

Supplementary Materials for: Qualitative Imputation of Missing Potential Outcomes

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April 21, 2021

Contents

A Application to End-of-Conflict Cases	1
B Full Dataset	3
C Democratization Imputations	7
C.1 Step 1: Disbanded and Discredited Cases	7
C.2 Step 2: Treated Cases	7
C.3 Step 3: Non-Transitional Cases	11
C.4 Step 4: Untreated Cases	14
C.5 Step 5: Unimputable Cases	19
D Expert Survey	20

A Application to End-of-Conflict Cases

Here we apply our framework of imputing missing potential outcomes using qualitative information to political transitions – at the end of conflict — that are also eligible for truth commissions. Specifically, we identify 54 cases that transitioned from civil war between 1980-2010, 6 of which are treated. We arrive at the end-of-conflict cases eligible for truth commissions from the Kreutz (2010) Uppsala Conflict Data Program’s (UCDP) Conflict Termination Dataset. Each entry is a separate war that reaches an intensity of at least 1000 cumulative battle deaths (Blattman and Miguel, 2010). Conflicts below this casualty threshold are considered minor conflicts by UCDP and are hence excluded. While our definition of treatment remains the same, our outcome of interest here is the recurrence of violence — we record outcomes as 1 when conflict resumes within ten years, and 0 otherwise.

We proceed in the same manner as in the main text: we first impute missing potential outcomes for disbanded or discredited cases, before proceeding to treated and non-transitional cases. We

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approach our untreated cases last, and most of these are left unimputed. The incorporation of qualitative beliefs about counterfactuals shrinks the width of the extreme value bounds from 100 to 41 points. The bounds come to $[-3, 42]$ (only 45 points wide), and the ATT can be summarized as a -10 percentage point effect on return to conflict.

Figure A.1: End of Conflict Cases: Extreme Value Bounds

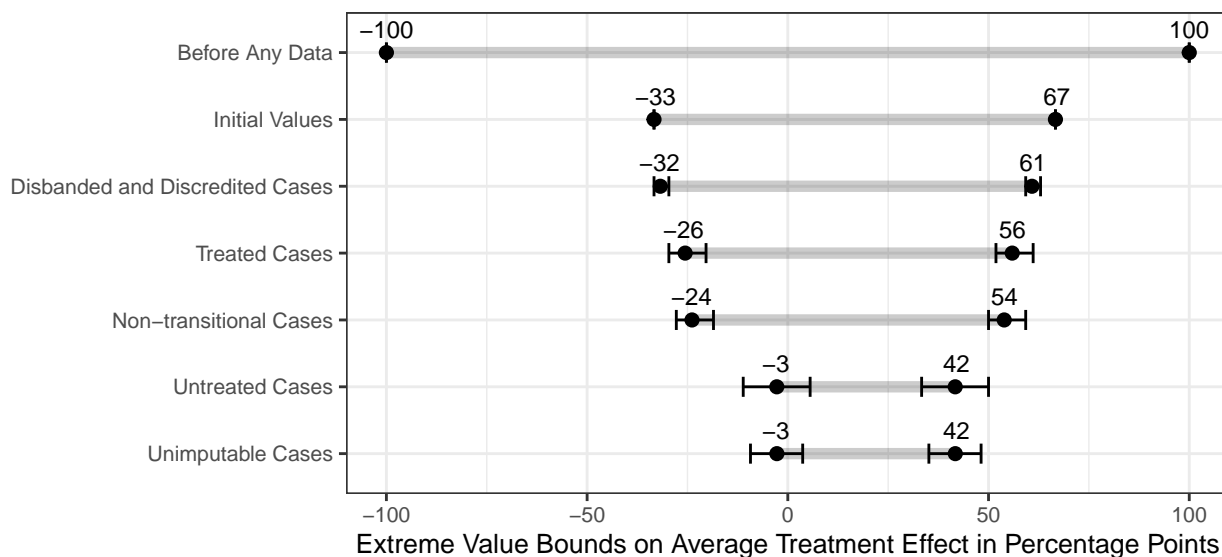
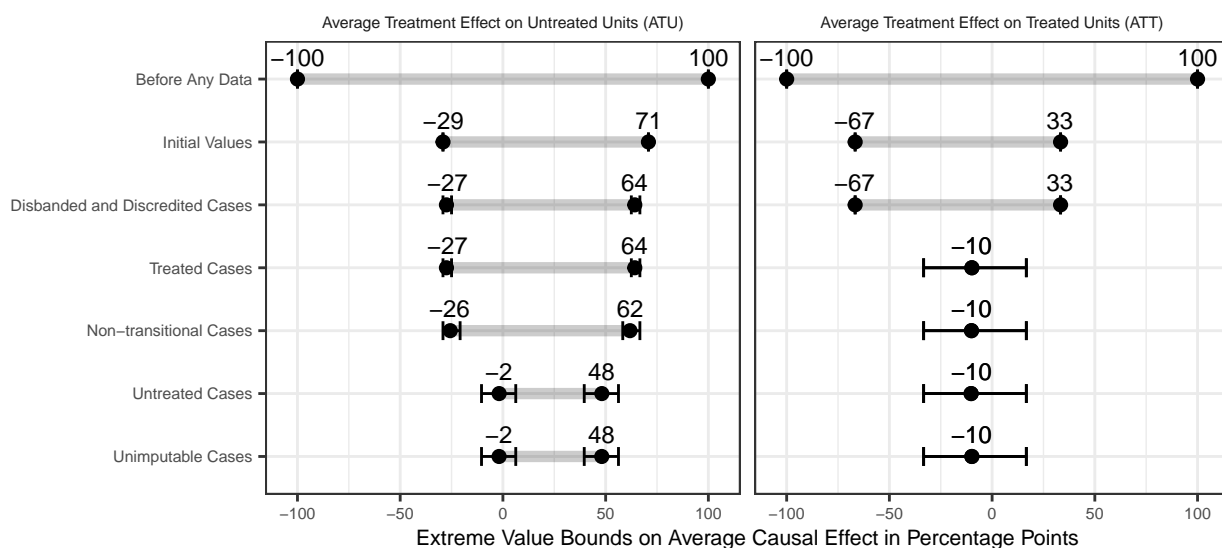


Figure A.2: End of Conflict Cases: Extreme Value Bounds by Treatment Status



B Full Dataset

In this section, we share the full datasets for the end of conflict and democratization cases. The “observed” portion of the dataset refers to the data as revealed by the world. If $d_i = 0$, then the observation did not receive a truth commission, but if $d_i = 1$, the observation did experience a truth commission. The Y_i column refers to the observed outcome. For the end of conflict cases, $Y_i = 1$ means that violence resumed within 10 years after the end of a conflict and $Y_i = 0$ means that it did not. In the democratization cases, $Y_i = 1$ means that the country returned to an authoritarian regime, and $Y_i = 0$ means that it did not. From the observed data d_i and Y_i , we can infer which of the potential outcomes $Y_i(0)$ and $Y_i(1)$ we know and which we do not. The “imputed” portion of the dataset shows our best guess on the basis of the available information what we think would have happened if the treatment indicator had been set to the opposite value. We call these imputed outcomes $\tilde{Y}_i(0)$ and $\tilde{Y}_i(1)$. The implied treatment effect $\tilde{\tau}_i$ is the difference between them. The number in parentheses indicates our subjective guess of the probability that the imputed potential outcome equals 1.

Table B.1: End of Conflict Cases

Step 1: Disbanded and Discredited	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
Nepal - CPN-M (1966-2006)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Sri Lanka - LTTE (1984-2009)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Serbia (Yugoslavia) - Croatia (1991-1991)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.3)	0
Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) (1998-1999)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.3)	0
Step 2: Treated Cases	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
Liberia (2000-2003)	1	0		0	0 (0.1)	0	0
El Salvador - FMLN (1979-1991)	1	0		0	0 (0.2)	0	0
Sierra Leone (1991-2001)	1	0		0	0 (0.2)	0	0
Indonesia - East Timor (1997-1999)	1	0		0	0 (0.3)	0	0
Peru - Shining Path (1982-1999)	1	1		1	1 (0.9)	1	0
Uganda (1962-1986)	1	1		1	1 (0.9)	1	0
Step 3: Non-transitional Cases	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
Sri Lanka - JVP (1971-1990)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Burundi (1991-2008)	0	0	0		0	1 (0.8)	1
Step 4: Untreated Cases	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
India - Punjab (1983-1993)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
United Kingdom - Northern Ireland (1998-1998)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.2)	0
Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.2)	0

Cambodia (Kampuchea) (1979-1998)	0	0	0	0	0 (0.3)	0
Bosnia-Herzegovina (1993-1994)	0	0	0	0	0 (0.3)	0
South Africa - Namibia (1966-1988)	0	0	0	0	0 (0.8)	0
Thailand (1974-1982)	0	0	0	0	1 (0.7)	1
Bangladesh (1975-1997)	0	0	0	0	1 (0.7)	1
Myanmar (Burma) - Arakan (1948-1994)	0	0	0	0	1 (0.8)	1
Myanmar (Burma) - Kachin (1961-1992)	0	0	0	0	1 (0.8)	1
Angola (1998-2002)	0	0	0	0	1 (0.8)	1
Nicaragua (1982-1990)	0	0	0	0	1 (0.9)	1
Angola (1975-1995)	0	1	1	1	1 (0.6)	0
India - Nagaland (1992-1997)	0	1	1	1	1 (0.7)	0
United Kingdom.- Northern Ireland (1971-1991)	0	1	1	1	1 (0.8)	0
Liberia (1989-1990)	0	1	1	1	1 (0.9)	0
India - Manipur (1982-1988)	0	1	1	1	1 (0.9)	0
India - Assam (1983-1990)	0	1	1	1	1 (0.9)	0

Step 5: Unimputable Cases

	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
Iran (1946-1996)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Yemen (North Yemen) (1979-1982)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Lebanon (1958-1990)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Laos (1959-1990)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Iraq (1961-1996)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Ethiopia (1976-1991)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Indonesia - ELF (1965-1984)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Syria (1979-1982)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Guinea (2000-2001)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Morocco (1975-1989)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Mozambique (1977-1992)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Indonesia - Aceh (1999-2005)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Yemen (North Yemen) (1994-1994)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Pakistan (1990-1996)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Congo (Brazzaville) (1993-2002)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Israel (2006-2006)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Iraq (1982-1996)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Ethiopia (1976-1983)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Indonesia - Aceh (1990-1991)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Rwanda (1990-2002)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Senegal (1988-2003)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Georgia (1992-1993)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Tajikistan (1992-1999)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Israel (1990-1999)	0	1	1		1	?	?

Table B.2: Democratization Cases

Step 1: Disbanded and Discredited	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
Bolivia (1980-1982)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Philippines (1972-1986)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Step 2: Treated Cases	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
Guatemala (1985-1995)	1	0		0	0 (0.1)	0	0
Nepal - Panchayat (1951-1991)	1	0		0	0 (0.1)	0	0
Nigeria (1993-1999)	1	0		0	0 (0.1)	0	0
Sri Lanka (1978-1994)	1	0		0	0 (0.1)	0	0
Argentina (1976-1983)	1	0		0	0 (0.3)	0	0
Chile (1973-1989)	1	0		0	0 (0.4)	0	0
South Africa (1910-1994)	1	0		0	1 (0.2)	0	-1
Haiti (1991-1994)	1	1		1	1 (0.9)	1	0
Step 3: Non-transitional Cases	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
Ghana (1981-1993)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
South Korea (1961-1987)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Paraguay (1954-1993)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.2)	0
Brazil (1964-1985)	0	0	0		0	0 (0)	0
Panama (1982-1989)	0	0	0		0	1 (0.9)	1
Uruguay (1973-1984)	0	0	0		0	1 (1)	1
Step 4: Untreated Cases	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
El Salvador (1982-1994)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Mexico (1916-2000)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Peru - Fujimori (1992-2000)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Serbia (1991-2000)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.1)	0
Liberia (1997-2003)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.2)	0
Sierra Leone (1997-1998)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.2)	0
Haiti (1999-2004)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.3)	0
Nepal (2002-2006)	0	0	0		0	0 (0.3)	0
Nicaragua (1979-1990)	0	0	0		0	1 (0.8)	1
Burundi (1996-2005)	0	0	0		0	1 (0.9)	1
Honduras (1972-1981)	0	0	0		0	1 (0.9)	1
Central African Rep (1981-1993)	0	1	1		1	1 (0.3)	0
Sierra Leone (1992-1996)	0	1	1		1	1 (0.3)	0
Thailand (1976-1988)	0	1	1		1	1 (1)	0

Thailand (1991-1992)	0	1	1	1	1 (1)	0
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Step 5: Unimputable Cases

	Observed				Imputed		
	d_i	Y_i	$Y_i(0)$	$Y_i(1)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(0)$	$\tilde{Y}_i(1)$	$\tilde{\tau}_i$
Albania (1944-1991)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Azerbaijan (1991-1992)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Benin (1972-1990)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Bulgaria (1944-1990)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Congo (Brazzaville) (1968-1991)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Czechoslovakia (1948-1989)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Georgia (1992-2003)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Guinea (2008-2010)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Guinea-Bissau (2002-2005)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Hungary (1947-1990)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Indonesia (1966-1999)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Kenya (1963-2002)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Lesotho (1986-1993)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Madagascar (1975-1993)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Malawi (1964-1994)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Mali (1968-1992)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Mongolia (1921-1993)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Niger (1996-1999)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Pakistan (1977-1988)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Pakistan (1999-2008)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Peru - Military (1968-1980)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Poland (1944-1989)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Romania (1945-1989)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Senegal (1960-2000)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Sudan (1985-1986)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Taiwan (1949-2000)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Turkey (1980-1983)	0	0	0		0	?	?
Bangladesh (1982-1990)	0	0	1		1	?	?
Guinea-Bissau (1980-1999)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Haiti (1988-1990)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Niger (1974-1991)	0	1	1		1	?	?
Zambia (1967-1991)	0	1	1		1	?	?

C Democratization Imputations

C.1 Step 1: Disbanded and Discredited Cases

1. **Bolivia (1980-1982)** The outcome in this case was a continuation of democratic functioning following a disbanded truth commission (National Commission for Investigation for Forced Disappearances), i.e. $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, so $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $Y_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. In this case, we believe that even if Bolivia had completed its truth commission process, the state would be unlikely to experience a return to authoritarianism. Our conclusion is based on studies such as Hayner (2000); Skaar (1999); USIP (2011*b*), which found that the 1982 truth commission was able to document 155 cases of disappearance, even though none of the cases were conclusively investigated and the commission’s mandate prevented investigations into incidents of torture, illegal detention and other abuses of note. Two years into its functioning, the commission disbanded without producing a final report, owing to a lack of sufficient resources and political support to complete its work. In the mid-1980s, numerous civil society debates surrounding the work of the commission led political figures to set aside the initial amnesty law (from the time of transition) that protected the outgoing military regime from prosecution and institute the trials against more than 50 former officials of the military government. These trials were not based on evidence gained by the Truth Commission, but “the combination of a truth commission, trials, and private efforts at truth-finding resulted in what Human Rights Watch and others characterized as an overall positive process” (Hayner, 2000, p. 54). Given that the commission was disbanded because of (a) a lack of sufficient resources or support and (b) an establishment of other transitional justice mechanisms that did not lead to any backlash from the outgoing regime, it is unlikely that a completed truth commission would have catalyzed a return to military dictatorship.
2. **Philippines (1972-1986)** The outcome was no return to authoritarianism, therefore $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, so $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. In this case, we believe that if the Philippines had completed its truth commission, authoritarianism would not have resumed. We conclude this based on our reading of Hayner (1994), Dancy et al. (2010) and Avruch and Vejarano (2001). They find that a truth commission was set up but was disbanded before completing its work out of financial constraints, a lack of cooperation from political leaders, the cutting short of committee work on account of death of leadership and reports of continuing violence against civilians. According to them “justice may be served if human rights abuses are systematically documented through nonofficial mechanisms (Avruch and Vejarano, 2001),” suggesting that a proper investigation itself would not have invited authoritarian backlash.

C.2 Step 2: Treated Cases

1. **Argentina (1976-1983)** Upon democratization, Argentinian President Alfonsín established a truth commission (the National Commission on Disappearances or CONADEP) and the outcome has been no resumption of authoritarianism. Therefore, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 1)$, so $Y_i(1) = 0$ and we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 0$, with a probability of 0.3 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. Authoritarianism would not have resumed even if Argentina would

not have established a truth commission at transition. Based on our reading of Brysk (1994); Crenzel (2012); Sikink (2008); Americas Watch (1991); the truth commission made significant contributions to accountability and inspired rapid growth in the number of truth commissions worldwide, but it was also met with controversy domestically. Specifically, CONADEP's report *Nunca Más*, a powerful indictment of the repressive policies of the machinery of state terror, has remained a domestic and international bestseller. It collected wide-ranging evidence on the targets of the military regime and brought hundreds of cases against repressors implicated in testimonies. At the same time, CONADEP's setup inspired opposition and boycott from prominent human rights organizations at multiple points out of disagreements on the structure of the commission, treatment of information around disappeared individuals, and allegations of sensationalism. Further, the televised broadcasting of the report was immediately followed by acts of violence against the television station and acts of military insubordination, both of which were perceived as threats to peace related to the commission's activities. The significant contributions of this initial attempt at truth commissions on one hand, combined with reactions by the human rights community and the military on the other, lead us to believe that authoritarianism would have been unlikely to resume even in the absence of a truth commission.

2. **Chile (1973-1989)** Chile established a truth commission at transition and the outcome has been sustained democratization without a return to authoritarianism, hence ($Y_i = 0, d_i = 1$), and $Y_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.4 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. Based on our reading of case specific and comparative transitional justice scholars, we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 0$. The absence of a truth commission would not have caused Chile to return to authoritarianism, due to its divergent short and long-term legacies. In terms of legacy, the Chilean truth commission was seen as a creative endeavor in providing acknowledgement, memorials, reparations, and apologies (Ensalaco, 1994; Brahm, 2005). Such observations have led authors such as Wiebelhaus-Brahm (2010) to conclude that in the long term, the truth commission had a 'positive, though indirect impact on democratization' by providing evidence for trials. In the short term, however, the military rejected the commission's findings, and its release was immediately followed up by episodes of political violence (Amstutz, 2005; Quinn, 2001). Amstutz (2005) argues that while the commission's revelations and Aylwin's acknowledgment helped restore public trust and renew democratic political culture, the message appeared to only reach moderates while conservatives remained lukewarm at best. The positive long-term effects combined with short-term complications and violence given the significant power still enjoyed by Pinochet's supporters, make it unlikely that Chile would return to authoritarianism in the absence of a truth commission.
3. **Guatemala (1985-1995)** The outcome was no resumption of authoritarianism, i.e. ($Y_i = 0, d_i = 1$), so $Y_i(1) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. In this case, we believe that even if Guatemala had not instituted a truth commission, the state would not have returned to authoritarianism. This imputation is based on our reading of case-specific analysis by (Grandin, 2005; Rachel et al., 2013; Corntassel and Holder, 2008; Isaacs, 2010; Ross, 2004; Rothenberg, 2016). These analyses of the commission lead them to conclude that although the Guatemalan truth commission was effective in establishing a baseline for descriptive and forensic truth, domestic politics caused polarization and interfered with the commission's efforts

to produce reconciliation. Specifically, owing to a constricted political environment after a cosmetic and military-led democratic transition, the investigation was intentionally vague and prohibited publishing the names of perpetrators. The commission failed to represent those most affected by violence. The governing elite was unwilling to support the Commission’s findings and explicitly rejected the resulting report’s policy recommendations. As a result, the popular reaction to the truth commission’s findings (especially its suggestion that the violence in question was genocidal) was highly polarizing in an already divided society, and the findings were unable to impact Guatemalan governance or the way in which powerful groups remembered the past. According to a 2006 survey by Isaacs (2010), “only 14 percent of respondents described Guatemala as reconciled, while close to half (44 percent) believed another war is possible” (270). Although authoritarianism has not resumed, violent attacks on human rights defenders and individuals demanding accountability have persisted, indicating that accountability continues to be fraught with disruptions of peace.

4. **Nepal - Panchayat (1951-1991)** Upon democratization, the commission (‘Commission on Inquiry to Find the Disappeared Persons during the Panchayat Period’) was established and the outcome was democratization for the next 12 years i.e., ($Y_i = 0, d_i = 1$) and $Y_i(1) = 0$. We imputed $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. We conclude this based on studies by Olsen et al. (2010); Thapa (1992); Barkan and Karn (2006); Hayner (2000). We conclude that the truth commission did not contribute significantly to sustained democratization. According to these authors, Nepal possesses many characteristics such as awareness and demand for accountability, civil society pressure for human rights, that are conducive to improvements in human rights. At the same time, the truth commission that did get established was judged to be too weak to bring stability and accountability. Because of its narrow mandate to investigate limited cases (of which it was only able to get to a fraction), inability to name perpetrators, lack of subpoena power and failure to implement recommendations; experts said that the commission “succeeded in appeasing potential human rights violators” (Olsen et al., 2010, p. 471) and was merely “a political exercise” (Barkan and Karn, 2006, p. 41). Given its weaknesses, the truth commission had little impact on long term outcomes and it is unlikely that Nepal would have returned to authoritarianism in its absence.

5. **Nigeria (1993-1999)** The outcome was no return to an authoritarian apartheid regime, which implies that ($Y_i = 0, d_i = 1$), so $Y_i(1) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. In this case, we believe that even if Nigeria would not have instituted a truth commission at the time of democratic transition, authoritarianism would not have resumed. We conclude this based on studies by Nwogu (2007) and Yusuf (2007). They interviewed local participants and experts on the commission and found that the truth commission process in the country failed because of deep political capture and resource constraints. According to these studies, the truth commission received subsidies from the international community, but it lacked the budget, patience and sincerity to create context-specific procedures. Additionally, civilians perceived the source of the HRVIC itself seemed antithetical to truth commission goals, because it was set up by a former military leader who was still engaged. Although Osbanjo perceived of the HRVIC as a means to distance himself from his predecessors, he was not vested in the moral claims of pronouncing against the past and allegedly engaged in deliberate financial

strangulation to undermine the working of the Commission. These deep issues, germane to commission establishment, lead us to believe that the truth commission had no causal effect in preventing a return to authoritarianism.

6. **Sri Lanka (1978-1994)** Within the first year of democratization, the Sri Lankan President established three linked commissions ('Commissions of Inquiry into the Involuntary Removal or Disappearance of Persons') to investigate abuses that occurred in different regions of the country from 1988 to 1994. The outcome has been a continuation of democratic functioning without a return to authoritarianism, so $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 1)$ or $Y_i(1) = 0$. Based on our reading of authors who discuss the impact of the truth commission (Barkan and Karn (2006); Neistat (2008); Wiebelhaus-Brahm (2010)), we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. We believe that even if Sri Lanka had not initiated these commissions at democratization, it would likely not have catalyzed a resumption of authoritarianism. Even though the commissions analyzed tens of thousands of complaints, uncovered evidence of systematic state-sponsored violence, and criminal proceedings were instituted against members of the security forces; it was considered merely perfunctory. This because only a handful of these cases went to trial and there was little attempt to go beyond recitations of bare facts instead of examining moral underpinnings of crimes committed and being precise about affixing blame. While it provided some reparations, the influence of the final report and the ability of the state to implement its measures was minimized by the continued persistence of civil conflict against the Tamil Tigers. In this context, "existential threats [took] priority over the perceived luxuries of democracy and human rights. . . it is difficult to justify exploring past human rights violations when abuses remain ongoing and . . . ending the fighting is top priority" (Barkan and Karn, 2006, p. 149-150). Due to an undermining of the truth commission from continued fighting and politicization after democratization, we believe that the truth commission did not have a lone causal effect in preventing authoritarianism.
7. **South Africa (19910-1994)** South Africa established a truth commission at transition and the outcome was no return to an authoritarian apartheid regime, hence $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 1)$, or $Y_i(1) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 1$, with a probability of 0.8. In this case, we believe that if South Africa had not instituted a truth commission at the time of democratic transition, it would have returned to the old order. Our conclusion is 0 based (among others) on landmark studies by Gibson (2006, 2004, 2002) that rely on extensive interviews to deem the truth commission and its innovative institutional arrangements as key to South Africa's transition. The TRC was viewed on average as having a moderately positive effect across sociodemographic variables (Stein et al., 2008). These studies find that claims of South Africans being dissatisfied with their commission were largely limited to White South Africans, but more than 85 percent of Black South Africans interviewed believed that "the commission did a reasonable job of letting families know what happened to their loved ones, of providing a true and unbiased account of the country's history, and of ensuring that human rights abuses would not happen again" (Gibson, 2002). Even though the government's failure to institute timely and adequate reparations to victims immediately following the Truth Commission created renewed political tensions (Laplante and Theidon, 2007), the investigation into and reparations for violations likely prevented their repetition. In fact, Wiebelhaus-Brahm (2010) adds undeniable confidence to our imputation by engaging in an explicit counterfactual analysis around

the South African commission’s contribution to South African democracy. Specifically, he writes that “a brief counterfactual suggests that the TRC did play a significant role in this regard [contribution to democratic institutions]. Imagine a South Africa in which the TRC did not exist. Perhaps the NP was able to extract a blanket amnesty as a concession for giving up power. Vigilantism would likely have exploded and whites would have fled South Africa in even larger numbers. Conversely, a South Africa in which many apartheid government officials were put on trial would seem a likely recipe for civil war. Many observers believed whites would prefer civil war to being ruled by the ANC. As it turned out, the TRC did just enough to satisfy all sides” (48).

8. **Haiti (1991-1994)** The Haitian truth commission (Commission Nationale de Vérité et de Justice) was set up upon transition from military rule in 1994. The outcome has been a resumption of authoritarianism in 2000, hence $(Y_i = 1, d_i = 1)$ and $Y_i(1) = 1$. Based on our reading of the commission from Chapman and Ball (2001); Quinn (2009); McCalpin (2012); Benedetti (1996), we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 1$ with a probability of 0.9. The truth commission did not contribute to a return to authoritarianism. Case-specific studies discuss various reasons why the work of the commission was undermined. These reasons included a lack of popular support, absent political will, lack of institutional capacity, shortages of resources, constraints resulting from US censorship of the intervention, and public inaccessibility. At the same time, none of these studies find that the commission itself became too politically sensitive, caused backlash among political elite or compromised nascent democracy. Instead, Freedom House finds that such changes in regime are frequent in Haiti regardless of truth commission establishment: “over the past two centuries, there have been 34 coups d’etat in Haiti, and the violent overthrow of government has been far more commonplace than the peaceful transition of power from one president to another” (Freedom House, 2010). It is unlikely that a relatively weak truth commission, established in a context of an unstable regime, triggered a return to authoritarianism.

C.3 Step 3: Non-Transitional Cases

1. **Brazil (1964-1985)** In Brazil, there was no truth commission at transition and the outcome was no resumption of authoritarianism – $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, so $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. The first step in Brazil’s transition to democracy was the establishment of an amnesty law that provided immunity for human rights abuses committed by both, the military and the resistance. This amnesty was deemed “essential to make way for a secure transition” by allowing for the return of political prisoners (Schallenmueller, 2014). While the law prevented successive governments from confronting the military directly through an official commission (Wiebelhaus-Brahm, 2009), it has paradoxically reinvigorated attempts at unofficial investigation that has proved to be the basis of governmental action (Bickford, 2007). Specifically, civil society lawyers gained access to archives of every case brought before military courts, which they used to write a 2,700-page investigative report (*’Brasil: Nunca Mais’*) that became an instant best-seller and established military complicity in human rights abuses during authoritarian rule. In response, the Brazilian government proceeded to remove or block individuals named as torturers in this project from public office and began a reparations program for the families of the 135 disappeared. Bakiner (2015) deems this an example of how non-

official investigations can substitute for the lack of political initiative in addressing the public demand for the truth concerning human rights violations. While the list of cases in this report is far from comprehensive, according to Bickford (2007), this effort is “best understood as a replacement for a truth commission, since an official truth commission was unlikely at that time”. Given that an unofficial initiative mirroring the work of a truth commission soon after democratic transition did not lead to military backlash from a still-relevant military, it is unlikely that an official effort to investigate such abuse would have revived authoritarianism. In 2011, in an effort to comply with the IAHR, Brazil established a truth commission to clarify the history of violations until 1988 (Schallennmueller, 2014), but this commission is a non-transitional one.

2. **Ghana (1981-1993)** Ghana experienced no transitional truth commission (though a non-transitional one was established in 2002) and the outcome was no resumption of authoritarianism. In other words, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, so $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.2 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. If Ghana had established a truth commission at transition, it would not have returned to authoritarianism. We conclude this based on studies of the conditions of transition and the establishment of the eventual non-transitional truth commission in Ghana. First, Alidu and Ame (2013) shows that the Ghanaian transition, unlike others, already had strong state institutions and vibrant civil society organizations in place. Apart from instituting free and fair elections, Ghana also had a hierarchical court structure, a vibrant parliament, active civil society organizations, horizontal institutions of accountability (such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the National Commission for Civic Education). Further, Ameh (2006) argues that despite the (non-transitional) commission’s difficulties in offering an authoritative account of the truth, it was ultimately successful because the specific yet flexible mandate of the NRC, the high standard of proof adopted, the elaborate information management process, and the internal control mechanisms put in place favorably positioned the NRC to ascertain truth regarding the cases it deliberated. Union (2013) documents that public hearings garnered massive attention from the media, victims turned out in large numbers to make statements and testify and had a generally positive view of the commission’s work. These analyses lead us to conclude that even if a truth commission would have been established at the time of transition, it would not have contributed to a return of authoritarianism.

3. **South Korea (1961-1987)** Over a decade after its transition, South Korea set up a truth commission in 2000 to investigate incidents of human rights abuse, violence and massacres occurring over the course of a century, since the period of Japanese colonialism to the nation’s anti-communist dictatorships before democratization. After this commission completed its work, the Parliament followed up by establishing another, broader truth commission to examine these periods. As a result, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 0$ and we imputed $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead.. Based on analyses by Suh (2010); USIP (2011*g,h*); Gentilucci (2005); Han (2005), we conclude that a truth commission at transition would not have risked a return to authoritarianism. The demand for investigating past incidents has been widespread in South Korea. This led national police and state information agencies (starting as early as 1988) to establish internal units in order to investigate past human rights violations and suspicious deaths and to try

former leaders in the early 1990s. While critiquing these trials for their political showmanship instead of providing closure or justice, Gentilucci (2005) argues that the South Korean trial demonstrates that for post-conflict trials to be successful, it is imperative that they be accompanied by a comprehensive truth-finding function. The state's policy responses to demands for truth-telling (though completed with varying degrees of success) and lack of backlash give us reason to believe that a transitional truth commission would not have undermined democratic functioning.

4. **Paraguay (1954-1993)** Panama established a (non-transitional) truth commission in 2004, over a decade after its transition to democracy, and the outcome has been a continuation of democratic functioning. Hence, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 0$ and we imputed that $\hat{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.2 that the imputed outcome would take on the value of 1 instead. A truth commission at transition would not have caused a resumption of authoritarianism. We impute this based on studies by Hayner (2010); Backer (2003); Cohen (1995); Collins (2012); USIP (2011*d*). They find that: (a) even though political infighting overshadowed the need to officially address the abuses of the past, two unofficial (non-state sponsored) attempts at uncovering disappearances during the Strossner regime were successfully undertaken immediately following the transition and (b) once the non-transitional commission was undertaken, it did not spark opposition backlash. In the context of continued legal and civil society efforts at transition to discover authoritarian-era abuses without negative outcomes for democracy, we believe that a transitional truth commission would not have led to a resumption of authoritarianism.
5. **Panama (1982-1989)** Panama established a (non-transitional) truth commission in 2001, over a decade after its transition to democracy, and the outcome has been a continuation of democratic functioning. Hence, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 0$ and we imputed that $\hat{Y}_i(1) = 1$ with a probability of 0.9, implying that the establishment of the truth commission at the time of transition would have led to authoritarian backlash. We conclude this based on studies by Ranft (2011); Mendez and Mariezcurrena (2003); New York Times (2001); Bakiner (2015); USIP (2011*c*) – who find that two main factors prevented the establishment of a truth commission at transition. First, the balance of power at transition was tilted in favor of military-loyal elite. The ex-military's aide won the nation's first free and fair general elections since 1960 and took over its leadership, despite the opposition's attempts to emphasize the Partido Revolucionario Democrático (PRD) candidate's collaboration with the authoritarian regime. Second, Panamanian activists alleged that given America's involvement in and invasion of Panama in 1989, Washington had no interest in promoting investigations that could reveal American ties to the military leader or uncover details about civilian deaths. Consequently, any attempt at investigation was curbed as a result of both domestic and external pressures. It was only in 2000, when the pre-regime president's widow Mireya Moscoso took office (even though the parliamentary assembly was controlled by the PRD), that the distribution of power changed and civil society organizations began exhumations at a former military base. The finding of several corpses led to the official order for exhumations and a decree to establish the truth commission in 2001. Even once it was established, however, the commission faced serious setbacks from a lack of funds and opposition from the PRD-controlled national assembly. The party not only slashed its funding, but also threatened to seek legal action against the president for its creation. Given the pressures at transition and their persistence in light of

still-strong elite from the previous regime, it is likely that a transitional truth commission would have caused greater backlash from the ex-military's aides.

6. **Uruguay (1973-1984)** In Uruguay, no truth commission was established at transition and the outcome was no resumption of authoritarianism i.e., $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, so $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 1$ with a probability of 0.9. In this case, we believe that if Uruguay had instituted a truth commission, it would have made things worse and would have caused a return to authoritarianism once again. Nearly two decades after transition, a state-led truth commission was established to investigate the period of authoritarian rule, (Allier, 2006) but this was not a transitional truth commission and hence this case remains untreated. Our imputation is based on case-specific studies that show the myriad of post-authoritarian challenges the country faced. First, the military agreed to a transition only after a secret pact in which major political leaders pledged not to open investigations human rights violations. Instead, the military specifically threatened to demobilize democracy if accountability was made part of the state agenda (Méndez, 1997; Roniger, 2011). Second, in the face of pressure from international, civil society and human rights organizations, a popular referendum against annulling impunity-imparting ‘Law of Expiry of the Punitive Powers of the State’ was brought to vote in 1989. However, the Uruguayan leader Sanguinetti openly campaigned to retain the law on the basis of the inevitability of a coup d’état if it was repealed, effectively calling on Uruguayans to choose between justice and democracy (Méndez, 1997). Given this dilemma, the results of the referendum (with a turnout of 85 percent) upheld the Law of Expiry by a margin of over 13 points (Roniger, 2011). While civil society efforts culminated in the publishing of the SERPAJ report in 1989 (Uruguay: Nunca Más), the government made no response to it (Bickford, 2007). In a situation where democracy and accountability were presented as a tradeoff, an official truth commission would have witnessed low participation due to high levels of fear and potentially invited punitive, democracy-threatening action from the military.

C.4 Step 4: Untreated Cases

1. **El Salvador (1982-1994)** El Salvador did not establish a truth commission and it did not experience a return to authoritarianism. Hence, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, so $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead. In other words, a truth commission would not have made post-authoritarian outcomes worse based on studies by Stahler-Sholk (1994) and O’Shaughnessy and Dodson (1999). These studies show that even though voter turnout remained low, the 1994 election was conducted largely without manipulation and the potential for the return to authoritarianism was very low. The military was no longer dominant in the political scene, polarization was relatively low, and the state had already established a truth commission to investigate the FMLN conflict (discussed above) that served to bring the military’s actions under the scanner despite its weaknesses. Consequently, another attempt at the truth commission would have been unlikely to undermine seemingly stable democratic functioning.
2. **Haiti (1999-2004)** Upon its transition from the 2004 coup d’etat, Haiti did not establish a truth commission, and the outcome has been no resumption of authoritarianism. Hence, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.3 that the

imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead. Our conclusion is based on our reading of Haiti’s experience with a truth commission in 1994 (Chapman and Ball, 2001; Quinn, 2009; McCalpin, 2012; Benedetti, 1996) and our reading of post-coup domestic politics (United Nations Peacekeeping, N.d.; Leininger, 2006; Billon, 2012). A truth commission would have had no impact on Haiti’s chances of continued democratization. This is because, first, Haiti’s first attempt at a truth commission was undermined due to a lack of political support and political will, and thus was unable to pull the country out of its vicious cycle of authoritarian resumption. Second, Haiti remained a “failing state” even at its transition in 2004, given its inability to provide physical and human security to its citizens due to a lack of resources and functioning state institutions, making it unlikely that a renewed attempt at a truth commission would have been any more successful. Finally, following the instability resulting from the 2004 coup, the United Nations established a Stabilisation Mission in Haiti to “restore a secure and stable environment” that continued its operations in 2017. It is likely that the observed lack of authoritarian resumption in the region is a result of the international dynamics and presence (though often controversial) of the peacekeeping intervention, and that a potential truth commission would have had little independent contribution in this context.

3. **Liberia (1997-2003)** We consider this case untreated because even though a truth commission was established in 2003, the mandate was the investigation of the period of internal conflict (and not exclusively under the Taylor regime). However, since the end of conflict in Liberia coincided with its democratization and the resulting truth commission included this period within its mandate, this case follows very similar logic to that of Liberia (2000-2003), discussed above. Specifically, there was no truth commission exclusive to the Taylor regime, but even if such a truth commission had been established, it would not have undermined democratic functioning. In other words, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 0$ and we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$ with a probability of 0.2 that the imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead.
4. **Mexico (1916-2000)** Upon its transition to democracy after over 70 years of single-party rule, Mexico did not set up a truth commission and the outcome was sustained democratic functioning. In other words, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 0$ and we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead. We make our imputation based on a study by Bickford (2005). Specifically, he finds that even though an official truth commission was not established, the transitional government was committed to investigating human rights abuses, crimes and excesses of the past. Consequently, the government decided to establish a Special Prosecutor’s Office in 2001 as a carefully considered alternative to a truth commission because “it offered a potentially innovative combination of accountability for past human rights abuses through criminal law on the one hand, and of truth-seeking about the past on the other” (p.543). In addition to this body, the National Human Rights Commission released a report on disappearances from the 1970s to early 1980s that was considered analogous to a truth commission report. Finally, in 2002, the classified files of intelligence services that cover intelligence services’ activities during the 1970s and 1980s were made available to the broader public via transfer to General National Archives. While these initiatives were met with varying degrees of success and skepticism, the fact that multiple official and enhanced truth-seeking initiatives were established upon transition

makes it clear that a ‘truth commission’ would have posed no risk to Mexico’s democracy.

5. **Nepal (2002-2006)** In 2002, the national parliament was dissolved, and the king dismissed the prime minister. He in turn imposed “direct rule,” restricted press freedom, and imprisoned hundreds, claiming that the country needed peace and security before it could have democracy (Bohara et al., 2006). By 2006, however, massive demonstrations forced the king to reinstate the previously elected parliament, which in turn stripped the king of virtually all power in June 2006. Following this transition, no truth commission was set up and the outcome was no resumption of authoritarianism, ($Y_i = 0, d_i = 0$) or $Y_i(0) = 0$. The case follows a similar political logic to Nepal – CPN-M (1966-2006), discussed above, since this authoritarian period was included as part of the mandate for the proposed truth commission. However, the proposed truth commission was set up to investigate post-conflict Nepal so this case is considered untreated. We imputed that a truth commission would not have undermined peace or democratic functioning i.e., $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$, with a probability of 0.3 that the imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead.
6. **Peru - Fujimori (1992-2000)** The establishment of the truth commission coincided with the end of the Fujimori regime. Even though the transition from authoritarianism provided a political opening for accountability (Bakiner, 2015), the commission’s mandate was primarily set up to investigate the civil war. As a result, this observation is considered untreated. At the same time, Fujimori’s civilian dictatorship was covered within its mandate (USIP, 2011e) and hence the case follows a logic similar to that of ‘Peru - Shining Path (1982-1999)’, discussed above. Specifically, a truth commission limited in its mandate to the authoritarian period would not have contributed to a resumption of authoritarianism. In other words, ($Y_i = 0, d_i = 0$), so $Y_i(1) = 0$ and we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead.
7. **Serbia (1991-2000)** The Milošević regime was overthrown in October 2000, following the results of a Presidential election and a long-running pro-democracy movement. While a truth commission in Serbia was established by the incoming President, its mandate was to investigate war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo) in the past two decades (USIP, 2011f) and not Milošević’s term per se. As a result, this case is untreated and the outcome has been sustained democratic functioning: ($Y_i = 0, d_i = 0$), or $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 0$ with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead, implying that a truth commission to investigate the authoritarian regime would not have caused its resumption. We conclude this based on studies by Ostojčić (2013); McDonald (2004); Kandic (2005); Gow and Zveržhanovski (2004). The idea of such a truth commission originated from civil society even before Milošević was ousted from power. Post-transition, the domestic government saw truth commission creation as a way to demonstrate their willingness to deal with a war crimes legacy. However, given the nature of crimes committed, the international community did not consider the commission a replacement for the UN-sponsored International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY). Instead, cooperation with the ICTY constituted a precondition for Serbia’s access to international financial assistance. Consequently, Milošević was arrested by the Yugoslav police in 2001 and extradited to the ICTY’s jurisdiction in the Hague soon after. Milošević died mid-trial and the international community believed that the ICTY had failed to generate

any reckoning with the past or any normative change in the targeted states. The willingness to establish transitional justice mechanisms at the domestic level, combined with the clear primacy of the ICTY in the Milošević case indicates that a completed parallel attempt by the Serbian government would not have had an impact on the return to authoritarianism.

8. **Sierra Leone (1997-1998)** Sierra Leone did not establish a truth commission at transition and the outcome was no resumption of authoritarianism. In other words, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, so $Y_i(1) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 0$, with a probability of 0.1 that the imputed outcome would take on the value 1 instead. We believe that a truth commission (even if established to cover the authoritarian period specifically), would have had no impact on the eventual regime outcome. This case follows a logic similar to Sierra Leone (1991-2001), since the time period of this period of authoritarianism was covered under the mandate of the truth commission. At the same time, the truth commission was established with an official mandate to cover the conflict, so this case is considered untreated.
9. **Honduras (1972-1981)** Honduras did not set up a truth commission upon its transition from military rule, and the outcome has been sustained democratic functioning. As a result, $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 0$. We imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 1$, with a probability of 0.9. A truth commission would have caused a return to authoritarianism. This is because, as Kaye (1997) finds, Honduras remained relatively free of human rights violations during the military governments of the 1970s, but the situation deteriorated following the return to civilian government in 1981 when the US dramatically strengthened the power of the military vis-à-vis the civilian government. As a result, forced disappearances, extrajudicial executions and human rights violations increased until 1993, when the fair and free election of Carlos Roberto Reina (noted human rights defender) reaffirmed the stability of democratic processes in Honduras. In 1993, an official investigation into the violations from 1980-1993 undertaken by the National Commissioner for the Protection of Human Rights, Leo Valladares Lanza) revealed that members of the Honduran military and Nicaraguan insurgents operating in Honduras were responsible for the disappearances, and Argentine and U.S. intelligence units were instrumental in their training (Human Rights Watch, 1995). Given the continuation of external support to military and abuses of human rights even after the formal end of the military regime, it is likely that the establishment of a truth commission would have caused an authoritarian backlash.
10. **Nicaragua (1979-1990)** Since democratization followed the end of the civil war, this case follows the same logic as Nicaragua (1982-1990) (post-civil war), as discussed above. We imputed that while Nicaragua didn't set up a truth commission upon its democratic transition, its establishment could have led to a revival of tensions, or $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 1$, with a probability of 0.9. This implies that a transitional truth commission would have caused a resumption of authoritarianism. We base this decision on two sources – first, an academic expert on the case speculated during an interview with the author, that any attempt at truth commission creation was undermined due to heavy US involvement with the rebel groups. This speculation is borne out by evidence in Stahler-Sholk (1994), who finds that peaceful reconstruction led by a progressive government was a near-impossibility in Nicaragua. The United States refused to demobilize the Contras and threatened to not lift its crippling trade embargo and financial blockade if the Sandinistas won. More generally, O'Shaughnessy and Dodson (1999) finds

that the turning point of transition in Nicaragua was less clear (especially when compared to El Salvador). This is because the Contras were politically divided between their military and civilian leaders and the resulting pacts were weak in legitimacy and conducted in an atmosphere of potential de-legitimation of the entire process. In light of these concerns, we believe that the stakeholders were not yet committed to the basics of an electoral solution to Nicaragua and establishing a truth commission at a time of divided loyalties would have made things worse.

11. **Burundi (1996-2005)** While plans for a truth commission were in order by the time the power sharing agreement that effectively ended authoritarianism was signed, the truth commission mandate was not specific to the Buyoya regime and hence this case is considered untreated. The outcome has been no formal resumption of authoritarianism, so $(Y_i = 0, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 0$, and we imputed $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 1$ with a probability of 0.8. Because of the fragile state of democratization, a truth commission would have risked a return to authoritarianism. It is clear through a reading of domestic politics in the country (Falch, 2008; Arieff, 2015; Falch and Becker, 2008; British Broadcasting Corporation, 2018; USIP, 2011*a*) that both, conflictual and authoritarian tendencies persisted in the country despite formal power sharing agreements. On the conflict end, the FLN disarmed in 2008 but has been linked to many domestic attacks since 2010. On the regime side, the trend has been towards democratic backsliding. Pierre Nkurunziza, who was elected as President in 2005 shortly after democratic transition, was in 2015 allowed a disputed third term in office even though he was responsible for a coup attempt, severe repression, shutdown of independent media, and the exodus of hundreds of thousands from the country (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2018; Mechkova et al., 2017). Given these difficulties, political elite preferred a cessation of hostilities and the return of political stability (Vandeginste, 2012) over transitional justice attempts that inevitably carried the risk of derailing the fragile transition toward peace, security and stability. Beyond these concerns of political elite, studies of attitudes of civilians towards a truth commission make it clear that a truth commission was not high on the list of priorities and came with risks to peace. For instance, Vandeginste (2012) finds that the (late) timing of the truth commission’s establishment comes as no surprise given the difficulties of transition and the leadership’s explicit priority of “Peace First, Truth and Justice Later.” Further, he finds that the top priorities for Burundi’s international partners were the cessation of hostilities and the return of political stability. That is, they did not consider transitional justice as an urgent need since it carried the risk of derailing the fragile transition toward peace, security and stability. Further, Samii (2013) finds, based on a 2007 survey of civilians, that the bulk of the population would rather forgive and forget than to seek the truth by investigating the conflict. Even when a truth commission was finally initiated, it polarized domestic opinion and was criticized by civil society (Rugiririza, 2016). Given the dual dilemmas of continuing conflict and democratic backsliding, a truth commission attempt would likely have made the fragile situation worse.
12. **Central African Republic (1981-1993)** Central African Republic did not establish a truth commission, and the outcome has been a resumption of authoritarianism $(Y_i = 1, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(1) = 0$ and we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 1$ with a probability of 0.7. A truth commission would not have been able to prevent a return to authoritarianism. A reading of CAR’s history suggests that the country had a long history of both, civil conflict and regime switching. The

establishment of a truth commission at transition in the face of continuing tensions would not have been able to break the country’s cycle of returns to authoritarianism. CAR only considered transitional justice alternatives starting 2003, after tensions that characterized past transitions had somewhat subsided.

13. **Sierra Leone (1992-1996)** Sierra Leone did not establish a truth commission after the military handed over power to a democratically elected government. The outcome was a return to authoritarianism i.e., $(Y_i = 1, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(1) = 0$ and we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(0) = 1$ with a probability of 0.7. A truth commission would not have been able to prevent the return to authoritarianism. Given that the transition to elected governance (a) occurred at the time of ongoing civil war and (b) lasted less than a year before being ousted by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council in 1997, there was little time or scope for the establishment of a truth commission. Even if such a truth commission were established, it wouldn’t have been able to complete its work in the context of continuing violence or prevent the observed authoritarian outcome given the continued dominance of the military.
14. **Thailand (1976-1988)** After its transition from authoritarianism in 1988, Thailand did not establish a truth commission, and the outcome was a resumption of authoritarianism in 1992. As a result, $(Y_i = 1, d_i = 0)$, or $Y_i(0) = 1$ and we imputed that $\tilde{Y}_i(1) = 1$ with a probability of 1. This imputation follows a logic similar to the authoritarian transition in Thailand (2007) (Human Rights Watch, 2012; Pongsudhirak, 2003; Baker, 2016) discussed above. Regime instability (alternations between democracy and authoritarianism) has been frequent in Thailand, leading scholars to characterize Thailand as a ‘semi-democracy’ (Neher, 1996). Secondly, a truth commission attempt in 2010 also failed to prevent the coup in 2014. It is unlikely, then, that a truth commission following the fragile transition in 1988 would have been effective in preventing a return to authoritarianism.
15. **Thailand (1991-1992)** This case follows the same logic as the authoritarian transition in Thailand in 1988, explained above.

C.5 Step 5: Unimputable Cases

We are unable to make a counterfactual imputation in these cases: Albania (1944-1991), Azerbaijan (1991-1992), Benin (1972-1990), Bulgaria (1944-1990), Congo (Brazzaville) (1968-1991), Czechoslovakia (1948-1989), Georgia (1992-2003), Guinea (2008-2010), Guinea-Bissau (2002-2005), Hungary (1947-1990), Indonesia (1966-1999), Kenya (1963-2002), Lesotho (1986-1993), Madagascar (1975-1993), Malawi (1964-1994), Mali (1968-1992), Mongolia (1921-1993), Niger (1996-1999), Niger (1997-1999), Pakistan (1977-1988), Pakistan (1999-2008), Peru - Military (1968-1980), Poland (1944-1989), Romania (1945-1989), Senegal (1960-2000), Sudan (1985-1986), Taiwan (1949-2000), Turkey (1980-1983), Bangladesh (1982-1990), Guinea-Bissau (1980-1999), Haiti (1988-1990), Niger (1974-1991), Zambia (1967-1991)

D Expert Survey

Here is the wording of our expert survey (for an untreated case).

In our reading of [Country]’s transition to democracy in [Year], we coded the case like this:

- [Country] did not establish a Transitional Truth Commission (treatment = 0)
- [Country] maintained democratic rule for at least 10 years (outcome = 1)

Q1 Do you believe that our description of the case is correct, if blunt?

- Yes
 - No
 - Can’t say
1. Now imagine that – counterfactually – [Country] had established a Transitional Truth Commission (counterfactual treatment = 1). What is your best guess of what would have happened?
 - [Country] would have maintained democratic rule for at least 10 years (outcome = 1)
 - [Country] would not have maintained democratic rule for at least 10 years (outcome = 0)
 - Can’t say
 2. We understand that you might not be sure of your answer to Question 2, so we want to give you a chance to express your beliefs about what would have happened in terms of a probability. Still imagining that [Country] had established a Transitional Truth Commission (counterfactual treatment = 1), what is the probability that [Country] would have maintained democratic rule for at least 10 years (outcome = 1)?
 - Please give a number between 0 and 100, where 100 means [Country] definitely would have maintained democratic rule for at least 10 years. If you can’t say, that’s fine too.
 3. Only if you would like, please write a few sentences that explain your reasoning. We would be interested to hear how you came to your conclusions, even if your conclusion was that you can’t say what would have happened with any confidence. We might include your responses in our article, but we would remove any identifying features of the response (including specific case details).

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