

FROM DEPENDENCY TO SOVEREIGNTY: AN EVENT HISTORY ANALYSIS OF DECOLONIZATION 1870-1987*

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This paper examines the precipitants of decolonization among Western dependencies from 1870 to 1987 within an event history framework. It focuses on the implications of world economy and world polity perspectives. Results indicate the usefulness of both perspectives, while also pointing to an array of other factors. On the world economy side, the rate of decolonization rose during the period of American hegemony. On the world polity side, decolonization was more rapid where suffrage regimes were broad and after 1960 when imperialism was delegitimated in global political discourse. There is further evidence of diffusion processes within empires, where the number of prior decolonization events within the empire accelerated the decolonization rate of remaining dependencies. Separate analyses of decolonization before and after World War II point to some shifts in parameters over time that challenge assumptions that institutional effects are invariably located in the later stages of a historical process.

The breakdown of Western empires and the entry of non-Western states into the international states system is one of the most massive political processes of the twentieth century. By the criteria employed in this study, 130 colonial dependencies of Western states became recognized independent states or were fully incorporated as parts of sovereign states during the twentieth century. By 1987, the remnants of once far-flung colonial empires constituted a tiny proportion of the world's population and land area.

A number of recent studies have quantitatively analyzed long-term patterns in Western colonization (Bergesen and Schoenberg 1980, McGowan 1985, Boswell 1989). These studies have advanced our understanding of the expansion of the Western political and economic system, indicating links between colonial activity and properties of the system as a whole. They present evidence that the aggregate number of formal dependencies is inversely related to hegemony in the interstate system and economic up-

swings in the world-economy.

These analyses of "net colonization" treat the resultant of the twin processes of colonization and decolonization. It may be fruitful, however, to also consider these processes in isolation: to keep distinct the questions "under what conditions do Western states construct formal dependencies?" and "under what conditions do formal dependencies move to sovereign status?" This separation may be particularly important in pursuing the latter issue, which tends to be theoretically defocused.

Why attend to decolonization? From the perspective of theories of the world-system, decolonization is important because state sovereignty potentially changes the economic and political "rules of the game." Sovereign states have widely legitimated rights to nationalize industries (Krasner 1978), spur economic growth through central direction and initiative (Delacroix and Ragin 1981, Evans 1985), and organize collectively (Krasner 1985). A world-system composed of sovereign states may be quite unlike one made up of empires.

In this paper I address the historical phenomenon of decolonization by connecting patterns in its timing to general theoretical arguments. For theory I turn primarily to two analyses of the world system: "world economy" arguments focusing on core-periphery exchange and "world polity" arguments focusing on the global diffusion and institutionalization of political models.

WORLD ECONOMY

The world economy perspective (Wallerstein 1974, 1980, 1989; Chase-Dunn and Rubinson 1979) views the international exchange of commodities as constructing a hierarchically organized division of labor. Unequal exchange is rooted in and reinforces the concentration of economic and political resources in the core of the system. As such it is fundamental. What may vary, however, is the degree to which core-periphery relations are regulated through direct political controls.

Chase-Dunn and Rubinson (1979) suggest two structural conditions that should affect the form of core-periphery linkages. The first involves the presence or absence of a hegemonic state, a state which dominates the world economy industrially, commercially, and financially. Chase-Dunn and Rubinson (1979) argue that relative equality among core states preserves and expands colonial empires by intensifying competition over peripheral areas. Conversely, the rise of a hegemonic state reduces the amount of competition between core states, producing an "imperialism of free trade" dominated by the hegemon (Krasner [1976] provides an international relations analysis reaching the same conclusion). Wallerstein (1989) argues that Britain's rise towards hegemony after 1763 reshaped the costs and benefits of empire for both European colonial powers and American settler colonies, promoting decolonization in the Americas.

Second, upturns in the world economy are thought to facilitate decolonization, while economic downturns lead to colonization (Chase-Dunn and Rubinson 1979, p. 462-3). This argument reproduces Lenin's (1933) account of imperialism at the level of the world system as a whole. A falling rate of profit drives capitalists to invest in new markets; colonies are created and maintained to protect investments. When core economies are expanding, there is less need to look for opportunities outside the national economy, rendering unnecessary the considerable overhead costs of political regulation (Clark 1936).

The two arguments share the same form. Pressures induced by inter-state competition or economic stagnation lead core states to intensify their efforts to monopolize peripheral areas. The relaxation of such pressures diminishes the need to politically control the periphery. Bergesen and Schoenberg (1980) and Boswell (1989) provide evidence at the world system level relating hege-

mony and periods of global economic expansion to net colonization.

WORLD POLITY

Just as ideas about dependency within global markets challenge notions of internally generated economic development, models of an interconnected world polity challenge emphases on the internal roots of state structures and policy making. These arguments are often institutional (Meyer and Rowan 1977; Ashley 1984; March and Olsen 1984), stressing the impact of international political discourse and the power of dominant models of social action. Examples include the regimes literature on the collective understandings organizing international relations (Krasner 1983; Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986) and the work of Meyer and others on the way states are constrained and empowered by external definitions (Meyer and Hannan 1979; Meyer 1980; Thomas and Meyer 1980).

An institutional perspective suggests that decolonization involves the spread of political models. Two distinct mechanisms may be delineated. First, decolonization is facilitated by the transmission of the nation-state model from Western powers to their dependencies. Fieldhouse (1966) documents the way colonial institutions mirror metropolitan institutions. From the first, British colonies possess substantial local autonomy; American dependencies are constructed around bicameral legislatures, mass suffrage and mass education; and Portuguese administration is centered in judicial authority with low levels of political participation. Indigenous populations speedily become oriented to the metropolitan political model (as are, of course, metropolitan settlers).

Where the metropolitan model is grounded in popular sovereignty, nationalism, and a broadly incorporative state, it is a weapon easily turned against its creators (Emerson 1960; Anderson 1983). Its universalism and communalism make the nation-state a powerful model for peripheral political mobilization (compare the limited appeal of traditional structures). In addition, even opportunistic metropolitan elites may find it difficult to oppose their own political theory and model.

A parallel institutional argument focuses on the diffusion of decolonization itself. The first instances of decolonization make national liberation a conceivable and possible political event. The successes of independence struggles in In-

dia, Indochina, and Indonesia inspired indigenous nationalism elsewhere. Subsequent events produced a sense of the inevitability of decolonization and routinized its achievement. By 1960 one could argue that decolonization itself had delegitimized imperialism, as ex-dependencies and ex-metropolises in the United Nations proclaimed the right of self-determination in colonial possessions.

While world economy and world polity arguments involve different theoretical apparatuses and images of the world system, they need not be seen as contradictory. From a larger perspective, they treat the two faces of a dialectically structured world system, where a global division of labor is embedded in a political community of formally equal sovereign states. In terms of decolonization, structural properties of the world economy and the spread of political models within the world polity may both be important.

I should also note that these two approaches do not exhaust the range of arguments relevant to decolonization. For example, neither attends to the realist insight that dependencies are a source of national power and prestige, and that decolonization may therefore stem from the inability of the metropolitan state to crush rebellion. This argument, and other factors less clearly connected to a particular theoretical logic, are empirically assessed below.

DATA AND MEASURES

Definitions and the Scope of the Study

Dependency is defined in this paper as a relation of explicit political subordination. Operationally, dependencies are formed through the creation of a colonial administration or protectorate (where sovereignty over internal jurisdiction or external freedom of action are ceded). This definition includes a number of cases not always treated as formal dependencies; for example, U.S. imposition of budgetary controls and rights of military occupation are regarded as transforming several Caribbean polities into American protectorates in the early twentieth century. It does not include unequal treaties opening areas to economic penetration or giving one Western state special economic privileges.

Decolonization occurs when a dependency becomes a new sovereign state or when it is fully incorporated into an existing sovereign state. In the second case the existing state may be the prior metropolis (as with Hawaii and the U.S.) or

some other polity (as with Goa and India).¹ Decolonization must be recognized *de jure* within the Western international community. Recognition by the previous sovereign is the effective criterion unless, as in the case of South African homelands or Portugal's colonies, metropolitan definitions are widely and explicitly challenged in the international community.

This study examines the colonial dependencies of Western states, where "Western states" include the Russian Empire/Soviet Union and ex-settler colonies such as the United States. Dependencies of non-Western states are excluded from the analysis.² Also excluded are geographically proximate dependencies of Western states. For example, neither the component parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire nor the landward expansion of the United States is included in the data set.

This definition of the population takes both theoretical and pragmatic considerations into account. Theoretically, the aim is to make sense of the concrete historical phenomenon of the breakdown of Western overseas empires. World economy arguments about core-periphery relations do not apply to the dependencies of peripheral states or political relationships within core areas. And world polity notions of the global delegitimation of Western empires do not speak clearly to cases where dependent status is unrecognized or disputed. Pragmatically, the identification of all such dependencies would require a close examination of each state's internal political structure that would go beyond this study's resources.

The study spans the period 1870 to 1987. Starting in 1870 permits contrasts important to world systems theories: between intense international competition before and after World War I, global economic expansions at the turn of the

¹ These two forms of movement to sovereignty are combined on theoretical grounds; most arguments about decolonization apply to both equally well. Analyses examining only independence events give results very similar to those reported below. There are only thirteen incorporation events for which all variables were available at the time of transition, too few to support an extended multivariate analysis.

² If a Western dependency becomes a dependency of a non-Western state, the case is censored at that point. For example, in 1947 India assumed Great Britain's sovereignty over the Indian Princely States. This study tracks the Princely States as a British dependency until 1947, but not their career as an Indian dependency. (Princely states were fully integrated into the Republic of India several years later.)

century and after 1945, and changes in metropolitan military power and political models occurring over the course of a century. In addition, 1870 marks the emergence of the intense military and economic competition characteristic of the twentieth century, as the Franco-Prussian War restructured the balance of power in Europe and Britain's industrial dominance was challenged by the United States and Germany. I would thus argue that the latter part of the nineteenth century thus does not involve such a fundamentally different international context that comparisons become more misleading than helpful (as a comparison to eighteenth century decolonization in the Americas might). To test this assumption, models were also estimated over the periods 1918-1987 and 1924-1987 (the latter conditions on the first decolonization event); results were almost identical to those discussed below.

Ending this study in 1987 captures as much of the process of twentieth century decolonization as possible. It is often contended that more recent decolonization is theoretically uninteresting or not comparable to earlier events. For example, Boswell (1989) halts his analysis in 1960, arguing that the emergence of global norms condemning imperialism changed the meaning of colonization and decolonization. I would instead regard international shifts in the legitimacy of imperial arrangements as factors to be included in the analysis of decolonization. More generally, the spread of decolonization from major colonies like India and Indonesia to dependencies all over the world (Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific) is a theoretically interesting aspect of the process that should be explained, not assumed to be unimportant or disjoint from earlier events.

Within the definitions discussed above, I attempt to cover all non-Western dependencies of Western states in existence over the 1870-1987 period. Henige's (1970) comprehensive listing of colonial governors from 1415 to 1969 was used to establish the founding and decolonization dates of most non-Western dependencies. Banks (1987) was used to cover the period from 1970 to 1987. Extensive research in secondary materials modified and supplemented these data to fit the definitions discussed above. Colonization dates were measured to the year; decolonization dates to the day and month where available.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Figure 1 displays an integrated hazard plot (Aalen 1978) of the transition rate from dependency to

sovereignty from 1870 to 1987. The slope of the integrated hazard gives a nonparametric estimate of the rate of decolonization as a function of time. An upward (downward) acceleration of the curve indicates that the rate of decolonization rises (declines) over time. Ninety-five percent confidence intervals are marked by dashed lines.

The plot shows clearly that the transition rate from dependent to sovereign status increased dramatically over historical time. One can see that the slope of the curve increases from 1924, the year of the first decolonization events in the twentieth century, until almost the end of the observation period. By contrast, I show elsewhere (Strang, forthcoming) that the rate of decolonization does not vary with dependency age. Together, these results suggest that decolonization is primarily conditioned by factors external to the dependency.

Both world systems perspectives can explain the rapid increase in the rate of decolonization over historical time. From a world economy viewpoint, much may be attributed to American hegemony and global economic expansion after World War II. World polity arguments point to the increasing dominance of the expanded nation-state model and the dynamics of diffusion. In addition, realist attention to the declining military stature of the major colonial powers forms a third plausible explanation of the historical trend. A central concern of the analysis below is to tie the increasing rate of decolonization to specific factors at the dependency, metropolitan, and systemic levels.

Independent Variables

Measures capturing both the arguments discussed above and a number of other factors were constructed from publicly available data sets and statistical yearbooks. All variables were measured continuously or repeatedly (at intervals of a decade or less, as a rule) to capture temporal variation within cases. Values are assumed constant between observations.

The world economy literature provides broadly accepted periodizations of both hegemony and long waves for the period under study in this paper. Wallerstein (1983) defines hegemony as the presence of a state that is dominant in manufacturing, commerce, and finance, and identifies three periods of hegemonic dominance: the Netherlands 1625-1672, Great Britain 1815-1873, and the United States 1945-1967. While there is some controversy over the identification and pe-

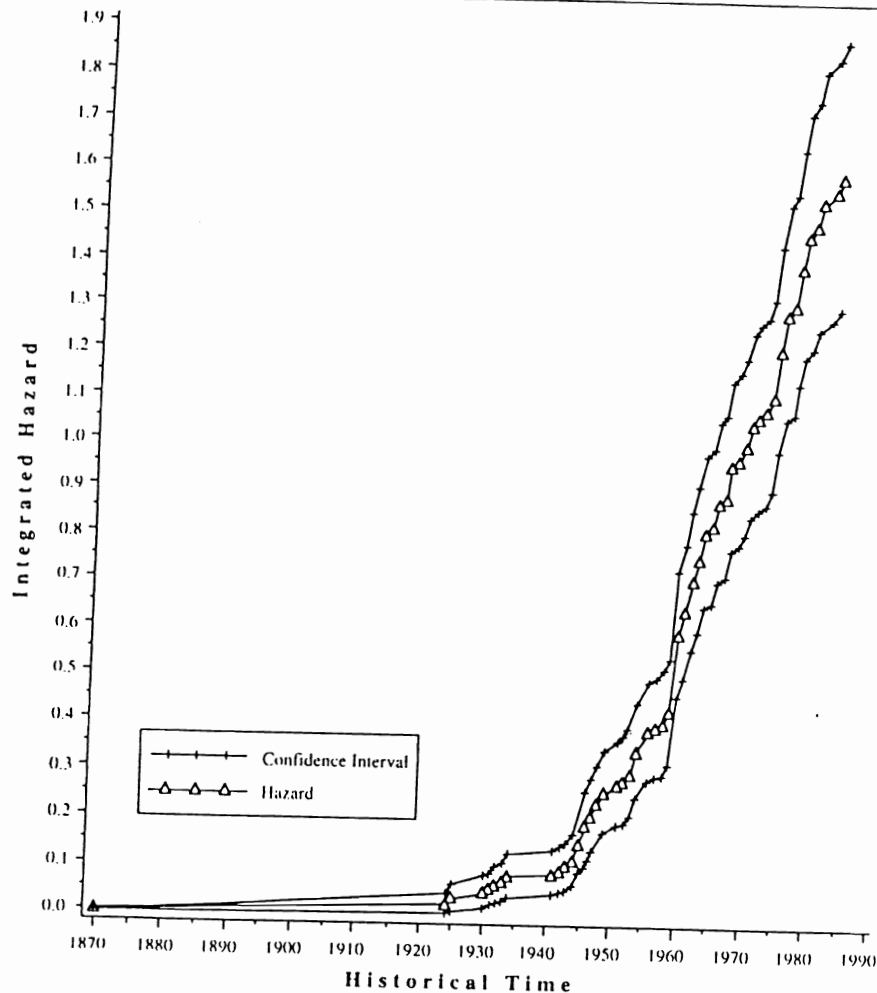


Figure 1. Transitions From Dependency to Sovereignty: Non-European Polities, 1870-1987; Aalen Estimates With 95 Percent Confidence Intervals

oxidation of early hegemon, there is little debate concerning the 1870-1987 period. The binary variable "Hegemony" equals one during the periods identified by Wallerstein, and zero otherwise.

Goldstein's (1985) periodization of Kondratieff waves is used to define upswings and downswings in the global economy. For the 1870-1987 period, Goldstein identifies downswings for 1872-1893 and 1917-1940 and upswings for 1848-1872, 1893-1917, and 1940-1967 (and by

the cyclic logic 1967 to 1987 is dated as a downswing). "Economic Upswing" is a binary variable corresponding to this periodization.⁴

Factors capturing world polity arguments are measured at the systemic, metropolitan, and de-

⁴In recent work Goldstein (1988) revised his position, arguing that the post-World War II upswing lasts until 1980. There seems to be less agreement with this stance than with his original periodization. I am indebted to Terry Boswell for help with the long waves literature.

pendency levels.⁴ At the systemic level, the shift in global political discourse from support of colonialism as Western "trusteeship" to the condemnation of imperialism is a critical factor. While any dating of this shift in international discourse is somewhat arbitrary, I follow Boswell (1989) in arguing that the United Nations' 1960 "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples" is a crucial landmark. The binary variable "UN Declaration" equals zero before 1960 and one afterward.

Arguments about exposure to the nation-state model are captured at the metropolitan level by the breadth of metropolitan suffrage, since voting dramatically enacts popular sovereignty. "Metropolitan Suffrage" is measured as the ratio of the enfranchised to the total population, taken from Banks (1976), Mackie and Rose (1982), and Flora (1983). The same argument is captured at the dependency level through the presence of self-governing colonial institutions. "Representation" equals one where a colonial legislature is elected on a broad suffrage regime (so electoral rights are not restricted to metropolitan settlers or traditional elites), and zero otherwise.⁵

A second set of world polity factors captures the diffusion of decolonization. One way to measure diffusion effects would be to identify salient events like the decolonization of India; this strategy, however, would necessarily involve a number of essentially *ad hoc* decisions. A more systematic method is to use the number of relevant prior events within the population as an exogenous variable. This approach constitutes an individual level analogue to classic population level models of diffusion (Strang, 1991).

Two sorts of relevant prior events are defined here: events within the region, and events within the empire. Virtually all comparative historical accounts of decolonization organize their mate-

⁴I would argue that variables representing implications of world systems arguments need not be systemic properties. What is important is the substantive connection between theoretical argument and measure, not the type of unit being characterized. Variables can represent the implications of world polity arguments by denoting the exposure of individual dependencies to external political structures and events, much as the dependency literature has employed foreign investment and export partner concentration to signal economic dependency.

⁵This variable was coded by the author from descriptions of colonial institutions in volumes of the *Statesman's Yearbook*, Cook and Paxton (1979), and other secondary sources.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Independent Variables

Variable	Mean	s.d.	Percent Missing
<i>System</i>			
Hegemony	.19	.28	0
Economic upswing	.50	.69	0
UN declaration	.12	.23	0
<i>Metropolitan</i>			
Naval capacity	.25	.18	0
Suffrage	.44	.24	1
<i>Dependency</i>			
Population*	5.40	2.22	15
Trade*	3.59	2.28	23
Representation	.23	.42	0
Imperial diffusion	8.72	13.16	0
Regional diffusion	7.67	9.76	0
Settler majority	.15	.36	14
Settler minority	.10	.30	14

*Logged

rial in terms of one or the other of these categories, or through their intersection. Regionally channeled diffusion suggests imitation and mutual support among historically and culturally linked dependencies. While imperial diffusion within empires may also work through imitation, a number of other mechanisms may be involved — for example, shifts in metropolitan policy after the loss of key dependencies. Therefore, evidence of regional diffusion is required to unambiguously support world polity arguments.

Two variables are constructed to examine these diffusion processes. "Regional Diffusion" counts the number of prior decolonization events within the region. Six regions were defined — the Americas, the Arctic, North Africa and the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. While these categories imply a few unlikely linkages, for the most part they index historically and culturally connected groups of dependencies. "Imperial Diffusion" counts the number of prior decolonization events within the empire. (In both cases, the number of prior events refers to the number of dependencies moving to sovereignty, not the number of sovereign entities that result from these movements.)

The realist perspective (Morgenthau 1978; Waltz 1979) provides an important alternative to world systems approaches to decolonization. The fundamental realist argument is that the formal anarchy of the international system makes the state's survival contingent on military capacity and the will to use it. The annexation and mainte-

nance of colonial possessions provide one form of self-help in the face of external competition. Such arguments imply that metropolitan military power should be negatively related to decolonization, since metropolitan states should resist the loss of national power and prestige.

"Naval capacity" is a good summary measure of metropolitan military power in the present context, since virtually all metropolises required navies to project coercion to their colonies. I make use of Modelski and Thompson's (1988) measure, which gives the ratio of metropolitan naval power to total world naval power. This indicator may be criticized on the grounds that it captures the metropole's naval capacity versus the core rather than the dependency; on the other hand, such power may be important in preventing other states from supporting decolonization. Standardization by global naval capacity also provides a useful way to adjust for historical change in the technology of warfare.

A variety of dependency characteristics seem potentially relevant to decolonization, although they cannot be tied to a single theoretical perspective. One is the size of the dependency's "Population," taken from volumes of the *Statesman's Yearbook*. The scale of the dependency has implications for the level of pressure that can be brought to bear against the metropolis (or conversely, the value of the dependency to the metropolis) and the economic and military viability of the dependency as a newly sovereign state.

Marxist and neo-classical economists alike have argued that colonialism may accelerate industrialization, which in turn should promote decolonization. On the right, this is regarded as a natural process of modernization or colonial maturation. On the left, urban workers and segments of the bourgeoisie are seen as the foci of national independence movements (e.g., the Communist International's interpretation of bourgeois-democratic revolutions). Bergesen and Schoenberg (1980) develop a world economy interpretation, arguing that political dependency becomes unnecessary once external economic linkages are constructed. To capture these arguments, "Trade" is measured as the volume of the dependency's foreign trade per capita.⁶

⁶ Values of exports and imports from the *Statesman's Yearbook* and World Bank (1983) statistics were first summed. Values were converted into American dollars of the current year when originally in a different currency, using exchange rates given in the *Statesman's Yearbook* and Bidwell (1970). All values were then converted to 1969 dollars using U.S. consumer price

Finally, metropolitan settlement may be importantly related to decolonization, though the direction of the relationship seems unclear. Settlers may spur the dependency's development along Western lines and claim sovereignty as their birthright. On the other hand, settlers may seek to preserve the imperial structure that gives them a privileged position within the dependency. This seems especially likely if the settler population, while substantial, is outnumbered by the indigenous population.

To get at these possible relationships, two binary variables were constructed. "Settler Majority" equals one when more than half of the dependency population are of European ancestry, and "Settler Minority" equals one when more than five percent, but less than half, of the dependency's population is of European ancestry. The omitted category is the case where settlers form less than five percent of the total population. Statistics on metropolitan settlement were taken from the *Statesman's Yearbook*, supplemented by Barrett (1982).

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for these explanatory variables. Dependency "Population" and "Trade" are logged to correct for skewness in absolute values. The table indicates nontrivial numbers of missing cases for several dependency characteristics. Considering the full set of variables, there is no data on one or more of the dependency-level variables at the moment of 20 of the 130 transitions to sovereignty, and 30% of all observed durations in dependent status. However, descriptive statistics for the cases without missing values do not differ greatly from the full set of cases. Furthermore, parameter estimates and significance levels are largely the same for all models reported when dependency trade and metropolitan settlement, the chief sources of missing cases, are omitted from the analysis. None of the central conclusions of the paper would change if those analyses were reported.

MODELLING FRAMEWORK

Event history analysis provides an appropriate methodology for the study of decolonization,

indices (from the *Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970* and the *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1987*) to control for inflation, and standardized by dependency population. Note that the measure captures the importance of foreign trade to the dependency. It would be desirable to also measure the economic importance of the dependency to the metropolis, but I was unable to find a way to do so.

which involves a discrete change (movement from formal dependency to formal sovereignty) that may occur at any point in time. The quantity of interest is the instantaneous transition rate:

$$r_{\mu}(t) = \lim(\Delta t \downarrow \Delta 0) \Pr_{\mu}(t, t + \Delta) / \Delta t \quad (1)$$

Event history methods allow regression-like analyses of the conditions that raise or lower the transition rate (see Tuma and Hannan 1984).

As discussed above, Figure 1 indicates that the rate of decolonization accelerates rapidly with historical time over the period studied. The explanatory challenge is in large part to account for this massive twentieth-century rise in the rate of decolonization. At the same time, it is important to control for unobserved temporal effects to recover unbiased estimates of the effects of measured variables. Given the historical trend indicated in Figure 1, a Gompertz model provides a convenient framework for analysis. This allows the rate to vary as an exponential function of covariates and historical time:

$$r(t) = \exp(X\beta + \gamma t) \quad (2)$$

In addition, analyses were also performed using Cox's partial likelihood technique, which provides a more general way to control for unobserved temporal variability. Results proved equivalent to those for Gompertz models shown below.

In the models below, coefficients may be interpreted as the multiplier or fractional change in the rate for an infinitesimal change in the covariate. Likelihood ratio tests compare the model to the baseline of a simple Gompertz model including a constant and an effect of historical time. Large values signal significant improvement in fit; test statistics are distributed as χ^2 with degrees of freedom equal to the number of covariates. Models are estimated by iterative maximum likelihood procedures using RATE (Tuma 1980).

RESULTS

Decolonization 1870-1987

Table 2 presents results for a Gompertz model of the transition rate from dependency to sovereignty between 1870 and 1987. Consistent with Boswell's (1989) findings, hegemony increases the rate of decolonization significantly. The period of global hegemony between 1945 and 1967 has a rate of decolonization almost four times larger

Table 2. ML Estimates of Transition Rates from Dependent to Sovereign Status 1870-1987

Variable	Estimate
θ_0	.1075* (.116)
<i>Systemic</i>	
Hegemony	1.31* (.63)
Economic upswing	.37 (.64)
UN declaration	1.75* (.34)
Historical time	.004 (.013)
<i>Metropolitan</i>	
Naval power	3.57* (.72)
Suffrage	4.86* (1.32)
<i>Dependency</i>	
Population	.44* (.05)
Trade	.10 (.05)
Representation	.40 (.21)
Imperial diffusion	0.3* (.01)
Regional diffusion	.01 (.01)
Settler minority	.07 (.32)
Settler majority	1.63* (.38)
Likelihood Ratio χ^2	
vs. $r(t) = \exp(\theta_0 + \gamma t)$	185.0*

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

* Standard errors in parentheses

than periods of parity among core states.⁷ A world economy interpretation points to the evaporation of competition over peripheral markets in the post-World War II era, as European powers focused on domestic concerns while the United States orchestrated a global free market regime. By contrast, no support is found for the other major world economy prediction, that periods of global economic expansion produce a loosening of political ties between core and periphery. One

⁷ For binary variables it is convenient to interpret $\exp(\beta)$ as the amount the rate is multiplied by when x equals 1 rather than 0. For hegemony, $\exp(1.31) = 3.70$.

reason may be the perfect overlap with periods of hegemony after 1945; when hegemony is omitted from the model, economic upswings have a significant positive effect. On the other hand, a global economic boom occurred during the turn-of-the-century heyday of imperialism, and twentieth-century decolonization was launched during the economic stagnation of the interwar period. While one might argue that rapid decolonization in the decades after World War II was accelerated by global economic growth, economic fluctuations are not generally synchronized to decolonization.

World polity arguments are generally supported. At the systemic level, the delegitimation of imperialism formalized by the United Nations' 1960 declaration seems to have substantially raised the rate of decolonization. Net of other factors, the estimated rate after the UN Declaration in 1960 is nearly six times larger than before. While a number of explanations for systemic effects can be suggested, I would argue that the crucial change occurring around 1960 was a shift in the terms of international political discourse. Explicit opposition to decolonization in overseas territories was radically delegitimated, as the debate in the United Nations over Portuguese Africa made clear (Nogueira 1963).

The impact of the nation-state model shows up strongly at the metropolitan level. Broad metropolitan suffrage regimes substantially raise the rate of decolonization in the metropole's dependencies. The addition of a third of the population to the metropolitan electorate (a typical increment when universal male suffrage is achieved, or when universal suffrage replaces universal male suffrage) quintuples the estimated rate [$\exp(4.86 \times .33) = 4.97$]. The estimated effect of self-governing institutions in the dependency is also positive, but falls just short of statistical significance at the .05 level.

There is evidence for the diffusion of decolonization within empires, but little within regions. To give some notion of the scale of these effects, "Imperial Diffusion" multiplies the rate of decolonization for British dependencies by 1.16 in 1945 (5 British decolonization events), 1.56 in 1955 (15 events), 2.77 in 1965 (34 events), and 3.63 in 1970 (43 events). There are a variety of processes that might produce diffusion within empires: imitation and signalling between dependencies, the institutionalization of metropolitan routines expediting decolonization, and metropolitan fatigue after unsuccessful attempts to maintain key dependencies. Simple imitation seems untenable

as the fundamental mechanism involved, however, since one would then expect a larger regional effect.

Realist arguments stressing metropolitan military strength point to an important obstacle to decolonization. As expected, dependencies of militarily strong metropolises tend to remain in dependent status. American retention of a number of dependencies (such as Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) provides important evidence for this relationship, especially since by world polity arguments the United States should witness very rapid decolonization.

The size of the dependency's population accelerates decolonization markedly. Some of the most consequential early events are the independence of the Philippines, India, and Indonesia. The last decolonization events, on the other hand, involve dependencies such as Antigua, St. Kitts-Nevis, and Brunei. Hong Kong is the most populous territory remaining in dependent status in 1987.

High volumes of trade (per capita) have an insignificant negative effect on decolonization. Other analyses substituting exports per capita for total trade per capita also yielded similar results. These findings contradict the expectation that economic development and integration into global markets pave the way for decolonization by producing new groups who lead the fight for independence. In fact, territories that play a highly specialized role in the world economy (such as Hong Kong or Macao) or are strongly tied to the metropolitan economy (i.e., Puerto Rico) seem to be among the last to decolonize.

Table 2 indicates that dependencies whose populations are dominated by metropolitan settlers become sovereign about four times more rapidly than dependencies with insignificant settler populations. The most notable examples are the British Dominions, which achieved formal independence in the 1930s and 1940s. Dependencies with substantial settler minorities are neither faster nor slower to gain sovereignty than dependencies with very few settlers. This may be due to countervailing effects; settlers are carriers of metropolitan rights, but are also more royalist than the King where imperial policy is concerned.

Finally, a remarkable result is that historical time has a small and statistically insignificant effect once the above covariates are included in the model. In addition, results for exponential and Cox models (omitted for brevity) are equivalent in terms of parameter direction and levels

Table 3. ML Estimates of Transition Rates from Dependent to Sovereign Status 1870-1945 and 1945-1987*

Variable	1870-1945 Estimate	1945-1987 Estimate
β_u	-18.87** (4.09)	-8.06** (2.93)
<i>Systemic</i>		
Hegemony/upswing		.66 (.41)
Economic upswing	.30 (.85)	
UN declaration		1.93** (.39)
Historical time	.090 (.065)	-.02 (.02)
<i>Metropolitan</i>		
Naval power	-1.50 (4.18)	-3.81** (.77)
Suffrage	9.14** (3.37)	3.90** (1.63)
<i>Dependency</i>		
Population	.49** (.18)	.47** (.61)
Trade	-.15 (.26)	-.08 (.05)
Representation	-.63 (.93)	.58 (.22)
Imperial diffusion	-.56* (.24)	.03** (.01)
Regional diffusion	-.15 (.25)	.01 (.01)
Settler minority	3.20** (.96)	-.34 (.36)
Settler majority	3.12** (1.15)	1.65** (.44)
Likelihood ratio χ^2 vs. $r(t) = \beta_u + \gamma$	32.7**	160.1**

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

*Standard errors in parentheses.

from the factors involved in its maintenance and expansion. A common finding is that various "realistic," case-specific factors are significant in the early stages of a process, while more "institutional," systemic processes dominate the later stages (Tolbert and Zucker 1983; Tolbert 1985).

Since methods designed to systematically detect shifts in parameter values have not been developed in event history analysis, one must choose dates at which to split the observation period. Many considerations suggest World War II as the critical watershed for decolonization. World War II gave rise to American hegemony, shifting political and military power away from the major colonial powers; it was followed by an extended economic boom that contrasts sharply with the pre-war depression; it marked the first time an Asian people (Japan) had successfully reversed Western political expansion; and it promoted political ideas and institutions which supported decolonization.

Table 3 gives parameter estimates for separate analyses from 1870 to 1945 and from 1945 to 1987. Seventeen events occur in the first period, and 113 in the second. The variables are generally the same as those reported in Table 2. "Hegemony" and "Economic upswing" form a single variable in the post-World War II analysis, since they are perfectly correlated over that period. "UN Declaration" and "Hegemony" are omitted for the 1870-1945 equation since they exhibit little or no variation over that period. Only those relationships that differ from the full period analysis are discussed below.

Metropolitan "Naval Capacity" has an insignificant effect on decolonization between 1870 and 1945. The first dependencies to become sovereign were often those of major naval powers like the United States and Great Britain. While other factors help to explain these early independence events, there is little sign that global decolonization was triggered by the disintegration of the lesser colonial empires.

On the other hand, metropolitan suffrage has a much larger impact on the rate of decolonization before 1945 than after, though coefficients are significant in both periods. Its strong effect in the earlier period is illustrated by the first decolonization events: American withdrawal of controls over Caribbean protectorates (Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic) and the Soviet Union's incorporation of Imperial Russia's protectorates (Bukhara, Khiva). In very different ways the United States and the Soviet Union both represent political systems grounded in theories

of significance to the results reported in Table 2. Together these findings signal that cross-sectional and temporal variation in the measured covariates are sufficient to account for the rapid historical rise in the rate of decolonization over the 1870 to 1987 period.

Early vs. Late Decolonization

The speed of social change over the 1870 to 1987 period makes it important to examine the possibility of shifts in parameter values over time. In addition, it is often useful in longitudinal studies to distinguish the factors that trigger a process

of popular sovereignty.

Self-governing institutions in the dependency show the opposite pattern, with insignificant effects before 1945 and quite strong effects after World War II. One reason may be that the dependencies with representative institutions in the early twentieth century often had other characteristics that bolstered independence. For example, the British Dominions were large settler colonies under a metropolis with a broad suffrage regime. Representative institutions may have had a larger impact after 1945 by providing small, nonsettler societies with a vehicle for the legitimate formulation of independence demands.

Dependency "Trade" has insignificant effects in both periods. To further explore the impact of social structural change and economic development, I also added a measure of urbanization (United Nations 1985) to the post-World War II analysis (the measure was only available for the postwar era). Urbanization had a small, insignificant effect, giving greater support to the tentative inference that economic transformation within the dependency has little effect on decolonization.

The impact of metropolitan settlers declines over time. The coefficient for "Settler Majority" is two times larger between 1870 and 1945 than after 1945. The coefficient for substantial settler minorities is also very large before 1945, and insignificant afterwards. Additional results (not shown) indicate a steady decline in the impact of metropolitan settlement throughout the 1870-1987 period. While both effects are initially large and positive, the impact of a settler minority reaches zero in 1959, and that of a settler majority in 1970. After those dates, dependencies with metropolitan settlers are estimated to decolonize at a slower rate than dependencies with a negligible settler presence.

This temporal shift makes sense. In the prewar era, settlers were the carriers of metropolitan ideologies of popular sovereignty. They promoted decolonization to rid themselves of colonial restraints and achieve external sovereignty. But after 1945, indigenous peoples became the heirs of decolonization, and settlers leant on colonial ties to maintain their privileged positions. Sizeable settler populations were major obstacles to independence in Algeria and Kenya. When Southern Rhodesia sought to achieve independence as a racist state in 1965, its claims went unrecognized by both Great Britain and the world community as a whole.

Finally, two parameter shifts are intriguing but

possibly misleading. "Hegemony/Upswing" has an insignificant effect in the post-World War II period. It is also insignificant in unreported analyses of the periods 1918-1987 and 1924-1987. Two interpretations seem possible. One is that shifts in other parameters are mistakenly attributed to hegemony in the full period (1870-1987) analysis. Alternatively, one may argue that the effect of hegemony has to do with long run trends, and can only be detected when a relatively broad time frame is employed. While both interpretations are reasonable, I would choose the second on the strength of much qualitative historical discussion and the fact that the rise in the parameter's standard error is not very large.

The number of prior decolonization events within the empire slows decolonization before 1945 while it speeds decolonization after World War II. This implies that prior decolonization within the empire led metropolises to tighten their hold on their remaining dependencies. Such a relationship seems possible in the inter war era, since decolonization was not yet institutionalized. But I would emphasize that diffusion is supposed to be slow at the outset of a process. The most compelling evidence distinguishing diffusion from a secular trend is the explosion of events in the middle of the process. In fact, it is quite possible for diffusion effects, when estimated net of a historical trend, to appear negative in severely right censored analyses.

DISCUSSION

In this paper I have tried to link empirical patterns in twentieth century decolonization to theoretical understandings of the world system, pointing to sources of decolonization spanning both units of analysis and substantive arguments. Substantial effects are found for dependency characteristics (population and representative institutions), metropolitan effects (naval capacity and suffrage regimes), network effects (diffusion within empires), and systemic effects (hegemony and shifts in international political discourse). Factors as substantively disjoint as the military power and the suffrage regime of the metropolis contribute to an account of decolonization. Separate analyses for the periods of 1870-1945 and 1945-1987 suggest further insights into the process of decolonization.

World economy arguments connecting hegemony to the form of core-periphery relations receive some support. This paper provides a more severe test of these ideas than aggregate analyses

over the *longue durée* since a variety of dependency and metropolitan characteristics are included in the analysis, and since the time frame is relatively short. At the same time, a methodological (not a conceptual) weakness of the world economy perspective is highlighted here. Because concepts and measures have been developed with the *longue durée* in mind, it is difficult to empirically distinguish the impact of hegemony and global economic cycles over the twentieth century. It is thus unclear whether hegemony facilitates decolonization, or whether it is the combination of hegemony and economic upswing that is critical.

To the extent that we can distinguish these factors, however, hegemony is the crucial ingredient. This interpretation is bolstered by a broader historical view. The other major period of global hegemony, the *Pax Britannica* of the nineteenth century, had concrete implications for Spanish-American independence. Aiming to curb Bourbon power, Great Britain recognized revolutionary Spanish colonies as sovereign states and stood ready to block Spanish efforts at reconquest. By contrast, there are simply too many historical upswings in Kondratieff waves to produce a good match with decolonization, which is historically concentrated in two waves (Bergesen and Schoenberg 1980). Simple models of decolonization over the entire period of Western imperialism (1500-1987) thus suggest effects of hegemony but an unexpected negative relation to periods of economic expansion (Strang, forthcoming).

World polity arguments are generally supported. Decolonization is rapid after the United Nations' declaration on self-determination (1960), where metropolitan suffrage regimes are broad, and where the dependency possesses self-governing institutions. (This last effect appears to be confined to the post-World War II period.) However, the finding of imperial but not regional diffusion runs counter to world polity arguments. While the notion of imitation is straightforwardly connected to regionally based diffusion, it is not the most compelling explanation of diffusion within empires. On the other hand, the United Nation's 1960 declaration may be understood as a direct product of prior decolonization, especially since ex-dependencies supplied most of the votes.

Overall, the strongest evidence for a "world polity" interpretation of decolonization is the large impact of metropolitan suffrage. It is thus important to consider whether other mechanisms might

be responsible for this effect. Perhaps the most plausible alternative is that suffrage empowers some set of metropolitan actors to facilitate decolonization. Hobson (1902) first argued that the benefits of imperialism accrued to segments of capital, while the metropolitan state and economy as a whole lost more than they gained from colonialism. It thus seems possible that "Suffrage" captures the political efficacy of those segments of the population that have an interest in decolonization.

This interpretation is made plausible by the fact that political parties on the left (the Democrats in the U.S., Labour in the U.K., Socialist and Communist parties in France) were generally more amenable to decolonization than parties on the right. In my view, however, it would be a misreading of the historical record to put great weight on the programs and actions of these parties. Metropolitan involvement in issues of decolonization was never very high. The French war in Algeria may have been the only occasion where popular pressure for decolonization was really strong. And even when the role of metropolitan parties is admitted to be reactive, there is little indication that decolonization occurred more quickly when labor or socialist parties were in power. De Gaulle orchestrated French decolonization; British imperial policy did not differ substantially across Conservative and Labour governments (Goldsworthy 1971).

I would thus maintain that metropolitan suffrage captures the institutional structure within which actors operated, rather than the influence of a single set of actors. The most obvious example is the "reluctant imperialism" of the United States, where indigenous elites and American administrators moved towards decolonization during the heyday of Western colonialism. But the case of French sub-Saharan Africa is even more telling. While French politicians of all stripes favored assimilation, attempts to build a Greater France foundered on metropolitan unwillingness to be outnumbered by subjects turned citizens and "become the colony of its former colonies" (Edouard Herriot, cited in Albertini, 1982, p. 390). Unwillingness to fully incorporate meant that policies of "association" simply empowered indigenous elites, to the point that sub-Saharan decolonization finally took place through referenda called in the colonies. In general, metropolitan ideologies and institutions of popular sovereignty formed a context within which peripheral actors could become nationalists but not assimilated metropolitans, where the metropoli-

tan state could sponsor local autonomy but not integration, and where decolonization came to mean independence rather than secession.

Given this interpretation, the impact of metropolitan suffrage demonstrates that institutional explanations need not be relegated to the bandwagon of history. It is correct that arguments explicitly linked to prior "taken-for-grantedness" do not, and cannot, explain the first events in a process. But arguments that are institutional in a substantive sense — emphasizing the way models or theories constrain or facilitate lines of action — are not restricted to feedback loops. Metropolitan suffrage thus appears to be one of the critical conditions leading to the earliest decolonization events. In fact, its effects are considerably larger before 1945 than after. As explanatory factors exogenous to the process of interest, institutional conditions may trigger as well as maintain a process.

While I have emphasized the distinction between world economy and world polity perspectives, linkages between the two are important. In particular, one can argue that hegemony accelerates decolonization in the twentieth century precisely because the United States has historically embraced notions of popular sovereignty and national self-determination. A hegemonic power like Nazi Germany would scarcely be expected to help reconstruct the world system as a community of formally sovereign, equal states. On the other hand, one can also contend that it is no accident that hegemonic states are characteristically the carriers of liberalism, and connect the politics of the hegemon to its structural position within the world economy. Close attention to these linkages may provide one way to connect "world economy" and "world polity" perspectives to each other.

In addition to world systems arguments, a number of dependency and metropolitan characteristics have substantial effects on decolonization. Perhaps most surprising, however, is the absence of any effect of the volume of dependency foreign trade (or urbanization). This study finds little evidence that decolonization occurs as a result of integration into global markets, or the social and economic change which integration into these markets implies. It should be emphasized, however, that such processes are difficult to measure and that more finely specified indicators might tell a different story.

This variety of findings is not easily synthesized; certainly a monocausal logic has severe limits in accounting for decolonization. But a

general theme is that decolonization arises from characteristics of the larger political context, while more purely economic factors have a modest impact (though for a concept like economic hegemony the distinction may not be useful). Metropolitan political institutions and military power clearly matter, as do the pronouncements of the United Nations. The economic transformation of the dependency and global economic conditions seem less relevant.

This conclusion may appear curious. Since Hobson, imperialism has been understood largely in terms of the interests of metropolitan economic elites and the internal transformation of the dependency. It may thus be fruitful to separate the conditions that produce colonization from those that produce decolonization. The processes that lead to the breakdown of empires may be intrinsically different from those that construct them. Or change in the world historical context could make colonization (occurring mostly in the nineteenth century) and decolonization (in the twentieth) seem driven by different logics. Studies attempting to tease out intrinsic from contextual differences seem important in either integrating the processes of colonization and decolonization or understanding the gap between them.

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EXPLAINING MILITARY COUPS D'ÉTAT: BLACK AFRICA, 1957-1984*

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Military coups and related problems of political control in Third World countries present a major obstacle to economic and social development. We evaluate a synthetic theory of military coups derived from political development theory, military centrality arguments, several theories of ethnic antagonism, and economic dependency theory. Using data on military interventions in 33 Black African states between 1957 and 1984, we carry out a LISREL analysis of the structural propensity for military coups. We find strong support for modernization and competition theories of ethnic antagonisms, military centrality theory and aspects of dependency theory. Political development theory is not supported. Ethnic diversity and competition, military centrality, debt dependence, and political factionalism are major predictors of coup activity. Military centrality is, in turn, rooted in the same underlying structures. Ethnic dominance is a stabilizing force creating social integration and weakening opposition. Intractable conflicts rooted in ethnic competition and economic dependence appear to create a structural context for military coups and related instabilities.

At independence, observers hoped that the new states of Black Africa would successfully address the problems of economic and social development within the framework of civilian constitutional regimes and avoid the human costs of military political interventions, e.g., political repression, human rights violations, internal conflicts, and the diversion of scarce economic resources into wars and military build-ups. These hopes have largely been destroyed by pervasive military coups d'état, military governments, and political instability. Between 1960 and 1982, almost 90 percent of the 45 independent Black African states experienced a military coup, an attempted coup, or a plot (Johnson, Slater, and McGowan 1984, p. 646). During the course of some 115 legal governmental changes, these states experienced 52 successful coups, 56 attempted coups, and 102 plots, making the military

coup "the institutionalized mechanism for succession" in postcolonial Black Africa (Young 1988, p. 57).¹ In the late 1980s, the central executive of 25 of these 45 states was in military hands and the military remained a powerful force in most other states (Mazrui and Tidy 1984, pp. xxiii-xxviii). Restraints on human rights and political expression remain among the highest in the world and military expenditures remain high despite major economic problems (Sivard 1983, p. 10). Political conflicts ranging from protest demonstrations to riots and open rebellions have made these some of the most unstable states in the world (Gurr 1989, pp. 113-15).

We examine the structural sources of military coups d'état in postcolonial Black Africa. We define a military coup as an irregular transfer of a state's chief executive by the regular armed forces or internal security forces through the use (or threat) of force. We exclude nonmilitary irregular transfers such as cabinet reshufflings and palace coups that lack military participation. The "new nations" of Black Africa form a region with some of the highest rates of military coups in the world (Zimmermann 1979, pp. 387-91). We are thus able to build on the work of area experts who have extensively documented coup pro-

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¹ Data on regular government changes are from the machine-readable version of Taylor and Jodice (1983). Data on coups come from Johnson, Slater, and McGowan (1984, p. 627).