Strategic Power Sharing: Commitment, Capability, and Authoritarian Survival

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Abstract

All dictators confront threats to their survival in office. One strategy is to share power with challengers. Using a formal model, I provide new insights into the conditions under which dictators share power and how this choice affects survival. Sharing power bolsters the coercive capability of challengers, which creates dual consequences. (1) Commitment effect: the challenger mobilizes more frequently, which enables the dictator to credibly commit to more future concessions. (2) Threat-enhancing effect: the challenger wins a conflict with higher probability, which makes them harder to buy off. Dictators face two distinct motives to marginalize the challenger. First, weak challengers do not fight despite mobilizing infrequently, which encourages opportunistic exclusion. Second, the dictator maximizes long-term expected consumption rather than survival per se, which can encourage greedy exclusion. The ruler strategically shares power only if doing so switches equilibrium bargaining from conflictual to peaceful without creating a high opportunity cost from lost rents.

Key words: Authoritarian politics, conflict, game theory, power sharing, social mobilization

Supplementary material for this article is available in the appendix in the online edition.

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All dictators confront threats to their survival in office. One strategy to mitigate threats is to *share power* with challengers. For example, a ruler can offer positions in the cabinet or legislature to co-opt members of mass societal opposition organizations or of different ethnic groups. Ostensibly, the goal of any power-sharing arrangement is to prevent violent overthrow, but is this strategy effective? Under what conditions do dictators share power with challengers, as opposed to marginalizing them?

Using a formal model, I provide new insights into strategic power sharing and consequences for authoritarian survival. Sharing power *bolsters the coercive capability of challengers*, which creates dual effects. First, the ruler can *commit* to provide more spoils for the challenger in the future. Any challenger is only periodically able to mobilize force against the ruler, that is, enjoy "moments in the sun." A power-sharing arrangement brings the challenger closer to the center of power. This facilitates more frequent moments in the sun and, consequently, more spoils. By making the status quo more palatable, this effect discourages the challenger from attempting to overthrow the ruler. Second, sharing power triggers a *threat-enhancing effect*. Greater coercive capability for the challenger bolsters their prospects for prevailing in a conflict. By making the challenger harder to buy off, this effect imperils the dictator's survival.

Given these dual consequences, sharing power ambiguously affects regime survival. A challenger with very low coercive capability is unlikely to win a conflict. Given this low threat, they do not fight the ruler. But if the challenger's coercive capability is really high, then they are able to mobilize so frequently that fighting is unnecessary. In this case, the ruler can commit to lucrative spoils over time, which eliminates the motive to fight. Combining these two considerations establishes that only an intermediate-capable challenger ever fights in equilibrium.

The dictator faces two distinct motives to marginalize the challenger. First, if they can survive without sharing power. This holds when the challenger's baseline coercive capability vis-à-vis the ruler (i.e., absent any voluntary power sharing) is low. In existing models, the challenger is motivated to revolt during their moments in the sun if such opportunities arise infrequently (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006). Their opportunity to gain concessions is fleeting because the ruler cannot commit to concessions in future periods when the challenger lacks a coercive threat. However, in my model, infrequent moments in the sun reflect low coercive capability—which means that the challenger is highly unlikely to prevail in a conflict. Consequently, weak challengers do not fight, and the dictator gets a free lunch via *opportunistic exclusion*.

Second, dictators will not share power if the opportunity cost from lost rents is too high. The dictator maximizes long-term expected consumption rather than survival per se. Gaining acquiescence from an intermediate-strong challenger might require the ruler to share a considerable amount of power, which diminishes their rents. By instead marginalizing the challenger, the ruler can push an inevitable conflict into the future and accrue more rents in the meantime. These considerations can motivate *greedy exclusion*.

Overall, *strategic power sharing* occurs under narrow circumstances: voluntarily sharing power switches equilibrium bargaining from conflictual to peaceful without creating a high opportunity cost from lost rents. I discuss empirical applications following the model analysis.

My findings help to reconcile discrepancies in existing theories. Many link power sharing to *durable authoritarian regimes* because lucrative concessions reduce incentives for challengers to fight for power via a coup (Svolik 2012; Meng 2020), ethnic rebellion (Cederman et al. 2013), or social revolution (Goodwin 2001). Yet others stress the *perils of sharing power*. Institutional concessions reduce a dictator's rents and provide resources for challenging the ruler (Paine 2021). Whereas marginalized societal groups lack opportunities to mobilize against the regime and must build a private military to challenge the government, bringing outsiders into the government enhances rivals' ability to overthrow the ruler in a coup (Roessler 2016). In my model, sharing power creates dual consequences by shifting the coercive capability of challengers. I explain why divergent implications in existing research are not mutually exclusive. Instead, many existing theories highlight special cases of the logic presented here. Appendix A.1 discusses related formal-theoretic contributions in depth.

1 Model Setup

A dictator D and a challenger C interact over an infinite horizon with time denoted by $t = 0, 1, \ldots$ They share a discount factor $\delta \in (0, 1)$. At the outset of the game, D makes a one-time power-sharing choice $p \in \left[p^{\min}, 1\right]$ that sticks for the rest of the game. The exogenous lower bound $p^{\min} \in (0, 1)$ expresses C's baseline coercive capability. After the model analysis, I motivate why challengers vary in their baseline capability or, conversely, why dictators vary in their ability to marginalize challengers. Appendix A.3 discusses why p is a one-time choice. Appendix A.7 parameterizes an upper bound $p^{\max} \leq 1$.

After D chooses p, the following interaction occurs in each period (if no prior conflict). With probability

$\mu(p) \in (0,1)$, Nature allows C to mobilize (creating a "moment in the sun"). With probability $1-\mu(p)$, C does not mobilize. In any period t that C does not mobilize, D consumes the entire per-period budget of 1, C consumes 0, and the game moves to a strategically identical period $t+1$. If C mobilizes in period t, then D offers $x_t \in [0,1]$, to which C responds by either accepting or fighting. By accepting, C consumes x_t, D consumes $1-x_t$, and the game moves to a strategically identical period $t+1$. Fighting ends the game. C wins with probability p, and D with $1-p$. The winner consumes $1-\phi$ in every period (including t) and the loser consumes 0. The costs of fighting are $\phi \in (0,\delta)$. The upper bound makes the interaction strategically interesting; otherwise, conflict cannot occur in equilibrium.

Sharing more power exerts dual consequences. First, higher p raises C's probability of winning a fight. Second, higher p increases the fraction of periods in which C mobilizes. I assume an exponential functional form, $\mu(p) = p^{\gamma}$. Hence, higher p implies greater ability to mobilize, $\mu'(p) > 0$; a perfectly weak C never mobilizes, $\mu(0) = 0$; and a perfectly strong C always mobilizes, $\mu(1) = 1$. Finally, γ parameterizes the rate at which sharing power affects the frequency of mobilization, $\mu(p)$, relative to C's probability of winning, p; and $\gamma > 1$ ensures a strictly convex relationship. To isolate how *shifting the challenger's coercive capability* influences equilibrium decisions, I assume away other possible effects of sharing power, such as guaranteeing a basement level of spoils for the challenger in each period. Appendix A.2 summarizes notation.

These dual consequences of sharing power follow naturally from existing research. For example, Roessler (2016, 37) contrasts the logistics of coups and rebellions. Factions incorporated into the central government (higher p) can co-opt actors within the state military to stage a coup. This reduces the costs of mobilizing against the regime (facilitating more frequent threats) and raises their probability of winning. By contrast, factions excluded from power must raise a private army defeat the state army in battle. Similarly, delegating power to an institutionalized party boosts the challenger's bargaining power (Magaloni 2008).

The parameter γ determines the relative bite of each effect of p by determining the extent to which sharing power increases D's ability to commit to transfers. If γ is high, then raising p does not increase the frequency of mobilization, $\mu(p)$, by much (when p is low and we consider small increases in p; see Appendix Figure A.1). In weakly institutionalized countries, γ is high because promises on paper by rulers are inherently incredible. Instead, rulers must provide the challenger with substantial de facto means to defend their prerogatives. High γ is necessary for conflict to occur along the equilibrium path (Lemma A.1).

2 NON-MONOTONIC EFFECT OF COERCIVE CAPABILITY ON CONFLICT

To solve the game, I first fix the challenger's coercive capability p and examine the resultant bargaining interaction. Markovian strategies yield two possible paths of play. Along a *peaceful path*, in every period that C mobilizes, D makes the same offer x^*, which C accepts. Along a *conflictual path*, C fights during their first moment in the sun. The relationship between p and whether equilibrium bargaining breaks down is inverted U-shaped. A weak challenger, formalized as $p < \underline{p}$, never fights because of their low probability of winning a conflict. A strong challenger ($p > \overline{p}$) also forgoes fighting because frequent mobilization enables the dictator to commit to lucrative concessions along a peaceful equilibrium path.

Does C accept when mobilized? Accepting yields consumption of x^* in the current period and in a fraction $\mu(p)$ of future periods. Successful fighting yields consumption of $1-\phi$ in all periods. Thus we need:

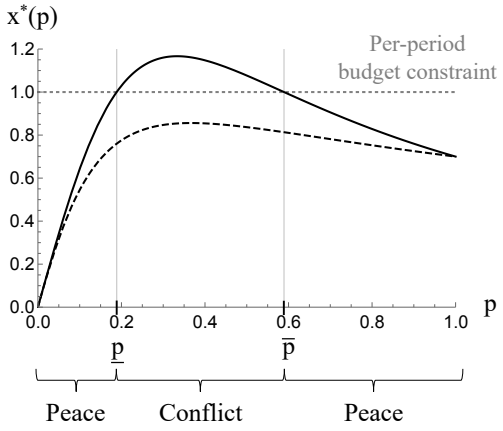
$$x^* + \frac{\delta}{1-\delta} \cdot \mu(p) \cdot x^* \geq p \cdot \frac{1-\phi}{1-\delta} \implies x^*(p) \geq \frac{p \cdot (1-\phi)}{1-\delta \cdot \big(1-\mu(p)\big)}. \tag{1}$$

If feasible, D satisfies Equation 1 with equality to make C indifferent, yielding for D all surplus saved from no conflict. Overall, power sharing exerts an inverted U-shaped effect on the optimal offer, $x^*(p)$.

$$\frac{dx^*}{dp} = \frac{1-\phi}{1-\delta \cdot \big(1-\mu(p)\big)} \cdot \Bigg[\underbrace{1}_{\text{Threat-enhancing effect (+)}} \quad \underbrace{-\frac{\delta \cdot p}{1-\delta \cdot \big(1-\mu(p)\big)} \cdot \mu'(p)}_{\text{Commitment effect (–)}} \Bigg]. \tag{2}$$

Greater coercive capability yields two consequences. First, C's higher probability of winning, p, during a moment in the sun creates a *threat-enhancing effect*. Second, C enjoys more frequent moments in the sun, $\mu(p)$. This enables D to *commit* to greater total concessions, which lowers C's bargaining demand (see Appendix A.4). Given the functional form assumptions, the discrepancy between C's probability of winning and the frequency of mobilization is greatest at intermediate values of p. As depicted in Figure 1, equilibrium

Figure 1: Coercive Capability and Equilibrium Offer



Notes: This figure sets $\phi = 0.3$ and $\delta = 0.9$. For the dashed curve, $\gamma = 1.5 < \hat{\gamma}$ (see Lemma A.1), and hence fighting does not occur for any value of p, whereas the black curve satisfies $\gamma = 2 > \hat{\gamma}$.

bargaining breaks down for $p \in \left(\underline{p}, \overline{p}\right)$. By contrast, conflict does not occur if p is either low (if perfectly weak, then C's probability of winning equals 0) or high (if perfectly strong, then D can commit to pay C in every period). Appendix Proposition A.1 presents equilibrium bargaining strategies for fixed p. As Figure 1 suggests and as Appendix A.5 discusses in detail, the optimal offer $x^*(p)$ does not exceed the per-period budget constraint of 1 even for intermediate values of p unless convexity is steep enough (i.e., high γ).

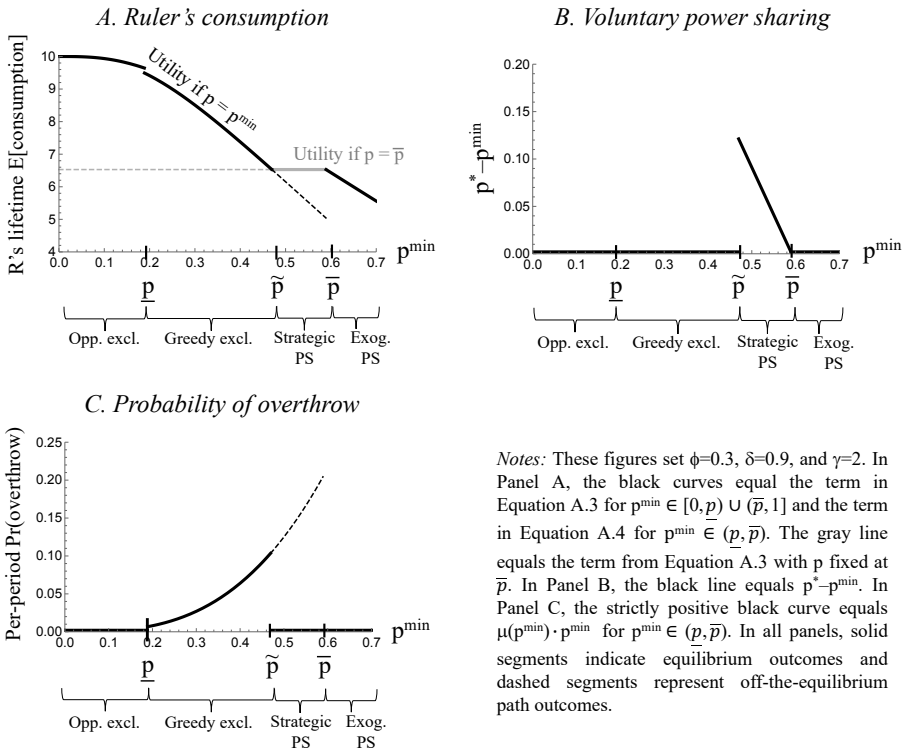
3 Equilibrium Power Sharing

The dictator *strategically shares power*, that is, sets p above the lower bound $p^{\min}$, under narrow circumstances: voluntarily sharing power switches equilibrium bargaining from conflictual to peaceful without creating a high opportunity cost from lost rents. Otherwise, D sets $p = p^{\min}$ for one of three reasons: (1) *Exogenous power sharing*: the challenger's baseline capacity enables them to mobilize frequently. (2) *Opportunistic exclusion*: C is too weak to punish D. (3) *Greedy exclusion*: D chooses to maximize rents despite eventually triggering conflict. Appendix A.6 provides supporting technical information.

Figure 2 depicts how the main outcomes vary in $p^{\min}$. Panel A plots in black D's lifetime expected consumption from setting $p = p^{\min}$ (solid segments indicate when this is D's optimal choice, and dashed segments when not). Two features stand out. First, discrete jumps in the black curves occur at $p^{\min} \in \left\{\underline{p}, \overline{p}\right\}$. These are the points at which small changes in C's coercive capability determine whether bargaining breaks down. For fixed p, D's lifetime expected consumption is higher if the equilibrium path is peaceful rather than conflictual. This result is standard; D makes the offers and conflict is costly. The jumps demark the intermediate conflict range (see Figure 1). Second, *within* any of the three continuous ranges for the black curves, D's lifetime expected consumption strictly decreases in p. D can benefit from sharing more power only if raising p shifts equilibrium bargaining from conflictual to peaceful. Lemma A.3 formalizes this intuition.

Panel A also plots (in gray) D's lifetime expected utility at $p = \overline{p}$, which is constant in $p^{\min}$. This is the relevant benchmark because $\overline{p}$ indicates the lowest amount of power sharing that moves D out of the intermediate conflict region. Thus, if D does not prefer $p = \overline{p}$ over $p = p^{\min}$, then she prefers $p = p^{\min}$ to any $p > p^{\min}$. Panel B plots the magnitude of voluntary power sharing, $p^* - p^{\min}$. Panel C plots in solid black the per-period probability with which C overthrows D along the equilibrium path. If D's optimal power-sharing choice p^* induces peaceful equilibrium bargaining, then this probability equals 0. If p^* induces conflict, then this is the probability that C has a moment in the sun and wins a conflict, $\mu(p^*) \cdot p^*$. The

Figure 2: Equilibrium Outcomes



Notes: These figures set ϕ=0.3, δ=0.9, and γ=2. In Panel A, the black curves equal the term in Equation A.3 for $p^{min} \in [0, \underline{p}) \cup (\overline{p}, 1]$ and the term in Equation A.4 for $p^{min} \in (\underline{p}, \overline{p})$. The gray line equals the term from Equation A.3 with p fixed at $\overline{p}$. In Panel B, the black line equals $p^* - p^{min}$. In Panel C, the strictly positive black curve equals $\mu(p^{min}) \cdot p^{min}$ for $p^{min} \in (\underline{p}, \overline{p})$. In all panels, solid segments indicate equilibrium outcomes and dashed segments represent off-the-equilibrium path outcomes.

dashed curve expresses $\mu(p^{\min}) \cdot p^{\min}$ for values of $p^{\min}$ such that (counterfactually) setting $p = p^{\min}$ would yield a conflictual path, but, instead, D optimally shares $p^* = \overline{p}$ to avoid conflict.

The dictator refuses to voluntarily set p above $p^{\min}$ in three distinct ranges of parameter values. First, if $p^{\min} > \overline{p}$, we are in the *exogenous power sharing* range. The challenger frequently enjoys moments in the sun regardless of the power-sharing choice, which enables (in fact, forces) the ruler to commit to lucrative future spoils. As in Acemoglu and Robinson (2006), this facilitates peaceful equilibrium bargaining. Sharing more power than $p^{\min}$ would simply diminish D's rents.

Second, some rulers can avoid conflict even with low commitment to future concessions, contrary to existing intuitions. If the lower bound is quite low and D sets $p = p^{\min}$, then equilibrium bargaining is peaceful. Despite infrequent mobilization, C forgoes fighting because of the low probability of prevailing in a conflict. This *opportunistic exclusion* range, $p^{\min} < \underline{p}$, highlights the importance of studying the dual consequences of power sharing: the same power endowment that influences the frequency of moments in the sun also affects the probability of conflict success.

Third, in the intermediate range, $p^{\min} \in \left(\underline{p}, \overline{p}\right)$, D cannot drive down C's coercive capability enough to

achieve opportunistic exclusion. This creates a tradeoff between survival and rents. Minimizing power sharing by setting $p = p^{\min}$ maximizes the expected number of periods until C can mobilize. D consumes the entire budget of 1 in every period before C's first moment in the sun, when a conflict occurs. By contrast, sharing power to yield $p = \overline{p}$ induces perpetual peace. D benefits from avoiding the surplus destroyed by fighting, although she must make concessions more frequently.

Does D willingly share enough power to prevent conflict? In my model, the dictator's objective to maximize lifetime expected consumption does not necessarily align with the standard presumption that dictators prioritize political survival above all other goals. For $p^{\min}$ close to $\underline{p}$, the opportunity cost from lost rents is too high to induce D to jump to $p = \overline{p}$. In the *greedy exclusion* range, $p^{\min} \in \left(\underline{p}, \tilde{p}\right)$, D sets $p^* = p^{\min}$ despite knowing that she could have shared enough power to guarantee survival. Thus, in this range, conflict occurs in equilibrium (see Panel C of Figure 2). Of course, D cannot consume rents if she loses power. But if D can set p to a low level, then she does not expect to face a conflict until far in the future. Consequently, she prioritizes the rents accrued in the meantime despite eventually suffering the costs of conflict.

By contrast, for $p^{\min}$ closer to $\overline{p}$, sharing enough power to prevent conflict entails a lesser opportunity cost. *D strategically shares power*, i.e., sets $p > p^{\min}$, only for $p^{\min} \in \left(\tilde{p}, \overline{p}\right)$. Comparison to the greedy exclusion range highlights that small differences in $p^{\min}$ can yield a divergence in equilibrium outcomes, as shown by the discontinuities at $\tilde{p}$ in Panels B and C of Figure 2. In the strategic power sharing range, the lost rents from setting $p = \overline{p}$ are small relative to the benefits from preventing conflict, given the exogenous lower bound that prevents D from dropping p further. The dashed curve in Panel C of Figure 2 shows that the per-period probability of overthrow would be quite high if, counterfactually, D refused to share power in this range. Proposition 1 summarizes how $p^{\min}$ influences power sharing and conflict.

Proposition 1 (Optimal power sharing and equilibrium conflict)**.**

Part a. *If $\gamma > \hat{\gamma}$, for $\hat{\gamma}$ defined in Lemma A.1, then in equilibrium:*

- ***Opportunistic exclusion.*** *If $p^{min} \leq \underline{p}$, then $p^* = p^{min}$ and conflict does not occur.*
- ***Greedy exclusion.*** *If $p^{min} \in \left(\underline{p}, \tilde{p}\right)$, then $p^* = p^{min}$ and the per-period probability of overthrow equals $\mu(p^{min}) \cdot p^{min}$. The proof defines a unique $\tilde{p} < \overline{p}$ that makes D indifferent between $p = p^{min}$ and $p = \overline{p}$.*
- ***Strategic power sharing.*** *If $p^{min} \in \left(\tilde{p}, \overline{p}\right)$, then $p^* = \overline{p}$ and conflict does not occur.*
- ***Exogenous power sharing.*** *If $p^{min} \geq \overline{p}$, then $p^* = p^{min}$ and conflict does not occur.*

Part b. *If $\gamma < \hat{\gamma}$, then $p^* = p^{min}$ and conflict does not occur.*

4 Empirical Implications

Equilibrium actions and outcomes vary in $p^{\min}$, the challenger's baseline coercive capability absent voluntary power sharing. Table 1 summarizes empirical examples of substantively interesting parameter ranges.

Table 1: Empirical Examples of Parameter Ranges

Parameter range	Examples
Opportunistic exclusion	African founding fathers (Guinea), revolutionary regimes (China)
Greedy exclusion	Narrow ethnocracies (Syria)
Strategic power sharing	Multiple large ethnic groups (Benin)
Exogenous power sharing	Split domination regimes, countries dependent on Western aid

Strong dictators who can survive long periods while minimizing opportunities for the opposition to access power engage in *opportunistic exclusion*. For example, African countries such as Guinea gained independence amid a mass decolonization movement headed by a "founding father" who became president after independence. These broad movements encompassed would-be opposition groups, but usually devolved little institutionalized power because the ruling party was a hollow organizational shell. Thus, the opposition lacked an independent power base from which they could mobilize against a popular ruler (Meng 2020, 140-45). A different type of example is communist regimes that gained power via social revolution. In cases like China, the party monopolized power by overhauling the military to make it a reliable tool of repression that destroyed alternative centers of power (Levitsky and Way 2013).

Most dictators cannot achieve this free lunch. If they do not voluntarily share power and boost their commitment to the challenger, then conflict occurs because the challenger's baseline capability, $p^{\min}$, is moderately high. This generates a tradeoff. Bumping power sharing up to $\overline{p}$ prevents conflict. However, allowing more frequent mobilization diminishes the dictator's rents, which derive from kleptocratic economic controls such as government-owned monopolies, property confiscation, and restricting access to essential services. Syria and Benin illustrate alternative responses to this tradeoff.

Syria's narrow ethnocratic regime exemplifies *greedy exclusion*. The al-Asad family has stacked the military with co-ethnic Alawites to create a reliable tool of repression—as in revolutionary regimes. However, the regime's control over society is inherently more tenuous than in cases like China. Alawites are a small minority group (12% of the country's population), which simultaneously binds them to the al-Asad regime but also limits the total manpower available to dominate society (Quinlivan 1999). The regime's control over the military makes $p^{\min}$ low enough to trigger the gamble for rents, but not so low that the regime is

immune to revolts, such as the long-running civil war that began in 2011. In reality, the al-Asad regime also worries that broadening access to power would create coup risk, but this consideration makes the present theoretical mechanism more striking: I isolate a greed effect whereby the dictator chooses to exclude and faces conflict even though *sharing power would eliminate any risk of violent confrontation*.

By contrast, Benin's post-colonial regimes exemplify *strategic power sharing*. Roessler (2016, ch. 10) argues that multiple ethnic groups in Benin have high inherent coercive capability because they are numerically large and reside close to the capital city. High risk of center-seeking civil wars (i.e., relatively high $p^{\min}$) compels dictators to share power with members of other ethnic groups.

Even higher values of $p^{\min}$ engender *exogenous power sharing*. For example, at independence, rulers in some countries inherited regimes with "split dominance" in which members of different ethnic groups dominated political (D) and military (C) positions. The challenger's inherited access to power at the center elevated $p^{\min}$ because they could stage a coup if the ruler attempted to reduce their influence in the military (Harkness 2018). Alternatively, in countries highly dependent on Western aid, donors can demand legalizing opposition participation in elections in return for aid, which elevates $p^{\min}$.

Appendix A.7 highlights yet another path to minimal power sharing by parameterizing an upper bound on power sharing, $p^{\max} \leq 1$. If $p^{\max} < \overline{p}$, then maximal power sharing does not prevent conflict, hence eliminating the strategic power sharing range. If, additionally, $p^{\min} > \underline{p}$, then no feasible choice of power sharing prevents conflict. This induces *strategic exclusion*. Applicable cases are ones in which a newly elected party defeats the incumbent dictator, or a dictator settles a civil war with military integration provisions. Popular pressure to implement transitional justice measures against members of the old regime, or resistance from the existing army to integrating rebel soldiers, constrains how much power a ruler can share with challengers. Perversely, greater ability to eliminate rivals (i.e., lower $p^{\min}$) would enhance regime survival.

5 Conclusion

Sharing power bolsters the coercive capability of challengers. This creates dual consequences, a commitment effect and a threat-enhancing effect. My model provides new strategic insights into two crucial questions about authoritarian survival. First, is sharing power effective at preventing violent overthrow? Only sometimes. Sharing power enables the ruler to commit to distributing more spoils, which mitigates

attempts at overthrow. However, if sharing power bolsters the challenger's coercive capability from a low to an intermediate value, then this choice would hasten overthrow by enhancing the threat posed by the challenger. Second, under what conditions do dictators share power? The ruler's survival in office may be secure even without sharing additional power—and hence they leave the challenger at their baseline capability. For inherently weak challengers, I call this *opportunistic exclusion*, and for inherently strong challengers, I call this *exogenous power sharing*. By contrast, when facing an intermediate-strong challenger, the ruler might engage in *strategic power sharing*. However, even in this scenario, power sharing is not guaranteed because of the opportunity cost of lost rents—even though *greedy exclusion* provokes avoidable conflict.

The power-sharing choice in my model is one-shot even though the interaction occurs over an infinite time horizon. A natural next step would be to combine insights from the present approach with models in which the government's main choice is a dynamic state variable (e.g., Gibilisco 2021 for repression and Luo and Przeworski 2020 for power consolidation by elected incumbents). By allowing strategies to evolve over time, this setup would enable studying intermediate steps that many dictators pursue to concentrate power.

My results also highlight the need for researchers to specify the conditions under which they expect the commitment effect to outweigh the threat-enhancing effect in magnitude, or vice versa. By contrast, existing theories often (implicitly) assume that one effect dominates the other, but without explaining why. A related implication for statistical tests is that we need to account for endogenous institutions when estimating effects on authoritarian survival (Pepinsky 2014; Meng 2020, 190-92). Depending on the distribution of $p^{\min}$ in a particular data set, equilibrium rates of power sharing and leadership removal can correlate either positively or negatively, as Figure 2 summarizes. This reflects my core contention that sharing power enhances the coercive capability of challengers—but this can either bolster or undermine prospects for survival.

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