Appendix A: China in 1989

This Appendix addresses three issues. First, it explains how we conducted our comparison of Chinese scholarship on Eastern Europe to scholarship on East Asia. Second, it addresses the role of the Soviet Union, a country that is both a geographic neighbor and a regime of similar type (single-party). Third, it addresses how the China case speaks to the question of regime learning, and contributes to some of the areas for future research that we outline in the paper's conclusion.

Comparing Eastern Europe to East Asia

We first compared Chinese scholarship on transitions in East Asia with comparable scholarship on transitions in Eastern Europe. (Because the CCP's comprehensive, prolonged attention to the failure of single-party regimes in the USSR and Eastern Europe is well-documented in existing scholarship, we review those findings briefly; readers may consult the references given for a full explication of this analysis.) Beginning in late 1989, the top leadership of the Chinese Communist Party assigned research projects on the fall of single-party rule in Europe and the Soviet Union to researchers at major institutions such as the Institute of Soviet and Eastern European Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS, affiliated with the PRC State Council), the CCP's International Liaison Department (which conducts party-to-party foreign relations), and the Central Party School (the higher education institution that officially trains CCP cadres). Because of the CCP's relationships with, financial sponsorship of, and direction and supervision of these institutions during this period of China's history, their output is commonly interpreted as reflecting the priorities and thinking of the Chinese leadership (Li 2002; Casarini 2012; Shambaugh 2008a, 2008b).

Beginning in 1990, the research teams working on these projects began to publish their findings in officially supported journals like *Russian Studies* (俄罗斯研究, *Eluosi Yanjiu*) and *Eastern European and Central Asian Studies* (东欧中亚研究, Dong-ou Zhong-ya Yanjiu, formerly *Soviet and Eastern European Studies*, 苏联与东欧研究, *Sulian yu Dong-ou Yanjiu*). A large number of articles and books analyzed the breakdown of single-party socialist rule in Europe, both comparatively and in country-by-country studies. This literature explicitly used its analyses to make comparisons to China's situation and draw conclusions for the CCP. For representative examples of this literature, see Bo and Cui (1990); Ding, Li, and Zhao (1992); Jiang (1993); Li Jingjie (1992); Li and Ma (1993); 'Xifang Zai' (1992); and Yin (1993). An additional set of studies combined analyses of the USSR and Eastern Europe, also for the purposes of extracting lessons for the Chinese regime. CCP officials were required to study a number of these autopsies in detail (Guan 2010). For readers who want further detail on this body of work, we recommend the summary in Shambaugh (2008a), Chapter 4, and the other sources cited above.

We next sought to compare this body of regime-directed scholarship on Eastern Europe to the comparable body of officially-directed work on East Asia. We believed that a side-by-side comparison of the two literatures would allow us to systematically as-

sess how much the CCP had focused on authoritarian breakdown in other single-party regimes, versus the regimes that had also experienced transitions in the late 1980s in the more geographically proximate countries of East Asia. We therefore searched for analyses of the countries in East Asia that had experienced transitions in the journals where these analyses were most likely to appear, including *Southeast Asian Studies* (东南亚研究, *Dong-nan-ya Yanjiu*), *Taiwan Studies* (台湾研究, *Taiwan Yanjiu*), *Journal of Taiwan Research* (台湾研究集刊, *Taiwan Yanjiu Jikan*), and *Journal of Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies* (亚太研究, *Ya-tai Yanjiu*). We searched all issues published from 1988 to 1994 in order to make our results comparable to the period typically analyzed for Eastern Europe. For each article we located, we first determined whether it referenced regime transition; second, we read the article in full to examine the context and content of the discussion. To our knowledge, no previous study has explored how China viewed regime transitions during this period in East Asia, or systematically compared the amount of attention that the CCP accorded to each set of transitions.

Our main findings are as follows:

1. There are simply very few articles about transitions among China's geographic neighbors. Of the articles that do discuss China's neighbors, there are almost none that attempt to identify causes of regime breakdown or prescribe lessons for China. There are, for example, no post-mortem analyses of the causes of breakdown and regime transition in either South Korea (a military regime) or the Philippines (personalist), and therefore no attempt to learn anything from these cases that might be useful to China. There are three articles on Philippine politics, but all assess electoral dynamics in the Aquino government (Ceng 1988, 1989; Fei 1988). This is a clear contrast to the studies of Eastern Europe cited above, all of which focus heavily on outlining the causes of regime breakdown and using that analysis to draw out implications for the CCP.

2. The Asian regimes that do receive (limited) attention are the *socialist or single-party* regimes most similar to China's (Li 2005; Wang and Jiang 2002): Taiwan, Singapore, and Myanmar. Taiwan and Myanmar are clearly geographic neighbors; Singapore under only one of two operationalizations commonly used (region, rather than contiguity). In all three cases, it is regime similarity, rather than geographic proximity, that the authors use to claim relevance for their study: their analysis is focused on regime type's relationship to breakdown (Taiwan and Myanmar) or survival (Singapore). In the case of Taiwan, the authors either focus on cross-Strait relations or on sources of decline in KMT *party* strength (Dai and Chen 1990; Dong 1994; Liu 1993a, 1993b; Mao 1992; Yang 1993; Zhu 1989). On Singapore, CCP researchers focused on the intra-*party* generational succession then underway, and its potential precedents for the generational evolution of the CCP (Cao 1990; Huang 1988; Li 1991; Li Luqu 1992; Zhang 1993). Four articles also discussed transition in Myanmar, which CCP analysts framed unequivocally as "the collapse of the socialist government," even though most Western scholars consider Myanmar during this period a military regime (Cao 1988a, 1988b; Lin 1990; Wei 1992). Similarity in regime type - partic-

ularly the role of the leading party - drove comparisons made by Chinese analysts during this period; geography did not play an important role.

3. The comparatively higher degree of attention paid to European single-party regimes is illustrated by the presence of two articles analyzing the importance of Europe's political transitions for East Asia (Yun 1993; Zeng 1990). In other words, there are more discussions of how Europe's transitions matter for East Asia than of the regional consequences of political change within the region itself.

China and Soviet Socialism

Readers may be wondering why our discussion of regime similarity does not focus more on the Soviet Union. Indeed, the USSR did loom large in Chinese thinking, especially after its collapse in 1991. Even in 1989, CCP leaders recalled with fear the official, once-promising slogan of the 1950s, re-deployed by protesters in Beijing: "the Soviet Union's today will be our tomorrow" (今天的苏联就是我们的明天, *Sulian de jintian jiu shi women de mingtian*). China's analysis of Soviet failure was even more extensive than the autopsies written on Eastern European regimes; one survey found approximately 600 papers and 30 monographs on the USSR's disintegration published between 1992 and 2001 (Guan 2010: 506; see also Li 2004; Lu et al. 2002). Moreover, the CCP produced an eight-DVD classified documentary on the mistakes of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) that became required viewing for party officials (Guan 2010: 507; *Ju'an Siwei* 2006).

We take no issue with extant literature's characterization of China's focus on the Soviet Union. However, because the Soviet Union is *both* a geographic neighbor and a similar sub-type of regime, geographically-based diffusion and regime-based diffusion theories both predict attention to the USSR: the outcome is, by our framing, over-determined. In order to try to separate the effects of diffusion-by-regime-type from diffusion-by-geography, we concentrate our analysis on how much attention Beijing paid to Eastern Europe (beyond the USSR) compared to East Asia (beyond the USSR), comparing the diffusion risks that Beijing perceived from East Asia (proximate, non-similar) and Eastern Europe (non-proximate, similar). We find, as outlined in the main text, that regime isomorphism played a stronger role than geographic proximity in shaping China's perceptions of likely diffusionary threats. We also see Chinese thinking on the relevance of the Soviet Union as supportive of H_2, which proposes that regimes are more influenced by breakdowns in other similar regimes that are also geographically proximate.

Moreover, China's discussion of the USSR provides qualitative corollary evidence in support of our claim about the importance of regime type, though not necessarily in the way that one might first expect. From the beginning of 1989, CCP leaders argued that China was at risk, but also that it had the ability to avoid the USSR's fate because there was something *different* about Chinese single-party communism - or, as Chinese rhetoric often phrases it, "socialism with Chinese characteristics." From the earliest years of CCP history, Deng and his colleagues had learned not to apply Soviet experience blindly; across a range of issues - economic development, internal security, cultural framing -

China's leaders had long been trained in the need to modify Soviet legacies and 'indigenize' them into Chinese society (Bernstein and Li 2010; Guo 2012; Luthi 2007; Marsh 2005; Perry 2012; Rozman 1987; Westad 1998). As one author reflected, China views its evolution as having been defined by departure from the Soviet path more than adherence to it, and "Chinese reform is a process of discarding the Soviet model and building socialism with Chinese characteristics" (Guan 2010: 505). The implicit line of reasoning was that if China was truly similar to the Soviet Union, it had a higher, perhaps inescapable, risk of sharing Moscow's fate, so that the availability of a different outcome for the CCP hinged on differences between the two regimes.

Thus, Chinese analysis often explicitly rejected or placed heavy caveats on analogical reasoning that compared China to the Soviet Union. As early as April 1989, Premier Li Peng indicated that China would refuse to 'mechanically copy' the Soviet Union, and in the longer-term, scholarly Chinese analyses of Soviet failure tended to focus on ways in which the CCP was different from the CPSU.[24] Soviet weakness was often described in such a way as to emphasize China's differences and therefore highlight the CCP's potential advantages: the USSR suffered from reliance on a command economy; international chauvinism, expansionism, and client-state establishment; a crisis of faith resulting from excesses of totalitarianism and the cult of personality; and mismanagement of ethnic minorities ("Russian chauvinism"). China was also said to benefit from lower levels of ethnic diversity, less religious development, and a living generation of revolutionary leadership. Chinese analysis of regime breakdown in the Soviet Union, therefore, reinforces the utility of our central research question: how do similarities in regime type systematically shape patterns of diffusion of authoritarian breakdown and democratization?

China and Authoritarian Learning

Finally, the China case provides suggestive insights on regime learning, though it also poses some puzzles that lead us to call for further inquiry into this phenomenon in the conclusion of our paper. As noted above, the case primarily serves here to highlight the importance of a new independent variable, regime similarity, in determining the potential risks of authoritarian breakdown. But it also offers two different interpretations of how regime learning influenced China (or may not have). Properly adjudicating these claims would require a full-length manuscript, so we summarize our interpretation here and highlight the importance of future research on this topic in the conclusion of the main article text.

It is possible to argue that could argue that Beijing's observations of Eastern Europe informed the steps that the CCP took to avert regime breakdown in 1989. While this interpretation is *prima facie* plausible, a closer examination of the nature and timing of CCP behavior throughout 1989 also casts significant doubt on this narrative. First, much of the known learning that the CCP did in collaboration with other authoritarian regimes occurred later'Ă'Tinitially in summer and fall 1989, *after* China had weathered its May-June

---

[24]For good summaries of this voluminous Chinese-language literature, see Shambaugh (2008a), and Guan (2010).

crisis, and later on as part of the longer-term learning and "diffusion-proofing" process that we outlined above.[25] Willingness to repress appears to be the primary factor that explains the CCP's initial survival in the wave of single-party collapse in 1989; the collaborative learning process that occurred in the summer and fall of that year also did little to stabilize other single-party regimes in Eastern Europe. In our view, therefore, much of the evidence that does exist about authoritarian learning reinforces the claim that intra-crisis learning is difficult and therefore unlikely.

The most plausible argument that intra-crisis learning contributed to Beijing's survival in 1989 is that observations of eastern Europe informed its decision to repress protests in early June. But there is also good historical evidence to suggest that the CCP's willingness to repress was a pre-crisis preference of a significant number of CCP elites, not simply an intra-crisis epiphany (Sarotte 2012; Brook 1998; Zhang et al 2002). We cannot do justice to the book-length treatments of this episode, and the way that domestic preferences and international context interacted in the elite debates that consumed the CCP during this period; readers may consult the references cited here for further explication of this complex and important topic.

References

Bernstein, Thomas P. and Li Hua-Yu. 2010. *China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949-Present*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Bo, Tingxiang, and Cui, Zhiying. 1990. "Dong-Ou jubian de lishi jiaoxun: tan zhizheng-dang yu gongren jieji de guanxi" ["Historical Lessons of Drastic Changes in Eastern Europe: discussing the relationship between ruling parties and the working class"]. *Sulian yu Dong-Ou Wenti* [*Soviet and Eastern European Studies*], No. 6.

Brook, Timothy. 1998. *Quelling the People: The Military Suppression of the Beijing Democracy Movement*. Stanford, CA: Sanford University Press.

Cao, Yunhua. 1988a. "Miandian Zhengzhi tizhi: ji tedian, genwu yu chanshi" ["Myanmar's Political System: A Few Features, Causes, and Trends"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 2: 34-40.

Cao, Yunhua. 1988b. "Miandian Zhengzhi Dongluan Fenxi" ["Analysis of Political Turmoil in Myanmar"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 4: 71-80.

Cao, Yunhau. 1990. "Cong Li Gong Yao dao Wu Zuo Dong" ["From Lee Kuan Yew to Goh Chok Tong"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 4: 10-16.

Casarini, Nicola. 2012. "The Role of Think Tanks in China." *Europe China Research and Advice Network*. http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/china/docs/division_ecran/ecran_is37_paper_33_the_role_of_think_tanks_in_china_nicola_casarini_en.pdf (Accessed August 31, 2017).

---

[25]The broader literature on China's authoritarian resilience is extensive: for reviews, see Dimitrov 2013; Heilmann and Perry 2012; Nathan 2003; Pei 2012.

Ceng, Moxiu. 1988. "Ke Ajinuo zhengfu jinru di san nian" ["Aquino Government Enters its Third Year"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [Southeast Asian Studies], No. 2: 28-33.

Ceng, Moxiu. 1989. "Feilubin zhengdang liliang chongzu he juezhu" ["Philippine political parties' strength, reorganization and competition"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [Southeast Asian Studies], No. 3: 28-33.

Dai, Peiyuan, and Chen Xianzeng. 1990. "Guomindang shangceng quanli jiegou yanbian qushi tanxi" ["Analysis of the Evolution of the KMT Leadership Power Structure"]. *Taiwan Yanjiu Jikan* [*Taiwan Studies Journal*], No. 1: 25-29.

Dimitrov, Martin K., ed. 2013. *Why Communism Did Not Collapse: Understanding Authoritarian Regime Resilience in Asia and Europe.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ding, Weiling, Li Dongyu, and Zhao Lianzhang. 1992. *Sulian Dong-Ou Jubian Qishi Lu* [*Revelations from the Dramatic Change in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*]. Changchun: Jilin Renmin Chubanshe.

Dong, Yuhong. 1994. "Taiwan chaoyezhengdang shili xiaozhang jiqi yingxiang tanxi" ["Analyzing Taiwan's Ruling Party's Growth and Decline, and Its Impact"]. *Taiwan Yanjiu* [*Taiwan Studies*], No. 4: 25-32.

Fei, Siwen. 1988. "Ajinuo zai buduan paichu kunnan zhong qianjin" ["Aquino Continues to Overcome Difficulties"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 1, pp. 11-17.

Guan, G. 2010. "The Influence of the Collapse of the Soviet Union on China's Political Choices." In Thomas P. Bernstein and Li Hua-Yu eds. *China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949-Present*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield: 505-15.

Guo, Xuezhi. 2012. *China's Security State*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Heilmann, Sebastian, and Elizabeth J. Perry, eds. 2011. *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center.

Huang, Songzan. 1988. "Lun Xinjiapo xinyidai lingdao ceng de nanti" ["On the Difficulties of Singapore's New Generation Leaders"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 4: 21-28.

Jiang, Lieqin. 1993. "Guanyu Minzhushehuizhuyi sichao yu yuan Sulian he Song-Ou gonghui de yanbian" ["On the ideological trend of democratic socialism and the evolution of trade unions in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe"]. *Sulian yu Dong-Ou Wenti* [*Soviet and Eastern European Studies*], No. 4.

Ju'An Siwei: Sugong wang dang de lishi jiaoxun: ba ji dianshipian [Consider danger in times of peace: Historical lessons from the CPSU's death: eight-episode TV series]. (2006.) [China]: *Zhongyang Jiwei Fangzheng Chubanshe*: *Jilin Chuban Jituan*.

Li, Luqu. 1991. "Xinjiapo zhengzhi wenhua de xingcheng yu yanbian" ["Formation and Evolution of Singapore's Political Culture"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 3: 1-9.

Li, He. 2002. "The Role of Think Tanks in Chinese Foreign Policy." *Problems of Post-Communism* 49(2): 33-43.

Li, Luyou. 2005. *Dangdai Ya-Tai Zhengdang Zhengzhi de Fazhan* [*Development of Contemporary East Asian Political Parties*]. Shanghai: Xueshu Chubanshe.

Li, Jingyu, and Ma Shufang. 1993. "Liening guanyu zhizhengdang jianshe lilun he Su-Dong ge dang zhizheng shoucuo jiaocun" ["Lenin's theories on party-building and lessons from the mistakes of Soviet and Eastern European ruling parties"]. *Sulian yu Dong-Ou Wenti* [*Soviet and Eastern European Studies*], No. 2.

Li, Jingjie. 1992. "Sugong wang dang de lishi jiaoxun" ["Historical Lessons of the Failure of the CPSU"]. *Sulian yu Dong-Ou Wenti* [*Soviet and Eastern European Studies*] No. 6: 1-12.

Li, Luqu. 1992. "Lun Xinjiapo de zhengzhi fazhan" ["Discussing Singapore's Political Development"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 3-4: 31-40.

Li, Z. 2004. *Sulian Gongchandang xingshuai chengbai de shige jingyan jiaoxun* [*Ten Lessons from Experience from the Rise and Decline of the Soviet Communist Party.*] *Dangdai Shijie yu Shehuizhuyi* [*The Contemporary World and Socialism*] 1: 10-16.

Lin, Xixing. 1990. "Daxuan qian de miandian jushi" ["Situation before Myanmar's Election"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 1: 50-56.

Liu, Guoshen. 1993a. "Analysis of Reforms in the KMT's Central Decision-Making System". *Taiwan Yanjiu Jikan* [*Taiwan Studies Journal*], No. 2: 8-13.

Liu, Guoshen. 1993b. "1986 nian yilai de Taiwan zhengzhi bianqian" ["Changes in Taiwan's Politics Since 1986"]. *Taiwan Yanjiu Jikan* [*Taiwan Studies Journal*], No. 3: 1-9.

Lu, N., C. Jiang, K. Xu, and J. Li. 2002. *Sulian Xing Wang Shilun* [*Historical Analysis of the Soviet Union's Rise and Fall.*] Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe.

Luthi, Lorenz. 2007. *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Mao, Zhongwei. 1992. "'Li-Hao tizhi' de huigu yu zhanwang" ["Reflections on the 'Li-Hao System' and its Prospects"]. *Taiwan Yanjiu Jikan* [*Taiwan Studies Journal*], No. 3.

Marsh, Christopher. 2005. *Unparalleled Reforms: China's Rise, Russia's Fall, and the Interdependence of Transition*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Nathan, Andrew J. 2003. "Authoritarian Resilience." *Journal of Democracy* 14(1): 6-17.

Pei, Minxin. 2012. "Is CCP Rule Fragile or Resilient?" *Journal of Democracy* 23(1): 27-41.

Perry, Elizabeth J. 2012. *Anyuan: Mining China's Revolutionary Tradition*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Rozman, G. 1987. *The Chinese Debate on Soviet Socialism, 1978-1985*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sarotte, Mary Elise. 2012. "China's Fear of Contagion: Tiananmen Square and the Power of the European Example." *International Security* 37(2): 156-182.

Shambaugh, David. 2008a. *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

Shambaugh, David. 2008b. "Training China's Political Elite: The Party School System." *The China Quarterly* 196: 827-44.

Wang, Changjiang, and Jiang Yao. 2002. *Xiandai Zhengdang Zhizheng Fangzhen Bijiao Yanjiu* [*Comparative Research on the Ruling/Governance Methods of Modern Political Parties*]. Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe.

Wei, Tianqi. 1992. "Jinnian miandian jushi zongshu" ["Summary of Myanmar's Situation in Recent Years"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*] No. 6: 35-37.

Westad, Odd Arne. 1998. *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-63*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

'Xifang Zai.' 1992. "Xifang zai yuan Sulian de Dong-Ou gongyun lingyu ruhe weixing heping yanbian zhanlue" ["Types of Peaceful Evolution Strategies by Western Countries in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe"]. *Sulian yu Dong-Ou Wenti* [*Soviet and Eastern European Studies*], No. 4.

Yang, Lixian. 1993. "Taiwan 'xianzheng gaige' zai toushi" ["Taiwan's Constitutional Reform in Perspective"]. *Taiwan Yanjiu* [*Taiwan Studies*] No. 3: 60-66.

Yin, Xuyi. 1993. "Shehuizhuyi de jianglai zenmeyang de?" ["What will be the future of socialism?"]. *Guoji Gongyun Shi Yanjiu* [*Research on the International Communist Movement's History*] No. 3.

Yun, Yan. 1993. "Lengzhan ju wang yi, chongtu heshi xiu" ["Cold War Goes, When Does Conflict End"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 1-2: 13-15.

Zeng, Qingfeng. 1990. "Dong-Ou tai Yazhou dai lai de jiyu he tiaozhan" ["Opportunities and Challenges Brought by Eastern Europe to Asia"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 1:113-115.

Zhang, Xiaotian. 1993. "Xinjiapou shouren minxuan zong" ["Singapore's First Democratically Elected President"]. *Dongnanya Yanjiu* [*Southeast Asian Studies*], No. 5-6: 86.

Zhang, Liang, Andrew J. Nathan, and Perry Link. 2002. *The Tiananmen Papers*. New York, NY: PublicAffairs.

Zhu, Tianshun. 1989. "Guomindang zai Taiwan de 'fatong' weiji." ["KMT's Legitimacy/Legal System Crisis in Taiwan"]. *Taiwan Yanjiu Jikan* [*Taiwan Studies Journal*] No. 3: 45-55.

Appendix B: Robustness Tests

Contents

1 Summary Statistics

Table 6: Summary Statistics

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Median	Mode
Autocratic breakdown	0	1	.05	0	0
Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)	0	6	1.03	1	
Similar regime×geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag)	0	2	.05	0	
Similar regime×geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 150 miles	0	2	.06	0	
Similar regime×geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 400 miles	0	2	.06	0	
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag)	0	3	.14	0	
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 150 miles	0	3	.16	0	
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 400 miles	0	3	.18	0	
Democratization	0	1	.02	0	0
Similar regime democratic transition (lag)	0	4	.44	0	
Similar regime×geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag)	0	2	.02	0	
Similar regime×geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 150 miles	0	2	.03	0	
Similar regime×geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 400 miles	0	2	.03	0	
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag)	0	2	.06	0	
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 150 miles	0	2	.06	0	
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 400 miles	0	2	.07	0	
GDP per capita logged	3.62	10.91	6.56	6.29	
Growth	-51.03	81.89	4.43	4.68	
Civil war	0	1	.16	0	0
Interstate war	0	1	.02	0	0
Former British colony	0	1	.30	0	0
Global democracy level	-2.52	3.84	.17	-1.12	
Duration	2	269	23.41	15	

2 Serial Correlation

We first check that serial correlation, a common issue in time-series data, is not a concern. We check this on Models 2 and 5. Using a Wooldridge (2002) test for serial correlation, for both models we find no evidence to reject the null hypothesis that there is no first-order autocorrelation.

3 Robustness Test: Levels of Contiguity

We reestimate equation 1 with *Autocratic breakdown* and *Democratization* as the dependent variables, but with broader operationalizations of proximity. The results are in Table 7. In Models 7 and 9, a regime can be separated by up to 150 miles of water and still be counted as a neighbor, while in Models 8 and 10 this goes up to 400 miles. The positive and statistically significant effects (at least at 99% confidence) of *Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)* and *Similar regime democratic transition (lag)* hold throughout these alternative specifications. *Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag)* is insignificant in all models.

Table 7: Effects of Autocratic Regime Transitions and Democratizations in Similar Regimes and Different Levels of Geographic Neighbors on the Likelihood of *Autocratic breakdown* and *Democratization*

	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)	.19**	.19**		
	(.06)	(.06)		
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 150 miles	.04			
	(.17)			
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 400 miles		.03		
		(.17)		
Similar regime democratic transition (lag)			.44***	.43***
			(.10)	(.10)
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 150 miles			.30	
			(.30)	
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 400 miles				.43
				(.27)
GDP per capita logged	-.26**	-.27**	-.08	-.08
	(.09)	(.09)	(.11)	(.11)
Growth	-.07***	-.07***	-.04**	-.04**
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Civil war	.57**	.57**	.09	.08
	(.22)	(.22)	(.29)	(.29)
Interstate war	-1.36	-1.36	-.29	-.29
	(.98)	(.98)	(.96)	(.96)
Former British colony	-.32	-.32	-.18	-.17
	(.25)	(.26)	(.32)	(.32)
Global democracy level	-.02	-.02	.07	.07
	(.05)	(.05)	(.07)	(.07)
Constant	-1.39*	-1.38*	-3.37***	-3.39***
	(.57)	(.57)	(.69)	(.68)
N	2,819	2,819	2,819	2,819
AIC	1,008.19	1,008.21	610.70	609.66
Pseudo R^2	.08	.08	.05	.05
Dependent variable	Autocratic breakdown		Democratization	

Unit of analysis is autocratic regime-year, spanning 1961-2010.
Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered by country.
***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$

4 Robustness Test: Geographic Spatial Lag Variables Excluded

We conduct a robustness test by reestimating Models 2 and 5 with, respectively, *Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag)* and *Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag)* excluded to alleviate potential concerns about including multiple spatial lag variables in one model. The positive and statistically significant effects of *Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)* and *Similar regime democratic transition (lag)* remain at least at 99% confidence.

Table 8: Effects of Autocratic Breakdowns and Democratizations in Regime Neighbors on the Likelihood of *Autocratic breakdown* and *Democratization*

	Model 11	Model 12
Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)	.19**	
	(.06)	
Similar regime democratic transition (lag)		.46***
		(.10)
GDP per capita logged	-.27**	-.09
	(.09)	(.11)
Growth	-.07***	-.04**
	(.01)	(.01)
Civil war	.57**	.09
	(.22)	(.29)
Interstate war	-1.36	-.30
	(.98)	(.96)
Former British colony	-.33	-.20
	(.25)	(.32)
Global democracy level	-.02	.07
	(.05)	(.07)
Constant	-1.37*	-3.33***
	(.56)	(.68)
N	2,819	2,819
AIC	1,006.24	609.50
Pseudo R^2	.08	.05
Dependent variable	Autocratic breakdown	Democratization

Unit of analysis is autocratic regime-year, spanning 1961-2010.
Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered by country.
***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$

5 Robustness Test: Regime Duration

Our model specification was based, in part, on previous quantitative studies of democratic diffusion. Brinks and Coppedge (2006: 480) do not account for regime longevity in their model, only including it in the appendix (486). Following their precedent, we did not include *Duration* in our main model but we check whether accounting for a regime's duration affects our findings. *Duration* measures the number of years since the regime's inception. When we reestimate Models 2 and 5 with *Duration* included, *Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)* and *Similar regime democratic transition (lag)* remain positive and significant at least at 99% confidence.

Table 9: Effects of Autocratic Breakdowns and Democratizations in Similar Regimes and Geographic Neighbors on the Likelihood of *Autocratic breakdown* and *Democratization*

	Model 13	Model 14
Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)	.19** (.06)	
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag)	.06 (.18)	
Similar regime democratic transition (lag)		.42*** (.10)
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag)		.45 (.31)
GDP per capita logged	-.20* (.10)	-.02 (.12)
Growth	-.07*** (.01)	-.04** (.01)
Civil war	.53* (.22)	.02 (.30)
Interstate war	-1.41 (1.00)	-.33 (.98)
Former British colony	-.32 (.25)	-.19 (.32)
Global democracy level	-.01 (.05)	.08 (.06)
Duration	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Constant	-1.59** (.58)	-3.58*** (.70)
N	2,819	2,819
AIC	1,006.94	609.79
Pseudo R^2	.08	.06
Dependent variable	Autocratic breakdown	Democratization

Unit of analysis is autocratic regime-year, spanning 1961-2010.
Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered by country.
***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$

6   Robustness Test: Temporal Shocks

We check that un-modeled temporal shocks are not creating the appearance of spatial dependence when it is actually absent (Plümper and Neumayer 2010). We reestimate Models 2 and 5 with annual dummy variables, which we do not display due to the large number of variables; the full results can be obtained from the authors. The effect of *Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)* is positive and significant at 90% confidence, while *Similar regime democratic transition (lag)* is positive and significant at 99% confidence. For Model 16, a joint F-test of the annual variable suggests the null hypothesis that they are jointly equal to zero should not be rejected. For Model 15, an F-test suggests that the null hypotheses that they are jointly equal to zero should be rejected. However, none of the annual dummy variables come close to being statistically significant.

Table 10: Annual Dummies Robustness Test: Effects of Autocratic Breakdowns and Democratizations in Similar Regimes and Geographic Neighbors on the Likelihood of *Autocratic breakdown* and *Democratization*

	Model 15	Model 16
Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)	.19† .10	
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag)	.20 (.21)	
Similar regime democratic transition (lag)		.74** (.28)
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag)		.92* (.35)
GDP per capita logged	-.25* (.10)	-.10 (.12)
Growth	-.07*** (.01)	-.03 (.02)
Civil war	.57* (.23)	.01 (.31)
Interstate war	-1.31 (.99)	-.23 (1.05)
Former British colony	-.29 (.25)	-.16 (.33)
Global democracy level	3.10 (15.99)	9.83 (31.38)
Constant	-12.85 (61.08)	-40.67 (119.76)
N	2,698	2,006
AIC	1,041.48	602.24
Pseudo R^2	.12	.10
Dependent variable	Autocratic breakdown	Democratization

Unit of analysis is autocratic regime-year, spanning 1961-2010.
Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered by country.
***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$ $^\dagger p < .10$

7 Robustness Test: The Temporal Nature of Diffusion

We outlined in our theory why diffusion by both geographic and regime-based mechanisms occur over a temporal delay. However, it is possible that geographic-based diffusion is a faster process than diffusion based on regime type. We therefore estimate a spatial Durbin model to capture simultaneous geographic-based diffusion while including the temporal lag for regime-based diffusion (*Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)*). As before, we use a non-row-standardized spatial weights matrix to identify regimes as geographic neighbors if they are contiguous. However, the spatial Durbin model requires a continuous dependent variable. We therefore switch our dependent variable to a country's Polity score (Marshall and Jaggers 2005). This is not ideal, but enables us to investigate whether our findings about the importance of regime type for the diffusion of autocratic breakdown are robust to accounting for geographic-based diffusion as a more immediate process, even though it is with a slightly different dependent variable.

We find evidence that authoritarian regimes' levels of democracy - measured by Polity and signified in Table 11 by ρ - are responsive to events in their geographic neighbors. We also find that authoritarian regimes' levels of democracy are influenced by whether autocratic breakdowns occur in similar regimes. This finding remains statistically significant at 99% confidence. In line with our theory, autocracies' levels of democracy are expected to increase as an increasing number of authoritarian regimes of a similar type break down.

Table 11: The Effects of Temporally Lagged Regime-Based Diffusion and Simultaneous Geographic Diffusion on Autocracies' Levels of Democracy

	Model 17
Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)	.17**
	(.06)
ρ	.18***
	(.00)
GDP per capita logged	-.05
	(.06)
Growth	.00
	(.01)
Civil war	1.21***
	(.19)
Interstate war	-1.12*
	(.49)
Former British colony	1.43***
	(.15)
Global democracy level	.41***
	(.03)
Constant	-2.78***
	(.38)
N	2,483

Unit of analysis is autocratic regime-year, spanning 1961-2010.
***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$

8 Robustness Test: Levels of Contiguity for the Interaction Effect

We reestimate Models 3 and 6 - the models with the interaction effect - with broader operationalizations of proximity. The results are in Table 12. In Models 18 and 20, we calculate the interaction effect where similar regimes can be separated by up to 150 miles of water and still be counted as a neighbor, while in Models 19 and 21 this goes up to 400 miles. The positive but statistically insignificant effects of the interaction terms hold throughout these alternative specifications.

Table 12: Effects of Autocratic Regime Transitions and Democratizations in Geographically Proximate Similar Regimes on the Likelihood of *Autocratic breakdown* and *Democratization*

	Model 18	Model 19	Model 20	Model 21
Similar regime autocratic breakdown (lag)	.19**	.19**		
	(.06)	(.06)		
Similar regime×geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 150 miles	.07			
	(.42)			
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 150 miles	.02			
	(.23)			
Similar regime×geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 400 miles		.03		
		(.42)		
Geographic neighbor autocratic breakdown (lag) - 400 miles		.02		
		(.23)		
Similar regime democratic transition (lag)			.42***	.42***
			(.10)	(.10)
Similar regime×geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 150 miles			.60	
			(.68)	
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 150 miles			-.04	
			(.51)	
Similar regime×geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 400 miles				.24
				(.60)
Geographic neighbor democratic transition (lag) - 400 miles				.31
				(.40)
GDP per capita logged	-.27**	-.27**	-.09	-.09
	(.09)	(.09)	(.11)	(.11)
Growth	-.07***	-.07***	-.04**	-.04**
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Civil war	.57**	.57**	.09	.08
	(.22)	(.22)	(.29)	(.29)
Interstate war	-1.36	-1.36	-.27	-.28
	(.98)	(.98)	(.96)	(.96)
Former British colony	-.32	-.32	-.18	-.17
	(.25)	(.26)	(.32)	(.32)
Global democracy level	-.02	-.02	.07	.07
	(.05)	(.05)	(.07)	(.07)
Constant	-1.38*	-1.38*	-3.30***	-3.36***
	(.55)	(.55)	(.67)	(.67)
N	2,819	2,819	2,819	2,819
AIC	1,010.16	1,010.20	611.91	611.51
Pseudo R^2	.08	.08	.05	.06
Dependent variable	Autocratic breakdown		Democratization	

Unit of analysis is autocratic regime-year, spanning 1961-2010.
Robust standard errors in parentheses clustered by country.
***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$

9 Appendix B References

Brinks, Daniel, and Michael Coppedge. 2006. "Diffusion Is No Illusion: Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy." *Comparative Political Studies* 39(4): 463-489.

Marshall, Monty, and Keith Jaggers. 2005. *Polity IV Project: Dataset Users' Manual*. Arlington, VA: George Mason University.

Neumayer, Eric, and Thomas Plümper. 2010. "Spatial Effects in Dyadic Data." *International Organization* 64: 145-166.

Wooldridge, J.M. 2002. *Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.