Introducing Authoritarian Diasporas: Causes and Consequences of Authoritarian Elite Dispersion

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Abstract: Scholarship on democratization has made significant progress in theorizing the trajectories of former authoritarian elites, with considerable attention given to authoritarian successor parties in particular. However, the literature has largely failed to contend with cases in which the cohort of former authoritarian officials scatters widely across the political system. We identify these patterns of dispersion as *authoritarian diasporas* and investigate their potential causes and consequences. In launching a new research agenda on this understudied phenomenon, we review not only contending causes for elite defection from authoritarian ruling parties, but also various options for political reincarnation of these officials (e.g., new party creation, colonization of existing parties, and independent candidacies). We hypothesize that the initial decision to defect is contingent upon a number of intervening regime-level and individual-level variables. The destinations of former authoritarian incumbents are shaped by regime legacies, personal political resources, and institutional rules. We conclude by reflecting on the ways in which authoritarian diasporas are likely to be more harmful to democracy than the continued presence of an authoritarian successor party.

The transition to democracy rarely means the disappearance of all features of the outgoing dictatorship. While democratization is sometimes imagined as a "big bang" moment in which one regime falls and is quickly replaced by another, the reality is that vestiges of the old regime almost always linger on in the new. Scholars have become increasingly aware of how common it is for both institutions (e.g., constitutions) and actors (e.g., authoritarian successor parties) to survive regime transitions. Building on this research tradition, this article introduces a new concept: *authoritarian diasporas*. The term "authoritarian diaspora" refers to a pattern of dispersion among former authoritarian officials (the "authoritarian cohort") in the lead-up to, or aftermath of, a transition to competitive elections. Rather than concentrate in a single former authoritarian ruling party, they scatter across multiple parties and/or other electoral vehicles. To date, this phenomenon has not received sufficient

recognition, despite being a core feature of politics in countries as varied as Brazil, Kenya, the Philippines, and Ukraine.

In this article, we present the concept of authoritarian diasporas and offer hypotheses about their causes and consequences. We begin by briefly reviewing the literature on authoritarian vestiges in democratic regimes, arguing that it has not generated an adequate vocabulary for discussing cases in which former authoritarian officials scatter widely. In the second section, we illustrate the limitations of existing concepts through the case of Brazil, a dramatic case of authoritarian elite dispersion. In the third section, we present a formal definition of authoritarian diasporas and a typology of vehicles through which former authoritarian officials may operate after a transition to competitive elections. In the third and fourth sections, we advance hypotheses about the causes and consequences of authoritarian diasporas. We conclude by considering the broader implications and provide a roadmap for the rest of this thematic section of *Democratization*.

Authoritarian Vestiges in Democratic Regimes

Since the onset of the third wave of democratization in the mid-1970s (Huntington 1991), scholars have become increasingly aware of how common it is for authoritarian vestiges to persist after a regime transition. The earliest strand of research focused on *institutional* vestiges. In the 1980s and 1990s, scholars of Latin American politics observed how departing militaries often left behind a range of "military prerogatives" (Stepan 1988), "reserved domains" (Valenzuela 1992), and other "authoritarian enclaves" (Garretón 2003).[1] Scholars also noted the influence of outgoing authoritarian elites on the design of new

[1] The term "authoritarian enclave" has also been used in a spatial sense to refer to territorial pockets of non-democratic rule left behind after a national-level transition to democracy. See, for example, Gibson (2012).

democratic institutions, with the literature on "pacted" transitions warning that this could lead to a permanent "birth defect" (Karl 1990: 8). More recently, Albertus and Menaldo (2018: 8) quantified this phenomenon, finding that for the period between 1800 and 2006, a "total of 66 percent of new democracies inherited a constitution that was designed under dictatorship and where outgoing elites dominated the transition process."

The second major strand of research—in which we situate the present article—considers not institutions, but *actors* from the old regime. The primary focus of this work has been on "authoritarian successor parties," or parties that emerge from authoritarian regimes but that operate after a transition to democracy (Loxton 2015). Pioneering work on this topic was carried out on Eastern Europe, with scholars such as Grzymala-Busse (2002) and Bozóki and Ishiyama (2002) examining the successful adaptation of former communist ruling parties to democratic competition. In recent years, a burst of new research has documented the persistence of similar parties in Africa (Riedl 2014; LeBas 2018), Asia (Hicken and Kuhonta 2015; Slater and Wong 2013), and Latin America (Langston 2017; Power 2018). The empirics of the third wave justify this focus: of the 65 countries that experienced a transition to democracy between 1974 and 2010, 47 of them (72 percent) produced a prominent authoritarian successor party, and in an astonishing 35 countries (54 percent) the party was elected back into office (Loxton 2018).

This literature has demonstrated something as clear as it is normatively discomfiting: democratization almost never means a clean slate. It is the norm, not the exception, for institutions and/or actors from former dictatorships to persist under democracy. Nevertheless, existing works have almost certainly *understated* the true extent of the phenomenon. As noted, research on actors from the old regime has privileged authoritarian successor parties, especially the formal descendants of official parties in single- or hegemonic-party regimes. There is no guarantee, however, that former regime officials will remain concentrated in a

single authoritarian successor party. On the contrary, they may scatter widely in the wake of a transition to democracy, choosing among a range of parties and other electoral vehicles. One of the few existing works to grapple seriously with this phenomenon is Power's (2000) study of post-authoritarian Brazil, which followed the trajectories of former officials from the country's most recent military regime in the aftermath of democratization. In the next section, we examine this emblematic case in order to illustrate both the usefulness—and shortcomings—of existing concepts, before presenting a more formal definition of authoritarian diasporas.

Case Study: The "ARENA Diaspora" in Post-Authoritarian Brazil

From 1964 until 1985, Brazil was under military rule. Unlike contemporaneous military regimes in neighboring countries, the regime was distinguished not only by the fact that it continued to hold semi-competitive elections for federal and state legislatures, but also by the remarkable feature of maintaining an official two-party system for most of its life. In 1966, civilian supporters of the dictatorship were directed to form the National Renovating Alliance (ARENA), later called the Social Democratic Party (PDS). This pro-regime party was formed hastily from preexisting conservative parties, most of which overlaid longstanding—and often rivalrous—clientelistic machines (Hagopian 1996). The official opposition party, the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), consisted mainly of the left-liberal and democratic forces that had not been purged or exiled after the 1964 coup. Competition between ARENA/PDS and MDB was lopsided until the mid-1970s, with ARENA/PDS retaining control of the presidency, all state governorships and mayoralties of large cities, and enjoying comfortable majorities in Congress.

When democratic pressures mounted in the late 1970s, the regime authorized a return to a multiparty system in 1980, with the aim of dividing the opposition into several parties. This strategy succeeded in fragmenting the opposition, while leaving the ruling ARENA/PDS largely intact. However, a sharp economic downturn induced by the Latin American debt crisis saw urban riots in 1983. This was followed by a massive cycle of protest rallies in early 1984 demanding a return to direct presidential elections ("Diretas Já"), which had last been held in 1960.

These events led many in the ruling party to see the writing on the wall. Democracy was coming, and for those who wished to have a successful electoral career in the future, it would be best to defect sooner rather than later. In late 1984, a faction of ARENA/PDS calling itself the "Liberal Front" crossed the floor to support the PMDB (formerly the MDB), resulting in the (indirect) election of an opposition presidential candidate in January 1985. These defectors then created a new party, the Liberal Front Party (PFL), which entered a PMDB-led government in March 1985, normally taken as the starting date of Brazil's current democratic regime (Mainwaring 1986). The PFL's opportunism paid off: establishing a reputation as a reliable support party, the PFL was well represented in every Brazilian federal government for the next 17 years.

Brazilian democracy was thus born with two authoritarian successor parties: the remnants of the PDS plus the new PFL (Power 2018). These were not the only vehicles, however, through which former authoritarian elites operated in the new regime. While some created newer parties still, others took the astonishing step of switching to the PMDB—the former official opposition party under military rule. In the first free legislative elections in 1986, 219 former authoritarian incumbents (about 40% of the new Congress) won seats on the labels of seven different parties. However, only about 15% of these 219 veterans of the dictatorship were still in ARENA/PDS; about 45% were in the PFL, and about a third were in

the PMDB. By 1989, in the wake of rampant party-switching, one could find ARENA/PDS veterans in an astonishing *twelve* different parties in Congress, despite the absence of an intervening legislative election (Power 2000: 76-81).

The case of Brazil illustrates both the usefulness and shortcomings of existing concepts from the literature on authoritarian vestiges in democratic regimes. In terms of institutions, the "pacted" nature of Brazil's transition resulted in a series of birth defects (Hagopian 1990), notably a range of special "prerogatives" for the military (Stepan 1988). In terms of actors, Brazil saw the emergence of not one but two prominent authoritarian successor parties, as noted above. Nevertheless, these concepts fail to capture the full extent of "authoritarian DNA" in Brazil's new democracy. While the country's two authoritarian successor parties performed respectably, the overall authoritarian *cohort*—that is, the full universe of former officials from the military regime—performed spectacularly. Not only did this cohort have ample legislative representation (which allowed it to have a major collective impact on the writing of Brazil's new constitution in 1987-1988), but it also elected large numbers governors, mayors, and leaders of both houses of Congress. In addition, it supplied the core political support for presidents José Sarney (1985-1990), Fernando Collor (1990-1992), Itamar Franco (1992-1994), and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002), the first two of whom were themselves former members of ARENA/PDS. In short, Brazil is a case of acute authoritarian dispersion.

Defining Authoritarian Diasporas

As the articles in this thematic section make clear, Brazil is not the only country to experience widespread scattering of officials from an outgoing dictatorship. To date, however, scholars have lacked a vocabulary to discuss the phenomenon of authoritarian elite

dispersion. We therefore offer a new concept: authoritarian diasporas. The Cambridge English Dictionary defines a *diaspora* as "a group of people who spread from one original country to other countries, or the act of spreading in this way."[2] While we are not interested in literal geographic relocation,[3] we find this to be an apt metaphor for the kind of elite behavior that interests us. Thus, we define *authoritarian diasporas* as "the dispersion of former authoritarian officials across multiple political parties and/or other electoral vehicles in the lead-up to, or aftermath of, a transition to competitive elections."[4]

The key word is *dispersion*. To understand dispersion, we must first make an analytical distinction between (1) the universe of former authoritarian officials—for which we use the term *authoritarian cohort*—and (2) the subset of that cohort comprised of out-migrants from the original ruling party,[5] i.e., the *authoritarian diaspora*. In the hypothetical situation in which 100% of former authoritarian officials (i.e., the entire authoritarian cohort) remained concentrated in a former authoritarian ruling party, we could not speak of an authoritarian diaspora, just as we could not speak of a Lebanese diaspora if all Lebanese people remained in Lebanon. However, once members of the authoritarian cohort begin to break away to form new parties, colonize existing parties, and/or launch independent candidacies, we can begin to speak of an authoritarian diaspora.

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[2] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/diaspora [Accessed on 17 October 2020].

[3] On the exile of former dictators to foreign countries, see Escribà-Folch and Krcmaric (2017). While this is an important topic deserving of further study, it is not the focus of our concept.

[4] Our focus in this introductory article is on the arena of *electoral politics*, which we acknowledge is not the only arena in which the continuity of authoritarian personnel shapes the trajectories of new democracies. In fact, the contributions to this thematic section by Way (on the political influence of economic elites after state socialism) and by Albertus and Deming (on unelected policymakers, including judges and bureaucrats) make this point explicitly. However, elections are a definitional element of democracy and thus we take them as a natural starting point, while leaving other variations of diasporic behavior to our collaborators. The electoral incarnations of past authoritarian elites nearly always figure heavily in their strategies for retaining influence under democracy, and early electoral outcomes often have a major effect on the direction of the new regime.

[5] It is more difficult to trace authoritarian dispersion in cases where the dictatorship did not create an official ruling party (e.g., Chile, Argentina).

This is not a discrete category; it is a continuous one. Cases may exhibit more or less of a diasporic pattern. Imagine a nascent democracy in which there are 100 former authoritarian officials. If all of them remain concentrated within the former authoritarian ruling party, there is no diaspora. However, if 5 break away, a diasporic pattern begins to emerge. If 25 break away, the diaspora grows; if 50 break away, it grows more still. In theory, all 100 former officials could break away and migrate to their own destinations. Unlike the more familiar motto of *e pluribus unum* ("out of many, one"), the motif of authoritarian diasporas is *ex uno plures* ("out of one, many").

While the two extremes (i.e., zero out-migration, total atomization) are ideal types, examples of most intermediate points on the continuum can be readily identified. An example of limited dispersion is Taiwan. During and after the island's transition to democracy in the 1990s, the bulk of the authoritarian cohort remained concentrated in the Kuomintang (KMT), the former authoritarian ruling party. While smaller factions did break away to form new parties (e.g., New Party), these largely remained within the KMT orbit as part of the "pan-Blue coalition."[6]

At the opposite extreme are Kenya and Ukraine, as discussed by LeBas and Gray and by Way, respectively, in this issue. Following the election of an opposition candidate to the presidency in 2002 for the first time, Kenya's former authoritarian ruling party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU), experienced mass defections, with KANU members forming or migrating to a multitude of other parties. The result was that while KANU itself largely collapsed, virtually every major party in the country had roots in KANU. Another example is Ukraine, where, despite the weakness of the old communist ruling party, "[t]he bulk of the former Communist elite remained in power after independence" (Zimmer and

[6] See Cheng and Hsu (2015: 111-112).

Haran 2008: 557). In between these two extremes is Brazil, which, as discussed, combined authoritarian successor party strength with widespread authoritarian dispersion.

In seeking to retain influence under democracy, former authoritarian officials can choose from a menu of potential electoral vehicles. While perhaps the most common is *former authoritarian ruling parties*, such parties are not, strictly speaking, part of our definition of authoritarian diasporas. Members of the authoritarian cohort who opt for Hirschmanian "loyalty" by sticking with these parties are analogous to those individuals who choose to stay in the home country rather than set sail for new shores.[7] Our focus, however, is on those who choose "exit." For those who decide to "emigrate" from the former authoritarian ruling party, there are a number of options for participating in electoral politics. While we present these vehicles as discrete alternatives, they are in fact complementary and often employed simultaneously.

New parties. The most obvious option is to form a new party. The Brazilian PFL is one clear example, but an even more striking case is Romania. After democratization, many former authoritarian officials chose to remain loyal to the old communist ruling party, which eventually took the name Democratic National Salvation Front (FDSN). Others, however, broke off during the 1990s to form new parties, such as the Democratic Party (PD), which became the country's second most important party after the FDSN. The result was that for much of the post-transition period, *both* of the country's major parties had roots in the old regime.[8]

The option to form new parties has been recognized in recent work on authoritarian successor parties, with Loxton (2015, 2018) distinguishing between (1) former authoritarian

[7] For a classic discussion of "exit," "voice," and "loyalty" as responses to organizational decline, see Hirschman (1970).

[8] See Pop-Eleches (2008).

ruling parties and (2) "reactive authoritarian successor parties," or new parties formed by high-level authoritarian incumbents in *reaction* to a transition to democracy. However, while he chose to limit his attention to new parties formed shortly before or shortly after a transition to democracy (no more than one electoral cycle after the founding election), in developing the concept of authoritarian diasporas we take a more capacious view. Diasporas can thus include parties formed by authoritarian officials well before the transition (e.g., the New Party in Taiwan, which was born from a split in the ruling KMT in 1993), as well as new parties formed more than one election cycle after the transition (e.g., Party of Regions in Ukraine).

Colonization of existing parties. A second option is to colonize an already existing party, as happened in Brazil with the migration of former authoritarian officials to the PMDB. Another example is Tunisia, the sole case of successful democratization of the Arab Spring. Following the overthrow of dictator Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali in 2011 and the dissolution of the official ruling party, the Democratic Constitutional Rally (RCD), former RCD officials scattered. Many opted for a reactive authoritarian successor party formed in 2012, Nidaa Tounes, which swept the 2014 legislative and presidential elections. Yet others made a more surprising choice: in the 2018 municipal elections, many "regional notables" (Wolf 2018: 553-554) from the RCD chose to run on the ticket of Ennahda, the most important opposition party during the old regime. A final, albeit slightly different, case is the National Party in South Africa, the ruling party under apartheid. Following democratization in 1994, it attempted to rebrand itself in more inclusive terms as the New National Party (NNP). In 2005, however, following a steady electoral decline, the remnants of the NNP made the astonishing decision to formally merge with the African National Congress (ANC), the party of Nelson Mandela.[9]

[9] See Schulz-Herzenberg (2005: 166).

Independent candidacies. A final option is to run for office as an independent. Although democratic Chile produced two prominent authoritarian successor parties, some former regime officials initially chose to run for office as independents, such as Hernán Büchi, Pinochet's former finance minister, who placed second in the 1989 presidential election. This option is most dramatic when it involves former dictators democratically returning to the presidency, such as Mathieu Kérékou in Benin or Manuel Pinto da Costa in São Tomé and Príncipe, who were elected as independents in 1996 and 2011, respectively. But independent candidacies are common at all levels of government, with former authoritarian officials routinely running for and winning legislative office as independents or through the use of thinly disguised personalistic vehicles (e.g., the cases of Ukraine, Philippines, Kenya discussed in this thematic section).

To sum up: while authoritarian diasporas vary in terms of extent and electoral vehicles employed, they always involve the *dispersion* of authoritarian elites. Adding diasporas to the repertoire of concepts in the literature on authoritarian vestiges in democratic regimes has significant empirical and theoretical payoffs. First, by forcing us to look beyond the formal descendants of ruling parties in single- or hegemonic-party regimes, the concept makes clear that former authoritarian officials are more numerous and influential under democracy than previously believed. Second, recognizing authoritarian diasporas requires us to ask new questions about their causes and consequences. It is to these questions that we now turn.

Causes of Authoritarian Diasporas: A Framework for Analysis

Why does the authoritarian cohort remain concentrated in some cases, but disperse widely in others? We find it useful to employ a framework inspired by Robert A. Dahl's

(1971) understanding of democratization. Beginning with a distinction between what he called "costs of toleration" and "costs of suppression," Dahl went on to pose one of the most famous axioms in comparative politics: "*The more the costs of suppression exceed the costs of toleration, the greater the chance for a competitive regime*" (1971: 15; emphasis in original). Influenced by this stylized approach, we begin with our own distinction: the *costs of loyalty* vs. the *costs of defection*. Association with an authoritarian regime and/or the legacy of an authoritarian regime entails both advantages and disadvantages. When the disadvantages come to outweigh the advantages, we should expect self-interested politicians to distance themselves from the regime and/or its legacy.[10] Thus, echoing Dahl, we offer our own axiom about the emergence of authoritarian diasporas: *The more the costs of loyalty exceed the costs of defection, the greater the chance for authoritarian dispersion.*

In thinking about the costs of defection, it is useful to draw on the literatures on authoritarian regimes and authoritarian successor parties. In the 2000s, a large number of works examined the role of ruling parties in sustaining authoritarian systems.[11] Since party loyalty in such contexts is a virtual prerequisite for access to political power, ambitious politicians have a strong incentive not to break ranks. While this literature makes clear the advantages of loyalty to existing authoritarian regimes, the literature on authoritarian successor parties shows that there can also be advantages *after* a transition to democracy. For example, in her pathbreaking work on communist successor parties in East Central Europe, Grzymala-Busse (2002: 5) argued that such parties often benefited from what she called "usable pasts," or "the historical record of party accomplishments to which the elites can

[10] Here we offer a heavily stylized analysis of a primary game of authoritarian elite defection, referring to defectors in the aggregate and drawing insights largely from cases where democratization has already occurred. We do not undertake analysis of the secondary game of potential coordination among the subset of potential defectors, although we recognize that the shifting benefits of defection—and perhaps even the likelihood of transition itself—are endogenous to such interactions. We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for drawing our attention to this point.

[11] For an overview, see Levitsky and Way (2012).

point." More recently, Loxton (2015, 2018) has shown that such parties may in fact benefit from various forms of "authoritarian inheritance," such as a party brand, territorial organization, clientelistic networks, and/or financial resources. If distancing oneself from the legacy of the former regime means losing access to such resources, there is a strong incentive to remain loyal. In short, there are two major time-variant costs of defection. Under authoritarian rule, defection is likely to result in *exclusion from political office*; after democratization, defection may mean *losing access to authoritarian inheritance*.

Yet loyalty may also entail costs. One is what Power (2000: 114, 117) has called the problem of "strange bedfellows." While all authoritarian regimes attempt to present a public face of unity, under the surface they may be deeply divided, forcing regime supporters to endorse policies they privately oppose (see below for more on this). There are even more obvious costs of loyalty *after* the transition to democracy. Loxton (2015, 2018) distinguishes between "authoritarian inheritance," as discussed above, and what he calls "authoritarian baggage." While the former refers to the benefits of an authoritarian past, the latter refers to the liabilities. Invariably, much of the electorate will disapprove of the party's origins and thus be unwilling to vote for it, particularly if it performed poorly in crucial policy areas, such as the economy and national security. In sum, there are also two major time-variant costs of loyalty. Under authoritarian rule, loyalty may *require regime officials to tolerate groups and/or policies with which they disagree*; after democratization, open association with the old regime may mean being *saddled with authoritarian baggage*.

As with Dahl's (1971) stylization of democratic transitions, this simple framework for thinking about authoritarian diasporas has two advantages. The first is its focus on *relative*, not absolute, costs. The framework allows for authoritarian dispersion to be prompted either by the costs of defection going down or by the costs of loyalty going up (or both simultaneously), a perspective that acknowledges the often messy empirics of regime change.

The second advantage is its *versatility*. No single factor determines the costs of loyalty and defection, just as no single factor determined Dahl's costs of toleration and suppression.[12] In what follows, we consider six factors that we hypothesize are likely to affect whether authoritarian diasporas emerge or not: (1) authoritarian regime type, (2) performance of the authoritarian regime, (3) mode of transition to democracy, (4) preexisting regime divisions, (5) portability of personal political capital, and (6) institutional framework. While we recognize that these factors often work in combination, for reasons of space and simplicity we largely treat them separately below.

Authoritarian regime type

While authoritarian regimes vary on many dimensions, one crucial factor is the role of *elections*. It is now conventional to distinguish between fully closed authoritarian regimes and "electoral authoritarian" regimes. Within the category of electoral authoritarianism, Schedler (2002: 47) makes a further distinction between "hegemonic" regimes, in which elections are largely meaningless, and "competitive" regimes, in which competition is real but unfair. These distinctions have important implications for the main cost of defection under authoritarianism: exclusion from power. Fully closed regimes—those with no multiparty elections at all—impose the most severe costs, since defecting from the authoritarian coalition immediately shuts the door to political office. In hegemonic electoral authoritarian regimes, however, the cost of defection should be lower; while the possibility of winning office as an opposition candidate is unlikely, it is at least theoretically possible. In competitive electoral authoritarian regimes, the cost should be lower still. While the playing field is tilted in favor of incumbents, it is not uncommon in such regimes for opposition

[12] For Dahl (1971), these factors included the level of socioeconomic modernization, the degree of concentration in the economy, and whether arms were widely distributed among the population.

candidates to win legislative seats, subnational posts, and occasionally even executive power.[13] We should therefore expect politicians to defect from electoral authoritarian regimes more frequently than from their fully closed counterparts.

This helps to make sense of the not uncommon phenomenon of high-level authoritarian officials defecting to become leaders of the democratic opposition. One example is Mwai Kibaki, vice president of Kenya from 1978 to 1988 during the period of one-party KANU rule.[14] After defecting to the opposition, in 2002 he became the first non-KANU candidate to win the presidency since independence. Even more startling is the case of Mahathir Mohamad, the former autocratic prime minister of Malaysia (1981-2003). In 2016, he broke from the dominant United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), before leading a coalition of opposition parties to victory—for the first time in over a half-century—in the 2018 general election.

Performance of the authoritarian regime

While it is possible for authoritarian elites to defect at any time, it is more likely to occur once a transition to democracy is imminent or under way. The decision to hold fast or to scatter will hinge in large part on the governing performance of the old regime. At one extreme of the performance spectrum are cases such as the KMT regime in Taiwan and the military regime of Park Chung-hee in South Korea, which both oversaw extraordinary economic development and defended their countries from serious national security threats. At the other extreme are Greece's military regime in 1967-1974 and Argentina's military regime in 1976-1983, which led their countries to humiliating defeats in wars against geopolitical archfoes and, in the case of Argentina, oversaw an economic catastrophe. The closer an

[13] For more on this, see Levitsky and Way (2010).

[14] For more, see LeBas and Gray (this issue).

authoritarian regime is to the Taiwan/South Korea end of the spectrum, the greater the incentive to embrace its legacy under democracy. The closer it is to the Greece/Argentina end of the spectrum, the greater the incentive to run from it.

To put it differently, authoritarian regimes produce varying amounts of "authoritarian inheritance" and "authoritarian baggage." The ratio of the two, in turn, is likely to impact how parties and/or officials position themselves toward the old regime. Loxton (2018) outlines a number of strategies that authoritarian successor parties have used to offload their authoritarian baggage, including "contrition," "obfuscation," and "scapegoating." However, former officials saddled with particularly bad legacies may conclude that these mitigation strategies are inadequate. If association with the old regime is believed to be the kiss of death under democracy, the cost of loyalty will be prohibitive. This is a recipe not for cohesive authoritarian successor parties, but for wholesale dispersion. For example, Argentina's 1983 transition—in the wake of the Falklands fiasco and economic ruin—failed to generate any authoritarian successor party at all.

Mode of transition to democracy

A third and closely related factor is the nature of the transition to democracy. As the literature on modes of transition has shown,[15] authoritarian regimes may end under very different conditions. This, in turn, is likely to affect how they are remembered by voters. While there are many different typologies, here we invoke the simple distinction made by Haggard and Kaufman (1995: 126-135) between "crisis" and "non-crisis" transitions. A classic case of a crisis transition would be Argentina in 1983, discussed above. In cases of non-crisis transitions, such as Chile in 1990, Haggard and Kaufman argue that authoritarian

[15] For an overview, see Munck and Leff (1997).

successor parties ("continuist parties," in their terminology) are more likely to succeed under democracy. Slater and Wong (2013) have made a similar argument, claiming that it is in the interests of authoritarian incumbents to initiate democratization from a position of strength. By getting out while the getting is good, they argue, it is more likely that the authoritarian *ruling* party will be able to make the transition to high-performing authoritarian *successor* party in the new regime.

These works do not explicitly engage with the idea of elite dispersion, but they have clear implications for it. In non-crisis transitions, we should expect the authoritarian cohort to remain concentrated in an authoritarian successor party, since association with the old regime is more likely to be an asset. In crisis transitions, we should expect greater levels of dispersion, since association with the old regime is more likely to be a liability. Moreover, we suspect that the greater velocity and uncertainty associated with crisis transitions may lead to less coordinated, more atomized patterns of defection.[16]

There are two different scenarios in which a crisis transition can contribute to authoritarian elite dispersion. In one scenario, regime elites remain loyal until the bitter end—and then, after failing to avert a transition to democracy, scatter. In the other, what we might call the "sinking ship" scenario, dispersion begins earlier. Rather than going down with the Titanic, elites attempt to save themselves by jumping overboard. In the wake of an economic crisis, major scandal, explosion of popular protests, etc., they conclude that the regime's days are numbered and that it is better to defect strategically. Such prophecies can become self-fulfilling, as in the case of the PFL in Brazil, whose impeccably timed "jump" in 1984 preserved its access to national government for nearly two decades after the transition to democracy. In sum, much like a poor overall performance, regime termination in the midst of crisis is likely to lower the cost of defection.

[16] See Przeworski (1986) on the role of uncertainty and rapid unfolding of events.

Preexisting regime divisions

Both distal factors (poor performance) and proximal factors (terminal crises) can create incentives for authoritarian officials to distance themselves from the legacy of the old regime, but this is even more likely to occur where there already existed deep divisions within the ruling coalition (e.g., ideological, regional, ethnic, and/or other cleavages). Authoritarian regimes expend considerable energy to conceal these internal fault lines. Whenever cracks in the coalition are "wallpapered over," analysts may fail to recognize that the cost of regime loyalty was already quite high under authoritarianism. When the regime comes to an end and the offsetting incentive of access to political office is removed, the coalition may disintegrate.

These internal divisions can result either from underlying ideological tensions or from garden-variety political rivalries. In Mexico, ideological heterogeneity was hardwired into the PRI coalition, with leadership alternating between progressive and conservative wings of the "revolutionary family" (Bruhn 1997: 42-44). Similar conflicts emerged in the last two decades of the Franco regime in Spain, where tensions between liberal modernizers and conservative clericalists were suppressed until the dictator's death in 1975 (Share 1986). In both cases, eventual democratization gave rise to new parties based closely on these longstanding ideological factions.

In other cases, long-simmering tensions have owed less to ideology than to disputes over patronage. This was clearly the case of ARENA/PDS in Brazil, which was assembled hastily from conservative parties and clientelistic machines predating the 1964 coup, as discussed above.[17] The artificial nature of Kenya's authoritarian ruling party from 1963 to 2002 was even more pronounced, with KANU's patronage networks uneasily overlaying a

[17] For more on the "artificiality" of ARENA/PDS in Brazil, see Power (2000: 70).

multitude of ethnic groups with rivalries dating back to at least the colonial period (Chege 2008: 132-135). In each case, the formal party apparatus was less than the sum of its parts, and the advent of democracy tore those parts asunder. We posit that the strangeness of bedfellows matters: the deeper the preexisting divisions, the higher the probability of a robust authoritarian diaspora.

Portability of personal political capital

While underlying tensions within the authoritarian coalition increase the propensity to eventual elite dispersion, these tensions are probably best understood as permissive factors rather than direct causes of authoritarian dispersion. For individual elites, the calculus of loyalty versus defection must also take into account future electoral viability. Similar to Sartori's (1976: 74-78) claim that factions will only become parties when they acquire the resources to do so, we might hypothesize that individual elites will only abandon the authoritarian ruling party when they believe they have the tools to survive on their own.

For those seeking to adapt to a new life under democracy, these career-prolonging resources may come in a variety of forms, including name recognition, charisma, membership in a political dynasty, connections to local elites, clientelistic networks, direct ownership of firms, or family fortunes. All of these constitute forms of political capital. If this capital is inextricably tied to the former authoritarian ruling party, we should expect limited dispersion. However, if the capital is *personal* (it accrues to *individual politicians*) and *portable* (it is convertible to the new regime), it should facilitate the emergence of an authoritarian diaspora.

Several of the articles in this thematic section emphasize the importance of this factor. In the case of Kenya, LeBas and Gray (this issue) highlight the role of individualized clientelistic networks forged under authoritarianism. In their examination of the Philippines,

Buehler and Nataatmadja (this issue) also emphasize clientelistic networks—though, in this case, ones that predated authoritarian rule. As they explain, the ruling party of the Marcos dictatorship was little more than an "an amalgam of local dynasts who had sided with Marcos." After democratization, these figures dispersed, taking their old patronage networks with them. According to Buehler and Nataatmadja, a crucial additional factor is the *type* of clientelistic networks (whether "transactional" or "relational"). When clientelism depends on a steady diet of centralized state resources, the cost of defection is high; when the influence of patrons over clients owes mainly to ethnicity, family, or local communities, the cost of defection is lower.

There is good reason to think that the portability of personal political capital may also have an interaction effect with the previous hypothesized cause of dispersion (preexisting conflicts in the ruling coalition). When both coalitional tensions and portability of political capital are high, this is a recipe for robust elite dispersion.

Institutional framework

Thus far we have examined reasons why authoritarian elites choose loyalty or defection, but these are insufficient to explain the variation that we observe in degree of elite dispersion. Accounting for this variation requires a consideration not only of the various "push" and "pull" factors discussed above, but also the institutional rules that shape countries' electoral and party systems.

Authoritarian regimes vary immensely with respect to institutional design.[18] While fully closed authoritarian regimes forbid competition, electoral authoritarian regimes allow multiparty elections. As discussed above, this distinction affects the menu of "exit" options

[18] For one of the definitive works on this topic, see Gandhi (2008).

available to authoritarian officials: while in the former their options are extremely limited, in the latter they may "cross the floor" to the opposition prior to a regime transition, as in the case of Brazil.

Countries vary dramatically, however, with respect to the *number* of possible destinations for such defectors. The greater the number of electoral vehicles to choose from, the higher the probability that the authoritarian cohort will fragment, all else equal. Thus, we identify another permissive factor for authoritarian diasporas: the formal rules affecting new party creation.[19] Low barriers to new party entry encourage the individualistic ambitions of regime defectors. By creating their own party labels, they can set themselves up as "big fish in small ponds" rather than share power with other elites. Power (2000) shows how regime defectors in Brazil exploited the country's lax rules for new party registration, launching a large number of small parties within several years of the democratic transition. By contrast, Buehler and Nataatmadja (this issue) show how stringent rules for party accreditation deterred diasporic behavior in post-New Order Indonesia.

In addition to rules regarding new party creation, the same electoral rules that foster multipartism more generally (e.g., proportional representation, high district magnitudes, absence of electoral thresholds) should also be conducive to a greater authoritarian elite dispersion. When electoral rules are permissive and party fractionalization is high, part of the answer to "Why do authoritarian cohorts fragment?" must surely be "Because they can." In other words, for authoritarian diasporas to form, regime defectors must not only have *motives* but also *opportunities*—and the opportunity structure is shaped by the institutional rules of the game.

[19] Here we do not enter into debates about the origins of these rules or the degree to which they are endogenous to the strength of the authoritarian ruling party (e.g., Riedl 2014). For overviews of the "endogenous institutions" debate in new democracies, see Shvetsova (2003) and Hassan (2013).

Consequences of Authoritarian Dispersion

What are the consequences of authoritarian elite dispersion? In what ways are they similar to, or different from, the effects of authoritarian successor parties? Scholarship on the latter suggests that their effects on democracy are double-edged (Loxton 2018). In terms of harms, authoritarian successor parties can impede processes of transitional justice, prop up other vestiges of the old regime, and even trigger an authoritarian regression. Yet they can also have salutary effects: they can contribute to party system institutionalization, stabilize new democratic regimes by incorporating potential "spoilers," and possibly even inspire authoritarian incumbents in neighboring countries to initiate their own transitions. In this section, we consider the effects of authoritarian diasporas on democracy. We argue that while they can have some positive externalities, on balance they are likely to be more harmful than authoritarian successor parties. We discuss three possible effects of diasporas: (1) overrepresentation of the authoritarian cohort under democracy, (2) persistence of authoritarian-era practices and institutions, and (3) dilution of the regime cleavage.

Aggregate overrepresentation of the authoritarian cohort

One potential outcome of diasporas is the overrepresentation of the authoritarian cohort in the new democratic regime. Strategic dispersion can inflate the political survival rate of former authoritarian officials, just as jumping overboard might improve the survival rate of sailors on a sinking ship. This hypothesis can be interrogated through counterfactual reasoning, a technique underutilized in comparative politics.[20] Had there been no diaspora, would the authoritarian cohort have fared worse?

[20] See Fearon (1991).

One way to probe the counterfactual is by comparing reelection rates of out-migrants from the former authoritarian ruling party to those who chose to remain within it, an approach similar to the intra-cohort comparisons of KANU veterans made by LeBas and Gray (this issue). Another way is through cross-national comparisons. In their study of the Philippines and Indonesia, Buehler and Nataatmadja (this issue) find that the authoritarian cohort did better in the former than in the latter. While the former authoritarian ruling party in the Philippines largely collapsed, incumbents who defected—that is, the authoritarian diaspora—thrived in the new regime. By contrast, the former authoritarian ruling party in Indonesia survived democratization and concentrated the lion's share of former authoritarian incumbents. While the party continued to perform respectably, Buehler and Nataatmadja find that the overall survival rate of former authoritarian officials in the Philippines was higher than in Indonesia—a suggestive finding that supports the hypothesis above.

The implications of this hypothesis for democracy are decidedly mixed. On the one hand, the fact that the authoritarian cohort can achieve greater representation than it would have otherwise might help to stabilize new democratic regimes in cases where the former authoritarian ruling party collapsed. If collapse of the party meant certain exclusion from office, former incumbents might be motivated to undermine the new regime; however, if they can use the alternative pathways to power discussed in this article, they have less of an incentive to do so. On the other hand, the sheer messiness and uncertainty of this scenario is unlikely to inspire officials in existing authoritarian regimes to initiate their own transitions to democracy; they are more likely to do so when convinced that they will remain unified in a strong authoritarian successor party (Riedl, Slater, Wong, and Ziblatt 2020).

Persistence of authoritarian-era elite political practices

One clearly harmful potential effect of authoritarian diasporas is the persistence of practices and institutions from the old regime. This hypothesis was first raised by Max Weber a century ago (Weber 1978 [1918]). According to Weber, politicians socialized to weak representative institutions (e.g., to a rubber-stamp legislature, as in Bismarck's Germany) turn to particularistic politics in order to maintain their careers. This hypothesis inspired Power's (2000) work on ex-authoritarians in Brazil, in which he showed that members of the authoritarian diaspora were more prone to clientelism, and far less invested in party development and legislative strengthening, than the rest of the political class. The Weberian expectation was recently supported by a large-*N* study of former authoritarian ruling parties by Kitschelt and Singer (2018), which found that such parties were more prone to employ clientelism than were other parties. If dispersion contributes to overrepresentation of authoritarian elites socialized to these sorts of nonaccountable and particularistic practices, this is likely to have a damaging effect on the quality of democracy.

Dilution of the regime cleavage

A final potential consequence of authoritarian elite dispersion is the *dilution of the regime cleavage*. By "regime cleavage," we mean a clear and lasting distinction between defenders and opponents of the former dictatorship. Multiple scholars have argued that such cleavages can contribute to party system institutionalization, with a strong authoritarian successor party anchoring one pole and a strong party of the former democratic opposition anchoring the other.[21] However, if former authoritarian incumbents scatter widely across the party system, this is likely to dilute the salience of the cleavage and thus its ability to serve as

[21] On party system institutionalization, see Mainwaring and Scully (1995). On the regime cleavage and party system institutionalization in a variety of geographic settings, see Grzymala-Busse (2007), Hicken and Kuhonta (2015), and Riedl (2014).

the basis for party-system competition.[22] Many voters may wish to use the regime cleavage as an informational shortcut in deciding whom to support. However, if this cleavage is rendered opaque by authoritarian dispersion, the result is electoral inefficiency and reduced vertical accountability. A clear example is Brazil. In the liberalizing 1982 elections, virtually the entire authoritarian cohort stood under one party label. As noted earlier, by the time of the 1990 elections, these former officials were so widely scattered (across a dozen parties) that a regime yardstick was of little use. In sum, while prominent authoritarian successor parties may enhance electoral efficiency, acute authoritarian dispersion is likely to reduce it.

Conclusion

This article has introduced a new concept: authoritarian diasporas. In doing so, we have contributed to the growing literature on authoritarian vestiges in democratic regimes. While scholars have made substantial progress in documenting the existence of such vestiges, the phenomenon of authoritarian *dispersion* has largely been overlooked. Adding this concept to the repertoire of comparative politics makes clear that it is even more common for authoritarian-era actors to remain influential under democracy than previously known. For example, if one were to look only at the lineal descendants of official ruling parties, then Kenya, Ukraine, and the Philippines would all appear to be cases of virtual authoritarian obliteration. However, if one looks beyond these parties, as do the articles in this thematic section, one discovers that that these were actually cases where former authoritarian officials utterly thrived. This revelation forces us to think seriously about why authoritarian elite dispersion happens in the first place—and what it means for democracy. In this article, we

[22] See Lupu's (2014) work on "party brands" and "brand dilution."

presented several hypotheses about the causes and consequences of authoritarian diasporas, but these must be studied systematically.

The four subsequent articles in this thematic section help to advance this research agenda. As befits an initial proof-of-concept dialogue, the authors reflect on concept formation, while at the same time conducting rich empirical work—including both hypothesis-generating case studies and cross-national quantitative testing—on new democracies in Africa, Southeast Asia, postcommunist Europe, and Latin America.

In their article, Adrienne LeBas and Kyle Gray analyze post-2002 Kenya, an extreme case of authoritarian dispersion. They find that veterans of the former authoritarian ruling party, KANU, were not only well ensconced in former opposition parties, but were also more electorally successful than other politicians.

In their comparison of Indonesia and the Philippines, Michael Buehler and Ronnie Nataatmadja demonstrate the value of making analytical distinctions among authoritarian successor parties, authoritarian cohorts, and authoritarian diasporas. They show that while Indonesia's authoritarian successor party fared better than its Philippine counterpart after the collapse of the Suharto and Marcos dictatorships in 1998 and 1986, respectively, the broader authoritarian *cohort* was more successful in the Philippines, where there was widespread dispersion.

Lucan Way's study of post-1991 Ukraine makes the case that the concept of authoritarian cohort should be expanded in postcommunist contexts to include not just political elites, but also economic elites from the old regime. While such actors continued to dominate Ukrainian politics after 1991, he argues that their ability to cause an authoritarian regression was hindered by their extreme levels of internal fragmentation.

Finally, in a quantitative cross-national analysis of Latin American elites between 1900 and 2010, Michael Albertus and Mark Deming adopt a different conceptual

understanding of authoritarian diasporas. They argue that elite dispersion should be understood in terms not only of parties and electoral vehicles, but also sites of policymaking authority. They find that the greater the scattering of such elites across branches of government, the lower the quality of democracy.

As a whole, the thematic section invites us to further theoretical reflection about the various political incarnations of former authoritarian elites in new democracies, and raises important questions about the relationship between authoritarian legacies and democratic practice.

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