

# Consolidation of Power in Authoritarian Regimes

Evgeniya Mitrokhina

Higher School of Economics

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# Regime typologies

**Political regime** is the form of government or the set of rules, cultural or social norms, etc. that regulate the operation of a government or institution and its interactions with society.

## CONTINUOUS

## CATEGORICAL

	<i>Dichotomous</i>	<i>Polychotomous</i>
Freedom House	Alvarez et al. (1996)	Levitsky & Way (2010)
Polity IV	Boix et al. (2012)	Geddes et al. (2013)
	Cheibub et al. (2010)	Hadenius & Teorell (2010)

# Regime typologies

<b>LIBERAL DEMOCRACY</b>	<b>ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY</b>
Robert Dahl <i>"A Preface to Democratic Theory" (1956)</i>	Joseph Schumpeter <i>"Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy" (1943)</i>
1) elected officials	1) The chief executive must be chosen by popular election or by a body that was itself popularly elected
2) free and fair elections	2) The legislature must be popularly elected
3) inclusive suffrage	3) There must be more than one party competing in the elections
4) the right to run for office	4) An alternation in power under electoral rules identical to the ones that brought the incumbent to office must have taken place
5) freedom of expression	
6) alternative information	
7) associational autonomy	

# Institutions in autocracies

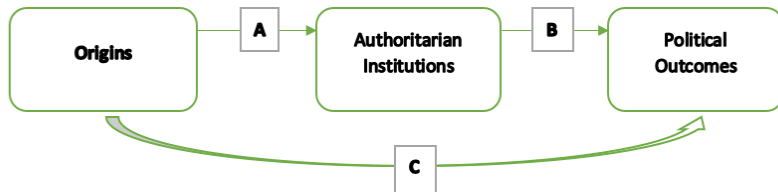
Motivation to create institutions is the same as in democracies, the crucial difference dictators are less constrained in how they can pursue their goals (broader range of means)

*Political institutions in authoritarian regimes are important tools through which elites structure political order*

Two views on institution:

- 1 Institutions undermine elites hold on power
- 2 Elites purposefully create institutions to consolidate their hold on political power

# Institutions in autocracies



**Figure:** Pepinsky, T. (2014). The institutional turn in comparative authoritarianism. *British Journal of Political Science*, 44(3), 631-653.

Analysing institutions as equilibria we should understand that they are endogenous. Theories have to be able to explain not only the equilibrium consequences of institutions but also WHY (in light of those consequences) political actors have an incentive to comply with institutions in the first place.

## Institutions in autocracies

Authoritarian regimes do many things besides grow/stagnate and survive/collapse:

- they decide to murder their subjects or not;
- to favor certain ethnic groups or not;
- to integrate with the global economy in various ways;
- to mobilize, ignore, or reeducate their citizens;
- to respond to domestic challenges with repression, concessions, or both;
- to insulate their bureaucracies from executive interference or not;
- to delegate various ruling functions to security forces, mercenaries or criminal syndicates, or subnational political units;
- to structure economies in various ways that might support their rule.
- regime and leadership dynamics (regime persistence and breakdown, the nature and frequency of leadership changes, ruling-coalition formation)
- authoritarian institutions (parties, legislatures, elections)
- policies (repression, censorship, cooptation)

- Escrib-Folch (2013) finds that irregular exits are higher for personalist regimes.
- Dictators constrained by institutions:
  - allocate more resources to public goods (Gandhi, 2003)
  - are less likely to start wars compared to regimes where there are no institutional bounds (Geddes et al., 2014)
  - promote economic growth (Gandhi, 2008; Wright, 2008)
  - show lower corruption rates and higher effectiveness of foreign aid (Wright, 2008)

## Main problems of authoritarian politics:

- ① Conflict between population and the elite group  
(Gandhi and Przeworski, 2006; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2001)
- ② Problem of power-sharing between the leader and the elite  
(Magaloni, 2008; Svobik, 2009; Boix & Svobik, 2013; Svobik, 2009; Svobik, 2012)

⇒ leader and the elite are **both necessary and sufficient** for the regime survival (Svobik, 2009)



# More cases of power change in autocracies are connected with coup d'etat

**TABLE 1 Nonconstitutional Exits of Leaders in Dictatorships<sup>a</sup>**

Nature of Exit <sup>b</sup>	Frequency (Percentage)			
	At Least One Day in Office		At Least One Year in Office	
<i>Coup d'état</i>	205	(67.66)	151	(63.71)
<i>Popular uprising</i>	32	(10.56)	30	(12.66)
<i>Transition to democracy</i>	30	(9.90)	30	(12.66)
<i>Assassination</i>	20	(6.60)	17	(7.17)
<i>Foreign intervention</i>	16	(5.28)	9	(3.80)
<i>Total</i>	303	(100.00)	237	(100.00)

Source: Svobik and Akcinaroglu (2006).

<sup>a</sup>Exits of interim leaders and leader exits during civil wars are not included.

<sup>b</sup>Unambiguous determination of the nature of exit was not possible for 13 leaders.

from Svobik, M. W. (2009). Power sharing and leadership dynamics in authoritarian regimes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 53(2), 477-494

Based on the conflict of interest the ability of elites to threaten the dictator affects their and the leader's power and ability to influence decision-making process

**Institutions** are created not only for the regime domination, but to limit leaders' personal power

*Legislatures under dictatorship by method of selection*

Region	Dictatorial legislatures			
	None	Appointed	Elected	Total
Sub-Saharan Africa	356	76	1002	1434
Middle East/North Africa	275	65	379	719
Asia	146	101	619	866
Latin America/Caribbean	183	2	375	560
Eastern Europe/ex-USSR	1	0	447	448
Western Europe	7	30	53	90
Total	968	274	2875	4117

Listed in country-year units of observation

Gandhi, J. (2008). Dictatorial institutions and their impact on economic growth. *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 49(1), 3-30.

- Post-tenure fate of a leader is connected with his opportunistic behavior. Leaders expecting peaceful exit from power tend to steal less and be more accountable to the elite (Escrib-Folch, 2007)
- Dictators provide seats in legislatures to members of the ruling coalition in exchange for not rebelling. The seats are valuable because they allow the ruling coalition influence policy decisions (Gandhi and Przeworski, 2006)
- Institutions provide successful power-sharing when it otherwise would not be possible because it precludes unnecessary rebellions and provide more stability (Boix and Svoboda 2013)

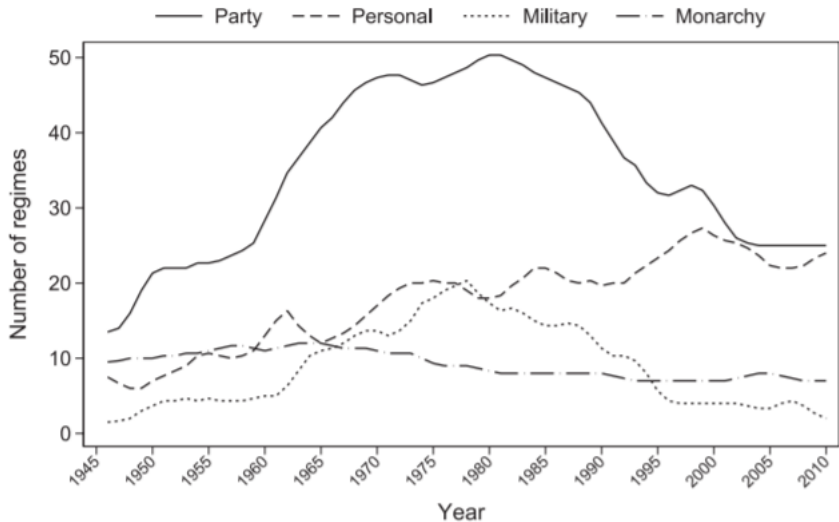


Figure: from Geddes, B., Wright, J., & Frantz, E. (2014). Autocratic breakdown and regime transitions: A new data set. *Perspectives on Politics*, 12(2), 313-331

## Research question

- Observing individual cases it can be seen that after coming to power individuals become stronger with years despite the existing institutions (e.g. Russia, Turkey, Philippines)
- There is a general tendency of personal power accumulation in authoritarian regimes despite existing political institutions

*What determines the transition to personalism?*

## Cases

- Slater, D. (2003). Iron cage in an iron fist: authoritarian institutions and the personalization of power in Malaysia. *Comparative Politics*, 81-101.

*How can an aspiring autocrat personalize power in the face of powerful preexisting institutions?*

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's (since the mid 1980s)

Mechanisms he used:

- 1 Packing  
Appointment of personal loyalists to top party and government posts while purging rivals, thereby converting institutional constraints into institutional weapons.
- 2 Rigging  
Strategic modification of institutional rules and procedures to forestall competition for leadership positions.
- 3 Circumventing  
Creation of alternative policy channels to divert influence and resources away from rivals in mainline government departments and toward loyalists in packed institutions.

# Cases

- Khisa, M. (2016). Managing elite defection in Museveni's Uganda: the 2016 elections in perspective. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 10(4), 729-748.

Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni (since 1986)

*How the leader managed the elite defection?*

- ① The use of patronage resources  
To maintain a relatively stable and inclusive ruling elite coalition while simultaneously making the cost of defection very high
- ② Coercion  
Tight and personalised control of the military, police and security apparatus (demonstration effect against defection).
- ③ Informal socio-political networks  
To ameliorate defection and mitigate its impact during the many occasions when it has happened

## Personalism

"One man rule" (Ezrow and Frantz, 2011)

The concept of personalism is closely related to sultanism (extreme form of neopatrimonialism) (Chehabi and Linz, 1998)

GWF (2014) define **personalist regimes as autocracies in which discretion over policy and personnel are concentrated in the hands of one man, military or civilian**. In the real world, that discretion is often maintained by balancing the interests of multiple competing groups within the dictators support coalition; the military, or the faction of it that supports the dictator, is one among the groups balanced.

Personalism may present in each regime to some degree (Hadenius and Teorell, 2007):

- leader duration as a proxy for the level of personalism (Wahman, Teorell and Hadenius, 2013)
- latent time-variant characteristic ( Gandhi and Sumner, 2016; GWF, 2017)

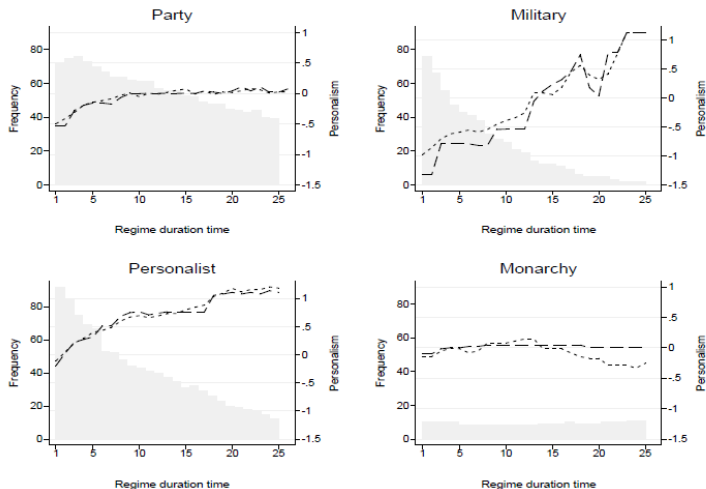
# Latent personalism

- 1 Does access to high office depend on personal loyalty to the regime leader?
- 2 Did the regime leader create a new support political party after seizing power?
- 3 Does the regime leader control appointments to the party executive committee?
- 4 Is the party executive committee absent or simply a rubber stamp for the regime leader's decisions?
- 5 Does the regime leader personally control the security apparatus?
- 6 Does the regime leader promote officers loyal to himself or from his ethnic, tribal, regional, or partisan group, or are there widespread forced retirement of officers from other groups?
- 7 Does the regime leader create paramilitary forces, a president's guard, or new security force loyal to himself?
- 8 Does the regime leader imprison/kill officers from groups other than his own without a reasonably fair trial?



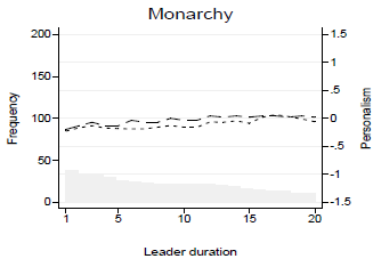
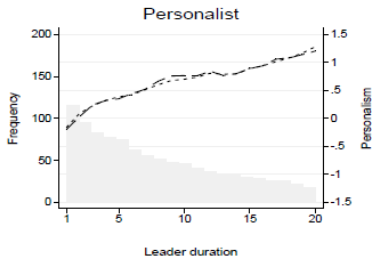
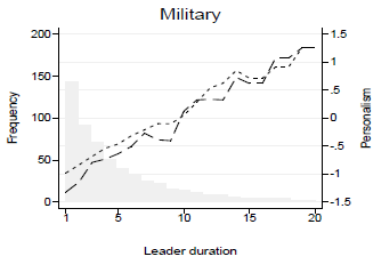
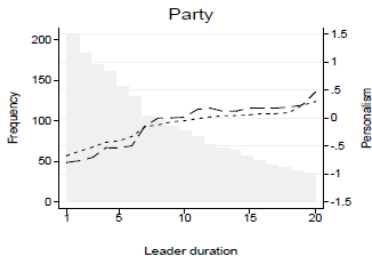
# Latent personalism over regime duration

(a) Regimes



# Latent personalism over leaders' tenure

(b) Leaders

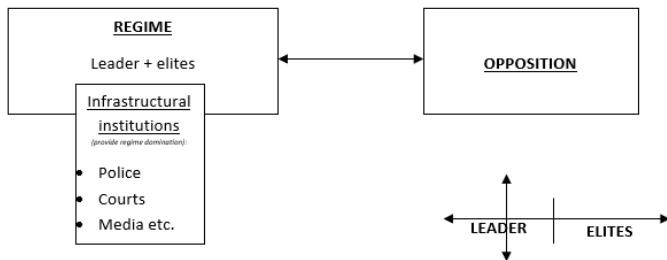


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# Latent personalism over leaders' tenure



## Autonomy

The way of power legitimation:

- 1) Elections
- 2) Other (coup/ appointment) – or separate them as well

## Strength

Leader's type:

- 1) Strong
- 2) Weak

## Capacity

to sway infrastructural institutions:

- 1) Yes
- 2) No

### Institutional strength

*to provide regime survival*

(Slater: “Infrastructural power” (to implement))

### Personal power

*Reflecting  
leaders’ strength*

(Slater: “despotic  
power” (to  
decide))

	STRONG	WEAK
STRONG	<p>The leader may become stronger without weakening the ruling coalition swaying the institutions that are supposed to protect the regime from the opposition.</p> <p>Malaysia (1998-present) China (Mao), Kenya (Moi), Stalin (Russia), Putin (Russia), Erdogan</p>	<p>The infrastructural institutions to save the regime domination (legitimation) are not developed or are closely related to the elite (for example the army). The leader stays in power till he has an agreement with the elite.</p> <p>Indonesia (Suharto), Philippines (Marcos), Pakistan (Musharraf), Nigeria (Abacha)</p>
WEAK	<p>The leader is subordinated to the elite group and is a part of the infrastructural power to save the regime.</p> <p>Malaysia (1957-98), Singapore, Vietnam, China (1976-present?)</p>	<p>Considering the dynamic of the regime, in the absence of institutions strong members of the ruling coalition are eliminated.</p> <p>Burma, Thailand (pre-1988), South Korea (pre-1987), Brazil (pre-1985)</p>

Because of the threat for the leader within the coalition and constraints on his power the leader may gain the power **outside of the coalition** using the institutions that serve to save the regime

The institutions created for the regime domination may be used as  
*the tool for the leaders strength*

The leader's possible behavior is to create or transform already existing *organisations that will obey only his orders* and may be used to eliminate potential rebellions within the elite

Slater (2003) calls these institutions infrastructural power embodied in regime organisations (the police, media, judiciary, bureaucracy), the main purpose of which is to provide stable basis for domination of the regime

# Questions

What factors can push to personalism if any?

- Recourses: access and how they get
- Investment state capacity
- Institutions structures of elites
- Controlling the elite elite configuration

Is personalism a choice or a desperate measure for a leader? Maybe personalism is an end option for a dictator

At which point leaders choose with whom to cooperate elites vs. masses (elites easier, collations with people are shaky)

Is it possible to talk about autonomy? Elite configuration (cohesion) when leaders come to power.