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Protest Beats Manipulation
Exploring Sources of Interparty Competition under Competitive and Hegemonic Authoritarianism

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Abstract

Electoral authoritarian rulers face a potential strategic dilemma. They need to contain the uncertainty of national elections and they need to maintain a minimum of popular support. Yet, achieving the former through electoral manipulation may hurt the latter. In the face of this hypothetical dilemma, the paper poses the empirical question whether electoral manipulation constitutes an effective strategy to keep levels of competitiveness low. It also examines the main alternative political explanation of authoritarian election results: the protest mobilization by opposition actors. In its statistical explorations, the paper relies largely on an original dataset that covers (almost) the universe of authoritarian elections in the world from 1980 through 2002 (N=197). Since the relative effectiveness of manipulation and protest may be context-dependent, the paper traces their effects by segmenting the sample into competitive and hegemonic regimes. Essentially, it finds, quite surprisingly, that levels of electoral manipulation and levels of electoral competitiveness are largely unrelated —while levels of opposition protest are associated with dramatic differences in electoral outcomes.

Resumen

Los regímenes autoritarios electorales enfrentan un dilema potencial. Tienen que contener la incertidumbre de las elecciones por medio de la manipulación, al tiempo que necesitan mantener un mínimo de apoyo popular. En la medida que la ciudadanía reclama elecciones democráticas, las exigencias de control y de legitimidad pueden entrar en conflicto. Ante este dilema hipotético, el presente documento examina la pregunta empírica si la manipulación electoral representa una estrategia efectiva para comprimir los niveles de competitividad interpartidaria. También pone a prueba la hipótesis alternativa más prominente en la explicación de resultados electorales no democráticos: la movilización de la protesta por parte de la oposición. En sus exploraciones estadísticas, el documento se apoya en una base de datos original que cubre (casi) el universo de elecciones autoritarias en el mundo de 1980 a 2002 (N=197). Como los efectos tanto de la manipulación como de la protesta pueden variar de acuerdo a sus contextos, el documento los examina segmentando su muestra de casos en regímenes competitivos y hegemónicos. Sus dos hallazgos centrales son bastante sorprendentes. Por un lado, los niveles de manipulación no tienen relación sistemática con los niveles de competencia; por otro, los niveles de protesta sí varían de manera muy dramática con los niveles subsecuentes de competencia electoral.

Introduction

Electoral authoritarian rulers face a potential strategic dilemma. They need to contain the uncertainty of national elections and they need to maintain a minimum of popular support. Yet, achieving the former through electoral manipulation may hurt the latter, with the net result being unclear. In the face of this hypothetical dilemma, the present paper addresses the empirical question whether electoral manipulation actually is, or is not, an effective strategy to keep opposition parties weak, and thus levels of electoral competitiveness low. In this sense, its motivating research question is *x*-centered. It is focused on the effects of a determinate explanatory variable *x* (here, electoral manipulation), rather than the causes of a determinate dependent variable *y* (here, electoral competitiveness). Yet, as any serious *x*-centered analysis, it cannot but take into account alternative explanations of *y*, the supposed consequences *x*. Here, my explanatory favorite of electoral competitiveness, regime manipulation, shall compete against its closest competitor, opposition protest.[1]

I will explore the sources of electoral competitiveness in electoral authoritarian regimes largely on the basis of my own, original dataset that covers (almost) the universe of authoritarian elections in the world from 1980 through 2002 (N=197). Since the relative effectiveness of regime manipulation and opposition protest may be context-dependent, I examine their effects by separating competitive and hegemonic authoritarian regimes. The resulting segmented sample of authoritarian elections contains 128 competitive elections (75 legislative and 53 presidential contests) and 69 hegemonic elections (48 legislative and 21 presidential contests).

My analysis will proceed in five steps. In the first three analytical sections, I will outline the contradictory consequences of electoral manipulation (its redistributive benefits *vs.* its legitimacy costs), the hybrid nature of authoritarian elections (fed by regime manipulation and voter preferences), and the possible context-dependence of manipulative effectiveness (in competitive *vs.* hegemonic regimes). The subsequent two empirical sections present the data and discuss the findings.

1. The Strategic Dilemma of Electoral Authoritarianism

To thrive and survive, electoral authoritarian regimes need to win, and keep winning, the electoral contests they convoke. How can they do so? What can regimes do to win elections under authoritarian conditions of their own making? On the one hand, they can try to persuade citizens that the regime

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[1] On the distinction between *x*-centered and *y*-centered analyses, see Gerring (2001: 137).

they preside and the government they command deserve genuine voluntary support. On the other, should their persuasive enchantments falter, they can tamper with the institutions and practices of electoral governance to ensure that any given election produces the result it is supposed to: their resounding confirmation in power.

Popular support and regime manipulation are substitutes. If regimes have more of one, they need less of the other. Yet there are limits to substitution. While other types of dictatorships (in particular, military regimes and totalitarian regimes) may know few constraints on the intensity of repression they unleash on their subjects, electoral authoritarian regimes cannot rely on manipulation alone. They engage in a game of contradictions. Officially, they give citizens a voice. Informally, they retain the capacity of distorting "the will of the people" as it emanates from the ballot box. Their rule is built on fraudulent foundations. Playing the game of democracy (on the front stage), they juggle (behind the scenes) with the tools of authoritarianism. However, while manipulation (presumably) constitutes a valuable strategy to contain the uncertainty of electoral results, it suffers the perennial possibility of over-extension. At some ill-defined point, it may turn counter-productive.

People may support a political regime for many reasons. The sources of regime legitimacy may be procedural (liberal democracy), revolutionary (independence, the creation of a new society), transcendental (divine inspiration), traditional (hereditary succession), communitarian (nation building, anti-imperialism, ethnic mobilization), charismatic (magical leadership), or substantive (material welfare, public integrity, law and order, external security). Yet, to the extent that citizens *(a)* do value democratic political goods and *(b)* perceive the existing political regime to violate democratic precepts, they create a dilemma for electoral authoritarian regimes. By manipulating the electoral arena, electoral authoritarian incumbents may compensate for their deficits of popular support. At the same time, they aggravate these deficits to the extent that manipulation makes democratic voters turn their backs to the regime. Manipulative substitutes for popular legitimacy may thus end up deepening the very problem they are supposed to solve. The dual goals of control and legitimacy may turn into "conflicting imperatives" (Gould, 1999). To survive, regimes need both, but their efforts to obtain one hurt their chances of attaining the other.

Figure 1 (in the appendix) illustrates the space of possible outcomes. The vertical axis depicts the redistributive gains of manipulative maneuvers, the horizontal axis their legitimacy costs. To provide a common measure, both dimensions may be conceived of in concrete electoral terms, with the *y* axis depicting the vote shares rulers gain through manipulation, and the *x* axis the vote shares they lose through manipulation (either because voters stay at home, vote for the opposition, or take part in activities that mitigate the impact of manipulation). Net effects of manipulation are neutral along the

line that evenly divides this two-dimensional space at 45 degrees. Along this neutrality line, the costs and benefits of manipulation hold a balance, whether they are small or large. Below the neutrality line, delegitimizing effects prevail; above, redistributive benefits predominate. In the lower triangle, net effects of manipulation on the vote share of the ruling party are negative, in the upper triangle they are positive.

If citizens are indifferent towards liberal-democratic goods, or unwilling to recognize the existing regime as authoritarian, redistributive maneuvers are costless and incumbents are free to deploy their authoritarian strategies at their convenience, moving up and down the horizontal axis unhampered by cost considerations. By contrast, if citizens are firm in their democratic convictions, convinced of the non-democratic nature of the existing regime as well as somehow (miraculously) able to counteract the deleterious effects of manipulation, authoritarian maneuvers become pointless; by picking from the repertoire of manipulation, rulers do nothing but choosing a location at the horizontal axis of legitimacy costs. The Northeastern and Southwestern corners of the graphic show extremes of these polar possibilities: effective and cheap manipulation (NE) *vs.* ineffective and costly manipulation (SW).

In these opposite corners, regimes face clear structures of incentives. In the Northwestern area of authoritarian comfort, the reasonable thing to do is to recur to manipulation. In the Southeastern area of democratic resistance, the reasonable course is to cede to democratization. In general, as long as the net effects of manipulation stay close to either the vertical or the horizontal axis, authoritarian rulers will know what to do. The structure of choice turns more uncertain as net effects approximate zero. The closer they lie to the line of neutrality, the more difficult it is for the regime to decide upon its choice of instruments.

Figure 1 shows two polar situations in which the net effects of manipulation fall close to the line of neutrality. On the one side, rulers may expand or intensify their measures of authoritarian control in a manner that yields few redistributive benefits. At the same time, the legitimacy costs of their limited maneuvering may be limited, too, as citizens may be distracted or forgiving. The Southwestern area points to such a situation of small contradictory effects. On the other side, ruling parties may be able to manipulate the electoral arena in a highly effective manner, either by securing large vote swings, or earning decisive margins, or freezing a favorable status quo. At the same time, voters may be alert as well as allergic against authoritarian manipulation. They may respond with massive defection, active mobilization, and vote swings towards the challengers. In such situations of large contradictory effects, as illustrated by the Northeastern area of our figure, rulers act under the promise of decisive gains and the simultaneous threat of decisive losses. With the final and precise balance of both being uncertain, the situation turns indeterminate. It places rulers

before a true dilemma in which whatever they do to further their goals of survival may end up undermining these very goals.

According to Robert Dahl's famous (1971) account of the history of modern democracy, socio-economic modernization involved a gradual progression from the Northeastern corner, where benefits of repression are high and its costs low, to the Southwestern corner, where benefits of repression are low and its costs high. The decision-theoretic implication is compelling: Actor incentives work in a consistent, convergent manner in favor of democratization. As the costs of democracy decline and the costs of authoritarianism go up, democratization obtains (see, in particular, Dahl, 1971: 16, Figure 1.4). Opposition actors usually try hard to push electoral authoritarian regimes Southeast, towards the corner most favorable to democratization. Yet, even if they succeed in dragging a regime out of the Northeastern area of authoritarian comfort, they may very well get stuck in some messy spot close to the diagonal line of neutral consequences and indeterminate choices.

All these somewhat entangled considerations are prolegomena to pose the *x*-centered research question that motivates the present paper: Within the hypothetical space of possible consequences, where can we situate strategies of electoral manipulations in the real world? Which are the empirical consequences of authoritarian maneuvers? How secure can ruling parties be about their capacity to contain opposition forces through electoral manipulation? To what extent can they trust their ability to forge artificial majorities through authoritarian measures? Inversely, how real is the possibility that their manipulative acts are ineffectual or even counter-productive instruments of control? How fancy is the idea of ruling parties facing a strategic dilemma when choosing between the alternatives of manipulation and reform?

2. The Hybrid Nature of Authoritarian Elections

The claim that authoritarian manipulation may bear legitimacy costs that diminish its electoral efficacy involves the assumption that authoritarian election results not children of fraud alone. Rather, they are the combined product of regime manipulation and citizen preferences. The relative weight of either component may vary. It is clear, though, that the official outcomes of authoritarian elections do not arise from the simple aggregation of citizen decisions, as they do under democratic conditions. Nor are they a simple function of regime manipulation, as they are under conditions of single-party rule. In EA regimes, neither voters nor ruling parties are fully sovereign. Electoral outcomes reflect, to unknown degrees, citizen choices as well as manipulative maneuvers by the regime. Putting the hybrid nature of authoritarian election figures in simple mathematical language: the vote

shares (v) of contending parties are a function of citizen preferences (p) and electoral manipulation (m).

$$v = f(p, m) \qquad (1)$$

To simplify matters, *p* shall stand here for popular support of the incumbent party and *v*, analogously, for the vote shares of the incumbent (that manipulative maneuvers try to inflate, while striving to deflate the vote shares of opposition parties).

The two variables of regime manipulation *m* and popular support *p* directly relate to the two orthogonal effects of manipulation mapped in Figure 1. Redistributive benefits represent the intended effects of manipulation on votes, legitimacy costs its counter-intentional effects on popular support, with electoral results depending on the final balance between the two. The possibility of "legitimacy costs" of manipulation implies *p* may be a partial function of *m*. Manipulative maneuver may do more than adding or subtracting votes to the ballots deposited by citizens. They may do more than distorting voter preferences. They may mold these preferences in a way that counteracts the manipulative intentions. As a result, citizen support for the ruling party may be partially endogenous to the level of manipulation.

$$p = f(m) \qquad (2)$$

Abstracting from other sources of preference change, such as the effects of electoral campaigning, we may conceive the level of popular regime support at election time (for which we keep the notation *p*) as the product of initial, pre-electoral support levels (p_i) and citizens' tolerance for authoritarian measures (τ).

$$p = \tau \, p_i \qquad (3)$$

The mediating factor τ may vary with the depth of voters' democratic commitment and alertness. If citizens are sympathetic to authoritarianism, τ is larger than 1 and manipulative maneuvers will augment the regime's reservoir of support. If citizens are indifferent to or ignorant of authoritarian manipulation, τ is equal to 1 and will leave the original level of regime support unchanged. However, if citizens are democratic and watchful, τ descends below 1 and authoritarian measures provoke reductions in support levels. In the (somewhat unrealistic) extreme case that citizens are entirely allergic against authoritarianism and massively refuse to either go to the polls or vote for a manifestly authoritarian incumbent, τ approximates zero and election results have to be manufactured primarily through manipulation.

By conceiving the "legitimacy costs" of regime manipulation as a simple function of voter intolerance towards authoritarianism (as expressed in the electoral arena), I rely on a narrowly normative conception of political

legitimacy that excludes instrumental considerations, such as personal gain and personal security. The contemporary literature on the political economy of authoritarianism tends to employ the broad notion of popular "loyalty" as a shorthand for factual acquiescence, irrespective of motives. As loyalty, in such a broad, behavioral understanding, may be nurtured by diverse material motives, such as fear and access to patronage, it tends to be *positively* associated with repression (within certain limits), rather than negatively (see, in particular, Wintrobe, 1998). According to my normative understanding of legitimacy, modifications of voter preferences through force (voter intimidation) and money (vote buying) constitute intended consequences of manipulation, rather than independent sources of regime sustenance.

My narrowly liberal-democratic notion of legitimacy focuses its attention on possible counterproductive consequences of electoral manipulation. To the authoritarian ruler, the inbuilt dilemma is transparent: the higher the legitimacy costs of manipulation, the greater the need for manipulation, the higher the legitimacy costs of manipulation, and so forth. A perfect circle —yet not the only problem rulers have to consider when assorting their repertoire of manipulative strategies. In addition to the variability and partial endogeneity of legitimacy costs, a further complication concerns the variable nature of redistributive benefits (illustrated in Figure 1).

Just like everyone else, like all mortals in the world of strategic interaction and stochastic uncertainty, authoritarian incumbents choose strategies, not outcomes.[2] They decide upon the bundle of authoritarian strategies to be deployed and the intensity of electoral manipulation to be implemented. They do not, however, fully control the *effectiveness* of their strategic moves. Due to political, administrative, or financial reasons, they may suffer severe agency losses along the extended chain of command that runs from the centralized design of manipulative strategies to their local execution. Electoral regimes that lack the personnel, infrastructure, and resources to put their authoritarian strategies into effective practice, may eventually enlarge spaces of interparty competition "by default" (Way, 2006), as the benign outcome of their political and administrative failure.

In part, the effectiveness of authoritarian manipulation is endogenous to voters' authoritarian tolerance. Through acts of protest and vigilance, democratic voters may well subvert, or even revert, the electoral impact of manipulation. In response to manipulative maneuvers they find repulsive, they may join the opposition campaign, they may engage in civic education, they may monitor the confection of voter rolls, they may denounce acts of intimidation and other violations of the electoral law, they may organize comprehensive election monitoring, they may take bribes, and still vote their

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[2] In his Indeterminacy and Society, Russell Hardin examines the strategic and normative implications of this simple and compelling, yet often overlooked, insight: "In strategic interaction I choose a strategy, not an outcome" (Hardin 2003: ix).

conscience, et cetera. In addition to the vote losses authoritarian strategies may induce (the "legitimacy costs" of manipulation), the vigilant resistance of citizens may reduce the redistributive impact of authoritarian maneuvers (the "effectiveness" of manipulation). Put simply:

$$\varepsilon = f\ (\tau) \qquad\qquad\qquad (4)$$

If we multiply a chosen level, or level change, of manipulation *m* by the redistributive effectiveness of electoral manipulation (denoted by the Greek letter *ε*), we obtain the actual impact authoritarian manipulation bears on electoral outcomes. If *ε* equals 1, the implementation of manipulative strategies takes its planned course, without any efficiency losses. If it is higher than 1, manipulative strategies overshoot, with the concomitant risk of producing embarrassing victories for the incumbent. If *ε* is lower than 1, manipulation falls short of its goals, which may put the survival of the authoritarian regime at risk. Finally, if *ε* is zero, the direct net effect of manipulation is nil.

If we simply add the legitimacy costs of manipulation (the product of regime support *p* and voters' authoritarian tolerance *τ*) to the redistributive gains of manipulation (the product of *m* and the efficiency factor *ε*), the authoritarian electoral equation, the vote function of the ruling party, reads as follows:

$$v = \tau\ p_i + \varepsilon\ m \qquad\qquad\qquad (5)$$

At this point, this simple additive function (constructed along the lines laid out in Figure 1) is no more than a heuristic device that may serve to precise, at a high level of generality, the causal dynamics of authoritarian elections. As a matter of course, if we would know the values of the mediating factors *τ* and *ε*, plus those of any of the two unknown variables *p* and *m*, the equation would be easy to solve for any given election. If we would know these values. But of course we don't. What we can do nevertheless, and what we will try to in the subsequent pages, is to find partial proxies for parts of the equation in order to see, in a cautioned and tentative manner, whether strategies of manipulation tend to fulfil the condition of manipulative success implied in the equation:

$$\varepsilon\ m > p_i - \tau\ p_i \qquad\qquad\qquad (6)$$

The redistributive vote gains of manipulation must be larger than the vote losses induced by its legitimacy costs. If they are, we should see variations in levels of manipulation co-vary in a positive and lineal fashion with variations in the vote shares of incumbent parties. In case we do find such pattern of association, we may take it as prima facie evidence of manipulative efficiency (even when admitting for alternative interpretations). In case we don't, our

trust in the electoral effectiveness of authoritarian manipulation may not be broken. But shaken it shall be.

3. The Context-Dependent Consequences of Manipulation

If, as stipulated above in equation 5, the vote share v of the incumbent party is the composite outcome of initial voter preferences p_i, the severity of regime manipulation m, citizens' tolerance of authoritarianism τ and the redistributive effectiveness of manipulation ε, then we must expect the causal effect of m on v to vary systematically to the extent that the three remaining variables, any of them or all of them, vary in a systematic fashion. Put differently, if regime legitimacy or any of the intervening factors τ and ε vary across contexts, the causal weight of authoritarian manipulation will be context-dependent, too.

The emerging literature on electoral authoritarian regimes has been recognizing significant variations within the broad family of electoral authoritarian regimes. In particular, such regimes vary substantively in the degree of interparty competition they admit. The distinction between "competitive" and "hegemonic" authoritarian regimes maps such variations in party-systemic competitiveness.[3] In hegemonic regimes, the ruling party keeps all relevant sites of central state power under tight control. As it also holds the power of constitutional change, it acts without formal checks and balances. Due to an uncertain mix of manipulation and popularity, its vote margins are stratospheric. Opposition actors struggle at the margins, weak and disunited, perpetually torn between heroism, cooptation, and resignation. Single-party hegemony also leaves its imprint on intersubjective believes and expectations. Hopes for democratization are only modest, incremental, and long-term. As there are no viable opposition parties vying for power, alternation in government seems close to impossible, and timid anticipations of change are fraught with fears of chaos and repression.

Competitive regimes, by contrast, allow for larger amounts of electoral uncertainty. They manipulate the electoral game, but they do not control it as tightly as hegemonic regimes do. Lacking the aura of invincibility hegemonic parties possess, competitive regimes are more insecure, less institutionalized. Ruling parties keep winning the relevant elections that allow them to occupy the chief executive office. Yet their margins of victory may be small and volatile; they may lose control over the levers of constitution making; they may even fall below an absolute majority of seats in the national legislative assembly; and they may have troubles in controlling non-elected state officials, such as judges, security agents, and local election

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[3] The concept of hegemonic regimes goes back to Sartori (1976). The notion of competitive authoritarianism was introduced by Levitsky and Way (2002). For an exploration of empirical variations in competitiveness among electoral democracies and electoral authoritarian regimes, see Schedler (2004).

officials. In competitive regimes, opposition parties are still supposed to lose the big prize of the electoral game, the presidency. Yet they may win lesser prizes and they can always hope to win the uphill battle against authoritarian manipulation, to land a surprise, and dislodge the incumbent in a "stunning election" (Huntington, 1991: 174-180).

If these differences are real, electoral manipulation would be more "productive" in hegemonic regimes: lower levels of manipulation would yield higher levels of regime support at the polls, and smaller increases in manipulation would produce larger gains in electoral support. At the same time, at given levels of manipulation, hegemonic regimes would be more vulnerable to mood changes in the electorate. If indeed they rely more heavily on popular support, adverse changes in either party preferences or the authoritarian tolerance of voters may depress their vote margins more severely.

To examine the possible heterogeneity of causal effects authoritarian strategies bear on electoral results in competitive and hegemonic regimes, I will conduct the statistical explorations to be presented below on the basis of a segmented sample that separates the two subtypes of electoral authoritarian regimes.[4] My overall sample covers (almost) the universe of national legislative and presidential elections held in electoral regimes worldwide between 1980 and 2002.[5] To distinguish hegemonic from competitive regimes, I rely on two criteria: a minimum duration of ten years (since the assumption of power by the ruling coalition) and the continuous control of legislative supermajorities (with the ruling party holding at least two thirds of seats in the Lower House).

The criterion of duration relates to the institutionalized nature of hegemonic party regimes. Hegemonic parties are no shooting stars that illuminate the party system during one or two brief elections only. Founded at the end of civil war, the achievement of national independence, or the imposition of military rule, hegemonic parties aspire to rule for the long haul and they have the resources to do so, be it primarily in terms of popular legitimacy or in terms of repressive capacities.[6]

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[4] A technical reason for segmenting the sample stems from the fact that the competitive and hegemonic elections in my dataset show heterogeneous variances for most of the independent variables I study, and thus violate the assumption of homoscedasticity.

[5] To delimitate the universe of cases, I proceeded in two steps. In order to discard those regimes that are either too democratic or too dictatorial to be included in the category of electoral autocracies, I identified, in a first step, all countries that received Freedom House political rights scores between 4 and 6 during at least four consecutive years between 1980 and 2002. In a second step, from these countries located at intermediate levels of political freedom, I picked those that had held at least one full set of multiparty elections with universal suffrage for the chief executive as well as the national legislature (Lower House) (for more extensive discussions of my selection criteria, see Schedler, 2006a and 2006b).

[6] I handle the 10-year rule with certain flexibility. For instance, when Burkina Faso held its first multiparty election in 1991, only eight year had elapsed since the military coup that brought president Blaise Compaore to power. I nevertheless count the regime as hegemonic from 1991 to 2002 (when it lost its legislative supermajority).

The criterion of continuous legislative supermajorities derives from the notion that hegemonic regimes strive to assemble heterogeneous "oversized coalitions." Their rather inclusive and overpowering alliance structure permits them to be invincible, and appear invincible, in the electoral arena. In the arena of constitution making, it allows them to control the basic rules of the political game and to manipulate them at their convenience (see Magaloni 2006: 15).[7]

Table 1 (in the appendix) contains the resulting list of countries that accommodated hegemonic party regimes at some point during the period under study (1980–2002). Table 2 offers complete listing of the 197 authoritarian elections included in the dataset, 128 legislative and 69 presidential contests. Tables 3 and 4 show their regional distribution. Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa concentrate the largest numbers of competitive authoritarian elections (about a quarter each), while the Middle East & Northern Africa and South & East Asia host the lowest numbers (less than 10% each). In the world of hegemonic elections, Sub-Saharan Africa after the Cold War stands out from among the rest. Well over half of all were conducted South of the Sahara (56%). A notable fifth of hegemonic-party elections (21.7%) took place in South and East Asia, still an intriguing "storehouse of historical and contemporary electoral authoritarianism" (Case, 2006: 95). Due to the recent independence of post-Soviet countries, hegemonic elections were practically unknown in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

4. What We Can See (Obliquely): The Data

In established democracies, election after election, students of voting behaviour work hard to unearth the long-term and short-term factors, the social, political, and institutional forces that drive voter decisions. In electoral authoritarian contexts, by contrast, scholars tend to assume that the preferences and decisions of voters matter loo little to deserve extensive study. Most empirical analyses of authoritarian elections are concerned with issues of electoral manipulation. The complex logic of voter decisions has received much less attention, and the same is true for the dynamics of electoral campaigning.[8]

Plausible causal assumptions about the limited relevance of voter decisions in the face of electoral manipulation may explain in part the

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[7] Again, I grant some minor exceptions to the rule of continuous supermajorities. The governing parties of Gabon (in 1990), Guinea (in 1995), and Togo (in 1994) suffered transitory losses of their comfortable supermajorities. All three were quick to repair their electoral "accidents" and recovered their qualified legislative majorities in the subsequent elections.

[8] Notable exceptions in the study of Mexican hegemonic party rule are Greene (2007), Langston and Morgenstern (2007), and Magaloni (2006).

relative neglect of voter behavior in the study of authoritarian elections. Endemic, indeed overwhelming, information problems may explain the other part. Under non-democratic conditions, the study of electoral behavior is irredeemably hampered by the inexistence of reliable data on both its dependent variables (the choices of voters) and its independent variables (the beliefs and desires of voters). Neither can election results be taken at face value, as aggregate expressions of free citizens decisions. Nor can public opinion polls, where they exist, be taken as faithful reflections of voter attitudes. The one thing actors do know for sure after an authoritarian election (not always, but most of the times) is the official outcome. Usually, they know nothing else! No-one knows anything with reasonable certainty about *any* of the variables that form part of the vote function introduced above (equation 5). In the absence of shared knowledge claims that would be acceptable across antagonistic political communities, political actors (including international election observers) tend to engage in intense public contention about the true status of voter preferences, about the level of popular intolerance towards authoritarian strategies, and about the nature, intensity, and effectiveness of manipulation.

Authoritarian elections generate irritating mixtures of noise and silence, of rhetoric and rumor, of absolute certainty and absolute distrust, of too much and too little information. No cross-national quantitative dataset can ever do justice to the level of detail and sophistication, or to the amount of confusion and controversy, that tends to reign over local actors' efforts to draw "descriptive inferences" on levels of manipulation and legitimacy from such informational disorder. The present enterprise of disentangling the causal effect of manipulation on electoral outcomes across a medium number of cases, does not pretend to introduce radiant factual knowledge into a field marked by epistemic uncertainties. Its statistical explorations will rest modestly upon a (a) one specific measure of interparty competitiveness, (b) thin data on a small set of strategies of manipulation, and (c) partial and indirect measures of popular legitimacy.

4.1. Electoral Competitiveness

To map variations in interparty competitiveness, comparative election studies work with a broad variety of quantitative indicators. For the present purpose, I choose one simple measure: margins of victory. For legislative elections, I take the difference in seat shares between the largest and the second-largest party. For presidential elections, I use the difference in valid vote shares that separates the winning candidate from the up-runner (in the first round of presidential elections, in ballotage systems). Margins of victory are simple and intuitive. They seem relevant to political actors themselves (who may, or may not, compute Rae indices of party-systemic fractionalization or Laakso-Taagepera indices of effective numbers of parties and candidates).

In addition, margins of victory offer a straightforward lineal measure of competitiveness: the larger they are, the less competitive is the party system. As electoral authoritarian parties may reduce interparty competitiveness either by concentrating power (the creation of hegemonic party systems) or by fragmenting power (the creation of non-party systems), most conventional counts of parties suggest that more is better. Yet, higher numbers of parties may not always indicate higher levels of competitiveness. Where ruling parties block the formation and consolidation of opposition parties by promoting the boundless proliferation of nominally independent candidates, as in the Central Asian successor countries of the former Soviet Union, very high numbers of competitors are symptomatic of very low levels of competition.

As the descriptive statistics in Table 6 show, competitive regimes and hegemonic regimes differ dramatically in their mean levels of competitiveness. On average, hegemonic parties control 70.6% *more* legislative seats than their nearest competitors. The average seat advantage ruling parties enjoy in competitive regimes is only half that size, although it still looks supremely comfortable (35.6%). The difference in margins of victory between the two regime types diminishes somewhat in the presidential arena. In hegemonic regimes, regime candidates tend to defeat their closest challengers by 61.5% of valid votes, in competitive regimes, by 39.7% (see Table 6 in the appendix).

From one election to another, margins of victory may undergo dramatic changes, in competitive as well as in hegemonic regimes (cf. the high standard deviations of both variables in Table 6). Mean changes in margins of victory between elections (not reported here) bear negative signs (except for legislative elections in hegemonic regimes). This could be indicative of sustained reductions of margins from election to election. However, none of these average changes in competitiveness (that lie within a range of -5.4 to +5.0%) is significantly different from zero (bilateral t-tests). Apparently, for opposition parties to gain strength and for authoritarian rulers to lose terrain, the mere, mechanical "power of elections" (Di Palma, 1993: 85) is not enough. In and by themselves, it seems, authoritarian elections do not carry any inherent tendency of either increasing or decreasing the correlation of force between incumbents and challengers (see, however, Lindberg, 2006b).

4.2. Regime Manipulation

Given my original "x-centered" interest in assessing the (potentially contradictory and thus dilemmatic) consequences authoritarian manipulation may bear on electoral outcomes, regime strategies of manipulation constitute my primary explanatory variables. The repertoire of manipulation electoral authoritarian rulers have at their disposition is wide, multifaceted, and open (see Schedler, 2002b). In the present paper, I wish to study the individual impact of four specific strategies: physical repression, media restrictions, the

exclusion of parties and candidates, and electoral fraud (to reduce problems of endogeneity, I measure repression and media restrictions in pre-election years). Table 5 (in the appendix) provides summary descriptions of my measures (for more extensive descriptions of coding rules, coding processes, and data sources, see Schedler, 2006b).

Overall, as the descriptive statistics in Table 6 indicate, competitive and hegemonic authoritarian regimes display similar levels of electoral manipulation. The only statistically significant differences lie in their mean levels of repression and legislative exclusion. Competitive regimes are slightly more repressive, hegemonic regimes slightly more exclusionary in the legislative arena (bilateral t-tests).

4.3. Opposition Protest

In any non-democratic regime, citizen preferences and perceptions are partially endogenous to the authoritarian practices and institutions in place. Not even the most powerful and repressive totalitarian state is able to manufacture popular beliefs and values by administrative fiat. Yet, unless democratic institutions allow for the free circulation of information, we cannot know how "genuine" citizen preferences would look like. We cannot know what citizens would want, or see, or do in a counterfactual world without political coercion, distortions of public information, the banning of parties and candidates, the threat of electoral fraud, and so forth.

Authoritarian rulers may care little about the fact that the "free will" of the electorate is unknowable under non-democratic conditions. At the same time, they are likely to worry deeply about the fact that even the manufactured, empirical will of the authoritarian electorate remains fundamentally opaque to the political observer. Electoral authoritarian rulers would pay a lot (and often do) to decipher the private beliefs and desires of their subjects. However, authoritarian elections may serve to alleviate, but can never fully eliminate, the epistemic dilemma of the dictator who knows less about his people the more repressively he treats them (see Wintrobe 1998). In the end, rulers will have to face a similar epistemic challenge as comparative scholars: How to deal with structural ignorance?

Acknowledging the fundamental difficulty of observing and measuring the attitudinal variables in my authoritarian electoral equation, I take refuge in observable proxies. Lacking reliable data on "attitudinal legitimacy," I trace manifestations of "behavioral legitimacy" (Diamond, 1999): public pre-electoral protest by opposition actors. The justification for relying on protest data is simple. Even if protest activities by active minorities may bear only tenuous relations to the political attitudes of silent majorities, we may still take them as reasonable proxies (as both proximate indicators and proximate causes) of two unknown factors in the authoritarian electoral equation 5: citizen tolerance of authoritarianism τ and the effectiveness of manipulation

ε. We may plausibly read the mobilization of protest by opposition parties as a manifestation of active intolerance towards authoritarian behavior. Plausibly, we may also hypothesize protest to act as a causal factor that may erode the effectiveness of manipulative maneuvers. Either way, higher levels of opposition protest should lower the redistributive impact of given levels of regime manipulation.

From the "conflict event" data of the Tony Banks Cross-National Time Series (CNTS), I use event counts of four types of contentious action: political assassinations, riots, strikes, and anti-government demonstrations (calculating averages for the five years preceding each election).[9] In addition, I employ my own, news-based data on election protest that capture, in a coarse, dichotomous way, the intensity of pre-electoral opposition protest. From my own dataset, I also include information on the most dramatic non-violent strategy of election protest opposition actors may take recourse to: the boycott of an election. Again, Table 5 provides summary descriptions of my measures (for more extensive descriptions of coding rules, coding processes, and data sources, see Schedler, 2006c).

According to CNTS conflict event data, hegemonic regimes experience significantly lower levels of pre-electoral contention during the five years preceding national elections. They also observe significantly lower levels of pre-electoral protest and a somewhat higher incidence of opposition boycott (bilateral t-tests). Generally speaking, though, opposition actors choose more often to acquiesce, than to protest, to authoritarian elections. For a remarkable number of competitive elections, CNTS data does not register any instance of certain event categories in the five preceding years: no political assassinations (45.6%), no riots (45.6%), no general strikes (65.6%), no anti-government demonstrations (27.9%). The figures of non-events are even higher in the tranquil world of hegemonic elections: no assassinations (84.2%), no riots (59.6%), no general strikes (80.7%), no anti-government demonstrations (47.4%).

Similarly, according to my data, in competitive regimes, opposition parties actively protest 35.6% of legislative and half of presidential contests. They convoke either partial or full boycotts in 35% of legislative and 29.5% of presidential elections. In hegemonic regimes, the incidence of pre-electoral protest is even lower. It lies at 22.9% in the legislative arena and 28.6% in the presidential arena. While the boycott rate for legislative elections is similar (31.2%) to competitive elections, it is much higher for hegemonic presidential contest, where it climbs to an astounding 61.9%.

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[9] Quite evidently, the category of political assassinations is problematic, as assassinations may more often be the work of state agents (or agents licensed or tolerated by state agents) that of opposition actors.

4.4. Material Legitimacy

While I cannot measure the base level of popular regime support, I will include two indicators of short-term economic performance (growth and inflation) that may have an impact on the "material legitimacy" political regimes enjoy. From the World Development Indicators, I take annual percentage changes in GDP per capita and the Consumer Price Index. Again, to mitigate problems of endogeneity, data refer to the year preceding each elections (for descriptive statistics, see Table 6).

5. What We Can Infer (Cautiously): The Results

In the following statistical explorations, I will employ simple OLS regression to examine the lineal association between my explanatory variables (authoritarian strategies, opposition protest, and macroeconomic fluctuations) and my dependent variables (legislative and presidential margins of victory). In principle, the underlying causal expectations seem straightforward: A positive association between manipulation and vote margins would suggest that electoral manipulation is not an idle activity, but an effective tool of power. A negative association between protest and vote margins would suggest that opposition protest is not a hopeless waste of time, but an effective tool of contention. A significant association between my macroeconomic variables and interparty competitiveness would indicate that electoral authoritarian regimes are vulnerable to short-term economic fluctuations. However, before plunging into the merry presentation and interpretation of results, I wish to point towards the disquieting possibility of inverse causality.

Authoritarian elections are haunted by endogeneity (which is a problem for the statistician, and a resource for the politician). They constitute complex two-level games in which the struggle for votes (at the game level of electoral competition) is embedded in a struggle over rules (at the meta-game level of electoral reform). The two levels of competition between regime and opposition evolve in a simultaneous as well as interactive fashion. What happens at one level affects the other (see Schedler 2002a and 2006a). For my present enterprise of estimating the causal effects of manipulation on competitiveness, the close interaction between the game and the meta-game levels implies that electoral manipulation may indeed affect electoral competitiveness —and the other way round. Competition may very well affect manipulation, too. Correlations of strength between regime and opposition may a direct result of authoritarian manipulation —at the time that authoritarian manipulation may be a direct response to present or anticipated correlations of strength.

Naturally, as soon as we conceive variables as interacting, messing up their neat separation into dependent and independent factors, their patterns

of association turn ambiguous. Thus, a positive association between manipulation and margins of victory may be indicative of manipulative effectiveness —or else, of preventive manipulation, where tight authoritarian controls pretend to keep levels of opposition threat low. Similarly, a negative association between the two variables may speak of manipulative ineffectiveness —or else, of defensive manipulation, where increasing authoritarian controls respond to rising competitive threats. Analogous ambiguities hold for opposition protest. A positive relationship between protest and margins of victory may be reflective of counterproductive opposition strategies —or else, of courageous, calculating opposition actors who take to the streets when grievances are deepest and focus on electoral competition when the odds are best. Similarly, a negative relationship between protest and margins of victory may be evidence of effective contention – or else, of prudent opposition actors who recognize the futility of protest as long as regimes look too strong.

As I have been careful to select explanatory variables that are temporarily prior to the election results I want to explain, I may be minimizing problems of endogeneity. Temporal priority provides limited insurance against endogeneity, though. Human intelligence is forward-looking and their dense "local knowledge" (Geertz, 1983) may enable political actors to anticipate structural trends that take years to crystallize in the ethereal matter of election figures.

With these caveats in mind, we can begin our exploratory walk through the results of multivariate regression. I conducted separate analyses for legislative and presidential elections as well as for competitive and hegemonic regimes (excluding presidential elections in hegemonic regimes, due to the low number of cases). For each of the resulting four groups of cases, I fed separate regressions with each group of explanatory variables: regime manipulation, opposition protest, and macroeconomic fluctuations. In addition, I ran one combined model that retains all manipulation variables as well as those protest and economic variables that were significant in the separate models. Tables 7–9 (in the appendix) provide the results.

5.1. Competitive Legislative Elections

Let us begin with examining legislative elections in competitive authoritarian regimes (see Table 7). Model 1 regresses legislative margins of victory on our four manipulation variables. The result is quite stunning. Apparently, levels of electoral manipulation and levels of electoral competitiveness are unrelated. Individual B coefficients are rather low and statistically non-significant. Taken together they are not significant either and explain almost nothing (R^2=.01). Even their signs are unstable. In the combined model, only electoral fraud maintains a positive association with margins of victory. None of the four strategies turns significant.

By contrast, the protest variables included in the second model fare far better. Together, they explain more than one quarter of the variance of legislative margins of victory in competitive regimes (R^2=.28). Individually, the pre-electoral five-year averages of conflict events recorded by CNTS show no systematic relations with subsequent legislative margins of victory (and therefore are excluded from the combined model). My two election related protest measures are highly significant, though, and carry substantively large effects that are robust to the inclusion of authoritarian strategies in the combined model.

The boycott variable in my dataset has four ordinal values: full opposition participation, the issuance of boycott threats, a partial boycott by some opposition parties, and a full boycott by all relevant opposition parties. Each step in the 4-point scale from full participation to full boycott increases the ruling party's legislative margin of victory by almost 12% (according to the combined model 4). At this point, I'm agnostic about the long-term consequences of election boycotts. They may retard the prospects of democratization, as Staffan Lindberg finds (2006a). Or they may trigger democratizing reform, as Emily Beaulieu suggests (2006). The immediate negative impact of opposition boycotts on interparty competitiveness, though, is dramatic.

In a similar fashion, the short-term consequences of pre-electoral protest on electoral competitiveness look no less impressive. The regression coefficient is negative, high, highly significant, and robust to the inclusion of our manipulation variables. According to the combined model, a switch from opposition acquiescence to active protest mobilization (a one-unit change in this dichotomous variable) tends to depress margins of victory by almost 20%!

My economic model, finally, pretends to establish the possible impact of variations in "material legitimacy" on electoral competitiveness. To what extent are competitive regimes able to compensate their "democratic deficit" by tapping alternative sources of legitimation? In particular, to what extent are they able to take advantage of positive macroeconomic developments on the eve of national elections? Inversely, to what extent are they vulnerable to short-term changes in macroeconomic fortunes? The answer is somewhat mixed. Model 3 suggests that inflation rates in the year preceding the election bear no relation to electoral outcomes, while changes in GDP per capita do. Each additional percentage point of per capita growth translates into one additional percentage point in legislative margins of victory.

In times of economic bonanza, ruling parties may appreciate the extra bonus. Yet, in times of economic crisis, they may still find comfort in the fact that even harsh economic downturns may bear only modest electoral consequences. For instance, if they happen to engineer a serious economic debacle with GDP with per capita decreasing by 5%, they could expect their vote distance to the largest opposition party to shrink by little more than 5%.

In times of economic troubles, they might find additional comfort in the fact that the impact of GDP per capita changes on their vote margins is much reduced and turns insignificant in the combined model. If electoral threats do not arise from economic crisis *per se*, but from opposition protest that might be triggered by economic distress, their task is much simplified. They can afford to fail in managing the economy, as long as they succeed in controlling discontented crowds.

5.2. Competitive presidential elections

In the presidential arena of competitive regimes, like in their legislative arena, levels of authoritarian control show loose associations only with levels of electoral competitiveness (see Table 8). Regression coefficients are small and insignificant, their signs unstable, and their overall explanatory power is rather modest (R^2=.10). The big exception, at first sight, are restrictions of media freedom. Our first, manipulation model suggests a tight positive relation between violations of media freedom and presidential margins of victory. In competitive regimes that score a 2 on our scale of violations of media freedom (full restrictions), incumbents may expect to retain the presidency with vote margins that are almost 20% higher than in regimes scoring a 1 (partial restrictions). Apparently, controlling the media is an effective authoritarian tool in presidential elections where challengers tend to depend more on media exposure than opposition parties participating in more party-based legislative elections.

While our second, protest model carries considerable explanatory power (R^2=.37), only opposition boycotts and anti-government demonstrations are both substantively and statistically significant. However, once we combine these two variables with our battery of manipulation strategies, both media restrictions and protest demonstrations fall well below conventional thresholds of statistical significance. The two explanatory variables are correlated (r=.23, p=.03) and may well be causally related. Opposition protest may well be effective in lessening media controls and media controls may well be effective in dampening opposition protest. Which ever of the two causal effects may be stronger, censorship and protest seem to interact in a way that washes out their individual effects on electoral competitiveness.

Finally, somewhat surprisingly, presidential vote margins in competitive regimes seem to be impervious to short-term macroeconomic oscillations (R^2=.02).

5.3. Hegemonic Legislative Elections

With respect to the impact of regime manipulation on official margins of victory, hegemonic regimes show a similar picture as their competitive counterparts (see Table 9). The explanatory potential of Model 1 is much

better than under competitive conditions (R^2=.21). Individually, the coefficient of physical repression is significant and quite sizable, although its sign is negative and thus difficult to interpret in causal terms (it is difficult to believe that each increase of repression along our 9-point scale *decreases* margins of victory of the ruling party by 3.7%). In any case, though, the magnitudes and signs of manipulation coefficients are unstable and without exception insignificant in the combined model. Again, levels of manipulations seem remarkably unrelated to levels of competitiveness.

Once again, protest variables work substantively better. The six protest variables included in Model 2 account for more than two fifths of the variance in legislative margins of victory (R^2=.42). Remarkably, though, neither boycott nor pre-electoral protest are statistically significant. Perhaps, in hegemonic regimes, opposition parties are so weak that their withdrawal from electoral contests makes little difference for the final outcome; and perhaps, incumbents are so strong that the occasional protest they confront in the run-up to a national election (in little more than one fifth of legislative contests) may barely scratch the surface of their well-oiled machinery of domination.

Of the CNTS conflict variables, political assassinations, riots, and general strikes are non-significant (although the coefficient of strikes is hugely negative). Protest demonstrations, by contrast, show a high and significant negative association with electoral competitiveness that is robust to the inclusion of our manipulation variables in the combined model. Quite remarkably, just one additional anti-government demonstration by year that makes it into the *New York Times* (and thus into the CNTS dataset) decreases the legislative seat advantage of the hegemonic party by almost 20% (see Model 4 in Table 9). Hegemonic party regimes, it seems, are immune to a broad range of opposition activities, yet hyper-allergic against simple protesters walking the streets of their capital cities.

Finally, short-term macroeconomic fluctuations seem to have similar effects on legislative margins as in competitive regimes. Inflation seems irrelevant for the legislative fortunes of the hegemonic party, while GDP per capita growth shows strong positive associations with margins of victory. Pre-electoral variations in GDP per capita may account for about a fifth of the variance of hegemonic parties' seat margins (the R^2 of the bivariate regression, not reported here, lies at .22). Again, one percentage change in GDP per capita yields about one percentage gain in the seat advantage of the hegemonic party (see Model 4 in Table 9).

5.4. Hegemonic Presidential Elections

Given the two-fold segmentation of my overall sample by legislative and presidential elections and, in addition, by competitive and hegemonic regimes, I have been operating with uncomfortably low case numbers. In the case of presidential elections in hegemonic regimes, my low number of cases

(N=21) obliges me to abandon multiple regressions. I will limit myself to the analysis of regression coefficients, bivariate regressions, and comparisons of means.

In bivariate correlation analyses (not reported here), two variables consistently show significant associations with presidential margins of victory: exclusion and boycott. The difference in mean margins of victory between inclusionary and exclusionary lies at 34.5% of valid votes. The difference, visualized in Figure 2 (in the appendix), is both substantively large and statistically significant (bilateral t-test, p=.000). Bivariate regression suggests that our simple dummy of exclusion may explain a substantial portion of variance in the vote margins presidents earn in hegemonic regimes (R^2=.44). Actually, the exclusion of opposition parties and candidates may be the hidden key to the electoral success of hegemonic-party regimes.

While all other protest variables do not seem to be systematically related to levels of presidential competitiveness, opposition boycott again emerges as a strong predictor of presidential competitiveness. Bivariate regression suggests it may be explaining almost two fifths of the observed variance in vote margins (R^2=.38, B=12.974, p=.003, N=20). Once again, at least in the short run, opposition boycotts seem to constitute the safest and quickest route to overwhelming opposition defeat.

Finally, as in competitive regimes, our macroeconomic variables seem irrelevant to explain variations in presidential vote margins.

Conclusions

The preceding statistical explorations have yielded some remarkable findings, some positive, others negative. In conclusion, I wish to highlight the most relevant points:

Disconnected manipulation. With few exceptions, levels of electoral manipulation show no systematic, statistically significant relation to the ruling party's margins of victory, our measure of electoral competitiveness. This striking lack of statistical significance may be theoretically (as well as practically!) highly significant. It seems to confirm the initial, motivating intuition of this paper, the idea that the effectiveness of electoral manipulation may be structurally problematic. Due to agency losses, manipulative maneuvers may generate limited vote gains ("redistributive benefits") for the incumbent; and thanks to their potentially negative impact on citizen support ("legitimacy costs"), they may even turn counter-productive. The remarkable empirical disconnect between levels of manipulation and levels of competitiveness reaffirms the potential importance of these mediating factors. It strongly suggests that strategies of manipulation may be much less important in explaining the official distribution of votes under electoral authoritarian conditions than we have been inclined to believe. Of course, we may raise a fair number of cautionary objections. Most prominently, the friendly elephant of endogeneity is still walking around the paper room. However, for all the well-advised inferential caution we may practice (and for all the comforting congruence of our finding with hypothetical expectations), it remains a striking discovery that levels of electoral manipulation have little to do with levels of electoral competition.

Magical protest. In contrast to the consistently weak and ambiguous effects of manipulation, selected indicators of opposition protest show very strong, highly significant and largely robust associations with levels of competitiveness. In particular, both short-term, pre-electoral protest and sustained street mobilization in the five years previous to a national legislative election go hand in hand with large downward swings in ruling parties' seat margins. If there is a causal story behind these figures, it is immensely encouraging for opposition parties: Those parties strong and bold enough to take their followers to the streets have impressive chances of reducing official margins of victory in legislative contests. If the two-level game of "democratization by elections" (Schedler, 2002a) is supposed to be driven by regime decisions on manipulation on the one side, and opposition decisions on protest on the other, my findings strongly suggest that the real motor that drives authoritarian electoral outcomes, in particular in the legislative arena, may not be regime decisions, but opposition strategies. If we wish to understand the dynamics of electoral authoritarian regimes,

perhaps we should turn more decisively to the study of opposition politics, instead of maintaining our relative fixation on regime politics.[10]

Defeat by boycott. Whatever the normative grounds and potential long-term benefits of opposition boycotts, at least their immediate effects are as bad as one would expect. Boycotts give a massive vote boost to the authoritarian incumbent. The only exception are legislative contest under hegemonic-party rule where opposition parties may be so weak that their eventual departure from the electoral arena does not greatly affect the final results. Overall, however, opposition actors face a simple choice: Unless they accept to trade the certainty of defeat in the present against the uncertain prospect of future gains, they should stay within the electoral arena. They should keep struggling within the game, while taking their protest against the game to the streets.

Unproductive hegemony. The segmentation of my sample into competitive and hegemonic regimes yielded some interesting contrasts and commonalities. Against my initial expectations, the commonalities prevail. In both subtypes of regimes, levels of manipulation bear scarce effects on levels of competitiveness, while the intensity of opposition protest carries huge effects. The productivity of manipulation as well as the sensibility to contentious actions seems similar in competitive and hegemonic regimes. If electoral authoritarian rulers indeed face a strategic dilemma due to the indeterminate net effects of manipulation, their dilemma is no lighter for hegemonic parties than for competitive authoritarian rulers. Too, both regimes seem to be largely impervious to protest in the presidential arena, yet highly susceptible to protest mobilization in the legislative arena. Competitive regimes seem to be more vulnerable to immediate election-related pressures, though, while hegemonic regimes appear to be more responsive to longer-term, inter-electoral mobilization. The two regimes also show an intriguing asymmetry in the causal weight of authoritarian strategies they deploy in presidential elections. Media restrictions seem to be an effective tool to augment margins of victory in competitive presidential elections, while the exclusion of opposition candidates seems to be the golden road to huge margins of victory in hegemonic presidential elections. In other words, competitive regimes tend to manufacture presidential landslides most effectively by silencing their opposition, hegemonic regimes by excluding them.

Legislative opportunities. I did not walk into the analysis presented in this paper with explicit expectations about systematic differences in the determinants of competitiveness between legislative and presidential elections. Yet, some interesting differences did serendipitously emerge. In

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[10] In fact, the emerging literature on electoral authoritarian regimes is giving more and more systematic attention to opposition politics. Recent examples are Aspinall (2005), Beaulieu (2006), Howard and Roessler (2006), Lindberg (2006a), Lust-Okar (2005), Pripstein (2005), and van de Walle (2006).

particular, as mentioned above, legislative elections seem to be more vulnerable to opposition protest, while contentious action carries few robust effects in the presidential arena. This causal asymmetry may be reflective of the lesser importance actors tend to ascribe to legislative elections. In many political systems, actors consider the office of the chief executive to be the big prize in national politics. Regardless of the real relevance of the other branches of power, political struggles about the occupation of the symbolic commanding heights of the state tend to be somewhat fiercer than the competition about other state offices. Thus, electoral authoritarian rulers may be more willing to cede spaces of legislative power to opposition parties, than to put the presidential office on risk. While opposition actors may find it depressing that their protest activities leave little imprint in presidential elections, they should understand their high success rate in the legislative arena as a golden structural opportunity. Under the protective shadow of epic struggles for national presidencies, they can make significant inroads in the legislative arena.

Discriminative economics. Short-term economic factors capable of inducing oscillations in popular regime support, also show an intriguing asymmetry between the electoral arenas. Pre-electoral changes in GDP per capita, while moderately important in the legislative arena, are of no effect in the presidential arena. Inflation is irrelevant throughout, which is excellent news for authoritarian macroeconomic populists.

Appendix

FIGURE 1. ELECTORAL COSTS AND BENEFITS OF MANIPULATION

**Redistributive
benefits**

NE

NW

**Neutral
effects**

SE

SW

Legitimacy costs
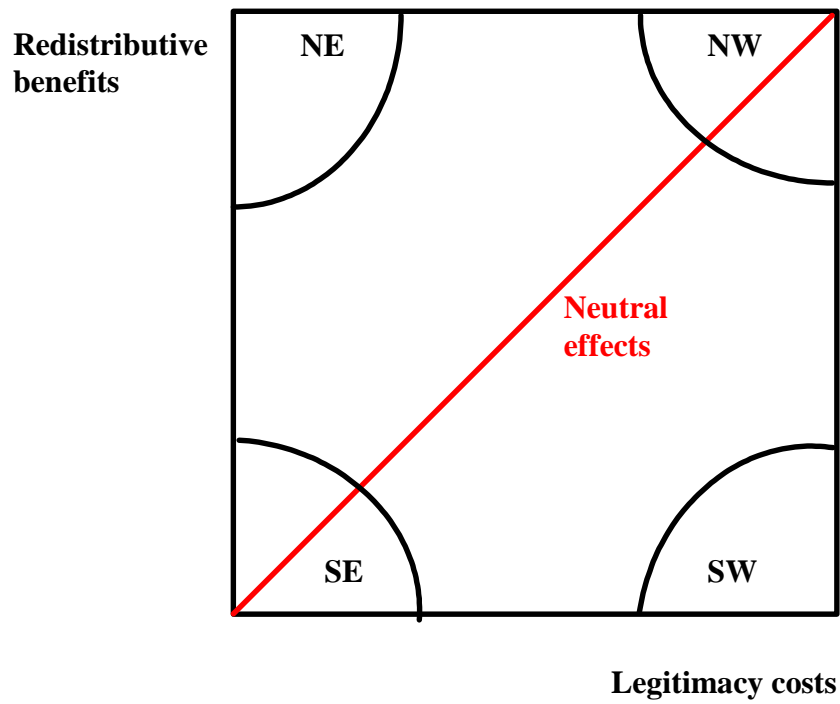
FIGURE 2. EXCLUSION AND COMPETITIVENESS IN
AUTHORITARIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS*
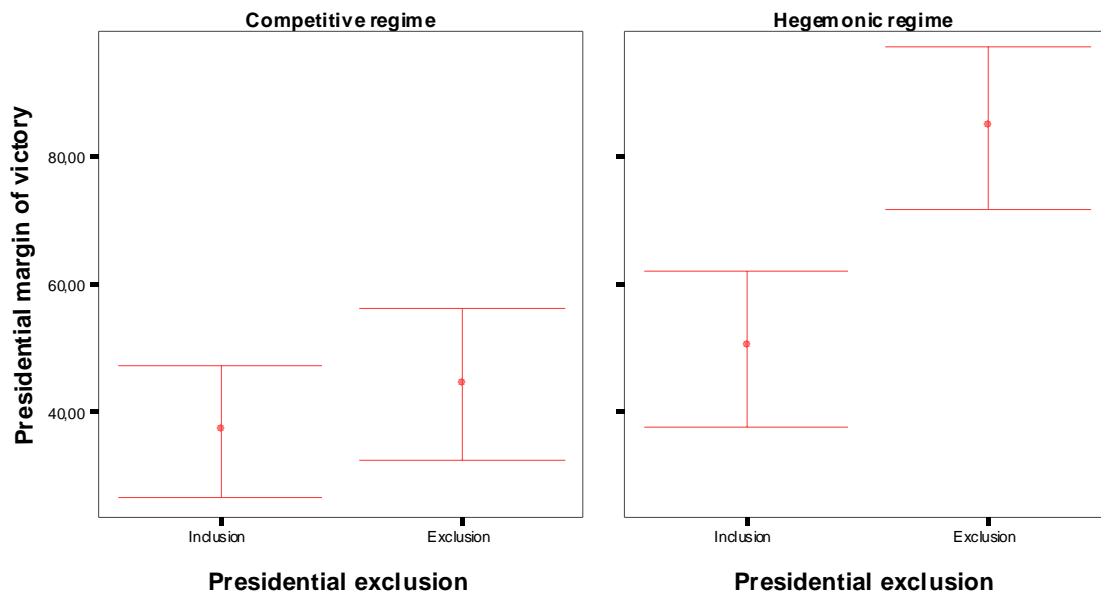
* Comparison of means with confidence intervals at 95%.

TABLE 1. HEGEMONIC PARTY REGIMES, 1980—2002

COUNTRY	RULING PARTY	ACRONYM	INITIATION OF RULE*	ORIGIN	PERSONAL LEADERSHIP**	YEARS IN OFFICE	REGIME TERMI-NATION	MODE OF TERMINATION
ALBANIA	ALBANIAN LABOUR PARTY		1946		–		1992	ELECTORAL ALTERNATION IN POWER
MEXICO	INSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTIONARY PARTY	PRI	1929	CIVIL WAR	–		1988	LOSS OF LEGISLATIVE SUPERMAJORITY
PARAGUAY	NATIONAL REPUBLICAN ASSOCIATION — PARTIDO COLORADO	ANR	1954	MILITARY COUP. PARTY FOUNDATION 1887	ALFREDO STROESSNER	1954–1989	1993	LOSS OF LEGISLATIVE SUPERMAJORITY (DESPITE COUP 1989)
BURKINA FASO	CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS		1983	MILITARY COUP	BLAIS COMPAORE	1983–	2002	LOSS OF LEGISLATIVE SUPERMAJORITY
COTE D'IVOIRE	DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF COTE D'IVOIRE	PDCI	1960	INDEPENDENCE	HENIR KONAN BEDIE	1993–1999	1999	MILITARY COUP
EGYPT	NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY	NDP	1952	MILITARY COUP 1952, PARTY FOUNDATION 1978	HOSNI MUBARAK	1981–		
TUNISIA	CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRATIC RALLY	CDR	1956	INDEPENDENCE (SOFT COUP 1987)	ZINE EL-ABIDINE BEN ALI	1987–		
GABON	GABONESE DEMOCRATIC PARTY	PDG	1960	INDEPENDENCE	OMAR BONGO	1967–		
GUINEA	PROGRESS AND UNITY PARTY	PUP	1984	MILITARY COUP	LASANA CONTÉ	1984–		
MAURITANIA	SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLICAN PARTY	PRDS	1978	MILITARY COUP	MAAOUYA OULD SID AHMED TAYA	1984–2005	2005	MILITARY COUP
SENEGAL	SOCIALIST PARTY	SP	1960	INDEPENDENCE	ABDOU DIOUF	1981–2000	1998	LOSS OF SUPERMAJORITY
TANZANIA	CHAMA CHA MAPINDUZI	CCM	1961	INDEPENDENCE	BENJAMÍN MKAPA	1995–		
TOGO	RALLY OF THE TOGOLESE PEOPLE		1967	MILITARY COUP	ETIENNE EYADEMA	1967–		
ZIMBABWE	ZIMBABWE AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION — PATRIOTIC FRONT	ZANU-PF	1980	INDEPENDENCE	ROBERT MUGABE	1987–	2000	LOSS OF LEGISLATIVE SUPERMAJORITY
INDONESIA	GOLONGAN KARYA (FUNCTIONAL GROUPS)	GOLKAR	1965	MILITARY COUP	SUHARTO	1965–1998	1999	RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT
MALAYSIA	UNITED MALAYS NATIONAL ORGANIZATION	UMNO NATIONAL FRONT	1963	INDEPENDENCE	MAHATHIR MOHAMAD	1981–2003		
SINGAPORE	PEOPLE'S ACTION PARTY	PAP	1965	INDEPENDENCE	LEE KUAN YEW	1965–1990		
					GOH CHOK TONG	1990–		

* Initiation of regime governed by same party, person or ruling coalition.
** Under hegemonic party rule (not single-party period)

TABLE 2. AUTHORITARIAN ELECTIONS IN THE WORLD, 1980–2002

COMPETITIVE REGIMES	ARMENIA 1999 L	KENYA 2002 C	GABON 1998 P
	AZERBAIJAN 1993 P	NIGER 1996 C	GABON 2001 L
COLOMBIA 2002 C	AZERBAIJAN 1995 L	NIGER 1999 C	GUINEA 1993 P
EL SALVADOR 1984 P	AZERBAIJAN 1998 P	SENEGAL 1998 L	GUINEA 1995 L
EL SALVADOR 1985 L	AZERBAIJAN 2000 L	ZAMBIA 1996 C	GUINEA 1998 P
GUATEMALA 1985 C	GEORGIA 1992 L	ZAMBIA 2001 C	GUINEA 2002 L
GUATEMALA 1994 L	GEORGIA 1995 C	ZIMBABWE 2000 L	MAURITANIA 1996 L
GUATEMALA 1995 C	GEORGIA 1999 L	ZIMBABWE 2002 P	MAURITANIA 1997 P
HAITI 1990 C	GEORGIA 2000 P	CAMBODIA 1993 L	MAURITANIA 2001 L
HAITI 1995 C	KAZAKHSTAN 1995 L	CAMBODIA 1998 L	SENEGAL 1983 C
HAITI 1997 L	KAZAKHSTAN 1999 C	INDONESIA 1999 L	SENEGAL 1988 C
HAITI 2000 C	KYRGYZSTAN 1995 C	PAKISTAN 1990 L	SENEGAL 1993 C
MEXICO 1988 C	KYRGYZSTAN 2000 C	PAKISTAN 1993 L	TANZANIA 1995 C
MEXICO 1991 L	TAJIKISTAN 1999 P	PAKISTAN 1997 L	TANZANIA 2000 C
MEXICO 1994 C	TAJIKISTAN 2000 L	PHILIPPINES 1981 P	TOGO 1993 P
NICARAGUA 1984 C	ALGERIA 1995 P	PHILIPPINES 1984 L	TOGO 1994 L
PANAMA 1984 C	ALGERIA 1997 L	PHILIPPINES 1986 P	TOGO 1998 P
PANAMA 1989 P	ALGERIA 1999 P	SRI LANKA 1994 C	TOGO 1999 L
PARAGUAY 1998 C	ALGERIA 2002 L		TOGO 2002 L
PERU 1995 C	TURKEY 1983 L	HEGEMONIC REGIMES	ZIMBABWE 1985 L
PERU 2000 C	TURKEY 1995 L		ZIMBABWE 1990 C
ALBANIA 1992 L	TURKEY 1999 L	MEXICO 1985 L	ZIMBABWE 1995 L
ALBANIA 1996 L	YEMEN 1997 L	PARAGUAY 1983 C	ZIMBABWE 1996 P
ALBANIA 1997 L	YEMEN 1999 P	PARAGUAY 1988 C	INDONESIA 1982 L
BELARUS 1994 P	BURKINA FASO 2002 L	PARAGUAY 1989 C	INDONESIA 1987 L
BELARUS 1995 L	CAMEROON 1992 C	ALBANIA 1991 L	INDONESIA 1992 L
BELARUS 2000 L	CAMEROON 1997 C	EGYPT 1984 L	INDONESIA 1997 L
BELARUS 2001 P	CAMEROON 2002 L	EGYPT 1987 L	MALAYSIA 1982 L
CROATIA 1992 C	CHAD 1996 P	EGYPT 1990 L	MALAYSIA 1986 L
CROATIA 1995 L	CHAD 1997 L	EGYPT 1995 L	MALAYSIA 1990 L
CROATIA 1997 P	CHAD 2001 P	EGYPT 2000 L	MALAYSIA 1995 L
MACEDONIA 1994 L	CHAD 2002 L	TUNISIA 1999 C	MALAYSIA 1999 L
MOLDOVA 1994 L	COTE D'IVOIRE 2000 C	BURKINA FASO 1992 L	SINGAPORE 1980 L
ROMANIA 1990 C	ETHIOPIA 1995 L	BURKINA FASO 1997 L	SINGAPORE 1984 L
ROMANIA 1992 C	ETHIOPIA 2000 L	BURKINA FASO 1998 P	SINGAPORE 1988 L
RUSSIA 1999 L	GAMBIA 2001 P	COTE D'IVOIRE 1990 C	SINGAPORE 1991 L
RUSSIA 2000 P	GAMBIA 2002 L	COTE D'IVOIRE 1995 C	SINGAPORE 1997 L
ARMENIA 1995 L	GHANA 1992 C	GABON 1990 L	SINGAPORE 2001 L
ARMENIA 1996 P	KENYA 1992 C	GABON 1993 P	
ARMENIA 1998 P	KENYA 1997 C	GABON 1996 L	

P = Presidential elections, L = Legislative elections, C = Concurrent elections (within one calendar year)
Source: Author's Database on Authoritarian Elections in the World.

**TABLE 3. ELECTIONS IN COMPETITIVE AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES,
BY WORLD REGION, 1980–2002**

WORLD REGION	LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS	PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS	TOTAL	%
1 LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN	17	15	32	25.0
2 EASTERN EUROPE	12	7	19	14.8
3 CENTRAL ASIA & CAUCASUS	12	10	22	17.2
4 MIDDLE EAST & N. AFRICA	6	3	9	7.0
5 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	20	15	35	27.3
6 SOUTH & EAST ASIA	8	3	11	8.6
TOTAL	75	53	128	100.0

Source: Author's Database on Authoritarian Elections in the World.

**TABLE 4. ELECTIONS IN HEGEMONIC AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES,
BY WORLD REGION, 1980–2002**

WORLD REGION	LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS	PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS	TOTAL	%
1 LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN	4	3	7	10.1
2 EASTERN EUROPE	1	0	1	1.4
3 CENTRAL ASIA & CAUCASUS	0	0	0	0.0
4 MIDDLE EAST & N. AFRICA	6	1	7	10.1
5 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	22	17	39	56.5
6 SOUTH & EAST ASIA	15	0	15	21.7
TOTAL	48	21	69	100.0

Source: Author's Database on Authoritarian Elections in the World.

TABLE 5. AUTHORITARIAN MANIPULATION AND OPPOSITION PROTEST: DESCRIPTION OF VARIABLES

STRATEGIES OF NORM VIOLATION	LM	CATEGORIES	SOURCE
PHYSICAL REPRESSION: VIOLATION OF PHYSICAL INTEGRITY (EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS, DISAPPEARANCE, TORTURE, AND POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT) (PERSONAL INTEGRITY)	ORDINAL	RANGE 0–8 0 = FULL RESPECT FOR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS 8 = GROSS VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS	CINGRANELLI-RICHARDS (CIRI) HUMAN RIGHTS DATA PROJECT: PHYSICAL INTEGRITY RIGHTS INDEX (INVERTED) HTTP://CIRI.BINGHAMPTON.EDU
MEDIA RESTRICTIONS: RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND MASS MEDIA (CIVIL LIBERTIES)	ORDINAL	RANGE 0–2 ORIGINAL CATEGORIES (RECODED): CIRI: 0 = NO, 1 = SOME, AND 2 = FREQUENT VIOLATIONS. FREEDOM HOUSE: 0 = FREE PRESS, 1 = PARTLY FREE, AND 2 = NOT FREE.	ARITHMETIC MEAN OF CIRI FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND PRESS (INVERTED) AND FH PRESS FREEDOM (AUTHOR CALCULATION) HTTP://CIRI.BINGHAMPTON.EDU WWW.FREEDOMHOUSE.ORG
ELECTORAL FRAUD: ADMINISTRATIVE REDISTRIBUTION OF VOTES	ORDINAL	0 NO FRAUD 1 IRREGULARITIES 2 FRAUD	AUTHOR'S DATABASE ON AUTHORITARIAN ELECTIONS IN THE WORLD (1980–2002).
EXCLUSION: EXCLUSION OF PARTIES AND CANDIDATES FROM ELECTIONS	NOMINAL	0 OPENNESS 1 EXCLUSION	IBIDEM.
OPPOSITION BOYCOTT: PARTICIPATION OR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ELECTORAL PROCESS BY MAIN OPPOSITION PARTIES.	ORDINAL	0 PARTICIPATION 1 BOYCOTT THREATS 2 PARTIAL BOYCOTT 3 FULL BOYCOTT	IBIDEM.
PRE-ELECTORAL PROTEST: MOBILIZATION OF FOLLOWERS BY OPPOSITION (E.G. THROUGH PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, STREET BLOCKADES, STRIKES) IN PROTEST AGAINST UPCOMING ELECTIONS.	NOMINAL	0 ACQUIESCENCE 1 ACTIVE PROTEST	IBIDEM.

LM = Level of measurement.

TABLE 6. DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	COMPETITIVE REGIMES				HEGEMONIC REGIMES				
	N	MIN.	MAX.	MEAN	ST.DEV.	N	MIN.	MAX.	MEAN	ST.DEV.
INTERPARTY COMPETITION										
LEGISLATIVE MARGIN OF VICTORY	75	0,90	90,50	35,59	24,64	46	0,00	100,00	70,61	21,07
PRESIDENTIAL MARGIN OF VICTORY	53	0,18	97,96	39,70	27,87	21	17,90	97,02	61,47	25,03
REGIME MANIPULATION										
PHYSICAL REPRESSION (PRE-ELECTION Y.)	93	1,00	8,00	4,70	2,04	56	0,00	8,00	3,38	1,91
MEDIA RESTRICTIONS (PRE-ELECTION YEAR)	92	0,50	2,00	1,36	0,41	56	0,50	2,00	1,36	0,42
LEGISLATIVE EXCLUSION	73	0	1	0,38	0,49	48	0	1	0,58	0,50
PRESIDENTIAL EXCLUSION	54	0	1	0,37	0,49	21	0	1	0,33	0,48
LEGISLATIVE FRAUD	73	0	2	0,96	0,75	48	0	2	0,88	0,67
PRESIDENTIAL FRAUD	54	0	2	1,17	0,75	21	0	2	1,05	0,74
OPPOSITION PROTEST										
LEGISLATIVE ELECTION BOYCOTT	73	0	3	0,86	1,10	48	0	3	0,88	1,08
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION BOYCOTT	54	0	3	0,85	1,22	21	0	3	1,71	1,19
LEGISLATIVE PRE-ELECTORAL PROTEST	73	0	1	0,36	0,48	48	0	1	0,23	0,42
PRESIDENTIAL PRE-ELECTORAL PROTEST	54	0	1	0,50	0,50	21	0	1	0,29	0,46
OPPOSITION PROTEST (CNTS)										
POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS (PREVIOUS 5 YEARS)	90	0,00	7,40	0,87	1,54	57	0,00	2,20	0,10	0,35
GENERAL STRIKES (PREVIOUS 5 YEARS)	90	0,00	1,80	0,17	0,33	57	0,00	0,40	0,05	0,11
RIOTS (PREVIOUS 5 YEARS)	90	0,00	5,40	0,48	0,90	57	0,00	2,20	0,25	0,43
PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS (PREVIOUS 5 YEARS)	90	0,00	7,80	0,95	1,40	57	0,00	2,20	0,32	0,47
ECONOMIC CYCLE (WDI)										
GDP PER CAPITA CHANGE (PRE-ELECTION)	95	-27,50	10,84	-0,97	7,65	57	-17,11	12,17	1,56	5,37
INFLATION (PRE-ELECTION YEAR)	85	-8,59	4962,22	178,83	651,60	52	-9,54	65,54	9,03	11,84

CNTS = Tony Banks Cross-National Time Series, WDI = IBRD World Development Indicators 2006.

TABLE **7**. EXPLAINING LEGISLATIVE MARGINS OF VICTORY IN
COMPETITIVE AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

	MODEL **1** CONTROL	MODEL **2** PROTEST	MODEL **3** ECONOMY	MODEL **4** COMB.	MODEL **4** SIG.
1. REGIME MANIPULATION					
PHYSICAL REPRESSION (P1)	,185			-,283	,828
MEDIA RESTRICTIONS (P1)	3,576			-,417	,951
LEGISLATIVE EXCLUSION	-1,340			-3,667	,509
LEGISLATIVE FRAUD	3,690			4,768	,188
2. OPPOSITION PROTEST					
OPPOSITION BOYCOTT		[4]**11,34**		[4]**11,914**	,000
PRE-ELECTORAL PROTEST		[4]**-21,60**		[4]**19,948**	,001
POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS (P5)		-,338			
RIOTS (P5)		,066			
GENERAL STRIKES (P5)		-7,165			
PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS (P5)		1,090			
3. MATERIAL LEGITIMACY					
GDP PER CAPITA CHANGE (P1)			[2]**1,112**	,552	,145
INFLATION (P1)			,002		
CONSTANT	26,848	34,268	35,126	32,297	,011
STANDARD ERROR	25,249	22.064	24,655	21,202	
R^2	,014	,280	,065	,333	
N	69	68	64	68	

Note: Estimation of linear effects, B coefficients, OLS regression analysis, SPSS 14.0.
P1   Year previous to election year.
P5   Previous five years (average).
1      $p \leq 0.10$
2      $p \leq 0.05$
3      $p \leq 0.01$
4      $p \leq 0.001$

**TABLE 8. EXPLAINING PRESIDENTIAL MARGINS OF VICTORY
IN COMPETITIVE AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES**

	MODEL 1 CONTROL	MODEL 2 PROTEST	MODEL 3 ECONOMY	MODEL 4 COM.	MODEL 4 SIG.
1. REGIME MANIPULATION					
PHYSICAL REPRESSION (P1)	,408			-,675	,726
MEDIA RESTRICTIONS (P1)	[2]**18,170**			9,363	,255
PRESIDENTIAL EXCLUSION	5,371			5,142	,479
PRESIDENTIAL FRAUD	1,171			-3,245	,515
2. OPPOSITION PROTEST					
OPPOSITION BOYCOTT		[4]**12,674**		[4]12,093	,000
PRE-ELECTORAL PROTEST		-,046			
POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS (P5)		3,115			
RIOTS (P5)		4,911			
GENERAL STRIKES (P5)		-1,190			
PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS (P5)		[2]**-9,143**		-4,603	,146
3. MATERIAL LEGITIMACY					
GDP PER CAPITA CHANGE (P1)			-,076		
INFLATION (P1)			,017		
CONSTANT	9,538	33,026	36,095	25,009	,129
STANDARD ERROR	27,577	24,263	27,757	23,333	
R^2	,097	,369	,021	,349	
N	50	42	47	48	

Note: Estimation of linear effects, B coefficients, OLS regression analysis, SPSS 14.0.
P1   Year previous to election year.
P5   Previous five years (average).
1        $p \leq 0.10$
2        $p \leq 0.05$
3        $p \leq 0.01$
4        $p \leq 0.001$

TABLE **9**. EXPLAINING LEGISLATIVE MARGINS OF VICTORY
IN HEGEMONIC AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

	MODEL **1** CONTROL	MODEL **2** PROTEST	MODEL **3** ECONOMY	MODEL **4** COMB.	MODEL **4** SIG.
1. REGIME MANIPULATION					
PHYSICAL REPRESSION (P1)	[2]**-3,675**			-,648	,702
MEDIA RESTRICTIONS (P1)	-4,447			,192	,981
LEGISLATIVE EXCLUSION	4,074			-,327	,960
LEGISLATIVE FRAUD	-4,955			-2,006	,646
2. OPPOSITION PROTEST					
OPPOSITION BOYCOTT		1,281			
PRE-ELECTORAL PROTEST		-7,400			
POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS (P5)		-4,181			
RIOTS (P5)		10,064			
GENERAL STRIKES (P5)		-48,965			
PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS (P5)		[2]**-25,81**		[3]**-19,48**	,006
3. MATERIAL LEGITIMACY					
GDP PER CAPITA CHANGE (P1)			[3]**1,681**	[1]**1,077**	,083
INFLATION (P1)			-,171		
CONSTANT	91,030	78,459	70,013	77,782	,000
STANDARD ERROR	19,444	17,157	19,064	16,796	
R^2	,208	,425	,191	,350	
N	44	45	42	44	

Note: Estimation of linear effects, B coefficients, OLS regression analysis, SPSS 14.0.
P1   Year previous to election year.
P5   Previous five years (average).
1        $p \le 0.10$
2        $p \le 0.05$
3        $p \le 0.01$
4        $p \le 0.001$

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