

PLS 341

# Politics of Development

Week 11, Lecture 2:  
Political regimes

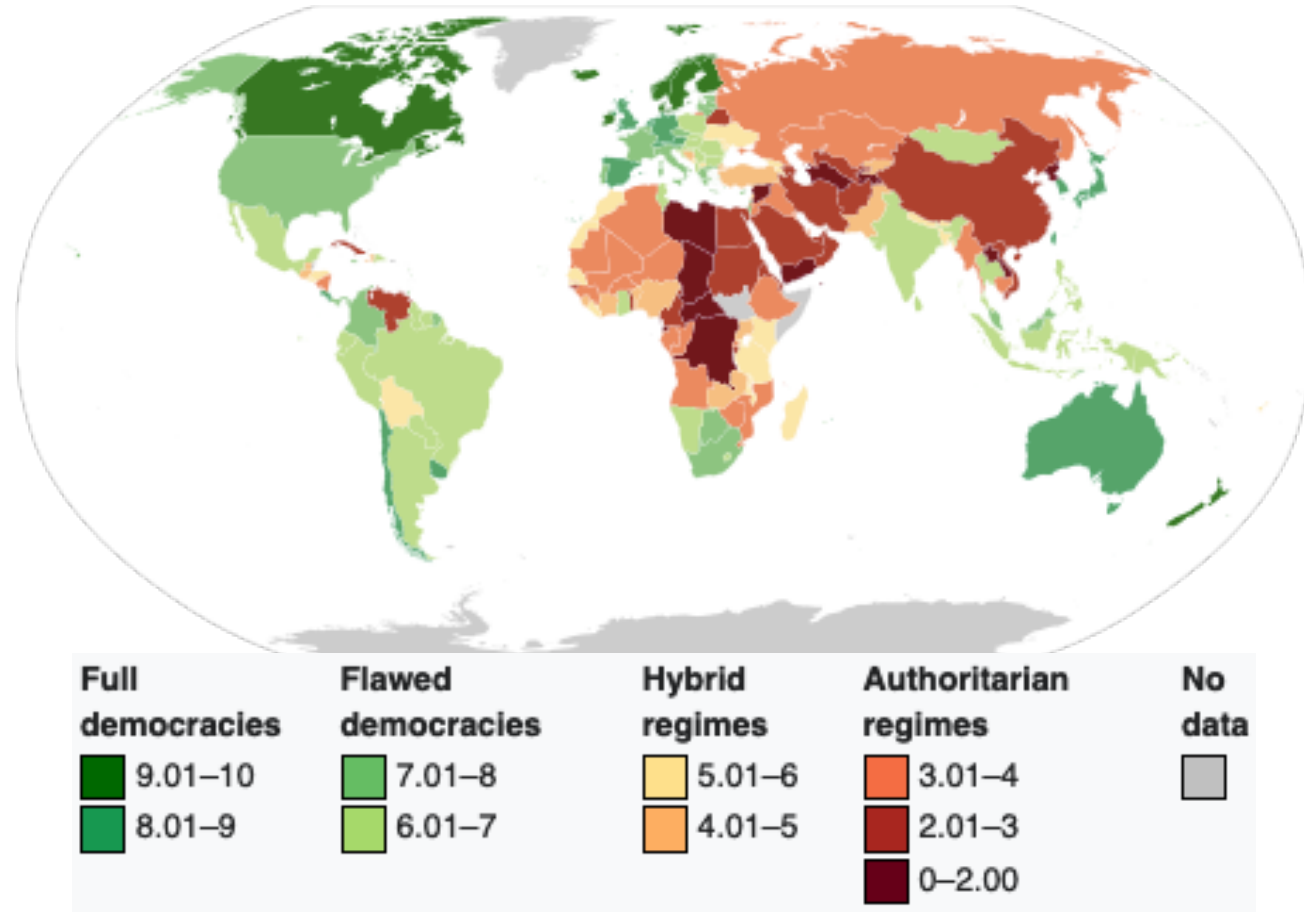
# Recap

- Complex connections between:
  - State capacity
  - State autonomy
  - Societal pressure
  - Developmentally detrimental uses of sociability
- Data limitations

# Plan for today

- Political regimes:
  - Benefits and pitfalls
  - Developmental performance

# Political regimes

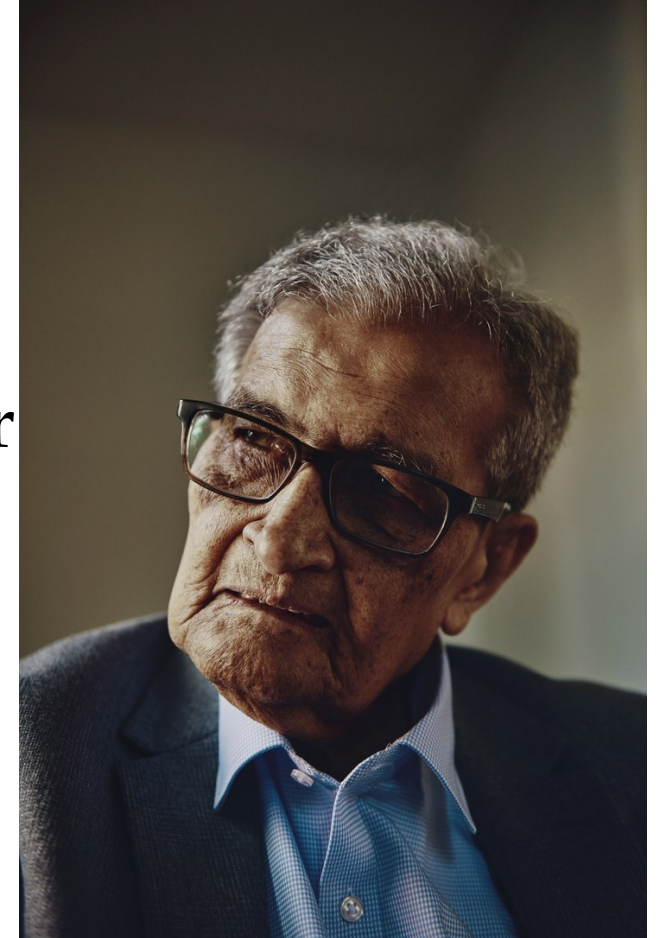


[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy\\_Index#/media/File:Democracy\\_Index\\_2020.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy_Index#/media/File:Democracy_Index_2020.svg)

# Benefits of democracy according to Sen

- Intrinsic value:
  - Guaranteeing political freedom
  - Enabling political and social participation
- Instrumental value:
  - People's ability to express and support their claims to political attention
- Opportunity for citizens to learn from others
- Generation of informed and considered choices
- Formation of values and priorities

• Sen, Amartya. 1999. "Democracy as a Universal Value." *Journal of Democracy* 10 (3): 3-17.



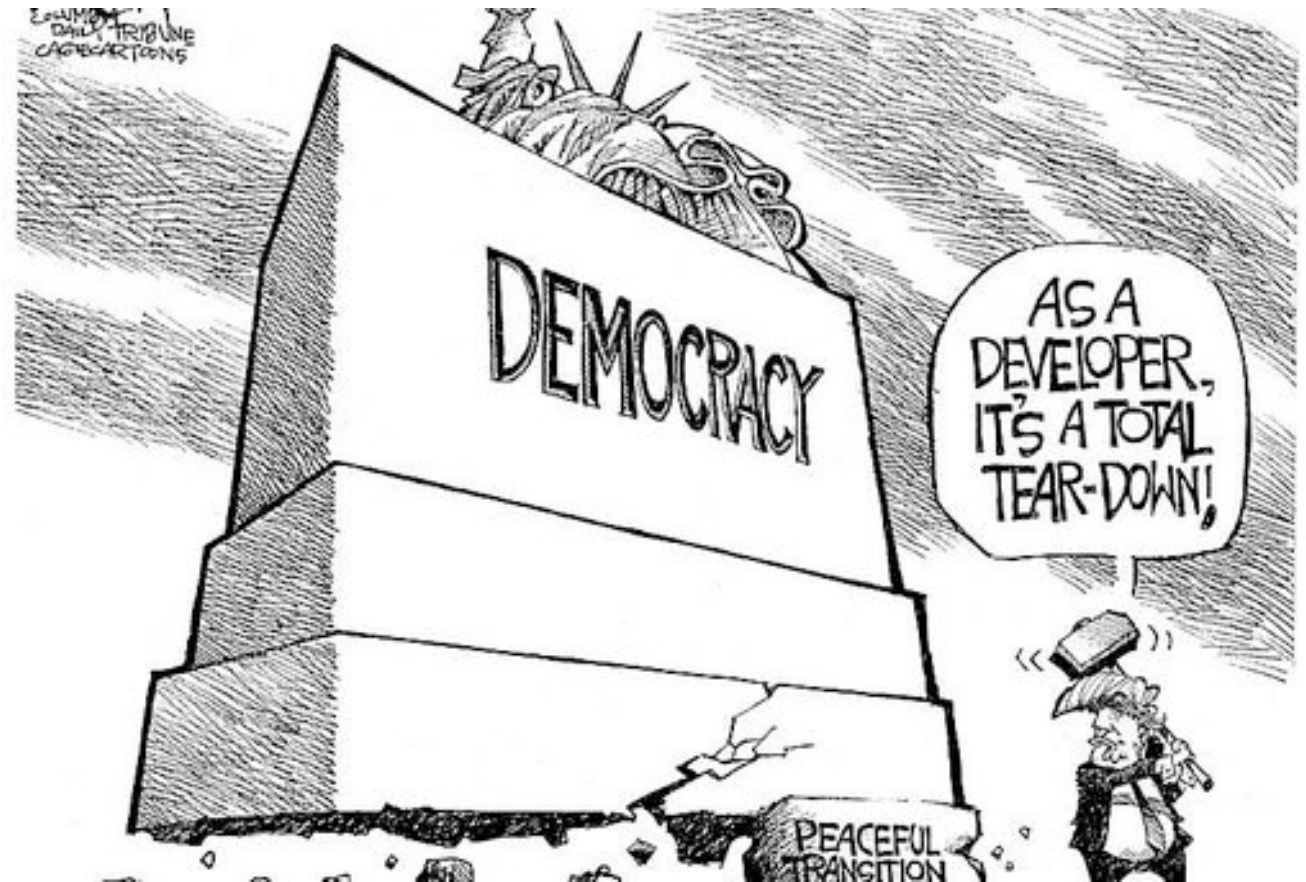
# Benefits of democracy according to Sen



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wu3esi9x3EY>

# Pitfalls of democracy

- Slow and costly decision-making
- Power of interest groups
- Particularistic demands
- Citizen myopia / present-bias
- Politicians' incentives to deliver short-term observable benefits



# Benefits of autocracy

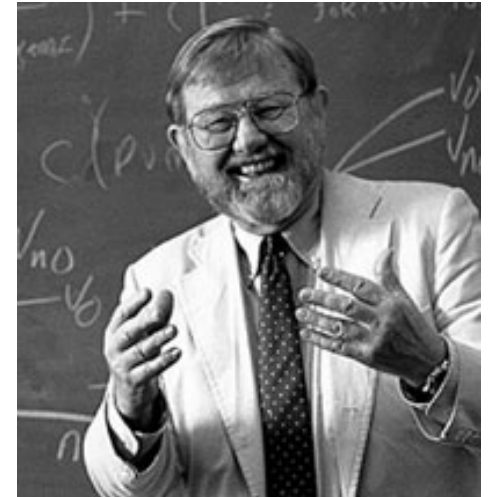
- Longer time horizons
- Insulation from societal demands
- Easier, faster decision-making
- Ease of implementation





# Pitfalls of autocracy according to Acemoglu and Olson

- Predation on society
- Diversion of resources for the autocrat's consumption
- Little private or public investment



# Pitfalls of autocracy according to Cheeseman

- Restrictions on freedoms and abuses of human rights:
  - Exclusion of marginalized segments of society
  - Conflict, displacement, and destruction
- Constraints on economic success
- Moral hazard for donors



# Accountability, state autonomy, and regime type according to Bardhan

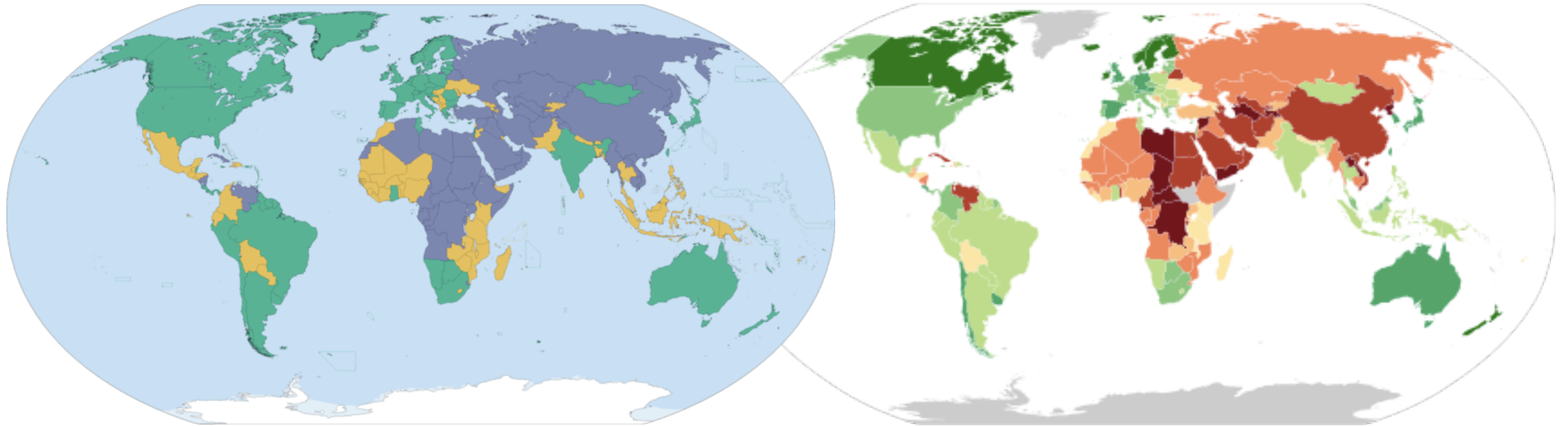
- Benefits of accountability
- Costs of state autonomy
  - Bardhan, Pranab. "Democracy and Development: A Complex Relationship." University of California at Berkeley.



# Some aspects of development

- Freedoms and human rights protections
- Public goods provision
- Economic growth

# Freedom



Sources:

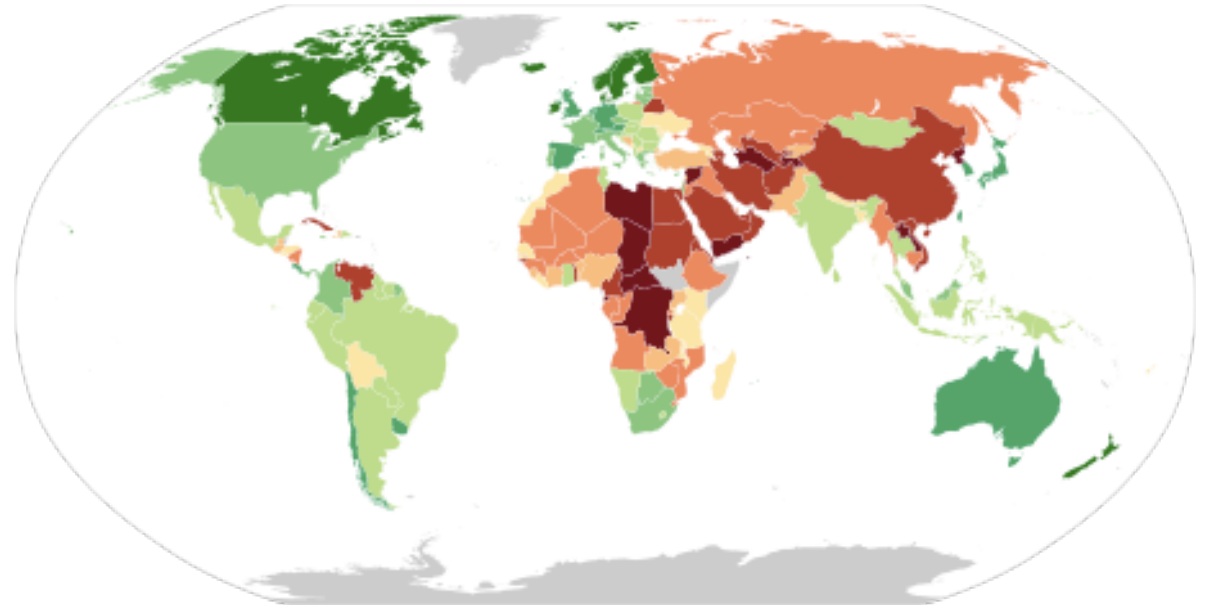
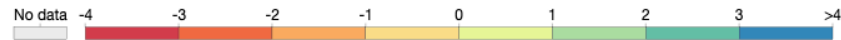
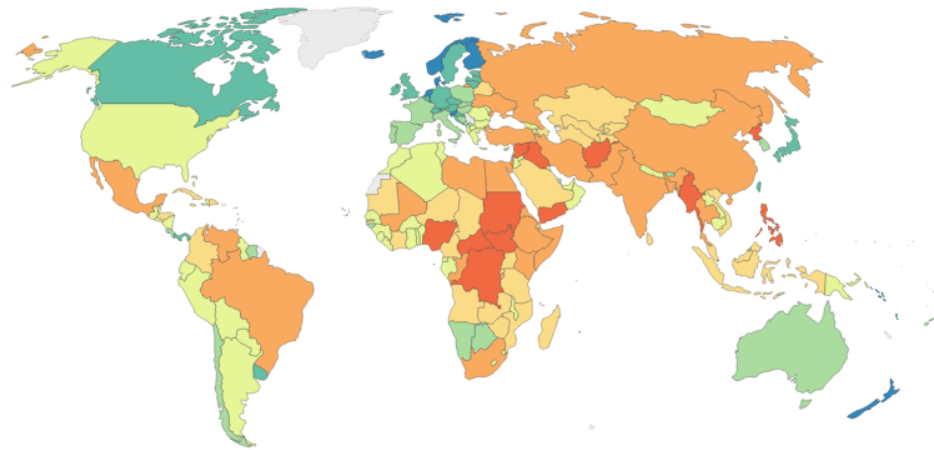
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy\\_Index#/media/File:Democracy\\_Index\\_2020.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy_Index#/media/File:Democracy_Index_2020.svg)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:2020\\_Freedom\\_House\\_world\\_map.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:2020_Freedom_House_world_map.png)

# Human rights protections

## Human Rights Scores, 2017

These Human Rights Scores indicate the degree to which governments protect and respect human rights. The values range from around -3.8 to around 5.4 (the higher the better).



Source: Schnakenberg and Fariss (2014), Fariss (2019) [OurWorldInData.org/human-rights/](https://OurWorldInData.org/human-rights/) • CC BY  
Note: These Scores are produced from an econometric model that combines measures from nine other sources. For details, see Fariss (2019).

# Public goods provision

**Table 1** Variable means by political regime

Regimes	GNP per cap.	Safe water	Sani- tation	Road density	School enrollm't	Lead in gas
<b>Polity Index</b>						
Polity $\geq .5$	9,429	77.6	74.9	6.96	69.8	1.72
Polity $< .5$	1,279	58.6	45.5	1.62	33.5	2.37
<b>Red Flags/Green Flags</b>						
Democracy	11,261	77.8	73.6	8.35	73.9	1.55
Mixed	1,574	70.5	62.2	1.13	40.4	2.17
Autocracy	1,315	57.8	44.3	1.94	32.2	2.42
<b>Descriptive Regimes</b>						
Democracy	9,491	79.1	74.8	6.37	67.73	1.76
Strong Executive	920	58.0	43.8	2.07	35.9	2.40
Monarchy	989	68.4	56.0	0.64	35.5	2.19
Military Dict.	1,326	53.2	39.6	0.85	26.1	2.46
Other	1,298	54.7	42.2	2.67	32.4	2.22

Source: Deacon, Robert T. 2009. "Public Good Provision under Dictatorship and Democracy." *Public Choice* 139(1-2): 241-62.

# Public goods provision

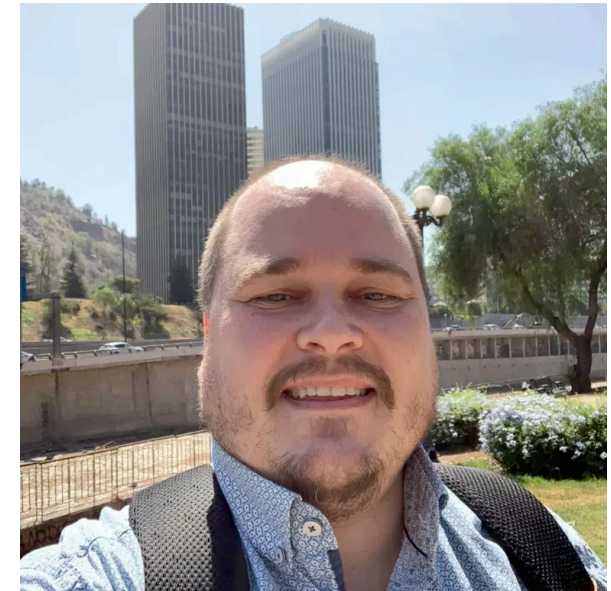
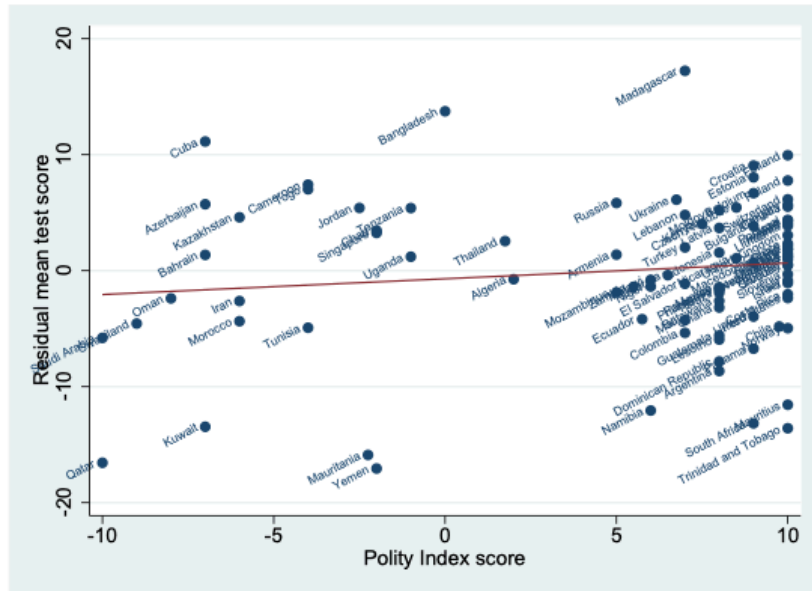
- Importance of sequencing:
  - State capacity —>
  - Democratization —>
  - Public goods provision
    - D'Arcy, Michelle, and Marina Nistotskaya. 2017. "State First, Then Democracy: Using Cadastral Records to Explain Governmental Performance in Public Goods Provision." *Governance* 30(2): 193–209.





# Public goods provision

- More education provision in democracies
- However, no evidence that democracies offer better education
  - Dahlum, Sirianne, and Carl Henrik Knutsen. 2017. "Do Democracies Provide Better Education? Revisiting the Democracy–Human Capital Link." *World Development* 94. Elsevier Ltd: 186–99.



# Public goods provision

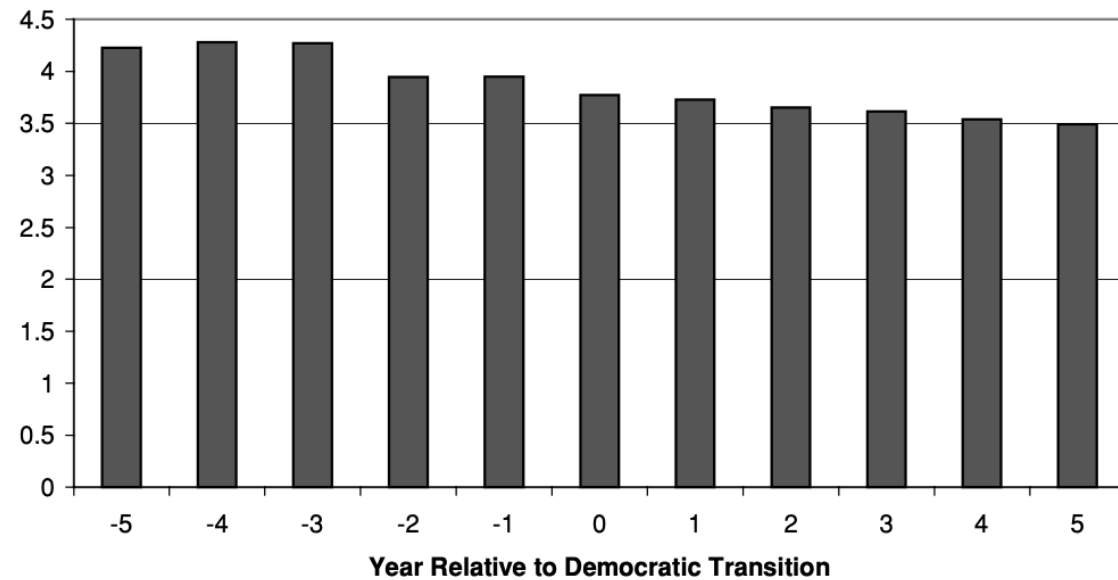
- Electoral benefits of prioritizing the distribution of ‘visible’ public goods, e.g. famine response, over goods such as malnutrition

- Mani, Anandi, and Sharun Mukand. 2007. “Democracy, Visibility and Public Good Provision.” *Journal of Development Economics* 83(2): 506–29

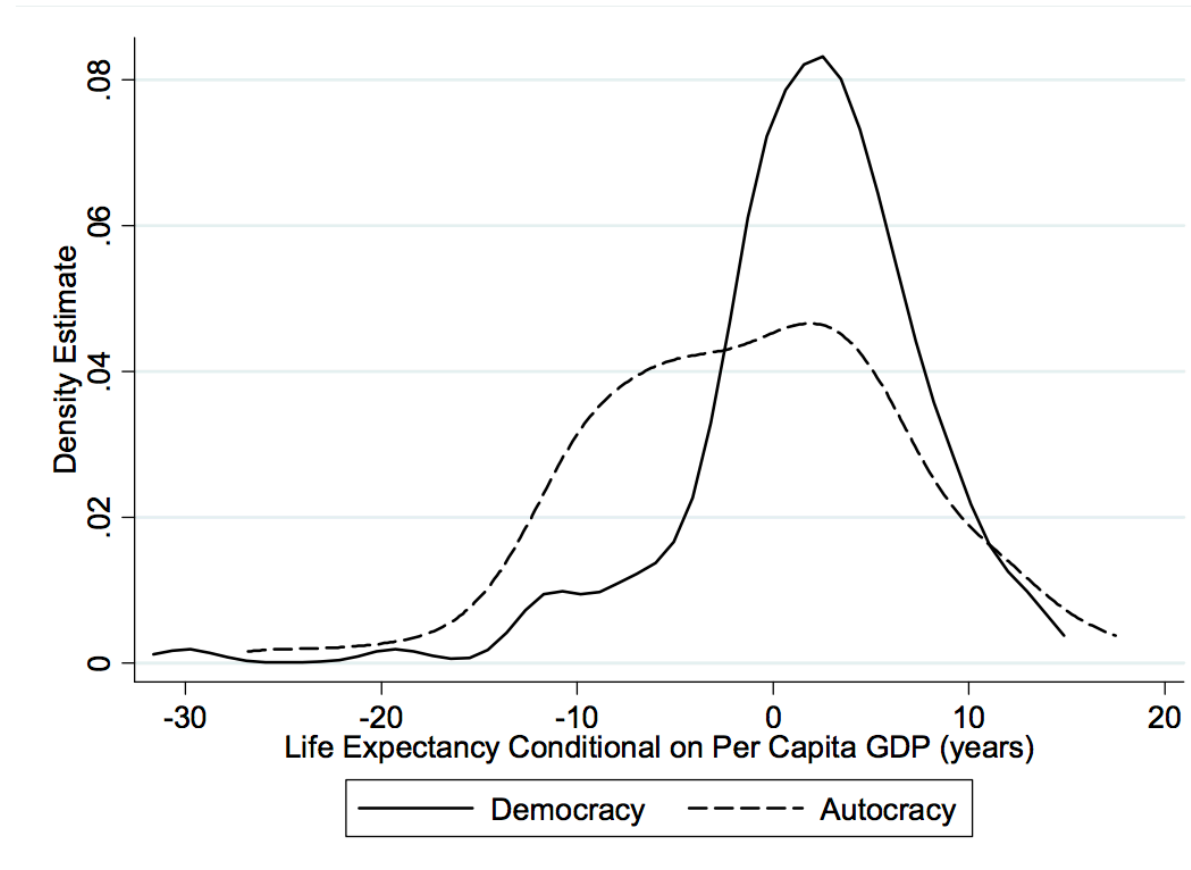


# Public goods provision

**FIGURE 1** Log of Infant Mortality Rate Before and After Democratic Transitions, for 44 States



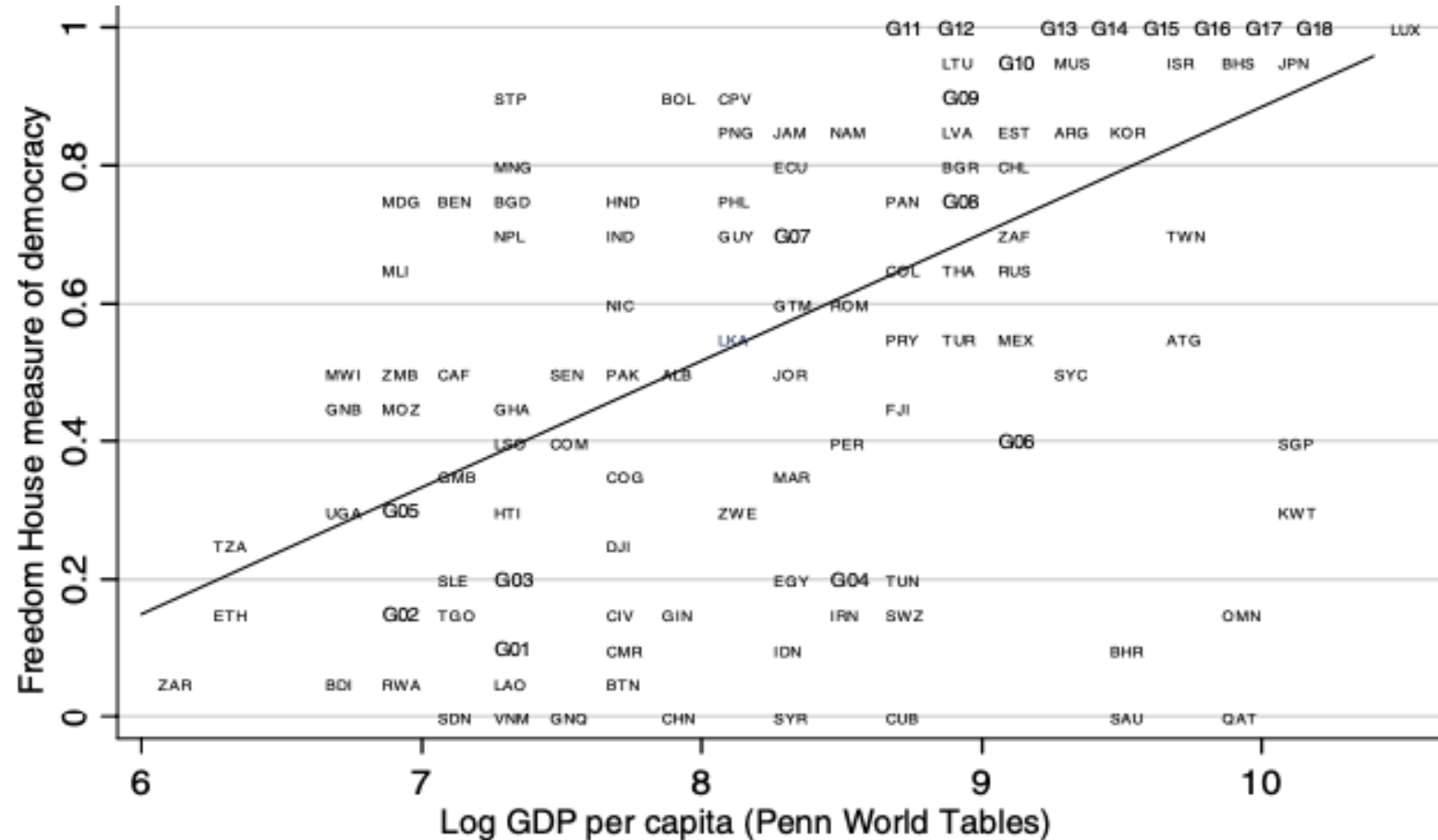
# Public goods provision



**Figure 2: Health Performance Distributions among Democracies and Autocracies**

Source: Besley, Timothy, and Masayuki Kudamatsu. 2008. "Making Autocracy Work." *Institutions and Economic Performance*, no. 20: 452–510.

# Economic development

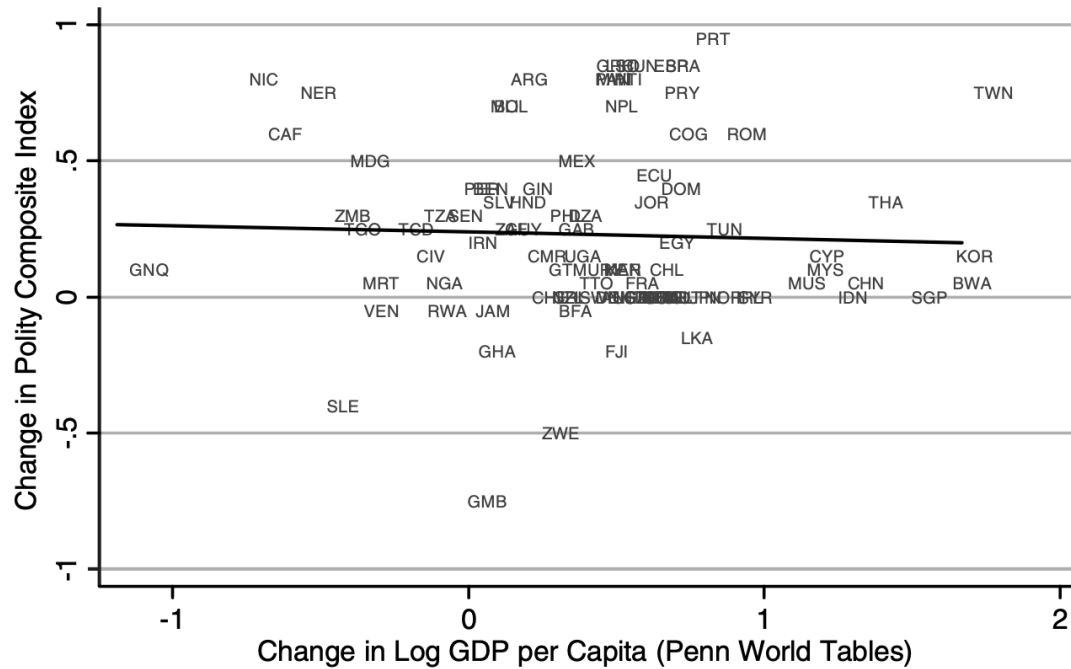


Source: Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, James A Robinson, and Pierre Yared. 2008. "Income and Democracy." *American Economic Review* 98(3): 808–42.

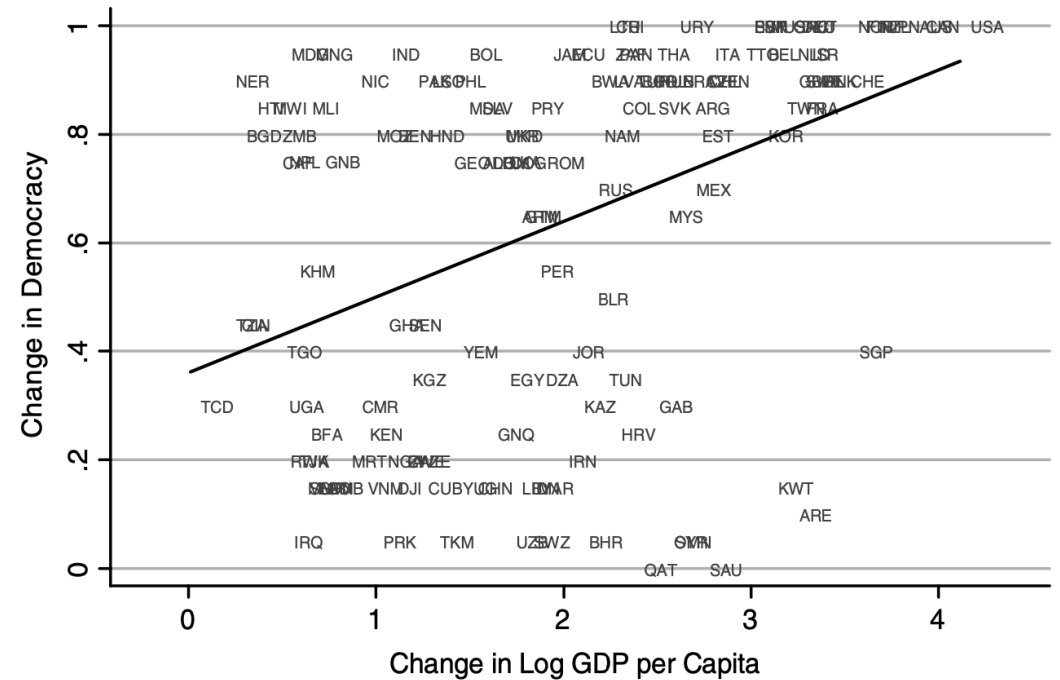
# Economic development

- Acemoglu et al. 2001 and 2002:
  - Colonization —> institutions (~> regime type) —> economic development
- Sokoloff and Engerman:
  - Endowments —> distribution of wealth —> distribution of power (~> regime type) —> economic development

# Economic development



**Figure 6** Democracy growth and income growth 1970–1995.



**Figure 8** Democracy growth and income growth 1500–1995.

# Economic development

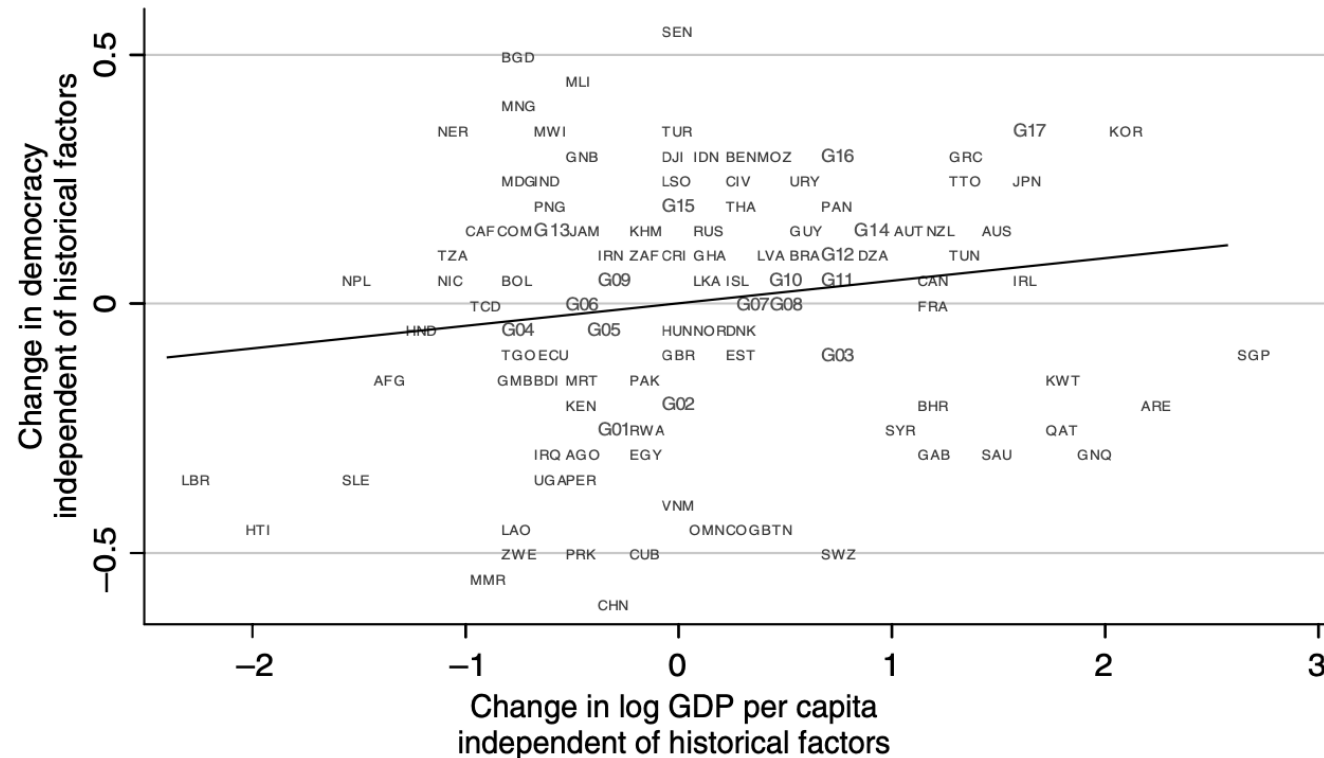
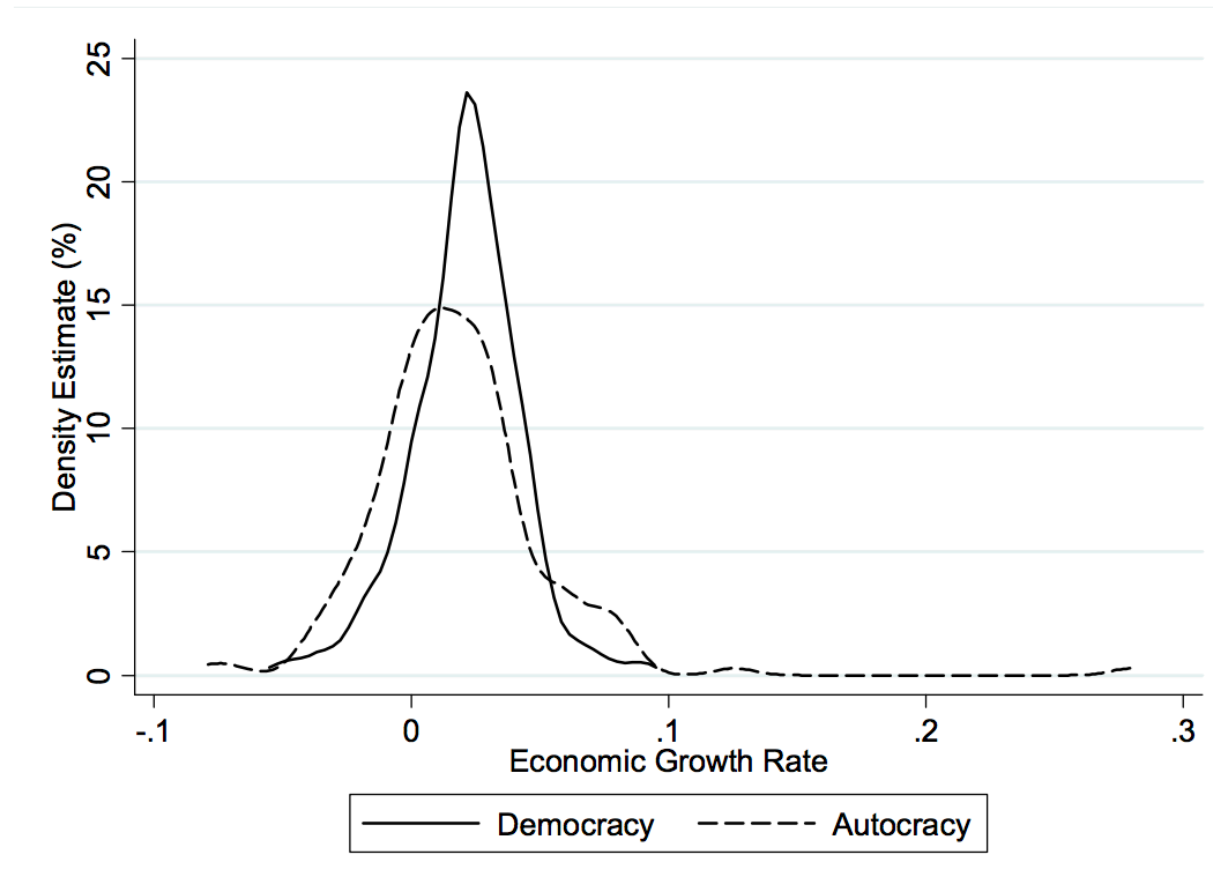


FIGURE 6. CHANGE IN DEMOCRACY AND CHANGE IN INCOME, 1500–2000, CONDITIONAL ON HISTORICAL FACTORS

Source: Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, James A Robinson, and Pierre Yared. 2008. "Income and Democracy." *American Economic Review* 98(3): 808–42.



# Economic development



**Figure 1: Economic Growth Distributions among Democracies and Autocracies**

Source: Besley, Timothy, and Masayuki Kudamatsu. 2008. "Making Autocracy Work." *Institutions and Economic Performance*, no. 20: 452–510.

# Economic development

**Table 1: Autocracy, democracy, and development**

# Developing countries in each category 1960-2008	Big growth failure	Not big growth success or big growth failure	Big growth success
Autocracy or flawed democracy	10	70	9
Democracy	0	12	1

# Takeaways

- Mixed evidence of the effect of the regime type on provision of public goods and economic performance, but much wider performance range among authoritarian regimes
- Lack of protections of freedoms and human rights in authoritarian regimes