

2 Multiparty Authoritarian Regimes in the Literature

After taking a general look at authoritarian regimes this section provides a more detailed account of the literature on authoritarian regimes with multiple parties and competitive elections. The goal is to get a better understanding of the political system and how the introduction of multiparty politics influences the relationship between members of the authoritarian elite, the opposition, voters and actors on the international level. Even though elections are competitive, the ruling party has a strong interest in preventing opposition parties from winning elections and limiting their political influence. Thus, it is important to clarify if electoral competition is meaningful and if so, to get an understanding of the incumbent government's strategies to maintain its dominant position. Keeping up a parliamentary majority is central to reach this goal.

2.1 Democratic Façade?

A prominent view on authoritarian multiparty elections is that they are installed to create a democratic façade. The idea is that these democratic institutions confer some kind of legitimacy on authoritarian regimes. Competitive elections are thought to motivate domestic actors with liberal ideals to support the political regime, but also to appeal to international actors who can offer preferential trade agreements or cheap loans (Joseph 1997). In this view authoritarian regimes “reap the fruits of electoral legitimacy without running the risks of democratic uncertainty” (Schedler 2002a: 37). The possibility of electoral turnover is reserved for democratic regimes only (Przeworski 1991: 10). On the other hand, Levitsky and Way (2010:12-13) acknowledge that electoral competition in authoritarian regimes is likely to be unfair, yet generates sufficient uncertainty for government officials to fear an opposition victory.

If competitive elections in authoritarian regimes indeed did not involve uncertainty about the outcomes, then we might expect voting rules and voting behavior to be irrelevant and election results to be a product of fraud. As Schedler (2002a) points out, authoritarian regimes have a wide menu of manipulation to obtain election results to their liking. For instance, they can

exclude competitors from running, restrict the opposition's ability to campaign, disenfranchise parts of the electorate, manipulate voter registration, or simply stuff the ballot box. This assessment is partly based on authoritarian regimes' ability to resort to repression in order to ensure their reelection, which is employed rather frequently (Hafner-Burton et al. 2014).

Party members can threaten voters to use violence against them in case they should support the opposition. The armed forces are often active members of the ruling coalition and are not neutral about the outcome of elections. Thus, incumbents do not necessarily accept the elections they have lost and can attempt to annul them after the fact. Yet, manipulating elections from above is only an option if voters are unable to unite and revolt in the case of fraud (Magaloni 2010). With elections as an additional avenue to challenge the regime, repression has been suggested to be less effective than in more authoritarian regimes types, where intimidation suffices to deter opponents from undermining the regime (Vreeland 2008). Especially the so called Color Revolutions and the Arab Spring illustrate that incumbents in fact run a substantial risk of facing massive popular protests (Bunce and Wolchik 2006).

Even though competitive authoritarian regimes are expected to violate democratic norms of holding elections in various ways, it cannot be concluded that multiparty elections are meaningless and inconsequential. Moreover, there is empirical evidence that electoral fraud is not necessarily decisive for election outcomes as McCann and Dominguez (1998) show for the case of Mexico before the transition to democracy. However, opposition parties in competitive authoritarian regimes tend to be weak and fragmented which is often regarded as a sign that competition creates only limited amounts of electoral uncertainty and accountability (Rakner and van de Walle 2009).

In competitive authoritarian regimes, opposition candidates are allowed to compete for the presidency and the legislature. This leads to the question how their participation influences policy-making. A common trait of newly established regimes with competitive elections is their preference for presidentialism (Easter 1997; Mozaffar and Scarritt 2005). It allows dictators to preserve a lot of the powers they enjoyed under a fully authoritarian regime. The more a ruler can govern by decree, the weaker the legislature. In turn, members of the opposition have fewer opportunities to participate in decision-making. Some countries allow for competitive presidential elections only and do not even have a multiparty parliament. This means that there are few incentives for opposition parties to form in the first place, as presidential candidates' support coalitions are unlikely to last until the next election.

Legislatures are staffed with members of the ruling party and representatives of the opposition. According to the cooptation argument that was already mentioned in the introduction, multiparty legislatures are an instrument to include societal groups into the policy-making process (Gandhi and

Przeworski 2006). These opposition groups can then use the legislature to bargain the terms under which they are willing to support the regime. Wright (2008) even suggests that authoritarian incumbents can use a legislature to credibly commit to welfare enhancing economic policies. This argument is supported by correlations between economic growth and a dichotomous variable indicating if a legislature includes opposition parties (Gandhi 2008, chapter 5; Wright 2008).

Yet, when the ruling party holds a majority of parliamentary seats, policy compromises are unnecessary to pass a law. Popular interests that are represented through opposition parties might be inconsequential for the policy output. As a result, even multiparty legislatures are frequently viewed as rubber-stamps without real legislative responsibility (Lust-Okar 2006; Blaydes 2010). In the case of Jordan, several policy arenas are even off-limits to parliamentarians (Lust-Okar 2006). When a parliamentary seat is not associated with political influence for members of the opposition, we have to wonder about opposition candidates' motives to run in the first place.

Opposition parties in non- OECD countries are rarely institutionalized, meaning that they frequently split, and reform (Randall and Svasand 2002; Rakner and van de Walle 2009) so that the party system is highly volatile (Mozzafar and Scarrit 2005; Lindberg 2007). The latter finding is particularly problematic as parties can only be held accountable when they persist over time. Oftentimes, opposition parties only manage to attract a small number of supporters that is more focused on the party leader than a specific policy platform (Randall and Svasand 2002). In addition, the lack of party members who continuously work on attracting supporters also slows down the process to spread over the country and develop into a national rather than a local party.

It has been argued that candidates care about access to government rents and parliamentary immunity (Lust-Okar 2006; Blaydes 2010). Apart from benefiting from these resources themselves, politicians can share these state resources with their supporters. Many studies note that voters are motivated by the provision of resources rather than ideological position (Lust-Okar 2006; Greene 2007; Blaydes 2010). For instance, "in the 1997 Jordanian elections, losing candidates were consistently more likely to take policy positions than the winning candidates" (Lust-Okar 2006: 461). Thus, opposition parties have to offer higher payments than the ruling party, in order to be elected. On the other hand, it might also be a case of reversed causality. Assuming that opposition politicians have very limited influence on policy-making, voters only seek patronage as opposition candidates cannot deliver policies anyway.

While both views on multiparty legislatures have merit, as arenas of joined policy-making, and to distribute rents, there is need for both the development of theoretical arguments and empirical testing on these subjects. In Chapter 4 I argue that both single-party and multiparty legislatures serve as a

bargaining arena for different factions of the ruling coalition. However, the opposition still benefits from the legalization of opposition parties when multiparty elections lead to the reformation of a governing coalition. According to my argument competitive elections are installed to include new actors into government. Once a new ruling coalition has formed, the former opposition can use its position in parliament to influence policy-making.

2.2 Staying in Power

In order to maintain a dominant party system and prevent the opposition from winning elections, ruling parties aim at choosing electoral rules that are likely to advance this goal. From democratic political systems we know that there is a strong connection between the electoral system and the party system (Duverger 1951). Ruling parties could purposefully design the electoral system in a way that it is to their benefit (Colomer 2005; Benoit 2004). Yet, it is not straightforward to identify a voting system that is likely to produce outcomes that are in the interest of the authoritarian incumbents.

Based on the work of Duverger (1951), we know that plurality voting systems give incentives for two party systems, while proportional representation systems make it easier for new parties to enter the legislature. Ruling parties have an interest in achieving both of these goals at the same time. While a plurality system makes it easier for the incumbent party to gain a larger percentage of legislative seats than the percentage of votes they received, it is reluctant to face a strong opposition party. This would not be the case in a proportional representation system, where smaller parties are more likely to gain parliamentary representation. Thus, the opposition has fewer incentives to unite behind a single party which is also in the interest of the ruling party. As a result, researchers (Diaz-Cayeros and Magaloni 2001; Magaloni 2006) suggested a mixed electoral system that disproportionately rewards existing majorities and fosters opposition party fragmentation.

Empirical studies have questioned the relationship between electoral rules and the number of parties in authoritarian regimes altogether. Several researchers note that both plurality and proportional representation systems lead to an overrepresentation of the ruling party in the legislature, so that the electoral system is not a predictor of the number of parties (Bogaards 2000; Mylonas and Roussias 2008). The strength of the presidency and coordination problems caused by ethnic fragmentation have been identified as potential obstacles for the formation and coordination of opposition parties (Mozaffar and Scarrit 2005). Others (Posusney 2002; Lust-Okar 2006) remark that even in nondemocratic regimes, electoral systems affect the number of parties and their internal dynamics.

Apart from the voting system, the ruling party can also manipulate other electoral rules to secure its dominant position. For example, this can be done by redistricting, so that more parliamentary seats are granted to districts that are dominated by traditional supporters of the ruling party (Lust-Okar 2006). Multiple vote systems can be used to discourage the formation of opposing majorities. Rather than supporting a single party, voters are likely to split their vote between candidates from different parties who might be able to supply them with resources in the future (Posusney 2002).

If electoral rules did not matter, we would also expect opposition candidates and voters to be ignorant about them. Yet, case study evidence suggests that opposition forces are acutely aware of any changes to the electoral rules that are likely to increase the pro-regime bias (Lust-Okar 2006). When the playing field is perceived to be very unlevel, opposition parties frequently choose to boycott elections or challenge the results (Lindberg 2006). This is a difficult decision for opposition party leaders as a boycott can lead to splintering (Posusney 2002). Especially career oriented politicians are likely to leave the party and enter the election as independents to use their chance to become a member of parliament.

2.2.1 Internal Effects of Multiparty Competition

The ruling party's ability to win elections does not only depend on its faculty to manipulate the rules of the game to its favor, it also has to ensure that its own members do not defect. The introduction of competitive elections opens up the possibility to form or join an opposition party in case membership in the ruling party is not associated with sufficient benefits. Thus, multiparty elections create an exit option for members of the ruling party and increase their bargaining power towards the party's leadership (Magaloni 2008).

Within the party, resources are partly distributed according to members' capability of attracting votes. Members of the ruling party who are able to maximize the party's vote share in their district are promoted (Blaydes 2010). They are allowed to extract state rents and potentially enjoy parliamentary immunity. Taking advantage of Russia's mixed electoral system, Kunicova and Remington (2008) even find evidence for a mandate divide. Duma members who had been elected in single-member districts were more responsive to electoral pressure and more likely to dissent than legislators from party lists. However, dominant parties become vulnerable and more likely to split when members' economic benefits decline (Greene 2010; Reuter and Gandhi 2011) and opposition parties are able to provide similar levels of resources for their supporters.

2.2.2 *Winning Elections*

Apart from the purposeful design of electoral rules, the ruling party can also adopt policies to attract more supporters. Similar to democracies, incumbents can choose a policy platform at the center and thus split the opposition to the left and right (Riker 1976). Parties that are further away from each other are less likely to coordinate and form a coherent platform against the ruling party. However, each party bloc will find it difficult to win elections on its own. These dynamics have also been reported for competitive authoritarian regimes like Mexico, where the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) took a central position on the economic policy dimension (Greene 2007). However, case study evidence on African regimes suggests the opposite, noticing a lack of programmatic politics altogether (Albrecht 2005; Rakner and van de Walle 2009).

In closed, or hegemonic authoritarian regimes, there is little need to develop links between the political elite and voters. The introduction of multiparty elections creates incentives to mobilize supporters in order to win elections. Incumbents can make policy-offers that improve voters' welfare, e.g. the provision of public or private goods. Public goods are available to the whole population. On the other hand, private and club goods can be targeted at more narrowly defined social groups. According to Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2003), authoritarian regimes with a small winning coalition rely on private goods, while democracies require the backing of a large support coalition and thus resort to public goods provision. Empirical studies support this argument and find a positive relationship between democracy and the provision of public goods (Lake and Baum 2001; Brown and Hunter 2004; Avelino et al. 2005; Stasavage 2005; Ross 2006; Ansell 2008; Blaydes and Kayser 2011).

Authoritarian regimes with multiparty elections are particularly interesting for studying the question whether competition increases accountability and thus leads to policy-making that improves voters' welfare. However, research on competitive authoritarian regimes' strategy to attract voters and deal with competition is still very limited and contradicting. Comparative work by Blaydes and Kayser (2011) suggests that hybrid regimes are not different from democracies in the provision of daily calories for their population. Focusing on authoritarian Mexico, Hecock (2006) finds that incumbents increase education spending in Mexican states where they expect strong electoral challenges. These findings indicate that electoral competition leads to increases in the provision of public goods.

A lot of case study evidence notes that the linkage between citizens and politicians in competitive authoritarian regimes can be largely described as clientelistic, where politicians mostly rely on private goods. In this view parliamentary elections are a competition over access to state resources, not

policy making (Lust-Okar 2006). Parliamentarians have access to jobs within the civil service and provide these to their constituents. An advantage of private goods is that they can be delivered contingent on electoral support and be withheld in case a voter does not choose the respective party that gave out the goods (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007a). The notion of multiparty authoritarian elections being clientelistic contradicts the argument that increased levels of competition lead to an expansion in the provision of public goods. This makes the topic of electoral influences on public policies in competitive authoritarian regimes particularly interesting to study and is examined in more detail in Chapter 5.

Governments can also try to manipulate economic policies right before elections in order to pull voters to their side (Nordhaus 1975). Empirical analyses on individual countries (Magaloni 2006 on Mexico; Pepinsky 2007 on Malaysia; Blaydes 2010: 77- 99 on Egypt) show that competitive authoritarian governments systematically lower taxes or increase spending before elections. Block et al. (2003) compare the effect of non-competitive and multiparty elections on manipulation of the economy in African countries but only find evidence for a political business cycle in the latter case. At the same time, they suggest that elections might be accompanied by greater accountability leading to healthier macroeconomic policies than in authoritarian regimes without competitive elections. A different explanation for business cycles is put forward by Hyde and O'Mahoney (2010) who note that pre-electoral fiscal manipulation is more likely when international elections monitors make it difficult to manipulate elections outcomes.

2.2.3 *Democratization by Election?*

Both researchers and practitioners are interested in multiparty elections' influence on democratization. Democratization by election is considered a viable mode of transition, as electoral competition does not only influence the distribution of power under the current regime type, but can also lead to an alternation in power (Schedler 2002b; Lindberg 2009). This view is based on the assumption that the opposition always strives for more democratic forms of government and would not continue to rule in the same fashion as the previous incumbents.

The empirical evidence suggests that competitive authoritarian regimes are not more likely to fail than other authoritarian regime types (Brownlee 2009). Yet, if they do, a transition to democracy is more frequent than to authoritarianism (Lindberg 2006; Hadenius and Teorell 2007; Brownlee 2009). However, researchers disagree about the underlying causal path. In line with economic theories of democratization from all regime types (Haggard and

Kaufman 1997; Przeworski et al. 2000), many researchers emphasize access to economic resources as a precondition for the durability of competitive authoritarian regimes. In this perspective politicians and citizens are only willing to support the regime when their material benefits are sufficiently high (Magaloni 2006; Greene 2007; Greene 2010; Reuter and Gandhi 2011). An economic crisis is thought to necessitate the shrinkage of the public sector and thus destabilizes the regime.

Competitive authoritarian regimes' particular feature, multiparty elections, has also been considered to cause political liberalization. According to Brownlee (2009), multiparty elections simply open up an additional avenue of challenging the incumbents, and thus facilitate democratization. Lindberg (2006) considers learning processes by voters, the media, and non-governmental organizations who press for more civil liberties over time. Alternatively, opposition parties are suggested to mobilize voters along a new issue dimension, e.g. democratization (Riker 1983; Greene 2007) and in turn are more likely to win elections.

Even though elections seem to play an important role in the democratization process from competitive authoritarian regimes, there are still a lot of open questions when it comes to their effect on policy output and outcome. Only if we get a better understanding about political dynamics more generally in these regimes, we will be able to understand if and under which conditions opposition parties are likely to win such elections. That is why more research on party politics, electoral competition, and policy making is necessary. By focusing on the effect of electoral competition on the provision of public and targeted public goods (Chapter 5), I make a contribution to this set of questions.

2.3 Multiparty Authoritarian Regimes in the International System

The effect of holding competitive elections in authoritarian regimes cannot only be studied on the domestic level, but also internationally. Foreign policy analyses reveal that multiparty authoritarian regimes behave differently from other authoritarian subtypes (Carey 2007; Fjelde 2010; Kinne and Marinov 2013). Again, the particular role and influence of multiparty elections is debated. According to Fjelde (2010), multiparty autocracies are more likely to experience a domestic conflict than single-party regimes, as they have fewer possibilities to coopt the opposition. These findings stand in contrast to research done by Carey (2007) who argues that rebels use elections as an opportunity to challenge the incumbent and thus are less motivated to start an insurgency. The author shows that multiparty elections in Africa reduce the risk of violent dissent. In addition, Carey finds no difference between one-party systems and regimes where multiple candidates compete for office.

A commonly held view in the international relations literature is that democracies are better than autocracies at signaling their policy intentions (Schultz 2001; Slantchev 2006). The argument here is that democratic elections create audience costs which do not arise in non-democracies. However, recent studies note that there are non-electoral mechanisms creating audience costs, and authoritarian subtypes differ in their ability to generate such costs (Weeks 2008). In addition, even limited competitive authoritarian elections have been shown to be a relevant source of credible signaling (Kinne and Marinov 2013). This evidence demonstrates that it is not only worthwhile to distinguish between authoritarian regime types, but also emphasizes the role of multiparty elections.

Apart from competitive authoritarian's own foreign policy, it is also possible to study the behavior of other states towards them. The question is if international actors also differentiate between authoritarian regime types in other realms than international conflict. In order to achieve their own goals (commercial, geopolitical, etc.), or to promote democracy, foreign governments try to influence the domestic politics of authoritarian regimes. For these purposes, they resort to sanctions, foreign aid, or election monitoring.

Whether international pressure is effective, depends on different factors. According to Levitsky and Way (2005, 2010), it is necessary to consider a country's leverage and linkage with an authoritarian regime. Leverage is determined by states' raw size, military and economic strength. Linkage, on the other hand, comes from economic, geopolitical, and social ties, but also from the existence of transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs). More importantly, the effectiveness of the diverse instruments is also dependent on a target country's regime type. For instance, Escriba-Folch and Wright (2010) find that economic sanctions only destabilize authoritarian rulers in personalist regimes, or monarchies, but have little effect in military and single-party regimes.

A large literature is concerned with the effectiveness of foreign aid. Researchers with an interest in aid's influence on economic development report that the success of aid-sponsored projects depends on the quality of institutions (Dollar and Levine 2005; Wright 2010). When it comes to promoting democratic governance, aid also seems to be more useful for more democratic regime types. Researchers note that aid props up very authoritarian governments (Kono and Montinola 2009; Wright 2009; Licht 2010), while dictators with large support coalitions are more likely to respond to aid with democratization.

Selection bias is a potential problem for all studies that try to measure the effectiveness of a specific foreign policy tool. Democratic governments choose to sanction, or offer foreign assistance to a specific country because it is vulnerable to foreign pressure, has a certain set of institutions or chooses policies that another country deems important to encourage or penalize. Even though this mechanism is well established, our knowledge how much international

actors consider these country characteristics, particularly the effect of holding multiparty elections in authoritarian regimes, is still rather limited.

As economists already became aware of developing countries' sound policies and good governance to be a prerequisite for development, especially scholars with an interest in the effect of foreign assistance have studied the allocation of aid. Yet, the literature is divided on the question if donors consider a country's political institutions when distributing aid, as they are also motivated by non-development related goals. While some research finds that aid allocation is not driven by recipient institutions (Zanger 2000; Easterly and Pfutze 2008), others state that it depends on the donor country (Neumayer 2003; Dollar and Levin 2006; Nunnenkamp and Thiele 2006; Hoeffler and Outram 2011). Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2009a) find a U-shaped relationship between coalition size and the amount of aid given. They explain that more aid flows to larger-coalition regimes because concessions are more costly to buy there.

A drawback of all of these studies is that they employ a large variety of indicators for institutional quality (the size of the winning coalition, Polity, or property rights). None of them directly measures differences in the level of institutionalized competition, e.g. closed, hegemonic, and competitive authoritarian that have been established in the literature (Diamond 2002). This is particularly surprising as the majority of countries which international actors try to influence with the help of military interventions, sanctions, and aid are authoritarian regimes. These are the regimes where diplomacy and cooperation through international organizations fail. In Chapter 6, I add to this literature by studying donor governments' behavior towards competitive authoritarian regimes. This also allows me to answer the question if international actors simply differentiate between regimes where competition is more or less institutionalized, or if they also consider the distribution of power within competitive authoritarian regimes. In extreme cases this could mean that opposition parties are legalized but not represented in parliament, or that the opposition is so strong that the ruling party might lose elections.

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