

# Sanctions targeting and logics

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# Departing questions

- Based on your readings for the two weeks:
  - What does smartening involve?
  - What sense did you get for the crucial identified pitfalls during the first wave of smartening? Early 2000s.
  - What seem to be the “hot” challenges today?
- What does a sanctions **pressure point** (i.e. coercive) usually hope to achieve – think of the mechanism/logic (i.e. pressure leaders to change their policy? Or change allegiance? Or build public resistance?)
- What does regime type have to do with it? And why?

Smartening =  
targeting?

#### need for a **disaggregated approach**

- deconstruction of sanctions packaging

#### 2000 watershed report "Fowler report"

- naming presidents by name,
- naming officials by name
- providing concrete evidence
- violations as well as money trails
- recommendations not implemented at outset...

#### targeted measures provide **increased challenges to implementation**

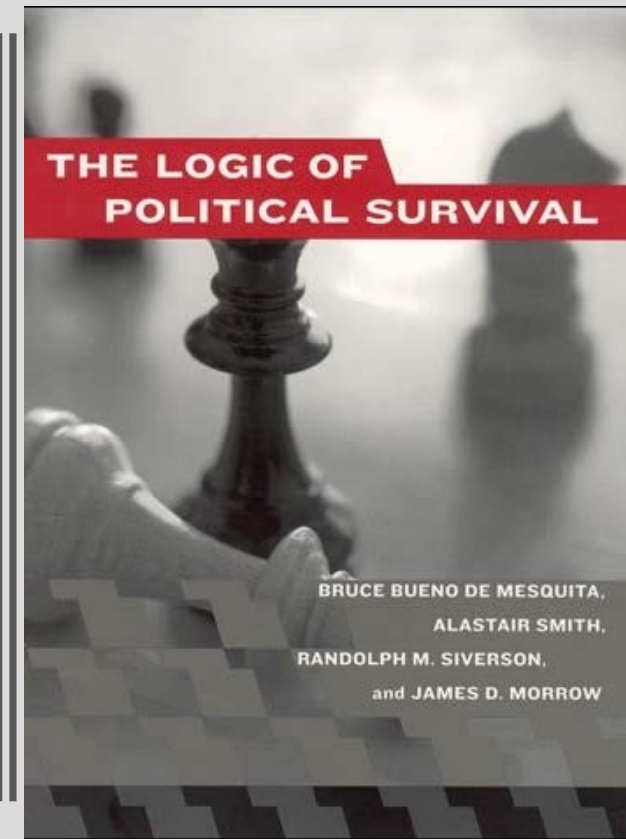
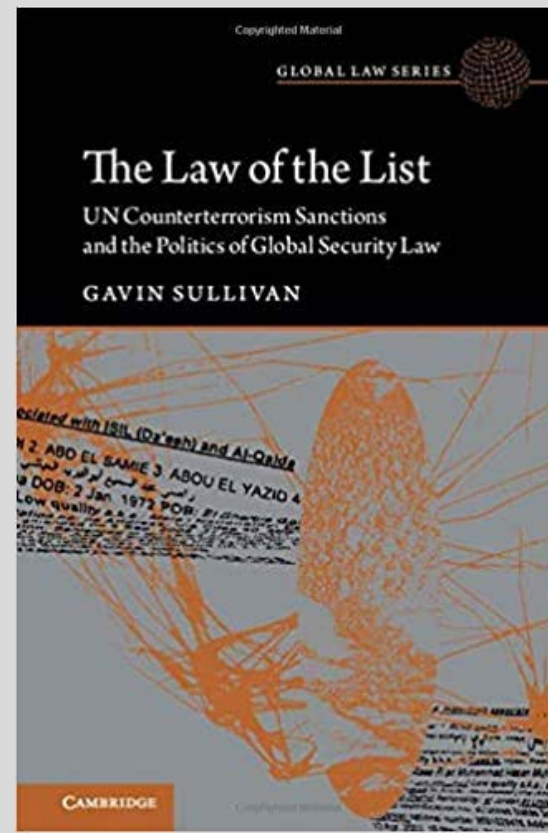
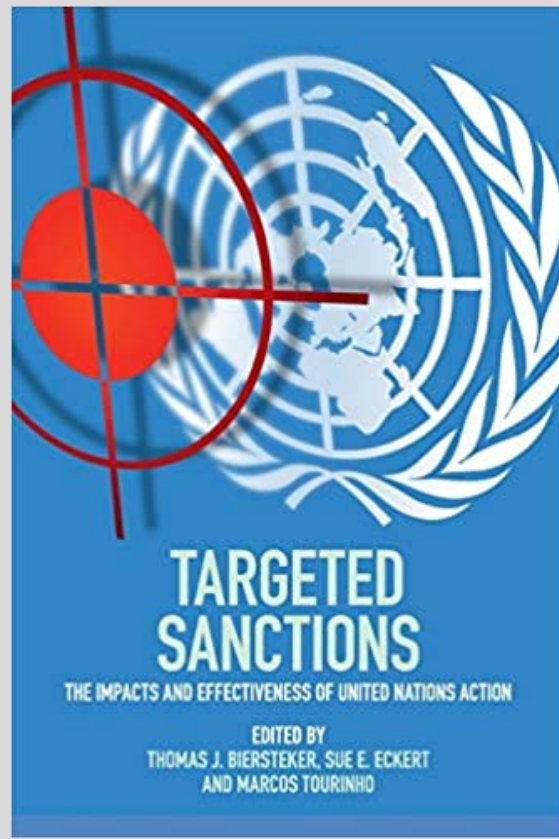
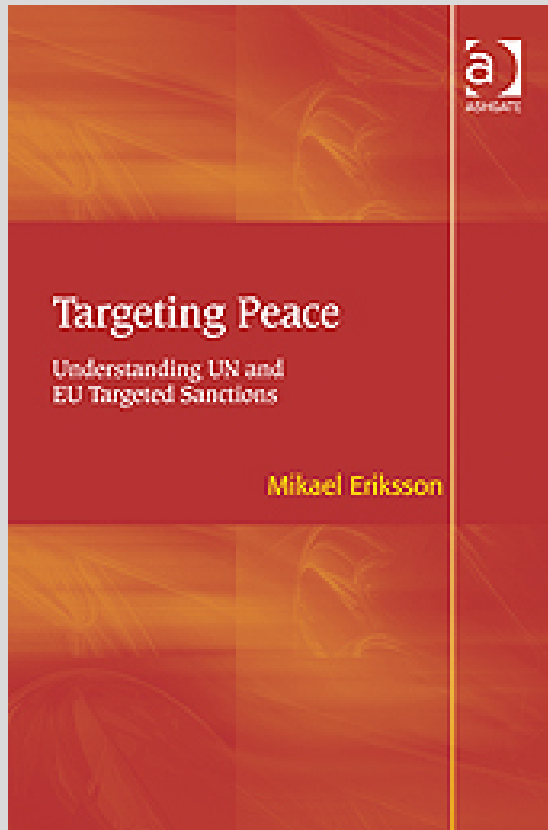
- **monitoring**
- **national implementation**
- **enforcement**
- **legal recourse and loopholes**

#### e.g. –dual-use goods

- goods need to be inspected vs. denied flat out
- legislation adapted and domestically enforced by limited capacity regimes
- specialized investigate teams for monitoring
- mandated taskforces

# Smartening

- **pre-assessment**
- **tailoring**
  - most direct pain for political gain
  - least amount of collateral damage
- **time limited**
- **targeting**
  - government (whole, individuals, groups: police, military...)
  - non-governmental forces (whole, individuals, wings)
- **adaptation of regime composition**
  - reactionary capability
- **inherent bargaining chip maneuverability**
- **“listing” and subsequent (de)listings**
  - not only persons but specific commodities/goods
  - interpretation of vague Resolution language for national implementation
- **enforcement and monitoring updates**



# Sanctions targeting

- If targeting and smartening is prevalent (humanization of sanctions) what does that mean for coercive capability?



# Naïve theory

- **pressure on population**

- **demand for new institutions/mechanisms to rectify situation**

- **manipulation of said institutions to benefit from the support of powerful domestic groups**

- white minority protection from sanctions effects  
Rhodesia + South Africa



# Sanctions pressure translation theory

- **broad targets within society all have means of pressure**
  - **the wealthy bribe; students riot; workers strike; mobs demonstrate; and the military coup (Huntington 1968)**
- means of pressure may therefore be manifested in all targets
  - however regime type and target type (state / non-state) influence the real-world capabilities of pressure translation
- regime type
  - open system +
  - closed systems -
- target type
  - state +
  - non-state -
- divide and conquer
  - sanctions, much like punishment by warfare targeting civilians, aim to **divide**
    - the elite from the masses
    - the leadership from its direct support

# Problems with naïve theory

high domestic price

high unintended impacts

inflexibility

regime-dependent translation

regime might even benefit from maintaining sanctions (rally around the flag)

counter-integrationist - isolationist

vilification of international community

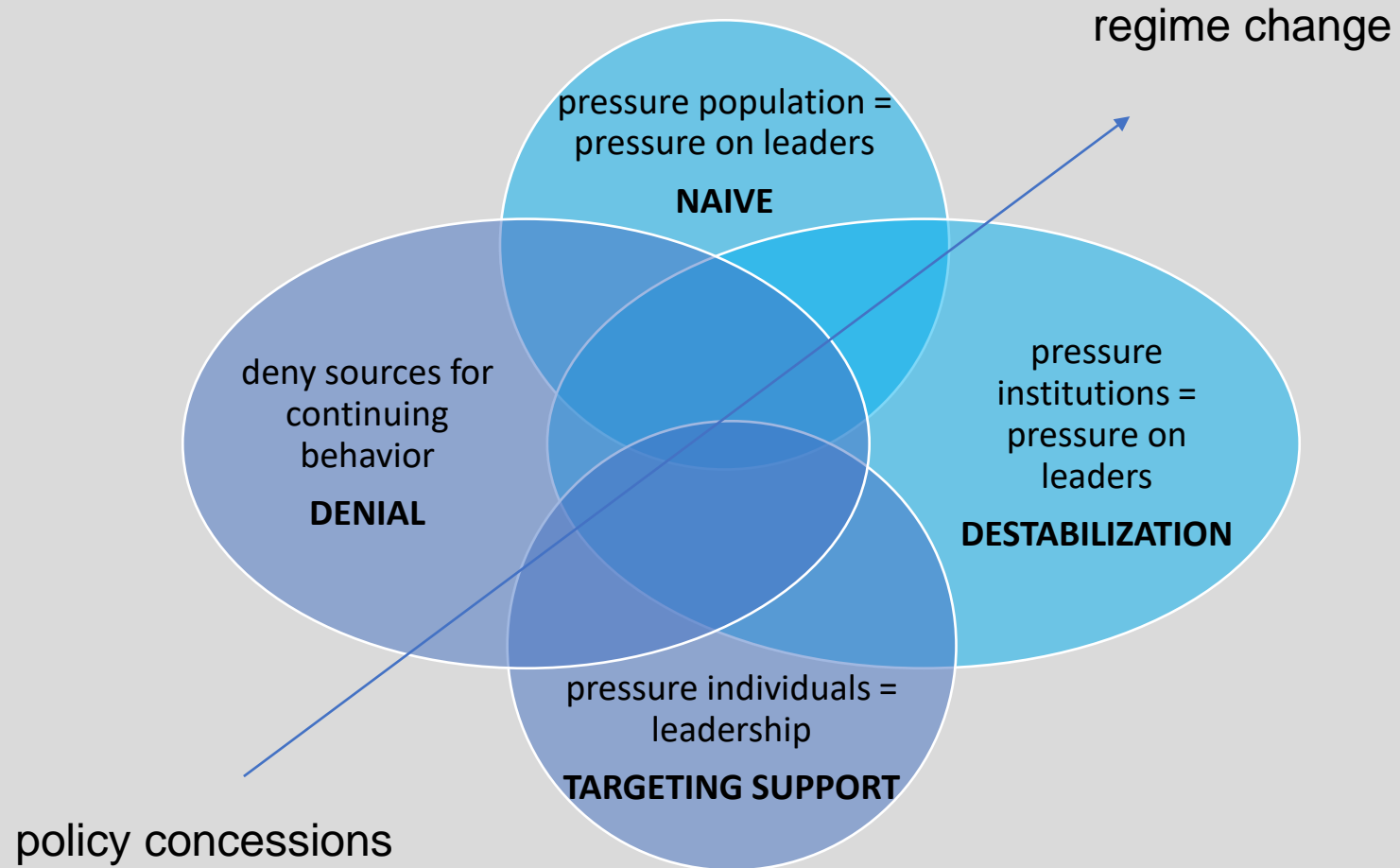
compellence less likely

disproven by empirical knowledge

# How sanctions (should) coerce

- losing the benefit of cooperation
- **1. naïve theory**
  - pain = gain
  - however - costs incurred by state need not be equated to costs incurred by leaders
  - still a strong approach in the USA
- **2. destabilization**
- for coercion to work, the political stability of the target should suffer **more from coming under pressure than from conceding**
- targeting becomes crucial
  - selection of most directly translating pain to gain targets
- cost!
  - success more at 2,4% GDP decrease
  - failure average 1% decrease
- **3. denial**
- **4. targeting**

# Sanctions logic



# Destabilization

- destabilization requires that the **opposition in the target actor feels a common cause with the sender (fifth column)**
- otherwise the threshold of coinciding internal support for sender demands is unachievably high
  - i.e. collective deprivation of more than “*panem et circenses*”
  - although link between economic hardship – frustration – aggression they are **not necessarily in line with sender demands**
  - rather than thinking about the good of the state or the community more broadly, individuals **look to their closest units to sustain them**
- if support does not exist – destabilization is problematic
- economic hardship can be “**blamed on sanction senders**” (rally around the flag effect)
  - Cuba, Iraq 1990s
- **destabilization** – ideal targets – weaker autocracies, where repressive measures aren’t completely forbidding of opposition action
  - neither strong autocracies NOR democracies are ideal for destabilization

# Destabilization

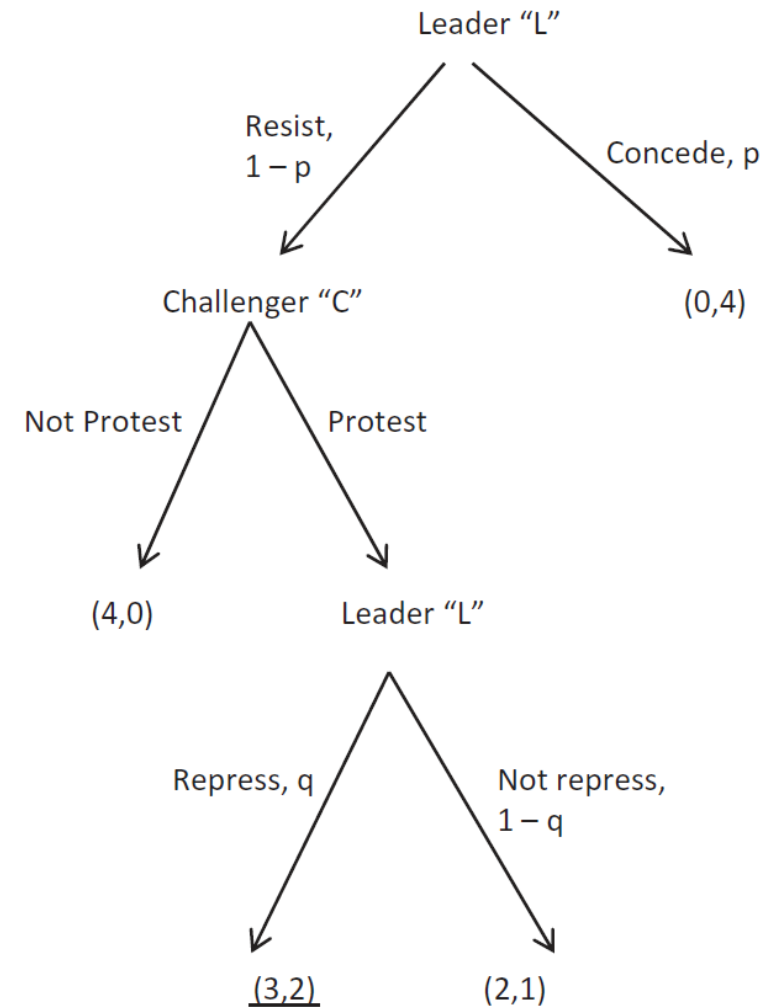
- destabilizing leaders
- *the mere existence of the sanctions option – induces compliance to international norms from specific types of leaders*
  - namely democratic, or unstable authoritarian
- the threat or imposition of sanctions creates a **new bargaining zone**, where leaders are more likely to agree to partial concessions whose destabilization effect is lesser than that of continuing/increasing sanctions
- **democracies, and less so small economies + multilateral sanctions** – create the optimal combination for coercion success
- change of power leads to increased sanctions lifting

# Destabilization

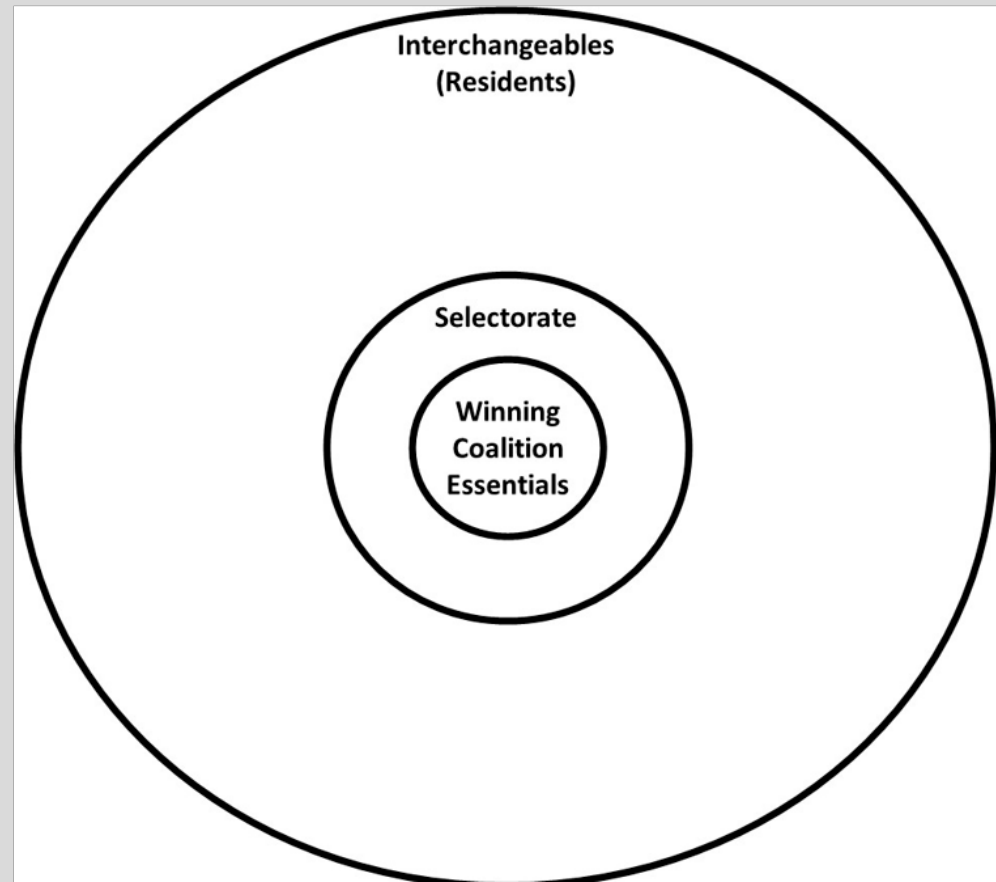
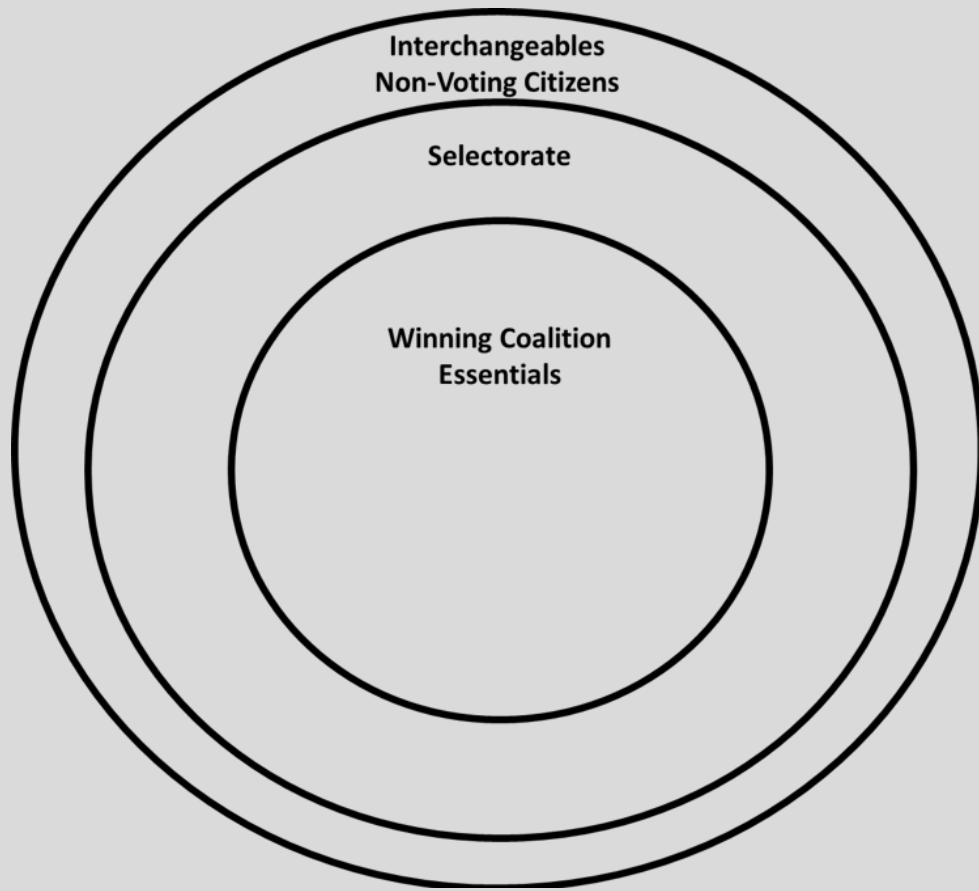
- aiming for pain by the application of pressure, **population not the only intermediary actor**
- longer economic sanctions regimes **disproportionately hurt the opposition rather than the elite**
- they provide pretext for more repressive measures
- **tighter control of previously open resources (distribution)** (Zimbabwe)
- political **reform toward openness can be halted** and reversed (Panama)
- **dissuasion of FDI**, global trade, institutional assistance, development programmes
- increased necessity of military intervention to counter negative effects, which compound original motive to apply sanctions

## Regimes and coercive sanctions

- *“Because targeted sanctions seek to impose concentrated costs, they have a higher probability of actually weakening the leadership when compared to conventional sanctions. This probability is higher in authoritarian regimes because in these polities the winning coalition is rewarded primarily with private goods, which implies a concentrated perception of realized or potential costs.”* (assigned text Carneiro, p.572)

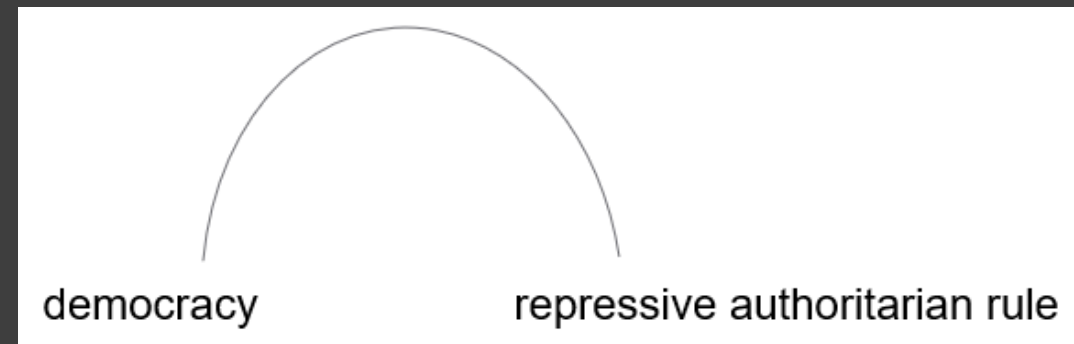






## Selectorate theory

- Marinov
- deMesquita
- Drezner



# The sanctions trap

- presumption of gradual increase in sanctions
- sending weak measures creates “**lock-in syndrome**” low credibility signaling measure is NOT met with concessions in target
  - sender then HAS TO either increase pressure
  - OR lose credibility and erode tool
  - OR opt for military solution
- when **low-sender-cost sanctions** are chosen as the **initial response** to a **crisis**, there is a danger that the **target** of the sanctions will **interpret this as a sign of weakness** on the part of the sender (of sender as such or commitment)
  - this can increase the probability of repression, escalation, or extortion as it emboldens the target against acquiescing to the sender’s demand

# EU, US, UK sanctions on China Mar. 22

- GMA and EU Human rights regime in action
- For EU first new HR sanctions on china since 1989
- *March 30, the Biden administration declared that China has engaged in "genocide and crimes against humanity," citing Beijing's "mass detention" of the Uyghurs, as well as evidence of forced sterilization, rape, torture, and forced labor. A week earlier, on March 22, the Biden administration—in conjunction with the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Canada—imposed [economic sanctions](#) on top Chinese officials over the persecution of the Uyghur people.*
- **This leaves us with the effects of the remaining two on design and impact –**
- **3. TARGETING SUPPORT**
- **4. DENIAL**

# Impact on design

- **Myanmar sanctions?**
  - US, UK added major military run conglomerates to sanctions list (**soldiers are being sold stocks now to continue financing**)
  - EU has added individuals
  - China+Russia have blocked UN arms embargo vote (coup=major cabinet reshuffle)
  - Russia has stated sanctions will cause civil war
- **So what about the Russia sanctions?**
  - Weak or strong at the outset?
  - What's the logic?

## United Co. Rusal shares in Hong Kong



Source: WSJ Market Data Group