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Official Visits and Democracy

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Abstract

This paper examines whether the number of official visits to and from the United States allows the country to adopt a more democratic system of governance. To achieve its objective, the paper develops a model that derives the conditions under which a host invites a guest to persuade or pressure for democratic improvement, and the conditions under which the guest accepts an invitation to visit, and decides to improve the quality of democratic governance after the visit. To test our hypothesis, we introduce novel variables that indicate the number of leader's trips to the United States, and the number of visits of U.S. Presidents and Secretaries of State to the country, from 1960-2015. The estimation results show that the official visits have a statistically significant and positive effect on democracy. These results are robust to the inclusion of control variables, to the use of alternative econometric techniques and different democracy indicators, and to the exclusion of observations and countries where the democracy score is higher than that of the United States. The paper also uses 3SLS to deal with potential endogeneity. The estimation confirms our previous findings that the official visits have a statistically significant positive effect on democracy. We also explore the channels of transmission and find that American administrations use bilateral trade flows and U.S. aid as an incentive for countries to democratize. This supports our model predictions.

JEL Code : H11, D72

Keywords : Executive, Democracy, Official Visits, Leader Trip.

"It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world." George W. Bush in his inaugural address after the swearing-in ceremony of 2005.

1. Introduction

This paper examines the effect of the number of trips by the leader of a country to the United States, and the number of visits of U.S. Presidents or Secretaries of State to the country, on democratic governance in that country. To be specific, we investigate whether the visits of a country's leader to the United States, or the visits of the leaders of the United States to the country, allow the country to adopt a more democratic system of governance and to embrace better democratic practices. This is considered the first attempt in the literature to consider the number of official visits as a determinant of democracy.

To achieve our objective, we develop a simple theoretical framework of a host and a guest country. The model derives the conditions under which an invitation for an official visit is extended by the host, and whether the host will use the visit to pressure or persuade the guest to enhance the quality of its democratic governance. In this context, the model finds that a guest chooses to improve the democratic quality of the system of governance after the visit if and only if the increase in the total net benefits to the guest from this change is higher than the increase in the total net benefits from the

alternative. The model, thus, offers a testable hypothesis that the official visit is more likely to lead to an improvement in the quality of democratic governance in the guest country if the host increases the total tangible benefits of the guest from this decision through offering foreign aid, increasing bilateral trade flows or injecting more capital into the guest economy.

To empirically test our model prediction, the paper uses a variable that indicates the number of trips by a country's leaders to the United States, the number of visits of U.S. Presidents to the country, and the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of States to the country during the period 1960-2015. These variables are derived from the historical archives of the U.S. Department of State. As our dependent variable, we use alternative indicators of democratic governance such as the Polity score and the Freedom House indicator. The focus on the United States is driven largely by data availability.

The Pooled OLS and the fixed effects estimations show that the number of leaders' trips to the United States has a statistically significant positive coefficient whether we use the Polity score or the Freedom House indicator, the number of visits of U.S. Presidents has a positive association with democracy only when we use the Polity score as our dependent variable, while the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State has a positive effect on democracy only when we use the Freedom House indicator. These results are robust even after the inclusion of several control variables identified by the literature as confounding factors of democracy.

To test the robustness of our results, we compare the effect of the leader's trips to the United States before and after the end of the cold war. The results show that the leader's trips have a statistically significant positive effect during the cold war only. On

the other hand, we do not observe a difference in the effect of the visits of U.S. officials before or after the end of the cold war era. We also exclude observations and countries whose democracy score is higher than that of the United States. The estimation provides evidence that the leader's trips to the United States have a statistically significant positive coefficient in all specifications. On the other hand, the visits of U.S. Presidents have a positive association when we use the Polity score, while the visits of U.S. Secretaries of States have a positive effect when we use the Freedom House indicator. This confirms our previous findings.

In this context, the problem of endogeneity cannot be ignored. As much as the official visits to and from the United States may affect the level of democratic governance, leaders from more democratic countries are more likely to be invited to visit the United States and American officials are more likely to visit more democratic countries. To deal with potential endogeneity, we conduct a Three-Stage-Least-Squares estimation. The estimation shows a statistically significant positive coefficient for all the official visits variables, especially when we use the Polity score as our dependent variable. Finally, we explore the transmission channels and find that the official visits can lead to improvements in the democratic quality of the system of governance through the carrot of signing free trade agreements with the United States or extending U.S. aid to the country. This provides empirical evidence to support our hypothesis.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: section 2 discusses the theoretical framework, section 3 discusses the intuition, section 3 covers the literature survey, section 5 includes the detailed description of the data, section 6 includes the empirical estimation and the robustness tests, and section 6 concludes. References, tables and figures are included thereafter.

2. Model

In this section, we develop a simple theoretical framework of a host and a guest country. For the host, inviting foreign officials is costly. The direct cost of the visit of foreign dignitaries and their entourage includes accommodations, transportation, security and others. There is also the indirect cost of the visit as the officials of the host country have to engage in formal activities with the foreign guests during the period of their visit. This will take them away from their daily duties, which accounts for the opportunity cost of the visit. The total direct and indirect cost is denoted HC . We also add the cost of the host's effort to pressure or persuade the guest to enhance the democratic quality of their system of governance. This effort is time consuming and labor intensive. We denote this cost p . Thus, the total cost of the visit for the host is $HC + p$.

For the guest, official visits are also costly. Leaders travel with a retinue that includes security personnel, policy makers, public officials, expert advisors, private entrepreneurs, staff of the presidential cabinet, members of the press corps and others. Thus, these trips are a burden on the coffers of the state. This includes the cost of travel, lodging, transportation, security, boarding and others. In addition to the direct cost of the trip, longer trips may also take those officials who accompany the leaders away from their other duties for a longer period of time. The total direct and indirect cost for the guest is denoted GC .

In addition, the guest may need to offer concessions to the host to secure an invitation. We denote the concessions that are offered to the host k . These concessions can be tangible (supplying the host with products at lower prices, extending preferential

treatment to host firms to sell their products in the guest markets, offering concessions to host firms to invest in the guest economy, or buying armaments from the host that may not be vital for defense purposes) or intangible (serving the geostrategic goals of the host, voting with the host in international organizations). In addition to these concessions, the decision by the guest to enhance the democratic quality of their system of governance as a consequence of the visit comes with its expenses. Democratic quality improvement is a process that may include changes to the country's constitutions, laws, and political institutions. We denote this cost to enhance the quality of democratic governance d . Thus, the total cost of the visit for the guest country is $(GC + k + d)$.

On the other hand, the official visits are intended for both countries to reap future benefits. For the host, the benefits can be signing a trade agreement to open markets for the host country's products, facilitating the entry of the host country's firms and investors into the guest's economy, offering aid to the guest in return for political favors, agreeing with the officials of the guest country on how to service their debt to the host's public and private creditors, selling weapons to the guest, and guaranteeing that the guest serves the geopolitical priorities of the host abroad. For the guest, the benefits include increasing the value and volume of trade with the host, borrowing loans from the host, appealing for aid from the host, attracting the host's capital flows, procuring weapons from the host, or guaranteeing the host's support for the incumbent government.

In this context, we distinguish between tangible benefits in terms of bilateral flows of trade, capital, credit and aid, and intangible benefits that can take the form of promoting political alliances, rendering moral support, recognizing regime legitimacy, and satisfying specific geostrategic goals. For the host, we denote the intangible benefits

HB^I and for the guest GB^I . For tangible benefits, we distinguish between those that benefit one country on the expense of the other, and those that can benefit both countries. For the former, we denote the tangible benefits HB^T for the host and GB^T for the guest, such that $HB^T + GB^T = 1$. For the latter, we denote the tangible benefits HB^{TX} for the host and GB^{TX} for the guest. It is worth noting that if the concessions by the guest are intangible, the intangible benefits of the host increase since $\frac{\partial(HB^I)}{\partial k} > 0$. If the concessions are tangible, the tangible benefits of the host increase since $\frac{\partial(HB^T)}{\partial k} > 0$ and/or $\frac{\partial(HB^{TX})}{\partial k} > 0$.

In this context, the host benefits from enhancing the quality of political institutions of the guest. Pressuring for an improvement in the quality of democratic governance in the guest country can ensure political stability which may satisfy the geostrategic goals of the host in an important region, may promote the image of the host as a champion of political freedoms, may satisfy domestic political calculations within the host, or may be used as a pretext by the host to push the guest on some other issues that are more expedient to the host. Given this framework, we can derive some conclusions as follows:

PROPOSITION 1: *An invitation for a visit by the host to the guest will be extended if and only if the total benefit of the visit is higher than the total cost of the visit to the host, such that $HC + p \leq (HB^I + HB^T + HB^{TX})$.*

PROPOSITION 2: *The host will extend an invitation to the guest to pressure or persuade the guest to enhance the democratic quality of the system of governance if and only if $\frac{\partial(HB^I + HB^T + HB^{TX})}{\partial p} > 1$.*

Proof: The host will extend an invitation to the guest to pressure or persuade the guest to enhance the democratic quality of the system of governance if the increase in the total benefits from both the visit and the improvement in the quality of democratic governance in the guest is larger than the increase in the total cost of pressuring or persuading the guest. This is more likely if $\frac{\partial(HB^I + HB^T + HB^{TX})}{\partial p} > 1$.

PROPOSITION 3: *The higher the concession k offered by the guest to the host, the more likely that an invitation to a visit will be extended to the guest.*

Proof: The higher the concession k offered by the guest, the higher the host's total benefits given that $\frac{\partial(HB^T)}{\partial k} > 0$, $\frac{\partial(HB^{TX})}{\partial k} > 0$, and $\frac{\partial(HB^I)}{\partial k} > 0$. The higher the host's total benefits the more likely the condition $(HC + p) \leq (HB^I + HB^T + HB^{TX})$ is satisfied, and the more likely an invitation to visit will be extended to the guest.

PROPOSITION 4: *The guest will accept the invitation of the host if the total benefit of the visit is more than the total cost of the visit to the guest such that $(GC + k + d) \leq (GB^I + GB^T + GB^{TX})$.*

PROPOSITION 5: *A guest who opts not to enhance the democratic quality of their system of governance after the visit is more likely to accept an invitation if and only if $\frac{\partial(GB^I)}{\partial k} - \frac{\partial(GB^T)}{\partial k} > 1$*

Proof: If the guest chooses not to enhance the democratic quality of their system of governance after the visit, $d=0$ and the guest will offer other concessions $k>0$ (supplying the host with products at lower market prices, offering preferential treatment to host firms to sell products in the guest markets, offering concessions to host firms to

invest in the guest economy, etc.) that will increase the host's tangible benefits HB^T . This comes on the expense of the guest's tangible benefits to confirm the willingness of the guest to serve the interests of the host as a way to eschew the pressure for improving the quality of democratic governance, which will decrease GB^T . The concessions will also increase the host's intangible benefits HB^I (serve the geostrategic goals of the host) and will increase intangible benefits of the guest GB^I (the host recognizing the guest's regime legitimacy and offering moral support against its political opponents). Thus, guests who opt not to enhance the democratic quality of their system of governance are more likely to accept an invitation if and only if $\frac{\partial(GB^I)}{\partial k} - \frac{\partial(GB^T)}{\partial k} > 1$.

PROPOSITION 6: A guests who opts to enhance the democratic quality of their system of governance after the visit is more likely to accept an invitation if and only if $\frac{\partial(GB^{TX})}{\partial d} - \frac{\partial(GB^I)}{\partial d} > 1$

Proof: If the guest chooses to enhance the democratic quality of the system of governance after the visit, $d > 0$ and $k = 0$, since the decision to improve the quality of democratic governance is considered a sufficient concession. That will increase the host's tangible benefits HB^{TX} (democracies are more likely to engage in mutually beneficial transactions) and intangible benefits HB^I (if promoting democracy is a component of the host's foreign policy, and if better democratic practices ensures the political stability of the guest which may satisfy some strategic objectives of the host). This will increase GB^{TX} but will decrease or not change GB^I . Thus, guests who opt to enhance the democratic quality of the system of governance are more likely to accept an invitation if and only if $\frac{\partial(GB^{TX})}{\partial d} - \frac{\partial(GB^I)}{\partial d} > 1$.

PROPOSITION 7: A guest will choose to enhance the democratic quality of the system of governance after the visit if and only if $\frac{\partial(GB^I)}{\partial k} - \frac{\partial(GB^T)}{\partial k} < \frac{\partial(GB^{TX})}{\partial d} - \frac{\partial(GB^I)}{\partial d}$

Proof: A guest will choose to enhance the democratic quality of the system of governance after the visit if the increase in the total net benefits to the guest from improving the quality of democratic governance after the visit $\frac{\partial(GB^{TX})}{\partial d} - \frac{\partial(GB^I)}{\partial d}$ is higher than the increase in the total net benefits from the alternative $\frac{\partial(GB^I)}{\partial k} - \frac{\partial(GB^T)}{\partial k}$.

This framework allows us to develop a hypothesis that can be tested empirically.

HYPOTHESIS: An official visit is more likely to lead to an improvement in the democratic quality of the system of governance of the guest if the host increases the tangible benefits of the guest from this decision through offering foreign aid or increasing bilateral trade flows.

Proof: The host can increase the tangible benefits of the guest from the visit with a promise of foreign aid and an increase in bilateral trade during the visit. This increases $\frac{\partial(GB^{TX})}{\partial d}$ and makes the decision by the guest to enhance the democratic quality of the system of governance more likely as it satisfies the conditions in proposition 6 (which ensures that the guest accepts the invitation) and proposition 7 (which ensures that the guest enhances the democratic quality of the system of governance after the visit).

3. Intuition

The model predictions are tested empirically by examining the effect of the official visits, to and from the United States, on democracy in a country. Our focus on

the United States is dictated largely by data availability. In this section, we discuss the intuition of the effect of the visits to and from the United States within the context of our simple theoretical framework. American foreign policy typically swings between two approaches. The first is to stand for the promotion of democratic governance and political freedoms. The second is to safeguard American strategic interests even if it entails fostering alliances with totalitarian states. For instance, it is noted that¹ “Democracy promotion has been a key aspect of U.S. identity and foreign policy, though Washington also has a long history of supporting non-democratic forms of governance; it has both consolidated democratic regimes and intervened to overthrow democratically elected governments.” This section argues that each approach leads to a different effect of official visits on the quality of democratic governance.

This dichotomy in U.S. foreign policy implies that, on one hand, there is an ideological position that considers democracy promotion in the core of a national security doctrine. Accordingly, some American administrations elevate democratic imperatives and voice their concern whenever they encounter serious violations to democratic practices. These Administrations attempt to pressure governments to embrace more democratic practices through the carrot of foreign aid, capital flows, bilateral trade and debt relief or the stick of sanctions, censure and isolation. One of the common ways to cajole countries into better democratic practices is to persuade or to pressure the leaders of these countries during their interaction with American officials. As long as this improvement in the quality of democratic governance does not lead to leader replacement, we expect that the number of official visits, to and from, the United States to have a positive effect on democracy.

¹ <https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-361>

Another channel through which the official visits can enhance the level of democracy is that of “socialization.” In our context, these visits allow the country’s leaders to socially interact with American political figures, or to be exposed to the functioning of American political institutions in a dynamic democratic environment. This socialization allows the leaders to experience the advantages of a vibrant democracy and to observe its beneficial economic outcomes. This may lead the country’s leaders to implement more democratic practices.

There is also the “transnational linkage” channel which operates through “push” and “pull” factors. Pull factors are pertinent when leaders use their influential connections and contacts in the West to lobby for democracy assistance and aid from Western governmental agencies and nongovernmental organizations. On the other hand, leaders cultivate close ties with influential figures in the West, but they are also susceptible to their pressure. Thus, Western states can leverage these connections with leaders by threatening to withhold foreign aid or to impose conditions on their assistance, or because these leaders feel hesitant not to deliver on democratic improvements in order to preserve their connections in the West.

The leader’s trip to the United States or the visits of American officials to the country can also bring its people’s attention to the U.S. democratic system of governance. This may affect the demand for political reform in the country. The official visits may also incentivize the government’s adversaries to voice their opposition while the country’s leader is under the spotlight of American media outlets. This can attract the attention of American officials who may decide to discuss these issues with the leaders of the country during these visits. These factors can cause the official visits to have a positive association with democracy.

On the other hand, American foreign policy has another pragmatic approach aimed at achieving strategic objectives and protecting economic interests without being preoccupied with the type of government that delivers. This approach is willing to overlook non-democratic behavior as long as other practices are conducive to achieving these foreign policy goals. In this case, intervention for democracy is used only as a pretext for pressure on other more expedient issues to the United States. Thus, the leaders may be emboldened to continue with their current political practices as long as they perceive themselves indispensable strategically to the United States, which they can reassure their host during their visits. Thus, we expect that the official visits to have an adverse effect on democracy. Given that the effect of the number of official visits on democracy is inconclusive, an empirical analysis is warranted.

4. Literature

This paper contributes to a new burgeoning literature on the determinants of democracy that follows the seminal work in Barro (1999). Studies in this literature specifically focus on the political outcomes of the background of the country's leadership, in addition to the foreign experiences by the people and the leaders of the country. These experiences include foreign education or living abroad. Our paper contributes to this literature by considering the effect of foreign travel by the leader of the country, in addition to the official visits by foreign leaders to the country, on democracy.

Some studies show that there is an association between a leader's educational background and democracy. For instance, Besley and Reynal-Querol (2011) use a data set on over 1,400 world leaders to show that democracies are 20% more likely to select

highly educated leaders. Mercier (2016) shows a positive correlation between the fact that leaders studied abroad, especially in high-income countries, and the evolution of democracy during their tenure. Gift and Krcmaric (2017) show that leaders educated at Western universities significantly improve a country's democratic prospects. Barceló (2020) shows that leaders who attended a university in a Western democratic country, are less likely to initiate interstate disputes. Spilimbergo (2009) shows that foreign-educated individuals foster democracy in their home country, only if the education is attained in democratic countries. This obviously applies to a country's leadership as well. Our paper contributes to this literature by arguing that the direct interaction and interpersonal contact between the leaders and American political figures who are involved in one of the most spirited democratic experiences in the world can be more powerful than their exposure to democratic ideas in an academic setting.

There is also another stream of literature that focuses on the effect of foreign experiences of leaders or individuals, who lived abroad, on democracy in their home countries. This is because migrants may transmit to their home communities the political ideals they adopted while living abroad. For instance, Chauvet and Mercier (2014) find a positive effect of return migrants to Mali, from non-African countries, on political participation and on electoral competitiveness. Batista et al. (2018) show that the number of migrants an individual is in close contact with significantly increases political participation in that area in Mozambique. Batista and Vicente (2011) conduct an experiment to examine whether migration increases the demand for political accountability in the country of origin. The authors find a positive effect which is stronger for migration to countries with better governance. Docquier et al. (2016) find that openness to emigration, in a large sample of developing countries, has a positive

effect on home-country democratization. Our paper contributes to this stream of literature by arguing that the trips of leaders abroad expose them to the democratic ideals that they can bring back to their home countries.

This paper also contributes to the literature on the effect of international linkages on democracy. For instance, Levitsy and Way (2005, 2006) present a framework on the role of international influences in political change. The authors posit that the post-cold war international environment operated along two dimensions: “Western leverage, or governments’ vulnerability to external pressure, and linkage to the West, or the density of a country’s ties to the U.S., the European Union, and Western-led multilateral institutions.” In this context, western leverage indicates the susceptibility of governments to external pressure for democratization through punitive sanctions, diplomatic persuasion, and military force. The authors conclude that leverage in the form of diplomatic pressure or conditionality was not sufficient for democratic change, while the subtle effects of linkage contributed more to democratization. Gleditsch and Ward (2006) find that the scope and extent of connections with other democratic countries can strengthen support for democratic improvements and political reforms. Our paper contributes to this literature by conducting an empirical analysis on the effect of international influences on democracy. In this context, we examine whether the leverage channel working through pressure exerted during official visits can be sufficient to lead to political reforms.

5. Data

The dependent variable in our analysis is democracy. We use two indicators of democratic governance. The first is the Polity score which is extracted from the Polity

IV Project. The Polity score captures a country's political regime on a 21-point scale ranging from -10 (strongly autocratic) to +10 (strongly democratic). The paper uses the Polity2 variable which is a modified version of the Polity variable by applying a simple treatment to convert instances of "standardized authority scores" (-66,-77,-88) to conventional polity scores within the range -10 to +10.

The second democracy indicator is the Freedom House democracy score. This score is calculated as follows: "A country or territory is awarded 0 to 4 points for each of 10 political rights indicators and 15 civil liberties indicators, which take the form of questions; a score of 0 represents the smallest degree of freedom and 4 the greatest degree of freedom. The political rights questions are grouped into three subcategories: Electoral Process (3 questions), Political Pluralism and Participation (4), and Functioning of Government (3). The civil liberties questions are grouped into four subcategories: Freedom of Expression and Belief (4 questions), Associational and Organizational Rights (3), Rule of Law (4), and Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights (4). The political rights section also contains an additional discretionary question addressing forced demographic change. The highest overall score that can be awarded for political rights is 40 (or a score of 4 for each of the 10 questions). The highest overall score that can be awarded for civil liberties is 60 (or a score of 4 for each of the 15 questions)." These two variables are standard indicators in empirical studies of democracy (e.g., Jha and Kodila-Tedika, 2020 ; Acemoglu et al., 2019 ; Acemoglu et al., 2008; Acemoglu et al., 2005 ; Barro, 1999).

The variable of interest is official visits, which is calculated as the number of trips by the country's leader to the United States, and the number of visits of U.S. Presidents or Secretaries of State to the country, during the period 1960-2015. This data is derived

from the Office of the Historian, which is affiliated to the Department of State of the United States of America.² Figures 1-3 show world maps of the total official visits variables during the period 1960-2015. To collect this variable, we use historical data from the Department of State of the United States of America. These include state visits, official working visits, summits, private visits, informal visits, meetings, and working visits. Initially, the objective was to use the official visits to and from all countries, especially those whose foreign policy focus on democracy promotion. However, we focus only on visits to and from the United States due to the lack of data availability for other countries.

Table 1 presents the data sources and descriptions of all the variables used in this study. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for all the variables used in the analysis. The list of countries included in the analysis is in appendix 1. It is also worth noting that the data used is a panel of 5-year averages which is a common practice in the literature.

6. Estimation

This section conducts an empirical estimation of the effect of the number of official visits to and from the United States on democracy in a country during the period 1960-2015. To estimate this relationship empirically, we use the following equation

$$Democracy_{it} = \theta + \delta_i Visits_{it} + \mathbf{x}_{it}\gamma + \mu_i + \sigma_t + e_{it} \quad (1)$$

Where $Democracy_{it}$ is the democracy indicator in country i in period t . $Visits_{it}$ is the number of trips by the leader of country i to the United States in period t , or the number of visits of U.S. Presidents or Secretaries of State to country i in period t . $\mathbf{x}_{it}$ is a vector of control variables in country i in period t . The vector of control variables includes those commonly identified in the literature as determinants of democracy.

² <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory>.

Thus, we control for the logarithm of GDP per capita, natural resource rents, a dummy for a country with majority Muslim population, continental dummies, and legal origins. The μ_i denotes a full set of country dummies, the σ_t denotes a full set of time effects that capture common shocks to democracy of all countries, and e_{it} is an error term capturing all other omitted factors, with $E(e_{it}) = 0$ for all i and t . It is worth noting that the estimation techniques used in this paper are similar to those in Acemoglu et al. (2008).

6.1. Baseline Results

The baseline results are included in table 3 when our variable of interest is the number of leader's trips to the United States. Columns 1 and 2 use the Polity score as our dependent variable, while columns 3 and 4 use the Freedom House indicator. In each case, we include the Pooled OLS and the fixed effects results using robust standard errors clustered by country. The Pooled OLS is identical to our regression equation except for the omission of the fixed effects that reflect country dummies. These country dummies capture any time-invariant country characteristics that affect democracy. When the true model is given by our regression equation, Pooled OLS estimates are biased and inconsistent. In this context, the fixed effects estimator is more consistent. The results in table 3 show that the coefficient of leader's trips has a statistically significant positive effect in most specifications.

In the estimation, we include a Muslim dummy since Potrafke (2012) finds that countries with Muslim majorities enjoy less freedom and are less democratic than countries in which Muslims are a minority. Our results show that the Muslim dummy is statistically significant and negative in all specifications. We also include the logarithm of GDP per capita since the central tenet of the modernization theory is that higher

income per capita causes a country to adopt a more democratic system of governance. Lipset (1959) also suggests that “the factors subsumed under economic development carry with it the political correlate of democracy” (p. 80). Our results are consistent with this view and show that the logarithm of GDP per capita has a statistically significant positive coefficient in all specifications. We also add total natural resources rents as a percentage of GDP. Some studies show a connection between oil abundance and the system of governance such as Tsui (2011). Our results show that the coefficient is significantly negative in the Pooled OLS but insignificant in the fixed effects estimations. In all these specifications we add legal origins which influence the design of the political system and the separation of powers between political branches.

Table 4 includes the results when our variable of interest is the number of visits of U.S. Presidents. The results show that the visits of U.S. Presidents have a statistically significant positive effect on democracy only when we use the Polity score as our dependent variable. Table 5 includes the results when our variable of interest is the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State. The results show that the visits of U.S. Secretaries of State do not have a statistically significant effect on democracy in all specifications. This implies that the visits of the heads of state are what matters for democracy promotion compared to visits by other officials.

In table II.1 in appendix II, we add other control variables such as foreign direct investment as a percentage of GDP and trade openness. The results confirm our previous finding and show that the leader’s trips to the United States has a positive association with democracy using either the Polity score or Freedom House, the visits of U.S. Presidents have a positive effect when we use the Polity score, while the visits of U.S. Secretaries of State enhance democracy when we use the Freedom House

indicator. In table II.2, we include country-specific trends in levels of variables. The results show that the leader's trips to the United States has a positive association with democracy using either the Polity score or the Freedom House indicator, while the visits of U.S. Presidents have a positive effect when we use the Polity score only.

6.2. Robustness

6.2.1 Before and after the end of the cold war

In this section, we conduct some tests to check the robustness of our results. The first test compares the effect of official visits on democracy before and after the end of the cold war. This is because the confrontational climate during the cold war caused countries around the world to attempt to cope with a highly antagonistic environment, and to survive in a global arena squeezed between the conflicting interests of the two super powers. This implies that high level visits to and from the United States during the cold war likely focused on dealing with the geopolitical developments of the time.

The results of this robustness test are included in table 6 when our variable of interest is the number of leader's trips. Columns 1-4 show the results using the Polity score. On the other hand, columns 5-8 show the results using the Freedom House indicator. Our results show that the coefficient of the leader's trips is statistically significant and positive during the Cold war era. This variable, however, does not have a statistically significant effect after the end of the cold war in most of the specifications. This result implies that the visits of a country's leader to the United States were used to pressure for improvements in the quality of democratic governance during the cold war era. This is because embracing better democratic practices inherently signified an affiliation to the Western bloc during that period of time.

Table 7 includes the results when our variable of interest is the number of visits of U.S. Presidents. The results show that the coefficient of this variable is not statistically significant in most specifications. Table 8 includes the results when our variable of interest is the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State. The results show that the coefficient of this variable is not statistically significant in all specifications either. This implies that there is no significant difference in the effect of the number of visits of U.S. officials on democracy before or after the end of the Cold war.

6.2.2 *Alternative Resource Rents*

To further test the robustness of our results, we use alternative measures of natural resource rents. Boschini et al. (2007) find that different types of natural resources have different effects on economic growth. Several studies also consider the effects of alternative types of natural resources on democracy such as Asiedu and Lien (2011), Ross (2001,2015), Wantchekon (2002), Jensen and Wantchekon (2004), Brückner et al. (2012), and Tsui (2011). In this context, we control for forest rents, coal rents, mineral rents, natural gas rents and oil rents as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product. This data is derived from the World Development Indicators.

The results are included in table 9 when our variable of interest is the number of leader's trips to the United States. Our results show the leader's trips have a statistically significant positive effect in all specifications. The coefficient is, however, higher when we use the Polity score compared to the Freedom House indicator. Tables 10 and 11 conduct the same robustness tests when our variables of interest are the number of visits of U.S. Presidents and the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State, respectively. The results show that the number of visits of U.S. Presidents has a statistically significant positive effect only when the Polity score is used as our dependent variable,

while the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State has a weakly statistically significant positive effect only when the Freedom house indicator is used.

6.2.3 *Alternative Samples*

This paper provides evidence that high level contact with American officials improves the quality of democratic governance. However, this is not the case with countries which already have a higher level of democracy compared to the United States. Therefore, including these countries in the sample may bias the results. To take this issue into account, we first exclude the observations where the democracy score is higher than that of the United States. Second, we eliminate the countries that have a higher average democracy score than that of the United States for the entire period.

The results are included in table 12 when our variable of interest is the number of leader's trips to the United States. Columns 1 and 2 exclude observations with a democracy score higher than that of the United States. Columns 3 and 4 exclude countries that have a higher average democracy score than the United States for the entire period. Our results show that the leader's trips have a statistically significant positive effect in all specifications whether we use the Polity score or the Freedom House indicator.

Table 13 shows that the visits of U.S. Presidents have a statistically significant positive effect consistently when the Polity score is used as our dependent variable. Table 14 shows that the visits of U.S. Secretaries of State have a statistically significant positive effect only when the Freedom House indicator is used as our dependent variable. These different effects on democracy scores can be attributed to the fact that these indicators capture different aspects of democratic governance. While the Polity

score focuses more on the selection process of the chief executive and other constitutional features, the Freedom House indicator puts more weight on political freedoms, rights and liberties. This implies that the visits of U.S. Presidents focus more on the executive and constitutional components of political reforms, while the visits of U.S. Secretaries of State focus more on promoting political rights and civil liberties.

We also examine the effect of official visits on democracy before and after the end of the cold war with the exclusion of the observations where the democracy score is higher than that of the United States, and the elimination of countries that have a higher average democracy score than that of the United States for the entire period. Table 15 shows that the leader's trips to the United States have a statistically significant effect on democracy during the cold war era only, while the effect of the visits of U.S. Presidents and Secretaries of State do not show a significant difference between the cold war era and the post-cold war period in most specifications. This is consistent with our previous findings using the entire sample.

We also examine the effect of official visits on democracy with alternative measures of natural resource rents, and with the exclusion of the observations where the democracy score is higher than that of the United States and the elimination of countries that have a higher average democracy score than that of the United States for the entire period. Table 16 shows that the effect of leader's trips to the United States on democracy is significantly positive in all specifications, the visits of U.S. Presidents have a significant positive effect when we use the Polity score with the exclusion of observations, and significantly positive in all specifications with the exclusion of countries. Finally, the visits of U.S. Secretaries of State have a significant positive effect when we use the Freedom House indicator as our dependent variable.

6.3. Endogeneity

The relationship found so far assumes that the official visits are exogenous to democracy. However, the problem of endogeneity cannot be ignored. First, the association may be spurious due to the failure to account for an unobserved channel which is affecting both variables. It is likely that economies that are different for a variety of causes will differ both in the number of official visits to and from the United States and their democracy scores as well. Second, as much as the official visits to and from the United States may enhance the level of democratic governance, leaders from more democratic governments may be invited more to visit the United States and American officials may visit democratic countries more. This indicates an issue of reverse causality. To deal with potential endogeneity, we use the Anderson and Hsiao (1982), and the Arellano and Bond (1991) estimation techniques. The discussion of these techniques and the estimation results are included in appendix III.

We also use a system of simultaneous equations that can be jointly estimated using Three-Stage-Least-Squares (3SLS). Simultaneous equations are a statistical model in which the dependent variables are functions of other dependent variables, rather than just independent variables. In our context, both the democracy and the official visits indicators can be determined jointly as follows

$$Democracy_{it} = \theta + \delta Visits_{it} + X_{it}\gamma + \mu_{it} \quad (1)$$

$$Visits_i = \alpha + \beta Democracy_{it} + Z_{it}\sigma + e_{it} \quad (2)$$

Z_{it} is a vector of determinants of official visits to and from country i in year t . This vector includes a dummy if the country has a free trade agreement with the United

States³. Countries that are major trading partners of the United States are more likely to have more bilateral official visits than others. Another variable is a dummy equals to 1 if the country has a common language with the United States, or if the country's official language is English. Common language and cultural proximity facilitate diplomatic communications and commercial transactions.

We also include capital distance, which is the distance in kilometers from Washington D.C. to the official place of the leader's residence in every country around the world. We use different sources for the distance calculations⁴ to ensure robustness, reliability, and to check the conformity of the observations. The inclusion of this variable is based on the intuition that American officials are more likely to visit countries whose capital cities are closer to that of the United States, and that U.S. administrations are more likely to invite leaders of countries in close proximity to visit Washington DC. This proximity usually implies that the country is more likely to be within the sphere of influence of the United States and to be particularly of strategic significance to American administrations. For instance, Latin America in closest proximity to the United States has been labeled as "America's Backyard" and was off limits to other powers. In this context, the "Monroe doctrine" stated that any efforts by European powers to take control of any state in North or South America would be viewed as "the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States."

The close distance between the country and the United States also reflects lower transportation costs and thus a higher level of bilateral trade and commercial exchange. These factors cause the United States to be more interested in strengthening bilateral

³ <https://ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements>

⁴ <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml>, and <https://gps-coordinates.org/distance-between-coordinates.php>; <https://www.movable-type.co.uk/scripts/latlong.html>

ties with these countries through frequent official visits to and from the country. The proximity of the two capitals also decreases the cost of the trip. Finally, we include a dummy if the country was a British colony. In this case, we expect a former British colony to have similar political, economic, legal, and cultural institutions to those in the United States. This strengthens bilateral ties, and thus increases the level of official visits between the country and the United States.

Table 17 shows the 3SLS estimation results of the effect of the number of official visits on democracy. Columns 1-2 show the effect of the number of trips of the country's leaders to the United States. Columns 3-4 show the effect of the number of visits of U.S. Presidents to the country, while columns 5-6 show the effect of the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State to the country. In each case, the first column shows the results when democracy is the dependent variable, while the second column shows the results when the number of official visits is the dependent variable. The top part of the table shows the results when the Polity score is used as our dependent variable, while the bottom part shows the results when the Freedom House indicator is used.

The results in table 17 show that all the official visits variables have a statistically significant positive effect on democracy when we use Polity score as our dependent variable, while only the visits of U.S. Presidents is significant when we use the Freedom House indicator. The results also show that democracy has a statistically significant positive effect on official visits using either the Polity score or the Freedom House indicator. This implies that American officials are more likely to visit democratic countries and American administrations are more likely to invite leaders of democratic countries.

Table 18 shows the 3SLS estimation results with the exclusion of the observations where the democracy score is higher than that of the United States and the elimination of countries that have a higher average democracy score than that of the United States for the entire period. The results show that the leader's trips to the United States and the visits of U.S. Presidents to the country have a statistically significant positive effect on democracy when we use Polity score as our dependent variable.

6.4. *Transmission Channels*

In this section, we test our hypothesis by considering the channels of transmission through which official visits can influence democratic outcomes. We argue that there are two channels that are supported by findings of some previous studies: bilateral trade and aid flows. The argument is that these official visits can be used to pressure or persuade the country to enhance the quality of democratic governance through the carrot of promoting bilateral trade with the United States or through extending U.S. aid funds.

To provide evidence for the first channel, some studies find a positive association between bilateral trade and democracy such as Dutt and Traca (2010), Yu (2010) and Nicolini and Paccagnini (2011). In addition, Kodila-Tedika and Khalifa (2021) show that the official visits to and from the United States have a positive impact on bilateral trade between the country and the United States. Thus, official visits can impact bilateral trade with the United States which can be used as a means by which an American administration persuade or pressure a country to democratize.

The second transmission channel is aid inflows which are considered as a geopolitical instrument. Several studies explore the association between aid and the system of governance. For instance, Reinsberg (2015) finds that donors react to regime change in a large sample of recipient countries. Kersting and Kilby (2014) provide

evidence that donors allocate aid in response to democratization and that recipients respond to this incentive for democratic transition. Knack (2004) shows a positive impact of aid on democratization in a large sample of recipient countries over the 1975–2000 period. In addition, Kodila-Tedika and Khalifa (2020b) find an association between official visits to and from the United States and U.S. aid inflows. This implies that these official visits can affect aid inflows from the United States which can be used as an incentive for embracing better democratic practices.

Table 19 considers these possible channels of transmission. In the top part, we distinguish between countries that have free trade agreements with the United States and those that do not. In the middle part, we include an interaction term between the number of visits variables and a dummy of whether a country has a free trade agreement with the United States. In the bottom part, we include an interaction term between the official visits variables and aid inflows from the United States. The results show that the number of leader’s trips to the United States has a positive association with democracy in the sample of countries that do not have a free trade agreement with the United States. The results also show that the number of visits of U.S. Presidents has a positive association with democracy especially at low levels of aid inflows from the United States. These results imply that signing a free trade agreement with the U.S. or receiving U.S. aid can be used as an incentive to entice these countries to adopt better democratic practices. The U.S. administration uses the former as a carrot when inviting the country’s leader to the United States, and the latter as a carrot when a U.S. President is visiting the country.

Table 20 shows the transmission channels estimation results with elimination of countries that have a higher average democracy score than that of the United States for

the entire period, while table 21 includes the estimation results the exclusion of the observations where the democracy score is higher than that of the United States. The results show that both the number of leader's trips to the United States and the visits of U.S. Presidents to the country have a positive association with the Polity score in the sample of countries that do not have a free trade agreement with the United States. All the visits variables have a positive association with the Freedom House indicators in the sample of countries that do not have a free trade agreement with the United States. The results also show that all the visits variables have a positive association with democracy especially at low levels of aid inflows from the United States. This confirms our previous findings for the entire sample, and provides evidence to support our hypothesis derived from the theoretical framework.

7. Conclusion

This paper investigates whether the official visits to and from the United States allows the country to adopt a more democratic system of governance and to embrace better democratic practices. To achieve its objective, the paper develops a model that derives conditions under which a host country invites a guest country in order to pressure or persuade the latter to transition into a democratic system, and those under which the guest accepts the invitation and decides to enhance the quality of democratic governance. To empirically test the findings of our model, the paper introduces novel variables that indicate the number of trips by a leader to the United States, and the number of visits of U.S. President and Secretaries of State to the country, during the period 1960-2015. The paper uses panel estimation techniques to examine the effect of these variables on the Polity score and the Freedom House indicator.

The results show that the official visits have a statistically significant and positive effect on democracy, especially during the cold war era. This is the case using alternative econometric techniques, using different democracy indicators, including additional control variables, and excluding observations and countries whose democracy score is higher than that of the United States. The paper uses a 3SLS estimation technique to deal with potential endogeneity. The 3SLS estimation confirms our previous findings that official visits have a statistically significant positive effect on democracy. Finally, the paper considers the channels of transmission and finds that American administrations use bilateral trade flows and U.S. aid as an incentive for countries to democratize. This provides evidence to support the hypothesis derived from our model. This line of research can be extended to consider the effect of official visits to and from other countries, once this data becomes available.

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Table 1. Data Definitions and Sources

Variables	Definitions	Sources
Polity	The Polity score captures a country's political regime on a 21-point scale ranging from -10 (strongly autocratic) to +10 (strongly democratic).	Polity IV Project
Leaders' trips to USA	Number of trips by heads of governments or state leaders to the USA during the period 1960-2015.	U.S. Department of State : https://history.state.gov/department-history/visits
Freedom house democracy score	Cf. Section 5	Freedom House
Oil rents (% of GDP)	Oil rent as a percentage of GDP	World Bank WDI online Database
Log of GDP per capita	GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2011 international \$) 1960-2015.	World Bank WDI online Database
Africa	Dummy variables that take on the value of one when a country belongs to a Africa and 0 otherwise	Own Calculation
Asia	Dummy variables that take on the value of one when a country belongs to a Asia and 0 otherwise	Own Calculation
America	Dummy variables that take on the value of one when a country belongs to a America and 0 otherwise	Own Calculation
Oceania	Dummy variables that take on the value of one when a country belongs to a Oceania and 0 otherwise	Own Calculation
Europe	Dummy variables that take on the value of one when a country belongs to a Europe and 0 otherwise	Own Calculation
English legal origin	Dummy indicating a country's legal system based on the English common law.	Djankov et. al. (2007)
French legal origin	Dummy indicating a country's legal system based on the French civil law.	Djankov et. al. (2007)
German legal origin	Dummy indicating a country's legal system based on German civil law.	Djankov et. al. (2007)
Scandinavian legal origin	Dummy indicating a country's legal system based on Scandinavian legal system.	Djankov et. al. (2007)
Socialist legal origin	Dummy indicating a country's legal system is Socialist.	Djankov et. al. (2007)
Muslim	Dummy indicating the main religion in the country is Islam.	La Porta et. al. (1999).
Visits of the U.S. President	The number of visits of U.S. Presidents to a country	U.S. Department of State : https://history.state.gov/department-history/travels/president
Visits of the U.S. Secretary of State	The number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State to a country	U.S. Department of State : https://history.state.gov/department-history/travels/secretary
Coal rents (% of GDP)	Coal rents as a percentage of GDP	World Bank WDI online Database
Mineral rents (% of GDP)	Mineral rents as a percentage of GDP	World Bank WDI online Database
Natural gas rents (% of GDP)	Natural gas rents as a percentage of GDP	World Bank WDI online Database
Forest rents (% of GDP)	Forest rents as a percentage of GDP	World Bank WDI online Database

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Observation	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Leaders' trips to USA	2,101	1.159	1.915	0	17
Travels Abroad of the President	2,101	0.268	0.714	0	5
Travels Abroad of the Secretary of State	2,101	1.108	2.537	0	25
Log of GDP per capita	1,698	8.224	1.486	5.033	11.576
Africa	2,101	0.283	0.450	0	1
Asia	2,101	0.246	0.431	0	1
America	2,101	0.178	0.383	0	1
Oceania	2,101	0.068	0.252	0	1
Europe	2,101	0.225	0.418	0	1
English legal origin	1,551	0.284	0.451	0	1
French legal origin	1,551	0.440	0.500	0	1
German legal origin	1,551	0.043	0.202	0	1
Scandinavian legal origin	1,551	0.035	0.185	0	1
Socialist legal origin	1,551	0.184	0.388	0	1
Muslim	1,727	0.293	0.455	0	1
Forest rents (% of GDP)	1,638	2.091	4.039	0	28.340
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	1,638	7.389	11.263	0	67.670
Coal rents (% of GDP)	1,475	.121	.545	0	10.144
Mineral rents (% of GDP)	1,638	1.002	3.194	0	35.203
Natural gas rents (% of GDP)	1,512	.417	2.2614	0	43.299
Oil rents (% of GDP)	1,505	4.149	10.300	0	65.396
Polity IV	1,605	.968	7.182	-10	10
Freedom house	1,511	2.868	2.075	1	7

Table 3. Effect of leader's trips to the U.S. on democracy

	Polity IV		Freedom House	
	Pooled OLS	Fixed effects OLS	Pooled OLS	Fixed effects OLS
Leaders' trips to USA	0.376*** (0.127)	0.536*** (0.133)	0.041 (0.037)	0.082*** (0.028)
Muslim dummy	-3.010*** (0.885)	-6.622*** (0.813)	-0.511** (0.201)	-2.856*** (0.255)
GDP per capita (log)	0.983*** (0.371)	3.397*** (0.678)	0.685*** (0.107)	0.926*** (0.209)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	-0.142*** (0.034)	0.070* (0.038)	-0.041*** (0.008)	0.005 (0.007)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	YES	NO	YES
Constant	-4.685 (3.338)	-21.759*** (3.170)	-2.542** (1.046)	-7.042*** (1.032)
Number of observations	1 088	1 088	995	995
R ²	0.487	0.700	0.701	0.886

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Pooled cross-sectional OLS and Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 4. Effect of visits of U.S. Presidents on democracy

	Polity IV		Freedom House	
	Pooled OLS	Fixed effects OLS	Pooled OLS	Fixed effects OLS
Visits of U.S. Presidents	0.491*	0.561**	-0.004	0.013
	(0.264)	(0.216)	(0.099)	(0.069)
Muslim dummy	-2.966***	1.604***	-0.511**	1.157***
	(0.873)	(0.531)	(0.201)	(0.164)
GDP per capita (log)	1.106***	3.678***	0.708***	0.987***
	(0.364)	(0.706)	(0.103)	(0.219)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	-0.157***	0.079**	-0.043***	0.006
	(0.034)	(0.039)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	YES	NO	YES
Constant	-5.245	-29.744***	-2.679**	-5.137***
	(3.368)	(4.518)	(1.207)	(1.484)
Number of observations	1 088	1 088	995	995
R ²	0.478	0.691	0.699	0.883

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Pooled cross-sectional OLS and Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 5. Effect of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State on democracy

	Polity IV		Freedom House	
	Pooled OLS	Fixed effects OLS	Pooled OLS	Fixed effects OLS
Visits of the U.S. Secretaries of State	0.042 (0.069)	0.109 (0.083)	-0.004 (0.025)	0.027* (0.014)
Muslim dummy	-3.005*** (0.888)	1.594*** (0.538)	-0.510** (0.203)	1.126*** (0.163)
GDP per capita (log)	1.152*** (0.376)	3.750*** (0.709)	0.709*** (0.105)	0.969*** (0.216)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	-0.159*** (0.034)	0.078** (0.039)	-0.043*** (0.008)	0.006 (0.008)
Contental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	YES	NO	YES
Constant	-5.594 (3.458)	-30.313*** (4.543)	-2.621** (1.033)	-5.054*** (1.459)
Number of observations	1 088	1 088	995	995
R ²	0.476	0.689	0.699	0.883

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Pooled cross-sectional OLS and Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 6. Effect of leader's trips to the U.S. on democracy during and after the end of the Cold war.

	Polity IV				Freedom House			
	Pooled OLS		Fixed effects OLS		Pooled OLS		Fixed effects OLS	
	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War
Leaders' trips to USA	0.557*** (0.177)	0.047 (0.093)	0.674*** (0.229)	0.134 (0.096)	0.146** (0.060)	-0.009 (0.033)	0.102** (0.051)	0.046** (0.020)
Muslim dummy	-1.941** (0.964)	-3.565*** (1.029)	-8.295*** (1.812)	-3.339*** (0.673)	-0.161 (0.173)	-0.721*** (0.245)	-3.307*** (0.528)	-2.353*** (0.197)
GDP per capita (log)	1.385*** (0.497)	0.321 (0.324)	0.130 (1.013)	2.512*** (0.662)	0.523*** (0.128)	0.751*** (0.105)	0.894** (0.347)	0.992*** (0.240)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	-0.170*** (0.048)	-0.177*** (0.032)	0.032 (0.059)	0.003 (0.048)	-0.033*** (0.010)	-0.048*** (0.010)	-0.019* (0.010)	-0.005 (0.008)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Constant	-15.098*** (3.305)	3.370 (3.253)	-3.207 (7.654)	-11.003*** (3.211)	-0.942 (1.380)	-3.310*** (1.247)	-5.709*** (1.582)	-7.392*** (1.132)
Number of observations	478	610	478	610	388	607	388	607
R ²	0.608	0.577	0.874	0.885	0.724	0.715	0.946	0.942

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; *, Pooled cross-sectional OLS and Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 7. Effect of visits of U.S. Presidents on democracy during and after the end of the Cold war.

	Polity IV				Freedom House			
	Pooled OLS		Fixed effects OLS		Pooled OLS		Fixed effects OLS	
	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War
Visits of the U.S. Presidents	0.388 (0.509)	0.192 (0.193)	0.343 (0.285)	0.322** (0.139)	0.079 (0.170)	-0.060 (0.103)	-0.019 (0.122)	0.026 (0.052)
Muslim dummy	-1.855* (0.966)	-3.549*** (1.025)	-6.704*** (1.179)	2.901*** (0.435)	-0.153 (0.173)	-0.726*** (0.246)	0.860** (0.368)	1.258*** (0.162)
GDP per capita (log)	1.611*** (0.490)	0.312 (0.320)	0.891 (1.124)	2.397*** (0.651)	0.594*** (0.123)	0.756*** (0.104)	1.037*** (0.354)	0.960*** (0.240)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	-0.190*** (0.048)	-0.178*** (0.032)	0.043 (0.053)	0.007 (0.048)	-0.040*** (0.010)	-0.048*** (0.010)	-0.015 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.009)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Constant	-16.358*** (3.342)	3.457 (3.262)	-15.853 (10.178)	-10.381** (4.495)	-1.486 (1.285)	-3.348*** (1.247)	-5.614** (2.202)	-4.031** (1.632)
Number of observations	478	610	478	610	388	607	388	607
R ²	0.595	0.578	0.865	0.885	0.711	0.715	0.943	0.941

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Pooled cross-sectional OLS and Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 8. Effect of the visits of U.S. Secretaries of State on democracy during and after the end of the Cold war.

	Polity IV				Freedom House			
	Pooled OLS		Fixed effects OLS		Pooled OLS		Fixed effects OLS	
	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State	0.150 (0.106)	-0.088 (0.065)	0.155 (0.111)	0.059 (0.061)	0.057 (0.035)	-0.033 (0.025)	0.026 (0.033)	0.019 (0.012)
Muslim dummy	-1.901* (0.967)	-3.538*** (1.027)	-6.820*** (1.198)	2.848*** (0.433)	-0.175 (0.176)	-0.709*** (0.245)	0.855** (0.367)	1.237*** (0.165)
GDP per capita (log)	1.560*** (0.499)	0.391 (0.325)	0.719 (1.157)	2.391*** (0.651)	0.568*** (0.125)	0.766*** (0.105)	1.027*** (0.352)	0.952*** (0.242)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	-0.186*** (0.048)	-0.183*** (0.032)	0.044 (0.053)	0.006 (0.048)	-0.037*** (0.010)	-0.049*** (0.010)	-0.015 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.009)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Constant	-16.169*** (3.352)	2.983 (3.323)	-14.337 (10.468)	-10.336** (4.500)	-1.493 (1.282)	-3.407*** (1.253)	-5.532** (2.180)	-4.003** (1.634)
Number of observations	478	610	478	610	388	607	388	607
R ²	0.596	0.579	0.866	0.884	0.715	0.717	0.943	0.942

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Pooled cross-sectional OLS and Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 9. Effect of leader's trips to U.S. on democracy using alternative measures of resource rents

	Polity IV				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Leaders' trips to USA	0.541*** (0.134)	0.571*** (0.129)	0.538*** (0.132)	0.510*** (0.131)	0.579*** (0.127)
Forest rents (% of GDP)	0.192 (0.142)				
Coal rents (% of GDP)		-0.005 (0.356)			
Mineral rents (% of GDP)			0.148* (0.082)		
Natural gas rents (% of GDP)				0.734** (0.362)	
Oil rents (% of GDP)					-0.008 (0.040)
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-22.252*** (3.645)	-22.041*** (3.753)	-22.022*** (3.351)	-19.584*** (3.726)	-21.638*** (3.456)
Number of observations	1 088	1 005	1 088	1 027	1 020
R ²	0.700	0.700	0.700	0.706	0.706
	Freedom House				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Leaders' trips to USA	0.081*** (0.028)	0.081*** (0.028)	0.081*** (0.028)	0.071*** (0.025)	0.081*** (0.029)
Forest rents (% of GDP)	0.063*** (0.020)				
Coal rents (% of GDP)		-0.023 (0.122)			

Mineral rents (% of GDP)			0.017 (0.021)		
Natural gas rents (% of GDP)				-0.214*** (0.053)	
Oil rents (% of GDP)					-0.006 (0.006)
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-7.668*** (1.125)	-7.064*** (1.049)	-7.136*** (1.065)	-7.482*** (1.046)	-7.017*** (1.029)
Number of observations	995	979	995	978	980
R2	0.887	0.886	0.886	0.890	0.886

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 10. Effect of visits of U.S. Presidents on democracy using alternative measures of resource rents

	Polity IV					Freedom House				
Visits of the U.S. Presidents	0.546**	0.551**	0.560***	0.564***	0.577**	0.010	0.009	0.013	0.012	0.010
	(0.215)	(0.237)	(0.213)	(0.214)	(0.231)	(0.069)	(0.069)	(0.069)	(0.068)	(0.069)
Forest rents (% of GDP)	0.198					0.065***				
	(0.146)					(0.021)				
Coal rents (% of GDP)		0.038					-0.022			
		(0.344)					(0.123)			
Mineral rents (% of GDP)			0.161*					0.020		
			(0.088)					(0.022)		
Natural gas rents (% of GDP)				0.666*					-0.225***	
				(0.380)					(0.055)	
Oil rents (% of GDP)					0.002					-0.005
					(0.042)					(0.007)
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-30.022***	-30.030***	-29.037***	-27.033***	-29.703***	-5.815***	-5.192***	-5.128***	-5.706***	-5.064***
	(4.924)	(5.414)	(4.635)	(5.208)	(4.895)	(1.579)	(1.546)	(1.478)	(1.490)	(1.478)
Number of observations	1 088	1 005	1 088	1 027	1 020	995	979	995	978	980
R ²	0.690	0.690	0.691	0.698	0.695	0.885	0.883	0.883	0.888	0.883

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 11. Effect of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State using alternative measures of resource rents

	Polity IV					Freedom House				
Visits of the U.S. Secretaries of State	0.105 (0.083)	0.130* (0.075)	0.108 (0.082)	0.091 (0.077)	0.121* (0.073)	0.027* (0.014)	0.026* (0.014)	0.027* (0.014)	0.027* (0.014)	0.026* (0.014)
Forest rents (% of GDP)	1.167* (0.645)	2.030*** (0.724)	1.883*** (0.524)	1.628*** (0.596)	1.968*** (0.564)	0.949*** (0.138)	1.133*** (0.210)	1.152*** (0.166)	1.240*** (0.171)	1.156*** (0.169)
Coal rents (% of GDP)	4.090*** (0.725)	4.225*** (0.800)	3.710*** (0.702)	3.750*** (0.791)	4.160*** (0.763)	1.065*** (0.229)	1.001*** (0.226)	0.955*** (0.214)	1.082*** (0.223)	0.995*** (0.224)
Mineral rents (% of GDP)	0.200 (0.145)					0.065*** (0.021)				
Natural gas rents (% of GDP)		0.014 (0.354)					-0.021 (0.124)			
Oil rents (% of GDP)			0.159* (0.088)					0.020 (0.022)		
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-30.619*** (4.955)	-30.902*** (5.386)	-29.615*** (4.655)	-27.860*** (5.237)	-30.548*** (4.905)	-5.724*** (1.554)	-5.098*** (1.521)	-5.042*** (1.454)	-5.613*** (1.467)	-4.973*** (1.454)
Number of observations	1 088	1 005	1 088	1 027	1 020	995	979	995	978	980
R ²	0.689	0.688	0.689	0.696	0.694	0.885	0.883	0.884	0.889	0.884

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 12. Effect of leader's trips to the U.S. on democracy excluding observations and countries with higher democracy score than the U.S.

	Exclusion of observation		Exclusion of countries	
	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House
Leaders' trips to USA	0.736*** (0.164)	0.106*** (0.034)	0.817*** (0.167)	0.114*** (0.034)
Muslim dummy	-2.319*** (0.283)	-0.115** (0.057)	-2.185*** (0.285)	-0.117** (0.058)
GDP per capita (log)	4.039*** (0.765)	0.932*** (0.231)	3.878*** (0.837)	0.523*** (0.162)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	0.065* (0.038)	0.006 (0.007)	0.055 (0.039)	0.000 (0.005)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-25.054*** (3.572)	-7.582*** (1.156)	-0.371 (3.249)	-0.057 (0.623)
Number of observations	928	850	834	760
R ²	0.638	0.811	0.579	0.726

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 13. Effect of visits of U.S. Presidents on democracy excluding observations and countries with higher democracy score than the U.S.

	Exclusion of observation		Exclusion of countries	
	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House
Visits of U.S. Presidents	1.077*** (0.317)	0.125 (0.079)	1.368*** (0.395)	0.280*** (0.073)
Muslim dummy	2.048*** (0.604)	1.119*** (0.178)	1.884*** (0.651)	0.786*** (0.120)
GDP per capita (log)	4.280*** (0.805)	0.965*** (0.244)	4.043*** (0.869)	0.506*** (0.163)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	0.077* (0.039)	0.008 (0.008)	0.066 (0.041)	0.003 (0.006)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-33.676*** (5.149)	-5.517*** (1.670)	-31.482*** (5.538)	-2.187** (1.086)
Number of observations	928	850	834	760
R ²	0.623	0.805	0.562	0.721

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 14. Effect of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State on democracy excluding observations and countries with higher democracy score than the U.S.

	Exclusion of observation		Exclusion of countries	
	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State	0.144 (0.114)	0.032** (0.016)	0.252* (0.138)	0.066*** (0.019)
Muslim dummy	2.044*** (0.617)	1.105*** (0.177)	1.818*** (0.671)	0.770*** (0.124)
GDP per capita (log)	4.390*** (0.811)	0.973*** (0.240)	4.152*** (0.874)	0.535*** (0.170)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	0.077* (0.039)	0.008 (0.008)	0.066 (0.040)	0.002 (0.006)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-34.540*** (5.188)	-5.612*** (1.643)	-32.524*** (5.575)	-2.494** (1.138)
Number of observations	928	850	834	760
R2	0.619	0.805	0.556	0.716

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **, .1 - *, Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Table 15. Effect of official visits on democracy during and after the end of the Cold war with exclusion of countries and observations

	Polity IV				Freedom House			
	Pooled OLS		Fixed effects OLS		Pooled OLS		Fixed effects OLS	
	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War	Cold War	Post Cold War
Exclusion of observation								
Leader's Trips to US	0.623*** (0.234)	0.039 (0.107)	0.958*** (0.307)	0.175 (0.123)	0.041 (0.053)	-0.023 (0.036)	0.127** (0.062)	0.053** (0.024)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-9.578** (4.235)	2.725 (3.539)	-14.195* (7.827)	-12.953** (4.986)	-1.200 (1.312)	-3.291*** (1.191)	-4.661* (2.558)	-3.212** (1.595)
Number of observations	403	525	403	525	328	522	328	522
R ²	0.451	0.518	0.815	0.866	0.566	0.589	0.883	0.920
Exclusion of countries								
Leader's Trips to US	0.744*** (0.254)	0.122 (0.125)	1.053*** (0.329)	0.190 (0.143)	0.134*** (0.037)	0.040 (0.031)	0.131** (0.060)	0.054** (0.024)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-5.505 (5.560)	5.951 (3.739)	-11.357 (7.921)	-14.469** (5.861)	1.118* (0.656)	-0.991 (0.798)	-1.835 (1.443)	-1.379 (1.332)
Number of observations	373	461	373	461	302	458	302	458
R ²	0.348	0.493	0.766	0.841	0.446	0.494	0.792	0.883
Exclusion of observation								
Visits of US Presidents	0.385 (0.710)	0.251 (0.266)	0.607 (0.501)	0.445** (0.189)	0.013 (0.141)	-0.087 (0.130)	-0.056 (0.198)	0.096* (0.053)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-10.507** (4.207)	2.798 (3.539)	-20.166** (9.077)	-11.854** (4.901)	-1.265 (1.259)	-3.307*** (1.188)	-5.666** (2.577)	-2.890* (1.599)
Number of observations	403	525	403	525	328	522	328	522
R ²	0.435	0.519	0.797	0.866	0.565	0.590	0.877	0.919
Exclusion of countries								
Visits of US Presidents	0.514 (0.788)	0.509 (0.361)	0.933 (0.643)	0.536** (0.227)	0.100 (0.152)	0.121 (0.162)	0.139 (0.188)	0.165*** (0.048)

Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-7.018 (5.679)	6.052 (3.725)	-16.607* (8.543)	⁻ 13.222** (5.787)	0.853 (0.731)	-0.994 (0.809)	-2.731* (1.524)	-1.018 (1.301)
Number of observations	373	461	373	461	302	458	302	458
R ²	0.322	0.494	0.744	0.841	0.408	0.494	0.779	0.884
Exclusion of observation								
Visits of US Secretaries of State	0.246* (0.131)	-0.091 (0.076)	0.226 (0.159)	0.081 (0.080)	0.063 (0.040)	-0.023 (0.030)	0.001 (0.024)	0.031** (0.014)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-9.953** (4.235)	2.432 (3.658)	⁻ 18.880** (9.173)	⁻ 11.973** (4.928)	-1.095 (1.291)	⁻ 3.334*** (1.208)	⁻ 5.688** (2.606)	-2.903* (1.606)
Number of observations	403	525	403	525	328	522	328	522
R ²	0.440	0.520	0.798	0.865	0.574	0.590	0.876	0.919
Exclusion of countries								
Visits of US Secretaries of State	0.279 (0.183)	-0.039 (0.103)	0.452 (0.281)	0.084 (0.094)	0.060** (0.030)	0.025 (0.032)	0.042 (0.037)	0.045** (0.020)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-6.695 (5.566)	5.446 (3.947)	-15.428* (8.487)	⁻ 13.498** (5.842)	0.936 (0.696)	-0.983 (0.817)	-2.820* (1.527)	-1.053 (1.344)
Number of observations	373	461	373	461	302	458	302	458
R ²	0.327	0.491	0.747	0.839	0.418	0.493	0.779	0.883

note: .01 - ***, .05 - **, .1 - *;

Table 16. Effect of official visits on democracy using alternative measures of resource rents with exclusion of countries and Observations

	Polity IV					Freedom House				
	Forest rents (% of GDP)	Coal rents (% of GDP)	Mineral rents (% of GDP)	Natural gas rents (% of GDP)	Oil rents (% of GDP)	Forest rents (% of GDP)	Coal rents (% of GDP)	Mineral rents (% of GDP)	Natural gas rents (% of GDP)	Oil rents (% of GDP)
Exclusion of observation										
Leader's Trips to US	0.745*** (0.165)	0.806*** (0.155)	0.737*** (0.163)	0.709*** (0.169)	0.799*** (0.150)	0.107*** (0.034)	0.107*** (0.034)	0.106*** (0.033)	0.094*** (0.030)	0.106*** (0.034)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-32.791*** (5.329)	-34.537*** (5.718)	-30.964*** (4.956)	-30.203*** (5.625)	-32.393*** (5.110)	-5.919*** (1.686)	-5.343*** (1.658)	-5.196*** (1.563)	-5.906*** (1.615)	-5.205*** (1.584)
Number of observations	928	846	928	868	866	850	834	850	833	835
R ²	0.639	0.644	0.638	0.648	0.650	0.814	0.812	0.811	0.820	0.812
Exclusion of countries										
Leader's Trips to US	0.824*** (0.168)	0.856*** (0.168)	0.821*** (0.166)	0.806*** (0.169)	0.835*** (0.172)	0.114*** (0.034)	0.112*** (0.033)	0.114*** (0.034)	0.109*** (0.034)	0.114*** (0.034)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-31.582*** (5.877)	-34.927*** (6.264)	-29.244*** (5.448)	-28.478*** (6.215)	-31.230*** (5.797)	-2.851** (1.172)	-3.068*** (1.162)	-2.248** (1.069)	-2.728** (1.156)	-2.289** (1.110)
Number of observations	834	754	834	775	776	760	744	760	743	746
R ²	0.581	0.590	0.579	0.595	0.592	0.729	0.733	0.726	0.731	0.727
Exclusion of observation										
Visits of US Presidents	1.071*** (0.312)	1.136*** (0.360)	1.077*** (0.311)	1.097*** (0.320)	1.158*** (0.346)	0.125 (0.077)	0.121 (0.078)	0.124 (0.079)	0.128* (0.075)	0.121 (0.078)

Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-34.603*** (5.622)	-35.803*** (6.206)	-32.861*** (5.263)	-32.003*** (5.870)	-34.023*** (5.517)	-6.148*** (1.779)	-5.555*** (1.753)	-5.432*** (1.651)	-6.075*** (1.683)	-5.426*** (1.673)
Number of observations	928	846	928	868	866	850	834	850	833	835
R ²	0.624	0.626	0.623	0.635	0.633	0.808	0.805	0.805	0.816	0.806
Exclusion of countries										
Visits of US Presidents	1.356*** (0.388)	1.437*** (0.456)	1.366*** (0.388)	1.379*** (0.395)	1.439*** (0.429)	0.279*** (0.072)	0.278*** (0.068)	0.280*** (0.073)	0.275*** (0.072)	0.278*** (0.072)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-32.921*** (6.095)	-35.624*** (6.759)	-30.679*** (5.690)	-29.928*** (6.426)	-32.282*** (6.170)	-2.731** (1.184)	-2.937** (1.174)	-2.137** (1.077)	-2.566** (1.160)	-2.167** (1.118)
Number of observations	834	754	834	775	776	760	744	760	743	746
R ²	0.563	0.571	0.562	0.579	0.574	0.724	0.728	0.721	0.727	0.722
Exclusion of observation										
Visits of US Secretaries of State	0.140 (0.115)	0.178* (0.106)	0.143 (0.113)	0.117 (0.107)	0.164 (0.101)	0.032* (0.016)	0.031* (0.016)	0.032** (0.016)	0.033** (0.016)	0.031* (0.016)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-35.478*** (5.667)	-37.277*** (6.193)	-33.732*** (5.299)	-33.160*** (5.985)	-35.434*** (5.568)	-6.242*** (1.753)	-5.653*** (1.726)	-5.528*** (1.624)	-6.177*** (1.656)	-5.522*** (1.646)
Number of observations	928	846	928	868	866	850	834	850	833	835

R ²	0.619	0.621	0.619	0.629	0.628	0.807	0.805	0.805	0.815	0.805
Exclusion of countries										
Visits of US Secretaries of State	0.246*	0.245*	0.250*	0.197	0.211	0.065***	0.065***	0.066***	0.065***	0.065***
	(0.139)	(0.144)	(0.137)	(0.124)	(0.131)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-33.981***	-37.791***	-31.722***	-31.582***	-34.386***	-3.036**	-3.251***	-2.446**	-2.901**	-2.483**
	(6.141)	(6.701)	(5.722)	(6.586)	(6.220)	(1.243)	(1.238)	(1.128)	(1.214)	(1.172)
Number of observations	834	754	834	775	776	760	744	760	743	746
R ²	0.557	0.564	0.556	0.572	0.567	0.719	0.723	0.716	0.722	0.717

note: .01 - ***, .05 - **, .1 - *;

Table 17. Three-Stage-Least-Squares

	Equation I	Equation II	Equation I	Equation II	Equation I	Equation II
Polity IV						
Leader's Trips to U.S.	4.543*** (0.372)					
Visits of U.S. Presidents			13.849*** (1.398)			
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State					0.757** (0.366)	
GDP per capita (log)	-0.887*** (0.331)	0.169*** (0.048)	-0.919*** (0.342)	0.062*** (0.019)	0.832*** (0.313)	0.548*** (0.074)
Control variables	YES		YES		YES	
Continental effects	YES		YES		YES	
Legal Origin effects	YES		YES		YES	
Democracy		0.194*** (0.008)		0.071*** (0.003)		0.117*** (0.015)
Free trade agreements with US		0.242 (0.149)		-0.012 (0.052)		0.660** (0.262)
Common language		-0.159 (0.107)		-0.101** (0.048)		-0.264 (0.214)
Capital Distance (log)		0.158 (0.099)		0.047 (0.043)		0.490** (0.192)
British Colony		-0.013 (0.085)		-0.026 (0.035)		-0.326 (0.199)
Constant	2.732 (2.975)	-1.441 (1.020)	5.986* (3.299)	-0.628 (0.441)	-4.258 (3.035)	-7.371*** (1.863)
Number of observations	1 069		1 069		1 069	
R ²	-1.1146	0.1025	-1.9242	0.0416	0.3880	0.1322

	Freedom House					
Leader's Trip to U.S.	0.056					
	(0.068)					
Visits of U.S. Presidents			1.105***			
			(0.246)			
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State				0.111		
				(0.078)		
GDP per capita (log)	0.688***	0.352***	0.501***	0.112***	0.636***	0.541***
	(0.060)	(0.108)	(0.061)	(0.043)	(0.070)	(0.155)
Control variables	YES		YES		YES	
Continental effects	YES		YES		YES	
Legal Origin effects	YES		YES		YES	
Democracy		0.250***		0.116***		0.281**
		(0.092)		(0.037)		(0.133)
Free trade agreements with US		1.410***		0.053		0.743**
		(0.206)		(0.074)		(0.294)
Common language		0.178		0.045		-0.176
		(0.166)		(0.063)		(0.236)
Capital Distance (log)		0.003		-0.163***		0.241
		(0.150)		(0.057)		(0.214)
British Colony		-0.188		-0.038		-0.205
		(0.152)		(0.054)		(0.216)
Constant	-2.540***	-2.031	-1.201*	0.632	-2.198***	-5.667***
	(0.615)	(1.403)	(0.656)	(0.536)	(0.676)	(2.006)
Number of observations	977		977		977	
R ²	0.706	0.224	0.519	0.159	0.679	0.154

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *;

Table 18. Three-Stage-Least-Squares with exclusion of countries and observations

	Polity IV		Freedom House			
	Equation I	Equation I	Equation I	Equation I	Equation I	Equation I
Exclusion of observation						
Leader's Trips to US	15.056*** (2.122)			0.080 (0.107)		
Visits of US Presidents		69.671** (31.129)			-0.019 (0.125)	
Visits of US Secretaries of State			61.976 (41.939)			-0.039 (0.052)
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Contries effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Legal Origin effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	51.650** (20.911)	106.686 (77.903)	336.134 (271.807)	-4.911*** (1.172)	-5.398*** (0.869)	-5.526*** (0.750)
Number of observations	1 069	1 069	1 069	977	977	977
Exclusion of countries						
Leader's Trips to US	15.056*** (2.122)			0.080 (0.107)		
Visits of US Presidents		69.671** (31.129)			-0.019 (0.125)	
Visits of US Secretaries of State			61.976 (41.939)			-0.039 (0.052)
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Contries effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Legal Origin effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	51.650** (20.911)	106.686 (77.903)	336.134 (271.807)	-4.911*** (1.172)	-5.398*** (0.869)	-5.526*** (0.750)

Number of observations	1 069	1 069	1 069	977	977	977
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Table 19. Channels of Transmission

	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US
Polity IV						
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.415 (0.228)	0.582*** (0.164)				
Visits of U.S. Presidents			0.328 (0.358)	0.618* (0.254)		
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of States					0.033 (0.175)	0.134 (0.087)
Constant	-34.641* (12.839)	-26.019*** (4.800)	-41.168** (13.594)	-27.875*** (5.018)	-41.530** (13.718)	-28.369*** (5.031)
R ²	0.711	0.650	0.699	0.640	0.698	0.639
N	177	911	177	911	177	911
Freedom House						
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.020 (0.029)	0.104** (0.035)				
Visits of U.S. Presidents			0.088 (0.057)	-0.022 (0.089)		
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of States					0.040 (0.020)	0.018 (0.019)
Constant	-7.100 (4.675)	-4.037** (1.487)	-7.186 (4.879)	-4.488** (1.540)	-6.685 (4.731)	-4.384** (1.518)
R ²	0.876	0.870	0.877	0.866	0.877	0.866
N	161	834	161	834	161	834
Interaction between Official Visits and Free Trade Agreements with US						
	Polity			Freedom House		
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.572*** (0.166)			0.101*** (0.036)		

Free trade agreements with US	2.946** (1.343)	4.072*** (1.201)	4.186*** (1.209)	1.139*** (0.374)	1.183*** (0.387)	1.155*** (0.380)
Leader's Trips to U.S.*Free	-0.112 (0.294)			-0.059 (0.058)		
Visits of U.S. Presidents		0.590** (0.258)			-0.029 (0.088)	
Visits of U.S. Presidents*Free		-0.115 (0.489)			0.155 (0.117)	
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State			0.122 (0.087)			0.016 (0.019)
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State *Free			-0.041 (0.200)			0.036 (0.036)
Constant	-27.576*** (4.303)	-29.761*** (4.530)	-30.329*** (4.550)	-4.758*** (1.424)	-5.132*** (1.471)	-5.037*** (1.447)
Number of observations	1 088	1 088	1 088	995	995	995
R ²	0.700	0.691	0.689	0.886	0.883	0.884
Interaction between Official Visits and Bilateral Aid US						
	Polity IV			Freedom House		
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.665*** (0.196)			0.099*** (0.036)		
Aid	13.647 (56.344)	40.390 (39.466)	35.168 (43.400)	7.418 (6.154)	5.606 (4.649)	6.633 (5.379)
Leader's Trips to U.S.*Aid	-1.378 (9.435)			-1.808 (1.162)		
Visits of U.S. Presidents		1.388*** (0.511)			0.208*** (0.076)	
Visits of U.S. Presidents *Aid		-32.749 (28.800)			-3.365 (3.959)	

Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State			0.258			0.061**
			(0.170)			(0.028)
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State *Aid			-2.474			-0.923
			(6.275)			(0.749)
Constant	-29.497***	-31.290***	-32.095***	-3.732**	-3.751**	-3.865**
	(5.646)	(5.835)	(5.881)	(1.618)	(1.686)	(1.682)
Number of observations	796	796	796	733	733	733
R ²	0.605	0.595	0.591	0.738	0.734	0.733

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses. All columns estimated contains the control variables of table 3.

Table 20. Channels of Transmission with exclusion of countries

	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US
Polity IV						
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.593** (0.216)	0.941*** (0.229)				
Visits of U.S. Presidents			0.641 (0.648)	1.629*** (0.447)		
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of States					0.129 (0.181)	0.317 (0.193)
Constant	-42.598*** (13.378)	-28.020*** (6.261)	-45.419*** (14.472)	-29.483*** (6.439)	46.348*** (14.062)	-30.002*** (6.464)
R ²	0.681	0.555	0.657	0.540	0.656	0.639
N	143	691	143	691	143	691
Freedom House						
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.011 (0.030)	0.169*** (0.042)				
Visits of U.S. Presidents			0.215** (0.087)	0.292*** (0.093)		
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of States					0.039* (0.018)	0.079*** (0.025)
Constant	-8.414** (3.359)	-1.047*** (.948)	-7.904** (3.262)	-1.024 (.962)	-8.155** (3.299)	-1.280 (1.002)
R ²	0.876	0.753	0.660	0.736	0.877	0.733
N	131	629	131	629	131	629
Interraction between Official Visits and Free Trade Agreements with US						
	Polity			Freedom House		
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.932***			0.164***		

	(0.230)			(0.043)		
Free trade agreements with US	3.838**	4.915***	4.838***	0.598**	0.454	0.481*
	(1.343)	(1.506)	(1.443)	(0.287)	(0.274)	(0.282)
Leader's Trips to U.S. *Free	-.298			-.124**		
	(.324)			(0.059)		
Visits of U.S. Presidents		1.594***			0.268***	
		(0.447)			(0.093)	
Visits of U.S. Presidents*Free		-0.757			0.037	
		(0.812)			(0.174)	
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State			0.296			0.070***
			(0.191)			(0.025)
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State *Free			-0.117			-0.010
			(0.264)			(0.042)
Constant	-29.872***	-31.682***	-32.510***	-2.295**	-2.187**	-2.493**
	(5.330)	(5.596)	(5.581)	(1.121)	(1.080)	(1.145)
Number of observations	834	834	834	760	760	760
R2	0.580	0.5629	0.556	0.731	0.721	0.716

Interaction between Official Visits and Bilateral Aid US						
	Polity IV			Freedom House		
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.884***			0.115***		
	(0.165)			(0.032)		
Aid	0.000***	0.000**	0.000***	0.000	0.000*	0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Leader's Trips to U.S. *Aid	-0.000**			-0.000**		
	(0.000)			(0.000)		
Visits of U.S. Presidents		1.785***			0.350***	
		(0.669)			(0.097)	

Visits of U.S. Presidents *Aid		-0.000**		-0.000***		
		(0.000)		(0.000)		
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State			0.534***			0.091***
			(0.179)			(0.029)
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State *Aid			-0.000***			-0.000***
			(0.000)			(0.000)
Constant	-28.173***	-28.588***	-28.394***	-1.758	-1.440	-1.672
	(5.729)	(6.085)	(6.025)	(1.073)	(1.082)	(1.104)
Number of observations	746	746	746	684	684	684
R2	0.570	0.554	0.556	0.646	0.644	0.636

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses. All columns estimated contains the control variables of table 3.

Table 21. Channels of Transmission with exclusion of observations

	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US	Free trade agreements with US	No Free trade agreements with US
Polity IV						
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.470 (0.271)	0.870*** (0.190)				
Visits of U.S. Presidents			0.517 (0.620)	1.223*** (0.352)		
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of States					0.022 (0.196)	0.198 (0.129)
Constant	-42.066*** (13.139)	-30.548*** (5.603)	-45.679*** (14.248)	-32.245*** (5.893)	46.969*** (13.807)	-32.649*** (5.917)
R ²	0.678	0.631	0.662	0.615	0.6611	0.610
N	147	781	147	781	147	781
Freedom House						
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.023 (0.034)	0.141*** (0.040)				
Visits of U.S. Presidents			0.172** (0.077)	0.093 (0.100)		
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of States					0.036* (0.020)	0.024 (0.0213)
Constant	-10.89*** (4.690)	-4.372** (1.662)	-10.755** (4.855)	-4.608*** (1.735)	-10.867** (4.744)	-4.674*** (1.705)
R ²	0.667	0.828	0.672	0.820	0.669	0.820
N	134	716	134	716	134	716
Interraction between Official Visits and Free Trade Agreements with US						
	Polity			Freedom House		
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.865***			0.138***		

	(0.192)			(0.041)		
Free trade agreements with US	4.230***	5.167***	5.276***	1.199***	1.173***	1.191***
	(1.550)	(1.408)	(1.367)	(0.416)	(0.426)	(0.420)
Leader's Trips to U.S.*Free	-0.357			-0.086		
	(0.340)			(0.066)		
Visits of U.S. Presidents		1.205***			0.084	
		(0.354)			(0.099)	
Visits of U.S. Presidents*Free		-0.509			0.162	
		(0.740)			(0.144)	
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State			0.187			0.021
			(0.129)			(0.021)
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State *Free			-0.118			0.032
			(0.236)			(0.040)
Constant	-31.801***	-33.861***	-34.593***	-5.319***	-5.490***	-5.594***
	(4.886)	(5.211)	(5.206)	(1.594)	(1.652)	(1.630)
Number of observations	928	928	928	850	850	850
R ²	0.639	0.624	0.619	0.812	0.806	0.805
	Interaction between Official Visits and Bilateral Aid US					
	Polity IV			Freedom House		
Leader's Trips to U.S.	0.889***			0.112***		
	(0.158)			(0.036)		
Aid	0.000***	0.000**	0.000***	0.000	0.000	0.000

	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Leader's Trips to U.S.*Aid	-0.000***			-0.000*		
	(0.000)			(0.000)		
Visits of U.S. Presidents		1.680***			0.263***	
		(0.606)			(0.083)	
Visits of U.S. Presidents *Aid		-0.000**			-0.000**	
		(0.000)			(0.000)	
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State			0.477***			0.072**
			(0.155)			(0.028)
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State *Aid			-0.000***			-0.000**
			(0.000)			(0.000)
Constant	-28.457***	-29.174***	-28.989***	-3.979**	-3.888**	-4.022**
	(5.327)	(5.701)	(5.663)	(1.611)	(1.687)	(1.682)
Number of observations	783	783	783	719	719	719
R ²	0.606	0.586	0.589	0.689	0.683	0.681

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses. All columns estimated contains the control variables of table 3.

Figure 1. World Map of the number of Leader's Trips to the United States

Legend:

- [1,4]
- (4,7]
- (7,13]
- (13,21]
- (21,111]
- No data

Figure 2. World Map of the number of Visits of U.S. Presidents

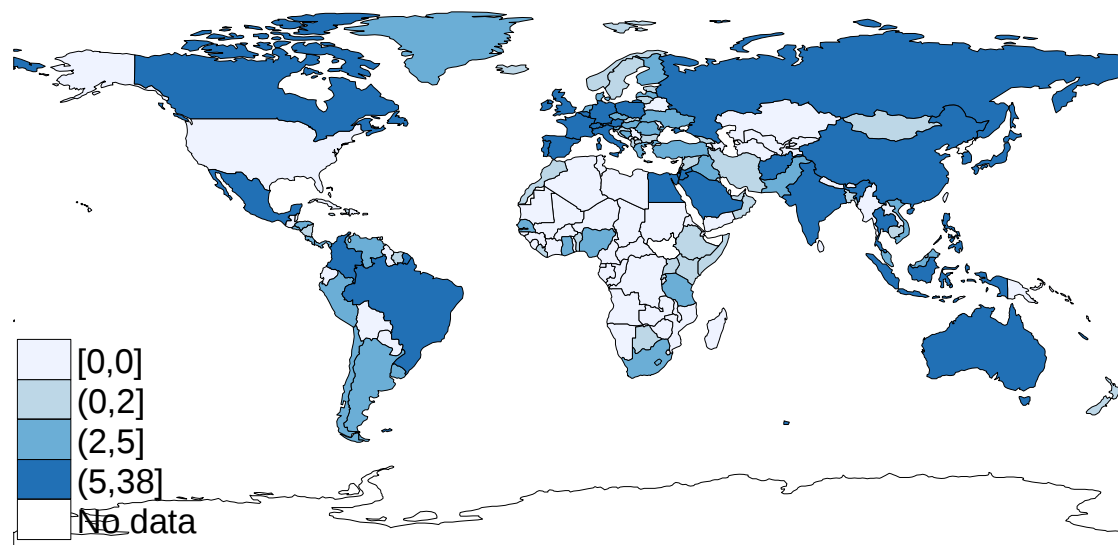
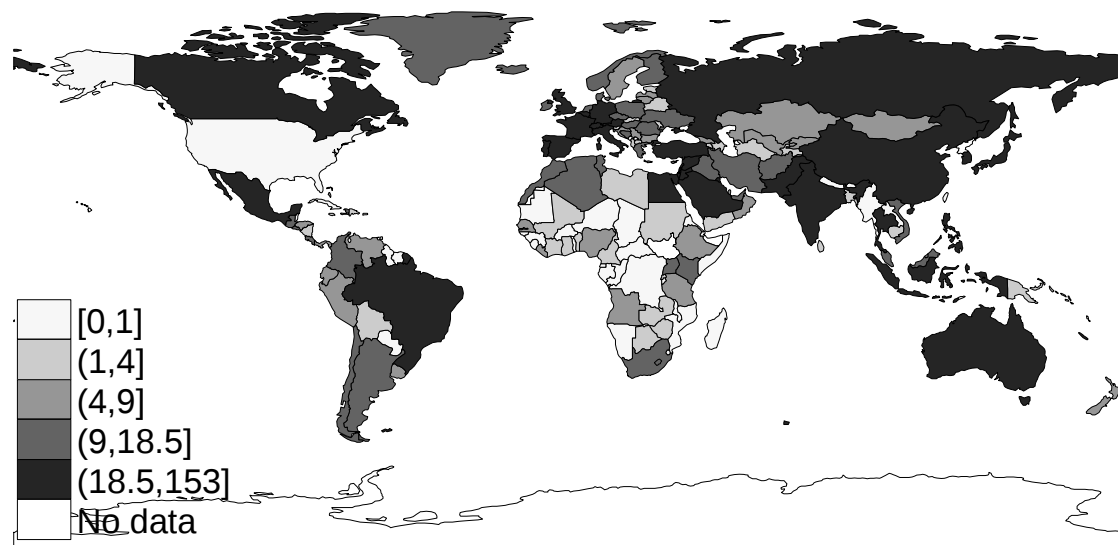


Figure 3. World Map of the number of Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State



APPENDIX 1. List of Countries

Africa: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Europa: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bermuda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Maldives, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Americas : Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela.

Asia : Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Georgia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Kuwait, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Macao, Mongolia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Vietnam, Yemen.

Oceania : Australia, Belize, Fiji, Kiribati, Micronesia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga.

Appendix II

Table II.1. Additional control variables

	Polity			Freedom House		
	I	II	III	I	II	III
Leaders Trips to U.S.	0.488*** (0.131)			0.070** (0.027)		
Visits of the U.S. Presidents		0.495** (0.208)			0.004 (0.068)	
Visits of the U.S. Secretaries of State			0.097 (0.077)			0.025* (0.014)
Foreign direct investment. net inflows (% of GDP)	0.022 (0.027)	0.022 (0.030)	0.022 (0.031)	0.011*** (0.003)	0.011*** (0.004)	0.011*** (0.004)
Openness	0.071** (0.030)	0.076** (0.031)	0.075** (0.031)	0.009 (0.005)	0.009* (0.005)	0.009* (0.005)
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Cons	-26.284*** (4.320)	-28.683*** (4.575)	-29.222*** (4.607)	-4.636*** (1.438)	-5.030*** (1.521)	-4.934*** (1.498)
Number of observations	1 021	1 021	1 021	940	940	940
R ²	0.716	0.708	0.706	0.894	0.892	0.892

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

II.2. Country-specific trends in levels of variables

	Polity			Freedom House		
Leaders Trips to U.S.	0.377***			0.055***		
	(0.070)			(0.014)		
Visits of U.S. Presidents		0.479**			-0.022	
		(0.163)			(0.033)	
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State			0.112			0.021
			(0.058)			(0.012)
Control variables	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Contental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Constant	-9.751	-10.444	-10.328	-0.283	-0.258	-0.149
	(10.428)	(10.552)	(10.585)	(1.494)	(1.511)	(1.507)
Number of observations	1 088	1 088	1 088	995	995	995
R ²	0.847	0.843	0.843	0.942	0.941	0.941

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *; Pooled cross-sectional OLS and Fixed effects OLS regression in all columns estimated with robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses

Appendix III

III.1 Anderson and Hsiao (1982)

To account for the sources of potential endogeneity, we implement the Anderson and Hsiao (1982) approach. This technique eliminates the fixed effects by taking first differences, and then conducts instrumental variable estimation using lagged values as instruments. Table III.1 includes the estimation results when our variable of interest is the lagged number of leader's trips to the United States. The results show that the coefficient of the leader's trips variable is positive and statistically significant using the Polity score but not the Freedom House indicator. We find the same results in table III.2 when the variable of interest is the number of visits of U.S. Presidents to the country. When the variable of interest is the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State, the results in table III.3 show that the official visits have a positive association with democracy only when the Freedom House indicator is used as our dependent variable.

III.2 Arellano and Bond (1991)

However, the Anderson and Hsiao (1982) estimator does not exploit all the pertinent moment conditions. Alternatively, Arellano and Bond (1991) develop a generalized method of moments GMM estimator using all of these moment conditions. When these conditions are valid, this GMM estimator is more efficient than the Anderson and Hsiao (1982) estimator. In addition, the previous analysis does not consider the possibility of persistence in democracy. It is possible that a high level of democracy in one period of time leads to higher democracy scores in subsequent periods. Therefore, we estimate the following equation

$$Democracy_{it} = \theta + \delta_i Visits_{it-1} + \sigma_i Democracy_{it-1} + \mathfrak{X}_{it-1} \gamma + \mu_i + \sigma_t + e_{it} \quad (3)$$

The standard techniques that can be employed for panel estimation, such as fixed effects and random effects, cannot be used in this case. The problem with these techniques is that the equation contains a lagged endogenous variable, which is lagged democracy. In this case, estimation by fixed effects and random effects is not consistent. In addition, we also have the problem of endogeneity of official visits. To deal with potential endogeneity and the lagged dependent variable, we use the Arellano and Bond (1991) estimation technique. This GMM estimator first-differences each variable so as to eliminate the country specific effect and then uses all possible lagged values of each of the variables as instruments. This not only corrects for the bias introduced by the lagged endogenous variable but also allows for a certain degree of endogeneity in the other explanatory variables.

The results of the Arellano and Bond (1991) estimation technique are included in table III.3 when our variable of interest is the number of leader's trips to the United States. The results in table III.4 show that democracy exhibits a high level of persistence, since the coefficient of lagged democracy is positive and statistically significant. The leader's trips variable, however, is statistically significant and positive when the Polity score is our dependent variable, but not when we use the Freedom House indicator. Table III.5 includes the results when our variable of interest is the number of visits of U.S. Presidents, and shows that the coefficient is not significant in all specifications. Table III.6 conducts the same estimation when our variable of interest is the number of visits of U.S. Secretaries of State, and shows that the coefficient is statistically significant and positive in all specifications.

Table III.1. Effect of lagged leader's trips to the U.S. on current democracy (Anderson-Hsiao, 1982)

	Polity IV	Freedom House
Leaders' trips to USA $t-1$	0.216** (0.086)	0.037 (0.025)
GDP per capita (log) $t-1$	0.600 (1.961)	0.804** (0.381)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP) $t-1$	0.079 (0.060)	0.004 (0.010)
Muslim dummy	1.602*** (0.407)	0.169*** (0.054)
Continental effects	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES
Constant	4.389*** (0.504)	0.134* (0.073)
Number of observations	855	849
R2	0.091	0.117

note: .01 - ***, .05 - **, .1 - *;

Table III.2. Effect of lagged visits of U.S. Presidents on current democracy (Anderson-Hsiao)

	Polity IV	Freedom House
Visits of U.S. Presidents $t-1$	0.875** (0.360)	0.080 (0.075)
GDP per capita (log) $t-1$	21.824 (13.720)	-0.699 (1.820)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP) $t-1$	-0.178 (0.384)	0.091* (0.052)
Muslim dummy	0.281 (0.496)	-0.101 (0.064)
Continental effects	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES
Constant	0.518 (0.801)	-0.124 (0.124)
Number of observations	855	849

note: .01 - ***, .05 - **, .1 - *;

Table III.3. Effect of lagged visits of U.S. Secretaries of State on current democracy (Anderson-Hsiao)

	Polity IV	Freedom House
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State _{<i>t-1</i>}	0.185 (0.179)	0.076** (0.035)
GDP per capita (log) _{<i>t-1</i>}	21.170 (13.238)	-0.439 (1.677)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP) _{<i>t-1</i>}	-0.171 (0.374)	0.078 (0.049)
Muslim dummy	0.271 (0.496)	-0.099 (0.064)
Continental effects	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES
Constant	0.282 (0.794)	0.077 (0.108)
Number of observations	855	849

note: .01 - ***, .05 - **, .1 - *;

Table III.4. Effect of lagged leader's trips to the U.S. on current democracy (Arellano-Bond)

	All sample		Exclusion of observation		Exclusion of countries	
	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House
Democracy $t-1$	0.8154*** (0.0562)	0.3407*** (0.1183)	0.6442*** (0.0688)	0.6201*** (0.1861)	0.7268*** (0.0637)	0.3243*** (0.1204)
Leaders' trips to USA $t-1$	0.213* (0.1157)	-0.0487 (0.0355)	0.4907** (0.1922)	0.0044 (0.0272)	0.3274** (0.1397)	0.0150 (0.0305)
GDP per capita (log) $t-1$	0.3310 (0.9106)	0.0043 (0.1318)	0.5146 (0.8785)	0.0167 (0.1272)	0.4104 (0.9123)	0.1236 (0.1366)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP) $t-1$	0.0009 (0.0327)	0.0015 (0.0044)	-0.0180 (0.0317)	-0.0025 (0.0043)	-0.0100 (0.0314)	-0.0013 (0.0044)
Muslim dummy	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Number of observations	844	751	640	569	718	643
AR(2)	0.464	0.007	0.544	0.173	0.494	0.039

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *;

Table III.5. Effect of lagged visits of U.S. Presidents on current democracy (Arellano-Bond)

	All sample		Exclusion of observation		Exclusion of countries	
	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House
Democracy $t-1$	0.814*** (0.056)	0.351*** (0.125)	0.630*** (0.064)	0.649*** (0.185)	0.721*** (0.062)	0.338*** (0.122)
Visits of U.S. Presidents $t-1$	0.331 (0.255)	-0.095 (0.080)	0.459 (0.339)	-0.003 (0.058)	0.478 (0.310)	0.017 (0.070)
GDP per capita (log) $t-1$	0.123 (0.859)	0.064 (0.123)	0.039 (0.776)	0.024 (0.123)	0.030 (0.835)	0.122 (0.126)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP) $t-1$	0.000 (0.032)	0.000 (0.004)	-0.018 (0.031)	-0.002 (0.004)	-0.010 (0.031)	-0.001 (0.004)
Muslim dummy	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Number of observations	844	751	640	569	718	643
AR(2)	0.331	0.013	0.304	0.180	0.295	0.051

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *;

Table III.6. Effect of lagged visits of U.S. Secretaries of State on current democracy (Arellano-Bond)

	All sample		Exclusion of observation		Exclusion of countries	
	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House	Polity IV	Freedom House
Democracy $t-1$	0.808*** (0.054)	0.373*** (0.114)	0.647*** (0.064)	0.676*** (0.190)	0.727*** (0.061)	0.359*** (0.117)
Visits of U.S. Secretaries of State $t-1$	0.135** (0.064)	0.038* (0.022)	0.261** (0.111)	0.050* (0.030)	0.210** (0.082)	0.053** (0.021)
GDP per capita (log) $t-1$	0.055 (0.863)	0.048 (0.126)	-0.002 (0.797)	0.021 (0.129)	-0.003 (0.850)	0.122 (0.130)
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP) $t-1$	0.001 (0.032)	0.001 (0.004)	-0.016 (0.031)	-0.002 (0.004)	-0.009 (0.031)	-0.001 (0.004)
Muslim dummy	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Continental effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Legal Origin effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Countries effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Number of observations	844	751	640	569	718	643
AR(2)	0.341	0.006	0.326	0.145	0.303	0.026

note: .01 - ***; .05 - **; .1 - *;