Nonviolent Resistance and the Quality of Democracy

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Nonviolent Resistance and the Quality of Democracy *

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Abstract

Previous research has shown that successful nonviolent resistance (NVR) campaigns are more likely to promote the growth of democratic political systems compared to violent revolutions. The decentralized organizational structure and pluralistic practices of nonviolent campaigns serve as a template for future political arrangements during and after the initial democratic transition. However, research to date has not disaggregated this finding to address the mechanisms and pathways that produce these effects on democratic quality. In this paper we address this gap by analyzing the effect of NVR on the quality of democracy for a sample of 101 regimes between 1945 and 2010, using an index of polyarchy and its sub-components: (1) elected executive, (2) free and fair elections, (3) freedom of expression, (4) associational autonomy, and (5) inclusive citizenship. Using local linear matching and differences-in-differences estimation, we find that initiating a democratic transition through NVR improves democratic quality after transition significantly and substantially relative to cases without this characteristic. Our analysis of the sub-components of polyarchy reveals that this positive effect comes about primarily due to improvements in freedom of expression, with no significant difference along the other dimensions of polyarchy.

I. Introduction

In recent years scholars and policymakers have begun to question whether we are in an age of "democratic decline" (Diamond, 2015). Perhaps nowhere has this question been more relevant than in the Middle Eastern countries of the "Arab Spring," where moments of hopeful democratizing change in 2011 that saw mass uprisings against brutal authoritarian governments have been variously dashed by authoritarian retrenchment in Egypt, state failure in Libya, and a brutal civil war in Syria. However, even in a time of renewed skepticism, points of hope remain. Tunisia, the country that initiated the Arab Spring, continues to move through milestones on the road to democratic consolidation. The country has adopted a democratic constitution and held free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections. According to Freedom House, Tunisia today is a free (i.e. democratic) country.[1]

What explains these divergent outcomes? One body of research with growing empirical support points to the power of nonviolent resistance (NVR) to shape political transitions. Multiple studies have shown that nonviolent resistance is more effective not only in deposing dictators but also in improving democracy over the long term relative to violent revolutions or top-down liberalizations (Ackerman & Karatnycky, 2005; Bayer, Bethke & Lambach, 2015; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011). The decentralized organizational structure and pluralistic practices of nonviolent campaigns serve as a template for future political arrangements and reconfigure power during and after democratic transition. This relationship is not deterministic, as shown in the return of authoritarianism in Egypt, but empirical evidence continues to affirm that initiating a transition with nonviolent resistance is a powerful means of consolidating democratic gains and stemming democratic decline.

However, previous studies on this question have either focused on the durability of democracy after nonviolent resistance (Bayer, Bethke & Lambach, 2015) or the degree of democracy on a very general level (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011), and have left many of the mechanisms through which NVR affects future democracy untested or poorly articulated. One way of deepening our knowledge of this relationship is through examining the massive variation in the broad category of "democracies," analyzing not just the degree of democracy but its specific quality and character. In this paper we fill this gap by looking at the effect of NVR on democratic quality and specific dimensions of democracy.

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[1] See https://freedomhouse.org/country/tunisia

For a sample of 101 regimes between 1945 and 2010, we analyze the effect of NVR on the quality of democracy, using an index of polyarchy and its sub-components: (1) elected executive, (2) free and fair elections, (3) freedom of expression, (4) associational autonomy, and (5) inclusive citizenship. Using local linear matching and differences-in-differences estimation we find that initiating a democratic transition through NVR substantially improves democratic quality after transition relative to cases without this characteristic. Through our analysis of the sub-components, we find that this positive effect can be largely explained by improvements in freedom of expression. The other dimensions of polyarchy appear be less relevant with regard to difference in the pre-post transition change between regimes brought about by NVR campaigns and regimes without this characteristic.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In section two we review related literature on nonviolent resistance and democratization. In section three we describe our theoretical approach. Here we draw on the existing literature to specify the relationship between democratic transitions that were induced by NVR campaigns and the quality of democracy in the subsequent regime. In section four we give an overview of the data used in this study and describe our research design for the empirical analysis. We present the results of the empirical analysis in section five, and finally in section six we discuss the findings of the empirical analysis and highlight areas for further research.

II. Related Literature on Nonviolent Resistance and Democratization

In this paper we build on previous work on the consequences of NVR campaigns as well as the broader democratization literature. Whereas the former focuses on explaining the various outcomes of resistance campaigns the latter investigates how democratic transitions come about as well as the quality and durability of the subsequent democratic regime.

The literature on NVR has always had a strong focus on improving democracy and increasing free popular rule. A vision of local-level participatory democracy or *Swaraj,* driven by a "constructive program" outside of state structures, inspired Mahatma Gandhi's work (Iyer, 1973; Sharp, 1979), while early writer Richard Gregg described nonviolent resistance as "the key to the problem of liberty in the modern state" (Gregg, 1935: 128). Seminal nonviolent resistance scholar Gene Sharp (1973; 1990), while focusing his work primarily on the various strategies of nonviolent resistance, also made a powerful argument that the character of nonviolent resistance was inherently democratizing. For Sharp, the diffusion of skills in resistance and

attitudes of internal political efficacy produced by participation in nonviolent action would naturally protect and improve democracy, fostering a process of continual political improvement.

Early work on NVR was given credence by transformative historical events such as the mostly peaceful transitions in Eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War (e.g. Hadjar, 2003; Joppke, 1993). Using the framework of NVR, scholars and activists started compiling guidelines for implementing strategies to depose dictators (Helvey, 2004; Sharp, 2008). In this context, numerous studies empirically analyzed the consequences of NVR for democratization more generally, i.e. if and how NVR campaigns induce transitions from autocracy to democracy and influence subsequent political development.[2]

The first comparative study on the relationship between NVR and democratization was conducted by Ackerman and Karatnycky (2005). Analyzing a sample of 67 democratic transitions, they found that countries improved in terms of political rights and civil liberties more substantially after "bottom-up" nonviolent transitions as compared to "top-down" or violent transitions. This finding was replicated by Johnstad (2010) with different measures of democracy (i.e. Polity IV and the Economist Intelligence Unit instead of Freedom House data). However, neither study employed multivariate analysis in examining democratization. Given the complex nature of the phenomenon numerous confounding factor could make the relationship spurious.

Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) substantially advanced the literature on this topic by providing accurate historical data on more than 300 resistance campaigns in their Non-Violent and Violent Conflict Outcome (NAVCO) database. Comparing the level of democracy in a country after nonviolent campaigns relative to violent campaigns, Chenoweth and Stephan (2011: 213) find that NVR campaigns significantly increase the degree of democracy and the probability of a country being democratic five years after the end of conflict. However, they only compare the consequences of NVR campaigns relative to violent campaigns, thereby omitting case of elite-led democratization. Moreover, their sample also includes resistance campaigns in states that were already democratic. Thus their analytical strategy does not account for transition events. Still, the findings by Celestino and Gleditsch (2013), who account for elite-

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[2] Related literature also comes from studies that analyze the consequences of civil wars. Scholars argue that after the end of a civil war, there is a window of opportunity for political liberalization (Gurses & Mason, 2008; Wantchekon & Neeman, 2002). However, the findings produced by empirical studies, on this topic are inconclusive (Fortna & Huang, 2012; Gurses & Mason, 2008; Toft, 2010). Accordingly, Fortna and Huang (2012: 807) conclude that "democratization in post-conflict societies looks much like democratization elsewhere".

led transitions and focus exclusively on autocratic regimes, also suggest that the presence of a NVR campaigns increase the odds of transition towards democracy.[3]

In proposing causal mechanisms for how NVR benefits democracy, scholars have predominately focused on its benefits for civil society (Ackerman & Karatnycky, 2005; Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011). While participation in violent campaigns is typically limited to a small cadre of young men, participation in civil resistance is open to much larger segments of civil society, irregardless of age, gender and physical ability (Schock, 2005: 40). This participation advantage both helps NVR achieve success (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011) and promotes democracy following a successful campaign, as large and diverse campaigns provide a check on the new regime's power and constrain the elite's ability to defect from democratic rule.

Research on the determinants of democracy in general as well as specifically on modes of transition also provides leverage in addressing this question. The earliest literature of democratization focused on the socio-economic prerequisites for democracy such as education and economic development (Lipset 1959, Dahl 1971). Following the transitions to democracy in Southern Europe and Latin America, the "transitology" approach took a less deterministic and more contingent approach to explaining democratization, focusing on processes of elite interaction. Scholars considered negotiations between different factions of hard-liners and soft-liners within the regime and the opposition respectively as most important factor determining the outcome of a transition process (Higley & Burton, 1989; O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986; Przeworski, 1991). Mobilization from below, while common during transitional periods, was assumed to either be epiphenomenal to this elite-guided democratization process or even potentially dangerous to the stability of the transition (Karl, 1990: 8).[4] However, inspired by instances of democratization that occurred after the end of the cold war in Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa, in which mass resistance was a crucial factor, the focus shifted.

Ekiert and Kubik (1998) demonstrated how collective protest influenced post-transition political development in East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. Their findings suggest that protest activity fosters democratic consolidation if it becomes an institutionalized way of participating in politics. Similarly, Oberschall (2000) advanced a collective action model to explain how popular movements were able to depose communist regimes in Eastern Europe and highlighted the importance of nonviolent resistance for the subsequent deepening of democracy in these states. Tilly (2004; Tilly & Wood, 2009) also

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[3] Wood (2001) advances a different argument, highlighting how violent insurgencies can be beneficial for democratization.

[4] For an early critique of this perspective see Collier and Mahoney (1997) who highlight the relevance of collective action by labor unions for democratization.

stresses the connection between collective mass protest, social movements and democratization, although he is inconclusive about the direction of causation, i.e. whether popular mobilization fosters democratization or vice versa. Analyzing democratization with a large sample of states for the time period 1955–2002, Ulfelder (2005) finds that events of nonviolent contentious collective action promote democratization in certain types of authoritarian regimes (i.e. single-party and military regimes). Likewise, Teorell (2010) investigates the impact of different forms of popular mobilization on democratization. His results suggest that peaceful anti-government protest effectively increases the level of democracy in the short and the long run. Similar to the NVR literature, Teorell (2010: 104-107) also highlights the number and diversity of participants as the crucial mechanism that explains how nonviolent protest fosters democratization. However, both Ulfelder and Teorell rely on event data from the Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive (Banks, 2011 [1979]) to measure popular mobilization. This data has been criticized for various reasons, including geographic bias and lack of transparency (Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013: 387; Woolley, 2000).

The potential importance of NVR during a political transition is also powerfully reinforced by research on the democratizing impact of modes of transition. In this approach the transition process is interpreted as a critical juncture that shapes subsequent political development in a path-dependent way (Guo & Stradiotto, 2010; Guo & Stradiotto, 2014; Karl & Schmitter, 1991; Munck & Leff, 1997). Guo and Stradiotto (2014) test this assumption empirically using data on all democratic transitions since 1900. They identity four modes of transition: conversion, cooperative, collapse and foreign intervention. Their findings suggest that a cooperative transition process increases both the quality and the duration of the democratic successor regime relative to the other three modes. However, like others Guo and Stradiotto (2014) rely on a minimalist definition of democracy and measure the level and duration of democracy using the Polity IV index (Marshall, Jaggers & Gurr, 2010). Furthermore, their categorization of modes of transition does not account for the presence or absence of resistance campaigns and the use of violence during transition. Integrating work from the literature on NVR and studies of different modes of transition, Bayer et al. (2015) analyze how transitions that were induced by an NVR campaign affect the survival of democracy relative to violent and elite-led transitions. Their findings suggest that democratic regimes, where the transition process was induced by an NVR campaign survive substantially longer than regimes without this characteristic.

To summarize, the extant work on the consequences of NVR provides robust evidence that NVR increases the odds of a successful democratic transition and is beneficial for

the subsequent development of democracy. Similarly, empirical studies on the determinants of democratization and political development after different modes of transition also highlight the importance of popular mobilization. However, data limitations in prior studies mean that the relationship between NVR and democratization is measured at a highly abstract level, often using indexes of democracy that have been critiqued as misleading or possessing measurement error (Coppedge, et al., 2011). This gives only the most general view of the relationship and provides little or no evidence concerning the mechanisms underlying the democratizing effect of NVR. Furthermore, this highly aggregated view of democracy means that we know little about the character of the democratic regimes that follow NVR movements. This is particularly relevant in light of recent popular critiques of NVR as "mob rule" or "*maidancracy*" (Li, 2014), which argue that "rule from the streets" is ultimately a poor way to establish sustainable, high-quality democratic institutions. To build our understanding of the mechanisms underlying this relationship, and to truly understand the nature of the democratic regimes that follow successful NVR campaigns, an investigation into the character and quality of the democratic regimes that follow NVR is crucial.

III. Theoretical Approach

In this section, we present our theoretical argument on how NVR campaigns influence democratic transitions and subsequent political development. We begin by defining the concepts used in our analysis: regimes, democracy, transitions, and resistance campaigns. Afterwards, we describe the mechanisms through which NVR campaigns affect the quality of democracy after transition and derive testable empirical implications from these theoretical assumptions.

Our unit of analysis is the political regime. A political regime is an "institutionalized set of fundamental formal and informal rules structuring the interaction in the political power center (horizontal relations) and its relation with broader society (vertical relation)" (Skaaning 2006, 13). Initially, we assume only two categories of regimes, democracies and autocracies. To distinguish between those categories, we build on Boix, Miller and Rosato (2013) who use a minimal definition of democracy to classify regimes based on the two dimensions of political contestation and participation. Participation refers to a minimal level of suffrage (i.e. a majority of adult men has the right to vote) and contestation requires that decisions to govern are based on free and fair elections.[5] If these conditions are met, a regime is considered democratic. If one

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[5] More specific, contestation consists of two conditions: (1) the executive is directly or indirectly elected in popular elections and is responsible either directly to voters or to a legislature and (2) the legislature (or the executive if elected directly) is chosen in free and fair elections (Boix, Miller & Rosato, 2013: 9).

or both conditions are lacking a regime is considered autocratic (Boix, Miller & Rosato, 2013: 8-9).

Once established, regimes tend to remain in place. However, occasionally regimes move between these two categories through a transition event. During transition events societies experience a period of radical change and the design of political order (horizontal and vertical relations) is renegotiated. Afterwards, newly-empowered political actors establish a new regime, either autocratic or democratic. At this most aggregated level, two forms of transition events are possible: (1) a democratic transition, that is a transition from autocracy to democracy and (2) a democratic breakdown, a transition from democracy to autocracy. For this study, our main interest is in explaining whether transitions that were initiated by an NVR campaign have beneficial effects on post-transition political development. Therefore, we distinguish modes of transitions only regarding the relevance of a resistance campaign for the transition process and whether that resistance campaign was primarily violent or nonviolent. We assume that transitions shaped by NVR systematically differ from transitions that were shaped by violent resistance or occurred without the influence of a resistance campaign.

Following Chenoweth and Lewis (2013: 417-418) we define resistance campaigns broadly as an enduring mass-level phenomenon where multiple actors pursue a common political goal. We limit the population of resistance campaigns by size and scope to those that organize at least two different collective action events with at least 1,000 participants within one year. Campaigns may be 'primarily' violent or 'primarily' nonviolent depending on how movement participants express and perform their resistance. A resistance campaign is defined as nonviolent if participants are mostly unarmed civilians who do not directly threaten or injure the physical welfare of their opponents. All other resistance campaigns that do not meet these criteria are defined as violent.

Democratic transitions represent critical junctures where the choices of political actors have an enduring impact on the political development of the respective country (Capoccia and Kelemen 2007, 341; Soifer 2012, 1572-73). The directions taken during the transition process shape future political development. We argue that NVR campaigns, by shaping the process of transition, set the subsequent democratic regime on a path which is favorable for democratic political development.

To specify what we mean by democratic political development we build on the quality of democracy literature. Research on the quality of democracies compares existing empirical manifestations of democratic regimes to an ideal type of democracy (Diamond & Morlino, 2004;

O'Donnell, Cullel & Iazzetta, 2004; Pinto, Magalhães & de Sousa, 2012; Przeworski, 2010).[6] To assess the quality of democracy after transition, we build on Teorell et al.'s (2016) account of Dahl's (1971; 1989) concept of polyarchy. While there is generally large disagreement among scholars concerning the question of what are the crucial elements of democracy, Robert Dahl's (1989) seven principles of an ideal type democracy, which he terms 'polyarchy' constitutes an area of widespread agreement. According to Dahl, democracy relies upon the following principles: (1) constitutionally bound elected officials govern, (2) the regular practice of free and fair elections, (3) citizens have universal suffrage, (4) the right to run for public offices, (5) freedom of expression, (6) access of alternative sources of information, and (7) the right to form autonomous associations (e.g. political parties or NGOs).

Teorell et al. (2016) collapse Dahl's seven principles into five dimensions of democratic quality, which in conjunction measure polyarchy. The first dimension, "elected executive", evaluates how the chief executive is elected. Depending on the system of government it also uses information on other political institutions such as the proportion of legislators that is elected. The second dimension, "clean elections", addresses whether elections can be considered free and fair, which refers to an absence of registration fraud, systematic irregularities, government intimidation of the opposition, vote buying, and election violence. The third dimension, "freedom of organization", measures freedom of association for political parties and civil society organizations. The fourth dimension, "inclusive citizenship", relates to suffrage and captures the share of adult citizens that has the legal right to vote in national elections. Finally, the fifth dimension, "freedom of expression", addresses to what extent a government respects press and media freedom, the freedom of expression for ordinary citizens, as well as the freedom of academic and cultural expression.

Using this conceptualization, we seek to answer the following question: Given a successful transition to democracy, indicated by the accomplishment of a minimal amount of political contestation and participation, to what extend do post-transition democratic regimes match to the ideal type of polyarchy, both as a whole and in regard to each of its individual dimensions?

To observe a democratic transition at all requires that certain conditions of a minimum level of suffrage and free and fair elections be satisfied. However, achieving these minimum conditions says very little about the quality of the resulting democracy. For instance, attaining a minimum level of suffrage (i.e. a majority of adult men has the right to vote) is a necessary condition for a democratic transition, but regimes that have achieved this goal still vary

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[6] For articles summarizing the discussion about the concept and its measurement see Pickel, Stark and Breustedt (2015) as well as Munck (2016).

significantly in their degree of universal suffrage (e.g. by including or excluding women). Similarly, a free and fair founding election is a necessary condition for democratic transition but regimes display different degrees of freedom and fairness at the ballot. As these examples illustrate, these questions of democratic quality are not minor or insignificant but rather indicate a vast degree of meaningful potential variability. Particularly in light of the growing concern with "electoral" or "illiberal" democracy (Zakaria, 1997), questions of democratic quality are critically important.

We argue that democratic regimes that follow from an NVR campaign establish certain constraints and incentives that increase the quality of democracy after transition. Commitment to nonviolent collective action creates large, inclusive and diverse movements composed of broad segments of society. Accordingly, NVR campaigns develop a culture of compromise to balance the diverse interests of the participant groups. This organizational culture of NVR movements will help to shape a democratic political culture that values compromise and cooperation after transition (Della Porta & Diani, 2006: 21; Sharp, 2005: 428). As Chenoweth and Stephan (2011: 207) point out, participation in NVR campaigns "encourages the development of democratic skills and fosters expectations of accountable governance". We expect that a civic political culture spills over from the NVR campaign to the subsequent democratic regime. Thus, citizens that participated in a nonviolent resistance campaign, which induced a transition to democracy, are more likely to show democratic civic culture in the future post-transition environment. This civic culture increases the quality of democracy in general and specifically promotes an active and engaged civil society. We argue for three key mechanisms for spillover effects from NVR to the subsequent regime: (1) involvement of campaign participants in democratic politics, (2) spreading techniques of peaceful resistance within society, and (3) empowering free expression and reconciliation with the past.

First, after transition, participants of the NVR movement often obtain influential positions such as being voted into parliament or assuming governmental or administrative posts. Afterwards, they can use these offices to spread the ideals they learned while participating in nonviolent resistance. For example Jerzy Regulski, an activist in the Polish Solidarity movement, became minister of local government reform in the first government after Poland's democratic transition in 1989. He used this position to advance major decentralization reforms, inspired by Solidarity's idea of 'the self-governing republic'. The reforms empowered local councils and communities and led to democratic municipal elections in May 1990 (Regulski, 2003).

Moreover, NVR campaigns may also evolve into political parties or NGOs that act as watchdog institutions to monitor the quality of democracy (Della Porta &Diani, 2006: 138).

Several leaders of the *Otpor* movement, which led the protests that caused the ouster of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in 2000, were elected into parliament or took advisory positions in the new government. *Otpor* as an organization also stayed active in Serbia's post-transition political system, functioning first as a civil society watchdog of the political class and later as a political party (Joksic & Spoerri, 2011).

Participation and even leadership in an NVR campaign is by no means automatically translated into pro-democratic ideals or a desire for consensus-driven decision making. For example, in Kenya many political leaders who had been active in the primarily nonviolent movement against President Daniel arap Moi once in power tended to follow Moi's practices of ethnic-based clientelism and corruption (Murunga & Nasong'o, 2006). However, we argue that the experience of participation in an NVR campaign and the requirements for achieving success through NVR bias participants in NVR to be on average more democratically-minded and focused on achieving political changes that improve democratic quality relative to the leaders of elite-led or violent transitions. First, participation in NVR alone is likely to socialize potential leaders into belief in the benefits of popular representation. Second, overthrowing an autocratic regime through NVR typically requires broad, diverse participation throughout society (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011). Leaders of NVR campaigns tend to hold legitimacy and political influence through their ability to speak for and continue to mobilize this same broad, diverse coalition that brought them into power. In contrast, the leaders of violent revolutionary movements tend to maintain legitimacy through their association to the formative events of the past, as in Zimbabwe, or through their technocratic ability to achieve economic growth, as in Rwanda (Kagame, 2012). And the leaders of elite-led transitions tend to maintain legitimacy on the basis of their ability to speak for particular political forces either from the *ancien regime* or the formal opposition. In neither of these cases does the basis for political legitimacy require particularly strong commitment to deepening democracy. On the contrary, it is likely to bias these groups of leaders towards minimalist compromises which keep power in the hands of small groups of elites.

Thus, out of these three groups we expect participants in NVR campaigns, once in political office in a new democracy, to be the strongest advocates for strengthening and deepening democratic quality. This is due both to the internal preferences likely to have been fostered through their participation in NVR and to the incentives implied by the basis for their political legitimacy.

Second, NVR campaigns spread techniques of non-violence and mass mobilization that can enable peaceful resistance in the future (Sharp, 2008: 53). An active civil society will be

prepared to defend democracy against signs of erosion. As Tarrow puts it: "activism begets future activism" (Tarrow, 1998: 165). Poland and the Philippines are two cases that highlight the relevance of this mechanism. As described in the literature review, the success of Solidarity in Poland created a 'rebellious civil society', whose main features were an increase in the number of civil society organizations and a continuation of protest activity against government policies. After democratic transition, protest became an institutionalized method for articulating grievances and thereby advanced democratic consolidation in Poland (Ekiert & Kubik, 1998; Ekiert & Kubik, 2001). A similar development occurred in the Philippines. After deposing President Marcos in 1986 in the so called 'people's power revolution', civil society successfully mobilized again in 2001 against President Estrada, who was confronted with corruption allegations. After Estrada rejected the demands, a second people's power movement, a diverse coalition of about three million citizens, eventually forced the president to step down (Landé, 2001).

This diffusion of skills and experience in NVR means that not only are more democratic preferences spread throughout society during the transition, but the capability of civil society to protect the transition and push a democratic agenda is similarly strengthened. For example, in Burkina Faso in 2015, when elements of the elite Presidential Guard attempted to overthrow the country's transitional government in a coup their actions were almost immediately countered by a massive outpouring of nonviolent resistance across the country. Activists such as the Balai Citoyen youth movement who had participated the previous year in an NVR campaign against long-time authoritarian president Blaise Compaore had the skills and organizational networks already in place to rapidly mobilize large numbers nationwide. They almost entirely shut down the country through protests and strikes, putting severe pressure on the coup leaders, preventing them from consolidating their control over the armed forces, and ultimately restoring the transitional government (Pinckney, 2015).

Finally, transitions initiated by NVR may provide particularly powerful environments for dealing with the abuses of the past. In many elite-led transitions, certain "authoritarian legacies" may retain particular influence in pacts that protect their core interests. A key aspect of these pacts is often protection from an accounting for the abuses of the old regime. For instance, in the Spanish transition to democracy elites engaged in a *Pacto del Olvido* (Pact of Forgetting), whereby discussion of the abuses of the past was actively suppressed for the sake of placating old regime members who remained influential during the transition period (Encarnación 2008: 131-149; Fernandes, 2015: 1087-1088). In contrast, in countries such as South Africa, where NVR played a key role in initiating the transition, the post-Apartheid

government instituted a process of Truth and Reconciliation whereby the grievances of the Apartheid area could be directly addressed (Gibson, 2006). This necessity of protecting political pacts means that elite-led transitions are more likely to suppress freedom of expression, restricting the ways in which media and individuals can use speech to affect the political order. NVR campaigns, on the other hand, tend to encourage a diverse, participatory culture of expression of grievance that strengthens freedom of expression.

Based on these mechanisms, and drawing from the framework of democratic quality based on polyarchy and its subcomponents, we derive the following hypotheses about the effect of transitions induced by NVR. We assume that the spillover of civic culture from the campaign to the post transition environment is beneficial for the quality of democracy in general, but promotes two sub-dimensions of polyarchy most substantially.

First, we argue that by promoting an active civil society, NVR-induced transitions will specifically foster freedom of association, which refers to low entry barriers for political parties and civil society organizations, as well as the degree of autonomy of these groups from the state and the absence of repression towards these organizations.

Second, we argue that transitions induced by an NVR campaign are particularly beneficial for freedom of expression. Given that a culture of dialogue and inclusiveness is a crucial feature of NVR campaigns, and that transitions brought about through NVR are less likely to have pacts protecting members of the old regime from scrutiny of their past misdeeds, we expect more substantial improvement of press freedom and freedom of expression for civil society organizations if transition was induced by an NVR campaign, relative to cases of democratic transition without this characteristic.

To summarize our main hypotheses, we expect that NVR induced democratic transitions promote the general quality of democracy. Furthermore, we assume that the sub-dimensions of associational autonomy and freedom of expression will particularly benefit.

IV. Research Design

Using data from Boix, Miller and Rosato (2013) on democratic transitions and data on resistance campaigns provided by Chenoweth and Lewis (2013), we created a dataset that combines information on democratic regimes with information on the presence of NVR during these regimes' transitions. Our dataset consists of all democratic regimes that succeeded an autocratic regime between 1945 and 2006. Whereas the dataset by Boix, Miller and Rosato (2013) on political regimes covers the time-period 1945-2007, the dataset by Chenoweth and Lewis (2013) accounts for the period 1945-2006. Therefore, we included only regimes that

began after 1945 and included only regimes which originated before 2007. Our full sample consists of 101 democratic regimes.

To measure the existence of a NVR campaign during the transition phase of a democratic regime, we use data from Chenoweth and Lewis (2013). We coded a campaign as relevant for the transition process if it was present in the year of the transition or the year before the transition and aimed at political change of the incumbent autocratic regime. More specifically, we considered campaigns where NAVCO coded the campaign goal as 'regime change', 'significant institutional reform', or 'policy change'. Correspondingly, we did not consider campaigns where the goal was coded as 'territorial secession', 'greater autonomy', or 'anti-occupation'. Furthermore, to ensure the validity of this coding, we inspected for each case if the form of resistance was violent or nonviolent and also checked whether there was indeed a causal link between the resistance campaign and the transition process. We distinguish between (1) regimes whose transition process was induced without a resistance campaign, (2) regimes whose transition process was induced by a violent resistance campaign, and (3) regimes whose transition process was induced by a NVR campaign. Table 1 describes the frequency distribution of these categories.

Table 1: Categorical coding of resistance campaigns during transitions

	Freq.	Percent
No Resistance Campaign	57	56.4
Violent Resistance Campaign	4	4
Nonviolent Resistance Campaign	40	39.6
Total	101	100

Table 1 shows that few democratic transitions in our sample were induced by violent resistance campaigns, which corresponds to findings by previous studies that violent resistance campaign are usually not successful in bringing about democratic transition (e.g. Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013). More than half of the sample consists of regimes without any resistance campaign and almost 40% of the cases experienced a nonviolent resistance campaign during transition from autocracy to democracy. Therefore, we continue our analysis using a combined category for transitions that were induced without a resistance campaign or by a violent resistance campaign. For our treatment indicator, we only distinguish whether the transition was induced by an NVR campaign or not.

The dependent variable in our analysis is the quality of democracy. More specific, we want to explain the degree of improvement in the quality of democracy that countries experience given the presence or absence of a transition induced by an NVR campaign. Following our theoretical discussion, in the empirical analysis that follows we use both an aggregate measure of democratic quality and separate measures of each of its components.

The data for the different outcome variables is taken from the Varieties of Democracy dataset (Coppedge et al., 2015). The dataset is based on extensive expert coding by more than 2,500 country experts, and gathers hundreds of indicators for almost every country in the world. For our analysis we use the polyarchy index, which, as described above, is based on the following five components: (1) elected executive, (2) free and fair elections, (3) freedom of expression, (4) associational autonomy, and (5) inclusive citizenship. To analyze the mechanisms through which NVR affects democratic quality we also use each sub-component as an outcome variable. All outcome variables range from zero to one, with higher values indicating a higher quality of democracy.

The quality of each dimension is measured with multiple indicators. For instance, the quality of freedom of expression is measured using nine indicators, with three addressing questions of alternative sources of information.[7] For each outcome variable we create indicators that measure the difference between its level before the transition and up to five year after the transition. Summary statistics for the different outcome variables are described in table 2. Note that with longer time periods the sample size decreases. This is caused by some regimes experiencing a democratic breakdown. For example, out of the 101 regime that experienced a democratic transition five did not survive the first year and therefore drop from the sample.

To analyze the effect of NVR during democratic transition on the quality of democracy in the post-transition regime, we use difference-in-differences (DiD) estimation in combination with local linear matching. This approach has proven to be an especially potent method for achieving causal inference with observational data (Heckman, Ichimura & Todd, 1998; Smith & Todd, 2005). With matching methods, treatment and control subjects are matched on a set of baseline characteristics with the goal of compiling a balanced sample where groups are as comparable as possible. The basic idea is that if two subjects are sufficiently similar on observed covariates but differ in terms of treatment assignment, then the selection process of treatment assignment is "as good as random" (Rosenbaum & Rubin, 1983: 495; Sekhon, 2009). For this study we seek to match regimes where democratization was induced by NVR with similar regimes where NVR was not relevant for the transition process.

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[7]For a detailed description of all indicators that are used to measure polyarchy and its components see Teorell et al. (2016) and Coppedge et al. (2015).

Table 2: Summary statistics for the outcome variables

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Polyarchy$_{(diff, t+1)}$	96	.24	.19	-.22	.73
Polyarchy$_{(diff, t+2)}$	96	.23	.2	-.31	.73
Polyarchy$_{(diff, t+3)}$	90	.24	.21	-.29	.73
Polyarchy$_{(diff, t+4)}$	85	.26	.2	-.11	.74
Polyarchy$_{(diff, t+5)}$	78	.27	.21	-.12	.75
Elected Officials$_{(diff, t+1)}$	96	.37	.5	-1	1
Elected Officials$_{(diff, t+2)}$	96	.36	.5	-1	1
Elected Officials$_{(diff, t+3)}$	90	.36	.52	-1	1
Elected Officials$_{(diff, t+4)}$	85	.36	.5	-1	1
Elected Officials$_{(diff, t+5)}$	78	.35	.47	-.18	1
Inclusive Citizenship$_{(diff, t+1)}$	96	.04	.14	0	.86
Inclusive Citizenship$_{(diff, t+2)}$	96	.04	.14	0	.86
Inclusive Citizenship$_{(diff, t+3)}$	90	.05	.15	0	.86
Inclusive Citizenship$_{(diff, t+4)}$	86	.05	.15	0	.86
Inclusive Citizenship$_{(diff, t+5)}$	78	.04	.14	0	.86
Free and Fair Elections$_{(diff, t+1)}$	96	.25	.27	-.74	.89
Free and Fair Elections$_{(diff, t+2)}$	96	.24	.31	-.88	.89
Free and Fair Elections$_{(diff, t+3)}$	90	.25	.29	-.74	.89
Free and Fair Elections$_{(diff, t+4)}$	86	.28	.25	-.13	.89
Free and Fair Elections$_{(diff, t+5)}$	78	.29	.27	-.34	.89
Associational Autonomy$_{(diff, t+1)}$	96	.23	.26	-.08	.88
Associational Autonomy$_{(diff, t+2)}$	96	.22	.27	-.41	.88
Associational Autonomy$_{(diff, t+3)}$	90	.21	.27	-.53	.87
Associational Autonomy$_{(diff, t+4)}$	86	.22	.25	-.09	.87
Associational Autonomy$_{(diff, t+5)}$	78	.23	.26	-.09	.87
Freedom of Expression$_{(diff, t+1)}$	96	.21	.24	-.06	.90
Freedom of Expression$_{(diff, t+2)}$	96	.2	.26	-.67	.90
Freedom of Expression$_{(diff, t+3)}$	90	.2	.25	-.33	.90
Freedom of Expression$_{(diff, t+4)}$	86	.21	.25	-.21	.91
Freedom of Expression$_{(diff, t+5)}$	78	.22	.26	-.28	.92

There is no consensus in the literature as to which covariates should be included in matching procedures. Most scholars agree to include only covariates that were measured before treatment assignment or are not influenced by treatment assignment. In addition, the literature points out the importance of potential confounding variables which are correlated with both treatment assignment and the outcome (Ho et al., 2007: 216) and so called prognostic factors - pre-treatment measures of the outcome of interest (Stuart, 2010: 15). We focus on those covariates which were identified as most important in previous studies on democratization and NVR campaigns (Bayer, Bethke & Lambach, 2015; Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013; Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011; Chenoweth & Ulfelder, 2015; Guo & Stradiotto, 2014; Teorell, 2010): GDP per capita, proportion of neighboring democracies, previous instability, military legacy and urbanization.

Our variable measuring the level of *GDP per capita* uses an updated version of the 'Expanded Trade and GDP Data' compiled by Gleditsch (2002), transformed using the natural logarithms. The variable *military legacy* is a binary variable indicating whether the pre-transition autocratic regime was a military regime, as coded by Geddes, Wright and Frantz (2014). Using the Boix, Miller &Rosato (2013) dataset, we measure *previous instability* by counting the number of regime changes from 1900 until the transition in question. To measure how widespread democracy is in a regime's geographic environment, we use the variable *neighboring democracies*, which is simply the proportion of states that are democratic in the region.[8] *Urbanization* is defined as the percentage of the population living in cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. For the measurement we use the National Material Capabilities dataset version 4.0 (Singer, 1987). Finally, as additional covariate, we include the level of respective outcome variable measured one year before the transition. We report summary statistics for all covariates used in the matching procedure in Table 3.

After matching we use a DiD estimator to test the effect of NVR on future democratic quality. In the DiD set up we observe the outcome for two groups at two points in time. Our groups are regimes where democratization was induced by an NVR campaign and regimes without this characteristic. For these two groups we observe democratic quality before and after transition. We examine the transition process itself as an intervention at which regimes in the treatment group experience NVR and regimes in the control group do not. To obtain the DiD effect we simply subtract the average change from pre to post transition democratic quality in the non-NVR group from the average change from pre to post transition democratic quality in the NVR group.

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[8] We use the data from Ulfelder (2010) combined with tenfold politico-geographic classification of world regions as specified by Teorell et al. (2015).

Table 3: Summary statistics for covariates used for matching

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
GDP p.c.$_{(log, t-1)}$	101	7.82	.9	5.75	9.82
Military Legacy	101	.37	.48	0	1
Previous Instability	101	1.3	1.77	0	8
Neighboring Democracies$_{(t-1)}$	101	34.11	23.21	0	91.7
Urbanization$_{(t-1)}$	101	.21	.15	0	.66
Polyarchy$_{(level, t-1)}$	101	.34	.16	.11	.8
Elected Officials$_{(level, t-1)}$	101	.58	.48	0	1
Inclusive Citizenship$_{(level, t-1)}$	101	.93	.19	.14	1
Free and Fair Elections$_{(level, t-1)}$	101	.33	.28	0	.94
Associational Autonomy$_{(level, t-1)}$	101	.55	.26	.05	.91
Freedom of Expression$_{(level, t-1)}$	101	.53	.24	.04	.96

V. Empirical Analysis

The empirical analysis is conducted in two steps. First, we evaluate the covariate balance of potential confounding variables. Second, we estimate treatment effects using the matched samples.

A. Balance Checking

We begin our analysis with balance checking, that is, we evaluate to what degree confounding variables may bias the relationship between treatment and outcome in our sample. Figure 1 shows the standardized difference of means between treatment (NVR-induced transitions) and control group (all others) for all covariates in the unmatched sample compared to the matched sample. As shown in figure 1, the matching procedure substantially reduces bias. The average bias for covariates in the unmatched sample is 19.6 percent. Local linear matching reduces the average bias to only 4.8 percent.[9] Furthermore, whereas in the unmatched sample there is a

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[9] Note that most scholars are concerned about covariates that are biased by more than 10 percent (Austin, 2009: 3090; Normand et al., 2001: 390).

significant difference between the means of Urbanization in the treatment and control group, after matching none of the individual covariates shows significant differences in the means.[10]

Figure 1: Standardized differences for covariates before and after matching
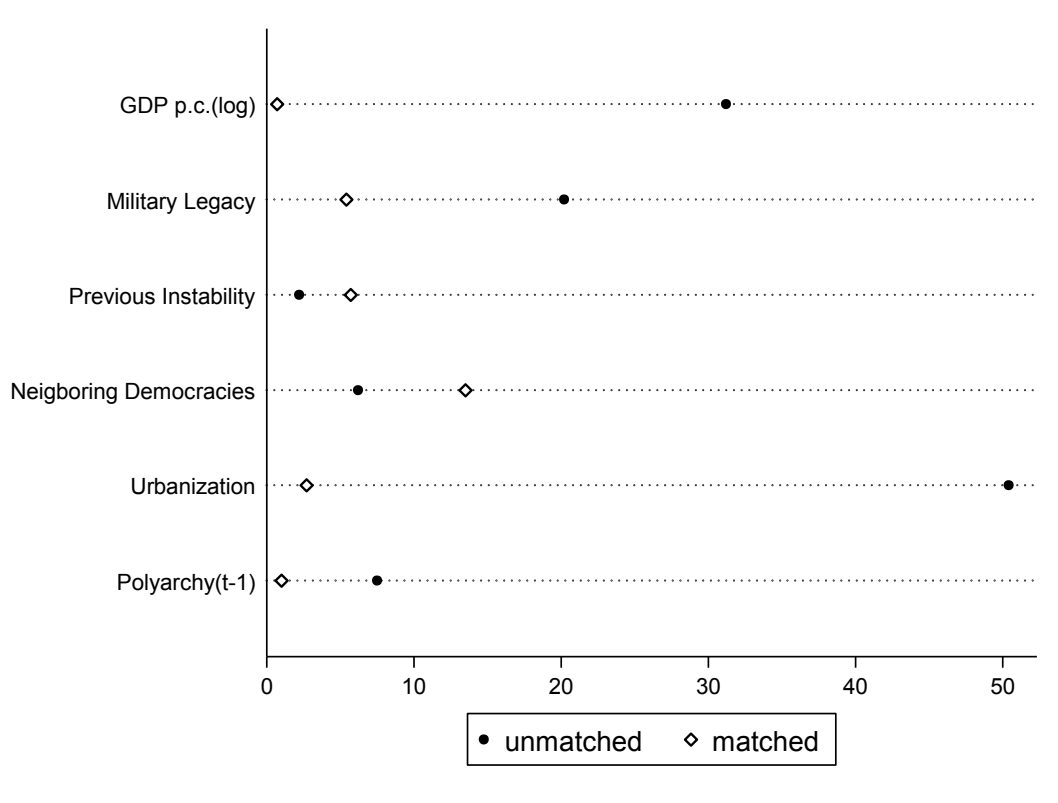

B. Estimation of Treatment Effects

Next we report the difference in difference estimates that we calculated for the matched samples. Figure 2 describes the results for changes in polyarchy and its sub-components. The figure shows point estimates of the difference-in-differences of the respective outcome variable for regimes where the transition was induced by an NVR campaign relative to regimes without this feature along with bootstrapped confidence intervals. As discussed above, we analyze changes in the respective outcome variable from the year before the transition until up to five years after the transition.

The results for the change in aggregate levels of polyarchy are reported in the upper middle panel of figure 2. The point estimates in figure 2 are average treatment effects on the treated. The average change in polyarchy score is between 0.12 to 0.18 units higher in regimes

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[10] Similar results are obtained when evaluating covariate balance for the other lagged versions of the sub-component outcome variables (i.e. Elected Officials$_{(t-1)}$, Inclusive Citizenship$_{(t-1)}$, Free and Fair Elections$_{(t-1)}$, Associational Autonomy$_{(t-1)}$, Freedom of Expression$_{(t-1)}$).

with transitions induced by NVR over the course of the five years following transition compared to regimes without this characteristic. This is a substantial difference, given that the scale for change in polyarchy ranges from -1 to 1. For comparison, a difference of 0.18 units is roughly equivalent to the difference in level of democracy between the United States and Romania in 2015. As also shown in figure 2, the lower bound of a 95% bootstrap confidence interval is above zero for the five years following the transition, meaning that for this time period we are 95% confident that a nonzero difference in changes of polyarchy between treatment and control group falls into this interval.

Figure 2: Differences in change of democratic quality
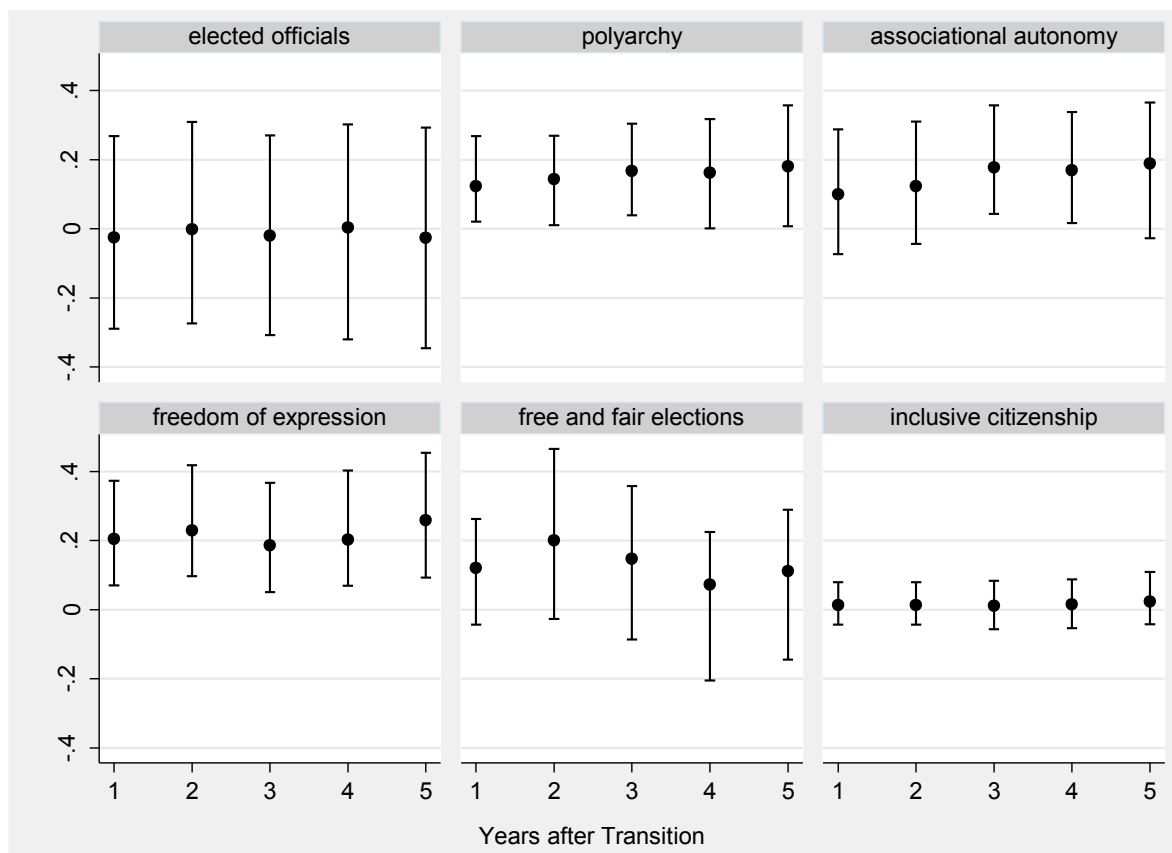
The picture is more mixed when looking at the DiD effects of NVR on the sub-components of polyarchy. There appears to be no substantial difference between NVR and non-NVR regimes regarding changes in elected officials and inclusive citizenship. With regard to associational autonomy and free and fair elections, we see positive and substantial DiD estimates indicating higher changes in the respective outcome variable for regimes induced by NVR. However, as indicated by the confidence intervals, the respective effect estimates are not significant across different time periods. For instance, the DiD effect of NVR on associational

autonomy is only significant when changes are measured three or four years after the transition. For the outcome variable that measures changes in the quality of elections, none of the estimates reaches statistical significance.

As shown in the bottom left panel of figure 2, the only substantial, significant and robust DiD effect of NVR is on the freedom of expression dimension. Point estimates range from 0.18 to 0.26, which implies that depending on the time period the average change of the freedom of expression score is between 0.18 and 0.26 units higher for regimes where transition was induced by NVR relative to regimes without this feature.

VI. Discussion of the Results

We find that initiating a democratic transition through NVR increases the scale of improvement of democratic quality after transition relative to transitions without NVR. This effect is substantial and robust for at least five years after the transition. Our results support and expand upon previous studies that provided evidence that NVR fosters democratization and general quality of democracy after transition (e.g. Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011; Teorell, 2010).

However, our analysis of the sub-components of polyarchy revealed that the positive effect of NVR is not uniform across all the dimensions of democracy. Instead, it largely comes about due to improvements in freedom of expression. The developments of other dimensions of polyarchy do not appear to be significantly different between regimes brought about by NVR campaigns and regimes without this characteristic. Most importantly, although previous studies highlighted how NVR facilitates an active civil society, we find only limited evidence for this effect. While our results suggest that NVR transitions lead to greater associational autonomy than other transition paths, this result is not robust across different time periods of measurement. This finding runs counter to the general arguments in the literature on the effects of NVR on fostering an active and engaged civil society, such as has been argued theoretically by scholars such as Sharp and empirically by authors such as Fernandes (2015). While some influential cases of democracy following NVR such as Poland and Portugal may have been characterized by a resurgent civil society that had a long-term positive impact of those country's democratic quality, this does not, on average, appear to be a consistent effect of NVR during the transition.

However, these results are preliminary and further research is required on multiple grounds. First, different forms of selection bias may influence our results. We only consider successful transitions to democracy and thus do not account for the many cases of failed democratization. Furthermore, as discussed above, observing measures of democratic quality in

the years after transition depends on the survival of democracy. In the current analysis, we do not incorporate these mechanisms of sample selection in our estimation of treatment effects. Second, we do not rigorously evaluate the sensitivity of our findings, i.e. whether they are robust to alternative estimation procedures such as DiD with regression adjustment or different matching procedures. Furthermore, measurement error may bias the results. Additional data reliability checks have to be implemented and the whole analysis needs to be replicated with alternative sources of data for political regimes, transition events and resistance campaigns before we can arrive at a more definite conclusion about the relationship between NVR and democratic quality. Third, a more detailed analysis of the mechanisms of NVR and their effect on sub-dimensions of polyarchy is required, which goes beyond relationships between quantitative indicators. We have offered an initial theory as to why freedom of expression is particularly connected to NVR during a transition, related to the decreased ability of elites from the old regime to suppress discussion of their past transgressions. While the data does support this theory, detailed case-specific evidence on the process through which NVR influences freedom of expression and other aspects of democracy is needed to substantiate this theory and further our knowledge of NVR's specific mechanisms of impact.

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