



Faculty of Social Science

IPSA, 2025

Illuminating the Impact of Resistance: Nonviolent Political Movements and Economic Activity

Ustyuzhanin Vadim
HSE University

vadim.v.ustyuzhanin@gmail.com



Mass mobilization consequences-1

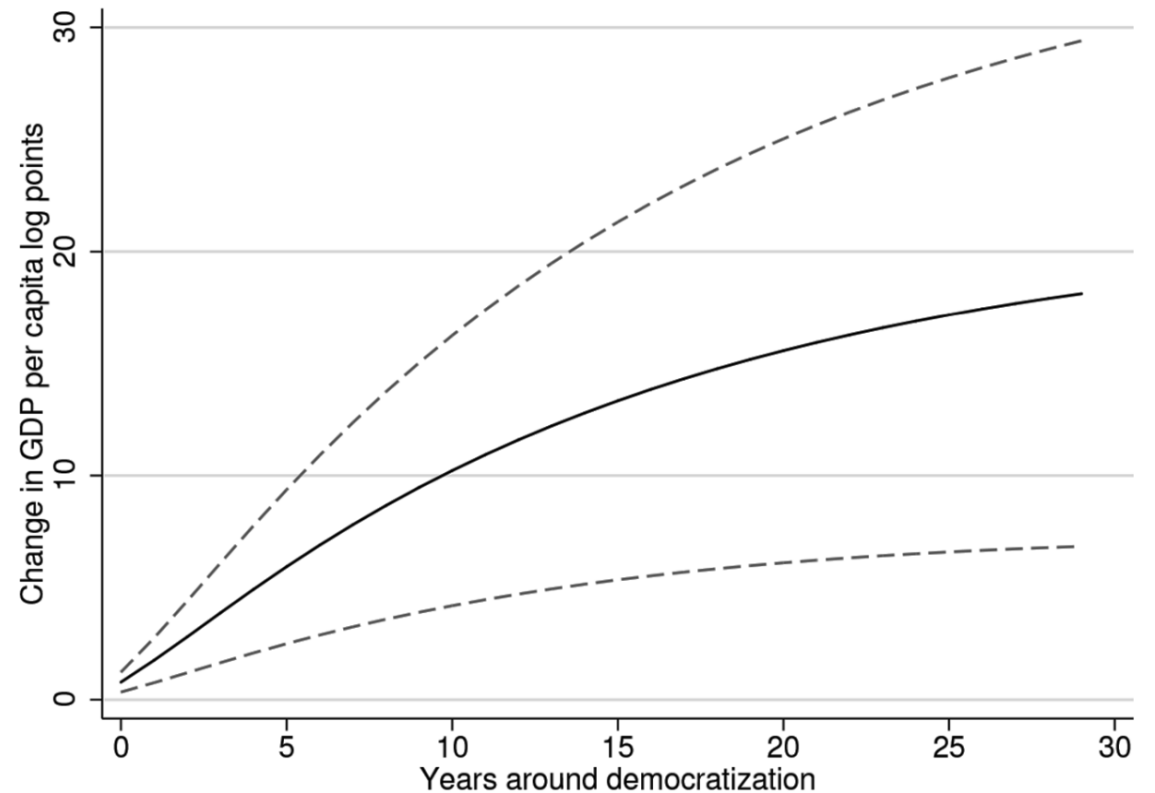
Nonviolent maximalist campaigns (NVC)* lead to political change (both short- long-term):**

1. Democratization
2. Decline in repression
3. Freedom of press
4. ...

NVC -> democracy -> prosperity?

***NVC** – irregular effort to change a political regime through unarmed mass mobilization:

1. *Orange revolution*
2. *Anti-Maduro protests*
3. *Tunisian revolution*



Acemoglu, D., Naidu, S., Restrepo, P., & Robinson, J. A. (2019). Democracy does cause growth. Journal of political economy, 127(1), 47-100.

****** e.g. Kadivar, 2018; Bogati et al., 2025



Mass mobilization consequences-2

NVC do not always lead to regime change:

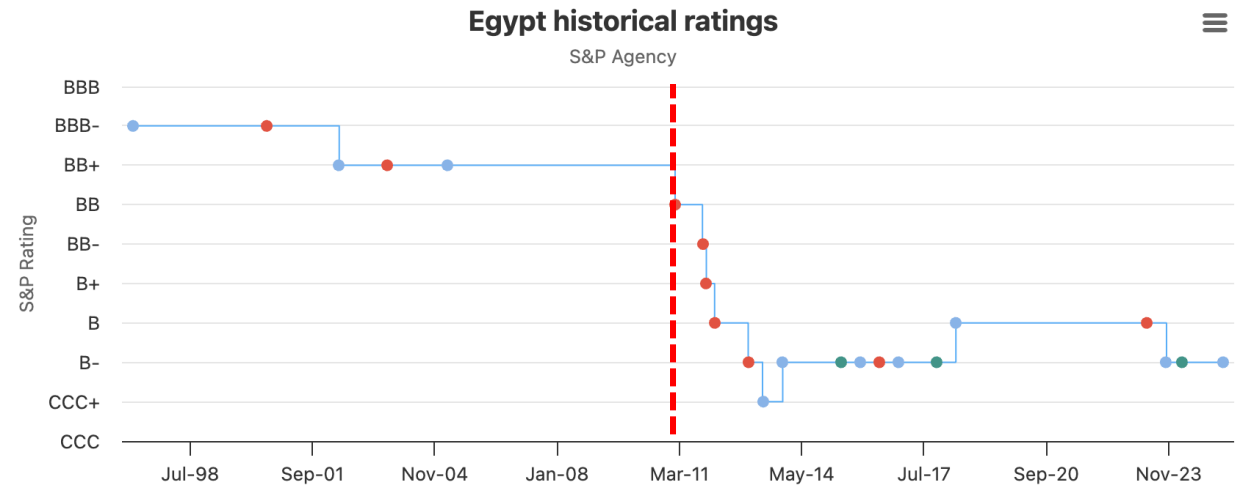
Usual situation – no change

NVC produce instability:

1. Tunisia 2010
2. Egypt 2011

Table A2. Regime before and after NVCs, 1950–2022

	Regime after				Total
	Closed Autocracy	Electoral Autocracy	Electoral Democracy	Liberal Democracy	
Regime before					
Closed Autocracy	27 (42%)	12 (18%)	20 (31%)	6 (9.2%)	65 (100%)
Electoral Autocracy	13 (13%)	61 (61%)	25 (25%)	1 (1.0%)	100 (100%)
Electoral Democracy	1 (2.5%)	7 (18%)	31 (78%)	1 (2.5%)	40 (100%)
Liberal Democracy	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	10 (100%)
Total	41 (19%)	80 (37%)	76 (35%)	18 (8.4%)	215 (100%)





Mass mobilization consequences-3

Academia underestimate failed NVC:

half of NVC failed

Failed NVC:

1. **Liberalization:**

Threat to elite -> choose to share power to save resources

Myanmar 2007 (Saffron revolution)

Russia / Ukraine 1989

2. **Autocratization:**

Treat to elite -> repression & power consolidation

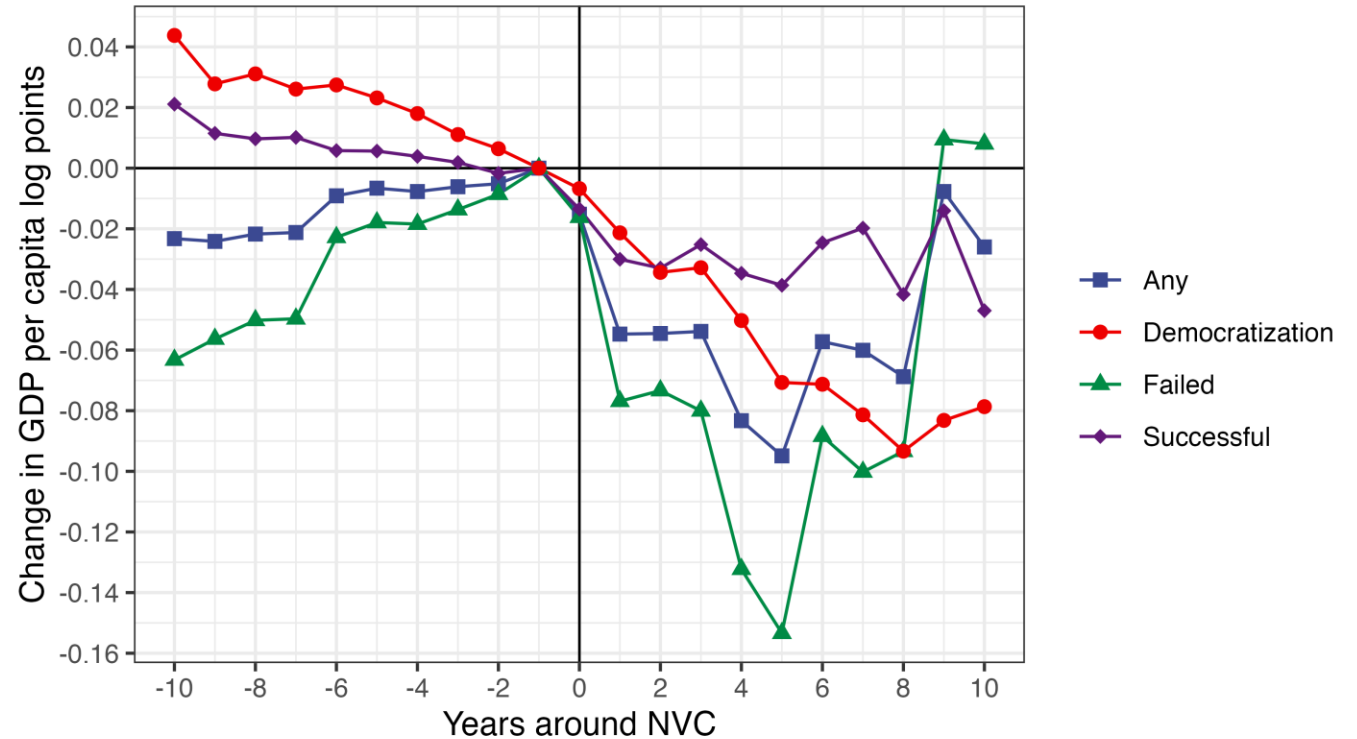
Russia 2011-12



Naive descriptive statistic

1. Any NVC
2. Successful:
Protesters achieve at least some goals
3. Failed:
Protest was suppressed or failed to achieve any change
4. Leading to democratization
Two years after the end of the campaign, the regime became democratic, whereas it had been autocratic before

	Democratization		Total
	0	1	
Success			
0	118 (60%)	14 (27%)	132 (53%)
1	79 (40%)	38 (73%)	117 (47%)
Total	197 (100%)	52 (100%)	249 (100%)



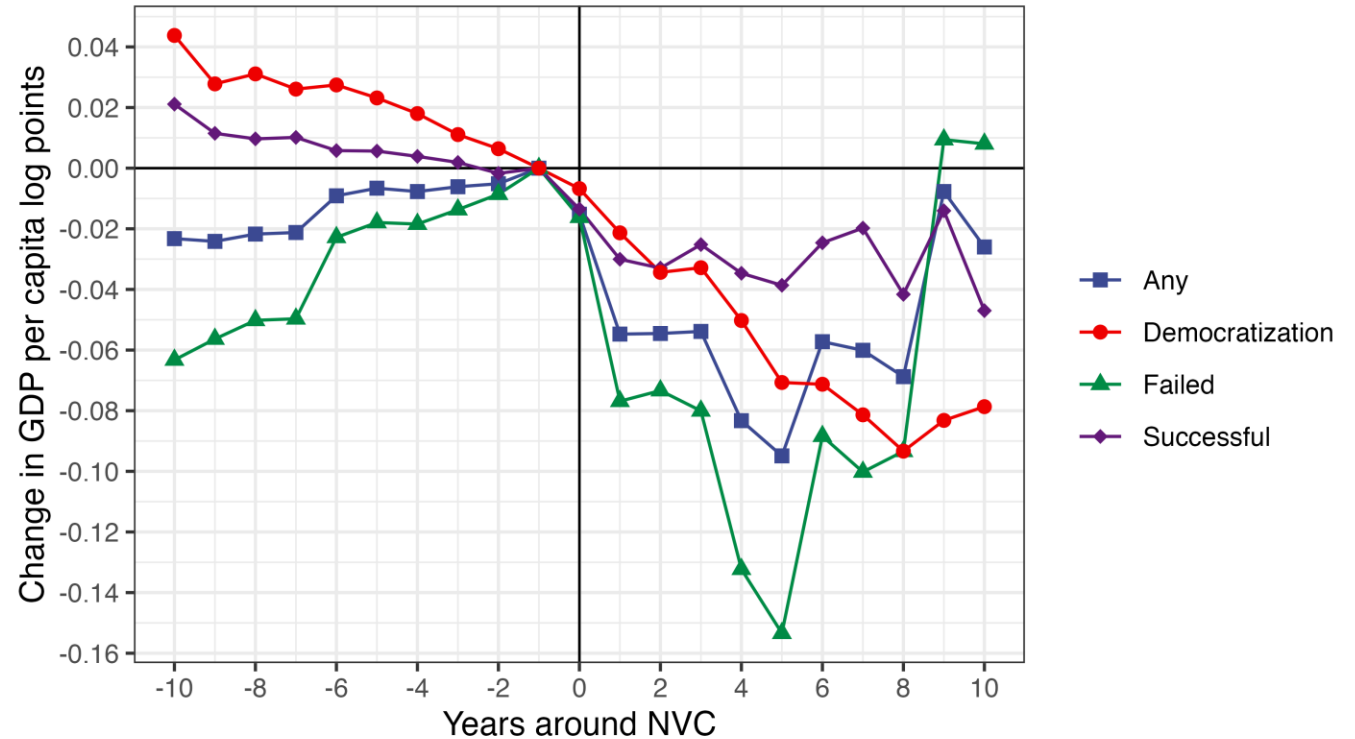
Difference in log GDP per capita between countries that experienced and did not experience NVC



Actuality & RQ

1. *No comprehensive study of economic consequences of NVC*
2. *“Streetlight effect” in the previous studies*

RQ: What effect does NVC have on the economy?



Difference in log GDP per capita between countries that experienced and did not experience NVC

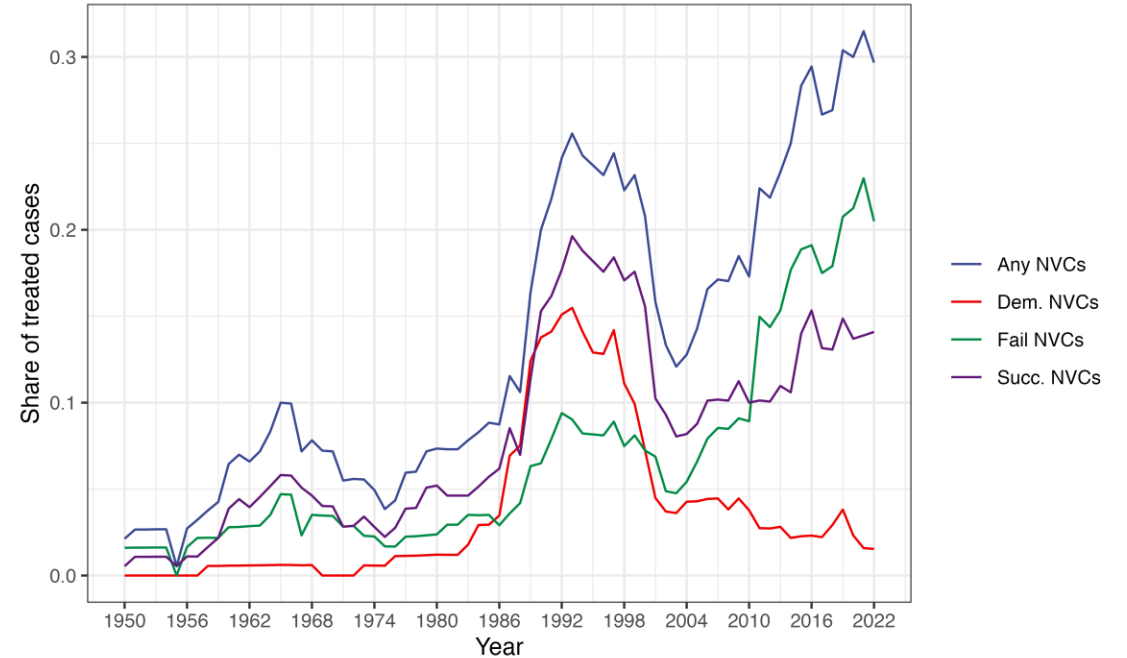
Empirical strategy

Estimator - Difference-in-difference using panel matching:

1. Match control and treated cases by treatment history and year
2. Balance on covariates
3. Usual DiD

Data:

1. **NVC** – NAVCO 1.3 + my addition
2. **DV** – GDP per capita, 2017\$ PPP
3. **Controls:**
 1. Population
 2. Oil rent
 3. Regime type
 4. Education
 5. Child mortality
 6. Regime durability



Treatment operationalization:

1. Treated group: **Start of NVC + 10 years**
2. Control group: no treatment
3. NO treatment reversal (no new NVC in 10 years after NVC)

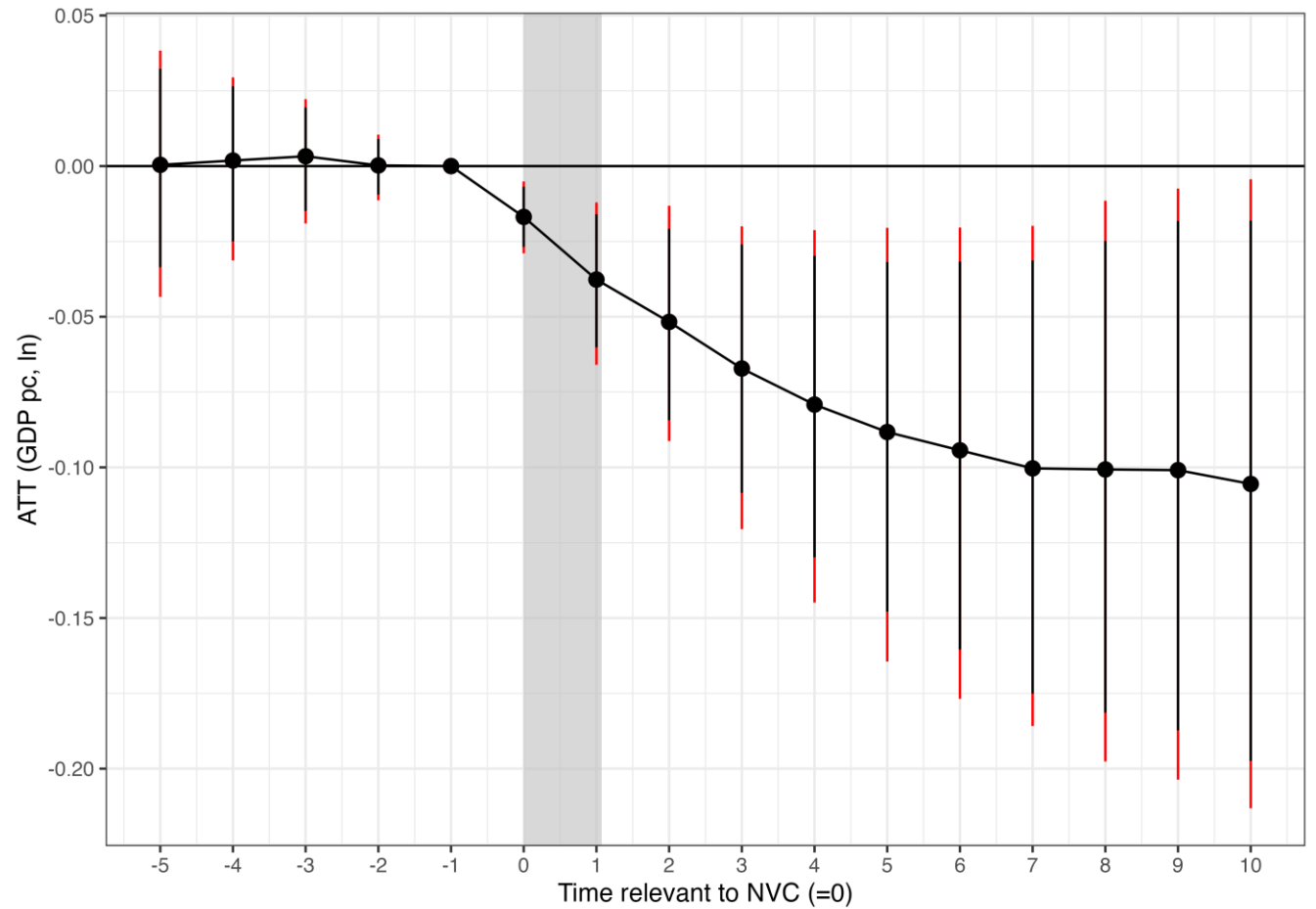


Results: Any NVC

Significant shock

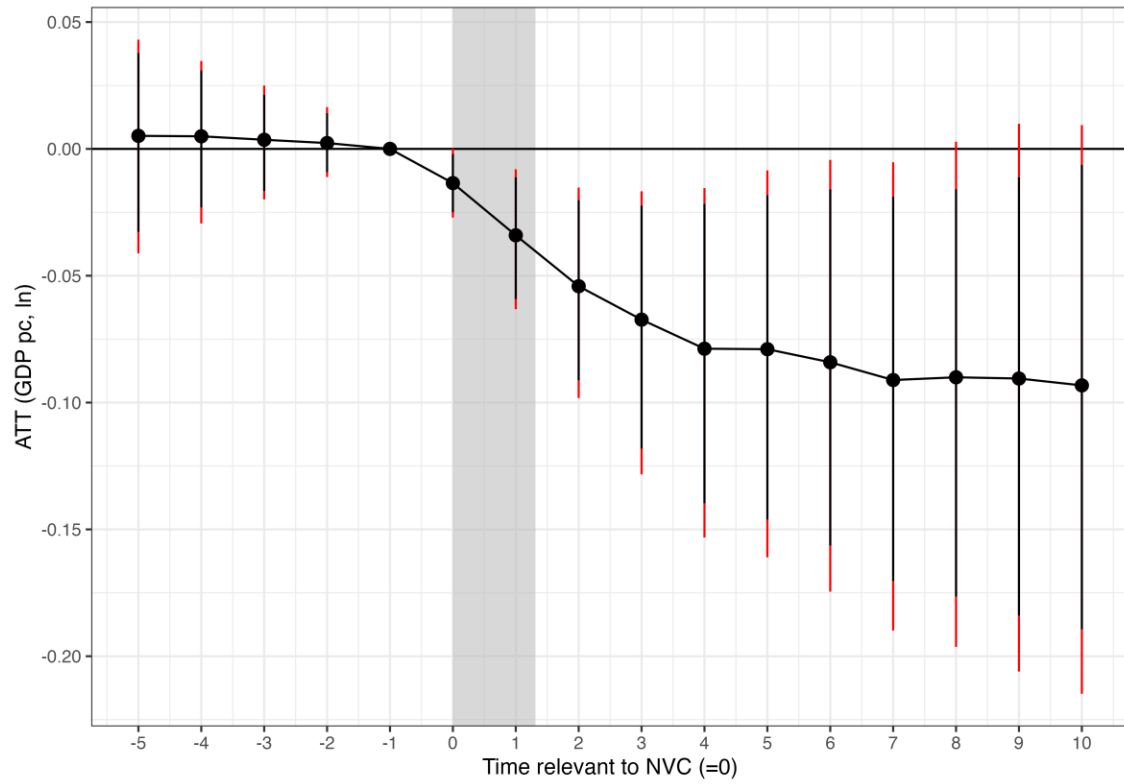
Constant decline after NVC

~10% after 10 years

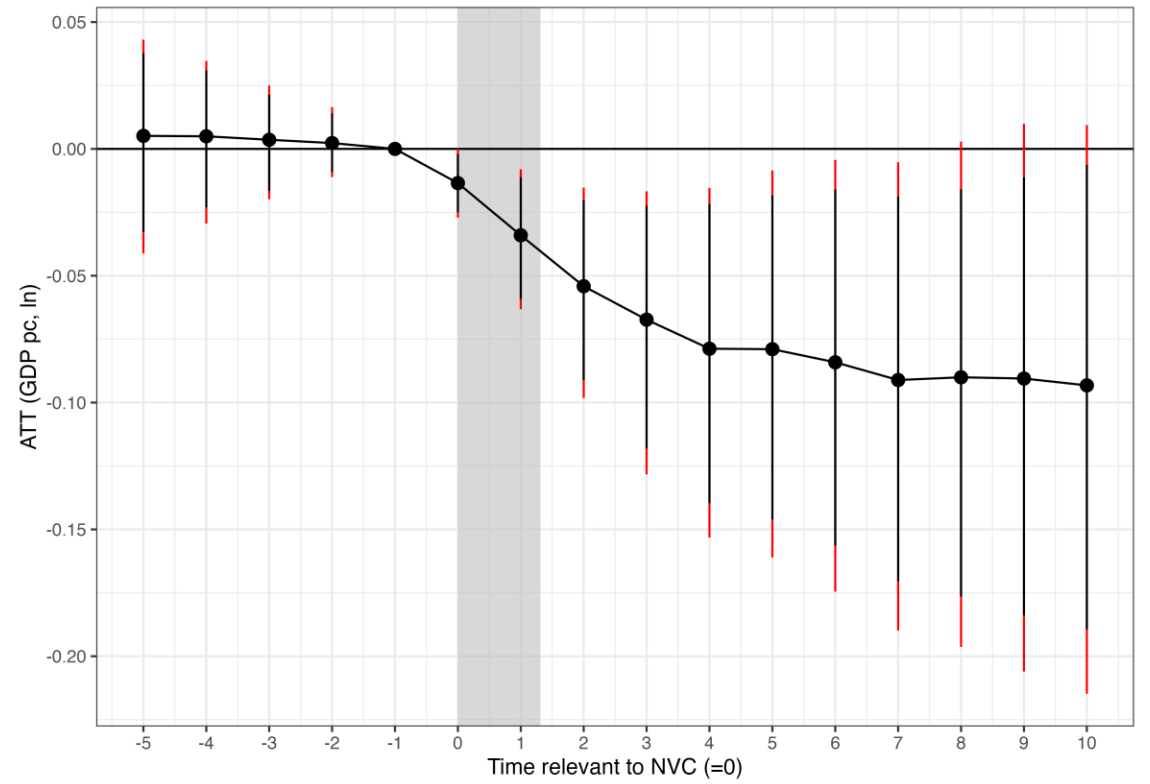




Results: Successful NVC



Failed NVC



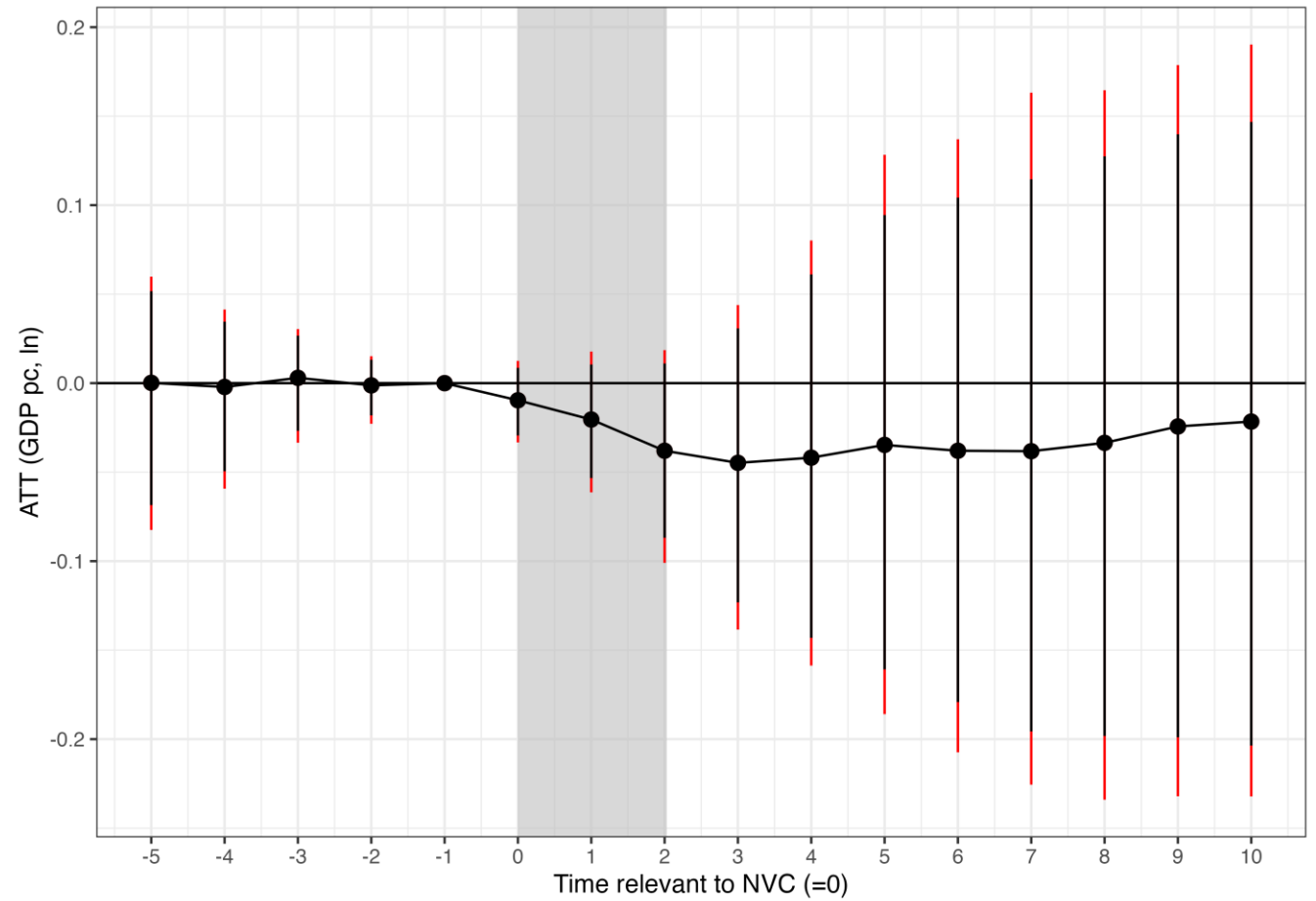


Results: Democritizing NVC

Insignificant shock

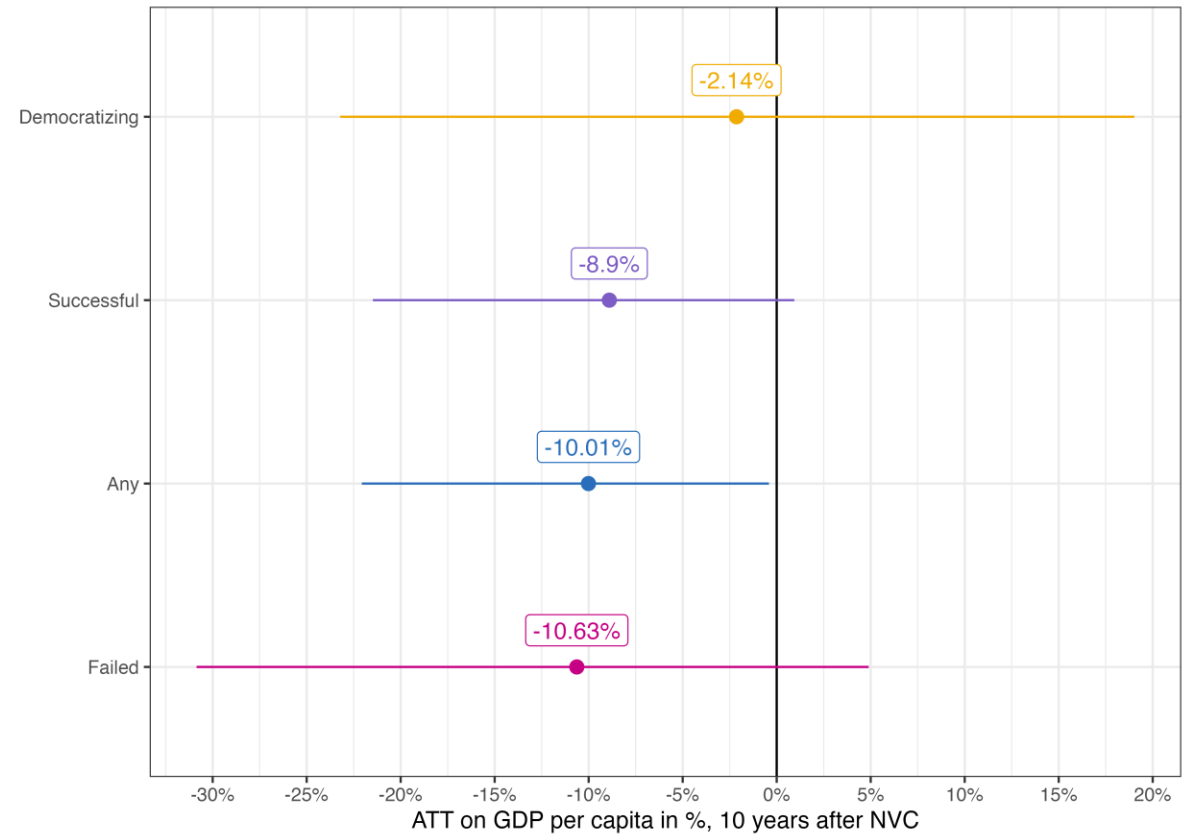
Short decline and recovery

No significant lose and gain



Conclusion

1. NVC lead to economic decline
2. There is no significant differences between Failed and Successful cases
3. NVC leading to democratization neutralize (?) negative effect of political shock
4. Democratization “from below” does not produce immediate economic boom





Further work

1. What mechanisms lie behind such dynamics?

1. Investments
2. Elite changes
3.

2. Case studies by NVC types

**Protesters
Success**

Democratization

	Yes	No
Yes	No effect <i>(why?)</i>	Decline
No	No effect <i>(why?)</i>	Decline



Faculty of Social Science

IPSA, 2025

Illuminating the Impact of Resistance: Nonviolent Political Movements and Economic Activity

Ustyuzhanin Vadim
HSE University

vadim.v.ustyuzhanin@gmail.com