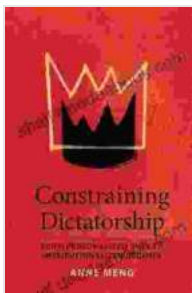


From Personalized Rule to Institutionalized Regimes: The Political Economy of Autocratic Survival

Autocratic regimes, characterized by their concentration of power in the hands of a single individual or a small group, have long been a subject of study for political scientists and economists. One key question in this field of research is how autocratic regimes manage to survive and perpetuate their power over time.



Constraining Dictatorship: From Personalized Rule to Institutionalized Regimes (Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions) by Anne Meng

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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In recent years, scholars have increasingly recognized the importance of political economy factors in understanding autocratic survival. This article examines the political economy of autocratic survival, focusing on the transition from personalized rule to institutionalized regimes.

Personalized Rule

Personalized rule is a form of autocracy in which power is highly concentrated in the hands of a single leader, who often holds absolute or near-absolute authority. This type of regime is typically characterized by the absence of institutionalized mechanisms of power sharing and succession, as well as a high degree of corruption and rent-seeking behavior.

Personalized rule is often seen as an unstable form of government, as it is highly dependent on the personal charisma and legitimacy of the leader. When the leader dies or loses power, the regime is often unable to survive without undergoing a major transformation.

Institutionalized Regimes

Institutionalized regimes, on the other hand, are characterized by a higher degree of institutionalization, which refers to the existence of formal rules, procedures, and organizations that regulate the exercise of power. In institutionalized regimes, power is not concentrated in the hands of a single individual, but rather is shared among a broader group of elites.

Institutionalized regimes are generally seen as more stable than personalized rule, as they are less dependent on the personal charisma and legitimacy of the leader. They are also more likely to survive the death or departure of the leader, as the institutions provide a framework for the smooth transfer of power.

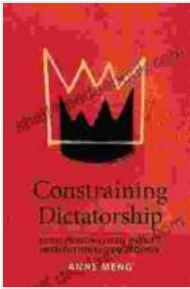
The Transition from Personalized Rule to Institutionalized Regimes

The transition from personalized rule to institutionalized regimes is a complex and challenging process. There is no single formula for success, but some key factors that have been identified include:

- **Resource dependence:** Autocratic leaders who are heavily dependent on natural resources or other sources of income are more likely to institutionalize their regimes in order to secure their access to these resources.
- **Institutionalization:** The process of institutionalization involves the creation of formal rules, procedures, and organizations that regulate the exercise of power. This can help to reduce corruption and rent-seeking behavior, and make the regime more accountable to its citizens.
- **Power concentration:** Autocratic leaders who are able to concentrate power in their own hands are more likely to institutionalize their regimes in order to prevent challenges to their authority.
- **Elite co-optation:** Autocratic leaders can institutionalize their regimes by co-opting elites into the regime, giving them a stake in its survival.
- **Rent-seeking behavior:** Autocratic leaders who engage in rent-seeking behavior are more likely to institutionalize their regimes in order to protect their ill-gotten gains.

The transition from personalized rule to institutionalized regimes is a complex and challenging process, but it is one that can lead to greater stability and longevity for autocratic regimes. By understanding the political economy factors that contribute to autocratic survival, scholars and policymakers can better understand the challenges of promoting democracy and good governance in autocratic countries.

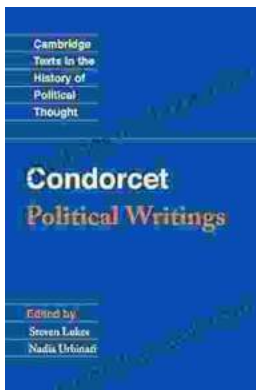
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