

**Against All Odds?
The History of Imposed Democracy & the Future of Iraq & Afghanistan**

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Abstract

What does history tell us about the prospects for democracy in post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan? American policymakers frequently referenced the post-WWII success stories of Germany and Japan as plausible futures for the imposed democratic regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan. To evaluate the historical validity of this comparison, we examine the durability of 43 imposed democratic regimes during the period 1800-1994, given several political, economic, and social dimensions, as well as the long-term political institutional impact of these regimes. Our analysis suggests that the survival of imposed democracy is by no means assured. Instead, the survival of democracy is strongly conditioned by the process by which the regime is imposed and the social and economic conditions present in the imposed state. We discuss the prospects for the survival of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan in light of these findings.

1. Introduction

Prior to the invasion of Iraq by coalition forces in 2003, American policymakers emphasized the broader benefits likely to result from the removal of Saddam Hussein's authoritarian regime and the cultivation of a democratic regime in its place.¹ The democratization of Iraq (and to a lesser extent Afghanistan) would, first and foremost, improve the political and economic well being of Iraqi citizens. A democratic Iraq would pursue peace abroad, eliminating a major antagonist in the Middle East and setting the stage for the settlement of conflicts long plaguing the region. Finally, American policymakers argued that a democratic Iraq would stimulate further democratization and greater economic prosperity in the Middle East, a region characterized historically by authoritarian governments and widespread poverty, conditions considered to reinforce chronic political instability and conflict.

The broader goals of American foreign policy were grounded, in part, in two cases of democratic, market-oriented regimes imposed from abroad: West Germany (later unified Germany) and Japan following WWII. Defeated in war, West Germany and Japan were transformed by the United States and its allies from militarist regimes with weak democratic cultures into paragons of democracy, institutions that were in turn reinforced by capitalist economies that generated startling levels of prosperity. Furthermore, West Germany and Japan were critical to the functioning, and ultimate success, of the Western security system during the

¹American policy expectations are made clear in a speech that President George W. Bush made to the National Endowment for Democracy in 2003. For a transcript of this speech, see "Iraqi Democracy Will Succeed." *New York Times*, November 6, 2003. These early themes were also reiterated in the National Security Council document, *The National Strategy for Victory in Iraq* available at the following URL:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq_national_strategy_20051130.pdf.

Cold War, and served as beacons of democracy, economic prosperity, and peaceful foreign relations in regions notable for authoritarian regimes, state controlled economies, domestic turmoil, and interstate conflict. Similar to the impact of post-WWII West Germany and Japan, American policymakers suggested that democratic, prosperous, and peaceful regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq would serve as catalysts for similar outcomes in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Contemporary scholarship suggests some tangential support for these policy expectations, as democratic regimes are found to be more prosperous, are unlikely to engage in militarized conflict with each other, exhibit significantly greater respect for human rights, and proliferate geographically through “snowballing.”² These scholarly findings were bolstered by early policy analysis, particularly by those focusing on Iraq.³ Conversely, other scholarship warns of potential negative byproducts from newly democratized states, such as regional instability, tendencies toward aggressive foreign policies, the difficulty of grafting democratic institutions on to ethnically diverse societies, as well America’s poor track record of transplanting democracy.⁴ In

²Adam Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950–1990*.(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Bruce Russett and John Oneal. *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations*.(New York: W.W. Norton, 2001); Steven Poe and C. Neal Tate.“Repression of Human Rights to Personal Integrity in the 1980s: A Global Analysis.” *American Political Science Review* 88 (December 1994): 853–900; Samuel P. Huntington. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth-Century*.(Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

³For example, see Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack, “Democracy in Iraq?”, *Washington Quarterly* 26 (Summer 2003): 119-136; Adeed Dawisha, “The Prospects for Democracy in Iraq: Challenges and Opportunities,” *Third World Quarterly* 26 (June 2005): 723-737.

⁴Zeev Maoz. *Domestic Sources of Global Change*. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan

turn, this scholarship squares with the cautionary policy analysis of the contemporary cases of Iraq and Afghanistan.⁵

Clearly, by 2006 the United States had adjusted its expectations regarding feasible outcomes in Afghanistan and Iraq, a shift that might call into question the necessity of studying, in part, the historical validity of the original policy expectations.⁶ We argue that such an exercise is important for three reasons. First, it is important to establish the validity of the original policy expectations, given prevailing historical patterns identifiable prior to the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan—that is, how much American policymakers might reasonably have known about the prospects for democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan given readily available historical data. Second, despite the aforementioned recent shift in American policy expectations regarding

Press, 1996); Andrew J. Enterline and J. Michael Greig. “Beacons of Hope? The Impact of Imposed Democracy on Regional Peace, Democracy and Prosperity.” *Journal of Politics* 67 (November 2005): 1075–1098; Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder. *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Choose to Fight*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2005); Jack Snyder. *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: Norton, 2000); Niall Ferguson. *Colossus: The Price of America’s Empire*.(New York: Penguin, 2004).

⁵For example, see Larry Diamond. “Building Democracy After Conflict: Lessons From Iraq.” *Journal of Democracy* 16 (January 2005): 9-23.

⁶Robin Wright and Ellen Knickmeyer. “Administration Is Shedding ‘Unreality’ That Dominated Invasion, Official Says.” *Washington Post*, August 14, 2005: p. A1. Evidence of a subtle shift in goals away from a democratic-centric core can be detected in President George W. Bush’s press conference on December 20, 2006, during which he made the following statement: “What is going to happen is we’re going to develop a strategy that helps the Iraqis achieve the objective that the 12 million people want them to achieve, which is a government that can—a country that can sustain itself, govern itself, defend itself, a free country that will serve as an ally in this war against extremists and radicals.” (Available at the following URL:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/12/20061220-1.html>.

Afghanistan, and in particular, Iraq, the cultivation of democratic regimes abroad remains central to American foreign policy.⁷ Last, in addition to this retrospective evaluation of policy expectations, questions regarding the future of the political systems in Iraq and Afghanistan remain relevant. For example, how likely is it that the democratic regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq will achieve the strength and durability of the West German and Japanese beacons? If democratic institutions fail in the contemporary cases, what are the long-term implications of their failure for the return of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan? That is, regardless of short term setbacks, have the United States and its allies sowed the seeds of long-term democracy in the Middle East?

To address these retrospective and prospective questions, here we examine the historical performance of democratic regimes cultivated by outside powers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, focusing upon how the manner in which democratic institutions are cultivated, as well as the conditions under which these institutions are implemented, influence the durability and future prospects for democracy in a given country. Prior to exploring these characteristics, we discuss the concept of imposed democracy, followed by the identification of the sample of democratic regimes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that we employ in our analysis. We conclude the article with a discussion of the implications of our analysis for expectations of success in the contemporary democracies in Afghanistan and Iraq. Briefly, we find evidence suggesting that the means by which democracy is being implemented in both Iraq and Afghanistan and the domestic environment in which the efforts are being conducted are both contrary to the conditions that are most likely to produce durable democracy.

⁷See President Bush's 2006 State of the Union Address, available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/stateoftheunion/2006/print/index.html>, for broad policy goals

2. Imposed Democratic Regimes

States seeking to exert influence upon the affairs of another state have a variety of methods at their disposal. They might employ exhortations, inducements, threats, and punishments as a means of enticing or compelling a target state to adjust its policies in a more favorable direction. Efforts to alter the policies of another state can also be accomplished by stimulating a change in leadership in the target state, with the expectation that a new leader will bring more favorable policies for the foreign power⁸.

We consider the contemporary efforts to cultivate democratic institutions in Afghanistan and Iraq as representative of an additional approach to influencing the policies of another state through the implementation of changes in institutional authority patterns. In the case of contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan, said institutional patterns are of the democratic variety. Here, we refer to the process by which these democratic institutions are created as one of *imposed democratic regimes*.⁹ Therefore, imposed democratic regimes are democratic governments installed by a foreign power in which the foreign power plays an important role in the establishment, promotion, and maintenance of the institutions of government. In this sense, the imposition of these democratic regimes represents a more significant and costly way of altering the policies of another state that involves

including the spread of democracy across the Middle East.

⁸ Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce and Alistair Smith and Randolph M. Siverson and James D. Morrow. *The Logic of Political Survival*. (Cambridge: MIT University Press, 2003).

⁹We consider the term “imposed” to be synonymous with the terms “cultivated” and “stimulated.” While President George W. Bush states that the United States is uninterested in imposing an American form of government on Afghanistan or Iraq, it is clear from his language that the set of acceptable forms of government is limited to democratic variants. See Bush’s 2005 State of the Union Address, available at the following URL:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/02/20050202-11.html>.

more than merely encouraging or facilitating leadership change, but necessitates restructuring entirely the domestic political system of the target state.

Imposed democratic regimes can be installed following the defeat of a state in a war such as the familiar examples of post-World War II West Germany and Japan in which a foreign power occupies a state military, removes the government, and establishes entirely new democratic political institutions. Iraq and Afghanistan, of course, are similar cases in this respect. Other democratic polities can be imposed by an outside power more incrementally, through a colonial process, for example, in which the colonial power establishes the democratic regime to govern the colony after independence, or via covert activity, such as via the support of a coup d'état. Yet, despite the significant differences between regimes imposed by a departing colonizer and the current efforts to establish democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan, they share one key commonality: *the means of governance are established through the actions and decisions of a foreign power*. This external cultivation of these regimes by a foreign power sets them apart from other regimes that develop primarily indigenously (e.g., the United States in 1789 following the American Revolution), making examination of their performance as a separate class of regimes important.

Examining cases of imposed democracy side by side, regardless of the precise process by which they occurred or by a particular external power (e.g., the United States), permits us to understand the underlying factors that shape the survival of imposed democracies. Our analysis enables us to canvas history and examine the influence that domestic conditions, such as prosperity and social divisions, exert upon the survival of imposed democracies. In turn, we reason that our analysis of all cases of imposed democracy during the modern state system enables us to better understand the influence that the conditions present in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan are likely to exert upon the survival of their nascent democratic regimes.

3. Sample

Our sample of imposed democratic regimes is grounded in the *Polity III*d database on polities (i.e., authority patterns), supplemented with reference to Stearns' *Encyclopedia of World History* and various country monographs.¹⁰ The *Polity III*d terminal year of 1994 is advantageous to the analysis that we conduct herein, because it facilitates out-of-sample forecasts of the contemporary cases of interest. While we discuss the coding of imposed democratic regimes in greater detail elsewhere,¹¹ we summarize our procedures briefly in the remainder of this section.

Initially, we rely on the *Polity III*d's coding of the origin of the polities in a global data sample covering the period 1800-1994 to identify those polities that emerge primarily due to the influence of foreign states. Specifically, we identify polities that are the products of foreign involvement, such as those polities that are cultivated following war (e.g., the West German polity following WWII), or colonialism (the Indian polity following the grant of independence in 1947 from Britain), but we exclude those polities that are primarily the result of indigenous design (e.g., the post-WWII Indonesian polity.) In addition to relying upon the *Polity* coding of the origins of polities to identify the sample of imposed polities, we employ Stearns and additional monographs to evaluate the origins of polities included in the *Polity* set. Although we employ the

¹⁰Sara McLaughlin et al. "Timing the Changes in Political Structures: A New Polity Database." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42 (April 1998): 231–242; Peter N. Stearns. *The Encyclopedia of World History*. Sixth Edition. (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001).

¹¹Andrew J. Enterline and J. Michael Greig. "Beacons of Hope? The Impact of Imposed Democracy on Regional Peace, Democracy and Prosperity." *Journal of Politics* 67 (November 2005): 1075–1098; and Andrew J. Enterline and J. Michael Greig, (2007) "A Perfect Storm? Political Instability in Imposed Polities and the Future of Iraq." University of North Texas, Department of Political Science, Typescript.

term “imposed” when referring to the democratic polities in our sample, it is clear that the imposition process can run the gamut from “long term cultivation” to “overt imposition.” Here, we employ an inclusive strategy for identifying our sample of polities that are primarily the products of external imposition. Additionally, in the interests of the accessibility of the discussion, we employ the more common term of “regime” to reference the imposed polities in our sample.

Having identified a sample of all imposed polities persisting in the interstate system during the period 1800-1994, we rely on *Polity III*’s composite regime score (*DEMAUT*) to identify a sub-sample of imposed regimes reflecting varying degrees of democratic institutions, or what we refer to as imposed democratic regimes. The manner in which the *Polity* project conceptualizes and categorizes regime types in calculating the composite regime score is especially useful for our project. Specifically, the *Polity* project identifies five dimensions of authority characteristics in coding the level of democracy and autocracy present within the political system: the competitiveness of political participation, the regulation of political participation, the competitiveness of executive recruitment, the openness of executive recruitment, and the constraints on the chief executive¹². Each authority dimension has both democratic and autocratic elements. For example, a state with competitive political participation would receive 3 points towards its democracy score and 0 toward its autocracy score. By contrast, a state in which political participation is suppressed would receive 0 points towards its democracy score and 2 points toward its autocracy score. The *DEMAUT* score combines the ordinal coding of democracy and autocracy by subtracting the latter from the former, a procedure

¹² Kristian Gleditsch and Michael Ward. “Double Take: Reexamining Democracy and Autocracy in Modern Polities”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41 (1997):361-83.

that results in an ordinal scale ranging from -10 (a fully autocratic regime) to 10 (a fully autocratic regime.)

For example, the imposed democratic regime in Panama in 1994 is coded a *DEMAUT* score of 7, or a rather strong democracy. In the calculation of its *DEMAUT* score, Panama receives toward its democracy score the following aggregation: 2 points toward its democracy score for choosing its executive through an election, 1 point for the open recruitment of the executive, 1 point for the factional nature of party competition, and 4 points for the presence of significant constraints on the independent power of the executive. Panama receives 1 point for the factional/restricted nature of the regulation of political expression within the polity. Summing these values yields a democracy score of 8 and an autocracy score of 1 for 1994 Panama, producing Panama's *DEMAUT* score of 7, a relatively strong democracy.

As is the case in the current cases in Iraq and Afghanistan, the development of democracy occurs in a piecemeal fashion with some elements of democracy occurring early, while other institutional components of democracy lagging behind. As a result, we identify imposed democratic regimes using a broad definition of democracy to include those regimes which, while not fully democratic, demonstrate at least some characteristics of democracy. Operationally, these regime are those that reflect *DEMAUT* scores greater than or equal to a value of one during the initial year that the democratic authority pattern is imposed. In this sense, as long as the democratic components of an imposed polity are greater in magnitude relative to its autocratic components, we identify the regime as an imposed democracy. Doing so facilitates examining the performance of the gamut of imposed democracies, ranging from the weakest (a *DEMAUT* score of 1) to the strongest (a *DEMAUT* score of 10). Furthermore, pursuing this strategy enables us to capture the essence of what referred to in the literature as regime "coherency," a quality of

political institutions that conditions their durability. Specifically, regimes that are “incoherent,” i.e., reflective of mixed institutional prerogatives, such as dictatorships grounded in mass politics, are more volatile and less durable.¹³ In our sample of imposed democratic regimes that we refer to as “weak” (*DEMAUT*<7) exhibit greater incoherency, while democratic regimes that we refer to as “strong” exhibit greater coherency, and in turn durability.

Once we identify an imposed democratic regime’s first year of existence, we trace the persistence of the regime until the point at which (1) the state hosting the imposed polity ceases to exist, (2) a host state’s *DEMAUT* scores falls below a value of 1 (thereby resulting in a regime that is becoming more autocratic), or (3) the terminal year of the study (i.e., 1994).¹⁴ Relying on these coding criteria, we identify a sample of 43 imposed democratic regimes, a sample that is reported in Table 1.¹⁵

[Table 1 about here]

Consider the basic distributional characteristics of the sample of 43 imposed democratic

¹³Gates, S., H. Hegre, M. P. Jones and H. Strand (2006). “Institutional Inconsistency and Political Instability: Polity Duration, 1800–2000.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 50(4): 893-908.

¹⁴We allow an imposed polity to persist through periods of “interregnum” or “interruption,” as these periods are identified in the *Polity III*d sample.

¹⁵ Given the necessity of merging several data samples together for subsequent our analysis of the performance of imposed democratic regimes, a process that requires combining slightly incompatible systems of political units (e.g., the *Polity* projects identifies and international system of polities, while the Correlates of War (*COW*) identifies an interstate system membership, we opt to employ the *COW* system membership dates. As a result, the start and end dates of some polities are truncated (e.g., the South African imposed democratic regimes commences in the *COW* start year 1920, rather than the *Polity* designated start year of 1910.) The *COW* state system membership data can be located at <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/>.

regimes reported in Table 1. First, imposed democracy is a phenomenon occurring primarily during the twentieth century. Specifically, while we identify three cases (7.5 percent) occurring in the nineteenth century (Yugoslavia in 1838, New Zealand in 1857, and Canada in 1867), the remainder of the imposed democracies in our sample occur in the twentieth century.

Furthermore, the cross-temporal distribution of these democratic regimes in the twentieth century is uneven, with 13 of the 43 regimes (30 percent) occurring prior to 1940, the remaining 70 percent thereafter. The decade reflecting the greatest frequency of imposed democratic regimes is the 1960s, with 15 imposed democratic regimes (34.8 percent) occurring during this period, most of which correspond to the wave of new regimes in post-colonial Africa.

Next, consider the regional distribution of imposed democratic regimes. Figure 1 reports the distribution of the 43 imposed democratic regimes across seven geographic regions. First, we observe that each region that we identify in Figure 1 experiences at least one imposed democratic regime. The contemporary effort in Iraq is not the first such effort in the Middle East, as previous democratic impositions occurred in both Lebanon (1941) and Syria (1944). Second, despite the occurrence of imposed democratic regimes in each region, it is clear that most occur in two regions, Africa (16, or 37 percent) and Asia (9, or 21 percent). Finally, the distribution of imposed democratic regimes across the regions, as well as the diversity of potentially causal conditions in these regions, reinforces the notion that analysis of the contemporary cases of Afghanistan and Iraq would benefit from comparisons with cases beyond that of the very limited sample including post-WWII West Germany and Japan.

[Figure 1 about here]

Finally, we consider the distribution of imposed democratic regimes in terms of the degree, or strength of democratic institutions. To facilitate our discussion, in Figure 2 we plot the

frequency of imposed democratic regimes by the strength, or degree, of democratic institutions reflected in *Polity III* data's coding of the variable *DEMAUT* (in each regime's first year). We consider a *DEMAUT* score of 1 to reflect the presence of weak democratic institutions, and a *DEMAUT* score of 10 to reflect the presence of strong democratic institutions. In general, the distribution of imposed democratic regimes is skewed toward the higher *DEMAUT* values, reflecting attempts by imposing states to establish stronger democratic regimes, rather than nebulous regimes, those that are sometimes referred to as "anocratic," or mixed, regimes. This said, 17 of the democratic regimes in our sample are associated with *DEMAUT* scores of ≤ 5 , which underscores the fact that historically the degree of democracy in imposed regimes is reflective of the range of the degree of democratic institutions.

[Figure 2 about here]

Our simple descriptive analysis of the sample of 43 imposed democratic regimes reveals that, while rare, imposed democratic regimes are more frequent than one might anticipate, and certainly more than is reflected in the very constrained, but often cited, sub-sample consisting of the case of post-WWII West Germany and Japan. Indeed, there is considerable variation in both the regional distribution of these regimes and the strength of their democratic institutions. This variation is important, because it suggests that the performance of imposed democratic regimes historically is variable, and that our sample can provide insights into the performance of imposed democratic regimes under a variety of conditions. Such variations in outcomes and potential causes will enable us to more fully assess the prospects for imposed democratic regimes in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan by placing these cases in a more complete historical context.

4. Durability of Imposed Democratic Regimes

The Imposition Process

Central to an assessment of the likely performance of democracy in contemporary, post-invasion Afghanistan and Iraq is the durability of these nascent democratic regimes. Any analysis of regime durability confronts the issue of right-censoring, cases that remain durable through the end date of our analysis, such that we are unable to determine precisely how long each political regime persists for those regimes that persist beyond the terminal point of our observation period, the year 1994. For example, if a democratic regime is imposed in 1993, we only observe it for two years in our data sample (1993–1994). This imposed democratic regime might terminate on January 1, 1995, or the regime might persist until the year 2050, yet we are unable to observe either trajectory, given the terminal time point in our data sample (1994). For example, consider the Panamanian democracy imposed by the United States in 1989. In our data, we observe that this regime persists until 1994, but technically we are unable to observe its persistence beyond this point, despite the fact that it might very well persist (and does) until the writing of this article¹⁶ Here, we adopt an econometric approach, survival modeling, that allows us to deal explicitly with this issue.

First, we examine the overall historical performance of imposed democracies, independent of the time and conditions under which they are imposed. Figure 3 plots the survival curve for all imposed democracies imposed between 1800 and 1994. The survival patterns of these historical imposed democracies suggest several interesting observations. First,

¹⁶The problem of right-censoring is inescapable. Obviously, we as authors of the present article could observe the aforementioned Panamanian regime as it persists to the very moment in time that we concluded writing this manuscript (December 2007), but not beyond this point in time. Thereafter, the issue of right censoring emerges forthwith.

not surprisingly, in their earliest years, imposed democracies are particularly prone toward failure. Indeed, approximately 30% of imposed democracies fail by the tenth anniversary of their imposition. This suggests that the early years of the young democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan constitute the period of greatest danger for the survival of democracy in these states, a prediction that matches the conditions in the contemporary cases as of this writing.

[Figure 3 about here]

Thus, the historical record of imposed democracy suggests that if democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan can survive beyond this initially dangerous first decade after the creation of the regime, the prospects for continued survival will improve. Indeed, among those imposed democracies that survive the first decade after their creation, it takes approximately another 40 years for the next 30% of imposed democracies to fail. This suggests that once imposed democracies survive the initial dangerous period following their implementation, they begin to take root within their home states and become increasingly resistant to the political instability that might cause their failure.

Of course, as we have seen in Iraq and Afghanistan, not all imposed democracies are created equally. Full, Jeffersonian democracy was implemented quickly in post-World War II West Germany and Japan without a long, gradual transition phase from autocracy to democracy. Political change in Iraq and Afghanistan has proceeded more slowly in something closer to a piecemeal fashion. While elections have taken place in both Iraq and Afghanistan, other attributes of full democracy such as the development of a free and open press, the complete opening of the selection process for political leadership to the masses, and the development and implementation of institutions to regulate the political system remain under development. In this sense, West Germany and Japan moved quickly toward the achievement of what we term “strong

democracy”, highly democratic states with *DEMAUT* scores greater than 6. By contrast, Iraq and Afghanistan are better labeled as cases of “weak democracy”, states that show some elements of democracy but fail, as yet, to achieve the full flowering of political liberalism.

Given the significant differences between strong and weak democracy, it makes sense to expect that they might demonstrate different historical patterns of survival. Evidence in the literature has shown that “inconsistent” regimes, those that are neither fully democratic nor fully autocratic are at risk for a higher probability of polity change¹⁷. We begin to examine these differences in Figure 4. Focusing on strong democracies, we see that they demonstrate a distinct pattern of regime survival. As we observed in general among all imposed democracies, the first decade for imposed strong democracies is an especially dangerous period for their survival. By the end of the first decade after their imposition, approximately 28% of strong democracies have failed. Yet, once these regimes survive this “dangerous decade,” the survival rate of strong democracies increases significantly. By year 15 following imposition, only an additional 12% of strong democracies fail. Among those imposed strong democracies that survive beyond 18 years (55% of all strong democracies), none fail in our sample

[Figure 4 about here]

Weak democracies, those most closely resembling the contemporary cases in Iraq and Afghanistan, fare significantly worse historically. In the first decade of their existence, 39% of weak imposed polities fail. While 55% of strong democracies survive at least 52 years after their imposition, only 16% of weak democracies survive during this interval. In this sense, the quick

¹⁷ Gates, S., H. Hegre, M. P. Jones and H. Strand (2006). “Institutional Inconsistency and Political Instability: Polity Duration, 1800–2000.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 50(4): 893-908.

institutionalization of full democracy in imposed regimes increases the potential for regime durability. This suggests that states that develop strong democracy early on, by expanding political participation at the ballot box and in the selection of candidates, in addition to fostering civil liberties, are likely to be more effective at dampening the domestic opposition to the regime that typically accompanies the imposition of a regime. The more gradual development of democracy, as is occurring in Iraq and Afghanistan, appears less durable, perhaps due to the lack of “buy-in” into the regime by its political opponents that piecemeal steps toward democracy tend to engender.

Although distinguishing polities that come closer to an ideal democracy from less democratic regimes by referencing Polity’s *DEMAUT* scale is often used in the literature¹⁸, this approach is not without drawbacks. First, such an approach sets an arbitrary dichotomous threshold between “strong” or “full” democracy and “weak” or “partial” democracy. Second, the structure of the *DEMAUT* scale fails to include the scope of political participation within the polity, an important attribute of democracy. To guard against the possibility that our findings with respect to “strong” versus “weak” democracy are a reflection of the way that we measure differences in the level of democratization in a polity, we employ a second operationalize of the distinctions between democracies, one developed by Gates, et al.

Gates, et al. develop a measure of democratic strength known as the Scalar Index of Polities (SIP). This measure creates a scale from 0 to 1 that measures the level of democracy in a state along three dimensions: executive recruitment, executive constraints, and political

¹⁸ See, for example, David L. Epstein, Robert Bates, Jack Goldstone, Ida Kristensen, and Sharyn O’Halloryn (2006). “Democratic Transitions.” *American Journal of Political Science* 50(3): 551-569.

participation. Values closer to 1 identify cases more closely approximating an ideal democracy. Using the SIP measure, we categorize the imposed democracies in our sample as “low”, “medium”, and “high” groups of democracies. The “low” group of democracies includes those with an SIP value more than .5 standard deviations below the mean SIP score for our entire sample. The low group includes the imposed democracies in Pakistan, Cuba, and Yugoslavia. The “medium” group includes those polities with SIP values between .5 standard deviations below and .5 standard deviations above the mean SIP score. The medium group includes the imposed democracies in Botswana, the Philippines, and South Africa. Finally, the “high” group, the most democratic polities, are those with SIP scores more than .5 standard deviations above the mean score. India, Canada, West Germany/Germany are examples of the high group. The survival curves for these three groups of imposed democracies are reported in Figure 5.

[Figure 5 about here]

Employing this alternative measure of democratic strength, we observe a very similar pattern to that which we observed using the dichotomous distinction between strong and weak imposed democracies: Imposed democracies with the greatest similarity to an ideal democracy fail at a much lower rate than less consistent democracies. Ten years after the imposition of democracy, only 16% of polities in the “high” SIP group fail. By contrast, at the 10 year mark nearly 35% of those in the medium and 53% of those in the low group of imposed democratic regime fail. By 20 years following democratic imposition, 67% of those in the low group and 44% in the medium group have failed. Among the most consistently democratic polities, only 30% fail by this 20-year mark. In this respect, imposed democracies behave very similarly to the performance of democratic regimes in general.¹⁹ This auxiliary analysis furnishes additional

¹⁹ Gates, S., H. Hegre, M. P. Jones and H. Strand (2006). “Institutional Inconsistency and

evidence suggesting that the gradual efforts at democratization in Iraq and Afghanistan are unlikely to produce durable, fully consistent democracies.

Thus far, the track record of imposed democracies suggests dim prospects for durable democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet, historically, democracies have been imposed across a variety of contexts and through distinct processes, and it makes sense to expect that these processes and contexts are likely to influence the performance of imposed democracies, shaping their prospects for durability. For example, although our analyses focus upon the full period from 1800-1994, one might argue that much has changed in the international system during this period of time. The ability of imposer states to project their power and influence what takes place within an imposed state has certainly expanded since the end of World War II. Yet, the post-World War II period has also witnessed the growth of national self-determination movements and the spread of civil war across the international system that can pose significant challenges to the stability of imposed regimes.

Comparing the historical experience of democracies imposed before World War II to those imposed democracies created after the war provides further basis for skepticism regarding the prospects for durable democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan if we assume these contemporary cases are more likely to look like other post-World War II democratic impositions. Among pre-World War II imposed democracies, more than 92% survive their first decade after imposition. The risk of failure of post-World War II imposed democracies is considerably higher, with 44% of these regimes failing within their first decade after imposition. This heightened risk of failure among post-World War II imposed democracies continues for an extended period such that while

Political Instability: Polity Duration, 1800–2000.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 50(4): 893-908.

only 31% of pre-World War II imposed democracies fail by their 25th anniversary, 42% of post-World War II democracies fail by this point in time. These results are summarized in Figure 6.

[Figure 6 about here]

One of the key changes during the post-World War II period is the transition of states away from colonial status to sovereign states. While some colonial powers did little more than abandon their colonies (e.g., Portugal), other colonial metropolises, such as the British in India and the United States in the Philippines, played a lengthy role in shaping political institutions in their colonies in the lead up to independence. In these cases, imposer states cultivated democratic institutions prior to decolonization. In comparing these colonial democratic impositions to other types of democratic impositions, we see clear evidence that the process by which democracies are imposed also appears to influence the survival rate of such polities.

The survival curves reported in Figure 7 describes the survival rate of those democracies imposed through a colonial process against those imposed absent colonization. In the earliest years following their establishment, colonially-imposed democratic regimes are significantly more likely to fail relative to their non-colonial counterparts. By the tenth year after their imposition, 41 percent of colonially-imposed polities fail. By contrast, the sub-sample of non-colonially imposed democratic regimes do not approach this failure proportion until the 21st year after imposition, by which time 38 percent of non-colonially imposed democracies have failed. Indeed, non-colonially imposed democratic regimes outperform colonially-imposed democracies through the first half-century of their existence. Conditions change beyond this point such that by the 52nd year after imposition *all* non-colonially imposed democracies fail while 39 percent of colonially-imposed polities persist.

[Figure 7 about here]

This tendency of colonially-imposed democracies to fail very early, but upon reaching a certain survival point persist for long periods of time, suggests the presence of two competing forces influencing the durability of imposed democracy. First, colonially-imposed democracies may initially be particularly prone to failure during the early post-colonial years as the citizenry of the former colony seek to overthrow what are perceived as the last vestiges of a colonial period. In this sense, in trying to move beyond the colonial experience and establish a regime more effectively deemed as “their own,” citizens may replace democratic regimes imposed upon them by their former colonial masters in the early years after imposition.

However, colonial metropolises often possess a better understanding of the underlying political and social dynamics in a colony, as well as a deeper commitment to a colony, relative to the qualities that non-colonial imposers bring to their targets of imposition. This deeper understanding of the context in which democratic imposition is to be conducted, coupled with a greater commitment of resources by a colonial imposer, can provide a firmer foundation for a lasting imposed democracy. As long as a colonially-imposed democracy can survive beyond its initial existence when it runs the greatest risk of being deposed with the colonizer, the imposed democratic regime is likely to be more durable than a democracy imposed by a non-colonizer.

Thus far, the historical record suggests a bleak prognosis for the imposed democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan as post-World War II imposition efforts, incremental democratization policies, and non-colonial impositions show poor survival rates among imposed democracies. Yet, the timing of imposition and the process by which the democratic imposition is conducted only furnishes a partial picture of the forces that influence the success or failure of efforts to impose democracy upon another state. The domestic environment in which an imposing power seeks to foster democratic institutions is also likely to influence the prospects for the survival of

these institutions. Quite simply, some domestic environments may be more conducive to the development of democratic institutions than other environments. To better understand how these contextual conditions are likely to influence the developing democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan, we turn next to an examination of some prominent domestic conditions.

Domestic Conditions

While both the strength of democracy and the process by which it is imposed influences the durability of imposed democracies, it makes little sense to expect that all domestic environments will be equally conducive to the successful implementation of democracy by an outside power. The social divisions within Iraq and Afghanistan, for example, are fundamentally different from those of post-World War II West Germany and Japan. As such, it makes sense to expect that the social divisions within Iraq and Afghanistan are likely to condition the survival of their newly democratic regimes in ways that are different from those of West Germany and Japan.

Examining the historical record of imposed democracies reveals a tremendous diversity of domestic contextual present in these regimes, contextual influences that are apt to influence the degree to which democratic institutions, once imposed, tend to survive. For example, some states demonstrate high levels of ethnic and religious divisions, creating social cleavages that are likely to be particularly challenging for an imposed democracy to weather. Uganda, for example, has a markedly higher level of ethnic fractionalization than Japan. As a result, *ceteris paribus*, it is reasonable to expect that an imposed democracy in Uganda, as these groups compete for influence and resources, is likely to experience a stress upon the political system arising from these ethnic divisions that is greater than that experienced by a Japanese democracy. Similarly, just as religious divisions have provided the fault lines for conflict in contemporary

Iraq, we see significant variation in the level of religious diversity among historical cases of imposed democracy, ranging from those states with little religious heterogeneity (such as Honduras and Ireland) to those with significant religious differences, such as Papua New Guinea and Lebanon.

To examine the degree to which the social diversity of an imposed democracy influences its survival, we estimate survival curves for these regimes, classifying them by their levels of ethnic and religious diversity. We use data on ethnic fractionalization and religious fractionalization from Fearon as our measures of each form of social cleavage.²⁰ These measures evaluate the extent of ethnic and religious fractionalization in each state on a scale from 0 (complete homogeneity, or least fractionalized) to 1 (complete heterogeneity, or most fractionalized.) Given our sample of imposed democracies reported in Table 1, we sub-classify these cases in groups with the top third of cases representing cases of high heterogeneity, the second third comprising cases of medium heterogeneity, and the bottom third of cases constituting examples of low heterogeneity.

As can be seen in Figures 8 and 9, imposed democratic regimes with the highest levels of both ethnic and religious heterogeneity exhibit the greatest risk of failure, particularly initially. Among states with the lowest level of ethnic fractionalization, slightly more than 90% of imposed democracies endure at least 10 years. As ethnic fractionalization increases, the survival rate of imposed democratic regimes decreases. Among imposed democracies in the middle third of ethnic fractionalization, the ten year failure rate doubles, with about 76% of regimes surviving to the ten-year mark. The risk of failure is greatest in the group with the highest level of ethnic

²⁰ James Fearon, "Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country," *Journal of Economic Growth* 8(2) (June 2003), 195-222.

fractionalization, with less than 50% of imposed democracies in this group surviving to the ten-year mark. These differences persist at the twenty-year mark with 60% of all imposed regimes failing in the most ethnically diverse group as compared to a failure rate of 49% in the middle and 28% in the lowest groups, respectively.

[Figures 8 & 9 about here]

A similar pattern emerges when we examine the influence that religious fractionalization exerts upon the survival of imposed democracy. Among imposed democratic regimes with the lowest level of religious differences, 84% of imposed democracies survive at least ten years. The failure rate of democracy, however, is markedly higher as religious diversity increases with the ten year survival rate being only about 60% for both states with moderate and high levels of religious divisions. By the 20 year mark, 67% of states with low levels of religious divisions have survived while only 42% of states with moderate and 50% of states with high levels of religious divisions have survived.

Of course, the social characteristics of states are not fully determinative of their futures. While significant social divisions can breed instability in both indigenously and externally developed regimes, prosperity can serve to mitigate these threats and boost the survival of regimes. By expanding the pool of resources available to all, prosperity provides a means of preventing and moderating regime challenges that arise from ethnic and religious divisions, by providing a greater capacity for the government to foster compromise between contending groups and to create incentives for the groups to confine their disputes with one another to within the political system.

In order to examine the influence that economic prosperity exerts upon the historical survival of imposed polities, we consider to two distinct measures of prosperity. First, we

measure an imposed democratic regime's level of prosperity by its per capita GDP (as measured in constant U.S. dollars.)²¹ Of course, reliable GDP data is only available following World War II. Therefore, in order to examine the impact that prosperity exerts upon the survival of all 43 imposed democracies during the 1800-1994 time period covered by our sample, we also employ total iron and steel production of each country for each year during the period as a proxy for economic development and prosperity, the data for which are from the COW National Material Capabilities data set.²² Admittedly, iron and steel production is only a crude proxy for prosperity. Our ability to compare our findings using this measure with those using post-World War II per capita GDP data gives us greater confidence in this approach. As was the case in our examination of the effect of ethnic cleavages, we classify imposed polities in low, medium, and high strata for our prosperity measures with one-third of the cases of imposed democratic regimes in each group.²³

²¹ GDP data is taken from Kristian Gleditsch's Expanded Trade and GDP data available at <http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/exptradegdp.html>. Information on this data is available in Kristian Gleditsch, "Expanded Trade and GDP Data," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46 (2002): 712-24.

²² J. David Singer, Stuart Bremer, and John Stuckey. "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965." in Bruce Russett (ed) *Peace, War, and Numbers*, Beverly Hills: Sage: 19-48, 1972).

²³ Clearly, prosperity is a very broad concept, and one that is only partially reflected in our empirical measures of industrialization and gross domestic product. A reasonable argument is that critical to the success of democratic institutions is the degree to which a nation's wealth is distributed across its citizens (i.e., social inequality), in addition to whether a nation's wealth emerges from a diversified economy, or one that is driven by a single resource, such a oil wealth or a mono-crop economy. While we believe that our choice of operationalization taps into relevant dimensions that condition the success of imposed democracy, additional economic

Figures 10 and 11 underscore the important role prosperity plays in the survival of imposed democratic regimes. Regardless of whether we operationalize prosperity in imposed democratic regimes as per capita GDP or iron and steel production from the COW, the same pattern emerges: *imposed democracies in the poorest group of states are the most likely to fail rapidly*. Specifically, among imposed democracies in the group with the lowest level of economic development, only 30% survive ten years. Imposed democracies in the middle and upper strata of development fare considerably better with 85% and 86%, respectively, of democracies surviving at least ten years. The survival gap between the high and middle prosperity strata accelerates with the passage of time. At 20 year mark, 71% of imposed democracies in the highest development strata persist while only 55% in the middle group continue to survive. Imposed democratic regimes in the poorest states continue to lag, such that only 25% last at least 20 years. By the 50th year after democratic imposition, only 16% of the imposed democracies in the poorest states persist while 41% of regimes in the middle group and 65% in the most prosperous group survive.

[Figures 10 & 11 about here]

Switching our attention to the relationship between of per capita GDP and the persistence of imposed democracies, we observe a similar pattern. Among the poorest group of imposed democracies, only 39% survive at least 10 years whereas all imposed polities in the middle and high per capita GDP groups last at least this long. After 20 years, the survival rate of imposed democratic regimes reduces even further, with fewer than a third of the imposed democracies in the poorest states surviving but 89% of polities in the middle and 75% of polities in the highest per capita GDP groups surviving. By year 40, only one of the imposed democracies with the

dimensions remain to be explored in future research.

lowest per capita GDP persist while 67% of democracies in the middle and 75% in the highest group last at least this long.

In sum, democratization via foreign imposition is a fragile process. This fragility is likely to be all the more case among imposed democracies because of the low level of institutional legitimacy that their foreign source engenders. To the degree to which the imposed democratic regime is considered illegitimate or as a tool of an external power, said regime will be less likely to survive. Furthermore, social cleavages, such as religious and ethnic fractionalization, undercut the survivability of imposed democratic regimes. This said, economic prosperity furnishes one means of insulation from these pressures for imposed democracies as well as a tool for dealing with challenges to the regime. First, to the degree to which a state is more prosperous, there are fewer distributional issues over which competing groups in the society must compete, thereby reducing pressure upon the imposed regime during its nascent existence. Second, when challenges to the regime arise, relatively more prosperous imposed democratic regimes have a greater array of resources with which to satisfy disaffected groups within the state, and in turn to increase their chances of survival.

5. Applications

Above, we examine the relationship between three key domestic conditions and the persistence of imposed democratic regimes—the degree of democracy, the degree of social divisions, and the level of economic prosperity. In this section, we turn now to a closer examination of the survival of imposed democratic regimes in several states with comparable historical experiences in order to evaluate the degree to which these general empirical patterns bear out in contemporary cases. We follow this analysis with a discussion of its implications for the future of the imposed democratic regimes in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan.

During the 1960s, colonial powers sought to foster democracy in seven continental African states. For example, France sought to develop democracy in Congo and Benin, while similar efforts were made in Nigeria, Uganda, Botswana, Gambia, and Zimbabwe by Great Britain. Yet, despite the similarities these cases shared in terms of both geographic location and the process by which the foreign power sought to impose democratic institutions, the survival of the democracies imposed within them varies considerably. Democracy survived briefly in four of the cases---Benin, Nigeria, Uganda, and Congo---with an average polity persistence of 4.5 years for the group. By contrast, in Botswana, Gambia, and Zimbabwe, democratic institutions proved much more durable, persisting through at least the year 1994, the terminal time point in our sample²⁴.

Upon closer examination, these cases demonstrate a remarkable consistency with our findings in the broader analysis. One observation that emerges in the broader analysis discussed above is that imposed democracy tends to survive best when relatively stronger democratic institutions were established early on in the democratization process rather than through incremental movement toward full democracy. Among the seven African cases that we examine here, two of the three cases in which democracy proved most durable, Botswana and the Gambia, were full democracies in the first year of democratic imposition, holding elections and establishing political institutions prior to transitioning to full self-rule. The Gambian and Botswanan constitutions each established protections for fundamental human rights early on. The Botswanan constitution, for example, guaranteed universal adult suffrage, the right to free expression, and the right opportunity. The initial elections conducted in each state were both

²⁴Gambia experiences a coup and a transition to military rule in 1994 while Zimbabwe transitions to autocratic authority patterns in 1987.

highly contested, with elections drawing participation by multiple political parties.

One clear pattern among these African cases is the tendency of for high degrees of social division to undermine the persistence of imposed democratic regimes. For example, the level of religious fractionalization in the most religiously heterogeneous durable imposed democracy, Zimbabwe, is less than that of the least religiously diverse least durable imposed democracy, Congo. Similarly, the level of ethnic fractionalization in each of the least durable cases is greater than that of the long-duration cases. Nigeria, for example, a state marked by strong ethnic rivalries, has between 250 and 400 ethnic groups and has been described as “among the most ethnically complex nations in the world”.²⁵ Similarly, Benin, a state divided among 42 ethnic groups, including 8 major ethnic groups, has an extensive history of regional ethnic rivalries such as that between the Bariba and Somba in the north and the Fon in the south²⁶. Congo and Uganda demonstrate similar patterns of sharp ethnic divisions and intense ethnic rivalries. The more durable democracies in Botswana, Gambia, and Zimbabwe are marked by significantly fewer ethnic divisions. The Botswanan population is dominated by the Tswana ethnic group, producing ethnic relations that are largely peaceful.²⁷ Zimbabwe demonstrates a similar pattern, with the Shona constituting 70% of the total population and ethnicity playing little role in domestic politics.²⁸ Similarly, the Gambia, which has the highest ethnic fractionalization score of the durable democracy group, is described by Levinson before the 1993 coup which toppled

²⁵ David Levinson, *Ethnic Groups World Wide: A Ready Reference Handbook*. (Phoenix: Oryx Press., 1998), p. 156.

²⁶ David Levinson, *Ethnic Groups World Wide: A Ready Reference Handbook*. (Phoenix: Oryx Press., 1998), p. 111.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

the imposed democracy as “a model of internal ethnic harmony”.²⁹

The influence that prosperity exerts upon the durability of imposed democracy is equally apparent among these seven states. Among the four African states in which imposed democracy failed quickly, the average per capita GDP was \$789. By contrast, the three durable African states had an average per capita GDP of \$1151. The least persistent imposed democracy, Congo, which only persisted four years, had a per capita GDP of \$492. By contrast, the longest-lived imposed democracy (30 years), Gambia, had a per capita GDP of \$1070. Taken together, these trends further underscore the degree to which prosperity can mitigate the problems faced by imposed democracies and survival trajectories.

As we note above, the historical record of imposed democratic regimes suggests that the conditions associated with the imposition of democracy in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan are core to the long-term survival of the contemporary regimes. Not only are Iraq and Afghanistan cases of the post-World War II, non-colonial impositions that generally perform poorly in our analysis, but the incremental manner in which democratic institutions are being cultivated in the contemporary cases also correspond to poor performance historically. As troubling as these qualities may be, the domestic social and economic environments within which democracy is being cultivated suggests an even bleaker picture for durable democratic institutions in each state.

For example, despite the fact that Afghanistan has a low level of religious fractionalization, it has a high degree of ethnic fractionalization, a social cleavage profile that corresponds to short-lived democratic institutions. Iraq is doubly cursed, falling in the middle range in both ethnic and religious fractionalization as we operationalize these ordinal categories.

²⁹ Ibid. Page 135.

In this respect, the survival of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan is disadvantaged not only by the process by which democracy was imposed, but also by their demographic characteristics that undermine the durability of imposed democracy.

While the level of social divisions in Iraq and Afghanistan provide a fundamental challenge to the survival of the democratic regimes imposed upon them, this survival is also conditioned by the level of prosperity of these states. In this respect, Iraq is advantaged over Afghanistan. Afghanistan's 2006 per capita GDP of \$800 places it squarely in the poorest third of imposed democratic regimes in our sample, a sub-sample of which nearly 60% fail by their tenth anniversary. Iraq, by contrast, has a much higher per capita GDP of \$1900, which places it in the middle prosperity category among imposed polities. This middle prosperity group enjoys a much stronger level of democratic durability among imposed democracies, with none of the cases in our sample failing within the first ten years after their imposition.

6. Does Democracy Strike Back?

The historical experiences of imposed democracies we observe above cast a bleak outlook for the durability of the current imposed democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan. Not only do nearly 63 percent of our sample of 43 imposed democratic regimes fail during our period of observation (1800-1994), but the mean durability of imposed democratic regimes is 13.1 years. Collectively, this information suggests that, on average, it is difficult to impose durable democratic regimes. However, a longer view might be grounded in the notion that democratic experience provides more fertile ground for future democracy, despite the fact that imposed democratic institutions fail following an imposition³⁰ From this perspective imposed democracy

³⁰Adeed Dawisha, "Iraq: Setbacks, Advances, Prospects." *Journal of Democracy* 15 (January 2004): 5–20; Daniel Byman, "Constructing a Democratic Iraq: Challenges and Opportunities."

can set the stage for democratic institutions, “striking back” subsequently; that is, imposition primes a state for a return to democracy in the long run.

To test this claim, we compare the occurrence of democratic authority patterns in states with a historical experience of a failed imposed democracy to states absent an experience with foreign imposition of democratic institutions. We employ the previously explicated *DEMAUT* values from the *Polity IV* data sample to investigate this effect, analyzing the effect of prior imposed democracy upon the future occurrence of democracy in any form, weak or strong ($DEMAUT \geq 1$), and strong democracy ($DEMAUT \geq 6$).³¹ Following this logic, we test the effect of prior imposed weak democracy ($DEMAUT \geq 1$ & $DEMAUT < 6$) and strong imposed democracy ($DEMAUT \geq 6$) on the likelihood of subsequent democratic experience. We summarize our findings in Figure 12.

[Figure 12 about here]

Clearly, our analysis suggests that prior experience with imposed democracy does not increase the likelihood that democracy will take root in the future. Specifically, the prior imposition of either a weak democracy or a strong democracy reduces the future probability of observing democracy of any form by more than 50% relative to states that have never experienced an imposed democracy. Prior imposed democracy exerts a similar effect upon the prospects for the emergence of future strong democracy. A prior failed imposed strong democracy reduces the future probability of strong democracy by nearly 50%. A failed imposed weak democracy sets back the future cause of strong democracy even further, reducing the

International Security 68 (Summer 2003): 48–78; Marina Ottaway and Anatol Lieven, “Rebuilding Afghanistan.” *Current History* 100 (March 2002): 133–38.

³¹Monty G. Marshall and Keith Jagers. *Polity IV Dataset*. (College Park, Maryland: University of Maryland, 2000). Available at the following URL: <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/polity/>.

probability of its emergence by 70%. Considered together, these results suggest that there is something about either the states in which imposed democracies are attempted and fail or the imposition process itself that undermines the subsequent emergence of democracy.

Several explanations might account for the negative impact of imposed democracy on subsequent democracy. First, simply by virtue of their selection as cases for imposition, states with a history of an imposed democratic regime may be inherently unstable. After all, a state in which a foreign power has gone to such lengths as to intervene directly within its borders and establish an entire political structure may, by definition, be inclined toward instability, making democracy less likely to emerge in the future. Second, the prior experience with a failed imposed democratic regime may serve to undermine support for future democratic polities. Citizens in states in which an imposed democracy has already been attempted and failed may conclude, based upon this experience, that democracy itself is a flawed endeavor for the state. Citizens may reason that if democracy cannot succeed with the support of a foreign imposing power, it is unlikely to do so without such support. Finally, the process of imposing democracy upon another state may serve to taint democracy as viable political institutions, allowing parties opposed to democracy to paint subsequent efforts at democracy as an instrument for the return of foreign control. Regardless, our analysis demonstrates clearly that imposed democracy reduces the likelihood of subsequent democracy and undermines its persistence when it does occur.

7. Foreign Policy Implications

Our study of imposed democratic regimes suggests several implications for American foreign. In light of political developments in Afghanistan and Iraq during the past four years, it is merely stating the obvious that conditions are unstable, difficult, and above all dangerous. Yet, our analysis is relevant because it places the contemporary cases in historical context with

respect to future developments in Afghanistan and Iraq. That is, while we are aware of developments currently obtaining in these two countries, what are the prospects for democracy in these cases ten years hence? Our analysis leads to a pessimistic prognosis in each case. This said, perhaps the more important implication emerging from the analysis is that prevailing political, economic, and social conditions might militate against durable democratic institutions in Afghanistan and Iraq, *despite the fact that at the individual and group levels citizens in these two countries prefer democratic forms of government*. As such, simply liberating individuals from the scourge of authoritarian government does not necessarily or reasonably translate into durable democracies. Indeed, to expect as much from the populations in target countries ignores well substantiated conclusions to the contrary that central to the sub-field of comparative politics.

Our study also suggests the importance of evaluating American foreign policy options within a broad historical context. That is, it is important to consider policy options and likely outcomes relative to a representative sample of cases historically, rather than examining solely past instances of American foreign policy, or worse, developing samples that are a function of biased sample selection, such as cases in which policy outcomes are non-variable. Thus, while the United States might be the most notable representative of the international democratic community, other states, such as the United Kingdom and France, transplanted democratic political processes varying in type, degree and with varying levels of success historically. The necessity for representative cases clearly extends to policy outcomes, as well. Only by ensuring that evaluation samples are representative can policy options be evaluated relative to what is likely to happen, in addition to understanding how policy choices might avert less preferred foreign policy outcomes. In sum, American foreign policymaking should be anchored to analysis that considers “the good, the bad, and the ugly” of the historical record. The analysis

contained here reflects this type of analysis, one that could reasonably be executed prior to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and provide foundation from which policy options might be considered and evaluated.

In several ways, the implications of our study of foreign policy parallel the aforementioned implications of the study for the future of American foreign policy. Specifically, we believe this study underscores the importance of evaluating foreign policies within a general context, rather than in sub-dividing such analysis into studies of American, British, and French foreign policy, for example. The phenomena of interest---e.g., democratic institutions ---are general and therefore can be studied within generalizable frameworks, just as one might study civil wars, for instance. Thus, we argue that studies of foreign policy are strongest when they avoid over-emphasizing the unique qualities of a particular state's foreign policy and foreign policy experiences as conditioning foreign policy outcomes. Stated differently, we argue against evaluating British foreign policy, or instance, solely with reference to the history of British foreign policy. Rather, British foreign policy goals, options, choices, as well as the outcomes of these choices, should be evaluated against the historical record of the phenomenon of interest.

Given this approach to understanding foreign policy, what implications do our results have for the current efforts to impose democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan? Our analysis underscores several important implications for American foreign policy with respect to both states. First, establishing stable democracy in both Iraq and Afghanistan represent efforts to swim against a prevailing tide historically. In many respects, the conditions under which the efforts to develop democracy in the two countries are not only unfavorable to the long-term maintenance of democracy, but directly hostile to it. Not only does the non-colonial nature of the imposition process lean toward a lower durability of democracy in both Iraq and

Afghanistan, but their social characteristics push even more strongly against the persistence and deepening of democracy. The sharp ethnic and religious differences that divide the Iraqi and Afghani peoples are key impediments to the success of the current efforts to develop and sustain fully democratic political institutions.

While these findings suggest a bleak outlook for the prospects of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan, our findings point to two important means by which democratic durability can be promoted: By encouraging swift movement toward full political liberalization and fostering economic development and growth. If democracy is to be sustained in Iraq and Afghanistan, policymakers must push more quickly for fuller political liberalization in each state. The conduct of elections represents an important initial step for both countries, but efforts must be made to broaden political participation by obtaining “buy-in” to the political process from major ethnic and religious groups, as well as expanding the pool of executive recruitment. In this respect, for it to survive, democracy must be deepened sooner rather than later.

At the same time, efforts aimed at promoting economic growth and prosperity are similarly vital to the survival of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan. Increasing prosperity expands the resource pie available to competing groups within society, reducing conflict between groups, thereby lowering the pressure exerted upon the developing democratic political institutions. As such, efforts to encourage foreign investment, develop and expand a middle class, and promote economic revitalization should be encouraged as quickly as possible. Because democratization and economic development tend to be mutually reinforcing, policy efforts to promote one will tend to positively promote the other.

Of course, encouraging political liberalization and economic development is easier said than done in Iraq and Afghanistan. Adequate security is a prerequisite for the deepening of

democracy and the fostering of prosperity in these two states. As a result, in order to promote the durability of the imposed democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan, policymakers must adopt a two-pronged approach, emphasizing efforts to foster greater security within both states while, at the same time, promoting economic development and deeper political liberalization. While a sequential approach of establishing security first and then turning to the promotion of economic and political development might make intuitive sense, our results suggest that each goal must be pursued simultaneously. Without security, neither democratization nor economic development is likely to be obtainable. At the same time, without a quick push toward economic development and political liberalization in Iraq and Afghanistan, even the achievement of domestic security in these two states is unlikely to translate into a greater probability that imposed democracy will survive in the long-term.

8. Conclusion

Evaluating the success and failure of democracy in the contemporary cases of Afghanistan and Iraq is a function of absolute and relative methods of assessment. We focus on the latter method of assessment, such that we can evaluate the capacity of contemporary Afghanistan and Iraq to achieve the strength, durability, and regional influence of the oft-cited cases of successfully imposed democracy, post-WWII Germany and Japan. More fundamentally, this approach enables us to determine the degree to which the West German and Japanese cases are representative of the historical record, and as such bellwethers for the democratic regimes in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan. To do so, we elaborate the concept of imposed democratic regimes, and identified a sample of 43 such regimes occurring in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In turn, we examine the durability of imposed democracy as well as the implications of a failure of imposed democracy on the prospects for the subsequent emergence of democratic

institutions.

Our analysis of imposed democratic regimes has important implications for gauging our expectations regarding democratic futures in contemporary Afghanistan and Iraq. First, successfully imposing durable democratic institutions is a difficult task, with the average likelihood of democratic institutions persisting beyond a quarter of a century in either country approaching a coin flip historically. This said, central to the success of democratic institutions in Afghanistan and Iraq is the strength of the democratic institutions and their legitimate dominance in the political system, an observation that squares with Diamond's emphasis on the necessity of a strong state as a foundation for democratic institutions.³²

Weighing heavily upon the success of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan is not only the way in which democracy is cultivated, but also the environment in which democracy is being fostered. West Germany and Japan represent near ideal cases for the successful imposition of democracy, due to their high levels of prosperity and low levels of ethnic and religious differences. Yet, this is not the case in Iraq and Afghanistan, two states that are sharply divided across ethnic and religious lines. The challenge of building lasting democracy is all the more pronounced in Iraq and Afghanistan due to their lower levels of economic development relative to West Germany and Japan, leaving fewer resources to divide amongst contending groups within both societies. This challenge is particularly acute in Afghanistan, a state that is among the poorest in the world. Without significant improvement in the economic performance of Afghanistan, it is difficult to envision the long-term survival of democracy.

While the post-invasion insurgency in Afghanistan and sectarian violence in Iraq portend

³²Larry Diamond. *Squandered Victory: The American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to Bring Democracy to Iraq*. (New York: Times Books, 2005).

a perilous future for democratic institutions in each state, one counter argument is that while democracy might fall prey to anti-democratic forces in the short-term, the process of imposition will spark inexorable momentum toward democratic institutions in the long-term. As such, history might judge the attempts to impose democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq more kindly once long-term democratic success counterbalances initial failure. However, our analysis of the long-term implications of imposed democratic regimes suggests that historically these expectations are not borne out. Rather, the likelihood of democracy returning to these two states is significantly lower than had the United States and its allies not imposed democratic institutions. Quite simply, despite the considerable challenges faced by the current efforts to cultivate democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan, this is the key moment for the establishment of democracy in both states. If the current efforts at democracy fail, it is unlikely that there will be a second chance at democracy in either state in the foreseeable future.

Despite the marked successes of the democratic regimes in post-WWII West Germany and Japan the prognosis for successful democratic institutions in post-invasion Afghanistan and Iraq is poor at best. As such, Afghanistan and Iraq are unlikely to mimic West Germany and Japan, and pre-invasion expectations that Afghanistan and Iraq would do so ignored prevailing historical patterns, patterns that were readily accessible. Finally, if democratic institutions do manage to survive in Afghanistan and Iraq, they are more likely to emulate the political trajectories in cases identified in our sample, such as the Philippines or Sri Lanka, a path that is likely to be difficult, fraught with a high probability of failure, and provide few of the regional fruits associated with the West German and Japanese democratic beacons. Historically, then, American foreign policy expectations regarding the successful imposition of democratic institutions in Iraq and Afghanistan ran against the odds. This said, in politics odds are

influenced by policy choices. As such, the task that remains is to understand how policy choices influenced the trajectories of imposed democracies historically, and whether said policy choices are available for the contemporary endeavors in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Table 1: Imposed Democratic Regimes, 1800-1994.

State	Start	DEMAUT	End	DEMAUT	Duration
Austria	1946	10	1994	10	49
Botswana	1966	10	1994	10	29
Jamaica	1959	10	1994	10	36
Japan	1952	10	1994	10	43
Malaysia	1957	10	1994	7	38
New Zealand	1857	10	1994	10	138
Papua New Guinea	1976	10	1994	10	19
W. Germany/Germany	1949	10	1994	10	46
Fiji	1970	9	1987	9	18
India	1950	9	1994	8	45
Lesotho	1966	9	1970	9	5
Mauritius	1968	9	1994	10	27
Austria	1920	8	1934	-88	15
Burma	1948	8	1962	8	15
Cyprus	1960	8	1994	10	35
Gambia	1965	8	1994	10	30
Ireland	1922	8	1994	10	73
Laos	1958	8	1959	8	2
Nigeria	1960	8	1964	7	5
Panama	1989	8	1994	7	6
Sudan	1954	8	1958	8	5
Singapore	1957	7	1965	-66	9
Somalia	1960	7	1969	7	10
Sri Lanka	1948	7	1994	7	47
Uganda	1962	7	1966	-88	5
Sierra Leone	1961	6	1967	6	7
Honduras	1908	5	1936	5	29
Philippines	1935	5	1972	2	38
Syria	1944	5	1950	5	7
Canada	1867	4	1994	10	128
Congo	1960	4	1963	4	4
South Africa	1920	4	1994	8	75
Zimbabwe	1964	4	1987	1	24
Cuba	1901	3	1959	-88	59
Benin/Dahomey	1960	2	1963	2	4
Guyana	1966	2	1980	0	15
Haiti	1918	2	1950	-88	33
Kenya	1962	2	1969	0	8
Lebanon	1941	2	1990	-77	50
Pakistan	1947	2	1958	8	12
Yugoslavia/Serbia	1838	2	1858	2	21
Zambia	1964	2	1972	0	9
Madagascar	1960	1	1966	1	7

Figure 1: The Regional Distribution of Imposed Democratic Regimes.

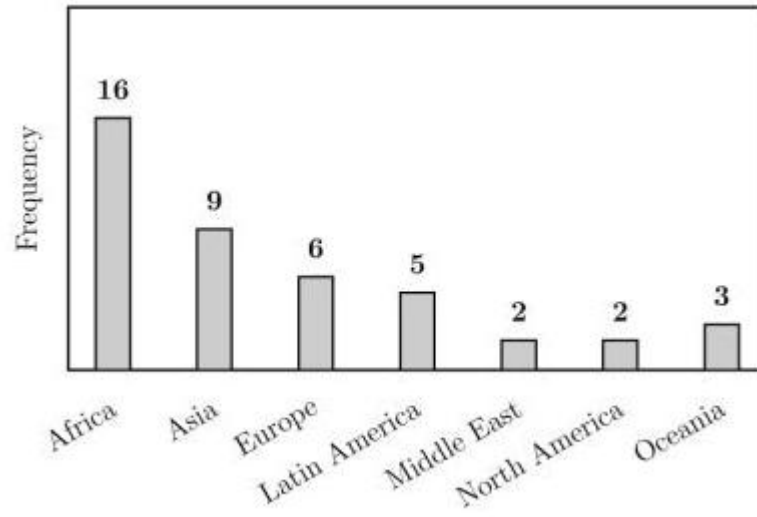


Figure 2: Distribution of the Strength of Imposed Democratic Regimes.

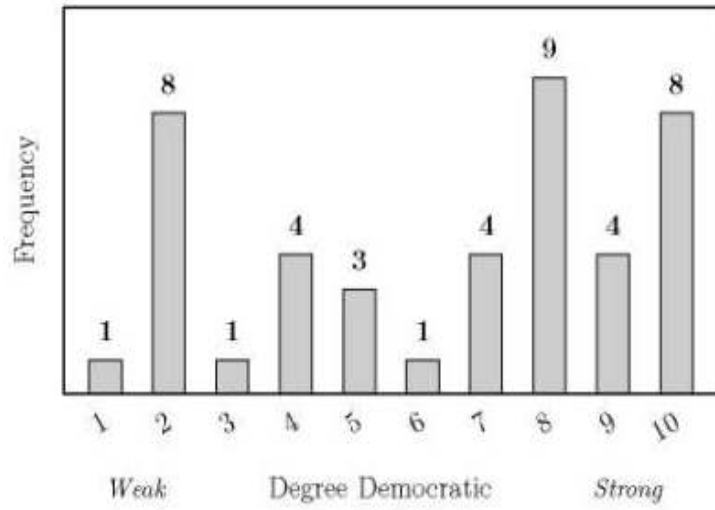


Figure 3: Survival of Imposed Democratic Regimes.

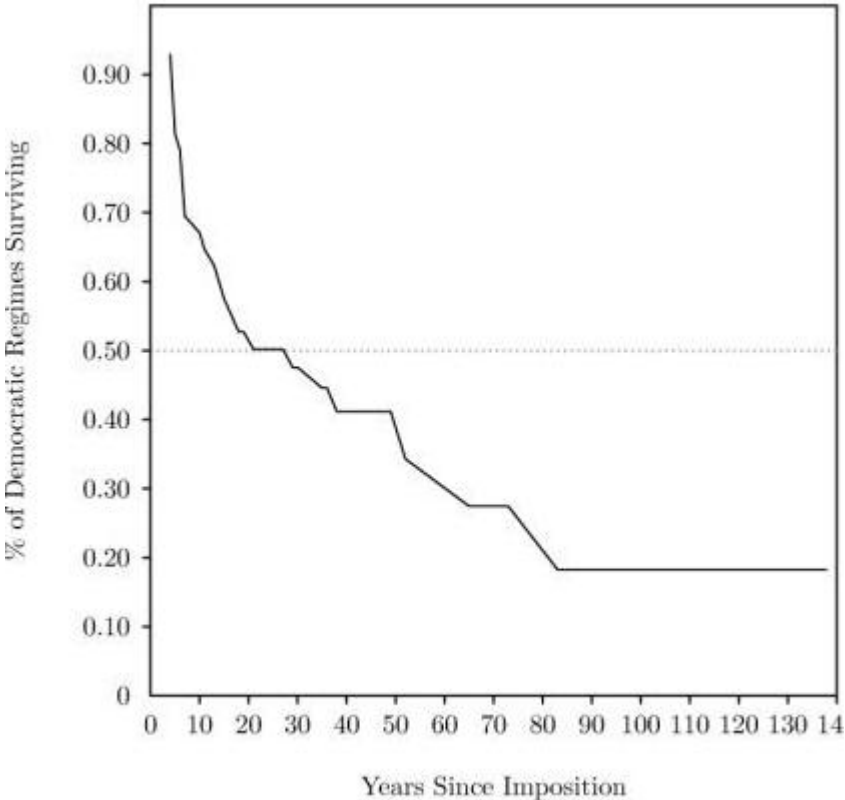


Figure 4: Survival of Strong and Weak Imposed Democratic Regimes.

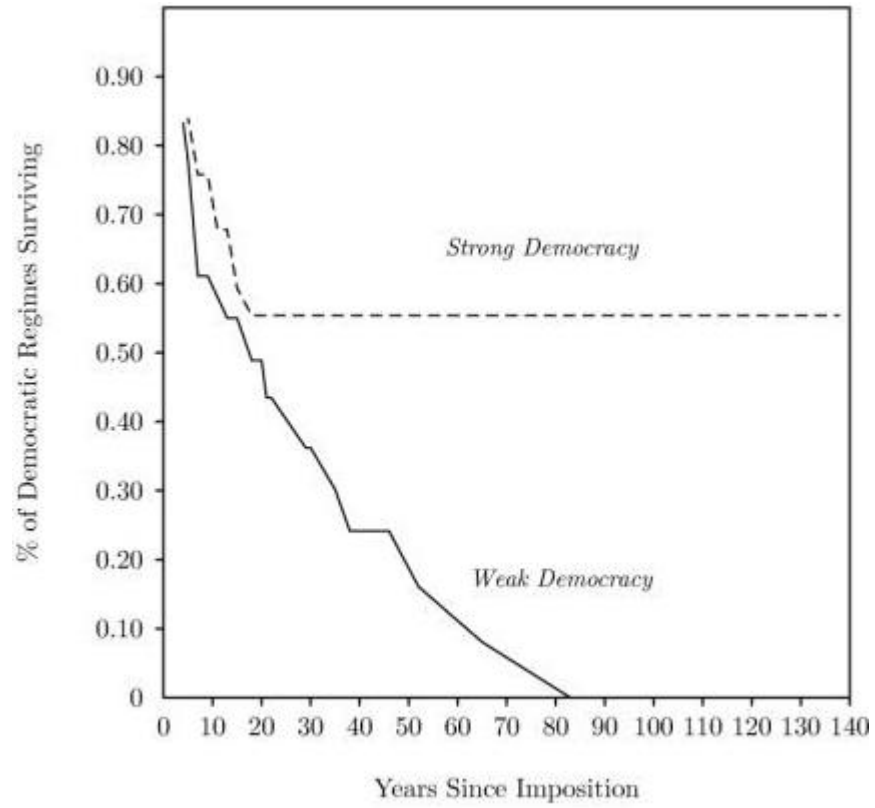


Table 5: Survival of Low, Medium, and High Democracies, Based on the Scalar Index of Politics (SIP).

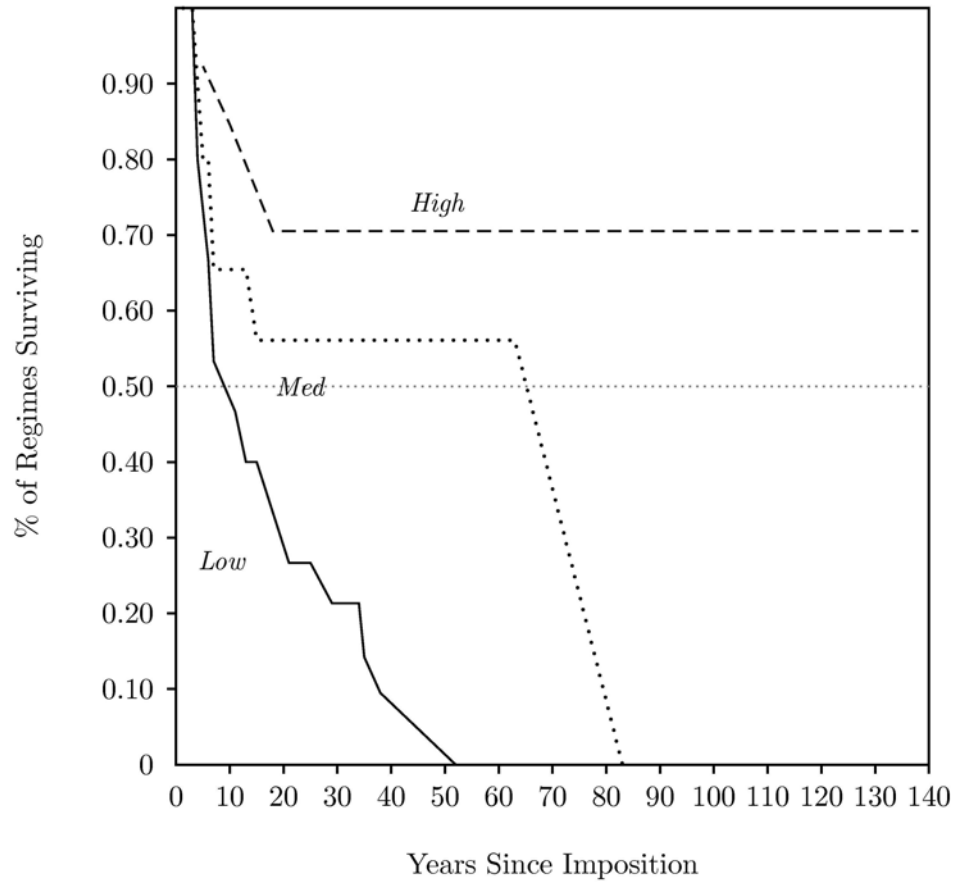


Figure 6: Survival of Pre- and Post-WWII Imposed Democratic Regimes.

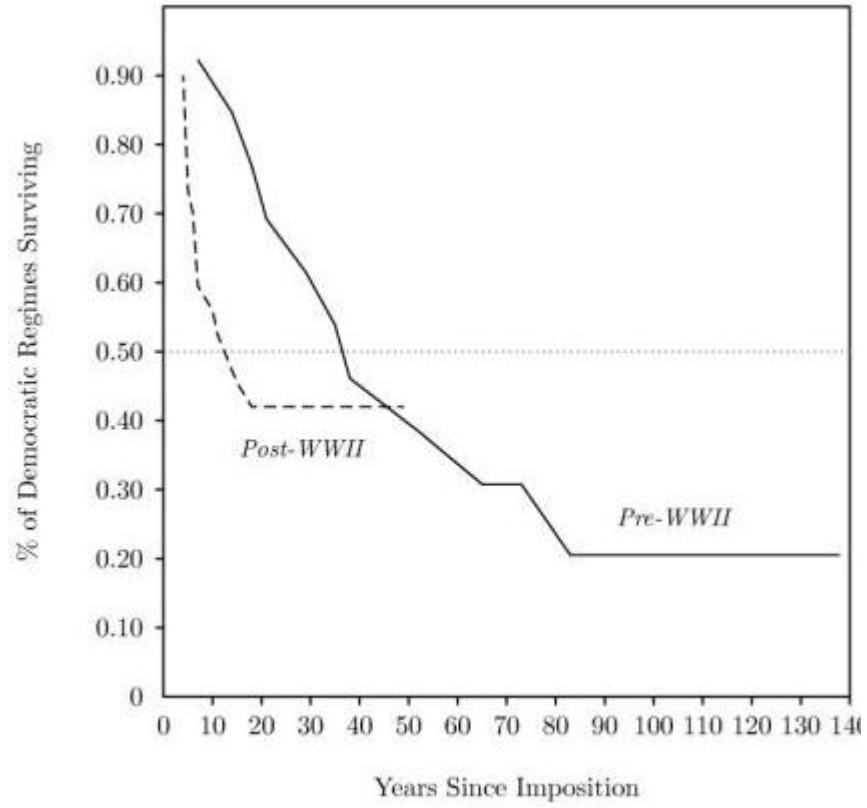


Figure 7: Survival of Colonial and Non-colonial Imposed Democratic Regimes.

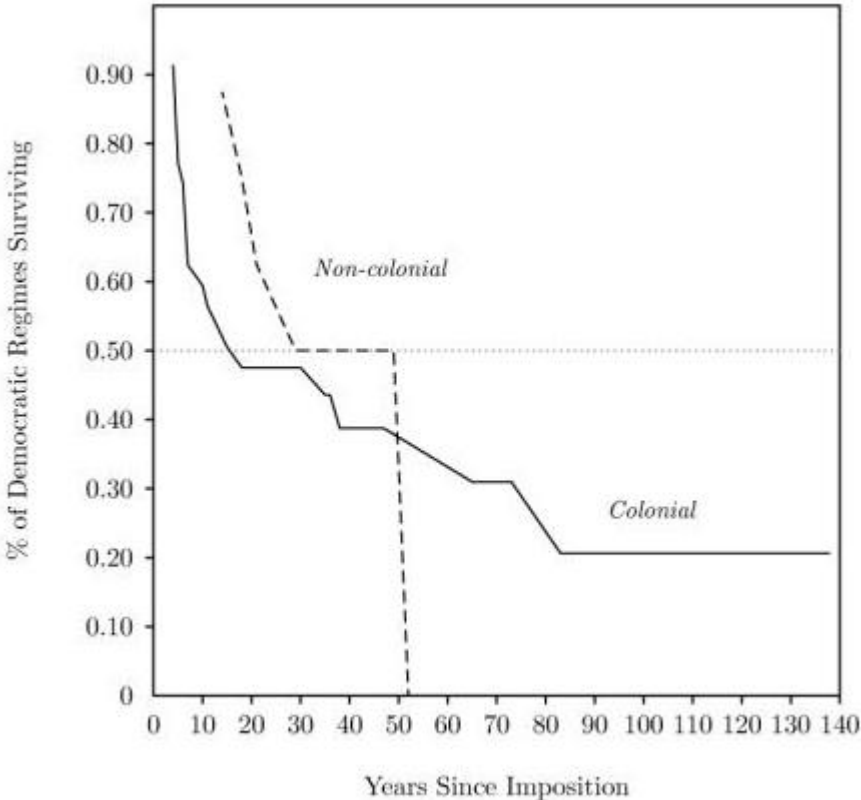


Figure 8: Survival of Imposed Democratic Regimes by Degree of Ethnic Fractionalization.

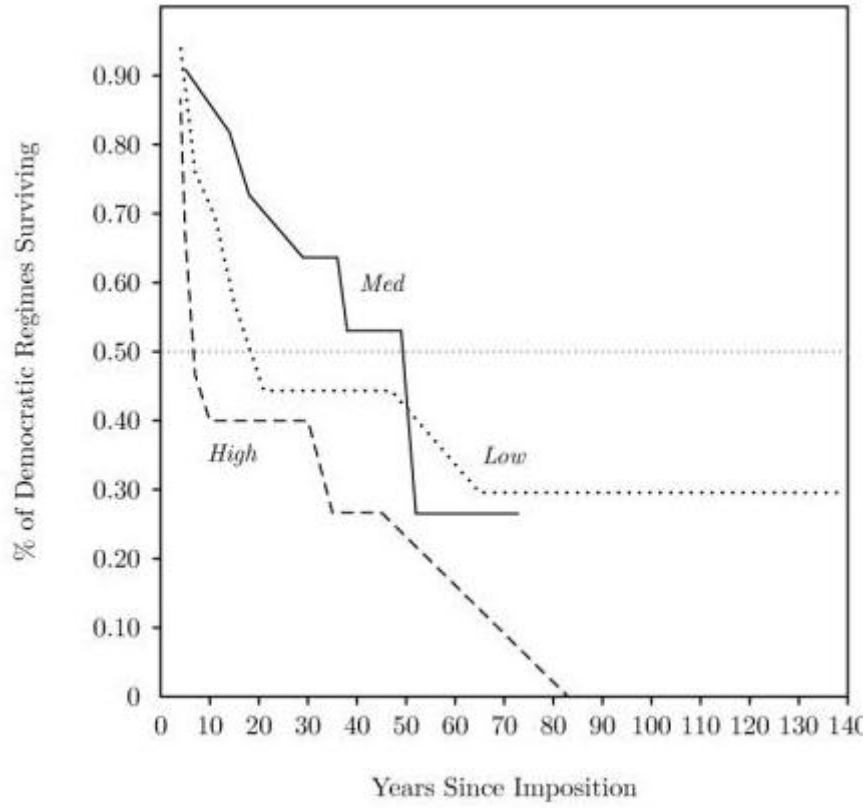


Figure 9: Survival of Imposed Democratic Regimes by Degree of Religious Fractionalization.

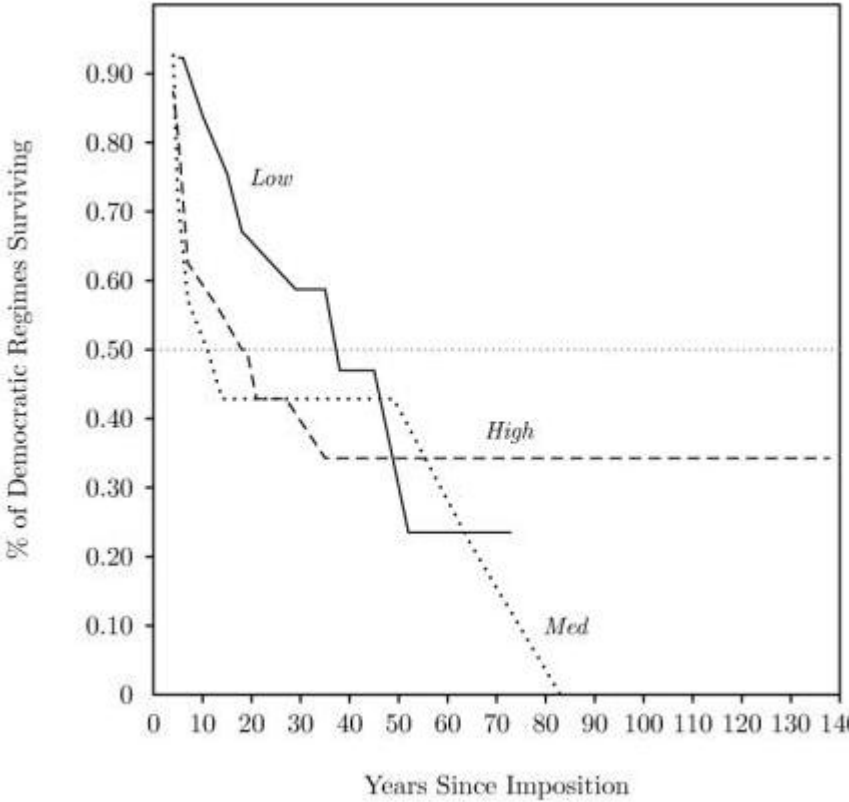


Figure 10: Survival of Imposed Democratic Regimes by Level of Iron and Steel Production.

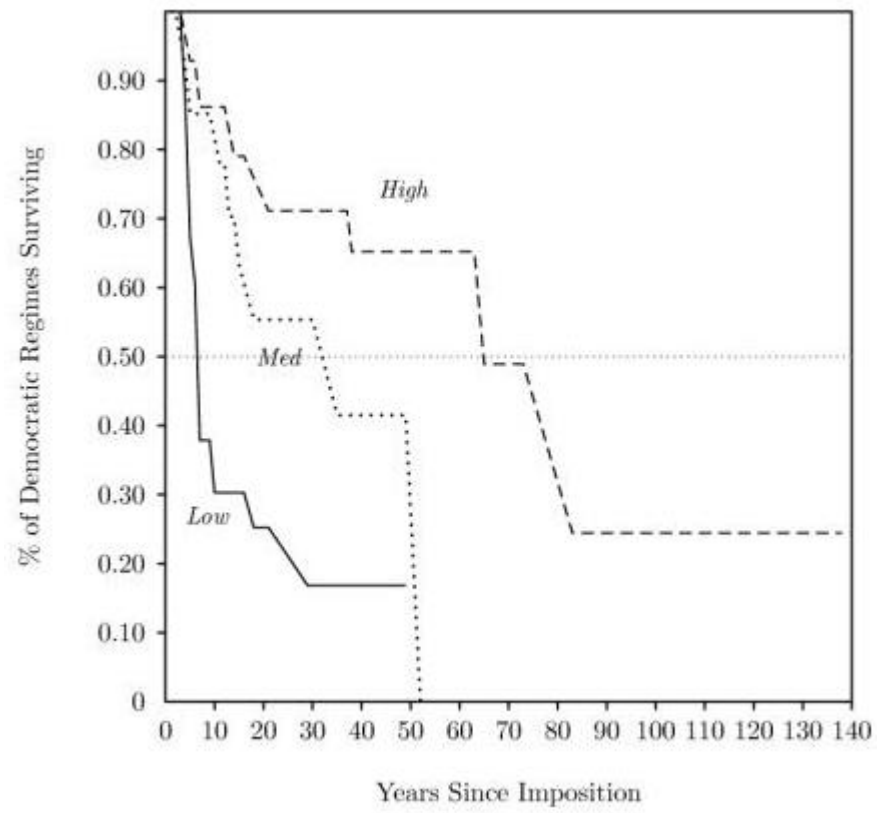


Figure 11: Survival of Imposed Democratic Regimes by Level of Per Capita GDP.

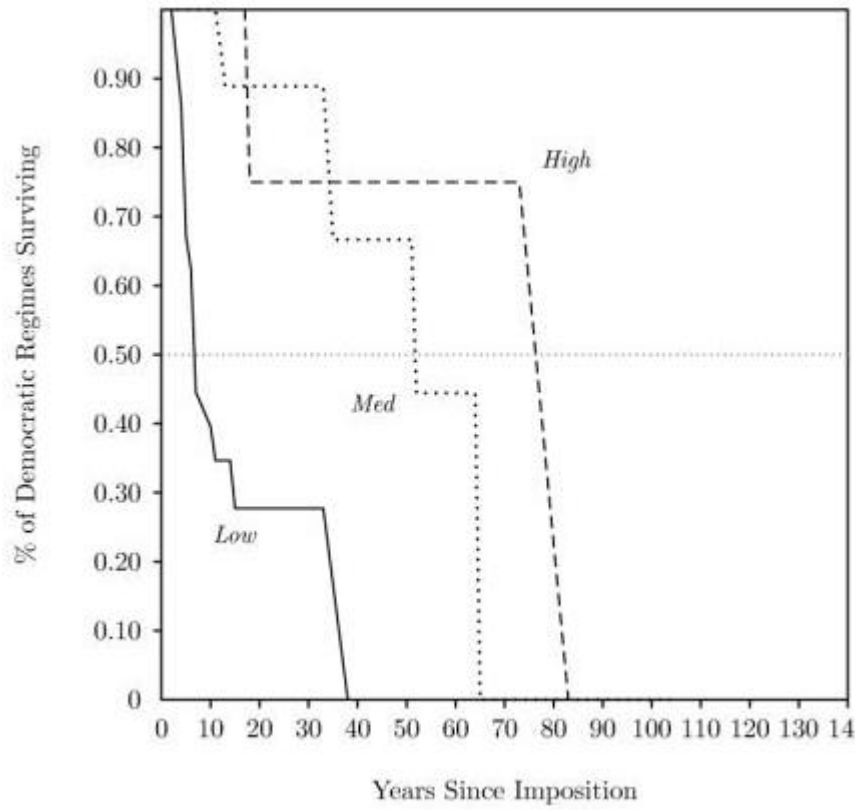


Figure 12: Probability of Democratic Institutions Returning Given Presence or Absence of Prior Imposed Democratic Regime.

