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Credible Autocracies: Domestic Autocratic Power-sharing Agreements and International Conflict Propensity

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Credible Autocracies:
Domestic Autocratic Power-sharing Agreements and International Conflict Propensity

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree
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by

Joseph Brian Perry

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Credible Autocracies:
Domestic Autocratic Power-sharing Agreements
and International Conflict Propensity

by

Joseph Brian Perry
Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science
University of California, Los Angeles, 2021
Professor Deborah Larson, Chair

Recent scholarship has emphasized variation in militarized interstate dispute (MIDs) propensity across authoritarian regime type. There is little agreement, however, on what structural features make some autocracies more or less pacific. To address this puzzle, this article examines the dyadic interaction between different autocratic types. Using recently updated data, I find that conflict between party-dominant regimes occurs as frequently as democratic dyads. Furthermore, whereas previous work situations decreased MID propensity in the context of audience costs, I find evidence for deeper institutionalized structural causes. As with autocracies more broadly, coup risk plagues the stability and future of party-dominant regimes. Unlike other autocracies, these regimes mitigate such risks by relying on cooptation, legitimization, and power-sharing agreements. I argue that these same mechanisms that make commitments between the dictator and regime insiders credible do so also for agreements between party-dominant regimes. I support this hypothesis quantitatively by in-country regime-type variation. This evidence challenges prior claims about the irrelevance of

institutional features in autocracies and shows how domestic institutional constraints enable states to make effective, credible commitments.

The dissertation of Joseph Brian Perry is approved.

Arthur Stein

Barbara Geddes

Kathleen Bawn

Deborah Larson, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2021

To my mother . . .

who always placed my education

above everything and supported me

in every way she could

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

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VITA

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In 2005, to almost no fanfare, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China formalized an agreement reached in 2004 settling the border dispute over Vladivostok. This conflict had raged on for more than 300 years and was the bases of several militarized disputes between the Soviet Union and China during the 1960s and 1970s. Only four years prior in 2001, these two nations ratified the "Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation Between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation." This treaty affirmed

> "In accordance with universally recognized principles and norms of international laws and on the basis of the Five Principles of mutual respect of state sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence, the contracting parties shall develops the strategic cooperative partnership of good-neighborliness, friendship and cooperation and equality and trust between the two countries from a long-term view and in a comprehensive manner."[1]

This was not the first time such poetic declarations of friendship were declared between these two nations. In 1950 the newly solidified Sino-Soviet relationship was celebrated in poems

[1] "E. Treaty of Good-Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, Moscow, 16 July 2001.

printed on red banners in newspapers in the respective nations.[2] However, unlike the current wave of "mutual peaceful co-existence" which has been the state of relations between the two nations for over 20 years, and has been recently renewed for another five years, Sino-Soviet relations soured in less than six.

Why this discrepancy in the lasting peace between these two nations? As border nations with nuclear weapons, and superpower aspirations tensions between the two should be the norm. Further, Russia has shown increasing hostility towards the European Union and the significantly smaller post-Soviet states on its borders. Similarly, China has recently shown hostility to Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and India. These relations preclude the possibility that the leadership in the two nations are relatively pacific. This dissertation posits that the domestic institutions of autocratic regimes play a more important role than simply shaping the overall foreign policy posture of the state. Rather, these domestic institutions produce an emergent property at the dyad level that is more than the sum of their parts.

1.2 Existing Explanations

Recent literature has sought to explore variation among autocratic regimes. Building on work pioneered by Geddes (1999)[3], International Relations scholars have become increasingly interested in how these variations impact the foreign policy of autocracies. This work is also heavily influenced by the literature democratic peace theory and the democratic advantage, the general observation that democracies are more likely to win a conflict than are autocratic regimes. Jessica Weeks (2014) uses a simplified autocratic taxonomy, by disaggregating autocracies across two dimensions, the presence of institutions and the whether the ruler is a

[2]Sergey Radchenko, Two Suns in the Heavens: The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967, 1st edition (Washington, D.C: Stanford University Press, 2009), 9.

[3]Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?," Annual Review of Political Science 2, no. 1 (1999): 115–44.

civilian or military leader. She finds that autocracies that are centralized around ruling elites are more pacific than personalized regimes. Moreover, civilian regimes are more pacific than military regimes. Combined she finds that civilian-based regimes with some party-based restraints on the dictator—"machines" — are the most pacific.[4] Expanding on this finding and using China as a case study, Jessica Weiss finds that the Chinese politburo manipulates the Chinese populous to stir-up to tamp down on nationalist protests aimed at a rival as a means of tying the hands of the dictator to improve his bargaining position and signal their resolve in crisis negotiation.[5]

This literature emphases the role of audience costs in shaping the regimes foreign policy. Audience costs is the label Fearon (1994), gave to the observation that democratic regimes are much less likely to bluff, or threaten to escalate and then backdown during a crisis than are autocratic regimes. Fearon attributes this to the fact that the voting population punishes leaders who look weak or in some way wounds national pride on the international stage. Fearing that they or their party will be harmed in the next election democratic leaders only select themselves into conflicts they either confident they can win or concerns an issue of national security.[6]

In party-based regimes, regime insiders are strong enough relative to the dictator that they can credibly threaten to remove him from power without dismantling the regime in the process. In these regimes, regime insiders play the role of voters in democratic regimes. Consistently, dictators of party-based regimes enter fewer conflicts and win a higher portion

[4]Jessica L. Weeks, "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve," International Organization 62, no. 01 (January 2008): 35–64; Jessica Weeks, Dictators at War and Peace (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2014); Jessica Weeks, "Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict," The American Political Science Review 106, no. 2 (2012): 326–47.

[5]Jessica Chen Weiss, Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protest in China's Foreign Relations, 1 edition (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 32–33.

[6]James D. Fearon, "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs," Journal of Conflict Resolution 41, no. 1 (February 1, 1997): 68–90; James D. Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," The American Political Science Review 88, no. 3 (1994): 577–92.

of conflicts than their autocratic brethren. While my research does not dismiss the role of autocratic audience costs, it puts forth a much deeper explanation for the passivity of these regimes.

1.3 My Argument (in a nutshell)

In most autocracies, the dictator will consolidate power within the first decade of rule. However, dictators in autocracies that inherited a political party upon ascending to power are significantly less likely to personalize and more likely to share power with regime insiders.[7] While these parties wield more power than elites in personalistic regimes, as an autocracy the dictator still benefits from significantly more power, more information, and less restrictions than democratically elected executives. Nevertheless, these parties are still powerful enough to credible threaten the dictator with a coup if the party elites act collectively. This creates an incentive for the dictator to slice off regime insiders using inducements increasing his power at the expense of the party.[8] Fearful of this tendency and the imbalance of power between elites and the dictator, regime insiders must remain vigilant that the dictator is not planning or taking actions to consolidate power. In short, in these regimes the dictator and regime insiders are fearful of each other that the other will seek to strip them of power or remove them from the regime.

The mutual fear is further complicated by the risk of domestic crises. Any regime will at some point face down the threat of economic downturns, protests, pandemics, or general malaise that requires course correction. Regime insiders would be rightfully concerned that the dictator intends on using a crisis to further consolidate power and remove regime insiders from power. An "honest" dictator, a dictator who is responding to a real crisis without

[7]Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse (Cambridge, United Kingdom: New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 91.

[8]Historically, nearly all autocratic leaders have been men. Reflecting this, this project will use male pronouns when referring to dictators.

ulterior motives, might also be concerned his actions might provoke his removal by the regime insiders. To prevent this Type-1 error, some dictators power-sharing institutions that solve commitment problems, monitoring problems and information asymmetry. These institutions solve collective active problems among regime insiders bolstering the threat of removal but also provide a source of information to the regime insiders concerning the true state of the regime.[9]These institutions play a powerful in reducing coup risk and increasing the regimes lifespan.[10]

My argument centers these power and information sharing institutions to explain the higher levels of passivity among party-based regimes. I argue that these regime strengthening and stabilizing institutions have the added bonus of providing assurances to fellow party-based autocratic regimes. The establishment of institutionalized parties and legislatures create conditions in which the regime must increasingly rely on maintaining the prevision of public rather private goods, and the support of elites both inside and outside of the regime. These mechanisms produce policy stability and inertia making change more difficult than in personalistic regimes. While this policy stability is not as "sticky" as found in democratic regimes, it provides enough assurances for fellow party-based regimes that any agreement will be respected tomorrow and with subsequent leaders. This increased faith that agreements will be respected in the future, makes party-based autocratic regimes to bargain before a crisis emerges and settle disputes before they become militarized. Coupled with the passivity induced by audience costs, this has the effect of making party-based autocracies credible partners.

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[9]Carles Boix and Milan W. Svolik, "The Foundations of Limited Authoritarian Government: Institutions, Commitment, and Power-Sharing in Dictatorships," The Journal of Politics 75, no. 02 (April 2013): 300–316.

[10]Geddes, Wright, and Frantz, How Dictatorships Work, chap. 5; Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," Perspectives on Politics 12, no. 02 (June 2014): 313–31.

1.4 Roadmap

The next chapter of my dissertation serves as literature review to our existing understanding of the role of elites and institutions on foreign policy. This chapter begins by explore the features of each variety of autocratic regimes with special attention to the impact those features have on the stability of the regime and subsequent MID propensity. I next turn to the existing literature on that looks past the simple autocratic/democratic dichotomy which seeks to explore the similarities and differences among autocratic and democratic regimes and specifically how domestic institutions in democracies and the role elites play in shaping and manipulating the public with the aims of signaling resolve and commitment to foreign policy objectives. I conclude this chapter by outlining the shortfalls and limitations of the audience cost literature.

In chapter three, I outline my theory of dyadic autocratic foreign policy. It seeks to answer three questions 1) What is the role of parties in MID proneness at dyad level? 2) What is the role of institutions in MID proneness at dyad level? And 3) What interactions if any occur between democracies and autocracies with strong institutions and parties? I posit that power-sharing agreements, parties, and legislatures transforms the party-based regime into a more stable regime. Not only do these institutions block the dictator from making ad-hoc and bizarre policy choices but they create the need for a deliberative process whereby foreign policymaking is more similar to that of democratic regimes.

Chapter four provides statistical evidence demonstrating support for my theory. I find that dyads that exhibit high levels of party strength are significantly less likely to enter a MID. Compared to "Mixed" party strength dyads are 44% less likely to enter a MID which holds at 95% confidence level. Further, I find that dyads where both states have strong legislatures relative to the dictator are significantly less likely to enter a MID. Compared dyads where each state has differing levels of legislative strength "HH" dyads are 54% less likely enter a MID. However, I also find a challenge for democratic regimes in the future,

democratic-party dyads are more likely enter a conflict that other Mixed dyads. Democratic-High dyads are 61% more likely to enter a MID compared to Mixed dyads.

In the concluding chapter, I return to the original puzzle by summarizing the arguments and findings in the theory and empirical chapters. I outline the significance and novelty of my contribution and suggest how future research may be conducted to further our understanding of both the democratic peace and party-based autocratic peace. I conclude by considering the broader implications of my dissertation, focusing in particular on implications for democratic regimes and the United States in their dealings with autocratic regimes with institutionalized parties.

I conclude this chapter by acknowledging the impact the Covid-19 pandemic had on this dissertation. Originally, I had intended to write an empirical chapter based on primary source documents and new translated documents that had not been digitalized. This research was to be conducted in the Spring and Summer of 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns prevented me from conducting the research I had originally intended to conduct. As of Fall 2021, the achieves at Stanford remain closed to non-affiliated researchers. This research would have examined high level documents from 1965-1990. Using process tracing I had hoped to show that as changes in the level of party institutionalization occurred trust between the two nations was built. Secondary sources did not provide an adequate alternative and I was unable to find evidence and resources for this empirical chapter. I intend in the future to conduct this research once some level of normality has returned. For personal, financial, and professional reasons I must submit this dissertation now. While I am deeply disappointed by this limitation, I have no other alternative than to submit at this time.

1.5 Work Cited

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CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Autocratic institutions in personalistic and military regimes

Power concentration by the dictator often is achieved by commandeering the security apparatus of the state. If the dictator has consolidated power and control over the security apparatus, he will use it to consolidate his power in the regime further. Control over the security apparatus begins with removing or excluding members of the inner circle that might disagree with him, and replacing them or enabling those members who will support him regardless of his actions.[1]If the dictator successfully takes over the security apparatus, the risk of being ousted by a regime insider is significantly decreased. However, this is a double-edged sword for the dictator concerned with being overthrown by a coup. While coup risk from regime insiders has been eliminated, coup risk from the military or regime outsiders is now more likely. To combat this possible avenue of coup risk, the dictator must turn to delegitimization, weakening, and otherwise occupying the military's attention away from internal matters.

Diversionary war[2] is one of the most utilized tools in the arsenal of personalist dictators.

[1]Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse (Cambridge, United Kingdom: New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018), chap. 3; Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," Perspectives on Politics 12, no. 02 (June 2014): 313–31.

[2]Diversionary war in this context refers to occupying the military abroad. This is in contrast to diversionary war as a means to increase support for the, typically democratic, administrations by evoking a "rally 'round the flag" effect.

In general, interstate conflict reduces coup risk by approximately 60%.[3] More protracted interstate conflicts have a more significant impact. A two-year conflict reduces coup risk by 50%, a 6-year conflict reduces coup risk by 80%, and by year 10, coup risk is nearly eliminated.[4] . In some military regimes, the dictator has become the head of the military and thus the state by appointment or political manipulation. Bashar al-Assad, for example, was rushed through military training and boosted through the ranks after his father chose him as his successor. Such regimes typically suffer from a poor relationship between the dictator and the rest of the military. Such military regimes may send the military out to fight wars it will likely lose to delegitimize the military.[5] While this is not proof that dictators initiate conflicts to reduce coup-risk, it is evidence that conflict initiation is an attractive tool to dictators fearful of impending coups.

Under the most extreme conditions, the dictator will purposely micromanage the military in order to weaken it to reduce coup risk further. In the early phases of the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein exerted considerable oversight on the military fearful they would remove him from power. During this phase of the war, Iraq took considerable losses and suffered humiliating defeats. Nevertheless, during the conflict, there were no coup attempts against the Hussein regime, despite eight in the previous 30 years.[6] Once Hussein was confident the military was loyal to him and would not attempt a coup, he relinquished control of day to day planning of the war to newly trusted generals resulting in significant improvement in military performance.[7] This is general observation is consistent with the guardianship

[3]Cemal Eren Arbatli and Ekim Arbatli, "External Threats and Political Survival: Can Dispute Involvement Deter Coup Attempts?," Conflict Management and Peace Science 33, no. 2 (April 2016): 115–52.

[4]Varun Piplani and Caitlin Talmadge, "When War Helps Civil-Military Relations: Prolonged Interstate Conflict and the Reduced Risk of Coups," Journal of Conflict Resolution 60, no. 8 (December 1, 2016): 1387.

[5]Sophie Panel, "Regime Instability, Leader's Affiliation, and Organizational Culture: Why Are Military Dictatorships More Likely to Initiate Militarized Interstate Disputes? An Empirical Analysis, 1975–2006," Security Studies 26, no. 2 (April 3, 2017): 333–58.

[6]Piplani and Talmadge, 1374.

[7]Caitlin Talmadge, "The Puzzle of Personalist Performance: Iraqi Battlefield Effectiveness in the Iran-

dilemma. Given that the dictator has complete control over policy, military elites faced with defeats as the result of the dictator's meddling have little choice but to demonstrate their loyalty to the dictator to improve the chances of winning.[8]

This strongly suggests that personalist and military dictatorships are not merely more conflict-prone because they have a conservative culture or dictators that value conflict for conflict's sake. Instead, internal conflict in most autocratic regimes is the consequence of a lack of institutional constraints and assurance mechanisms to keep both the dictator and regime insiders from attempting to acquire more power. As noted above this pattern of behavior is not found in party-based regimes indicating, further, that dichotomized views of autocracies and democracies are oversimplified.

2.2 Beyond the Dichotomy

Recent literature has attempted to bridge the gap between autocracies and democracies. Conventionally, the field of international relations has taken two approaches that have impeded the study of regime type and conflict. The first is a consequence of Kenneth Waltz's work, *Man, The State, and War*. Waltz argues persuasively that analyzing complex relationships between states at the state level is inherently reductionist. If both "bad states" and "good states" can act peacefully or go to war, any analysis at the state level would reduce our ability to determine the role of the environment in state behavior.[9] This view dominated the realist school of thought in the subfield until the 1990's. In contrast, the state or domestic level of analysis was typically employed in scholarship in the neoliberal school or work that was grounded in International Political Economics or International Organizations.

Iraq War," *Security Studies* 22, no. 2 (April 1, 2013): 196–97.

[8]R. Blake Mcmahon and Branislav L. Slantchev, "The Guardianship Dilemma: Regime Security," *American Political Science Review* 109, no. 2 (May 2015): 297–313.

[9]Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, 1st ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), chap. 4.

Beginning in the 1990's, some realist scholars, self-described as neoclassical realists, began to consider the role of the state in international relations.

These neoclassical realists argued that differences between status quo and revisionist powers, weak and stable states, and democracies and autocracies not only existed but interacted with the anarchical international system, producing behaviors and outcomes that could not be explained by the system alone.[10] Most relevant to this discussion is the introduction of the concept of audience costs.[11] Combining the insight that autocracies and democracies interact with other states differently with the theoretical expectation that democratic audiences should hold their leaders accountable for bluffing, a plethora of research arguing for a democratic advantage emerged. The democratic advantage argues that audience constraints force democracies to be more selective when selecting themselves into crises and wars. Democracies should only select themselves into conflicts they believe they can win. As a result, democracies find themselves in fewer conflicts and with a higher victory ratio.[12] These results run counter to expectations made by neorealism, and strongly suggest that the state cannot be as easily ignored. Broadly, this literature emphasizes democratic coercive bargaining, and while it has advanced the field, it too is not without problems. First, the Democratic coercive bargaining literature has treated democratic regimes as a binary or dummy variable where democracies and autocracies are coded as opposites with nothing in common. Second, this literature has overemphasized the role of audience costs without providing empirical evidence of its existence.

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[10]For a general discussion of neoclassical realism see Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," ed. Michael E. Brown et al., *World Politics* 51, no. 1 (1998): 144–72.

[11]James D. Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," *The American Political Science Review* 88, no. 3 (1994): 577–92.

[12]Schultz, "Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy"; Schultz, "Do Democratic Institutions Constrain or Inform?"; Schultz, "Domestic Opposition and Signaling in International Crises"; Schultz and Weingast, "The Democratic Advantage"; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., "Political Survival and International Conflict," *British Journal of Political Science* 32, no. 4 (2002): 559–90; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Randolph M. Siverson, "War and the Survival of Political Leaders: A Comparative Study of Regime Types and Political Accountability," *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 4 (1995): 841–55; David A. Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," *The American Political Science Review* 86, no. 1 (1992): 24–37.

There are two broad approaches to disaggregating regime type and the democratic/autocratic dichotomy and its relationship to conflict. Jessica Weeks exemplifies one such approach. Weeks disaggregates autocracies across two dimensions, the presence of institutions and the whether the ruler is a civilian or military leader. She finds that autocracies that are centralized around ruling elites are more pacific than personalized regimes. Moreover, civilian regimes are more pacific than military regimes. Combined she finds that civilian-based regimes with some party based restraints on the dictator—"machines" — are the most pacific.[13] In these regimes, the party that shares some power with the dictator is sufficiently strong to meet the requirements of audience costs, namely, the ability of a domestic audience to coordinate and sanction a leader who has backed down after initiating a threat.[14] In this analysis, the audience is political elites that care about the "national honor." A dictator issuing a threat is tying his hands, knowing that if he backs down he will face sanctions from his politburo or similar institutions.

Jessica Weiss expands upon this insight in her investigation of foreign policymaking in China. Weiss argues that not only are members of the politburo an audience that can sanction the dictator but so are the people of China. Weiss finds that Chinese elites manipulate nationalist protests to advance their position during crisis negotiation. Curtailment of protests may serve as a signal to diplomats of target countries that China is attempting to make strategic flexibility easier in response to a crisis. Conversely, Chinese elites may allow grassroots mobilization to get out of hand such that regime stability may be questionable should China back down after escalating the crisis. By allowing protests "to leave something to chance," effectively placing the regime's stability at risk, Chinese elites may be attempting

[13]Jessica L. Weeks, "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve," *International Organization* 62, no. 01 (January 2008): 35–64; Jessica Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace* (Ithaca ; London: Cornell University Press, 2014); Jessica Weeks, "Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict," *The American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2 (2012): 326–47.

[14]Weeks, "Autocratic Audience Costs," 38–42; Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," 581.

to signal their resolve in crisis negotiation.[15]

Experimental results conducted in China buttress Weiss's case study findings. In a hypothetical crisis when participants are given a nationalistic or national pain treatment, subjects report they would strongly disapprove of the regime's backing down after making threats. Similarly, this experimental data suggests that a "wait and see" treatment, where the leader emphases that fighting now would weaken the state in future conflicts, not only dampens nationalistic sentiments in response to a hypothetical crisis, but leads to positive attitudes among participants when the regime backs down after escalating a crisis. This experimental data suggests that Chinese elites have significant leverage over the population to manipulate public opinion, allowing elites to tie their hands and signal resolve in a crisis.[16]

Combined, this scholarship suggests that institutionalized autocracies have long-term effects that restrain the dictator from launching crises and wars they are not confident they can win and allow for the manipulation of public opinion to strengthen their hand in negotiations. This affords party-based regimes an analogous benefit to that of the Democratic advantage. Party-based autocracies get into fewer wars and can tip the scales in their favor to win conflicts they enter. This suggests that not all autocracies are created equally, and aggregating autocracies under a single dummy variable obscures a more complicated reality.

The second approach to disaggregating the democratic dummy variable examines democratic regimes. Saunders proposes a caveat to the robustness of audience costs. She argues that the primary target of public opinion is democratic elites or elite voters. This class category? of voters is not inside the government but is attuned to elites inside the government. These democratic elites then convey their views on foreign policy, which ultimately shapes public opinion.[17] Government elites are therefore most interested in managing and

[15]Jessica Chen Weiss, *Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protest in China's Foreign Relations*, 1 edition (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 32–33.

[16]Allan Dafoe and Jessica Chen Weiss, "Authoritarian Audiences and Government Rhetoric in International Crises: Evidence from China," Working Paper, October 5, 2017.

[17]Elizabeth N. Saunders, "War and the Inner Circle: Democratic Elites and the Politics of Using Force,"

convincing democratic elites that there is policy consensus among those in the government and that this message should be conveyed to the public as a positive policy position.[18]

Taken as a whole, scholarship investigating regime-specific cohesive diplomacy strongly supports treating regime type less like a dichotomy and more like a spectrum. Both democratic and autocratic regimes can foster audience costs through institutional structures and use these structures to manipulate domestic citizens. While this scholarship has arrived at new insights, it nevertheless raises additional questions. First, given the use and manipulation of audience costs by elites, are audience costs as useful as a restraint as conventionally believed? Second, if multiple regime types can be bound and employ regime types are there multiple pathways to audience costs? Related, if a single pathway exists for multiple regime types, is that mechanism mostly responsible for the relative pacificity of democracies and party-based autocracies and their respective advantage in foreign policy?

2.3 The limits of Audience Costs

Audience costs undoubtedly play a role in crisis bargaining and management. States have an incentive to bluff about the level of their resolve in order to extract more concessions from their bargaining partner. The theoretical consequences of audience costs make them an attractive tool for scholars and politicians alike to demonstrate sincere resolve. However, the empirical reality reveals a more complicated relationship between domestic audiences and the ability of a leader to demonstrate sincerity. At its core, for audience costs to be effective, it must operate as a tool in a signaling game leading to a separating equilibrium. That is, only a sender of a resolved type would subject herself to audience costs. Short of this, the theoretical utility of audience costs weakens. Recent scholarship suggests that audience costs operate more like a semi-separating equilibrium or pooling equilibrium, with states of

Security Studies 24, no. 3 (July 3, 2015): 466–501.

[18]ibid

both a bluffing or resolved type using audience costs to send a resolved signal. The ability of both autocracies and democracies to use audience costs to manipulate their type should give future scholars pause as a tool for explaining the democratic advantage.

On the autocratic side, conventional wisdom would hold that autocracies, by virtue of lacking a domestic selectorate, should be unable to employ audience costs. Even if autocratic institutions allow the regime the ability to use audience costs, a democratic regime should be better at using audience costs in a crisis negotiation.[19] However, that is not always the case. Autocratic regimes can manipulate policing and enforcement strategically to make use of broader audiences when crisis bargaining might otherwise be difficult.[20] Autocrats can also shift accountability if a crisis goes poorly to reduce punishment from audiences.[21] While it is unsurprising that autocratic regimes would abuse the rule of law, as it exists in autocracies, and enforcement, it is notable that political elites in autocracies can use audience costs to restrain the dictator, while still manipulating them temporarily to negotiate better outcomes. However, this does pose a theoretical problem for audience costs.

If an autocratic leader can switch his type strategically then over repeated interactions bargaining partners should reasonably question the real resolve of the crisis initiator. Transparency is a necessary condition for audience costs to be effective. A crisis bargaining partner must be able to "look into" the regime and ascertain that if the leader backs down, he will be at risk of losing power.[22] This same transparency would also allow an opponent to notice that elites are changing the level of policing and tolerance for nationalistic protests. Such mid-crisis alteration was seen in the aftermath of the US bombing of the Chinese embassy

[19]Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Boston, MA: The MIT Press, 2003), chap. 6.

[20]Weiss, *Powerful Patriots*; Dafoe and Weiss, "Authoritarian Audiences and Government Rhetoric in International Crises: Evidence from China."

[21]Sarah E. Croco and Jessica L. P. Weeks, "War Outcomes and Leader Tenure," *World Politics* 68, no. 4 (October 2016): 577–607.

[22]Weeks, "Autocratic Audience Costs," 43.

in Yugoslavia during the 1999 NATO air strike.[23] Over repeated interactions, such manipulation of policing and enforcement against protests should cause future bargaining partners to question the legitimacy of the protests. Thus, the manipulation of internal security to allow or prevent protests should diminish the supposed advantage audience by increasing the chance that a state is misrepresenting its type.

In addition to the signaling type blurring, strategic use of audience costs further weakens the significance of audience costs as a restraining mechanism. Consider the strategy of "leaving something to chance." Regime insiders and the dictator may allow nationalistic protests to get out of hand in order to threaten the future of the regime. For such protests to be effective at inducing audience costs the following must be true: 1) Protests must threaten the stability of the regime; otherwise, regime insiders are simply bluffing, and audience costs are not the primary mechanism for improving their bargaining position. 2) The dictator and at the very least the median veto player must believe with certainty that the target will back down. Allowing such protests poses a significant risk that counter-regime protests might emerge and become difficult to put down. While China and other party-based regimes allow local and small-scale protests "to identify and deal with discontented communities before they turn to more extreme counter-regime activities or revolt,[24]" protests that could potentially "get out of hand," would necessarily have to be on a much larger scale. Only a regime that is confident that its bargaining partner will back down or a regime that is highly resolved would be willing to undergo such a risk. Manipulating the public is, therefore, a strategy for the regime to more clearly signal their resolve by using their structural advantages. Audience costs make for an attractive explanation, because, in theory, such manipulation is not possible. Theoretically, leaders cannot avoid punishment because of institutionalized restraint, most notably in democratic regular elections, and therefore should not be able

[23]Weiss, *Powerful Patriots*.

[24]Peter L. Lorentzen, "Regularizing Rioting: Permitting Public Protest in an Authoritarian Regime," *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 8, no. 2 (February 25, 2013): 129.

to manipulate the domestic environment strategically. However, given that the dictator can temporarily allow himself to be punished, audience costs alone cannot be the sole explanation for the pacific nature of party-based regimes. Instead, it likely the case that deeper structural characteristics of these regimes are responsible for the lower levels of conflict. We should, therefore, take a closer examination at the structural power afforded to regime insiders as the primary mechanism for international elite bargaining.

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CHAPTER 3

Theory

3.1 Introduction

Foreign policy of not only the United States, but of most Western democracies is reliant on the idea that autocracies are largely untrustworthy and unreliable. This stereotype is not without reason. With policymaking strictly in the hands on one person, it is relatively easy for a feckless leader to abruptly change his mind and reserve course. Even worse, a dictator with sole control over policymaking can make disastrous edicts leading to destabilization of the country and regime. A notable example, under the personalistic control of Mao Zedong tens of millions died during the Great Chinese Famine an outcome exasperated by Mao's bizarre decision to implement so-called backyard furnaces to catch up to the US's and UK's steel output.[1] But not all autocratic regimes are personalistic regimes with all power held by the dictator. Similarly, not all autocratic regimes are as mercurial in policymaking. Party-based regimes have stronger institutions than their personalistic brethren. Does this have an effect on foreign policymaking? Are party-based regimes more reliable as potential bargain makers than other autocracies? Can party-based dyads make secure bargains that make conflict between them less likely? Are these bargains capable of building lasting trust between party-based regimes making pacificity the status quo?

This project attempts to shed light on these questions and the domestic institutions that contribute to them. Most interactions between states rely on shared knowledge of

[1]Frank Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958-1962*, 1st edition (Bloomsbury USA, 2010), 61.

previous interactions, this includes crisis interactions when an abrupt change in the status quo requires states to respond quickly and decisively. This shared history and perception of the dyad partner shapes the accessed reliability of a partner—including a crisis partner when choosing to deescalate. The reliability of an autocratic partner is dependent on the restraints placed on the dictator by regime insiders. As regimes vary in the level of these restraints, we should expect to find vary levels of MID-proneness across dyads.

In order to explain some dyads are more conflict prone than others, this project must first address several questions.

1. Role of parties in MID proneness at dyad level
2. Role of institutions in MID proneness at dyad level
3. The interaction of democracies and autocracies with strong institutions and parties.

3.2 Peaceful(ish) Parties?

In the conventional view of autocracies, conjured by journalists the dictator is an absolute ruler who can do whatever he wants whenever he wants free of repercussions. The dictator's position is secure until a devastating change occurs and uprising replacing him, or he is forced out by a western power. While dictators do have significantly more leeway and are significantly less restrained than are democratically elected executives, the dictator is still bound to the reality that no man can truly rule alone. He must rely on a minimum number of regime insiders who will actualize his demands and goals for running the country. Hence the dictator lives in a paradoxical world. He is questionably the most powerful person in the state, but he is also justifiably paranoid that regime insiders will kill him, or a challenger will replace him after being sufficiently weakened.

Like any leader when considering a conflict, the dictator must consider the costs of initiating a conflict and potential costs of defeat. In the lead up to a conflict the dictator must

consider the costs of making a threat should he later decide to back down. For personalist regimes, the cost of doing so is minimal. The personalist dictator does not face audience costs and hence should be more willing to make threats that are in reality bluffs. The dictator of a party-based regime can be sanctioned by regime insiders should he take the same action, and hence should be more reserved in their willingness to threaten or initiate conflicts, electing to do so in cases in which they are willing to carry out the threat.[2] [3] We should expect to see party-based regimes entering fewer conflicts and winning a higher proportion of those they enter. Overall party-based regimes are more pacific than other autocracies and helping to give credibility to their threats.[4]

After MID initiation, the dictator must also deal with the consequences of losing the conflict. While coding schemes differ depending on the scholar the literature strongly suggests that party-based regime dictators are significantly penalized for losing a conflict. Relying on descriptive statistics Weeks finds that all party-based regime leaders who suffer a war defeat are ousted from office within two years. In contrast boss and strongman dictators are ousted only 38% and 20% after leading the state to a war defeat.[5] Debs and Goesmans (2010) use a hazard model and find that civilian regimes (this category would include party-based regime and boss regimes) receive no benefit from crisis or war victories and suffer a cost from war defeat and crisis draws.[6]

[2]Jessica L. Weeks, "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve," *International Organization* 62, no. 1 (January 2008): 35–64.

[3]Junta should in theory also have a mechanism for punishing the dictator if he backs down. However, as Weeks points out given the military expertise of dictators of Junta, they are "likely to overestimate the likelihood of victory." (Weeks 2004, 24) Moreover, such dictators are unlikely to find coercive diplomacy as effective. Hence, they are unlikely to make threats they do not intend to carry out. This combination results in Juntas selecting themselves into a greater number of conflicts and a greater number of conflicts they will likely lose. For more see: Jennifer Gandhi and Adam Przeworski, "Cooperation, Cooptation, and Rebellion Under Dictatorships," *Economics & Politics* 18, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 1–26.

[4]Jessica Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace* (Ithaca ; London: Cornell University Press, 2014).

[5]Weeks, 73.

[6]Alexandre Debs and H.E. Goemans, "Regime Type, the Fate of Leaders, and War," *American Journal of Political Science* 104, no. 3 (August 2010): 440.

The economic outcomes are also divergent depending on regime type. For a personalist dictator, survival depends on preventing or deterring challengers. When economic growth or stability run contrary to that aim the personalist dictator will select a strategy that reduces the chances of being ousted despite the cost to the economy. Personalist regime insiders will often select incompetent "advisors" over competent advisors in order to ensure loyalty and deter challengers. An incompetent advisor will have a difficult time adjudicating between a challenger who could successful overthrow the dictator and a threat that will be unsuccessful. This uncertainty will make the advisor risk adverse and place greater value on the benefits of being in the regime. Consequently, he will inform the dictator of any threats, even if they turn out to be insignificant aiding the dictator's ability to remain in power. Moreover, since the "advisor" is loyal a challenger cannot depend on him for insider information deterring the challenger from starting a coup.[7] While this helps ensure stability for the dictator, an incompetent advisor will not be able provide useful information on the state of the economy or useful advice to fix or stabilize the economy leading to poor economic outcomes.

Additionally, personalist dictators and party-based regime dictators must rely on different strategies to provide patronage to their insider. In personalist regimes, particularly boss regimes, dictators remain in power by providing patronage to their loyal supporters.[8] Given that these regimes have a relatively small number of regime insiders, ensuring the economy produces enough profit to provide patronage to these insiders should be relatively sustainable. Excluding large debilitating price shocks, the dictator of personalist regimes should be able to provide patronage regardless of the economic policies. Following an exogenous price shock, personalist regimes depart more radically from economic policy than

[7]Georgy Egorov and Konstantin Sonin, "DICTATORS AND THEIR VIZIERS: ENDOGENIZING THE LOYALTY-COMPETENCE TRADE-OFF," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 9, no. 5 (2011): 906.

[8]Abel Escribà-Folch and Joseph Wright, *Foreign Pressure and the Politics of Autocratic Survival* (OUP Oxford, 2015), 338.

experienced in party-based regime regimes.[9] Following a price shock, personalist regimes reduce their average spending by about 3.2% of GDP. Moreover, there is substantial variance among personalist regimes as to how to approach the price shock. Facing similar price shock personalist regimes vary in the reduction of regime spending by ± 4%.[10] Inflation rates follow a similar pattern. Personalist regimes suffer high levels of inflation and year-to-year experience significant variance in the level of inflation. [11]

In party-based regime regimes, the veto players demand established procedures for choosing the members of executive committees.[12] Such dictators are therefore unable to select incompetent advisors who are fearful of sharing information to others. This is particularly true for regimes that have semi-competitive elections and term limits on the dictator's reign. These regimes have significantly longer time horizons and need to consider the political costs of economic decline. [13] In party-based regime regimes, the institutionalization of veto players forces the dictator to create economic policy that are "middle of the road".[14] Hence, we should expect party-based regime regimes to produce more stable and advanced economies than personalist regimes. Following a price shock, party-based regime regimes increase their GDP spending by about 7%, and variance across party-based regime regimes is only 1.89%.[15] Inflation rates are more steady and significantly less variable.[16]

Given the poor economic performance of personalist regimes, we would expect personalist

[9]Erica Frantz and Natasha Ezrow, *The Politics of Dictatorship: Institutions and Outcomes in Authoritarian Regimes* (Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner Pub, 2011), 91.

[10]Frantz and Ezrow, 95.

[11]Frantz and Ezrow, 98.

[12]Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, *How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse* (Cambridge, United Kingdom : New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018), chap. 3.

[13]Egorov and Sonin, "DICTATORS AND THEIR VIZIERS," 918.

[14]David Koh, "The Politics of a Divided Party and Parkinson's State in Vietnam," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 23, no. 3 (2001): 525; Frantz and Ezrow, *The Politics of Dictatorship*, 91.

[15]Frantz and Ezrow, *The Politics of Dictatorship*, 95.

[16]Frantz and Ezrow, 98.

regimes to be significantly shorter lived than party-based regime regimes. However, personalist regimes are only slightly shorter-lived than other autocracies and are relatively stable regimes. Therefore, it must be the case that dictators of personalist regimes are relatively successful in providing patronage to regime insiders. As Bueno de Mesquita (2003), points out regime insiders should remain loyal to the dictator as provided that he can provide patronage to the insiders. Given that challengers cannot credibly commit to provide patronage to current regime insiders in the event the challenger takeover, current regime insiders who are receiving patronage should be reluctant to support a challenger.[17] Hence, given that we observe reasonably long-lived personalist regimes, despite poor economic performance it must be the case that regime insiders are weak, incompetent, loyal but well paid. As a result, we should expect personalist dictators to have significantly more latitude to pursue damaging economic and foreign policies.[18]

As one of the causes of the dictator's anxiety, regime insiders must also cope with the fear of being ousted or eliminated. How they are able to cope and prevent the dictator from eliminating them also depends on the regime type. Lacking complete information, regime insiders have difficulty ascertaining if an action taken by the dictator is harmless or a subtle attempt to increase his power. Aware of this moral hazard the dictator can take small steps to avoid sending a high signal of this intent to renege. Eventually, the dictator can increase power to the point that regime insiders can no longer credibly rebel and must depend on the dictator for their continued survival.[19] Statistical evidence supports this stylized formal model. Geddes (2018) finds that regimes lacking an inherited party at the time of regime take over are significantly more likely to become personalist regimes. By the tenth year

[17]Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Boston, MA: The MIT Press, 2003), 86–89.

[18]This latter point is supported by evidence that personalist regimes are significantly more likely to start conflicts they will eventually lose. Weeks 2014, 61

[19]Milan W. Svolik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 65–71.

of power, the dictator typically has considerably more power than the collective power of regime insiders.[20]

Civilian regime insiders also face a collective action problem that aids the dictator in his attempt to concentrate power. Invariably, the preferences of individuals in a regime will be divergent. Some individuals will have preferences closer to that of the dictator and will be more tolerant of his attempts to concentrate power.[21] With fewer regime insiders the patronage each remaining member increases, creating a material incentive to defect. Recognizing (or believing) that they will remain within the regime these individuals remain silent or fail to act when purges occur. Eventually, the dictator consolidates enough power that any rebellion by the remaining insiders is no longer credible.[22]

Party-based regimes are not entirely doomed to this fate. In regimes that eventually become party-based regimes the initial condition of governance is such that the keys to effective governance are too numerous for the dictator to eliminate a sizable number of regime insiders to ensure he wields a majority of power in the regime. The dictator must establish a mechanism allowing him to credibly commit to his regime insiders that he will not renege on his agreement to rule the regime jointly. In what Svolik refers to as "contested autocracies" the threat of rebellion is sufficiently legitimate, that the dictator must be cautious to avoid sending a signal that he intends to renege.[23] If the dictator has benign intentions but these intentions are misinterpreted as an attempt to consolidate power, his actions and lack of accountability might provoke a response by regime insiders. Such a response would likely lead to the violent removal of the dictator from power.[24] To avoid such a calamity, the dictator is incentivized to establish parties, legislatures, advisory councils or courts. For

[20]Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, *How Dictatorships Work*, 2018, chap. 3.

[21]Bruce de Mesquita et al., "The Logic of Political Survival," *MIT Press*, August 2003, 91.

[22]Bueno de Mesquita et al., 59.

[23]Svolik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*, 55, 59.

[24]Svolik, 65.

these "institutions" to be effective, they must make the dictator's commitments credible. Such institutions have several pathways and at varying degrees to prevent the dictator from reneging.

These institutions provide transparency between the dictator and the regime insiders. As Boix and Svolik (2013), contend these institutions diffuse information about the health and status of the regime from the dictator to of insiders. With this additional information, regime insiders can alleviate monitoring problems and collective action problems. [25] This information provides more accurate knowledge into the dictator's actions allowing regime insiders to respond appropriately. Moreover, this information provides common knowledge among regime insiders allowing them to better estimate if their fellow regime insiders would support a challenger.[26] Myerson (2008) takes a similar approach. He argues that the presence of courts allow regime insiders to accurately signal their disapproval of the dictator. While these courts may not be able to remove the dictator from power, they can signal to the dictator that they will not support the dictator should he face a challenger.[27] Stronger courts may have the ability to remove the dictator from power using peaceful means, an arrangement the dictator prefers to a more violent fate.

While these models provide little in the way of empirical evidence, they do provide implications that can be tested. If it is the case that the dictator creates or allows the establishment of these institutions to mitigate the risk of a violent coup than we should expect to observe lower levels of violent overthrow and dictators remaining in power until they die of natural causes or step aside as a result of age. For those dictators who foolishly believed they could concentrate power and found they could not, we would expect them to leave office peaceful. Life in the country without power is better than death from a

[25]Carles Boix and Milan W. Svolik, "The Foundations of Limited Authoritarian Government: Institutions, Commitment, and Power-Sharing in Dictatorships," *The Journal of Politics* 75, no. 02 (April 2013): 301.

[26]Boix and Svolik, 304.

[27]Roger B. Myerson, "The Autocrat's Credibility Problem and Foundations of the Constitutional State," *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 1 (February 2008): 128–29.

violent removal. Moreover, as violent ousting of the dictator is costly either institutionally or monetarily, regime insiders have a strong incentive to maintain the status quo if the dictator is equally committed to the status quo.[28] We should expect to find such regimes to last longer than regimes that do not have such institutions.

Statistical evidence supports these expected outcomes. Boix and Svolik (2013), find that dictators in regimes with legislatures are far less likely to be ousted by coups and revolts.[29] Geddes et al. (2014), further support this observation, noting that dictators of dominant-party regimes are far more likely to leave office dying from natural causes than are dictators of personalist regimes.[30] While the opaque nature of these regimes prevents us from understanding exactly how these institutions create stability, this evidence strongly supports the claim that these institutions make party-based regimes more stable through exogenous forces.

While these institutions create a more stable regime compared to other autocracies, the stability is significantly more precarious than to democracies. The lack of legal and constitutional third-party enforcement mechanism makes violence the only way to remove an uncooperative or reneging dictator. The institutions in party-based regimes merely make the violent removal more legitimate by reducing collective action and monitoring costs. Nevertheless, vigilance on the part of regime insiders is necessary for the institutions to have any impact on restraining the dictator. The appearance of complacency, by the ruling party, might be interpreted as an opportunity to consolidate power. Hence, the stability created by institutions is precarious and fragile.

It is this precarious and fragile nature that makes the relative peacefulness of party-based regimes possible. In addition to audience costs and the economic costs of initiating a conflict,

[28]Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival*, 100.

[29]Boix and Svolik, "The Foundations of Limited Authoritarian Government," 312.

[30]Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 02 (June 2014): 321.

there are also significant regime costs. First, war provides an opportunity for dictators to alter the composition of the military and surround himself with those most loyal to him in the military.[31] Second, wars increase military spending and expenditures. As military spending increases the probability of coups decrease as soldiers and officers are reluctant to risk their spoils granted to them by the dictator.[32] Finally, and seemingly paradoxically, as coup risk decreases the risk of purges increases. As the risk of coup decrease institutions designed to promote power sharing become weakened and ineffective. This temporary weakness increases the possibility of breakdown and emboldens the dictator to begin purges.[33] Aware of this tendency, regime insiders in party-based regimes should be hesitant to allow the state to go to war. Hence, party-based regimes should only select themselves into wars that both the dictator and regime insiders agree are necessary and winnable.

3.3 Credible Party-based regimes?

The evidence in the previous two sections strongly suggests that party-based regime regimes are significantly different than other autocracies. Dictators of party-based regimes are significantly more afraid of his regime insiders than other dictators. Regime insiders are reasonably more confident of their ability to remove the dictator should he renege on his commitments. The combination of a fearful dictator, and capable but equally fearful regime insiders creates a regime in which bargains are legitimate. These regimes are able to solve the dictator's commitment problem. Regime stability is not the only benefit afforded to these regimes. Solving the dictator's commitment problem should make international agreements more legitimate and stable.

[31]Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, The Henry L. Stimson Lectures Series edition (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2006).

[32]Jonathan Powell, "Determinants of the Attempting and Outcome of Coups d'état," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56, no. 6 (December 1, 2012): 1031.

[33]Jun Koga Sudduth, "Strategic Logic of Elite Purges in Dictatorships," *Comparative Political Studies*, February 2, 2017, 1–34.

In democratic regimes, laws are enforced by third party mechanisms, debate is public and transparent, and succession from one president/prime minister to another is peaceful, orderly, and constitutionally defined.. Free and fair elections and open and public debate make democratic regimes transparent. This transparency makes it difficult for democracies to bluff and easier for target states to determine the democracy's actual level of resolve. Constitutionally created third party enforcement mechanisms prevent democracies from easily reneging on agreements. This boasts the confidence for bargaining partners making bargains more likely. Lastly, constitutionally defined transfer of power makes laws and treaties enforceable from leader to leader.[34]

The same mechanism that makes party-based regime dictators commitments credible to regime insiders may produce results that are analogous to transparency, constitutionalism, and peaceful transfer of power. While Weeks argued that audience costs, another consequence of transparency reduced the MID proneness of party-based regimes if these regimes also have these features than we would expect deeper effects and lower levels of MID proneness among party-based regimes.

3.3.1 Transparency and Resolve

The Fashoda crisis of 1898 is used as the prototypical example of the influence of transparency during a crisis involving two democracies. Newspaper articles and public speeches made by the United Kingdom demonstrated that the UK was highly resolved to maintain possession Fashoda. The French who intended to capture Fashoda to consolidate their control over the upper Nile were unable to credibly signal their resolve after the public opposed the conflict, and state officials publically pressed the government to find a peaceful resolution.[35] More broadly this inability of democracies to exaggerate their resolve reduces the chance that a

[34]Charles Lipson, *Reliable Partners: How Democracies Have Made a Separate Peace* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[35]Kenneth Schultz, "Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy," *Cambridge University Press*, July 2001, 19.

democracy will enter a conflict it is unwilling to fight and brings the state to the bargaining table to find a solution amicable to both parties.[36] It may be that the quarrelsome and precarious balance found inside party-based regime regimes offers an analogous mechanism.

Transparency in democracies mitigates private information and establishes mutual confidence. Instinctively, we consider conflicts as being periods where mutual confidence and bargaining are at their lowest. However, mutual understanding can prevent a state from fighting a conflict it would be expected to lose. With less private information each state can be relatively certain about the other state's preferences and the meaning behind their behavior.[37] While party-based regimes are significantly more opaque than democracies, a party-based regime's willingness to go to war should provide significantly more information about the regime's preferences than could be signaled by other autocracies. One such way is through elections.

Party-based regime regimes often have elections to solve problems of intra-regime conflict that might destabilize the regime.[38] During these elections, greater resources and patronage are supplied to citizens of the state to bolster support for the party.[39] These elections while not fair are still semi-competitive. Opposition parties are allowed to compete "but [dictators] use control of the media, restrictions or violence that limits opposition campaigning, fraud, and large-scale state spending to bias outcomes."[40] While not fair these elections partially meet Schultz's (1998) conditions for an election to send credible information. 1) political parties should value and seek office, 2) oppositions should have access to crisis-

[36]This logic is consistent with rationalist models of war. Both parties, winners, and losers are better off not fighting as they receive the payout from the war minus the cost of going to war. James Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organizations* 49, no. 3 (Summer 1995): 379–414.

[37]Lipson, *Reliable Partners*, 45.

[38]Barbara Geddes, "The Role of Elections in Authoritarian Regimes," *Unpublished*, September 1, 2005.

[39]Geddes, Wright, and Frantz, *How Dictatorships Work*, 2018, chap. 4.

[40]Geddes, Wright, and Frantz, chap. 4 pg. 32–33.

relevant information, 3) competition should be public and unrestricted.[41] While threats made by party-based regimes should be less credible than democratic regimes, they should still nevertheless be more credible to other autocracies, compared to non-party-based regime threats. Kinne and Marinov (2013) find that the effect of competitive authoritarianism for reducing the probability that a target will reciprocate a threat is nearly as strong as the effect of procedural democracies.[42] These results are consistent with Weeks (2008, 2014) and Schultz (1998) that audience costs are vital to signaling intentions.

Absent semi-competitive elections, party-based regime regime, can signal their intentions by the vary nature of the structure of their regime. The dictator of a party-based regime must bargain in a two-level game.[43] Not only must he convince his bargaining partner that he is resolved, but must also convince his regime insiders that escalating the crisis is in the interest of the regime. If he fails to convince his ruling coalition that the war meets these requirements, regime insiders have incentives to stop the conflict for fear he will use the conflict to concentrate power.

In party-based regimes, the armed forces are typically subordinated to the party leadership.[44] Party-based regime regimes are typically less reliant on repression to maintain power. [45] The absence of high levels of repression inhibits the formation of a secret police that is typically is under the personal control of the dictator. As a result, regime insiders in party-based regimes should have a better understanding of the regimes military capabilities than regime insiders in other autocracies. In addition to the economic information provided

[41]Kenneth A. Schultz, "Domestic Opposition and Signaling in International Crises," *The American Political Science Review* 92, no. 4 (1998): 831–32.

[42]Brandon J. Kinne and Nikolay Marinov, "Electoral Authoritarianism and Credible Signaling in International Crises," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57, no. 3 (2013): 373–74.

[43]Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (1988): 427–60.

[44]Svolik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*, 132.

[45]Christian Davenport, "State Repression and the Tyrannical Peace," *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 4 (July 1, 2007): 485–504. Svolik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*, 132–33.

to regime insiders from power-sharing institutions, regime insiders can be expected to know if a conflict will result in victory and if it is beneficial to the regime. If regime insiders are skeptical about either, they will restrain the dictator out of fear he is attempting an internal power grab. Fellow party-based regimes should be aware of this dynamic thus the decision to escalate a conflict reveals information about the state's resolve and capability.

3.3.2 Constitutionalism

Given the state of international anarchy, all international bargains suffer from the threat of commitment problems. Absence enforcement, states must rely on information about their bargaining partner's wiliness to commit to cooperation when making agreements. While by no means a guarantee that a state will abide by their agreements, democratic constitutions significantly increase the probability that a state not renege. Constitutional procedures dictate how laws can be created or repealed. This creates inertia into any agreement, especially those between two democracies. Like a body at rest it is extremely difficult for a democracy to ratify a treaty or international agreement and like a body in motion, it is extremely difficult for a democracy to leave a treaty or international agreement. [46]

However, constitutionalism does not establish credibility from the onset of a partnership. Constitutionalism merely opens the door for learning. For any international treaty, there is a range of the severity of costs of defection. At very low levels, the costs of defection are small enough that states require little reassurance before making an agreement. In this range, a cut point should exist at which constitutionally bounded regimes are still confident to make agreements, but other regimes are not. Over repeated interactions, these regimes can learn more about their partner's reliability and make deeper and more impactful bargains. This results in higher levels of cooperation among democracies.[47] While constitutionalism causes

[46]Lipson, *Reliable Partners*, 79.

[47]Lipson, 150–51.

this political inertia in democracies, other methods of political inertia should cause similar levels of reliability.

Suppose a dictator of a party-based regime proposes a security bargain with another party-based regime. Regime insiders should only agree to bargains which are 1) beneficial today and in the future or 2) costly today but with clear benefits in the future to offset those costs. Regime insiders and their veto power should prevent the dictator from negotiating deals that are costly to the regime and should be leery of deals that are not beneficial to the regime. That is we should expect only those deals that the median regime insider supports to be ratified. Similarly, we should expect deals once they are made to continue to be enforced unless the median regime insider supports repeal. Fellow party-based regimes should be aware of this restraint and should be more willing to negotiate bargains that are costly enough that non-party-based regimes would be reluctant to negotiate. Provided that neither side reneges, the inertia created by veto regime insiders should raise confidence to allow for learning leading to increasingly deep bargains. Mattes and Rodriguez (2014) find support for this claim. They find that jointly party-based regime dyads are 45% more likely to cooperate with one another than jointly democratic regimes.[48] Moreover, democratic/party-based regime dyads have higher levels of cooperation than jointly democratic dyads, while party-based regime/personalist dyads experience significantly less cooperation. Combined this suggests bargaining partners must be aware of the significance of the political inertia to be confident enough to bargain.

3.3.3 Peaceful succession of power and stability

The faith in democratic institutions provides an under-appreciated but vital tool promoting stability. Excluding assassinations, democratic leaders are seldom violently removed from power. The vast majority of democratic leaders are term limited or voted out of office.

[48]Michaela Mattes and Mariana Rodríguez, "Autocracies and International Cooperation," *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 3 (September 1, 2014): 535.

Subsequent leaders peacefully assume power. This peaceful transition of power means that the same methods and avenues to create and repeal laws remain constant from administration to administration. Even in a particularly impactful election, such as the 2016 election, seismic and truly revolutionary changes are difficult to be implemented. As a result, outsiders of the regime do not need to be overtly concerned about leadership changes or whether the new leader will target them for an attack.[49]

For most autocracies, this is not the case. Among personalist regimes (boss, and strongman) leaders are removed from office by exile, imprisonment or death in 69 percent of the time they exit office.[50] Such crises produce situations that increase the probability that an aggressive neighbor might strike or raise concerns about an impending attack from the new regime for a fearful neighbor. This uncertainty about the new regime's intentions reduces a bargaining partner's willingness to cooperate and increase the probability of preemptive wars.[51]

Party-based regime regimes are not as chaotic as other autocracies. Fewer than 37 percent of party-based regimes face exile, imprisonment or death after losing office.[52] While not an insignificant or trivial number it is significantly lower than other autocracies. In the vast majority of party-based regimes, the power-sharing institution worked. Dictators could not or did not attempt to consolidate power, and hence regime insiders did not oust them. Subsequent leaders in party-based regimes are typically regime insiders who are selected to become the next dictator. Having been a regime insider, they are aware that continuing to abide by agreements is beneficial to the regime and know better than anyone else the futility of challenging his former regime insiders. Fellow party-based regimes should recognize this

[49]Lipson, *Reliable Partners*, 113–14.

[50]Barbara Geddes, Erica Frantz, and Joseph Wright, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 2 (2014): 332.

[51]Lipson, *Reliable Partners*, 114.

[52]Geddes, Frantz, and Wright, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," 332.

stability advantage, thus making them more willing to commit to long-lasting agreements that will outlive the incumbent dictator.

CHAPTER 4

Statistical Evidence

4.1 Hypothesis

The theory outlined above leads to some testable implications for the impact of autocratic institutions on their pacificity and ability to make bargains. In general, this model means that party-based regimes should be better able to make binding commitments to fellow party-based regimes and with democracies.

Hypothesis 1: The odds of the outbreak of conflict between states with high levels of party strength will be significantly lower than other autocratic dyads.

I expect that party-based dyads to enter fewer conflicts and wars. This should be the case regardless of the source of the conflict, capability of each side, major power status, during or after the Cold War, or whether the countries are contiguous.

Hypothesis 2: The odds of the outbreak of conflict between states with strong legislatures relative to the dictator will be significantly lower than other autocratic dyads.

As with H1, I expect that autocratic dyads where both regimes have strong "legislative" bodies relative to the "executive" and those were the "executive" can be removed to enter fewer MIDs and have long lasting spells of peace.

Hypothesis 3a: The odds of the outbreak of conflict between states with high levels of party strength and democracies will be significantly lower than other mixed dyads.

Hypothesis 3b: The odds of the outbreak of conflict between states with high levels of party strength and democracies will be significantly higher than other mixed dyads.

It could be found that democratic regimes and party-based regimes to have lower frequencies of conflicts, albeit higher than democratic-democratic dyads. The same institutional constraints placed on party-based dictators and to a much stronger degree on democratically elected leaders should result in similar bargains promoting peace as is found among party-party and democratic-democratic dyads.

Alternatively, regimes with institutionalized parties could be more bellicose towards democratic regimes. Democratic regimes may be unable to interpret or appreciate the policy inertia properties of regimes with institutionalized parties. As a result, democracies may be unable to trust such regimes in ways that party-party dyads are able to form. Complicating matters this lack of trust could be compounded by the policy stability and overall higher levels of economic and military power party-based regimes benefit from. This could result in two regimes with high levels of resolve unable to solve a crisis before it devolves into a MID.

4.2 Data

The primary variable of interest is MID initiation. My dataset contains 1.4 million direct dyad pair observations running from 1945 to 2010. For MID initiation, I rely on the gold standard from the Correlates of War (COW) project. Specifically, I use the Dyadic Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) Dataset Version 3.0.[1] This dataset contains observations of all MIDs from 1816 to 2010, where each dyad is record twice. For example, a hypothetical MID involving the United States and Canada in the year 1953 would be listed as both "2, 20, 1953" and "20, 2, 1953." (2 and 20 are the COW country codes for the US and Canada). This allows for a more granular understanding of who initiated a conflict with who. For example, suppose Canada initiated the dispute with the US the entries would appear as follows "2, 20, 1953, 0" and "2, 2, 1953, 1."

[1]Zeev Maoz et al., "The Dyadic Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) Dataset Version 3.0: Logic, Characteristics, and Comparisons to Alternative Datasets," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63, no. 3 (March 1, 2019): 811–35.

I rely on the COW MID dataset for this project as it is considered among many to be the gold standard for conflicts, disputes, and wars. As it is the most widely used dataset recording such events, the use of this dataset will allow for greater comparability with previous research and scholarship. Moreover, unlike other datasets the COW dataset has the advantage of recoding not just wars but all disputes. Given that conflict of any kind is a rare event, relying on a larger pool of incidents will provide a more robust analysis and significant results

As my outcome variable is a binary variable, I will be using a logistic regression. To control for within-group variation over time the analysis will use country fixed effects. Finally, control for any temporal effects or dependencies, I will be cubic polynomial controls that measure the amount of time since State A and State B entered a dispute. This is following methods used by Carter and Signorino (2010).[2]

The primary dependent variable for my analysis is regime type. The primary motivation relies on the pioneering dataset by Geddes, Wright, and Frantz.[3] Like the MID dataset I rely on this dataset for motivation as it is the largest dataset available differentiating regimes on subtype. Moreover, since 2014 this dataset has become one of the most widely used and well known within both comparative politics and international relations. Nevertheless, there are some minor shortcomings of this dataset for the purposes of understanding the role domestic institutions play in preventing conflict and signaling cooperation to other autocracies with highly developed institutions.

To augment the Geddes et al. dataset I rely on the Varieties of Democracy Project (V-dem) dataset.[4] While both the Geddes et al. and V-Dem dataset rely on regional and

[2]David B. Carter and Curtis S. Signorino, "Back to the Future: Modeling Time Dependence in Binary Data," *Political Analysis* 18, no. 3 (ed 2010): 271–92.

[3]Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set," *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 02 (June 2014): 313–31.

[4]Michael Coppedge et al., "The Methodology of 'Varieties of Democracy' (V-Dem)1," *Bulletin of Sociological Methodology/Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique* 143, no. 1 (July 1, 2019): 107–33.

national experts to code for their respective datasets, the V-Dem dataset has some advantages for this study. Most notably is the ability to home in on specific traits a research believes may be of consequence using variables that are continuous. Furthermore, since each continue variable is coded by experts every year researchers have more granular understanding of historical trends and how these trends may affect the outcome variable.[5]

To test these hypotheses, I have created three composite indexes: party strength, legislative strength, and executive restrictions. Each of these indexes rely on indicators from the V-dem dataset that are theoretically relevant for measuring mechanisms by which trust, and stability can be inferred by a potential crisis bargaining partner.

4.2.1 Party Strength:

The party strength index is comprised of five measures: level of party organization, strength of party branches, method of party-society linkages, method of candidate selection at subnational level, and method of party advancement.

4.2.1.1 Party Organization

Regimes with permanent bureaucratic institutions assist regimes in bargain making in several ways. At the most basic level, permanent parties have administrative tools to ensure the survival and continued operation of party mechanics. This in turn allows the party to develop organizational structure and hierarchy to coordinate among elites both within side the party and those elites allied with the regime. Further, party headquarters disseminate and collect information across the regime and nation directing elites, their behavior, and maintaining fidelity to party goals and platforms. In short, the permanence party organization helps ensure policy stability reassuring prospective bargaining partners that any deal

[5]Daniel Pemstein et al., "The V-Dem Measurement Model: Latent Variable Analysis for Cross-National and Cross-Temporal Expert-Coded Data," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, April 1, 2018).

will be respected.

Permanent party bureaucratic institutions also assist regime stability upon leadership transitions or vacancies. Upon promotion, resignation or death parties with permanent organizational structure have clear rules and procedures for filling vacancies at all levels of leadership and elite membership. Moreover, low ranking party officials are institutionalized into the party ensuring that most members share the institutional goals of the party and more importantly only those who clearly show fealty to the party are promoted.

4.2.1.2 Strength of party branches and Subnational candidate Selection

Local party branches facilitate the goals of the national party further stabilizing the regime in several keys ways. First and most basic, local branches are tasked in the discovery, recruitment, and training of new members, beginning the process of institutionalizing members. These local branches also facilitate relations with local actors and organizations and the regime allowing for monitoring of the vox populi to handle criticisms of the regime and co-opt would-be rivals before frustrations boil over into uprisings. This act of self-preservation for the regime ensures that potential international agreements and bargains have the support of local elites decreasing the likelihood that significant objections over the bargain linger providing another avenue of assurance for would be bargaining partners.

4.2.1.3 Method of Party-Society linkages

All regimes rely on linkages between the state and society. Many autocratic regimes rely on clientelist networks to buy support for the regime. Such transitions help stave off support for rival movements and provides an additional avenue of local information to increase support among the population. Nevertheless, clientelist networks provide a relatively weak linkage between the regime/party and the nation. As the linkages rely on the ability of the regime to provide private goods, any disturbance in the output of the regime puts at risk the network

as a whole. Moreover, these linkages are unlikely to bolster confidence in bargaining partners because these relationships are not based on "values," agendas or preferences but rather the ability to buy support. In contrast, programmatic linkages provide much stronger linkages as they rely on the creation and maintenance of public policies and goods. The same tools required to create and maintain programmatic goods are also essential in elite cohesion and punishment of defection. The subsequent feedback loop establishes policy stability once again reassuring bargaining partners.

4.2.1.4 Party advancement

Elite cohesion is also enforced when the party and not the dictator has control over who gets promoted, how they get promoted and into what roles. In more personalistic regimes, advancement in the party or regime is based on loyalty not to policy platforms or ideals, but to the whims of the dictator. Such elites are more likely to be shortsighted or only interested in their own standing. This provides more opportunities for a dictator to weaken party control and more flexibility abandoning bargains made with other regimes.

4.2.2 Legislative Strength:

The legislative strength index is comprised of four measures: whether the executive can be removed by the legislature, whether the executive can dissolve the legislature, the ability of the executive to appoint cabinet minister, and the ability of the executive to dismiss cabinet ministers. Dictatorships without a legislature are scored 0, higher values indicate stronger legislatures.

4.2.2.1 Executive can be removal

As first noted by Weeks (2014), autocratic regimes where the dictator can be removed subjects the dictator to audience costs increasing the likelihood that a dictator will only

select himself into conflicts the regime are likely to win and where the issue area is directly related to the national interests of the regime. Hence, regimes where the dictator can be removed should be more reliable bargaining partners

4.2.2.2 Legislature permanence

Following a similar logic of the benefits of permanent party bureaucracy, regimes with permanent legislative bodies assist regimes in bargain making. Regimes suffering from a weak or non-exist legislature will also suffer from elites whose survival depends on maintaining the good graces of the dictator. Such elites are more likely to cave into the demands of the dictator and bend to his every whim. In regimes with permanent legislatures, members are likely only selected once they have demonstrated sufficient loyalty to the party and the legislative body. Moreover, such elites are more likely to be institutionalized into the legislative body and hence more likely to put the needs of the legislature above short-term personal ambitions. These factors create policy inertia making the crafting or abandonment of policy much more difficult than in more personalistic regimes. Ultimately, reassuring bargaining partners that once a deal is made the regime will respect said deal.

4.2.2.3 Confirmation powers over appointment and dismissal

Similar to the role of party advancement in securing elite cohesion among party members, confirmation powers over appointment and dismissal ensures that cabinet ministers and advisors are loyal to the regime and not the dictator. Short sighted dictators might be tempted to select cabinet minister and advisors who are loyal to him and can him advance his agenda irrespective of their skills or expertise. Such ill-skilled cabinet ministers would in turn follow the dictators every whim as their positions depends on sycophancy. In regimes where the legislature has control over appointment and dismissal cabinet ministers are more likely to be institutionalized into the regime, supporting policies beneficial to the regime

and not merely short-term goals or aims of the dictator. Providing yet another avenue of confidence for bargaining partners.

4.2.3 Executive Restrictions:

The executive restrictions index is comprised of two measures: degree to which the executive respects the constitution, degree to which the executive enjoys bribes. As with the other two composite indexes higher values are associated with higher levels of executive restrictions

4.2.3.1 Respect of "constitution"

Many autocratic regimes have constitutions that outline the duties, responsibilities, and limits of the executive. While these constitutions may not establish sufficient, protect of the rule of law nor outline the limits of the regime these constitutions do provide some guidance over governance. The constitution of the People's Republic of China outlines term limits for the President, how he is elected, how he can be removed and how the constitution can be amended. Weak as it may be the degree to which the dictator respects the constitution and the few limits placed on him may serve as another layer of assurance to would be bargaining partners.

4.2.3.2 Ubiquity of bribes

In more personalistic autocratic regimes the dictator is more likely to give favors in exchange for bribes, kickbacks, or other material inducements to himself or his family. In such regimes policy stability is fragile as the exchange of money for favors does not guarantee policy consistency. In regimes where bribes are rare policy stability is more likely because the dictator and elites must provide public goods by way of policy making.

For each composite index, I normalized each measure on a scale of 0 to 1 and reordered the scale such that higher values were associated with higher levels of party strength, legislative

strength, and executive restrictions. These composite indexes are then broken into terciles, "High, Medium and Low." As mentioned, my dataset is directed dyad allowing me to create a combined variable for each index. "HH" if both are high, "MM" if both are medium, "LL" if both low, "DD" if both are democracies, and "Mixed" if otherwise. In the second model, "DH" refers to a directed dyad when one is "High" and the other is a democracy.

4.2.4 Control Variables

The dataset also relies on several control variables. To control for variations in strength I rely on the Composite Index of National Capability (CINC).[6] Each dyad has a variable of the CINC score for state A, state B and the ratio of relative strength. These variables will control for the simple fact that strong states are more likely to be bellicose or resolved against a weaker opponent. To control for the general phenomenon that states closer to each other are more likely to go enter a MID, I include a binary variable whether the dyad boarders each other and a variable for the log distance between the dyad. Lastly, dyads that share an expansive alliance portfolio are unlikely to enter conflicts with one another regardless of regime type. To control for foreign policy similarities, treaty obligations, and alliances I rely on the dyads Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) score.[7]

4.3 Results

The results in Table 4.1 illiterates the impact of homogenous tercile dyads on MID initiation. The reference group are Mixed dyads for each model. As explained above, I rely on dyad fixed effects to control for dyad specific effects that persist across time. The dependent variable is a binary variable testing whether a MID was initiated by "State A" during the

[6]David Singer, John Bremer, and John Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820–1965," in *Peace, War, and Numbers*, ed. Bruce Russet (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972), 115–32.

[7]Daina Chiba, Jesse C. Johnson, and Brett Ashley Leeds, "Careful Commitments: Democratic States and Alliance Design," *The Journal of Politics* 77, no. 4 (October 1, 2015): 968–82.

corresponding year. Most MIDs are short lasting less than a month, for those MIDs lasting over a year the MID initiation variable records a value of 0 in the subsequent years of a conflict. As my theory tests the impact of domestic institutions on MID initiation by way of increasing bargaining confidence during crises leading up to a MID and not the role of domestic institutions on solving information asymmetry or commitment problems occurring during a war such encoding is consistent with the hypothesis testing of this project.

As predicted by hypothesis 1, model (1) demonstrates dyads that exhibit high levels of party strength are significantly less likely to enter a MID. Compared to "Mixed" party strength dyads are 44% less likely to enter a MID which holds at 95% confidence level. Consistent with the expansive democratic peace literature, democratic dyads are 52% less likely to enter a MID. Both "Mid" and "Low" party strength dyads are indistinguishable from "Mixed" party strength dyads. This effect is independent of the dyads ATOP score suggesting that this effect is not merely a result of similar regimes "flocking" together.

Partially consistent with hypothesis 2, model (2) demonstrates that dyads where both states have strong legislatures relative to the dictator are significantly less likely to enter a MID. Compared dyads where each state has differing levels of legislative strength "HH" dyads are 54% less likely enter a MID. This result is consistent with the main finding of Weeks (2014). As detailed in the literature review chapter that project was tested the role of audience costs on dictators of party-based regimes. This finding expands on Weeks' initial finding, suggesting that if regimes with strong legislatures, find themselves in a crisis the ability to remove the dictator increases confidence in bargains as legislatures can carry out punishment against a dictator who reneges on high level foreign policy preferences of elites. We can further be confident over these findings as Democratic dyads are the only other dyad type that shows this same decrease in MID propensity. Both low-low and mid-mid dyad pairs are indistinguishable from mixed dyads at the 95% confidence level.

Inconsistent with hypothesis 2, model (3) fails to show a difference between a statistical difference between Mixed dyad regimes and those with high levels of executive restrictions.

Table 4.1: Test of Hypothesis 1 and 2

	Dependent variable: MID initiation		
	mzinit		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
DD Party Strength	−0.738*** (0.135)		
HH Party Strength	−0.579** (0.243)		
LL Party Strength	0.268 (0.234)		
MM Party Strength	−0.094 (0.179)		
DD Legislative Strength		−0.742*** (0.135)	
HH Legislative Strength		−0.782*** (0.247)	
LL Legislative Strength		−0.605* (0.316)	
MM Legislative Strength		0.053 (0.206)	
DD Executive constraints			−0.730*** (0.135)
HH Executive constraints			0.752 (0.627)
LL Executive constraints			0.071 (0.142)
MM Executive constraints			−0.761*** (0.193)
CINC score state 1	1.542 (1.163)	1.340 (1.174)	1.385 (1.169)
CINC score state 2	5.058*** (1.511)	4.905*** (1.547)	4.917*** (1.525)
Initiator Share	0.279* (0.158)	0.279* (0.156)	0.278* (0.157)
MajMaj	2.055*** (0.450)	1.982*** (0.495)	2.064*** (0.469)
MinMaj	0.790*** (0.302)	0.779** (0.304)	0.823*** (0.303)
MajMin	1.364*** (0.220)	1.357*** (0.217)	1.397*** (0.218)
Border states	1.139* (0.614)	1.195** (0.606)	1.185* (0.614)
Log Distance	−0.221*** (0.075)	−0.212*** (0.074)	−0.215*** (0.075)
ATOP	−0.439*** (0.143)	−0.437*** (0.141)	−0.421*** (0.142)
Time	−2.363*** (0.156)	−2.378*** (0.158)	−2.380*** (0.159)
Time^2	0.318*** (0.037)	0.320*** (0.037)	0.320*** (0.037)
Time^3	−0.015*** (0.003)	−0.015*** (0.003)	−0.015*** (0.003)
Constant	−0.322 (0.670)	−0.353 (0.662)	−0.369 (0.672)
Observations	807,078	807,078	807,078
R^2	0.480	0.480	0.480
χ^2 (df = 16)	11,254.620***	11,257.530***	11,265.280***

Mixed dyads are Reference group *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

These results suggest that fellow autocracies are less concerned with the actions of the dictator and his commitment to pseudo-rule of law norms but rather gain confidence from the ability of a strong institutionalized party and legislature to punish the dictator if he

violates the policy preferences of the regime. Moreover, it could be the case that this measure is too opaque for bargaining partners and thus is not a reliable tool to assess the likelihood a regime will respect agreements.

As a check of robustness, I will now test whether regimes with institutionalized parties are more likely to reach agreements with democracies. As mentioned above institutionalized parties could both negatively or positively impact MID propensity with democratic regimes. The policy inertia afforded party regimes could make these regimes "stubborn" when faced with a democratic opponent should trust not be established between the two regimes. As democratic regimes have a general advantage against autocratic opponents I am also including binary variables for Low-Democratic and Mid-Democratic dyads.[8] As predicted by hypothesis 3b, table 3.2 demonstrates that democratic-party dyads are more likely enter a conflict that other Mixed dyads. Democratic-High dyads are 61% more likely to enter a MID compared to Mixed dyads. Other autocratic-democratic dyads are indistinguishable from Mixed dyads at the 95% confidence level. In the appendix to this chapter, I also test whether the direction of the dyad e.g., democratic-high vs high-democratic has an effect. However, with directionality included, the results fail to find a pacifying effect.

4.4 Discussion

As the democratic world faces new threats and challenges to its legitimacy, the autocratic world has managed to find its own "separate peace." Contrary to the optimism of IR scholars 30 years ago autocratic regimes have become increasingly resilient and at the same time a new wave of democratic backsliding has occurred. The results of this analysis suggest an

[8]Kenneth Schultz, "Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy," Cambridge University Press, July 2001,; Kenneth A. Schultz, "Domestic Opposition and Signaling in International Crises," *The American Political Science Review* 92, no. 4 (1998): 829–44; Kenneth A. Schultz, "Do Democratic Institutions Constrain or Inform? Contrasting Two Institutional Perspectives on Democracy and War," *International Organization* 53, no. 02 (1999): 233–66; Kenneth A. Schultz and Barry R. Weingast, "The Democratic Advantage: The Institutional Sources of State Power in International Competition," 2003.

Table 4.2: Test of Hypothesis 3

	Dependent variable:
	mzinit
DD Party Strength	-0.482^{***} (0.164)
HH Party Strength	-0.297 (0.240)
LL Party Strength	0.485^{**} (0.246)
MM Party Strength	0.125 (0.182)
DH Party Strength	0.477^{***} (0.133)
LD Party Strength	0.239 (0.150)
MD Party Strength	0.173 (0.144)
CINC score state 1	1.135 (1.169)
CINC score state 2	4.626^{***} (1.505)
Initiator Share	0.280^{*} (0.156)
MajMaj	2.062^{***} (0.426)
MinMaj	0.810^{***} (0.300)
MajMin	1.377^{***} (0.221)
Border states	1.175^{**} (0.599)
Log Distance	-0.218^{***} (0.073)
ATOP	-0.344^{**} (0.141)
Time	-2.365^{***} (0.156)
Time^2	0.319^{***} (0.037)
Time^3	-0.015^{***} (0.003)
Constant	-0.649 (0.665)
Observations	807,078
R^2	0.481
χ^2	$11{,}290.660^{***}$ (df = 19)

Note: Mixed dyads are reference group *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

additional challenge for liberal democracies and American foreign policy. Tools implemented by autocratic regimes with institutionalized parties to strength the regime has the benefit of decreasing conflicts with other party-based regimes. This may present challenges for the United States' future ability to triangulate and isolate rising autocratic powers. Further, the inability of democracies to form bonds of trust with party-based regimes means that future disputes and crises are less likely to be solved lasting agreements but rather on a case-by-case bases.

The results of my analysis also push back on claims that port the audience costs literature to autocratic regimes. While strong legislatures in autocracies do make the regime more pacific towards other party-based regimes, it is more likely the case that this is a result of institutionalizing elites and party members thereby creating incentives for party members and the dictator to ensure policy stability rather than shortsighted policies that benefit the dictator. This policy stability creates an insurance policy for autocratic bargaining partners create bilateral lock-in. Further, study is needed on the role of parties in producing peace among autocratic regimes with special attention to economic and international institutions. Lastly, renewed attention should be given to the role of parties in creating and fostering the democratic peace.

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4.6 Appendix

Table 4.3: Further test of Hypothesis 3

	Dependent variable:
	mzinit
Direct DD Party Strength	-0.481^{***} (0.164)
Direct DH Party Strength	0.281^{*} (0.154)
Direct DL Party Strength	-0.051 (0.212)
Direct DM Party Strength	0.029 (0.190)
Direct HD Party Strength	0.650^{***} (0.166)
Direct LD Party Strength	0.479^{***} (0.175)
Direct MD Party Strength	0.313^{*} (0.183)
Direct HH Party Strength	-0.298 (0.241)
Direct LL Party Strength	0.486^{**} (0.246)
Direct MM Party Strength	0.126 (0.182)
CINC score state 1	1.251 (1.241)
CINC score state 2	4.330^{***} (1.388)
Initiator Share	0.322^{**} (0.154)
MajMaj	2.094^{***} (0.409)
MinMaj	0.891^{***} (0.275)
MajMin	1.332^{***} (0.230)
Border states	1.179^{**} (0.580)
Log Distance	-0.217^{***} (0.071)
ATOP	-0.348^{**} (0.142)
Time	-2.372^{***} (0.156)
Time^2	0.320^{***} (0.037)
Time^3	-0.015^{***} (0.003)
Constant	-0.665 (0.649)
Observations	807,078
R^2	0.483
χ^2	$11{,}319.110^{***}$ (df = 22)

Note: Mixed dyads are reference group *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

The directed test of hypothesis 3 does shed some interesting results. At the 95% level we see that the MID propensity of a democratic initiator against a party autocratic opponent is indistinguishable from other mixed dyads. However, dyads with a party initiator are nearly 100% more likely to result in a militarized dispute. This provides evidence that it

is democratic regimes that are more skeptical of the trustworthiness of party-based regimes than the reverse. Future research explore this observation further to better determine the root of this trust asymmetry.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

In July 2021, the Chinese Communist Party retweeted a video calling for nuclear attacks against Japan, should Japan come to the aid of Taiwan in the event China attempted to annex Taiwan. Subsequently, in October Russia and China participated in a joint military operation circling the islands of Japan. Joint cooperation between Russia/Soviet Union and China is not novel. However, by the 1960's these relations had soured. Driven by Mao's perpetual paranoia of ousting by members of the Chinese Politburo, Mao escalated tensions with the Soviet Union to maintain revolutionary momentum and claim the mantle as the true success to the October Revolution. Mao's fears of ousting regime insiders, and subsequent hostility towards the Soviet Union ultimately led to the withdrawal of Soviet specialists from China. Both Mao and Khrushchev understood the security implications of the Sino-Soviet split, but for Mao the threat of domestic factors were more precedent and escalated hostilities continued until his death.[1] Despite the more intense security environment the Soviet Union and China failed to balance against the United States. Why have Putin and Jinping succeeded where Mao and Khrushchev failed?

The theory and evidence presented in this dissertation provide insight into this discrepancy. Dictators of personalistic regimes are under intense pressure to mitigate coup risk. This increases the likelihood that the personalistic dictator will make short-sighted and ad-hoc

[1]Sergey Radchenko, Two Suns in the Heavens: The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967, 1st edition (Washington, D.C: Stanford University Press, 2009)

decisions. These decisions not only impact the economic, domestic, political, and military health of the regime but dramatically decrease the trustworthiness of the regime. When a dispute emerges between two personalistic regimes, the lack of institutionalized constraints makes pre-crisis and long-lasting bargains difficult. Absent bargain making regimes more likely to settle disputes with conflict.

Party bases autocracies can avoid this fate because the institutionalized parties make long term and reliable bargains possible. The same regime lengthening institutions that provide information to regime insiders, transforms the regime into one that must rely on policy making and consensus building for regime survival. Elites in these regimes place the regime and party above their own short-term gains, as elites who chose to place their own well-being above that of the party will be expelled from the party or have their career advancements limited. The policy inertia makes these regimes more trustworthy and subsequently makes bargain and attractive alternative to conflict. These claims are supported by the statistical data I have collected showing a 44% decrease in MID propensity. As the number of party institutionalized regimes increases we should expect to see this new separate peace increase.

5.2 Future Research

Further researchers should also explore why democratic regimes fail to trust party-based regimes and in fact are more bellicose towards them. This maybe a result of democratic regimes failing to understand or appreciate the policy inertia afforded to regime because of institutionalized parties. As personalistic dictators are freer to make ad-hoc decisions, democracies-the U.S. in particular- may find negotiating with personalistic dictators easier. Whereas the heightened of mistrust existing between autocracies and democracies, coupled with the extensive time party-based regimes make on policy making may come across to democratic regimes as filibustering. This research may pave the way for democratic regimes to understand the internal politics of party-based regimes.

5.3 Broader Implications

Further researchers should also explore why democratic regimes fail to trust party-based regimes and in fact are more bellicose towards them. This maybe a result of democratic regimes failing to understand or appreciate the policy inertia afforded to regime because of institutionalized parties. As personalistic dictators are freer to make ad-hoc decisions, democracies-the U.S. in particular- may find negotiating with personalistic dictators easier. Whereas the heightened of mistrust existing between autocracies and democracies, coupled with the extensive time party-based regimes make on policy making may come across to democratic regimes as filibustering. This research may pave the way for democratic regimes to understand the internal politics of party-based regimes.

Recent research has indicated that party-based autocratic regimes are not only longer lasting but increasing in numbers. If this is the case researchers should continue to explore variations in autocracies and better refine the categorical indices of autocratic regimes. One solution as presented in this dissertation is to rely on individual measures of authoritarianism to better understand how they impact survivability and international trustworthiness.

Future work should also explore the role of sub-national forces in these regimes. Not all power players in the nation are regime insiders. Having a better understand of how party insiders assuage the concerns of these actors may better help us understand the role of pacifying the state. Research from both Weeks and this project indicate that party-based regimes are naturally more pacific the use of individual measures from sources like V-Dem may help us better understand the role of sub-national forces and actors.

Finally, policy makers and intelligence agencies should avoid lumping all autocracies into a single category. The variation between autocratic regimes produces variation in foreign policy making. As a result, actions that may be hostile or diversionary by one regime maybe sincere foreign policy making in another. This is especially important, if in fact these regimes have formed their own separate peace. Triangular diplomacy is unlikely to work to manage

relations between different rivals to the United States. In short, the growing number of rivals to America's great status power are more likely to work with each other than against the U.S., this necessitates the U.S. to adopt better strategies to of coercive diplomacy in the coming decades.

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