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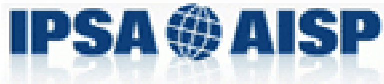

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Political Participation and Regime Stability: A Framework for Analyzing Hybrid Regimes

Joakim Ekman

Abstract. In past decades a number of countries that have moved away from outright authoritarianism have not transformed into democracies, but rather into regimes that combine democratic and non-democratic characteristics, sometimes labeled hybrid regimes. This article develops a framework for analyzing hybrid regimes. Empirically, the article examines three cases, Tanzania, Russia, and Venezuela, looking specifically at electoral participation and support for the opposition, as well as the potential for political change, i.e. public discontent and conditions for mobilization. The article demonstrates that the stability of hybrid regimes is related to the incumbents' ability to circumvent the opposition, but also to the lack of interplay between citizens and opposition parties.

Keywords: • Hybrid regime • Electoral authoritarianism • Public opinion • Political participation

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Over the past decades a significant number of countries that have moved away from outright authoritarianism have not transformed into democracies, but rather into regimes that combine democratic and non-democratic characteristics, where formally democratic political institutions, such as multiparty electoral competition, mask the reality of authoritarian domination. Many of these electoral regimes are characterized by frequent abuses of human rights and disrespect for civil liberties, and are often plagued by widespread corruption. More recently, observers have pointed to a tendency among these regimes to denounce international democracy promotion, such as assistance to NGOs and civil society organizations (Carothers, 2006: 55–6).

In an emerging academic literature, these pseudo-democratic regimes are sometimes labeled *hybrid regimes* or *electoral authoritarian regimes* (Diamond, 2002: 24; Furman, 2007: 207; Levitsky and Way, 2009: 1–5; 2002: 51–2; Schedler, 2006: 2–6). In a recent contribution, Richard Snyder notes that this bourgeoning literature suffers from an overwhelming emphasis on the electoral process – i.e. how

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incumbent elites manipulate election outcomes – and that scholars have "thus overlooked other fundamental dimensions that are critical for analyzing regimes" (Snyder, 2006: 220; see also Gel'man, 2008: 157). This article seeks to enhance our understanding of modern electoral non-democratic or hybrid regimes by looking at the role of ordinary citizens in such systems.

Drawing on international composite indices of democracy and political development, the first part of the article provides the reader with an overview of the countries of the world that fit the "hybrid regime profile" implicitly suggested in the recent literature on ambiguous semi-democratic or semi-authoritarian regimes.

In the second part of the article, the focus is on a more narrowly defined set of countries: Tanzania, Russia, and Venezuela. Drawing on public opinion surveys, the article examines to what extent ordinary citizens in these countries find it worthwhile to participate in elections and vote for opposition parties. More specifically, the second part of the article examines participation and public opinion in *three types of hybrid regimes*, trying to identify crucial differences and similarities, in order to develop a framework that may be used for analyzing the stability of hybrid regimes that utilizes both election data and public opinion data. Such a framework has been absent in recent academic debates on hybrid regimes (Schedler, 2006: 13–14; Snyder, 2006).

Identifying Hybrid Regimes

The global development of democracy has resulted in an impressive body of literature on democratic transition and consolidation. Scholars have thoroughly analyzed emerging democracies in Latin America, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Asia, identifying not only positive developments but also problematic consolidation processes. Many new democracies have been unable to make a clean break with the authoritarian past. However, in most previous studies of regimes that combine democratic and authoritarian features, such regimes have been perceived not as semi-authoritarian but as partial or diminished forms of *democracy*, moving towards consolidation (Levitsky and Way, 2009: 2–3; McFaul, 2002: 212–13). Recent developments in many parts of the world show that this is indeed not always the case. Instead, a short period of optimism and democratic progress has been followed by an authoritarian backlash, where "democracy" in reality has been reduced to a set of formal institutions without true democratic substance (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 51–2; McFaul, 2002: 232–4). It makes little sense to analyze such countries from a transitional perspective. Indeed, some scholars argue that the "transition paradigm" of the 1990s incorrectly assumes that democratizing states are always moving in a linear direction, from authoritarian rule to democracy (Carothers, 2002; McFaul, 2002: 242–4). Accordingly, the established paradigm runs the risk of overlooking the *sustainability* of hybrid regimes.

More recently, scholars have argued that we should be clear about what we are doing when analyzing hybrid regimes – these are not poorly functioning *democracies* but new forms of *authoritarian regimes*. This entails a break with the transition paradigm. Drawing on the scholarly debate, we may identify a number of political arenas crucial for the maintenance of hybrid regimes: the electoral arena, the executive and legislative arena, and the judicial arena (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 54–8; 2009: 6–14). Also, the role of the public stands out as a distinct dimension, albeit a dimension somewhat neglected in the literature.

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The *electoral arena* is perhaps the most obvious point of departure (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 54; Schedler, 2002). Typically, in authoritarian regimes elections do not exist or are merely façades where electoral competition is in reality eliminated. Totalitarian regimes need not even bother with a democratic façade, since ideology has provided an alternative (Furman, 2007: 207). In hybrid regimes, by contrast, elections serve as a source of legitimacy and, consequently, may be bitterly contested. Even if tainted by a certain level of manipulation and abuse of state power, for example in the form of uneven media coverage and harassments of opposition candidates, elections are regularly held and as a rule are free from excessive fraud. Consequently, the incumbents have to take elections seriously (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 53–5; McFaul and Petrov, 2004: 30).

The second arena comprises *executive–legislative relations*. In outright authoritarian regimes real legislatures do not exist or, if present, are so firmly controlled by the ruling executive or the ruling party that there are de facto no checks and balances between the executive and legislative branches. In hybrid regimes, parliaments may be ever so weak, but they can still function as potential platforms for the opposition (Furman, 2007: 217; Levitsky and Way, 2002: 55).

In general, hybrid regimes adhere to a weak form of rule of law, where the government regularly attempts to subordinate the *judiciary*, the third arena. This is often done by means of bribery and extortion, and, if possible, by appointing and dismissing judges and officials (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 56). Simply put, hybrid regimes combine formal judicial independence and incomplete executive control. Institutions such as the supreme courts or constitutional courts tend to function not only as arbiters of constitutionality and legal principles but also as advocates of the current regime (Brown and Wise, 2004).

The *public*, finally, is a crucial dimension when analyzing hybrid regimes. Although incumbents may manipulate election results, this can be costly and may ultimately bring them down. This is actually what we have seen happen in the colored revolutions in Serbia (2000), Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004), and the Kyrgyz Republic (2005). When analyzing the sustainability of hybrid regimes, we should thus also take notice of the levels of public discontent and the potential for such discontent to bring about political change (Furman, 2007: 235–6).

Next, we turn to empirical measurement, utilizing various composite indices and country rankings currently in the public domain. The idea is to identify the countries of the world that fit the hybrid regime profile noted in the literature, i.e. political systems that combine regular democratic elections with a number of democratic deficits, such as corruption, lack of press freedom, and poorly working systems of checks and balances between the executive and the legislative branches of government.

Table 1 summarizes our findings. Freedom House's *Freedom in the World* and the *Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index* (2006) have been used as points of departure. The 2007 *Freedom in the World* lists 60 political systems in the world as "partly free." In Table 1, 30 countries identified by the Economist index as "hybrid regimes" have also been included. The latter – which covers 167 political systems in the world – is a composite index, encompassing five dimensions: electoral process; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Countries are classified into four types: full democracies; flawed democracies; hybrid regimes; and authoritarian regimes.

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TABLE 1. *The Hybrid Regime Profile in the World*

Partly free countries or hybrid regimes	Competitive elections	Significant levels of corruption	Lack of democratic quality	Problematic press freedom situation	Poor civil liberties situation	Lack of the rule of law	Hybrid regime indicators
Russia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Venezuela	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Bangladesh	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5
Malawi	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	5
Colombia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	4
Ecuador	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Guatemala	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	4
Lebanon	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	4
Malaysia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	4
Nicaragua	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Paraguay	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Philippines	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	4
Sri Lanka	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	4
Tanzania	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	4
Timor-Leste	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	4
Albania	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	3
Bolivia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	3
Bosnia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	3
Ghana	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	3
Honduras	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	3
Macedonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	3
Senegal	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	3
Turkey	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	3
Moldova	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	2
Montenegro	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	2
Serbia	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	2

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Croatia	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	1
Romania	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	1
Armenia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	–
Bahrain	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Burkina Faso	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	–
Burundi	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Cambodia	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Central African Rep.	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	–
Ethiopia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Gabon	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Gambia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Haiti	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	–
Hong Kong	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	–
Iraq	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Jordan	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Kenya	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	–
Kuwait	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	–
Kyrgyztan	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Madagascar	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	–
Mauritania	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	–
Morocco	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Mozambique	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	–
Nepal	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Niger	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	–
Nigeria	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Sierra Leone	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	–
Singapore	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	–
Thailand	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	–
Uganda	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	–
Yemen	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Zambia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	–

Sources: Economist (2006); Freedom House (2006; 2007); Reporters without Borders (2006); Transparency International (2006).

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It may be noted that six countries classified by the Economist as "hybrid regimes" are not rated as "partly free" by Freedom House; Russia, Iraq, Thailand, and Cambodia are considered to be "not free," whereas Ghana and Thailand are rated "free." We have nevertheless chosen to include these six countries in Table 1. Also, we have included four additional countries, the post-communist countries that Freedom House rates as "free" but Freedom House's *Nations in Transit* (2006) designates "semi-consolidated democracies" or "hybrid regimes": Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and Ukraine. All in all, we thus have a rather large sample of 59 countries as a starting point.

However, the whole point of using the label "hybrid regimes" is to acknowledge that these regimes are something different from both transitional democracies and outright authoritarian regimes. Thus, we cannot settle for just the middle-ranking countries in various democracy indices, such as the Economist's hybrid regime category or Freedom House's partly free category. What we need to do, then, is to distill countries that are characterized not just by mediocre democracy ratings, but by a specific *combination* of scores: relatively high scores when it comes to elections, but low scores when it comes to other democratic practices. In the next paragraphs, we will develop empirical measures for, in turn, competitive elections, corruption, lack of democratic quality, press freedom, civil liberties, and the rule of law.

The condition of having free and fair elections is a basic requirement for a democracy. To establish the presence of a hybrid regime, by contrast, the requirement is closer to "elections make a potential difference." Here, we have utilized the Economist's 2006 *Index of Democracy* 0–10 scale, where 10 represents the top score. In order to make an assessment of the elections, the designers behind the Economist index have looked at a number of aspects. For example, are elections for the national legislature and head of government free and fair? Do opposition parties have a realistic prospect of achieving government positions? In Table 1, we have identified countries that score relatively highly on the subcategory "electoral process" (6 and above) in the Economist index. This cut-off point may seem random, but it nevertheless works to set the "real" hybrid regimes in our sample apart from collapsed states and authoritarian states; we make sure that we get a sample of countries where elections are not *too* flawed.

Corruption is another common feature of hybrid regimes, which according to the literature may be found in the judicial and electoral arenas (Carothers, 2002: 10–13; Levitsky and Way, 2002: 55–6). In order to assess the levels of corruption, we have utilized the country rankings provided by Transparency International's *Corruption Perceptions Index* (CPI). In Table 1, the description "significant levels of corruption" is reserved for countries that score below 3 on the CPI 1–10 scale, where 10 represents no corruption and 1 highly corrupt countries.

In democracy ratings, it is customary to include questions on the actual functioning of government. In order to assess democratic quality in this respect, the Economist has used a checklist comprising a number of questions: Is there an effective system of checks and balances on the exercise of government authority? Are sufficient mechanisms and institutions in place for assuring government accountability to the electorate in between elections? Is the civil service willing and capable of implementing government policy? When trying to identify countries that fit the "hybrid regime profile," we are primarily interested in countries that *do not* meet these criteria very well, i.e. countries that clearly lack checks and balances

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and government accountability – in short, countries that lack vital components of "democratic quality" (Morlino, 2004). In Table 1 we have again cut the scale in the middle: countries with scores below 6 on the Economist's 0–10 scale fulfill yet another criterion for a hybrid regime.

The press freedom column in Table 1 draws on the 2006 *World Press Freedom Index* by Reporters without Borders. The index ranges from 0 to 110, where 0 signifies the top rating – i.e. no press freedom obstacles – and 110 the worst rating. Countries with scores above 20.00 are characterized as having a "problematic press freedom situation." This is in fact a typical feature of a hybrid regime, where the incumbents desire to control the media, especially television (Furman, 2007: 221).

The Economist's democracy index utilized here also tries to assess the civil liberties situation in different countries. Is there freedom of expression? Are citizens free to form organizations and trade unions? A poor rating in this category – again, below 6 – helps us to point out countries with a distinctly "poor civil liberties situation" in Table 1.

As noted above, when trying to establish the presence of a hybrid regime, we should also take into consideration the degree to which the judiciary is independent of government influence. Are courts able to issue important judgments that go against the incumbents, or are the supreme courts and constitutional courts government-controlled tools? In Table 1, we have utilized the *Freedom in the World* (2007) country ratings, looking exclusively at the scores for the "rule of law" subcategory. The checklist consists of several questions: Is there an independent judiciary? Does the rule of law prevail in civil and criminal matters, and are the police under direct civilian control? The Freedom House subscores range from 0 to 16; the higher the points, the better is the rule-of-law situation. In Table 1, we have highlighted countries that score *below* 8. The interpretation is that these countries have a particularly problematic rule-of-law situation.

In the last column in Table 1, we have summarized the number of affirmative "hybrid regime" indicators. This additive construction is inspired by Larry Diamond's (2002: 29) call to develop a formal index of authoritarian competitiveness. The highest possible score is 6; only Russia and Venezuela manage to collect that many indicators. These are the most clear-cut examples of hybrid regimes in our sample. Thereafter, we find a number of countries with four or five hybrid regime characteristics: Bangladesh, Colombia, Ecuador, Georgia, Guatemala, Lebanon, Malawi, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Paraguay, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Timor-Leste (East Timor), and Ukraine. All of these countries fit the "hybrid regime profile." We also have a group of countries with only three clear-cut indicators: Albania, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ghana, Honduras, Macedonia, Senegal, and Turkey.

Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia end up with two unambiguous hybrid regime characteristics, respectively, and Croatia and Romania with just one. Arguably, these are flawed democracies rather than hybrid regimes. As for the remaining countries in Table 1, these are not hybrid regimes; they fail to meet the most basic criterion, that of competitive elections.

Participation and Public Opinion in Hybrid Regimes

Moving on to an analysis of political participation and public opinion in hybrid regimes, the focus will be on three countries only: Tanzania, Russia, and Venezuela. This sample represents a deliberate attempt to cover the *variation* within the

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hybrid regime typology. As noted by Levitsky and Way (2002: 60–2; see also Diamond, 2002: 23–4), although not without historical predecessors, competitive authoritarian regimes have proliferated in recent years. Levitsky and Way (2002) identify three different contemporary paths that have led to hybrid regimes (see also Levitsky and Way, 2009: 20–1).

The first path is the decay of a full-blown authoritarian regime. Typically, this path is characterized by an adaptation of formal democratic institutions, often brought about by domestic as well as international pressure: "Transitions of this type occurred across much of sub-Saharan Africa, where economic crisis and international pressure compelled established autocrats to call multiparty elections, but where many transitions fell short of democratization and many autocrats remained in power" (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 60). As demonstrated by Bratton and van de Walle (1997), political developments in Africa in the 1990s have been highly divergent. Still, Tanzania would seem to be a typical representative of the first hybrid regime path.

A second path has been created through the collapse of one authoritarian regime, followed by the emergence of a new (electoral) authoritarian regime. Post-Soviet Russia is a typical example, and similar developments have been observed in a number of other post-communist countries (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 61; see also Furman, 2007, and Gel'man 2008: 173).

The third hybrid regime path follows from the decay of a democratic regime: "In these cases, deep and often longstanding political and economic crises created conditions under which freely elected governments undermined democratic institutions – either via a presidential 'self-coup' or through selective, incremental abuses – but lacked the will or capacity to eliminate them entirely" (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 61). Venezuela is a typical case in point.

The three countries share some basic similarities: they are all electoral regimes with strong presidents and a recent history of increasingly authoritarian tendencies and, simultaneously, a recent record of economic growth. Russia under Putin could perhaps be described as a hybrid regime with outright authoritarian traits. Since 2005 Russia has been rated "not free" by Freedom House (Zimmerman, 2007: 14–15). Venezuela has also received more and more criticism in recent years, as Chávez has consolidated his power (Corrales and Penfold, 2007). In addition to these two most "typical" hybrid regimes (see Table 1) – one East European and one Latin American country – we have included one African country. In Tanzania, the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the party that ruled the country for decades, has managed to stay in power despite the formal introduction of a multiparty system and a democratic constitution (Diamond, 2002: 32–3; Levitsky and Way, 2009: 20–1).

In the following paragraphs, we will briefly capture the political situation in these three countries. Thereafter, we will summarize our findings and suggest a framework for analyzing the sustainability of the "hybrid regime" in relation to its citizens. In this way, we hope to contribute to the literature on electoral authoritarianism. Previous research tells us little about differences and similarities between hybrid regimes with regard to citizen participation and public opinion.

Tanzania: a Post-Authoritarian Hybrid Regime

After independence in the early 1960s, Tanganyika and Zanzibar united in the new state of Tanzania. For decades, Tanzania was dominated by Julius Nyerere

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and the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), the sole legal party. TANU was reformed in 1977 into the CCM. Nyerere's successor, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, president from 1985 to 1995, initiated a slow liberalization process (Lindberg, 2004: 11–13).

Still, the 1995 elections were marred by irregularities, and unfair media campaigns favored the ruling party. Benjamin Mkapa of the CCM received almost 62 percent of the votes in the presidential elections. His main opponent, Augustine Mrema of the National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR-Mageuzi), received some 28 percent. Furthermore, the CCM won 59 percent of the votes in the National Assembly elections.

In the 2000 elections, the Civic United Front (CUF) and Ibrahim Lipumba stood out as the main democratic alternative, but as in 1995 the opposition was weak and divided. The ruling CCM and incumbent President Mkapa emerged as election winners despite allegations of electoral fraud. The elections in Zanzibar were particularly marred by irregularities, with post-election riots in early 2001 resulting in more than 40 deaths. In the fall of 2001, the CCM negotiated with the CUF to resolve the Zanzibar crisis. The incumbents promised electoral reforms and an improved media situation. However, the implementation of these reforms was seriously delayed, and the electoral situation in Tanzania did not improve significantly (Freedom House, 2007).

The victory of the CCM in the 2005 elections came as no surprise: the party retained a substantial majority in the National Assembly (70 percent), and outgoing President Mkapa's handpicked successor, Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, was elected president by more than 80 percent of the voters. The CUF complained about a number of irregularities in the separately held Zanzibar elections, such as multiple voting, underage voting, and instances of military intimidation.

This brief overview of recent elections indicates that Tanzania is not a functioning democracy; nor is it a transitional democracy (Bratton et al., 2005: 15–18). The country's constitution provides for universal adult suffrage, and opposition parties were officially legalized in 1992. In reality, however, the CCM has continued to dominate elections and political life. The CUF has tried to challenge the CCM, but so far without success at the national level. There are other opposition parties, but as a rule these are fragile and divided. As noted by Lindberg (2004: 14), elections in African countries often follow an electoral logic whereby each geographical area is treated as an independent base, "where politicians compete for a (sometimes single) seat with little or no regard for what is happening in other constituencies or at the national level." This makes it very difficult for the opposition to unite in fighting the incumbents. Furthermore, parties in Tanzania are subjected to restrictions; for example, parties may not be formed on religious, ethnic, or regional bases, and, in line with this, the union of Zanzibar and the Tanzanian mainland may not be opposed.

An NGO act from 2002 imposes serious restrictions on the activities of NGOs in Tanzania, for example compulsory registration backed by criminal sanctions, the alignment of NGO activities with government plans, and the prohibition of national networks of NGOs. In addition, the 2002 Prevention of Terrorism Act gives the government considerable power to come down hard on any group or individual suspected of "terrorism." In addition, the judiciary is still heavily influenced by the CCM regime (Freedom House, 2007).

Looking at the outcomes of the Tanzanian elections, we note a tendency toward increasingly uneven competition. In the presidential elections, the gap

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TABLE 2. *Elections in Tanzania*

		Votes (%)	Gap	Turnout (%)
Presidential elections				
1995	Benjamin Mkapa	61.8	34.0	76.7
	Augustine Mrema	27.8		
2000	Benjamin Mkapa	71.7	55.4	84.4
	Ibrahim Lipumba	16.3		
2005	Jakaya Kikwete	80.3	68.6	72.3
	Ibrahim Lipumba	11.7		
Parliamentary elections				
1995	Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)	59.2	37.4	76.5
	National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR-M)	21.8		
2000	Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)	65.2	52.7	72.8
	Civic United Front (CUF)	12.5		
2005	Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)	70.0	55.7	72.0
	Civic United Front (CUF)	14.3		

Source: International IDEA (2006).

between the CCM candidate and the main opponent has increased continually since 1995, from 34 to almost 69 percentage units (Table 2). The same pattern is found when looking at the parliamentary elections. In 1995, the gap between the election winner (CCM) and the second largest party was 37 percentage units. In 2005 the corresponding gap was some 56 percentage units. This illustrates the ineffectiveness of the political opposition in Tanzania at mobilizing voters.

To make sense of the ability of the CCM to survive elections, the outcomes should be related to the political culture in Tanzania, that is, citizen attitudes toward politics. The Afrobarometer surveys of recent years (2002, 2004, and 2006) report a somewhat ambiguous picture of democratic attitudes among Tanzanians (Table 3). A firm majority (84 percent) support democracy as the best form of government, and 57 per cent claim to be satisfied with the way democracy actually works. At the same time, Table 3 highlights a distinct skepticism toward pluralism and freedom of expression (cf. Bratton et al., 2005: 65–75).

As for political parties, 60 percent of the respondents appreciate the need for a multiparty system. Still, in recent years (2001–5) as many as 37 percent of Tanzanians have agreed that "political parties create division and confusion; it is therefore unnecessary to have many political parties in Tanzania." Also, some 48 percent of the respondents have felt that "politics and government sometimes seem so complicated that you can't really understand what is going on." Even more discouraging is the apparent lack of appreciation for oppositional voices and critique of the regime. Rather, Tanzanian public opinion is biased toward unhealthy consensus: Table 3 reports that 44 percent agree that "government should not allow the expression of political views that are fundamentally different from the views of the majority," and 53 percent agree that the government has the right to silence newspapers. Furthermore, 60 percent agree that people in general are "like children" and that the government "should take care of them like a parent." Even more alarming is that as many as 63 percent of the respondents

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TABLE 3. *Political Attitudes in Tanzania, 2001–5 (%)*

Democratic principles and procedures	
Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. [Agree]	84
Satisfaction with the way democracy works.	57
Government should not allow the expression of political views that are fundamentally different from the views of the majority. [Agree]	44
Government should close newspapers that print false stories or misinformation. [Agree]	53
People are like children; the government should take care of them like a parent. [Agree]	60
Government should be able to ban any organization that goes against its policies. [Agree]	63
Political parties	
Political parties create division and confusion; it is therefore unnecessary to have many political parties in Tanzania. [Agree]	37
Many political parties are needed to make sure that Tanzanians have real choices in who governs them. [Agree]	60
Elections and political participation	
Think about how elections work in practice in this country. How well do elections ensure that the members of Parliament reflect the views of voters? [Not very well and not at all well]	39
Politics and government sometimes seem so complicated that you can't really understand what is going on. [Agree]	48

Sources: Afrobarometer (2004); Afrobarometer (2006); Chaligha et al. (2002). Approximately 1200 respondents per survey round. When the same item has been included in more than one round of the Afrobarometer, the figures in the table indicate the averages over time.

actually agree that the government should be able to ban any organization that goes against its policies.

The anti-pluralist tendencies among ordinary citizens seem to be an outcome of decades of one-party rule (Bratton et al., 2005: 35–43; Lindberg, 2004: 14–15). The CCM was an all-embracing multilevel organization rather than a conventional political party, and it would seem that most Tanzanians still consider the CCM to be the rightful ruler of the country (Bratton and Logan, 2006; Chaligha et al., 2002). In addition, the main opposition party, the CUF, suffers from its image as a Zanzibar (Muslim) party, which means that a vote for the CCM becomes the only alternative for many Tanzanians. At the same time, one can find dissatisfaction with elections: the Afrobarometer surveys indicate that in 2001–5 some 39 percent of Tanzanians felt that elections failed to ensure that the parliament reflected the views of the voters (Table 3).

Russia: A Post-Communist Hybrid Regime

Turning next to Russia, we will review a similar development, from an uncertain post-authoritarian phase to a full-blown hybrid regime. In the Putin era, scholars have pointed to widespread corruption, lack of respect for human rights, and significant press freedom violations in Russia (McFaul et al., 2004; Sestanovich, 2007; see Schleifer and Treisman, 2004, for an alternative perspective).

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Vladimir Putin came to power following some years of political turmoil. His predecessor Boris Yeltsin had been elected president of Russia in June 1991, prior to the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union. Under Yeltsin, Russia went through a period of radical market reforms that resulted in a severe economic crisis. In 1992–3 tensions between the executive and the legislative led to a constitutional crisis. On September 21, 1993 Yeltsin disbanded the Supreme Soviet and the Congress of People's Deputies. Aided by the military, Yeltsin remained in power after a spectacular armed attack on the parliament. A new constitution was subsequently adopted in December 1993, which endowed the president with considerable powers and at the same time provided for a legislature with relatively little influence over the government (Colton and McFaul, 2005: 13–15; White, 2007: 23–5).

The 1990s brought increasingly bitter conflicts in Chechnya. The economic situation in Russia improved somewhat after the 1996 presidential elections, which Yeltsin won with some 54 percent of the votes, but already in 1998 global economic changes brought about new financial crises and a severe depreciation of the ruble. The 1998 economic crisis soon led to recession, capital flight, and a sharp decline in living standards for millions of Russians. The stage was now set for a new order. In the 2000 presidential elections, former KGB colonel Vladimir Putin emerged from relative political obscurity and won with almost 53 percent of the vote. Gennady Zyuganov of the Communist Party, who received over 40 percent of the votes in 1996, garnered a meager 29 percent (cf. Wilson, 2005: 75–9).

Examining the outcome in the Russian presidential elections, we find – as in Tanzania – a tendency toward increasingly uneven competition (Table 4). This

TABLE 4. *Elections in Russia*

		Votes (%)	Gap	Turnout (%)
Presidential elections				
1996	Boris Yeltsin	54.4	13.7	68.8
	Gennady Zyuganov	40.7		
2000	Vladimir Putin	52.9	23.7	68.6
	Gennady Zyuganov	29.2		
2004	Vladimir Putin	71.3	57.6	64.3
	Nikolai Kharitonov	13.7		
2008	Dmitrii Medvedev	70.3	52.6	69.7
	Gennady Zyuganov	17.7		
Parliamentary elections				
1999	Communist Party	24.3	1.0	61.6
	Unity (Putin)	23.3		
2003	United Russia (Putin)	38.0	25.2	54.7
	Communist Party	12.8		
2007	United Russia (Putin)	64.3	52.7	63.0
	Communist Party	11.6		

Sources: McFaul and Petrov (2004: 22); Russia Today (2007); Russia Votes (2008); White (2007: 24).

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may be interpreted as an indicator of an ineffective political opposition. From the 2000 to the 2004 presidential elections, the gap between the winner and the main opposition candidate increased from 24 percentage units to 58 percentage units. The 2004 elections were basically free from irregularities, but media coverage was extremely uneven, in favor of Putin (Wilson, 2005: 110–13). In the most recent elections (March 2008), Putin's successor Dmitrii Medvedev received 70.3 percent of the votes, against Zyuganov's 17.7 percent.

The legislative elections have also been characterized by increasingly uneven competition. Back in 1995 the Communist Party managed to stand out as a credible opposition party, with almost 35 percent of the national vote. In 1999 the Communists just barely remained the largest party in the Duma, challenged this time by the new party Unity, associated with Putin. The 2003 parliamentary elections resulted in victory for Putin as well: the newly formed pro-Putin party United Russia received 38 percent of the vote. The Communist Party lost ground and managed to attract only 13 percent of the voters. Consequently, the Duma was now controlled by parties loyal to the Putin regime (McFaul and Petrov, 2004: 21–2). Outside observers claimed that the election result could at least partly be ascribed to unfair media coverage in favor of the pro-Putin parties. Also, United Russia chose not to participate in television debates, thereby giving the opposition no chance to come across to the voters as credible alternatives (McFaul and Petrov, 2004: 23–5).

In the December 2007 Duma elections, competition was even less manifest. United Russia received some 64 percent of the vote and the Communist Party again attracted only around 12 percent. As in 2003, United Russia refused to participate in debates with opposition parties prior to the elections. International observers such as the OSCE and Freedom House claimed that the 2007 parliamentary elections failed to meet conventional democratic standards.

The Russian economy recovered in the Putin era, mainly due to the weak ruble (which increased exports) and the rising prices of oil and gas. At the same time, ordinary Russians have as a rule not benefited from this economic growth. The money has remained in the hands of a new business elite with close ties to the political incumbents (who often have a background in the security and law enforcement services). Indeed, top administration members chair some of the largest corporations in the country (Kasparov, 2007; Treisman, 2007: 2). What is more, the incumbents have not hesitated to use the state apparatus to gain control over major corporate assets. In 2003 the Putin regime attacked Mikhail Khodorkovsky and his oil company Yukos, with allegations of tax evasions. The private company was dismantled, and the money went to Rosneft, the state-controlled oil company. It is presumed that Khodorkovsky's articulated support for the political opposition was the main reason for this attack (Gel'man, 2008: 175; Remington, 2006: 158–61).

Furthermore, in the Putin era political power fell into fewer hands. Despite the actual wording of the constitution, Putin introduced the practice of *appointing* the governors of the regions, who were – prior to 2004 – *elected* by the people. Putin also made it harder for small parties to enter the political arena, supposedly in order to strengthen the party system. The electoral threshold was raised from 5 to 7 percent. Furthermore, only parties with more than 50,000 members were entitled to run candidates in the elections. The law on political parties originally specified 10,000 members, but was amended in December 2004. Also, a party must

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have branches in more than half of Russia's regions in order to be registered to participate in the Duma elections (Furman, 2007: 221–3; McFaul and Petrov, 2004: 20–1; Remington, 2006: 170; White, 2007: 32–6;).

Russian NGOs have experienced increasing harassment in recent years. In early 2006 Putin signed into law a bill that imposed strengthened controls on NGOs operating in the country. The law required all local NGOs to inform the government in advance about every project they intended to conduct. In practice, foreign organizations too, such as Amnesty International, were negatively affected by this law. The state also tightened its control over the media by taking over private broadcasters and harassing investigative journalists (Reporters without Borders, 2006).

Table 5 provides a snapshot of Russian public opinion in the Putin era (2003–4). Only about a third of the respondents agreed that "democracy is preferable to any other kind of government," which means that a majority of Russians did

TABLE 5. *Political Attitudes in Russia, 2003–4 (%)*

Democratic principles and procedures	
Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. [Agree]	33
In certain situations an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one. [Agree]	38
It doesn't matter to people like me whether we have a democratic or a non-democratic government. [Agree]	29
Satisfaction with the way democracy works.	19
Experts should take major government decisions rather than elected leaders. [Agree]	77
Do you think the president of Russia should have the right to suspend the parliament and introduce presidential rule by decree if he considers this necessary? [Yes]	79
Political parties	
Do you identify with any political party? [No]	92
To what extent do you trust political parties to look after your interests? [No trust]	76
Multiparty elections do more harm than good. [Agree]	52
Elections and political participation	
What do you think people like yourself should do when there is a national election?	
Make every effort to cast your vote.	53
If it is not convenient, no need to vote.	28
No point in voting; doesn't do any good.	19
Do you think that having elections regularly makes government do what ordinary people want? [Not much and none at all]	67
How much influence do you think people like yourself have on what government does? [Little or none]	95

Sources: New Europe Barometer (2004); New Russia Barometer (2003); Pipes (2004). The annual samples comprised approximately 2000 respondents from all over Russia.

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not support democracy as the best form of government. Instead, 38 percent felt that certain situations justify authoritarian rule, and 29 percent simply felt that it did not really matter if they had a democratic or a non-democratic government. Only 19 percent were satisfied with the way democracy worked in Russia at the time.

Expert rule is regarded as a credible alternative to democracy: in 2003–4, 77 percent of respondents agreed that experts rather than the elected government should take major decisions. These attitudes seemed to spill over to support for strong-man rule: 79 percent of Russians agreed that the president should have the right to suspend the Duma and introduce presidential rule by decree. These findings are consistent with other studies that reveal strong public support for seemingly anti-democratic attitudes (Carnaghan, 2007; Pipes, 2004).

As for political participation, Table 5 presents an equally bleak picture. A surprising 92 percent of Russians did not identify with any political party in 2003–4, and 76 percent did not trust political parties to look after their interests. Some 52 percent agreed that "multiparty elections do more harm than good." Furthermore, about half of all respondents did *not* agree that voting in national elections was necessary: 28 percent felt that if it was not convenient, there was no need to vote, and another 19 percent agreed that there was simply no point in voting, since it does not do any good. When explicitly asked if having regular elections makes government do what ordinary people want, 67 percent answered in the negative. Finally, in 2003–4 a stunning 95 percent of Russians thought that they had little or no influence on what the government did (White, 2007: 26–8).

Venezuela: A Post-Democratic Hybrid Regime

Up until the early 1990s Venezuela was dominated by two parties, the social-democratic Acción Democrática (AD) and the Social Christian Party (COPEI). In the 1980s changes in the international oil market brought about an economic crisis. President Carlos Andrés Pérez of AD remained in office from 1989 to 1993, and survived two attempted coups in 1992, led by nationalist military officers, among them Hugo Chávez. However, Pérez was subsequently impeached as a result of corruption and replaced by Rafael Caldera (COPEI) in late 1993.

The economic crisis brought about social tension and political corruption, all of which resulted in popular discontent and disillusionment with politics. The stage was thus set for Chávez, who re-emerged in the December 1998 elections with a populist, anti-establishment, and anti-corruption message. Chávez took office in February 1999, and Venezuela began its transition to a hybrid regime (Canache, 2002: 65–6; Schamis, 2006: 30).

A new constitution was soon drafted, which strengthened the presidency and introduced a unicameral National Assembly. The Senate was eliminated, and new national elections were subsequently held in 2000 which confirmed Chávez's popular support. The new constitution created a more polarized political situation, by raising both the advantages of holding office and the costs of being in opposition. Following 2000, public financing for political parties was banned. In 2001 the polarization was further accentuated as Chávez obtained the right to rule by decree in certain policy areas relating to property rights. Chávez threatened to seek similar rights to control public education. The opposition then took to the streets. Throughout 2001 and 2002 the political opposition, civil society

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organizations, and business groups staged a number of large-scale demonstrations against Chávez (Coppedge, 2003; Corrales and Penfold, 2007: 100–2).

In April 2002 a military coup backed by powerful business groups attempted to remove Chávez from office. The provisional government that was installed also tried to dismiss the National Assembly, which only worked to marshal support for Chávez. He was quickly reinstated as president, and soon regained control over the military. However, Chávez could not as easily control the public. In October 2002 one million people demonstrated in the capital Caracas, challenging the regime and calling for new elections. A general strike followed that lasted for 62 days but failed to force Chávez from office. The opposition was weakened but managed to collect enough signatures to force a recall vote on Chávez's tenure in office. As a response, the incumbent president introduced health care reforms and literacy programs. As it turned out, his tactics worked. His opponents failed to force a recall of the presidency in the popular referendum, finally held in August 2004. The opposition, organized as the Democratic Coordination, had actually managed to collect more than three million recall petitions, and some 42 percent voted in favor of ending Chávez's presidency before the completion of the constitutional mandate. Still, 59 percent of the voters nevertheless supported Chávez (Corrales and Penfold, 2007: 102–3).

The old political parties in Venezuela, supported by the traditional elites – the AD and COPEI – as well as a few small opposition parties, have failed to become accepted as credible alternatives to Chávez. Following the defeat in the 2004 recall referendum, the political opposition was shattered. Reports of the ability of the government to misuse the automated voting system (the *Maisanta* database) to trace the identity of voters were used as an excuse to boycott the 2005 parliamentary elections, which resulted in a total pro-Chávez electoral victory: all 167 seats in the National Assembly were claimed by the Movimiento Quinta República (MRV) and its supporting parties (Corrales and Penfold, 2007: 103). The international community deemed the elections to be more or less free and correct, but turnout, at around 25 percent, was very low.

Chávez has ultimately been more successful than the opposition at electoral coalition building. Chávez formed the MRV in 1997, and since 1998 the leftist Patria por Todos (PPT) has cooperated with the MRV. In the 2005 parliamentary elections, the MRV and PPT joined forces with a faction of the socialist Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) in the election coalition Bloque del Cambio.

In recent years authoritarian tendencies in Venezuela have increased. In the 2006 elections Chávez was re-elected president by 63 percent of the voters. Social democrat Manuel Rosales was the main opposition candidate, but managed to marshal the support of only some 37 percent of the citizens. In January 2007 the National Assembly granted Chávez the right to rule by decree. These extraordinary powers were restricted to 11 specific areas and a period of 18 months, starting from February 2007. This was possible since the parliament at the time consisted exclusively of pro-Chávez parties. In May 2007 private broadcaster Radio Caracas TV (RCTV) was forced off the air because of its alleged involvement in the 2002 attempt to remove Chávez from office, and replaced with the state owned TEVES. Chávez has thus substantially improved his ability to control the political agenda (Corrales and Penfold, 2007: 110–11). According to Freedom House (2007), the press situation in Venezuela is "not free" (Reporters without Borders, 2006).

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More recently, Chávez has proposed a series of reforms to further strengthen his presidential powers, including a constitutional reform that would allow him to run for office again, after his term ends in 2012. This pattern is in fact typical for authoritarian leaders – the president moves on from suppressing genuine opponents to creating conditions that make it impossible for *any* opponent to emerge (Furman, 2007: 225). The reforms were approved by the National Assembly, but ultimately rejected by the Venezuelans in a popular referendum held in December 2007.

Looking at the Venezuelan elections, we may see a pattern that we have also noted in Tanzania and Russia: elections have become increasingly uneven in recent years. In the presidential elections, the gap between the election winner and the main opposition candidate has widened, from 16 percentage units to 26 percentage units. A similar development may be observed in the outcomes of the parliamentary elections. In 1998 the gap between the election winner (MRV and its electoral partners) and the second largest party was only 4.7 percentage units. In 2000 the corresponding figure was some 33 percentage units. In 2005 the gap amounted to 60 percentage units since no real opposition parties participated in the elections (Table 6).

Chávez has come across to the public as a man of the people, who has redistributed Venezuela's oil wealth to the poor. While this "socialism of the 21st century" may be nothing more than a façade (Rodríguez, 2007), Chávez nevertheless has capitalized on the country's economic growth in recent years – and since 2003 economic growth has been spectacular, as the world price of oil has increased (Corrales and Penfold, 2007: 99).

Turning to public opinion, surveys from 2004 to 2007 indicate that Venezuelans in general are strong supporters of the *principles* of democracy: 69 percent of respondents agree that "democracy is preferable to any other kind of government," and only 13 percent feel that "in certain circumstances an authoritarian government

TABLE 6. *Elections in Venezuela*

		Votes (%)	Gap	Turnout (%)
Presidential elections				
1998	Hugo Chávez	56.2	16.3	58.3
	Henrique Salas Römer	39.9		
2000	Hugo Chávez	59.8	22.3	56.5
	Fransisco Arias Cárdenas	37.5		
2006	Hugo Chávez	62.9	26.0	74.7
	Manuel Rosales	36.9		
Parliamentary elections				
1998	Fifth Republic Movement (MRV) and MAS	28.8	4.7	52.6
	Acción Democrática (AD)	24.1		
2000	Fifth Republic Movement (MRV) and MAS	49.4	33.3	56.6
	Acción Democrática (AD)	16.1		
2005	Fifth Republic Movement (MRV)	60.0	60.0	25.3
	No real opposition (boycotted elections)	–		

Sources: Latinobarómetro Report (2005); Molina (2002); Political Database of the Americas (2006).

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TABLE 7. *Political Attitudes in Venezuela, 2004–7 (%)*

Democratic principles and procedures	
Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government. [Agree]	69
In certain circumstances an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one. [Agree]	13
Satisfaction with the way democracy works.	55
Political parties	
There are people who say that without political parties there can be no democracy, while others say that democracy can work without parties. What is closer to your view? [No parties, no democracy]	62
Is the work the political parties are doing good or bad? [Good]	44
Elections and political participation	
Some people say that the way you vote can change the way things will be in the future. Others say that no matter how you vote, things will not improve in the future. Which statement is closest to your way of thinking? [The way you vote can change the way things will be in the future]	68
Generally speaking, do you think the elections in this country are clean or rigged? [Clean]	53
Have you learned of someone who has been pressured or has received something in order to vote in a certain way in the last presidential elections? [Affirmative]	29
Politics is so complicated that people like us often cannot understand what is going on. [Agree]	40

Sources: Economist (2007); Latinobarómetro (2004–6). The samples comprise approximately 2000 respondents per year. When the same item has been included in more than one round of the Latinobarómetro, the figures in the table indicate the averages over time.

can be preferable" (Table 7). However, when it comes to evaluations of democracy in *practice* (Canache, 2002: 52), Venezuelans stand out as more critical. When polled in 2004–7, 68 percent of the respondents believed that their vote actually could make a difference, but only 53 percent thought that elections were essentially clean. Nearly one-third of respondents claimed to know about unfair practices in the presidential elections. Also, in recent years only about 55 percent have been satisfied with the way democracy works in Venezuela.

As for pluralism, 62 percent of Venezuelans polled in 2004–7 were in favor of a multiparty system, or at least agreed that "without political parties there can be no democracy." At the same time, Table 7 also demonstrates a rather widespread disillusionment with politics. As many as 40 percent of respondents agreed that "politics is so complicated" that ordinary people often cannot understand what it is all about, and only 44 percent thought that the political parties at the time were doing a decent job.

A Framework for Analyzing Political Participation and the Sustainability of Hybrid Regimes

This article has so far outlined a general picture of the political situation in three different hybrid regimes, trying to identify the role of the public in these political

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systems, as well as the potential for political change, i.e. public discontent and conditions for public mobilization. In order to develop a framework that may be used for analyzing the sustainability of hybrid regimes – and ultimately explain the variation in the capacity of incumbents in hybrid regimes to remain in power – we need to recapitulate our main empirical findings.

Tanzania, Russia, and Venezuela were selected to cover the variations within the hybrid regime typology (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 60–2). The three countries represent three distinct paths to new forms of electoral authoritarianism: the decay of a full-blown authoritarian regime, where the old incumbents have managed to stay in power (Tanzania); the replacement of one authoritarian regime by a new (post-communist) authoritarian regime (Russia); and the decay of a democratic regime, where the elected president uses his power to undermine the country's democratic institutions (Venezuela).

In Table 8 we summarize the empirical findings and highlight the critical elite–mass linkages that are relevant when trying to explain the variation in the capacity of incumbents in hybrid regimes to remain in power. A crucial feature, common to all three countries, is a *weak or ineffective political opposition.* The incumbents in Tanzania, Russia, and Venezuela have so far been successful in circumventing the opposition, making elections "safe." The three countries are all characterized by weak political competition, i.e. a pronounced electoral difference between the incumbents and the opposition. The tendency has been for the incumbents to make sure that this difference has increased from one election to the next. Also, this has resulted in weakened institutional accountability, as the presidents have faced progressively fewer constraints from the legislative branch of government. Here, our analysis of public opinion and political participation further adds to our understanding of the sustainability of hybrid regimes.

In all three countries, we have observed the inability of the political opposition to attract voters. Thus, the sustainability of hybrid regimes has not only to do with the incumbents' ability to circumvent the opposition, but also with the *lack of interplay between ordinary citizens and opposition parties.* Table 8 indicates that we should distinguish in particular between "first path" and "second path" hybrid regimes, on the one hand, and "third path" hybrid regimes on the other (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 60–2). In the post-authoritarian/post-communist countries (Tanzania and Russia), citizens care little for pluralism. Confidence in political parties is generally low. Citizens are indifferent or unwilling to participate in order to bring about political change.

Admittedly, cross-national comparisons of public opinion are nearly always problematic, simply because different concepts – such as "democracy" – carry different connotations in different national contexts. Here, however, this problem should not be overstated. In Tables 3, 5, and 7 we do have enough items to make a sound comparison of Russian, Tanzanian, and Venezuelan public attitudes toward elections, confidence in political parties, and political efficacy. While it may very well be true that democracy, for example, does not mean the same thing to Russian, Tanzanian, and Venezuelan voters, the survey evidence nevertheless lends itself to plausible (if tentative) conclusions about the nature of the political culture in the three countries.

In Tanzania, we have documented a political culture distinguished by unhealthy consensus: the importance of opposition parties and interest conflicts is generally not acknowledged, and freedom-of-speech restrictions are accepted (Table 3).

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TABLE 8. *A Framework for Analyzing Political Opposition, Citizen Participation, and the Stability of Hybrid Regimes*

	Role of the political opposition		Role of the public		
	Incumbents versus opposition		Citizen participation		
	Type of incumbent repression	Effectiveness of the opposition	Confidence in political parties	Turnout and confidence in elections	Public support for democracy
Tanzania Post-authoritarian hybrid regime	Unfair media campaigns, elections marred by irregularities.	*Low* Divided opposition; unable to mobilize voters in order to challenge the CCM through elections. The main opposition party suffers from its image as a regional party.	*Low* Support for multiparty system, but very weak public support for pluralism.	*Low to medium* Rather high turnout (median value 74.7). Dissatisfaction with elections.	*Low* Support for formal democratic procedures, but passive acceptance of restrictions on freedom of speech. Many citizens feel that they do not understand politics.
Russia Post-communist hybrid regime	Increasingly uneven elections and unfair media coverage. Opposition parties are crowded out. Harassment of NGOs and critical journalists.	*Low* Weak opposition; unable to mobilize voters in order to challenge the incumbents through elections. The main opposition party (the Communist Party) has lost ground in recent years.	*Low* Low trust in political parties, and very weak party identification. Lack of support for multiparty system.	*Low* Moderate turnout (median value 64.3). Indifference toward elections. Many feel that their vote does not count.	*Low* Support for strong-man rule and lack of support for democracy. Widespread apathy. Many people feel unable to influence politics. Popular support for the president.
Venezuela Post-democratic hybrid regime	Selective, incremental abuses of democracy. No large-scale electoral fraud. Tactical public spending and intimidations of the opposition as well as the general public.	*Low* Failure of the opposition to challenge Chávez; the traditional parties have failed to work as credible alternatives. Since 2004–5, the old party system has been shattered.	*Medium* Significant public support for multiparty system.	*Low to medium* Low turnout, fluctuating (median value 56.6). Dissatisfaction with elections but a majority feels that elections make a difference.	*Medium to high* Support for democratic governance. Many citizens feel that they do not understand politics, but a majority feels that their vote counts.

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Rather than a civic political culture, Tanzania is characterized by a "subjective" culture (Almond and Verba, 1965: 16–18; Lindberg, 2004: 13–14). All of this constitutes a serious obstacle for an effective opposition to overcome, despite public dissatisfaction with elections and relatively high turnout figures. Furthermore, the main opposition party (CUF) suffers from its image as a Zanzibar party. As for the *type of incumbent repression*, the ruling CCM party need not engage in large-scale manipulation, since the opposition cannot link up with any vivid civil society and challenge the incumbents through the regular elections.

In Russia, we have documented widespread indifference towards politics (Table 5). A majority of Russians feel that they cannot influence politics at all. Consequently, they care little for political parties, democracy, and elections. Politics appear distant, and strong-man rule is cynically accepted. This does not necessarily reflect a historically inherited Russian predisposition for authoritarian rule. As demonstrated by Carnaghan (2007: 265–81), ordinary Russians may also reject democracy and the market economy because they experience these as chaotic and unpredictable; they long for social stability and order. Putin's popularity has been part of the same package (Furman, 2007: 213; Pipes, 2004).

In the Russian case, a few more words of caution are due when it comes to survey evidence. This article has painted a bleak picture of Russian political culture, i.e. citizen attitudes toward democracy, parties, and political participation. A similar picture has been depicted in Pipes (2004), drawing on data from the Levada Center for the Study of Public Opinion in Moscow. At the same time, other scholars have documented a description of Russian public opinion that points in a more pro-democratic direction (Hale et al., 2004: 302). It is arguably not a matter of insincere responses being given to opinion research institutes. Rather, the problem is more one of the lack of consistent time series data. Responses to survey questions may depend heavily on the exact wording of the questionnaire, and thus differ from survey to survey. Ideally, we would have opinion data from the entire Putin era, where Russians had been asked exactly the same questions from year to year. Here, no such data have been available. Again, what we have been able to do is to present a snapshot of Russian political culture – and this snapshot tells us that in 2003–4 Russians in general were indeed skeptical toward democracy and multiparty elections.

During his terms in office, Putin profited from such sentiments, which at the same time were not supportive of the emergence of an effective political opposition. The crucial point for Putin was to control the elections, which was done through unfair media campaigns and higher and higher thresholds to keep potential outsiders out, and, to some extent, by harassing the genuine opposition and inventing fake opposition parties (Sestanovich, 2007; Wilson, 2005: 187–96). To sum up, Russia under Putin exhibits all the trappings of a hybrid regime. In March 2008 Putin's handpicked successor Dmitrii Medvedev won the presidential elections. For the time being, a more democratic development in Russia appears unlikely (Gel'man, 2008: 176).

As a "post-democratic hybrid regime," Venezuela is different. Here, too, we have noted widespread disillusionment with politics (Table 7). Early on, an erosion of trust in democracy and political cynicism provided a base of support for Chávez (Canache, 2002: 65–6). At the same time, we have seen how ordinary citizens *may* be called on to oppose Chávez; he faces at least a *potential* participant culture. Confidence in political parties is not entirely absent, as in

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Russia. The 2004 recall referendum in Venezuela was made possible by the fact that more than three million recall petitions were collected. In the 2005 legislative elections, millions of people deliberately abstained from voting. Furthermore, the fact that almost 63 percent voted for Chávez in 2006 should not be taken as an indicator of his uncontested popularity. There are large groups of people who are neither strongly for nor strongly against Chávez. Whereas the opposition has failed to utilize such voters, the incumbents have used both the carrot and the stick to put pressure on ambivalent groups. As for the type of repression, scholars have pointed to Chavez's tactical clientelistic spending: state resources have been used to buy votes. This has been combined with negative job discrimination against opposition sympathizers. It is no secret that government jobs, contracts, and subsidies go exclusively to loyal supporters. The administration has used this card frequently, making public the notion that it allegedly knows people's voting behavior (Corrales and Penfold, 2007: 104–10; Rodríguez, 2007).

The opposition has also suffered from a lack of internal unity and a decline in party identification among voters (Molina, 2002). At the same time, Venezuela stands out as the *least* stable hybrid regime in our sample, on account of the *potential* public opposition. Consider for example the December 2007 referendum, in which 51 percent of Venezuelans rejected a series of reforms that, had they been accepted, would have allowed Chávez to run for re-election indefinitely. In the absence of any future constitutional reforms, he will thus have to step down after 2012.

Public opinion aside, Table 8 tells us something interesting about the conditions for participation in hybrid regimes as well. Voter turnout is a classical indicator of popular participation, and generally understood to be an important aspect of the quality of democracy (Lindberg, 2004: 53; Morlino, 2004). In hybrid regimes, however, turnout is not necessarily a crucial dimension. As we have seen, a "subjective" political culture seems to go hand in hand with the *post-authoritarian/ post-communist* hybrid regime type. At the same time, the actual electoral turnout does not seem to make any real difference. Post-authoritarian hybrid regimes are thus not dependent on people abstaining from voting – quite the contrary, in fact: the regimes base their authority on "free" elections, where the media is tilted highly in favor of the incumbents from the very outset. In "post-democratic hybrid regimes," on the other hand, the political culture is different, closer to the ideal of a "participant" culture. This forces the incumbents to use other tactics, as we have seen. Instead of electoral manipulation, tactical public spending is combined with intimidation of the electorate. It would also appear that the incumbents in this type of hybrid regime have a lot to gain from low electoral turnout.

The framework suggested in Table 8 may thus be used to analyze different kinds of hybrid regimes, and may serve as a basis for future debate and research. For one thing, it helps us develop a clearer definition of "hybrid regimes" than that found in previous studies. Furthermore, the framework focuses not just on elections and the strategies used by incumbents to remain in office; it also underlines the crucial links (or lack of such links) between opposition parties and ordinary citizens. The incorporation of public opinion data and the focus on citizen participation help us account for the *dynamics* of hybrid regimes.

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