

This article was downloaded by: [24.99.132.192]

On: 19 March 2013, At: 16:31

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH,
UK



Democratization

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fdem20>

The incentives for pre-electoral coalitions in non-democratic elections

Jennifer Gandhi ^a & Ora John Reuter ^b

^a Department of Political Science, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA

^b Skalny Center, Department of Political Science, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, USA

Version of record first published: 29 Jan 2013.

To cite this article: Jennifer Gandhi & Ora John Reuter (2013): The incentives for pre-electoral coalitions in non-democratic elections, *Democratization*, 20:1, 137-159

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2013.738865>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

The incentives for pre-electoral coalitions in non-democratic elections

Jennifer Gandhi^{a*} and Ora John Reuter^b

^a*Department of Political Science, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA;* ^b*Skalny Center, Department of Political Science, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, USA*

(Received 14 December 2011; final version received 25 June 2012)

What are the incentives of opposition parties to coordinate their electoral strategies to challenge authoritarian incumbents? Are these incentives the same in non-democracies as in democracies? A well-formed literature on party competition in established democracies points to the importance of mostly institutional factors in determining whether parties form pre-electoral coalitions. We find, however, that many of these institutional factors have only modest effects on the formation of opposition coalitions in authoritarian elections. As a consequence, we discuss the ways in which authoritarian elections differ from democratic ones, focusing on how these differences affect the incentives of parties to form coalitions. Analysing original data on party competition in legislative elections in all non-democracies from 1946 to 2006, we find that electoral repression and the stability of parties influence the emergence of pre-electoral coalitions among opposition parties.

Keywords: authoritarianism; elections; opposition; coalitions

Introduction

In recent years, much of the focus in the study of authoritarianism has shifted to the study of regimes that hold multi-party elections.¹ While the phenomenon of multi-party elections under dictatorship is far from new, the twenty-first century authoritarian regime is clearly not the single-party or strong-man dictatorship that dominated popular (and even scholarly) perceptions of dictatorship in the mid-twentieth century. In 2002, 72% of the world's authoritarian regimes had held multi-party elections within the previous five years. These regimes may hold elections in order to enhance their own legitimacy, curry favour with the international community, gather information on supporters and opponents, demonstrate their dominance, or assuage and co-opt domestic opponents.

Whatever the reason they decide to hold elections, authoritarian incumbents do not intend to permit alternation via the ballot box. While sometimes electoral institutions abet the downfall of these regimes, dictators are quite adept at winning the electoral contests that they hold. Most efforts to explain the regime's success at

*Corresponding author. Email: jgandh2@emory.edu

winning elections has focused on their “menu of manipulation”, which may include fraud, repression, patronage distribution, control over information, and general abuse of state resources.² Regime parties can win electoral contests by maintaining high levels of elite coordination that deprive the opposition of strong candidates and leave voters with no choice.³ We know much about why authoritarian incumbents hold elections and the ways in which they dominate these institutions.⁴ What we know far less about is “ordinary” electoral strategies and party competition in non-democratic regimes. When parties do participate in non-democratic elections, to what extent is their behaviour driven by the institutional factors that motivate parties competing in democratic contests? What factors are unique to authoritarian elections and how do they influence the behaviour of opposition parties?

One context in which we can examine these questions is during the pre-electoral period, when parties are deciding whether to form coalitions. Pre-electoral coalitions are agreements in which parties publicly announce that they will not compete independently in an election. Instead they coordinate their campaigns to sponsor joint candidates or lists or to not run against each other in some constituencies. The idea is to coordinate their efforts so that they do not make it easier for the incumbent to win re-election by defeating each other. As such, the formation of pre-electoral coalitions has important effects on electoral outcomes – who wins and whose preferences are represented in the policy-making process and in the distribution of benefits – and has been studied quite extensively in the context of established democracies, where parties represent stable political choices to voters and incumbents respect institutional rules.⁵

Coordination among parties competing in authoritarian elections is interesting for similar, but also additional, reasons. Legislatures in non-democracies are important institutional arenas in which some groups have access to policy-making and to rent-seeking opportunities.⁶ As a result, we should expect that pre-electoral coalitions, to the extent that they shape electoral results, will have important effects on who gets what. The authoritarian context, however, is different from the democratic one in a number of ways. In authoritarian elections, challengers face uncertainty not only over how much support they command among the electorate, but also about the willingness of the incumbent to step down from power. Relatedly, they oppose incumbents who have fewer limits on how far they will go to keep power, and they face the possibility of a regime transition should the incumbent lose.⁷ In addition, having been subject to harassment and co-optation by authoritarian incumbents and having never held power, most opposition parties belong to party systems that are large and highly volatile. During the post-war period, the average effective number of opposition parties competing in authoritarian legislative contests was 5.6, while in democracies was only 3.45.⁸ Faced with a large number of competitors – many of whom are ephemeral – it becomes difficult for parties to find responsible bargaining partners. These differences between authoritarian elections and contests in established democracies potentially create very different incentives for parties to coordinate their electoral strategies.

We examine the extent to which the decision to form pre-electoral coalitions is driven by “normal”, mostly institutional factors (that should affect party behaviour in both democracies and dictatorships) versus factors that are unique to the authoritarian context. This analytical comparison is useful in discovering to what extent democratic institutions, such as elections, have been perverted by authoritarian incumbents and their tactics to win by any means necessary. It also leads us to consider more carefully the exact differences between elections in established democracies versus those in dictatorships. We are able to theorize about these differences and test them with original data, covering legislative elections in all non-democratic regimes from 1946 to 2006.

In the next section, we briefly describe the variation in opposition coordination in authoritarian elections and then review some of the explanations for pre-electoral coalitions in established democracies. We test to see whether some of these factors account for the behaviour of opposition parties in autocracies. Finding very modest effects, we go on to discuss how authoritarian elections differ from democratic ones, pointing to a different set of factors that may influence partisan strategies. In the empirical section, we examine these hypotheses for 413 multi-party legislative elections in dictatorships during most of the post-World War II period. Our analysis shows that the stability of a major opposition party and state-sanctioned harassment of the opposition are both positively related to the formation of coalitions. But economic performance – which serves as a proxy for the likelihood of a regime transition – exerts no systematic effect on opposition coordination.⁹ We conclude with a summary of our findings and some areas of future research.

Authoritarian elections and pre-electoral coalitions

Elections on an uneven playing field are not a new phenomenon. From 1946 to 2000, legislative elections occurred in approximately 15% of all country-years under dictatorship.¹⁰ In any given year, anywhere from 8 to 38% of all dictatorships were holding legislative contests. Figure 1 shows the frequency of legislative elections in which independents only, single party candidates, and multiple party challengers ran. Multiparty dictatorships have always comprised a major proportion of the world’s dictatorships, but in recent years they have come to comprise the vast majority.

The figure shows that after excluding communist dictatorships, the frequency of single party elections has declined precipitously since its highpoint in the early 1980s.¹¹ What appears to have changed over time is the relative frequency of single party plebiscitary contests in comparison to contests in which incumbents face challenges from opposition parties. Clearly, multi-party elections have become the norm under authoritarian regimes (although it is interesting to note that multi-party elections always have occurred with greater frequency), giving rise to the study of “electoral authoritarianism” and “competitive authoritarianism”.¹²

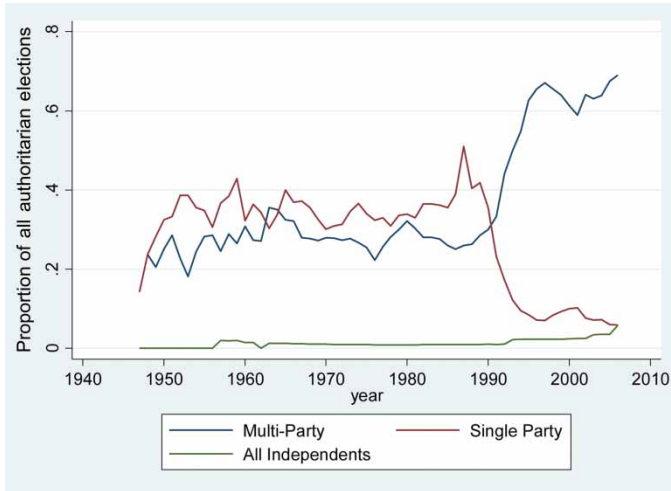


Figure 1. Legislative elections in authoritarian regimes.

When competing in authoritarian elections, opposition parties sometimes form pre-electoral coalitions in which they publicly agree to not compete independently in an election. Instead, they coordinate their campaigns so that parties must do at least one of three things: parties sponsor joint candidates or lists; parties agree not to run against each other in some districts; and in the case of multi-round elections, parties agree to support each other's candidates depending on the results of the previous round.¹³ Oftentimes, in joining a pre-electoral coalition, parties agree to enter government together following the election. Indeed, pre-electoral coalitions usually make a group of parties more likely to form the next government.¹⁴ Yet an agreement to coordinate electoral campaigns need not result in a government coalition.

There is substantial variation in the frequency of pre-electoral coalitions among opposition parties. In 413 authoritarian elections from 1946 to 2006, we identify 65 coalitions among opposition parties in our sample.¹⁵ Coalitions formed in almost 16% of all authoritarian elections. Interestingly, as Figure 2 shows, authoritarian coalitions are a very recent phenomenon. In elections prior to 1970, opposition coalitions formed in less than 5% of all authoritarian elections. By contrast, they formed in over 25% of all elections held in the 2000s.

Opposition coalitions are not confined to any world region; however, as Figure 3 shows, they do seem to be most prevalent in the post-Soviet world, where almost 30% of all authoritarian elections witnessed coalitions. In all other parts of the world, coalitions formed in between 10 and 20% of authoritarian elections. The prevalence of coalitions in the post-Soviet world is likely due to the fact that authoritarian coalitions are more common in the post-Cold war era and this is the only region in our sample where multi-party authoritarianism existed only in the post-Cold war era.

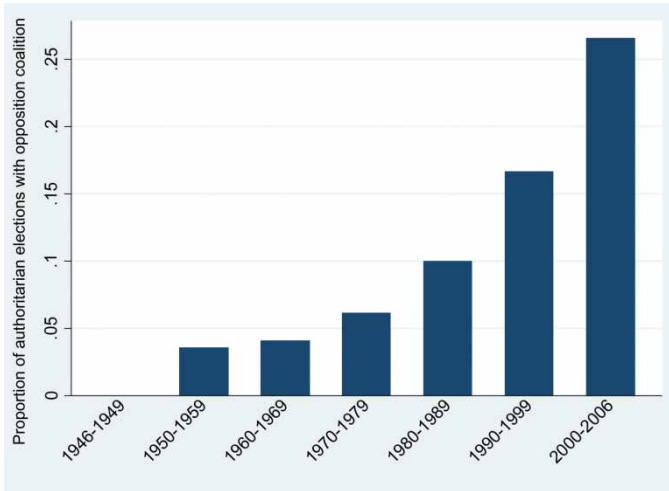


Figure 2. Share of authoritarian elections with opposition coalitions, by decade.

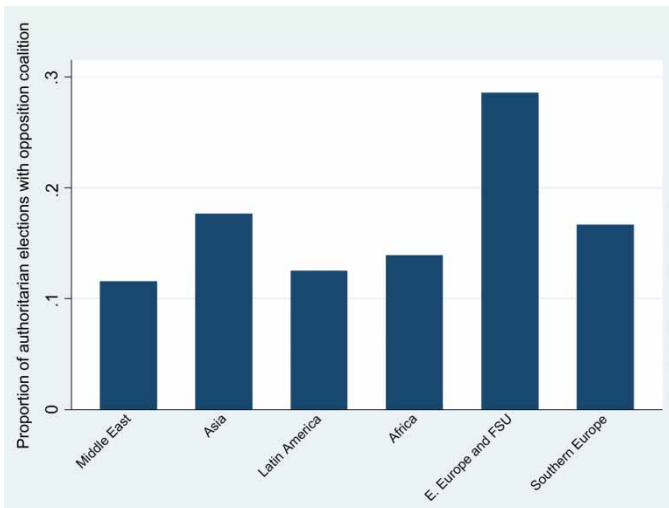


Figure 3. Share of authoritarian elections with opposition coalitions, by world region.

What influences the decision of parties to enter electoral coalitions? Most scholarship on this topic examines the strategies of political parties in advanced industrialized parliamentary democracies, focusing on factors such as electoral rules and social cleavages that are important in influencing other electoral outcomes (for example effective number of parties). We empirically examine some of these

hypotheses to determine how well they explain coalitions in legislative elections in non-democracies.

Electoral rules

Disproportional rules reward large parties in the translation of votes into seats, and penalize small ones. This increases incentives, *ceteris paribus*, to be part of a large party or coalition. As a result, coalitions should be more likely to form in majoritarian systems than under proportional representation.¹⁶ In districts under proportional representation, an electoral threshold that threatens the viability of small parties as well as low district magnitude increases the likelihood of pre-electoral coalitions.¹⁷ *District magnitude* is a continuous variable measuring the average log district magnitude for elections to the lower house.¹⁸

Ideological cleavages

Identifiable ideological differences among parties constitute the norm in established democracies where most major parties have a long history centred around particular social cleavages and more recent smaller parties have developed niche ideological followings in order to break into party systems.¹⁹ Pre-electoral coalitions are less likely to form between parties as the ideological distance between them increases.²⁰ Parties may be concerned that their constituents will not support at the polls their current participation within a coalition or that coalitions with ideologically strange bedfellows may hurt their reputations in future electoral competition.²¹

In non-democracies, parties frequently are not ideologically disciplined organizations formed to win elections, but rather groupings of notables who compete in elections to win personal benefits.²² The major exceptions appear in non-democracies, in which a stable set of multiple parties has competed in several national-level elections, as occurred in Mexico under the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) or in heterogeneous societies in which groups are represented by, for example, ethnic parties. Therefore, we examine whether the frequency of coalition formation is lower in countries with numerous past elections or with high degrees of ethnic fractionalization. *Number of elections* indicates the cumulative number of elections held in the country since 1946 or the year of independence. *Ethnic fractionalization* is a time invariant measure of the degree of ethnic heterogeneity within a country. Because the effects of social cleavages may be conditional on the permissiveness of electoral institutions,²³ we include an interaction between *District magnitude* and *Ethnic fractionalization*.

Asymmetry among parties

If the expected coalition is sufficiently large, coalitions are less likely to form when there is an asymmetry in the electoral strength among potential partners.²⁴ The idea

is that when party strength is asymmetric, larger parties reason that going it alone is a viable electoral strategy. Conversely, smaller parties may be less likely to enter coalitions out of worry that they will be dominated by their larger partners.²⁵ In either case, asymmetries in electoral strength among parties hinder coalition formation. *Party asymmetry* is the ratio of vote (or seat) shares from the previous election between the first and second largest opposition parties. Larger values indicate a greater proportion of votes (or seats) to the largest party, and hence greater asymmetry.

Voter uncertainty

If voters are uncertain about which governing coalitions might form after the election and the ability of certain parties to engage in government formation, then parties may try to signal their abilities and intentions by forming a pre-electoral coalition.²⁶ Voter uncertainty about the identity of a post-electoral coalition should increase with the size of the party system: as the number of possible combinations among parties increases, voters are more uncertain about the end result. As a result, pre-electoral coalitions are a more useful signalling device as the number of parties competing in elections increases. As a count variable indicating the number of opposition parties receiving votes in the election, *Number of opposition parties* measures the size of the party system.

We examine the influence of these factors – which are important for pre-electoral coalitions in established democracies – on the formation of coalitions in non-democracies. The dependent variable is *Opposition coalition*, a dichotomous measure coded 1 if there was a significant pre-electoral coalition among opposition parties, and 0 otherwise. Table 1 shows the results of logistic regressions, in which the standard errors are clustered by country to account for unit-specific heteroskedasticity and autocorrelation. In model 1 we include only those variables that enable us to preserve as much of the sample as possible. We also include an indicator – *Parliamentary system* – which indicates whether the legislature nominally selects the executive. Parties may be more motivated to coordinate their efforts to obtain seats in an assembly that has the power to elect the executive. In model 2 we add the lagged dependent variable as well as *Party asymmetry*. Because *Party asymmetry* is constructed using data from the previous election, a number of founding elections and one-shot elections are omitted, leaving a significantly reduced sample.²⁷

The results of models 1 and 2 show that electoral rules, ethnic cleavages, and legislative election of the executive have no significant impact on the formation of pre-electoral coalitions among opposition parties.²⁸ In results not shown, we also test whether ethnic cleavages and electoral rules have an effect in a linear (non-interactive) model and find that they do not. The positive and significant coefficient on *Number of opposition parties* in model 1 provides some support for the signalling hypothesis: as the size of the party system increases, parties are more likely to form coalitions to serve as a cue for voters. However, this effect disappears once we

Table 1. Institutional incentives to form opposition coalitions.

Model	1	2
Dependent variable	<i>Opposition coalition</i>	<i>Opposition coalition</i>
<i>District magnitude</i>	-0.254 (0.284)	-0.160 (0.224)
<i>Ethnic fractionalization</i>	0.509 (0.925)	0.266 (1.026)
<i>District magnitude*Ethnic fractionalization</i>	0.202 (0.476)	
<i>Number of elections</i>	0.092** (0.042)	0.052 (0.047)
<i>Number of opposition parties</i>	0.116*** (0.037)	0.064 (0.086)
<i>Parliamentary system</i>	0.251 (0.660)	0.229 (0.627)
<i>Party asymmetry</i>		-0.167* (0.096)
<i>Lagged dependent variable</i>		3.183*** (0.732)
Constant	-2.824*** (0.688)	-2.072* (1.086)
Observations	355	146
Countries	94	54
Log-pseudo likelihood	-142.198	-50.233
Wald χ^2	19.51***	31.74***

control for whether parties formed coalitions in the previous election and further diminishes once the sample is reduced by the introduction of *Party asymmetry*.²⁹ Similarly, the *Number of elections* is positive and significant in model 1, indicating that as the frequency of past participation increases, parties are more likely to form a coalition. The lagged dependent variable in model 2, however, reduces the effect of *Number of elections*, leading us to suspect that, rather than capturing the development of ideological stances, *Number of elections* proxies parties' past opportunities to cooperate. *Party asymmetry* does have a slightly negative effect on the likelihood of a pre-electoral coalition. When the largest opposition party dwarfs its competitors, it may simply decide that it does not need to cooperate with other parties in order to maximize its seat share, or smaller parties may be fearful of its domination within a coalition.

The factors that explain electoral coalition formation in established democracies clearly exhibit very modest effects in the authoritarian context. Why is this so? What accounts for the formation of pre-electoral coalitions among opposition parties under autocracy? We address these questions by first systematically considering the differences between democratic and authoritarian elections and how they might influence the incentives of parties to form coalitions. We then assess empirically whether there are factors unique to authoritarianism that better explain party behaviour in this context.

The incentives for coordination in authoritarian elections

Elections in established democracies differ from authoritarian contests in three important ways that should affect the incentives for coalition formation. The first, and most obvious, is the degree to which there is a level playing field. Authoritarian elections involve incumbents who have fewer limits on how far they can go to win elections. With the ability to create a non-level playing field, authoritarian incumbents can keep the opposition divided. In a survey of 35 opposition leaders in Kyrgyzstan, for example, respondents rated the tactics of the authorities as the second most important factor impeding them from cooperating with one another.³⁰

One strategy is the use of coercion or the power of the state to ensure that opposition forces do not coalesce. In Russia, for example, the pro-Kremlin United Russia party survived several close calls at the hands of electoral blocs in regional elections in the 2000s. In response, the Kremlin moved to ban the formation of blocs at both the national and regional level.³¹ Subsequent to these changes, any parties wishing to unite before an election would have to formally register a new party, a process that is subject to significant legal barriers.

Another tool that authoritarian leaders may use to divide the opposition is co-optation. The autocrat may provide patronage, perks, and offices to some members of the opposition while denying these benefits to others.³² In Kyrgyzstan, for example, prominent opposition leader Almaz Atambayev was neutralized as an opposition figure after being named Prime Minister by President Kurmanbek Bakiyev.³³ During his subsequent tenure as Prime Minister, Atambayev worked to quell anti-government protests. Other autocracies take divide-and-rule tactics a step further by creating state-sanctioned opposition parties that can funnel votes away from the opposition, but remain under regime control. In Putin-era Russia, for example, the Kremlin created a centre-left parastatal opposition party, Just Russia, which criticizes the ruling party, but not Putin. Crucially, the party occupies a left-of-centre ideological position, drawing votes away from the Communist party, but always refusing to cooperate with either the Communists or the non-parliamentary opposition at election time. Because incumbents in authoritarian regimes have fewer limits on their ability to use electoral repression and state resources to win elections, they should be able to use these tactics to deter the formation of opposition coalitions.

Another important difference between democratic and authoritarian elections is the degree to which actors are certain that the incumbent will cede power. Elections are a means of “institutionalizing uncertainty” in democracies only because there is certainty that if the incumbent loses the election he or she will step down from power.³⁴ In contrast, in authoritarian elections, there is often great uncertainty about whether the incumbent would be willing to step down in the event of an electoral defeat, in no small part because yielding would involve a regime transition.

The fact that an opposition coalition may result in an electoral victory followed by a regime transition means that the stakes of the election are high not only for the incumbent, but also for opposition parties.³⁵ A pre-electoral coalition for a

legislative election entails an agreement about how parties are going to coordinate their electoral candidates and campaigns. It frequently also involves an agreement about the governing coalition: should the coalition win a legislative majority, who within the coalition will receive which cabinet portfolios. As electoral victory and a regime transition seem more likely, anti-regime parties may be uncertain about how much they can trust their coalition partners to honour any deal *during* or *after* the election. A coalition member may renege on the agreement by sponsoring candidates in constituencies where it had promised to withdraw in favour of a coalition partner. Alternatively, renegeing may happen after the election, such as when a party within a pre-electoral coalition refuses to go into government with coalition members.

Mistrust among opposition parties may also be a product of the authoritarian past. Some parties have a chequered past of cooperating with the regime; others are periodically harassed and banned from competing. Also, because many authoritarian countries have no or little experience of a democratic past, opposition parties often have no experience of effectively governing. The result is that parties are more likely to be ephemeral vehicles for personal ambition, leading to high party system volatility. Without a stable past of interaction and with uncertainty about who their bargaining partners might be in the future, parties may find it difficult to form meaningful reputations and future expectations that are conducive for coalition building.³⁶ So while the literature on established democracies takes for granted that parties' incentives are aligned to honour electoral agreements, in this context, we expect that whether parties can coordinate depends on their stability.

There are several important differences between the electoral environments facing parties in established democracies versus autocracies. In advanced industrialized democracies, parties function as stable political actors with recognizable ideological stances, reputations developed from their actions in past elections, and expectations that they will interact with each other in future elections. In addition, incumbents are constrained in the degree to which they can try to keep political office: they cannot resort to state-sanctioned violence; there are limits to how much of the state's resources they can employ to buy support; and they must step down from power in the event of an electoral defeat. In dictatorships, in contrast, opposition parties face incumbents who are more able and willing to stymie their efforts. In addition, they compete in an electoral environment characterized by much greater uncertainty: about the capabilities and intentions of their bargaining partners, whether electoral defeat of the incumbent is possible, and what electoral victory might bring. In the next section, we assess empirically whether these key features of authoritarian elections have an impact on the decision of opposition parties to form pre-electoral coalitions.

Empirical analysis

To examine these ideas, we use data on the incidence of pre-electoral coalitions among opposition parties in 413 legislative elections under authoritarianism

from 1946 to 2006. To be included in the sample, the legislative election must involve multi-party competition under the auspices of an incumbent who came to power through non-democratic means (for example coup). We include all legislative elections in country-years coded as authoritarian by Cheibub et al.,³⁷ and those elections in country-years coded as democracy when the election resulted in a regime transition. The unit of analysis is the election-year.

Our key dependent variable, *Opposition coalition*, is a dichotomous measure that takes the value 1 if, in a given election-year, any significant opposition party formed a pre-electoral coalition with another opposition party, and 0 otherwise. Opposition parties are identified primarily using the *Political Handbook of the World* series,³⁸ which distinguishes government-supporting parties from the opposition. A coalition may take the form of a public statement of mutual support or a division of electoral districts for each party to contest. Our sources (for example Banks) do not allow us to distinguish between such loose and tight commitments.³⁹ However, they provide enough information that we are able to ensure that the coalition was made *prior* to the legislative election at hand.

We distinguish significant coalitions who have the potential to win significant representation in the legislature from those that do not. Significant coalitions are operationalized by two main criteria: the sum of the seat shares received by all coalition members in the previous legislative election must exceed 5%, and the ratio of the seat share won by the largest party in the coalition to the seat share of the second largest party in the coalition is less than 15.⁴⁰ If data on the distribution of seats is missing for the previous election, we count the coalition as “significant” *unless* all coalition partners in the *current* election received less than 5% of the seats or if the ratio of the largest coalition partner to the second largest is greater than 15 for the current election.⁴¹

We include a number of measures designed to capture the actions that authoritarian incumbents take in order to prevent opposition coordination. *Harassment* is a dichotomous variable coded 1 if the opposition was subject to harassment by the regime, and 0 otherwise. *State resources* – the total income per capita (2007 US dollars) earned from natural resources – indicates the resource rents that incumbents can use to buy off parties and prevent an opposition coalition from forming.

In addition, the institutionalization of the ruling party may determine how much the incumbent relies on co-optation versus repression in dealing with opposition parties. Ruling parties are closed shops for the distribution of spoils and rents. Dominant party equilibria hinge on the fact that party members are privileged over others in the allocation of these spoils. When ruling parties are institutionalized, it is likely that dictators will be restrained from sharing spoils with opposition parties. Hence, we predict that dictators with strong hegemonic parties will be less likely to use co-optation to play divide-and-rule vis-à-vis the opposition, and as a result, opposition coalitions should be more likely. *Regime party share* is the vote (or seat) share of the regime party in the previous election. If the regime party is large and inclusive, the incumbent may have fewer remaining benefits to distribute to those outside of the ruling coalition.

Authoritarian elections are also unique because they may lead to regime transitions and may involve parties that have reasons to mistrust each other. Incumbents are more in danger of losing power when economic performance is poor. So as a measure of the possibility of a transition, following Wahman's empirical study, we include *Economic growth*.⁴²

The degree to which opposition parties trust each other should be a function of how frequently they had had the chance to interact with each other. While *Number of elections* could serve as a proxy for frequency of past interactions, it does not indicate whether the *same* parties are interacting from one election to another. To better capture the stability of parties, we include *Age of largest opposition party*, which is the number of elections that the largest opposition party has competed in. A large opposition party with a stable history of competition indicates that there is at least one significant party that has had the opportunity to build a reputation for cooperative behaviour, and hence a coalition is more likely.

Finally, we include a few additional control variables. The size of the country's *Population* is a measure of the size of the voting population, which may affect parties' decisions to enter the race and create coalitions. We also include *District magnitude*, *Ethnic fractionalization*, and *Parliamentary system*.

Table 2 provides the results of our analysis. Models 1 and 2 are the results of logistic regressions in which the dependent variable is *Opposition coalition*. Model 1 is our base model, while model 2 includes a lagged dependent variable.

The results indicate that some of the factors that differentiate authoritarian elections from those in established democracies influence parties' decisions to form coalitions. The strongest finding of substantive interest is that opposition coalitions are more likely the longer the largest opposition party has been participating in elections. The coefficient on *Age of Largest Opposition Party* is positive and significant. As Figure 4 shows, the substantive effect is also large. The predicted probability of an opposition coalition forming in any given year is 9% if the largest opposition party has never competed in an election before. That probability jumps to 25% if the largest opposition party has competed in seven elections. Opposition coalitions become more likely when parties have opportunities to develop reputations and expectations of future cooperative gains.

The findings on the other authoritarian hypotheses are more mixed. In contrast to Wahman's findings and using a larger sample,⁴³ we do not find that opposition coalitions are more likely when the economy is depressed; the coefficient on *Economic Growth* is not statistically significant. The negative and significant coefficient on *Regime Party Share* indicates that opposition coalitions are less likely when the ruling party receives a large share of the vote, contrary to our expectations. In addition, the positive and significant coefficient on *Harassment* indicates opposition coalitions are *more* likely when repression is deployed against the opposition. This effect is again contrary to expectations that more repression by the regime would deter coalitions from forming.

To check the robustness of our results, we construct and use another measure of significant pre-electoral coalitions as the dependent variable in models 3 and 4.

Table 2. Coalitions as a function of “authoritarian” factors.

Model	1	2	3	4	5
Dependent variable	<i>Opposition coalition</i>	<i>Opposition coalition</i>	<i>Coalition with largest party</i>	<i>Coalition with largest party</i>	<i>Regime coalition</i>
<i>Age of largest opposition party</i>	0.177*** (0.038)	0.126*** (0.048)	0.160*** (0.046)	0.129*** (0.038)	
<i>District magnitude</i>	-0.096 (0.185)	-0.066 (0.168)	-0.142 (0.175)	-0.117 (0.178)	-0.236 (0.289)
<i>Economic growth</i>	-0.006 (0.018)	-0.017 (0.021)	-0.023 (0.027)	-0.029 (0.027)	-0.068*** (0.024)
<i>Ethnic fractionalization</i>	1.143 (0.022)	0.895 (0.795)	1.095 (0.893)	0.973 (0.753)	2.786*** (0.988)
<i>Harassment</i>	0.590* (0.348)	0.894** (0.409)	0.908** (0.361)	1.004** (0.402)	
<i>Number of opposition parties</i>	0.090* (0.053)	0.019 (0.054)	0.048 (0.057)	0.043 (0.049)	
<i>Parliamentary system</i>	0.635 (0.685)	0.396 (0.514)	0.066 (0.563)	-0.054 (0.484)	-0.946 (1.016)
<i>Population</i>	-0.241 (0.157)	-0.236 (0.145)	-0.109 (0.162)	-0.059 (0.150)	
<i>Regime party share</i>	-0.021** (0.009)	-0.024*** (0.009)	-0.005 (0.009)	-0.004 (0.008)	-0.025* (0.014)
<i>State resources</i>	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	
<i>Number of parties</i>					-0.218 (0.156)

(Continued)

Democratization

Table 2. Continued.

Model	1	2	3	4	5
Dependent variable	<i>Opposition coalition</i>	<i>Opposition coalition</i>	<i>Coalition with largest party</i>	<i>Coalition with largest party</i>	<i>Regime coalition</i>
<i>Dominant party age</i>					-0.058** (0.024)
<i>Lagged dependent variable</i>		2.547*** (0.655)		1.711*** (0.526)	3.572*** (1.188)
Constant	1.788 (2.542)	1.978 (2.432)	-1.429 (2.807)	-2.266 (2.647)	-1.385 (1.200)
Observations	316	292	320	295	274
Countries	84	82	84	82	74
Log-pseudo likelihood	-121.52	-100.44	-86.09	-81.36	-35.67
Wald X^2	47.80***	61.82***	29.55***	40.08***	75.93***

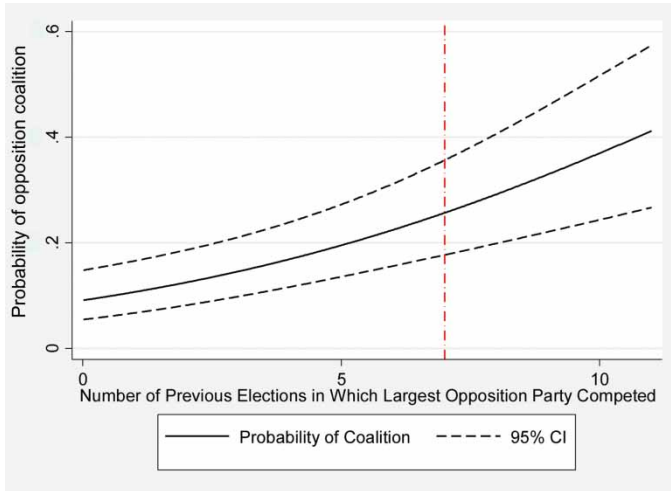


Figure 4. Effect of age of largest opposition party on probability of opposition coalition. Note: 90% of observations fall below the red reference line; 38% of observations have a value of 0 for *Age of largest opposition party*.

Coalition with largest party is a dichotomous variable that takes the value of 1 when the largest opposition party announces the formation of a pre-electoral coalition with other parties, and 0 otherwise. This dependent variable is more appropriate for testing hypotheses related to our key indicator of trust: the number of elections in which the largest opposition party has competed.

Models 3 and 4 show that our findings are generally robust to the use of a different dependent variable. We again find evidence that the stable existence of the largest opposition party makes coalitions more likely. In addition, economic performance – as a proxy for the likelihood of a regime transition – has no effect substantively different from zero, while electoral harassment is positively correlated with coalition formation.

The findings on political transitions and state-sanctioned harassment are suggestive but deserve more investigation to sort out complications due to endogeneity. Van de Walle emphasizes that the likelihood of a political transition induces parties to cooperate,⁴⁴ but Howard and Roessler argue that the direction of causality is reverse: coalitions make liberalization more likely.⁴⁵ Regime change likely has components that are both endogenous and exogenous to the behaviour of opposition parties in authoritarian elections.⁴⁶ Similarly, while conventional wisdom suggests that authoritarian leaders harass the opposition to deter them from uniting it may also be the case that autocrats deploy repression *in response to* opposition coalition formation.

The finding that does not prove to be robust in models 3 and 4 is the one on regime party institutionalization. *Regime party share* has no substantial impact on the formation of an opposition coalition that includes the largest party. The ambiguity surrounding this finding led us to investigate further. In model 5, we

model the formation of regime coalitions; instances in which the regime party forms a pre-electoral coalition with another party. One key independent variable that we examine here is the age of the dominant party in the current election, *Dominant party age*. By dominant party, we mean a regime party that controls more than 49.5% of the seats in the primary legislative body.⁴⁷

We take this variable as a proxy for the institutional strength of the dominant party. Older ruling parties are more likely to have established norms and codified procedures about how spoils are distributed among the party elite.⁴⁸ Such institutional norms constrain the ability of the autocrat to co-opt other parties by sharing the spoils of office. When ruling parties are strong, therefore, it stands to reason that they will be less inclined to share spoils by forming coalitions with other parties. This is exactly what we find. The probability of the ruling party forming a coalition with another party increases *sixfold* from 0.006 when the age of the ruling party is 35 years (the 90th percentile in the data) to 0.036 when the ruling party is one year old (the 25th percentile in the data).⁴⁹ Notably, this finding holds even while controlling for the share of the vote received by the largest regime party. So while we do not find direct evidence that characteristics of the regime party directly influence the formation of opposition coalitions, we do find that incumbents with strong dominant party institutions are less likely to form counter-coalitions to dissipate the strength of opposition forces.

Conclusion

In holding elections, authoritarian incumbents mix elements of democracy and autocracy. They allow for challengers to compete, but frequently enact registration laws or electoral rules that impede their candidacies. Incumbents may allow for some independent media, but the coverage is vastly more advantageous for them. Opposition candidates are free to campaign, but can scarcely compete against incumbents who have state resources to distribute. If these tactics fail, incumbents can resort to fraud or repression. In combining democratic institutions with non-democratic strategies, “regimes may be *both* competitive *and* authoritarian”.⁵⁰

The mix results in an electoral environment that is very different from what parties in established democracies face. Opposition parties in dictatorships face incumbents who are well-positioned to use the coercive apparatus and resources of the state to ensure re-election. In addition, they face greater uncertainty in the form of incumbents who may refuse to step down from power and other parties that may renege on electoral bargains. As a result, the influence of factors such as electoral rules – which are so important for determining partisan strategies in established democracies – may simply be overwhelmed by factors that characterize authoritarian elections.

What we learn, then, is twofold: the implicit conditions under which parties in advanced democracies form coalitions and the factors characteristic of authoritarian elections that are important. The literature on electoral coalitions in established democracies points to the importance of factors such as electoral rules and

ideological cleavages in determining the emergence of coalitions. However, many of the hypothesized effects of institutions rely implicitly on an informational environment and a high degree of party (and party system) stability that exists in democratic, but not in authoritarian, elections. Majoritarian electoral rules, for example, reduce the number of parties in a system only if political parties are sufficiently institutionalized to control the nomination process.⁵¹

Factors characteristic of authoritarian elections, intuitively, play a more important role in determining coalition behaviour. The stable presence of a major opposition party makes coalitions more likely. Its stable existence proves that it is not ephemeral and may have enabled the party time to build a reputation for cooperation. The connection between stability and institutionalization of opposition parties deserves greater investigation, as does the connection between these characteristics of the major opposition party and the party system at large. We also find that there is a positive and significant correlation between regime harassment and pre-electoral coalitions, but we are hesitant in claiming a causal direction. Electoral repression may motivate challengers to form coalitions as a more expedient way of removing the incumbent, but it is perhaps more likely that incumbents view the emergence of a pre-coalition as threatening and, in response, deploy more state-sponsored coercion. We do not find economic growth to have a significant impact on the formation of coalitions. It may be that economic performance is, in fact, a poor proxy for the likelihood of regime transitions, or it may be that the endogenous relationship between coalition formation and regime transitions needs to be modelled more explicitly. Finally, the institutionalization of the regime party does not explain the emergence of opposition coalitions directly, but it does affect the degree to which incumbents mobilize counter-coalitions. The race to form electoral coalitions – between the incumbent and the major opposition parties – is a dynamic that deserves further investigation.

While we have discussed the characteristics that differentiate authoritarian elections from those in established democracies and shown that they make a difference in determining the emergence of opposition coalitions, the question of elections in new democracies remains. Even after democratic transitions, incumbents may use electoral manipulation and violence to stay in power. In addition, party systems can be extremely volatile. As a result, some of the features that are characteristic of authoritarian elections may also have some influence on the electoral strategies of opposition parties in unconsolidated democracies.

Notes

1. Schedler, *Electoral Authoritarianism*; Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*; Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*.
2. Schedler, *Electoral Authoritarianism*.
3. Reuter and Remington, "Dominant Party Regimes".
4. For a review, see Gandhi and Lust-Okar, "Elections under Authoritarianism".
5. Bargsted and Kedar, "Coalition-Targeted Duvergerian Voting"; Carroll and Cox, "Gamson's Law"; Golder, *Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*; Laver and Schofield, *Multiparty Government*.

6. Gandhi, *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*; Wright, "Do Authoritarian Institutions Constrain?"; Malesky and Schuler, "Nodding or Needling". Blaydes, *Elections and Distributive Politics*; Lust-Okar, "Elections under Authoritarianism".
7. Howard and Roessler, "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes".
8. The effective number of parties under authoritarianism is based on data from 1946 to 2006, while the figure for democracies is constructed from data from 1946 to 2000.
9. This finding is in contrast to that found in Wahman, "Offices and Policies".
10. For democracies during this period, the equivalent proportion is roughly 30%.
11. Legislative elections in communist dictatorships (that is Eastern Europe, Soviet Union, Mongolia, North Korea, Vietnam after 1976, Laos from 1975, and Cuba from 1959) are excluded.
12. Schedler, *Electoral Authoritarianism*; Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*.
13. What Benoit terms "stepping back". See Benoit, "Two Step Forward".
14. Martin and Stevenson, "Government Formation"; Debus, "Pre-Electoral Commitments".
15. We discuss the details of our criteria for identifying coalitions in the "Empirical analysis" section.
16. Cox, *Making Votes Count*; Strom, Budge, and Laver, "Constraints on Cabinet Formation".
17. Mixed electoral systems that have larger PR components designed to "compensate" for disproportionality also encourage electoral coalitions. See Ferrara and Herron, "Going it Alone?".
18. Complete descriptions and sources of the variable can be found in the appendix.
19. Kalyvas, *Christian Democracy in Europe*; Przeworski and Sprague, *Paper Stones*; Meguid, *Party Competition*.
20. Golder, *Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*.
21. Gschwend and Hooghe, "Voter Responses to Pre-Electoral Coalitions".
22. Blaydes, *Elections and Distributive Politics*; Lust-Okar, "Elections under Authoritarianism".
23. Duverger, *Political Parties*, Cox, *Making Votes Count*.
24. Golder, *Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*.
25. Gschwend and Hooghe, "Voter Responses to Pre-Electoral Coalitions".
26. Golder, *Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*.
27. We use the results from the previous, rather than the current, election to construct *Party asymmetry* to avoid spurious correlation generated by endogeneity.
28. In this interactive model, it could still be possible that electoral rules and ethnic cleavages have effects at certain values of the respective modifying variable. After examining the conditional coefficients of each of these variables at different values of the modifying variable, we find no evidence that they have an effect at any value of the modifier.
29. In countries in which multi-party elections were preceded by single party rule, the lagged dependent variable is coded as 0 (rather than missing). The results are substantively similar if the lagged dependent variable is coded as missing for the first multi-party election in all countries.
30. Huskey and Isakova, "Evidence from Kyrgyzstan".
31. Kynev, "Politicheskii Partii v Rossiskikh Regionakh"; Golosov, "Elektoralnyi Aftoritarianizm v Rossii".
32. Lust-Okar, *Incumbents, Opponents, and Institutions*.
33. Huskey and Isakova, "Evidence from Kyrgyzstan".
34. Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*.
35. Gandhi, "Presidential Power in Authoritarian Elections".

36. The contrast with established democracies is stark: empirically, the renegeing on pre-electoral agreements is highly unusual (Golder, *Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*). This is likely because parties are stable and interact with each other frequently.
37. Cheibub, Gandhi, and Vreeland, "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited".
38. Banks, Thomas, and William, *Political Handbook of the World*.
39. In this regard, our measure differs from some indicators of pre-electoral coalitions in democracies found in Carroll and Cox, "Gamson's Law", and Golder, *Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*.
40. We identified 23 coalitions that received no seats in the previous election and 13 that received less than 5% between the parties. We also identified seven coalitions where the ratio of the largest coalition partner to the next largest was greater than 15.
41. This rule leads us to exclude four more insignificant coalitions.
42. Wahman, "Offices and Policies".
43. Ibid.
44. Van de Walle, "Tipping Games?"
45. Howard and Roessler, "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes".
46. Gandhi and Reuter, "Opposition Coordination".
47. Reuter and Gandhi, "Economic Performance".
48. This variable, and variants of it, have been used elsewhere to measure ruling party strength. See Reuter and Gandhi, "Economic Performance"; Gehlbach and Keefer, "Private Investment".
49. Almost 25% of authoritarian elections feature no dominant ruling party.
50. Diamond, "Thinking about Hybrid Regimes", 23.
51. Moser, "Electoral Systems".

Notes on contributors

Jennifer Gandhi is Associate Professor of Political Science at Emory University. Her research interests include authoritarian regimes, elections, opposition movements, and democratization.

Ora John Reuter is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Skalny Center at the University of Rochester and a Senior Researcher at the Center for the Study of Institutions and Development at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow. His research interests include authoritarian regimes, political parties, elections, democratization, and comparative political economy.

Bibliography

- African Elections Database. Accessed January–August, 2008. <http://africanelections.tripod.com/>.
- Banks, Arthur, Thomas Muller, and William Overstreet. *Political Handbook of the World*. Binghamton, NY: CSA Publications, 1975–2008.
- Bargsted, Matias, and Orit Kedar. "Coalition-Targeted Duvergerian Voting: How Expectations Affect Voter Choice under Proportional Representation." *American Journal of Political Science* 53, no. 2 (2009): 307–323.
- Beck, Thorsten, George Clarke, Alberto Groff, Philip Keefer, and Patrick Walsh. "New Tools in Comparative Political Economy: The Database of Political Institutions." *World Bank Economic Review* 15, no. 1 (2001): 165–176.
- Benoit, Kenneth. "Two Step Forward, One Steps Back: Electoral Coordination in the Hungarian Elections of 1998." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington DC, August 31–September 3, 2000.

- Blaydes, Lisa. *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Carroll, Royce, and Gary Cox. "The Logic of Gamson's Law: Pre-election Coalitions and Portfolio Allocations." *American Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 2 (2007): 300–313.
- Cheibub, José Antonio, Jennifer Gandhi, and James Vreeland. "Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited." *Public Choice* 143, nos. 1–2 (2010): 67–101.
- Cox, Gary. *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Debus, Marc. "Pre-Electoral Commitments and Government Formation." *Public Choice* 138 (2009): 45–64.
- Diamond, Larry. "Thinking about Hybrid Regimes." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 21–35.
- Duverger, Maurice. *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*. London: Routledge, 1964.
- Election Guide. International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). Washington, DC. Accessed January–August 2008. <http://www.electionguide.org/>.
- Fearon, James. "Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country." *Journal of Economic Growth* 8, no. 2 (2003): 195–222.
- Ferrara, Federico, and Erik Herron. "Going it Alone? Strategic Entry under Mixed Electoral Rules." *American Journal of Political Science* 49, no. 1 (2005): 16–31.
- Gandhi, Jennifer. *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Gandhi, Jennifer. "The Role of Presidential Power in Authoritarian Elections." In *Constitutions in Authoritarian Regimes*, edited by Tom Ginsburg et al. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.
- Gandhi, Jennifer, and Ellen Lust-Okar. "Elections under Authoritarianism." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 403–422.
- Gandhi, Jennifer, and Ora John Reuter. "Opposition Coordination in Legislative Elections under Authoritarianism." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, MA, August 27–31, 2008.
- Gehlbach, Scott, and Philip Keefer. "Private Investment and the Institutionalization of Collective Action in Autocracies: Ruling Parties and Legislatures." *Journal of Politics* 74, no. 2 (2012): 621–635.
- Golder, Sona Nadenichek. *The Logic of Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006.
- Golosov, Grigori. "Elektoralnyi Aftoritarnizm v Rossii." *Pro et Contra* 12, no. 1 (2008): 22–35.
- Gschwend, Thomas, and Marc Hooghe. "Should I Stay or Should I Go? An Experimental Study on Voter Responses to Pre-Electoral Coalitions." *European Journal of Political Research* 47 (2008): 556–577.
- Haber, Stephen, and Victor Menaldo. "Do Natural Resources Fuel Authoritarianism?" *American Political Science Review* 105, no. 1 (2011): 1–26.
- Howard, Marc Morje, and Philip G. Roessler. "Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes." *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 2 (2006): 365–381.
- Huskey, Eugene, and Gulnara Iskakova. "The Barriers to Intra-Opposition Cooperation in the Post-Communist World: Evidence from Kyrgyzstan." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 26, no. 3 (2010): 228–262.
- Hyde, Susan, and Nikolai Marinov. "Which Elections Can be Lost?" *Political Analysis* 20 (2012): 191–210.

- Kalyvas, Stathis. *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996.
- Kynev, A. "Politicheskii Partii v Rossiskikh Regionakh: vzglyad cherez prizmu regional'nyi izbiratel'noi reformy." *Polis* 6 (2006).
- Laver Michael, and Norman Schofield. *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan Way. *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Lust-Okar, Ellen. "Elections under Authoritarianism: Preliminary Lessons from Jordan." *Democratization* 13, no. 3 (2006): 456–471.
- Lust-Okar, Ellen. *Structuring Conflict in the Arab World: Incumbents, Opponents, and Institutions*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Maddison, Angus. *The World Economy: Historical Statistics*. Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2003.
- Magaloni, Beatriz. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Malesky, Edward, and Paul Schuler. "Nodding or Needling: Analyzing Delegate Responsiveness in an Authoritarian Parliament." *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (2010): 1–21.
- Martin, L. W., and R. T. Stevenson. "Government Formation in Parliamentary Democracies." *American Journal of Political Science* 45, no. 1 (2001): 33–50.
- Meguid, Bonnie. *Party Competition between Unequals: Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Moser, Robert. "Electoral Systems and the Number of Parties in Postcommunist States." *World Politics* 51, no. 3 (1999): 359–384.
- Nohlen, Dieter. *Elections in the Americas: A Data Handbook, Volumes 1 and 2*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Nohlen, Dieter, Florian Grotz, and Christof Hartmann. *Elections in Asia and the Pacific: A Data Handbook, Volumes 1 and 2*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Nohlen, Dieter, Michael Krennerich, and Bernhard Thibaut. *Elections in Africa: A Data Handbook*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Przeworski, Adam. *Democracy and the Market*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Przeworski, Adam, and John Sprague. *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- Psephos: Adam Carr's Election Archive. Accessed January–August, 2008. <http://psephos.adam-carr.net/>.
- Reuter, Ora John, and Jennifer Gandhi. "Economic Performance and the Unraveling of Hegemonic Parties." *British Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 1 (2011): 83–110.
- Reuter, Ora John, and Thomas Remington. "Dominant Party Regimes and the Commitment Problem: The Case of United Russia." *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 4 (2009): 501–526.
- Schedler, Andreas, ed. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006.
- Strom, Kaare, Ian Budge, and Michael Laver. "Constraints on Cabinet Formation in Parliamentary Democracies." *American Journal of Political Science* 38, no. 2 (1994): 303–335.
- Van de Walle, Nicolas. "Tipping Games? When Do Opposition Parties Coalesce?" In *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, edited by Andreas Schedler, 77–94. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006.
- Wahman, Michael. "Offices and Policies – Why do Oppositional Parties Form Pre-Electoral Coalitions in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes?" *Electoral Studies* 30 (2011): 642–657.

Wright, Joseph. "Do Authoritarian Institutions Constrain? How Legislatures Affect Economic Growth and Investment." *American Journal of Political Science* 52, no. 2 (2008): 322–343.

Appendix. Data and sources

Variable	Description	Source
<i>Age of largest opposition party</i>	Number of elections in which the largest opposition party has competed	Authors' construction
<i>Coalition with largest party</i>	Dichotomous variable coded 1 if a pre-electoral coalition exists and includes the largest opposition party, 0 otherwise	Authors' construction
<i>District magnitude</i>	Continuous variable measuring the average log district magnitude for elections to the lower or single house of parliament	Constructed from Nohlen (<i>Elections in the Americas</i>), Nohlen et al. (<i>Elections in Asia and the Pacific</i> ; <i>Elections in Africa</i>), Beck et al. ("Comparative Political Economy"), and additional sources
<i>Economic growth</i>	Annual rate of growth of per capita income, lagged	World Bank WDI, Penn World Tables, Maddison (<i>The World Economy</i>)
<i>Effective number of parties</i>	Number of parties receiving seats within the legislature, weighted by the vote (or seat) shares of parties	
<i>Ethnic fractionalization</i>	Time invariant measure of ethnic heterogeneity in a country	Constructed from Fearon ("Ethnic and Cultural Diversity")
<i>Harassment</i>	Dummy variable coded 1 if "there is evidence that the government harassed the opposition", 0 otherwise	Hyde and Marinov ("Which Elections Can be Lost?")
<i>Opposition coalition</i>	Dummy variable coded 1 if any opposition parties form a pre-electoral coalition, 0 otherwise	Authors' construction

(Continued)

Appendix Continued

Variable	Description	Source
<i>Number of elections</i>	Count variable measuring number of elections held in country since 1946	Authors' construction
<i>Number of parties</i>	Count variable measuring number of parties receiving votes in election	Authors' construction
<i>Parliamentary system</i>	Dichotomous variable coded 1 if there are elections to the legislature, and the legislature chooses the executive, 0 otherwise	Authors' construction
<i>Party asymmetry</i>	The ratio of vote (or seat) shares of the first and second largest opposition parties	Authors' construction
<i>Population</i>	Log of the total population within a country	Haber and Menaldo ("Do Natural Resources Fuel Authoritarianism?")
<i>Regime party share</i>	Continuous variable measuring share of seats received by regime party in previous election	Authors' construction
<i>State resources</i>	Continuous variable measuring total income per capita (2007 US dollars) from natural resources	Haber and Menaldo ("Do Natural Resources Fuel Authoritarianism?")

Note: Variables constructed by the authors were made using the following sources (unless otherwise noted): Nohlen (*Elections in the Americas*); Nohlen et al. (*Elections in Asia and the Pacific; Elections in Africa*); African Elections Database; Psephos: Adam Carr's Election Archive; Election Guide; and other historical material.