Party Institutionalization and the New Democracies

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The object of this paper is to examine the concept of institutionalization in the context of Third World political parties and their role in democratic consolidation. In the first section we begin by exploring the concept of party institutionalization as established in the academic literature, pointing to problems and inconsistencies and suggesting a possible analytic framework. Drawing on empirical studies, the second section considers the prospects and problems, in the ‘new democracies’ of the Third World, for individual party institutionalization understood in this way. The third section examines the relationship and possible contradictions between the criteria and requirements of individual party institutionalization on the one hand and institutionalization of (competitive) party systems on the other.

The relationship between parties and governance is well established in long running democracies. Indeed, it has become an axiom in the study of modern democracies that it is a form of governing which is unthinkable save in terms of political parties. This view is echoed in the vast and growing literature on democratic transition. We see this in reference to the latecomers to democracy in Europe. Analysing democratisation in the southern Mediterranean, Pridham for instance writes: ‘focusing on parties and party systems must remain a basic if not the central theme for examining the quality of the liberal democracy in question but also its progress towards and achievement of democratic consolidation’. Paul Lewis similarly sees party development as a central aspect of democratisation in eastern Europe. The development of political parties has also been a pervasive theme specifically in

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Definitions of democracy of course abound and there is little agreement on which factors contribute to bringing democracy about or to its consolidation, but a recurrent refrain is the vital role that is or should be played by parties. Thus surveying prospects for consolidation in sub-Saharan Africa, Clapham suggests the key indicator is 'the capacity to develop a political party system which is both integrative between different communities, and competitive between different parties'. Diamond reaches a similar conclusion about the importance of parties in summarising findings in ten Asian countries. The role of parties has received especial attention in the literature on Latin American transitions. Dix, for instance, argues that in assessing prospects for democratic survival and consolidation in that region 'much may depend on political parties. Although it seems that strong parties are not necessary for inaugurating democratic regimes (although they might be helpful in doing so), they are almost certainly necessary for the long-term consolidation of broad-based representative government'. In some ways the greatest testimony to the importance of political parties is offered by Rueschemeyer et al., precisely because they had adopted a more 'structural', class-based, approach to analysing democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean. They were surprised by their own finding that political parties were 'a crucial mediating mechanism', playing a 'crucial role in making democracy viable or not in very similar economic and social structural conditions'.

This view of the importance of parties is not universally shared. Schmitter, for instance, argues that the emphasis on parties underestimates the complexity of modern democracy.

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democracy. Citizens of the new democracies are more politically sophisticated and less partisan than their historical counterparts and the international environment provides them with innumerable alternative models of successful collective action. Though viewing parties as fairly indispensable to the moment of transition itself, he contends that both in the build-up to transition and in the consolidation phase, social movements or interest associations could be more decisive. It also runs somewhat counter to recent arguments about the 'decline of party' in western democracies. Finally it is evident from the comments cited so far, that political analysts see the actual or potential contribution of parties as varying at different stages of the democratisation process. In general the perception is that their contribution gets increasingly important as the process evolves and is especially central to successful consolidation.

But beyond this perception of the potential importance of parties, is the question of how parties are to be characterized or categorised, and what kinds of parties - distinguished in these terms - can make the most positive contribution to democracy. The common perception that the existence of political parties is a vital ingredient in the consolidation of democratic regimes does not imply that there is agreement on which particular qualities individual parties should have, or what kind of party system that is the most conducive for democratic governance. Nor is there a common understanding of which factors help to bring about these particular qualities in the first place. In this context, different criteria have been cited - for instance concerning the ideal number of parties, the degree of ideological polarisation, the relative merits of two-party, three-party or dominant party systems and the relationship between parties and underlying social and cultural cleavages. But the criterion which has received most emphasis, especially in relation to democratic consolidation, is that of party institutionalization. The need for institutionalization is underlined in many of the discussions

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cited so far\(^{11}\) and it is the central theme of a recent volume edited by Mainwaring and Scully on party-system building in Latin America\(^{12}\).

While there is considerable convergence on the need for party institutionalization, there is much less clarity, or indeed consistency, as to what institutionalization involves. Sometimes the term is used without further explanation. Alternatively the author invokes the definition and criteria suggested by Huntington\(^{13}\), or by Panebianco\(^{14}\). More critical and independent theorisation is very unusual\(^{15}\). There is also almost no explicit consideration of the relationship between individual party institutionalization and the institutionalization of the party system, although these are neither the same thing nor necessarily and always mutually compatible.

**PARTY INSTITUTIONALIZATION - REFINING THE CONCEPT**

In shaping our understanding of the process and features of party institutionalization, two writers have been pre-eminent and we should begin by briefly rehearsing their arguments. To some extent the 'father' of the concept is Samuel Huntington who made it central to his *Political Order in Changing Societies*. In fact, Huntington in that work first discusses political institutionalization more broadly, but then argues that the criteria he derives can as well be applied to parties (whether to parties singly or to the party system is a question we shall leave to later). For Huntington, 'Institutionalization is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability'\(^{16}\). He identifies four dimensions of institutionalization

\(^{11}\) For instance Lewis (fn 3), Diamond (fn 6), Dix (fn 7)

\(^{12}\) Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R Scully (eds) *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995). Although here the ostensible topic is party-system building rather than party building, a point discussed further below.


\(^{16}\) Huntington (fn 13), 12
adaptability, complexity, autonomy and coherence. Adaptability can partly be deduced from longevity, including the ability to survive a first generation of leaders, but also entails functional adaptation, for instance in terms of groups represented or from opposition to government. Organizational complexity is measured by the number of sub-units. Autonomy refers to the degree of differentiation from 'other social groupings and methods of behaviour'. Coherence has to do with the degree of consensus within the organization on its functional boundaries and on procedures for resolving disputes that arise within these boundaries. Although in theory autonomy and coherence are independent characteristics in practice they tend to be interdependent.

Panebianco, writing much later, focuses just on political parties, and specifically on parties in established democracies. By 'institutionalization', he understands 'the way the organization "solidifies"', which he later elaborates as the process by which it 'slowly loses its character as a tool: it becomes valuable in and of itself, and its goals become inseparable and indistinguishable from it. In this way, its preservation and survival become a "goal" for a great number of its supporters' 17. For this to happen, an appropriate internal incentive system needs to develop which provides both selective incentives for those with an interest in leadership and more collective incentives that foster diffuse loyalty to the party. In order to measure the degree of party institutionalization, Panebianco singles out two criteria: the degree of autonomy vis a vis its environment and the degree of internal 'systemness' or interdependence of different sectors. Again he recognizes that autonomy and systemness will in practice be interrelated.

There is considerable overlap in the criteria of institutionalization specified by the authors - both include autonomy, and Panebianco's notion of systemness seems to embrace the combination of Huntington's complexity and coherence. What Panebianco does not require is adaptability. In fact he suggests that a high degree of institutionalization could actually hinder flexibility or adaptability.

Levitsky points out that these two accounts of institutionalization have something else in common. There is a kind of disjuncture between the initial conception of institutionalization and the way this is elaborated and related to specific criteria. The initial conception emphasizes what Levitsky, following Selznick 18, calls 'value infusion'. This is

17 Panebianco (fn 14), 49, 53

when an organization becomes 'infused with value beyond the technical requirement of the task in hand'. Thus Huntington talks about the way in which an organization 'develops a life of its own quite apart from the specific functions it may perform' and Panebianco likewise speaks of how the organization 'becomes valuable in and of itself'. However when it comes to elaborating the term, the specifications, particularly in the case of Panebianco, are above all to do with organizational elaboration and routinization in the narrow behavioural sense.

Levitsky argues the need to distinguish these two aspects, or what we might call 'sources of cohesion'. He cites the case of Argentina's Peronist party - (Partido Justicialista, PJ) - which on his reckoning scores high on value infusion measures but in which rules and procedures are circumvented, manipulated and contested. This suggests that the two dimensions will not necessarily go together: parties could be high, or low, on both, but there could also be parties which were like the PJ strong on value infusion but low on organizational routinization (and possibly vice versa - he suggests some of the European Green parties).

One final further dimension of party institutionalization has been suggested by Kenneth Janda in his conceptual framework for a cross-national analysis of political parties. In fact he identifies institutionalization as one of several aspects of the party's external relations, rather than being a feature of internal organization. He suggests that an institutionalized party is one that is 'reified in the public mind'. Although in elaborating this idea, he seems to come closer to the value infusion notion examined earlier, he raises the issue of how the party is perceived by the wider society. The potential importance of this 'external dimension' has been subsequently underlined by Harmel and Svåsand in their analysis of the institutionalization of right-wing 'protest' parties in Norway and Denmark. They characterize it as involving the extent to which 'the party has become part of the "routines" of other relevant actors in ways which suggest that they consider it to be an "established party"'.

The discussion so far has yielded a series of possible dimensions or criteria by which to give greater specificity to the notion of party institutionalization. These could be summarised as: adaptability, systemness (coherence/complexity), 'value infusion', external institutionalization and autonomy. But firstly there is disagreement as to how far these are all necessary aspects of institutionalization. Panebianco, we have seen, questions whether party

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19 Janda (fn 15)

20 Harmel and Svåsand (fn 15), 10
systemness will always promote adaptability but this leads him to exclude adaptability, or flexibility, from his criteria. Most writers on the subject omit external institutionalization.

There is also disagreement about the necessity for autonomy. Implicit in Levitsky's argument is the suggestion that autonomy is not necessary for institutionalisation, at least in the value diffusion sense. Janda had already raised this objection some time back, citing with some justification the case of the British Labour Party and its relationship with the trade union movement: 'I believe that a party can be highly institutionalized and yet lack independence of other groups (Huntington's "autonomy")...as the Labour Party in Great Britain'\(^{21}\). This question about the need for autonomy seems to us important but it is not susceptible to a simple yes/no answer. It must depend first on the form of interdependence. As with so many of these analytic distinctions, there is a conceptually hazy but empirically frequent situation in which a party is neither completely dependent on a sponsoring institution or group nor simply in some neutral sense 'linked' to it (in the literature 'linkages' are generally regarded as a good thing)\(^{22}\). Where the party is clearly the dominant element in the relationship, a degree of interdependence could have very positive consequences, in terms of extending resources (which could be vitally needed) and indeed of external institutionalization. But this is likely to be affected in turn by the nature of the group or organization to which the party is closely linked. The continuing close relationship between the trade union movement and the PJ in Argentina, rather than compromising that party's integrity or room for manoeuvre may actually have helped to ensure its survival through long periods of political repression, as Levitsky argues. This is partly because of the very top-down relationship that has prevailed between Peronist union officials, who were in the original corporatist model appointed from the centre and were subsequently likely to be coopted in reality if not in form, and the workers. On the other hand the relationship between India's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the so-called paramilitary organisation the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh (RSS) has been more problematic. It is the RSS that has imparted to the BJP its distinctive centralised, unified system of organisation as well as helping to sustain its links with the 'grass roots' but the RSS has its own social, and increasingly political, project of Hindu nationalism, which has at times constrained the party leadership's room for manoeuvre\(^{23}\). The difference here may have partly

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\(^{21}\) Janda (fn 15) 19


to do with the differing roles of the Argentinian unions and the RSS in the formation of the respective parties, a point returned to in the following section. Perhaps one way around these complexities would be to specify the party's need for *decisional autonomy*.

But even if we can agree on dimensions of institutionalization, a difficulty remains that these may not all be compatible but can pull in opposite directions. Or as Morlino has recently observed, 'a form of institutionalization that displays simultaneously maximum adaptability and complexity and maximum coherence and autonomy seems virtually impossible' 24. We have noted in particular the possible tension between adaptability and systemness. Huntington also suggests that to the extent that complexity involves linkages with external organisation it could conflict with autonomy. This leads us to propose that rather than understanding institutionalization as a single process it is best regarded not only as multidimensional but as potentially taking a number of different forms.

For purposes of analysis, we suggest the following model may be helpful. This model distinguishes firstly two main dimensions of party institutionalization, an internal and an external and, secondly, within these two dimensions, a further division between what we shall call 'structural' and more attitudinal aspects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIMENSIONS OF PARTY INSTITUTIONALIZATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>INTERNAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>STRUCTURAL Organization</td>
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<td>ATTITUDINAL Value Infusion</td>
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<td>EXTERNAL</td>
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<td>Decisional autonomy</td>
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<td>Reification</td>
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**ADAPTABILITY**

The internal dimension refers to how well the party is organized and to how strongly the adherents are emotionally linked to the party. The structural aspect of the internal dimension

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24 Leonardo Morlino, *Democracy Between Consolidation and Crisis : Parties, Groups and Citizens in Southern Europe*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998) 23. However he is not referring to parties as such, nor does he develop this tantalising perception much further
captures Huntington’s notion of 'complexity' and Panebianco’s 'systemness'. Thus a party that has a fairly detailed organizational network and in which decisions in the party follow, at least in a formal sense, the procedures set down in its statutes, is considered highly institutionalized. The attitudinal aspect of the internal dimension refers to the strength of the affective linkage of party to societal groups. Parties are not only formal instrumental organisations that potential supporters regard like any type of supermarket, but purposeful actors in which the participants share an ideology and identify with the values of the organization. Thus the more the party members and supporters identify with the party as an expressive phenomenon, and the higher the degree of voter loyalty, the more institutionalized it is. (This notion captures Levitsky’s idea of value infusion).

The external dimension refers to the party's relationship to its environment. Here the structural aspect revolves around the issue of autonomy. A party that is totally dependent on external factors is less institutionalized than one in which preservation of the organization is not at the mercy of such factors. Second, as regards the attitudinal aspect, reification refers to the fact that the party’s existence is established in the public imagination. It has become taken for granted by external actors and therefore impacts on the way the environment behaves. A party that is expected to disappear may be ignored, a party that mobilizes extensive electoral support over time, can not.

Implicit in the concept of institutionalization is the time dimension. A party cannot be said to be institutionalized if it is not able to survive over time. But this adaptability should be seen as a consequence of both internal and external dimensions: pressures for change in parties may originate internally as well as externally. In the long run, only parties which are able to respond to challenges from both sources can endure.

**PARTY INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN THE THIRD WORLD**

If the discussion so far has helped to clarify the meaning and criteria of party institutionalization, we need next to consider how far these requirements can actually be met

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in the new democracies of those regions that have conventionally be grouped together as the ‘Third World’. Of course this grouping contains countries that are widely diverse on a range of cultural and developmental indicators. This is clearly a huge topic and one that moreover requires much more systematic empirical investigation before any authoritative judgements could be reached. What follows are provisional assessments only, based primarily on the available secondary literature.

Evidently a whole range of factors associated with the particular circumstances of democratic transition in 'emerging' societies have a potential bearing upon party institutionalization. Many of these are familiar from the more general democratization literature. They include features of the broad economic and cultural context - as in levels of 'development' (literacy, communications and so forth) and particular cultural traits (Huntington emphasises the need for 'trust'; others stress the prevalence of forms of authoritarianism, as in 'Asian values', or 'caudillismo'). But they also comprise factors of a more narrowly political institutional nature - especially the historical legacy in terms of earlier experience of party-building. The character and timing of the democratic transition itself will be of great relevance; political parties may, but most often have not played a central role in bringing it about. The shift in the global ideological climate away from socialist values poses particular problems for would-be left-wing parties, and this can in turn be argued to have implications for the institutionalization of party systems as a whole, since in (north and western) Europe at least it is generally accepted that parties of the left acted as pacesetters in the institutionalisation process. Moreover, there are further institutional features of the emerging democratic context that can affect party development, such as the electoral system, the extent to which government is centralised, the way the executive function of government is organised (parliamentary vs presidential) and so forth. Of great importance, finally, will be the character and role of the mass media.

Here, however, and while these cannot be completely divorced from contextual features indicated above, we shall focus upon attributes more intrinsic to the individual parties themselves. We have already specified the main criteria of party institutionalization. How far and in what ways might particular features that tend to be characteristic of political parties

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27 This goes right back to M Duverger's thesis of organizational 'contagion' from the Left; see Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State, (London : Methuen, 1954).
and their development in the contemporary Third World - affect the degree to which these criteria are met? The following discussion will be organized around our original institutionalization criteria, but will aim to avoid repetition in the case of specific party characteristics that are relevant to more than one criterion.

Beginning with the internal/structural dimension, we have seen that a party’s degree of institutionalization depends on its ability to develop an organizational apparatus. Five aspects of party development seem of especial relevance in this respect. These are the way the organization originated and grew, organizational resources and especially funding, the role of the individual party leader vs. the party organization as such, and the role of factions vs. the party as a whole and the implications of clientelism. We shall consider each in turn.

Panebianco has laid great emphasis upon the consequences for a party's institutionalization, of the manner in which it was founded, its origins or 'genetic model'. One key dimension of this genetic model, with clear relevance for the party's organizational capacity concerns what we will call the process of party-building, the extent to which the party has been constructed through a process of 'penetration' from the centre to the periphery (understood both in territorial and more organisational terms) or 'diffusion', in which the party emerged more diffusely out of the 'spontaneous germination' from below. Broadly Panebianco argues that the greater the element of penetration, the more strongly institutionalized a party is likely to become, but at the same time some element of both is desirable.

Panebianco’s notion of party organization extending through a combination of penetration and diffusion from below reflects European experience. But how realistic is this in a Third World context? In the first place, this approach tends to assume that parties emerge and develop gradually. By contrast in the Third World, typically, over the longer term the process of party development has been regularly interrupted. In some cases parties in the present wave of democratisation have had a headstart where they can build on institutional foundations laid in an earlier period. For instance Munck and Bosworth 28, seeking to explain why Chile's parties stand out in terms of institutionalization, identify the main reason in the existence of institutionalized parties prior to the coup of 1973. In this case, the argument is that institutionalization survived military intervention. But in many of the 'new' democracies, general party development has been regularly interrupted. An example is Brazil where Power points out there have been as many as seven different party systems since independence, and

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four since 1945. Secondly, the process of democratic transition in this third wave has itself typically been foreshortened. There may be particular parties, closely linked to or even dominating the retreating authoritarian regimes, which have benefitted from the restriction of party competition and the opportunity to extend their organization and build up their resources—an obvious example would be Taiwan's KMT, discussed further below. But in contrast the sheer speed of the process, once it gets underway, means that alternative competing parties have to form very quickly, either reconstituting themselves from the residue of earlier parties, or organizing from scratch. That is, it can actually be the announcement of forthcoming elections that calls parties into existence. A further twist comes when opposition parties summoned into existence at fairly short notice, soon after find themselves in power - the period for organizational consolidation is doubly truncated. Rapid electoral success may actually prevent parties from institutionalizing organizationally because of the preoccupation of the elites with running the government, as exemplified by left-wing parties in Greece, Portugal and Spain, in southern Europe or the MMD in Zambia.

It could be argued that Panebianco’s conception of party-building also to an extent presupposes a social constituency available to be incorporated into some more or less regularized membership system. Again this tends to echo the earlier experience of a number of west European countries in which mass-integration parties, based generally on class but also on religious denomination, emerged with the expansion of suffrage. But first as we discuss more fully in relation to value infusion, differences in the level and sequencing of social development, on the one hand and the impact of changing mass communications media on the other, have tended to limit the possibilities of this kind of mass membership party in the Third World context. Second, it is increasingly recognised that even in Europe this kind of party may be proving atypical. Party membership is falling rapidly in the established European parties and when new parties are formed in the established democracies, they often lack an extensive membership base. Regularised mass membership may not, then, be an essential feature of party organization, but there does need to be some degree of grass-roots presence.


To summarize this discussion around party-building, the problematic legacy of earlier periods of party formation, the circumstances and speed of democratic transition and the frequent absence of obvious and accessible social constituencies have restricted the opportunities for political parties to build organizations that are extensive in terms either of their territorial reach or of their regularized incorporation of substantial memberships.

Second there is the question of organizational resources. We have seen that parties are unlikely to be able to derive any significant income from membership dues. On the other hand the possibilities of effective and continuous organization are heavily constrained by the availability of resources, including funding. Moreover, given the circumstances of democratic transition, the escalating costs of election campaigns in many parts of the world mean that parties need funds if they are to compete effectively. The ruling parties of Malaysia (UMNO - the United Malays National Organisation) and Taiwan (KMT) - also Golkar in Indonesia but so far there has been little possibility for meaningful party competition in that country - are according to Sachsenroder amongst the wealthiest in the world. They have been able to build their own massive business empires, giving them effective financial self-sufficiency. In contrast their opponents face tremendous difficulties in raising the necessary funding to pay for office space, staff, communication facilities and all the other requirements for effective electoral competition. This incidentally helps to explain why individual opposition politicians with substantial sources of personal wealth so often play a dominant role in the creation and direction of new political parties, whether in East Asia, Latin America or even parts of Tropical Africa. The Democratic Progressive Party in Taiwan may have succeeded in bucking this trend. Before being legalized in 1986, it had a long record of opposition to the ruling KMT and popular support. Partly as a result of its identification with the indigenous Taiwanese (and opposed to Chinese mainlander) community, it has been able to collect funds from local business. Even so it was reported in 1997 that the DPP was in serious financial straits. Its cheques were bouncing and there was no cash to pay staff salaries.

Third, the possibilities for effective organizational development are likely to be affected by the relationship between the party and its leadership. In discussing party origins,

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Panebianco stresses the part played by 'charisma' in the party's formation, the extent to which it was created primarily as a vehicle for an individual charismatic leader. There will always be some element of charisma and it may indeed play a positive role in the early stages in helping to secure a cohesive 'dominant coalition', but almost by definition, charisma is antithetical to organization and all institutionalization involves the 'routinization' of charisma. The more parties are based purely on charisma, the more ephemeral they will prove: 'they are parties which pass like a meteor over the political firmament, which spring up and die out without ever institutionalising' 34.

This observation certainly has particular relevance for the formation of parties during the process of transition in the new democracies. A frequent criticism of these parties is that they appear to be personal mobilization instruments for ambitious politicians. In Ihonvbere's view, African political parties, in particular, suffer from a 'pathological fixation on the leaders' 35. Similarly, Amundsen 36 argues that in Senegal parties '..are more like entourages around the party leader than real party organizations with a fixed program'. Discussions of democratic transition in South Korea frequently note the extent to which party competition and the constant formation and reformation of parties has been a reflection of the ambitions of the 'three Kims' 37.

Indeed where parties cannot build on a pre-existing organisational base and established identity, then it is more than likely that new parties will often consist of ephemeral vehicles for politically ambitious individuals with charisma and/or access to the necessary resources, or at least of largely opportunistic coalitions of such. Commitment to democracy and opposition to the outgoing authoritarian regime will provide insufficient 'glue' to hold them together much beyond the first set of elections, whether they win or lose. Developments in the mass media, as in the west, may reinforce this tendency. As Semetko has noted, 'in countries with nonexistent or developing party systems, news values or journalistic preferences for personalities and conflicts may actually serve to hinder the institutional development of parties and public

34 Panebianco (fn 14) 53.


36 Inge Amundsen, In Search of a Counter-force : State, Power and Civil Society in the Struggle for Democracy in Africa, (University of Tromso, dr.polit. dissertation, 1997), 293

attachment to them’. In a number of Latin American countries, perhaps most of all Brazil, the combination of a Presidential system with sophisticated and extensive media of mass communication is widely held to have contributed to the phenomenon of parties that are little more than temporary vehicles for the presidential ambitions of their leaders: the leaders use the media to appeal directly to the people. In these circumstances, personalistic leadership could contribute at the initial stages to party cohesion and survival but in the longer run, and in the absence of effective routinization, it could seriously inhibit organizational development.

Leadership links to a further issue that needs to be addressed here - factionalism. A tacit understanding in much of the literature is that factionalism, which tends to be endemic in Third World parties, is inimical to organizational cohesion, and therefore to institutionalization. The term 'faction' has been understood in a variety of ways but a widely accepted and broad definition is that of Beller and Belloni: 'any relatively organized group that exists within the context of some other group and which (as a political faction) competes with rivals for power advantages within the larger group of which it is a part'. Faction within parties can reflect any number and combination of different motives - for instance ideological or issue differences, social or cultural cleavages or personal leadership struggles. It is often represented as the antithesis of cohesion, as in Janda's measure of party organisational coherence. Tursan's account of the 'pernicious' role of faction within Turkish political parties certainly demonstrates how undermining it can be of party institutionalization. However, firstly, it is recognised that 'factions can play a constructive role in the creation of a party system in cases of political transition', in circumstances where most parties are still in the process of formation and faction may have more substance than party. Second, even in more evolved party systems, faction does not necessarily undermine party cohesion, and it could be argued that at times the existence of internal factions increases a party's adaptability.

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41 Janda (fn 15)


This has for instance been argued in the case of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party: 'It is now widely believed that factionalism had positive effects in sustaining the LDP's predominant rule, as the change in party leadership (and therefore the prime minister) from one factional leader to another transformed the party's public image and usually enhanced the popularity of the LDP government'. Another example of the compatibility of factionalism and institutionalization is Italy's Christian Democratic Party. What may partly make the difference in these cases is the extent to which faction itself is institutionalized, in the sense of being governed by mutually recognised procedures and constraints.

Finally we need to ask about the implications of clientelism for the party’s organizational development. Like faction, and often associated with it, clientelism is widespread in Third World societies and political parties. Neither economic growth in Latin America nor constraints on public expenditure associated with structural adjustment in Africa appear significantly to have diminished its hold. In the past some political scientists stressed the positive role of patronage-based party politics in facilitating the growth of political parties in the face of overweening state bureaucracies but in the more recent literature the existence of clientelistic relationships within parties and between parties and their supporters is widely regarded as inimical to effective party organization. It undermines rules and regularised procedures, reducing the party constitution if there be one to a meaningless sham. It constrains the possibilities for concerted party leadership or programme-making.

However, we need to recognize that clientelism within parties can take rather different forms. Of particular relevance to the present discussion, there is a broad intermediate zone extending between the kind of old-style, more personalistic clientelism characterised by a chain of transactional relationships, with notables themselves as the source of largesse and object of loyalty at the local, or periphery, level, and the situation where the party organization, through its access to local or national government, is able to distribute resources to broader categories of people, who are coincidentally potential supporters. The latter case comes very close to what most parties do, or seek to do, in developed democracies. To the extent that the party collectively has control of this activity and distributes benefits to classes of people closely linked to its ideological profile and electoral strategy, clientelism clearly poses less of a threat to party organization.

44 Masaru Kohno, Japan's Postwar Party Politics, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979, 91

45 The original formulation of this argument is Fred Riggs, 'Bureaucrats and Political Development: A Paradoxical View' in J LaPalombara (ed) Bureaucracy and Political Development (Princeton University Press: 1963)
The second cell in our scheme for party institutionalization (autonomy: structural/external) refers to the party’s dependency on external actors. In discussing the origins of parties, Panebianco considers the implications of external sponsorship. He suggests that the presence of a sponsoring institution will tend to result in weak institutionalisation, since the leadership’s source of legitimacy and the object of party organizational loyalties will be outside the party, vested in this external institution. As already noted, the contrasting cases of the BJP in India and the PJ in Argentina may provide an illustration of this point. On the one hand the RSS predated the BJP (it was actually founded in the 1920s) and was largely responsible for the formation in 1951 of the Jan Sangh, which was reincarnated in 1980 as the BJP. The RSS was moreover from the start highly institutionalised in its own right. On the other hand Peron himself from 1943 ‘regrouped the weak and divided Argentine unions into the regenerated CGT’ (General Confederation of Labour), which thenceforth owed its particular allegiance to him or to his memory, that is to ‘Peronism’, a powerful but famously vague ideology. However an exception to this pattern of the weakening effect of institutional sponsorship, Panebianco concedes, may be the case where the external sponsoring institution is not actually based in the same country; the example he gives is of the relationship between Comintern and various national communist parties.

Although both Panebianco and Huntington see autonomy as a necessary criterion of institutionalization, the distinction between institutional dependence and linkage is not always clear. In the case of parties emerging in opposition to an established ruling party, with all its resource and other advantages, external sponsorship even from within their own society, may be essential. The absence or weakness of such sponsoring institutions, most obviously trade unions, or as in South Korea the positive prohibition on trade union involvement in party politics, may be part of the difficulty for new parties. Ihonbvere criticises parties in a number of African countries which have turned to the international donor community for support instead of cultivating links with national civic groups as a means of resource mobilization. In this way, he argues, new parties have become dependent on external supporters like aid agencies. However, and as acknowledged by Panebianco, some type of

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international support may actually contribute to internal party development. There exist a number of transnational party organizations, set up along ideological lines, that function as support organizations for new parties in multiparty systems. While this may give international actors an influence in the national development of a party system, this type of influence can nevertheless assist individual party institutionalization (and to an extent thereby party system institutionalization). Unfortunately to date in spite of the number of parties formed in new democracies, particularly in Africa and Asia, few of them are yet connected to these transnational party organizations. Parties in Latin American and Caribbean countries are fairly well represented in international party federations but for Africa there are only six in the Socialist International, two in the Liberal International, five in the Christian Democratic International and a solitary one in the International Democrat Union, the federation of conservative parties. (Reasons for this absence are likely to include the newness of many of the parties, the extent to which they are regarded simply as vehicles for individual leaders and the corresponding difficulty of fitting such parties into traditional classifications of party families.)

The attitudinal/internal dimension of party institutionalization we have labelled *value infusion*. It focuses upon the strength of the affective attachment to the party of members and supporters. Two issues, which are not entirely separable, and have both already been touched upon, seem of especial relevance here: the nature of the party’s relationship with some kind of popular base and the impact of clientelism.

Value infusion is likely to be strongest where the political party is identified with a broader social movement. The classic instance has been the European mass party, with its social base typically in the urban working-class or alternatively a religious denomination, as described both by Duverger and by Kirchheimer. The strength of the ‘class-mass’ party was its ability to appeal to an expanding socio-economic group, incorporated into the party through an extensive network of party organizations. In addition to the party itself, it relied on a number of affiliated organizations, such as trade unions and cooperatives. The party became the linchpin in a ‘movement’ by itself stimulating the development of numerous other types of organizations, everything from children’s associations to funeral societies. This helped to incorporate the electorate into the movement and to infuse party supporters with identification with the movement as a whole.

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As already noted in most Third World countries the likelihood of this form of class-mass party is remote. In some regions this simply reflects the level of development: as Bienen and Herbst observe, ‘class still is not a salient cleavage in most African countries’.

Although there has been significant industrial growth in a number of Latin American and Far Eastern countries, the circumstances of late or dependent development have tended to constrain opportunities for the political mobilization of labour on its own behalf. Specifically in South Korea, given its proximity to the communist North, attempts by the substantial industrial workforce to organize politically have been met with severe repression. The collapse of much of the communist world and growing global ascendancy of a neo-liberal outlook have for the moment further constrained the possibilities of political mobilisation on a coherent left-wing platform.

While the scope for class-based parties on the classical model may be limited - Chile is generally cited as an exception - organized labour, as in the case of Argentina’s PJ, may help to underpin more populist or nationalist movements with which a political party is identified. A still more powerful source of value infusion can be the identification of members of a particular religious or ethnic community with their ‘own’ party. The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria, which was officially recognized in September 1989 and proceeded to dominate competitive party elections until military intervention in January 1992 was both a party and a political movement. It was the most organized and structured of the Islamic parties, but its precise social and political programme, beyond fervent identification with Islam and its Islamic vision of a future just society, was left vague enough to appeal to a wide range of groups (though by no means to all Muslims). In particular it commanded tremendous loyalty amongst the disaffected youth and poorest sections of Algerian society.

While such identification with a religious or ethnically-based movement can reinforce value-infusion, it may be associated with diminished autonomy, as was suggested in the case of India’s BJP (and of course, as we discuss below, it may well prove problematic for institutionalization of a competitive party system).


We need also to consider the implications of clientelism for value-infusion. As already noted clientelistic relationships are endemic in Third World parties. Generally one would expect clientelism to encourage a highly instrumentalist orientation towards parties, rather than more longlasting party loyalty or identification: party support would be conditional on the expectation of tangible benefits to the individual or community. The cases of the PJ and the Indian Congress Party amongst others, however, suggest that clientelism is not intrinsically incompatible with party loyalty: where party identification is independently established through the party’s association with a social or political movement and/or charismatic leader, clientelistic practices may actually help to extend and reinforce this sentiment.

Party reification (the attitudinal/external dimension), refers to the extent to which a political party becomes installed in the popular ‘imaginary’ and as a factor shaping the behaviour of political actors. The ability of a party to establish itself in this way will partly depend on the particular historical place and symbolic values it can successfully claim to represent. It will also depend on the party’s organizational strength and especially its access to effective means of communication. But party reification is finally and importantly a function of longevity, the party’s ability to survive over time. We have already discussed the severe organizational constraints facing the great majority of parties in the circumstances of democratic transition. Nor have many enjoyed a long, let alone an uninterrupted existence, although there are major exceptions and moreover the ability of individual parties to retain some kind of identity and place in public consciousness despite one, or successive, phases of political repression should not be underestimated: the PJ in Argentina would itself be a good example.

As emphasised the discussion in this section has been provisional only, an attempt to begin to follow through the implications of a more rigorous understanding of the concept of party institutionalization. Even so, it suggests two broad conclusions: first that we should guard against bringing into this analysis assumptions about how political parties work that are based on a particular, and increasingly outdated, model of European party development. Second, and nonetheless, that the circumstances of transition in perhaps the majority of the new Third World democracies are less than conducive to party institutionalization on any of its dimensions.
PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION

So far the discussion has concentrated on the institutionalization of individual parties. But we come now to our second main criticism of the party institutionalization literature, its tendency to elide the issue of party institutionalization with that of party system institutionalization, the implication being that the institutionalization of single parties must contribute to the overall institutionalization of the party system and thence to democratization. In this section we try to unpick some of the conceptual confusion that has resulted from this elision, to identify the main dimensions or criteria of party system institutionalization and begin to explore the relationship and possible tensions between the institutionalization of individual parties and the party system.

Although we have so far referred without qualification to the ‘party system’, at this point a further complication must be faced. We are not just interested, for the purposes of the current discussion, in the relationship between the individual party and every kind of party system. After all the notion of a party system denotes any system comprised of parties. In practice, though this may seem illogical, it has been used to describe *de iure* single party systems; more legitimately it includes systems in which a single party is overwhelmingly dominant. But we are interested here in the implications of party institutionalization, and of party system institutionalization for democratic consolidation. For a party system to be conducive to democratic consolidation it must have a certain level of competition. Obviously, for instance, the Mexican party system is institutionalized, but until recently no party other than the PRI has had any realistic chance of winning major offices. *How* competitive a party system must be can not be specified exactly, but clearly our focus needs to be on party systems that are competitive to some degree. The question we are posing concerns the relationship between institutionalization of individual parties and of competitive party systems.

So what do we mean by (competitive) party system institutionalization? Huntington uses the same criteria for party systems as for individual parties and indeed for political institutions as a whole. He does however acknowledge that organizational complexity may assist the party's functional versatility (adaptability) but for that very reason contribute less to the flexibility of whole system. Mainwaring and Scully, who however appear to ignore

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51 Huntington (fn 13)

52 Mainwaring and Scully (fn 12)
the possibility for conflict between party and party system institutionalization, suggest
criteria for ‘democratic’ party systems. In such systems, they maintain, there is stability in the
rules and nature of interparty competition, major political actors accord legitimacy to the
electoral process and to parties, political parties have ‘somewhat stable roots in society’ and
party organizations matter.

While we cannot devote the same extended consideration to this question as we have
to elaborating upon the dimensions of institutionalization for individual parties, we suggest it
may again be helpful to think both in terms of internal and external-regarding aspects, and of
structural and attitudinal elements, of party system institutionalization. This would be
represented diagramatically as follows.

### DIMENSIONS OF PARTY SYSTEM INSTITUTIONALIZATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERNAL</th>
<th>EXTERNAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STRUCTURAL</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Continuity and Stability</td>
<td>Party-state relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATTITUDINAL</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mutual acceptance</td>
<td>Appreciation by Electorate</td>
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### ADAPTABILITY

The concept of a party system implies several relationships. First, a party system refers to the
relationship between parties themselves. In a party system that is institutionalized one can
expect continuity and stability among party alternatives (internal/structural). Continuity in a
party system means the extent to which a given set of parties are competing over several
elections. In a highly institutionalized party system one can expect that the alternatives voters
are facing are more or less the same across several elections. Stability, on the other hand,
implies that the electoral support for the individual parties are not wildly fluctuating from one
election to the other. Lack of continuity in party alternatives across time touches at the very base of the problem of political accountability. Accountability in electoral terms depends on the ability of the electorate "..to make meaningful electoral choices predictive of policy performance, but also on the ability of voters to inflict retrospective punishment for party failure." Second, a party system that is institutionalized is composed of parties who accept each other as legitimate competitors (internal/attitudinal). This is the essence of accepting the notion of political opposition.

For a party system to be institutionalized, however, it is necessary not only to stabilize the relationship between its individual party components, but also to relate the party system to the polity as such (external/structural). While parties in democracies are 'private' associations, their activities are mainly of consequence for the political system as such, not primarily (or only) for their own members or supporters. This has led all political systems to regulate parties and their activities in various ways. Among such regulations are hurdles the parties must pass to be registered, regulation of party finance and electoral campaigns. The more parties and their activities are supported by public measures, such as public subsidies, access to media and legal protection for their existence, for instance in the constitution or in ordinary laws, the more the party system can be said to be institutionalized. Moreover, a characteristic of parties is their activity of nominating candidates for public offices. But in democracies parties are not given a monopoly of this function. However, it is a sign of party system strength that parties are able to control the recruitment process. Thus, a more institutionalized party system is one in which the parties are able to control the access to political offices, an indicator of what Katz calls party government.

Finally, for a party system to be institutionalized the electorate must express some trust in parties as institutions and the electoral process must be perceived as the only legitimate way to select political leaders and to promote policy goals (attitudinal/external). Trust in

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53 The combination of the two aspects can be seen as parallel to Rokkan and Lipset’s notion of ‘freezing of the party system’. See Stein Rokkan and Seymour Martin Lipset: ‘Introduction’, in S. Rokkan and S.M. Lipset (eds.): Party Systems and Voter Alignments (New York, Free Press 1967) 1-64,


parties as institutions is a problem in many of the new democracies although we should note that declining trust is also part of the phenomenon of party decline in established democracies.

To return to our earlier question, then, would the institutionalization of individual parties necessarily contribute to these features of an institutionalized (competitive) party system? How interdependent are they? Again our answer at this point can only be provisional. Party system institutionalization is an outcome of a range of developments, only some of which have to do directly with the constituent parties themselves. In particular it is affected by the state’s role in regulating parties and providing them with forms of support and by the nature of the electoral system. Thus for instance, when states protect the existence of parties in the constitution or in ordinary laws, the party system has a better chance to become institutionalized. Similarly, when the state offers support for parties in the form of public subsidies and guaranteed access to the media, they are more likely to endure and to be able to communicate their policies and program to the electorate.

Nonetheless it appears that in many respects these requirements for party system institutionalization, if they do not directly converge with those for party institutionalization, are mutually supportive or at least compatible with them. Thus continuity in party alternatives and stable patterns of party support will benefit from, and create an environment conducive to, the institutionalization of the constituent individual parties. Individual parties will benefit from an ethos of mutual acceptance amongst parties collectively (although party institutionalization will not necessarily contribute to it - see below). Support, through various public measures, for the party system, one would again expect to assist individual party institutionalization, unless either it came with conditions that significantly reduced the parties’ autonomy or it was distributed unevenly as between parties. Certainly the case of Zimbabwe would not be an example to follow! There when state subsidies rules were introduced, a minimum of 15 seats was required for a party to qualify for such support. However, the only opposition party had just two seats, hence all public subsidies were directly


allocated to the ruling party 59. Public trust in political parties as a whole, finally, could only be to the benefit of individual parties.

But we can also see ways or contexts in which the imperatives of individual party institutionalization and institutionalization of the party system as a whole could be at odds. We shall concentrate here on two issues with particular resonance for the new democracies. The first concerns the evenness of party institutionalization. When it is asserted that party institutionalization is important for democratic consolidation, there is an unstated assumption that such institutionalization will be relatively even across parties. But under conditions of democratic transition this is not necessarily, or even probably, the case. As we have seen, certain parties have enjoyed distinct institutional advantages, because of their close association with preceding authoritarian regimes or their access, following initial electoral victory, to the perquisites and opportunities of public office, advantages which are likely to stunt the possibilities for growth and institutionalization of other parties. Just as a further example, in a number of partially democratised African societies, the ability of the ruling party to control much of the print media clearly detracts from the possibility of a 'level playing field' for party competition. Even in Botswana, usually identified as one of the most democratic African states, the government newspapers are distributed cost-free by the government's airline and railways while no such service is available for the independent press 60.

The extreme unevenness of party institutionalization in many of the new democracies obviously detracts from the competitiveness of the party system. It is also likely though not bound to mean that significant social sectors are excluded not only from power but from any meaningful party representation. The party system as a whole will be lacking in responsiveness or adaptability, which will undermine popular trust in political parties and may affect the system’s durability. In this sense party institutionalization may be in tension both with party system institutionalization and with the development of the kind of competitive party system that would contribute to democratic consolidation.

A second possible area of conflict which while less widespread can be perhaps still more drastic when it arises, is when a party is strongly institutionalized on the value-infusion dimension but this is as a consequence of its identification with an exclusive ethnic or cultural


grouping. This may take the form of a number of different parties each representing a distinct social group, as in the case of ethnically-based parties in many African countries. It can be argued that when only one party monopolizes the electorate within each group, competition does not really exist. In this case, electoral entrenchment, which in other contexts is seeing as a positive aspect of institutionalization of the individual party, is detrimental to party competition and to the prospect of democratic governance. Such a danger has been acknowledged in the decision in some African countries not to register parties formed on an exclusive, particularistic basis. Thus Tanzania requires that parties are ‘national’ in character. In order to become registered parties must be able to demonstrate that they have at least 200 members in at least ten regions, two of which must be the islands. Also, parties built for the explicit purpose of promoting religious, tribal or territorial interests are not permitted.

Alternatively major, popular parties have appealed on the basis of a form of religious chauvinism. Examples we have seen have included India’s BJP and most seriously the FIS in Algeria. As Zoubir notes, ‘The FIS’ leaders contended that they expressed the general will of the Algerian people and promised to implement the Shari’a al Islamiya (religious law) once in power. Which implied a total disregard for the republican constitution and forshadowed the divinization of politics, hence precluding the expression of secular views and the existence of a genuine civil society. Thus in a context in which class identification cannot, or can no longer, constitute a basis for party institutionalization and especially for value-infusion, the very opportunity provided by other, more exclusive forms of cleavage, above all religion and ethnicity, could be at odds with the institutionalization of the party system, through restricting the possibilities for cross-party competition, and undermining the ethos of mutual acceptance amongst parties as well as the confidence of at least a section of the public in political parties. The relationship, to reiterate, between party institutionalization and party system institutionalization, needs to be analysed logically and through reference to empirical cases, rather than assuming unproblematic convergence.

CONCLUSION

61 Sandbrook (fn 4)

62 The Political Parties Act, No. 5 1992 § 9, § 10

63 Zoubir (fn 50), p120
The first and primary objective of this paper has been to call into question the rather facile association in much of the recent literature on democratization of democratic consolidation with party institutionalization. We have tried to show firstly that the concept of party institutionalization itself is not straightforward but contains different tendencies or dimensions which can at times be in tension with one another. Second we have offered a provisional assessment of the prospects for party institutionalization along these dimensions by considering the likely impact of specific resources or constraints. While we emphasise the need to avoid invidious comparison with a somewhat idealised or at least outdated model of party development in western Europe, in terms for instance of our assumptions about mass membership, factions or clientelism, we have nonetheless identified a number of formidable obstacles in the way of institutionalization for perhaps the great majority of parties. But finally we have called into question the tacit premise of much of this literature that party institutionalization is automatically conducive to (competitive) party system institutionalization and thence to democratic consolidation. While there is convergence in many respects, there remain potentially important areas of tension and the two processes need to be kept distinct both conceptually and for purposes of analysis.