

Putting Parties out to Pasture

The Effect of Pastoralism on Party Institutionalization in Autocracies

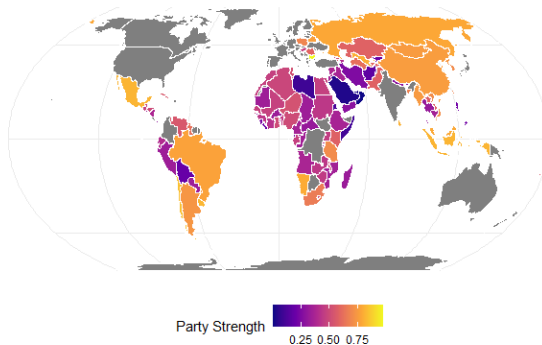
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In some autocracies both rulers and opposition build strong parties, in others they do not. Prevailing explanations focus on the incentives for rulers to ban, allow or build parties. This article proposes a bottom-up explanation of party system strength which centers tribal institutions inherited from pastoral agriculture. Lineage-based tribes provide an alternative mechanism for issue aggregation, representation, and the exchange of patronage for support. Tribes may benefit an autocrat by providing the co-optation benefits of parties without the threat of a united cross-lineage opposition. I show that autocracies whose ancestors practiced more pastoralism have weaker party systems today. I also present causal evidence using surface water availability as an instrument and show this relationship persists when controlling for pre-modern development and colonization.

- Autocratic parties are a major subject of research. There are papers on party regimes and
 - Regime survival [Magaloni and Kricheli, 2010]
 - Democratization [Slater and Wong, 2013]
 - Even RD investment [Simmons, 2016]
- Large variation in the presence of parties and their institutional strength (many are ephemeral vehicles for ruling group)
- Why?

Choropleth Map of Party Inst., Autocracy Years Only



Data Source: V-Dem
Countries with less than 10 autocratic years between 1970 and 2020 are dropped.

Figure: Party institutionalization index described below.

Theory: Tribal Institutions

- Bottom-up explanation of partisanship based on tribes
- Tribes are informal identity networks based on kin or fictive kin bonds [Barfield, 1991]

Competing Organizations: Tribes vs. Parties

Tribes are an alternative ruling group organization

- They can exchange support for patronage
- They can run candidates for parliament
- Less demand from citizens due to tribal options
- Less demand from autocrats who use tribes to coordinate ruling group

Hypothesis: Weaker Party Systems

Hypothesis: Pastoral agriculture in the premodern era caused weak or absent parties today

I also want to show that this connection does not act through trivial or already understood pathways. For example, pastoralism may lead to lower population density which causes higher natural resources per person. I need to close those pathways.

Independent Variable: Pastoralism in the year 1800

The ratio of pastureland to farming land in the year 1800 Gathered by [Meiyappan and Jain, 2012] and Klein Goldewijk et al. [2011] and [Taylor and Rising, 2021]

Dependent Variable: Party Institutionalization

We use the VDEM party institutionalization because it is comprehensive and covers all autocracies.

Based on hand coded observations of the following indicators

- How many political parties for national-level office have permanent organizations?
- How many political parties with representation in the national legislature or presidency have publicly available party platforms (manifestos) that are publicized and relatively distinct from one another?
- Is it normal for members of the legislature to vote with other members of their party on important bills?
- Among the major parties, what is the main or most common form of linkage to their constituents?

VDEM index example

Party linkages (v2psprlnks)

Among the major parties, what is the main or most common form of linkage to their constituents?

0: Clientelistic. Constituents are rewarded with goods, cash, and/or jobs.

1: Mixed clientelistic and local collective.

2: Local collective. Constituents are rewarded with local collective goods, e.g., wells, toilets, markets, roads, bridges, and local development.

3: Mixed local collective and policy/programmatic.

4: Policy/programmatic. Constituents respond to a party's positions on national policies, general party programs, and visions for society.

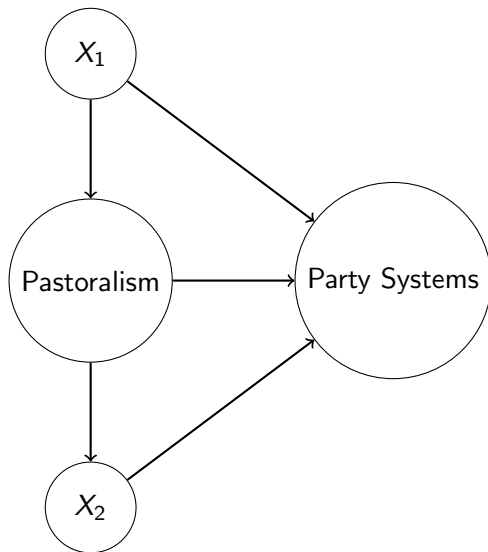
Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
0.08	1.45	-3.21	3.51	16871

Source: Coppedge et al. (2019)

Figure: Party institutionalization index described below.

Directed Acyclic Graph (DAG)

Scenario 1

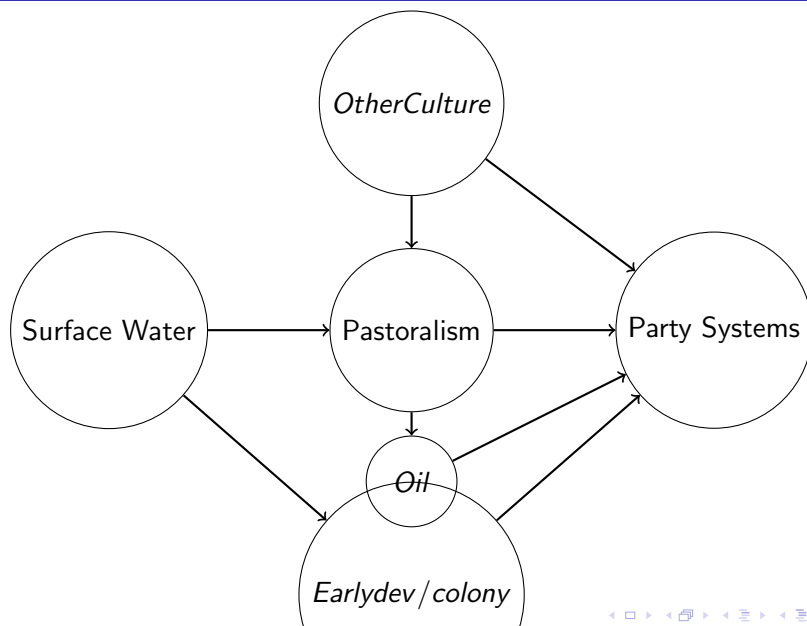


Results: OLS Pastoralism and Party Weakness

Table: Regression Results: Party Strength in Autocracies

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Mean Party Strength (Autocratic Years Only)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Pastoralism 1800	-0.003*** (0.001)	-0.002*** (0.001)	-0.002** (0.001)	-0.002*** (0.001)	-0.002*** (0.001)	-0.002** (0.001)
Log GDP per capita		-0.010 (0.017)	0.023 (0.020)	-0.006 (0.019)	0.007 (0.021)	0.042 (0.026)
Log Population		0.040** (0.016)	0.013 (0.024)	0.029 (0.034)	0.028* (0.017)	-0.030 (0.038)
Natural Resource Rents			-0.008*** (0.002)			-0.006*** (0.002)
Log Area			0.026 (0.020)			0.018 (0.023)
Log Pop 1400				0.013 (0.031)		0.041 (0.038)
Urbanization 1600				-0.006 (0.018)		0.005 (0.023)
Years Colonized					0.0005 (0.0003)	0.0004 (0.0003)
Arab Culture					-0.158** (0.071)	-0.159** (0.077)
Colonizer Controls					Yes	Yes
Observations	91	87	83	87	87	83
R ²	0.204	0.242	0.357	0.244	0.395	0.464
Adjusted R ²	0.195	0.214	0.316	0.197	0.315	0.354

Instrumental Variable Setup DAG



Instrumental Variable: Surface Water Availability

- I use as an instrument for this the log of surface water produced per kilometre of land (FAO)
- I want to show that other pathways between water and party formation are not relevant
- 3rd model controls for geographics like continent, area and nat resource rents (WDI PW)
- 4th model controls for precolonial development proxied by urbanization and population
- 5th model controls for colonizer, years colonized, arab culture and Umayyad Caliphate colonies

Instrumental Variable results

Table: Instrumental Variable Regression Results: Party Strength in Autocracies

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Mean Party Strength (Autocratic Years Only)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Pastoralism 1800	-0.005*** (0.001)	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.005** (0.003)	-0.004*** (0.001)	-0.003** (0.001)	-0.005* (0.003)
Log GDP per capita		-0.014 (0.018)	0.011 (0.026)	-0.022 (0.018)	0.017 (0.021)	0.015 (0.032)
Log Population		0.023 (0.019)	-0.036 (0.041)	0.007 (0.020)	0.004 (0.035)	-0.044 (0.044)
Log Land Area			0.060* (0.032)			0.053 (0.040)
Nat. Resource Rents			-0.005** (0.003)			-0.004 (0.003)
Years Colonized				0.001** (0.0003)		0.001 (0.0004)
Arab					-0.181*** (0.066)	-0.112 (0.084)
Log Pop 1400					0.032 (0.032)	0.002 (0.048)
Urbanization 1600					0.0001 (0.018)	0.015 (0.025)
Constant	0.750*** (0.077)	0.432 (0.395)	0.721 (0.466)	0.785* (0.406)	0.031 (0.393)	0.859 (0.607)
Colony Controls	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Continent Controls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	88	85	83	85	85	83
R ²	0.143	0.193	0.254	0.331	0.313	0.425

First stage results

Table: First-Stage Regression Results

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Pastoralism 1800 (First Stage)	
	(1)	(2)
Log Surface Water Area	-9.041*** (1.406)	-5.565*** (1.634)
Log GDP per capita		-3.466 (3.077)
Log Population		-10.093*** (2.577)
Log Land Area		7.024*** (2.357)
Nat. Resource Rents		0.363 (0.251)
Africa		10.633 (11.282)
Asia		-1.328 (9.418)
Observations	94	89
R ²	0.310	0.554
Adjusted R ²	0.303	0.516
F Statistic	41.341*** (df = 1; 92)	14.401*** (df = 7; 81)

Note:

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

Old World Vs. New World

Table: Instrumental Variable Regression Results: Old World vs. New World

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Mean Party Strength (Autocratic Years Only)	
	Old World	New World
	(1)	(2)
Pastoralism 1800	-0.005*** (0.001)	0.004 (0.005)
Constant	0.750*** (0.077)	0.241 (0.369)
Observations	88	19
R ²	0.143	-0.157
Adjusted R ²	0.133	-0.225
<i>Note:</i> * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01		

Conclusion

Evidence is supportive of the hypothesis 1

Single-country election results Mechanisms: Tribe strength vs. ingroup/outgroup trust Mechanisms: Tribal launching organizations or citizen demand for parties?

References

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