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**STRATEGIES OF REGIME SURVIVAL.
APPLICATION IN THE CLOSED AUTHORITARIAN REGIME**

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Abstract

This thesis studies how autocratic management and ruling is implemented in the context of closed autocracies. A typical case of the closed regime, Uzbekistan during Islam Karimov offers fruitful and understudied field for formulating hypotheses and drawing inferences. The application of the theory of subnational regimes appears to be informative towards differentiating various strategies of the city center to rule the territories. This thesis looks at two strategies of repressions and authoritarian management of subnational regimes and argues that these strategies of the ruling are connected and predetermine one another. The results reveal links between the two mechanisms. Specifically, intense repressions in the regions foreshadow dismissals of local governors and tend to be especially widespread in the regions with a lower level of economic development. Findings contribute to the broader layer of literature about the connection between two strategies and offer new ways of analyzing closed autocracies.

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Introduction

A distinct feature of authoritarian regimes is the use of violence as the 'ultimate arbiter of conflict' (Svolik 2013). This violence expressed in repressions, human rights abuses, media censorship, and prohibition of freedom of speech frequently serves as the key explanatory variable of authoritarian regime persistence (Escribà-Folch 2013). In the short run, this strategy indeed may neutralize threats and ensure stability. However, in the long run, autocrats still need to delegate power and rule, provide citizens with basic support to guarantee regime persistence (Croissant & Wurster 2013; Mares & Carnes 2009; Guriev & Treisman 2015).

The presence of both the ability to repress and necessity to govern is a toolkit of any dictator. Any power delegation entails a risk that this power and position may be used by actors to build their own base of support and overthrow the dictator (Frantz & Kendall-Taylor 2014). Thus, the dictator is faced with the task of when to use power and when to resort to repression. However, existing researches do not capture the situations and conditions when a dictator decides to use selective incentives or employ repressions. While researchers pay much attention to the authoritarian management in electoral autocracies (Boix & Svolik 2010; Gandhi & Przeworski 2007; Gandhi 2008; Reuter & Szakonyi 2019; Lust-Okar 2006) and dominant party regimes (Landry 2008; Gehlbach and Keefer 2011; Lin 2012; Sharafutdinova 2015), we still lack the understanding of what is happening in closed regimes. The application of the recent findings may be useful, but the very specificity of closed regimes -- the absence of any electoral competition and the dominance of no party -- prevents us from fully aligning with their findings.

The scarcity of studies and explanations of authoritarian management in closed regimes presents a **research problem**. Underdevelopment of this area happened due to the extreme difficulty of operationalizing and detect practices and rules of the regime. Closed and weakly institutionalized regime operate through informal rules, and invisibility of these rules hinders the

navigation within the regime as for actors, and as for the researchers who study these weakly institutionalized and closed regimes.

One way to approach the examination of the functioning of the closed regimes is to look at the strategies of the incumbent from a regional, divide-and-rule perspective. This tradition is rooted in studies of federal and decentralized democratic states (Gibson 2005), but scholars start adapting this model towards authoritarian countries as well (Gel'man and Ross 2010; Benton 2012; Chasquetti and Micozzi 2014; Giraudy 2013). Rather than viewing the regime as a single entity, researchers draw the disaggregated picture with several subnational regimes. If we would never know what is happening behind the scene, and how decision-making is actually done, then shifting perspective to the regional/territorial level enables us to trace how and when a dictator uses different strategies towards different levels and actors. Despite that, studies in this area are still underdeveloped, and we know a little about when the dictator creates these regimes, how to control and prevent rebellion.

That is why the thesis attempts to answer the research question ***How do central authorities control and monitor subnational regimes in closed regimes?***

I argue that to sustain and to control subnational authoritarian regimes, central authorities would use both subnational governor's dismissals and repressions in the regions. By answering the research question, I expect to reveal certain factors and conditions when authoritarian rulers decide to use authoritarian management either through means of repressions or reestablishment of local authoritarian regimes. Specifically, I demonstrate under what regional conditions dictators are likely to use repressions and how these repressions may cause political consequences expressed in the dismissal of the regional governors.

Uzbekistan, during the period of first President Islam Karimov, presents a typical case of a closed authoritarian regime: extreme repressions, restricted media, exceptional censorship, banned opposition, and absence of competitive elections. The regime survived within 26 years

despite economic and political isolation, the lowest economic indicators in the Central Asian region, and high inequality. All these factors beg the question about what made the regime persistent for so long. Partial answers done by previous studies highlight the importance of authoritarian management (Luong 2003; Ilkhamov 2004), the balance of power between regional elites (Gullette 2007; Tunçer-Kılavuz 2009; Collins 2002) and the employment of a widespread repressive apparatus (Jones et al. 2006; Olcott 2007; McGlinchey 2011). The Soviet system prearranged the emergence of powerful regional elites in the country. The power of the Soviet elites was exacerbated by the collapse of the Soviet Union, when they gained relative independence in the privatization of key assets and built their own financial base. This is a common scenario for many post-soviet countries in the region, but what draws attention in Uzbekistan are the strategies of President Islam Karimov to rule and govern in this fractionalized regime.

All the above makes Uzbekistan, on the one hand, a typical case, which is essential for the general population of closed autocracies. On the other hand, the importance of regional elite division that pushes central authorities to create subnational regimes and regime persistence for 26 years allows us to apply and test the theory of subnational authoritarianism as a strategy of autocratic management.

The contribution of the research is three-fold. Firstly, the thesis contributes to relatively new and understudied literature on sub-national authoritarianism in a non-democratic context as a strategy of authoritarian rule. Also, the current state of the literature devoted to Karimov's regime in Uzbekistan is unequally distributed in time. Most of the studies describe the situation in the country and its political constellation before 2003. As Markowitz (2016) rightly points out, scientific closure of the state starting from 2003 even discouraged researchers even to enter the field. Scientific closure also entails that the availability of any reliable and systematic data is rare, which prevents researchers from Uzbekistan systematically analyze the country and provide a testable hypothesis. Due to this, understanding of the political activities in the country usually

boils down to informal rulings and clan politics; thus, any other politics that unfold "behind the scene" can be barely approached on standardized accounts. Thirdly, the original dataset was gathered and used in the course of this study, may contribute to the general understanding of the repressions in Uzbekistan and enable us to have a systematic account of regime functioning that has never been done so far.

The theoretical predictions about regional variation in the strategies of authoritarian rule are quantitatively tested. The assembled dataset presents observations of different regional-level parameters throughout 14 years. To estimate the prediction about the intensity of repressions, we use the ordinary least square regression model. To overcome possible endogeneity problems, the model further specified with instrumental variables. The evaluation of the governor's survival is done with Cox proportional hazard estimation. In this model, we take as the event the year of governor's dismissal and as the time – the time of his tenure. This approach allows controlling for specific personal and regional parameters that may explain the likelihood of dismissal at the time of the event.

The structure of the thesis is the following. The first chapter reviews existing theories of regime survival. The first part tackles strategies that researchers tend to aggregate and ascribe to the regimes as an explanatory framework of regime survival. The second part unpacks existing approaches to study regime survival through a subnational authoritarianism framework. We specify there the type of threats that the regime may face and come up with the strategy that dictators utilize to iron out the situation. The second chapter is devoted to a specific case of Uzbekistan and highlights existing literature and researchers' ways to explain regime persistence in Uzbekistan. Specifically, it explains how the framework of subnational authoritarianism can be applied to the Uzbek case as a survival strategy. In the third chapter, I formulate the argument. Empirical testing of the argument is additionally supported by the discussion and prospects of the researches.

Chapter 1 Theoretical framework and studies of regime survival

1.1. Approaches to embark on a regime longevity study

The understanding of why some regimes manage to survive and endure for a long time while others collapse not even starting, turn from sporadic explanations into grand theories about worlds of non-democratic politics.

The seminal explanation of autocratic survival belongs to Bueno de Mesquita and his colleagues, who concentrate their attention on the winning coalition and the leader's ability to meet the needs of this coalition (De Mesquita et al. 2003). What is vital for researchers here is the size of this coalition. It is traditionally more significant in democracies and smaller in non-democratic regimes, which, as a result, affects the very nature of decision-making within the regime. The winning coalition is composed of the closest dictator's trustees and whose support to stay in power is crucial. Failure in the pleasing them may lead to the dictator's overthrow. Though theoretically idea seems to be very promising, the way it is calculated empirically (by mixing the Polity IV scores) fails to explain the radical changes within the coalition shifts that affect regime stability. Moreover, criticism of this approach often lies in the inattention to the group identity that makes decisions as a determinant of the duration. A prominent representative of this criticism, as well as the author of the theory built on group identity, is Barbara Geddes (Geddes 1999; Geddes et al. 2018). For Geddes and her colleagues, it is essential how power is structured within the governing group, and the more institutionalized the transfer of power in the group (one-party authoritarian regimes), the longer it will remain in power; the more personalistic the regime, the higher the risk that the death of the leader or his overthrow will lead to the end of the regime itself.

Following Geddes's attention to institutions, some authors demonstrate that it is the institutionalized approach of power transfer and competition for power that might explain regime endurance (Lust-Okar 2009). Indeed, the power contestation on the local level might create

competition, nurture policy-ideas shopping, allow to see and detect potential opposition and deliver necessary public goods at the lower levels of power (Gilley 2010). Power for Gilley, though, is not about political programs and decision-making but patronage that might be distributed once the candidate got access to the resources. Boix and Svolik (2013) demonstrate that some dictators may intentionally create institutions like legislatures and parties that, at some point, restrain them, as a platform for the opposition.

Overall, scholars from this school suggest that moderate competition tends to satisfy the basic need of the people on the local level, address the requests from the population on the competition, and guarantee regime survival. (Gehlbach and Keefer 2011; Brownlee 2008).

Studies above are by no means a complete list of how different researchers seek to explain the survival of the undemocratic regimes. The difficulties arise in the tradeoff between internal and external validities of the studies when, in a thorough explanation of one regime's endurance, the results we obtain are hardly generalized to a bigger population of cases. Simply because by emphasizing one of the tools in the context of one political regime, the explanation may miss out on some other key factors contributing to the prolongation of the regime.

An attempt to generalize the strategies of autocrats is made by Johannes Gerschewski (2013), who proposed a theory of stability based on three pillars. For Gerschewski, the stability of the regime depends on the legitimation of power, the cooptation of essential groups for the regime into power, as well as repression within the regime (Gerschewski 2013). Gerschewski's model is mainly criticized for inattention to external factors of regime stability, for example, external relations of autocrats (Koehler & Schmotz 2017), for the lack of economic parameters in the model be it external economic assistance or other macroeconomic indicators that could affect the result even if all three pillars are in place. Another significant criticism of the model is that Gerschewski does not seek to explain how these pillars work together (and do they work?) but looks at them in isolation (Schneider & Maerz 2017). Researchers here also try to empirically

show how a combination of different pillars produces different worlds of authoritarian politics (Schneider & Maerz 2017). Thus, on the one hand, Gerschewski generalizes the work done by researchers on a systematic explanation of the stability of regimes. On the other hand, he outlines the boundaries and ways of further research. So, each pillar may be seen as an umbrella term for a variety of practices in autocracies that serve regime resistance.

In addressing the economic account that Gerschewski fails to incorporate, one may think of a political-economic approach to regime duration. Most of these political-economic approaches to regime survival rely on the significant promise that autocrat wants to maximize its revenue, power, or both at the same time. Ronald Wintrobe makes an essential work on the incorporation of the economic variable in regime persistence in his book *Political Economy of Dictatorships* (2003). Wintrobe introduces readers to its theory with the dilemma that every dictator faces. The Dictator's Dilemma in a short way may be formulated as follows: the more dictator represses, the less he knows about its constituencies. Indeed, knowing about intentions and thoughts of citizens a useful thing that may prevent spontaneous rebellion, regime dissatisfaction, coup, and uprisings. Wintrobe comes from the proposition that this signaling function of dissatisfaction with the current state is much costly in dictatorships than in democracies. A solution that many dictators come up with is the combination of rent distribution to please the need of one group and repression to punish the demands or intentions of the other. Wintrobe suggests that these institutions of redistribution and repression are the core of each dictatorship (Wintrobe 2003).

It seems that Wintrobe's loyalty and repressions are similar to Gerschewski's cooptation and repressions. However, the absolute advantage of the Wintrobe is that these factors are put in the model and help to work out further predictions about dictatorial behavior, especially during the economic downturns.

Turning back to Wintrobe's theory, on the equilibrium crossroads of different levels of loyalty and repressions lie four as Wintrobe calls himself "archetypes" of dictatorships. Low levels

of repressions and low levels of loyalty are distinctive features of tinpot regimes. For a ruler in this type of dictatorship, the goal is to stay in power without much resources invested. So, the equilibria (and sustainable regime as a result) then might be achieved on the minimum point necessary for both loyalty and repressions. Following this, the reaction to economic improvements would lead to a decrease in the number the repressions. The opposite of the tinpot type is a totalitarian leader, whose strivings are to maximize power by all means: the more successful the country in economic gains than the same increase in the number of repressions. It the new equilibria that evolve when income is rising, thus the further proliferation of repressive activities is the new equilibria.

In the two other types, as Wintrobe posits, it is not the economic gains that help autocrat to build the support. In the timocracy (low loyalty high repressions), dictator more behaves like a roving bandit (Olson 1993), heavily taxing and devastating people and suppressing any acts of disobedience. The benevolent dictator is also in this typology, explained by a low level of repressions and a high level of loyalty equilibria. Wintrobe himself suggests that this is a rare example of Dictator and illustrates this type (unlike other modern examples) with the ancient Roman Empire.

Once the theory that can potentially explain regime longevity absorbing different consideration is determined, the research task then is to "measure" these loyalties and repressions. For instance, drawing on Wintrobe's theory, Philip Verwimp evaluates how the totalitarian nature of the Habyarimana - President in Rwanda sparked the most known violent genocide (Verwimp 2003). Previously explained with the divided nature of Rwandan society, Verwimp's approach is to reassess the genocide through lenses of loyalty-repression equilibria, and skewness to the side of repression. For the author here, the signs of loyalty were subsidized economic industries, farmers' support programs, and various loans, whereas repressions in his framework

presented by the instances of genocide. Nevertheless, we need to step back from Wintrobe's theory and look at the extensive literature that may provide us with several empirical and theoretical implications for further studies.

Scholars of authoritarian regimes emphasize the extreme use of repressions and violence as a mode of resolving conflict in autocracies (Svolik 2013). However, the main difficulty is that these repressions are quite challenging to evaluate empirically. On the one hand, we may see the state repressiveness as a generic term for any human right violations and prohibition on free speech, gathering, and distinct opinion (Wintrobe 2003). On the other hand, we may look at state repressiveness as a real mechanism (extrajudicial killings, imprisonments, tortures, political prisoners) to destroy the real or perceived opponents.

Studies of repressions, due to the extreme scarcity of reliable measurement, most often stand at the border of political science, psychology, and social psychology. For example, a recent study by Lauren Young argues with the generally accepted approach of rationalizing the actions of actors and experimentally assesses the general level of fear of people and their desire to join opposition forces (Young 2019). Young finds that fear (something that remains outside the scope of political science studies earlier) of people diminishes their desire to join opposition activities (Young 2019). In a way, repressions create signaling to other members, due to this decreasing the likelihood of mass protests.

Researchers also differentiate between the types of repression. For example, Shen Bay highlights two types of repressions: judicial and extrajudicial repression (Shen-Bayh 2018). Autocrats are inclined to resort to extrajudicial when it is necessary to punish the opposition or any other actors undermining regime stability. Authors have resorted to judicial, and as a result, processes open to the media and observers, punishing coalition members and by this action signaling to the rest of the elites the ramifications of the wrong-doing (Shen-Bayh 2018).

An interesting direction in distinguishing repressions is their distinction between targeted and widespread (Nugent 2017). In the first case, the state represses a specific group of people (ethnic, religious groups). In the second case, the repressions are not targeted, scattered around the whole population, and are not intended to punish any particular group of people. Depending on the type of repression, Nugent believes, we will expect a more or less polarized society concerning decision-making and the development of a single, focused policy.

As to loyalty, then the set of strategies varies here a lot. For Wintrobe, it is first of all pork-barrel projects (buy of support) and patronage and cooptation (Wintrobe 2003, p.32). For some other researchers, loyalty is targeted to the whole population and be expressed in generous public schemes and social policies (Guriev & Treisman 2015; Corrales 2004).

Even though researchers may point out some instances of cooptation of the political elite or opponents, to incorporate such cases into a comparative context seems to be more challenging. Gerschewski, while describing the model of three pillars, expresses doubt about the existing operationalizations of cooptation, and calls on scholars to search for more valid methods (Gerschewski 2013). Matt Buhler suggests "calculating" cooptation by tracking party affiliation of regional deputies, as well as its change over several electoral cycles (Buehler 2015). Taking the identity of the MP as the unit of analysis, the author then clusters the data and looks at the regions and the intensity of cooptation within a comparative context. It turns out that the change of party affiliation more often occurs in remote rural areas. Indeed, Buehler is not the first to pay attention to the cooptation of precisely regional (remote from the center) actors.

Researchers also distinguish between cooptation practices depending on what type of group regime coopts. There is a cooptation of elites and non-elites (Stacher 2012). The cooptation of the opposition is exercised as an act of pacification rebel elites. At the same time, this cooptation affords autocrat to detect threats (Frantz and Kendall-Taylor 2014).

While talking about cooptation, then patronage and clientelism became a means of communication. The particular case of patronage and clientelism are political machines. The notion started its life in American politics in the nineteenth century (Scott 1969) then fade away in the middle of the twentieth century to be revived again after the third wave of democratization and the development of electoral authoritarianism.

Machines are usually described as a system of patronage and clientelist ties on the city, a municipal or regional level which primary goal is to deliver as much as possible votes to its patron - incumbent party (Scott 1969). This factor explains its newly gained power in electoral authoritarianism. By and large, political machines can be considered as a specific case of patronage and clientelism, for the fact that patronage here grows in a new systemized and longstanding relations.

The other side of the coin is that patronage and clientelism do not necessarily serve the regime purposes. In some cases, such patronage may evolve as a "subversive clientelism": a situation where non-governmental oppositional parties replace the state as the primary provider of public goods and use these ties to mobilize people when it is necessary (Radnitz 2012). A typical example would be the Tulip revolution in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2005.

To summarize, this chapter went over the vital explanatory theories about the longevity of non-democratic regimes. These theories tend to explain the concrete strategies of the autocrats. In a way, "menu of manipulations," that dictator can use. These strategies may be boiled down to the cooptation of the opponents and loyalists, repressions of any subversive elements, and behavior. Less evident though in its ability to sustain regime is legitimation strategy, but here again is the question of operationalization of the legitimacy.

1.2. Subnational authoritarianism and the balance of power

The previous section gave an overview of how researchers approach the longevity of non-democratic regimes. As it became clear from the overview, despite various types of non-

democratic regimes, dictators there tend to use similar strategies of patronage and cooptation intertwined with repression to ensure regime persistence. To understand the politics of survival in autocracies, not only Center strategies might matter, but the nature of the threat to the regime, inasmuch as depending on the type of threat, varies autocratic strategies (Gandhi 2008). It might be a threat coming from the opposition, as well as the threat posing by the regime elite.

The situation and survival exacerbate in closed regimes, where most of the national politics exercised behind the scene. Thus, researchers can barely approach studying these regimes because it becomes challenging to look beyond the portrayed picture of national stability. One way of incorporating various threats is to look at it from a regional perspective. This would afford to see how dictator rules and answer to threats. Thus, this paragraph will add one more layer to the understanding of politics in the autocracies through a subnational framework.

Scholars of political systems usually define political regime as a treat that belongs to the whole political system in the country. Indeed, the very definition of political regime points out how power is transferred and exercised on the national level.

In contrast with that, the seminal study of Edward L. Gibson *Boundary control: Subnational authoritarianism in democratic countries* (2005) proposed researchers to shift their focus from national to regional levels. His idea was to dismantle one political regime on the numerous regional regimes that, despite the average democratic performance on the national level, still diverge on the regional (Gibson 2005). As a showcase, he was using Argentina, whose democratic performance on the national level was hindered by the existence of several regions with local non-democratic regimes.

Gibson wondered what allows sub-national regimes to persist during the overall democratization of the country. The answer that he comes up with, he formulates in the theory of “boundary control.” To sustain the local regime, the power of regional incumbent need to answer three criteria (Gibson 2005, p.26):

1. the parochialization of power,
2. the nationalization of influence
3. the monopolization of national–subnational linkages.

Parochialization of power refers to the establishment of the undeniable power of the local incumbent on the regional level. According to Gibson, no other party or group can exercise or claim power over the territory. Speaking of nationalization of the influence, Gibson refers to the specific abilities of the regional governor to represent the territory on the national level, take part in the decision making as a regional representative. In other words, regional authorities should be visible and influential not only within its territory but on the national level as well. Finally, under monopolization of the linkages, Gibson understands the specific and inclusive authority of the regional governor to have any connection with the center – be it financial flows or bargaining. An important clue here is that no other sources of information and communication may exist. Gibson's theory was originally planned for a democratic environment and monopolization refers to the containment of any opposition within borders, so that they cannot become an alternative source of information for the center and undermine the local regime. According to Gibson, all these factors ensured the conservation of the regimes despite changes on the national level.

Such disaggregation of the political regime on the small sub-regimes then further gained the development and for non-democratic contexts. A typical case of this development became the Russian Federation in the 1990-s. Vladimir Gelman and Cameron Ross adapted Gibson's model for the authoritarian context (Gel'man and Ross 2010), arguing that within one authoritarian regime, researchers still may contemplate numerous (semi) autonomous regimes.

By holding the same vital premises of boundary control, Gelman advances the theory and proposes to look at the relative strength of both center and national political parties. The author differentiates between three types of sub-national authoritarianisms (SNA) based on the different

degrees of two institutions: decentralized SNA, centralized party-based, centralized bureaucratic (Gelman 2010) (see Appendix 1).

Decentralized SNA is a scenario close to a fragile state. In the overall authoritarian context, play many independent actors setting up their local regimes within their territory, making their rulings. Gelman uses Russia in the 90-s as an empirical referent for this type of SNA. On how the country lives in this scenario, scrutinized by Gelman & Ross, as well as other researchers of disintegrated regimes, which lost the monopoly of violence. (Volkov 1999). Regimes with numerous conflicting actors are likely to persist for a long time. Local leaders have no incentives to stay within the state, as well as the central authority has no power and capacity to prevent secession and disobedience.

If on the national level acts strong party that deals with recruitment matters, appointment, and other local cadre selection and agenda-setting, then it is centralized party-based SNA. An example would be the Communist Party in China or Mexico in the time of PRI. A distinctive feature of such regimes is that acting strategies are institutionalized. Local leaders know how to be promoted, and the presence of the influential party usually predetermines the evolvement of political machines on the regional level to ensure that the party will win the elections. Here again, researchers set up several points of reference (Giraudy 2013) and proved that this type of regimes are the most robust and longstanding (Geddes et al. 2016).

As to centralized bureaucratic SNAs, researchers do not pay attention to this type. Probably, because this seems to be a natural continuation of the authoritarian regimes, and researchers prefer not to go into the details. This is how Gelman views this: "Governors remained fully subordinated to the Centre and mediated center-periphery relations, thus maintaining local SNA (*sub-national authoritarianism*) regimes as a logical continuity of nationwide authoritarianism" (Gelman & Ross 2010, p.5). Nevertheless, the implementation of autocratic governance through

artificially created regimes on the local level seems theoretically exciting and promising to study. For instance, how power is exercised on the highest levels is impossible to know.

Contrary to that, things of the regional matter are public like dismissal or appointment of the governor, and information is available for citizens. Thus, strategies here are traceable, unlike something that is happening at the very top of the regime. As Gelman writes, the centralized bureaucratic regime is self-enforcing and unlikely to be broken – only in case, central authorities will decide to do so. Similarly notes Giraudy, that asserting control over bureaucratized regime President "engage in SUR (subnational undemocratic regime) reproduction from above" (Giraudy 2013, p.62).

Eventually, what we see is that the center, in some cases, may build centralized bureaucratic SNAs. Unlike the initial idea of Gibson, where SNA appears in contradiction to the central power, the recent interpretations of the theory posit that the center may initiate the building of the regional regimes for specific reasons. If we further unpack these sub-regimes, what we see inside them goes along the theory described in the first section. Leaders still rely on repressions and cooptation within the regime to ensure Gibson's boundary control, governors mix strategies, and juggle with patronage and self-legitimation.

In many studies that have applied this theoretical framework, regional regimes are equal to the regional leader. Indeed, usually, it is the incumbent that builds up linkages, lines up the connection with local and national powers, and monopolizes these linkages. Though the institutional constellation that enables sub-national regimes may be fixed in the laws or Constitution, it is usually a person that spearheads the campaign. This concentration on personality also originates from the political machine's approach that highly utilized in studies of SNAs, and that was already mentioned as one of the strategies of autocratic survival. The political machine is a systematized way of exchange goods to votes (Gilev 2016). Delivering votes to the

incumbent originally the main purpose of machines, though this systematized system of exchange and relations between actors on the regional level, may also deliver some other goods.

Alexey Gilev makes an interesting comparison of scholarly examination of political machines and patronage as an attempt to find a black cat in a dark room with closed eyes (Gilev 2016). A distinctive feature of closed regimes and political machines within is that they are not codified and rest on informal, neo-patrimonial ties.

That is why this research area so often personified. It would be correct to say that it is the very informal ties that explain the success or failure of the regional machine and sub-national regime. So, researchers, during the performance of the political machine, usually specify the region and time or name of the regional governor who leads the region. That is why we can say that the following formula is correct:

Subnational regime = regional governor = political machine

As soon as the regional government appears to be an essential figure and a tool for the implementation of the national politics on the regional level, many studies were devoted to why and how these regional leaders are appointed. Li and Zhou (2005) examine why some governors in Chinese provinces were promoted while others were not. They found that it is economic performance and development of the region determine successful promotion and decrease the likelihood of dismissal (Li and Zhou 2005). Ora John Reuter and Graeme B. Robertson also undertake an attempt to explain regional variation in Russian gubernatorial appointments (Reuter and Robertson 2012). Unlike the findings of Li and Zhou, the economic development of the region is not significant in the tenure of the regional governor. What appears significant is the indicators of performance of the incumbent party on the regional level. If the party won the election and get many votes, the regional governor is likely to stay in office, and the opposite if United Russia failed to get the majority of votes in the region, then the governor is likely to be dismissed (Reuter and Robertson 2012).

At the same time, it is not necessarily that leaders may build up the local machine, and Russian studies show that some are more successful in doing this, some are less (Gilev 2014). It might also happen that these regimes of the regional levels may build their personal ties and patronage networks in opposition to the center. An excellent study of Scott Radnitz *Weapons of Wealthy* (2010) explains how the Center's failure in controlling and monitoring local level regimes ended up in the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan in March 2005. He advances the theory of subversive clientelism around the idea that clientelist ties may be built not only for Center purpose but against center as well and consequently mobilized against the existing national regime.

Radnitz's study pushes us to think about what prevents many regimes from mobilizing and acting against the central government? How and by using what mechanism state may counterattack existing subversive behavior on the local level. Theoretical lenses of subnational authoritarianism apply very well to the regimes with high elite fractionalization that goes along regional borders because the presence of this threat pushes regimes to build sub-regimes. Further, after the institutional environment is ready to set up these regimes, central authorities need to ensure that these new powers would not pose a threat to the regime.

Chapter 2 Case of Uzbekistan and application of theories

2.1. Regime persistence and Uzbek politics

The accumulated so far knowledge about Uzbekistan is quite extensive because researchers resorted to the various theoretical frameworks to study the regime in Uzbekistan. Started in 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed regime of first Uzbek President Islam Karimov existed up until 2016 when Karimov died.

Established theoretical tradition at the beginning of the 1990-s predominantly view politics in Central Asia as based on clan ties. These ties go deep into the history of the region, its specificities of life and habits. Despite desperate attempts of Soviet authorities to eradicate any kinship or paternalistic relations, it argued that the communist party only reinforced these ties by giving them more responsibilities on the regional level (Collins 2002). In fact, by the beginning of 1990, Uzbekistan had several active clans that spread their influence over crucial regions and critical spheres of economic activities in the state.

The distinctive feature of clans in Uzbekistan is their identity. Contrary to the rest Central Asian states, clan ties in Uzbekistan go beyond blood-based kinship, and territorial identity of the clans becomes a key identifier rather than a single-family name or blood connection. Thus, researchers tend to highlight the presence of the elites in every 14 regions. If one turns to map of modern Uzbekistan, then it becomes clear that for many clans, the current territorial division is similar.

The clan-based approach appears to be useful in explaining the transition and personalization of the regime in independent Uzbekistan. Along with Schmitter and O'Donnell, who argue for elites' pacts that initiate democratization, Collins takes this assumption and applies it to the Central Asian case. She posits that the very pacts between clans and families predetermine a relatively smooth transition from one regime to another (Collins 2002). One of the results of such "pact making" was first Uzbek President - Islam Karimov. His truly

communist career ladder and the fact that he does not belong to any clan made him a perfect figure for transition and power assertion. The presence of several influential competing groups in Uzbekistan also serves as an explanation of power personalization (Geddes, Franz & Wright 2018). The very nature of several competing elite groups and Karimov as a mediator allowed him to take power and gradually during the 1990s centralize power, not allowing any elite group to become dominant.

Clan optics, even though useful in understanding transition and power structure, fail to account formal side of policymaking. Moreover, the description of clan-based society supposes that such a structure is less likely to survive in the long-run (Collins 2009). Critics of clan politics often blame this approach for its overemphasizing the informal ties and consequently ignoring formal institutions like legislatures, budgets, economic orientation, and other regional characteristics.

Many experts in Central Asia heavily exploit institutional legacies of the Soviet Union to explain the current region condition, be it an extensive military presence that explains Soviet division (Marat 2009) or economic development (Blackmon 2005). Interestingly that almost every book and scientific article about this region would start with the "Soviet chapter," or even go more in-depth and looking at the roots of the phenomena in pre-soviet Russian empire colonization (Lipovsky 1995).

Despite many theoretical and empirical insights that the legacy approach can offer, it still has limited explanatory power towards the divergent regime and economic outcomes in Central Asia. To overcome this problem, researchers of Central Asia tend to include various intervening variables mixing legacies with geography and Russia proximity (Blackmon 2005), legacies, and international linkages (Akbarzadeh 2005).

In a seminal study on institutional change and political continuity, Pauline Luong (2004), among the first one tries to study Uzbek politics systematically. Her extensive study on

institutional change in Central Asian countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union tries to resolve the longstanding debate on agency and structure. Luong looks at the Central Asian countries as a big real-life laboratory of regimes with pretty similar initial settings (structure) and traces the divergent outcomes by concentrating attention on the actors (agency) (Pauline Jones Luong 2002). For instance, Luong retrospectively looks at the origin of regional identities in Uzbekistan (what earlier studies define as clans). She shows how Soviet tendency towards regional specialization made Tashkent, Fergana, and Samarkand key players (and as a result holder of critical economic assets) on the national arena and set their influential actors, that by the beginning of the transition controlled many resources within its area. The transition bargaining game (TBG) that the author introduces serves the purposes of illustrating how actors on different levels (regional and central) to bargain over the electoral system. Overall, her approach seems to be valuable in at least two points. Firstly, by admitting existed elites and clans, she steps forward and demonstrates how these divisions and bargaining resulted in the electoral institutions. Moreover, the insights that she obtains during the study from interviewing elite members and experts widen our understanding of the first two convocations in the new Karimov regime (1995 and 1999 accordingly).

Researchers also turn to the Uzbek economy to explain the regime and institutional paths the country has undergone. The point of departure for Luong and Wienthal is the resource curse and gas and oil possessions in the Post-Soviet space (Luong and Weinthal 2010). Their framework challenges the widely shared wisdom of resource curse, according to which the abundance of the natural resources in the state leads to worse institutional outcomes. In turn, for Luong and Wienthal, it is not the presence of resources *per se* that defines the quality of institutions but the ownership structure that can explain divergent outcomes within states with similar reserves. The research design is pretty similar to what Luong does while comparing electoral systems – most similar research design (Pauline Jones Luong 2002). Here authors also take several post-soviet states (Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan) since authors hold the

assumption that each country has the same quality of institution and presence of natural reserves before the Union collapse but ended up in divergent institutional paths by 2005.

If we proceed to keep track of the recent literature about Uzbekistan's regime endurance, it becomes evident that a big part of scholarly studies devoted to the extremely repressive nature of Uzbek authorities. Like a textbook example, the Uzbek government mix elite cooptation with the extensive and mostly targeted repressions in the state. More detailed, this part of the scholarly literature is described later in the Repressive state section.

To recapitulate, researchers exploited various ways to explain the Uzbek regime's persistence. Most of these researchers refer to the big picture of the country, though few touches upon specific strategies and ways how closed state work. Thus, the Uzbek case would be useful for studying and depicting these strategies.

2.2. Subnational regimes in Uzbekistan

The previous section indicated how those strategies typically ascribed to the survival of authoritarian regimes were trying to explain the regime's longevity of the Uzbek state. In the theoretical section on the subnational authoritarianism, we have indicated that depending on the nature of threats that challenge the regime, the regime may employ various strategies to push back the threat. Geddes, Frantz, and Wright, in their recent piece *How Dictatorships Work* (2018), use Uzbekistan as an illustrative case of the regime with fractionalized elites. These elites, if consolidated enough, got all resources to challenge the regime (Geddes et al. 2018). Nevertheless, the authors argue that the threat is alleviated by a dictator who employs successful strategies of counterbalancing elites and not allowing any elite group to be in the first place. One of these strategies is to build up regional regimes that would rectify threat. In other words, this subnational authoritarianism that central authorities built prevent numerous elites (or clans as many scholars interpret) from collective action (Radnitz 2010, p.85).

Define the Uzbek political regime in subnational terms is not novel. To illustrate, Gelman himself uses the Uzbekistan regime as an example of a centralized bureaucratic sub-national regime type. Recent, more specific researchers on Uzbekistan already used this framework to explain regime persistence and durability (Ilkhamov 2004, Markowitz 2013).

Lawrence P. Markowitz partly answers this question in *State Erosion: unlootable resources and unruly elites in Central Asia* (2013). Similarly, to Luong and Wienthal, he pursues the logic of resource curse to explain the current state quality. Not only oil and gas, Markowitz considers as cursed possession, but it is also cash crops that give rise to a specific institutional relation (Markowitz 2013). Drawing on Boix's theory of immobile capital, Markowitz suggests that the immobile nature of cotton (the primary source of revenue for Uzbekistan) promotes a specific set of relations of the local rulers with the central state. Centralized state decrees about norms of annual production regulate the followed up distribution and export of the cotton (Ilkhamov 1998). The situation is reinforced by constant rent-seeking at the local level (cotton revenues privatized by the state, then need to find the new source of rent-seeking) and, as a result, corruption and poor-quality institutions. For Markowitz, this is a path to inevitable state erosion and state failure in the long run.

Following the same patronage line of thought, Alisher Ilkhamov appeals to the center-periphery relations between a strong center and regional elites (Ilkhamov 2004). He describes this tension in relation mainly through two channels of power. The first one is battle over cotton, and the second one is the battle over parliamentary seats. In subsequent works, Ilkhamov also attempts to explain the endurance of the Karimov regime by using neopatrimonialism as a potential framework (Ilkhamov 2007). He argues that the resulted neo-patrimonial well-knitted system as a result of a deliberate choice of Karimov at the beginning of the transition, as well as the Soviet legacy, which put in place established clans.

Drawing on Ilkhamov study, Henry Hale refers to political machines that Karimov had started creating in the regions to oppose and to control the other local, regional elites: "One important move shortly after defeating the Tashkent network was to create a set of territorially defined political machines that were all beholden directly to him, formally subordinating regions to governors (hokims) whom he appointed as president starting in 1992." (Hale 2014, p.165). It seems that Hale is one of the few who views hokims (regional governors) as regional bosses (a term used by scholars of political machines).

As it was explained earlier, elite fractionalization in Uzbek state coincides with the regional division. To reassert control over the regions and monitor the actions of the local elite at the beginning of the 1990-s, Islam Karimov establishes the institute of regional governors – hokims. Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 1992 fixed the right of appointment and dismissal of regional governors after President. Further, it is showed how the central state consistently builds up the power of the hokims, making him an ultimate figure in the region and how this goes along Gibson's theory of subnational authoritarianism.

The original function of the regional governor regulates the Article 100 Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and it is to deal with economic, social, and cultural issues of the regional development, control and implement the budget, raise taxes, and other regional issues (Uzb. const. Art. C). Regional hokim appoints lower-level bureaucracy and governors of the city and municipalities. Article 102 of the Constitution also indicate personal responsibility of the governor over decisions and action of every constitutive body and fix the principle of one-person management (also known as the unity of command principle) (Uzb. Const. art. CII). Further, in Article 104, it is specified that decisions made by hokim are binding for the whole region (Uzb. Const. art. CIV). So, we see that the whole responsibility of the regional performance lies on the shoulders of the hokim, making him an influential figure on the regional level but highly dependent on the national center.

If we are to draw parallels with the theoretical framework outlined in the beginning, we can see that functions above correspond with the first rule of Gibson's about the parochialization of power (Gibson 2005). Institutional fixation of the hokim's rule makes him powerful on the regional level.

Apart from the regional executive power, governors can serve as the legislators in the national Parliament – Oliy Majlis. This indulgence in the law that allow regional governors at the same time exercise their power in the National Assembly resulted in the 1995 and 1999 Majlis half populated with presidential appointees. For instance, Ilkhamov notes that hokims of various levels and regional administration staff were represented in 167 out of 250 parliamentarian seats in 1995 (Pauline Jones Luong 2002; Ilkhamov 2007).

Perceived or real, this function of hokim echoes with the Gibson's second condition nationalization of power – the situation where hokims can resolve region-matter questions on the regional level.

Finally, institutional backing of the exceptional power of hokim at the regional level should be reflected in the monopolization of the contacts with the center – the President. The role of this monopolization, as shown earlier, is concentrated in the protecting of borders and giving the center only information given by hokim (filtered and clean) should reach President. On the one hand, prove for this theory may be found in the fact that most of the regional hokims are bureaucrats previously serving in the capital – Tashkent (Markowitz 2013). This fact, in most cases, predetermined personal relations with the head of the government.

The Constitution as well defines circumstances of dismissal of hokim by President, that can happen either if hokim violated Constitution or "performed acts discrediting the honor and dignity of a hokim." Real-life instances show that the center interprets the last condition of dismissal, usually as the inability of hokim to implement the regional norm of gathering cotton ("Central Asia: Uzbekistan at 10 –Repression and Instability | Crisis Group" 2001), hokims

involvement in corruption activities, or other reasons why hokims were dismissed very often. Despite Constitutionally fixed term of hokim as five years, empirically, we see high rotations of cadres in this office. Table 1 demonstrates the average tenure of the regional government from 1991 to 2016. The average number of years is – six, which is less than the officially indicated term (see Appendix 2).

Moreover, such regions as Fergana, Samarkand, or Surhkandaria regions witnessed changing of hokims every 2.5 years. If the term is fixed, the then question arises what may explain such often rotation of the people in the office on regional hokim? One of the explanations of such cadre rotation may be found in Wintrobe's theory of political economy in dictatorships (Wintrobe 2000). For him, the rotation of the people prevents governors from accumulating power and connections within the region. If hokim concentrates too much power in his hand and collaborates with local elites, it may be subversive for the regime. Thus, the leader prefers to rotate governors and people within the system. Indeed, some insights obtained from the interviews and fieldwork of scholars on Uzbekistan proves this theoretical suggestion – the fear of the center to collaborate and unite with local elites and losing the control over the region instigated central authorities to rotate people. The other explanation is that some hokims were performing not very good. Some studies suggested that regional governments were dismissed when the region failed to implement the cotton norm annually set by the central government or provide local people with basic needs and cause scandal. These cotton dismissals usually accompanied by the accusation of hokim in corruption. The opposite situation may also be true; some of them were promoted by being further appointed as ministers or removed to the other regions. This is, for instance, the case for a current president who served first as a hokim of Samarkand region then as the Jizzax region and finally promoted as prime minister.

By and large, the theoretical framework of SNA takes into consideration previously developed ideas on clans and informalities to study the regimes in Central Asia and enables scholars to apply it to study the regime's survival. Nevertheless, what is missing in the framework

is how the regime of Karimov can manage and rule these regimes to avoid the reverse situation like that happened in Kyrgyzstan.

2.3. Repressive Uzbek state

In the first chapter, we found that researchers often turn to reprisals as an explanation of regime stability. If we assume that every autocratic regime is more or less repressive, then when it comes to fully-fledged autocracies, repressions here gain tremendous scale.

This work cannot circumvent the exceptional repressiveness of the Uzbek regime during Karimov's tenure. As it is indicated in the first chapter, the definition of repressiveness in autocracies varies from defining it as regime's intolerance towards severe opposition to defining regime with real devastating repressions and state actions against the opposition. Moreover, if we talk about closed authoritarian regimes, then repressions appear to be not sporadic occasions but systematic violations of human rights and freedoms (Edel & Josua 2018).

It is shared by scholars of political regimes in Central Asia, that Karimov's government is seen as the cruelest and repressive among its neighbors (Olcott 2007). To illustrate, Graph 1 compares the aggregate number of several measures composed by the Physical Integrity Right Index (CIRI database) (see [Appendix 3](#)). These measures estimate the indicators of torture in-country, political imprisonments abuses. It ranges from 0 (no government respect for these four rights) to 8 (full government respect for these four rights). As it is seen from the graph, the indicator for Uzbekistan do not go higher than 5 points – which is still deficient respect, as to other countries. The worst indicators for Uzbekistan are for 2005 – reflects killing happened in the Andijan region in 2005.

The evolution of the repressive apparatus of Uzbek state starts with minor repression on oppositional leaders. For instance, during 90-s Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty was

systematically informing about the detention of real oppositional leaders and prosecutions, extrajudicial killings of these people. To finally eliminate any chance of opposition in the national politics in 1994 state went further and set up substantial restrictions on party registering, thus significantly narrowed the scope of parties that can take part in the coming-soon Parliamentary elections.

Starting from 1997, the repressiveness as a prohibition on the freedom of speech, freedom of gatherings started overlapping with repressions as a tool of capturing people and put in detention people, using violence and tortures. Acacia Shields (2004), in the report *Creating enemies of the state: religious persecution in Uzbekistan*, explains that repressions began at the end of the 90-s and beginning of the 2000-s were characterized by its specific narrow take on Islam followers. Experts tie this increase in the restraints against religious minorities with the series of terroristic attack happened in the Center of Tashkent in 1999.

Extensive and systematic work on human rights violation is done by the Human Rights Center “Memorial”. Central Asian department of “Memorial” kept track of political prisoners and court within 18 years. Human Rights Center “Memorial” stating from 1997, systematically collected the data about political prisoners. Apart from collecting data, “Memorial” accompanied reports with extensive analytical part (Spisok lits 2004; Spisok lits 2008; Spisok lits 2014).

From these reports, we may found that most of the detentions were scattered around various religious organizations and the vast majority of them - Muslims (Spisok 2014). While most of the people in the list were prosecuted for extremism, terrorism, the notion of these terms is not explicitly stated in Criminal Code what makes these massive detentions especially vulnerable to any people connected to religious or pose a potential threat to the government. Vitaliy Ponomarev, the Head of Central Asian mission in “Memorial,” notes that the data registered in the list probably uncover just a partial, not the full number of all prisoners (Spisok 2004). He also notes that along with the extreme scale of repressions, Uzbekistan witnessed an extreme number

of amnesties. Probably, this tendency maybe explains by the desire to threaten and block the career of the prosecuted people, and a limited number of prison cells would ask for a more intense repress-amnesty machine.

The number of repressions was exceptionally high in 1999-2000, and this soared number of prosecuted people is demonstrated with the graph in Appendix 5. This increase in the repressions may be caused by terroristic attacks that happened in Tashkent in 1999. We also see that number of repressions peaks in 2005, where rebellion and attempt of riot happened in the Andijan region.

The geopolitical position of Uzbekistan as well attracted Western attention after the 9/11 events. Some works approaching Uzbekistan's repressiveness views its energetic fight against terrorism as a result of incentives created by the West in War on Terror campaign (Murray 2013). Indeed, after 9/11 events, the financial support from the West and especially the USA increased, which instigated numerous arrests and prosecution of innocent people. They were relying on Karimov's support as "reliable ally in the War on Terror" the USA agreed to locate their base in one of the regions in Uzbekistan. The state was encouraged to take a firm grip on terrorism, and the USA invested a lot in these attempts (Akbarzadeh 2005; Lumpe 2010).

By and large, repressiveness became a distinctive feature of Karimov's regime, which has been revealed to the bigger audience during the Andijan massacres in May 2005. According to unofficial sources, a group of local leaders revolted against the center. Around thousands of deaths accounted for those actions. According to the official narrative of the state, authorities legitimized action by referring to radical Islamic groups, threatening stability and peace in the country (Edel and Josua 2018). After May 2005, Uzbekistan terminated all international connections, including the USA military base in Khanabad. Repressions, though, continued.

Chapter 3 Empirical analysis

3.1. The argument, expectations, and methodology

This paper argues that the authoritarian ruler uses strategies of authoritarian management to govern the country, detect threats, and survive. The framework of Section 1.2. proposed to look at the regime maintenance and management through the regional perspective of several territorial semi-autonomous regimes. It was pointed out that researches still lack the explanation of how dictators monitor delegated power and when means of repressions are used. That is why this research seeks to answer the following question: how do central authorities control and monitor subnational regimes in closed autocracies? Understanding these factors would inform us about how the government detects possible weaknesses of the regime and how it suppresses attempts of subversive behavior.

One way of authoritarian ruling is through the creation of subnational regimes. If the center is strong, these regimes simply mimicking and present a logical continuation of the national regime. Such regimes spearheaded by governors (appointed by the President) exercise full control over the critical assets in the region, responsible for the implementation of national policies on the local level, and able to make binding decisions for the whole territory of the region. Nevertheless, these artificially created regimes, institutionally backed by central authorities, may not always be the safest way to maintain national power. Regional governors and local regimes may be inefficient in ruling the region or may cooperate with local elites and rise against the center (Radnitz 2010). Thus, earlier researches suggested that reshuffling local authorities prevent them from establishing ties and become too powerful (Wintrobe 2000). For instance, if the governor stays in power long, he might establish more local ties within the region and regional elites. Scott Radnitz demonstrates how these ties on the local level may end up in the revolution as what happened in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2005.

This research argues that reshuffles do not happen sporadically but have reasons. To sustain and to control subnational regimes, central authorities would use both hokims appointments and dismissals either as encouraging/punishing particular behavior or as the best response to a threat of subversion. Numerous determinants may explain how long the governor stays in the office. There are distinct factors of efficiency, like the ability to rule the region, enhance its prosperity. Personal factors and governor's background are also in place: education, age, experience. The other group of factors is not general but country-specific. In the case of Uzbekistan, it might be cotton and fulfillment of the seasonal norm of cotton gatherings (Ilkhamov 2004).

The other way of authoritarian ruling is through the means of repressions. Repressions and purges alleviate the threat and credibly threaten the opposition and citizens, by preventing them from actions against the Central state. However, previous research suggested that relying on repressions too much might also be costly for an autocrat (Svolik 2013).

So, in the analysis, we try to trace these parameters and conditions when certain mechanisms of the authoritarian ruling (repressions and dismissals) are used. More specifically, we demonstrate what may explain the persistence of some sub-national regimes in comparison with others. Important to highlight, that as described in section 1.2., evaluating sub-national regimes is meaningful by looking at the governor who leads the regime, since institutions remain the same, but the performance of the region and center attitudes change from governor to governor. Uzbek case demonstrates that some regimes were persistent within 15 years (it is the case of the Bukhara region), while some other governors were replaced every 2.5 years (see [Appendix 2](#)).

Based on the previous study and peculiarities of the country, we would expect that:

H1. Repressions and dismissals are connected. Specifically, intense repressions would lead to the governor's dismissal.

H2. Repressions would be more intense in the regions with “local” governor. This expectation comes from the idea of linkages of the governor and subversive clientelism. Thus, to alleviate possible subversive connection regime would repress these regions intensively.

H3. Repressions are likely to be exercised in less-developed regions

H4. Positive economic performance of the regions would increase the likelihood of governor stay in power

H5. Differences in agricultural production would affect the likelihood of regional governor stay in power

H6. Cooptation of the governor in the National Parliament majlis would benefit his time in office

To evaluate the argument and test hypotheses, I use the survival analysis model and ordinary least square estimation of the data. To address the endogeneity, the models are also tested using an instrument variable.

The choice of this methodology is predetermined by the interests of the thesis in the regional changes throughout several years. The regression model, unlike other research techniques, allows us to examine these observations and see temporal variation. Cox’s estimation answers our research interests in the survival of the governors and demonstrates how the variables of our interest may potentially affect the event of dismissal. Moreover, methodologically no other existed research on the regime in Uzbekistan ever used systematic data to study the case. Additionally, this research integrates huge and yearly work on repressions in Uzbekistan done by the “Memorial” Human Rights Center. This unique dataset by itself presents a precious piece of information, and integrating it in the current project seems very promising.

3.2. Data and variables

The dataset presents indicators for various variables for 14 Uzbek regions within 14 years: 2000-2014. The available data limits these temporal boundaries. The unit of analysis of the data is the region-year. Most of the statistical data about regional consumption, GRP, production, or agricultural was obtained through the open data portal presented by the Uzbek government (The State Committee Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan 2020). The data, like the share of hokims or dismissal and appointment, was calculated by the author. The data was taken and compiled from national news, news agencies, central electoral committee. Moreover, the original dataset on repressions was gathered by the author based on the information in the annual reports by the “Memorial” Human Rights Center.

The analysis of the data consists of two steps. In the first step, using Cox's proportional hazard model (also known as survival model), we estimate factors of dismissal of regional hokims. Once we found some particularities, we proceed to the second stage where using OLS models consider factors of repressions.

Dependent variable

In this study, we are interested in two variables of authoritarian management: mechanism of repressions and mechanism of ruling by governors.

- **Model 1** Number of years until regional governor dismissed

Technically this variable consists of two and consists of a year when the governor was dismissed and the number of years before dismissal happened.

- **Model 2** Repressions

Repressions are operationalized as the number of political prisoners in the region within a year. The data assembles the Human Rights Center “Memorial” reports that trace the number of convictions each year, starting from 1997 and to 2014. More detailed

information is presented in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5. Starting from 1997, “Memorial” Humans Rights Center had publicized annual reports on the political prisoners. The way “Memorial” coded political prisoners was mainly based on the article that was assigned to the prisoners. “Memorial” database assembled by real and published sentenced, interviews with families of the prisoners. Within 17 years, “Memorial” kept tracing data on the people who were accused and probably had political background behind their sentence. Usually, these reports contain information about name and date of birth, place of living of registry, date of detention, and date of conviction (Spisok lits 2004; Spisok lits 2008; Spisok lits 2014). Data as well as presents information about the demographics of the person: family status, education. Finally, each prisoner has information about tenure and the type of sentence. Base on this rich information in the course of this study, we were able to extract and to code relevant data on year and region of prisoners—this information presented in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5 accordingly.

Independent variables

- Agriculture

First, as suggested earlier, the way cotton campaign and agricultural production are implemented tends to be explanatory in hokim dismissal. Cotton monopsony and state order of a certain amount of cotton production often served as a checkpoint for the regional hokims. Previous studies suggest that efficiency had been assessing by their ability to implement annual cotton normative (Markowitz 2013).

- Economic development

To measure economic development, various models use several alternative measurements. It is foreign investments – that shows the share of the froing investments

in the regional budget. GRP per capita, Retail trade turnover. More details about these variables demonstrated in Table 1 with summary statistics.

Control variables

- Locality

Authoritarian ruling often relies on local network and nepotism based on personal connections. To measure the difference between local governors and newcomers was constructed variable *locality*. Based on biographies of the 48 hokims (Table 1), the variable differentiates between governors who served previously in Tashkent (0) or had been building their career within the region (1).

- Majlis

It is also important to control for the loyalty and central attitudes towards governors. Moreover, section 1.2. suggested that the governor's inclusion in policymaking on the national level ensures local regime persistence. To do this in the model included variable *Majlis* that turns 1 if the governor serves in the National Parliament Majlis. We tend to think about this variable in loyalty terms because existed Majlis recruitment was highly centralized and controlled.

- Governor's tenure

Models on repressions include the tenure of the governor that rule the region. It is measured as the number of years between appointments and dismissals. Table 4 in Appendix 2 and Table 1 with descriptive statistics demonstrate that the average number is 3.5 years.

Table 1 demonstrates the summary statistics of the variables included in the analysis. Due to the abnormal distribution of the variables (those that grow as the time increases) some models use logarithms of these variables.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Repressions	210	17.614	34.097	0	258
Majlis	210	0.619	0.487	0	1
Governor's tenure	210	3.552	2.690	1	15
Foreign investments	210	17.655	13.202	1.600	77.977
Production of agriculture	210	1,634.904	2,215.734	0.000	11,747.600
Populations	210	1,934.866	735.078	642.200	3,445.600
Investments in main capital	210	367.460	452.761	15.800	2,239.000
GRP per capita	210	1,639.201	1,794.968	72.200	9,770.200
Retail trade turnover	210	596.987	728.294	31	5,361

Table 1 Descriptive statistics

3.3. Cox's proportional hazard estimation

Firstly, we estimate the likelihood of regional governor survival using Cox's proportional hazards estimation. The event – is the year of dismissal of the regional governor, and time is the number of years before this dismissal happened. Cox's model, also known as survival analysis, allows us to look at the specific factors at the time of the event and before the event that might lead to the outcome – dismissal. Precisely, in our Cox's model we have 210 observations and 47 events, which means that in 210 cases (year-regions) were replaced 47 governors. Having the information about years where governors were not dismissed and where they were, Cox's proportional hazard model reveals patterns that might lead to these dismissals. To estimate the data that was a year before the dismissal, we are using lagged variables. Important to note, that Cox's estimation does not demonstrate any causal relations between the event and variables, it instead demonstrates the likelihood of the event, given the factors of our interest (Darmofal 2009). It is a single-event analysis, which is advantageous to find the explanations for the event at a given time and specific year and year or two before. At the same time, this single-event peculiarity of survival models limits our research that needs to take into account unobserved effects within the regions, as well as accumulated performance throughout several years.

The results obtained in Cox's estimation presented in Table 2 demonstrate a significant association with two variables that affected the dismissal of regional governor: lagged repressions and locality of the hokim. The locality of the governor is significant in each of the three models. The results for locality inform that if the governor has the previous history in the region (in other words was local in the region), then the time until his dismissal is increased. In other words, these results may be interpreted as that governor who made his career within the region is likely to stay in office longer than those who came from other regions.

In contrast to the locality, repressions in the previous year increase the likelihood of a dictator's dismissal, which can be seen from Model 1 and Model 3. A large number of repressions in the previous year predetermine hokim dismissal (H4). Model 2 uses a number of repressions two years before the dismissal, and the results are insignificant.

To avoid multicollinearity, lagged foreign investments in the previous year and lagged repression are included in the different models. Model 3 demonstrates that low/high levels of investments in the regional budget did not serve as a reason for the governor's dismissal. Due to our interests in the production of agriculture in Model 4, we use the dataset that excludes Tashkent city because of zero level of agricultural production. The results show that the production of agriculture in the previous year did not affect the dismissal of the governor. In other words, our theoretical prediction (H1) about the poor performance of the region in the agricultural sector would lead the regional dictator dismissal was not confirmed. Finally, unlike the theoretical prediction about the loyalty (H5) of the regional governor measured as his involvement in the National Parliament Majlis, the variable does not significantly decrease the likelihood of dismissal.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	time			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Repressions (t-1)	0.004** (0.002)			0.011** (0.005)
Repressions (t-2)		0.002 (0.002)		
Majlis	-0.578 (0.311)	-0.506 (0.305)	-0.324 (0.324)	-0.467 (0.355)
locality	-0.788** (0.319)	-0.822*** (0.318)	-0.814** (0.335)	-0.638* (0.348)
Foreign investments (t-1)			-0.011 (0.012)	
Agricultural production (t-1)				-0.00003 (0.0001)
Observations	210	210	196	182
R ²	0.055	0.044	0.035	0.049
Max. Possible R ²	0.858	0.858	0.842	0.839
Log Likelihood	-198.667	-199.893	-177.124	-161.550
Wald Test	12.480*** (df = 3)	9.240** (df = 3)	6.820* (df = 3)	10.500** (df = 4)
LR Test	11.884*** (df = 3)	9.433** (df = 3)	6.997* (df = 3)	9.186* (df = 4)
Score (Logrank) Test	13.242*** (df = 3)	9.567** (df = 3)	6.989* (df = 3)	11.173** (df = 4)
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01			

Table 2 Cox's proportional hazard estimation

The key finding at this stage of analysis is the link between repressions and the ruling by dismissals. Specifically, this analysis shows that a high number of repressions have political consequences that are expressed in the dismissal of the governor. Hypothesis 1 was confirmed. While noticing this link between repressive apparatus and management of the regional governors, we are then interested in what factors predetermined these repressions. In particular, is there regional variation and patterns that might explain intense repressions? This analysis proceeds in the following section.

3.4. Estimation of repressiveness

In the second part of the analysis, we are interested in the determinants of the repressions in the country. We use ordinary least square regression to evaluate our predictions about the spread of repressions and repressive mechanisms. Repressions are measured as the number of political prisoners in the region in a particular year.

Undoubtedly, a good strategy would be to use models that account for unobserved country effects like Fixed Effects or Random Effects, but as soon as our repression data sets cover 14 years $T=14$ within 14 regions $N=14$, the basic assumption of reliable panel data estimation $T < N$ is not fulfilled. To overcome this problem and provide the robustness of the results, some models use alternative measurements of the significant variables, and in some cases, the dataset is also shortened to exclude potential outliers.

Model 1 analyses the whole dataset and demonstrates the significance of foreign investments on the number of repressions and locality of the governor. Also, the control variable population is significant, which says that in more populated regions, the number of repressions is higher. Other explanatory variables are insignificant.

Model 2 and Model 3 include alternative measurements of regional development. Model 2 tests the number of political prisoners and Gross regional product per capita and demonstrates a significant negative association with the number of repressions.

Similarly, Model 3 tests the turnover of retail trade as an indicator of regional development and demonstrate significance. In Model 3, we use smaller dataset, that does not include Tashkent city to avoid influential observation in both economic performance and an extreme number of repressions. The model still demonstrates the connection between economic development, the number of repressions, and locality as in two previous.

All three models reveal a significant negative association between categorical variable locality and the number of repressions. This output may be interpreted as that being local for the governor to decrease the number of repressions in the regions.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Repressions		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Majlis	3.322 (4.627)	3.870 (4.689)	-1.439 (3.532)
Locality1	-11.101** (4.569)	-12.520*** (4.562)	-6.353* (3.464)
Investments in main capital	-7.676*** (1.796)		
GRP per capita		-7.193*** (1.878)	
Population	15.711*** (4.965)	16.547*** (5.011)	0.008*** (0.002)
Retail trade turnover			-0.009*** (0.003)
Governor's tenure	0.908 (0.846)	0.432 (0.840)	0.266 (0.631)
Constant	-60.155 (38.098)	-55.358 (38.903)	5.538 (5.788)
Observations	210	210	195
R ²	0.172	0.158	0.110
Adjusted R ²	0.152	0.138	0.087
Residual Std. Error	31.408 (df = 204)	31.665 (df = 204)	23.341 (df = 189)
F Statistic	8.464*** (df = 5; 204)	7.668*** (df = 5; 204)	4.691*** (df = 5; 189)
<i>Note:</i>		* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01	

Table 3 OLS regression results

3.5. Discussion of hypothesis and outcomes

The argument of this paper was that dictators to sustain the regime intertwine both repressions and authoritarian ruling. To support this argument, I implement a two-stages of

estimation. The first stage and Cox's model revealed that there is a connection between repressions and dismissals. Hypothesis 1 was confirmed. In the second stage, we looked at what may cause repressions in these regions. What important is that repressions come first, and then governors are dismissed. This result demonstrates that repressions and repressive apparatus is centralized in Uzbekistan and work not because of regional governors but separately. This sequence of repressions and then dismissals support our proposition about using repressions as a mechanism of supervision in the regions.

Two hypotheses 2 and 3 about the economic and agricultural performance of the region were not confirmed. The reason for the significant outcomes may come from the specificity of Cox's model estimation that considers only one year, whereas the dismissals may become due to accumulated underperformance over several years. It also might be the case of the other stimulus that central authorities were driven by while dismissing hokims. However, it seems that the problem may also lie in the quality of the data we have.

The second stage of the analysis devoted to the repressions confirmed Hypothesis 3 and showed a significant association between the economic development of the region and the number of repressions. To prove and check the results, various measures of regional development were used, like retail trade turnover, and GRP per capita. This finding of higher repression in least-developed regions contributes to the bigger layer of literature about how repressive mechanisms are used and in what way they sustain regimes (Rogov 2018; Verwimp 2003; Frantz and Kendall-Taylor 2014). Economic variables, while being endogenous, may become a reason of wrong inferences. On the one hand, the significant negative association between the level of repressions and investments in the region may be interpreted as a stability factor. Highly unstable regions with numerous repressions are unlikely to attract investments. Another alternative explanation that may explain significant results with a negative coefficient is the level of development of the regions. Investors are not willing to invest in regions with low

economic development. At the same time, low economic development often may come a fruitful ground for subversive and rebellious behavior (Hale 2013; Radnitz 2010), which consequently leads to intensified repressions. Considering these alternative explanations, we see that despite significance, we still have a chance of unobserved effects and reversed causality.

This analysis also showed that the previous background of governor plays an important role. Specifically, governors with roots in the region where they rule are likely to rule longer than their colleagues from Tashkent city appointed by the Center. Interestingly, that unlike Hypothesis 2, about the locality of the governor and number of repressions, repressions are less intense in the regions where governors are local. Finding of the governor's previous career and lowered likelihood of dismissal coincides with a plethora of previous studies on the regional governor's background (Reuter & Szakonyi 2019; Reuter & Robertson 2012). Despite that, results challenge the previous studies on Uzbekistan suggested the importance of former Tashkent-based bureaucrats in the regions (Hale 2013). This result is significant and thus asks for more attention to the reasons for this outcome. For instance, it might be a factor of experience and knowledge about a region that helps to rule and perform better. Hypothesis H6 and the governor's cooptation in the National Parliament was not confirmed. Probably, because this variable does not show very significant variation, and almost 80% of the governors in our dataset were included in the work of National Parliament Majlis.

How does tracing and knowing these mechanisms may help us understand regime survival? Drawing on Jennifer Gandhi's point, "...the institutions we observe are supposed to be the ruler's best responses to the condition they face, absent unforeseen events..." (p.164) we may conclude that by observing these strategies and by the very fact of tracing them, we understand what the best response was. Indeed, the navigation and ruling within the regime for an extended period, other things being equal, may demonstrate the responses that dictator undertook to ensure regime persistence. In turn, examining them contributes to our understanding of patterns of

ruling and allows us to compare these patterns of using various mechanisms applicable to other authoritarian regimes.

Results obtained so far, show partial convergence with the findings on electoral autocracies and one-party regimes. The attempt to include in the analysis specificity of closed autocracy – as the orientation not on the election but production turned to be unsuccessful and should be the stepping stone for future studies on different types of autocracies.

3.6. Limitations and further prospects

To estimate the likelihood of regional governor dismissal, we were using survival analysis. As mentioned earlier, the limitation is that it evaluates the data for a single point in time. Some political processes and decisions are not always made based on previous year performance, but take into account accumulated information: for instance, accumulated underperformance within several years. So, the results we have so far only partially uncovered the reality behind dismissals and appointments.

The availability and the quality of data are the other limitations of this study. First of all is the number of observations – not exhaustive for regression analysis, at the same time too big to use some other research designs (like QCA). The availability of data is also important. For instance, despite the theoretical assumption about the dominance of clan/elite factors in Uzbekistan, it is challenging to reflect this dominance in variables due to problems of operationalization. Problematic is the measurement of the elite and clan strength and its variation over the regions. One way to do this is to look at various state tenders and business connections within regions and to trace the networks. Such data for Karimov term is not available. Moreover, cooptation strategies and center-regional relations maybe correctly traced by looking at the state transfers and subventions to the region. Such data is presented every year and discussed in Parliamentary

sessions, though the documents available for now do not disclose specifically the appendixes regarding state transfers.

Future research should also collect the information on career prospects of all hokims to look at their future movements. This would add more explanatory background on why and how this hokim was fired, dismissed, or replaced.

Furthermore, although data on the hokims tenures and repressions were gathered and assembled during the study, the rest statistical data utilized in the model was taken from the national statistical agency. Thus, the reliability of the data may be questioned. That is why further studies should look for a proxy or some other data that would characterize hokim performance on the cotton campaign or economic development of the region.

Future researchers should take into account the newly emerged regime after 2016. To trace differences or find similarities in the requirements patterns of regional governor in the current regime would be an interesting thing to do.

Conclusion

A growing number of democratic backslidings all over the world and mimicking autocracies instigates scholars of political science to look for more explanations of how these regimes work. Even though numerous works on autocratic survival and authoritarian governance have contributed to the study, some parts still need more investigations and answers. One of such undiscovered area is the autocratic governance in closed autocracies. The way fully-fledged autocracies operate is challenging to study due to the lack of information as well as the prevalence of informal ties and informal politics.

Previous researches agreed that the rightly chosen strategy of autocratic governance increase regime duration. However, what is this strategy and how it is implemented in the reality is still undiscovered. To trace informalities and to see patterns one might look at the center-regional relations. Recent developments in studying and comprehending subnational regimes have broadened the horizons of the application of the theory to a fully authoritarian environment. While drawing on the previous studies in this area and admitting that this strategy may be a useful tool of regime sustainability, this thesis strived to answer the question of how do central authorities control and monitor subnational authoritarian regimes? It was suggested that lining up territorial regimes requires scrutinized monitoring of the regional governors so that they avoid their deviant behavior towards local elite or corruption. Thus, this thesis argues that monitoring and control are exercised by both using repressions and reshuffling local authorities.

We found that repressions and local ruling are intertwined. Specifically, the analysis showed that an increase in the number of repressions has political consequences expressed in the governor's dismissal. This finding and sequence of mechanisms (repressions first, dismissal second) uncover the strategy of using the separate organizational body to control and monitor people – not embedded in the power vertical of the region. By equating regional governors to the regime, we have studied the determinants of the longevity of these sub-national regimes. In

compliance with the previous researchers in this area, our findings showed that previous experience of the governor matters for his persistence in office. Which factors may explain such persistence will ask for further scrutiny.

The further prospect of research would ask for more elaborated disaggregation of the personalities of the hokims. In particular, a significant layer of researchers of multilevel governance suggested that various backgrounds affect the way regional governors act and perform. Moreover, the inclusion of the bibliographies in the analysis would allow us to keep track of the further career of the dismissed governor. It is also tempting to look at the regime change after Karimov's death and trace new abilities of the regional governors affected the strategies of the new President on monitoring and controlling subnational regimes. Though due to recent changes, it is still early to draw any inferences.

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Appendix

Appendix 1

A typology of sub-national authoritarianism (source: Gelman & Ross, 2010)

Table 1.1 A typology of sub-national authoritarianism (SNA)

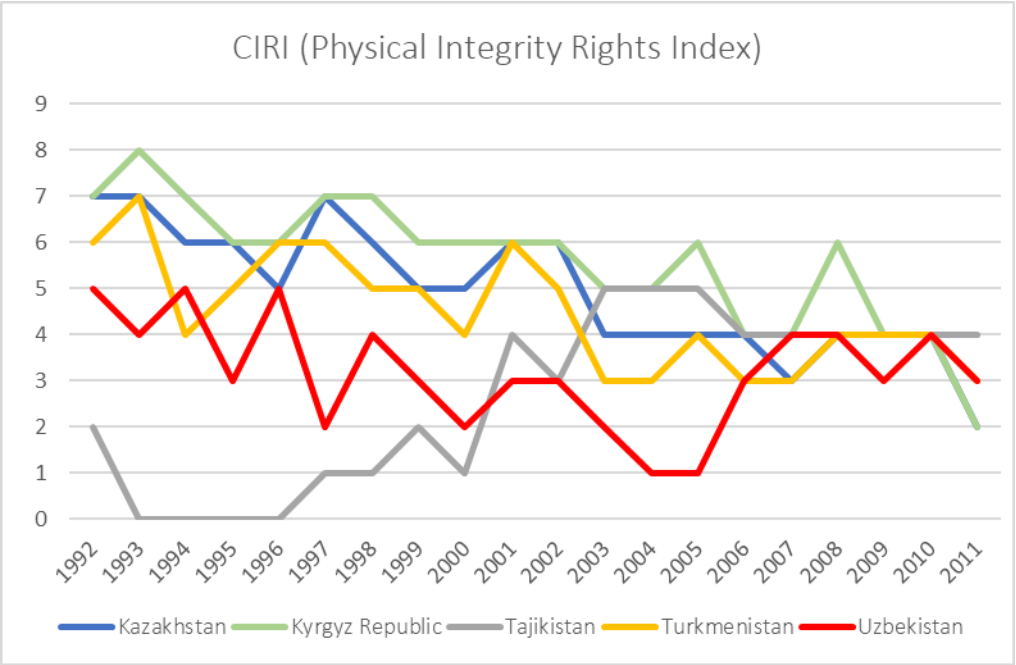
Local influence of national political parties	Local influence of the apparatus of the central state	
	Weak	Strong
	Strong	Weak or absent
	No empirical cases	<i>Centralised party-based SNA</i> (Southern Italy 1950-1980s, USSR, Russia after mid-2000s)
	<i>Decentralised SNA</i> (USA 1870-1930s, Russia 1991-mid-2000s)	<i>Centralised bureaucratic SNA</i> (pre-1917 Russia, Belarus, Uzbekistan)

Appendix 2

The average tenure of regional governors in Uzbekistan 1992-2016
Calculations made by the author

region	Average hokim tenure
Tashkent region	3
Surkhandarya	2.8
Samarkand	2.6
Fergana	2.75
Jizzax	4
Syrdarya	4
Kashkadarya	3.75
Xorezm	5
Andijan	3.5
Navoi	4.8
Tashkent city	5.2
Namangan	5.5
Bukhara	6
Overall average	4.069230769

Appendix 3
CIRI (Physical Integrity Rights Index)
(calculated based on CIRI database data)



Appendix 4
Number of political prisoners by year and region of detention
Calculated by author
Based on reports provided by “Memorial” Human Rights Center 1997-2014

Row Labels	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	?	Grand Total
?								1	21	4	12	66	22	1	88	7	5	1	6	5	7	14		1	35	296
Andijan		3	2	1	1	1	4	46	261	125	54	77	19	44	190	21	21	7	16	22	8	6	3	9	57	998
Buxoro				3				1	15	1		2	1	31	3	1	2	8	2	11	3		3	3	5	95
Tashkent city		5	4	4	3	1	5	58	474	258	200	66	73	131	119	41	16	49	40	50	43	13	14	6	301	1974
Jizzax					1	2		3	16	22	6	1	1	1	7	3	1	1	2	24			5		11	107
Kashkadarya	1	1	1	1	2		1	5	30	66	20	9	8	46	5	4	24	10	14	43	10	6	4	8	33	352
Navoi								10	2			1		1				1	7	8	5	1		6	9	51
Namangan		3	5	7	3	1	47	124	188	84	19	40	6	39	13	12	1	1	4	4	10	6	18	9	66	710
Karakalpak rep		1				2	1		4	2	1			1	1		1	2	1	5			1		5	28
Samarkand				1		1		2	82	22	7	2	13	16	13	3	2	1	10	8	5	2	1		8	199
Surkhandarya						1		1	21	129	16	4	2	5	2	7			5	17	11	9	1	2	18	251
Syrdarya				1				5	14	1	4	1		2	5	14	1		36	2	1				21	108
Tahskent region		1		4	3		2	7	82	82	26	20	20	84	11	23	11	1	30	70	41	20	17	22	80	657
Fergana	1		1	5	6	3	4	22	239	83	70	24	7	17	14	17	5	6	5	40	3	4	1	2	57	636
Xorezm			1		1	2	1	35	128	30	6			3	2		4		10		2		3	5	41	274
Grand Total	2	14	14	27	20	14	65	310	1585	911	441	313	172	422	473	153	94	88	188	309	149	81	71	73	747	6736

Number of political prisoners by year and region of detention

Calculated by author

Based on reports provided by "Memorial" Human Rights Center 1997-2014

