

Pavel Šatra, PhD student
Leuphana University of Lüneburg
Centre for the Study of Democracy (ZDEMO)
Doctoral program Democracy under Stress
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1st Supervisor Prof. Vera van Hüllen
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Autocracies' Counterintuitive Delegation Preferences to International Human Rights Organizations

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Abstract

Autocracies sustain their power predominantly due to human rights violations. Therefore, autocracies would not be expected to delegate authority to international human rights organizations that reveal human rights abuses and contribute to democratization processes. I observe, however, that some autocracies support even the highest level of authority delegation. Namely, they decide to delegate authority to human rights monitoring bureaucracies instead of shutting them down. To solve this puzzle, I ask: "Why do autocracies prefer to delegate authority to international human rights organizations?" I argue that if autocracies have managed to impose monitoring missions on their rival states, then autocracies should prefer to delegate authority to monitoring bureaucracies.¹

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Puzzle.....	4
3. State of the art and research gap.....	6
4. Question	11
5. Arguments	12
6. Alternative explanations	15
7. Methods	16
6. Bibliography	20

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1. Introduction

The promotion of state sovereignty is the crucial defense strategy of autocracies against human rights critics and waves of democratization (Acharya 2003; Ambrosio 2008, 2010). State sovereignty allows non-democracies to avoid outside pressures for democratization and to suppress more easily domestic human rights movements. According to autocracies, world politics should be organized around states and not international organizations (IOs) with authority (Ambrosio 2008, 2010). In particular, we may expect that autocracies would not support monitoring bureaucracies of IOs (short: monitoring bureaucracies) that scrutinize compliance with universal human rights and liberal democracy. Since autocracies sustain their power thanks to human rights violations (e.g. Poe 2007; Schmitz, Sikkink 2013; Svobik 2012), they should prefer to shut down monitoring bureaucracies that impose reputational costs on them and that support actors striving for democratization.

Nevertheless, I observe that certain autocracies prefer to delegate authority to human rights monitoring bureaucracies of IOs. For example, Russia and its autocratic partners from the regional organization (RO) Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) preferred to delegate authority to the election bureau² of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Russia and its partners did so, although the election bureau had already criticized them for their flawed domestic elections. It is puzzling to reveal that the autocracies did not want to close the bureaucracy in order to avoid further reputational costs. Moreover, I indicate a variation in the delegation preferences of autocracies. The autocracies of the CIS wanted to refrain from delegating authority to the Special Procedures, whereby Special Procedures are the monitoring bureaucracy of the UN Human Rights Council (UN HRC). The literature has not sought to find an answer to the puzzling delegation preferences of autocracies yet.

To approach the delineated topic, I define autocracies (/authoritarian regimes) as states that fail to elect their legislature and executive in free and competitive elections (Alvarez, Cheibub 1996; Cheibub et al. 2010; Svobik 2012, p. 10). Furthermore, human rights monitoring bureaucracies stand for permanent or mission-related IO-bodies that generate, cumulate and disseminate knowledge on human rights violations. Monitoring bureaucracies do not consist of member states, as intergovernmental bodies do, but include human rights experts who conduct remote or on the ground missions (see Barnett, Finnemore 1999, 2004). Moreover, I understand delegation as delegation of authority. Authority is delegated to IOs when states transfer competencies to IOs and recognize that IOs can make binding decisions (Cooper et al. 2008; Zürn et al. 2012; Zürn et al. 2015) whereby IOs may in the short [and long] term harm interests of some member states (Zürn et al. 2015, p. 6, modified by author). Finally, I examine authority delegation under moral interdependency where the domestic relationship of states and their inhabitants is regulated and thus includes universal human rights field which is interlinked with liberal democracy policies (e.g. Hill 2016, p. 1; Moravcsik 2000, p. 217; Rittberger et al. 2013, p. 232).

² "Election bureau" refers to the part of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe that conducts election monitoring.

In general, autocracies are expected to be “delegation-averse”³, while democracies are expected to be “delegation-friendly”⁴. Democracies are known to dominate the international system (Ambrosio 2008; Torfason, Ingram 2010) and autocracies — as violators of human rights — are said to lack the credibility to influence human rights IOs (see Johnston 2001, p. 508). Consequently, previous accounts failed to explain the delegation preferences of autocracies to monitoring bureaucracies because they did not even seek to explain them. It was simply taken for granted that autocracies would not support the highest form of delegation to monitoring bureaucracies. The current research provides for contributions on authority delegation to intergovernmental bodies, which represent medium level of authority, and manifold analysis on self-reporting procedures that do not qualify as authority delegation.

To solve the puzzling delegation preferences and address the research gap, I ask the question: **“Why do autocracies prefer to delegate authority to international human rights organizations?”** I aim to provide plausible explanations by analyzing delegation preferences in reform processes. Thus, I avoid investigation of IO creation. It is since I expect that an actual experience with an IO can re-shape the delegation preferences. My own argument, a borrowed one from research on democracies and an already established explanation of autocracies’ behavior should together account not only for the puzzling delegation preferences but also for the less puzzling ones.

I develop the following main argument: If autocracies succeeded in the past to target missions of monitoring bureaucracies to their rival states, then autocracies should be ready to delegate authority to monitoring bureaucracies. Principally, when authoritarian regimes target missions of monitoring bureaucracies, they choose who is going to be reviewed by human rights experts. I label the new recipients as “rival states” because they are involved in cultural conflict with autocracies. For instance, members of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) are in conflict with Israel or Russia and its partners aim to counter western liberal democracies. If autocracies manage to steer on-site monitoring missions they first, partially re-allocate scarce monitoring capacities away from own repressive regimes, second, expose rival states to critical evaluation, and third, they impose state sovereignty costs on rival states. In sum, autocracies have defensive and proactive motives to change the recipients of monitoring.

Although it is indispensable to elaborate on the *motives* of the targeting of monitoring missions, they are not of capital importance for this dissertation project. This project primary analyzes the *effects* of targeting of monitoring missions. According to my empirical preview, certain autocratic members of the OSCE and UN HRC imposed monitoring over their political rivals and afterwards preferred to delegate authority to relatively strong monitoring bureaucracies. As a result, we witness a partial convergence of preferences by autocracies and democracies, where democracies support strong IOs and autocracies stand out for relatively strong IOs. Strong IOs make binding decisions and are independent whereby relatively strong IOs make partially binding decisions and have a limited independence.

³ E.g. Acharya 2003; Ambrosio 2008; Eisentraut, Tokhi 2013; Hill 2016, 14.

⁴ Abromeit, Stoiber 2007; Finnemore, Sikkink 1998; Johnston 2001; Lebovic, Voeten 2006; Maoz, Russett 1993; Risse-Kappen et al. 1999; Simmons 2009. But see Cox 2010; Hafner-Burton et al. 2015; Hill 2016; Moravcsik 2000 for variation in delegation behavior of young and established democracies.

The convergence of delegation preferences reminds of the convergence of domestic institutions. On the domestic level, democracies create independent institutions and autocracies began to build semi-independent institutions recently. Democracies are told to export their system of checks and balances to IO level as they delegate to strong IOs (see Abromeit, Stoiber 2007; Maoz, Russett 1993). I test if this applies to autocracies as well. The “targeting of monitoring missions” could together with the “export of domestic institutions” explain autocracies’ delegation preferences to relatively strong monitoring bureaucracies.

Yet, there are autocracies as well that aim to shut down the monitoring bureaucracies and strive to create intergovernmental or self-reporting monitoring mechanisms instead. To explain such delegation preferences, I rely on an already established argument on “consolidation of authoritarian regimes.” The consolidation varies from very stable dictatorships to instable hybrid regimes. The more consolidated authoritarian regimes are, the less authority should they be ready to delegate. I expect these three arguments to explain the whole spectrum of autocracies’ delegation preferences.

It is important to generate knowledge on state delegation preferences, since in reform processes⁵, it is up to the states to give their consent to re-shape the IO-authority.⁶ IO-authority should in turn effect the enforcement of human rights (Simmons 2009, pp. 103–108).⁷ The results of a regime type sensitive analysis have the potential to produce policy relevant knowledge. Such knowledge should help states to better understand their coalition and oppositional actors during IO-reforms. Moreover, I perceive strong normative demand for this PhD project. Monitoring bureaucracies have the potential to generate systematic expertise on human rights violations which cannot be provided by other political actors. States tend to follow their particular interests and NGOs are able to generate only fragmented knowledge (see Dai 2014, pp. 50, 65). The generation of systematic expertise on human rights violations is the first step in enforcement of human rights. Without clear and systematic observations, it is difficult to identify violators and seek to induce compliance (Hollyer, Rosendorff 2011, pp. 6–7).⁸

Human rights [or democracy] policy field is the most demanding one to induce compliance and at the same time political actors of this field has to rely on the least developed compliance mechanisms (Fawn 2013, p. 5; Luck, Doyle 2004, modified by author). Most of the research on international human rights concentrates on democracies, whereby it is the authoritarian regimes who abuse human rights more

⁵ Reforms are initiated by selected member states which are dissatisfied with the IO’s work or are introduced because of consensual disapproval with the IO.

⁶ There are certainly other influential actor types in the global governance structures like NGOs (Deitelhoff 2009) and secretariats of IOs (Johnson, Urpelainen 2014), which are told to shape the IO-authority. However, these actors do not get to vote in reform processes. Thus, NGOs and secretariats of IOs must in the first place persuade states to give their consent and modify the IO-authority. Unfortunately, the literature on NGOs’ and secretariats’ influence of IO authority is not regime type sensitive. Therefore, it is more than complicated to integrate such contributions into my research design that differentiates between autocracies and democracies. Based on this criteria, I have also excluded the Principal-Agent literature that treats autocracies and democracies within the general category of “states.”

⁷ Nevertheless, the scientific debate whether IOs significantly improve human rights is still ongoing (e.g. Donnelly 2013; Rittberger et al. 2013; Schmitz, Sikkink 2013; Risse et al. 2013).

⁸ I do not aim to evoke the impression that the work of IO-bureaucracies should not be exposed to critical evaluation. See for example Barnett, Finnemore (2004) and Piiparinen (2008) for IO-bureaucracy paradoxes and Grigorescu (2013) on democratic deficit, accountability and transparency of monitoring bureaucracies.

(Møller, Skaaning 2013). Therefore, Hafner-Burton (2012, p. 280) calls to place authoritarian regimes in the center of analysis. Regarding research on IOs, we need to strengthen the agenda on autocracies since they constitute a significant share of the IO membership (Eisentraut, Tokhi 2013, p. 1). Thus, I aim to shed light on the relationship of autocracies and IOs.

Taken together, this project should allow me to resolve a crucial analytic puzzle in order to provide for an improved understanding of autocracies in global governance structures, where rigid state sovereignty norm protection and securing power on the domestic level are no more primary encompassing strategies of autocracies. Such a research goal is an instance of a larger question about the relationship of states and international authority, where our knowledge is still incomplete.

2. Puzzle

This project is driven by an important puzzle. Autocracies stay in power due to human rights violations (Poe 2007; Schmitz, Sikkink 2013; Svobik 2012). Consequently, autocracies should employ all their resources to avoid human rights criticism done by monitoring bureaucracies that aim to contribute to democratization. This would imply that autocracies strive to dissolve the monitoring bureaucracies. For example, Cuba holds that country missions conducted by the monitoring bureaucracy Special Procedures of the old UN Human Rights Committee “have proven to be dysfunctional, controversial and useless (Cuba 2006).” Some authoritarian regimes, however, support the existence of monitoring bureaucracies. They do so although monitoring bureaucracies embody the most authoritative form of human rights monitoring (e.g. Bradley, Kelley 2008; Simmons 2009, pp. 103–108; Zürn et al. 2015, pp. 10–11).

It is the large degree of autonomous decision making that ranks monitoring bureaucracies on the top of the authority scale. Monitoring procedures which require unanimous consent by all members or foresee self-reporting qualify as a pre-stage of authority delegation. IO bodies that employ majority decision making procedures have medium authority and take form of intergovernmental bodies (Zürn et al. 2015, p. 11); and finally, monitoring bureaucracies which determine monitoring results without a voting approval by member states score the highest authority (ibid).⁹ Based on my master’s thesis, democracies prefer monitoring bureaucracies whereas autocracies aim to establish relatively strong bureaucracies (see Satra 2015).

As the highest form of international monitoring authority, bureaucracies generate substantial resistance not only because they are the most expensive form of monitoring (Dai 2007) but especially because they can impose the highest reputational costs and empower domestic and transnational human rights movements and stakeholders (Dai 2014). They impose the highest reputational costs because their human rights expertise is perceived to be trustworthy. Bureaucracies can generate their own interests and seem to be primarily interested in fulfilling their monitoring mandate impartially. Consequently, their

⁹ Such delegation levels speak to the monitoring authority of IOs. I certainly would not argue that, for instance, the UN Security Council as an intergovernmental body has less authority than the monitoring bureaucracy of the UN Human Rights Council. Furthermore, international courts possess higher authority than monitoring bureaucracies do as far as the legal character of their work is considered (see Hill 2016). An international court makes one precise judgment per trial. Monitoring bureaucracies “judge” systemic conditions and conduct repeatedly large scale observations of human rights abuses. Thus, their action radius is much broader.

work is believed to be conducted apart from particular state interests (Busch, Liese 2016; Barnett, Finnemore 1999, 2004; Ecker-Ehrhardt 2009, 2012).¹⁰ Building on their trustworthy image and exclusive expertise, results of monitoring missions of bureaucracies are distributed by press and diverse political actors (Ecker-Ehrhardt 2012). In contrast, state-driven naming and shaming done by intergovernmental bodies and self-reporting mechanisms are not able to achieve the same levels of credibility.

By imposing reputational costs on autocracies, monitoring bureaucracies can trigger multiple negative consequences on the international as well as domestic level. Due to reputational costs, an image as a trustworthy partner of international relations diminishes (Axelrod, Keohane 1985; Bradley, Kelley 2008, p. 29). For human rights violators, it is very difficult to formulate credible normative arguments (Johnston 2001, p. 508). Countries with a clear human rights record may pressure human rights violators to contribute military personnel for international peacekeeping missions (see Daxner, Schrade 2011; Stock, Warwick 2012). A very negative human rights score can also upset foreign investors since it evokes the impression that the rule of law is not well-established and thus investments not secured (Farber 2002; see also Jetschke 2015; and Hafner-Burton et al. 2015, p. 22).

However, the most crucial consequences of human rights monitoring strike autocracies on the domestic level where regime change actors get initiated and legitimized by critical monitoring results. To properly grasp such consequences, at least an elemental understanding of autocratic domestic settings is required: Compared to democracies, autocracies are weak on legitimation (see Davenport 2007) and resort to human rights violations in order to mitigate real or perceived threats to their power (Poe 2007; Schmitz, Sikkink 2013; Svobik 2012).^{11,12} Out of the freedoms incorporated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, autocracies repress civil liberties (e.g. right to gather) by far more than individual human rights (e.g. free choice of religion) (Møller, Skaaning 2013). Autocracies impinge on civil liberties to inhibit political competition (ibid).¹³ Human rights movements and stakeholders constitute such a political competition as they aim to induce regime change.¹⁴ International bureaucracies — which are believed to provide for trustworthy human rights expertise — initiate and legitimize local and transnational human rights actors (Dai 2014, pp. 13–14).¹⁵ The critical assessments of human rights draw attention of democratizing actors to repressive policies as well as to single grave abuses. At the same time, poor freedom record legitimize action of human rights stakeholders which are already active. More generally, together with other factors, human rights critics can initiate democratization

¹⁰ See also Barnett, Coleman 2005; Cortell, Peterson 2006; Ellinas, Suleiman 2012; Huber, Shipan 2002; Koch 2008.

¹¹ Parallel to this power-related argument, Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) argue that autocracies choose to repress human rights when it is less costly than introducing liberal democracy institutions.

¹² Though the repression is a defining feature of autocracies, it does not mean that autocratic rulers would not seek legitimation. For example, Gerschewski (2013) theorizes and Hess (2013) empirically analyzes that only a combination of repression, legitimation and co-optation can account for longevity of autocracies.

¹³ Furthermore, autocrats resort to repression although it is often not effective in dispersing the opposition. Such behavior is well known as the “Punishment Puzzle”. (Davenport 2007)

¹⁴ Diamond 1999; Hingley, Burton 1989; O'Donnell et al. 1986; Przeworski 1991; Schimmelfennig et al. 2006; Welsh 1994.

¹⁵ Moreover, IOs in general provide for a communication channel where domestic opposition align international actors to criticize authoritarian policies (Keck, Sikkink 1998).

processes (Pevehouse 2002). As a result, monitoring bureaucracies pose a threat to the authoritarian rule.

Consequently, autocracies have multiple incentives to fight monitoring bureaucracies. Nonetheless, drawing on a qualitative content analysis of the delegation preferences expressed during the reform process of the UN Human Rights Council (UN HRC) in 2006-7 and 2010-11, I observe that some autocracies support the existence of monitoring bureaucracies (see Satra 2015). Even more, the delegation of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which represents autocratic members, praises the monitoring bureaucracy Special Procedures: “The OIC has always held that special procedure system of the UN Human Rights is an extremely useful mechanism for the promotion and protection of Human Rights (Janjua 2007).” It is the main goal of my dissertation to find out why autocracies support monitoring bureaucracies that can or even already did harm their interests.

3. State of the art and research gap

In this part, I would like to first define the analyzed policy field which is common for autocracies as well as democracies. Second, I will briefly summarize the well-developed research on democracies and their delegation-friendly preferences and indicate where my analysis of autocracies can inspire itself. Third, I will review the underdeveloped literature on autocracies. Finally, I will position my main argument and draw attention to the research gap which is about to be covered.

Irrespective of the regime type and policy field, states are ready to delegate authority to IOs and accept an asymmetrical relationship because they recognize that there should be a decision-making instance that advances common goods and avoids chaos (Zürn et al. 2012, p. 87). The extent of authority to be delegated, however, varies. This dissertation project examines authority delegation preferences under moral interdependence which includes two overlapping policies of human rights and democracy. In practice, these two fields are covered by the universal human rights which guarantee private freedoms (e.g. free choice of religion) and political liberties (e.g. right to gather). Unlike IOs governing financial, environmental, or security policies, human rights and democracy IOs are not primarily designed to regulate policy externalities arising from cross-border interactions but to hold governments accountable for domestic activities (e.g. Hill 2016, 1; Moravcsik 2000, p. 217; Rittberger et al. 2013, p. 232). Thus, these IOs foremost constrain states’ behavior towards their inhabitants and only exceptionally focus on inter-state cooperation generating obvious gains as it is the case of delegation under material interdependency. It is hard to make the case especially for autocracies – whose “governance backbone” is repression of the society – and to motivate them for international authority delegation.¹⁶

¹⁶ It is true that human rights and democracy policy fields are not always treated together within the discipline of International Relations. For example, the literature on effects of international election monitoring has gained its own audience or there are even specialized journals like the Journal of Human Rights that avoid specific democracy topics. Nevertheless, the democracy and human rights policy fields re-join in the literature on delegation since states delegate to human rights or democracy IOs under the moral interdependence where IOs regulate the relationship of state and its inhabitants. Moreover, specifically regarding my analysis, these two fields fusion since autocracies either impinge upon democracy or human rights standards in order to repress the opposition and thus stay in the driving seat.

It has to be further clarified that democracies as well as autocracies engage in delegation when embedded in a normatively shaped environment where human rights and democratic governance are to a great extent perceived as desired political goals. Many current contributions directly implement or at least contextualize the explanations by referring to influential human rights protection and liberal democracy governance norms.¹⁷ Norm driven politics motivate democratizing actors to take action and at the same time, it allows them to instrumentally pressure autocracies also for non-altruistic goals. In response, autocracies disseminate authoritarian governance structures (Ambrosio 2008, 2010), organize in “own” regional and international organizations (e.g. Acharya 2003; Börzel, van Hüllen 2015; Soest 2015), and offer an alternative to democratic regime type by pushing forward a “sovereign democracy” (Ambrosio 2008, p. 1338) where repression should protect traditional values and anti-terrorism measures legitimize tightening of the regimes (Plattner et al. 2016). A “sovereign democracy” helps autocracies to decrease the normatively backed external pressure (ibid). Nevertheless, as this project suggests, the authoritarian concept of non-interference is merely a tactical act. I expect autocracies to be ready to breach the state sovereignty norm and prefer to delegate authority to human rights IOs.

Starting the literature review with democracies, democracies are significantly more willing to delegate than autocracies. This applies both within the realm of material and moral interdependence as the dataset Correlates of War reveals (see Pevehouse et al. 2007). Regarding moral interdependence, following aspects has drawn the attention: Democracies have a better human rights account than autocracies do (Møller, Skaaning 2013). Thus, they can afford to delegate authority to IOs without risking severe reputational costs (Lebovic, Voeten 2009). Moreover, democracies aim to spread human rights norms and use IOs as their “vehicles”, therefore empowering them by authority delegation.¹⁸ Young democracies delegate even more authority to IOs than established democracies do. It is because democratizing states aim to externally lock-in their human rights promoting political system for future generations.¹⁹ Last but not least, democracies are ready to delegate since they externalize the design of their political systems with checks and balances (see Abromeit, Stoiber 2007; Maoz, Russett 1993). As I observe not only a convergence of delegation preferences but also convergence of domestic institutions, I inspire myself by the theoretical argument on export of domestic institutions. I will test if this assumption holds for autocracies as well.

The literature on delegation preferences of autocracies suggests that they withstand large scale authority delegation under both material (Mansfield, Pevehouse 2006; Eisentraut, Tokhi 2013) and moral interdependence (Hafner-Burton et al. 2015; Mansfield, Pevehouse 2008, pp. 275–276). The most frequently mentioned reason for autocracies to be delegation-averse is that they want to avoid regime

¹⁷ The robustness of these norms is assessed as rhetoric action in institutionalization processes (Deitelhoff 2009); implementation on the domestic level varying over number of states, durability and norm specificity (Legro 1997); believes of people (see Hawkins, Shaw 2008, p. 467) and NGO activity (Deitelhoff 2009; Risse-Kappen et al. 1999; see also Tallberg et al. 2016).

¹⁸ Finnemore, Sikkink 1998; Hafner-Burton et al. 2015, p. 4; Pevehouse 2002, 2005; Risse-Kappen et al. 1999.

¹⁹ Hafner-Burton et al. 2015; Hill 2016; Mansfield, Pevehouse 2006; Moravcsik 2000; but see Tallberg et al. 2016.

change associated either with state-to-state or IO-driven intervention.²⁰ Their reluctance to delegate should increase with the degree of regime consolidation.²¹ When autocracies decide to delegate to IOs or ROs operating in human rights and democracy fields, then explanations like fear of unilateral military intervention or political interference by democracies; foreign direct investment and foreign aid linkages; countering liberal democracy and putting forward concept of “authoritarian democracy”; and in special scenarios also mitigation of negative cross-boarder externalities come into play. Examples of such explanations take us on a tour throughout American, African, European, and Asian regional and international organizations. ROs with prevailing authoritarian membership serve as “incubators” for explanations of delegation patterns of non-democratic states. Prominent literature on IOs with mixed authoritarian and democratic membership tend to overly concentrate on democracies and does not provide for thorough theoretical reasoning on autocracies’ position.²² Thus, I mostly resort to literature on ROs in order to learn more about autocracies’ delegation preferences.²³

Regarding American IOs, Hawkins and Shaw (2008) delineate the explanatory variable “fear of unilateral military intervention” as they scrutinize reforms of the Organization of American States (OAS) throughout its lifespan. The authors explore by means of process tracing that authoritarian regimes of South and Latin America abided from dedicated protection of the state sovereignty norm as they did not fear unilateral intervention by the USA shortly after the Cold War.

Van Hüllen (2015) elaborates on the influence by the external democratizing actor USA as well. She provides for insights on the development of the Arab League. In the aftermath of 9/11 and the US intervention of Iraq in 2003, the Middle East and North African countries perceived substantial threat of political interference into domestic institutional settings. As a response, they decided to create an intergovernmental body called Arab Human Rights Committee in 2004 which does not foresee public reporting or other type of sanctioning of human rights abuses. The creation of such a body should satisfy external democratizing actors and assure human rights enforcement “without a bite”.

The already mentioned human rights norm pressure gets financial attributes when democratizing actors condition foreign aid flows and investments to democratic governance organizations. Hulse and van der Vleuten (2016) mention the relation of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and external actors such as the EU together with other OECD countries. The SADC countries created a regional tribunal with even supranational/bureaucratic features in 2005. Nevertheless, as the court tried to execute its authority, it was dismantled by its non-democratic members in 2010. Therefore, the shortly lived regional tribunal can be interpreted as an instance of window dressing, where the RO

²⁰ E.g. Ambrosio 2010, p. 376; Johnston 2003, pp. 14–15; Eisentraut, Tokhi 2013, pp. 9–10; Lynch 2007; Pevehouse 2002.

²¹ See for example Hafner-Burton et al. 2015; Mansfield, Pevehouse 2006; Hill 2016.

²² See e.g. Hafner-Burton et al. 2015; Hill 2016; Mansfield, Pevehouse 2006; Mansfield, Pevehouse 2008.

²³ The most peculiar issue of the research on delegation preferences towards IOs is that many contributions draw on data sets with prevailing number of ROs but label the results as being true for IOs. See Mansfield, Pevehouse (2006, p. 156) and Pevehouse, Borzyskowski (2016, p. 12) for more reflection on this problem.

members aimed to signal that they were ripe for foreign aid or investment but, however, were not prepared to expose themselves to judgments of the international authority.^{24,25}

Not willing to accept judgments as well, the members of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) created its own monitoring instrument named Election Monitoring Organization (CIS-EMO) in 2003 (Fawn 2013, p. 77). This kind of a monitoring bureau was called into life to counter assessments conducted by the OSCE election bureau which severely criticized elections in post-soviet countries (Evers 2009, p. 277; Libmann 2011). Its personnel consists of active and former politicians from illiberal as well as democratic European countries whereby the leadership resides with Russia (CIS-EMO 2017). It is supposed to guard domestic governance standards set up by formerly democratizing states whose democracy score and practices decreased to authoritarian category past 2000, as Russo (2015) analyzes.

An example of a window dressing situates us according to Munro (2009) and Gingbar (2010) to Asia, where the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – being under pressure of human rights norms – created the Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights in 2009. Munro (2009) is suspicious about the altruistic aims of the intergovernmental body since young democracies did not ratify optional protocols of the underlying treaties as they seem to undermine the IO-authority. Meanwhile, these protocols were ratified by authoritarian members.

Regarding ASEAN, a different argument is made by Jetschke (2015). She leaves the window dressing delegation motives aside and concentrates on mitigation of negative cross-border externalities and foreign direct investments linkages. Her analysis puts forward an argument where authority delegation should protect state sovereignty.²⁶ In Southeast Asia, a series of gross human rights abuses occurred when states conducted military operations within their territories to suppress opposition. As a consequence, the region experienced multiple transboundary refugee flows whereby neighboring countries complained about the material and social costs to shelter internationally displaced persons. At the same time, the EU and the US condemned the state-led violence and refused to appoint the ASEAN members. Such a move questioned the continuity of European and American foreign direct investments. To decrease the territorial breaches and improve their international reputation, autocracies have delegated some degree of authority to the Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights.²⁷

²⁴ *Communauté Économique des Pays des Grand Lacs* (CEPGL) is another case where external donors provided for material incentives for autocracies to delegate to a RO but could not ensure an operative status of the organization over time (see Heyl 2010).

²⁵ See Robinson (1993) for international political conditionality that puts African countries under pressure to develop domestic democratic institutions.

²⁶ Gingbar (2010) claims as well that the Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights of ASEAN could strengthen the state sovereignty of its members. It is because of the legal status of the commission findings which are clearly subordinated to the domestic policies of the majoritarian autocratic members (ibid). However, Gingbar does not identify any advantages for human rights enforcement as Jetschke (2015) does.

²⁷ Furthermore, the foreign direct investment linkage is approved also by quantitative analysis. Hufner-Burton et al. (2015, p. 22) tested that foreign direct investments play a role for delegation behavior of autocracies but not democracies. See Li, Resnick (2003) for a nuanced account on how foreign direct investment effects diffusion of domestic democratic governance.

In all of the above presented scenarios, autocracies did not strive to please the international community or norms in the first place. They thought primary of own domestic levels as they delegated authority to intergovernmental and supranational or bureaucratic bodies “without a bite” so that domestic interests does not get hurt. In scenarios where autocracies withstand to delegate authority to either intergovernmental or bureaucracy level during reform processes, they might suggest to adopt a self-reporting procedure.²⁸ Self-reporting procedures do not belong to the concept of authority delegation. They are an instance of international cooperation incentive where decision making procedures stay with every single state. I interpret preferences for a self-reporting procedure as a resistance to authority delegation and consequence of pressure to provide for results of reform processes.

To curve out the main analytical foci of this dissertation, it is required to put monitoring authority into perspective. In contrast to creation of self-reporting procedures and delegation to intergovernmental bodies, my project investigates delegation preferences to monitoring bureaucracies. For autocracies, this difference is crucial. When autocracies create self-reporting mechanisms and evaluate themselves uncritically, they only risk to be accused of having no normative incentives to comply with international standards. If autocracies build human rights intergovernmental bodies “without a bite” or emphasize that the domestic policies are more important than the working results of the intergovernmental body, they dismiss the monitoring results as unimportant from the beginning on. The literature explains also a situation where autocracies create own monitoring bureaucracy in order to protect and diffuse repressive domestic institutions. But when autocracies support monitoring bureaucracies devoted to universal human rights and liberal democracy norms, they are counterintuitively advocating the existence of institutions which are designed to impose credible reputational and sovereignty costs on them. Monitoring bureaucracies are a part of the mechanism that forces autocracies to organize large scale election fakes or “only quietly” dissolve human rights movements. Thus, although authoritarian regimes partially learned how to cope with the monitoring bureaucracies (Hyde 2011; see also Kelley 2012), it does not mean that their domestic politics would not be better off without the monitoring authority. Faking elections, employing fake observers (Debre, Morgenbesser 2017), and legitimization of repression entail additional critic for the attempt to cover for repressive practices. In short, I observe that autocracies support IOs which were brought to life by democracies in order to criticize autocracies.

Such puzzling delegation preferences question prevailing assumptions on behavior of autocracies in IOs. The reviewed literature postulates that authoritarian regimes accommodate international human rights and democracy pressure as they delegate authority meanwhile securing power on the domestic level is still their most important goal. In contrast, I argue that autocracies favor international goals to the domestic ones when they support relatively strong monitoring bureaucracies. This modification of the basic assumption on autocracies in IOs will guide my further theoretical reasoning. From the reviewed literature, I draw especially on the contribution by Jetschke (2015) who partially argues that autocracies decide to delegate authority in order to advance own genuine agenda. Thus, autocracies do not have to be pressured by external actors to delegate authority under moral interdependence. I theorize instead

²⁸ See Cole 2015; Goodliffe, Hawkins 2006; Hathaway 2008; Powell, Staton 2009; Simmons 2009.

that even a selective positive experience with monitoring bureaucracies may motivate autocracies to delegate authority.

Regarding human rights IOs, we have plenty of accounts on preferences of democracies. However, we completely lack a systematic analysis on preferences of autocracies toward monitoring bureaucracies working in the name of universal human rights or liberal democracy.²⁹ We are confronted with such a research gap since autocracies' influence on, and stances on human rights IOs are being underestimated. There are many contributions on democracies because they are assumed to be the drivers of human rights IOs, but autocracies are expected to lack the power and credibility to make normative arguments in order to influence IOs.³⁰ My research design avoids such a misleading assumption and pays an appropriate attention to autocracies' behavior. In essence, I follow the call by Hufner-Burton (2012, p. 280) to strengthen the research on autocracies in the field of international human rights.

4. Question

The very precise conceptual goal of my dissertation is to find out why are autocracies ready to delegate authority to bureaucracies monitoring universal human rights and liberal democracy standards. I do not seek to analyze creation of IOs as the most of the studies do. Instead, I investigate reform processes. It is because "explanations for delegation are best tested by examining actual participation in institutions rather than support for strong institutions in principle (Hill 2016, 5)."

Authority of monitoring bureaucracies is discussed in reform processes which are initiated by selected member states or manifest consensual dissatisfaction with IO's work. Yet, reform processes does not include merely discussions on authority of monitoring bureaucracies since autocracies may decide to delegate only to an intergovernmental body or withstand delegation at all and opt out for a self-reporting procedure. Thus, to provide for a holistic explanation of autocracies' preferences, it is indispensable to broaden the analysis and ask about all authority delegation options. Consequently, I formulate a main analytical question:

Q: "Why do authoritarian regimes prefer to delegate authority to human rights international organizations?"

In order to solve the puzzling behavior of autocracies, a careful conceptualization of the dependent variable is required. Essentially, I understand delegation preferences to be explicit statements that states have submitted in re-institutionalization processes. Such statements take the form of *claims* whereby claims express a demand for change (Koopmans, Statham 1990; Wilde 2013). Thus, state

²⁹ Exceptions could be reports by practitioners like Evers (2009) who mention but do not interpret or explain autocracies' intentions to keep monitoring bureaucracies alive. Most frequently, research contributions choose examples of profound state sovereignty defenders like China or the United Arab Emirates. Based on these, it is often concluded that autocracies withstand authority delegation to monitoring bureaucracies (e.g. Cox 2010).

³⁰ Regime diffusion research faced a similar situation recently: Autocracies as diffusing actors were overlooked since the last democratization wave evoked the impression that autocracies simply do not have a say in this world (Albrecht, Frankenberger 2010, p. 11; Ambrosio 2010, p. 376). At the same time, I join Ambrosio who does not contend that „democracy, as a political and normative force in global politics, is somehow dying (2010, p. 377).“ See also Merkel (2010).

preferences demand a change of IO-authority. Zürn et al. (see 2015, p. 8) operationalize IO-authority as “*bindingness times autonomy*”. Bindingness measures the degree to which decisions taken by IOs are compulsory or of recommendatory character (Zürn et al. 2015, p. 7). Autonomy stands for the extent to which IO-bodies can decide to follow their own logic or have to take into account the opinion of some or even every member state (ibid).

I do not rely on the results of the equation above but rather disaggregate them. Regarding bureaucracies, I differentiate between:

- A) Strong monitoring authority = bureaucracy with binding decisions and high autonomy. For example, such a bureaucracy conducts on-site observation missions, sets observation methods and releases reports without consulting them with affected states. Such a monitoring authority is usually preferred by democracies (see Satra 2015).
- B) Relatively strong monitoring authority = bureaucracy with partially binding decisions and low autonomy. For instance, such a bureaucracy conducts on-site observation missions whereby states prescribe the observation methods and reports include comments made by affected states. Similar entities are – according to my empirical preview – preferred by selected autocracies (ibid).

5. Arguments

To explain the counterintuitive delegation preferences of autocracies, I draw on the logic of action which is inherent to historical institutionalism: During reform processes, states are expected to reflect their *past* experience with an IO and balance on the *future* aims (see Fioretos 2011, p. 374). The past experience is here represented by the already imposed monitoring missions over rival states. The future component reflects the autocracies’ aims to avoid to create too strong monitoring bureaucracies. For analysis of reform processes, historical institutionalism has a comparative advantage to the logic of action proposed by rational choice and constructivist theories. Rational choice family takes into account only the expected utility of *future* benefits³¹ and the constructivist family expects actors to be bound and guided by *current* norms (ibid). Thus, both of them does not incorporate the *past* experience which develops throughout the lifespan of an IO and is reflected – together with the *future* aims – during reform processes.

Furthermore, compared to rational choice or realist theories, historical institutionalism allows for behavior where states can act against their material or power equilibria (see Fioretos 2011, p. 375). Therefore, it is suitable to explain a scenario where autocracies make a partially positive experience (targeting of monitoring missions) and are ready to accept the prevailing negative experience (reputational and sovereignty costs) as they decide to delegate authority. This point brings me to the literature on autocracies’ selective and self-serving interaction with democratic and human rights institutions and ideas.

To start with, autocracies provide for an alternative model of democracy to cover for or even legitimize their repressive domestic practice (Plattner et al. 2016). On the bilateral level, autocracies are ready to

³¹ See McAfee et al. (2010) for an exception.

support even democracies if it suits their regional strategy (Obydenkova, Libman 2015) . In IOs, authoritarian regimes plea for more procedural democratic standards to gain more participation opportunities (Eisentraut 2013). Overall, autocracies seek equality with democracies in global affairs as Kneuer and Demmelhuber (2015, p. 776) briefly mention. Such a will is not completely new for autocracies. Nevertheless, this time, autocracies strive to be equal partners in the policy fields of human rights and democracy, where they were formerly told to lack legitimacy to gain a proactive and influential actor status. As autocracies steer monitoring missions, they demonstrate their equal capabilities. I theorize furthermore that autocracies might be ready to accept the prevailing negative experience with monitoring bureaucracies as an expression of the will to become full-fledged members of global governance structures.

Moreover, it is required to narrow down such a broad understanding to provide for thorough insights into the relationship of autocracies and IOs. There must be specific motivation for autocracies to accumulate power in order to overcome their legitimacy deficits and be able to target monitoring missions over rival states in the first place. I outline that autocracies possess three motives to steer monitoring missions. First, when authoritarian regimes direct monitoring bureaucracies to rival states, they re-allocate scarce monitoring capacities and therefore shift the focus partially away from own repressive regimes. Second, already conducted missions to democracies revealed also systematic deficiencies. A critic of core democratic institutions reported by monitoring bodies, which are perceived to work impartially, serves the purposes of autocracies. It allows them to question the legitimacy of external human rights and democratizing actors. Third, autocracies simply let democracies to taste the same medicine of state sovereignty breach that happens due to the on-site missions. Taken together, autocracies have proactive and defensive motives to impose monitoring missions over rival states.

The already imposed monitoring missions create the partially positive experience with an IO and should encourage autocracies to delegate authority. It remains to theorize how such an authority should look like. At this point, the “future” component of autocracies’ delegation preferences comes into play. Overall, I observe a convergence of delegation preferences by autocracies and democracies. Selected autocracies are ready to delegate to relatively strong monitoring bureaucracies. Meanwhile, democracies stand out for strong bureaucracies. The stronger a monitoring bureaucracy is, the higher impact can its critical monitoring results have (see Busch, Liese 2016; Barnett, Finnemore 1999, 2004; Ecker-Ehrhardt 2009, 2012). Thus, autocracies whose governance backbone is repression are reluctant to strengthen the monitoring bureaucracies more than necessary. In contrast, democracies aim to strengthen the monitoring bureaucracies in order to approach the human rights and democratization agenda³² or they do so for non-altruistic reasons (see Daxner, Schrade 2011; Stock, Varwick 2012). In summary, I assume that autocracies balance the past experience with a particular IO (targeting of monitoring missions) and consider future goals (absent support of normative agenda) as they articulate authority delegation preferences.

³² Finnemore, Sikkink 1998; Hafner-Burton et al. 2015, p. 4; Pevehouse 2002, 2005; Risse-Kappen et al. 1999.

I break the theoretical reasoning stepwise down to spell out a testable hypothesis. A general wording reflects the broad theoretical assumptions: If autocracies managed to at least partially use an IO for their own sake, then the probability that they will prefer to delegate authority should increase. An operationalized version will be exposed to an empirical test:

H1: If autocracies managed to target monitoring missions to rival states, then the probability that autocracies prefer to delegate authority to relatively strong monitoring bureaucracies should increase.

In addition, I would like to describe how the proposed causal mechanism is expected to function. Essentially, autocracies organize in their own ROs with prevailing authoritarian membership. Here, they decide which rivals should be monitored. Afterwards, they advocate their interests in IOs with mixed membership of democracies and autocracies that dispose of monitoring bureaucracies. To steer the monitoring missions, autocracies use power and normative reasoning aggregated in their own ROs. Later on, during reform processes of IOs, authoritarian regimes coordinate once again to present their cohesive authority delegation preferences.

Furthermore, I test a second argument which can have concomitant effects. As already mentioned previously, democracies are known to export their domestic system of checks and balances as they delegate authority to IOs (see Abromeit, Stoiber 2007; Maoz, Russett 1993). This is a path-dependent argument which belongs to the realm of historical institutionalism as well. I am eager to find out if authoritarian regimes export domestic institutions to IO level as democracies are told to.

The convergence of delegation preferences by autocracies and democracies reminds of the convergence on the domestic level. Democracies create strong and independent domestic institutions to avoid power accumulation on the domestic level. Meanwhile, authoritarian regimes learned over the time to combine repression, legitimation and co-optation strategies to secure power on the domestic level (see Gerschewski 2013; Hess 2013). They create domestic institutions to include more actors into the regime and to legitimize repression strategies (see Svulik 2012; Boix, Svulik 2013). Such institutions are only semi-independent and autocracies keep them in place as far as they can steer them (Boix, Svulik 2013). Thus, the semi-independent domestic institutions remind of the delegation preferences of autocracies which aim to establish relatively strong monitoring bureaucracies with partially binding decision making competencies and limited independence. I call the second independent variable “export of domestic institutions.” The subsequent hypotheses reads as follows:

H2: A higher degree of independence of domestic institutions should raise the probability that autocracies prefer to delegate authority to IOs.

I expect the first and the second independent variables to explain delegation preferences to monitoring bureaucracies. In order to explain preferences for intergovernmental and self-reporting monitoring mechanisms, I employ an argument which has already been proven to be fruitful for these purposes.³³ The third independent variable is called “regime consolidation”. The consolidation of authoritarian

³³ See for example Hafner-Burton et al. 2015; Mansfield, Pevehouse 2006; Hill 2016.

regimes varies from very stable dictatorships like North Korea to instable hybrid regimes like Ukraine. The more consolidated a regime is, the more it opposes human rights and democracy ideas and institutions. This assumption is reflected in the third hypotheses:

H3: A higher degree of regime consolidation should lower the probability that autocracies prefer to delegate authority to IOs.

A mixed methods approach will test the arguments across IOs and various types of authoritarian regimes. Still, before moving to the methods section, I would like to right away address alternative explanations which are directly at hand.

6. Alternative explanations

Related to the export of domestic institutions, the increasing legitimation and cooptation strategies can awake the impression that authoritarian regimes “could afford” to delegate authority to monitoring bureaucracies. However, autocracies do not resort to cooptation and legitimation in order to apply lower levels of repression. They introduce cooptation and legitimation to be more resilient to democratization waves as well as to resist pressure from domestic authoritarian competition. Their governance “backbone” is still repression. Insights from the OSCE scenario illustrate these.

After the Cold War, the post-soviet countries that are members of the CIS and also the OSCE were rated as rather democratizing states than autocracies (Gershman, Allen 2006; Plattner et al. 2016, pp. 3–4). However, they experienced an authoritarian backlash from 2000 on and introduced a number of repressive policies (ibid, see also Walker 2016, Note 5). Later, under the leadership of Russia, the CIS countries changed the monitoring practice of the OSCE election bureau and let also Western democracies be scrutinized by the IO. I observe that thereafter, during a re-institutionalization process of the OSCE from 2004 to 2007, the authoritarian CIS members decided to delegate authority to the election bureau of the OSCE (see Evers 2009). Therefore, I do not associate delegation preferences of autocracies with decreasing repressive practice.³⁴

There is also another type of a path dependent argument, this time related to the IO level. The historical institutionalism literature demonstrates that IOs get “sticky” over time and that it is very complicated to dissolve an IO since IOs create broad networks in favor of their own organizational structures and bring revenues for member states (Fioretos 2011). Applying this perspective, it could be argued that autocracies support the self-reinforcing patterns of institutional development as they form own delegation preferences. Put simply, autocracies would not even come up with the idea of putting a monitoring bureaucracy to death. I have a threefold objection against this. First, there are multiple contributions which demonstrate that autocracies withstand authority delegation.³⁵ Second, selected autocracies indeed insist on dissolving monitoring bureaucracies. I can for instance refer to China’s

³⁴ Moreover, monitoring bureaucracies do not get fooled by strategies that should legitimate or hide repression. For example, it is an easy task for the OSCE election bureau to reveal that only “friends” of an authoritarian regime may register their parties and participate in elections. As a reaction to such legitimation strategies, monitoring bureaucracies apply reputational costs. Moreover, if monitoring bureaucracies cannot access for example a site where genocide might happen, then they again release critic of the authoritarian actors.

³⁵ E.g. Hafner-Burton et al. 2015; Mansfield, Pevehouse 2006; Pevehouse 2002, 2005.

position to the Special Procedures of the UN HRC (China 2010). Third, this type of a path dependent argument focuses on the *outcomes* of reform processes. Meanwhile, I concentrate on the state delegation preferences which constitute the *input* of reform processes. Thus, the analytical focus differs which complicates the potential theoretical transfer.

As I understand delegation preferences as oral or written statements submitted in reform processes of IOs, it could be pointed out that authoritarian regimes merely comply with diplomatic standards as they prefer to keep monitoring bureaucracies alive.³⁶ Drawing on the OSCE scenario, I would not expect, for example, a global player like Russia to be afraid to voice an actual position towards the OSCE election bureau. Russia applies even military means to advance its international politics. Therefore, I assume that Russian diplomatic apparatus reflects the country's interests in negotiation processes. Apart of the self-confident and rising autocracies like Russia, "smaller" autocracies found a way how to voice their delegation preferences without attracting too much of an attention. For instance, Cuba holds that the UN HRC Universal Periodic Review [which is predominantly an intergovernmental monitoring mechanism³⁷,] was sufficient (Cuba 2006, modification by author). The monitoring bureaucracy Special Procedures would only duplicate the work (ibid). Thus, Cuba – at least for this occasion – avoided an open assault of the bureaucracy and argued in favor of an overall simplified monitoring system.

7. Methods

I will apply mixed methods with a QUAN-*qual* configuration to create the common "1 and ½ empirical study" (see Morse 2016). The mixed methods approach should help me to achieve one demanding objective. My argument implies that autocracies found out how to use human rights IOs for their own sake and are willing to delegate authority to them meanwhile accepting the prevailing negative experience. Thus, I have to overcome the dominant argument that autocracies delegate authority to human rights IOs only when pressured to.³⁸ This requires first, a double check of the theorized causal relationship, and second, an in-depth knowledge that describes the causal mechanism so that we can properly understand it. The causal relationship will be tested by an ordered probit model that represents the QUAN part. The qualitative analysis is divided into two segments. The first one will expose the causal relationship to hard case scenarios and the second one will provide for descriptive process tracing. These two segments create the *qual* part.

In order to conduct a regime type sensitive analysis, I have to differentiate between democracies and autocracies. The basic difference is that democracies introduce political competition to avoid power accumulation and autocracies repress opposition in order to gain power. Here, I rely on the new dataset called V-DEM. Compared to other datasets, V-DEM indicates in 7-12% of cases better if a state only pretends to be a democracy but is actually an electoral autocracy (Lührmann et al. 2017). The V-DEM

³⁶ This is an argument which has been imported from the literature on international treaties. International treaties are told to be ratified by autocracies to avoid negative press coverage (e.g. Simmons 2009). But see Nielsen, Simmons (2015) for contradictory empirical results.

³⁷ The core of the Universal Periodic Review constitute peer review reports where states criticize states for insufficient human rights standards. Additionally, NGOs may also report human rights abuses and states submit self-evaluations.

³⁸ See Jetschke (2015) for an exception.

provides for a four point ordered scale “Regimes In the World” (closed autocracy, electoral autocracy, electoral democracy, liberal democracy) (Coppedge et al. 2017, pp. 263–264). Out of this scale, I will construct a dichotomous regime type measure for my purposes. I resort to the V-DEM dataset for other data sources as well.

In this project, an authoritarian regime that took part in an IO reform process represents a case. The whole universe of cases consists of all autocratic member states of IOs with a monitoring bureaucracy working in the name of universal human rights or liberal democracy. To acquire enough cases for the quantitative analysis and to secure sufficient data especially on the dependent variable of delegation preferences, I have selected three IOs and their respective monitoring bureaucracies: the OSCE with its election bureau, the UN HRC with the monitoring bureaucracy Special Procedures, and African Union with its Special Mechanisms. These three monitoring bureaucracies already imposed sovereignty and reputational costs on their autocratic member states.

The ordered probit model will provide for correlation coefficients and probability estimations. It incorporates the dependent variable called “authority delegation preferences”. These are here understood as *claims* to modify authority of IOs. States demand to refine the authority in reform processes of IOs. To provide for a systematized picture of delegation preferences by autocracies and to generate genuine, sufficiently detailed and contextualized data on the dependent variable of delegation preferences, I will employ qualitative content analysis (Mayring 2010; Kromrey 2009).³⁹ By the means of the qualitative content analysis, I will assess statements submitted by autocracies in reform processes of the three IOs (OSCE 2004-7, UN HRC 2006-7 & 2010-11, AU – period not settled down yet). The category system will be set up based on theory-led criteria and the smallest unit of analysis is a sentence. In reform processes, states may choose from the following five forms of monitoring authority which will be recorded on an ordinal scale. These are ranked from the highest form of authority delegation to an option that does not foresee any authority delegation:

- 4.** Monitoring bureaucracy with binding decisions and high autonomy (/strong monitoring bureaucracy; is expected to be preferred by democracies, e.g. OSCE election bureau)
- 3.** Monitoring bureaucracy with partially binding decisions and low autonomy (/relatively strong monitoring bureaucracy; is expected to be preferred by autocracies that imposed monitoring missions over rival states, e.g. UN HRC Special Procedures)
- 2.** Intergovernmental body with binding decisions and high autonomy (/strong intergovernmental body, e.g. UN HRC with 47 states)
- 1.** Intergovernmental body with partially binding decisions and low autonomy (/relatively strong intergovernmental body; e.g. UN General Assembly with 193 states)
- 0.** Self-reporting mechanism (entails no authority delegation; e.g. self-evaluations by states submitted to the UN Committee Against Torture)

³⁹ At this point, I join the authors Binder and Eisentraut (2015), Deitelhof (2009), Eisentraut and Tokhi (2013). This means that I avoid the very common operationalization of delegation preferences understood as membership to international institutions. I do so since this measure is indifferent to the relationship of states and bureaucratic bodies.

The first independent variable (/variable of interest) called “targeting of monitoring missions” is operationalized as a change of monitoring practice where the original recipients of monitoring get revised on behalf of autocracies. This change does not entail a modification of observation methods or reporting standards or transfer of new institutional competencies in general. First, targeting of monitoring missions can be indicated when autocracies managed to employ human rights missions conducted by a monitoring bureau in a country that would not be scrutinized based on the previous practice. For example, the OSCE election bureau was called into life to make observations in East European countries with autocratic past. However, Russia and its partners from the CIS managed to establish monitoring missions to West European and American democracies as well. Second, targeting of monitoring missions occurs when autocracies achieved to essentially restrict or broaden a certain monitoring mission so that human rights violators got included into or excluded out of the observation scrutiny. For instance, except for one, all missions of the UN HRC Special Procedures generate knowledge on human rights abuses within a certain territory embracing *all* violators into the reports and the missions has to be renewed in approximately three year periods (OHCHR 2017). An exemption of such a practice and thus an example of targeting of monitoring missions is the quest in Palestine. This mission has special recipients due to influence by autocratic members of the OIC, whereby Palestine is a member of the OIC. In Palestine, only human rights breaches by Israeli government are monitored, meanwhile other violators are left out. The first independent variable will be of binominal character: An autocracy either did or did not impose monitoring mission(s) over rival state(s).⁴⁰

The second independent variable analyzes whether autocracies export their domestic institutions to the IO level. It should account for recent developments where autocracies began to build semi-independent institutions in their domestic settings. A higher degree of independence of domestic institutions should raise the probability that an autocracy prefers to delegate authority. The “Horizontal accountability index” (Coppedge et al. 2017, pp. 76–77) from the V-DEM dataset is an interval scale measure of institutions that oversee regime activities and therefore matches my purposes.

The third independent variable represents the regime consolidation. A higher degree of consolidation should lower the probability that an autocracy prefers to delegate authority. For purposes of a robustness check (see Hafner-Burton et al. 2015), the consolidation is measured on an interval scale and at the very same time also on a dichotomous one. Here, I resort to the V-DEM data verse as well. The interval scale “Liberal democracy index” (Coppedge et al. 2017, p. 49) offers an exact score representing how consolidated an autocracy is. The (modified) dichotomous scale “Regimes In the World” differentiates only between a dictatorship and an autocracy. The results applying both scales will be compared and taken into account.

Except for the three independent variables, the quantitative model will also control for competing arguments. The first control variable represents the “extent of repression” carried out by an autocracy.

⁴⁰ There is another option to operationalize the independent variable of targeting of monitoring missions. Hug (2015) works with a so called *politicization* of IO-authority which is inspired by policy agenda of democracies. In his analysis, politicization stands for scenarios where states impose disproportioned or ill-placed monitoring over a certain state. To identify politicization, it is required to establish that the monitoring has been induced to carry out bilateral or multilateral political conflict whereby the enforcement of human rights does not figure as a primary goal. This kind of politicization does not represent public contestation of IOs with high authority levels as it was analyzed by Zürn et al. (2012).

A higher extent of repression should lower the probability of authority delegation. For this purposes, I use the interval scale “Political civil liberties index” from the V-DEM dataset (Coppedge et al. 2017, pp. 73–74).

The third control variable should allow me to account for possible effects of autocracies’ economic strength. Very often, GDP “summarizes” multiple influences. More powerful states are expected to delegate more authority to IOs since they can project their power and thus influence the input, throughput and output of IOs to a larger extent than less powerful countries. Furthermore, the here closely analyzed monitoring bureaucracies are the most expensive form of human rights monitoring authority (see Dai 2007). In sum, it seems to be more probable for wealthier states to prefer to delegate authority to IOs. I use GDP per country values from the IMF’s World Economic Outlook database.

It could be argued that the ordered probit model may suffer from multicollinearity issues as it incorporates the variables “independence of domestic institutions”, “consolidation of autocracies” and “extent of repression”. It is because the degree of consolidation takes into account what domestic institutions authoritarian regimes use to accumulate power and/or to repress the opposition. For example, a semi consolidated authoritarian regime – for instance current Turkey – employs semi-independent courts to legitimize repression of opposition. To find out whether multicollinearity is an issue here, I will compute and interpret variance inflation factors.

The first segment of the qualitative analysis inquires whether the argument on targeting of monitoring missions sustains even hard case scenarios. Thus, it tests the causal relationship by utilizing theoretical reasoning. It will be for example analyzed if a highly consolidated regime with a very poor repression record that imposed a monitoring mission over a rival state is ready to delegate authority to a relatively strong monitoring bureaucracy. Here, I could analyze for instance Iran. The final choice will be made upon data availability. Both the quantitative model and the first segment of the qualitative analysis test “Whether X causes Y.”

The second segment of the qualitative analysis should primary allow me to understand “How X causes Y”. For this purpose, I formulate a confirmatory question: “How can a partially positive experience with an IO influence authority delegation preferences?” I will employ descriptive process tracing to generate the required data (Collier 2011, p. 824). The process tracing will describe how the variable of interest “targeting of monitoring missions” and the dependent variable “authority delegation preferences” are formed in the UN HRC. I decided to scrutinize the UN HRC since it is the central body of the global human rights regime. Contrary to the straightforward causal analysis, the descriptive part will provide for space to contextualize the behavior of autocracies and to present the convergence of delegation preferences by autocracies and democracies.

Already now, I may offer a few insights into how the variable of interest “targeting of monitoring missions” is formed: Autocracies coordinate in ROs with homogenous autocratic membership and decide, who should be targeted by monitoring bureaucracies of IOs with mixed membership comprising democracies and autocracies. Here, I refer to the theoretical literature on the so called “nested IOs”, where two IOs with overlapping membership influence each other (Gehring, Oberthür 2009). Furthermore, empirical studies on the interplay of ROs and IOs suggest to shed light not only on the homogeneity of regime type but also on shared experience [which generates shared interests] and activity of powerful members of ROs (Panke 2013, modified by author). Moreover, Panke et al. (2016)

found out that it is also the design of large IOs with majoritarian rules that accounts for higher activity of ROs. In sum, agenda on nested ROs and IOs has the potential to describe how autocracies manage to use monitoring bureaucracies for their own sake. I interpret such an interaction between (smaller) “autocratic” ROs and (larger) IOs with both democratic and non-democratic states as a consequence of dense regional coordination by authoritarian regimes.

In summary, the presented mixed methods approach should allow me to tackle an important analytical puzzle and explain a so far overseen behavior of autocracies. This should in turn help me to provide for an improved understanding of authoritarian regimes in global governance structures where autocracies ease upon the state sovereignty norm to advance goals of international politics. At the same time, I expect autocracies to be ready to accept disadvantages of authority delegation as a part of their strategy to become full-fledged members of the global governance structures.

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