

Party Institutionalization in Authoritarian Regimes: Theory and Evidence

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Abstract

How does party institutionalization occur in dictatorships, and why do we observe variation in levels of ruling party institutionalization? I argue that party institutionalization can be thought of as instances where dictators voluntarily take actions that limit their personal authority, such as establishing succession procedures or naming a second in command. While other kinds of handouts, such as giving away top ministerial positions and influential portfolios, can help dictators co-opt party elites, this kind of co-optation is temporary and tends to fluctuate over time, and therefore does not constitute a form of party institutionalization. I present a formal model showing that dictators who are very strong or very weak at the start of the regime are likely to pursue limited or no party institutionalization. Employing original data on portfolio allocations and constraints on executive power in African one-party regimes from 1960-2005, I show that once succession procedures have been established, they are less likely to be revoked. This is in contrast to ministerial portfolio allocations, which are given and taken away by dictators much more frequently.

1 Introduction

A central finding from research on authoritarian regimes is that strong ruling parties are a significant source of stability in dictatorships. Numerous scholars have argued that one-party regimes tend to last longer (Huntington 1968, Geddes 2003, Magaloni 2008) and experience higher levels of economic growth (Keefer 2008, Gandhi 2008, Gehlbach and Keefer 2008, Wright 2008) compared with regimes that rely primarily on the charisma of a particular leader or military dictatorships. Similarly, regimes with strong parties fall prey to fewer coups (Cox 2008, Geddes 2008, Svobik 2012) and are better able to withstand popular unrest, even during periods of economic crises (Brownlee 2007, Levitsky and Way 2012). In sum, the general consensus is that one-party regimes tend to be more stable than military or personalist dictatorships.

However, conditions under which ruling parties develop into strong institutions once the regime comes into power remains under-theorized. Existing research on autocratic rule has focused almost exclusively on regime outcomes, rather than explaining variation in authoritarian party development. As a result, this literature often overlooks the fact that authoritarian parties exhibit substantial differences in levels of organizational strength and institutionalization.

Not all ruling parties necessarily help promote regime stability. In fact, unlike the often-cited examples of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) in Mexico or the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in China, many autocratic parties are quite weak and incapable of providing benefits of stable rule. The *Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution* (MPR) created by Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire, for instance, lacked institutionalized rules and served only to amplify the ruler's arbitrary power during his 28 year tenure. "The party was imposed upon the people, and it came into being to prevent political competition rather than to organize it" (Young and Turner 1985, pp. 201). The MPR manifesto declared that the party "will adhere to the political policy of the Chief of the State and not the reverse" (Jackson and Rosberg 1982, pp. 173). Unsurprisingly, the MPR disintegrated upon Mobutu's death. Contrast this with the Kenyan African National Union (KANU), the party that ruled Kenya for nearly 40 years after independence, which successfully underwent a constitutionally mandated leadership transition upon the death of the first president. Unlike the MPR, KANU is described as a "confederation of arenas where political bosses of rival factions collided and colluded in their perennial struggle for the power and

patronage of party, governmental, and parastatal offices” (Jackson and Rosberg 1982, pp.103). As Levitsky and Way (2012) fittingly conclude: “the key to durable authoritarianism is not the existence of ruling parties *per se*, but rather the character of those parties” (870).

This paper addresses the important puzzle of why we often see such drastic differences in the organizational character of ruling parties by answering the following three questions. (1) Why do some autocrats institutionalize their parties after already coming into power? (2) Under what conditions do ruling parties become institutionalized? (3) How does autocratic party institutionalization actually occur on the ground?

I argue that parties become institutionalized when autocrats see them as key to alleviating commitment problems in elite bargaining. Party institutionalization can be defined as instances where an autocrat voluntarily takes actions to limit his personal authority such as setting term limits, designating a successor, or creating procedures for party officials to move up the hierarchy. In autocratic regimes, this concept can also be thought of as the process by which power is depersonalized and the ruling party gains authority and autonomy as an organization, independent of any particular leader. When a dictator institutionalizes a party, he takes actions that voluntarily binds his hands and constrains his ability to take arbitrary future actions.

Recent studies of dictatorship have characterized two fundamental sources of conflict that all dictators face: threats from the masses and challenges from other ruling elites (Svolik 2012). Such “threats from above” often result from intra-elite competition over resources and power. In order to manage this competition, autocrats must constantly bargain with regime elites and offer concessions in order to maintain support and deter elite rebellion (Blaydes 2011, Geddes 2005). However, a number of recent studies have highlighted that dictators often cannot commit to not “not abusing their ‘loyal friends’” (Magaloni 2008, pp. 715). Hence, “power-sharing in dictatorships is complicated by a fundamental commitment problem: no independence authority can guarantee that the spoils of joint rule will be divided as the dictator and his or her allies agreed” (Boix and Svolik 2013, pp. 300).

Building on these ideas, this paper demonstrates conditions under which a dictator chooses to institutionalize the ruling party in order to facilitate elite bargaining. I present a formal model in which party institutionalization alleviates commitment

problems in elite bargaining by installing *permanence* in the bargaining process which essentially allows the dictator to make *future* promises. Using the model, I am able to demonstrate why higher levels of party institutionalization supports peaceful bargaining over longer periods of time. Yet, the model also reveals that taking actions to limit their future personal authority can be very costly for autocrats – hence not all leaders will choose to rule through an institutionalized party.

In the model, the autocrat is able to make future promises by choosing a baseline minimal division of benefits that the other party elites will receive with certainty in each peaceful round of the infinitely repeating game. Then, in each proceeding round, the incumbent can make an offer that is even greater than the baseline offer originally promised, but is constrained to share *at least* the amount that he committed himself to giving away at the start of the game. We can think of this baseline offer as an endogenously chosen floor for offers made in each round of bargaining. Party institutionalization can be thought of as guaranteed shares of benefits that are offered to party elites. Remaining offers that are higher than the minimal division can be thought of as *patronage*, since these offers fluctuate from round to round and depend on the distribution of power between the dictator and party elites.

I find that autocrats that are very strong relative to other elites do not tend to institutionalize, primarily because weak party members do not need very large offers to be satisfied. Bargaining under such conditions can be satisfied without any kind of party institutionalization because the autocrat does not need to make any future promises. Conversely, if the autocrat is very weak relative to other elites, then party institutionalization offers only limited protection against coup threats. Because of this, weak leaders are likely to pursue strategies of limited institutionalization or no institutionalization at all. Finally, autocrats who fall in a middle range of the distribution of power are the most likely to pursue a strategy of party institutionalization because they stand to gain the most from doing so.

After addressing why and when party institutionalization is likely to occur, I turn to the question of *how* autocratic party institutionalization occurs on the ground by presenting empirical evidence of the kinds of promises dictators can credibly commit to. Although I discuss conditions under which an autocrat would voluntarily institutionalize the party, the model assumes that he actually has the ability to do so. The empirical section of this paper is dedicated to providing evidence supporting

this assumption. I also highlight the types of promises that tend to be more credible and provide mechanisms to explain why autocrats have an easier time making certain types of commitments.

I present original data of constraints on executive power and ministerial cabinet portfolio allocation in Sub-Saharan African one-party regimes from 1960-2005. I collected data on different forms of distribution, both material and non-material, notably the creation of a vice president or prime minister position and the creation of a constitutional succession procedure within the party. I also collected data on the allocation of influential ministerial portfolios, such as defense, finance, or foreign affairs. Post-independence Africa is an ideal context in which to examine party institutionalization because single-party regimes dominated politics in the majority of newly independent states following European decolonization. In these regimes, the dictator and ruling party controlled virtually all aspects of the executive, the state, and the constitution. All cabinet ministerial positions were filled by party elites, and state constitutions were frequently drafted by the party central committee and included provisions about the authority of the ruling party over all decision making. The party in such regimes benefitted the most from the depersonalization of executive authority because institutionalization shifted the ruling party's stature above the autocrat's.

Using data on benefits that autocrats tend to have discretionary control over – such as the distribution of important ministerial portfolios (minister of defense, foreign affairs, economic affairs) or influential positions, I examined what kinds of benefits seemed to have more staying power once they were distributed. Although leaders often hand out various types of benefits to elite allies in order to maintain their support, my goal was to determine what kinds of concession are very difficult to retract once they are distributed or implemented. I show that the establishment of a vice-president or prime minister post and the creation of succession procedures in these party regimes resemble institutionalization because these measures, once implemented, were rarely overturned. The distribution of ministerial portfolios, on the other hand, was frequently retracted, as dictators would hand out portfolios then take them back the following year. Thus while the distribution of ministerial portfolios can help dictators co-opt party elites, these kinds of offers are temporary forms of patronage and do not constitute a kind of party institutionalization.

This paper makes three important contributions. First, the formal model offers

a framework that clarifies the tradeoffs inherent in the dictator's choice between offering higher levels of party institutionalization versus patronage to elites. Party institutionalization allows the autocrat to make future promises, thus alleviating conflict caused by commitment problems and deters elites from staging coups (benefit). However, party institutionalization is costly for the dictator because he must offer a larger portion of benefits to party elites that the dictator would have otherwise consumed himself (cost). Patronage, on the other hand, allows the dictator to make the cheapest possible offer to party elites in each round by holding them down to their reservation value (benefit). However, because the dictator is limited to the maximum amount of benefits he can offer in each period, commitment problems can cause conflict because the dictator cannot commit to future offers (cost). Because of these tradeoffs, only certain types of rulers will pursue the strategy of ruling through an institutionalized party.

An advantage of this model is that it highlights the idea that party institutionalization is *costly* for a dictator because it involves actions where he voluntarily binds his hands and constrains his ability to take future actions. Committing to offer at least the guaranteed share of spoils in good *or* bad times is also costly for the dictator in a distributional sense – by implementing party institutionalization, the dictator is committing himself to consuming less in each round. Although institutionalized parties can provide autocrats with the advantage of more stable rule, transforming the organization into a vehicle through which these benefits can accrue requires that the autocrat permanently relinquish certain decision-making authority.

A second main contribution serves to unify arguments about credible commitments and institutionalization in the existing literature on authoritarian regimes. A key distinction this paper makes is that party building is effectively a commitment device used in non-democracies and patronage is essentially uncommitted payments. While scholars have acknowledged that parties can act as vehicles for enforcing promises made in elite bargaining, I highlight how *institutionalizing* the party is what allows autocrats to make credible commitments to other party elites by depersonalizing the way in which benefits are distributed. Conversely, while other studies have made the general observation that institutionalization offers an effective enforcement mechanism for making inter-temporal promises, this paper offers a distinct application of institutionalization to autocratic party building (Boix and Svobik 2013).

My argument is closely related to existing studies claiming that parties can help dictators solve commitment problems in elite bargaining. A number of scholars have argued that a key purpose of ruling parties is that they help dictators manage intra-elite conflict, and in doing so, minimize coup threats. Magaloni (2008), for instance, posits that parties, such as the PRI in Mexico, provide a way for dictators to promise not to abuse their “loyal friends” by “[delegating] control to the access-to-power positions and the state privileges to a parallel political organization, such as a political party” (716). In his study of the NDP in Egypt and the UMNO in Malaysia, Brownlee (2007) notes that ruling parties alleviate elite conflict by “[creating] a structure for collective agenda setting, lengthening the time horizon on which leaders weigh gains and losses. Elites can envision their party bringing them medium- and long-term gains despite immediate setbacks; moreover, their overriding priority is to maintain a place in the decision-making process” (12). Yet, these studies have generally left the question of *when* autocrats make such commitments through the party unanswered. This study is dedicated to filling in these gaps.

Third, I present evidence of how party institutionalization actually occurs on the ground and offer insights on why some kinds of promises are easier for autocrats to commit to than others. This is, to my knowledge, the first paper that addresses this question and offers systematic empirical evidence of authoritarian party institutionalization.

The rest of the paper proceeds as follows. The next section reviews existing theories of party building and institutionalization in autocracies. Section 3 builds a conceptual framework for party institutionalization and discusses the costs and benefits an autocrat faces when deciding the extent to which he should institutionalize the ruling party. Section 4 contains a discussion of the formal model and a characterization of the equilibria. Section 5 presents empirical evidence of various forms of party institutionalization and provides an analysis of what sorts of promises autocrats are more able to commit to and why.

2 Existing Theories of Authoritarian Parties

This paper builds on recent theories of authoritarian stability, which posit that parties are central to regime stability because they fulfill a number of important

functions. Boix and Svolik (2013), Geddes (1999), and Magaloni (2008) argue that parties help dictators solve commitment and monitoring problems within the ruling coalition. Brownlee (2007) shows that parties help mediate elite conflict by creating a structure for collective agenda setting. Gandhi (2008) and Gandhi and Przeworski (2007) posit that parties and legislatures help co-opt opposition groups and reward supporters by providing a forum in which rents and policy concessions can be distributed. Geddes (2008) argues that parties help reduce dictators' dependence on their militaries. Finally, Svolik (2012) identifies several organizational features of strong ruling parties that help facilitate co-optation of the masses and party elites, including hierarchical assignment of services and benefits, political control over appointment, and selective recruitment and repression.

These studies suggest that – *once established* – ruling parties are a key source of regime stability. However, we know considerably less about how parties become established organizations. Magaloni (2008), in fact, notes: “A key question that emerges from this discussion is why not all dictators create political parties if they play such powerful roles in minimizing their risk of being overthrown by members of the ruling coalition. My account does not address the question of origins – how successful and credible political parties get established in the first place” (725).

To address this question of origins, a number of scholars have argued that the conditions under which ruling parties are formed have an effect on party strength. Smith (2005) argues that the types of fiscal and political constraints parties face at their inception generate long-lasting trajectories. “Elites that face organized opposition in the form of highly institutionalized social groups such as mass-mobilizing parties or dedicated foreign or colonial armies and that have little or no access to rent sources are likely to respond to these constraints by building party institutions to mobilize their own constituencies” (422). Similarly, Panebianco (1988) argues that parties that originate as opposition parties tend to develop stronger organizational structures because they lack easy access to public resources during periods of consolidation. Other theories posit that parties that come into power by prevailing in civil conflict are easily transformed into strong regimes. Levitsky and Way (2012), echoing Huntington (1968), argue that armed conflict, usually taking the form of revolutionary struggles or independence wars, provide ruling parties with a crucial source of cohesion once they take control of the regime. Conversely, Slater (2010) posits that it is more often counter-insurgency movements – rather than revolution-

ary parties – that provide a strong basis for regime durability because revolutionary regimes often fall apart when the external threat departs.

These studies highlight the important finding that parties that originate as opposition groups or mass-based revolutionary movements come into power with distinct organizational advantages. Yet, case studies of revolutionary parties and independence movements demonstrate that organizations that are good at fighting and succeed at coming to power are not necessarily equipped to govern and cannot stay in power without further institutionalization. In his discussion of independence parties in Africa, Welch (1970) asserts: “The tactics and organization of parties appropriate for anti-colonial activities were not necessarily appropriate for the tasks of government after independence. Failure in the structural adaptation of political parties made them considerably less effective instruments in a self-governing African state” (313). Zheng (1997) makes a similar case for the Communist Party of China: “a revolutionary party is not necessarily conducive to state-building, for state-building is not the same as waging revolution. The Communist Party’s winning the civil war does not necessarily mean it will be successful in rebuilding the state” (15-16).

Consequently, I focus on how and when parties are transformed into organizations that help sustain autocratic rule *after* the dictator has taken power. This paper is closely related to Boix and Svobik (2013) work, which also notes the central dilemma facing authoritarian incumbents is how to facilitate power-sharing among ruling elites. They argue that dictators will choose to establish political institutions that reveal information to other elites if there is a credible threat of rebellion. Focusing specifically on autocratic parties, I extend this logic by specifying the conditions under which dictators invest in party institutions in order to credibly commit to joint rule.

3 Party Institutionalization in Autocracies

Although scholars of authoritarian politics commonly point to the importance of strong ruling parties, how party institutionalization should be conceptualized and operationalized remains surprisingly vague. Huntington (1965) defines party institutionalization as the “process by which parties become established and acquire value and stability” (394). Levitsky (1998) adds a second dimension of “behavioral rou-

tinization” to this concept, noting that “[i]nstitutionalization is a process by which actors’ expectations are stabilized around rules and practices. . . . The entrenchment of ‘rules of the game’ tend to narrow actors’ behavioral options by raising the social, psychic, or material costs of breaking those rules” (80). Drawing from these ideas, I conceptualize party institutionalization in autocracies as organizational permanence. An institutionalized party should have the ability to endure as an organization, independent of any particular leader and autonomous of the state bureaucracy. Because authoritarian parties are often at risk of being utilized by the dictator as a personal vehicle for acquiring power, institutionalized parties are those with entrenched procedures and permanent structures that limit the ability of a dictator to make arbitrary decisions. As Panebianco (1988) notes, “Institutionalization entails a ‘routinization of charisma,’ a transfer of authority from the leader to the party, and very few charismatic parties survive this transfer” (53).

I argue that ruling party institutionalization can be defined as instances where an autocrat voluntarily take actions to limit his personal authority by committing to sharing at least some minimal threshold of benefits with other party elites.¹ Concrete examples of this include setting term limits or creating procedures for party officials to move up the hierarchy. Party institutionalization is distinct from patronage, which I argue are *uncommitted payments* that can fluctuate over time. This distinction between party institutionalization versus patronage is similar to Svobik’s comparison between party-based co-optation and transfer-based co-optation. He argues: “Co-optation via authoritarian parties differs from co-optation via transfers – which frequently takes the form of cash, price controls, subsidies, and redistribution – in a key political aspect: Co-optation via authoritarian parties breed an enduring rather than momentary stake in the regime’s survival. . . . what makes co-optation via a party so effective is not the distribution of benefits by itself – those could be easily distributed without a party. Rather, it is the conditioning of those benefits on prior costly service” (2012: 164).

However, party institutionalization is costly for dictators in two ways. First, I argue that party institutionalization is very difficult to reverse. Because actions such as the creation of a constitutional amendment specifying succession procedures

¹Benefits can be material or non-material. Examples of material benefits include direct monetary transfers or important ministerial posts with large discretionary budgets. Examples of non-material benefits include the creation of procedures or positions that allocate power or influence.

carves out benefits for other party elites in a very observable way, party institutionalization creates the expectation that such benefits will be available to the party in the future. I assume in my model, therefore, that party institutionalization is de facto irreversible. Trying to reverse such an action, though not technically impossible, can be extremely costly for the incumbent because it may cause party elites to defect, or worse – rebel against the regime. For instance, many scholars note that one of the main precipitating events of the Mexican Revolution in 1910 occurred when autocrat Porfirio Diaz made a public announcement that he was going to retire and allow other candidates to run for president. He reneged on this promise and ran for reelection against a popular politician, Francisco Madero. When it became clear that Diaz had rigged the elections, other elites banded with Madero and agreed to take part in the rebellion against Diaz (Dell 2012, Knight 1986).

Second, party institutionalization is extremely costly in a distributional sense because the autocrat is committing to sharing a set division of benefits with other elites as long as he stays in power. By voluntarily binding his hands, the leader constrains his own ability to make arbitrary decisions about how much to share with other elites in the future. This is true even if the distribution of power shifts, and other elites become less powerful. The next section of the paper formalizes the logic of party institutionalization in a game-theoretic model.

4 The Model

Consider an infinite horizon setting where an incumbent dictator and an elite party member want to divide a continuous flow of (non-material and material) benefits. Since this is a model focusing on party institutionalization, I assume that some kind of party already exists. The key decision is whether the dictator wants to institutionalize the party, and if so, how much to institutionalize it. The central tradeoff of this model is the following: the more benefits the dictator permanently carves out for the party, the less likely other party elites will try to depose him. Therefore, institutionalizing the party helps the leader stay in power. However, the more the dictator carves out for the party, the less of the benefits he can consume himself. In other words, if the dictator institutionalizes the party, he gets to keep a smaller piece of a bigger pie for more periods. If the dictator does not institutionalize

the party, he gets to keep more of the pie for fewer rounds because the party elite will try to depose him more frequently.

My argument builds on existing models of authoritarian institutions that weigh the tradeoffs dictators face when considering whether to establish a power-sharing regime with other elites. Dal Bo and Powell (2009) and Boix and Svobik (2013) present models that articulate conditions under which a dictator would bring regime allies into a fully institutionalized power-sharing agreement by perfectly revealing asymmetric information. Besley and Persson (2010) model institutional strength as an exogenous parameter that represents the extent to which the dictator has to make an equitable offer of benefits to the group that is not in power. The model I present here focuses on endogenizing the dictator's decision to voluntarily undertake a degree of party institutionalization in order to solve commitment problems in bargaining.

4.1 Setup

Formally, imagine a two player, infinite horizon stochastic game in which a Dictator (D) and a Party Elite (P) have to divide a flow of benefits or a flow of "pies" normalized to size 1. In every period, D makes an offer x_t to P, who can accept the division or reject it. If P accepts D's offer in that period, then D and P receive payoffs of $1 - x_t$ and x_t , respectively, and the game continues onto the next period.

If P rejects D's offer, then P attempts to stage a coup. The coup attempt succeeds in that period with probability p_t , which varies stochastically in every round. Think of p_t as the distribution of power in round t and assume that p_t is uniformly distributed on $[0, \bar{p}]$ such that $\bar{p} < 1$ so the mean p_m is strictly less than $1/2$. If P chooses to stage a coup, then P wins the coup attempt with probability p_t and D stays in power with probability $1 - p_t$. Fighting ends the game, and the winner receives all future flow of benefits. However, if fighting occurs, then neither player gets to consume in the fighting period, thus staging a coup is costly. Both players have a common discount factor denoted as β . Commitment problems arise when D cannot pay P enough to not want to stage in a coup in the current round because D is constrained by the fact that he cannot credibly commit to honor future promises to P.

D can decide at the very beginning of the game, whether he wants to institutionalize the party. What institutionalization means in this model is that D will

choose an amount $g \in [0, 1]$ that he will permanently give away in every period – once D chooses g , he cannot “undo” this distribution in the future – even in periods where P is very weak and D would not have otherwise given him a piece of the pie. In other words, in this game, the dictator endogenously chooses a floor for the offers, and we can think of g as the fraction of the pie that the dictator permanently relinquishes control over. If D sets $g = 0$, we can interpret this as the party not being institutionalized at all.

The game proceeds as following.

1. D selects $g \in [0, 1]$. g will be given to P in every peaceful period, regardless of what p_t is in that period.
2. Nature picks p_t , and this is observed by both players.
3. D makes an offer $x_t \in [g, 1]$ to P.
4. P chooses to accept or reject the offer.
 - (a) If P accepts, then P receives x_t and D receives $1 - x_t$. The game starts over from step 2. Note that D only picks g once at the beginning of the game, and this is implemented forever. Also note that g is not subscripted because it is constant in every period.
 - (b) If P rejects and attempts to stage a coup, P succeeds with probability p_t and D foils the coup attempt with probability $1 - p_t$. The winner receives 1 forever and the loser gets nothing forever.

4.2 Party Institutionalization

This section describes the main results of the model, focusing on the key intuitions. I restrict my attention to pure strategy Markov perfect equilibria. First we show that if \bar{p} is sufficiently low, then D will never institutionalize. In other words, if P is generally very weak, then commitment problems will never occur and D does not need to choose a positive amount of costly giveaways.

To see this, assume that there exists some x_t that can always solve P’s participation constraint such that P is indifferent between staging a coup in this period and accepting x_t in this period. Importantly, x_t can always meet this constraint

when $g = 0$. We also know that in a peaceful equilibrium, P's continuation value in the current period is the value of fighting in the next period because D will always make P indifferent between fighting and accepting an offer. In order for D to buy P off at the cheapest possible price, the following indifference condition must hold:

$$EU_P(\text{fight}) = EU_P(\text{accept})$$

$$\frac{p_t \beta}{1 - \beta} = x_t + \frac{p_m \beta^2}{1 - \beta}$$

Letting $V = \frac{1}{1-\beta}$ and rearranging terms, we see that D must make the following offer x_t^* to induce a peaceful equilibrium where P is willing to accept D's offer rather than fight in this period.

$$x_t^* = [p_t - p_m \beta] \beta V \tag{1}$$

The most D can offer P is the entire pie in that round. Therefore if $[p_t - p_m \beta] \beta V \leq 1$ always holds true, then peaceful bargaining can always be sustained without institutionalization. This will be true when \bar{p} is sufficiently low - specifically when $\bar{p} \leq \bar{p}_L \equiv \frac{2}{2\beta V - \beta^2 V} = \frac{2(1-\beta)}{\beta(2-\beta)}$.²

Equation (1) highlights why commitment problems can occur in this bargaining game. If $[p_t - p_m \beta] \beta V$ is *greater* than 1 given the current draw of p_t , then D will never be able to make an offer that will deter P from staging a coup. This is because D can only offer a maximum amount of 1 in any individual period, and he cannot credibly commit to honoring future promises to P. To see why, assume that in the next period, Nature draws a low enough p_t , such that equation (1) can be satisfied with an offer less than or equal to 1. D knows that in that if that is the case, P will not want to stage a coup, even if D had reneges on a "future promise" he had made in the previous round.

Proposition 4.1 (No Institutionalization) *When $\bar{p} \leq \bar{p}_L$ a commitment problem never exists and peaceful bargaining can be maintained without any party insti-*

²To see this, first note that $p_m = \frac{\bar{p}}{2}$. We need to find some threshold for \bar{p} such that the inequality above always holds. If the inequality is true for the draw of p_t that is the largest distance between p_t and p_m , then the inequality will be true for any draw of p_t . The obvious contenders are 0 or \bar{p} . Because p_m is weighed by β which is always less than 0, when $p_t = \bar{p}$, the difference on the LHS of the inequality is largest.

tutionalization.

Now assume that $\bar{p} > \bar{p}_L$ and commitment problems will occur in the absence of party institutionalization.

We note that we can have three possible cases depending on the draw of p_t and that D really only has to meet P's indifference condition in the middle case. In the first case, since g is already set, P will always accept, and in the third case, since the draw of p_t is too high, P will never accept.

To find P's continuation value, we break the distribution of p_t into three cases.

- Define $[0, \tilde{p}]$ as the range over which P will be satisfied with receiving g , and in fact, D is overpaying P. Define \tilde{p} as the exact draw of p_t that leaves P indifferent between receiving g and fighting.
- Define $[\tilde{p}, \hat{p}]$ as the range over which D will need to pay P some $x^*(p_t)$ that exactly fulfills P's participation constraint. Define \hat{p} as the exact draw of p_t that leaves P indifferent between receiving $x = 1$ and fighting. Note that $x^*(p_t)$ some a function of p_t to be determined.
- Define $[\hat{p}, \bar{p}]$ as the range over which P will always reject any offer x and will choose to fight because there is no x that can satisfy P's participation constraint.

$$V_P(p_t) = \begin{cases} g + \beta \int_0^{\tilde{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}}, & \text{if } 0 < p_t \leq \tilde{p} \\ x(p_t) + \beta \int_0^{\tilde{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}}, & \text{if } \tilde{p} < p_t \leq \hat{p} \\ p_t \beta V, & \text{if } \hat{p} < p_t \leq \bar{p} \end{cases}$$

We rewrite the continuation value as an integral.

$$\begin{aligned} \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= \int_0^{\tilde{p}} \left(g + \beta \int_0^{\tilde{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \right) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \\ &+ \int_{\tilde{p}}^{\hat{p}} \left(x(p_t) + \beta \int_0^{\tilde{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \right) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \\ &+ \int_{\hat{p}}^{\bar{p}} p_t \beta V \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \end{aligned}$$

Next, we solve for the integrals, keeping in mind that for all the double integrals, the p_t term will disappear in all the inner integrals, allowing us to solve the outer integrals.

$$\begin{aligned} \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= \frac{g\tilde{p}}{\bar{p}} + \frac{\beta\tilde{p}}{\bar{p}} \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \\ &+ \int_{\tilde{p}}^{\hat{p}} x(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} + \frac{\beta(\hat{p} - \tilde{p})}{\bar{p}} \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \\ &+ \int_{\hat{p}}^{\bar{p}} p_t \beta V \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \end{aligned}$$

This simplifies to

$$\left(1 - \frac{\beta\hat{p}}{\bar{p}}\right) \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} = \frac{g\tilde{p}}{\bar{p}} + \int_{\tilde{p}}^{\hat{p}} x(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} + \int_{\hat{p}}^{\bar{p}} p_t \beta V \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \quad (2)$$

Now we also know the following.

When $\tilde{p} < p_t \leq \hat{p}$, the following indifference condition holds:

$$\begin{aligned} x(p_t) + \beta \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= p_t \beta V \\ x(p_t) &= p_t \beta V - \beta \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

When $p_t = \hat{p}$, the following indifference condition holds:

$$\begin{aligned} 1 + \beta \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= \hat{p} \beta V \\ \hat{p} &= \frac{1}{\beta V} + \frac{1}{V} \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

When $p_t = \tilde{p}$, the following indifference condition holds:

$$\begin{aligned} g + \beta \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= \tilde{p} \beta V \\ \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= \tilde{p} V - \frac{g}{\beta} \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

Combining equations (4) and (5) gives us the following:

$$\hat{p} = \frac{1-g}{\beta V} + \tilde{p} \quad (6)$$

We can also write x^* as follows:

$$x^* = p_t \beta V - \beta \tilde{p} V + g \quad (7)$$

We now use these equations to solve for \tilde{p} .

First we plug equation (3) into equation (2) to get the following:

$$\begin{aligned} \left(1 - \frac{\beta \hat{p}}{\bar{p}}\right) \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= \frac{g \tilde{p}}{\bar{p}} + \int_{\hat{p}}^{\bar{p}} \left(p_t \beta V - \beta \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \right) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} + \int_{\hat{p}}^{\bar{p}} p_t \beta V \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \\ \left(1 - \frac{\beta \tilde{p}}{\bar{p}}\right) \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_P(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= \frac{g \tilde{p}}{\bar{p}} + \int_{\hat{p}}^{\bar{p}} p_t \beta V \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

Now we plug equation (5) into (8):

$$\left(1 - \frac{\beta \tilde{p}}{\bar{p}}\right) \left(\bar{p} V - \frac{g}{\beta} \right) = \frac{g \tilde{p}}{\bar{p}} + \frac{\beta V}{2\bar{p}} \left(\bar{p}^2 - \tilde{p}^2 \right)$$

Simplifying further, we get the following set of solutions for \tilde{p} :

$$\tilde{p}^2 \left(\frac{-\beta V}{2\bar{p}} \right) + \tilde{p}(V) + \left(\frac{-2g - \beta^2 V \bar{p}}{2\beta} \right) = 0$$

$$\tilde{p} = \frac{-V \pm \sqrt{V^2 - (4) \left(\frac{-\beta V}{2\bar{p}} \right) \left(\frac{-2g - \beta^2 V \bar{p}}{2\beta} \right)}}{2 \left(\frac{-\beta V}{2\bar{p}} \right)}$$

$$\tilde{p} = \frac{\bar{p}}{\beta} \pm \frac{\bar{p} \sqrt{\frac{\bar{p}(1+\beta) - 2g}{\bar{p}(1-\beta)}}}{\beta(1-\beta)} \quad (9)$$

We can focus our attention exclusively on the negative square root version of the solution for \tilde{p} . To eliminate the positive square root version of the solution, consider the following. The second term on the RHS of the expression for \tilde{p} is always positive.

Now recall that $\beta < 1$, which implies that $\frac{\bar{p}}{\beta} > \bar{p}$. However, it can't be the case that $\tilde{p} > \bar{p}$, so it must be the case that only the negative square root version of the solution makes substantive sense.³

Focusing on the negative square root version of the solution for \tilde{p} , we see that \tilde{p} increases with g . Notice that g appears only once inside the square root. As g increases, the expression inside the square root decreases. Therefore \tilde{p} gets larger as g gets larger.⁴

We also observe that \hat{p} increases as g increases, as $\frac{d\hat{p}}{dg} > 0$. $\frac{d\hat{p}}{dg} = -1 + \frac{V}{\sqrt{V^2 - V(\frac{2g}{\bar{p}} + \beta^2 V)}}$. Simplifying further, we see that $\bar{p} > \frac{-2g}{\beta^2 V}$, which is true for values of $g \in [0, 1/2]$.⁵ Therefore it is the case that \hat{p} also increases as g increases.

Proposition 4.2 (Benefits of Institutionalization) *Since \hat{p} increases as g increases, the probability of fighting decreases as institutionalization increases.*

On an intuitive level, it makes sense that \tilde{p} and \hat{p} get pushed up as g increases. As D makes a larger permanent offer, he needs to supplement his baseline giveaway for fewer draws of p_t . In addition, fighting occurs less in equilibrium because \hat{p} is getting pushed up.

On the other hand, note that the dictator incurs an increasing cost as g increases. Namely, for every offer $x = g$ that is accepted in the $[0, \tilde{p}]$ range, the dictator is overpaying the party elite because we have defined \tilde{p} as the draw of p_t in which setting $x = g$ perfectly satisfies P's participation constraint.

For what range of \bar{p} does an interior solution exist? To determine this, we see that there exists a cutpoint in which \hat{p} hits up against \bar{p} and D no longer gets increasing returns to institutionalization. When $\hat{p} \geq \bar{p}$ an interior solution does *not* exist. To find the threshold level of \bar{p} for which this is true, we plug \hat{p} into the equation $\hat{p} \geq \bar{p}$.

³As long as $\bar{p} \geq \frac{1}{1+\beta}$ the expression inside the square root will be non-negative. To see this, set the expression inside the square root greater than or equal to zero. Simplifying gives us the expression $\bar{p} \geq \frac{2g}{1+\beta}$. Further setting $g = 1/2$ and simplifying the expression to $\bar{p} \geq \frac{1}{1+\beta}$ gives us the general condition for which the expression inside the square root will always be non-negative.

⁴In other words, $\frac{d\tilde{p}}{dg} > 0$, since $\frac{d\tilde{p}}{dg} = \frac{1}{\beta \sqrt{V^2 - V(\frac{2g}{\bar{p}} + \beta^2 V)}}$.

⁵We know that choosing $g \in (1/2, 1]$ is strictly dominated for the Dictator because he would rather be out of power than share more than half of the spoils in every round.

$$\frac{1-g}{\beta V} + \bar{p} \left[\frac{1-\beta - \sqrt{\frac{\bar{p}(1+\beta)-2g}{\bar{p}(1-\beta)}}}{\beta(1-\beta)} \right] \geq \bar{p} \quad (10)$$

First, note that $\frac{1-g}{\beta V}$ is always non-negative because g is bounded by 1. Therefore if the expression inside the square brackets on the LHS is greater or equal to one, then equation (10) will always be true.

We set the expression inside the square brackets greater than or equal to one and solve for \bar{p} .

$$\frac{1-\beta - \sqrt{\frac{\bar{p}(1+\beta)-2g}{\bar{p}(1-\beta)}}}{\beta(1-\beta)} \geq 1$$

$$\bar{p} \geq \bar{p}_H \equiv \frac{2g}{(1+\beta) - (1-\beta)^5} \quad (11)$$

When $\bar{p} \geq \bar{p}_H$ D no longer gets increasing returns to institutionalization.

Proposition 4.3 (Limits to Institutionalization) *As long as $\bar{p} < \bar{p}_H$, an interior solution, g^* exists. When $\bar{p} \geq \bar{p}_H$, D no longer gets increasing returns to institutionalization.*

When $\bar{p} < \bar{p}_H$ we define g^* as the optimal level of institutionalization that solves the dictator's maximization problem:

$$g^* = \arg \max_g \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_D(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \quad (12)$$

In other words, D will choose an optimal level of g in order to maximize the payoffs he expects to get for the rest of the game, given that p_t will fluctuate in every round. Again, we separate out the continuation value into three cases, however \hat{p} and \tilde{p} are set from before.

$$\begin{aligned} \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_D(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} &= \int_0^{\tilde{p}} \left(1-g + \beta \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_D(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \right) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \\ &+ \int_{\tilde{p}}^{\hat{p}} \left(1-x^* + \beta \int_0^{\bar{p}} V_D(p_t) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \right) \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \\ &+ \int_{\hat{p}}^{\bar{p}} (1-p_t) \beta V \frac{dp_t}{\bar{p}} \end{aligned}$$

If it is the case that $\bar{p} \geq \bar{p}_H$, then the most that D will be able to institutionalize is \bar{g} . Define \bar{g} as the solution to D's maximization problem when $\bar{p} = \bar{p}_H$. When $\bar{p} \geq \bar{p}_H$, then D can only pursue limited institutionalization by implementing $g = \bar{g}$, even if \bar{p} may be greater than \bar{p}_H . Alternatively he can pursue no institutionalization at all, and try to grab all the benefits for himself for as many periods as possible.

4.3 Comparative Statics

[incomplete]

5 Party Institutionalization in Africa

How do the concepts of party institutionalization and patronage apply to the data? This section presents original data of constraints on executive power and executive cabinet portfolio allocation in African one-party regimes from 1960-2005. I demonstrate how party institutionalization actually occurs in autocracies and show that constraints on executive power, such as the creation of formal succession procedures, more closely resemble permanent giveaways.

I collected data on different types of benefits and power-sharing posts, notably the creation of vice presidential and prime minister positions, establishment of constitutional amendments specifying leadership succession procedures, and the assignment of influential ministerial posts.⁶ I then established whether the distribution of these various types of benefits had staying power, or whether they were easy to rescind by the dictator. Although offering concessions such as top ministerial positions can help dictators co-opt party elites, I argue that only giveaways that remain more permanent should be considered instances of party institutionalization.

In brief, the data show that the establishment of a second in command and formalization of succession procedures more closely resembles party institutionalization because such procedures constitute constraints on executive power that are rarely reversed. Once the position of a vice president or prime minister has been established, it is very rare for this position to be subsequently eliminated. Furthermore

⁶Following existing scholarship on African politics, I consider the following as top ministerial posts: defense, interior, budget, commerce, finance, treasury, economy, agriculture, state/ foreign Affairs. (See Francois et al. 2012).

if it is specified in the constitution that the vice president or prime minister will succeed the president in the event of his death, such amendments are rarely removed once they are implemented.

Conversely, when autocrats assign cabinet minister posts to party elites, these assignments often fluctuate from year to year. For example, presidents⁷ frequently distribute the defense portfolio to other elites, but subsequently take back the defense portfolio for themselves the following year. In other words, having a ministerial portfolio one year does not guarantee an elite that he will have a ministerial portfolio the following year. The distribution of cabinet positions thus constitutes impermanent transfers from dictators to other elites that can be retracted at any time.

Post-independence Africa is an ideal context in which to examine party institutionalization because single-party regimes dominated politics in the majority of newly independent states following European decolonization. In these regimes, the dictator and ruling party controlled virtually all aspects of the executive, the state, and the constitution. All cabinet ministerial positions were filled by party elites, and state constitutions were frequently drafted by the party central committee and included provisions about the authority of the ruling party over all decision making.⁸ Focusing on these single-party regimes, therefore allows me to evaluate the extent to which African dictators institutionalized ruling parties by collecting data on executive handouts, the establishment of power-sharing positions, and creation of constitutional provisions.

5.1 Party Institutionalization versus Patronage

To establish the difference between party institutionalization and patronage, I collected country-level time-series data from 1960-2005 on 35 countries and their ruling parties in Sub-Saharan Africa, beginning at independence. My sample includes every yearly observation for which an autocratic country in Sub-Saharan Africa had

⁷When discussing my data from Africa, I often refer to the dictator as the “president” because that was the formal title used for leaders of one-party regimes.

⁸The constitution of Angola, for instance, included the following provision: “The MPLA-PT, their legitimate representative, shall be responsible for the political, economic, and social leadership of the nation.” Similarly, the constitution of Guinea-Bissau included the following provision: “The Constitution states that the party that fought against Portuguese colonialism, the PAIGC, shall be the leading political force in society and in the State. The PAIGC shall define the general cases for policy in all fields.”

a ruling party in power.⁹ For every party-year observation, I documented the name of the president,¹⁰ the name of the vice president or prime minister if one had been designated, the number of ministerial portfolios the president held, and whether the president held the defense portfolio – a top ministerial post¹¹. In addition, for every party-year observation I also documented whether the constitution had an amendment outlining a procedure governing presidential succession. By coding yearly data on ruling parties, I am able to observe when parties become more institutionalized according to my various indicators.

First I documented whether the president created a vice-president or prime minister position in the executive. The creation of such a post represents a voluntary shift in power away from the dictator. Designating a second in command, a very visible national position, casts another elite as a potential foci of power and possible successor to the executive. In fact, we can even think of the act of naming a potential successor as the dictator solving the collective action problem for other elites as an alternative leader to rally around. In African party-based regimes, most presidential successors were former vice presidents or prime ministers. Under the Union Nationale Camerounaise in Cameroon, for instance, Paul Biya had been the Prime Minister in 1975 under the presidency of Ahmadou Ahidjo before becoming president himself in 1982. To verify that this was indeed the larger pattern in my data, I coded the previous position of presidential successors, conditional on a successful leadership transition. The data show that 41 percent of presidential successors held the position of vice president or prime minister prior to ascending to the presidency. 18 percent held the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs and 12 percent held the position of Minister of Defense.

Does the creation of a vice-president or prime minister post persist after being

⁹For my coding of autocratic countries, I referred to the Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited dataset (Cheibub et al XXXX), which codes all countries in Sub-Saharan Africa as authoritarian right after independence. The year a country democratizes, it drops out of my sample. For my coding of ruling parties, I referred the Database of Political Institutions dataset (Keefer et al XXXX) and Europa Publications (XXXX).

¹⁰Without exception, the president of the state and president of the ruling party are always the same person in my sample.

¹¹The defense portfolio is an especially important ministerial position because it represents control of military force, which is often used to overturn the dictator. In fact, coups were the most common method of “exiting office” for presidents in Africa during this time period. As such, defense is the most commonly kept portfolio by the president in my sample. Whether the president delegates this position to someone other than himself is thus of critical significance.

implemented, or do presidents often create this position then eliminate it in future years? In other words, can we think of this particular concession as an instance of party institutionalization or patronage? I find that once a second in command has been named, this position is rarely abolished. Out of 35 ruling parties, there were only four instances where a dictator created and filled the position of vice president or prime minister, then subsequently eliminated the post or left it vacant. Conversely, in 27 cases this position was created and kept in place.

I also analyze the creation of constitutional amendments that specify succession procedures for the executive. Albertus and Menaldo (2012) argue that “Constitutions are one of the key mechanisms whereby the political groups and organizations other than the dictator can codify their rights and interests. . . Autocratic constitution[s] allow the members of the launching organization to coordinate to sanction a dictator by serving as a focal point” and “one key function of autocratic constitutions is to consolidate a new distribution of power” (pp. 282, 284). The creation of such constitutional provisions serves as an important channel through which the status of a party elite can be elevated in a visible and public manner. In fact, the transfer of power from Jomo Kenyatta to Daniel arap Moi during the 1978 presidential succession in Kenya illustrates this mechanism. In 1969, an amendment was added to the Kenyan constitution that read: “If a President dies, or a vacancy otherwise occurs during a President’s period of office, the Vice President becomes interim President for up to 90 days while a successor is elected.” Near the end of Kenyatta’s rule, a faction within the ruling KANU party tried to contest the authority of then vice-president Moi on the grounds that he was not a member of the dominant ethnic group. Moi and his supporters were able to effectively dispute their claims by pointing to the policy governing presidential succession outlined in the constitution (Tamarkin 1979, pp.21-26).

To evaluate whether the creation of a constitutional provision tends toward permanence or patronage, I recorded the number of times a succession procedure was removed after being formally introduced in the constitution. There were 15 instances where a constitutional amendment specifying succession procedures was implemented during the tenure of a ruling party. Again, I find that such protocols tend to be difficult to overturn – out of the 15 cases only four were later removed. In fact, the majority of parties in my sample choose not to create formal rules of succession – 20 out of 35 either did not have a constitution or did not have a con-

stitutional amendment detailing who would act as the interim leader in the event of the president's death. This finding is significant in that it suggests that many parties in my sample are not very institutionalized.

I also examining how presidents allocate ministerial cabinet positions and portfolios to party elites. There is a consensus among scholars of African politics that dictators hand out influential portfolios with discretionary budgets as a common form of patronage. Arriola (2009) argues that "all African leaders have used ministerial appointments to the cabinet as an instrument for managing elite relations" (pp.1347). Similarly, Kramon and Posner (2012) note that scholars "emphasize the extent to which presidents keep themselves in power by co-opting other powerful elites...by granting them access to portions of the state in exchange for their loyalty and that of their followers. . . In practice, this is done by allocating cabinet positions, with the understanding that the holders of those cabinet positions will use their ministries to enrich themselves" (pp. 9). However, do these sources of patronage have any staying power?

While for most party-year observations the president did not keep any portfolios for themselves, a number of leaders did retain control over important ministerial positions (such as the ministry of defense, finance, or the interior) and distributed them to other party elites only when necessary. In the most extreme example, President Omar Bongo of the PDG in Gabon kept nine portfolios for himself in 1977, appropriating 31 percent of available ministerial positions.¹² Once a dictator gives away a portfolio to another party elite, can he rescind that portfolio at a later date? In order to evaluate the permanence of cabinet position giveaways, I recorded the number of times the collection of portfolios belonging to the president changed from year to year. I also recorded the number of times the president took back or gave away the Ministry of Defense, the portfolio most commonly kept by executives in my sample.

I find that ministerial portfolio allocation, on average, tends to fluctuate from year to year. In 24 out of 35 cases, the collection of ministerial portfolios held by the president changed at least once during the period in which the party was in power. In only 11 of these cases did the set of presidential portfolios not change at

¹²His portfolios that year included the Ministry of Defense, Information, Post and Telecommunications, Planning, Development and Land Management, National Guidance, Specialized Origins of the Party, Civil Service, Women's Affairs and People's Education.

all. The distribution of Defense portfolios changed hands less, though still relatively frequently. In 18 out of 35 cases, the president took back the defense portfolio at least once after naming a Minister of Defense.

In sum, the data reveals that procedures governing presidential succession or having a dictator name a second in command tend to be reversed much less frequently than the distribution of ministerial cabinet positions. On average, the number of times a constitution amendment specifying succession procedures was removed was 0.2667 per party and the average number of times a vice president or prime minister position was retracted was 0.1935 per party. By contrast, presidential portfolios changed an average of 1.9644 times per party and in particular, the defense portfolio was given away or taken back by presidents an average of 0.6667 times per party.

6 Conclusion

This paper argued that ruling parties in dictatorships exhibit varying levels of institutionalization because autocrats differ in the degree to which they benefit from making concessions to other party elites. Although scholars have noted that dictators often distribute benefits to regime supporters and elites as a means to stay in power, I show how only instances of party institutionalization in which the autocrat voluntarily binds his own hands can alleviate commitment problems in intra-elite bargaining. I presented a model that articulated the tradeoffs leaders face when deciding whether and how much to institutionalized their ruling party. Because offering guaranteed future shares of benefits to other elites is costly for autocrats, only certain types of leaders will pursue the strategy of ruling through a highly institutionalized party.

Employing original data on constraints on executive power and ministerial portfolio allocation in African one-party regimes after independence, I also specified the channels through which party institutionalization occurs. The data revealed that the establishment of a vice president or prime minister position and creation of formal leadership succession procedures resembled permanent giveaways because they were rarely eliminated once implemented. Ministerial portfolio allocations, on the other hand, changed much more frequently from year to year. Therefore while such material handouts can help autocrats co-opt party elites, I contend that the distribution

of ministerial portfolios does not constitute a form of party institutionalization.

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