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ABSTRACT

The literature on democratisation emphasises the contribution of political parties, and in that context the importance of party institutionalization. But this concept remains relatively unexplored. Our article first considers the relationship between party institutionalization and party system institutionalization, pointing out that they are not necessarily convergent. We then review the existing literature on party institutionalization, indicating weaknesses and contradictions, before offering our own analytic model. In the final section we identify some of the key considerations arising when this model is applied to the particular circumstances of democratic transition in the Third World.

KEY WORDS ■ democratic transition ■ party institutionalization ■ party system institutionalization ■ Third World

This article is about the concept of party institutionalization, with particular reference to the experience of the 'new democracies' of the former Third World. In the vast and growing literature on democratic transition and consolidation there is widespread agreement that political parties and party systems must play a vital role, whether in Africa (Clapham, 1993; Sandbrook, 1996), Asia (Diamond, 1989) or Latin America (Dix, 1992; Rueschemeyer et al., 1992; Norden, 1998).[1] Further there is a general perception that the contribution of parties gets increasingly important as the process evolves and is especially central to successful consolidation.

There is much less agreement on which particular qualities individual parties should have, or what kind of party system is most conducive to democratic governance. In this context, different criteria have been cited – for instance concerning the ideal number of parties, the degree of ideological polarization, the relative merits of two-party, three-party or dominant party systems and the relationship between parties and underlying social and cultural cleavages. But the criterion which has received most emphasis,

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especially in relation to democratic consolidation, is that of party *institutionalization*. The need for institutionalization is underlined in many of the discussions cited so far (Lewis, 1994; Diamond, 1989; Dix, 1992) and is the central theme of Mainwaring and Scully's recent edited volume on party-system building in Latin America (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995).

While there is considerable convergence on the need for party institutionalization, there is much less clarity, or indeed consistency, as to what institutionalization involves. Sometimes the term is used without further explanation. Alternatively the author invokes the definition and criteria suggested by Huntington (1968) or by Panebianco (1988). More critical and independent theorization is very unusual.[2]

Secondly, and as a consequence, the notion of institutionalization that is employed has been developed largely in the context of western industrialized democracies and is, indeed, in a sense a distillation of their distinctive experience. It has not always sufficiently disentangled what is essential to party institutionalization from features that have historically or contingently been associated with it. Nor has it been elaborated through an application to parties in a more 'Third World' environment, where circumstances (discussed further below) may differ from the developed democracies in a number of pertinent ways. What are the requirements of and barriers to party institutionalization in such a context?

The discussion which follows begins by considering how the institutionalization of individual parties may relate to party system institutionalization. There is almost no explicit consideration in the relevant literature of this relationship although individual party institutionalization and the institutionalization of the party *system* are neither the same thing nor necessarily and always mutually compatible. We then explore the concept of party institutionalization as established in the academic literature, pointing out problems and inconsistencies in the way the term has been elaborated and suggesting a possible analytic framework. The third section draws on empirical studies to examine the likely problems and prospects for party institutionalization understood in this way, in the new Third World democracies.

Parties and Party System Institutionalization

The main focus of this analysis is on individual parties. But before considering them more directly, we need to examine their relationship to party systems. In the party institutionalization literature, there is a tendency to elide the issue of party institutionalization with that of party *system* institutionalization, the implication being that the institutionalization of single parties must contribute to the overall institutionalization of the party system and thence to democratization.[3] In this section we unpick some of the conceptual confusion that has resulted from this elision, suggest what should

be some of the main dimensions or criteria of party system institutionalization and begin to explore the relationship and possible tensions between the institutionalization of individual parties and the party system.

We would argue that in analysing most kinds of party system (excepting perhaps *de jure* or *de facto* one-party systems), it is advisable to distinguish between party and party system institutionalization. However in the present discussion, we are particularly interested in party and party system institutionalization in the context of democratic transition. To the extent that the process of party system institutionalization is seen as contributing to democratic consolidation, the implication is that the type of party system must entail a certain level of competition. Obviously, for instance, the Mexican party system is institutionalized, but until recently no party other than the PRI has had any realistic chance of winning major offices. *How* competitive a party system must be can not be specified exactly, but clearly our focus needs to be on party systems that are competitive to some degree. The question we are posing concerns the relationship between institutionalization of individual parties and that of competitive party systems.

So what do we mean by (competitive) party system institutionalization? Mainwaring and Scully (1995) (who, however, appear to ignore the possibility for conflict between party and party system institutionalization) suggest criteria for 'democratic' party systems. In such systems, they maintain, there is stability in the rules and nature of interparty competition, major political actors accord legitimacy to the electoral process and to parties, political parties have 'somewhat stable roots in society' and party organizations matter.

While we cannot devote the same extended consideration to this question as we shall devote to the dimensions of institutionalization for individual parties,[4] we suggest that party system institutionalization comprises a number of dimensions. Anticipating our analysis for individual parties, it may be helpful to think both in terms of internal and external-regarding aspects, and of structural and attitudinal elements. First – the internal aspect – a party system refers to the relationship between parties themselves. In a competitive party system that is institutionalized one can expect continuity among party alternatives, enhancing prospects of electoral accountability. This is the structural component. The attitudinal counterpart is that the parties accept each other as legitimate competitors, essential to the notion of political opposition.

To determine whether a party system is institutionalized, however, we need to examine not only the relationship between its individual party components, but also the party system's external relationships with other parts of the polity. The structural dimension is especially concerned with the party system's interaction with the state. Clearly a basic prerequisite for competitive party system institutionalization is a sufficient degree of autonomy from the state. At the same time, while parties in democracies are 'private' associations, because their activities affect the public at large not

only their supporters, in all political systems they are subject to some regulation, and, to varying degrees, to state support. The more parties, collectively, and their activities are supported by public measures, such as public subsidies, access to media and legal protection for their existence, for instance in the constitution or in ordinary laws, the more the party system can be said to be institutionalized. Again the attitudinal dimension has to do with the public's attitude towards the party system, notably its degree of trust in parties as institutions and commitment to the electoral process. In practice, trust in parties as institutions is a problem in many of the new democracies[5] although we should note that declining trust is also part of the phenomenon of party decline in established democracies (Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995).

So, to return to our earlier question, does the institutionalization of individual parties necessarily contribute to these features of an institutionalized (competitive) party system? How interdependent are they? Clearly party system institutionalization is the outcome of a range of developments, only some of which have to do directly with the constituent parties themselves.

Still in many respects these requirements for party system institutionalization, if they do not directly converge with those for party institutionalization, are mutually supportive of or at least compatible with them. Thus continuity in party alternatives and stable patterns of party support will benefit from, and create an environment conducive to, the institutionalization of the constituent individual parties. Individual parties will benefit from an ethos of mutual acceptance amongst parties collectively. Public trust in political parties as a whole could only be to the benefit of individual parties.

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

service is available for the independent press (Darnolf, 1997; Molokomme, 1991).

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

A second area of conflict could arise when a major source of institutional strength for a party is its *identification with an exclusive ethnic or cultural grouping*. This may take the form of a number of different parties each representing a distinct social group, as in the case of ethnically-based parties in many African countries. It can be argued that when only one party monopolizes the electorate within each group, competition does not really exist. In this case, electoral entrenchment, which in other contexts is seen as a positive aspect of institutionalization of the individual party, is detrimental to party competition and to the prospect of democratic governance (Sandbrook, 1996).[6] Alternatively a major, popular party may appeal on the basis of a form of religious chauvinism whose ultimate consequence could be the repression of secular or religious minority viewpoints and politics (examples discussed further below include India's BJP and the FIS in Algeria). That is, the very opportunity for party institutionalization provided by exclusive forms of cleavage, above all religion and ethnicity, could be at odds with the institutionalization of the party system, through restricting the possibilities for cross-party competition, and undermining the ethos of mutual acceptance amongst parties as well as the confidence of at least a section of the public in political parties.

The relationship between party institutionalization and party system institutionalization, specifically here competitive party systems, is then clearly highly complex and it would require a more extended treatment to do it full justice. What we hope to have established, however, is that it needs to be analysed logically and through reference to empirical cases, rather than assuming unproblematic convergence.

Party Institutionalization – Refining the Concept

But even if we leave aside the relationship between party and party system institutionalization and concentrate on the individual parties themselves, we encounter numerous inconsistencies and ambiguities in the way that institutionalization has been conceptualised. In shaping our understanding of the process and features of party institutionalization, two writers have been

pre-eminent and we should begin by briefly rehearsing their arguments. To some extent the 'father' of the concept is Samuel Huntington who made it central to his *Political Order in Changing Societies*. In fact, Huntington in that work first discusses *political* institutionalization more broadly, but then argues that the criteria he derives can as well be applied to parties (whether to parties singly or to the party system is a question we shall leave to later). For Huntington, 'Institutionalization is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability' (1968: 12). He identifies four dimensions of institutionalization: adaptability, complexity, autonomy and coherence. *Adaptability* can partly be deduced from longevity, including the ability to survive a first generation of leaders, but also entails functional adaptation, for instance in terms of groups represented, or from opposition to government. Organizational *complexity* is measured by the number of sub-units. *Autonomy* refers to the degree of differentiation from 'other social groupings and methods of behaviour'. *Coherence* has to do with the degree of consensus within the organization on its functional boundaries and on procedures for resolving disputes that arise within these boundaries. Although in theory autonomy and coherence are independent characteristics, in practice they tend to be interdependent.

Panebianco, writing much later, focuses just on political parties, and specifically on parties in established democracies. By 'institutionalization', he understands 'the way the organization "solidifies" ', which he later elaborates as the process by which it 'slowly loses its character as a tool: it becomes valuable in and of itself, and its goals become inseparable and indistinguishable from it. In this way, its preservation and survival become a "goal" for a great number of its supporters' (1988: 49, 53). For this to happen, an appropriate internal incentive system needs to develop which provides both selective incentives for those with an interest in leadership and more collective incentives that foster diffuse loyalty to the party. In order to measure the *degree* of party institutionalization, Panebianco singles out two criteria: the degree of *autonomy* vis à vis its environment and the degree of internal '*systemness*' or interdependence of different sectors. Again he recognizes that autonomy and systemness will in practice be interrelated.

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

Levitsky (1998) points out that these two accounts of institutionalization have something else in common. There is a kind of disjuncture between the initial conception of institutionalization and the way this is elaborated and related to specific criteria. The initial conception emphasises what Levitsky, following Selznick (1957), calls 'value infusion'. This is when an organization becomes 'infused with value beyond the technical requirement of the

task in hand'. Thus Huntington talks about the way in which an organization 'develops a life of its own quite apart from the specific functions it may perform' and Panebianco likewise speaks of how the organization 'becomes valuable in and of itself'. However when it comes to elaborating the term, the specifications, particularly in the case of Panebianco, are above all to do with organizational elaboration and routinization in the narrow behavioural sense. Levitsky (1998) argues the need to distinguish these two aspects, or what we might call 'sources of cohesion'. He cites the case of Argentina's Peronist party – (Partido Justicialista, PJ) – which on his reckoning scores high on value infusion measures but in which rules and procedures are circumvented, manipulated and contested. This suggests that the two dimensions will not necessarily go together: parties could be high, or low, on both, but there could also be parties which were, like the PJ, strong on value infusion but low on organizational routinization (and possibly vice versa – as examples Levitsky offers some of the European Green parties).

One final further dimension of party institutionalization has been proposed by Kenneth Janda (1980), in his conceptual framework for a cross-national analysis of political parties. In fact he identifies institutionalization as being one of several aspects of the party's *external* relations, rather than a feature of internal organization. He suggests that an institutionalized party is one that is 'reified in the public mind'. Although in elaborating this idea, he seems to come closer to the value infusion notion examined earlier, he raises the issue of how the party is perceived by the wider society. The potential importance of this 'external dimension' has been subsequently underlined by Harmel and Svåsand in their analysis of the institutionalization of right-wing 'protest' parties in Norway and Denmark. They characterize it as involving the extent to which 'the party has become part of the "routines" of other relevant actors in ways which suggest that they consider it to be an "established party" ' (Harmel and Svåsand, 1989: 10).

The discussion so far has yielded a series of possible dimensions or criteria by which to give greater specificity to the notion of party institutionalization. These could be summarised as: *adaptability, systemness* (coherence/complexity), *'value infusion', external institutionalization* and *autonomy.* But there is disagreement as to how far these are all necessary aspects of institutionalization. Thus Panebianco, we have seen, questions whether party systemness will always promote adaptability but this leads him to exclude adaptability, or flexibility, from his criteria. Most writers on the subject omit external institutionalization. There is also disagreement about the necessity for autonomy. Implicit in Levitsky's argument is the suggestion that autonomy is not necessary for institutionalization, at least in the value diffusion sense. Janda had already raised this objection some time ago, citing with some justification the case of the British Labour Party and its relationship with the trade union movement: 'I believe that a party can be highly institutionalized and yet lack independence of other groups

(Huntington's "autonomy") . . . as the Labour Party in Great Britain' (Janda, 1980: 19). We return to the issue of autonomy below.

To some extent underlying this disagreement about necessary elements of institutionalization, is a weakness, running through the literature on party institutionalization, namely its failure to identify sufficiently clearly what the relationship is between these different dimensions and institutionalization. Are they causes or prerequisites; are they intrinsic characteristics; or are they indicators or consequences? Huntington, for example, has been criticized for conflating causes and effects in his four-dimensional model of institutionalization, leading to charges that the model is tautological. Not that it is necessarily easy to sort out these relationships and indeed a subjective element must inevitably remain in the way one chooses to understand 'institution' in this context.

Even if we can agree on dimensions of institutionalization, a final difficulty remains that these may not all be compatible but can pull in opposite directions. Or as Morlino (1998: 23) has recently observed, 'a form of institutionalization that displays simultaneously maximum adaptability and complexity and maximum coherence and autonomy seems virtually impossible'.[7] We have to ask how useful a concept (institutionalization) can be when not only is it multi-dimensional but its different dimensions are in tension with one another. It might be argued that it was more sensible to discuss the different dimensions separately rather than embrace them in one conceptual package. All we can suggest here is that most interesting and fruitful concepts in political science are multi-dimensional and riddled with ambiguities and tensions: if this objection was consistently applied, the discipline would have a severely depleted tool-kit.

Assuming, therefore, that the concept of institutionalization remains potentially useful, and taking into account the issues raised so far, we offer a possible approach. We begin by recognizing the need, elaborated in an extensive social science literature (North, 1990; Scott, 1995), to distinguish between institutions and organizations. Organizations are not necessarily institutions, and vice versa. ' "Organizations," to a variable extent and over time, are transformed into "institutions" ' (Scott, 1995: 18). Political parties are organizations, however rudimentary, set up more or less intentionally and with some kind of formal rules and objectives. But the process through which they become institutionalised is not identical with the party's development in purely organisational terms. Rather we suggest that institutionalization should be understood as the process by which the party becomes established in terms both of integrated patterns of behaviour and of attitudes, or culture. We suggest further that it is helpful to distinguish between internal and externally related aspects of this process. Internal aspects refer to developments within the party itself; external aspects have to do with the party's relationship with the society in which it is embedded, including other institutions. Within each of these aspects there will be a structural and an attitudinal component, yielding a simple, four-cell, matrix. Using this

	Internal	External
Structural	Systemness	Decisional autonomy
Attitudinal	Value infusion	Reification

Figure 1. Dimensions of party institutionalization

framework, we suggest a model of the central elements or dimensions of party institutionalization (Figure 1).

The structural aspect of the internal dimension is better captured by Panebianco's term 'systemness' than by 'organization'. What we mean by systemness here is the increasing scope, density and regularity of the interactions that constitute the party as a structure. Regularity implies a degree of routinization, and the development of prevalent conventions guiding behaviour. But this specification stops short of more rigorous criteria associated with 'rational' systems of organization. In the case of parties, organizational development has typically been understood in terms of the elaboration of a formalized structure and the building of mass membership, as in the traditional western party model, but this is not the only way a party can become institutionalized. It is true that in the case of the established democracies, institutionalization and strong organization have tended to go together, though the USA is arguably one important exception. Moreover one would expect strong organization in this sense to produce or reinforce systemness. But there is not a necessary association between the two.

For the attitudinal aspect of the internal dimension we use the Selznik–Levitsky term of 'value infusion'. This refers to the extent to which party actors and supporters (whether or not falling into a more formalized category of membership) acquire an identification with and commitment to the party which transcend more instrumental or self-interested incentives for involvement. It has to do with the party's success in creating its own distinctive culture or value-system and can be seen as an important aspect of party cohesion.

Turning to the external dimension, the structural aspect revolves around the issue of autonomy. As described above, this has been the subject of some disagreement amongst party theorists. The question of whether autonomy is a necessary element of party institutionalization seems to us important but it is not susceptible to a simple yes/no answer. We suggest that it depends firstly on the form of interdependence. As with so many of these analytic distinctions, there is a conceptually hazy but empirically common situation in which a party is neither completely dependent on a sponsoring institution or group nor simply in some neutral sense 'linked' to it (in the literature 'linkages' are generally regarded as a good thing (Lawson, 1980)). Where the party is clearly the dominant element in the relationship, a degree of interdependence could have very positive consequences, in terms of extending

resources (which could be vitally needed) and, indeed, of external institutionalization.

But this is likely to be affected in turn by the nature of the group or organization to which the party is closely linked. To offer a possible illustration of this distinction, Levitsky (1998) argues that the continuing close relationship between the trade union movement and the PJ in Argentina, rather than compromising that party's integrity or room for manoeuvre, may actually have helped to ensure its survival through long periods of political repression. This is partly because of the very top-down relationship that has prevailed between Peronist union officials, who were in the original corporatist model appointed from the centre and were subsequently likely to be coopted in reality if not in form, and the workers.[8] On the other hand the relationship between India's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the so-called paramilitary organization the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh (RSS) has been more problematic. It is the RSS that has imparted to the BJP its distinctive centralized, unified system of organization as well as helping to sustain its links with the 'grass roots', but the RSS has its own social, and increasingly political, project of Hindu nationalism, which has at times constrained the party leadership's room for manoeuvre (Jaffrelot, 1996).[9] The difference here may have partly to do with the differing roles of the Argentinian unions and the RSS in the formation of their respective parties, a point returned to in the following section.

Rather than specifying a need, *tout court*, for autonomy, some qualification is necessary. We suggest that a way around these complexities is to specifiy the party's need for a significant degree of *decisional autonomy*, or freedom from interference in determining its own policies and strategies.

Finally, as regards the external attitudinal aspect, reification refers to the extent to which the party's existence is established in the public imagination. As it becomes increasingly a taken-for-granted feature of the political horizon, individuals and institutions, including other parties, will more or less consciously adjust their expectations and aspirations accordingly.

We take these four elements of systemness, value infusion, decisional autonomy and reification as constituting the core of the process of party institutionalization, that is the process through which the party becomes established as an institution. This leaves still unresolved the issue of adaptability. It could be argued that implicit in the concept of institutionalization is the time dimension. The process of institutionalization itself takes time and on the other hand 'the concept of institution connotes persistence and stability' (Scott, 1995: 78). In the longer run, the survival of the party as an institution implies its ability to adapt, though we should note that adaptation is a rather less passive concept than simply persistence and stability. Moreover, adaptation implies adapting to pressures arising both from outside and from within the party externally (Harmel and Janda, 1994). Intuitively we might feel that the more institutionalized a party the more

likely it is to adapt and thus survive. However as suggested above, the different core elements of institutionalization are not always or necessarily supportive of adaptability. Nor of course will they necessarily develop *pari passu*. Thus a party characterized by a high degree of systemness and autonomy could thereby find itself isolated from the environment and its ability to accommodate new demands correspondingly constrained. Therefore, rather than including adaptability as a fifth core feature of institutionalization, it seems more appropriate to regard it as a likely but not inevitable consequence of institutionalization, leaving its exact relationship with institutionalization in any given case as a matter of empirical investigation.

While we suggest that this model of party institutionalization is useful both in identifying the key elements and in relating them to one another in terms of the central categorical dimensions – internal versus external and structural versus attitudinal – we need to be careful about what it is saying. Although in general, we might take these elements to be convergent – for instance we have argued that systemness and autonomy may be mutually reinforcing – this need not always or inevitably be so. Moreover the elements we have identified cannot be directly quantified and measured; this would require the further step of finding appropriate indicators. Taken together these considerations mean that we are not, on the basis of the discussion so far, in a position to somehow compute and aggregates scores for parties on these different aspects of institutionalization in order to arrive at a cumulative and comparative measure.

Nor are we suggesting that there is some optimum combination or recipe for party institutionalization that is in principle suitable for all parties. Rather, in practice we could expect some variation in the balance amongst these dimensions of institutionalization, creating different forms of party institutionalization For instance we might expect the institutionalization of parties built primarily around the appeal of a particular leader to be more dependent on value infusion than on systemness.

Finally there is no assumption here of an irreversible linear process. Although institutionalization in terms of the four variables will increase the party's prospects for survival, it is certainly no guarantee against regression or *de-institutionalization*. There is for instance an extensive literature on the 'deinstitutionalization' of India's Congress Party, although there is also some lack of clarity or consistency as to what this entails (Manor, 1981; Hardgrave and Kochanek, 1993: 258–9). In Latin America there has been talk of the deinstitutionalization from the 1980s of the formerly powerful Popular American Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) in Peru and still more recently of Democratic Action (AD) in Venezuela. Party deinstitutionalization may indeed have a special relevance in the context of democratic transition. Echoing our comments earlier about the interrelation of party and party system institutionalization, in the movement from one-party to multi-party regimes the deinstitutionalization of the incumbent party has often been a corollary of the institutionalization of new parties.

Party Institutionalization in the Third World

If the discussion so far has helped to clarify the meaning and criteria of party institutionalization, we need finally to consider how this process is affected by the circumstances of democratic transition in those regions that have conventionally been grouped together as the 'Third World'. The concept of a distinct 'Third World' has rightly come under considerable and growing fire in recent years (Randall and Theobald, 1998: 9–16). The countries conventionally grouped under this label have always been culturally diverse and the differences between them in terms of a range of economic and developmental indicators have steadily increased. Processes of economic and cultural globalization, accelerated by the collapse of the socialist 'second' world are widely perceived as reinforcing these trends and further undermining the coherence of the notion of a 'Third World'. Even so, there remain aspects of 'third worldness' – extreme poverty, economic dependence and associated with this limited external state autonomy, late industrialization, illiteracy, and so forth – that whilst not unique to countries of the (former) Third World or evenly spread amongst them, still tend to be concentrated there. Such features and allied cultural traits, including the strength of 'traditional' religious and ethnic bases of identification, have a potential bearing on the process of party institutionalization.

The actual timing and character of democratic transition in such countries are also likely to be relevant. Typically, and especially perhaps where external political pressures have played a significant part in bringing it about, countries in the 'third wave' of democratization have embarked relatively suddenly and with little forewarning or preparation on this process of transition. This obviously favours incumbent parties. Alternative competing parties have to form very quickly, either reconstituting themselves from the residue of earlier parties, or organizing from scratch: indeed it can actually be the announcement of forthcoming elections that calls parties into existence. The timing of transition is important in another sense. the coincidence of the 'third wave', or its later ripples, with the shift in the global ideological climate away from socialist values poses particular problems for would-be left-wing parties.[10] Global developments in communications technology also mean that in many parts of the Third World party institutionalization has been in the context of powerful mass media, especially television.

Historically political parties in the Third World have received much less scholarly attention than have parties in the western world and even in the developed state socialist world. In fact in some Third World countries – with India probably the best-known case – they have long been central political players but the more common pattern has been for the life of individual parties to be episodic and their political role quite marginal. This has been reflected both in the literature dealing with Third World politics and in that dealing more generally with political parties. By the 1980s a consensus was

indeed emerging that Third World parties were 'of marginal importance either as distinct institutions or in terms of their impact' (Randall, 1988: 1). Tordoff (1984: 120–1) talked about an actual 'decline of party' in Tropical Africa. Mainwaring (1988: 91), noting likewise the weakness of parties in Latin America from the 1960s, observed 'This pervasive discrediting of parties had as a side effect the delegitimation of scholarly work on parties.' With the new wave of democratization there has been a surge of interest in Third World parties, but this builds upon a legacy of political science neglect.

Drawing on this literature, we can now begin to assess how far and in what ways particular features that tend to be characteristic of political parties and their development in the contemporary Third World affect the degree to which our criteria of institutionalization can be met. The discussion is organized around our four institutionalization criteria or aspects but seeks to minimize repetition in the case of observations that are relevant to more than one criterion.

Beginning with the *internal/structural* dimension, we have understood this in terms of the party's degree of 'systemness', a concept we have sought to differentiate from more rigorous notions of organization. Amongst the party characteristics likely to have most bearing on systemness we suggest the following: the way the party originated and grew, its relevant resources and especially funding, the role of the individual party leader vs. the party organization as such, the role of factions versus the party as a whole and the implications of clientelism. We consider these in turn.

Panebianco has laid great emphasis upon the consequences for a party's institutionalization, of the manner in which it was founded, its **origins** or 'genetic model'. One key dimension of this genetic model, with clear relevance for party systemness concerns what could be called the process of 'party-building', the extent to which the party has been constructed through a processs of 'penetration' from the centre to the periphery (understood both in territorial and more organizational terms) or 'diffusion', in which the party emerged more diffusely out of 'spontaneous germination' from below. Broadly, Panebianco argues that the greater the element of penetration, the more strongly institutionalized a party is likely to become, but at the same time some element of both is desirable. This notion of party building through a combination of penetration and diffusion from below reflects European experience, but how realistic is it in a Third World context?

In the first place, this approach tends to assume that parties emerge and develop gradually. By contrast in the Third World, typically, over the longer term the process of party development has been regularly interrupted. In some cases, parties in the present wave of democratization have had a head-start where they can build on institutional foundations laid in an earlier period. For instance Munck and Bosworth (1998), seeking to explain why Chile's parties stand out in terms of institutionalization, identify the main reason in the existence of institutionalized parties prior to the coup of 1973.

In this case, the argument is that institutionalization survived military intervention. But in many of the 'new' democracies, general party development has been regularly interrupted. An example is Brazil where Power (1997) points out that there have been as many as seven different party systems since independence, and four since 1945. Secondly, as already noted, the process of democratic transition in this third wave has itself typically been foreshortened. There may be particular parties, closely linked to or even dominating the retreating authoritarian regimes, which have benefited from the restriction of party competition and the opportunity to extend their organization and build up their resources – an obvious example would be Taiwan's KMT, discussed further below – but other parties have had minimal time to organize and mount their campaign.[11]

A second issue with major consequences for the possibilities of structural consolidation is the availability of **resources**, especially funding. Third World parties are unlikely to be able to derive any significant income from membership dues. In contrast with the earlier experience of a number of west European countries, and as discussed more fully below, differences in the level and sequencing of social development, on the one hand and the impact of changing mass communications media on the other, have tended to limit the possibilities of the mass membership party in the Third World context. At the same time, given the circumstances of democratic transition, the escalating costs of election campaigns in many parts of the world mean that parties need funds if they are to compete effectively. The ruling parties of Malaysia (UMNO – the United Malays National Organisation) and Taiwan (KMT) – also Golkar in Indonesia but until recently there has been little possibility for meaningful party competition in that country – are according to Sachsenroder (1998) amongst the wealthiest in the world. They have been able to build their own massive business empires, giving them effective financial self-sufficiency. In contrast their opponents face tremendous difficulties in raising the necessary funding to pay for office space, staff, communication facilities and all the other requirements for effective electoral competition. Anticipating the following section, this incidentally helps to explain why individual opposition politicians with substantial sources of personal wealth so often play a dominant role in the creation and direction of new political parties, whether in East Asia, Latin America or even parts of Tropical Africa. The Democratic Progressive Party in Taiwan may have succeeded in bucking this trend. Before being legalized in 1986, it had a long record of opposition to the ruling KMT and popular support. Partly as a result of its identification with the indigenous Taiwanese (and opposed to Chinese mainlander) community, it has been able to collect funds from local business. Even so it was reported in 1997 (Guo et al., 1998) that the DPP was in serious financial straits. Its cheques were bouncing and there was no cash to pay staff salaries.

Third, the possibilities for increasing systemness are likely to be affected by the relationship between the party and its **leadership.** In discussing party

origins, Panebianco stresses the part played by 'charisma' in the party's formation, the extent to which it was created primarily as a vehicle for an individual charismatic leader. There will always be some element of charisma and it may indeed play a positive role in the early stages in helping to secure a cohesive 'dominant coalition', but almost by definition, charisma is antithetical to systemness and all institutionalization involves the 'routinization' of charisma. The more parties are based purely on charisma, the more ephemeral they will prove: 'they are parties which pass like a meteor over the political firmament, which spring up and die out without ever institutionalising' (Panebianco, 1988: 53).

This observation has particular relevance for the formation of parties in the new democracies. They are regularly criticised for being little more than the personal mobilization instruments for ambitious politicians. In Ihonvbere's view, African political parties, in particular, suffer from a 'pathological fixation on the leaders' (Ihonvbere, 1996: 21). Similarly, Amundsen (1997: 293) argues that in Senegal parties '. . . are more like entourages around the party leader than real party organizations with a fixed program'. Discussions of democratic transition in South Korea frequently note the extent to which party competition and the constant formation and reformation of parties have been a reflection of the ambitions of the 'three Kims' (Bedelski, 1994).

Where parties cannot build on a pre-existing organizational base and established identity, it is not surprising that they often consist of ephemeral vehicles for politically ambitious individuals with charisma and/or access to the necessary resources, or at least of largely opportunistic coalitions of such. Commitment to democracy and opposition to the outgoing authoritarian regime will provide insufficient 'glue' to hold them together much beyond the first set of elections, whether they win or lose. Developments in the mass media, as in the west, may reinforce this tendency. As Semetko has noted, 'in countries with nonexistent or developing party systems, news values or journalistic preferences for personalities and conflicts may actually serve to hinder the institutional development of parties and public attachment to them' (Semetko, 1996: 279). In a number of Latin American countries, perhaps most of all Brazil, the combination of a Presidential system with sophisticated and extensive media of mass communication is widely held to have contributed to the phenomenon of parties that are little more than temporary vehicles for the presidential ambitions of their leaders: the leaders use the media to appeal directly to the people.[12] In these circumstances, personalistic leadership could contribute at the initial stages to party cohesion and survival but in the longer run, and in the absence of effective routinization, it could seriously inhibit institutional development.

Leadership links to a further issue we need to address – **factionalism**. A tacit understanding in much of the literature is that factionalism**,** which tends to be endemic in Third World parties, is inimical to organizational cohesion, and therefore to institutionalization. The term 'faction' has been

understood in a variety of ways, but a widely accepted and broad definition is that of Beller and Belloni: 'any relatively organized group that exists within the context of some other group and which (as a political faction) competes with rivals for power advantages within the larger group of which it is a part' (Beller and Belloni, 1978: 419). Faction within parties can reflect any number and combination of different motives – for instance ideological or issue differences, social or cultural cleavages or personal leadership struggles. It is often represented as the antithesis of cohesion, as in Janda's measure of party organizational coherence (Janda, 1980). Tursan's account of the 'pernicious' role of faction within Turkish political parties demonstrates how undermining it can be of party institutionalization (Tursan, 1995). As against this wholly negative view, however, some mitigating arguments can be made. Firstly, it is recognized that 'factions can play a constructive role in the creation of a party system in cases of political transition' (Waller and Gillespie, 1995: 186), in circumstances where most parties are still in the process of formation and faction may have more substance than party. Second, even in more evolved party systems, faction does not necessarily undermine party cohesion, and it could be argued that at times the existence of internal factions increases a party's adaptability. This has for instance been argued in the case of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party: 'It is now widely believed that factionalism had positive effects in sustaining the LDP's predominant rule, as the change in party leadership (and therefore the prime minister) from one factional leader to another transfomed the party's public image and usually enhanced the popularity of the LDP government' (Kohno, 1979: 91). Another example of the compatibility of factionalism and institutionalization is Italy's Christian Democratic Party. What may partly make the difference in these cases is the extent to which faction itself is institutionalized, in the sense of being governed by mutually recognized procedures and constraints.

Finally we need to ask about the implications of **clientelism** for the party's development. Like faction, and often associated with it, clientelism is widespread in Third World societies and political parties. Neither economic growth in Latin America nor constraints on public expenditure associated with structural adjustment in Africa appear significantly to have diminished its hold. In the past, some political scientists stressed the positive role of patronage-based party politics in facilitating the growth of political parties in the face of overweening state bureaucracies[13] but, in the more recent literature, the existence of clientelistic relationships within parties and between parties and their supporters is widely regarded as inimical to party institutionalization. It undermines rules and regularised procedures, reducing the party constitution if there be one to a meaningless sham. It constrains the possibilities for concerted party leadership or programme-making. Recently in this journal, Warner (1997) has suggested that clientelism, or patronage, can undermine party cohesion by providing party politicians with the means and motivation to build up their own careers at the expense of the district and ultimately the party.

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

Turning to the internal/attitudinal dimension of party institutionalization, which we have labelled *value infusion*, two of the issues already cited seem of especial relevance. They are the nature of the party's relationship with some kind of popular base and the impact of clientelism.

Value infusion is likely to be strongest where the political party is identified with a broader social movement. The classic instance has been the European mass party, with its social base typically in the urban working class or alternatively a religious denomination, as described both by Duverger (1954) and by Kirchheimer (1966). The strength of the 'class-mass' party was its ability to appeal to an expanding socio-economic group, incorporated into the party through an extensive network of party organizations. In addition to the party itself, it relied on a number of affiliated organizations, such as trade unions and cooperatives. The party became the linchpin in a 'movement' by itself stimulating the development of numerous other types of organizations, everything from children's associations to funeral societies. This helped to incorporate the electorate into the movement and to infuse party supporters with identification with the movement as a whole.

As already noted in most Third World countries the likelihood of this form of class-mass party is remote. In some regions this simply reflects the level of development: as Bienen and Herbst observe, 'class still is not a salient cleavage in most African countries' (Bienen and Herbst, 1996: 26).[14] Although there has been significant industrial growth in a number of Latin American and Far Eastern countries, the circumstances of late or dependent development have tended to constrain opportunities for the political mobilization of labour on its own behalf. Specifically in South Korea, given its proximity to the communist North, attempts by the substantial industrial workforce to organize politically have been met with severe repression. The collapse of much of the communist world and growing global ascendancy of a neo-liberal outlook have for the moment further constrained the possibilities of political mobilization on a coherent left-wing platform.

While the scope for class-based parties on the classical model may be limited – Chile is generally cited as an exception – organized labour, as in

the case of Argentina's PJ, may help to underpin more populist or nationalist movements with which a political party is identified. A still more powerful source of value infusion can be the identification of members of a particular religious or ethnic community with their 'own' party. The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria, which was officially recognized in September 1989 and proceeded to dominate competitive party elections until military intervention in January 1992 was both a party and a political movement. It was the most organized and structured of the Islamic parties, but its precise social and political programme, beyond fervent identification with Islam and its Islamic vision of a future just society, was left vague enough to appeal to a wide range of groups (though by no means to all Muslims). In particular, according to Zoubir (1995) it commanded tremendous loyalty amongst the disaffected youth and poorest sections of Algerian society.[15]

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

The third cell in our scheme for party institutionalization (*autonomy: structural/external*) refers to the party's dependency on external actors. In discussing the origins of parties, Panebianco considers the implications of external sponsorship. He suggests that the presence of a sponsoring institution will tend to result in weak institutionalisation, since the leadership's source of legitimacy and the object of party organizational loyalties will be outside the party, vested in this external institution. As already noted, the contrasting cases of the BJP in India and the PJ in Argentina may provide an illustration of this point. On the one hand the RSS predated the BJP (it was actually founded in the 1920s) and was largely responsible for the formation in 1951 of the Jan Sangh, which was reincarnated in 1980 as the BJP. The RSS was, moreover, from the start highly institutionalized in its own right. On the other hand Peron himself from 1943 'regrouped the weak and divided Argentine unions into the regenerated CGT' (General Confederation of Labour), which thenceforth owed its particular allegiance to him or to his memory, that is to 'Peronism', a powerful but famously vague ideology (Manzetti, 1993: 36). However an exception to this pattern of the weakening effect of institutional sponsorship, Panebianco concedes, may be the case where the external sponsoring institution is not actually based in the same country; the example he gives is of the relationship between Comintern and various national communist parties.

Although both Panebianco and Huntington see autonomy as a necessary criterion of institutionalization, as we have already noted, the distinction between institutional dependence and *linkage* is not always clear. In the case of parties emerging in opposition to an established ruling party, with all its resource and other advantages, external sponsorship even from within their own society, may be essential. The absence or weakness of such sponsoring institutions, most obviously trade unions, or as in South Korea the positive prohibition on trade union involvement in party politics, may be part of the difficulty for new parties. Ihonvbere (1998: 26) criticizes parties in a number of African countries which have turned to the international donor community for support instead of cultivating links with national civic groups as a means of resource mobilization. In this way, he argues, new parties have become dependent on external supporters like aid agencies. However, and as acknowledged by Panebianco, some type of international support may actually contribute to internal party development. There exist a number of transnational party organizations, set up along ideological lines, that function as support organizations for new parties in multiparty systems. While this may give international actors an influence in the national development of a party system, this type of influence can nevertheless assist individual party institutionalization (and to an extent thereby party system institutionalization). Unfortunately to date in spite of the number of parties formed in new democracies, particularly in Africa and Asia, few of them are yet connected to these transnational party organizations.[16]

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

There is clearly a great deal more that could be said about party institutionalization in a Third World context but the preceding discussion has aimed to identify some of the key parameters. The implications of the discussion are not entirely straightforward. In evaluating the consequences of factionalism and clientelism, for instance, it is apparent that we should guard against making assumptions about how political parties work that are based on a particular, and increasingly outdated, model of European

party development. Nonetheless, the overall conclusion of this section must be that the circumstances of transition in perhaps the majority of the new Third World democracies are less than conducive to party institutionalization on any of its dimensions.

Conclusion

The strong assumption in the democratization literature that party institutionalization is a vital ingredient of democratic consolidation has not been accompanied by any extended examination of the notion of party institutionalization itself. The object of this article has been to subject existing conceptions of party institutionalization to more rigorous scrutiny, to suggest a more useful way of analysing it and to consider the experience of party institutionalization in practice in the context of democratic transitions in Third World countries.

We began by noting the tendency in the relevant literature to elide the concepts of party institutionalization and of party system institutionalization, thereby implying that they were in some sense mutually reinforcing. Focusing specifically on the case of competitive party systems, which are seen as a necessary element of working democracies, we suggested that this tacit assumption of convergence could not always be justified. In particular, there was likely to be a tension between the two levels of institutionalization when party institutionalization was markedly uneven. When party institutionalization drew heavily on identification with an exclusive ethnic or cultural grouping, this could be similarly problematic for the institutionalization of a competitive party system.

Turning to the concept of party institutionalization itself, we began with a critical review of the existing literature. Although a number of different elements of party institutionalization have been identified, accounts have varied regarding the interrelationship of these elements and which ones are the most important. There has also been a degree of confusion about the logical status of particular elements, whether they are intrinsic to institutionalization, or cause or effect. Characterization of these elements has often tended to reflect a particular western party experience, especially where party organization and membership are concerned. Drawing on this literature, but seeking to overcome the problems we have identified, we have suggested a simple analytic model that distinguishes between internal and external dimensions, and within these between structural and attitudinal aspects to yield four key elements: 'systemness', 'value infusion', 'decisional autonomy' and 'reification'.

Finally we have considered how this might be applied to the very specific circumstances of the 'actually existing' world of Third World countries in democratic transition. For each of our four aspects of party institutionalization we have suggested some of the questions about the party,

its development and relationships, that would need to be asked, looking at such issues as party origins, resources, party leadership, factionalism, clientelism and external sponsorship and other linkages. Whilst emphasising the need to avoid invidious comparison with a somewhat idealized, not to say outdated, model of party development in western Europe, the overall conclusion of this analysis must be that for perhaps the great majority of parties there are formidable obstacles in the way of institutionalization.

Notes

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1 This view is not universally shared. Schmitter (1992) argues that social movements and interest groups may be more decisive in the long run. The view also runs somewhat counter to recent arguments about the 'decline of party' in western democracies, as in contributions to Dalton et al. (1984), Lawson and Merkl (1988), Dalton and Kuechler (1990), and Mair and Katz (1994)
2 Exceptions in the general literature on political parties, which are discussed further below are Janda (1980), Harmel and Svåsand (1989), Levitsky (1998). Only Levitsky is discussing institutionalization in a 'Third World' context.
3 As one of our reviewers helpfully points out, this may partly reflect the fact that until recently the general party-related literature tended to focus on systems rather than individual party organizations. In this sense Panebianco (1988) was something of a trail-blazer in establishing a new research agenda focusing on parties themselves.
4 But for a rather fuller discussion, see Randall and Svåsand (forthcoming).
5 See, for instance, Steen (1996) on the lack of trust in parties in the Baltic states.
6 Such a danger is acknowledged in the decision in some African countries not to register parties formed on an exclusive, particularist basis. For instance, Tanzania, under the Political Parties Act, No 5 1992, §9 and §10, requires that parties be 'national' in character.
7 However, he is not referring to parties as such, nor does he develop this tantalizing perception much further.
8 However, an alternative interpretation emphasizes the extent to which union officials dominated the party organization in its early decades (McGuire, 1997).
9 We recognize that some political commentators, including adherents of the BJP, might disagree with this view. However, the experience of the BJP Government, from March 1998 to April 1999, seems to us to offer further confirmation.
10 This can in turn be argued to have implications for the institutionalization of party systems as a whole, since in (northern and western) Europe at least it is generally accepted that parties of the left acted as pace setters in the institutionalization

process. The argument goes right back to Duverger's (1954) thesis of organizational 'contagion' from the Left.

11 A further twist comes when opposition parties summoned into existence at fairly short notice, soon after find themselves in power: the period for institutional consolidation is doubly truncated. Such rapid electoral success may actually hinder institutionalization because of the party elites' preoccupation with running the government, as examplified by left-wing parties in Greece (Spourdalakis, 1998), Portugal and Spain (van Biezen, 1997), in southern Europe, or the MMD in Zambia.

12 The classic case was the 1989 Presidential victory, in Brazil, of Collor de Mello, leader of the newly formed and obscure National Reconstruction Party – see, for instance, de Lima (1993).

13 The original formulation of this argument is Riggs (1963).

14 For a fuller discussion of the relationship between political parties and social cleavages in the Third World, see Randall (2001).

15 Zoubir may, however, exaggerate the 'mass' character of the FIS.

16 Parties in Latin American and Caribbean countries are fairly well represented in international party federations, but for Africa there are only six in the Socialist International, two in the Liberal International, five in the Christian Democratic International, and a solitary one in the International Democrat Union, the federation of conservative parties.

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