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THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION THAT WASN'T: RURAL ELITE CONFLICT AND DEMAND FOR DEMOCRATIZATION

Social conflict theory holds that democratization is most likely when an incumbent rural elite is challenged by a rising urban bourgeoisie. While this framework accounts for historical patterns of democratization in industrializing autocracies in the Global North, it is less well suited to explaining the emergence of democratic demands in agrarian autocracies in the Global South. In this paper, we examine demands for democratization in the Egyptian parliament before the British occupation in 1882. Using a new dataset of MPs and the universe of parliamentary minutes from 1868 to 1882, we use text analysis, differences-in-differences models, and machine learning to test whether rural intra-elite economic conflicts in MP home districts can lead to meaningful calls for democratization in parliament by rural middle class MPs. Our findings suggest that rural intra-elite competition over labor and land catalyzed demands for oversight (constraints) on the executive and issuance of a new constitution from rural middle class MPs. Although these demands were ultimately suppressed by the British occupation in 1882, this study sheds light on how meaningful demands for democratization emerged in an authoritarian parliament in a non-industrialized agricultural economy that is comparable to other cases in the Global South during the first wave of democratization.

TIME

**Monday, May 6, 2024
12:10PM-1:20PM**

LOCATION

SSC 121