Why Do Authoritarian Regimes Provide Welfare Programs?

Sanghoon Park [1]

[1] University of South Carolina
Department of Political Science

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Research Question

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- How can we explain?

    - why do authoritarian regimes provide welfare?
    - are there variations of authoritarian welfare states?

Understanding of Welfare states

Definition

- A state in which organized power is deliberately used to modify the play of market forces.

- Minimum income, social insurance, and universal services

- The structure of class coalitions presses govt. toward specific types of welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1990).

- For example, red-green alliance of Sweden $\rightarrow$ universal

Welfare Regimes in Autocracies

- Leaders maintain coalitions of supporters by public, private goods (Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow and Smith 2003).

- Autocracies have different coalitions (Gandhi and Lust-okar 2009; Levitsky and Way 2010).

- Autocrats also have incentives to provide public goods (Wintrobe 1998)

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The problem is ***who is the target?***.

Classes

In authoritarian regimes,

- welfare = co-optation

- Extent of welfare depends on class.

Assumption: individuals in similar strata have converging preferences over social policies.

- Income-based: **middle class** and **working class**

- Institutional-based: **party elite** and **military**

Classes

1 Middle class can be heterogeneous. (Dahlum, Knutsen and Wig 2019).

- Urban middle class $\rightarrow$ higher leverage

2 Working class

- Rural working class also affected by urbanization, industrialization.
- Elites have tried to co-opt both (e.g., the Russian Revolution).

3 The party elite and the military

- Specific institutions create class of elites with distinct interests, incentives.

Class Coalitions

- Different classes $\rightarrow$ different welfare programs.

    - Democratization literature emphasizes threats of middle class.
    - Working class prefers more extensive welfare than middle.
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- Hypotheses (H_1): Working class has greater influence on universal welfare programs than the middle class.

Alternative: Party Institutionalization

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  - Autocrats with institutionalized parties → universal welfare programs (Rasmussen and Knutsen 2019).
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- Hypotheses (H_2): Higher levels of party institutionalization increase welfare programs universality.

Sample Selection

Authoritarian Regimes:
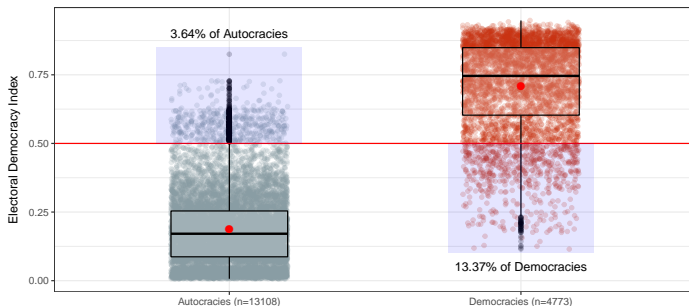
Sample Selection

Authoritarian Regimes:

Figure: The distribution of Democracies and Autocracies

Sample Selection

After the Russian Revolution of 1917:

Sample Selection

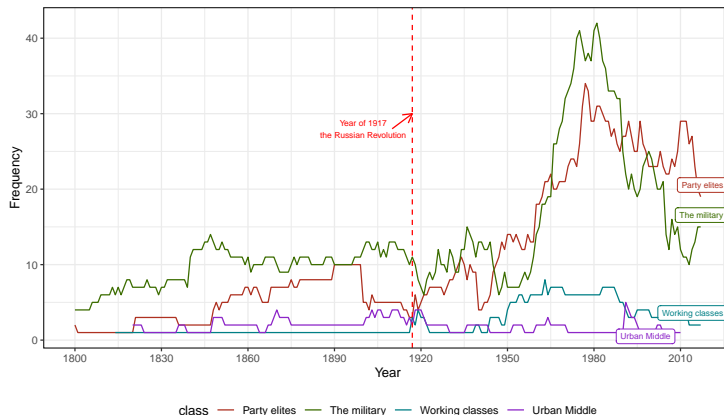## After the Russian Revolution of 1917:

Figure: Time trends of the numbers of states by classes

Dataset and methods

- Coverage: 95 authoritarian states from 1917-2000 (unbalanced)

- Essential data source

  - Social Policies around the World data set
  - Variety of Democracies (V-Dem) data set

- Variable

  - DV: Welfare programs (social coverage and delivery)
  - EV: Class coalitions (working, urban middle, party elites, and military)
  - CV: Logged GDP per capita (V-Dem), logged of population, and resource dependence (Miller 2015)

Dataset and methods

Figure: The distribution of universal indices by classes in Autocracies
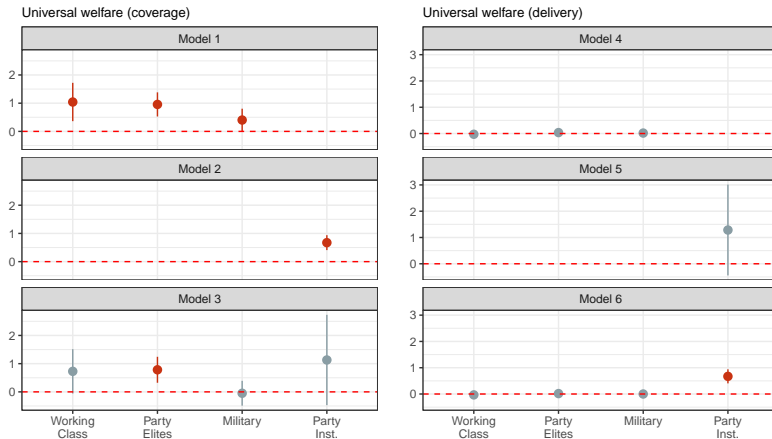
Empirical Analysis

Figure: Class coalitions, Party Institutionalization, and Welfare Universalism

Empirical Analysis
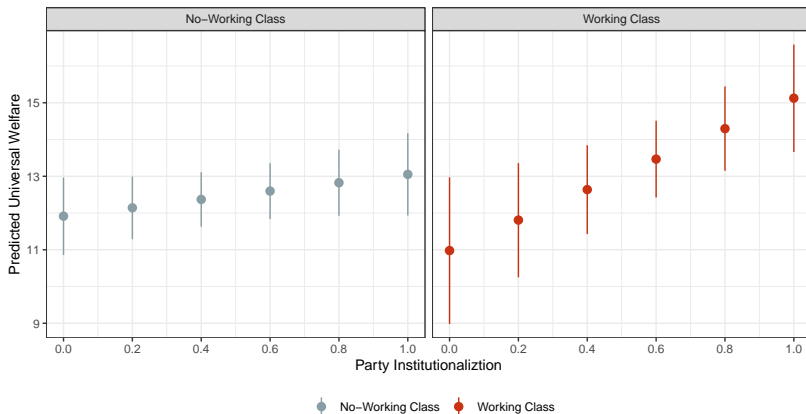

Figure: Predicted Universal Welfare of Working Class by Party Institutionalization (95% CI)

Conclusion

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3. Effect of coalitions are mediated by parties that emerge to capture them in autocracies.

Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Obs.	Mean	Std.	Min.	Max.
UI_SPaW	3,067	14.20	10.47	0.00	48.00
UI_VDem	6,285	0.01	1.42	-3.42	3.41
Party Elites	6,288	0.27	0.45	0.00	1.00
Military	6,288	0.28	0.45	0.00	1.00
Working Class	6,288	0.06	0.24	0.00	1.00
Urban Middle	6,288	0.02	0.14	0.00	1.00
Party Inst.	5,311	0.44	0.25	0.00	0.97
Ln.Pop.	5,186	8.73	1.58	4.12	14.05
Ln.GDPpc.	5,351	8.02	1.01	4.90	12.30
Res.Dep.	5,199	6.60	13.93	0.00	100.00

Table: Descriptive Statistics of Data
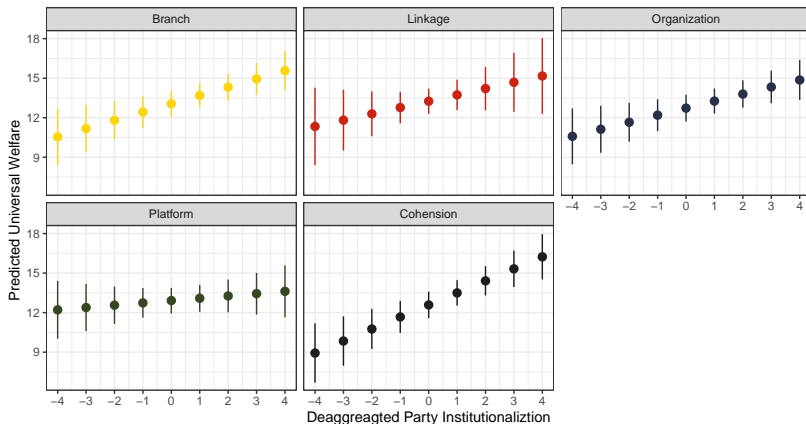
Deaggreagted Party Institutionaliztion

Figure: Predicted Universal Welfare of Working Class by Deaggreagted Party Institutionaliztion (95% CI)