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# THE STATE IN DEMOCRATIC BREAKDOWNS: WHO, HOW, AND WHY

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**WORKING PAPER SERIES 2016:7**

**QOG** THE QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT INSTITUTE  
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Box 711, SE 405 30 GÖTEBORG  
April 2016  
ISSN 1653-8919  
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QoG Working Paper Series 2016:7  
April 2016  
ISSN 1653-8919

## ABSTRACT

It is often invoked that in modern times the state is a prerequisite for democracy to endure. However, cross-national research typically applies this as a static assumption rather than a dynamic causal proposition. Therefore, we are largely left in the dark about who the relevant state actors are, how they contribute to democratic breakdowns, and why they do so. Specifying who, how, and why of the state in democratic breakdowns is a vital first step in developing a better understanding of whether the state stabilizes democracies, including whether a disaggregation of the state concept matters. In this paper, I present an overall theoretical framework and observable implications to answer these questions. At the general level, I propose that the state – defined by either a monopoly on violence, administrative effectiveness, or citizenship agreement – is relevant for containment of anti-systemic forces and management of security-related and socioeconomic conditions. I then specify seven oft-cited mechanisms which stem from weaknesses in one of the three aspects of state. Empirically, I examine the observable implications of these mechanisms in the 14 democratic breakdowns of the interwar period. This systematic examination provides a more detailed and disaggregated yet also coherent understanding of the state-democracy nexus. The results indicate the general importance of a strong and legitimate state for democratic stability. However, disaggregation of the state is recommended to obtain more precise average and single-case inferences.

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## Causality and state-democracy research

Recent reviews of research in democratization (e.g. Munck 2011) call for a more comprehensive theorization of the relationship between state and democracy – that is, a more specified causal relationship between state and democracy. In a special issue on what was termed the ‘state-democracy nexus’ (cf. Andersen, Møller, and Skaaning 2014), it was argued that a better understanding of the different ways in which the state may ensure the survival of free, fair, and inclusive elections was the most pressing concern.<sup>1</sup> In times when the arguably greatest problem of democracy is not its installation but its stabilization, this agenda needs to be moved forward. In this paper, I pursue this in two steps: first, by building a general theoretical framework that may connect multiple types of state weaknesses to democratic breakdown; and second, by specifying and examining observable implications of seven leading theories of the state-democracy relationship on the interwar democratic breakdowns which hold some of the paradigmatic cases of democratic breakdown.

The question of causality between state and democracy has typically been precluded by conflation of state and regime characteristics (cf. Mazzuca 2010); state-democracy theorization has ended in necessary yet often overly simplistic discussions of endogeneity (for a review, see Mazzuca and Munck 2014); or the state’s importance for democratic stability has been treated at an overall level and as a static assumption that leaves much causal interpretation to the reader (e.g. Linz and Stepan 1996; Rose and Shin 2001: 333-339; Fukuyama 2005; Bratton and Chang 2006: 1059-1063; Kraxberger 2007: 1056-1057; Møller and Skaaning 2011).<sup>2</sup> In consequence, empirical findings have tended to cloud more than illuminate an understanding of the state-democracy relationship (Andersen, Møller, and Skaaning 2014: 9-10). Perhaps most notably, the so-called sequencing debate has pointed to the importance of political accountability for state-building in early modern Europe (Møller 2015). While this is a very welcome take on the state-democracy nexus, the representative, mass democracy that was introduced in Continental Europe with the French Revolution and accelerated with industrialization in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Ansell and Samuels 2014) is a different regime that has been associated with civil conflict and political instability shown in a context of weak stateness (see e.g. Rose and Shin 2001; Carothers 2002: 8-9).

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<sup>1</sup> The authors noted the need for disaggregation of the concept of stateness and thinning of the concept of democracy to enable causal analysis of the state’s effect on democratic stability.

<sup>2</sup> To be fair, scholars (e.g. Fukuyama 2014) now increasingly specify their causal propositions.

Hence, what is needed are a set of more dynamic causal propositions answering who, how, and why concerning the state's stabilizing effect on democracies. I thus pursue the state-democracy nexus agenda by a disaggregated approach with multiple pathways from state to democracy. To this end, I capitalize on already existing research of civil-military relationships (e.g. Nordlinger 1977; Stepan 1988), clientelism, corruption, and political polarization (e.g. O'Donnell 1973; Rothstein 2011; Cornell and Lapuente 2014), and ethnic fractionalization and citizenship conflicts (e.g. Linz and Stepan 1996; Wimmer 2013). Yet, I sharpen these theories and anchor them in a unified theory of how the state affects democracy under the larger condition of ongoing socioeconomic modernization (cf. Przeworski 2005; Ansell and Samuels 2014).

To gauge the usefulness of different theories of the state-democracy relationship, we must have more specified knowledge on the causal mechanisms at play. I define a causal mechanism as “a delimited class of events that change relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations” (Tilly 2001: 25-26). In turn, any causal mechanism of the state-democracy nexus must explicate a set of observable implications in the right sequence. These observable implications specify the participating actors (their properties, activities, and relations) and their attitudes and behavior as they are constrained by a given state condition (cf. Hedström and Ylikoski 2010: 50-52). Identifying ‘who’ the relevant actors is important. If, for instance, an explanation focuses entirely on party politicians or trade unionists as the drivers of democratic breakdown, how can causality then stem from the state? Identifying ‘how’ they behave is equally important. For instance, explanations sometimes focus on certain social classes who nevertheless are later identified as politically insignificant and thus without the required opportunity to convert ideas into reality (see e.g. Luebbert 1987: 449-450). And finally, answering ‘why’ they are motivated, at the attitudinal level, to behave in a certain way is pertinent. For instance, powerful presidents and military elites are not always responsible for democratic breakdown even though they have the means to do so. The state actors that I point out are either vital for motivating or enabling democratic breakdown.

The remainder of the paper contains theorization of seven mechanisms connecting the state with democratic breakdown on the basis of these criteria for who, how, and why. I then illustrate how these mechanisms may be analyzed by making use of the democratic breakdowns of the interwar period. The interwar democratic breakdowns are not only among the most paradigmatic for extant theories of democratization and democratic stability. Aspects of the state have also been proposed

as important in explaining why some democracies broke down and others survived the economic crises of the period (see Bermeo 1997: 19). Yet, this proposition still needs a systematic examination.

Before the disaggregated theorization and application of the mechanisms, I present the theory of how the state, despite its different mechanisms, at an overall level stabilizes democracies.

## **The state and the distributionist model of democracy**

This paper aligns with the distinctions of state and regime from Andersen, Møller, and Skaaning (2014; for similar distinctions, see also Mazzuca and Munck 2014). I thus define the overarching concept of state as the organization with the capacity to impose law and order and to construct and implement policies within a clearly demarcated territory and the claim to legitimacy as the primary political unit of the territory.<sup>3</sup> Three conceptually distinct aspects of the state – monopoly on violence, administrative effectiveness, and citizenship agreement - relate to each part of this definition. A monopoly on violence entails the capacity of the military and police to impose public order throughout the territory of the state. This involves three necessary and jointly sufficient components. First, the state is the superior coercive force vis-à-vis societal forces combined. Second, monopoly on violence implies high cohesion among the security forces. That is, the military and police are effectively functioning hierarchical organizations with professionally educated members. Third, the military and police must accept ultimate subordination to the political executive in matters of their organizational interests (salary, level of administrative autonomy, and political prerogatives) (see Nordlinger 1977: 64-76; Stepan 1988: Ch. 6). Lack of subordination is identified by a pattern of conflicts with the political level over the organizational interests of the security forces prior to the breakdown of democracy.

Administrative effectiveness is the capacity of the civil administration, including the judiciary, to construct and implement policies regarding public services and regulations accurately, swiftly, and with high quality throughout the territory. The three components here are first, a penetration by administrative structures of the territory of the state entailing a relatively stable connection between center and periphery by which laws, decrees, and other political signals are communicated. Second,

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<sup>3</sup> I sometimes refer to the state strengths and weaknesses as matters of stateness.

administrative effectiveness hinges on the existence of a functioning civil service system basing recruitment and promotion of personnel on merits rather than political status or social connections. The third requirement regards the responsiveness of the civil administration implying a willingness to serve with equal effectiveness any government decision, no matter its content (see Dunleavy 1985; Rauch and Evans 2000). Unresponsiveness is identified by a pattern of interrupted or sabotaged implementation of government policies prior to the democratic breakdown.

I conceive of citizenship agreement as the sheer agreement on who are and could potentially be the members of the state. There are two necessary and jointly sufficient components which I term mutual subgroup acceptance and state legitimacy. First, mutual subgroup acceptance requires that the significant ethnic subgroups (along racial, religious, or linguistic lines) inside the state territory accept each other's presence which may often be conceived as the absence of profound group differences based on ethnic belonging. Second, it entails a measure of state legitimacy – that is, a common, or at least non-conflictual, view of the state as an ethnocultural symbol (see Linz and Stepan 1996: 16; Gellner 2006; Stepan, Yadav, and Linz 2011). Ethnic conflicts and state illegitimacy are identified by expressed or visible grievances between ethnic groups or against the state as an ethnocultural symbol prior to the democratic breakdown.

I define democracy as a political regime producing governments from free, fair, and inclusive elections. I, however, pragmatically lower the demands for inclusiveness to entail suffrage for only half of the adult male population (see Boix, Miller, and Rosato 2012). In turn, I understand democratic stability as the continued existence of these elections. As will be specified, there are four types of democratic breakdown to which the state may relate: 1) a civil war which postpones elections indefinitely; 2) a coup d'état by the state military; 3) a paramilitary coup d'état (by oppositional forces); and 4) an incumbent takeover by which the sitting executive undermines democratic institutions (see e.g. Linz 1978: Ch. 4; Svobik 2015). The mechanisms relate in different ways to these four types but these differences are not important from the perspective of evaluating the mechanisms.

Probing an independent effect of the state on democratic stability first of all requires a separation from the effect of processes of socioeconomic modernization or, more generally, levels of economic development. Indeed, state-building is part of modernization in Weberian and Marxian thought. Recent decades have seen a reinvigoration of modernization theory which can be summed up in the 'distributionist model of democracy' (see Przeworski and Limongi 1997; Boix 2003; Ansell and

Samuels 2014). In this model, democracy endures as a result of a high level of economic development which ensures that the elite costs of rebellion are higher than the benefits of accepting the redistributions that follow from democracy (Przeworski 2005: 253-254).

While my theory basically concurs with this model, its point of departure is that the model wrongly assumes the state to be in place. Countries at the same level of economic development do not enter into a democratic regime period with the same level of stateness (cf. Huntington 1968; Evans 1995; Grindle 1996). In turn, there is no guarantee that economic development levels or the democratic institutions as such are continuously enforced and trusted. These must be maintained by a centralized authority, the state.<sup>4</sup> The variation in democratic stability among postcommunist and Latin American countries testifies to this (Linz and Stepan 1996).

In contrast to the distributionist model, there are three paths to democratic breakdown based on the status of stateness and the subsequent processes occurring *after* a successful transition to democracy. While I assume that democracies at very high levels of economic development are more or less sure of stability (cf. Svobik 2008) by being robust to future poor performance by the regime, at least in the medium term, it is at lower levels of development that the effect of stateness kicks in. The first path takes place in democracies with low levels of economic development. Here, we likely find a majority of anti-systemic, including anti-democratic and secessionist, forces. Because these forces are initially wary of democracy, promises or actual delivery of some alleged goods of democracy will not satisfy them – at least not in the short term. Consequently, stability can only be achieved as a short-term strategy via pure containment (e.g. arrests, ban enactments, protest dissolutions) to curb anti-systemic mobilization.

The second and third paths include democracies of medium-level development. This level of development likely implies a prevalence of what Linz (1978) has termed ‘semi-loyalists’. Among these actors, support for democracy is initially indeterminate and thus amendable to democracy’s performance. However, to understand the basis of a democracy’s performance we must take stock of at least one basic condition besides stateness: the growth of the economy. Levels of wealth determine the initial popular inclination to support democracy but whether or not the economy is growing determines the likelihood that people can be persuaded into support.

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<sup>4</sup> A point that Przeworski (2003; 2005: 266-267) raises himself but does not pursue.

In the second path, the economy is either stagnant or in recession. Here, stability can only be achieved through a combination of containment of anti-systemic forces and management of the social hardships connecting with economic crisis such as unemployment and poverty. Even though situations of security and economic crises are only occasional, they are highly salient (see Bernhard, Reenock, and Nordstrom 2003; Gilley 2006). The third path takes place where the economy is growing. This makes crisis management obsolete. Anti-systemic forces do, however, still rise. Thus, containment is still relevant as a stabilizing device.

The level of development and status of the economy are constants in the framework that I provide. They are snapshots of the initial structural reality with which actors are faced. When these are set, it is possible, as seen, to distinguish between three different paths towards democratic breakdown. My core theoretical claim is that low levels of stateness lower the ability to contain anti-systemic forces and manage socioeconomic and security-related crises. In turn, it raises the likelihood that the processes outlined will lead to democratic breakdown rather than stability. When taking a look at processes preceding democratic breakdowns in Latin America, Eastern Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia alike, containment and crisis management are important instruments for the political elites that nevertheless occasionally fail. For the state-democracy nexus, the key question is whether state actors – the bureaucrats and military and police officials in the state apparatus and ethnic groups in society –work, deliberately or not, to safeguard democracy.

In the next section, I argue how and why these state actors may contribute to democratic breakdown via containment or crisis management. Rather than an exhaustive list of possible mechanisms connecting the state with democratic breakdown, the section presents seven mechanisms that fare prominently in the literature. I start with the mechanisms from disputed monopoly on violence and proceed to administrative ineffectiveness and citizenship disagreement. The mechanisms contain a number of steps which must be observed for the mechanism to be vindicated. These are explicated in figures.



## **Mechanisms connecting the state to democratic breakdown**

### **Disputed monopoly on violence**

A disputed monopoly on violence - either via simple resource problems, lack of coherence, lack of subordination, or some combination of these deficiencies – may spur two mechanisms leading to democratic breakdown. I term the first mechanism an ‘authoritarian restoration’. Here, opposition or incumbent elites succeed in a coup d’état or rebellion because of poor containment by the security forces. Alternatively, the state military initiates a coup d’état to restore its organizational powers. This is inspired by the theories of military power in civil matters in young, typically Latin American, democracies (Linz 1978: Ch. 5; Stepan 1988: Chs. 6-7) as well as the democracies with low coercive capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa. The other mechanism regards a ‘security delegitimization’, that is, a weakening of performance legitimacy in security matters which radicalizes the masses in turn provoking martial law, a revolutionary coup d’état, or civil war. Research has focused less explicitly on this mechanism (some exceptions are the globally applied theories of Tilly 2007; Rothstein 2011) but it is likely a relevant one given the importance of security in regime performance.

Of all seven, these two mechanisms are arguably the most complicated to evaluate because of the intimate relationship between politicians and military figures in many young democracies. The evaluation of authoritarian restorations is eased, however, because I explicitly demand concessions to the military in order to increase confidence that military ‘restoration of organizational powers’ caused breakdown. Evaluating security delegitimization is eased because security forces typically have a large degree of autonomy in security matters in democracies, disregarding the ideological stand of the government. Hence, even though implementations are no better than the content of the policies and vice versa, the government’s role in setting the content of policies is disregarded in both mechanisms as it can largely be assumed to be as focused on security as possible. Still, the observation of government orders to provide security which are then poorly implemented would increase the uniqueness of the examination.

Authoritarian restorations play out in either of two paths. The upper path in Figure 1 below occurs in democracies with low levels of economic development or, alternatively, in medium-developed democracies where the economy is growing. As indicated, destabilization in such regimes should pertain to failed containment. Generally, but particularly clear in this path, two very different moti-

vations may drive security forces, depending on the specific type of problem pertaining to monopoly on violence. If the disputed monopoly on violence stems from either a lack of resources or cohesion, we should observe expressions of constitutional values, order, and stability which are, however, frustrated by stalled implementation or internal disagreement about the appropriate means to be employed. In turn, paramilitary coup plotters are actually fought but without success. This leads to an overthrow or civil war if military powers are more balanced between the paramilitary and state military forces. Note that the failure of containment here is not due to a lack of willingness to protect democracy or the constitution as such but rather a weak ability to do so. Otherwise, the mechanism would amount to a somewhat trivial claim that democracy broke down because the military was anti-democratic.

The second motivation stems from a lack of subordination. This is a very different dynamic because we are here looking for security forces turning their backs on democracy. Their reasoning is, however, important: the security forces have come to conceive of democracy as too much of a threat to their organizational powers. They originally wanted to maintain or increase their powers but have been turned down by the government. Often, these forces align with generally authoritarian cadres of the military. The observable implications of this motivation are attitudes of praetorianism or military autonomy in budgetary and/or policy decision-making beyond purely means of coercion (cf. Stepan 1988: 92, 100). In turn, the state military may initiate a coup d'état, support an oppositional one, or an incumbent takeover that favors their interests.

It may of course also be that a successful military intervention actually saves democracy. This is what happens when martial law is initiated as a legal instrument of the constitution, public order restored, and a date for new elections is set within reasonable time. However, I do not expect such a mechanism. Rather, if the monopoly on violence is disputed, I expect martial law to become permanent and thus end in democratic breakdown.

The lower path in Figure 1 whereby the 'authoritarian restoration' mechanism plays out involves the medium-level democracies where the economy is stagnant or in recession. Crisis management is here a relevant parameter alongside containment. Whether grievances are socioeconomically based or related to security, the military and police gain prominence as actors of containment in the same way as in the upper path. Even though the need for containment is arguably less pressing due to fewer anti-systemic forces, the motivations of the security forces are basically the same: contain-

ment of the threat within constitutional boundaries if resource-insufficiency and/or incoherence or containment via extra-constitutional means if lack of subordination. However, the behavior of under-equipped and/or factionalized security forces is not only observed in the phase when an actual attack on democracy is attempted. The phase of mobilization is also relevant. Here, containment hinges on the ability to identify the antisystemic forces. Security forces with a genuine interest in containment should be observed trying to track down these movements or dissolve them. This battle is, however, lost due to weak intelligence work and coordination. The behavior by autonomous security forces is the same as in the upper path as they may try to install military rule with or without direct support of the opposition to restore their organizational powers. Such a coup d'état may thus also occur preemptively.

[Figure 1 about here]

The rest of the mechanisms differ from authoritarian restorations in that their unique effect is not found in the last step from attempt to successful breakdown. In any breakdown, the security forces enter the equation in the last step where final containment is a possibility. But the remaining mechanisms, if all their implications are observed, exist no matter the actions of security forces in this last step.

The 'security delegitimization' (Figure 2) mechanism typically regards medium-level democracies with a stagnant or declining economy. Here, we must either observe that autonomous security forces engage in dissolution of crowds that are not sanctioned by government orders. Alternatively, in case of low levels of resources or incoherence among the security forces, we must observe that they conduct weak identification and unsuccessful fighting (via, for instance, arrests) of crimes and violent conflicts. Either way, there is an 'unsuccessful enforcement of monopoly on violence'.

In young democracies, the experience of arbitrary violence or that violent conflict is spinning out of control might be the specific trigger of public agitation and mobilization for military rule with easier access to repression. In this way, masses or elites can grow anti-systemic and attempt a coup d'état or circumvention of political and civil rights.

[Figure 2 about here]

## Administrative ineffectiveness

I expect three mechanisms leading from administrative ineffectiveness to democratic breakdown. Expectedly, they are only relevant in medium-developed democracies with a stagnant or declining economy. They thus concern failed crisis management. The first mechanism, which I name ‘socio-economic delegitimization’, captures some of the most profound examples of processes of breakdown in democracies strained by economic recession (see e.g. Bernhard, Reenock, and Nordstrom 2003), or those democracies whose state apparatuses are out of line with the social structures and thus incapable of delivering the demanded socioeconomic transformation (see e.g. O’Donnell 2007; Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992). The second mechanism is termed ‘elite bias delegitimization’ to describe the process that may emerge from a certain type of administrative ineffectiveness, namely that of a politicized administration that implements socioeconomic policies, civil liberties, or property rights in a way that biases against the oppositional party elite thus provoking a coup attempt. The third mechanism is termed ‘mass bias legitimization’ and describes the specific mass dynamics of this sort of process. While the process in the elite-based mechanism is structured around foreseeable party political dynamics and is thus relatively easy to predict, the mass-based process is muddier, ends in rebellion, and has the particular explosive potential of leading to civil war. Particularly Latin American democracies have been scrutinized along the lines of these theories of elite and mass discrimination (see e.g. O’Donnell 2007; Cornell and Lapuente 2014).

Socioeconomic delegitimization (Figure 3) is a mass-based mechanism. When an economic recession or stagnation produces social hardships such as unemployment, impoverishment, and feelings of relative deprivation, grievances are raised in the broader public – particularly among those with the fewest resources to start with. It is these concerns that the government and civil service must address. Since socioeconomic policy issues are deeply ideological and usually clearly differentiate the political right and left, the content of the governments’ policy reactions to the public’s concerns cannot be taken as a given as in security matters. For instance, right-wing governments will tend to propose means and ends of fiscal austerity in times of recession while left-wing governments propose countercyclical policies by tax exemptions or public investments. As civil servants hinge on receiving such executive policy orders, and given that the quality of any policy is inherently difficult to classify a priori, the examination of socioeconomic delegitimization is strongest when it is observed that the government actually initiates policies targeted directly at the hardships of the eco-

conomic crisis. Only in this case can it be forcefully shown that the civil service is responsible for any poor performance.

The behavior of the civil service in socioeconomically relevant ministries and agencies must then, on an overall account, have one or both of the following features: When the civil service is politicized or patrimonial, the implementation of the government proposals is either delayed or inaccurate. Alternatively, when civil servants are unresponsive, implementation is interrupted or sabotaged.

A likely result of such problematic implementation is that angry crowds turn anti-systemic by calling for some form of economic authoritarianism, that is, as we know from present-day China and Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s, a system of economic management by authoritarian means. This sort of process may then repeat itself causing further grievances and polarization and eventually provoke coup attempts or rebellions.

[Figure 3 about here]

'Elite bias delegitimization' (Figure 4) assumes an initial atmosphere of dissatisfaction with socioeconomic conditions. As grievances increase, the opposition may radicalize. This may provoke the government to engage in undermining the rule of law and initiate discriminating policies against the opposition elite. The key observable implications begin with civil servants in politicized administrations. Given the direct dependence of their job on the will of the elected incumbents, they likely provide weakly credible limits to executive power which lead to biased policies in matters of socioeconomic distribution and rule of law. This transforms the broadbased grievances into more concentrated antagonizing of the opposition against the incumbents. In contrast to socioeconomic delegitimization, the problem here is not stalled implementation but rather the opposite, namely too precise and uncritical implementation. Thus, by contrast to a meritocratic system which is institutionally placed to balance government orders against the rule of law, we must observe direct and uncritical implementation.

The relevant policy areas are socioeconomic rights as well as civil liberties and property rights provision. Thus, we might, for instance, observe the civil service giving impunity for government party members, violating the rule of law through arbitrary arrests of opposition forces, or illegally seizing

their property. In socioeconomic matters, we might observe unfair distribution of social benefits with discrimination of certain social or economic groups.

In turn, we must observe that the opposition party elites rally to end these (perceived) injustices with extra-constitutional means. In some cases, coup attempts are carried out because the incumbents are ousted in an election. In this case, the mechanism would predict the same process to unfold, only with a new set of incumbents and opposition elites. In any case, however, we must eventually observe a coup attempt. This is likely paramilitary but the state military, backed by incumbents or not, may also initiate a coup as a precaution of the opposition threat.

[Figure 4 about here]

‘Mass bias delegitimization’ (Figure 5) is equal to elite bias delegitimization in terms of the sequence of events and the behavior and attitudes of actors. However, the actors, and thus the particular arena of action, are at the mass-level. Masses are more diverse and by definition farther away from executive political power than elites, and their behavior may thus be less rational and predictable indicating a different kind of process. Specifically, the issues of the means and timing of government reaction and military coup attempts are therefore harder to determine a priori. Otherwise, the same dynamic applies: A politicized administration may bias against a whole population group, either based on socioeconomic, ethnic, or other criteria. The unifying characteristic of the targeted groups, however, is their attachment to the opposition. For instance, governments may engage in biased policies because it sees executive power as an opportunity of exploitation of resources and favoritism of certain groups over others – predatory states are extreme cases hereof. In turn, the mass opposition are radicalized and provoked to attempt a coup or rebellion. Due to the unpredictable dynamics of radicalization among the masses in this mechanism, civil war is a particularly likely outcome.

[Figure 5 about here]

### **Citizenship disagreement**

The first mechanism connecting citizenship disagreement with democratic breakdown regards the destabilizing effect of ‘citizenship violence’ (Figure 6). This mechanism may occur in any of the

three overall paths outlined earlier and thus concerns both containment and crisis management. It captures the great variety of democratic instability in diverse societies which, for instance, dominates in Sub-Saharan Africa but also in countries in the Balkans or in Sri Lanka where religion is a vital source of political conflict. It thus relates to the works of Horowitz (1985), Wimmer (2013), and others on the severity of ethnic conflicts and their consequences for civic order (see also Alesina et al. 2003).

From a starting point of stability, we would expect to observe violence between those ethnic groups that do not accept each other's presence in the same country. If the problem instead pertains to state illegitimacy, we might also see violent attacks on state symbols and representatives. The insight is that the likelihood of violence increases with the level of citizenship disagreement and so increases the risk that containment of actual threats to democracy fails.

Whether violence is inter-ethnic or directed at the state, it may set in motion one of three mobilizations. The more radical the mobilization, the more likely is breakdown. The most radical one is a reversal of the ethnic situation observed by racist ideas, including xenophobia and calls for ethnic apartheid or hegemony. An equally radical mobilization centers on a wish for secession: an exit from the state. The least radical one involves a wish for equality and incorporation in the political system of the minority or majority ethnic groups in question. Even this claim can spur radical reactions from incumbents or their supporters. Alternatively, the state military takes action (preemptively or not) and installs a military dictatorship to end violence.

[Figure 6 about here]

The mechanism of 'citizenship injustices' (Figure 7) occurs in medium-developed democracies with stagnating or regressing economy. It builds on the same literature as citizenship violence but captures a different dynamic, namely the often debilitating dynamics of state integration amidst economically strained conditions. Citizenship disagreements lower the ability to manage crises in a legitimate way because disdistribution of socioeconomic goods may augment existing ethnic cleavages.

First, it must be observed that ethnic groups express concerns over socioeconomic injustices that they perceive to exist between them. Unemployment and wages may be perceived to be skewed

against particular ethnic groups. The concerns may be either elite- or mass-based but the heart of the matter is that they become salient issues for the parliament and government. Ethnic divisions are exacerbated or created within or between the parties in parliament (or in a coalitional government) resulting in polarization as they are driven to opposite extremes on a scale of ethnic and socioeconomic distribution. In turn, governments fail to promulgate action on the expressed concerns or only initiate half measures – all in all ineffective policy responses as a result of the government’s credence to polarization.

The ethnic groups are then radicalized further. They may then align their cause with lukewarm supporters of democracy. Accordingly, we should observe agitations among either elite or mass segments of these groups to mobilize for a socioeconomic upheaval implying reversed ethnocracy. The less radical demand is an economic authoritarian regime but it must be observed that they rally around inter-ethnic redistribution. From this point on the centrifugal logic leading to coup attempt or rebellion likely sets in.

[Figure 7 about here]

## **Empirical analysis**

To illustrate how these mechanisms might work in actual empirical analyses, I have identified the observable implications of the seven mechanisms in all the democratic breakdowns of the interwar period. Basing the identification of democracies on Boix, Miller, and Rosato’s (2014) codings, there are 14 democratic breakdowns between 1919 and 1939.

I have coded stateness in all democratic years prior to breakdown and the observable implications of the mechanisms. I have relied on biographies and historical case and comparative studies.<sup>5</sup> In what follows, I use this data to answer two separate but interconnected questions. First, to what extent are there weaknesses in the three aspects of the state in the breakdown cases? I discuss the pattern of development in the three aspects during the interwar years. This provides initial descriptive inferences in the sense of identifying those cases of weak stateness where some or more of the

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<sup>5</sup> Full analyses of all cases, including coding rules and threshold ambiguities, are available in the appendices. I engaged a research assistant to code 5 of the 14 cases by random selection (Greece 1926-1936; Germany 1919-1933; Lithuania 1920-1926; Uruguay 1919-1934; Portugal 1918-1926) as a reliability check on my own codings. My codings did not differ from those of the research assistant but the threshold ambiguities reflect the need for greater precision in my coding criteria.



mechanisms may be relevant. Second, is any of the mechanisms observable in the breakdown cases? For each aspect, I identify the mechanisms for each case and the total number of mechanisms across the cases. Connecting with the first question, this examination only focuses on the cases of state weakness. That is, where a given state aspect is strong, the mechanisms attached are excluded from consideration. Along the way, I identify whether any temporal and regional clustering exists.

### The development of stateness

Table 1 shows the status of the stateness aspects and their components in the year before democratic breakdown. This is based on the assumption that observing a given mechanism only makes sense if the relevant stateness aspect was weak in the year preceding breakdown.

[Table 1 about here]

Focusing on the state weaknesses pertaining to monopoly on violence, 5 of 14 had problems with resource supremacy of the military and police forces. This is a relatively low number when compared to the other two components of monopoly on violence showing no less than 10 and 12 cases with problems in cohesion and subordination, respectively. This discrepancy between the three components of monopoly on violence shows the importance of disaggregation: Based only on resource supremacy, we would infer that monopoly on violence was present in as many as 8 of 14 cases (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Portugal, Germany, Latvia, Greece, and Poland). However, these 8 cases would not be considered for the analysis of mechanisms even though their state weaknesses may have been highly relevant for democratic breakdown. The distinction between cohesion and subordination of the security forces seems less relevant. Only 3 cases (Germany, Latvia, and Spain) experienced problems in one but not the other of these two components. Nevertheless, a discrepancy of merely one case in principle justifies disaggregation.

Moving on to the trajectories of monopoly on violence during the interwar years, 13 of 14 democracies (except Estonia) had a disputed monopoly on violence in the year before their breakdown. This fact points to monopoly on violence as a widespread problem and potential cause of breakdown. Interestingly, only Spain experienced a backdrop in monopoly on violence during the interwar years. Resource supremacy was lost during the spring and summer of 1936 as Franco's forces entered Spain whereas the subordination of the military became problematic already from 1932

when the budget reforms and sidelining of the ordinary military by leftist Prime Minister Azana took hold. Otherwise, monopoly on violence remained constant in most cases, including notably the Latin American countries which went through WWI and the transition to democracy largely untouched.

Where changes did occur, they were to the better. Quite a few cases started their democratic period with a disputed monopoly on violence which then strengthened years before their democratic breakdown. This particularly concerned the establishment of resource supremacy and security force coherence. Lack of subordination was a somewhat more recalcitrant problem.<sup>6</sup>

Moving on to the state weaknesses pertaining to administrative effectiveness, challenges to territorial penetration ensued in only 3 of 14 cases whereas the arguably more demanding components of meritocracy and responsiveness were weak in 12 and 13 cases, respectively. Again, as with monopoly on violence, disaggregation to the component level is vital: If coding monopoly on violence as present based solely on territorial penetration, we would be wrong in no less than 10 cases (Uruguay, Chile, Portugal, Latvia, Germany, Estonia, Spain, Italy, Greece, and Yugoslavia). When comparing to the weaknesses of monopoly on violence, a similar pattern seems to emerge: Extending physical authority is less of a problem than building a reliable force of administrators that can take advantage of the physical structures to implement policies effectively. The only democracy that had achieved administrative effectiveness before its breakdown was Austria.

As with monopoly on violence, administrative ineffectiveness was a widespread problem in turn making it a potentially important explanation for democratic breakdown. In 13 of 14 democracies (except Austria), administrative ineffectiveness existed the year before breakdown. No democracy experienced a backdrop in any of the components. Yet, only two cases, Latvia and Estonia, experienced improvements. Territorial penetration in Estonia followed the lines of the dissemination of military resource supremacy obtained by the Treaty of Tartu in early 1920 – specifically, penetration could build on the administrative autonomy and unification of the major regions and towns of the Tallinn area and Northern Livland from 1905. The Latvian and Estonian state-building paths of the interwar period were very similar. As a general rule, Latvian developments were shortly delayed,

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<sup>6</sup> Studies of the cases of improvements in monopoly on violence (Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Germany, and Austria) can be seen in Appendix I to understanding of the dynamics of security apparatuses in the 1920s and 1930s.

around a year, relative to Estonia. This was also the case for territorial penetration which was obtained in 1920.

The Estonian and Latvian cases notwithstanding, we see a strong tendency that the states were mirrored in constant problems of conducting policy implementation in an effective but also impartial manner. The distinction between meritocracy and responsiveness seems less relevant here since only one case, Germany, experienced problems in one, i.e. responsiveness, but not the other of these two components. Otherwise, there is a perfect overlap between the remaining 12 cases showing problems of meritocracy and responsiveness alike. Still, the German case in itself justifies disaggregation between meritocracy and responsiveness.<sup>7</sup> Of more interest are the substantial differences in problems of administrative ineffectiveness that may be withdrawn.

Problems were all-encompassing in Latin Europe and the offsprings in Latin America. Here, unresponsiveness was constituted by state employee corruption and persistent patrimonial structures locally as well as politically motivated hirings and firings in the central bureaucracy. This obstructed the stability of any meritocratic system.

For these Latin democracies, administrative ineffectiveness could be particularly damaging because the conditions for all three mechanisms – socioeconomic delegitimization, elite bias delegitimization, and mass bias delegitimization – were all present. This is basically the same for the Baltic States although problems of politicization, patrimonialism, and corruption of civil servants were much less systematic and occurred within a much weaker bureaucratic framework.

The differences in the development of citizenship agreement to those of the two state capacities are not stark but nevertheless notable. Disrespect between ethnic groups as well as state illegitimacy existed in 9 of 14 cases. The differences in the codings of the components are thus much fewer for citizenship agreement than for the two state capacities. For instance, basing the coding of citizenship agreement on state legitimacy alone would result in wrong inferences about only 2 cases – a much smaller error rate than for the other two state aspects. On the one hand, this points out the intimate relationship between state legitimacy and mutual subgroups acceptance. On the other

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<sup>7</sup> For an analysis of this peculiar coding, see Appendix I regarding Germany.

hand, the partial overlapping of codings between the components does not disqualify the idea of disaggregation.<sup>8</sup>

Looking instead at the overall pattern, we find citizenship agreement in 4 of 14 cases (Argentina, Estonia, Uruguay, and Portugal). And no democracy experienced a backdrop in any of the two components. There are no obvious common factors between those four countries besides their citizenship agreement. Argentina and Uruguay exemplify violent nation-building as natives were slaughtered, driven to the territories' outskirts, or brutally assimilated through marriage with the European settlers. Portugal's road to nationhood was different as it resembles the much longer-term European path through the middle ages. Estonia's nation was of course much younger, emerging as an idea in late 19<sup>th</sup> century and forming materially after WWI.

Still, 10 cases exhibited citizenship disagreement the year before breakdown. This corroborates the general impression of sizeable problems of establishing citizenship agreement and a notable potential for explaining the democratic breakdowns. As regarding monopoly on violence and administrative effectiveness, path dependencies straitjacketed positive developments of nation-building although the legalistic pressure for minority protection, initiated with the Paris Peace Conference in 1918, was as large as ever. For instance, neither the series of liberal revolutions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century nor the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera or the inauguration of true democracy in 1931 could solve the centuries-old conflict between Castile Spain and Catalonia as well as the Basque Country. Alternatively, as in the imperial successor states of the Baltics, Poland, and Yugoslavia WWI and the resulting border changes served to forge a new set of territorial ethnic cleavages.

The analyses of state weaknesses above point to regional patterns that largely corroborate extant theories of state- and nation-building in medieval (e.g. Ertman 1997) and 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe and Latin America (see e.g. Rothschild 1974; Shefter 1977; Silberman 1993; Ertman 1997; Kurtz 2013). As we would expect, matters of resource supremacy and territorial penetration as well as both mutual subgroup acceptance and state legitimacy were most problematic where states were young, as in the Eastern European successor states to the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires. Broadly speaking, stateness was stronger in older states. This is not surprising given the selection of strong states via mechanisms of war and inter-state competition. Also expectedly, problems of mer-

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<sup>8</sup> Consider here, for instance, the cases of Austria and Greece which exemplify the ways that the two components developed and often conflicted with one another (see Appendix I).

itocracy and responsiveness of civil servants were all-encompassing in Latin Europe and the offsprings in Latin America. Feudalism weighed heavily on local administrations in Portugal, Spain, and Italy (and Greece in a less clear-cut fashion). This patrimonialism came to coincide with top-level politicization when they entered the era of mass politics in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. State-building in Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay, which first achieved their independence after the French Revolution and the delegitimization of feudalism, brought along weaker limits on executive power and weaker patrimonialism but more streamlined politicization of civil servants. Thus, some old states never got rid of its stateness problems because they had become embedded as the logic of how politics functioned.

One case fits less neatly into the dominating models of state- and nation-building: Germany. That citizenship agreement was problematic in Germany is congruent with the literature on late state formation and the inadequacies of imperial rule for nation-building. Yet, the development of effective state administrations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is much less accounted for in the comparative literature. Particularly, responsiveness was threatened and could sometimes be lost despite the existence of meritocracy.

Which overall lessons should we take on for the analysis of mechanisms? From Table 1, it is clear that stateness, whether in terms of monopoly on violence, administrative effectiveness, or citizenship agreement, was improving more than degenerating. However, as is evident the most dominating observation is weakness and stability of the three state aspects. The more qualitatively demanding issues of personnel control and organization in the military and the civil service were particularly hard to reform. And ethnic cleavages stuck. The most dominating observation is of multiple problems of stateness in each democracy prior to breakdown. All three aspects of state weakness - disputed monopoly on violence, administrative ineffectiveness, and citizenship disagreement - are represented by more than two-thirds of the cases. This does not primarily reflect weaknesses in territorial penetration and resource supremacy. Weaknesses are thus most frequent in the components that we expect to be the most powerful determinants of democratic breakdown. Altogether, all three state factors could be important explanations for the interwar democratic breakdowns.

Table 1, however, points to the relevance of disaggregating the stateness concept. No democracy was strong in all three aspects. Only one case achieved monopoly on violence and administrative effectiveness, respectively, while four cases achieved citizenship agreement and only Estonia achieved more than one aspect, namely monopoly on violence and citizenship agreement. Notably,

more democracies had problems with monopoly on violence and administrative effectiveness than with citizenship agreement, providing initial leverage for the two state capacity mechanisms. As for the components, it is instructive to see the ability of each aspect to predict the others: If basing the judgment on only one aspect, we are sure to judge stateness correctly in 9 of 14 cases: Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain, Greece, Yugoslavia, Italy, and Germany. The remaining 5 cases are Portugal, Estonia, Austria, Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. They exemplify the essence of a justified disaggregation since our judgement of stateness differs between each aspect of it: They are weak in or two aspects of stateness but not in the remaining. Disaggregation at the level of the aspects is therefore very much needed as a first step in classifying the democratic regimes correctly. Only disaggregation enables us to correctly assess the existence of any of the seven mechanisms and thus judge the explanatory importance of the state. As a result, we can conclude that no mechanism can be precluded as existing a priori because all three basic state weaknesses are represented. At the component level, the fact that a lack of meritocracy exists in 12 cases precludes the exclusion of the elite and mass delegitimization mechanisms.

### **The mechanisms of state weaknesses**

Table 2 lists all observed mechanisms. I now analyze the mechanisms of each aspect in turn. Lastly, I describe the overall importance of the state and the relative strength of the aspects.

[Table 2 about here]

#### **Disputed monopoly on violence**

Both mechanisms of monopoly on violence are represented among the cases: Security delegitimization can be identified in 5 cases (Italy, Portugal, Yugoslavia, Germany, and Greece) whereas authoritarian restorations are present in 8 cases (Italy, Chile, Poland, Portugal, Lithuania, Argentina, Greece, and Spain).

There is a certain temporal order regarding the authoritarian restorations in that most of these breakdowns occurred early in the interwar period (between Italy's breakdown in 1922 and Lithuania's in 1926). The period between 1922 and 1926 was in many countries one of positive economic growth, although some cases were stuck in the financial instability of the immediate postwar-years (cf. Møller, Schmotz, and Skaaning 2015: 307). Although the mechanism of authoritarian restora-

tion should be detectable in situations of economic crisis, it is among the few mechanisms which should also be detectable in non-crisis years. It is therefore notable that it is the most frequently present mechanism in the growth-years of the mid-1920s. In most of these cases, there was actually an economic crisis at the time of breakdown but economics did not alter the politics of civil-military relations in all of them. Some cases, like that of General Pilsudski's military coup d'état in Poland in May 1926, relied exclusively on a combination of civil-military and inter-military conflict over the proper organization and role of the military.

Other than the temporal clustering, a regional pattern can be seen. Besides Poland and Lithuania, authoritarian restorations were dominated by countries inside the margins of the Latin European and American countries. This is no surprise. Indeed, these countries are traditionally counted among those with a history of military coups d'état (see e.g. Pion-Berlin 1992). 19<sup>th</sup> century habits of intervening militarily whenever politics failed or produced unwanted policies were often reproduced in the interwar period as the inauguration of genuinely free, fair, and inclusive elections threatened the privileges of officer corps.

Regarding the less frequent mechanism of security delegitimization, there is no clear regional pattern (Latin, Central and Eastern European countries cluster together) and cases are quite evenly spread across the interwar period. The last point could reflect the fact that security delegitimization, more so than authoritarian restoration, takes time since anti-regime mobilization among the public usually matures over years of dissatisfaction. However, we should not make too much of this as there is really no clear temporal pattern concerning the time from transition to breakdown in the five relevant cases. The few years of democracy in Italy is one clear example of this.

It should be noted that in 3 cases (Uruguay, Latvia, and Austria), no mechanisms were found although monopoly on violence was disputed. There are no clear similarities between these three cases. In fact, they are quite different in many respects, including the specific problems of monopoly on violence. The breakdown in Austria illustrates the importance of considering every observable implication of the mechanisms with care. For instance, this applies to authoritarian restoration. The Austro-fascist regime that Chancellor Dollfuss initiated by dissolving the parliament on March 7, 1933, was supported by the army and police in its consolidation through 1933 and 1934. There is also no doubt that the regular army of Austria was a conservative body along the lines of the German *Reichswehr*. However, neither the army nor the police conspired with Dollfuss in his acts against

parliament in March 1933. To the contrary, the democratic breakdown was almost singlehandedly planned by Dollfuss. To the extent that there was an outside pressure on Dollfuss to install dictatorship, it came from the governmental ally and paramilitary group of *Heimwehr*.

That the Austrian breakdown was neither a case of authoritarian restoration nor security delegitimization shows the occasional inadequacies of the mechanisms that hinge on a disputed monopoly on violence. Overall, however, the mechanisms of monopoly on violence seem important. They apply to a varied group of countries but the temporal and regional patterns of authoritarian restorations fit fairly well with the proposition that a disputed monopoly on violence can destabilize democracies under many different economic conditions. Taken together, authoritarian restoration and security delegitimization occurred 13 times in 10 different cases.

### **Administrative ineffectiveness**

The three mechanisms stemming from administrative ineffectiveness are quite evenly and frequently present among the breakdowns: socioeconomic delegitimization in 7 cases (Chile, Poland, Portugal, Argentina, Germany, Greece, and Spain), elite bias delegitimization in 5 cases (Portugal, Yugoslavia, Uruguay, Greece, and Spain), and mass bias delegitimization in 5 as well (Italy, Yugoslavia, Argentina, Greece, and Spain).

Starting with socioeconomic delegitimization, there is neither a clear regional nor a clear temporal pattern. There are at least two cases, Argentina and Germany, which fit the classic story of the Great Depression and democratic breakdown in the 1930s, with the addition that administrative ineffectiveness drove this negative effect. Curiously, however, this only seems to concern these 2 cases of the 6 breakdowns in the immediate period after the crash on Wall Street in 1929. In this count, I tentatively include the breakdowns in Argentina, Germany, Austria, Estonia, Uruguay, and Latvia from 1931 to 1934. 3 breakdowns (Chile, Poland, and Portugal) occurred in 1925 or 1926 which are normally attributed as growth-years. This shows the importance of not restraining the examination of this mechanism to globally defined crisis-years such as during the Great Depression. We should also consider domestic economic crisis as well as, more generally, the social repercussions of crisis following years of recession.

The two similar mechanisms of elite and mass bias delegitimization shows no particular temporal ordering. Elite bias delegitimization does, however, apply exclusively to Latin countries, with the



exception of Yugoslavia. This is not surprising given Ertman's (1997) classification of Latin Europe. What is more interesting is that the problems of politicization and patrimonialism actually connected to one of the two bias mechanisms in most of the Latin democracies. Administrative ineffectiveness was not just one of the ordinary facts of life in these democracies; it seems also to have been consequential for democratic stability.

One explanation for this may be the weak civil societies of Latin countries. As an example of mass bias delegitimization, we have Italy which had a much more developed civil society than the other Latin cases (cf. Ertman 1998). But it also shows the political complexities that can arise when populists mobilize people based on a politicization of the state administration. The vibrant civil society was polarized in conservatives, which became anti-democratic (or rather oligarchic), and socialists which grew into revolutionary syndicalists.

No mechanisms of administrative ineffectiveness can explain the democratic breakdowns in the Baltics (Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia) even though all three countries experienced severe problems of administrative effectiveness. Latvian and Estonian democracies both broke down in 1934 upon years of economic crisis following the Great Depression. However, the economy in Latvia actually recovered quite effectively in 1931-1932 and there was thus no crisis stratum from which to mobilize (Rogainis 1971; Scerbinskis 2011: 188). More generally for all three countries, politics was formed along ethnic rather than socioeconomic lines. Those socioeconomic conflicts that were politicized such as agrarian reform were implemented quite effectively and to the satisfaction of most people (see e.g. Graham 1927: 277, 335). The Baltic breakdowns thus show that we should be careful in inferring directly from economic crisis to socioeconomic delegitimization or elite or mass bias delegitimization.

With this in mind, the overall impression is, however, that the mechanisms of administrative effectiveness are important. Just as those of monopoly on violence, they apply to a varied group of countries. They occurred 17 times in 10 different cases.

### **Citizenship disagreement**

The two mechanisms of citizenship agreement, citizenship violence and citizenship injustices, are present among 2 (Italy and Yugoslavia) and 7 (Italy, Poland, Lithuania, Yugoslavia, Germany, Latvia, and Spain) cases, respectively. When compared to the other mechanisms, we thus have an in-

interesting proposition. Citizenship violence seems less relevant whereas citizenship injustices fares prominently.

Given the limited explanatory importance of citizenship violence, I limit myself to commenting on citizenship injustices. Whereas there is no clear temporal pattern, it is remarkable that the cases featuring this mechanism span across successor states and old European states alike (Spain and the admittedly special cases of Italy and Germany which achieved federal union only in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century).

The mechanism of citizenship injustices thus shows no clear regional pattern as it applies to Latin, Eastern European, and Central European countries alike. We find most of the cases of citizenship injustices where democratic breakdown occurred by coup d'état. However, in particular the Latvian case illustrates well that perceived citizenship injustices can be used strategically by the incumbent to initiate a successful takeover, an 'autogolpe'. Whereas there was no real resentments between ethnic groups to build on in Estonia, Prime Minister Ulmanis in Latvia could align personal, dictatorial ambitions with a pledge for a 'Latvia for Latvians'. He could rely on a larger sense of dissatisfaction with governmental performance among the center-right and right parties as well as the security forces with the handling of regional and ethnic minority groups, particularly regarding minority protection.

Just as for monopoly on violence and administrative effectiveness, there are important inadequacies regarding the mechanisms of citizenship agreement. In light of the lesser frequency of mechanisms of citizenship agreement, these inadequacies are even more important. In 3 cases with citizenship disagreement (Chile, Austria, and Greece), neither citizenship violence nor citizenship injustices can explain breakdown. These cases are different in many regards, including the type of citizenship problem. The Greek case exemplifies how actual violence needs to be observed to probe at citizenship violence. Despite conflicts between natives and refugees in Greece, confrontations between them were rarely violent. It also shows that any antagonized actor must be ethnic and politically important to probe at citizenship injustices. The prelude to Metaxas coup d'état in 1936 was the political fight between anti-Venizelists and Venizelists. However, they mostly conflicted on the question of the proper regime: monarchy or republic. Metaxas' motivation for a coup in 1936 was a mixture of self-interest and the restoration of the monarchy. His fascist ideas of ethnic purity only developed afterwards.

Summing up on the importance of citizenship disagreement for the interwar democratic breakdowns, the mechanisms applied to a varied group of countries, 9 times in 7 different cases. Based on the observable implications of the theories of citizenship disagreement and democratic breakdown, we must thus maintain its general importance but we have reason to think of injustices related to the distribution of goods between ethnic groups rather than interethnic violence when explaining democratic breakdowns with citizenship problems.

### Overall and relative strengths

Based on the analyses of mechanisms pertaining to the three aspects, we have strong indications that they were all important in explaining the interwar democratic breakdowns. Table 2 shows 39 observed mechanisms from a total of 14 cases and 98 potential mechanisms. This means that there are on average slightly more than 3 state-related explanations for each interwar democratic breakdown. The next question is whether the diversity of state weaknesses and state strengths amounts to different explanatory strengths of each aspect of the state. This would increase the relevance of disaggregation. The first impression is that no such large differences are observable. 9 mechanisms stemming from citizenship disagreement are present regarding 7 cases. This makes citizenship agreement comparatively least important. Disputed monopoly on violence and administrative ineffectiveness are present via 13 (10 cases) and 17 (10 cases) mechanisms, respectively. Thus, if anything, administrative ineffectiveness was the most important destabilizing stateness condition in the interwar democracies. Nevertheless, this obviously far from precludes the importance of either monopoly on violence and citizenship agreement in any future analysis.

To back this up even further, there is a very varied influence of stateness on interwar democratic breakdowns (see the far right column in Table 2). Noting, importantly, that Estonia and Austria cannot be explained by any of the seven mechanisms, there are typically multiple mechanisms present in each case. In only two cases (Latvia and Uruguay) did exactly one mechanism contribute to democratic breakdown while cases such as Yugoslavia, Spain, Italy, and Greece can be explained by 5 of 7 possible mechanisms. This strongly indicates the explanatory relevance of a multiplicity of state weaknesses.

The correlation between the number of state weaknesses and number of mechanisms present across the cases is not particularly close. But it is still notable that Yugoslavia, Italy, and Greece were also among those cases where state weaknesses were all-encompassing and among the cases where democracy was typically regarded as particularly vulnerable. Again, this supports the general validity of the mechanisms.

There are thus important counter arguments to disaggregation. However, we should take the explanatory differences between the aspects seriously. Moreover, since no case was fully weak or fully strong in all of the three stateness aspects and the stateness aspects were rarely all relevant in the same cases, we would not only arrive at imprecise predictions of the general effect of stateness but also infer plainly wrong single-case explanations of stateness in a substantial number of cases. For instance, if measuring stateness solely by citizenship agreement for Portugal, we would wrongly exclude the possibility of any destabilizing effect of stateness and thus miss the actual importance of no less than four mechanisms. If basing the measurement on monopoly on violence or administrative effectiveness, other scholars could wrongly interpret any effects as pertaining to citizenship agreement. Against this backdrop, it seems justified to conclude that a disaggregated measurement of stateness is fruitful. It leads to a more complex but also more correct understanding of the state-democracy nexus in the interwar period.

### **State probably needed, disaggregation wanted**

In explaining the interwar democratic breakdowns indicates that it may indeed be meaningful to speak in general terms of a state-democracy nexus. However, this paper's analysis has specified this in several important respects. First, the state-democracy nexus is general because the state's various influences on democratic stability are unified by the causal forces of containment and crisis management. Second, the nexus is in fact much more rich in detail and varied in explanatory power. At least three aspects – monopoly on violence, administrative effectiveness, and citizenship agreement – seem highly relevant but in different contexts and to different degrees. If we had not appreciated the differences between these aspects, we would have arrived at imprecise and, in some cases, outright false descriptive and explanatory inferences. In this way, we may conclude that the state is probably needed in explanatory models of democratic stability but disaggregation of the state is surely wanted to achieve more correct inferences.

The interwar analysis also shows the importance of analyzing mechanisms separately and refraining from inference based exclusively on correlational patterns. Indeed, some cases suffered from all-encompassing state weaknesses which, however, only resulted in one or two of the destabilizing mechanisms. Thus, examining the ‘who, how, and why’ of the state-democracy nexus is not just a matter of achieving deeper understanding of the causal propositions of the nexus. It is also necessary to get the correct understanding of it. This warrants as many analyses of the state mechanisms as there are democratic breakdowns, thus going beyond the interwar period.

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FIGURE 1, AUTHORITARIAN RESTORATION

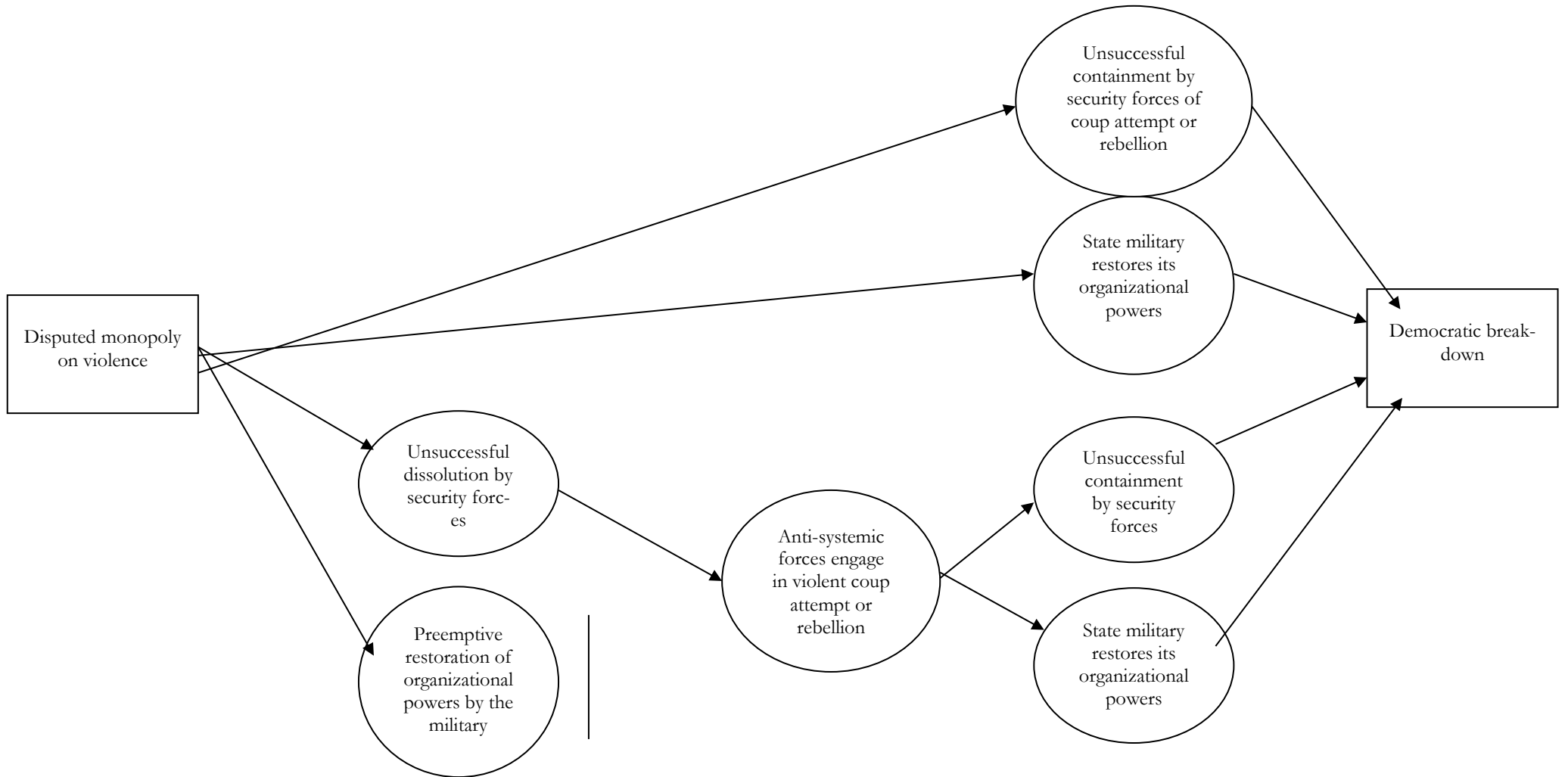


FIGURE 2, SECURITY DELEGITIMIZATION

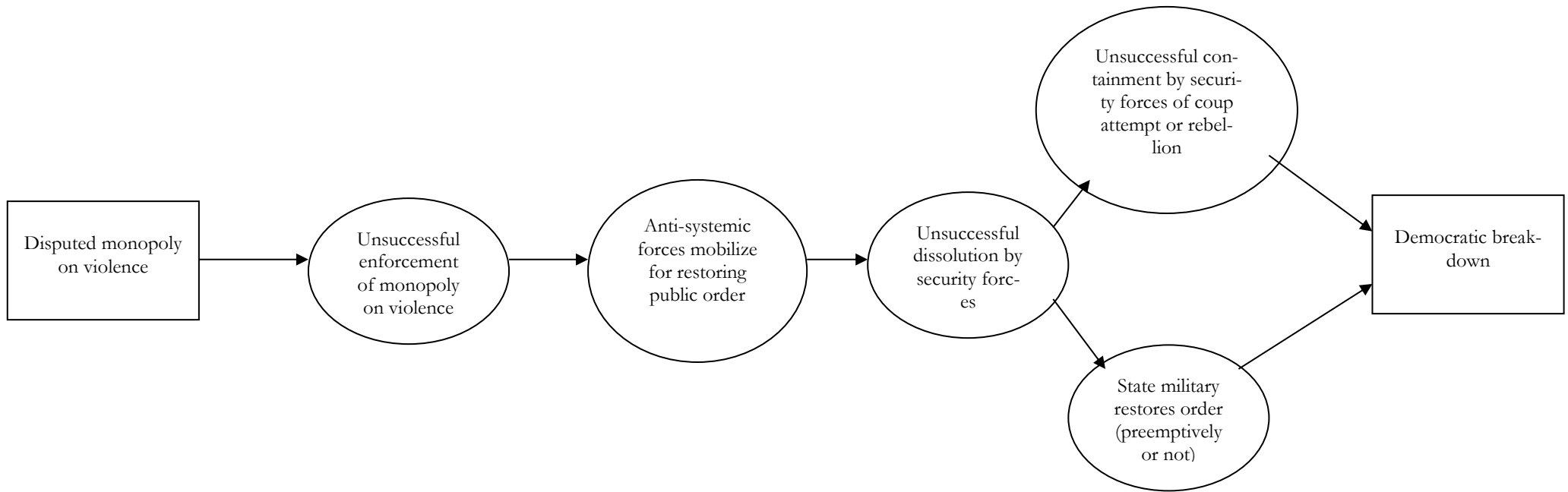


FIGURE 3, SOCIOECONOMIC DELEGITIMIZATION

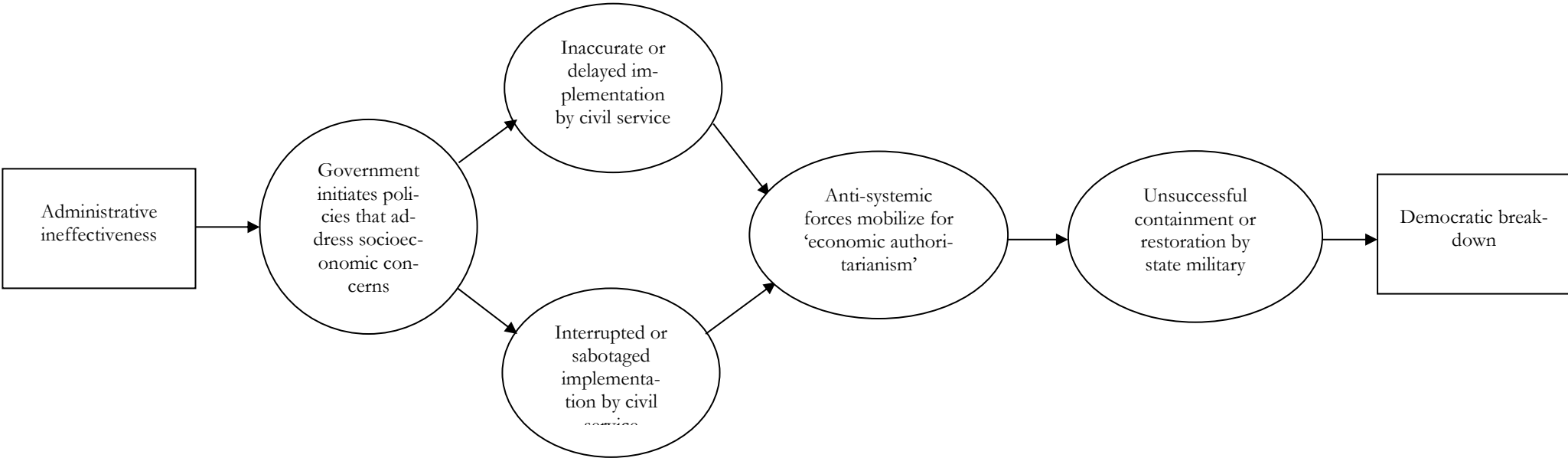


FIGURE 4, ELITE BIAS DELEGITIMIZATION

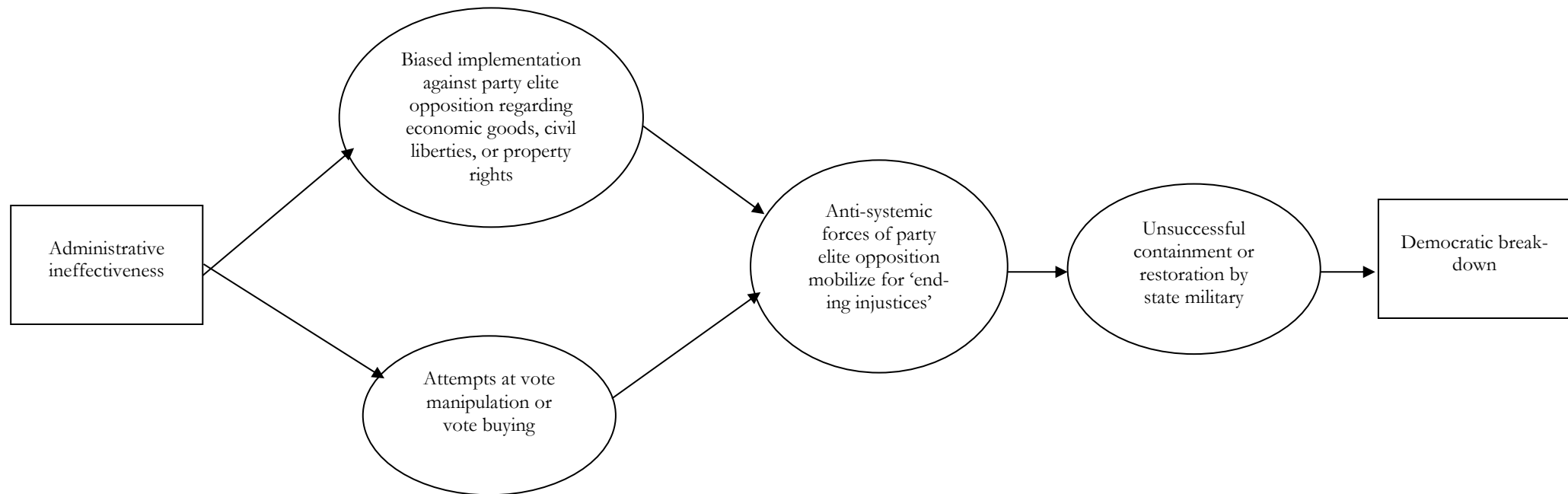


FIGURE 5, MASS BIAS DELEGITIMIZATION

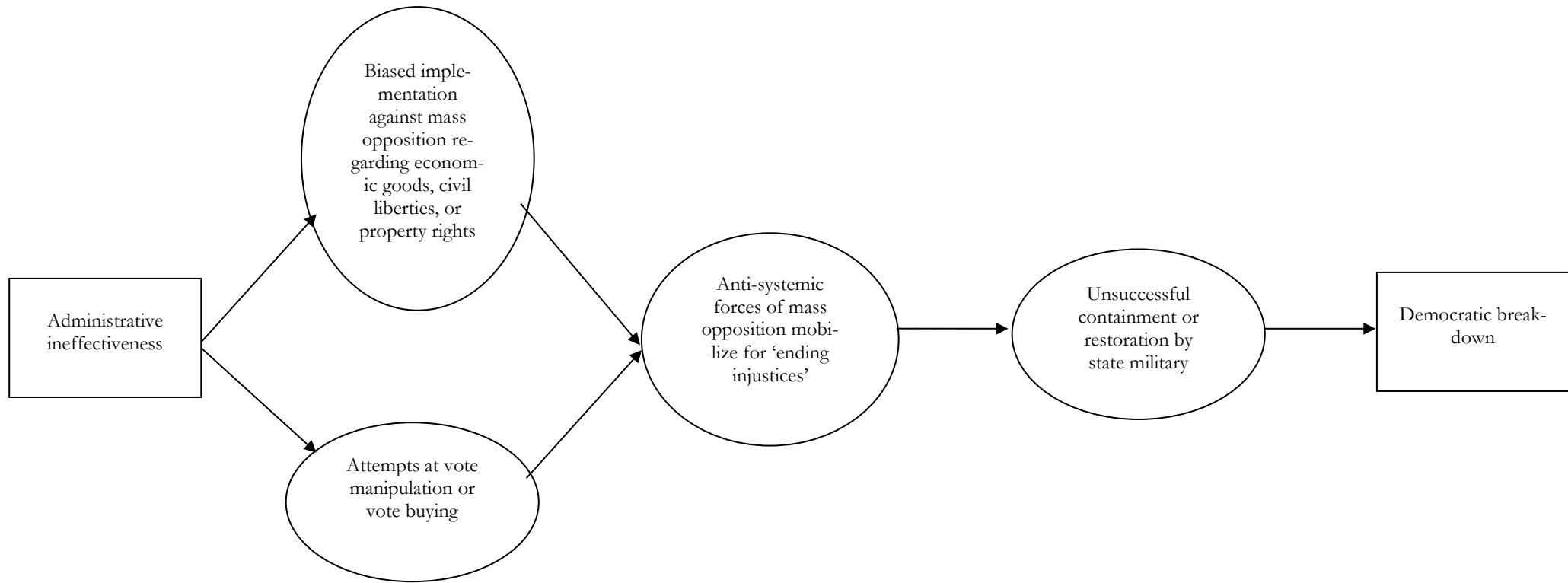


FIGURE 6, CITIZENSHIP VIOLENCE



FIGURE 7, CITIZENSHIP INJUSTICES

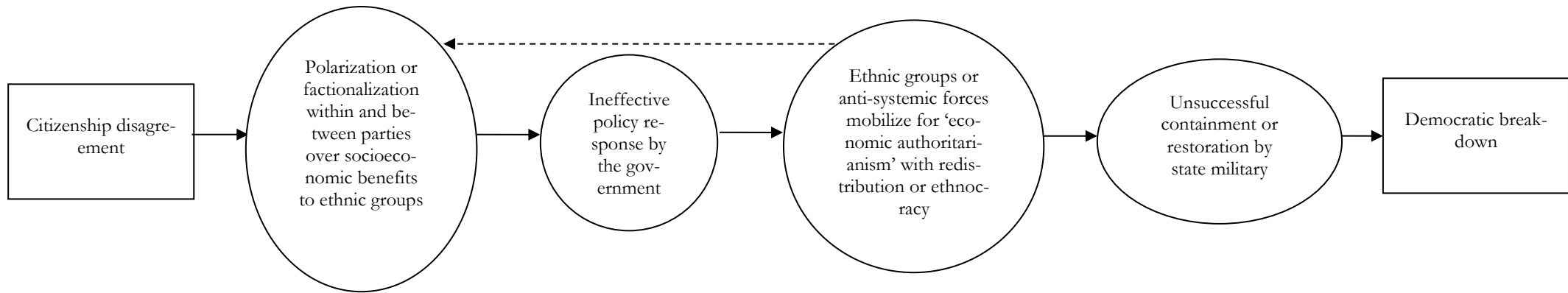




TABLE 1, INTERWAR STATE WEAKNESSES IN THE YEAR BEFORE THE DEMOCRATIC BREAKDOWNS

Case (spell)	Monopoly on violence			Administrative effectiveness			Citizenship agreement	
	Resource supremacy	Cohesion	Subordina-tion	Territorial pene-tration	Meritocracy	Responsive-ness	Mutual subgroup acceptance	State legitimacy
Italy (1919-1922)				x				
Chile (1918-1925)	x			x				
Poland (1918-1926)	x							
Portugal (1918-1926)	x			x			x	x
Lithuania (1920-1926)								
Yugoslavia (1921-1929)				x				
Argentina (1918-1931)	x						x	x
Germany (1919-1933)	x	x		x	x			
Austria (1920-1933)		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Estonia (1919-1934)	x	x	x	x			x	x
Uruguay (1919-1934)	x			x			x	x
Latvia (1920-1934)	x	x		x				
Greece (1926-1936)	x			x				x
Spain (1931-1937)				x				
<i>Number of cases with component</i>	9	4	2	11	2	1	5	5
<i>Number of cases with aspect</i>	1			1			4	

TABLE 2, MECHANISMS CONNECTING INTERWAR STATE WEAKNESSES WITH DEMOCRATIC BREAKDOWN

Case (breakdown year)	Disputed monopoly on violence		Administrative ineffectiveness			Citizenship disagreement		Number of mechanisms in case
	Authoritarian restoration	Security delegitimization	Socio-economic delegitimization	Elite bias delegitimization	Mass bias delegitimization	Citizenship violence	Citizenship injustices	
Italy (1922)	x	x			x	x	x	5
Chile (1925)	x		x					2
Poland (1926)	x		x				x	3
Portugal (1926)	x	x	x	x				4
Lithuania (1926)	x						x	2
Yugoslavia (1929)		x		x	x	x	x	5
Argentina (1931)	x		x		x			3
Germany (1933)		x	x				x	3
Austria (1933)								0
Estonia (1934)								0
Uruguay (1934)				x				1
Latvia (1934)							x	1
Greece (1936)	x	x	x	x	x			5
Spain (1937)	x		x	x	x		x	5
<i>Number of cases with mechanism</i>	8	5	7	5	5	2	7	
<i>Mechanisms by aspect</i>	13		17			9		
<i>Cases with mechanism by aspect</i>	10		10			7		