Puzzling Policy Shifts: Fickle Western Support of Democracy Promotion in Economically Salient Countries

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Abstract

Why do Western powers support ruthless dictatorships in allied countries, but at other times condemn the actions of these same dictatorships in support of democratic revolutionaries? Based on this puzzle, this paper argues that Western support of democratization is dependent upon the economic ties that develop between the two allied states during the dictatorial era, prior to a democratic revolution. In contexts where the Western power has strong historical relations rooted in economic ties, a regime change is likely to be supported to ensure a continuation of the economic benefits previously received. We use the analytical perspective offered by the linkage and leverage thesis offered by Levitsky and Way (2013) and reformulate it to offer an alternative view in which to analyze foreign policy shifts and the breakdown of authoritarian regimes.

Keywords

Authoritarian regime, Democratization, Dictatorship, Economic interdependence, Foreign Policy

Introduction

Western powers act and are largely viewed as democratic norm entrepreneurs. Western democratic countries tend to push for non-democratic countries to democratize in order to promote international cooperation and peace (Kant 1983). However, some of Western powers' strongest allies are authoritarian dictators who have been internationally condemned for violating human rights. This would exemplify the current relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia or the United States and its past relationship with the Somoza regime in Nicaragua from 1937-1979. Furthermore, Western powers have also been shown to shift their support of authoritarian dictators during moments of intense domestic and international crisis. For example, U.S supported the ruthless Samosa regime in Nicaragua, but shifted their policy stance in 1977 when the U.S. withdrew military aid and supported the revolutionary opposition that promised to instill democratic institutions. Also, the U.S. supported the Ferdinand Marcos regime in the Philippines but shifted their support of the dictator during the 1980s, where the once heavily support U.S. ally was ousted by U.S. supported revolutionary forces who also promised to instill democratic institutions.

Thus, the main question of this paper is "Why do Western powers support an authoritarian dictatorship in an allied country, but at other times condemn the actions of these dictatorships in support of democratization?" Based on this puzzle, this paper argues that Western support of democratization is dependent upon the economic ties that develop between the two allied states during the dictatorial era prior to a democratic revolution. In contexts where the Western power has strong historical relations rooted in economic ties, a regime change is likely to be supported to ensure a continuation of the economic benefits previously received.

The cases of South Korea and Tunisia will be used to exemplify this argument. This paper seeks to demonstrate how certain linkages in bilateral relations not only influence the amount of pressure that can be exerted on a country to democratize as is argued by Levitsky and Way (Levitsky and Way 2013), but that bilateral linkages also influence Western foreign policy shifts. In sum, we take Levitsky and Way's heavily cited linkage and leverage hypothesis that explains the durability of authoritarian regimes, and reverse the causal arrow to show that linkages not only influence democratization, but in revolutionary contexts can shape a new trajectory for Western foreign policy.

We fully recognize that this study suffers from case selection bias. The aim of this paper, however, is for hypothesis-generating. A hypothesis-generating is for contributing to a process of theory-building. It can be conducted with one or more cases and then tested with other methods such as large-N (Levy 2008: 5). Upon this argument, this paper tries to show a causal mechanism between economic interdependence and the foreign policy of the western powers with cases of South Korea and Tunisia. In other words, Tunisia and South Korea serve as appropriate *examples* of how our theory can be applied. This paper can

be further developed by conducting a more systematic study that directly tests the hypotheses by cases that would challenge our assumptions.

Literature Review

Foreign policy analysis has evolved over the past decades to include rational actor models, culture, psychological factors, group theory, organizational theory, bureaucratization, and comparative studies (Carlsnaes 1992; Breuning 1997; East 1973; Menkhaus and Kegley 1988; Ripley 1993; Risse-Kappen 1991; George 1980; Hudson and Vore 1995). However, studies that investigate shifts in foreign policy are sparse. The aforementioned factors have been used to determine how foreign policy decisions are made at a certain point in time, but studies that investigate shifting foreign policy stances especially in regard to democracy promotion, and what accounts for these shifts are largely absent from the foreign policy analysis literature. What begs to be investigated are factors that motivate a country to dramatically shift their stance in a relatively short period of time.

Furthermore, when it comes to the study of democratization, what influences a country to democratize has been heavily studied, but the decision on the part of an external state to either promote democracy or uphold a dictatorship are also severely lacking. However, pulling from both the foreign policy and democratization literature helps us to create a theoretical framework that can be applied to investigate our intriguing puzzle of shifting Western support for authoritarian regimes.

To start, the field of foreign policy analysis is founded upon the assumption that states are going to act in a way that maximizes their power and position in the international system. Robert Gilpin characterizes this behavior in his book *War and Change in World Politics.* "The fundamental nature of international relations has not changed over the millennia. International relations continue to be a recurring struggle for wealth and power among independent actors in a state of anarchy (Gilpin 1981: 7). Regarding foreign policy, states are asking themselves what costs and tradeoffs they are willing to incur to obtain a certain benefit. Thus, any change in foreign policy must mean that there is a change in the utility maximization formula that was implemented in order for the state to pursue a particular foreign policy agenda.

Although Gilpin's rational actor analysis on how change happens in the international system is useful for explaining the onset of war, the essential tenets of his theory have been underutilized in understanding foreign policy shifts that do not result into a War. The "bundle" thesis is useful in this regard. States have a "bundle" of costs, tradeoffs, and benefits that are tied together. Each state pursues the best foreign policy objective that responds to the "bundle" and produces the best possible outcome. When the components of that bundle change, so will the foreign policy of that state.

Second, pulling from the democratization literature, the international determinants of democratization are often viewed as being secondary in importance to explaining this phenomenon. Domestic factors have often been argued as holding more explanatory weight in predicting the onset and outcomes of a

democratization movement or revolution in a country. However, as our world becomes more globalized and interconnected, especially in a post-cold war environment (Friedman 1999), taking a more nuanced and focused approached when analyzing the factors that affect international relations is critical.

Previous studies that examine international determinants of democratization have focused on factors such as foreign aid, a state's position within the world economic system, and international organizations (Pevehouse 2002; Knack 2004; Wright 2009; Ahlquist and Wibbels 2012). These studies take a systemic or structural approach to explaining democratization. What is missing is an agency-centered explanation that is situated within the context of these factors mentioned above. For example, Pevehouse talks about foreign aid and how membership in an IO can exert pressure and motivate a country to democratize but he does not empirically test what motivates an IO to exert this type of pressure. In this context, there is a need for constructing a hypothesis which can explain patterns of behavior of states supporting democratization or not, rather than focusing on just the factors of democratization. Furthermore, not only understanding what these factors are, but also how they change and what effects this change is critical, which is the focus of this paper.

Although Levitsky and Way do not focus on what changes foreign policy, they produce one of the few studies in comparative politics that looks at what enables Western democracy promotion efforts to succeed or fail. Their theory is centered upon linkage and leverage mechanisms. They argue that when an authoritarian country possesses highly linked relations with the democratic West, then democratization is more likely to occur. However, if Western democratic countries are not highly linked with these regimes, then their leverage decreases, and the state can ignore pressures to democratize. Although Levitsky and Way provide a thorough analysis of the international factors that influence the stability or breakdown of an authoritarian regime, the causal flow between the "breakdown" and foreign policy has yet to be thoroughly investigated. For example, what if a Western democratic country and a non-democratic developing country share dense networks, but the Western country opts *not* to exert any "leverage" over this regime to democratize? Could the "ties that bind" as defined by Levitsky and Way be dictating not only the amount of leverage a country possesses, but could also be creating the incentive structure that shapes foreign policy. The ties that bind are inherent within the "bundle" made up of costs, tradeoffs, and benefits as defined by Gilpin.

In this view, the analytical perspective offered by the linkage and leverage thesis could be reformulated to offer an alternative view in which to analyze foreign policy and the breakdown of authoritarian regimes. Instead of focusing just on how the foreign policy of a Western state dictates the breakdown, the breakdown could also dictate the foreign policy of the Western state.

Theoretical Framework

This paper utilizes the theoretical framework of Levitsky and Way (Levitsky and Way 2005; Levitsky and

Way 2013) that emphasizes linkages and leverages inherent within international relations and their effects on democratization. The linkages that they define are comprised of various tenets of a state's foreign policy (such as border flows, support of foreign universities, and trade relations). A country's leverage is dependent upon the vulnerability of the country under question. The more vulnerable a country is (i.e. dependency on aid or on intergovernmental membership), the more leverage Western powers can impose upon a state to democratize.

However, Levitsky and Way argue that leverage alone is unlikely to be enough for international pressure to motivate a regime to democratize. High levels of linkage with a Western power or the Western world must also accompany high leverage for democratization to occur. Thus, in the context of a strong democratic revolutionary opposition, democratization is likely to occur if the state in question is largely dependent on a Western country and if that state has dense ties with the Western power that is promoting democracy.

Linkages are economic, cultural, social, or political ties between Western powers and a country, which is most likely a developing country. There are six different categories of linkage: economic, intergovernmental, technocratic, social, informational, and civil-society. Levitsky and Way's hypothesis is if both leverage and linkage is high, then pressures to democratize are more likely to have an influence on an authoritarian regime. The critical component for the authors are the linkage mechanisms. Leverage is a tool that can be used to exert pressure on a country, but it is the density of the linkages that really drives these efforts.

The linkage and leverage framework is applied to cases where democratization has or has not occurred. However, their framework could be developed even further in order to explain shifts in foreign policy, which is the aim of this paper. This paper argues that economic linkages between two countries determine the likelihood that a Western power will shift its democratization policy stance towards an ally. In this view, the international dimensions of the linkage and leverage framework are also coupled with domestic factors, thus promoting the "eclectic framework" heralded by Teorell (Teorell 2011).

After domestic actors have exerted pressure on their government to democratize, international pressure will follow and even constitute a policy shift depending on the level of linkage that a Western power has with the country in crisis. Due to the argument that "linkage" is the most salient component of this democratization thesis, this paper focuses on shifts in foreign policy and linkage mechanisms as explanatory variables. Our economic hypothesis is compared against three other dimensions inherent within the linkage framework. The hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: If a Western power has high technocratic linkages with a country that is undergoing increasing domestic pressures to democratize, then that Western power will shift its support from authoritarian regime to the democratic revolutionaries.

Hypothesis 2: If a Western power has high intergovernmental linkages with a country that is undergoing increasing domestic pressures to democratize, then that Western power will shift their support from the authoritarian regime to the democratic revolutionaries.

Hypothesis 3: If a Western power has high informational linkages with a country that is undergoing increasing domestic pressures to democratize, then that Western power will shift its support from the authoritarian regime to the democratic revolutionaries.

Hypothesis 4: If a Western power has high economic linkages with a country that is undergoing increasing domestic pressures to democratize, then that Western power will shift their support from the authoritarian regime to the democratic revolutionaries.

Conceptualization

The hypotheses above bring forth four different dimensions of Levitsky and Way's linkage theory. The first category is technocratic which is defined as "the share of a country's elite that is educated in the West and/or has professional ties to Western Universities or Western-led multilateral institutions," and the second category is intergovernmental which is defined as "bilateral diplomatic and military ties as well as participation in Western-led alliances, treaties, and international organizations." (Levistky and Way 2013: 43). The third category, informational, is defined as the level of "flows of information across borders via telecommunications, Internet connections, and Western media penetration" (Levistky and Way 2013: 44). The last category is economic linkage that is defined as "flows of trade, investment, and credit" (Levistky and Way 2013: 43).

It is the density of these variables between two countries that dictate the amount of leverage that can be exuded on the developing country to democratize. However, what is being argued here is that these variables can also shift Western authoritarian support away from a regime amid a state crisis. Thus, they can be used not only to determine the propensity for a country to democratize due to external pressure, but can be used to account for Western foreign policy shifts regarding purporting an allied dictator. In this analytical perspective, the unit of analysis is foreign policy shift of the Western power, *not* the rate of democratization which is done by Levitsky and Way. Each case will be analyzed using the different dimensions of international linkage included in the theoretical framework section: technocratic, intergovernmental, informational, and economic.

Methodology

This study utilizes a comparative case study approach using a dissimilar systems research design. France's foreign policy shift in support of the revolutionary regime during the Tunisian revolution in 2011 will be compared against the case of U.S. support of the regime change that took place in Korea in 1987. The cases are similar in the effect that the regimes faced domestic opposition that wanted democratic change, but they are distinct in their historical context, culture, geography, language, and major economic Western

ally. A brief synopsis of the two cases is outlined below.

America played a varying role in the South Korean democratization movement. At first, the U.S. did not intervene on behalf of the democratic rebels in the 1980s when the military regime killed people protesting in Kwangju. However, in 1987, the U.S. did intervene in domestic politics by not allowing the South Korean military regime to announce martial law in order to oppress the citizens who were protesting against the regime. The U.S. had shifted its policy stance to support the people who were pressuring the government to democratize, who ultimately overthrew their regime.

A similar instance can be found in the post-cold war era in the case of France and Tunisia in 2011. France had supported the dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali who had ruled the country with an iron fist from 1989-2011. When the initial protests for democratization broke out in December of 2010, France supplied military forces to oppress the protestors. However, after the protests went on and Ben Ali fled the country, France became supportive of any democratization efforts that were to take place after the revolution instead of pushing for a return to the old autocratic status quo.

The South Korean case happened prior to the end of the cold war, and thus represents a time that is characterized by bipolar politics with two world hegemons (the U.S. and the Soviet Union). The Tunisian case takes place in a post-cold war context where globalization has effected the economic and social relations among countries. The post-cold war era also represents a period where power politics are defined not just in military capacity but by the strength of a state's economy. Thus, economic relations during this historical era could have a greater impact on foreign policy, than foreign policy during the cold war era.

South Korea and Tunisia are historically, culturally, and socially very distinct. South Korea has a culture that is rooted in both traditional Chinese and Western influences after 1945. For example, in Korean, the governmental and educational system is US-styled, but traditional cultural artifacts such as the importance of social hierarchy derived from Confucianism still has a place in society. Tunisian culture and society is characterized by facets associated with the Arab identity and is dominated by one religion, Islam. It also receives many cultural and linguistic influences from the southern Mediterranean region of Europe and receives most of its national income from the service industry including tourism.

Limitations of study

A case study is not generalizable by any means. This analysis is purely descriptive and lacks a broader quantitative component that could be applicable across cases. Furthermore, this study suffers from case selection bias in that the two cases analyzed here both endured democratic revolutionary upheavals where an allied Western power shifted in their foreign policy support of the target regime. This study would be strengthened by comparing the two selected cases where allied Western foreign policy shifted against two cases where allied Western foreign policy did not shift. Despite these shortcomings, authors again

emphasize that this paper aims a hypothesis-generating according to Levy (Levy 2008: 5) rather than validating or proving an existing theory as stated in the introduction part. This analysis provides the first step towards analyzing the applicability of economic linkages serving as predictors of foreign policy shifts in the contexts of revolutions.

Korean Case: Change in US policy on Korean democratization in the 1980s

The president of the Korean government, Doo Hwan Chun, was elected into power indirectly after a coup in 1980. Due to the fact that Chun obtained his power outside of using the electoral system, he suffered from a lack of legitimacy in the eyes of the Korean people. In terms of foreign relations, a tie between the government and the US was established around the early 1980s. A main goal of the US government was to liberalize Korea and to influence the authoritarian Korean government against oppressing its political oppositions (Brezinsky 2011: 401). The US had tacitly approved the existence of the non-elected government. However, despite the tie between two governments, several people were killed (Cumings 2005: 389-91) and the government controlled mass media.

For example, in 1987, a student majoring in linguistics at Seoul National University was killed due to severe torture by the Korean government. His death sparked huge demonstrations led by people who wanted a formal explanation from their government that justified this young person's death. The government tried to hide his death because it did not want to lose even more legitimacy in the eyes of its people and the international community. After this event, the strained relationship between the political and civil society spheres of life continued (Cumings 2005: 392).

However, when the political situation of Korea in the late 1980s became even more unstable, the US changed its policy dealing with the Korean government. The U.S. no longer approved of the Chun regime and this foreign policy shift opened up the political opportunity for the democratic opposition to take advantage of a permissive world context. Eventually, the revolutionaries overthrew Chun's government, the fifth republic of Korea. However, what exactly prompted this policy shift on the part of the United States? The following sections outline possible incentives.

Technocratic Linkage

Starting in 1945, when the US occupied the Korean peninsula, pressure to liberalize and democratize were exerted. However, Korean political officials lacked experience operating within democratic principles. Therefore, the U.S. decided that the best approach to spread democratic ideals was to instill it in their educational system. This would fill the gap on the part of the political officials who lacked experience with democracy. In sum, educating elites in a U.S. implemented educational system proved indispensable for advocating the promotion of democracy.

Following the implementation of a U.S. styled educational system, the US tried to spur along modernization efforts. Modernization leads to more economic development and increases the presence

of educational school systems especially at the University level. Thus, to continue educating Korean scholars that would adopt liberal belief systems, the State Department and the Ford Foundation supported many Korean institutions such as Korea University (Brezinsky 2011: 284). To modernize, the U.S. made huge efforts at linking American and Korean technocratic elites especially via the University system. Finally, democracy could be achieved after this economic progress (Brezinsky 2011: 280), which would be spurred along by modernization efforts. Modernizing, economic development and the eventual adopting of liberal democratic beliefs systems via Western educational attainment would ensure that the US could protect their strategic relations with Korea.

However, elite education was not a factor that affected US foreign policy shift on the support of the regime. The U.S. had increased their technocratic ties starting in late 1945. Thus, technocratic ties existed during an era of largely continuous western support. Even though elites such as professors were involved in the huge demonstrations in the late 1980s, it was not a reason that the U.S. changed their foreign policy. Rather, it became a background of the advent of the middle class which is stated in the part of economic linkage. The technocratic ties were merely tools for the US to influence liberalization and democratization in the region but it did not influence support away from the regime. Thus, rendering weak support for hypothesis one.

Intergovernmental Linkage

The intergovernmental linkage between the US and Korea was strong. The US was confronted head on with the democratic movement in Korea especially after a diplomatic leader of the opposition was exiled to the U.S. Democratic movements which were led by Dae-Jung Kim, who was one of the main political figures stated above. When Kim has exiled again to the US in 1983 for 777 days, he established an institute that committed researches on Korean human rights abuses. He also met with many U.S. politicians regarding US support of the democratic movement (Kim 2010: 455-475). Some scholars and a politician, Donald Fraser, signed a plea for Kim's safe return to Korea, which was sent to president Chun (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1985: 22). Despite this plea on behalf of Kim, the US still supported the authoritarian regime according to declassified diplomatic documents.

The report written by the Korean government states that US officials said that the US wanted to support the Korean government (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1985: 48) and the US felt that the return of Kim to Korea could potentially destabilize any progress towards political development in Korea (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1985: 115). Thus, the US regarded their diplomatic relations with Korea as more important than democratization. The US was not willing to jeopardize their strong relationship with the Korean regime and their domestic durability in the wake of a growing democratic opposition in the late 1980s, despite the strong tie that was created between the U.S. and Kim's ideological commitment to democracy. The US remained in staunch support of the Chun regime, whilst interacting with the leader in the democratic movement. In sum, the intergovernmental tie did not break amid negotiations regarding

the return of Kim. Intergovernmental relations did not lessen amid the democratic movement in a manner that would call for a shift in foreign policy.

Informational Linkage

The informational linkage between the U.S. and Korea was road blocked by the government because the Chun government controlled newspapers and TV broadcastings. The media was highly censored. However, the US embassy in Korea published a journal "Current Events and Views" (Stueck 1998: 14) so that Koreans could access the US stance on the Korean democratization movement. Furthermore, the American Forces Korean Network (AFKN) acted as a channel for Koreans to get information from outside of their country. However, the Korean government urged the US government to censor any news related Kim's return broadcasted on AFKN (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1985: 140) because the Chun government was afraid of the opposition's accessing this information.

It can be said that the US government supported the Korean authoritarian government firmly, even amid growing domestic oppositions. Furthermore, it is evident that the intergovernmental tie affected weak informational linkages to suit the interests of Chun. The strong diplomatic relations between the authoritarian regime and the US continued. Then, what we need to ask is why US foreign policy towards Korea suddenly changed despite the strong intergovernmental tie.

Economic Linkage

In the Korean case study, the economic linkage represents not only traditional bilateral trade relations but was also used as a mechanism in which the US could control Korean trade policy. The main goal of the US was to liberalize the Korean economy despite the tendency for the authoritarian regime to push for more isolated policies (Brezinsky 2011: 402). The U.S. push for Korean liberalization led to the growth of companies owned by the middle class who wanted more of a say in their government. The growing middle class pushed not only economic liberalization but also political liberalization, which prompted the US to shift their foreign policy to authoritarian support.

Chun heavily relied on elites in the economic sector for his support. Therefore, it was easy for the US to push for liberalizing reforms since this US interest coincided with the interests of Chun's loyal elites. Thus, Reagan successfully started to emphasize liberalization of the finance and trade sectors in Korea starting in 1983 (Brezinsky 2011: 408). In addition, the US tried to change the tariff and taxation policies of Korea. Reagan suggested to the Chun that they abolish the income tax on foreign companies who try to withdraw their business from Korea. In light of this successful US-led reform, American insurance companies started to operate their business in Korea (Jeong 2010: 315). Now, the US had effectively integrated Korea into the global free trade system while simultaneously integrating US interests with Korean business elite interests.

However, some domestic problems started to occur. Most of the people in Korea were not able to

decipher whether the US was in support of the Korean democratic movement. Due to the ambiguity of US support of democratic reforms, an anti-Americanism movement started to rise. Some democrats in Korea occupied and even attacked some of US facilities in Korea (Jeong 2010: 312-316). Furthermore, opposition to the authoritarian government led to huge demonstrations in the late 1980s. Koreans rallied around nationalistic sentiments that coupled anti-Americanism and anti-imperialism with sentiments of anti-authoritarianism which withdrew popular support away from the regime. This movement threatened American interests because of their high level of economic integration between US foreign investments and Korean companies and conglomerates. This was a significant issue for American foreign policy because US support of the regime was posing a threat to US economic interests.

Thus, when huge protests and demonstrations occurred in 1987, it was difficult for the US to approve the regime led martial law again in that this approval would exacerbate tensions of Korean economy and stimulate anti-Americanism movement in Korea (Brezinsky 2011: 412-413). This is what prompted the US to shift their support away from the regime and in favor of the democratic opposition. In sum, it was the economic linkages, created by the liberalization of the Korean economy that eventually affected US policy in support of the authoritarian regime to dissolve. In it's a place, the US implemented a new foreign policy that supported the democratic revolutionaries.

Tunisia Case: France's Eventual Support of the Democratic Revolution in 2011

On December 16 2010, a young Tunisia street vendor, Mohammad Bouazizi lit himself on fire to protest police brutality and a corrupt dictatorship heralded by Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Ben Ali had been Tunisia's dictator for twenty-five years and throughout his tenure he fostered strong economic and political relations with Western countries such as the U.S. and France. France had a particularly close relationship with this small Mediterranean country due to past imperial colonial relations. The French government had supported Ben Ali's autocratic rule despite international outcry at Ben Ali's human rights abuses. Even during the revolution, France supported the regime by providing military assistance to the government to aid them in oppressing the protestors. Michele Alliot-Marie who served as the French foreign minister during this time had offered aid to the Tunisian regime to "assist in putting down the revolution" (*AllAfrica.com* 2011).

In the past, the French government argued that "national security interests and the economic benefits of maintaining close ties with the Ben Ali government outweighed dissatisfaction over its record on human rights and democratization" (Wood 2002, p.101). During the Jasmine revolution in 2011 this mentality appeared to persist. France's President Nicholas Sarkozy argued that France did not offer initial support of the revolution because France was committed to not involving itself in the affairs of other countries (*BBC Monitoring Middle East* 2011b). However, it was later expressed that France eventually shifted its support away from Ben Ali and in favor of the revolution "in order to guarantee the interests that Ben

Ali had guaranteed in the past" (*BBC Monitoring Middle East* 2011a).   But what interest specifically influenced this shift?

Furthermore, not only did France end up supporting the democratic transition, but France also shifted its foreign policy about working with the Islamic political party *Ennahda* who formed the majority of the ruling coalition after the revolution.[17] Prior to the revolution, the Tunisian government had inferred that the leader of this political party was affiliated with terrorist organizations. Ben Ali cracked down on Islamic oppositionists, and France was supportive of these endeavors to preserve regional and national security in France.

Like the Korean case discussed above, we argue here that economic linkages that existed prior to the revolution conditioned the decision for the French government to shift its foreign policy stance of supporting dictatorship in Tunisia to supporting a democratic transition with an Islamic political party leading the transition. The historical trajectory of the increasing economic ties between France and Tunisia are outlined below along with the other dimensions of Levitsky and Way's linkage hypothesis.

Technocratic Linkage

The technocratic linkage between elites in France and Tunisia is strong in the sense that many prominent Tunisians received their higher education in France. For example, Ben Ali who remained the dictator for twenty-five years received special training at the Special Inter-Service school in Coëtquidan and the Artillery school in Châlons-sur-Marne (Wood 2002). Furthermore, Tunisia's premier dictator Habib Bourguiba who ruled Tunisia from its independence in 1957 till 1987 was also educated in France. He attended the *Sorbonne* in Paris to study law (Hopwood 1992). What he learned about French politics and society during his academic tenure in Paris influenced his ties to secularism and to instating a French influenced educational system during Tunisia's post-independence era.

Not only are the two most prominent political figures educated in France, but many young Tunisians also sought to study abroad in France to receive their education. The scholarly exportation of French academic knowledge to Tunisia enhanced the technocratic linkage between France and Tunisia and exacerbated their influence and control in the region. However, this linkage was unlikely to be the most salient influential factor that motivated the French government to ultimately side with the revolutionaries. The technocratic linkage can be viewed as more of an indirect linkage on the economic relations between France and Tunisia because Tunisian students would buy French products and would continue to buy French products after they came back to their own country. Therefore, it would not be the technocratic linkage per say, but would be the economic relations as a byproduct of those linkages that would be most affected by a change in regime. Furthermore, strong technocratic linkages between the two countries

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[17] Dobbs interview with head of political affairs at the French Embassy in Tunis in 2014.

were always strong, and democratic opposition to Tunisia's leaders had also existed in the past. Therefore, the technocratic linkage does not explain why France decided to shift its policy now because this linkage did not particularly strengthen in the years prior to the revolution.

Informational Linkage

Information linkages between Tunisia and France are incredibly intertwined. The two countries share a common language, French, and many French newspapers often relay news about events and ongoing foreign relations between France and their old colony Tunisia. In fact, information spread from Tunisia to France about the abhorrent human rights abuses that were being reported by international organizations such as Amnesty International, the Arab Commission of Human Rights, Human Rights Watch, and the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (Human Rights Watch 2008). Upon receiving many of these reports, there was major outcry in French media that condemned their government's support of the Tunisian regime who was being pictured as a tyrannical oppressive leader.

When the Ben Ali regime increased oppressive measures between 1995 and 1998, aimed at squandering any political opposition, the French Press intensely criticized the French government. Thus, the domestic public in France was starting to turn against their government regarding their current foreign policy stance that supported the Tunisian regime. However, despite criticisms inherent within the French media and public outcry, the French government continued their support of the dictator (Wood 2002).

In 2011, informational linkages had a different impact on French support of the dictator. After Ben Ali fled the country on January 14[th,] Alliot-Marie made the statements about "the savoir-faire…of [French] security forces able to settle security situations of this type" (Marquand 2011). After this statement was mad, Alliot-Marie faced political and public opposition and was pressured to resign from her post of foreign minister. Now that the public and elites had received the information that Ben Ali had fled, they were no longer going to stand for a position that was anti-democratization. Thus, in the case of Tunisia and France, informational linkages seemed to play a role in the foreign policy shift. Although more research needs to be done about French public opinion during the initial uprisings.

Intergovernmental Linkage

There were intergovernmental ties between France and multilateral institutions that could have pushed France towards the decision to shift foreign policy towards supporting the democratic revolutionaries. France's involvement in the EU spurred along many different intergovernmental partnerships between Tunisia and the EU that would eventually lead Tunisia down a path of democratization. For example, in 1995, France encouraged the development of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Initiative. This partnership was geared at economic development and regional cooperation between European and North African countries along the Mediterranean. The initiative was also theorized as being a venue in which security issues in the Maghreb region that affected European countries could also be tackled.

However, this partnership suffered many setbacks and it is considered to have failed given that by "the end of 1996, it was clear that the lofty political goals of the EMPI were unattainable and the economic goals unrealistic" (Wood 2002: 97). Thus, France through the guise of the EMPI was unable to have any real intergovernmental influence in Tunisia.

Furthermore, the European parliament passed a resolution in 1996 that expressed that there was a major concern over human rights abuses associated with the Ben Ali regime. Ben Ali was condemned for continuously oppressing political opponents. When the passing of this resolution came up to vote, some of the French delegates voted against this international condemnation. Therefore, historically, intergovernmental ties between France and its membership in multilateral institutions has not been very effective at shifting political elite support away from the dictatorship in Tunisia.

Economic Linkage

It has been argued thus far that technocratic, informational and intergovernmental linkages between France and Tunisia were not enough to shift the foreign policy of France. Wood contends that French foreign policy started to shift subtly due to these forces, but after the attacks on 9/11, France quickly resumed their staunch support of the dictator despite reported human rights abuses. Furthermore, despite domestic and intergovernmental public outcry regarding the human rights abuses, economic relations between France and Tunisia became denser. In the 1990s, trade relations between France and Tunisia expanded. About 27.4% of Tunisian imports came from France and Tunisia exported about 28% of their exports to France (Wood 2002). Tunisia also attracted a lot of French investors numbering about 327 French enterprises were in Tunisia. Furthermore, the French government supported Tunisia financially by giving them about 441 million Francs in aid (Ibid).

The dense economic ties between France and Tunisia spurred along economic growth. France started to develop a growing middle class and only about 6% of the population lived below the poverty line. However, with the growing economic development, Tunisia started to become more modernized and the Tunisia people wanted more than economic development, they wanted more representation. As was outlined in the Korean case study, modernization theory contends that as a country economically develops and becomes more modernized, people start to become more educated and adopt new belief systems and values that are centered upon a more liberal society (Lipset 1959). This liberal ideology is then linked with increasing pressures for the government to liberalize. Furthermore, with the global economic crisis in 2008, Tunisian's value expectations were not suddenly not meeting their capabilities and this led them to revolt in 2010 (Gurr 1970).

It is argued that due to the increase density of Tunisian and French economic relations, not only did the revolution fervor partially originate from these relations that resulted into an increase in modernization, but France was to "tied up" in their economic relations with Tunisia. Being on the "losing side" of the

revolution would have been too costly, economically. Hence, France has been criticized in its late support of the revolution because this lateness in response has been analyzed as being a result of France's narrow interests. Initially, France wanted to squander the revolution in hopes of retaining their economic interests, but eventually they shifted their stance in support of the new revolutionary regime in hopes of salvaging their pre-existing economic relations that existed prior to the revolution.

Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to demonstrate how bilateral linkages can prompt a Western country to shift their foreign policy towards an authoritarian regime. The findings of this paper are the following; (1) economic linkages between Western democratic countries and developing countries play a salient role on the trajectory of foreign policies; (2) other linkages, such as technocratic, informational, and intergovernmental could also explain changes in Western foreign policy democracy promotion (although less salient than economic linkages).

In sum, aligned with the rational actor model, a shift in foreign policy is not just dependent upon domestic influences such as public opinion, but are based on decisions that are inherent within the state's autonomous interests. The examples provided in this paper, France and the United States, show that the foreign policies of the two countries were not directly related to their role as norm entrepreneurs in the global states system. France changed its policy supporting Ben Ali due to its economic interests that resided with Tunisia and the US had similar incentives with Korea. To understand foreign policy shifts regarding democracy promotion in developing and authoritarian countries, analysts need to understand how Western powers and a developing country are intertwined and interdependent using the linkages provided by Levitsky and Way. Western powers will change their direction of foreign policy to align with their interests that are dependent on this world system context.

Future research

To make a more generalizable argument regarding patterns of shifting Western foreign policy support of authoritarian regimes and democratization, this study needs to go beyond discussing cases that exemplify our theoretical framework. Future research needs to directly challenge the assumptions we have made here which can be done by increasing the number of cases that vary in their historical context, types of diplomatic ties, and domestic opposition. Also, the case of Korea could be more accurately analyzed if classified documentations are declassified in the future (in the case of Korea). As Stueck stated for the Korean case "[t]he unavailability of internal documents from the fall of 1986 to June 1987 renders us incapable of determining whether or not American observers anticipated the sentiments of the South Korean middle class" (Stueck 1998: 23). Studies investigating the Korean politics would greatly benefit if those documentations are officially released.

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