

When Elections are Free but not Effective: Party Systems and Corruption

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This chapter places the right to free elections in political context. Incumbents who seek to stymie free elections do not necessarily violate Article 3 of Protocol 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights directly, but often resort to alternative and less conspicuous measures, including the manipulation of the party system. The chapter argues that party system features play a critical and overlooked role in conditioning the effectiveness of elections as tools for voters to select and control politicians. In developing this argument, we focus on the example of accountability for governmental corruption. Corruption is a classical principal-agent problem for voters. Its severity varies with the extent to which voters have the information and choices at the ballot box that enable them to punish corrupt incumbents. Party system features condition the choices and the information available to voters and, therefore, shape the effectiveness of elections in controlling corruption. We test this argument through a controlled comparative analysis of corruption in 80 democracies around the world and find broad support for our hypotheses. The importance of party system features to the effectiveness of free elections is not lost on incumbents. The conclusion of the chapter examines why incumbent strategies to compromise free elections via manipulations of the party system present challenges for a human rights approach to safeguarding free elections.

Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights (hereafter “the Convention”) establishes the right to free elections and provides that “[t]he High Contracting Parties shall hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the

legislature." Free (and fair) elections are one of the central constitutive elements of democracy.¹ They are the mechanism by which voter concerns receive representation in democratic politics and by which representatives are held accountable for their actions.

Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 is a crucial legal tool for safeguarding the freedom of democratic elections in Europe, but the political challenges to electoral integrity can be formidable and often extend beyond the reach of Article 3, Protocol 1. While the acceptance of the Convention's principles in Europe's normative political discourse is now near universal, elections, even among the signatories to the Convention, vary tremendously in the extent to which they ensure the free and effective expression of the opinion of the people. For the European Court of Human Rights (hereafter "the Court"), which enforces the Convention, this raises a complex question: What is the scope of the obligations that the Convention imposes on member states?

In its rulings the Court has struck down state actions that are characterized by arbitrariness or a lack of proportionality, such as restrictions of the right to vote and of the eligibility of candidates, disqualifications of candidates, breaches of the electoral law and irregularities in the administration of the election.² But the truth is that incumbents who strive to undermine the effectiveness of elections for personal or political gain employ a broad repertoire of manipulative strategies that need not entail any of the crude violations on which the Court's attention has been focussed. These strategies include the manipulation of the party system through laws on political parties, registration requirements, party funding provisions and electoral thresholds. This chapter shows that party system features can stymie the ability of voters to select and control politicians and to achieve desired policy outcomes. In developing and testing this argument, we focus on the ability of voters to control a key public policy outcome - governmental corruption - given the features of the party system.

The variation in the level of corruption even among high quality democracies is striking and perplexing because the promise of democracy and of free elections is governance in the interest of the people (Fearon 1999: 82). In principle, electoral competition should allow voters to select politicians who will curb corruption and to replace representatives who do not. Yet, empirically, it is clear that free elections can fail to curb malfeasance and that voters often do not punish incumbents who engage in or permit malfeasance (Kurer 2001, Scheiner 2005). This chapter examines why free elections can sometimes fail to secure clean government in the interest of the people. Our argument is that party system features, which shape the effectiveness of elections as tools to select and control politicians, play a critical and overlooked role in conditioning the ability of voters to secure clean government.

Party systems, we argue, structure the effectiveness of elections as tools to select good agents and to hold accountable those who are not. They condition the information available to voters and the effectiveness of their electoral choices in controlling their agents. In both respects party systems shape the scope for corruption. Corruption, we anticipate, rises with party system features that reduce the capacity of voters to distinguish between clean and corrupt politicians and that limit the effectiveness of their choices in selecting good representatives and punishing corrupt ones. We test this argument in a controlled comparative analysis of corruption in 80 democracies around the world. The empirical results suggest that party system features have powerful effects on the scope for corruption. Where voter information or the effectiveness of voter choice is limited through weak party system institutionalization, high levels of fragmentation, the dominance of a governing party, and competition that is not programmatically structured, democracies give greater latitude to corruption.

The chapter proceeds as follows. The next section outlines our theoretical approach and develops a set of four hypotheses. The following sections introduce the data, variable operationalisations and model choice before we discuss our results. In concluding, we highlight some of the thorny questions that our findings raise for an approach to safeguarding free elections that is based on human rights. The right to free elections is meaningful only if it enables voters to express their opinion effectively. If the choices available to voters are structured so as to make elections ineffective as a means of choosing desired representatives and punishing bad ones, the right to free elections is no longer meaningful. One interpretation of these findings is that the Convention may place obligations on states, which are much broader than has hitherto been appreciated. Specifically, those obligations may include abstention from legislative interventions that compromise the effectiveness of the party system as a tool for voters to select and control politicians. Yet, such interventions may be difficult to define and remedy judicially. At a minimum, then, our findings highlight the challenges to an approach that seeks to safeguard free elections by focussing on human rights alone.

Governmental Corruption and the Effectiveness of Elections

In order to explore the effectiveness of free elections, we focus on governmental corruption. We define governmental corruption as the misuse of public office for personal or political gain, as well as the acquiescence in such misuse by bureaucrats (Key 1936, Tavits 2007). Our definition thus captures all forms of governmental corruption: grand and petty theft, as well

as bribery and rent-seeking by public officials. In doing so, we conceive of governmental corruption as a *public policy outcome* for which politicians are in principle accountable – they may employ resources to fight it, or tolerate it and possibly even engage in it.

For citizens, governmental corruption is an agency problem that arises when politicians deviate from the electorate's interests. Survey research indicates that this is precisely how governmental corruption is perceived by citizens. Around the world, survey respondents regularly report serious concerns about governmental corruption. Over three quarters of the respondents polled by a Eurobarometer Survey in 2009 viewed corruption as a major problem for their country, an outright majority (57 per cent) considered that preventing corruption is the responsibility of the national government, and a majority also regarded their government's efforts to combat corruption as ineffective (European Commission 2009: 7). The same is true of citizens in more clientelistic contexts, as documented by Latinobarometro and Afrobarometer surveys as well as Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer (see for example Transparency International 2009). This is not surprising. Even if citizens benefit in individual circumstances from a clientelistic exchange, this does not imply that they approve of governmental corruption to confer benefits on other groups of citizens, nor does it imply citizen tolerance for rent-seeking by politicians. For citizens, then, corruption is a deleterious public policy outcome that results when their political agents - elected politicians - are unwilling or unable to redress malfeasance by public officials.

To analyze governmental corruption, we employ a principal-agent approach. From this perspective, decision-making in representative democracies implies the delegation of authority from the electorate (the democratic principal) to politicians (the agents). Voters delegate government power to politicians to execute certain goals, such as ensuring clean government, but because the interests of the two sets of actors may not be well-aligned, politicians may choose to tolerate or engage in governmental corruption. Delegation to self-interested politicians thus opens up the possibility of corruption (Adsera, Boix and Payne 2003: 447).

Much of the formal literature in classical democratic theory analyzes precisely the problem that politicians may not act in the interest of citizens. Two central insights derive from this work. First, free elections are a critical tool for voters to control politicians. Second, free elections can only enhance the control of politicians when they are effective as *mechanisms of selection* by which voters can select "good" types of politicians rather than corrupt ones (Fearon 1999) and as *sanctioning devices* through which voters can reward or punish performance in office (Banks and Sundaram 1993, Barro 1973, Ferejohn 1986). When

elections are ineffective on either dimension, they give rise to the risks of *adverse selection* (i.e., voters may elect politicians who do not have the motivation or skills to act in their interest) and *moral hazard* (i.e., politicians may perpetrate or acquiesce in corruption because they cannot be effectively monitored and punished). As in other instances of delegation, these agency problems have their sources in asymmetries of information or limitations on the principal's ability to translate information into effective choice.

The magnitude of these agency problems varies with the information and effectiveness of the choices available to voters. When *information* is poor so that the electorate is not able to tell the difference between corrupt and non-corrupt types of politicians both agency risks are magnified (Fearon 1999: 79). Thus, voters may elect representatives whose preferences diverge from their own, or they may fail to punish politicians who have tolerated or engaged in corruption because they cannot discern the politicians' true type. Indeed, as Ferejohn points out, "the greater the informational advantage that officials hold, the greater their ability to earn rents from office-holding" (Ferejohn 1986: 10).

Equally critical in curbing the risks of adverse selection and moral hazard is the *effectiveness of the choices* available to voters. When credible challengers are not available, or the ability of voters to co-ordinate on them is reduced, corrupt types of politicians may be selected (Ferejohn 1986: 18, Myerson 1993: 119), and incumbents who have failed to curb corruption may escape punishment. As Ferejohn observes, it is only when voters have effective alternative choices that incumbents "are forced, implicitly, to compete with other options available to the principal in order to attract her support, and this circumstance may induce more-accountable agency" (Ferejohn 1999: 133).

Because party system features shape both, the information available to voters and the effectiveness of their electoral choices, they can be expected to impact on the effectiveness of free elections, and thus, the scope for corruption. In the section that follows we analyze the main dimensions of party system variation and their effects on the latitude for governmental corruption.

Party Systems, the Effectiveness of Elections and the Scope for Corruption

As Duverger's early work made clear, party systems are defined by the "forms and modes" of competition for votes and governmental office among the constituent parties (Duverger 1954: 203). Since Duverger, an extensive literature has shown that party systems vary significantly along three dimensions: the level of *institutionalization* (Mainwaring 1999), *competitiveness*,

which captures the number of competitors and patterns of dominance in their interaction (Duverger 1954, Laakso and Taagepera 1979, Bogaards 2004), and the *nature of the competition* that prevails, especially the extent to which it is programmatically structured (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007). Our argument is that these systemic features of party competition, net of the idiosyncrasies of individual parties, structure the quality of information and the effectiveness of the choices available to voters. As a result, party system features should have implications for the quality of representation, accountability and corruption control. Specifically, party systems that aid voters to select good types of politicians, and to hold accountable those who are not, can be expected to reduce corruption. The following section develops this argument for the three dimensions of party system variation outlined above and derives a set of testable hypotheses.

(1) Party System Institutionalization

As Mainwaring (1999) notes, the level of institutionalization is perhaps the most critical dimension of variation between the party systems of many newer democracies and those of advanced industrial societies. While party system institutionalization has a range of dimensions, including the strength of societal roots, the acceptance of parties as legitimate, their organisational stability and the regularity of patterns of competition, these features aggregate in institutionalized party systems to secure “stability in who the main parties are and how they behave” (Mainwaring 1999: 25). Institutionalization varies tremendously. Some young democracies, like Taiwan, quickly establish relatively stable (Croissant and Völkel 2010: 15), institutionalized party systems, while others, such as Russia throughout the 1990s, feature weakly institutionalized, fluid party systems in which the identity of key competitors changes from election to election. Similarly, there is no guarantee that institutionalized party systems will persist once they are established. Italy in the 1990s, as well as Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela and Peru during the 1990s and early 2000s, all suffered crises of representation that resulted in extensive de-institutionalizations of their party systems.

Party system institutionalization affects the risk of adverse selection and moral hazard in two respects (Schleiter and Voznaya forthcoming). First, more institutionalized party systems improve the information available to voters and their ability to sanction politicians who permit corruption because such systems are typically characterized by better party control of talent and career structures. Thus, politicians who rise to power in institutionalized systems are on average better screened and controlled by their party, which aids the

cumulative building of party reputations and enhances the value of party labels for voters (Cox and McCubbins 2005, Feldman and Conover 1983, Schleiter and Voznaya forthcoming, Shively 1979). More informative party labels and reputations limit adverse selection and moral hazard because they enable voters to employ party labels as reliable shortcuts in distinguishing good and bad types of politicians instead of acquiring detailed knowledge about individual ministers and legislators. Second, in institutionalized party systems, the repeated interaction among a stable set of competitors improves the opportunities for opposition politicians to form strategic coalitions and mount credible challenges to corrupt incumbents. Credible challenges, in turn, aid voter co-ordination to punish such incumbents (Keefer 2007, Schleiter and Voznaya forthcoming). Thus, by increasing information and making effective voter choice more likely, institutionalized party systems limit adverse selection and moral hazard and our first hypothesis is that

H1: Party system institutionalization reduces the scope for corruption.

(2) Party System Competitiveness

The second major dimension of variation among party systems is the degree of their competitiveness. Party system competitiveness varies first, with the level of fragmentation, which affects the number of parties on offer to voters, and second, with the extent to which competition is characterized by patterns of dominance. Both aspects of competitiveness can be expected to have a direct impact on adverse selection and moral hazard.

Party system fragmentation The level of fragmentation varies extensively among party systems. At one extreme lie party systems that offer a very restricted range of effective choices to voters. Namibia illustrates this type of party system well. Reflecting the dominance of SWAPO as the party that ushered in independence, Namibia throughout the 1990s and early 2000s had an average of just 1.6 effective electoral parties. At the other extreme lie democracies with highly fragmented party systems that offer voters extremely diverse choices and few clues about who is likely to emerge as the winner (Coppedge 1998). In the 1990s and early 2000s that group included Lithuania and Ecuador (with around 7 effective electoral parties), as well as Belgium and Brazil (with approximately 10 effective electoral parties).

Party system fragmentation affects the electoral control of politicians because it shapes the effectiveness of the choices and the quality of information available to voters. From a theoretical perspective both Myerson and Ferejohn anticipate that voter control over politicians is reduced when the number of parties is restricted (Ferejohn 1986: 18, Myerson

1993: 119). Indeed, at the lower bound a very restricted number of effective parties signals a degree of electoral hegemony that in itself presents formidable barriers to the deposition of incumbents because the level of mobilization, opposition co-ordination and vote switching required to oust them is so extensive. However, the increase in fragmentation required to make a party system significantly more competitive at this lower bound is not big. A rise from 1.6 to between 2 and 3 electoral parties (the range of fragmentation that characterized the party systems of the Benin, the Dominican Republic, Hungary, Mongolia and the US in the 2000s) can significantly increase the probability that a rejection by voters will be followed by the actual loss of policy-making power. Consequently, a rise from a very low to an intermediate number of effective electoral parties can be expected to improve the electoral control of politicians and thus reduce the scope for corruption.

However, as the number of competitors continues to rise and parties proliferate, both co-ordination problems and information costs can be expected to offset and reverse the beneficial effects of increased competition (Schleiter and Voznaya 2014). If an electoral challenge is to be successful, voters must converge on the opposition party or coalition most likely to oust the government (Ferejohn 1986: 22), and highly fragmented party systems accentuate the co-ordination problems for voters in replacing under-performing incumbents. By presenting voters with a broad choice of potential challengers, such systems are likely to split the opposition vote, making co-ordination on any one challenger less likely. In addition, fragmented party systems raise the information requirements for voters in assessing the record of incumbents and the promises of potential challengers, and as Kurer (2001) makes clear, information and co-ordination problems are mutually reinforcing. As the quality of information declines, so too does the probability that voters will be able to co-ordinate effectively. For these reasons we anticipate that

H2: A rise in the effective number of parties initially reduces the scope for corruption but this effect reverses at high levels of fragmentation.

Patterns of dominance constitute the second aspect of party system competitiveness.

Dominance Dominant party systems are characterized by the protracted and dominant position of a party or coalition in government. The origins of dominance typically lie in a combination of voter cleavages and the competitive strategies adopted by parties (Mershon 2002, Arriola 2011). The high prevalence of such systems in African democracies, for instance, is often traced to the voter loyalties commanded by parties that led the independence or democratization struggles (such as the ANC in South Africa), but it also

appears to reflect the use of patronage by governing parties to undermine the incentives for opposition politicians to coalesce and form an effective electoral opposition (Arriola 2011). In Europe dominant party systems are similarly based on voter cleavages as well as parties' competition strategies, and tend to arise when a party successfully positions itself ideologically as the core party, which makes it a member of all possible coalitions. In the Netherlands Dutch Christian Democracy (the KVP/CDA) occupied such a position; in Italy the Christian Democrats held core party status from 1946 through 1992 (Mershon 2002: 12-3). Note, that there is no clear correlation between the effective number of parties in a political system and the emergence of a dominant party system. Both Italy and the Netherlands have party systems with an intermediate number of parties; in Africa, dominant party systems feature anything "from one to more than three effective parliamentary parties" (Bogaards 2004: 188).

Dominance in party systems can be expected to accentuate adverse selection and moral hazard problems for two reasons (Schleiter and Voznaya 2014). First, the dominant presence of one party in government creates incentives for other coalitionable parties to collude with it, because entering government requires them to enter into coalition with the dominant party. Thus, in Italy, the long era of dominance by the Christian Democrats was accompanied by "a strong tendency toward inter-party collusion" (della Porta 2004: 51) that was often reinforced by agreements to distribute public contracts and other spoils according to the electoral strength of the parties involved. This type of collusion compromises the flow of information to voters and thus their ability to distinguish between clean and corrupt types of politicians. Second, the mechanisms through which dominance emerges – be that the positioning of a party or coalition in the ideological core of the party system or the use of patronage – limit the effectiveness of voter choice. As Arriola notes, incumbents often deliberately use patronage to enhance the co-ordination problems for opposition parties in mounting an electoral challenge (Arriola 2011). Similarly, core parties are insulated to a large degree from the effects of electoral punishment by their ideological position, which tends to secure their inclusion in government even if they are reduced in size. Thus, the mechanisms that give rise to dominant party systems can be expected to blunt the threat of electoral punishment (Schleiter and Voznaya 2014).

For both of these reasons we anticipate that patterns of dominance correlate with higher levels of corruption. From a theoretical perspective, Ferejohn and Myerson note that mechanisms which limit successful challenges help to "maintain collusive opportunities for officeholders of the established party" (Ferejohn 1986: 23, see also Myerson 1993: 119).

Case-oriented work on South Africa and Italy supports these theoretical expectations. Thus, Giliomee finds that South Africa's dominant party system contributed to widespread corruption through the abuse of state patronage (Giliomee 1998: 129), while Mershon observes that the Christian Democrats' core party status in Italy enabled "corruption of unprecedented scale and reach" (Mershon 2002: 184). In short, dominant party systems are likely to reduce the information available to voters and can be expected to undermine the effectiveness of electoral punishment as a means to discipline representatives. We therefore expect that

H3: Dominant party systems increase the scope for corruption.

(3) The Nature of Political Competition: Ideological Party System Structuration

The third source of major differences between party systems is the nature of the competition for votes, which can vary irrespective of the institutionalization and competitiveness of the system. As a host of studies of democracies in post-communist Europe, Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and Latin America make clear, the competition strategies which characterize party systems differ significantly. The nature of competition can span the entire spectrum from policy-based, ideologically structured competition to clientelistic, patronage-based competition (Kitschelt 2007: 527, Shefter 1994, Keefer 2007). Although clientelistic party systems are especially prevalent in newer and poorer polities, they can also be found "in advanced industrial democracies such as Italy, Japan, Austria and Belgium" (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007:3).

These modes of competition differ fundamentally and have implications for adverse selection, as well as moral hazard. Competition in programmatic party systems revolves around ideologically structured policy positions that parties bundle into programs that they promise to enact if elected, and can be held accountable for. As Keefer notes, programmatic competition enables politicians to commit credibly to policies to provide public goods such as curbing corruption (Keefer 2011: 96), while clientelistic systems tend to confront voters with parties whose policy positions are diffuse, erratic, and lack credibility. Credible information about policy positions reduces the risk of adverse selection. In addition, programmatic structuration also limits the risk of moral hazard. As Ferejohn (1986) shows, voters can limit incumbent shirking only if they can coordinate on a performance threshold, so that incumbents who fail to meet this threshold can be expelled from power. Programmatically structured party systems enable voters to evaluate the performance of their representatives

against the promises detailed in their programmes, which aids voter co-ordination on a performance threshold and enhances accountability. Our fourth hypothesis, therefore, is that

H4: Party systems in which competition is ideologically structured reduce the scope for corruption.

The discussion so far raises the question to what extent these dimensions constitute genuinely independent aspects of party system variation. The literature suggests that some of these dimensions ought to be correlated - less institutionalized party systems, for instance, are usually expected to be more fragmented and less ideologically structured. However, there is little theoretical reason to expect high correlations between any of these dimensions of party system variation. It is by now well established that party system fragmentation is shaped by institutional factors and social cleavages (Amorim Neto and Cox 1997), which are quite distinct from determinants of institutionalization. As a result, it is not surprising that a range of highly institutionalized systems support relatively high numbers of parties, as for instance Belgium, Finland, Italy, Israel, India and Switzerland, while other, less institutionalized party systems in recently established democracies support only small numbers of parties – examples include the party systems of Mongolia and many new African democracies. Similarly, there is no theoretical reason to expect more than a moderate correlation between party system institutionalization and programmatic structuration. While it has been argued that young democracies, in which party systems are often weakly institutionalized, tend to push politicians toward vote buying and patronage strategies in order to make credible promises to voters (Keefer 2007), the resort to clientelistic rather than programmatic strategies of competition is clearly not driven by credibility problems alone. The manner in which parties compete for votes can vary quite independently from institutionalization and appears to be driven by the comparative advantages afforded by clientelistic, as opposed to programmatic linkage strategies in particular contexts. It is, for instance, well documented that parties in a range of well-institutionalized systems in, such as Japan, Belgium, Italy and Austria have used their control of budgetary and regulatory processes, social security systems, public enterprises and the civil service for clientelistic purposes (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007, Scheiner 2005, Warner 2001). For this reason, we would not expect to see more than a moderate correlation between party system institutionalization and programmatic structuration.

Finally, the literature suggests no clear theoretical expectations at all regarding the correlation between dominant party systems on the one hand and institutionalization or ideological structuration on the other hand. Equally unclear are expectations about the

relationship between fragmentation and ideological structuration. In sum, there are no theoretical reasons to expect more than limited overlap between the dimensions of party system variation that we have identified. As is consistent with the theory, our data suggest that, empirically, the correlations between these party system dimensions range from just .064 to a moderate .398.³ Thus, theoretically and empirically, the party system dimensions that we identify are distinct. In the section that follows we examine their effects – jointly and separately – on governmental corruption.

Data and Dependent Variable

In examining why voters may fail to control their politicians we focus only on democracies, where electoral manipulation and fraud do not foil the democratic process (Kurer 2001: 65). We test our hypotheses about the effects of party system competitiveness on governmental corruption in democratic polities that rank 6 or higher on the Polity Index of Democracy. Our unit of analysis is the country and our data covers 80 democracies, observed over a seven-year period 2003-2009 (see Appendix 1 for a list of the countries included in the analysis).

One of the most widely accepted measures of corruption is the *control of corruption* dimension of the World Bank Governance Indicators (Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2004). These data gauge the essentially hidden phenomenon of corruption via a range of surveys of international and domestic business people, risk analysts, and residents of a country, and aim to capture the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as “capture” of the state by elites and private interests. The World Bank indicator aggregates these surveys, treating them as measures of a common latent variable, which is estimated using an unobserved components model. The two critical advantages of this indicator are its breadth of coverage, which is unmatched by any alternative measure, and the variety of sources employed, which makes it less susceptible to poll-specific or question-specific idiosyncrasies.

Despite these advantages, though, these data pose several challenges. First, the World Bank indicator cannot be appropriately used for longitudinal analysis because of changes in the sources used to construct the index over time (Kaufmann, Kraay and Zoido-Lobaton 2002: 13-14). This confines us to the cross-sectional analysis of these data. Second, the indicator records corruption perceptions rather than the frequency or seriousness of actual corruption and it is possible that corruption perceptions deviate from the underlying phenomenon. Given the covert and illicit nature of corruption, no measures of actual corruption exist for a sufficiently large number of cases to enable cross-national analysis.

Surveys that gauge corruption experiences come closest to providing such a measure, but their coverage of countries and years is as yet too limited. Fundamentally, though, corruption perceptions reflect the underlying frequency of corrupt interactions. As Treisman reports, the correlation between the World Bank measure of corruption perceptions and the main survey measures of corruption experiences is high and statistically significant, with correlation coefficients that range from .66 to .79 (Treisman 2007: 218). But to take account of the possibility that perceptions may deviate from realities at the margins, we average corruption perceptions reported for each of the countries in our analysis across a seven-year period (2003-9) so that spikes in corruption perceptions caused by raised awareness in a particular country-year do not bias our results.

Independent Variables: Measures and Measurement Validity

Because several of the party system features are conceptually complex, we describe the measures we use to gauge them, as well as the tests we performed to establish their validity.

In measuring *party system institutionalization* we are guided by Mainwaring's observation that the various dimensions of institutionalization aggregate to secure "stability in who the main parties are and how they behave" (Mainwaring 1999: 25) and use the average age of the first and second largest governing parties and the largest opposition party (or any subset of these for which party age is known),⁴ recorded in the Database of Political Institutions by Beck et al. (2001).⁵

Ideally, of course, we would measure institutionalization using an index that takes account of parties' societal roots, their legitimacy, organizational stability and regularity of their patterns of competition. Unfortunately, none of the indices of party system institutionalization that scholars have constructed cover the range of countries in our dataset. Nonetheless, for the subset of our cases which they cover, these indices allow us to examine how far average party age is a good proxy for the broader concept of party system institutionalization. For Latin America and East and Southeast Asia, Jones (2005) and Croissant and Völkel (2010) have developed very similar measures of party system institutionalization. In addition Kuenzi and Lambright (2001) gauge party system institutionalization in Africa, but employ a different method and scale. Jointly, these institutionalization indices cover 38 of the countries in our dataset. Simple cross-tabulation with our party age measure shows that institutionalization and average age generate coinciding classifications of party systems with above-average and below-average institutionalization in 68 per cent of the African cases and 64 per cent of the Latin American

and East and Southeast Asian cases, which suggests that average party age proxies party system institutionalization well. We take the natural logarithm of this variable since the marginal effect of an additional year can be expected to decrease as average party age rises. Our expectation is that party system institutionalization correlates with improved levels of perceived corruption.

To measure the number of parties that compete in elections, we follow the standard approach of using the *effective number of electoral parties (ENEP)* calculated according to the Laakso Taagepera Index. The majority of these data are drawn from Gallagher and Mitchell (2008) and augmented using Golder (2005), with remaining missing values calculated by the authors. Again, we take the natural logarithm of ENEP because the marginal effect of each additional party can be expected to decrease as the number of parties rises. To capture high levels of party system fragmentation we include the *quadratic term* of the logged variable, the expectation being that the effective number of parties will initially improve perceived corruption, but the quadratic term should have the opposite effect.

Governing party dominance is measured by the number of years a governing party has spent in office consecutively, coded from the International Parliamentary Union Database and the Psephos Election Archive.⁶ Since years-consecutively-spent-in-office is a variable with a distribution that is heavily skewed to the right, we take the natural logarithm. This measure captures the initial effects of ordinary incumbency, say a government's first and second term in office - about which we have no expectation - and party systems in which a governing party has established long-term dominance. To differentiate between these two effects, we include the main and quadratic terms of this variable. Our expectation is that long term governing party dominance, captured by the quadratic term, accentuates corruption.

The construct validity of this measure can be examined by probing how far it correlates with two other features that often characterize dominant party systems - high levels of opposition fragmentation and high vote shares of the dominant governing party (Bogaards 2004). As expected, our data show that long time ruling parties tend to face very fragmented oppositions while ordinary incumbency does not correlate with opposition fragmentation (as recorded by Beck et al. 2001). Where the longest serving governing party spends less than 12 years (e.g. less than approximately three terms) in power, there is no significant correlation between opposition fragmentation and length of incumbency, but once incumbency extends to 20 years and beyond, a very powerful and statistically significant relationship emerges with opposition fragmentation ($r = .86$, $p\text{-value} = .00$). Similarly, long-term incumbents tend to win larger vote shares, as expected. Ordinary incumbency of up to eight years in office

(e.g. approximately two terms) is associated with an average vote share of the largest governing party of only 34 per cent (as measured by Beck et al. 2001). However, where parties serve 12 or more years in power, the largest party wins on average fully 53 per cent of the vote - more than an absolute majority. Thus, our measure appears to capture the concept of governing party dominance well.

Turning to the *ideological structuration* of party systems, we use Keefer and Stasavage's (2003) data. These data record the extent to which the chief executive's party, the three largest government parties, and the largest opposition party in a country adopt programmatic positions with respect to economic policy (left, centre, or right).⁷ We follow Keefer's (2011) approach and calculate what proportion of these parties that adopt programmatic policy positions. Our expectation is that corruption is less pronounced in party systems that feature more programmatic competition.

As a test of the validity of this measure, we examine how far it coincides with the global expert survey based measure of programmatic party system structuration developed by Kitschelt et al. (see Kitschelt and Kselman 2011). The expert survey data only provides one data point for each country between 2007 and 2009, but overlaps with our data for 72 countries. Kitschelt et al.'s expert surveys gauge how far parties adopt programmatic, rather than clientelistic, positions on a range of economic and socio-cultural issue dimensions.⁸ To compare the two measures we average our variable for the period of 2007-2009. Despite the discrepancies in the number of issue dimensions assessed, cross-tabulating the two measures shows that they coincide in their classification of party systems with above-average and below-average programmatic structuration in 70 per cent of the cases.

In sum, we are confident that our measures capture party system variation well along the three dimensions that we seek to analyze – institutionalization, competitiveness and ideological structuration.

Control Variables

We employ two sets of control variables which have been shown to affect corruption in previous cross-national work. The more parsimonious set of controls includes constitutional, economic, social and regional factors. Constitutions are thought to differ in the extent to which they offer opportunities for corruption and rent extraction. Constitutions which decentralize power and those that feature executive presidents are characterized by greater competition between political actors and more extensive checks and balances, features that, a range of scholars argue, limit the scope for corruption (Persson and Tabellini 2003, Fisman

and Gatti 2002). We measure *decentralization* using Beck (2001) et al.'s coding of the extent to which countries have autonomous, locally elected governments and employ an indicator for democracies that feature an *executive president* drawing on Svolik's (2008) coding.

Economic conditions have been shown to have a powerful influence on corruption. Thus economic development can be expected to curb corruption because it "increases the spread of education, literacy, and depersonalized relationships — each of which should raise the odds that an abuse will be noticed and challenged" (Treisman 2000: 404). Additionally, the ability of officials to extract rents in the domestic market should be reduced when that market is open (Treisman 2000, Gerring and Thacker 2005). We measure *economic development* using the natural logarithm of real GDP per capita (in constant 2000 US\$), reported as part of the World Bank World Development Indicators. *Trade openness*, also drawn from the World Bank's Development Indicators, is measured by the sum of a country's imports and exports as a share of GDP – missing country-years were completed using import and export data as reported in the IMF's International Financial Statistics. In addition, we control for social influences on corruption. It is often argued that societies which feature ethnic and linguistic divisions are associated with greater corruption, because corrupt rents can be more easily extracted in divided societies that provide for internal sanctions against those who betray their co-ethnics. To capture the degree of *ethno-linguistic fragmentation* we draw on Alesina et al.'s (2003) index.

We also include a series of *regional indicators* for the Former Soviet Union, the Middle East, Central and Latin America, Asia, and Africa in the analysis to account for unobserved regional influences on perceived corruption.⁹

The more extensive set of controls additionally captures factors which, like party system features, shape electoral information and choice. First, we include the *quality of democracy*, as measured by the Polity Index of Democracy (Marshall, Gurr and Jaggers 2010), which has an impact on the degree of media freedom and thus the information available to citizens, as well as the protection of civil rights and liberties and thereby the scope for effective opposition exposure of governmental corruption. Second, we control for the nature of the electoral rules, which also structure the choices and information available to voters. Thus, plurality electoral systems are often expected to make it easier than PR lists for voters to attribute responsibility (Kunicova and Rose-Ackerman 2005). In addition, PR systems, in particular in combination with open lists, are thought to induce politicians to focus on personal reputations in order to differentiate themselves from their co-partisans and "to use illegal proceeds to fund electoral competition" (Chang and Golden 2006: 119),

skewing the distribution of politicians toward corrupt types. To account for the nature of the electoral rules, a series of indicator variables are used to record whether a country employs *Proportional Representation*, *Plurality*, and *Open Lists*. We also include an interaction to capture Open List PR systems (*Open List*PR*). The electoral systems data are drawn Beck et al. (2001) and augmented using Regan and Clark (2010) and Golder (2005). Since both, the quality of democracy and the nature of the electoral system can be expected to influence not just voter information and choice, but also the scope for governmental corruption, their inclusion can spuriously obscure the relationship between party system effects and corruption. However, despite these confounding influences, party system features exhibit a pattern of association with governmental corruption that is consistent with our expectations in all specifications.

Models and Results

Our model choice and specification is driven by three considerations. First, the dependent variable – the World Bank Control of Corruption Indicator - ranges from -1.46 to 2.35 in our data, which makes an OLS regression model the appropriate choice. Second, to correct for unobserved sources of variability between countries, we estimate robust standard errors. Third, in examining the effect of party systems on corruption, the possibility of reverse causation is an important concern. Party systems result themselves, at least in part, from the choices of politicians who may wish to protect corrupt practices by limiting the information and choices available to voters. To address this concern about the direction of causality, we lag all of our explanatory variables which capture aspects of the party system, as well as all time-varying control variables, by a period of seven years. Since our dependent variable is averaged over a seven-year period (2003-9), we also average our explanatory and control variables over the corresponding lagged seven-year period 1996-2002.

Table 1 presents the results of the analysis.¹⁰ Model 1 uses the parsimonious set of control variables, while Model 2 employs the more extensive set of controls. Because the shared variation between the main and quadratic terms for party system fragmentation and governing party dominance is high, it is difficult to distinguish in these models the separate effects of these terms. For this reason, we orthogonalize the two quadratic terms to render them uncorrelated with the main terms, and then replicate the analysis in Models 3 and 4. We orthogonalize these variables so as to add the shared variation between the linear and quadratic terms to the linear term. The coefficients on the main terms in Models 3 and 4 are thus equivalent to the coefficients these terms would have had if the quadratic terms had been

excluded from the analysis. The coefficients on the quadratic terms remain unchanged (Clarke and Stone 2008).¹¹

Across all of these specifications, the pattern of party system coefficients reflects precisely the expectations we derive from our analysis of corruption as a principal-agent problem between voters and politicians. Unless otherwise noted, the discussion of the results is based on Model 1 (for all predicted changes in corruption scores described in this section see Table 2).¹² As anticipated, levels of corruption control improve with party system institutionalization. This is consistent with our argument that institutionalization raises the informational value of party labels and assists voter co-ordination by making strategic alliances within the opposition to mount credible challenges to tainted incumbents more likely (H1). The effect is strongest for initial improvements in party system institutionalization. A rise in average party age from just 3.41 (the minimum in our data) by one standard deviation (to 34.51 years) correlates with an improvement of 15 per cent in the control of corruption scores. Predictably, a further one standard-deviation increase in institutionalization of an already well-institutionalized party system (from the mean party age of 36.5 years to 67.6 years) has a diminishing marginal effect and is only associated with an additional improvement of 4 per cent in perceptions of corruption control.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 2 makes clear that corruption scores also respond strongly to changes in the competitiveness of the party system. We anticipated that party system fragmentation initially improves perceived levels of corruption control because it enhances competition and choice for voters. As expected, an initial increase in the effective number of parties is always associated with a significant rise in perceived corruption control. This effect appears large in Model 1 - a one-standard deviation from the minimum of 1.7 to 5.2 reduces corruption scores by 46 per cent. Note, however, that the size of this coefficient is reduced in Models 3 and 4, which aim to distinguish the effects of fragmentation and its squared term by orthogonalizing the latter. As expected, the effect reverses at high levels of party system fragmentation. Thus, a one standard-deviation increase in the squared number of effective parties yields a very significant 38 per cent reduction in perceived levels of corruption control, which is consistent with our hypothesis that highly fragmented party systems raise the information costs for voters and create co-ordination problems in the effort to punish corrupt incumbents (H2). Long term governing party dominance, captured by the quadratic term, also has a powerful effect on corruption scores. Increasing long term governing party dominance by one standard deviation is associated with a 20 per cent deterioration of corruption control as is consistent

with our argument that long-term dominant party systems favour collusion and blunt the tool of electoral punishment (H3). Note that the main effect of governing party dominance is not precisely estimated and changes sign in Model 3, indicating that initial periods of incumbency have no clear effect on corruption as one might expect. Our fourth hypothesis was that party systems with more ideologically structured competition convey better information to voters and aid their co-ordination on a performance threshold, which improves corruption control (H4). This expectation, too, is borne out by the data. A one standard-deviation increase in ideological party system structuration correlates with a 5 per cent improvement in the corruption control scores. Thus, whether we use the more parsimonious or the fuller set of controls, and whether or not we residualize the quadratic terms, the variables of theoretical interest always have the expected signs and are statistically significant.

[Table 2 about here]

Turning to the controls, decentralized constitutions and the existence of an executive president both have the positive sign that Persson and Tabellini (2003) and Fisman and Gatti (2002) would expect - indicating that they tend to correlate with improved corruption control scores - but these effects are fragile and neither coefficient is precisely estimated. Wealth is - as the extant research overwhelmingly suggests - associated with significantly improved levels of perceived corruption control. The coefficients for trade openness and social structure suggest that trade openness tends to improve corruption control, while ethnic and linguistic divisions tend to correlate with lower levels of perceived corruption control as expected, but both coefficients fall short of statistical significance. The region dummies (not reported) suggest that Middle Eastern and Central and Latin American countries tend to have worse corruption perception scores, while African democracies fare better.

In Models 2 and 4, the inclusion of the expanded set of controls for the quality of democracy and electoral systems - all of which affect the information and choices available to voters - reduces the magnitude of most party system variables somewhat as is consistent with the theory, but the party system variables retain their significance and substantively sizable effects. The additional controls in Models 2 and 4 all have the expected signs. While the quality of democracy and plurality electoral systems correlate with improved perceptions of corruption control, corruption appears to be worse in the context of open-list proportional electoral systems (captured by the interaction). However, again these effects are fragile, as previous work suggests, and none of these coefficients are estimated precisely enough to

reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Finally, the level of explained variance across these models is high with R-squared statistics of .87 and .88.

Robustness

We employ two strategies to further examine the robustness of these results. First, because several of the party system dimensions we identify are moderately correlated, we probe how far the expected effects obtain when we examine each party system feature separately in Table 3, including both the parsimonious set of controls (Models 5-8) and the more extensive controls (Models 9-12). As these regressions make clear, whether we examine the effects of the party system features separately or jointly, the results are robust.

[Table 3 about here]

Second, we also examine how far our results are robust to a range of alternative model specifications (results not reported). Thus, we substitute alternative controls (Freedom House for the Polity score and a simple dichotomous coding of electoral systems into majoritarian and proportional). We then add to our model further individual controls for district magnitude, single party government, which may affect corruption by improving clarity of responsibility (Tavits 2007), and predominantly protestant cultures, which are thought to be less hierarchical than cultures shaped by Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy or Islam and may make challenges to under-performing office-holders more likely. Across all of these different alternative specifications our substantive results prove robust, none of the coefficients of theoretical interest to us drop below the 10 per cent level of statistical significance.

In sum, we find that party system features have powerful effects on levels of corruption control as perceived by citizens, domestic and international business people and risk analysts. Features that improve the information and effectiveness of the choices available to voters, such as party system institutionalization, the existence of a moderate number of competing parties and programmatic party competition, appear to enable voters to avoid the election of politicians for whom corruption is not a priority and to punish those that are discovered to tolerate or engage in abuse of public office. Conversely, party system features that either constrain the information available to voters or mitigate the effectiveness of their choices at the ballot box significantly worsen problems of corruption as a principal-agent approach would lead us to expect. These features include high levels of party system fragmentation and the emergence of patterns of dominance in party competition.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have focussed on the example of governmental corruption to test the argument that party system features can decisively moderate the effectiveness of free elections. Our findings make clear that party system variation, has a critical impact on the effectiveness of elections as a tool for voters to select and control politicians. We illustrate this effect by showing that party systems condition the scope for corruption. Party systems structure (i) the information available to voters to distinguish parties for which curbing corruption is a priority and (ii) the effectiveness of voter choices in avoiding the election and re-election of politicians who tolerate or perpetrate corruption. Though both of these mechanisms, our empirical results suggest, party system features such as high levels of fragmentation, dominance, and non-programmatic competition, can detract extensively from the effectiveness of elections.

These results have implications for literatures in two fields of politics – studies of party systems and the literature on a human rights approach to safeguarding free elections: Turning first to the work on party systems, as Kitschelt (2007) notes, the profusion of party system typologies and weak conceptualization of the role of party systems in shaping democratic accountability has for some time presented problems for research in areas such as political economy and public policy where party system variation is considered a potentially important explanatory variable. Crucial for work in these areas is an understanding of how different party system features enable or limit political accountability. However, to date, the effects of specific party system features on the ability of citizens to control their politicians have not been sufficiently well understood. By linking the party systems literature with the insights generated by positive democratic theory on the effectiveness of elections, our chapter offers a precise way to conceptualize the effect of specific party system features on voter information and choice, which in turn condition the effectiveness of elections as tools to control politicians.

For the literature on a human rights approach to elections, our findings have a troubling set of implications. They highlight that party system features can undermine the ability of voters to express their opinion effectively. By implication, the manipulation of party system features can be used to offset many of the implications of free elections. This insight has not been lost on leaders who are keen to suppress effective electoral choice for personal or political gain. They have availed themselves of an ever-broadening menu of strategies to shape party systems in order to suit their political ends. Legislation on parties, party registration requirements, electoral systems, representation thresholds and party financing rules has been used to shape the nature of the party systems. The result has been the

rise of "electoral democracies" and "hybrid" political regimes in many parts of the world, also among signatories to the European Convention of Human Rights. These regimes are characterized by competitive elections, which are often classified as free, but which are nonetheless deprived of effectiveness and integrity by other means. For the European Court of Human Rights, the defence of free elections in such regimes poses thorny challenges. On the one hand, the political motivations that drive legislative measures to consolidate dominant party systems, to promote extensive party system fragmentation, or to protect clientelistic party competition are often transparent. On the other hand, the Court has traditionally stressed that states have a wide margin of appreciation in determining electoral systems and other aspects of their political framework. Venturing into the territory of legislation that conditions party system features would require a much more comprehensive conceptualization of the obligations that the Convention imposes on states than the Court has espoused to date. Ultimately, such an approach may be difficult to defend judicially. Our findings, then, draw attention to the importance of the political context, in particular the nature of the party systems, as a factor that conditions the effectiveness of free elections and highlight some of the challenges to an approach that seeks to safeguard elections as an instrument of democracy by focussing on human rights alone.

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Table 1: Party System Effects on Corruption Perceptions (averaged 2003-9)

	(1) Parsim. Controls	(2) Full Controls	(3) Parsim. Controls	(4) Full Controls
Party System Features				
H1 Institutionalization (ln Party Age)	.249** (.070)	.199* (.080)	.249** (.070)	.199* (.080)
H2 Fragmentation (ln ENEP)	1.593** (.365)	1.451** (.419)	.276* (.133)	.253+ (.137)
Fragmentation Sq	-.409** (.086)	-.371** (.104)		
Fragmentation Sq (Residuals)			-.409** (.086)	-.371** (.104)
H3 Governing Party Dominance	.452* (.182)	.528** (.198)	-.003 (.066)	.027 (.069)
Governing Pty Dom Sq	-.126** (.044)	-.139** (.047)		
Gov Pty Dom Sq (Residuals)			-.126** (.044)	-.139** (.047)
H4 Ideological Structuration	.694** (.251)	.681** (.242)	.694** (.251)	.681** (.242)
Controls				
Decentralization	.027 (.065)	.048 (.075)	.027 (.065)	.048 (.075)
Executive President	.041 (.103)	.084 (.111)	.041 (.103)	.084 (.111)
GDP per capita (ln)	.402** (.049)	.399** (.069)	.402** (.049)	.399** (.069)
Tradeopenness	.110 (.099)	.118 (.109)	.110 (.099)	.118 (.109)
Ethnolinguistic Fragmentation	-.206 (.259)	-.199 (.265)	-.206 (.259)	-.199 (.265)
Quality of Democracy		.058 (.046)		.058 (.046)
Proportional Representation		.123 (.152)		.123 (.152)
Plurality (First-Past-the-Post)		.221 (.168)		.221 (.168)
Open Lists		.091 (.155)		.091 (.155)
Open Lists*Proportional Representation		-.202 (.262)		-.202 (.262)
Region indicators	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	-5.887** (.691)	-6.306** (.740)	-4.660** (.574)	-5.138** (.588)
Observations	80	80	80	80
R-squared	.873	.881	.873	.881

Note: Table entries are OLS regression coefficients, robust standard errors in parentheses; + significant at 10%; * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1% (two sided). Region indicators include: Former Soviet Union, Middle East, Central and Latin America, Asia, Africa.

Table 2: Magnitude of Predicted Changes in Control of Corruption Scores

	One std. dev. increase from	Change Control of Corruption Score	Percentage Change	Std. Err.	95% Confidence Interval	
Institutionalization (Party Age)	Min	.57	15%	.16	.25	.88
	Mean	.15	4%	.04	.07	.23
Fragmentation (ENEP)	Min	1.76	46%	.42	.88	2.55
Fragmentation (ENEPsq)	Min	-1.47	38%	.31	-2.09	-.84
Governing Party Dominance sq	Min	-.75	20%	.26	-1.27	-.25
Ideological Structuration	Min	.17	5%	.04	.03	.19

Note: Predicted changes are based on Model 1. Effects for all logged variables are reported in the original metric. Other variables were kept constant - continuous variables at their mean, dichotomous variables at their mode.

Table 3: Effects of Individual Party System Features on Corruption Perceptions (averaged 2003-9)

	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	
	Parsimonious Controls				Full Controls				
Party System Features									
H1	Institutionalization (ln Party Age)	.177** (.066)				.134+ (.073)			
H2	Fragmentation (ln ENEP)		.805* (.337)				.651+ (.387)		
	Fragmentation Sq		-.231** (.084)				-.181+ (.099)		
H3	Governing Party Dominance			.351+ (.201)				.561* (.213)	
	Governing Pty Dom Sq			-.099+ (.051)				-.142** (.051)	
H4	Ideological Structuration				.630** (.198)			.622** (.190)	
	Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Region indicators	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Constant	-4.057** (.629)	-4.535** (.780)	-4.162** (.704)	-4.160** (.567)	-4.603** (.633)	-5.115** (.788)	-5.224** (.692)	-4.866** (.542)
	Observations	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	
	R-squared	.824	.814	.813	.823	.837	.832	.840	.844

Note: Table entries are OLS regression coefficients, robust standard errors in parentheses; + significant at 10%; * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1% (two sided).

Parsimonious controls include: Decentralisation, Executive president, GDP (per capita) logged, Tradeopenness, Ethnolinguistic fragmentation. Full controls additionally include: Quality of democracy, Proportional representation, Plurality electoral system, Open lists, Open lists*Proportional representation. Region indicators include: Former Soviet Union, Middle East, Central and Latin America, Asia, Africa.

Appendix 1: Countries included in Analysis

Argentina	El Salvador	Lesotho	Poland
Australia	Finland	Liberia	Portugal
Austria	France	Madagascar	Romania
Bangladesh	Germany	Malawi	Senegal
Belgium	Ghana	Malaysia	Sierra Leone
Benin	Greece	Mali	South Africa
Bolivia	Guatemala	Mauritius	South Korea
Botswana	Guinea-Bissau	Mexico	Spain
Brazil	Guyana	Mongolia	Sri Lanka
Bulgaria	Haiti	Namibia	Sweden
Burundi	Honduras	Nepal	Switzerland
Canada	Hungary	Netherlands	Thailand
Chile	India	Nicaragua	Trinidad and Tobago
Colombia	Indonesia	Niger	Turkey
Comoros	Ireland	Norway	United Kingdom
Costa Rica	Israel	Pakistan	United States
Cyprus	Italy	Panama	Uruguay
Denmark	Jamaica	Paraguay	Venezuela
Dominican Republic	Japan	Peru	Yugoslavia
Ecuador	Kenya	Philippines	Zambia

Notes:

¹ Recent work has rightly pointed out that "free and fair" elections are only one of a range of features required to ensure "electoral integrity" (Norris, Frank and Martinez i Comma 2014). However, "free and fair elections" remain central to almost all definitions of democracy. Moreover, they are the focus of Article 3, Protocol 1, the challenges to which this chapter explores.

² Examples of rulings include: (i) restrictions of the right to vote, *Aziz v. Cyprus* (2004) and *Alajos Kiss v. Hungary* (2010); (ii) eligibility of candidates, *Podkolzina v. Latvia* (2002), and *Krasnov and Skuratov v. Russia* (2007); (iii) candidate disqualifications, *Paksas v. Lithuania* (2011), *Sejdic and Finci v. Bosnia and Herzegovina* (2009), *Tanase v. Moldova* (2010); (iv) voting irregularities, *Kovach v. Ukraine* (2008), *Namat Aliyev v. Azerbaijan* (2010).

³ For details about the measures employed, please see the following section.

⁴ Keefer (2011) demonstrates that governing party age net of the length of incumbency of the current ruler offers a way to gauge party institutionalization in authoritarian regimes. However, as he notes, in democracies the institutionalization of opposition, as well as governing parties, serves to constrain incumbents, and this is precisely what our measure captures.

⁵ Throughout, we use the updated 2010 version of Beck et al.'s Database of Political Institutions.

⁶ International Parliamentary Union Database (<http://www.ipu.org/>), Carr (<http://psephos.adam-carr.net/>).

⁷ The Keefer and Stasavage (2003) data are included in Beck et al.'s Database of Political Institutions. The measures record "Party orientation with respect to economic policy, coded based on the description of the party in the sources, using the following criteria: Right: for

parties that are defined as conservative, Christian democratic, or right-wing. Left: for parties that are defined as communist, socialist, social democratic, or left-wing. Center: for parties that are defined as centrist or when party position can best be described as centrist (e.g. party advocates strengthening private enterprise in a social-liberal context).”

⁸ We draw on Kitschelt et al.’s CoSalPo_4nwe measure, which gages a party’s overall programmatic appeal by averaging the programmatic orientation scores of a party on the four issues that generate the highest CoSalPo scores for that party. These typically include some economic-distributive and some socio-cultural issues. For each country, a national average across all parties was calculated, weighted by the electoral size of each party (CoSalPo_4nwe). Since the detailed data from the Kitschelt et al.’s project have not yet been released, we followed Kitschelt’s advice to extract CoSalPo_4nwe scores from figure 3 in Kitschelt (2011). On the basis of this figure, we classified national party systems into 9 categories – each category capturing a .1 increase in programmatic orientation scores, which run from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of .9.

⁹ While the region dummies make a significant contribution to the models’ overall explanatory power, they are not central drivers of the level of explained variance. Without the region dummies model R^2 statistics range from .74 to .79. The models that include the region dummies have R^2 statistics that range from .87 to .88.

¹⁰ All models are estimated using STATA 11.

¹¹ As Clarke and Stone (2008) note, the technique of residualization as a response to collinearity can give rise to misleading interpretations when applied to control variables rather than variables of interest, which can inflate the coefficients of the variables of interest and reduce their standard errors. However, we apply residualization exclusively to variables of theoretical interest to us, regressing first the quadratic on the linear term and then replacing the quadratic term with the residuals from the auxiliary regression. Note that in the case of

party system fragmentation, where we have theoretical expectations about both the linear and the quadratic term, residualization *lowers* the coefficient on the linear term and *increases* its standard error, thus putting our hypothesis to a more exacting test.

¹² All quantities of interest in the interpretation of these models were simulated using Clarify (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003).