicates if the relations between the government and its subjects are so regulated. As one might expect, the two classifications are not independent:

TABLE 2
Classification of Authoritarian Regimes According to LAWS and DIVIDED

Laws:	Democracy	Legislature	No Legislature	Total
Divided:				
Democracy	1740	0	0	1740
Divided	0	2050	340	2390
Monolithic	0	0	600	600
Total	1740	2050	940	4730

There are thus 2050 regime years during which dictatorships have legislatures, 340 in which a chief executive rules in the presence of a party but not legislature, and 600 years in which the chief executive rules in the absence of either a legislature and a party.

In Appendix I, the dictatorships that have legislatures are listed as "bureaucracies" and those that do not as "autocracies." Bureaucracies are dictatorships that have some internal rules for operating the government, at least rules regulating the com-

petence of the chief executive vis-à-vis the legislature, and some external rules, namely, laws. To put it differently, bureaucracies are dictatorships that are institutionalized. Operationally, bureaucracies are dictatorships that have legislatures: Since all regimes have chief executives, the existence of the legislature implies that they must have some rules for regulating relations among different organs of government. In turn, the existence of legislature implies that rule is exercised by law, that is, that people know the rules which dictators at least intend to enforce at a particular moment and, moreover, that these rules are universalistic in intent. In turn, autocracies are despotic or, in the language of Linz (1975) "sultanistic," regimes, which have neither internal rules of operation nor publicly announced universalistic intentions. Operationally, autocracies are systems in which there is a chief executive, and perhaps a single party, but no legislature. Yet some of the autocracies and bureaucracies that result from the application of these rules are, in fact, transitional regimes. We corrected for these regimes in the list presented in Appendix I.

6. What We Did Not Include.

This conception of democracy in terms of contested elections for executive and legislative offices is clearly minimalist. Hence, it may be useful to make explicit at least some of the features that we did not consider when classifying regimes as democracies or dictatorships.

First, we do not include in our conception of democracy any social or economic aspects of a society. Many scholars (Weffort 1992) and, as survey evidence from many countries demonstrates, most citizens perceive social or economic equality as an essential feature of democracy. Yet the questions whether, on the one hand, contested elections tend to generate equality in the social or economic realm (Jackman 1974, Muller 1988), and, on the other hand, whether economic equality makes democracy more durable (Muller, 1988), are just too interesting to be resolved by a definitional fiat. We prefer to define democracy narrowly and to study its causes and consequences.

Secondly, we do not think that accountability, responsiveness, or representation should be treated as definitional features of democracy. When Dahl (1971, 1) says that "a key characteristic of a democracy is the continued responsiveness of the government to the preferences of its citizens. . . . " or when Riker (1965, 31) asserts that "democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are fully responsible to the ruled. . . . " (Also Schmitter and Karl 1991, 76, Inkeles 1990, 4), they mean either that when, and only when, a government is responsive, the regime is democratic regardless of anything else, or that if a system is democratic by some other criteria, then the government will behave responsibly. The standard way of thinking follows Dahl, who lists several conditions that are necessary and sufficient for governments to be responsive. And it is the presence of these conditions, not responsiveness, that defines a regime as democratic: the statement that "if these conditions hold, then governments will be responsive" is a theorem not a definition.[18] Moreover, this theorem is most likely false unless additional conditions are specified: first, the very notion of "responsiveness" or "accountability" is muddled (Stokes

1994) and, second, probably only some otherwise democratic governments are "accountable" in any intuitive sense of this term.[19] Hence, the question of whether regimes characterized by freedom of opinion, widespread participation, and repeated elections are in fact responsive is best left open for investigation rather than resolved by definition.

Thirdly, while some degree of political freedom is a sine qua non condition for contestation, democracy cannot be sufficiently defined in terms of "liberties" or "freedom," or human rights, which underlie the Gastil (1980, 1990) or the Freedom House scales. The American conception of "freedom" perceives it as a condition, not as a predicate of actions: people *are* free, even if they never *exercise* their freedom. Thus U.S. citizens are free to form political parties; yet they almost never form them. They are certainly free to vote, yet about one half does not. From our point of view, to paraphrase Rosa Luxemburg, the point is not to be free but to act freely. And acting freely in the political realm entails enabling conditions, institutional as well as social. While democracy is a system of political rights—these are definitional—it is not a system that necessarily furnishes the conditions for an effective exercise of these rights.[20] Thus assessing "freedom" or "liberty" without determining the conditions enabling its exercise, easily leads to ideologically motivated labels that measure similarity to the United States rather than the actual exercise of political rights.

Fourthly, we do not include participation as a definitional feature of democracy. In Dahl's conception of "polyarchy," both contestation and participation are necessary to classify a regime as democratic. Indeed, Dahl sets the participation threshold so high that, by his criterion, the United States does not qualify as a democracy until the 1950s. Vanhanen (1992) sets it lower, but still disqualifies as democracies regimes in which elections are contested but participation is very limited. Yet we want to distinguish regimes in which at least some, but not necessarily all, conflicting interests contest elections. Empirical evidence from Western Europe (Przeworski 1975) as well as from Latin America (Coppedge 1992) indicates that the distribution of votes across parties changes only slowly after each extension of suffrage, implying that even when suffrage is highly restricted, divergent interests are being represented. Moreover, we want to be able to test theories about the effect of participation on the performance and the durability of democracy (Huntington 1968, O'Donnell 1973, Huntington and Nelson 1976). Using any threshold would thus produce a censored sample and a bias we prefer to avoid.[21]

Fifth, as long the chief executive and the legislature were elected in contested elections, we did not delve further into civil-military relations. Several distinctions could be made here. In some regimes that we classified as democracies, civilian institutions do not control the military who, in turn, do not intervene in politics. In other democracies, civilian politicians use the threat of military intervention in strategic interactions among themselves ("praetorian politics"). Finally, in some democracies—Honduras or Thailand are prototypes—civilian rule is but a thin veneer over military power, exercised by defrocked generals. Yet as long as office holders are elected in elections which someone else has some chance to win and as

long as they do not use the incumbency to eliminate the opposition, the fact that the chief executive is a general or a lackey of generals does not add any relevant information. Most generals who get elected only because they are generals are eliminated by other rules. Some probably sneak through: there is no measurement without error.

Finally, several countries were ravaged by civil wars: El Salvador, Guatemala, Uganda, and Sudan are obvious cases. If a regime is a set of institutions that regulate the relation between the civil society and the state (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 73), then there can be no regime where there is no state. To a varying degree, the very question of whether the regime is or is not democratic turns out to be irrelevant. Voting typically occurs in only some parts of the country, and legislatures frequently turn out to be ineffective.[22] We considered excluding such periods altogether. Yet the degree to which a civil war disrupts the normal functioning of the political system is difficult to assess. We preferred to code internal conflicts under a separate variable.

Thus, to repeat, our approach is minimalist. We want to be able to examine empirically, rather than decide by definition, whether the repeated holding of contested elections is associated with other features at times attributed to democracy: social and economic equality, control by citizens over politicians, effective exercise of political rights, widespread participation, or freedom from arbitrary violence.

7. Alternative Approaches

Conceptually, our scale is close to those of Bollen (1980), and Coppedge and Reinicke (1990). Bollen used four indicators: 1) whether elections were fair, 2) whether the chief executive was elected, 3) whether the legislature was elected, and 4) whether the legislature was effective. Coppedge and Reinicke coded answers to three questions: 1) whether elections present voters with a meaningful choice, 2) whether the outcome is affected by significant fraud, and 3) whether all, some, or no political organizations are banned. We used Bollen's second and third dimension and Coppedge's and Reinicke's third dimension. We did experiment with Banks's measure of legislative effectiveness but found his assessments too unreliable. In turn, allegations of fraud are even more frequent than its actual occurrence, and, by all indications, some fraud is a ubiquitous phenomenon in democracies. Screaming "fraud" is just a standard repertoire of democratic competition: indeed, there are cases where the opposition withdraws from competition claiming that elections will not be fair. We concluded that there is no way to assess the validity of such allegations in a standardized way: for example, the opposition decided not to contest the 1984 Nicaraguan elections, but some of its leaders expressed regret once they discovered that they won the subsequent elections in 1990. Hence, while our approach is theoretically akin to those of Bollen and Coppedge and Reinicke, we tried to the extent possible to avoid having to make subjective judgments by relying only on observables. Gurr's (1990) measure in POLITY II is conceptually somewhat different, since it considers the limited character of the government by coding

"constraints on the chief executive." His assessments, however, are not easy to reproduce.

While we have been careful to specify our understanding of democracy and to distinguish it from some rival conceptions, it appears that from a practical point of view alternative measures of democracy generate highly similar results. The dimensions used to assess whether or to what extent is a particular regime democratic seem to make little difference.[23] To cite Inkeles [1990, 5–6], "the indicators most commonly selected to measure democratic systems generally form a notably coherent syndrome, achieving high reliability as measurement scales. . . . A testimonial to the robustness of the underlying common form and structure of the democratic systems is found in the high degree of agreement produced by the classification of nations as democratic or not, even when democracy is measured in somewhat different ways by different analysts. . . . Thus Coppedge and Reinicke, following a quite independent theoretical model, end up with a scale of polyarchy which correlates .94 with Gastil's civil liberties measure for some 170 countries in 1985. Gurr's measure performs similarly in relation to Bollen's. . . . his ratings of 118 countries circa 1965 correlate .83 with Bollen's measure and .89 with a score combining Gastil's separate measures of political and civil liberties for 113 countries in 1985."

Our measure is no exception. The Copedge-Reinecke scale for 1978 predicts 92 per cent of our dichotomous regimes, the Bollen 1965 scale predicts 85 per cent, while the Gurr scales of Autocracy and Democracy for 1950–1986 jointly predict 91 per cent. The Gastil scale of political liberties, covering the period from 1972 to 1990, predicts 93.2 percent of our classification; his scale of civil liberties predicts 91.5 percent; and the two scales jointly predict 94.2 of our regimes.[24] Hence, our classification is by no means idiosyncratic. Different views of democracy, including those that entail highly subjective judgments, yield a robust classification.

The main difference between our approach and the alternatives is that we use a nominal classification, rather than a ratio scale. We believe that while some regimes are more democratic than others, unless offices are contested, they should not be considered democratic. The analogy with the proverbial pregnancy is thus that while democracy can be more or less advanced, one cannot be half-democratic: there is a natural zero point. Note that Bollen and Jackman (1989) are confused: it is one thing to argue that some democracies are more democratic than others and another to argue that democracy is a continuous feature over all regimes, that is, that one can distinguish the degree of "democracy" for any pair of regimes.[25]

Bollen and Jackman (1989, 612) argue that difficulties in classifying some cases speak in favor of using continuous scales: "Dichotomizing democracy . . . ," in their view, "blurs distinctions between borderline cases." Yet why are there "borderline cases"? Suppose we have defined democracy and not-democracy, established operational rules, and found that some cases cannot be unambiguously classified by these rules. Does this mean that "there are" borderline cases and that democracy is thus "inherently continuous"? And should we stick the cases which cannot be unambiguously classified, given our rules, into an "intermediate" category, half way between democracy and dictatorship? This view strikes us as ludicrous. If we cannot classify

some cases given our rules, all this means is that either we have bad rules or we have insufficient information to apply them.

We have already seen that some "borderline cases" constitute systematic while others random errors. Systematic errors can be treated by explicit rules, such as our Type II Error rule, and their consequences can be examined statistically. There are some regimes which cannot be unambiguously classified on the basis of all the evidence produced by history. Since history produces a biased sample of democracies—sampling is endogenous (Pudney 1989)—we must revert to counterfactual judgments (Przeworski and Limongi 1992). In such cases we must decide which error we prefer to avoid: classifying as democracies regimes that may not be ones or rejecting as democracies regimes that may in fact be ones. Yet, once this decision is made, the classification is unambiguous. Mexico is not a regime intermediate between democracy and dictatorship, not a "borderline case." It is a regime in which the ruling party allows some contestation but always wins: either a democracy or a dictatorship depending in which direction one wants to err systematically.

In turn, some errors random with regard to the rules will remain, and we will have to live with them. But errors are errors, not "intermediate" categories. And there are no grounds to think that a finer classification is more precise. A finer scale generates smaller errors but more of them, a rougher scale generates larger errors but fewer of them. As we show in Appendix II, if errors of a larger magnitude are less likely, the dichotomous scale will have a lower expected error.

In sum, we think that our classification has some advantages. First, it is grounded in theory. Second, it is based exclusively on observed facts. Third, it separates cases subject to systematic error. Fourth, it contains less random error than polychotomous scales. Finally, it covers every year in 141 countries during forty-one years.

APPENDIX I
Classification of Political Regimes, 1950–1990

COUNTRY	REGIME	ENTRY	EXIT
Algeria	Bureaucracy	1962	1964
	Autocracy	1965	1976
	Bureaucracy	1977	1990
Angola	Autocracy	1975	1979
	Bureaucracy	1980	1990
Benin	Bureaucracy	1960	1964
	Autocracy	1965	1978
	Bureaucracy	1979	1989
	Autocracy	1990	1990
Botswana	Bureaucracy	1966	1990
Burkina Faso	Bureaucracy	1960	1965
	Autocracy	1966	1969
	Bureaucracy	1970	1973
	Autocracy	1974	1977
	Bureaucracy	1978	1979
	Autocracy	1980	1990
Burundi	Bureaucracy	1962	1965
	Autocracy	1966	1981
	Bureaucracy	1982	1986
	Autocracy	1987	1990
Cameroon	Bureaucracy	1960	1970
	Autocracy	1971	1972
	Bureaucracy	1973	1990
Cape Verde Island	Bureaucracy	1975	1990
Central African Republic	Bureaucracy	1960	1965
	Autocracy	1966	1986
	Bureaucracy	1987	1990
Chad	Bureaucracy	1960	1974
	Autocracy	1975	1990
Comoro Island	Autocracy	1975	1977
	Bureaucracy	1978	1990
Congo	Presidentialism	1960	1962
	Bureaucracy	1963	1976
	Autocracy	1977	1978
	Bureaucracy	1979	1990
Djibouti	Bureaucracy	1977	1990
Egypt	Bureaucracy	1950	1990
Ethiopia	Autocracy	1950	1956
	Bureaucracy	1957	1973
	Autocracy	1974	1986
	Bureaucracy	1987	1990
Gabon	Bureaucracy	1960	1990
Gambia	Bureaucracy	1965	1990

APPENDIX I (Continued)
Classification of Political Regimes, 1950–1990

COUNTRY	REGIME	ENTRY	EXIT
Ghana	Bureaucracy	1957	1964
	Autocracy	1965	1969
	Parliamentarism	1970	1971
	Autocracy	1972	1978
	Presidentialism	1979	1980
	Autocracy	1981	1990
Guinea	Bureaucracy	1958	1983
	Autocracy	1984	1990
Guinea-Bisau	Bureaucracy	1974	1990
Ivory Coast	Bureaucracy	1960	1990
Kenya	Bureaucracy	1963	1990
Lesotho	Bureaucracy	1966	1969
	Autocracy	1970	1990
Liberia	Bureaucracy	1950	1979
	Autocracy	1980	1984
	Bureaucracy	1985	1989
	Autocracy	1990	1990
Madagasgar	Bureaucracy	1960	1971
	Autocracy	1972	1976
	Bureaucracy	1977	1990
Malawi	Bureaucracy	1964	1990
Mali	Bureaucracy	1960	1967
	Autocracy	1968	1981
	Bureaucracy	1982	1990
Mauritania	Bureaucracy	1960	1977
	Autocracy	1978	1990
Mauritius	Parliamentarism	1968	1990
Morocco	Autocracy	1956	1962
	Bureaucracy	1963	1964
	Autocracy	1965	1969
	Bureaucracy	1970	1971
	Autocracy	1972	1976
	Bureaucracy	1977	1990
Mozambique	Autocracy	1975	1990
Niger	Bureaucracy	1960	1973
	Autocracy	1974	1990
Nigeria	Parliamentarism	1960	1965
	Autocracy	1966	1978
	Presidentialism	1979	1982
	Autocracy	1983	1990
Rwanda	Bureaucracy	1962	1972
	Autocracy	1973	1980
	Bureaucracy	1981	1990
Senegal	Bureaucracy	1960	1990
Seychelles	Bureaucracy	1976	1990
Sierra Leone	Parliamentarism	1961	1966
	Autocracy	1967	1967
	Bureaucracy	1968	1990

APPENDIX I (Continued)
Classification of Political Regimes, 1950–1990

COUNTRY	REGIME	ENTRY	EXIT
Somalia	Mixed	1960	1968
	Autocracy	1969	1978
	Bureaucracy	1979	1990
South Africa	Bureaucracy	1950	1990
Sudan	Parliamentarism	1956	1957
	Autocracy	1958	1964
	Parliamentarism	1965	1968
	Bureaucracy	1969	1984
	Autocracy	1985	1985
	Parliamentarism	1986	1988
	Autocracy	1989	1990
Swaziland	Bureaucracy	1968	1972
	Autocracy	1973	1977
	Bureaucracy	1978	1990
Tanzania	Bureaucracy	1961	1990
Togo	Bureaucracy	1960	1966
	Autocracy	1967	1978
	Bureaucracy	1979	1990
Tunisia	Bureaucracy	1956	1990
Uganda	Bureaucracy	1962	1970
	Autocracy	1971	1979
	Presidentialism	1980	1984
	Autocracy	1985	1990
Zaire	Autocracy	1960	1960
	Bureaucracy	1961	1962
	Autocracy	1963	1969
	Bureaucracy	1970	1990
Zambia	Bureaucracy	1964	1990
Zimbabwe	Bureaucracy	1965	1990
Bahamas	Parliamentarism	1973	1990
Barbados	Parliamentarism	1966	1990
Canada	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Costa Rica	Presidentialism	1950	1990
Dominican Republic	Bureaucracy	1950	1961
	Autocracy	1962	1965
	Presidentialism	1966	1990
El Salvador	Bureaucracy	1950	1959
	Autocracy	1960	1960
	Bureaucracy	1961	1983
	Presidentialism	1984	1990
Grenada	Parliamentarism	1974	1978
	Autocracy	1979	1983
	Parliamentarism	1984	1990

APPENDIX I (Continued)
Classification of Political Regimes, 1950–1990

COUNTRY	REGIME	ENTRY	EXIT
Guatemala	Presidentialism	1950	1953
	Bureaucracy	1954	1957
	Presidentialism	1958	1962
	Autocracy	1963	1965
	Presidentialism	1966	1981
	Bureaucracy	1982	1985
	Presidentialism	1986	1990
Haiti	Bureaucracy	1950	1985
	Autocracy	1986	1989
	Bureaucracy	1990	1990
Honduras	Bureaucracy	1950	1955
	Autocracy	1956	1956
	Presidentialism	1957	1962
	Autocracy	1963	1964
	Bureaucracy	1965	1970
	Presidentialism	1971	1971
	Autocracy	1972	1981
	Presidentialism	1982	1990
Jamaica	Parliamentarism	1962	1990
Mexico	Bureaucracy	1950	1990
Nicaragua	Bureaucracy	1950	1970
	Autocracy	1971	1971
	Bureaucracy	1972	1978
	Autocracy	1979	1983
	Presidentialism	1984	1990
Panama	Presidentialism	1950	1950
	Bureaucracy	1951	1951
	Presidentialism	1952	1967
	Autocracy	1968	1977
	Bureaucracy	1978	1990
Trinidad & Tobago	Parliamentarism	1962	1990
U.S.A.	Presidentialism	1950	1990
Argentina	Presidentialism	1950	1954
	Autocracy	1955	1957
	Presidentialism	1958	1961
	Autocracy	1962	1962
	Presidentialism	1963	1965
	Autocracy	1966	1972
	Presidentialism	1973	1975
	Autocracy	1976	1982
	Presidentialism	1983	1990
Bolivia	Bureaucracy	1950	1950
	Autocracy	1951	1955
	Bureaucracy	1956	1963
	Autocracy	1964	1978
	Presidentialism	1979	1979
	Autocracy	1980	1981
	Presidentialism	1982	1990

APPENDIX I (Continued)
Classification of Political Regimes, 1950–1990

COUNTRY	REGIME	ENTRY	EXIT
Brazil	Presidentialism	1950	1960
	Mixed	1961	1962
	Presidentialism	1963	1963
	Bureaucracy	1964	1967
	Autocracy	1968	1969
	Bureaucracy	1970	1978
	Presidentialism	1979	1990
Chile	Presidentialism	1950	1972
	Autocracy	1973	1989
	Presidentialism	1990	1990
Colombia	Bureaucracy	1950	1953
	Autocracy	1954	1957
	Presidentialism	1958	1990
Ecuador	Presidentialism	1950	1962
	Autocracy	1963	1967
	Bureaucracy	1968	1969
	Autocracy	1970	1978
	Presidentialism	1979	1990
Guyana	Bureaucracy	1966	1990
Paraguay	Bureaucracy	1950	1990
Peru	Bureaucracy	1950	1955
	Presidentialism	1956	1961
	Autocracy	1962	1962
	Presidentialism	1963	1967
	Autocracy	1968	1979
	Presidentialism	1980	1989
	Bureaucracy	1990	1990
Suriname	Parliamentarism	1975	1979
	Autocracy	1980	1986
	Bureaucracy	1987	1987
	Mixed	1988	1989
	Bureaucracy	1990	1990
Uruguay	Presidentialism	1950	1972
	Autocracy	1973	1984
	Presidentialism	1985	1990
Venezuela	Autocracy	1950	1951
	Bureaucracy	1952	1958
	Presidentialism	1959	1990
Bahrain	Autocracy	1971	1972
	Bureaucracy	1973	1974
	Autocracy	1975	1990
Bangladesh	Autocracy	1971	1971
	Bureaucracy	1972	1974
	Autocracy	1975	1978
	Bureaucracy	1979	1981
	Autocracy	1982	1985
	Presidentialism	1986	1990
China-PR	Autocracy	1950	1953
	Bureaucracy	1954	1990

APPENDIX I (Continued)
Classification of Political Regimes, 1950–1990

COUNTRY	REGIME	ENTRY	EXIT
India	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Indonesia	Autocracy	1950	1954
	Parliamentarism	1955	1956
	Bureaucracy	1957	1959
	Autocracy	1960	1970
	Bureaucracy	1971	1990
Iran	Bureaucracy	1950	1960
	Autocracy	1961	1962
	Bureaucracy	1963	1983
	Autocracy	1984	1990
Iraq	Autocracy	1950	1950
	Bureaucracy	1951	1957
	Autocracy	1958	1979
	Bureaucracy	1980	1990
Israel	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Japan	Parliamentarism	1952	1990
Jordan	Bureaucracy	1950	1965
	Autocracy	1966	1966
	Bureaucracy	1967	1973
	Autocracy	1974	1983
	Bureaucracy	1984	1984
	Autocracy	1985	1988
	Bureaucracy	1989	1990
Korea, South	Bureaucracy	1950	1959
	Parliamentarism	1960	1960
	Bureaucracy	1961	1971
	Autocracy	1972	1972
	Bureaucracy	1973	1987
	Presidentialism	1988	1990
Kuwait	Autocracy	1961	1962
	Bureaucracy	1963	1975
	Autocracy	1976	1980
	Bureaucracy	1981	1985
	Autocracy	1986	1990
Laos	Parliamentarism	1954	1958
	Bureaucracy	1959	1965
	Autocracy	1966	1966
	Bureaucracy	1967	1973
	Autocracy	1974	1990
Malaysia	Bureaucracy	1957	1968
	Autocracy	1969	1970
	Bureaucracy	1971	1990
Mongolia	Bureaucracy	1950	1990
Myanmar	Parliamentarism	1950	1957
	Autocracy	1958	1959
	Parliamentarism	1960	1961
	Autocracy	1962	1973
	Bureaucracy	1974	1987
	Autocracy	1988	1989
	Bureaucracy	1990	1990

APPENDIX I (Continued)
Classification of Political Regimes, 1950–1990

COUNTRY	REGIME	ENTRY	EXIT
Nepal	Autocracy	1950	1958
	Bureaucracy	1959	1959
	Autocracy	1960	1962
	Bureaucracy	1963	1990
Oman	Autocracy	1951	1990
Pakistan	Parliamentarism	1950	1955
	Bureaucracy	1956	1957
	Autocracy	1958	1961
	Bureaucracy	1962	1971
	Presidentialism	1972	1976
	Autocracy	1977	1984
	Bureaucracy	1985	1987
	Parliamentarism	1988	1990
Philippines	Presidentialism	1950	1964
	Bureaucracy	1965	1971
	Autocracy	1972	1977
	Bureaucracy	1978	1985
	Presidentialism	1986	1990
Quatar	Autocracy	1971	1990
Saudi Arabia	Autocracy	1950	1990
Singapore	Bureaucracy	1965	1990
Sri Lanka	Parliamentarism	1950	1976
	Bureaucracy	1977	1990
Syria	Bureaucracy	1950	1960
	Autocracy	1961	1969
	Bureaucracy	1970	1990
Taiwan	Bureaucracy	1950	1990
Thailand	Bureaucracy	1950	1956
	Autocracy	1957	1968
	Bureaucracy	1969	1970
	Autocracy	1971	1974
	Parliamentarism	1975	1975
	Autocracy	1976	1976
	Bureaucracy	1977	1982
	Parliamentarism	1983	1990
United Arab Emirates	Autocracy	1971	1990
Yemen Arab Republic	Autocracy	1967	1977
	Bureaucracy	1978	1990
Austria	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Belgium	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Bulgaria	Bureaucracy	1950	1989
	Parliamentarism	1990	1990
Czechoslovakia	Bureaucracy	1950	1989
	Parliamentarism	1990	1990
Denmark	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Finland	Mixed	1950	1990
France	Parliamentarism	1950	1957
	Mixed	1958	1990

APPENDIX I (Continued)
Classification of Political Regimes, 1950–1990

COUNTRY	REGIME	ENTRY	EXIT
Germany	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Greece	Parliamentarism	1950	1966
	Autocracy	1967	1970
	Bureaucracy	1971	1973
	Parliamentarism	1974	1990
Hungary	Bureaucracy	1950	1989
	Parliamentarism	1990	1990
Iceland	Mixed	1950	1990
Ireland	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Italy	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Luxembourg	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Malta	Parliamentarism	1964	1990
Netherlands	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Norway	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Poland	Bureaucracy	1950	1988
	Mixed	1989	1990
Portugal	Bureaucracy	1950	1975
	Mixed	1976	1990
Spain	Autocracy	1950	1976
	Parliamentarism	1977	1990
Sweden	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Switzerland	Presidentialism	1950	1990
Turkey	Bureaucracy	1950	1960
	Parliamentarism	1961	1979
	Autocracy	1980	1982
	Presidentialism	1983	1990
U.K.	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
U.S.S.R.	Bureaucracy	1950	1990
Yugoslavia	Bureaucracy	1950	1990
Australia	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Fiji	Parliamentarism	1970	1986
	Autocracy	1987	1990
New Zealand	Parliamentarism	1950	1990
Papua New Guinea	Parliamentarism	1975	1990
Solomon Islands	Parliamentarism	1978	1990
Vanuatu	Parliamentarism	1980	1990
Western Samoa	Autocracy	1962	1978
	Bureaucracy	1979	1990

Appendix II
Expected Error of Dichotomous and Polychotomous Scales

Suppose that the true nature of democracy lies on a J-point scale, j=1,....J, but its measurement is subject to error. Let the unobserved true score be D_T and the assigned value D, and let the probability of a one-point error be $P(j) = Pr\{|D-D_T|=j\}$ = α^j, and the "reliability" of the scale is $Pr\{|D-D_T|=0\}= 1-\Sigma_{j=1} Pr(j)$. Assume that the distribution of the true observations is uniform. Then the expected value of error will be

$$E(|D-D_T|)= \Sigma_{j=1} Pr(j)*j*2(J-j)$$

where the first factor is the probability of an error of a given magnitude, the second factor is the magnitude, and the third is the number of such errors. Assume as an illustration that the probability of making an error of magnitude 1 is $\alpha = 0.2$, so that the $Pr(j=0) = 0.75$. Suppose that this is a Gastil scale, with seven points. Then the expected error for seven observations will be about 3.5.

Now dichotomize this seven-point scale in such a way that if D<=4, then the assigned score is D=2.5 (which is midpoint value for one regime), and if D>4, then the assigned score is D=5.5 (midpoint for the other regime), so that each error costs 3 points on the seven-point scale. Let the probabilities of errors and the distribution of the true scores on the seven-point scale be the same. Then the expected value of error is

$$E(|D-D_T|)= \Sigma_{j=1} Pr(j)*3*2[d*j+(1-d)(J-j)],$$

where the last factor in each expression is the number of relevant errors (for example, the only relevant one point error is between 4 and 5 and there are two of them, misclassifying 4 as 5 or 5 as 4), and d=1 if j <= 4, 0 otherwise. At $\alpha = 0.2$, the expected error for seven observations of a dichotomous scale will be about 2.

Hence, there is less measurement error when a dichotomous scale is used. If the distribution of true observations is unimodal and close to symmetric, a more refined classification will have a smaller error, but in fact, observations on all the polychotomous scales tend to be u-shaped, which advantages a dichotomous classification even more than our example with the uniform distribution.

Notes

1. To cite Macpherson (1966, 1): "Democracy used to be a bad word. Everybody who was anybody knew that democracy, in its original sense of rule by the people or government in accordance with the will of the bulk of the people, would be a bad thing—fatal to individual freedom and to all graces of civilized living. That was the position taken by pretty nearly all men of intelligence from the earliest historical times down to about a hundred years ago. Then, within fifty years, democracy became a good thing."

2. We are indebted to Bernard Manin (1995) in making these distinctions. See also Bobbio (1989, 100–125 and Chapter 4].

3. The quotation marks are needed since the very notion of "universal" suffrage is a matter of convention. Suffrage was "universal" in Europe before voting qualification was lowered from 21 to 18 years of age and it is now "universal" at 18 rather than 16, 14, or 12. And "universal" is in turn defined relative to "citizen," itself a legally regulated notion. Immigrants do not have a right to vote in national elections even if they live in a country for a long time, and in several Western European countries they constitute more than eight per cent of the adult population.

4. Except for Western Samoa.

5. A strong notion of uncertainty would require that there is some chance that the major member of a coalition may find itself out of office as the result of the next election: a weak notion extends to any member of the incumbent coalition. Under some conditions, changes of minor partners may be considered inconsequential: Italy may be a case in point. But in other cases, the electoral fates of minor parties affect the orientation of the government: Israel and Germany are the relevant cases here. We opted for the weak version: we consider any change of the governing coalition as "alternation" in office.

6. Such as Deng Tsao Ping, whose only formal position at this time is the President of the Chinese Bridge Association. Banks sometimes considers First Secretaries of the Communist Party as chief executives while at other times he takes Presidents and Prime Ministers as chief executives in communist regimes. We could not discover what rules he used and took occupants of the formal office as chief executives.

7. Note that we do not assume that the existence of political parties is a necessary condition for contestation: after all, most pre-1900 elections were non-partisan. We exclude from democracies only those regimes where political parties were banned, typically because the military knew that a party hostile to them would win. Bernard Manin made us sensitive to this point.

8. The mere act of dissolving the legislature is not sufficient to qualify as consolidation. In many cases, legislatures are dissolved or suspended according to the extant constitutional provisions: the 1975 Indian state of emergency was duly approved by the two houses of the legislature. In some cases, notably Australia in 1976, the constitutionality of the dissolution is dubious. Our rule was that if elections were immediately proclaimed and took place within the immediate future, we did not treat such dissolutions as a breakdown of democracy.

9. Coulon (1988, 154) writes about Senegal: "In 1978, a constitutional reform was adopted which put into place a system of 'controlled democracy.' The number of parties was limited to three. . . . The legislative and presidential elections of 1978 were a great success for the Socialist Party [former UPS, the ruling party] (which received 81.7 percent of the ballots cast and 82 of the 100 seats in the Assembly) and for President Senghor personally (who won 82.5 percent of the vote). . . . It must be emphasized, however, that the elections were held in a tense climate and organized in a way that threatened the secrecy of the ballot."

10. In Colombia, Laureano Gómez was elected president with 83.8% of the vote and took office in August 1950. He continued tight censorship and increased repression against labor and violence against Liberals and Protestants. He attempted to reform the constitution in order to impose a falangist-corporatist framework freeing the presidency from most congressional constraints, centralizing power, and converting the senate into a corporatist body.

11. In Honduras between 1965–70: "The conservative, authoritarian civil-military government suppressed popular organizations and rigged the electoral machinery to assure National party victories in the 1965 and 1968 elections" (McDonald and Ruhl 1989, 113).

12. In Pakistan, according to Rose (1988, 114–5): "Ayub's intention initially had been to establish a nonparty system but it quickly became clear that this would be counterproductive. Ayub then moved to the opposite extreme, legalized virtually all parties that applied, and formed his own party. . . . What was rather astonishing was the 1962 constitution. Ayub Khan's rather cleverly disguised authoritarian sys-

tem, went along from 1961 to 1969 with no serious political challenges."

13. In the Philippines, according to Jackson (1988, 246): "The final structure created by Marcos was the Kilusang Bagong Lipuna (New Society Movement) or KBL. The KBL initially was not referred to as a political party, but was designed to select and elect candidates to local, provincial, and national offices. KBL candidates, in an atmosphere of restricted press and speech, triumphed in the 1978 interim assembly elections as well as in the 1980 local elections. The degree of limited participation is indicated by the fact that the 1978 opposition was led from a jail cell by former Senator Benigno Aquino. The interim assembly contained only fourteen non-KBL members out of 200 members. . . . President Marcos ran for reelection in June 1981 but his logical opponent, former Senator Aquino, was excluded by the constitution, which required all nominees to be at least fifty years of age (Aquino was forty-eight.) With virtually no opposition, President Marcos was reelected. . . . "

14. In South Korea, according to Han (1988, 268–9): "The new government was born with a democratic constitution and with the expectation that it would usher in democratic politics for South Korea. But the Rhee government was determined to remain in power—for life—which required several constitutional changes, election rigging, and repression of the opposition. Rhee was able to establish his personal dictatorship by making use of the state power as exemplified by the national police."

15. A priori, the probability that during a random country-year the regime is democratic is 0.37. The probability that any election ends with more than 2/3 of seats going to one party is 0.38. The likelihood, the conditional probability that seats>2/3 given that a regime is democratic, is 0.126. Hence, by Bayes rule, the posterior, the probability that a country is democratic given that seats>2/3. is 0,1208.

16. We do not have data for Taiwan.

17. This criterion coincides almost perfectly with the mode of selection of the government: by legislatures in parliamentary systems, by voters (directly or indirectly) in presidential systems. For a review of the differences, see Lijphart (1992).

18. Mueller (1992), in a wonderfully irreverent essay, has the courage to assert that democracy is a government that is responsive, whether it holds elections or not. But while he replaced elections by people's right to complain by whatever means, he thinks in the same way as Dahl: his theorem asserts that "democracy is *routinely, necessarily* responsive: because people are free to develop and use peaceful methods to criticize, pressure, and replace the leadership, the leaders must pay attention." (984)

19. For views that governments under democracy are not responsive, see in particular Lippmann (1956) and Aron (1968). Manin (1995) shows that a mandate view of accountability is unrealistic since no democracy embodies institutional mechanisms for enforcing mandates. In turn, Ferejohn (1986) shows that the conditions for retrospective accountability or "control over the politicians" are quite stringent: they require voters to be purely retrospective and sociotropic. Finally, Powell (1990) points out that majoritarian versus non-majoritarian institutions have consequences for whether voters can exercise control over politicians.

20. Mueller's (1992, 988) libertarian view—"political equality is something that evolves without much further ado when people are free"—should thus be contrasted with J.S. Mill's insistence that "High wages and universal reading are the two elements of democracy. . . . " (Quoted in Burns 1969, 290).

21. Note that if we were to use Dahl's participation threshold of 50 per cent of adults to qualify countries as democratic, we would date Western European democracies quite late: in the case of Belgium or France after World War II. The proportion of the population 20 years or older which could vote in the 1946 election, the last one before women got the right to vote, in Belgium was 45.5 of whom 90.3 per cent voted, which yields the participation rate of 41.1 per cent. In France in 1936, 40.1 per cent of those 20 and over could vote and the turnout was 84.4, implying a participation rate of 33.7 per cent.

22. Most of Banks's codings for "ineffective legislature" is due to civil wars.

23. Note, however, that different measures appear to be biased in somewhat different directions. See Bollen (1993).

24. Since other scales are ordinal (and pretend to be cardinal), while ours is nominal, we use probit maximum likelihood to predict our classification on the basis of these scales.

25. They also argue by assertion, referring to "the inherently continuous nature of the concept of political democracy" (612); claiming that "since democracy is conceptually continuous. it is best measured in continuous terms" (612), and that "Democracy is always a matter of degree" (618). Hence, in their view the "degree of democracy" in Mexico, Salazar's Portugal, and Franco's Spain was different. How they decide that "democracy is conceptually continuous," whatever that means, remains mysterious, but we are admonished that "It is important that the measurement history of this construct not repeat itself" (612).

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