

Regional Governance in Divided Societies: Evidence from the Republic of Congo and Kenya

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We argue that leaders employ one of two strategies to govern subnational regions. These governance strategies, in turn, condition how leaders appoint and manage the regional executives to whom they delegate authority. In the co-optation strategy, leaders advance local welfare by appointing locally embedded regional executives, who are drawn from the local population and enjoy relatively long tenures. In the suppression strategy, leaders ensure that regional executives suppress local threats to the regime by minimizing local embeddedness, which entails appointing nonnative executives and shuffling them frequently. The regional governance strategy that a leader employs, we argue, depends on the region's ex ante level of regime support. We test the theory with original data from the Republic of Congo and Kenya, encompassing 250 regional executives across three presidents. Although incumbent governments in Congo and Kenya confront different local threats, our findings highlight how similarly they manage the trade-offs of local embeddedness.

In many countries, leaders govern local areas through appointed regional executives. These regional executives serve as the chief agents of the central government in their jurisdictions, constituting the state's local "face."¹ Responsible both for implementing local development policy and for overseeing the security apparatus, they are among a government's most critical appointees. When necessary, regional executives engage in *suppression*, which we define broadly: from rigging elections in favor of the government to ordering security forces to employ violence against protesters. Regional executives are also critical to government efforts to *co-opt* local residents: by crafting local policies and engineering development projects, which help sustain support for the government. Precisely because of their utility, regional executives exist across regions and regime types: from electoral regimes in modern-day Ghana (Brierley 2018) and Russia (Reuter and Robinson 2012; Taylor 2011) to historic ones in Prussia (Ziblatt 2009) and from former autocracies in Zaire (Schatzberg 1988; Young and Turner 1985)

and the Ottoman Empire (Barkey 1994) to current regimes in China (Landry 2008) and Sudan (El-Battahani and Gadkarim 2017).

We refer to suppression and co-optation as *governance strategies*, and they require conflicting skills of the regional executives who implement them. In this article, we examine the role of *local embeddedness*, which we define as the extent to which a regional executive is integrated into the jurisdiction she governs. Local embeddedness can stem from a range of sources. It may be innate, a product of shared ethnic, religious, or other identity-based attachments. But local embeddedness can also be learned, as regional executives spend more time in their jurisdictions and become ensconced in its social networks.

Local embeddedness creates a distinct set of trade-offs for leaders when deciding how to manage regional executives, as local embeddedness conditions a regional executive's capacity to discharge her responsibilities through two separate mechanisms.² First, locally embedded regional executives

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1. These officers go by many names, including provincial governors, area prefects, appointed mayors, and district commissioners. Unlike other state officials, such as military commanders or army generals, regional executives are often the only appointees who oversee both local policy making and security.

2. For clarity, we refer to regional executives as "she" and leaders of central governments as "he."

have a superior ability to both co-opt and suppress. More familiar with local issues and stakeholders, locally embedded executives are better able to craft policy that responds to local needs; likewise, locally embedded regional executives are better able to identify dissidents who may organize protests or emerge as opposition leaders. Local embeddedness, however, has conflicting implications for a regional executive's willingness to comply with central government directives. Personally invested in their communities, locally embedded regional executives are more willing to co-opt local citizens: to implement sound policies that improve their livelihoods. However, these same personal attachments render locally embedded regional executives less willing to suppress citizens: to employ violence against protesters or to engineer electoral fraud that invalidates their neighbors' political preferences. In short, from the center's perspective, local embeddedness is a clear advantage for co-optation but a potential liability for suppression.

When do leaders' governments task regional executives with co-opting the local population rather than suppression? And more relevant to our study on governance, how do leaders ensure that regional executives comply with the chosen strategy, even when monitoring is difficult? To answer these questions, we build a theory of regional governance in divided societies. We argue that leaders choose a region's governance strategy—either co-optation or suppression—according to the region's ex ante support for the regime. In regions of core support, leaders employ co-optation by fostering local embeddedness; they appoint in-group regional executives and grant them relatively long tenures. Outside core regions, where support is less assured, leaders employ suppression. They appoint regional executives who are drawn from afar and shuffle them frequently. By preventing shared social bonds between regional executives and the local population, leaders aim to ensure the compliance of regional executives during moments of crisis. Scholars have long recognized the persistence of political cleavages in divided societies (Bates 1981; Padrò i Miquel 2007). We locate the origins of that persistence, in part, in these governance strategies. In core support regions, the co-optation strategy sustains their ex ante levels of support. Outside core support regions, the suppression strategy hardens the grievances that induced the leader to privilege suppression in the first place.

We examine the theory's observable implications with data on regional executives from the Republic of Congo under Denis Sassou Nguesso and Kenya under Daniel arap Moi and Mwai Kibaki. For each country, we construct a jurisdiction-year data set, which enables us to probe how regional executives are appointed and how their tenures are determined. Our data sets count more than 250 executives across some 75 jurisdictions and include a range of information about their demographic backgrounds and the jurisdictions they govern.

Congo and Kenya make for an appealing comparison. Their regional executives are appointed and managed directly by the president and the Interior Ministry. They craft local policy and are at times charged with local suppression. They are also critical to regime survival, as scholars have long recognized (Branch 2009; Throup and Hornsby 1998) and our key informant interviews affirm.³ Yet the political environments in Congo and Kenya differ in two key respects that give us analytic leverage. First, Sassou Nguesso, Moi, and Kibaki governed under different regime types and hence confronted different threats to their survival. Since Sassou Nguesso can guarantee electoral victory with fraud, the chief popular threats to his survival are mass protests and rebellions. By contrast, Moi held meaningful but flawed elections, and so governed within a classic competitive authoritarian regime; Kibaki maintained a more open electoral regime. These three leaders thus span the range of popular threats that African presidents confront. Second, politics in Congo and Kenya are animated by different identity cleavages. In Congo, the cleavage is regional; in Kenya, it is ethnic. Despite these differences, our results across presidents are consistent with our theoretical expectations. By examining the theory in such different contexts, we gain confidence in its external validity: its ability to illuminate regional governance in the presence of different popular threats and identity cleavages.

This article makes several theoretical contributions. First, it advances our understanding of politics in divided societies. There is considerable evidence that the in-group areas of African leaders enjoy better livelihood outcomes than out-group areas (Franck and Rainer 2012; Hodler and Raschky 2014). When groups are spatially segregated, scholars presume that this variation is due to geographic targeting of goods by leaders.⁴ We propose a new mechanism, which privileges governance. The native jurisdictions of African presidents are routinely governed by executives who are locally embedded. In regions outside a leader's core support, sound public policy is subordinated to regime survival. These regions may receive fewer public goods, but they are also more likely to be governed by individuals with less local knowledge who are shuffled before they acquire it. Over time, as we observed above, this may foster a particularly intractable equilibrium: regions outside

3. In 2012, the Congolese interior minister described the regional prefect's responsibilities this way: "You, Mr. Prefect, are thus the guarantor of state sovereignty, of its authority, and of the preservation of peace" (*La Semaine Africaine*, no. 3161, January 24, 2012, p. 9). Similarly in Kenya, Branch (2009, 164) writes, "Few scholars . . . would need convincing of the importance of [regional executives in] the governance of Kenya throughout the past century."

4. For recent evidence of goods targeted by parliamentarians in Kenya, see Harris and Posner (2018).

the leader's core support are governed poorly, which exacerbates popular frustration, increases dissent, perpetuates identity-based cleavages, and reinforces the suppression governance strategy.

Second, scholars often regard the "elite shuffle"—the tendency for leaders to frequently shuffle their appointees to limit incentives for malfeasance (Barkey 1994; Blaydes 2011; Landry 2008)—as a critical principle of personnel management. Our results underscore this yet also make clear that the elite shuffle exhibits dramatic variation: in this case, across space, according to a region's prevailing political alignment toward the center. Moreover, we find that the elite shuffle is used to optimize over multiple goals. Not only is it a management technique to ensure agent loyalty, as existing literature makes clear, but it also serves a governance purpose: to control the periphery.

Finally, this article advances our understanding of stalled democratic transitions. We show that in Kenya under Kibaki's more open regime regional executives were managed in precisely the same way as under Moi: to co-opt citizens in core areas and to ensure that, in noncore areas, regional executives suppress local threats. This finding suggests that as long as they confront similar institutional environments, we should expect newly elected presidents to employ roughly the same governance strategies as their autocratic predecessors. Previous scholars have emphasized how formal political institutions, such as constitutions, persist and shape politics in new democracies (Albertus and Menaldo 2018). This article suggests that informal mechanisms that undergird executive power are important as well.⁵ Presidents in young electoral regimes often retain substantial autonomy in managing the state apparatus, which allows them to politicize the public sector in an attempt to align bureaucratic incentives with their own.

A THEORY OF REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

Local embeddedness and co-optation

A regional executive's ability to discharge the twin responsibilities of co-optation and suppression is a function of her local embeddedness. We think of local embeddedness as encompassing a regional executive's knowledge of the local population and her social affinity for them. Local embeddedness may be innate. Regional executives who are from the region's local in-group are, by definition, locally embedded. These regional executives speak the same language, practice the same customs, and share overlapping social networks. They enjoy an innate social bond. But local embeddedness can also be learned. Since the regional executive lives in the region she governs, she forges

5. Young and Turner (1985) described a similar process in the transition from colonial governance in contemporary Democratic Republic of Congo.

bonds with the community. As a result, her preferences may shift over time: from unqualified loyalty to the leader to genuine concern for the community's welfare.

However it is achieved, local embeddedness enables regional executives to craft and implement more effective local policies. In turn, these superior policies enable locally embedded regional executives to co-opt the local population: to build or sustain genuine support for the government. We identify two mechanisms that enable locally embedded regional executives to implement superior policies. First, local embeddedness increases their policy-making *ability*. They have a deeper knowledge of local needs (Eaton and Kostka 2014; Pepinsky, Pierskalla, and Sacks 2017), are more efficient at policy implementation (Woldense 2016), and know which local stakeholders must be won over. Second, local embeddedness renders regional executives more *willing* to implement sound policies, even absent monitoring by the central government. Locally embedded regional executives provide public goods at substantially higher rates for a variety of reasons. They receive "moral standing" from their local communities, and so have stronger incentives to implement better policy (Tsai 2007). Their preferences are aligned with the local population's (Alesina, Baqir, and Eastery 1999; Lieberman and McClendon 2012). They are subject to social sanctioning mechanisms that are uniquely effective among members of a common in-group (Baldassarri and Grossman 2011; Habyarimana et al. 2007).

For all these reasons, locally embedded regional executives are better positioned to craft policies that improve local living standards. This renders the government more popular, elections easier to win, and mass protests less likely.⁶

Local embeddedness and suppression

In addition to their policy roles, regional executives are expected to maintain law and order in their jurisdictions, and so generally oversee the local security apparatus. Accordingly, regional executives must be willing to suppress local threats to the central government. The nature of these threats, and hence the type of suppression required, varies by regime type. In closed autocracies, where elections either do not occur or the leader can guarantee electoral victory with massive fraud, these threats are generally popular protests and armed insurgencies. In turn, regional executives are routinely charged with rigging elections, as well as physical integrity violations such as jailing dissidents and ordering local security services to employ violence against protesters (Davenport and Armstrong 2004).

6. If relationships of trust provide opportunities for corruption, then local embeddedness may increase corruption. This does not obviate the trade-off between suppression and co-optation but does imply a comparative static: as local embeddedness increases corruption among regional executives, the benefits of local embeddedness to the leader decline.

Where electoral competition is more meaningful, suppression more commonly takes the form of civil liberties violations such as harassing opposition supporters, blocking opposition rallies, and raiding opposition offices (Levitsky and Way 2010).

In the previous section, we argued that local embeddedness enables regional executives to craft better public policies. Local embeddedness also has implications for a regional executive's ability and willingness to suppress. First, embedded regional executives may render suppression more efficient through the ability mechanism. Building on Kalyvas (2006), Lyall (2010) suggests that in-group security officials provide higher-quality intelligence during civil wars. In turn, regional executives may be able to use their positions in local social networks to identify dissidents and employ targeted violence. In so doing, regional executives may enable the government to avoid the popular frustration that indiscriminate violence often entails.

But second, and in contrast, locally embedded regional executives are generally less willing to suppress local citizens. This is critical to our theory. Whereas the first three effects of local embeddedness are advantageous to the leader, this fourth effect entails profound risks. Since locally embedded regional executives are less likely to view local citizens as "others," locally embedded regional executives are less likely to order the local security apparatus to employ violence against locals (Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong 2011; Sparsha 2014). They are also less likely to engage in electoral fraud, which suppresses the political preferences of local citizens. Conversely, nonlocally embedded regional executives are less likely to shirk. With no natural constituency, past research has found that nonlocally embedded regional executives are less likely to cooperate with local opposition leaders or build rival fiefdoms to challenge the regime (Migdal 1988), are more effective at breaking up local power brokers (Taylor 2011), are better able to extract forced labor (Harms 1974), and are generally more willing to privilege the regime's interests over those of local citizens (Barkey 1994) or local elites (Xu, Bertrand, and Burgess 2018).

In short, local embeddedness is a clear asset for leaders who aim to co-opt local citizens. For leaders who employ suppression, however, local embeddedness entails some benefits but also serious risks.

Scope conditions

In the next section, we use this framework to generate hypotheses about how leaders choose regional governance strategies and, in turn, manage a regional executive's level of local embeddedness. Before doing so, we identify scope conditions for our theory.

First, we focus on countries with some politically salient identity cleavage. This identity cleavage provides the leader with a credible signal about the political preferences of dif-

ferent groups. We are agnostic about the nature of this identity cleavage. In Congo, the cleavage is regional; in Kenya, it is ethnic. Other identity cleavages may have political salience as well, such as sect, caste, or clans within ethnic groups. These cleavages often have historical origins: in legacies of colonialism or political institutions that incentivize cleavage-based electoral strategies (Posner 2005). Second, this identity cleavage must also cluster geographically. This enables the leader to target groups on either side of the identity cleavage with different regional governance strategies. Together, these two scope conditions enable leaders to identify core supporters and the jurisdictions in which they live. We view them as broadly applicable.

Third, we focus on countries where the leader enjoys sufficient authority over the management of regional executives, because he either makes appointments directly or delegates authority to a trusted advisor whose interests are aligned. Note that this scope condition may obtain across regime type. As our empirical settings below make clear, our theory applies to different degrees of political competition: from a relatively closed autocracy like Sassou Nguesso's Congo, to a competitive authoritarian regime like Moi's Kenya, to a more open electoral regime like Kibaki's Kenya. Although this scope condition is more likely satisfied in autocracies, our theory applies broadly.

Finally, our theory is most relevant in environments where regional executives enjoy authority over both local development policy and the local security apparatus. These dual responsibilities make regional executives critical to both co-optation and suppression and, hence, give rise to the trade-offs for local embeddedness that we identify above. Although this is the case in many countries, there may be cross-country variation in the extent to which regional executives oversee the local security apparatus. Where regional executives have less control over the local security apparatus, we expect the trade-off identify above to be attenuated.

Hypotheses

Our argument is that leaders choose regional governance strategies according to a region's ex ante expected likelihood of threatening the regime, whether through mass protests or at the ballot box. This strategy, in turn, determines how the leader manages a regional executive's level of local embeddedness.

To retain power, leaders need the support of some share of the population.⁷ In countries with some politically salient

7. This is clear in countries where leaders face (real) reelection challengers. But even in closed autocracies, a leader without a base of popular support is more at risk of a coup from elites, who can paint the leader's rule as illegitimate and gather other elites for a coup attempt. Further, a leader without a base of popular support is more at risk for large-scale popular protests. Individuals are

identity cleavage, leaders look to their in-group to constitute their core support. Scholars have identified a range of reasons for this. Leaders can credibly commit to channeling state resources to core support regions after election day (Albertus 2013; Magaloni 2006; Posner 2005). Likewise, if core supporters derive nonmaterial utility from a coethnic government, their support may be cheaper for the leader to purchase (Robinson and Torvik 2009). Conversely, leaders in divided societies routinely block noncore support regions from receiving state resources. This fosters a sense in core support regions that an alternative government, populated from across the cleavage, would be far less generous, which reinforces their incentives to support their in-group government (Bates 1981; Padrò i Miquel 2007).⁸

Together, these forces create an environment of mutual in-group favoritism. Accordingly, in core support regions, where a leader's chief supporters are clustered, leaders can pursue a regional management strategy that generates regime stability by sustaining local support and potentially cultivating more. To do so, leaders employ a co-optation governance strategy. Leaders foster local embeddedness between the regional executive and local citizens by appointing regional executives who are drawn from the local population and then granting them long tenures in office. Over time, we expect this strategy to be self-reinforcing: to sustain the local support that made co-optation viable in the first place. This constitutes our first hypothesis.

H1 (Co-optation). In core support regions, leaders appoint regional executives from the local population and grant them longer tenures.

In noncore support regions, by contrast, co-optation is less viable. Indeed, local citizens often have powerful incentives to oppose a government from across the political cleavage. In countries with a legacy of violence across the politically salient cleavage, for instance, residents may refuse on principle to support a government that committed human rights violations against their in-group (Yengo 2006). Local residents may also have material incentives to oppose an out-group government, as they expect to benefit more if their in-group takes power (Posner 2005). These material incentives are especially powerful where the leader's political party has weak networks among

more likely to participate in protests if they know that the leader is unpopular, since they expect others to join in the protests too.

8. Posner (2005) argues that even though leaders do distribute resources to out-group areas in an attempt to broaden their base of support, there is a strong perception that leaders only favor their own, and so incumbents do not get rewarded by noncore regions.

out-groups, which limits their ability to credibly commit to each other: the leader cannot credibly commit to provide public goods after election day, just as the out-group cannot credibly commit to support the out-group leader after receiving public goods (Albertus 2013).⁹ If the leader incorporates an out-group elite into the regime to win the support of the elite's followers, that support is not guaranteed in the long run: the elite's followers are liable to oppose the leader, potentially even launching a civil war, if their elite leaves the coalition (Roessler 2017). For these reasons, threats to the leader are far more likely to emerge from noncore regions, and co-optation is unlikely to prevent these threats.

Precisely because the forces that compel mutual in-group favoritism are so powerful, the leader is generally forced to privilege suppression over co-optation in noncore support regions. Put simply, the politically salient cleavages required by our scope conditions cannot be easily undone. Accordingly, a regional executive must manage the political consequences of her jurisdiction's underlying opposition to the central government. This, in turn, conditions how the leader manages regional executives in noncore support areas. Recall that the willingness mechanism renders locally embedded regional executives less willing to suppress local citizens, while the ability mechanism renders locally embedded regional executives potentially better able to identify dissidents. The key question for the leader is this: When does the cost from the willingness mechanism outweigh the benefit from the ability mechanism? When, that is, will the leader govern noncore support regions with nonlocally embedded regional executives?

We identify two conditions, although there may be others. First, the leader will govern noncore support regions with nonlocally embedded regional executives when he lacks a particularly effective monitoring system. That is, unless the leader can quickly detect and reprimand shirking regional executives, the leader will not risk locally embedded regional executives in noncore support regions, where the suppression strategy obtains.¹⁰ Two sorts of institutions could serve this monitoring function: states and political parties. In many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, both state capacity and political parties are weak. As a result, we view this condition as very likely to obtain.

9. This problem is attenuated in areas where the leader's party is strong because the party can make credible commitments for the future. This problem is also attenuated in the leader's in-group areas even if the party is weak, as the group and the leader have recourse to social sanctioning mechanisms to punish renegeing.

10. The leader will be willing to allow higher embeddedness in places he wants co-opted, even absent monitoring; embedded bureaucrats who act on the community's behalf are still acting in line with the leader's demands to co-opt the local population.

Second, the leader will govern noncore support regions with nonlocally embedded regional executives when he can build a local intelligence-gathering apparatus that compensates for the ability mechanism. Put simply, when the leader can recruit local residents to his intelligence-gathering apparatus, he can mitigate the costs of nonlocally embedded regional executives. This enables the leader to ensure that the regional executive will suppress local threats without compromising the intelligence-gathering apparatus. Again, therefore, we view this condition as likely to obtain. Regional executives generally act on intelligence, not collect it, and so are often less critical to intelligence gathering.¹¹

In short, we argue that leaders will generally govern noncore support regions with nonlocally embedded regional executives. Leaders do so by appointing nonnative regional executives and shuffling them frequently. These regional executives are less likely to create alliances with local citizens, be bought off by local opposition leaders, or emerge as the leaders of nascent protest movements. They lack innate bonds with the local population, and their tenures in office are too brief to form them. In drawing regional executives from elsewhere and shuffling them quickly, the leader manipulates their local embeddedness to ensure that their loyalties during moments of crisis are undivided: with the regime, not local residents. This constitutes our second hypothesis for empirical testing.

H2 (Suppression). Outside core support regions, leaders appoint regional executives from outside the local population and shuffle them frequently.

Like the co-optation governance strategy, this suppression strategy tends to be self-reinforcing: to sustain the grievances that induced it in the first place. This equilibrium is reinforced from both the leader and citizens. For citizens, the suppression strategy does little to alleviate the popular frustration that compelled the leader to employ it because noncore support regions are governed less effectively. In turn, these areas sustain their opposition to the regime, which ultimately reinforces the suppression strategy. From the leader's perspective, the leader who employed suppression in out-group areas feels compelled to use suppression there in the future. Suppression "worked" to keep the leader in office, suggesting its viability again in the future. And a leader may come to believe that an

out-group's postsuppression grievances are high and, moving forward, must be put down through force. For these reasons, we argue, regional governance strategies tend to constitute dynamically stable equilibriums.

We conclude with a note about loyalty. A leader may have access to some reliable marker of individual loyalty. If so, this creates an opportunity. By permitting locally embedded regional executives—who bear this reliable marker of loyalty—to govern noncore support regions, a leader can gain the benefits from superior public policies without incurring the risks that the regional executive will shirk from suppression. That is, a leader can pursue a regional governance strategy in noncore support regions that aims to build genuine support for the regime, while also ensuring that, if popular threats emerge, the regional executive will privilege the regime's interests over the local population's. To be sure, we regard these reliable markers of loyalty as rare; loyalty is generally circumstantial. When such markers exist, however, a leader may employ loyalty strategically: the regional executives who bear them are to be appointed to their native regions and to be granted longer tenures.

REGIONAL EXECUTIVES IN TWO AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Our theory of regional governance and local embeddedness was informed by over two years of fieldwork in Congo and Kenya. One author carried out 18 months of research in Congo, and the other, 16 months of field research in Kenya. Together, we conducted more than 100 interviews with regional executives, government elites, and citizens. We selected respondents through snowball sampling. Interviews were semistructured and focused on the roles, duties, and management of regional executives. This field research informed our theoretical framework, from which we derived hypotheses, and enabled us to collect data on all regional executives in Congo between 1997 and 2013 and in Kenya between 1992 and 2007.

Congo and Kenya—and the three separate presidents for which we have data—represent an appealing comparison. To place them in comparative perspective, figure 1 plots executive constraint scores from Polity IV for both Congo and Kenya during our sample period, as well as the average for sub-Saharan Africa. Congo's executive constraint level is consistently lower than the regional average, and so is representative of countries that did not experience significant, durable democratic openings after the Cold War ended. In 2002, with the presidential election, Congo's executive constraint score increased slightly, from 1 ("unlimited authority") to 2 (intermediate category between "unlimited authority" and "slight to moderate limitation"). Kenya's executive constraint score is 3 ("slight to moderate limitation") during

11. Note that this creates a new principal-agent problem. The regime must ensure that local intelligence officials comply with orders to suppress, despite their embeddedness. Although this principal-agent problem is beyond the scope of our article, evidence from Congo suggests that leaders resolve it by creating parallel coercive apparatuses to do the same job. This enables performance to act as monitoring. These parallel apparatuses appear to be common in autocracies (e.g., Crassweller 1966; Quinlivan 1999).

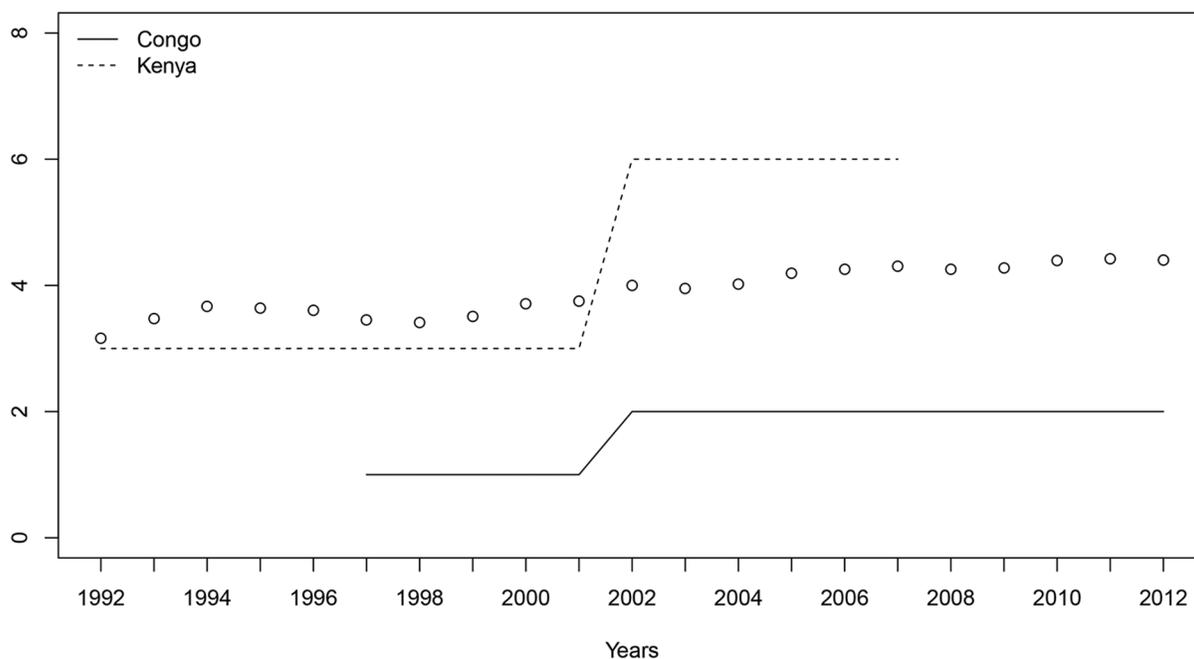


Figure 1. Average Polity IV executive constraints score for sub-Saharan Africa as a whole (circles), Kenya (dashed line), and Congo (solid line). Executive constraint scores for Congo and Kenya cover only the study period for each case.

Moi's presidency, just below the regional average and consistent with the regime's classification as competitive authoritarian. Under Kibaki, the executive constraint level jumps to 6 (intermediate category between "substantial limitations" and "executive parity"), representative of countries transitioning from autocracy.

Because their regime types differ, so too do the chief threats that these three presidents confronted. Moreover, they governed countries with different political cleavages. The following sections elucidate these differences and provide context for the empirical analysis.

The Republic of Congo

Sassou Nguesso has ruled Congo for all but five years since 1979. He first seized power in a 1979 coup, ruled as a single-party dictator during the 1980s, and lost power in 1992 as global food prices rose and Soviet support evaporated. He returned to power after the 1997 civil war, a brutal conflict that pitted Sassou Nguesso's northern supporters against those of President Pascal Lissouba, a native of Congo's southern regions and its only democratically elected president. Sassou Nguesso has since accumulated one of Africa's worst human rights records (Yengo 2006).

Political geography: Cleavage between north and south.

Congo's politics are animated by this cleavage between north and south, a legacy of its first years of independence. In 1967, a clique of military officers, from a variety of ethnic groups

but all of northern extraction, deposed President Alphonse Massamba-Débat, a southerner. The officers dubbed themselves the Comité militaire du parti (CMP)—the military wing of the Congolese Workers Party (PCT)—and governed as a junta, with Captain Marien Ngouabi designated president. This began the long-standing political dominance of Congo's northern regions, despite constituting only 30% of the country's population. In turn, the PCT—the only legal political party until 1990—became a symbol of northern dominance. Save for Lissouba's tenure between 1992 and 1997, Congo's presidents since 1967 have been drawn exclusively from the CMP's original membership, and hence from the north.

The 1997 civil war, fought along regional lines, hardened the regional cleavage: northerners supported Sassou Nguesso, southerners supported Lissouba. Both groups recognized that their political and economic fortunes depended on their favored politician claiming power. The war was devastating and had enduring political ramifications. The war cost the country 1% of its citizens and displaced an additional 35%. After claiming victory, Sassou Nguesso authorized his soldiers—again, all of northern extraction—to pillage areas inhabited by southerners, both as compensation and to punish southerners for their opposition.¹²

Sassou Nguesso's policies since have exacerbated the regional cleavage. With oil revenue accounting for some 95%

12. See Clark (2008) and Yengo (2006) on the civil war.

of gross domestic product and largely controlled by the Sassou Nguesso family (Clark 2008), citizens' economic fortunes largely depend on securing political appointments, the most lucrative of which Sassou Nguesso reserves for northerners. Although the government refuses to release data on public goods provision, all available evidence suggests that northern regions receive far more resources than southern regions.¹³ The only exception to northern dominance is Kouilou, birthplace of First Lady Antoinette Sassou Nguesso and home to Congo's oil industry.¹⁴

Local governance: Regional prefects. Executive authority in each of Congo's 12 regions is vested in a prefect, appointed by Sassou Nguesso. Sassou Nguesso draws regional prefects disproportionately, but not completely, from the north (see fig. 2). The regime routinely reminds citizens that regional prefects are charged with suppressing local threats. The prefect is given broad powers. She commands the region's security forces, coordinates electoral fraud, and disbands protests. Although the constitution guarantees freedom of assembly, regional prefects routinely deny permits for opposition rallies.

Regional prefects are also charged with development policy. Although the constitution grants regional councils formal authority to allocate funds provided by Brazzaville, these locally elected councils, as one council vice president put it, are "almost completely powerless."¹⁵ Since regional prefects enjoy veto power over any action passed by the regional council, they largely dictate regional policies. Indeed, regional councils have no recourse to an appeals process. Still, prefects rarely veto resolutions passed by regional councils. Given the prefect's broad powers and personal relationship with Sassou Nguesso, regional council members are reticent to offend her. And given the magnitude of electoral fraud, regional councils are dominated by PCT loyalists anyway.

The chief popular threat to Sassou Nguesso's survival is the possibility of mass protests by frustrated southerners, as the unrest during the constitutional referendum of October 2015 made clear. Therefore, prefects appointed to Congo's southern regions must be prepared to suppress local residents. To

ensure this, Sassou Nguesso routinely forces prefects to govern regions where they have no existing ties, the better to ensure their loyalties are undivided. This, one regional leader conceded, is "part of Sassou Nguesso's strategic framework."¹⁶ A candidate in the 2012 parliamentary elections from Niari region elaborated: "If [Sassou Nguesso] names a prefect from Niari [to govern Niari], [the prefect] can't implement Sassou Nguesso's politics. He can't steal or intimidate. [Local citizens] know his parents and his family, and they'll kill his family. A delegation would come to see him, and they would say: 'These policies are no good, and we won't accept it. Do you want to destroy your own [region] for Sassou Nguesso?'"¹⁷

A former aide to the Bouenza regional council president said, "the regime knows how unpopular it is. If they appoint a prefect from Bouenza, he'll be loathe to cheat, to oppress his own population. But with prefects from other regions, their loyalties are undivided."¹⁸ One high ranking member of the Niari regional council reported something similar: "[The government appoints nonnative prefects] to control the population. . . . They are always from the north, or at least from elsewhere. The regime fears having the region governed by one of its own. The regime has to control them, and if there are uprisings the prefects must be willing to suppress them. . . . A native son would know the reality, even the psychological realities. And he would be less likely to waste things, to be corrupted, and to corrupt. He would have the best interest of the region at heart."¹⁹

Regional prefects also play a critical role in electoral fraud. According to one high-ranking staff member of the Bouenza regional council: "They're instructed—obligated—by the Interior minister to ensure that such or such candidate is elected. . . . [Two senior aides to Sassou Nguesso] announced to the population: If the results don't favor [our candidate] in the end, what a pity it shall be for [the prefect]."²⁰ Regional prefects are quite open about their electoral role. Just before his appointment, one publicly acknowledged that his "objective is to make the PCT a true electoral machine."²¹

Kenya

In Kenya, during our sample period, elections were the chief threat to each president's tenure. Daniel arap Moi, a Kalenjin, took office in 1978, under an autocratic regime but was forced to legalize multiparty elections in 1992 amid the Third Wave

13. Regional councils are given equivalent operating budgets. Since the country's five southern regions are home to some 70% of the population, regional governments in the north receive far higher operating budgets on a per capita basis.

14. Adida et al. (2016) find that leaders can use marriages across ethnic lines as a way to credibly signal their willingness to share state resources with their spouse's ethnic group and build their winning coalition. We suggest that these dynamics apply to nondemocratic regimes and those with different identity cleavages.

15. Interview with Anonymous, location withheld for security reasons, July 11, 2013.

16. Interview with Anonymous, Mouyondzi, Congo, April 30, 2012.

17. Interview with Anonymous, Dolisie, Congo, July 8, 2013.

18. Interview with Anonymous, Nkayi, Congo, July 10, 2013.

19. Interview with Anonymous, Dolisie, Congo, July 11, 2013. The term "native son" is our translation of *fi ls du coin*, which this informant used.

20. Interview with Anonymous, Nkayi, July 10, 2013.

21. *La Semaine Africaine*, no. 3120, August 26, 2011, p. 6.

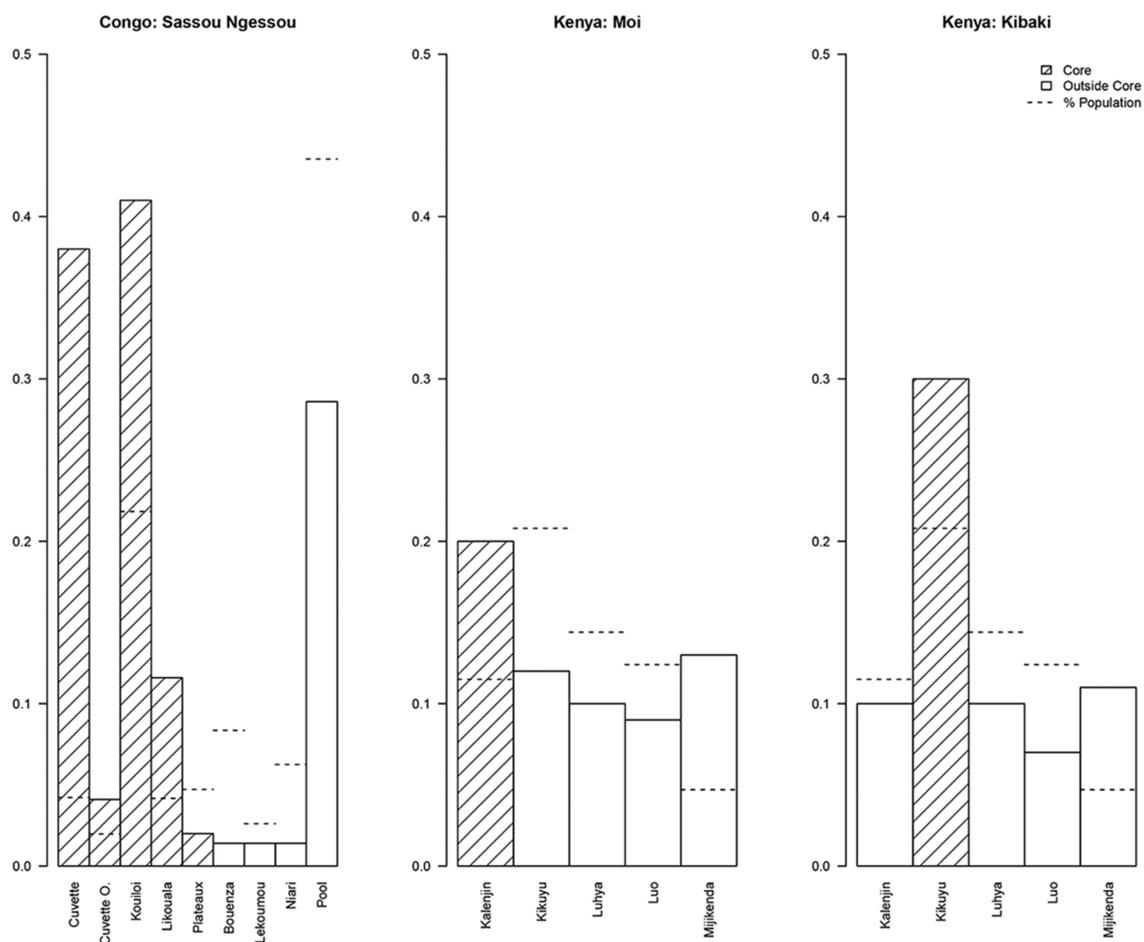


Figure 2. Regional executives appointed by Sassou Nguesso, Moi, and Kibaki, with their respective core support regions shaded. Y-axis gives the proportion of portfolio years in the data set—itsself subsetted by leader—that were natives of the regions or from the ethnic group listed along the X-axis.

of Democracy. Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu, defeated Moi’s successor in 2002 and was reelected in 2007. Neither president managed to win a majority of votes in their reelection bids, suggesting widespread domestic discontent and the potential for a united opposition to claim victory (Arriola 2012). Instead, each president has maintained power after winning a “flawed” reelection in part through the country’s regional executives (Levitsky and Way 2010; Mueller 2008; Throup and Hornsby 1998).

Political geography: Ethnic cleavages. Congo’s chief political cleavage is regional; in Kenya, it is ethnic (Elischer 2013; Horowitz 2016). Moi and Kibaki allocated more state spending to their coethnic areas (e.g., Jablonski 2014; Kramon and Posner 2016). In turn, a president’s coethnics constitute his core constituency. Since 1992, incumbent presidents have received more than 80% of votes in coethnic areas.

Local governance: District commissioners. Kenya’s administrative districts are analogous to Congo’s regions, and

its district commissioners (DCs) to Congo’s regional prefects. By 1992 Kenya’s 47 districts had an average population of 500,000, slightly larger than Congolese regions. The number of districts—and DCs—increased to 71 by 2003, a fact that we account for in the empirical analysis. DCs are presidentially appointed positions. They are posted and shuffled by the highest-ranking elites within the interior ministry. DCs are drawn from all of Kenya’s prominent ethnic groups, as seen in figure 2.²²

Kenyan DCs, like Congolese prefects, enjoy broad autonomy over local policy, which enables them to co-opt citizens on the president’s behalf. Each DC presides over a District Development Committee (DDC), which selects development

22. We measure embeddedness as whether a DC is a coethnic of the district majority as opposed to whether the DC is from the district she governs. DCs are barred from serving in their “home” district. That said, the country’s politically relevant ethnic groups are well represented among DCs and comprise the majority in multiple districts. We include a breakdown of majority ethnicity by district in the appendix (available online).

projects for implementation.²³ The quality of these projects is partly determined, citizens acknowledge, by a DC's local embeddedness. DCs who better understand local dynamics can more effectively adjudicate among claimants. A DC who speaks local languages and is sensitive to cultural customs can better adapt national-level policies to the community she serves.²⁴ Most officers attempt a "capstone" infrastructure project: perhaps a health facility or a large school extension. But major projects only succeed if the DC remains in office long enough to raise money, often through local fund-raisers (*harambees*), and obtains political support from the "correct" elders.²⁵ DCs also have access to discretionary funds that can be used to help locals. For instance, one member of Parliament (MP) explained that the DC in his neighboring district—who was a coethnic with that district's majority—used his control over agricultural development to forgive loans to farmers after a bad drought. Although the MP's constituents faced the same drought, his DC—a relative newcomer and a non-coethnic—was unwilling to give the same assistance.²⁶

As in Congo, Kenyan DCs are charged with maintaining local security. They command district police officers, chair the district security committee, and maintain a wide informant network. Since Moi and Kibaki were concerned more with the opposition's electoral performance than mass protests, Kenyan DCs employed suppression differently from Congolese regional prefects, instead using their coercive authority to advance the president's electoral interests. Under Moi, DCs routinely prevented opposition candidates from organizing rallies, disbanded rallies already underway, and refused to sign nomination papers for opposition candidates to get on the ballot in some constituencies.²⁷ Under Kibaki, DCs continued some election-tilting practices, but to a lesser degree. Raila Odinga, for instance, ran against Moi in 1997 and against Kibaki in 2007. Whereas DCs under Moi routinely denied his permits for campaign events outright, Odinga acknowledged, DCs under Kibaki permitted them but never on bustling "market days," the one or two days per week when citizens from surrounding rural areas congregate in town to sell produce.²⁸ Although suppression by regional executives in Kenya

is less violent than in Congo, it still played a significant role in tilting the playing field and helping each president win reelection. Indeed, Mueller (2008) observes that, throughout the multiparty era, Kenyan presidents have sought to strengthen institutions within the executive branch, including that over DCs, to centralize authority.

Whereas local embeddedness improved DCs' ability to co-opt area residents through development, it hampered their ability to suppress. One DC conceded that, if he governed his coethnics, he would be at risk of not suppressing local opposition to the best of his abilities, such as by being lenient with local campaign managers of the opposition: "I would allow [my coethnics] to do the [work of the] opposition. For the people not to be allowed to oppose [the regime], they must send somebody who is not close to the people."²⁹ And with regard to long tenure, one former interior minister confirmed that DCs were rotated frequently to ensure they carry out their directives as opposed to becoming subordinate to local citizens.³⁰

GOVERNING THROUGH SUPPRESSION AND CO-OPTATION

Data and descriptive statistics

To evaluate the theory, we collected analogous data on regional executives. For Congo, our data set includes every regional prefect between Sassou Nguesso's 1997 return and 2013, along with relevant demographic information.³¹ Where possible, we collected this information from the government's *Official Journal*, where it publishes many of its appointments, as well as the archives of Brazzaville's three leading newspapers. We supplemented this with the informant interviews discussed above. The result is a region-year data set that counts 29 individual prefects across 12 regions. We then created a series of variables based on the theory. The variable *Nonnative Prefect_{rt}* assumes value 1 if region *r*'s prefect in year *t* was drawn from elsewhere. The variable *Tenure Length_{rt}* measures the number of years that region *r*'s prefect in year *t* remained in office. To measure Sassou Nguesso's regional popularity, we exploit Congo's regional cleavage. The variable *Hostile Region* assumes value 1 if region *r* fought against Sassou Nguesso in the 1997 war.

For Kenya, we recorded every DC between 1992 and 2007, along with relevant demographic information. We

23. This DDC was the main source of centralized district funds for the majority of the study period. In 2003, Kibaki implemented a Constituency Development Fund (CDF) that also allocated resources by legislative constituency. However the DDC still persisted during these years, and the area DC sits on the CDF allocation boards for constituencies in her district.

24. Interview with former DC, Nairobi, Kenya, February 2, 2012.

25. Interview with then DC, Nairobi, Kenya, November 23, 2011.

26. Interview with then MP, Nairobi, Kenya, March 1, 2012.

27. Much literature has documented the political role of DCs under Moi during the multiparty era (e.g., Throup and Hornsby 1998).

28. Interview with Raila Odinga, Boston, MA, May 22, 2014.

29. Interview with DC, Nairobi, Kenya, November 17, 2011.

30. Interview with former minister of provincial authority, Nairobi, Kenya, February 24, 2012.

31. After 2008 the number of districts began to expand from 71 to 290. As a result, districts were no longer the main unit of administration, and so we conclude our analysis in 2007.

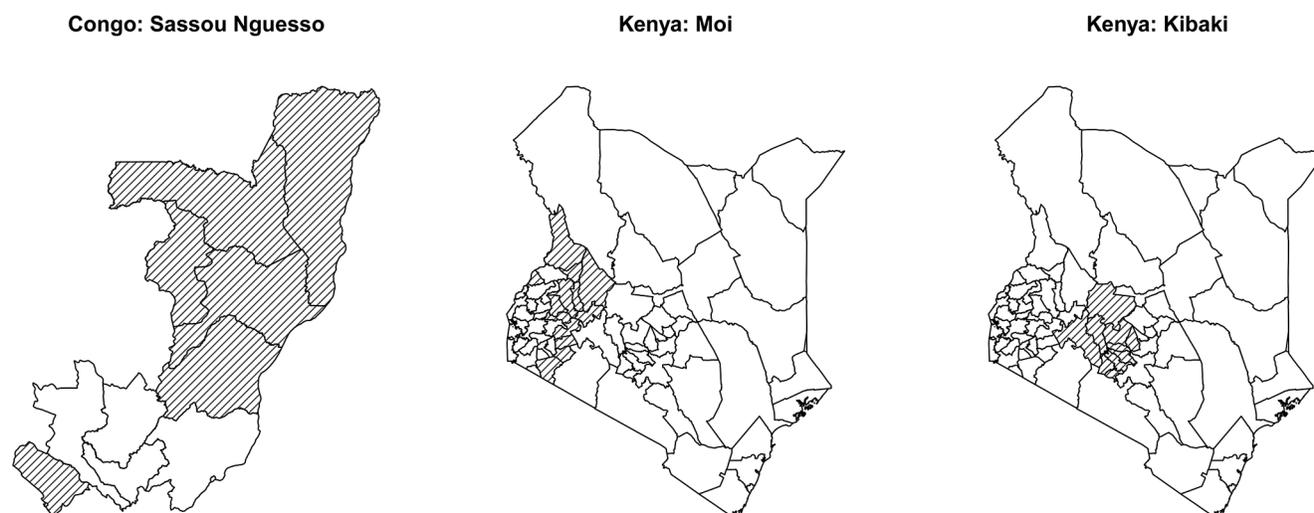


Figure 3. Maps of the main independent variable, core area. Congo map hashes the country's northern regions that constitute Sassou Nguesso's core, as well as Kouilou, his wife's core region. Kenya maps list the country's districts and hash in those districts where a majority of residents were a coethnic of the president (both Moi and Kibaki's spouses were from their respective ethnic group).

collected this information from Interior Ministry archives. This yielded a district-year data set that counts 220 unique DCs across 40–71 districts. DCs' ethnicity is coded from their names, using three methods described in the appendix. We then created the same three variables that we did for Congo. Non-co-ethnic DC_{rt} assumes value 1 if district r 's DC in year t was not drawn from district r 's majority ethnic group.³² This process was not as straightforward as for the Congo data, given the increase in Kenya's administrative districts. We use written and visual depictions of district boundaries and their creation date, alongside subdistrict census data to reestimate district majorities.³³ The variable $Tenure\ Length_{rt}$ measures the number of years that district r 's DC in year t remained in office. To capture the leader's support in district r , we leverage Kenya's ethnic cleavage. The variable $President's\ Non-co-ethnic\ District_{rt}$ assumes value 1 if the majority of district r 's residents in year t were not coethnics of the president.³⁴ Specifically, this variable assumes value 0 if the majority of district residents were Kalenjin under Moi, or Kikuyu under Kibaki, and value 1 otherwise. We provide a map of each president's core areas in figure 3.

32. In the appendix, we rerun these models after considering whether the district contained a substantial minority of each president's coethnics.

33. We explain this process in the appendix.

34. Each president has also received substantial support from other ethnic groups. But given Kenya's weak parties, a feature common in many African countries (LeBas 2011; Riedl 2014), ethnic alliances are not stable across time. Presidents thus recognize that non-co-ethnic supporters from the last election might "renege" and support the opposition. Only a president's coethnics are guaranteed to support him. For this reason, we do not consider measures of electoral support as the appropriate indicator for regime support.

Descriptive statistics for our outcome variables— $Nonnative\ Prefect_{rt}$ and $Tenure\ Length_{rt}$ for Congo, $President's\ Non-co-ethnic\ District_{rt}$ and $Tenure\ Length_{rt}$ for Kenya—appear in figure 4. Consistent with the theory, the left panel suggests that Sassou Nguesso, Moi, and Kibaki routinely appointed nonnative regional executives to regions outside their core support. Likewise, the right panel indicates that regional executives appointed to noncore support regions experienced shorter tenures than their counterparts in core support regions. The difference between core support regions and noncore support regions is particularly stark in Congo. In the conclusion we offer tentative explanations for why.

The politics of regional executive appointment

We begin by examining the politics of appointment: whether leaders govern noncore support regions with regional executives who are not from the local in-group. We employ a series of logit models to estimate the probability that the leader appoints to region r a nonnative executive in year t . The baseline estimating equations for Congo and Kenya, respectively, are

$$\begin{aligned} \text{logit}[\text{Pr}(\text{Nonnative Prefect}_{rt} = 1)] \\ = \alpha + \beta(\text{Hostile Region}_r) + \gamma X_{rt} + \varepsilon, \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{logit}[\text{Pr}(\text{Non-co-ethnic DC}_{rt} = 1)] \\ = \alpha + \beta(\text{President's Non-co-ethnic District}_{rt}) \\ + \gamma W_{rt} + \varepsilon, \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

where X_{rt} and W_{rt} give vectors of region-year controls. For Kenya, standard errors are clustered at the district level. We estimate two specifications for each leader: one with a

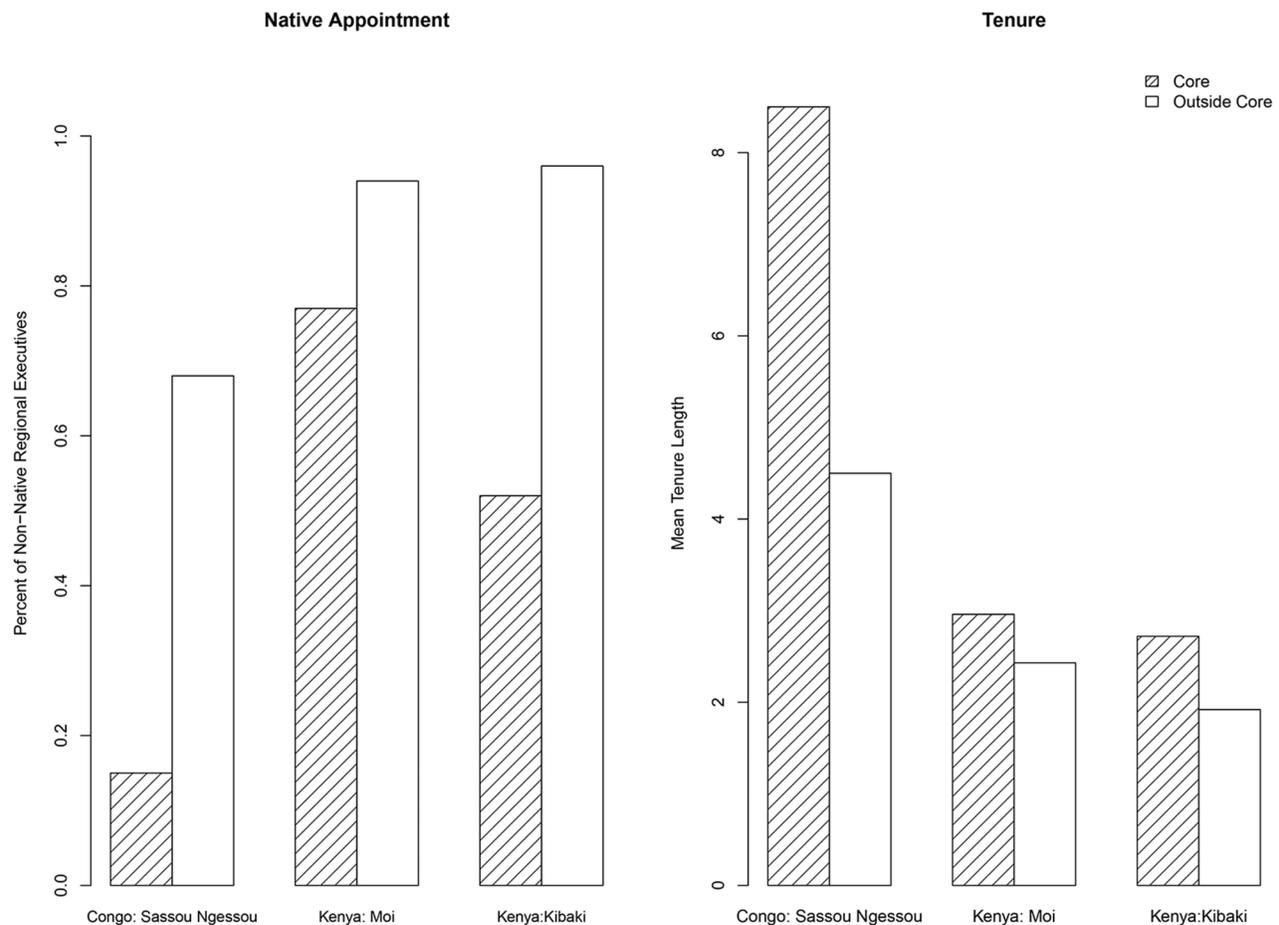


Figure 4. Descriptive statistics for the outcome variables of interest. *Left*, proportion of years in which region r was governed by a nonnative executive, according to core support areas and noncore support areas. *Right*, average tenure of regional prefects, again according to core support and noncore support areas.

lagged dependent variable, as observations in sequential time periods may be correlated, and one without.

Although the control variables in vectors X_{rt} and W_{rt} are theoretically similar, Congo and Kenya have distinct political institutions and histories, and so we operationalize control variables differently. The vectors X_{rt} and W_{rt} include an indicator variable that records whether region r 's executive in year t was identified as a "personal loyalist" of the president. From the theory presented above, this accommodates the possibility that leaders may be willing to govern hostile regions with a native executive if they are certain of the executive's loyalty. In Congo, the chief marker of personal loyalty is whether executive j occupied a senior role in Sassou Ngessou's 1997 civil war effort. For Kenya, all DCs were considered loyal. But we try to gauge variation in loyalty under Moi by including the number of years since DC j was appointed a DC; since Moi appointed all DCs during the sample period—he had been in power for 15 years by 1992—a DC's length of service is an appropriate measure of regime loyalty. Because of Kibaki's shorter tenure, we instead include an indicator variable that assumes value 1 if DC j was

first appointed by Kibaki. In all models, we control for traditional administrative factors by including region r 's geographic size and total population, both logged.³⁵ Descriptive statistics for all variables appear in table 1. In the appendix, we rerun the models after controlling for local development, with substantively identical results.

The results appear in table 2. As expected, all three leaders were more likely to appoint nonnative executives to noncore support regions. The bottom of the table reports a series of predicted probabilities. Sassou Ngessou governs noncore support regions—which fought against him during the 1997 civil war—almost exclusively with nonnatives. Indeed, it is exceedingly uncommon for Sassou Ngessou to permit a native executive to a noncore support region, with predicted probability of just 0.94 in a given year t (95% confidence interval:

35. For Congo's population, we use the 2007 census, the only one since Sassou Ngessou returned to power in 1997. Omitting this variable does not substantively alter the results. For Kenya, we use census data from 1989 and redetermine population on the basis of changing boundaries. This process is detailed in the appendix.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics on Regional Executives and the Areas They Govern

Theoretical Variable	Congo		Kenya			
	Operationalization	Count	Operationalization	Count		
Administrative unit	Regions	12	Districts	47–71		
Units	Prefect years	175	DC years	1,988		
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Nonnative officer	Nonnative prefect	.48	.50	Non-co-ethnic DC	.91	.29
Tenure	Years in region	4.64	3.43	Years in district	2.35	1.20
Outside core	Hostile region	.61	.49	President's non-co-ethnic district	.84	.37
Population	Logged region population	12.13	.75	Logged district population	8.77	.69
Area	Logged region area (km ²)	9.65	1.96	Logged district area (km ²)	8.13	1.34
Loyalty	Civil war veteran	.21	.41	Years as DC under Moi	12.71	6.49
				Kibaki appointee	.12	.33

Note. DC = district commissioner.

Table 2. Factors Affecting Regional Executive Appointments in Congo and Kenya

	Sassou Nguesso		Moi		Kibaki	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Outside core	6.69** (1.49)	4.10** (1.16)	1.73** (.21)	1.72** (.21)	2.79*** (.33)	2.78*** (.34)
Loyalty	-2.47** (.62)	-19.93 (2,933.32)	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)	-.12 (.34)	-.13 (.34)
Population	-3.87** (1.38)	-2.32 (1.52)	-.35* (.16)	-.35* (.16)	-.74* (.31)	-.73* (.31)
Area	-1.53 (.47)	-.88 (.52)	.15 (.09)	.15 (.09)	-.06 (.14)	-.06 (.14)
Lagged DV		22.75 (2,933.32)		-.05 (.23)		-.25 (.36)
Intercept	57.85** (20.21)	32.40 (22.25)	2.78 (1.67)	2.81 (1.68)	7.41* (3.25)	7.56* (3.25)
N	173	162	1,308	1,308	680	680
Predicted probability of nonnative regional executives with loyalty and lagged DV at 0						
Within core	.03	.03	.75	.76	.61	.61
95% CI	[.00, .14]	[.00, .13]	[.61, .87]	[.60, .86]	[.35, .82]	[.38, .81]
Outside core	.94	.47	.94	.94	.96	.96
95% CI	[.84, .98]	[.15, .82]	[.89, .97]	[.89, .97]	[.92, .99]	[.92, .99]

Note. Results from logit regressions following eq. (1) and (2). Dependent variable (DV) is whether a regional executive was a nonnative of a jurisdiction (for Congo, this is whether the executive is from a different region; for Kenya, this is whether the executive is from an ethnic group different from the majority of a district's residents, as seen in table 1). For descriptions of other variables, see table 1. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the district level for Kenya. CI = confidence interval.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

0.84, 0.98). By contrast, Sassou Nguesso governs core support regions almost exclusively with native executives. In Kenya, the results are similar, although less stark. Under Moi, his coethnic Kalenjin districts were 18 percentage points more likely to be governed by a coethnic than were non-Kalenjin districts. Under Kibaki, his coethnic Kikuyu districts were 35.6 percentage points more likely to be governed by a coethnic than were non-Kikuyu districts.

The politics of regional executive tenure

Just as leaders are more likely to govern noncore support regions with regional executives drawn from afar, so too, our theory suggests, should leaders shuffle them more quickly. In so doing, leaders ensure that regional executives are less likely to become locally embedded.

We employ a series of Cox proportional hazard models to examine the politics of shuffling. We estimate the probability that the leader removes region *r*'s executive in year *t* as a function of region *r*'s core support status. The estimating equations for Congo and Kenya are analogous to those in equations (1) and (2), respectively:

$$h(t) = \beta(\text{Hostile Region}_r) + \gamma X_{rt} + \varepsilon, \tag{3}$$

$$h(t) = \beta(\text{President's Non-co-ethnic District}_r) + \gamma W_{rt} + \varepsilon, \tag{4}$$

where *h*(*t*) gives the regional executive's hazard rate at year *t*. The control vectors *X*_{*rt*} and *W*_{*rt*} are identical to those in equations (1) and (2), respectively, except that we also control for whether region *r*'s executive in year *t* was nonnative. This accommodates the possibility that leaders treat shuffling and nonnative appointment as either complements or substitutes: that is, if regional executive *j* is not native to region *r*, quickly shuffling her may be less necessary, for her loyalty to the regime may already be assured. Again, we estimate two specifications for each leader: one with a leader-level frailty term and one without.

The results appear in table 3. Again, Sassou Nguesso, Moi, and Kibaki shuffled regional executives in noncore support regions at a far higher rate than in core support regions. Figure 5 presents the associated survival plots. The *Y*-axis gives the estimated proportion of all regional executives appointed in year 0 who remain in office at some year *t*, recorded along the *X*-axis. Outside of Sassou Nguesso's core support regions, some 65% of regional executives are shuffled just two years after appointment, and nearly all by year three. By contrast, in his core regions, Sassou Nguesso grants regional executives long tenures. A decade after appointment, some 70% will remain in office. In Kenya, Moi and Kibaki employed the same policy, although, again, differences across regions are less pronounced. For Moi, two years after appointment, roughly 55% of regional executives in core

Table 3. Factors Affecting Regional Executive Tenure in Congo and Kenya

	Sassou Nguesso		Moi		Kibaki	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Outside core	4.30** (1.11)	4.30** (1.11)	.34* (.16)	.34* (.17)	.64* (.31)	.64* (.31)
Loyalty	-4.83** (1.46)	-4.83** (1.46)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	-.49** (.17)	-.49** (.17)
Nonnative officer	-2.66** (.90)	-2.66** (.90)	-.07 (.20)	-.07 (.20)	.10 (.32)	.10 (.32)
Population	-.26 (.58)	-.26 (.58)	-.04 (.08)	-.04 (.08)	-.24* (.12)	-.24* (.12)
Area	-.15 (.26)	-.15 (.26)	.02 (.04)	.02 (.04)	.04 (.05)	.04 (.05)
Frailty term	...	Yes	...	Yes	...	Yes
<i>N</i>	174	174	1,308	1,308	680	680

Note. Results from Cox proportional hazard regressions following eqq. (3) and (4). Outcome variable is whether a regional executive was shuffled in a particular period. For descriptions of other variables, see table 1. Standard errors in parentheses.

* *p* < .05.

** *p* < .01.

*** *p* < .001.

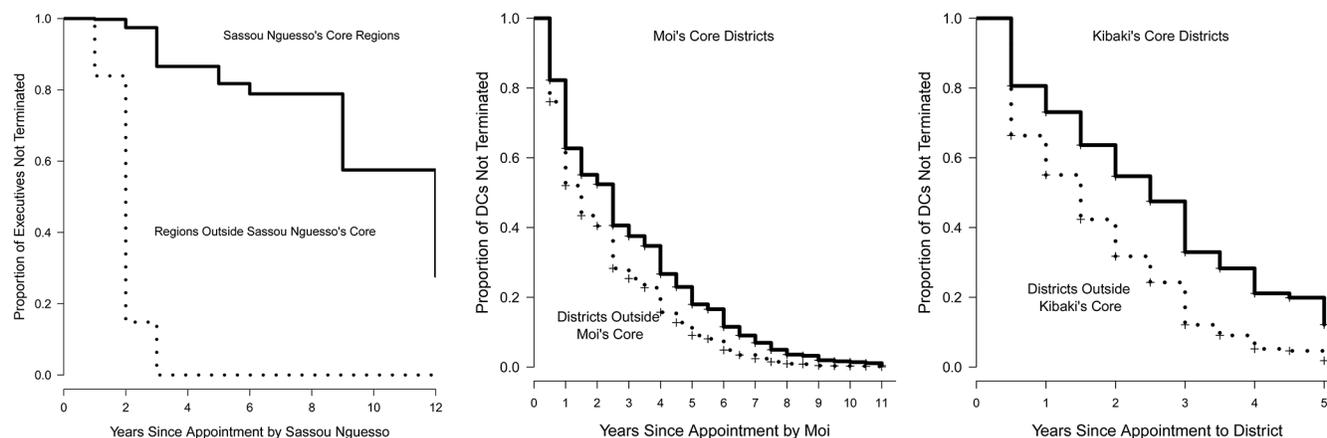


Figure 5. Survival plots associated with the statistical results in table 3. For each, the solid line gives the survival curve for the leader's core support regions, while the dotted line gives the survival curve for the leader's noncore support regions.

support regions will remain in office; in noncore support regions, only 40%. For Kibaki, two years after appointment, nearly 60% of regional executives in core support regions will remain in office; in noncore support regions, only 30%.

As in the previous section, the coefficients for $Loyalty_{rt}$ are consistent with our theory. For Sassou Nguesso and Kibaki, regional executives who were identified as personal loyalists were far less likely to be terminated in any year t . Indeed, when Sassou Nguesso and Kibaki appointed personal loyalists to regions outside their core support, they treated them like regional executives appointed to core support regions. In short, we find some evidence that presumed loyalty to the leader enables the leader to govern potentially hostile areas with native bureaucrats—with the associated benefits for local governance—while remaining relatively confident that, if threats emerge, these loyalists will suppress them.

ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

The appendix includes a series of robustness checks that we briefly describe here.

Native postings as strategic

First, readers may be concerned that the nonnative statistical results—presented above and in table 2—may simply be driven by the pool of potential Congolese prefects and Kenyan DCs. That is, if Sassou Nguesso, Moi, and Kibaki “pack” their regional governance apparatus with in-group officers, it may be overwhelmingly likely that noncore support regions/districts are governed by executives drawn from afar. Our statistical results, then, may reflect this packing rather than the leader's strategic behavior. Put otherwise, if the leader's in-group is well represented within the pool of potential regional executives, then this may “mechanically” generate the nonnative result in table 2.

As figure 2 makes clear, however, neither country's officer corps was totally packed. Although each of the three did disproportionately draw regional executives from their in-group, other demographic groups were well represented. As an additional robustness check, we employ randomization inference. For each leader, we specify a pool of potential candidates for regional executive positions: individuals who, for each leader, could have been selected. We then randomly select a group of counterfactual regional executives from this pool of potential candidates and randomly assign them to executive positions in region i in year t . For the randomly selected group of counterfactual regional executives, we construct our explanatory variable of interest: $Nonnative\ Prefect_{it}$ for Congo, $Non-co-ethnic\ DC_{it}$ for Kenya. We then estimate the baseline model, given by equations (1) and (2). We perform this simulation 1,000 times for each leader and then compare the resulting distribution of coefficients to the observed coefficients reported in table 2. If the strategic behavior we observe in Congo and Kenya is actually driven by a governance apparatus that is overwhelmingly composed of the leaders' coethnics or coregionals, then the simulated distribution of coefficients will converge to the observed coefficients reported above.

To ensure our results are robust, we define the pool in a variety of ways. For both countries, we initially consider the current pool of Congolese prefects or Kenyan DCs. We recognize, however, that selection into these elite regime positions is not random. Therefore, we run additional randomization inferences based on the potential pool of possible Congolese prefects or Kenyan DCs. In Congo, we examine (1) all government ministers appointed since 1997 and, (2) most expansively, all government elites (generals, senior colonels, ministers, presidential advisers, local mayors, regional executives, heads of parastatals, and appointees to the

various constitutional courts and advisory bodies). In Kenya, we consider the pool of district officers, who are one tier below DCs and from which all DCs are drawn. Across these different candidate pools, we find no evidence that our results are driven by packing.

Tenure length due to station difficulty or revealed disloyalty

Readers may also be concerned that our tenure results—presented above and in table 3—are driven by station difficulty rather than the leader’s strategic behavior. That is, Sassou Nguesso, Moi, and Kibaki may shuffle regional executives in noncore support regions not because of strategic considerations about expected compliance but simply because those postings are difficult, and so regional executives posted there perform poorly. In turn, we may observe shorter tenure spells in noncore areas because the central government views those regional executives as less competent, not because the central government is attempting to diminish local embeddedness. If this is the case, then our results may be driven by higher rates of social unrest, not the underlying politically salient cleavage.

Alternatively, readers may also be concerned that our tenure results are driven by disloyal regional executives that the leader purged. If, for instance, disloyal regional executives in noncore support regions have more opportunities to harness popular frustration to mount challenges to the central government, then disloyal regional executives may be detected—and hence purged—at higher rates than disloyal regional executives in core support regions.

To rule out these alternative explanations, we first examine the subsequent postings of all regional executives in our data set. If these alternative explanations are salient, then former regional executives in noncore support regions should be subject to forced retirement at higher rates than former regional executives in core support regions. In Congo, this is straightforward. All former regional executives willingly entered retirement after stepping down. As a result, long-tenured regional executives share the same subsequent career trajectory as short-tenured regional executives, just as former executives in core support regions share the same subsequent trajectory as former executives in noncore support regions.³⁶ The reason is that regional executive positions are regarded as the terminal point of a career in the regime. In Kenya, we observe a similar pattern. Although former DCs are routinely appointed to new postings, we observe no statistically signif-

icant difference ($p < .05$) in the rate of reposting across short- and long-tenured DCs. Likewise, we observe no difference in the rate of reposting across DCs who governed core support and noncore support regions. Again, the identical subsequent career trajectories implies that regional executives in noncore support regions enjoy shorter tenures, not because of poor performance but because of leaders’ strategic considerations. Further, we found no qualitative evidence that regional executives in noncore areas used their authority to create dissent against the leader.

We rule out these alternative explanations in a second way: by controlling for observed rates of protest. If the patterns we document above are driven by station difficulty, then controlling for observed rates of protest should attenuate the effect of the politically salient cleavage. We draw on the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED; Raleigh et al. 2010) data set to code the number of violent confrontations in a jurisdiction between the state and citizens.³⁷ Then, we reestimate the results above but include an interaction term between the number of ACLED events in a given region and its core support status. The results are substantively unchanged. These results provide support that the patterns we observe above are driven by the underlying politically salient cleavage, not station difficulty or observed social unrest.

We regard these null effects as unsurprising. The politically salient cleavages that compel the co-optation and suppression governance strategies are causally prior to social unrest. These cleavages routinely have deep historical origins and, as our theory makes clear, are sustained as equilibriums by powerful political dynamics. Regional executives must manage the implications of these cleavages, but they cannot undo them. Social unrest is one way these cleavages manifest themselves.

CONCLUSION

Regional governance strategies are not idiosyncratic, a function of a leader’s whims. Rather, leaders confront common popular threats and resolve them in common ways. Specifically, we find that leaders govern subnational regions according to their ex ante level of support. In core support regions, where popular threats are unlikely to emerge, regional executives are locally embedded; they are drawn from the local in-group and serve long tenures, which enables them to craft better policy and so secure local support. Outside core regions, where popular threats are more likely, leaders limit the

36. Note that there is no evidence that regional executives in noncore support regions were subject to forced retirement at higher rates than those in core support regions.

37. Specifically, we code ACLED interactions 10–17—those that include the state as a main actor.

embeddedness of regional executives; executives are drawn from the out-group and are shuffled quickly, which helps ensure that they do not develop social attachments to the area that compromise their orders.

We find evidence in support of our argument, using microlevel data drawn from three presidents across two African countries. By illuminating patterns of regional governance across countries with different political cleavages, institutions, and popular threats, we gain confidence in our theory's external validity. Our findings, indeed, resonate far beyond Congo and Kenya. Mobutu Sese Seko ruled Zaire between 1965 and 1997, and although he understood that "sub-regional commissioners [who were] assigned to their own ethnic areas . . . better understand local problems" (Young and Turner 1985, 226), Mobutu nonetheless required them "to serve outside their regions of origin and [subjected] them to frequent rotation" (Schatzberg 1988, 34). Our theory explains these patterns by understanding them as part of broader strategies of governance. Leaders co-opt where they can and suppress where they must.

These patterns are especially pronounced in Congo. Sassou Nguesso governs hostile regions with nonnative executives at an especially high rate and shuffles them especially quickly. We believe two factors may explain this cross-leader variation. First, popular uprisings constitute a more profound threat to Sassou Nguesso's survival than to either Moi's or Kibaki's. Accordingly, Sassou Nguesso may have even stronger incentives to employ suppression in Congo's southern regions. Second, Sassou Nguesso confronts especially weak institutional constraints. Congo's bureaucratic institutions were largely destroyed by the 1997 civil war, and so Sassou Nguesso may be able to employ suppression more aggressively in Congo's southern regions—and co-optation more liberally in northern regions—than either Moi or Kibaki. To be clear, these explanations for cross-leader variation are tentative. Still, they suggest new possibilities for cross-country research: how variation in regime threats and existing bureaucratic institutions condition regional governance.

More broadly, our results suggest that suppression is costly. In regions where leaders are less popular *ex ante*, they employ management strategies that render them even less so over time. Regional executives who are not locally embedded pursue inferior public policies, increasing the area's frustration with the regime. By increasing the probability of dissent, the suppression equilibrium is self-reinforcing. But leaders are forced to accept this risk, because the region's *ex ante* level of hostility forces them to privilege the loyalty of regional executives over local welfare. Although it is outside the scope of this article, we regard the long-term effects of the suppression strategy as a critical topic for future research.

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