

R E P O R T

INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND
PERONISM

The Concept, the Case and the Case for Unpacking
the Concept

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A B S T R A C T

The concept of institutionalization is widely employed but often poorly defined in the literature on political parties. This paper argues that 'institutionalization' as it is frequently used encompasses a diverse set of meanings that are better thought of as conceptually distinct. The paper examines two phenomena that have been widely associated with institutionalization: 'value infusion' and 'behavioral routinization'. It uses the case of Peronism in Argentina, which is infused with value but poorly routinized, to demonstrate that these phenomena can vary independently. The paper argues that the failure to make these conceptual distinctions may pose serious problems for causal analysis. As an example, it shows how different conceptions of institutionalization lead to opposing arguments about the relation between institutionalization and the capacity of parties to adapt to changing electoral and policy environments. The paper then examines the distinction between formal and informal routinization with respect to political parties, arguing that many studies of political parties fail to incorporate informally routinized behavior patterns into their conceptions of institutionalization.

KEY WORDS ■ behavior routinization ■ institutionalization ■ party adaptation ■ Peronism ■ values

In a recent debate on the transformation of Latin American party systems, two scholars presented opposing arguments about the relationship between

1354-0688(199801)4:1;77-92;001843

institutionalization and party change. Whereas one argued that the Chilean Socialist Party was able to successfully shift to the center after the late 1980s because it was well institutionalized, the other claimed that in Argentina, Peronism's recent shift to the right was facilitated by its *lack* of institutionalization.¹ This difference, it turned out, was not based on opposing understandings of the relationship between institutionalization and party change, but rather on different definitions of institutionalization.

The concept of institutionalization is widely employed in the literature on political parties, but is often poorly or ambiguously defined. Taking as a starting point the idea that such conceptual ambiguity is problematic for social science research (Sartori, 1970, 1984, 1991; Collier and Levitsky, 1997), this article seeks to sort out the meanings of institutionalization that have been employed in studies of political organizations. It argues that the concept of institutionalization has been associated with different organizational phenomena that do not necessarily vary together. Using the case of the (Peronist) Justicialist Party (PJ) in Argentina, I show how these different conceptions of institutionalization can lead to very different scorings of empirical cases. Addressing these inconsistencies can clarify the causal relation between institutionalization and party change, as well as provide a new perspective on the problem that causal arguments about institutionalization can become tautological. I then examine the distinction between formal and informal institutionalization, using the Peronist case to show how intra-party processes that depart significantly from formal rules and procedures may nevertheless still be institutionalized. The article concludes by suggesting that analysts of political parties break down the concept of institutionalization into more specific terms: value infusion and routinization, and formal versus informal routinization.

The Peronist case is, I believe, particularly useful in highlighting some of the ambiguities in the concept of party institutionalization. Peronism has been firmly entrenched in Argentine society – both organizationally and as a political identity – for more than 50 years, and despite decades of proscription and repression, PJ leaders and activists have demonstrated a high degree of loyalty to the party. At the same time, the PJ has long been fluid and unstable in its internal structure. The formal party bureaucracy and the rules and procedures associated with it are routinely ignored. Peronism is thus characterized by a combination of strength and endurance on the one hand, and internal fluidity and informality on the other. The dilemmas posed by the effort to characterize this set of organizational features serve to illustrate some broader issues in the study of party institutionalization.

The Meaning(s) of Institutionalization

A wide range of meanings of institution and institutionalization can be found in the literature on political organizations.² Definitions range from a

focus on formal rules (Tsebelis, 1989: 94) to the inclusion of beliefs, myths, knowledge and other aspects of culture (March and Olsen, 1989: 22). Institutionalization has been associated with phenomena as diverse as bureaucratization (Wellhofer, 1972: 156), organizational and electoral stability (Janda, 1980: 19–28), ‘taken-for-grantedness’ (Jepperson, 1991: 147), infusion with value (Selznick, 1957: 17), and the regularization of patterns of social interaction (O’Donnell, 1994: 57). Perhaps because these dimensions seem to intuitively ‘hang together’, analysts have often treated institutionalization as a cluster of two or more of them. Yet as this article argues, many of the phenomena associated with institutionalization do not always vary together empirically, which raises the question of whether they might be better thought of as conceptually distinct.

To develop this argument, this section outlines two predominant conceptualizations of institutionalization employed in the literature on political parties: (1) institutionalization as value infusion, and (2) institutionalization as behavioral routinization. It suggests that although both these phenomena have been widely associated with institutionalization, and have at times been incorporated into a single definition, they are, in fact, distinct.

Institutionalization as Value Infusion

One well-known definition, which takes as the unit of analysis the organization as a whole, equates institutionalization with what might be called ‘value infusion’ (Selznick, 1957; Huntington, 1968). According to this definition, institutionalization occurs when an organization becomes ‘infused with value beyond the technical requirement of the task at hand’ (Selznick, 1957: 17), or when actors’ goals shift from the pursuit of particular objectives *through* an organization to the goal of perpetuating the organization *per se*. Scholars who employ the value infusion definition tend to be concerned with individuals’ valuations of the organizations of which they are a part, and with how those valuations affect the fate of the organization as a whole. According to Selznick (1957: 5), a non-institutionalized organization is viewed by its members as an ‘expendable tool, a rational instrument engineered to do a job’. Members or participants value such organizations only to the extent that they help to achieve specific goals. They do not have a stake in the organization’s survival beyond the achievement of those goals and, consequently, the organization will be unlikely to survive once the goals change or are met. Institutionalization, by contrast, is marked by a ‘concern for self-maintenance’. It entails a ‘prizing of the device for its own sake’, whereby the organization is ‘changed from an expendable tool into a valued source of personal satisfaction’ (Selznick, 1957: 17–21). Because members of an institutionalized organization feel a personal stake in the perpetuation of the organization, they will seek to preserve it even when its original goals change or are met.

Huntington (1968: 12–15) similarly defines institutionalization as a

process by which an organization becomes 'valued for itself'. As an organization becomes institutionalized, he argues, its members weaken their commitment to the original goals of the organization but strengthen their commitment to the preservation of the organization itself. The organization 'develops a life of its own quite apart from the specific functions it may perform at any given time'. Consequently, it becomes more flexible or adaptable, and is thus better able to survive in a changing environment (Huntington, 1968: 15–16). Institutionalized parties, then, are those that are able to shift their programmatic or ideological goals when circumstances change. For example, nationalist parties in postcolonial states had to adapt their goals and functions if they were to survive in the post-independence period. According to Huntington (1968: 17), those parties that undertook this organizational change, such as the Indian Congress Party, were better institutionalized than those that did not.

Institutionalization as Behavioral Routinization

A second approach to institutionalization takes as the unit of analysis not the organization as a whole, but rather specific patterns of behavior *within* the organization. Analysts who use these definitions focus on the 'rules of the game' that shape social interaction, and they define institutionalization as the process by which such rules or patterns become routinized or entrenched (North, 1990; Jepperson, 1991; O'Donnell, 1996). Institutionalization, then, is the entrenchment of the rules of the game.

Scholars who employ the routinization definition tend to be concerned with how behavior is regularized and made predictable. According to North (1990: 3–4), institutions 'reduce uncertainty by providing a structure to everyday life'. Societal institutions are thus 'analogous to the rules of the game in a competitive team sport', in that they structure behavior through a combination of 'rules and informal codes'. Similarly, O'Donnell (1994: 57–9) defines institutions as 'regularized patterns of interaction that are known, practiced, and regularly accepted', as well as the 'rules and norms formally or informally embodied in those patterns'. Institutionalization is thus a process by which actors' expectations are stabilized around these rules and practices.

Institutionalization in this second sense is understood to constrain actors. The entrenchment of 'rules of the game' tends to narrow actors' behavioral options by raising the social, psychic, or material costs of breaking those rules. According to O'Donnell (1994: 58), in a context of high institutionalization individuals 'come to expect behaviors within a relatively narrow range of possibilities'. Although these actors may not like this narrow range of options, 'they anticipate that deviations from such expectations are likely to be counterproductive'. Similarly, Jepperson (1991: 148–9) argues that while institutionalized behavior patterns are reproduced through taken-for-granted routines, behavior that departs from institutionalized patterns requires

'action', which often entails significant costs. Thus, change in the context of well-institutionalized rules and procedures tends to be difficult, slow, and incremental.

For these scholars, then, institutionalization entails the stabilization or routinization of behavior. When rules, procedures, roles, or other patterns of behavior are institutionalized, they come to be repeated and taken for granted, and stable sets of expectations form around them. Institutionalized rules and behavior patterns come to be perceived by individual actors as permanent structures. Such regularization of behavior and expectation patterns is said to be essential for the effective functioning of regimes such as markets (North, 1990), party systems (Schedler, 1995b), and democracies (O'Donnell, 1994).

A Single Concept?

Party institutionalization may thus be viewed as the infusion with value of a party organization as a whole or as the routinization of the rules of the game within a party. Should these two 'institutionalizations' be understood to be part of a single phenomena, or should they be thought of as conceptually distinct? Scholars have frequently lumped value infusion and routinization into a single concept. In some cases, the two phenomena are simply conflated. For example, Panebianco (1988: 53) defines institutionalization as value infusion, writing that a party is institutionalized when it 'becomes valuable in and of itself, and its goals become inseparable and indistinguishable from it'. However, in his discussion of how to measure a party's 'degree of institutionalization', Panebianco offers indicators of routinization, such as the development of a centralized bureaucracy, stable career paths, and homogeneous organizational structures, as well as an increasing 'correspondence between a party's statutory norms and its "actual power structure"' (Panebianco, 1988: 58–60).

Other scholars distinguish between value infusion and routinization but include both dimensions in their concept because they understand them to vary together. McGuire (1997: 7–12), for example, argues that a political party is institutionalized 'to the extent that the individuals who operate within it infuse it with value, take it for granted, and behave in accordance with its incentives and sanctions'. McGuire treats these dimensions as a 'syndrome' of distinct, but causally related, components, suggesting that value infusion may improve an organization's 'capacity to shape and constrain the behavior of the individuals who operate within it'. Similarly, Janda (1980: 19) defines an institutionalized party as one that is both 'reified in the public mind so that "the party" exists as a social organization apart from its momentary leaders' and 'demonstrates recurring patterns of behavior valued by those who identify with it'. His operationalization of the concept includes measures of organizational endurance and electoral stability, as well as the regularity and openness of processes of leadership change.³

However, there are potential conceptual – and analytical – costs to treating value infusion and routinization as part of a single concept. Value infusion and routinization are distinct organizational phenomena that do not necessarily occur together. An organization may be infused with value without being internally routinized.⁴ For this reason, scholars may be better off distinguishing more clearly between the two types of institutionalization, and perhaps treating them as distinct concepts. The following section uses the example of Peronism, which is arguably infused with value but not well routinized, to make the case for such a conceptual distinction.

The Case of Peronism: Value Infusion Without Routinization?

The (Peronist) Justicialista Party (PJ)⁵ has been one of the most influential political forces in modern Latin American history. Created as a mass working- and lower-class movement of support for Juan Domingo Perón in the 1940s, Peronism has survived decades of proscription and repression, as well as the death of its charismatic founder in 1974. The PJ remains the largest party in Argentina today. The Peronist identity is deeply rooted in Argentine society, and the party has a strong organizational base among the working and lower classes. Nevertheless, since its founding, the PJ has been characterized by a weak bureaucratic structure and a fluid and contested set of intra-party rules and procedures. Is Peronism well institutionalized or poorly institutionalized?

By the value infusion definition, the PJ may be viewed as relatively well institutionalized. The PJ is clearly ‘valued for itself’ by its members.⁶ Peronist leaders and activists have remained committed to the party through periods of severe adversity and despite important changes in the organization’s goals and strategies. Perhaps the clearest evidence of the PJ’s institutionalization was its survival after the death of Perón in 1974 and its resurgence in the 1980s. Many parties of charismatic origin fail to survive the disappearance of their founders (Panebianco 1988: 162). Despite this fact, and despite the fact that the party was banned and severely repressed by the military governments that ruled between 1976 and 1983, the bulk of Peronist leaders and activists remained committed to the party. The PJ’s infusion with value was also evident in the early 1990s, when the vast majority of Peronist leaders and activists remained committed to the party despite President Carlos Menem’s abandonment of the PJ’s traditional socio-economic project. For most PJ members, then, the PJ is more than a tool for achieving other ends. Rather, it is widely valued for itself, and it is thus institutionalized in this sense of the term.

However, if one applies the routinization definition of institutionalization to the PJ, a different picture emerges. In terms of the rules of the game that govern the internal life of the party, the PJ is *not* well institutionalized, as

intra-party rules and procedures are widely circumvented, manipulated or contested by Peronist leaders. This under-routinization is to an important degree a product of party founder Juan Perón's repeated efforts to thwart the establishment of stable intra-party rules, as well as of the proscription and repression of the party throughout much of the 1955–83 period (McGuire, 1997). While the Peronist 'renovation' process of the late 1980s brought a greater degree of institutional stability to the party, particularly through the establishment of regular internal elections, it is still far from being internally routinized in comparison with other mass-based parties. Rather than being entrenched or 'taken for granted', the rules laid out by the party charter are constantly circumvented or manipulated to suit the short-term political needs of the leadership. Provincial party charters, for example, are routinely modified to allow non-party candidates, or candidates residing in other provinces, to participate in gubernatorial and legislative elections.⁷ Intra-party elections are likewise poorly institutionalized. Party leaders commonly negotiate 'unity lists' that make elections unnecessary and, in some cases, elections are canceled altogether.⁸ The absence of regularized elections is particularly evident at the national leadership level, where in the 10 years since the party charter was reformed to permit direct elections for the National Council, not a single competitive election has been held.

The PJ is likewise poorly institutionalized in that it lacks a functioning bureaucratic hierarchy and stable career paths. Since 1989, marginal party leaders, long-time associates of President Menem, and even non-Peronist cultural and sports personalities have routinely been vaulted into the top ranks of the party. Moreover, formal leadership bodies, such as the National Council and National Congress, do not exert the independent authority with which the party charter invests them. Whenever the political orientation of the members of these party organs bodies is out of line with the orientation of the *de facto* powers in the party, the party organs become virtually irrelevant, as Peronist leaders make and carry out party decisions by means of informal 'summits' and parallel organizations. Thus, in terms of the rules and procedures that structure intra-party activity, the PJ must be considered relatively under-institutionalized.

The case of Peronism thus illustrates the observation that value infusion and routinization are distinct phenomena that do not necessarily vary together. According to the first criterion, the PJ is arguably well institutionalized, for its members value, and seek to preserve, the party *per se*, rather than merely pursuing particular objectives through its organization. According to the second criterion, however, the PJ is poorly institutionalized, as specific organizational procedures within the party leadership structure are not routinized.

Implications for Causal Analysis

Poorly or ambiguously defined concepts pose a straightforward problem for causal analysis: if we cannot agree on the phenomena we are studying, then

arguments about their causes and effects will be confusing and contested. In the present context, the conceptual ambiguity produced by failure to distinguish among the different phenomena associated with institutionalization may undermine our capacity to develop and assess arguments about its consequences. This problem is made clear in scholarly work on party organization.

Definitions and Causal Analysis

A central concern in the parties literature is with the capacity of parties to adapt to changing electoral and policy environments. Scholars have pointed to the degree of institutionalization as an important variable in explaining parties' capacities to adapt (Huntington, 1968; Kesselman, 1970; Panebianco, 1988). Yet different conceptions of institutionalization are associated with opposing arguments about the causal relation between institutionalization and party change. For example, the 'value infusion' conception views institutionalization as facilitating adaptation (Huntington, 1968; Roberts, 1995), in that members of a valued organization will seek to preserve it even after its original goals have changed or been met (e.g. the YMCA or the March of Dimes). When individuals have a personal or professional stake in an organization's persistence, then the goal of maintaining the organization per se will override particular organizational goals, and members will be more likely to accept changes in those goals in order to ensure the organization's survival. When an organization is not valued for itself, then its members, upon realizing that the organization is no longer an effective means to the particular goals they are pursuing, will be more likely to abandon it rather than seek to preserve it.

By contrast, the 'routinization' conception treats institutionalization (particularly formal institutionalization) as reducing adaptability (Jepperson, 1991; Kitschelt, 1994; Schedler, 1995a). To the extent that organizational rules, procedures and roles become entrenched, it is argued, it becomes more difficult for actors to change them. According to Panebianco (1988: 58), a high degree of institutionalization within a political party 'drastically limits its internal actors' margins of maneuverability', as the organization 'imposes itself upon the actors' and 'channels their strategies into specific and obligatory paths'. As a result, whereas weakly institutionalized parties may experience sudden transformations, organizational change in well-institutionalized parties generally takes place 'slowly and laboriously'. Similarly, Kitschelt (1994: 213) argues that in highly bureaucratized parties, a 'plethora of rules of decision making' tends to limit the party leadership's capacity to carry out 'innovation from above', while strict career paths instill conformity in lower-level leaders and thus limit 'innovation from below'.

Thus, the value infusion and routinization definitions are associated with opposing causal arguments about the relation between institutionalization and the capacity of organizations to adapt and survive in response to

changing environmental conditions. Again, the case of Peronism helps to illustrate the analytic problems generated by this conceptual ambiguity. On the one hand, the Menem leadership's capacity to carry out far-reaching programmatic change in the PJ after 1989 can be said to have been facilitated by the party's institutionalization in the value infusion sense. Because their attachment to Peronism overrode their commitment to the party's original socio-economic project, most Peronist leaders and activists remained committed to the party even after Menem had abandoned that project. On the other hand, it can be argued that the post-1989 Peronist adaptation was facilitated by the party's under-institutionalization in the sense of routinization. First, the fluidity of the PJ bureaucracy permitted the rapid rise of reformers within the party. Second, the absence of established rules and procedures to govern the party hierarchy provided the Menem leadership with a substantial amount of room for maneuver. These two factors arguably contributed to both the speed and degree of the PJ's programmatic change (Levitsky, 1995). The Peronist transformation under Menem can thus be attributed to *both high and low* levels of institutionalization, underscoring the need to unpack the concept.

The Question of Tautology

Another important issue concerning institutionalization and organizational adaptation involves the problem of tautology. Arguments about the relation between institutionalization and organizational adaptation have been criticized for failing to separate the explanation from the outcome they are trying to explain.⁹ If, for example, organizational adaptation and survival is simultaneously treated as an indicator of institutionalization and a product of it, then causal inferences become meaningless (Tilly, 1973: 431; Sigalman, 1979: 215; Remmer, 1997).

To make a causal argument about the relation between institutionalization and organizational adaptation, one must be able to show independent observations of institutionalization and adaptation. In the case of the value infusion definition, this entails demonstrating that members valued the organization at some point prior to the episode of organizational change. For example, in the case of Peronism, one could point to continued rank-and-file commitment to Peronism after the death of Perón as a prior indicator of value infusion.

There is less risk of tautology in the case of the routinization definition, for the outcome to be explained (in this case, a change in organizational goals) is not treated as an aspect of institutionalization. Rather, certain features of the organization, such as fluidity of rules or career paths, may be said to directly facilitate the change in goals. Only if changes in rules or leadership turnover themselves were used as indicators of party transformation, rather than as facilitating conditions, would there be a problem of tautology.

Formal versus Informal Routinization

In addition to the distinction between value infusion and routinization, the case of Peronism helps to highlight another distinction that has not been adequately conceptualized in the literature on political parties: that of formal versus informal routinization.¹⁰ Guillermo O'Donnell (1996: 40) recently criticized studies of Latin American democratization for focusing almost exclusively on the formal rules and procedures of new democratic regimes and not paying enough attention to 'the actual rules that are being followed'. Although these informal rules and procedures function outside the scope of formal constitutional or legal frameworks, O'Donnell argues, they are often 'widely shared and deeply rooted'.

The idea of informal routinization is, of course, not new. Social scientists have long pointed out that there is often a 'great gap between the formal and the informal organization' (Meyer and Rowan, 1991: 43), and many contemporary 'institutionalists' focus primarily on the latter (March and Olsen, 1989; Powell and Dimaggio, 1991). In the political parties literature, work on political clientelism and machine politics (Wilson and Banfield, 1963; Scott, 1969) has pointed to the divergence between formal rules and informal practices. Nevertheless, informal institutions have not been systematically incorporated into scholars' conceptualizations of party institutionalization. Much of the literature on political parties treats routinization as a process by which actual behavior is brought into line with formal rules and procedures. Wellhofer (1972: 156), for example, defines institutionalization as 'synonymous with the formalization and bureaucratization of organizations', while Panebianco (1988: 58–62) associates party institutionalization with a greater 'correspondence between statutory norms and the "actual power structure"'. From such a perspective, informal behavior patterns – no matter how routinized – are viewed as phenomena that deviate from, or even undermine, institutionalization. Such an exclusive focus on the correspondence between formal rules and actual behavior risks missing important aspects of intra-party life, for it leads one to ignore or understate the degree to which intra-party politics is structured by stable, regularized patterns of behavior that nevertheless depart from (or are unrelated to) formal rules and procedures.

The case of Peronism is again useful in developing this point. As noted above, from a formal standpoint, the PJ is poorly routinized. Yet in at least some respects, and particularly at the base level, intra-party activity is structured in a relatively stable way by informal rules and practices. One example of such informal institutionalization is the '62 Organizations', an informal trade union alliance that for decades was widely recognized by Peronists as the 'labor branch' of Peronism. Although the '62' lacked formal statutes, regularized meetings, and a formal position within the party structure (McGuire, 1992: 40), its role as the political representative of organized labor within Peronism was virtually unquestioned between the late 1950s and the mid-1980s.

Other examples of informal institutions can be found at the base level of Peronism. Base-level Peronist activity is, from a formal standpoint, poorly routinized. Local party branches, *unidades basicas* (base units), operate almost entirely at the margins of local party authorities. The vast majority of them are not financed by, subject to the discipline of, or even officially registered with, local party authorities. In practice, any individual can open up a base unit, and in any location. Yet an exclusive focus on the formal party organization risks missing the important degree to which base-level Peronist activity is in fact routinized. Despite the fact that local base units rarely carry out the functions assigned to them in the party charter, much of the activity that takes place within them is rooted in widely shared norms and expectations about how to 'do Peronism'. Indeed, base-level Peronism exhibits a range of practices that, while not written down in the party charter or any party manual, are widely known and remarkably similar across territorial units. These include the celebration of important Peronist dates such as Eva Perón's birthday and Peronist Loyalty Day, organizational forms such as informal 'working groups' and *agrupaciones*, and mobilizational techniques such as the singing of the Peronist March, the formation of youth graffiti painting brigades, and the use of the *bombo* (big drum) at Peronist rallies. Particularly widespread is the practice of neighborhood 'social work'. All Peronist base units engage in activities such as the distribution of food, clothing and medicine, the organization of youth activities, or the operation of a retirees center. Although they undoubtedly serve clientelistic ends, these activities entail more than the simple exchange of goods for political support. Rather, they are embedded in established and widely shared traditions, roles, language, and symbols that center around Peronist notions of 'social justice' and images of Eva Perón (Auyero, 1997).¹¹

Peronism is by no means unique in its informal routinization. Case studies of political parties have long demonstrated how informal behavior deviates in regularized ways from formal party statutes.¹² Definitions that focus exclusively on formal rules and procedures fail to capture such routinization. Still, most comparative and theoretical work on political parties does not incorporate informal rules and procedures into discussions of party institutionalization. These informal patterns must be conceptualized and theorized in a more systematic manner.

Conclusion: Unpacking Institutionalization

The concept of institutionalization has not been clearly or consistently defined in the literature on political parties. The category encompasses diverse phenomena that are frequently assumed to cluster together, such as bureaucratization, electoral stability, value infusion, and regularized patterns of interaction. The case of Peronism compels us to question that assumption. The clustering of what are in fact distinct forms of

institutionalization into a single concept is problematic for causal analysis, for, as the Peronist case shows, different understandings of institutionalization generate opposing causal claims about the relationship between institutionalization and party change.

In the light of these ambiguities, it is worth suggesting that the concept of institutionalization be unpacked. Rather than lump together several different dimensions into a single concept, it may be more fruitful to break the concept down into its component meanings and to use more specific terms. This article has argued that *value infusion* and *routinization* should be conceptualized as distinct phenomena. Value infusion is a process in which organizational actors' goals shift from the pursuit of particular objectives through the organization to the goal of preserving or perpetuating the organization *per se*, while routinization is the regularization of patterns of social interaction, or the entrenchment of the 'rules of the game'. This disaggregated approach should also be extended to the formal-informal distinction. Thus, the concept of routinization can be broken down into the categories of *formal* routinization and *informal* routinization. Where the fit between formal rules and procedures and real patterns of behavior is tight, these rules and procedures may be said to be formally routinized. Where behavior does not conform closely to formal rules, but nevertheless follows patterns or routines that are well established and widely shared, then one may speak of informal routinization. Finally, where no stable rules of the game (either formal or informal) structure social interaction, one may speak of *non-routinization*.

Parties may combine these forms of institutionalization in different ways. Some parties, such as several European social democratic parties, score high on both the value infusion and routinization dimensions, while others, like many of those in Brazil, score low on both dimensions (Mainwaring, 1995). In other instances, parties' scores on the two dimensions diverge. For example, the PJ is relatively infused with value but not well routinized. Alternatively, parties may exhibit a significant degree of routinization without a high level of value infusion. Some European green parties may approach this category, in that they often exhibit a strong emphasis on intra-party democratic procedures, yet many activists prioritize ideological goals over the defense of the organization. Parties also differ on the dimension of formal versus informal routinization. Whereas European mass bureaucratic parties exhibit relatively high levels of formal routinization, clientelistic or machine-based parties may be said to be informally routinized.

These different combinations underscore the need to disaggregate institutionalization into a set of more specific concepts that refer to the particular organizational phenomena that scholars are trying to capture. The use of more specific terms would be an important step toward a much-needed clarification of this important, yet ambiguous, concept. Not only would such specification permit scholars to focus more concretely on the mechanisms by which organizations or behavior patterns are reproduced, but it would also improve our analyses of the consequences of such phenomena.

Notes

Christopher Ansell, Javier Auyero, David Collier, Sebastian Etchemendy, James McGuire, and Pierre Ostiguy, as well as two anonymous reviewers for *Party Politics*, made helpful comments on earlier versions of this article.

- 1 Panel on economic liberalization and the transformation of Latin American party systems at the XIX International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association. See Levitsky (1995) and Roberts (1995).
- 2 For detailed discussions of the meaning of party and party system institutionalization, see Welfling (1973: 5–13), Janda (1980: 19–28, 143–44), Mainwaring and Scully (1995) and McGuire (1997: 7–12).
- 3 Janda (1980: 143–4) finds a significant degree of intercorrelation among four of his indicators of institutionalization: party age, electoral stability, legislative stability and leadership competition.
- 4 O'Donnell (1996) makes a similar argument with respect to democratic institutions in many Latin American countries. He notes that whereas democracy itself may be valued and well established in many countries, the internal 'games' within those democracies are often quite fluid.
- 5 It is important to clarify what is meant by 'party' in the Peronist case. Following Sartori's (1976: 64) definition of a party as 'any political group that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections, candidates for public office', I treat as part of the PJ all Peronist organizations whose primary function is to compete for party offices and candidacies. This definition does not encompass non-electoral organizations such as trade unions or the Peronist paramilitary and guerrilla organizations that existed in the 1970s, but it does include the wide range of local 'base units', *agrupaciones* and other informal or semi-formal organizations that, though not formally part of the PJ bureaucracy, participate regularly in the competition for PJ candidacies and leadership positions. This distinction is important because the formal PJ bureaucracy has historically been undervalued by Peronists, leading McGuire (1997) to conclude that the PJ is not institutionalized in the value infusion sense. Although McGuire is correct in stating that the party bureaucracy is not infused with value, I find it essential to distinguish sharply between the party bureaucracy and the party as a whole. The bulk of Peronist political activity takes place outside the party bureaucracy, but *within* other informal party organizations. While Peronists may ignore or circumvent the party bureaucracy, there is no question that they value and invest in the party as a whole.
- 6 This was arguably not the case in the mid-1970s, when important groups within Peronism – particularly paramilitary groups on the right and left – either ignored the party entirely or sought to use it as a tool for other ends.
- 7 For example, the Federal Capital PJ altered the party charter (which stipulates that candidates be registered in the district party for 2 years) in 1992, 1993 and 1997 to allow 'outsiders' to run as Peronist candidates. A similar modification of the party charter allowed automobile racer Carlos Reutemann and pop singer 'Palito' Ortega to run for governor of Santa Fe and Tucuman, respectively, in 1991.
- 8 In the federal capital in 1992, for example, the PJ modified the party charter to 'proclaim' non-party member Avelino Porto the Peronist Senate candidate

- without an internal election (*Clarín*, 28 March 1992: 6). In the province of Buenos Aires, internal elections for the 1995 national deputy and mayor candidacies were canceled by the party congress, and the party leadership was given a 'special mandate' to name the candidates (*Clarín*, 18 December 1994: 12–13).
- 9 Huntington's (1968) use of the term institutionalization has been criticized in this manner; see Tilly (1973) and Sigalman (1979).
- 10 Note that the informal formal/informal distinction made in this section applies only to the routinization component of institutionalization.
- 11 Auyero (1997) aptly characterizes this set of practices as 'performing Evita'.
- 12 For example, in his study of the Democratic Party in the US South, V. O. Key (1949) describes the informal rules and practices that structured intra-party life in the first half of the 20th century. A more recent example is Appleton's (1994) study of French parties, which finds that informal practices are often more important than formal ones in structuring intra-party behavior. Other examples include work on the Daley machine in Chicago (Gosnell, 1968; Rakove, 1975) and the Indian Congress Party (Morris-Jones, 1966; Weiner, 1967). For a discussion of the emergence of informal institutions in a Leninist party, see Jowitt's (1983) work on Soviet 'neotraditionalism.'

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Paper submitted 3 October 1996; accepted for publication 3 June 1997.