



**DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND BREAKDOWN  
IN EUROPE, 1870-1939:  
A TEST OF THE MOORE THESIS**

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## ABSTRACT

Barrington Moore's Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy is widely regarded as a contemporary classic, yet there have been few attempts to evaluate the validity of his argument on a large number of comparable cases. This article makes such an attempt on the universe of Western European cases which experienced some period of democratic rule between 1870 and 1939. It seeks (1) to explain what structural and historical features distinguish the breakdown cases from those countries which remained democratic, and (2) to trace the process of class coalition formation in the transition to democracy and the subsequent breakdown with these structural and historical features as a background. It argues that Moore's thesis does fit with some modification. All four breakdown cases were characterized by an authoritarian coalition of labor-repressive landlords, the state, and a politically dependent bourgeoisie. These groups did, in some way or another, come together to end democratic rule in the twenties and thirties. Moreover, in every case, large landholders did retain significant power into the modern era, which Moore argues is crucial for the path to dictatorship. In contrast, this was true in none of the democratic survivors. This difference can, in turn, be traced to the difference in landholding patterns in the previous century. However, in contrast to Moore's characterization of the conservative authoritarian path, the ruling coalition in the breakdown cases other than the German did not play the *modernizing* role that it played in the German case.

## RESUMEN

Los orígenes sociales de la Dictadura y la Democracia de Barrington Moore está ampliamente considerado como un clásico contemporáneo, y sin embargo ha habido muy pocos intentos de evaluar la validez de sus argumentos aplicándolos a un gran número de casos comparables. Este artículo realiza tal intento en el universo de casos europeo-occidentales, los cuales experimentaron cierto período de gobierno democrático entre 1870 y 1939. Se pretende (1) explicar qué características estructurales e históricas distinguen los casos de países en que se da un fracaso de aquéllos que continúan siendo democráticos, y (2) trazar el proceso de formación de coaliciones de clases en la transición a la democracia y el fracaso subsiguiente, partiendo de estas características estructurales e históricas como base. Se arguye que la tesis de Moore es correcta, aunque con ciertas modificaciones. Los cuatro casos de fracaso se caracterizaron por una coalición autoritaria entre el estado, una burguesía políticamente dependiente, y terratenientes cuya relación con su campesinado era pre-capitalista. Estos grupos, de una manera u otra, en los años '20 y '30, convergieron en acabar con el gobierno democrático. Además, en cada caso, los grandes terratenientes retuvieron un poder significativo en la era moderna, lo cual según Moore es crucial en el camino hacia la dictadura. En cambio, no ocurre así en ninguno de los casos de los países que sobrevivieron como democracias. Esta diferencia, a su vez, puede remontarse a modalidades distintas de propiedad de la tierra durante el siglo pasado. Sin embargo, sólo en el caso alemán la coalición autoritaria-conservadora jugó el rol modernizante que Moore le atribuye; en los otros casos de quiebra de la democracia, ésto no sucedió.



### Introduction

Without a doubt Barrington Moore's Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy has become a contemporary classic and is one of the most widely read and cited books in social science. Yet there have been only a few studies which attempt to apply his arguments to other cases and these have been limited to case studies or the comparison of a very small number of cases. What has been absent in the discussion of Moore's work has been any attempt to test the validity of his conclusions on the social origins of various political regimes on a large number of comparable cases to provide a "test" of the thesis, to use the language of multivariate data analysis.

My purpose here is to provide such a "test," or better said, a further specification of Moore's thesis on the social origins of democracy and modern authoritarianism, limiting the analysis to the historical development of democracy and the collapse of democratic regimes in Western Europe in the period between the end of the Franco-Prussian War and the outbreak of World War II. I will extend the Moore thesis in three ways. First, he limits himself not only to the larger countries but even among those to three cases in Western Europe (Germany, France, and England), whereas my analysis will include all countries in Western Europe which experienced some period of democratic rule, defined as the existence of universal male<sup>1</sup> suffrage, cabinet responsibility to parliament (or a president elected by universal franchise), and the prevention of voter intimidation (e.g., freedom of organization, secret ballot, etc.). Moore excludes Italy and Spain entirely for reasons of economy but at several points indicates that his analysis of fascism fits these cases with some modification. As to the small countries, he argues that the "decisive causes of their politics lie outside their own boundaries" (Moore 1966: xiii). By contrast, Rokkan (1970) and Katzenstein (1985) contend that not only is this an exaggeration but also that the small Western European countries have special characteristics which make them an essential point of comparison in the study of the political dynamics of all of the countries in the region. Ripit

Second, Moore ends his discussion with the events of the mid-nineteenth century, well before democracy was introduced anywhere in Europe. Here the focus will be on the events of the following three quarters of a century, the events which Moore ultimately claims to explain. Third, I will also consider some alternative explanations of the social conditions leading to democracy proposed by Lipset (1960), Therborn (1977) and Rueschemeyer (1980).

### The Moore Thesis

In The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, Barrington Moore attempts to:

...explain the varied political roles played by the landed upper classes and the peasantry in the transformation from agrarian societies . . . to modern industrial ones. Somewhat more specifically, it is an attempt to discover the range of historical

<sup>1</sup> I use male suffrage as the critical transition point as it best signifies the point at which the democratic rights of the masses become (or come to be seen as) a threat to the upper classes, as it became possible to put together an electoral majority of dispossessed classes. Initially, female suffrage actually had a conservatizing effect in many cases. See Therborn (1977) on the relationship between the introduction of female and male suffrage.

conditions under which either or both of these rural groups have become important forces behind the emergence of Western parliamentary versions of democracy, and dictatorships of the right or the left, that is, fascist and communist regimes (Moore, 1966: viii).

On the basis of historical case studies of six countries (England, France, the United States, Japan, India, and China) and extensive research on two more (Germany and Russia), Moore identifies three distinct sets of conditions which contribute to the development of communism, fascism or parliamentary democracy. *or underdevelopment (India)*

The condition for the development of a peasant revolution leading to communism is the existence of a weak bourgeoisie, a highly centralized state, and high peasant revolutionary potential, due to increased traditional forms of exploitation in non-commercialized agriculture, the existence of solidaristic peasant communities, and weak ties to the (often absentee) landlords. This path will not concern us here since communism did not develop in any of the cases covered in this study.

In clarifying Moore's theoretical argument on the contrasting paths to modern capitalist dictatorship and capitalist democracy, it is useful to treat democracy as a residual case, as Skocpol (1973) does in her review of the work. That is, there are multiple paths to democracy and a country will develop in that direction if it lacks any of the essential characteristics leading to authoritarianism. The critical condition for the development of fascism is the development of a coalition of large landholders, the crown (the monarch, bureaucracy and military, i.e., the state) and a politically dependent bourgeoisie of medium strength. The following factors lead to the development of this coalition:

- (1) The landed upper classes must be strong or, more precisely, they must be the politically dominant force into the modern era (i.e. late nineteenth century) and must retain a significant amount of that power in a "democratic interlude".
- (2) The maintenance of peasant agriculture under landlords oriented to the market but employing political rather than market control of labor - labor-repressive agriculture, as Moore calls it - into the modern era is a second essential feature of the path to fascism.<sup>2</sup> The method of labor control leads the landlords to seek an alliance with those in control of the means of coercion, the state, and it accounts for the strong antidemocratic impulse of the aristocracy (Moore 1966: 435).
- (3) The country has to have experienced sufficient industrialization that the bourgeoisie is a politically significant actor, but it cannot be more politically powerful than the landed classes. Skocpol (1973) points to the difficulty involved in measuring the strength of "bourgeois impulses", but formulating it as I have here, which admittedly takes some license with Moore's work, this is less problematic.
- (4) The bourgeoisie is kept in a politically dependent position as industrialization is

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<sup>2</sup> Moore implies that labor-repressive methods of labor control are very likely in cases where large landlords oriented to the market have a need for a large agrarian labor force. It should be underlined that while slavery and serfdom are the most obvious examples of labor-repressive methods, legal binding of labor to the land or the master is not a necessary feature of labor-repressive agriculture. The postbellum US South is an excellent example of a system that, while certainly labor repressive, did not employ such features.

aided, and to some extent directed, by the state through protection, state credits to industrialists, state development of infrastructure, promotion of modern skills, and even state development of enterprises later handed over to private entrepreneurs. This is the core element of "revolution from above" and it could only occur after English development demonstrated the possibility of capitalist industrialization. Militarism and thus armaments production seals the bourgeoisie into the state-landlord dominated coalition and its reactionary and imperialistic politics.

(5) Skocpol (1973) takes Moore to task on a number of points, among them, his neglect of state strength/capacity as a variable. In truth, Moore alludes at a number of times to this factor (see especially pp. 439-441, 444). A state with a sufficient capacity to repress peasant (and worker) protest, something absent in England, due to, among other things, the reliance on the Navy for defense, is an essential element of the authoritarian class coalition. The dependence of the bourgeoisie on the state in the German case was conditioned by the top down nature of industrialization, which was made possible by the existence of a strong bureaucratic state. However, Skocpol's view and Moore's are not identical: in particular, in his brief discussion of the post-Napoleonic period of reaction in England, Moore indicates that the development of sufficient repressive capacity would not have been a difficulty; the crucial feature of the English case was the interests of the landed upper class (i.e. no need to repress the peasants) not the capacity of the state, a view clearly not shared by Skocpol (see also Skocpol 1979).

(6) Finally there must be no revolutionary break from the past. Thus, peasant revolutionary potential must be low (for the obverse reasons pointed to in the case of peasant revolution) or else the whole process, in particular the power of the landlords, would have been broken at an earlier point in history.

It should be noted here that while the coalition of the state, labor-repressive landlords, and a dependent bourgeoisie seems to be an essential feature of the authoritarian path, the six factors listed above may simply contribute to the outcome, that is, may make it more probable, without being completely essential. In developing this list of factors, I have focused on the elements which come closest to being necessary conditions; other contributing conditions could have been added. For instance, initially in the synthetic chapters, Moore (p. 417) argues that the persistence of royal absolutism into modern times is a feature of the non-democratic paths, but he later indicates that it is only a contributing feature, recognizing that Italy was constitutional monarchy. One might add that Spain was also and, on the other hand, Sweden and Denmark, like Germany, were ruled by limited absolutist governments in which the King could appoint his cabinet without reference to the composition of parliament. Nevertheless, it is probably accurate to say that the persistence of royal absolutism in Germany and Austria did contribute to the authoritarian outcome in those countries.

Two final points on Moore's argument involve the problematic characterization of the end state as "fascism" and the path followed from traditional pre-democratic authoritarian regimes ruled by Moore's authoritarian coalition to the interwar fascist regimes. In his synthetic chapter on fascism, Moore's treatment of this period is extremely brief and it is based largely on the German case. His argument follows: Fascism required mass mobilization. What developed initially was not fascism, but royal authoritarianism in which there was some mobilization but most of it against the regime, not by it. In this period, the landed class did successfully promote its authoritarian ideology among the peasantry. This royal authoritarianism was broken by war; democracy was not an internal development.

The landed upper class retained a substantial amount of power in this democratic interlude, not only in the countryside but also in the bureaucracy, judiciary, and the army (i.e. in the state). It allied with fascism, which was based in the urban middle class and the peasantry, who felt themselves squeezed between labor and capital and who were open to the extreme nationalist and authoritarian ideology in part due to the previous propaganda efforts of the landed upper class.

Now, if one were to suggest that a country had to fit this description for Moore's thesis to be correct, only Germany would really support his argument. Moreover, labeling the end state "fascism" eliminates Spain and Austria as these countries cannot be considered fascist according to Moore's definition or according to that of Linz (1975), the leading authority on typologies of authoritarian regimes. I suggest a less strict and I think more useful test of Moore's thesis. Does the existence of certain preindustrial agrarian class relations (labor-repressive agriculture) in general and more specifically the presence of the state-landlord-dependent bourgeoisie coalition distinguish the countries which succumbed to modern capitalist authoritarianism (fascist or otherwise) in the interwar period from those where democracy survived? Can difficulties in the initial transition to democracy and the events leading to the subsequent breakdown be traced to the pattern of class-state relations identified by Moore?

#### Other Theories of the Development of Democracy

In his classic statement of the modernization perspective on the development of democracy, Lipset (1960) argued that there is a strong relationship between socio-economic development and democracy, supporting his assertions by presenting some simple correlations between various indicators of development and democracy. Lipset argued that industrialization leads to increased wealth, education, communications, and equality which, in turn, are associated with a more moderate lower and upper class and a larger middle class (which is by its nature moderate); and this in turn increased the probability of democratic politics. Subsequent, considerably more elaborate, crossnational statistical studies all confirmed that there was a strong relationship between socio-economic development and democracy (e.g. see Bollen 1979, 1983; Bollen and Jackman 1985a, 1985b).

Generally, the results of these cross-national studies have been sharply divergent from those produced by comparative historical studies, such as those of Moore and O'Donnell (1973, 1978).<sup>3</sup> Rueschemeyer (1980) argues in his overview and analysis of this controversy that the results of crossnational studies, which invariably show a moderately strong relationship between development and democracy, are too persistent to be ignored. However, he provides an alternative explanation of the statistical results drawing on the frame of reference of the comparative historical studies: that is, briefly, that industrial capitalism creates conditions which facilitate the organization of the working class and the middle strata, making it much more difficult for elites to politically exclude these groups. Here Rueschemeyer finds some common ground with the more classically Marxist analysis of Therborn (1977). In his comparative study of the historical transition to democracy in the advanced capitalist world he emphasizes the role of the working class as represented by working class parties and unions.

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<sup>3</sup> The Gerschenkron-O'Donnell-Kurth perspective argues that the timing of industrial phases in relation to the development of the world economy is highly consequential for the development of democracy. This work is dealt with in the conclusion as a complement to the Moore perspective.



Strong correlation between land holding patterns & survival of democracy in inter-war period.

### The Transition to Democracy

In 1870, no country in Europe was democratic by the criteria laid out above. By 1920, the overwhelming majority were. Two decades later democratic rule had been eclipsed in a number of these countries. My purpose here is to explain the processes which brought democracy to these countries and to explain what separated the democratic survivors from the cases of breakdown in the interwar period. Moore argues that those which opted for authoritarianism were those in which there was a strong coalition of the state, large landholders engaged in labor-repressive agriculture, and a medium developed but dependent bourgeoisie. His analysis focuses heavily on the type of agricultural arrangements and labor force control adopted by the landed aristocracy. Had Moore included the smaller European countries, his focus would certainly have begun with the pattern of concentration of landholding itself. In all of the small countries, there were too few large estates to support the development of a politically significant class of landholders. This one factor prevents the development of the class coalition which Moore argues is fatal for democracy. And in fact, the correlation between landholding patterns and the survival or breakdown of democracy in the interwar period as shown in Figure 1 indicates that this one factor provides a powerful explanation for the survival or demise of democracy.<sup>4</sup> It is not, of course, the landholding pattern per se that is important but rather the class configuration it gives rise to. Moreover, large landholding may not be "dominant" in a statistical sense. In Germany, the West and South, a majority of the country in land area, was dominated by small farming, as was the North of Italy (except for the Po Valley). The critical factor here is the existence of a sufficient number of large estates to give rise to the formation of a politically powerful landed elite. — Defined how?

interest

(A few points on the landholding patterns indicated in Figure 1 are in order before we proceed. Historically, France was also large-holding, but the revolution broke the pattern, and by the late nineteenth century the French countryside was dominated by small peasants. Thus, the revolutionary break from the past which Moore hypothesizes as a necessary feature for democratic development was essential in the French case. However, as Katzenstein (1985) points out, most of the small states in Europe did not experience a revolutionary break and nonetheless developed in a democratic direction. Again, Moore's analysis is flawed by the exclusion of the small states. The virtually perfect correlation between country size and landholding pattern is no accident. As Tilly (1975: 40-44) points out, military success was one factor which distinguished the successful state builders from the unsuccessful ones and success in war was greatly facilitated by "strong coalitions between the central power and major segments of the landed elite". The small states only avoided being gobbled up by reason of geography (Scandinavia), the operation of the interstate system from the Treaty of Westphalia onwards,<sup>5</sup> or both (Switzerland).)

terms are badly defined.

crucial

The British case stands out as a deviant case in terms of landholding, and resort to Moore's emphasis on the type of commercialized agriculture as an explanatory factor is necessary to bring this case into line. And indeed it is also accurate to classify the three authoritarian

<sup>4</sup> The classification of landholdings in figure 1 is based on Doving (1960), the single most comprehensive compilation of data on landholding at the turn of the century, and the country studies consulted for the analysis of the cases.

<sup>5</sup> The Congress of Vienna and subsequent power balance politics was especially important for the preservation of Belgium and the Netherlands.

cases not discussed by Moore (Italy, Spain, and Austria-Hungary) as cases of dominance of "labor-repressive" agriculture. Still, while the correlation presented here is suggestive of the causes of breakdown, we must examine the individual cases to uncover what social forces actually brought in democracy and what forces and dynamics appear to explain the relationship between landed class strength and breakdown.

By the eve of World War I, Switzerland (1880s), Norway (1898), and France (1880s or 1913 for the secret ballot reform) had become democratic, and a year later Denmark joined this group.<sup>6</sup> These are all nations of smallholders, urban petty bourgeoisie, and with a significant though not nearly dominant industrial sector (and therefore significant working and capitalist classes) at the time of democratization. In Switzerland, democracy was achieved by pressure from small farmers and the urban petty bourgeoisie. In the other countries, the working class organized in unions and political parties played some role in drive for democracy. In the case of Norway, the working class contributed to the final push for universal suffrage (embodied in various laws passed between 1898 and 1913), though earlier suffrage extensions were largely the work of the peasantry with the help of sections of the urban middle class (Rokkan 1966, Derry 1973). In Denmark, the working class/small and medium farmer/urban middle segments coalition as represented by the Social Democratic-Venstre coalition pressed through the 1901 introduction of parliamentary government. The driving force behind the 1915 introduction of universal suffrage were the Social Democrats and the Radikale Venstre, representing the working class, small farmers, and segments of the middle class (Miller 1968, Dybahl 1969). It is important to note here that in Denmark and Norway (as well as Sweden), the medium farmers were ambivalent about the final suffrage extensions which resulted in the inclusion of large minorities of working class voters not previously included, and it was among the segments of urban middle classes and the small farmers and tenants that labor found its ally. So an interpretation of the effect of landholding patterns as being mediated simply by the authoritarian posture of large landlords and democratic posture of smallholders is inaccurate. At the same time, it is important to note that the peasantry was divided and even the medium and larger farmers, though not supportive of the final push to universal suffrage, generally contributed to the process of democratization by supporting earlier suffrage extensions.

In the rest of Europe, but particularly among the antagonists in World War I, the social dislocations caused by the war contributed to the breakthrough of democracy. The war and its outcome changed the balance of power in society, strengthening the working class and weakening the upper classes. The ruling class was discredited, particularly in the defeated countries. Labor support was necessary, at home for the production effort, on the front for the first mass mobilization, mass conscription war of this scale and duration. And, finally, the war economy and mass conscription strengthened the hand of labor in the economy, enabling it to extract concessions for the coming period of peace. One indicator of the change in class power was the swell in labor organization from an average prewar level of 9% of the labor force to a post war peak of 30% in the antagonists, which experienced the transition to democracy in this period (1918 or 1919). Organization more than doubled in

<sup>6</sup> These dates are taken from Therborn (1977) and Hewitt (1977), but adjusted in some cases based on the sources mentioned in the discussions of the individual countries in the text. It should be noted, however, that the following discussion of the transition to democracy is based not only on the final reform establishing democracy as we have defined it but also on previous steps which resulted in suffrage extension to the majority of the working class and/or the establishment of cabinet responsibility to parliament (e.g. the 1884 suffrage extension in Britain or 1901 establishment of parliamentary government in Denmark).

the two nonparticipants (Sweden and the Netherlands) which experienced the same transition at this time (Stephens 1979: 115). In all these countries the working class played a key, if not the key, role in the transition to democracy. But, as Therborn (1977) notes, the working class was not strong enough alone. It needed allies or unusual conjunctures of events to effect the introduction of democracy. As an indicator of this it could be pointed out that in no case did the working class parties receive electoral majorities even after the introduction of universal suffrage.

↳ In England, Sweden, Belgium, and the Netherlands, it can be argued that the war only accelerated the introduction of democracy. In each country, the prodemocratic coalition, at the party level and the underlying alignment of social forces, had formed or was in the process of formation. In most cases, the coalition had been responsible for previous suffrage extension, such as the 1907 reform in Sweden or the 1893 reform in Belgium. ↘

In Sweden and Belgium, there were no agrarian elites for the socialists to worry about. In Sweden, as in Norway and Denmark, the peasantry was split on the question of universal suffrage. It was the Liberals; who were based in the urban middle classes, dissenting religions and in small farmers in the North and West; who joined the Social Democrats in the push for suffrage extension. The war stimulated the Conservative capitulation in Sweden and an interparty compromise, implemented in 1917, had followed several decades of political pressure (through strikes, demonstrations, parliamentary obstruction) by the social democrats and the trade unions in cooperation with segments of the middle class.<sup>7</sup> In Belgium, the Workers' Party, after decades of struggle including six general strikes, found support in the social Christian wing of the Catholic party, which was based among working class Catholics (Fitzmaurice 1983, Lorwin 1966, Therborn 1977: 12, 25). In the Netherlands, similar divisions in the religious parties produced alliance possibilities for the Labor Party.

The British case is so singular in so many ways, both in terms of the antecedents of democracy and the process of democratization, that it is virtually impossible to decide which factor(s) was the most important on the basis of comparative analysis. Was it the absence of labor-repressive agriculture, the absence of a bureaucratic state and standing army, the independence of the bourgeoisie due to the country's status as an early industrializer, or something else entirely that separates Britain from Germany and the other authoritarian cases? At any rate the "peculiarities of English history" meant that segments of the British upper classes had settled into a pattern of peaceful political competition by the mid-nineteenth century and this competition extended to competition for working class votes which resulted in the suffrage extensions of 1867 and 1884.

My comparative analysis of the transition to democracy reveals that in Britain this process in itself is a peculiarity. In no other case did middle class based (and largely upper class led) parties unilaterally extend effective suffrage to substantial sections of the working class (except where suffrage was irrelevant for the actual governing of the country due to the lack of parliamentary government as in Germany, or due to electoral corruption as in Spain and Italy). At best, some sections of the middle classes allied with the working class parties for such suffrage extensions. All cases where the working class was politically included without substantial pressure from the politically organized working class itself (Switzerland and to a lesser extent Norway and France) were essentially agrarian democracies in which democracy was established by a peasant/urban middle class coalition

<sup>7</sup> On Sweden, see Rustow (1955), Verney (1957), Hadenius et al. (1970), Castles (1973), Tilton (1974). Tilton and Castles both explicitly apply the Moore thesis to the Swedish case.

before the working class had become a significant political actor.

This peculiarity in the process of transition is part of the explanation of the singularity in the process itself. The Liberals and the Tories were only willing to extend the right to vote to workers because they hoped to benefit from the votes of the newly enfranchised workers. Had a substantial Labour Party already commanded the loyalty of workers, the established parties would have certainly been reluctant to make such a move. All this is not to indicate that the organized working class played a passive role in this whole process. The reform of 1918, which established male suffrage and eliminated all but minor provisions for multiple voting, was the result of Labour-Liberal cooperation.

This survey leaves us with our breakdown countries<sup>8</sup> as cases where the war may have influenced more than the timing of the introduction of democracy. But before moving on to them, let us take stock of what can be learned from the development of democracy in Europe as I have outlined it. One obvious lesson, stressed by Therborn (1977), is the important role played by the working class, that is, by its organizational representatives, the trade unions and the socialist parties. The rapid development of industrial capitalism in the latter half of the last century stimulated the working class organization which first gradually, and then with the war and its outcome, decisively changed the balance of class power in these countries; indeed, it changed the balance of class power in the entire core of the world capitalist system. The organized working class was also the most consistently prodemocratic force in the period under consideration: by the eve of World War I, European labor movements, all members of the Second International, had converged on an ideology which placed the achievement of universal suffrage and parliamentary government at the center of their immediate program (Zolberg 1986).

↳ This interpretation turns Lipset (1960) and all the crossnational studies which followed on their head; the working class, not the "educated, literate, moderate, growing middle class" was the driving force behind democracy. But it also turns Barrington Moore on his head, who agrees with "the Marxists" on one point: "No bourgeoisie, no democracy" (Moore, 1966: 418). "No working class, no democracy", though overstated, would be closer to reality.

However, Therborn's (1977) focus on the last reforms in the process of democratization leads to an exaggeration of the role of the working class. First, in the three agrarian democracy cases (Switzerland, France, and Norway), the role of the working class was secondary or non-existent even in the final push to democracy. Second, in other cases, not only did the working class need allies in the final push, earlier democratic reforms were passed by similar alliances as the final push (Denmark, Sweden, and Belgium) or the working class organizations played little or no role in these early extensions, which did enfranchise substantial sections of the working class (Britain and Norway).

But, as will become apparent in my analysis of the authoritarian cases, none of these other social classes played as consistent a prodemocratic role as the working class.<sup>9</sup> Both the

<sup>8</sup> And, in addition, Finland, see below.

<sup>9</sup> In the interwar period this generalization about the working class is harder to sustain, since the splits in the working class induced by the war and the Russian Revolution created anti-democratic minorities, above all the Communist Parties, whose political posture clearly contributed to the breakdown of democracy. Moreover, as Linz (1978) points out, the radical posturing of maximalist socialists frightened the middle classes, which

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bourgeoisie can not play a positive role in push to democracy.

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urban middle class and/or segments of the peasantry provided the mass base for authoritarianism in these cases. The bourgeoisie whose role in the introduction of democracy has been emphasized in so many accounts, from marxist to liberal, played a positive role in only one case and in all of the others was one of the centers of resistance to working class political incorporation. It did make an indirect contribution to the outcome, however. In the cases discussed so far, the bourgeoisie sought entry into the corridors of power and in all cases, except for Denmark and Sweden, it supported the drive for parliamentary government. Bourgeois political forces established parliamentary government with property, tax, or income qualifications for voting - that is democracy for the propertied, a true "bourgeois democracy" in contrast to the bourgeois democracy of Leninist Marxism. This system then was opened up by successive organized groups demanding entry into the system: the peasantry, the middle class, and finally the working class. There is a certain amount of truth to the extremely crude interpretation that each group worked for its own incorporation and was ambivalent about further extensions of democracy. The positive contributions of the bourgeoisie were to push for the introduction of parliamentary government and then to capitulate to pressures for further reforms rather than risk civil war.

#### The Breakdown of Democracy

As we saw, the working class needed allies; its power alone was insufficient. Here is where the Moore thesis (revised to accommodate the smaller countries) comes in as it outlines the social and historical conditions which create the possibilities for alliances. In the cases of coalitions of the landed upper classes, the state and the bourgeoisie, no alliance strong enough to overcome their opposition can be constructed. It was only the temporary change in the balance of class power that allowed for the democratic breakthrough. And, in the end, the working class and its allies (where it had any) were unable to maintain democracy when a new conjuncture and new alliance possibilities for the upper classes moved the bourgeoisie and the landlords from passive to active opposition to the democratic regime.

This still leaves us with something of a black box in terms of the mechanism by which the existence of a relatively strong class of landlords actually influences the events of the twenties and thirties in our breakdown cases. It can be said that two basic mechanisms can translate the power of landlords and the more general antidemocratic impulses of both segments of the upper classes into influences on the events of the period. The first is conscious instrumentation, such as funding authoritarian parties and movements, using political influence to obstruct democratic procedures, and so on.

The second is through the effect of ideological hegemony in the Gramscian sense. In the view of the state in advanced capitalist democracies which I have advanced elsewhere, (Stephens 1979; see also Korpi 1982), the state is seen as reflecting the balance of class

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contributed to the strengthening of the authoritarian forces, and even the moderate social democrats contributed to the outcome by inflexible postures vis-à-vis parties of the center. This said, I think it is fair to say that all of the parties of the social democratic left, which commanded the loyalties of the majority of the working class in every country, maintained a commitment to democracy. Their mistakes do not make them anti-democratic.

power in civil society.<sup>10</sup> Crudely said the capitalist class derives its power from property and the working class from organization. In advanced capitalist societies, as Gramsci argues, the ruling class rules through an historically developed hegemony or ideological domination. In the state and nation building process, the state building alliance (e.g. in Germany, the Junker-State alliance) produces, in a quite nonconspiratorial way, an ideology that legitimates its rule and its development project (where such a project is present). This alliance can be referred to as the hegemonic fraction of the overall ruling class coalition (in Germany, the state-Junker-bourgeoisie, especially the coal and steel bourgeoisie). As more social groups are mobilized, as civil society becomes dense, the ruling ideology is diffused to other groups. This attempt is generally successful especially in the upper middle classes and more affluent middle strata. However, the labor movement insulates much of the working class from ruling class hegemony by building, in a very conscious fashion, a counter-hegemony, through the development of a dense organizational life; the party, trade unions, workers' education associations, sports clubs, youth organizations, women's organizations; and the development of alternative mass media and so forth. Departing from Gramsci now, it is important to observe that the Catholic church did exactly the same thing, it organized a counterculture for its believers. Clearly, the class content of this culture is quite different from that of the working class counter culture, but it will insulate its believers from ruling class hegemony (except where the church itself is allied with the hegemonic fraction of the ruling class. → important exception, perhaps,

To bring this back into the context of this comparative study, it is our argument that the political posture of the middle classes, both urban and rural is heavily influenced by the ruling class coalition which led the political development of the country in question. Where Moore's authoritarian upper class coalition was well established, it affected not only the content of the ideology propagated by the ruling classes, that is, a particularly hierarchic, rabidly antidemocratic, anti-liberal set of values, but it also affected the extent to which the ruling ideology was accepted by the urban middle classes and, especially, the peasantry. With regard to the latter, my analysis here can be combined with Lipset and Rokkan's (1967: 1-64, esp. 44-46) insights on the political mobilization of the peasantry in Europe to make the following observations (see Figure 2). In protestant small-holding countries (or areas of countries, e.g. Swiss protestant cantons), the peasantry themselves will be the agents of their own mobilization and the political form will be agrarian parties. In protestant large-holding countries, the mobilizing agent will be the landed upper classes, thus the political weight of the peasantry will strengthen that political block. In Catholic countries (or areas of countries, e.g. Southern Germany), the mobilizing agent will be Catholic parties, but as indicated above the class content of the parties will vary by the landholding structure and thus the role of large landholders in shaping the parties. There are, of course, exceptions due to historic relations between church, landlords, and peasants in particular regions (especially within Spain); but the Lipset-Rokkan scheme does give one a baseline that holds in most cases.

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<sup>10</sup> The passage in the text is the brutal summary of my view of the state in advanced capitalist societies. See Stephens (1979: 47-48, 77-81) for an elaboration. Not only would this theoretical view have to be altered to fit the conditions of the authoritarian capitalist regimes of pre-World War II Europe since it is quite clear that the extension of suffrage increases the influence of the working class, but subsequent work (e.g. Evans et al. 1985, Orloff and Skocpol 1984) also convinces me that the state has to be given a stronger role than I attributed to it in that work. See Evans and Stephens (forthcoming) for an updated viewpoint.

In clarifying the status of these two mechanisms, it is useful to draw on Stinchcombe's (1968) distinction between historical and constant causes. An historical cause is one which happens at a point (or, in this case a period) of time in the past and then the pattern created reproduces itself without the recurrence of the original cause. So, for instance, the Kulturkampf and Conservative-Union of Agriculturalists propaganda campaign (see below) did not have to be carried on constantly for them to have an effect on the political attitudes of the peasantry and the middle class a generation later. The instrumentation mechanism is closer (though not identical) to a constant cause, which is a set of social relationships, activities, etc. that are constant from year to year and produce a constant effect. In the present analysis, we are concerned with institutional change rather than maintenance, but otherwise the argument is the same. The importance of this distinction for this analysis is that the mechanism of ideological hegemony need not have a close relationship with the current economic and political strength of large landlords or the cohesion of the authoritarian coalition. Naturally, persistence of landlord power and/or the cohesion of the coalition will serve to maintain the ideological legacy of the past, but that legacy will not decline in a one-to-one relationship with the decline in landlord power or coalition cohesion.

### Italy

From the point of view of the historical development of the state and nation building coalition, Italy would appear to be a very poor candidate for a fit with the Moore thesis. As Lipset and Rokkan (1967) point out, the Italian state allied with the urban upper class in its drive to unify the country. This usually indicates a weak landed upper class, since the state generally chose to ally with landed interests if they were sufficiently strong as it did in all other large landholding cases in Europe. The deviation of Italy from the modal pattern is due to the fact that unification was spearheaded from the Piedmont, a small holding region as was most of the rest of the industrially advanced North. The South resisted incorporation into the new Italian state. However, there were significant large holding regions in the country: the South and the Po Valley. Still, it is clear that these landed classes did not assume the political leadership of the country even after unification, thus Italy does not fit Moore's pattern of a landholder dominated state in alliance with a dependent bourgeoisie.

Nevertheless, an alliance, or at least an accommodation, between the landed class, the bourgeoisie, and the state did develop in the period between unification and the war. The first step in this direction was the development of trasformismo, a political barter system in which the main political and economic (i.e. land and industry) interests were accommodated through clientelistic exchanges, first under Depretis and then Giolitti (Seton-Watson 1967: 51-52, 91-97, 246-248). Second, the government attempted to encourage economic development through protection of industry, protecting agriculture as compensation. And finally, the government embarked on an armaments program which tied segments of industry to the government and a militaristic foreign policy. Lyttelton (1973: 11-12) observes:

The political effects of the 1887 tariffs were extremely serious. The decision to create a national steel industry was defended by invoking the needs of national defence, and the new iron, steel and shipbuilding interests were heavily dependent on a lavish programme of battleship construction. The link between an uncompetitive heavy industry dependent on state contracts and the pursuit of an imperialist power policy, first forged between 1882 and 1887, was ominous for the future. The alliance between Northern industrial interests and Southern latifondisti brought into being by the tariff was a powerful obstacle to democratic development.

The parallels to the German tariffs of a decade earlier and subsequent developments in that country are so obvious that they hardly need to be mentioned. It is true, of course, that the landed classes never did assume a role of political leadership in Italy and thus the case differs from the German one and from the typical coalition pattern outlined by Moore. Still, the 1887 tariffs were not an isolated instance: Part of the project of Giolitti, the dominant politician from the 1890s to the war, was to create links between the state and agricultural and industrial interests through protection, defense expenditure, labor peace, and economic nationalism.

In the Italian case, the working class played an important but not leading role in the introduction of democracy. Giolitti extended suffrage to all adult males in 1912 in an attempt to gain support for his government's Libyan venture.<sup>11</sup> Certainly one of the target groups for his cooptative efforts in this case were the Socialists and more generally the working class, as cooptation of the Socialists was a long-term project of Giolitti. However, the 1913 election was managed by Giolitti and his allies through corrupt practices and it is actually the 1919 election that marks the introduction of democracy in Italy. The mobilization of workers and peasants during the war and particularly in its wake did play an important role in this transition. Nonetheless, in part because of the large agricultural population, only 12% of the total workforce was organized in unions, and the prodemocratic parties, the Socialists and the catholic Popolari, polled a bare majority of the vote together (32% and 21%, respectively).

In accounting for the breakdown of Italian democracy, conscious instrumentation was in fact very important. The post-war strike wave, factory occupations, peasant organizing, and victories by the Socialists in local council elections alarmed the bourgeoisie and the Po Valley landlords.<sup>12</sup> Both groups began to fund the Fascists on a massive scale as the Fascists made violent attacks on peasant organizations, trade unions, socialist party offices and local councils controlled by the left the main focus of their activity. Increasingly, the Po Valley landholders not only provided money but actually participated in the movement whereas the bourgeoisie contributed money but not men. Moreover they used their influence to prevent any alternative to Fascist rule. As Seton-Watson (1967: 598) points out, "(b)y 1922 contributions from banks and industrial firms, particularly those of Milan, were flowing into the treasury of the Fascist party, and their representatives in Parliament were using all their influence to block an anti-fascist coalition".

Forces internal to the state, particularly the security forces, also contributed to the fascist victory. Most army officers were sympathetic to the extreme nationalist organizations, and, at crucial points, such as the Fiume invasion and the March on Rome, the governments were reluctant to order the army to act against the radical nationalists for fear that they would

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<sup>11</sup> Seton-Watson (1967: 282) argues that it was with the Libyan war that nationalism became anti-democratic and imperialist and began to attract business support.

<sup>12</sup> This account is based on Seton-Watson (1967: 505-664) and Lyttelton (1973: esp. Chapter 3). Both emphasize the penetration of the Po Valley as a crucial turning point in the strengthening and the transformation of the character of fascism. It should be pointed out here that the size of landholdings in the Po Valley varied and that initially the Fascists got support from modest farmers who were dependent on wage labor as well as large landholders. Once the Fascists had ousted the socialist and catholic unions they were in a position to control the local labor market and dispense jobs and thus began to get support from agricultural workers, tenants, and small farmers.



not obey. The police tolerated the clearly illegal attacks of the Fascists on the Socialists and trade unions, an (in)action without which the growth of the movement would have been much more difficult.

The hegemony argument is less important in this case as the Fascists were never a mass electoral movement. Moreover, the South was so underdeveloped and its civil society was so weak that no group exercised hegemony in the region; it was integrated into the country's politics through clientelistic/patronage type relations and overwhelmingly supported the more conservative factions of the liberals (who, I hasten to add, were not a prodemocratic force).

As for the counterfactual in this case, one might ask what the political situation in Italy would have looked like if there were no large landholding class; if the countryside were covered with small peasants. Comparative work on party support argues that these Catholic peasants would have supported the *Popolari*, an essentially prodemocratic force, thus strengthening that party and greatly facilitating the formation of an anti-fascist parliamentary coalition in 1921-1922. Deprived of its Po Valley support, fascism would have remained an urban, and much weaker, phenomenon.

### Germany

The paradigmatic case for Moore's chapter on the path to modern authoritarianism was Germany, despite the fact that there is no chapter on that country in the book. It is not surprising then that the German case fits Moore's analysis quite well. Of course, there are social scientists who do not share Moore's materialist orientation and object to his treatment of this case among others (see Wiener 1976). But it is probably fair to say that few would contest his assertion that historically an alliance developed between the East Elbian landed upper class, the Junkers, and the Prussian state, and that this alliance assumed political leadership in unified Germany after 1870. The bourgeoisie, particularly the coal and steel segment, joined the coalition as a junior partner, with the tariffs of 1879 and later the naval armaments program consolidating the coalition. The main challenge to Moore is expressed by Skocpol in her contention that he underplays the autonomous role of the state, and I have accepted her view as a refinement of Moore's thesis.<sup>13</sup>

The role of the agrarian upper classes and of the authoritarian coalition more generally in the breakdown of Weimar democracy is, however, a point of contention. For instance, these factors play a role but not a central one in Bracher's (1970) important work on the breakdown of the Weimar Republic.<sup>14</sup> It seems rather obvious that to complete Moore's

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<sup>13</sup> Skocpol's point on the difficulty that class analysis has in dealing with the German case dates at least back to Weber's critique of Marx and is commonplace in recent critiques of historical materialism, which argue, among other things, that the state in both its bureaucratic and military manifestations has played a much larger role in historical development than most Marxist analyses attribute to it (e.g. see Mann 1986, forthcoming; Giddens 1981).

<sup>14</sup> This is characteristic of single country studies, not only of Germany but also of the other breakdown cases. For example, see any of the essays on Europe in Linz and Stepan (1978). The historical case studies uncover direct instrumentation, but the method does not press one to focus on what structural factors differentiate the breakdown cases from the democratic survivors as does a comparative study such as this one. It also matters what cases are being compared for what purposes. For instance, the one comparative essay

argument about the road to modern authoritarianism, it is necessary to specify how agrarian class relations and the coalition helped push Germany toward authoritarianism. In this section, I intend to provide such a specification as well as to highlight the prodemocratic role of the main working class party, the Social Democrats.

Democracy was introduced in Germany as a result of the defeat in World War I, the discrediting of the ruling class, and the temporary power vacuum on the right that this created. Labor organization surged to 30% of the labor force and the democratic parties received 77% of the vote in the National Assembly elections of January 1919 (38% for the Social Democrats-SPD, 20% for the Catholic Zentrum, and 19% for the bourgeois liberal German Democratic Party-DDP). Unfortunately, the right recovered quickly; these three parties only polled 42% in the June 1920 elections and never again reached a majority during the Weimar Republic.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, labor organization slid sharply backward in this same period. Without the defeat, it seems quite likely that Germany would not have become a democracy for decades, until something created a decisive shift in the balance of class forces.

The assertion that conscious instrumentation played an important role in the German case is bound to provoke a dispute.<sup>16</sup> But the debate on big business and the Nazis obscures the fact that the bourgeoisie and Junker aristocracy did support parties (including after 1929, at times, the Nazis) which supported an authoritarian solution, especially from 1929 on. The Junkers, officer corps, and the coal and steel bourgeoisie were the leading forces in the German National People's Party (DNVP) which was always monarchist and authoritarian and increasingly closely cooperated with the Nazis after 1928. Most of the rest of the bourgeoisie supported the German People's Party (DVP) which was at best ambivalent about democracy and moved sharply to the right after Stresemann's death in 1929.

The hegemony argument is crucial in the German case. Here one must explain why so many people were open to voting for the Nazis (37% in 1932) or, adding in the DNVP, (6% in July 1932) for authoritarian parties in general. To facilitate the analysis of the rise of the Nazi vote as well as a comparison of the German and Austrian cases, it is helpful to examine social and historical bases of the parties utilizing the Lipset-Rokkan scheme (Lipset and

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in the Linz and Stepan volumes, the introductory essay by Linz compares the breakdown cases in order to uncover commonalities among them. In part as a result of the method, Linz's essay focuses on the process of breakdown, not the distinctive features that differentiate the breakdown and survivor cases.

<sup>15</sup> The figures given in the text ignore the votes of the USPD, whose leadership was clearly democratic. But the party split into two factions, one of which re-entered the SPD. The other faction joined the communist party (KPD), whose disastrous line clearly contributed to the rise of Hitler.

<sup>16</sup> See Abraham (1986) and Turner (1985). The Feldman-Turner critiques of Abraham focus on the documentation of the instrumentalist argument about big business support for the Nazis. Abraham's self-admitted errors aside, this is in fact not the main argument of the book, which is a class coalitions approach to the conditions for stable democracy not unlike the one proposed here. Turner and Feldman remain prisoners of the historical case study method which, as I pointed out in a previous footnote, is biased toward instrumentalist arguments (e.g. this group did x with y effect).

Rokkan 1967).<sup>17</sup> The DNVP was the political creature of the conservative monarchist bloc which represented an alliance of the state (or "nation-building elite", N, in Lipset and Rokkan's terminology), the state church (C, the Lutheran Church in this case), and the landed upper class (L) (see Table 1). The national liberal bloc, the DVP and the DDP, represented the bourgeoisie and other elements of the urban upper classes (U) and assumed a secular posture (S). The Catholic (R) bloc, Zentrum and the Bavarian Peoples' Party, BVP, represented the largely South and West German Catholic population. The working class primarily supported the Social Democrats and secondarily the communists.

An examination of election results in this period makes it immediately obvious that the Nazis received votes from everyone who was not absorbed in the Socialist/working class or Catholic countercultures. The authoritarian and militaristic ideology of the Junker/state/coal and steel bourgeoisie coalition had penetrated every other sector of the population. Under the impact of the increasingly desperate economic conditions of the depression, these social groups turned from the traditional conservative authoritarianism of their old parties to the radical racist authoritarianism of the Nazis.

My crude analysis here is confirmed by detailed empirical studies of two sorts. First, the detailed examination of ecological data on voting patterns carried out by Hamilton (1980) and Childers (1983) clearly demonstrate the process described above. Second, Allen's (1984) fascinating and well researched community study of the Nazi seizure of power in one German town, based on newspaper reports, interviews with participants, and Nazi party documents, not only confirms the shift in voting patterns referred to above. It also provides a clear picture of how German civil society in the period was organized, with a highly cohesive working class social democratic subculture promoting a democratic and socialist ideology, and a somewhat less cohesive, but nonetheless densely organized, middle and upper class culture interpenetrated by a large number of rightist, nationalistic, and militaristic groups promoting variants of that ideological current.<sup>18</sup>

My argument here admits that there is a grain of truth in the cultural interpretations of the collapse of German democracy. In its crudest journalistic form, this view contends that the Germans succumbed to authoritarianism because they were authoritarian. A slightly dressed up academic version of this is that the Weimar Republic crumbled because its culture was "illiberal". Authors such as Bracher (1970) and Lepsius (1978) present a much more sophisticated variant of the argument by breaking the German society and polity into four

<sup>17</sup> The Lipset-Rokkan scheme is compelling not only because it predicts the configuration of European party systems relatively well, both with great parsimony and historical sensitivity, but also because the central variable of the scheme, the "alliance choices of the nation building elite", is quite predictable. For instance, the religious option follows a North-South (or distance from Rome) gradient, arguably an indicator of the degree of institutionalization of Rome's influence in the pre-Reformation era. The economic options follow the pattern of landholding: the "nation builders" chose to ally with the landed classes in countries dominated by large estates. The parallels between their analysis on this point and Moore's work is clear, something that Rokkan (Rokkan 1972) remarked on. This is all the more striking given the contrasting paradigms of the authors and the fact that their works were written independently of one another.

<sup>18</sup> Northeim, the town studied in Allen's book, was overwhelmingly Protestant, thus there was no Catholic subculture to speak of. It was also somewhat atypical in that the Communist Party was insignificant.

blocs, contending that it was in the National Liberal and Conservative Monarchist blocs in which the voters succumbed to the radical authoritarian appeals of the Nazis and in which the leaders were willing to cooperate with them. This closely follows my own argument, which is not surprising since I have borrowed freely from them.)

The weakness of these points of view is that they either leave the strength of the authoritarian camp unexplained, as Lepsius does in his short essay, or explain it in historical terms without clearly connecting the content of ideology to the material and political interest of the economic and political leaders of the camps promoting them. Bracher (1970: 27-28) hints at a connection between the promotion of the statist-nationalist-volkisch ideology, the related Lebensraum philosophies, and the carrying out of the Kulturkampf against the culture of the Catholic southern Germans, on the one hand, and the interests of the political elite of Imperial Germany, on the other. But the mesh of this ideology with the interests and development project of the Junker-military-bureaucratic elite and its allies in the coal and steel bourgeoisie is nowhere made explicit and tightly tied together.

In Bread and Democracy, which is sufficiently close to Moore's analysis of Germany that it might be termed the unwritten chapter in Social Origins on the German case, Gerschenkron (1943: esp. 53-55) does make an explicit link between Junker class interests and their conscious and successful, in his view, attempt to spread proto-Nazi ideologies among small peasants in order to maintain and increase support for the Conservative Party, the Union of Agriculturalists, and their agricultural program. Based on the electoral and community studies cited earlier, I contend that this can be extended to a more general argument about the ideology of the authoritarian coalition and its penetration of all social groups in varying degrees, outside the working class and Catholic blocs.

Forces inside the state also played a role in the German case. With the strong overrepresentation of the landed aristocracy in the upper ranks of the Reichswehr, it is not surprising that the army shared the Junkers' authoritarian monarchist politics, and though they never supported Hitler, their neutrality was essential for the Nazi's seizure of power (Carsten 1973). In the eleventh hour, the period of Presidential rule from 1930 to the seizure of power, the contribution of elements of this group went far beyond neutrality, as the circle around Hindenburg was completely dominated by the men drawn from the Junker-military bureaucratic elite. The project of those closest to Hindenburg was to use the Nazis to install authoritarian presidential rule. This game eventually led to the Nazi entry into the government with control of the chancellorship.

The German judiciary consistently treated equivalent offenses by political groups on the left and the right quite differently. The light sentence received by Hitler for the Beer Hall putsch is a case in point here.<sup>19</sup> This alignment of forces inside the state is also in part a product of the state and nation building coalition and the resulting imperialistic and militaristic ideologies propagated by state elites.

The counterfactual in this case is important because potential critics might correctly point out that the protestant peasants of Northern Germany were one of the first groups to whom the Nazis made a breakthrough in the post 1928 period. Thus, one might ask, why should we expect the movement to be much weaker if Germany were smallholding? Setting

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<sup>19</sup> The state prosecutor's plea began with a statement that sounded more like a campaign speech for a national hero than an indictment of a criminal. See Bracher (1970: 119-120).

aside the fact that it must be agreed that it would be impossible to imagine the whole economic and political trajectory of Germany without Junkers, we can turn to Finland for an answer. Under the impact of different but equally tumultuous events (revolution, civil war, depression), sections of the peasantry did turn to the radical right Lapua movement in the 1930s, and the movement did manage to get the Communist Party suppressed (Alapuro and Allardt 1978). But it never managed to effect the suspension of parliamentary politics. In accounting for its failure to reach this goal, Alapuro and Allardt cite several situational and structural factors. The most important of the structural factors, they contend, was the absence of a strong landed upper class. As a result, the Finnish peasantry had mobilized autonomously (as in all Protestant small holding countries) and formed its own political party decades before the rise of the Lapua movement. Thus, when the Lapua movement attempted to translate its substantial support among peasants into electoral support at the polls, it failed to make more than marginal inroads into the support of the Agrarian Union.

### Austria

Of the three European authoritarian cases not studied by Moore, the Austrian appears to be closest to the German. Certainly, the class-state constellations in the eighteenth and nineteenth century are quite similar. The basic state alliance was also between the crown; the army, which was very closely identified with the Habsburg Monarchy; the bureaucracy; and the landed nobility. The ethnic divisions within the Empire and later Austria-Hungary divided the nobility and often set the non-German nationalities, particularly the Magyar magnates, against the monarchy, but as Taylor (1976) emphasizes, when they had to choose between defending their class privileges and advancing claims for national autonomy, they virtually always chose the former. The system of labor control in the countryside can be accurately labeled "labor-repressive": though Joseph II abolished true serfdom, the Robot, obligatory labor service, which remained in effect until 1848, was actually the more critical provision in limiting labor mobility (Gross 1973: 247, 255). And even, in the post-Robot period, the great lords remained the predominant power in the countryside. Indeed, they gained at the expense of the minor noble landholders.

The ethnic divisions within the Habsburg monarchy point to one contrast between Austria and Germany that does have a bearing on my argument. For obvious reasons, the conscious promotion of a legitimating ideology in connection with an effort to increase national identification was out of the question for the ruling groups in the Habsburg Monarchy, particularly in German Austria, the area of main concern here.<sup>20</sup> Thus, while it can be plausibly asserted that the ruling groups did propagate an ideology legitimating their rule and that the content was of necessity authoritarian, one has no obvious "smoking gun" as one has in the case of the German Kulturkampf.

The bourgeoisie was dependent on the Habsburg state. The state attempted to promote industrialization through high protective tariffs; subsidies, loans and tax exemptions to businesses; armaments purchases; building of infrastructure; development of necessary skills and education in the population; and development and ownership of selected undertakings (Gross 1973: 243 ff). The abolition of the Robot furthered the links between the landed nobility and the bourgeoisie since many of the nobles used the monetary compensation provided for the abolition to enter business on a significant scale (Gross 1973: 255-256; Taylor 1976: 73). In the case of the German Austrian bourgeoisie, this dependence on the

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<sup>20</sup> As stated in the previous paragraph, the landed nobilities of the subject nationalities did often lead the nationalist pressures for autonomy.

state was reinforced by their (probably correct) view that the end of the Empire was inimical to their interests, despite the fact that it is arguable that the objective effect of their subordination was to impede the development of capitalism (see below). Gross (1973: 251) contends that the dependence of the German Austrian bourgeoisie expressed itself in the "persistent adherence to quasi-feudal social values". In a word, it accepted the ideological leadership of the monarchy and the landed nobility.

The transition to democracy in Austria followed a similar path to that in Germany, with the defeat in the war creating a temporary change in the balance of class power. The differences were that, on the one hand, the Socialist Party and the working class were stronger, electorally and organizationally, the Socialist movement being the very prototype of the successful application of a Gramscian strategy. On the other hand, the Socialists were the only clearly prodemocratic party, with the possible exception of the Landbund. The various parties of the German Nationalist bloc (polling together around one-fifth of the vote), which were supported by a large segment of the bourgeoisie and the protestant middle class, participated in governments in the late twenties which turned a blind eye to, and sometimes even cooperated with, the fascist Heimwehr. Indeed, during German Nationalist leader Schober's chancellorship in 1929-1930, his office acted as a conduit for monthly contributions of 250,000 schillings from Austrian banks to the Heimwehr (Simon 1978: 96). Moreover, by 1932 virtually all of the supporters of the German Nationalists had defected to the Nazis. The Christian Socials (polling around 40%) not only protected the Heimwehr while in office; the leadership of the party conspired to end democracy in 1933 and ultimately the party fused with the Heimwehr.

On the question of instrumentation, the Austrian case is again similar to the German. There is no doubt that industry did contribute to the fascists: I have just mentioned the role of Austrian banks; the country's largest mining and metallurgical firm, the Alpine-Montan Gesellschaft, also contributed significant amounts of money to the Heimwehr (Rabinbach 1983: 55). But, more important for the fate of Austrian democracy was the support in the upper classes for non-fascist authoritarian forces in the Catholic and German National blocs.

The Austrian case differs from the German in that the landed upper classes themselves apparently played little active role in the interwar events. Part of the reason for this is that compared to other regions in Austria-Hungary, German Austria contained a disproportionate amount of the mountainous areas, which were predominantly small holding.

The hegemony argument is, if anything, more important for the Austrian than German case. Based on local election results, it has been estimated that well over 50% of Austrians would have voted for the Christian Socials (30-35%) or the Nazis (over 20%) if a national election had been held in 1933 (Simon 1978: 110). The greater electoral strength of the authoritarian right parties in Austria compared to Germany is explained by the authoritarian (or, at the very best, ambivalent) position of the Catholic camp. This, in turn, is explained by the historical alliance of the Habsburg state and the landed oligarchs with the Catholic church. This N-R (Roman Catholic) -L alliance in the Lipset-Rokkan scheme was the historical social structural basis for the Christian Social Party. It represented a fusion of the organized Catholic subculture with this elite alliance, with the latter group defining the class character of the Catholic camp's political ideology. Thus, the prodemocratic camp in Austria

was weaker than in Germany due to the differences in the historic alliances of the Church.<sup>21</sup> For precisely the same set of reasons, the appeal of Nazism was considerably less in Austria than Germany and the authoritarian Catholic corporative state of the Dollfuss-Schusschnigg period much less repressive, with considerable autonomy for trade unions and other forms of nonparty social organizations.

There is one weakness in the argument linking the ideology of the dominant political coalition in Austrian development to the behavior of the parties in the interwar period. The development of the Christian Social movement substantially predated its fusion with upper class interests (Boyer 1981). While it is true that the party shed much of the radical romantic anti-capitalism and became solidly conservative with the development of the alliance, its opposition to lower class interests and universal suffrage and its anti-semitic authoritarianism date back to its early years. Thus, if its authoritarian posture is connected to the ideology of the ruling elites, the connection is not simple or obvious.

A stronger case can be made for connecting the class-state coalitions of the nineteenth century to the outcomes of the interwar period in the Austrian case by pointing to the link between the development coalition and the weakness of, and antidemocratic posture of, Austrian liberalism.<sup>22</sup> Austrian liberalism was based in the German Austrian bourgeoisie and upper middle classes and thus reflected the conservative position of those groups which was directly linked to their perception of their own self-interest in preserving the Empire and the Habsburg monarchy as mentioned earlier. Liberalism in Austria meant anti-clericalism, rationalism, and support of property rights and little more. It lacked the democratic tendencies of English liberalism, not to speak of the strong support for democracy characteristic of Scandinavian liberalism.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the dependence of the bourgeoisie on the Habsburg state helps to explain the weakness of democratic currents outside of the working class in the first Austrian Republic.

The Czech case presents a nice counterfactual on this point. For obvious reasons, the bourgeoisie in Bohemia and Moravia did not see the preservation of the Habsburg state in the same light as their German Austrian counterparts and thus developed a more aggressive and stronger liberalism. This is one factor that helps explain why democracy survived in

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<sup>21</sup> Thus, the sociological counterpart to the Christian Socials in Germany was the DNVP and the Zentrum. In the remainder of the party systems, the counterparts are closer: the PSU bloc contains the parties representing the secular urban upper classes and labor bloc containing the working class parties. The support for the latter two blocs are very roughly the same in the two countries. The difference lies in the remaining groups which are split in Germany with part supporting nationalistic monarchical authoritarianism and part democratic Catholicism, whereas in Austria they are united supporting the authoritarian Catholic corporativism of the Christian Socials.

<sup>22</sup> This argument could be applied with few modifications to Germany.

<sup>23</sup> In comparing Scandinavian liberalism to English (or Austrian) liberalism, it should be pointed out that it had a different social base. Lipset and Rokkan classify the English party as a P-D (Dissenting Sects) -U party and the Scandinavian parties as PD. This misses the urban middle class component of Scandinavian liberalism, but it accurately catches the key difference: the Scandinavian bourgeoisie supported the parties of the right, not the liberals. This is probably the main source of the more active support for democracy of the Scandinavian liberal parties as compared to the English.

Czechoslovakia until the German invasion in contrast to Austria. The case of Czechoslovakia also puts into perspective the arguments that the decisive factor sealing the fate of Austrian democracy was foreign pressure from its authoritarian neighbors. While it cannot be denied that this was a significant factor, Czechoslovakia was similarly surrounded by authoritarian regimes and subject to pressures from them but did not succumb. Moreover, this argument is weakened by the fact that the trajectory toward the authoritarian seizure of power in Austria began with the events of 1927, well before the rise of Nazi influence in Germany, and the critical step toward the installation of the authoritarian regime, the suspension of parliament, occurred only a few months after Hitler was appointed Chancellor and before the Nazis had consolidated power.

In Moore's work, the authoritarian coalition appears as a modernizing coalition promoting industrialization and economic growth. Taking Germany as an explicit point of comparison, Gross (1973: 249-251) argues that state intervention in Austria failed to adequately further industrial development in sharp contrast to the German case. He argues that it was precisely the nature of the ruling coalition that prevented the Habsburg state from intervening effectively to promote industrialization:

Since the main supports of the Empire and its dynastic regime were the aristocracy (and the hierarchical principle in general), the Church, the army and bureaucracy, as well as the interests of the ruling social-ethnic classes in certain provinces - a policy of rapid modernization and of promoting meritocratic social trends was out of the question. Moreover, although most Austrian governments in the second half of the [nineteenth] century included promotion of industry in their policy-mix, each according to its fashion, none could pursue rapid industrialization as a national objective. This, first of all, because no 'national' policy, in the strict sense, was to be envisioned. (Gross 1973: 250)

Some of the factors mentioned by Gross would apply equally well to Prussia-Germany and it is plausible that they actually did impede the development of capitalism there, but they were much more than counterbalanced by the strong and effective support of the Junker-military-bureaucratic leadership, in close cooperation with private industry, for industrialization and economic modernization more generally. The nationalities question, Gross argues, prevented the Habsburg monarchy from taking on such a project and it impeded more independent pressure from the German Austrian bourgeoisie, as mentioned previously.

### Spain

There is no doubt that landholding in absolutist Spain was extremely concentrated: the nobility and the Church held over two thirds of the land in the country (Carr 1982: 39). But, as in the Italian case, the initial development of the ruling political coalition in the nineteenth century does not seem to make Spain a very good case for Moore's explanation of the development of modern authoritarianism. The conflicts of the first decades of that century pitted the urban middle and upper classes, intellectuals and the Army, supporting a program of liberal reform, against the Church, nobility, and monarchy. An important part of the Liberal program was an attack on corporate property rights: entailed property, seigniorial rights, Church owned lands, and communal property, thus directly attacking the interests of the nobility as well as the Church.

In the course of the century, however, the coalition of forces that gradually assembled around the Moderado Liberal (later dynastic Conservative) party did resemble the Moorian



coalition.<sup>24</sup> By the time of the first Carlist wars in the 1830s, the crown was aligned with the Moderados and increasingly most elements in the army supported this party, though the Progresista Liberals continued to enjoy some army support until late in the century. In their periods in power in the thirties and the fifties, the Progresistas carried through the liberal property rights reforms of the original Liberal program, which resulted in a very significant redistribution of land as Church properties were sold by the government and the end of entailment led many poorer nobles sell their land. Since this land was sold on the open market rather than used as part of a land reform scheme, it was those who had the money to buy it who benefited: the affluent nobility, the upper peasantry, the local political bosses in the rural towns, and the bourgeoisie. The larger land owners, both the traditional nobles and the new landlords, also increasingly gravitated to the Moderados-Conservatives. By the time of the Restoration (post 1874), sections of the Catholic right in the form of the Catholic Union had broken with Carlism and joined the dynastic Conservatives. With the Catholic Union came the episcopate and "the more recalcitrant of the Catholic aristocracy" (Carr 1982: 355). These social supports of the Conservatives increasingly became a single social class with a common social and political outlook. Carr (1982: 284, 431-32) sketches the situation at midcentury and then at end of the century:

[The generals] were absorbed into the aristocracy by a continuous process of new creation [of titles]. . . The amalgam of speculators, industrialists, landowners, together with the prosperous lawyers and ennobled generals who were its political voice par excellence, constituted what democrats were beginning to call a ruling oligarchy-estimated at five hundred families.

[The aristocracy] was conspicuous in its support of Catholic values. Since its whole history in the nineteenth century had been one of accretion, through the incorporation of successful soldiers, hauts bourgeois, and politicians, it tended to impose these values on the upper ranges of society as it imposed its way of life.

The dynastic Conservatives' opposition within the El Turno Pacífico system was the dynastic Liberals, the heirs of the Progresistas. The Liberals were based in the provincial urban upper middle classes and, on paper, supported liberal democratic ideals. When they were in office in the last decades of the nineteenth century, they put these ideals into law, making Spain, on paper, a democracy: universal suffrage, freedom of association, freedom of the press, etc. But the reality of the situation was quite different: in the El Turno system, there was a de facto agreement that the two dynastic parties would alternate in power, and this was accomplished by fixing the electoral outcome. The parties outside the system, the Republicans and the Socialists, had no chance to gain power despite the existence of universal suffrage and the numerical significance of the classes they represented. Thus, the political situation under El Turno was very similar to that under trasformismo in Italy. The parallel does not end there. Like Italy, Spain, in 1891, introduced tariffs on both agricultural and industrial imports. Like Italy, in a conscious effort to create a national industry, it embarked on naval building programs in 1888 and again in 1908. Thus, it is probable that all these developments had the same effect as in Italy: to bring the state, the bourgeoisie, and the landed classes into closer alliance.

The Spanish situation in the closing decades of the last century shows some other interesting contrasts and similarities to the German and the Italian. In both Spain and Germany, the upper officers corps were closely linked with the upper class(es), but in quite

<sup>24</sup> The following remarks on nineteenth century Spain are based on Carr (1982). See especially, pages 158ff., 203ff., 284ff., 287, and 342 on the social bases of the parties.

↳ Pretty flimsy support.

different ways. In Germany, many top officers were traditional aristocrats. In Spain, the officers were often of humble origin and an army career could be a way to move into the political elite (due to the role of the military in Spanish politics) and then the economic elite, sometimes ending in ennoblement. A second contrast to Germany was that the landlord class was a mix of traditional aristocrats, ennobled haut bourgeoisie and military men, and untitled property holders. As in Italy and in contrast to Germany, it cannot be said that the bourgeoisie was dependent on a landholder dominated state. As to the state role in development, it was yet more passive than in the Italian case. Indeed, it would be stretching the facts beyond belief to call any of the Spanish regimes of the nineteenth or early twentieth century "modernizing" in Moore's sense: this is hardly a case of "revolution from above". Thus, like the Austrian case, the Spanish case argues for an important revision of the Moore thesis. A ruling class alliance of labor-repressive landlords, sections of the bourgeoisie, and the state did materialize in the last half of the nineteenth century, but it hardly had the modernizing project of its German counterpart.

The process of economic development in the period 1875 to 1920 and thus the increasing size of the urban lower middle and working classes put pressure on the El Turno system; as it increased the strength of the unions and Socialist and Republican parties, as well as the Anarchists. The economic boom induced by the war, in particular, greatly strengthened labor unions. Indeed, it became more and more difficult to fix elections in the urban areas and the votes of the urban electorate became known as "votos verdad". A widespread feeling developed that there was a need for a temporary dictatorship to clean up the corruption of the El Turno system and Primo de Rivera stepped in to fill this role in 1923. The institution of the Republic, and thus, democracy came as a result of the victory of the Republicans and Socialists in the larger cities in the municipal elections of 1931 and the subsequent proclamation of the Revolution Committee composed of Republican and Socialist conspirators. The passive role of the army was critical, it did nothing to stop the republican conspirators.

The transition to democracy in Spain is rather like the same process in Italy.<sup>25</sup> The working class played a secondary role in the transition to democracy. The Socialists (PSOE) garnered a similar, limited, portion of the vote, no more than 25-30% at best, though it is difficult to say given the electoral system of the Republic. And even more than in Italy the immediate reaction of the upper classes (i.e. re the instrumentation argument) to the political mobilization and trade union organization of the working class and landless agricultural workers was a central, if not the central, dynamic in the breakdown of the regime.<sup>26</sup> Not only did large estates dominate the countryside more so, even, than in the other three cases discussed here, it was also a very heavily agricultural country. Thus it is not surprising that the agrarian question was the focal point of class conflict and that the hostility of the large landholders to the modest agrarian reforms of the first Republican government was such an important factor in the breakdown. By the same token, given the low level of capitalist development of the country and thus the weakness of civil society,

<sup>25</sup> For the events of the Republic, see Preston (1983) and Malefakis (1970).

<sup>26</sup> The struggle over the role of the Catholic Church in Spanish society was the other burning issue of the Republic. But it is important to see that it is linked, in part, to the land question. In a Catholic small holding society like Belgium, the Church and Catholic political forces are more moderate. In Spain, where large landholders and the Church are allied, it is not difficult to see why the discontent of the masses was often strongly anti-clerical.

ideological hegemony of the authoritarian (upper class) forces did not play such a crucial role in the Spanish case.

There is a sense in which the Republic was a premature progressive development which was quickly rolled back because the democracy itself and the reforms it introduced exceeded the limits the balance of class power in society would tolerate. The Republic was ushered in by developments in urban Spain and did not reflect the power balance in Spanish society as a whole. Thus, it was quite similar to a number of revolutions in nineteenth century Spain which emanated from the urban areas and resulted in the installation of a Progressive government and the promulgation of a liberal constitution or the like, and then were quickly, though not completely, rolled back. The Republic was only unusual in that its accomplishments were completely destroyed and it ushered in five decades of dictatorship.

The Spanish case is exceptional in that the most crucial element of the state, the army, played not simply a passive role in the authoritarian seizure of power but rather was the instrument of seizure. Again, this was a continuation of a nineteenth century pattern of Spanish politics rather than a new development.

### Conclusion and Discussion

#### Summary and Conclusion

The central task of this article has been to evaluate Barrington Moore's (1966) thesis on the role of agrarian class relations and historic state-class coalitions in the paths to capitalist authoritarianism and democracy through a comparative historical analysis of the transition to democracy in Western Europe in the period 1870-1920 and the subsequent breakdown of democracy in the interwar period. In the process of the analysis, other theories of the transition to democracy were considered and, before proceeding to a summary of the evidence on Moore's thesis, some reflection on these theories is in order.

The overview of the transition to democracy confirmed Therborn's (1977) contention that the working class, represented by socialist parties and trade unions, was the single most important force in the majority of countries in the final push for universal male suffrage and responsible government, though in several of the small holding countries the small peasants and/or the urban middle class played the major role. This contradicts the modernization view, as advanced by Lipset (1960) which argues that economic development and democracy are connected primarily through the expansion of education, the growth of the middle class and so on. Rather it was the growth of the working class and its capacity for self-organization that was most critical for the final breakthrough of democracy. The rapid industrialization experienced by Western Europe in the five decades before World War I increased the size and, with varying time lags, the degree of organization of the working class and thus changed the balance of class power in civil society to the advantage of democratic forces.

↳ But, by focusing only on the final step of the process, Therborn's work rather exaggerates the role of the working class. Not only did the working class need allies in the final push; earlier suffrage extensions which incorporated substantial sections of the lower classes, rural and urban, were often led by other social groups, usually the urban middle class or small peasantry, with the working class playing only a supporting role. Moreover, where the working class had few allies (e.g. in Germany and Italy, only the Catholic parties) or none (Austria) democracy was fragile and did not survive the interwar period.↳

The overall picture then comes closest to the view of Rueschemeyer (1980), who argues that economic development strengthens both the middle and working classes thus leading to the strengthening of democratic forces. This view does account for the essential elements of the process of transition in the countries which experienced an internally generated transition to democracy and in which democracy survived the interwar period. However, as the breakdown cases demonstrate, the middle classes are not invariably democratic forces. The middle classes and the peasantry played quite different roles in different countries. In some, such as the Scandinavian countries, they supported suffrage extension and allied with the working class. In others, such as Germany and Austria, they formed the mass base for authoritarian movements that ended democracy, hardly living up to the heroic democratic role assigned to them in modernization theory.

Explanation of the differences between countries is where the Moore thesis comes in. Agrarian class relations appeared to be the critical feature distinguishing the cases in which democracy broke down and in which it survived: in all four countries in which authoritarian regimes replaced democracies, large landholders dominated the countryside into the twentieth century and historically these landholders were engaged in what Moore calls labor-repressive agriculture (see Figure 3). None of the other countries fit this description: in the single other largeholding case, England, the large landholders did not employ labor-repressive techniques of labor control and in the rest of the countries the countryside was dominated by small holders.

In the detailed analysis of the four authoritarian cases, I attempted to show that an alliance, or at least an accommodation, did develop between the state, labor-repressive landlords, and the bourgeoisie. However, only in Germany, Moore's paradigmatic case, did the authoritarian coalition develop along the lines outlined in Social Origins. As indicated in Figure 3, in Italy, the bourgeoisie, not the landholders, was the politically dominant segment of the upper classes. In Austria, the political and economic dependence of the German Austrian bourgeoisie was, in the final analysis, cemented by its position in the multi-ethnic state, and this dependence was not shared by its Bohemian and Moravian counterparts. It is questionable whether one could describe the state in Spain and Italy as "strong" if one means something more than it had the sheer repressive capacity to introduce authoritarian rule, a point to which I will return shortly.

In order to fully evaluate the importance of the six factors listed in Figure 3, it is necessary to examine the cases in which democracy survived. They are strikingly different. For reasons discussed by Moore (and cited in the text), the British and French cases are different from the typical authoritarian path. The small European democracies are diametrically opposed to the paradigmatic German case. It is worth underlining how much of this difference can be traced to the historic patterns of landholding and agrarian class relations. First, as was pointed out earlier, size, landholding patterns, and military strength were historically interrelated. With no large landholding class, labor-repressive agriculture was impossible (point 2 in the figure); the bourgeoisie was ipso facto stronger than the landed class (point 3); and, for the same reason, it was not the dependent partner in a coalition. Because there was no agrarian oligarchy, a revolutionary break from the past was not necessary. Not only is state repressive capacity connected to the size/great power status/military strength complex, it also may be more directly related to agrarian class relations, if the Swedish case is typical. There, Tilton (1974: 568) argues that insufficient repressive capacity in general, and the absence of a standing professional army in particular, did play a role in the calculations of the conservatives at the point of their final capitulation in 1917. The weakness of the repressive apparatus, in turn, can, in part, be attributed to the influence of the peasantry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

century as they used their influence in the lower house to block appropriations for defence, since these were connected to taxes which would fall on their backs (Rustow 1955; Verney 1957).

Turning now to how the legacy of agrarian class relations and the authoritarian coalition more generally actually affected the events of the interwar period, I proposed the distinction between instrumental effects, that is, active intervention in the historical process by the actors in question, and hegemonic effects, that is, legacies (and recreations) of the ideological hegemony of the ruling coalitions, past and present, which are particularly important in explaining the behavior of the middle classes, urban and rural. In Italy and Spain, active intervention by landlords and capitalists in support of authoritarian outcomes was found to be of great importance. In Germany, it was argued that both factors mediated the effect of the historic developmental coalition on the interwar events.

The weakest case of the four for the Moore thesis is Austria (-Hungary). Though it was most similar to Prussia-Germany in terms of the development of the state-class alliances in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the effect of those alliances on the breakdown of the democracy in the interwar period was less clear than in the other three countries. The strongest argument, and one that I believe will stand the test of further study, is that the dependence of the German Austrian bourgeoisie on the Habsburg state explains the weakness and conservative character of Austrian liberalism and this in turn helps explain why the democratic currents outside the working class were so weak in Austria.

This contrast between the two pairs, Austria/Germany and Spain/Italy, is obviously a function of the level of economic development and thus the strength of civil society. A second contrast between the four cases has been suggested by Stein Rokkan (personal conversation, 1974): it was in the two late nation builders, Italy and Germany, that the hyper-nationalism of fascism was ideologically dominant, whereas in Spain and Austria the ideologically dominant current was clerical corporate authoritarianism. Rokkan argued that the overlapping of nation-building and mass mobilization created a climate favorable to the development of mass hyper-nationalism. One can add to this the experience of World War I which was also a component in the fascist trajectory as it was directly related to the development of the right wing paramilitary organizations that fed into fascism. Thus, as I argued in my initial discussion of Moore's work, fascism was only one form of modern capitalist authoritarianism, it is not equivalent to it as Moore indicates. — Right

This discussion of differing ways in which the historic authoritarian coalitions influenced interwar events helps explain why this analysis comes to conclusions diametrically opposite to those in the recent work of Luebbert (1987) covering similar cases and a similar time period. Using percentage of the labor force in agricultural labor as the indicator of rural social structure, Luebbert contends that there is no correlation between rural social structure and regime outcome. The landholding measure used in my analysis, which taps the existence of the economic base for the presence of a class of large landholders, shows something quite different. Luebbert then correctly points out that, in the arguments of Gerschenkron and Moore, the reason landholder power resulted in authoritarian outcomes in the interwar period is, in large part, that they still exercised political control over the rural masses in this period. This path was not replicated in the other cases, he contends, again correctly. Therefore, he concludes, landlord strength cannot explain the breakdown in these other cases. My objection to this was made clear in my initial discussion of Moore; this is simply too severe a test of Moore's thesis given that he discusses interwar events only tangentially. The mechanism suggested by Moore and Gerschenkron does not exhaust the ways in which late nineteenth century coalitions and landlord power expressed themselves in

Luebbert

the events of the twenties and thirties.

To put the results of the analysis in a single statement, it is my conclusion that the agrarian class relations and patterns of state-class alliances of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were necessary though not sufficient causes of the breakdown of democracy in interwar Europe. What this amounts to is to assert that had the country in question had different landholding patterns and resultant state-class relations, democracy would have survived. As I pointed out in the discussion of Germany, this counterfactual will appear to many to be absurd, since those patterns of agrarian class relations and state-class alliances are an integral element of one's understanding of the essential features of German (Italian, Spanish, Austrian) economic and political development. In a sense, this is precisely my point.

The one point on which the analysis of the three cases other than Germany appear to fit the Moore thesis poorly is that it is questionable whether the authoritarian coalition in any of them was modernizing, even in a strictly economic sense. This was most clear in the case of Spain, but economic historians also contend that Austrian and Italian development was impeded by the way the state intervened in the economy rather than promoted by it. It might be argued that this assessment is a product of the neo-classical biases of many economic historians. To a certain extent, this is the case: generally the tariff policies of all of these countries, including Germany, are assumed by the economic historians to have had a negative effect on economic development. As Senghaas (1985) demonstrates in his comparative historical study of European industrialization, the reality is that free trade oriented industrialization was very much the exception rather than the rule. Most countries went through a period of protection, which was necessary for successful industrialization as it allowed the domestic market to develop and encouraged forward and backward linkages in the economy and thus self-sustaining growth.

Still, even if one rejects an orthodox condemnation of all state intervention as being counterproductive, there is reason to believe that the type of intervention typical of regimes led by landlord dominated coalitions will impede economic development. This includes but goes well beyond the usual "feudal barriers to capitalist development" line of argument found in both Marxist and neo-classical economic literature, as well as reasons connected to idiosyncratic features of the particular country.<sup>27</sup> Senghaas' comparative study again offers an insight on this point. He contends that agricultural modernization was a necessary feature of all successful developers because of the macro-economic function of agriculture as a market for manufactured goods and due to industry's contribution to rising agricultural productivity (Senghaas 1985: 46-52). Land concentration and thus income concentration impeded the former. Senghaas goes so far as to argue that the response to the British industrial challenge was pre-determined, as it was those countries with autonomous processes of agricultural modernization and a relatively equal distribution of assets in agriculture which met the challenge with successful industrialization of their own.

With this in mind, Germany becomes somewhat of an anomaly, since it was characterized by a powerful landed aristocracy but experienced rapid and self-sustaining industrialization in the nineteenth century. A possible answer to this problem is that Germany did contain substantial areas of medium and small peasant agriculture in the south and west, which could serve the internal market function and as a source for linkages between the agricultural and industrial sector, two of the functions of this group in Senghaas' account.

<sup>27</sup> See the quote from Gross on Austria above for an example of both of these lines of reasoning.

And, indeed, it is true that German economic development followed an east-west gradient with the west being the most developed and the east most backward. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the Junker dominated state did intervene effectively in developing the national economy. The paradox of the German case is that the successful national economic development project was based on a political coalition whose dominant economic class component might have prevented the success of the project had it been dominant in the entire rural economy of the country.

This point also leads us to a revision of Skocpol's argument that a strong state is a necessary component of the authoritarian coalition analyzed by Moore. Our analysis of Spain (and to a lesser extent this could be said of Italy) suggests that a strong state is only necessary if the coalition is attempting to carry out a "revolution from above", a project of rapid economic development.<sup>28</sup> It is not a necessary feature of the path to modern authoritarianism in interwar Europe. Clearly, the state has to have sufficient repressive capacity to install authoritarian rule, but the capacity to effectively intervene in the economy, to develop modern skills in the population, and so on is not essential.

#### Other Structural Factors Contributing to Authoritarian Outcomes

In arguing that agrarian class relations and nineteenth century class-state coalitions were a necessary feature of the breakdown of democracy, I do not mean to discount other factors pointed to by specialists working on the individual countries or comparativists working on the problem more generally. For instance, international economic conjunctures played an important, if variable, role. At a mass level in Germany, the depression fueled the defection of the voters from the traditional parties of the right to the Nazis. Indeed, the increase in the Nazi vote correlates very strongly with the rise of unemployment (Lepsius 1978). On the other hand, the economic crisis played a relatively minor role in Spain and Austria.<sup>29</sup> Geopolitics also played an obvious role. We have already seen how the international political conjuncture created by the end of World War I created reverberations which profoundly affected all of the countries discussed here including the non-combatants. The Versailles Treaty had an obvious affect on German politics in this period and the demise of Austrian democracy was clearly affected by the fact that Austria was surrounded by authoritarian states. All four of the countries went through a number of destabilizing events in the turbulent interwar period and it is plausible that in the absence of several or perhaps even one of these events, things would have turned out differently. (But almost all advanced capitalist countries experienced destabilizing events in this period, and it is only in countries with certain structural and historical features that authoritarianism emerged

<sup>28</sup> The assessment of state capacity is problematic. *Jes* If the state effectively intervenes in the economy, then one can conclude that state capacity was adequate, but if it does not intervene then it may be because of either lack of state capacity or lack of (perceived) interest of ruling groups or bureaucrats in doing so. In the Austrian case, it would appear that the sheer bureaucratic capacity was there, but that the dominant social groups in the Habsburg regime did not perceive it to be in their interests to pursue such an ambitious development project.

<sup>29</sup> As in Germany, the rise in unemployment did weaken the trade unions and thus the social democratic party, the main democratic political force in both countries.

victorious.<sup>30</sup>

It would be impossible for us to review all such idiosyncratic features and assess their weight against the factors discussed here. It is possible and useful to discuss other structural features of the countries analyzed here which contributed to the differing political outcomes and how these features relate to the themes in this essay. Developing the line of thought of O'Donnell on bureaucratic authoritarianism in Latin America and Gerschenkron on European industrialization, Kurth (1979) argues that the timing of industrialization and the movement through various industrial phases (from light consumer goods to capital goods to consumer durables) relative to other countries influenced the political development of Europe over the last century and a half. Industrialization in early industrializers, such as Britain, France, and Belgium, was propelled by the light consumer goods industries, especially textiles. The relatively small amount of capital required for the development of these industries facilitated industrialization without dependence on the state, which Moore argues was a feature of the authoritarian pattern. As a later industrializer, German industrialization was dependent on the state first in the form of protection (and later aid in mobilizing capital in the capital goods phase) which tied the German bourgeoisie to the state and strengthened the authoritarian Junker-crown alliance. A similar situation prevailed in Austria. The entry into the capital goods phase, in which the development of the steel industry played a key role, further reinforced this pattern. The capital required (which was relatively high in this case) was mobilized from the profitable and internationally competitive light consumer goods industry in the early industrializers whereas this was not possible in the later industrializers which turned to the state for this task.

Kurth argues that it is in the saturation phase of the steel industry where the link between the timing and phasing of industrialization and the development of modern (i.e. twentieth century) authoritarianism is most clear. Initially, the vast majority of steel output was absorbed by railroad construction. Once the domestic market for rails was exhausted, steel producers turned to other countries and overseas colonies and to armaments. Germany, with few colonies and with overseas markets preempted by the British, had to rely more heavily on the latter. The loss of colonies as a result of World War I exacerbated the situation and, not surprisingly, the steel industrialists favored rearmament and rejection of the Versailles Treaty and were strong supporters of the DNVP and authoritarian "solutions" throughout the Weimar Republic.

As for the "late-late" industrializers of Latin Europe, Kurth suggests that there was a link between the *trasformismo/el turno* politics of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and the industrial phase at the time. The uncompetitiveness of both industry and agriculture was reflected in protection of both sectors and in a merging of interests of land and industry which was in turn reflected in the political arrangements of *trasformismo/el turno*. Both involved, among other things, an accommodation of interests of segments of the economic elite through bargaining and clientelistic ties. Thus, Kurth's argument suggests a different economic basis for the development of the landowner-bourgeois coalition in Latin Europe than in Central Europe, which fits with our observations on the differing role of the state in the two regions.

Juan Linz suggested to the author that a critical feature separating the authoritarian cases

<sup>30</sup> Similarly, it is possible to accept Linz's (1978) argument that if mistakes made by politicians of the center, moderate left, and moderate right had not been made, a different outcome would have resulted, without rejecting the arguments being advanced here.



from the democratic survivors was participation in, especially defeat in, World War I. Particularly if one includes Italy, though formally a victor, as a country with a defeated mentality, the argument is compelling on a number of grounds: the resentment created by the peace treaties, the close link between the de-mobilized ex-servicemen and the growth of the Squadristi, S.A. and Heimwehr, and so on. Indeed, the style and violent character of fascism is unimaginable without the war. But, again, this factor is connected to the agrarian class relations argument because historically all the great powers (and thus major participants in the war) were large landholding countries (see footnote 5).

#### Extensions to Other Areas

The argument advanced here could be extended to other areas of the world in a modified form. Moore includes the United States in his analysis and the other industrialized former settler colonies of Britain fit as well: Canada, like the North and West in the United States, was predominantly small holding. Australia was dominated by large estates, but these were involved in sheep raising and thus repressive forms of labor control were not necessary. Thus, democratic outcomes would be expected in these countries.

On the surface of it Eastern Europe would also appear to fit: most of these countries were dominated by large estates, and democracy, where it was established, rarely survived the interwar period.<sup>31</sup> The Czech case, one of the few survivors, does fit our analysis: the bourgeoisie was not dependent on the state (see above) and the working class movement in this country was by far the strongest in Eastern Europe. No doubt that the power of the landed classes in Eastern Europe in general did influence events in an antidemocratic direction but closer examination of the events of the period shows that other factors were perhaps more important. The region was markedly less developed than the west and, as a consequence, the working class movement was weaker, too weak to lead the struggle for democracy. In these newly created nations, classes were not historically organized on a national scale with a clear political project. The adoption of democracy was influenced more by international factors. And its breakdown was influenced more by ethnic struggles than by upper class attempts to exclude the working class and peasants.

The thesis fits Latin America more closely.<sup>32</sup> The fact that most Latin American countries did (and some still do) have a significant body of landholders engaged in labor-repressive agriculture is certainly an important contributing factor explaining the agony of democracy in that region. It is important to recognize that in most cases peasants continued to be politically excluded during the populist period and any movement to include them met vociferous opposition from agrarian elites. For a more complete understanding of Latin American political development, it is necessary to investigate the historical and contemporary development of the interrelationship of the landed and bourgeois elites, as Zeitlin (1985, forthcoming) has done for Chile, in order to complement the phases of industrial development argument advanced by O'Donnell.

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<sup>31</sup> See Seton-Watson (1962) for the events of the interwar period. My comments here have greatly benefited from discussions with Valerie Bunce.

<sup>32</sup> For a discussion of the origins of democracy in the Caribbean and Central America employing the type of analysis elaborated here, see Stephens and Stephens (1987).

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**TABLE 1**  
**ELECTIONS IN THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC**

	National Assembly								
	Jan. 1919	June 1920	May 1924	Dec. 1924	May 1928	Sept. 1930	July 1932	Nov. 1932	March 1933*
<b>National Socialists NSDAP</b>	-	-	<u>7%</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>18%</u>	<u>37%</u>	<u>33%</u>	<u>44%</u>
<b>Conservatives (NCL) DNVP</b>	<u>10</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>
<b>National Liberals (PSU)</b>	<u>23</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
<b>DVP</b>	4	14	9	10	9	5	1	2	1
<b>DDP</b>	19	8	6	6	5	4	1	1	1
<b>Catholics (PR) Zentrum</b>	<u>20</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>
<b>BVP</b>	-	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Labor</b>	<u>46</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>30</u>
<b>SPD</b>	38	22	21	26	30	25	22	20	18
<b>USPD</b>	8	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>KPD</b>	-	2	13	9	11	13	15	17	12
<b>Other</b>	1	3	8	7	13	14	2	3	1

\*Conducted by the Nazi-Nationalist Government with significant harassment of the opposition.

NSDAP - National Socialist German Workers' Party, DNVP - German National People's Party, DVP - German People's Party, DDP - German Democratic Party, BVP - Bavarian Peoples' Party, SPD - German Social Democratic Party, USPD - German Independent Social Democratic Party, KPD - German Communist Party

**FIGURE 1**  
**LANDHOLDING PATERNS AND POLITICAL OUTCOMES**

<b>Dominant Pattern of Landholding as of 1900</b> - <i>Defined how?</i>		
	<u>Small</u>	<u>Large</u>
<u>Democracy</u> <u>Survives in</u> <u>Interwar</u> <u>Period</u>	Sweden Denmark Norway Switzerland Belgium Netherlands France	Britain
<u>Partial</u> <u>Eclipse of</u> <u>Democracy</u>	Finland	
<u>Authoritarian</u> <u>Regime</u> <u>Established</u>		Austria-Hungary Spain Italy Germany

**FIGURE 2**  
**MOBILIZING AGENT OF THE EUROPEAN PEASANTRY**  
**Dominant Pattern of Landholding as of 1900**

	<u>Small</u>	<u>Large</u>
<u>Catholic</u>	Centrist Catholic party (e.g. Netherlands)	Rightist Catholic party (Austria)
<u>Protestant</u>	Agrarian party (Scandinavia)	Conservative party (Germany)



**FIGURE 3**  
**SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL FACTORS LEADING TO AUTHORITARIANISM**

	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>Spain</u>	<u>Britain</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>Small Countries</u>
Landed upper class politically very significant	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Engaged in labor repressive agriculture	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Bourgeoisie strong enough to be politically very significant, but not more powerful than landed class	yes	yes	more powerful than landed interests	yes	more powerful	more powerful by 1900	more powerful
Bourgeoisie dependent partner in coalition	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
"Strong" state	yes	yes	?	?	no	?	no
revolutionary break from the past	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no

All evaluations of strength of the various forces etc. are for the last half of the nineteenth century.

*Measured how?*

