Accounting for the (In-)Stability of Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa[†]

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1. Introduction

It is perhaps no coincidence that trends of wide-spread democratisation have been equalled to a force of nature. Indeed, the effect of the democratic "waves" sweeping over authoritarian landscapes was formidable, and the momentum of each wave was unpredictable. Starting with Portugal's democratisation in 1974, extending to most of Latin America and Southern Europe and culminating in the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the "Third Wave of Democracy"[1] promised to be a tsunami washing the earth clean of illiberal political regimes. Yet only four years after Francis Fukuyama prominently declared the advent of the "End of History" in his 1992 book,[2] the well-known democracy scholar Larry Diamond wondered whether this Third Wave had already ebbed out.[3] Worry turned into anxiety when, in a *Foreign Affairs* article a little more than a decade later, he avails himself of a Cold War metaphor to diagnose a "democratic rollback".[4]

Until very recently, Comparative Politics mostly concerned itself with the dynamics of the democratic waves and the democratic landscapes built on the rubble of the former dictatorships. It has, however, neglected the equally important study of "autocratic undertows" and of those regimes able to withstand the democratic tide. For a long time, it has turned a blind eye to the various institutional and organizational adaptations that authoritarian regimes engage in to better confront internal and external challenges to their legitimacy. The literature on democratic transitions has tended to characterize them rather uniformly as hostile to participation and innovation, phlegmatic, and unable to adapt to economic or political crises.[5] Because of these features, they were regarded as inherently unstable.[6]

As opposed to democracies which, no matter how short-lived they turned out to be, are conceptualized to enter reasonably well-charted processes of "consolidation" right after their birth, "authoritarian consolidation" has long been regarded as a contradiction in terms.[7] As opposed to democracies, authoritarian regimes tended to be understood as a black box out of which democracies emerge and into which they return upon breakdown.[8] Given the number of long-standing authoritarian regimes especially in East Asia and the Middle East, these assumptions are slowly coming under attack.

In line with a growing body of literature that is concerned with the resilience of authoritarian regimes, we seek to understand why some authoritarian regimes are more likely to survive than others. However, we hold that it is important to not only look at the life-span of a regime, but also at its quality. For example, China and Myanmar are both long-standing authoritarian regimes, yet they are fundamentally different with regards to how their regimes function. While the ruling elites in China have taken great care to improve the institutional base that underpins their rule, such institutionalisation has been absent in Myanmar. For this reason, the capacity of the Chinese

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[1] Huntington 1991.
[2] Fukuyama 1992.
[3] Diamond 1996.
[4] Diamond 2008.
[5] Merkel 1999.
[6] Compare this to the literature on civil wars which finds that autocracies are as stable as democracies and much more stable than hybrid regimes (see, e.g., Hegre et al. 2001).
[7] Carothers 2002.
[8] Linz 1978.

regime is far greater than that of Myanmar to flexibly react to social demands and thereby defuse (latent) conflicts. The Junta in Myanmar, on the other hand, chiefly relies on organised and, where possible, covert repression to uphold its rule. Yet different are regimes where repression is exercised overtly, like Liberia under Charles Taylor.

In order to better understand the resilience of authoritarian regimes in general and the impact of differences in regime character on the longevity of authoritarian regimes in particular, we propose an analytical framework that builds on the related concepts of "responsiveness" and "authoritarian consolidation."[9] We are concerned with how (collective) government actors can improve their capacities to structure the incentives of those governed in order to secure their compliance and address social grievances to gain their support. Responsiveness denotes the capacity of a regime to learn and the willingness of the elites to solve problems without recurring to coercion. However, solving problems without recurring to coercion presupposes the existence of instruments that enable a regime to aggregate, understand and address social preferences. Authoritarian consolidation denotes the process of acquiring and improving such instruments.

At the centre of our theoretical approach stands a differentiated concept of state power combining three dimensions: 1) the traditional Weberian understanding of power as getting someone to do something he would not otherwise have done, i.e. the application of coercion; 2) the power located in a differentiated institutional structure that is capable of regulating society and thereby able to structure the incentives of social actors; 3) and the ability to make people want what you want them to want. Thus, we augment Michael Mann's distinction of "despotic power" and "infrastructural power" with another dimension of power which is best conceptualised in Steven Lukes' "radical view" of power (see below), and which we call "discursive power."[10]

Consolidation is comprehended as a – somewhat stylized – process which enables a regime to move from repression to the extension of cooptation and finally to a comprehensive institutionalisation and regularisation of state-society relations (extension of inclusion). Responsiveness we understand as the willingness and ability to react to or seek to prevent regime crisis, and to respond to societal demands more generally, without resorting to despotic power. In the short run, responsive strategies do not seek to the solve the (impending) crisis through the suppression of discontent but by removing the cause of the immediate grievances through the application of the existing infrastructural power of the state. In the long run, a responsive regime will undertake a process of learning and institutional differentiation, in which infrastructural power is increased by reforming the existing institutional framework in order to prevent similar crises from recurring in the future. As part of this process, the regime will also attempt to shape political discourses by improving networks of communication connecting state and society which

[9] The usage of the term "authoritarian consolidation" has gained fashion, although this is not yet underpinned by a theoretical concept. At the time of writing, Google Scholar listed 102 references for "authoritarian consolidation", 39 of which originating between 2001 and 2005, and 40 between 2006 and 2009. They are all used descriptively, however, and none of them was formulated as a genuine concept.

[10] Our understanding of "discursive power" differs from the concept as elaborated by Foucault. Instead of understanding the concept in terms of social relations, we follow a more traditional view of power and see discursive power as power employed by agents of the state through/on discourse. Our view of discursive power has some parallels with the aspect of "hegemonic power" as the alteration of substantive beliefs identified by Ikenberry and Kupchan (1990).

serve as the vehicle for the transmission of propaganda. Of course, this does not mean that elites in a more consolidated regime will forego the use of despotic power entirely but that they have access to a broader set of governing tools, some of which can be applied in more subtle ways. Due to this, we also expect that more consolidated regimes will last longer and survive tougher challenges than their less consolidated counterparts.

Consolidation and responsiveness are thus closely linked, but they are not identical. Responsiveness is an actor-level variable that encompasses regime decision-making in situations of crisis as well as the regime's willingness and ability to learn from such crises and thereby extend its strategic timeframe. Of course, the opportunities for responsiveness can be constrained when there are insufficient resources for institution-building or when strategic reform is blocked by veto players. Consolidation, on the other hand, is a structure-level phenomenon that encompasses the improvement of these very institutions, their embeddedness in society, and the capacities of the state propaganda system. This, of course, can also entail the institutionalisation and regularisation of elite relations, which makes factionalism less and responsiveness more likely. Thus, responsiveness drives consolidation and consolidation opens new opportunities for responsive action. This brings us quite close to Linz and Stepan's understanding of democratic consolidation: only through actively creating responsive institutions and, we add, managing discourses and beliefs are authoritarian regimes able to convince their citizens that they are "the only game in town".[11]

We start by giving a brief overview over existing approaches to democratic consolidation to argue that democratic and authoritarian processes of consolidation, far from being opposites, indeed have much in common. Thereafter, we explain the three forms of power introduced above and relate them to the levels identified in conceptual approaches to democratic regime consolidation. At the macro level, authoritarian consolidation is manifested in the build-up of infrastructural power. At the meso level which connects state and society, the institutions and organisations thus created are used not only to penetrate and regulate society, but also to relay societal demands into decision-making processes. That is, infrastructural power is utilised in a responsive way. At the micro level, discursive power is used to justify state actions, structure demands and shape a political culture conducive to the survival of the authoritarian regime.

In order to explore these initial prepositions, we compare four long-standing authoritarian regimes from two continents that were all faced with major crises. What these regimes have in common is that while all of them applied despotic means to come to or hold on to power, they built up significant infrastructural and discursive power in the aftermath and became more responsive. They differ, however, in that only two of these cases, China and Uganda, have survived until this day, while Indonesia and Guinea collapsed in 1997 and 2008, respectively. In light of what we have proposed so far, we explain this difference with the fact that China and Uganda have continued to build up and responsively apply infrastructural and discursive power. In Indonesia and Guinea, on the other hand, these processes stalled and led to the implosion of these regimes.

2. Approaches to Democratic Consolidation

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[11]   Linz/Stepan 1996: 15.

In the task of trying to find out why some authoritarian regimes are more resilient than others, much is to learn from looking at the extensive literature on democratic consolidation that has been produced in the last two decades. In fact, we will argue that there are considerable overlaps between the factors that make democratic and authoritarian regimes consolidate.

It is important to note, first, that there are two rather distinct understandings of the term "democratic consolidation". The first asks when a regime can be considered consolidated, and the most widely answer is provided by Juan Linz und Alfred Stepan: "Essentially, by a 'consolidated democracy' we mean a political regime in which democracy as a complex set of institutions, rules, and patterned incentives and disincentives has become, in a phrase, 'the only game in town'."[12] While this definition is intuitively compelling, it is very hard to operationalize when democracy has indeed become "the only game in town". Samuel Huntington argued that this would be the case when at least two elections after the country's founding elections have led to the dismissal of the previous government.[13] Another indicator proposed by Larry Diamond is that a democracy is consolidated when it is considered "legitimate" by the political elite and when it is supported by 70 to 75 percent of the population.[14] For obvious reasons, however, such context-insensitive indicators have not proven practical.[15] While some scholars advocated abandoning the concept altogether,[16] Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell, und J. Samuel Valenzuela made the case for trusting scholarly intuition: "(T)he qualitative difference between transitional and consolidated regimes is such that the analyst should be able to determine whether specific cases are one or the other."[17]

A second understanding, which we follow in our concept, seeks to solve the problem by seeing consolidation as a process that starts right after democratisation and basically never ends. A good example for such scholarship is Andreas Schedler's sub-conceptualisation of democratic consolidation as "avoiding democratic breakdown", "avoiding democratic erosion", "completing democracy", "deepening democracy", and "organising democracy."[18] Thus, he follows Geoffrey Pridham who distinguishes between "negative" and "positive" consolidation.[19] By negative consolidation, Pridham means generating passive elite support for the existing regime in the absence of a viable alternative, while positive consolidation denotes genuine legitimisation by elites and the general population alike.[20]

As a careful reading of the above sections makes clear, the literature on democratic consolidation can be readily applied to authoritarian regimes as well, which, we argue, basically face the same problems of preventing breakdown, deepening and organising the regime, and generating legitimacy. In fact, they face the same challenge of moving, as Gramsci[21] put it, from a "war of manoeuvre," where the political system itself is contested, to a "war of position," where political

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[12]   Ibid.
[13]   Huntington 1991: 266-67.
[14]   Diamond 1999: 67-68.
[15]   Beyme 1996: 146.
[16]   Schneider 1995; Barrios 1999.
[17]   Mainwaring/O'Donnell/Valenzuela 1992: 4-5.
[18]   Schedler 1998.
[19]   Pridham 1990: 15.
[20]   See also Tilly 2007.
[21]   Gramsci/Hoare/Nowell-Smith 1971: 243.

and social elites agree on the nature of the political system and seek to improve it on the basis of this consensus. Thus, according to Philippe Schmitter,

"Regime consolidation consists in transforming the accidental arrangements, prudential norms and contingent solutions that emerged [...] during the uncertain struggles of the transition into structures, i.e. into relationships that are reliably known, regularly practised and habitually accepted by those persons or collectives defined as participants/citizens/subjects of such structures."[22]

Building and refining such "accepted structures," as we will show, are equally important for authoritarian regimes. It is in the control of such structures that infrastructural power manifests itself, and discursive power can help to accelerate its acceptance. The similarities do not stop here. "Stateness" and "a viable bureaucracy", the two most important preconditions for democratic consolidation listed by Linz and Stepan,[23] are no less relevant to authoritarian regimes. Finally, the arenas in which consolidation is said to occur are quite similar. Based on the work of Linz and Stepan just mentioned, Wolfgang Merkel distinguishes between three connected levels of consolidation: constitution, intermediate level (parties and associations), and attitudes and behaviour.[24] Or, more broadly, institutional structure, modes of participation, and political culture. As we will show in the following section, these levels are valid for authoritarian regimes as well, but the challenges the latter face are somewhat different.

We will come back to these differences in the course of this paper, but we should note another difference at this point of our enquiry. As the preceding overview has shown, much of the literature of democratic consolidation (in contrast to democratic transitions) concentrates on examining institutions and, with the exception of the elite theories by Burton and Higley,[25] tends to neglect the distinctive roles played by various actors. In addition, the normative outlook of most of these studies seems to build on Huntington's observation that, in order for a political system to function, public participation must be matched by adequate political structures able to channel such participation.[26] As for the relationship between actors and such institutions, it is a commonplace in the literature on New Institutionalism that elites shape political rules, which in turn shape elite strategies. However, the impact that political institutions have in structuring not only the modes of public participation but also the decision, in which kinds of participation to engage still requires examination. The implicit assumption is that the public is happy with whatever participatory institutions they are presented as long as they are democratic and enable them to influence policy-making.

Two fallacies are inherent in this view: first, it over-emphasises the role that public participation plays in the life of most people. As a consequence, other direct and indirect contacts with state organisations, which they engage in on a day-to-day basis, might be awarded much more importance in evaluating government performance. Examples in case are the job market, the fiscal system, public transport or regular access to the internet. Second, the evaluation of institutions by individuals in society takes place in a collective realm and evaluations are influenced not only by

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[22] Schmitter 1995: 539.
[23] Linz/Stepan 1996: 24.
[24] Merkel 1999: 145-69.
[25] Higley/Burton 1992 .
[26] Huntington 1968.

personal experiences but also, and perhaps mainly, by discourses within peer groups, media reports, statements by political elites etc.

For these reasons, we understand authoritarian consolidation not as largely self-referential processes taking place in each of the three levels mentioned above – the constitution, the intermediate level of parties and associations, attitudes and behaviour – and involving casts of very different actors (i.e. government, civil society organisations and political parties, individuals). Rather, we see it as a deliberate state project driven by responsive elites seeking to secure their rule. Therefore, we conceptualise the three levels as arenas in which different aspects of state power are deliberately formed and played out. As will be seen below, our concept of power is not limited to the chance of making people do something which they would not otherwise do ("power over"), but also to the chance of providing structural incentives for certain types of behaviour ("power to").

In addition, we not only focus on input legitimacy generated by the existence of democratic mechanisms of interest aggregation, but also on output legitimacy created by reducing the complexity of social and economic life, increasing well-being and more generally addressing social grievances in a successful way. In a related manner, we hold that either kind of legitimacy is created not only (and perhaps not mainly) through a subject's own and immediate contact with the regime, but also by means of government propaganda that provides compelling narratives of good government performance.

3. Authoritarian Consolidation and the Three Dimensions of Power

The three levels of consolidation provide a good starting point when trying to disentangle the concept of authoritarian consolidation (see Figure 1). With regard to the first level, studies of democratic consolidation look at how apt a constitution is in structuring political life and if it was passed by public mandate. As just pointed out, however, they tend to overemphasise representative institutions and neglect those that structure everyday life. For example, the differentiation of the legal system tends to receive only scarce attention in such studies. In fact, authoritarian regimes are not much different from democracies in that the existence of a dense network of institutions provides citizens with incentives to behave in certain ways and thereby reduces complexity and improves predictability. Furthermore, such a network also enables the regime to flexibly react to social grievances. The existence and density of such institutions essentially is what the concept of infrastructural power captures. As for the second level in democratic consolidation studies, the party system and the pervasiveness of civil society organisations is examined, as are collective veto players such as the military or the landed elite. Obviously, we will generally not find an institutionalised party system and a high density and variation of civil society organisations in authoritarian regimes, but, as will be shown, infrastructural power can be used to link state and society by other means than parties and pluralist associations. Hence, such embeddedness can be understood as one way of utilising infrastructural power in a responsive manner (coordinating coercion would be the non-responsive variant).

Figure 1: democratic and authoritarian consolidation

	democratic consolidation	authoritarian consolidation	role of the state
macro level	- constitution (- legal system) - bureaucracy	- legal system - bureaucracy - communication	generating infrastructural power
meso level	- party system - civil society	embeddedness of government institutions	responsively applying infrast. power
micro level	attitudes and behaviour (elites, population)	attitudes and behaviour (elites, population)	applying discursive power (propaganda)
(legiti-mation)	„democracy"	ideology/mentality	generating discursive power

Finally, the third arena is devoted to attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of the general public. Unfortunately, studies on elite-level political culture are scarce in this context. As we know, the existence of a democratic political culture is the result not only of successful political participation, but also, and perhaps more so, of socialisation and political education, much of which is directly undertaken in state organizations such as schools and universities. In authoritarian regimes, values and political culture play an equally important role. Hence, the third element that complements coercion and infrastructural power is the ability of the regime to intentionally shape or influence the attitudes and beliefs of individuals to make them accept or support something which might, at the first glance, to be quite irrational to support. This we call discursive power.

We have added a fourth row, which relates to the attitude dimension and pertains to the legitimation of the regime. As Juan Linz has prominently stated, authoritarian regimes tend to claim legitimation on the basis of mentalities such as national strength, economic growth or social stability. Democracies, in contrast, tend to legitimate their regime form not by means of goals external to that regime form, but by the very regime form itself. In other words, being a democracy is self-legitimating, which is why many authoritarian regimes strive to set up a democratic façade. We conceptualise the process of creating and elaborating such an overarching ideology or mentality as the creation of discursive power.

Regimes, whether democratic or authoritarian, consolidate themselves across these various levels. In our understanding, power is more than simply exerting coercion on a regime's subjects to get them to do what their rulers want, it is also about using institutions to structure the citizens' daily lives and about influencing perceptions and opinions. To this end, we take Mann's well-known categories of "despotic" and "infrastructural power" and add a third type which we call "discursive

power" which regimes can draw on to achieve their aims. Illustrated by our four cases, we will explain each of these types of power and then discuss the relationships between them.

3.1 Despotic Power

Despotic power is the easiest of the three to understand, since it closely approximates the Weberian understanding of power which we are intuitively familiar with. Mann defines it as "the range of actions which elites can undertake without routine, institutionalised negotiation with civil society groups,"[27] i.e. power OVER civil society. "Great despotic power," Mann clarifies, "can be 'measured' most vividly in the ability of all these Red Queens to shout 'off with his head' and have their whim gratified without further ado – provided the person is at hand. Despotic power is also usually what is meant in the literature by 'autonomy of power'."[28]

Despotic power often entails the use or threat of physical or psychological coercion. It is exemplified, among others, in states of emergency declared without a constitutional basis, over-reliance on presidential decrees, plain-clothes security agents arresting regime opponents in the middle of the night, the military mobilised against anti-regime demonstrations, confiscating private property under false pretences, opposition newspapers shut down, whole neighbourhoods deterred by government-sponsored thugs from attending elections. In coming to power, all of our four regimes relied heavily on despotic power.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) might well turn out to become the textbook example for the interrelationship between responsiveness and authoritarian regime consolidation, especially after the severe crisis in late 1989. Before that year, China indeed displayed many of the features that theories of regime transitions and authoritarianism attribute to authoritarian regimes, as the country was riddled with corruption, factional strive and increasing inequality. In other words, the buildup of infrastructural state power had initially been slow, and violence had been a defining feature of Chinese politics, especially under Mao Zedong. The years after Mao's death were characterised by corruption, favouritism and a double-digit inflation, which led to massive popular protests throughout the late 1980s. In 1989, a meeting staged between defiant student leaders and a moralising, yet unrelenting Prime Minister symbolised what Samuel Huntington has found to be a dangerous combination: significant participatory pressures, but a lack of institutions able to channel such participation.[29] The regime had no choice but to crack down on the popular demonstrations. As will be seen in the next section, this event was a turning point for the Chinese regime. The next 20 years were a period characterised by political system reforms, i.e. the buildup of infrastructural power and the deepening of embeddedness, albeit without either liberalisation or democratisation. In addition, the propaganda apparatus was thoroughly restructured to build up discursive power.

In a very similar way, the rule of the Suharto Regime in Indonesia, which lasted more than three decades, also started with a massive display of despotic power. After 20 years of first struggle for

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[27]   Mann 1993: 113.
[28]   Ibid..
[29]   Huntington 1968.

independence, (1945-1949), then parliamentary (1950-1957) and finally "guided" democracy (1957-1965) under the Sukarno regime, a leadership change took place. The 20 years under Sukarno were characterised by dismal economic performance, low extractive capacity, the "metastazation" of a corrupt civil service apparatus, but at the same time by an increasingly powerful army. [30] Against the backdrop of an anti-communist witch-hunt that cost the lives of several hundred thousands, General Suharto wrested power from the ailing Sukarno to become president himself in 1967. Almost instantly the regime, dubbed the "New Order coalition" by Suharto, commenced to build up infrastructural power in Indonesia. In discursive terms, the frequent invocation of the principles of *Pancasila* (see below) served to justify corporatist control of the heterogeneous Indonesian society. Both served to keep the regime in power for more than 20 years.

In Guinea, the Conté regime had the good fortune that it followed the regime of Sekou Touré. Touré, who had led the country into independence in 1958, ran a socialist-style system that became less and less popular over the years. Within a week of Touré's death in March 1984, the army, led by Lansana Conté, assumed power to the almost palpable relief of Guinean citizens. Conté, buoyed by popular support for his programme of economic reform, wasted no time in entrenching his position by murdering or jailing his co-conspirators, Touré loyalists and opposition politicians. Lansana Conté had been in office for more than 24 years, but his regime was unable to "lock in" the consolidation initially achieved in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Opposition leaders were frequently and arbitrarily imprisoned, barred from running or forced into exile. In a striking similarity to Touré's tenure, plots – whether real, fabricated or imaginary – were "uncovered" regularly. Usually, opposition parties or the army were implicated and key figures punished. Thus, we argue that Conté's failure to further develop the infrastructural and the discursive power of his regime and the subsequent lack of consolidation eventually led to the regime's decline when Conté died in December 2008.

Despotic power heralded in the regime under Yoveni Museveni in Uganda as well. In 1986, his National Resistance Army (NRA) defeated the Ugandan government after a five-year military campaign, making Museveni president of Uganda. As in the other cases, the regime has build up infrastructural and discursive power, but has not foregone the application of despotic power when it was deemed necessary. Usually, this took the form of extra-constitutional decisions by the government, the harassment of the judiciary and the limiting of parliamentary powers of oversight to increase the autonomy of the executive. However, violence is not used indiscriminately but only as a means of last resort, as even critics of the regime acknowledge.[31] But even though the human rights record is much better than that of previous regimes, opposition politicians are frequently arrested on trumped-up charges, particularly before elections.[32]

As these sections have illustrated, despotic power can be understood as the chance to apply coercive means when and where state elites see fit, unhampered by procedures that need legitimation by society. As we argued in the beginning of this paper, positive consolidation in the

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[30] Anderson 1983, 486.
[31] Mwenda 2007: 29.
[32] Tripp 2004.

sense that "authoritarianism becomes the only game in town" entails reducing the use of despotic power. Infrastructural and discursive power, however, need to be developed to fill the void.

3.2 Infrastructural Power

Infrastructural power denotes the "logistics of political control,"[33] the "capacity of the state to penetrate and coordinate civil society, and to implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm."[34] This definition refers to two dimensions of infrastructural power, namely the spatial dimension of state organisations and their relational nature. The first is the "territorial reach" of the state and applies to the extension of the "organisational networks that they coordinate, control and construct" into even the remotest areas of the state territory.[35] A lack of territorial reach can manifest itself in a regime whose power is constrained to a few cities without extending to the countryside, or in a government who only holds sway in particular regions within a country.

The second dimension is what Soifer calls the "weight of the state", i.e. the "organisational entwining" of state and non-state actors.[36] Again, two components can be identified. The first component is the resources that the government has at its disposal. This is frequently measured with indicators such as the size of state revenues as a percentage of GDP, the size of the army, the size and effectiveness of the bureaucracy, access of the rural population to drinking water, the physical infrastructure, the student-to-teacher ratio, budgetary expenditure for research and development and so on,[37] but must also include surveying technologies that make societies legible to state institutions such as census data.[38] The second component is how these resources can actually be employed. This is not only a function of the territorial reach of the state discussed above, but also one of vertical and horizontal organisational coherence and a state's "embeddedness" in society. The notion of embeddedness covers the links between state and society – the better the integration, the more the regime is able to learn about social grievances and to co-opt civil society.

Thus, infrastructural power is determined 1) by the ability of the state to penetrate society by regularising behaviour through implementing and enforcing authoritative rules in an increasing number of social domains through the institutionalisation of patterns of rule; and 2) by the degree of embeddedness of state institutions. Responsive behaviour necessitates the aggregation of preferences in society and the existence of a monitoring system that warns the regime of an impending crisis. In democracies, this role is played by representative organisations and the media. In authoritarian regimes, as the developmental state literature has shown, such an "embeddedness" of the regime in can be achieved also by other means.[39]

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[33] Ibid.: 116.
[34] Ibid.: 113.
[35] Soifer/vom Hau 2008: 222.
[36] Soifer 2008.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Scott 1998.
[39] See for example Granovetter 1985; Evans 1995.

Institutionalisation

Several authors have highlighted the intimate relationship between democratic consolidation and institutionalization.[40] It is quite obvious that this would also apply to other regime types and it is in this area that most of the research on the stability of authoritarian regimes is located even though its focus mainly lies on institutions structuring elite behaviour, in particular with regard to leadership recruitment and mechanisms for the mediation of elite disputes. As to the first, Barbara Geddes, in her famous comparative study of various forms of authoritarian government,[41] traced the higher life expectancy of single-party systems to the party's integrative function and to the presence of regularised procedures of elite succession within such a system. This argument was further elaborated by Jason Brownlee,[42] who found that the ability of a single party to integrate contending factions was determined in the early years of a regime. When elite conflicts could be resolved early on, factions were much less likely to defect the ruling coalition in later times.

These findings no doubt carry great explanatory power but institutions can also support authoritarian consolidation in other ways beyond mediating elite conflicts. Crucial elements of state infrastructural power are also the capacity to extract resources and redistribute them, to monitor the movements and socio-structural composition of the population, and to address social grievances or even prevent them from forming. This can only be achieved where a professional bureaucracy is present. Therefore, we follow up on the notion of Linz and Stepan that the improvement and differentiation of the bureaucratic apparatus is in fact one of consolidation's most vital components. But how can such "professionalization" be conceptualised?

First of all, it was already mentioned that one crucial dimension of state infrastructural power is the territorial reach of its organisations, the extent to which villagers far away from the central apparatus have access to and can be reached by state administrative organisations. Among our cases, China and Indonesia fare best in this aspect. In China, the party-state consists of vertically integrated hierarchies that extend down to more than 600.000 villages. While the CCP might be credited for this institutional feat in China, in Indonesia the military has played a similar role. New Order Indonesia justified the omnipresence of the military by means of a doctrine called "dwi-fungsi" (two functions), which in essence states that the military not only performs coercive functions, but also has a social role to play. Thus, down to the village level the military to this day pervades economy, government and administration. And the administration, as William Liddle pointed out in the mid-1980s, "is the largest employer [...] in every city, town and village,"[43] testifying to the wide territorial reach of the Suharto Regime.

The matter is somewhat different in Uganda and Guinea, although in Uganda attempts are clearly visible to increase the territorial reach of the state. Even as the National Resistance Movement (NRM, sometimes simply called "the Movement"), the movement/party led by Museveni, itself still lacked an organisational structure, it engaged with instituting the Resistance Councils (today

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[40] See for example Valenzuela 1992, O'Donnell 1992. Note that this applies to both formal and informal institutions. On the role of informal institutions in democracies see Lauth 2000.

[41] Geddes 1999.

[42] Brownlee 2007.

[43] Liddle 1985, 71.

called 'Local Councils') that function as bodies of grassroots democracy in every village.[44] While the organisation of these councils no doubt represents an impressive feat,[45] anecdotal evidence suggests that most councils are ineffective and mostly exist on paper.[46]

Second, enough organisational coherence must exist to ensure that information, communication and fiscal flows are not misdirected or severed on their way up and down. As for vertical organisational coherence, a good example is the Chinese saying that "heaven is high, the emperor is far away", meaning that although state organisations might be nominally present, the orders of the central government cannot be enforced in remote regions because local-level cadres pursue their own particularistic goals.[47] Although far from being field offices for the central governments, both the Chinese and the Indonesian regime proved able to implement all vital policies throughout the realm. Although especially in China central polices are frequently distorted, the government has not lost control over its local agents and successfully intervened whenever it felt that vital interests such as local stability or revenue generation were at stake.

Horizontal coherence applies to the coherence of the leadership. Factionalism and splits in the leadership have torn many authoritarian regimes apart, and they are not conducive to the responsiveness of the regime. Hence, institutionalising and regularising the turnover of regime leadership is an important element of authoritarian consolidation. Of our cases, only China has so far managed to institutionalise orderly leadership change. With respect to the former, the leadership had learned that factional strive is dangerous since it can render the bureaucracy inefficient by forcing bureaucrats to take sides, that reformers reaching out to oppositional groups in society can instigate protests, and that it leaves the leadership impotent to deal with the negative consequences arising from bureaucratic inefficiency and public protest. Soon after the 1989 demonstrations, measures were taken to rejuvenate and professionalize political leadership in Beijing and beyond.[48] In addition, the factional struggle for leadership positions had begun to be replaced by an institutionalised and formalised system of leadership succession.[49] For example, the Chinese presidency is now confined to two terms in office (as is the post of the General Secretary of the CCP, which is held by the same person), and term limits also apply to provincial Party secretaries. Conflicts between different factions of course continue to exist, but they are hidden from the public now, which is presented with the image of a unified and harmonious leadership striving for the common good. With numerous think tanks (Chinese and foreign) supplying leaders with information and advice, decision-making is far more professionalized than only 10 years ago.

Our other cases differ strongly: knowing that grooming a heir-apparent causes power to begin to flow to him or her,[50] neither Suharto, nor Conté or Museveni chose a successor, let alone allow mechanisms for regular leadership turnover to be established. Still, in the early years of the Museveni regime, the NRM was a crucial instrument for the integration of different political factions. Being neither a party nor an official organ of the state, however, the NRM provoked

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[44] Kasfir 1998: 54, Makara/Rakner/Svåsand 2009: 187
[45] Kannyo 2004.
[46] Apter 1995: 129, Jones 2009.
[47] Göbel 2009 .
[48] Yang 2004.
[49] Fewsmith 1999.
[50] Liddle 1985, 85.

criticism by the opposition who labeled it as a *de facto* single party. Elite coherence began to break down in the late 1990s as the discontent with the regime's obstruction of further democratization led to a fractionalization of the political elite.[51] Since then, there have been frequent elite conflicts about the trajectory of reforms; yet the fact that the NRM is still able to dominate the political scene can be partly attributed to the weakness of the opposition parties and partly to its still-broad support among major segments of the population.[52]

Third, expert knowledge is required at the upper levels of the bureaucracy to design policies able to forestall or address social grievances, and at the lower levels to actually implement these policies. The existence of a "professional" bureaucracy plays an important role in Peter Evans' concept of "embedded autonomy". Evans convincingly shows that economic transformation was more likely to be successful in regimes where bureaucracies were characterised by "selective, meritocratic recruitment", "longterm career rewards" and "corporate coherence". The last point is exceedingly important, since it gives a regime the "ability to resist incursions by the invisible hand of individual maximisation by bureaucrats."[53] As Evans points out, corporate coherence is largely a function of the former two items, but is reinforced by the coexistence of pre-existing informal networks tying bureaucrats to each other and of beliefs or "mentalities" tying the aspirations of bureaucrats to the goals of the state. The developmental state literature is a good example of how regime legitimacy is tied to regime performance, which is in turn a result of improved infrastructural power.

There can be no doubt that neither of the regimes discussed here has reached the level of bureaucratic professionalism of Japan, Korea and Taiwan, the cases discussed by Evans. It is interesting to note, however, that bureaucratic restructuring was on the agenda in three of the four regimes discussed here. The only exception is Guinea, where the bureaucracy never received much attention. One major reason for this is that the regime was propped up by rents accruing from the extraction of bauxite. Bauxite mining is a capital-intensive, heavily industrialized activity which means that it can only be done by large companies. This, in turn, makes it easy for the state to collect taxes, customs duties and concession payments from a small number of corporations. In the end, this ensured that the regime had a huge advantage in resources over potential opponents without ever being institutionalised or developing tax capacity to a significant degree.

In all other cases, restructuring started with the downsizing the bloated bureaucracies that had grown mainly as a result of cronyism and a lack of employment opportunities elsewhere. Staff training and other measures to improve bureaucratic policy often followed. In Indonesia, civil service reform was one of Suharto's first steps after taking power. Departments were streamlined, civil service hiring frozen, and employment procedures professionalized.[54] The assessment of the quality of Indonesia's bureaucracy after these steps had been taken varies. While Bhattacharya and Pangesitu[55] note that "Indonesia's top-decisionmakers are of the highest quality but the bureaucracy as a whole is weak", Donald P. Warwick (1987) presents a more nuanced picture. To

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[51] Makara/Rakner/Svåsand 2009.
[52] Steiner 2004
[53] Evans 1992: 163.
[54] Warwick 19??, 40-
[55] Bhattacharya/Pangesitu 1993, 41.

be sure, he points out that as a general tendency departmental insularity promotes organisation-specific interests at the cost of societal benefit, that corruption is wide-spread, that the performance evaluation system is dysfunctional, that staff training is weak, and that the assignment system rigid. However, he also states that there is a high variation on these issues across the various departments, and that the generally negative performance on these indicators does not necessarily correlate with actual performance. At least in some policy fields (such as primary education and family planning) the involved departments performed well, which Warwick attributes to the presence of personal motivation not dissimilar to that highlighted by Evans.[56]

Bureaucratic restructuring was also on the agenda in Uganda, where the government undertook a major reform of the bureaucracy as part of a World Bank-sponsored program of structural adjustment, halving the number of civil servants between 1992 and 1996.[57] Similar to Indonesia, however, even though civil servants received a substantial pay increase as part of the reform, many still have to resort to petty corruption to make ends meet.

Comparatively late, China underwent a programme of government streamlining that led to the reduction of 1.5 Million government employees at all levels between 1998 and 2002.[58] In addition, the bureaucracy underwent significant rejuvenation, professionalization, and restructuring, and several laws were passed to simplify and regularise law-making and administrative procedures.[59] Regarding central-local relations, the responsivity of the system was increased by delegating managerial autonomy over important tasks to lower administrative levels, without however relinquishing control over the outcomes.[60] Thereby, the creative potential of local-level politicians was harnessed to produce innovations for policies necessary for China's economic and, to a smaller extent, social development.

Embeddedness

As to the intermediate level of communicative channels between regime organisations and societal groups, studies of democratic consolidation tend to concentrate on the institutionalisation of the party system and the "vibrancy" of civil society. Comparative studies on the integrative role of the authoritarian "equivalent" of civil society associations, i.e. corporatist mass organisations, have so far been scarce, but would merit more attention. As for other formalised processes channelling societal demands into the regime, newer studies have sought to explain the stability of of authoritarian regimes with the existence of semi-competitive elections[61] and limited discourse in parliaments.[62]

However, the prevalent - and perhaps most convincing - approaches on embedded state-society relationships tend to focus on informal relations between political, economic, and social elites. For

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[56] Warwick 1987, 54.
[57] Mwenda/Tangri 2005: 456
[58] Yang 2004: 25.
[59] Ibid.: Chapter 5.
[60] Göbel 2009 ; Heilmann 2008.
[61] Schedler 2006.
[62] Gandhi 2007.

example, the "rentier state" approach explains the longevity of authoritarian regimes with the fact that political elites use rents appropriated from the sale of natural resources or the control of state enterprises to "buy off" potential challengers to their rule. Rentier states often radiate stability, but as the example of Indonesia will show, they are prone to sudden breakdowns if rents cease to flow. Informal cooptation is one central element also in the literature on developmental states, where professional and meritocratic bureaucracies are built on personal networks knit in elite academies, where retired bureaucrats can serve as advisors to key enterprises, and where political and economic elites meet in lush surroundings to discuss (economic) policies.

As to the embeddedness of the regime, China is the most advanced of our four cases. First of all, some scholars stress that the rubberstamp representative organs at all levels (the People's Congresses and the Consultative Conferences) are increasingly becoming arenas for voicing discontent. However, it remains debatable whether indeed social, and not merely personal, interests are actually represented there. No doubt more important for relaying public opinions into the political system are channels such as the internet, a system of Letters and Complaints attached to government organs, as well as letters to the editor which are evaluated and summarised by the news agencies and passed on the political decision-makers.[63] Second, the level of social organisations has increased significantly. As of now, there exist about 300.000 registered social- and non-profit organisations, the number of non-registered organisations is estimated to surpass 3 Million.[64] Since the organisation of genuinely political interests is very difficult in China, the majority of these organisations is active in the rather "unpolitical" sectors of social welfare and environmental protection. Given that their relationship to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) tends to be one of cooperation rather than conflict, the state can shift some of its burdens to society without having to fear that perceptions of increased efficacy on the side of the organisations' members will turn them against the regime.[65] In fact, the governments at all levels tend to actively support such organisations and, where applicable, incorporate them into the mass organisations of the CCP.[66] Third, the party state has created arenas of limited political participation not only for the growing middle classes (such as house-owner's committees), but also for the disadvantaged strata of Chinese society. By means of semi-competitive village elections, China's peasants are partially integrated into the regime and instrumentalized as watchdogs against local cadre corruption.[67] In the cities, newly formed Residents' Committees not only provide avenues for community participation, but are also responsible for handing out lowest cost of living payments and for engaging the elderly and jobless in community tasks, education programmes and freetime activities.[68] In addition, medical insurance and lowest cost of living are being extended from the cities to the countryside.

In Uganda, Museveni depended more and more on informal networks to safeguard his rule as the integrative power of the NRM waned. According to Mwenda, "Museveni's success at consolidating his power and stifling democracy flows from his knack for integrating large chunks

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[63] Chung 2000.
[64] Howell 2003.
[65] Göbel/Heberer (eds.) 2004 .
[66] Heberer 2008.
[67] Baum/Shevchenko 1999.
[68] Heberer/Schubert 2008. See also Heberer forthcoming and Heberer forthcoming.

of the political class into his vast patronage empire."[69] Tripp adds that, starting in the late 1990s, the regime started to rely on "a smaller clique of loyalists, whose activities were cloaked in secrecy. Political appointments increasingly took on a more pronounced regional and ethnic character."[70] These developments also contributed to the discontent among the more reform-oriented members of the elite, thus deepening elite factionalization.

If Conté made no measurable progress in the institutional arena, he did much better – for a time – when it came to embeddedness. While his predecessor relied on a single party, Conté soon discovered the possibilities of electoral authoritarianism and semi-competitive parliaments. He allowed the free formation of political parties in 1991-92 and held regular elections at the municipal and national level, first running for president himself in 1993. However, even at the time it was fairly obvious that Conté, like so many other African post-1990 autocrats, ensured that he and his party would never lose these elections. Voter rolls were intransparent, commissions dominated by the regimes and schedules were frequently moved to better suit the president's needs. In addition, the government often bought off protesters by acquiescing to their demands (or at least pretending to do so).

As regards embeddedness, Indonesia displays features of both China and Guinea. Just like in China, freedom of organisation did not exist, and the major ethnic and functional groups in Indonesia's heterogeneous society were integrated into the regime by means of strictly regulated corporatist organisations. In a similar manner, the range of political parties that had existed during Sukarno's reign were bundled into one party each representing the interests of specific constituencies. These organisations served as vehicles for Suharto to balance elites in a way that they neither turned against each other, nor united to challenge his rule. The dispersion of political offices and economic rents served this purpose well. Although the Indonesian government was able to escape the resource curse in the early 1980s by reducing its reliance on oil exports and promoting exports of manufactured goods, Indonesia still shared many features of rentier states. In particular, privatisation served as a vehicle to reallocate state enterprises to groups whose loyalty Suharto needed. A significant number of these enterprises also made their way into the holdings of the Suharto family. It appears that one major reason for the breakdown of Indonesia's otherwise resilience authoritarian system was that Suharto in his later years became less adept at managing the contending elites and concentrated more and more political and economic power in himself and his family. When the 1997 Asian financial crisis threw the Indonesian economy into turmoil and Suharto was faced with the choice between clientelist politics and adhering to the structural adjustment conditions imposed by the IMF, Suharto chose to follow the IMF. The facts that rents stopped flowing to Suharto's agents (but not to his family) made many Indonesian elites wary of the old man, and eventually Suharto was forced to resign.

3.3 Discursive Power

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[69] Mwenda 2007: 29.
[70] Tripp 2004: 8, also Makara/Rakner/Svåsand 2009: 190.

Finally, on the level of individual- level beliefs, attitudes and behaviour, the literature on democratic consolidation stresses that a "democratic political culture" needs to take precedence over authoritarian values. Political culture is defined as "a people's predominant beliefs, attitudes, values, ideals, sentiments, and evaluations about the political system of their country and the role of the self in that system."[71] Larry Diamond identifies three dimensions of political culture:

"The cognitive orientation, involving knowledge of and beliefs about the political system; an affective orientation, consisting of feelings about the political system, and an evaluational orientation, including commitments to political values and judgements (making use of information and feelings) about the performance of the political system relative to those values."[72]

It would be beyond the scope of this paper the excellent work available on the component parts of political culture, and how political culture changes over time. What is necessary for the analysis at hand is that empirical research has shown that support for democracy correlates significantly not with the short-term performance of the regime in dealing with economic and social problems, but how it delivers on its "promises of freedom and democracy."[73] Larry Diamond has built a comprehensive model of how the historical legacy of a democracy, the current political and economic performance, party system institutionalisation and feelings of efficacy shape assessments, perceptions, and trust which ultimately translates into regime legitimacy.[74] The implicit assumption of this model is that experience directly translates into attitudes and beliefs, and neglects the role that ready-made assessments of regime performance dispersed through the media and peer group plays. In a similar vein, the role of education and political socialisation for producing regime support is only mentioned in passim.[75] Both, however, are very important elements in explaining the stability not only of authoritarian, but also of democratic regimes.

Authoritarian regimes usually do not promise freedom and democracy (although, as seen below, China does) but employ legitimating frameworks that Juan Linz has called "mentalities." As stated above, such mentalities usually build on visions of national strength and economic well-being, and often come in the guise of "modernisation projects" that require the cooperation of all social forces. As Peter Evans puts it with regard to professional bureaucracies in authoritarian development-oriented regimes, "what is at stake is building a self-orienting organisation that generates sufficient incentives to induce its individual members to pursue collective goals and assimilate enough information to allow it to choose goals worth pusuing."[76] Case studies of career choices of Chinese university graduates show that propaganda can indeed contribute to building up such a capacity for "sustained collective action" in the name of a nation's progress and thereby help stabilise the regime.[77]

In order to pursue this line of research further, we avail ourselves of a concept that we call "discursive power." Discursive power denotes "the art of government", a "means of securing the active complicity of the subjects of power in their own self-regulation."[78] The aim of discursive

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[71] Diamond 1999: 163.
[72] Ibid..
[73] Ibid.: 192-93.
[74] Ibid.: 204.
[75] Ibid.: 199.
[76] Evans 1992: 178.
[77] Hoffmann 2006.
[78] Jessop 2008: 147.

power is to get the citizens to want what the regime wants them to want. This is closely tied to Lukes' "radical view" of power where he rhetorically asks, "is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances shaping their perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things?"[79]

Strong states rarely resort to violence but rather seek to influence individuals in way that they support state projects because they believe that this is the correct thing to do. In Foucauldian terms, authorities make use of "governmental technologies", a complex of "practical mechanisms, procedures, instruments, and calculations through which [they] seek to guide and shape the conduct and decisions of others in order to achieve specific objectives."[80] Examples of such symbolic devices are, in the case of China, paradigms such as the "Three Represents" and the "Harmonious Society", attempts to shape identities such as that of the "peasant,"[81] but also means of political socialization such as such as hymns, flags, constitutions or the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.[82]

In contrast to institutionalist approaches where power is mainly associated with the means to change the political rules of the game, the notion of discursive power alerts us to another meaning of power: the means to change (or at least influence) the cognitive filters through which strategic environments are interpreted.[83] Of course, the manipulation and creation of symbols requires considerable skill and finesse because the addressees need to develop a certain degree of intrinsic motivation to make these narratives their own. As Bob Jessop points out, "it is the continuing interaction between the semiotic and extra-semiotic in a complex co-evolutionary process of variation, selection, and retention that gives relatively successful economic and political imaginaries their performative, constitutive force in the material world."[84] In other words, successful political propaganda shapes political and social realities, but also needs to somehow correspond to these realities.

As for China, Anne-Marie Brady has shown how the year 1989 marked the "turning point of a new era" for China's propaganda system. Not only was the whole system modernised and rationalised, but also was "thought work" stepped up intensively.[85] A number of clever strategies can be identified. First, government propaganda insures that modernisation does not go unnoticed, and research has shown that government propaganda indeed helps to built support for China's party state. For example, central government propaganda obfuscated the systemic nature of excessive fiscal extractions from China's peasants simply by blaming local cadres for lacking morality.[86] Second, the regime has shifted its legitimacy basis from voicing abstract mentalities to providing short-term development benchmarks on which it offers to be evaluated.[87] Naturally, if these benchmarks are

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[79] Lukes 2006: 28.
[80] Lemke 2007: 50.
[81] Kipnis 1995.
[82] Anderson 1983.
[83] Hay 2001 .
[84] Jessop 2008: 240.
[85] Brady 2008.
[86] Li 2004.
[87] Holbig 2008.

reached, the central government will accept the praise, but if they are not reached, the lower-unit administrations can always be blamed. In terms of sensitive issues like human rights, the Chinese government went from a defensive to an offensive position by confronting the "Western" model of individual human rights with an "Asian" model of collective human rights. In a similar vein, Chinese leaders frequently use the word "democracy" in the context of their reforms, but it is quite clear that the term does not mean to them what it means to us. Whereas we tend to see democracy as an end in itself, Chinese leaders understand it merely as a set of participatory mechanisms that can be employed to reach non-democratic political aims. It is no coincidence, however, that a concept that seems to be so much at odds with an authoritarian context is so frequently used. By giving such a strong normative concept its own meaning the Chinese government cleverly attempts to soften its impact when it is used as a discursive weapon against its authoritarian rule. Finally, the regime uses the propaganda apparatus to prop up nationalist feelings in China's population in order to portray itself as a safeguard of national interests and, more importantly, a guarantor of stability.[88]

For Museveni's regime, the local councils represented a mechanism through which local interests could be politically aggregated and understood, but they also could be employed as a vehicle for the application of discursive power. Military-style political education programs, called *chaka-mchaka*, were employed to inculcate citizens with a pro-Movement ideology that propagated the ills of sectarian party politics.[89] The government is also active in promoting its point of view through the media (mostly radio and newspapers). Since 1986, Uganda has quickly developed a relatively free and critical national media even though editors and journalists often face harassment and detention.[90] The regime has frequently cracked down on the media by shutting down radio stations and arresting journalists yet has been unable to dominate the media landscape. Recently, it has started to try a different approach by creating a propaganda machinery: "committees of ruling party sympathizers facilitated with a quarterly $150,000 to buy airtime, transport and allowances to call radio stations and present views that are government-friendly."[91] At any rate, surveys that show the population to be broadly in support of "democracy" but sceptical towards political parties seem to indicate that government propaganda has been effective.[92]

3.4 The Interrelationship between the Three Dimensions of Power

Clearly, these dimensions of power do not exist in isolation, but influence each other. In this part, we will highlight, how states can use different dimensions of power in a mutually reinforcing manner (see Figure 2) but we acknowledge that sometimes the exercise of one type of power might obstruct or even counter the development or application of another dimension of power.[93]

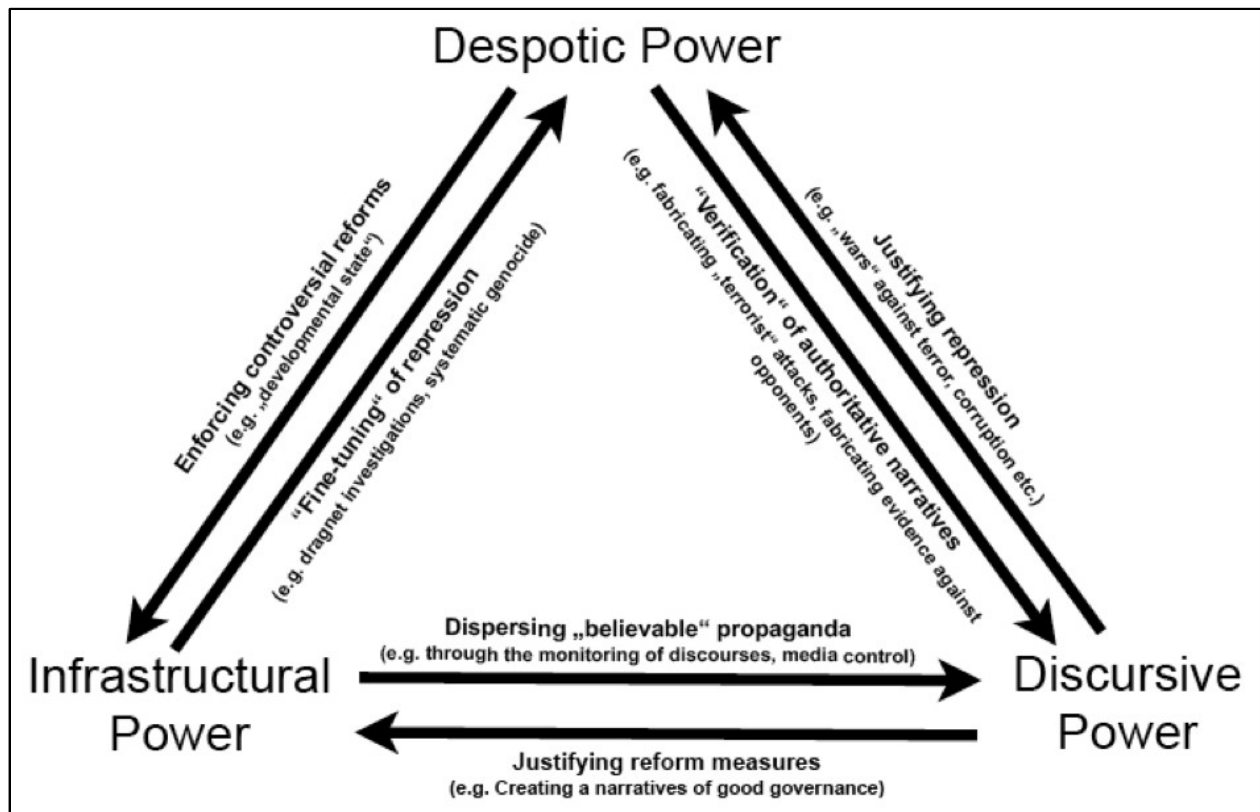[88]   Lynch 1999.
[89] Tripp 2004: 19.
[90] Tripp 2004: 10-12.
[91] East Africa Press 2008.
[92] Ottemoeller 1998.
[93]   Lucas 1998 and Holsti 1996: 109-112 provide examples of the latter.

Figure 2: How dimensions of power (can) reinforce each other

In his initial design of the component parts of "autonomous state power", Mann already stressed that the existence of infrastructural power (IP) may be a necessary precondition to the successful application of despotic power (DP). Put simply, without the monitoring capacities that result from IP, the despots might find themselves unable to find the object against whom despotic power is to be applied. But it is not only monitoring capabilities that IP offers, but also capacities to organise coercion effectively, as Scott Straus has demonstrated in his analysis of the genocide in Rwanda.[94]

Another element would be the use of information derived from improved monitoring capacities to selectively target key figures of the opposition and thereby prevent large-scale demonstrations from occurring. As these examples show, an increase in IP does not automatically mean that coercion will be reduced. Resorting to IP and discursive power (alone or in combination) is only possible where responsiveness exists. Arguably, regimes which utilise infrastructural power to prop up despotic power can be stable for a long time (such as North Korea, Laos or Myanmar), but they are not gaining quality. In fact, there are good reasons that both regimes, despite their stabile appearances, are considered "fragile" by the Fragile States Index.

The other way round, DP can also be used to enhance IP. Though not made explicit, this relationship is one of the crucial elements underlying the success of "developmental states" in Asia and elsewhere. Because of their authoritarian nature, these states were able to undertake economic restructuring without the "bothersome" interference of trade unions protesting against exploitative wages, peasant organisations deploring the extraction of agricultural surplus for the buildup of urban industry, environmental groups demonstrating against the pollution discharged by these

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[94]   Straus 2006.

factories, or individual entrepreneurs colluding with parliamentarians or other decision makers in the political system to further their own particularistic goals.[95] This alerts us to the fact that authoritarian regimes, consolidated as they may be, are not democracies. As such, they are still very likely to make use of DP where goals cannot be the attained by making use of IP or discursive power.

The two-way relationship that exists between IP and discursive power has received scarce attention so far, but is very important for the study at hand. First of all, as had been the case with DP, the application of Discursive Power becomes more efficient the better the underlying infrastructure is. This applies not only to the technical level and density of TV and radio networks and the print media, to the ability to produce compelling propaganda or to the sophistication of internet censorship, but also to gathering the information that allows autocracies to fabricate propaganda that is indeed believable. As mentioned above, propaganda must correspond to the lifeworld experiences of its addressees and channels must exist to relay such lifeworld experiences to those in power. In the other direction, such propaganda helps to shape not only diffuse beliefs, mentalities and even demands, but can also create specific support for institutional adjustments that are undertaken and that would otherwise not resonate so well with the general public. For example, sacrifices people have to make for the sake of modernisation, progress, and development are frequently justified by recurring to the above-mentioned mentalities, or, even more frequently, national and international forces are blamed for the existence of poverty and uneven development. In addition, propaganda is often used to proliferate success stories with regards to infrastructure improvement, the extension of social security systems, administrative reforms and other signs of responsiveness.

Finally, there is a two-way relationship between discursive power and DP. Clearly, discursive power can be used to ameliorate the effects of harsh actions undertaken against segments of the population such as minorities or dissidents, but also to imbue international events affecting the country in question with a tailor-made interpretation that serves to bolster the legitimacy of the regime in power. The evocation of nationalism by the Chinese party-state in times of crises serves as a good case in point. The other way round, DP can be used to fabricate evidence which underscores propaganda already dispersed, such as instigating violence by or fabricating evidence against enemies of the regime.

5. Conclusion

As we have hopefully shown, the systematic study of how and why authoritarian regimes remain stable and can even gain a substantive measure of public support is a true challenge to Comparative Politics. While previous studies on authoritarian regime stability have focussed on isolated institutional traits, elite cooptation or, in the case of the developmental state literature, a combination of both, we have attempted here to present an analytical framework that allows the systematic and comprehensive study of macro-, meso- and micro-level factors which contribute individually and in combination to improve not only the stability, but also the quality of authoritarian regimes. An important insight that strongly resonates with observations made by

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[95] Pempel 1999.

Samuel Huntington more than four decades ago is that many, indeed perhaps most institutions necessary for the consolidation of a democracy also need to be present in authoritarian regimes.

In addition, we have shown that two issues which have been neglected so far need to be included in approaches seeking to explain the consolidation of authoritarian regimes. First, while most approaches so far have focussed either on the role of coercion or on the role of institutions, much explanatory power also lies in the third dimension of state power, which we have called discursive power. Second and relatedly, we have shown that these dimensions of state power can not only be applied alone, but that they are mutually reinforcing when applied in combination. Both issues merit more scholarly attention.

Our case studies have tentatively confirmed that regimes that manage to build up infrastructural and discursive power tend to be more stable than those that do not. Clearly, China represents the most advanced case in this respect, and both institutionalisation and discursive refinement are still ongoing. New Order Indonesia was able to build up substantial infrastructural power (though significantly less so than China), but the fact that Suharto engaged in a process of de-institutionalisation in his later years in office contributed Indonesia's lack of capacity to withstand the 1997 economic crisis (although it had been able to manage two similar crises in the 1970s and 1980s). However, the case of Guinea has also shown how long regimes can survive if they rely on despotic power mixed with selective responsiveness.

Uganda represents an interesting case, as it shares many features with Indonesia. Similar to Suharto's New Order, the Museveni regime has combined a restrained use of despotic power with a certain degree of both infrastructural and discursive power. Also, further progress towards consolidation is undercut by the regime's unwillingness to strengthen and deepen formal institutions including, notably, any means of a formalized succession of power. It is interesting to note, however, that institutionalization is moving to new fields and has been reverted in others, as the ongoing development of the NRM and the proposed new propaganda machine indicate. Thus, consolidation is stalled in the sense that there is little net progress towards the institutonalization of infrastructural power even as the institutional basis of the regime's infrastructural power continues to change. It is difficult to say if this institutional fluidity suffices to keep the regime in power if Museveni dies or if Uganda is hit with an economic crisis similar to that of Indonesia. The similarities to the Indonesian case suggest, however, that the chances of survival are not good.

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