

# Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité!

The Impact of Inequality on Support For Democracy



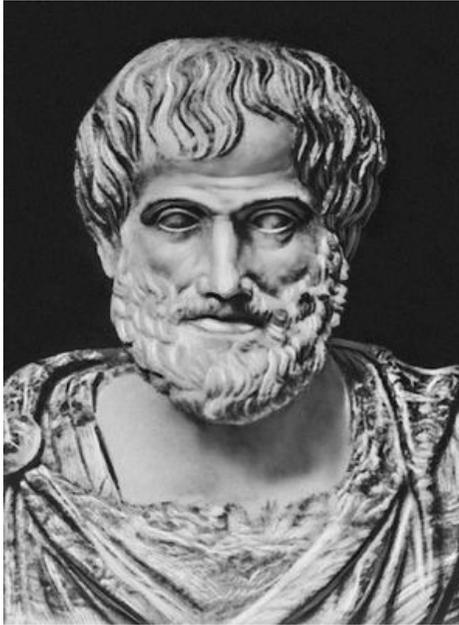
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# Research Question

How does inequality affect support for democracy?

# Inequality and Democracy: Debate

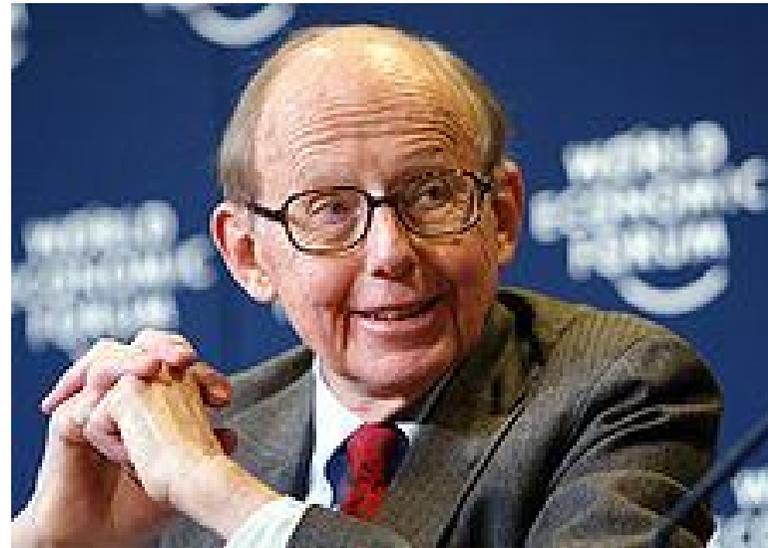


Aristotle

Alexis de Tocqueville



# Theoretical Perspective



Democracy is almost impossible in highly unequal societies.

# Empirical Facts: Controversies

- Bollen and Jackman (1985) no statistically significant relationship
- Przeworski et al., (2000) in most cases the durability of dictatorships is unaffected by income distribution.

# Inequality and Democratization

- Boix (2003)

The higher is inequality, the less likely is democratization

- Acemoglu and Robinson (2006)

Non-linear relationship between inequality and democratization

**This is your preference!**

$$x = \pm \int \frac{dy}{\sqrt{2 \int F(y) dy + C_1}} + C_2$$

# Real Preferences Matter

Inglehart and Welzel (2005)

Principal role of ordinary citizens, their beliefs and values in democratization process

# Aims of study

- Bridge political economy models of democratization and democracy with socio-cultural theory
- «Meet» *homo economicus* with *homo sociologicus*
- Provide empirical cross-national analysis

# The Main Hypothesis

*The higher is income inequality, the higher is support for democracy.*

# Core variables

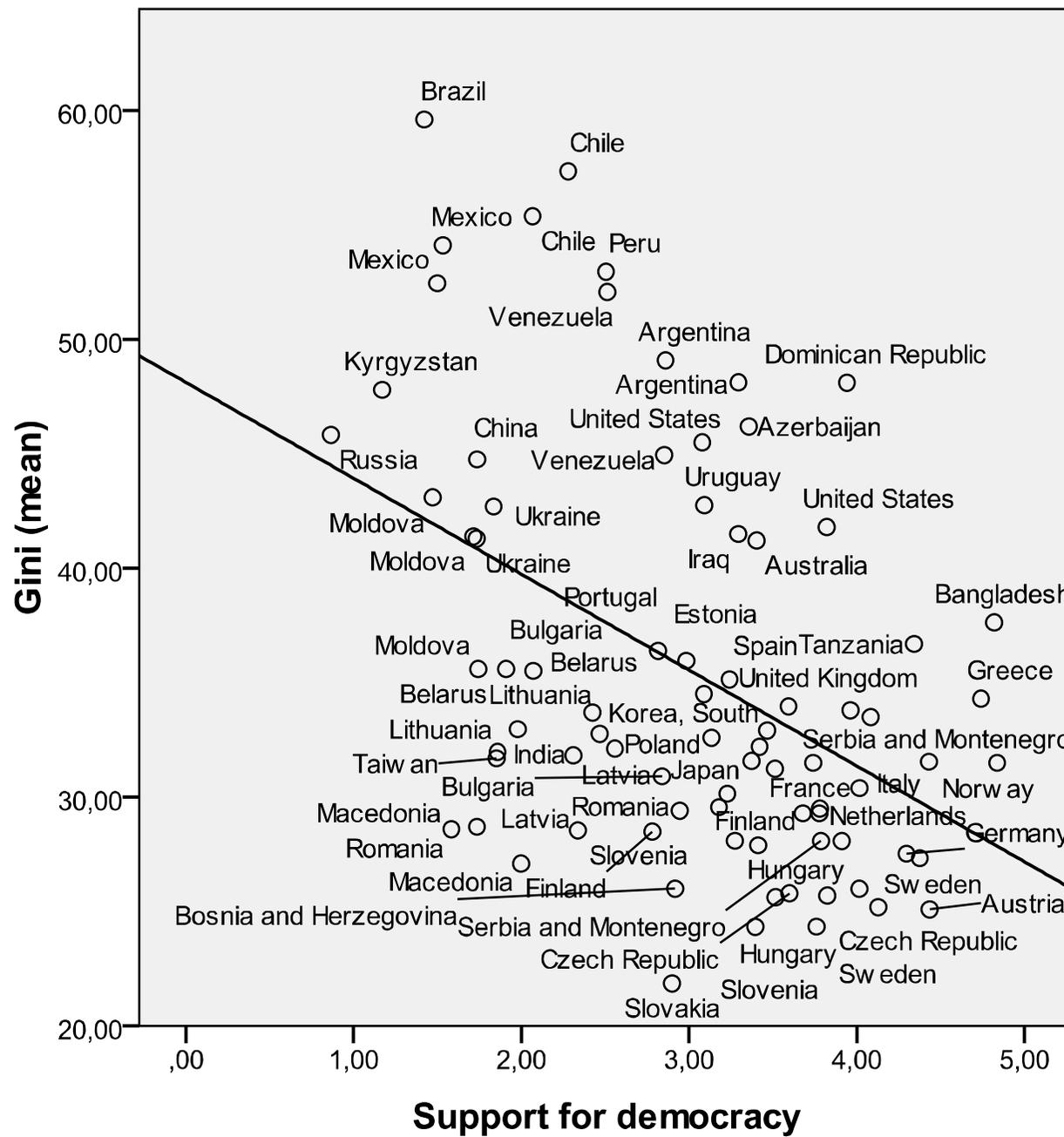
- Support for democracy *WVS*
- Inequality *GINI*
- Regime Type *Polity IV*
- Media Freedom *Freedom House*
- GDP per capita
- Ethnolinguistic Fractionalization
- Religiousness

# What is support for democracy?

*Aggregated index of several measures from WVS:*

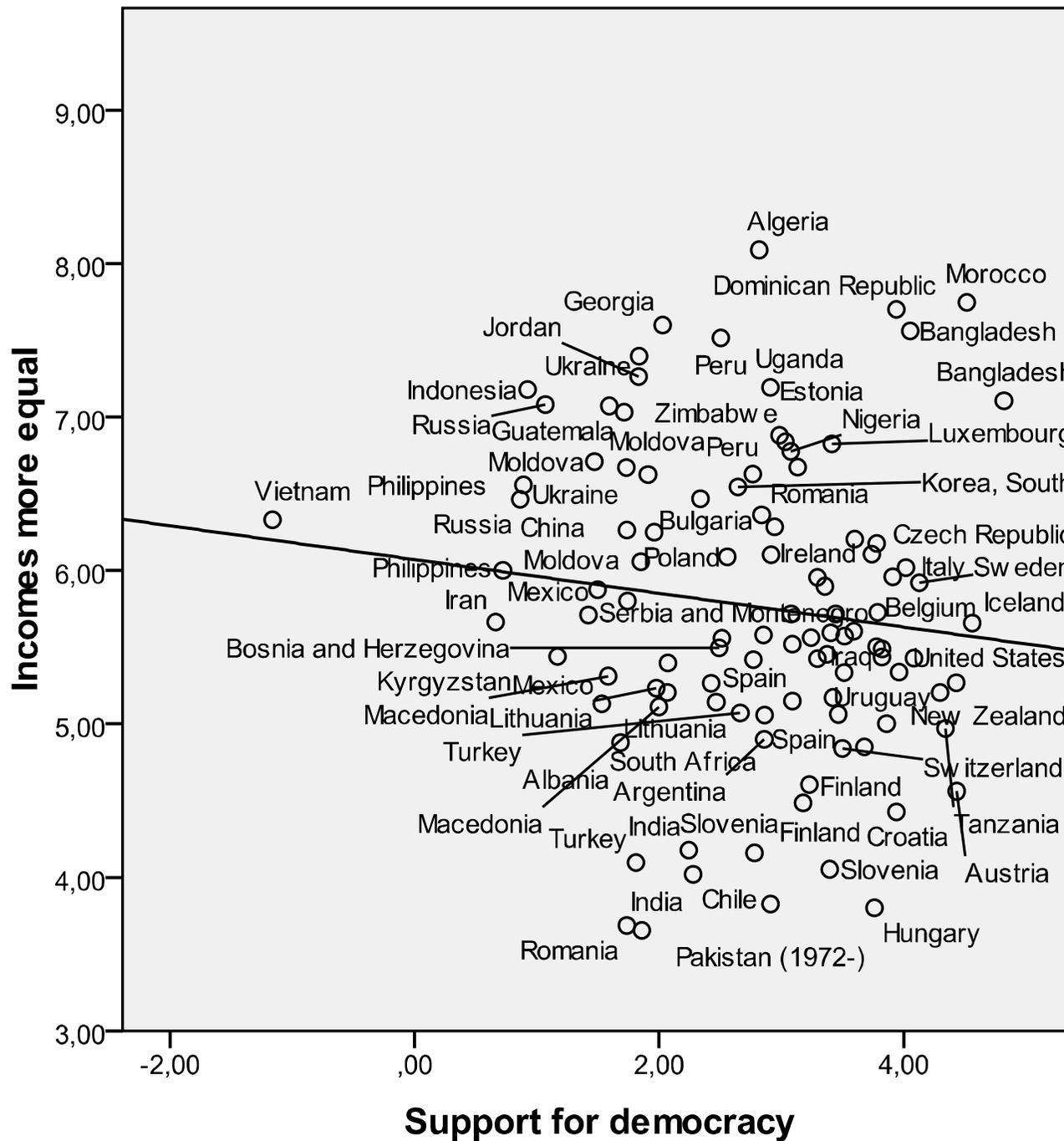
- *“Having a democratic political system”*
- *“Democracy may have problems, but is better”*

# **Empirical Analysis**



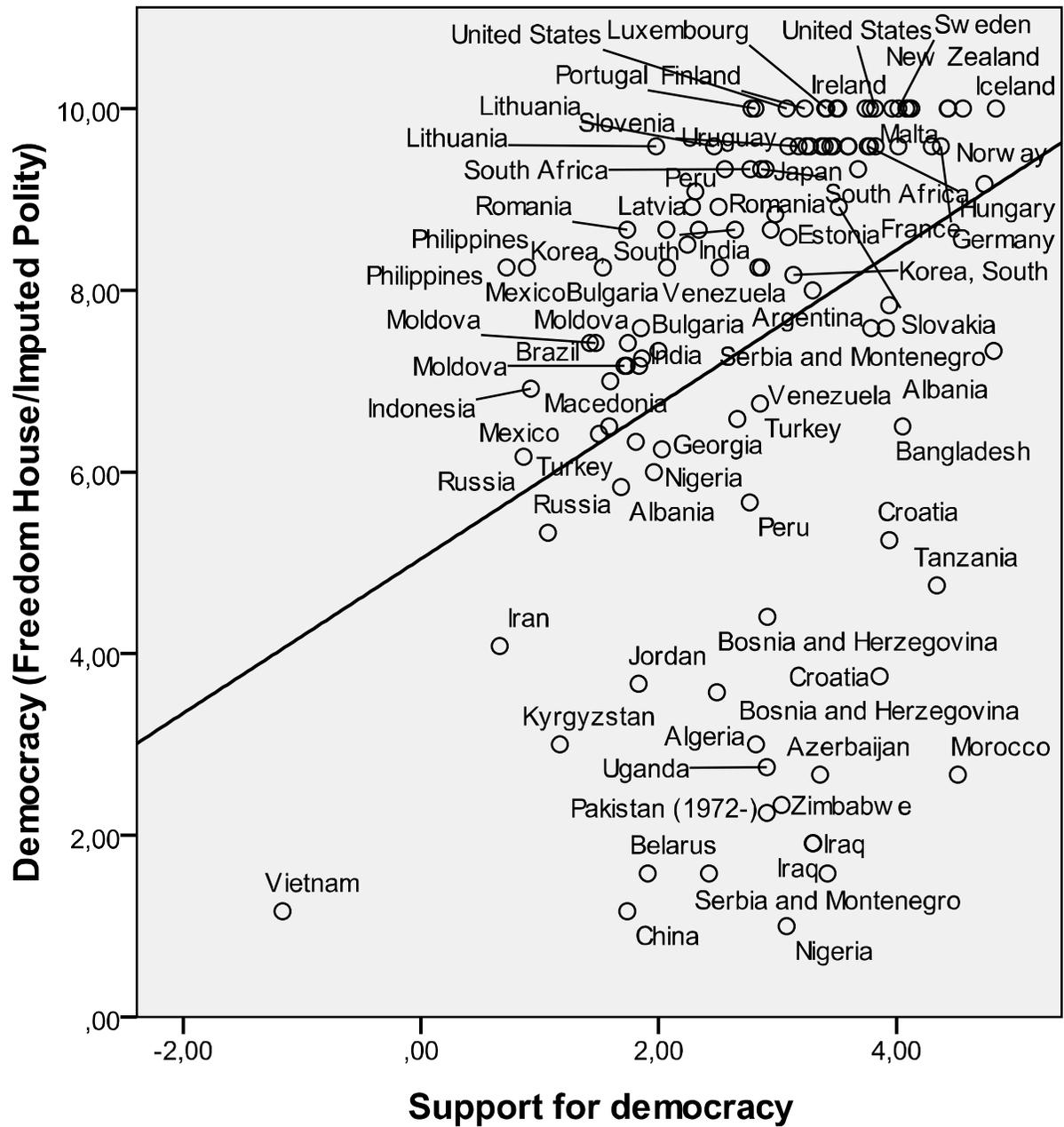
Линейная регрессия

R<sup>2</sup> Линейная регрессия = 0,202



Линейная регрессия

$R^2$  Линейная регрессия = 0,014



Линейная регрессия

R<sup>2</sup> Линейная регрессия = 0,117

# The Model

*Support for democracy* = GINI + Delta  
GINI + Support for redistribution + Support  
for Government + GDP per capita +  
Democracy + Democracy (1930-1995) +  
Freedom of Press + Ethnolinguistic  
fractionalization + Islam

# Results

- Inequality – significant and have strong negative impact in all specifications
- Prosperity – significant and have strong positive impact in all specifications
- Freedom of the Press - significant and have strong positive impact in all specifications
- Democracy – insignificant

# Surprise. Or Not?

Islam – significant and have quite strong positive impact in all specifications



# Conclusions

- Income Inequality tends to decrease support for democracy
- In the modern world support for democracy is not instrumental, but motivated by demands for freedom itself