Severing the lifelines of tyranny: How individually targeted sanctions can decrease public, elite, and international support for autocratic regimes

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PhD Dissertation

Politica

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Preface

This is a summary of my dissertation entitled "Severing the lifelines of tyranny". The dissertation consists of this summary and three self-contained articles:

Article 1: Winning hearts and minds with economic sanctions? Evidence from a survey experiment in Venezuela
Under review

Article 2: Boycotting bureaucrats: Why administrators are targeted with individual sanctions
Under review

Article 3: Democratic sanctions meet black knight support: Revisiting the Belarusian case
Democratization, 26(3), 502-520.

In this summary, I pose the overarching research question of my project and provide a comprehensive answer before recommending ways forward for future research.

Chapter 1:
Introduction

On February 18 2002, the Council of the European Union adopted Common Position 145/CFSP, which imposed targeted sanctions against members of the Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe. The Common Position states:

> ... the Government of Zimbabwe continues to engage in serious violations of human rights and of the freedom of opinion, of association and of peaceful assembly. Therefore, for as long as the violations occur, the Council deems it necessary to introduce restrictive measures[1] against the Government of Zimbabwe ...

From the Common Position, it is evident that the targeted sanctions were intended to create an incentive for the autocratic regime to change its behavior, i.e. stop the use of state violence. The Zimbabwean case is part of a global trend. Since the turn of the millennium, targeted sanctions have become an increasingly common response to international and domestic conflicts (Eriksson & Wallensteen, 2015; Tourinho, 2015). Similar to the Mugabe regime, the overwhelming majority of the regimes[2] subjected to targeted sanctions are autocratic.[3] Therefore, targeted sanctions must be able to coerce autocratic regimes effectively to influence ongoing conflicts positively.

In a new research agenda, scholars have examined whether targeted sanctions can effectively coerce a regime into providing policy concessions (Cortright & Lopez, 2002a; Shagabutdinova & Berejikian, 2007; Portela, 2010; Charron, 2011; Eriksson, 2011; Biersteker, Eckert & Tourinho, 2016a). These studies have predominately focused on all targeted sanctions imposed by a

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[1] EU legal documents refer to targeted sanctions as restrictive measures, while others prefer the terms smart sanctions or targeted sanctions. In this dissertation, I use targeted sanctions regardless of the terminology in the legislative documents. I define the concept in chapter 2.

[2] I adopt the conventional definition of a regime from the literature on autocratic politics. Regimes are the informal and formal rules that determine what interests are represented in the autocratic leadership group (Geddes, Wright & Frantz, 2014: 312).

[3] I use the terms autocracy and autocratic regimes interchangeably. Autocratic regimes are defined by the absence of free and competitive elections for the state legislature or the chief executive (Cheibub, Gandhi & Vreeland, 2010: 69; Svolik, 2012: 22). The empirical overview of regime types across targeted sanctions cases appears in table 2 (p. 50), chapter 5 and substantiates this claim.

specific sender[4] and examined the direct relationship between targeted sanctions and policy concessions. This highly fruitful research endeavor has greatly improved our understanding of the issue. However, the approach has three important limitations. First, the use of policy concessions as the dependent variable is problematic. When autocratic regimes see the contested policy as essential to their survival, policy concessions are unattainable regardless of the pressure exerted by the targeted sanctions. The opposite is true when regimes place little value on the policy. The value the regime ascribes to its policy is virtually impossible to observe and take into consideration. This makes policy concessions an unreliable indicator of the pressure exerted by the targeted sanctions (Blanchard & Ripsman, 1999: 229-230). Second, the direct relationship between targeted sanctions and policy concessions devotes insufficient attention to the domestic level and the central actor in the relationship, namely the autocratic regime (Kirshner, 1997; Kaempfer, Lowenberg & Mertens, 2004; Blanchard & Ripsman, 2008). There is very little theorization about how targeted sanctions affect domestic actors and compel the autocratic regime to behave differently. This is problematic as targeted sanctions are unable to exert pressure on a regime directly and instead work through domestic actors. Targeted sanctions may alter domestic actors' incentives. In turn, these domestic actors have a direct influence on the decisions made by the regime (Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2015: 19). Finally, the focus on all targeted sanctions imposed by a single sender conflates the effects of different sanctions instruments. Moreover, it limits the number of comparable cases under examination by excluding similar sanctions imposed by other senders. In this dissertation, I seek to overcome these three limitations and thereby uncover ways whereby targeted sanctions can affect autocracies.

I address the first limitation by treating regime support rather than policy concessions as the dependent variable. Specifically, I start from the common assumption that autocratic regimes wish to stay in power and need a sufficient level of support from relevant constituencies[5] for this to be possible (Wintrobe, 1990; Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2003; Svolik, 2012). Thus, autocratic regimes want to avoid their own destabilization and potential breakdown at all costs and, for this reason, they will be attentive to the potential withdrawal

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[4] In research on sanctions, the term sender refers to the actor imposing the sanctions. This is typically a state or an international organizations (Drezner, 2011: 96).

[5] The relevant constituencies are actors who supply valuable resources (political, economic) to the regime and therefore have the potential to undermine the regime by rallying behind its political rivals. Examples include elites and the general population.

or weakening of support from relevant constituencies. What the sanctions literature should focus on is not the ultimate outcome (whether autocrats grant concessions), but rather whether targeted sanctions decrease support for the incumbent regime. Only this way can targeted sanctions create an incentive for autocratic regimes to provide policy concessions to the sender and prevent a potentially fatal loss of regime support (Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2015: 23). Therefore, I pose the following research question:

How can targeted sanctions decrease support for autocratic regimes? (RQ1)

Figure 1 depicts the theoretical relationship between targeted sanctions, regime support, political costs, and coercion. I argue that regime support is a superior option to the focus on policy concessions in the literature (see chapter 4 on this point). Overall, the aim of this dissertation is to identify mechanisms whereby targeted sanctions can decrease regime support. In turn, this should improve the ability of policymakers to use targeted sanctions effectively and have a positive influence on ongoing conflicts.

Figure 1: The theoretical link between targeted sanctions, regime support, political costs, and coercion

Focus of the dissertation

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┌─────────────────────┐
│ Targeted sanctions  │         ÷      ┌──────────────────┐
│ (asset freezes,     │ ──────────────>│ Regime support   │
│ travel bans)        │                │ (from the people,│
└─────────────────────┘                │ elites, and      │
                                       │ interna-         │
                                       │ tional actors)   │
                                       └──────────────────┘
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+ Political costs (regime destabilization)

+ Coercion (policy concessions, regime breakdown)
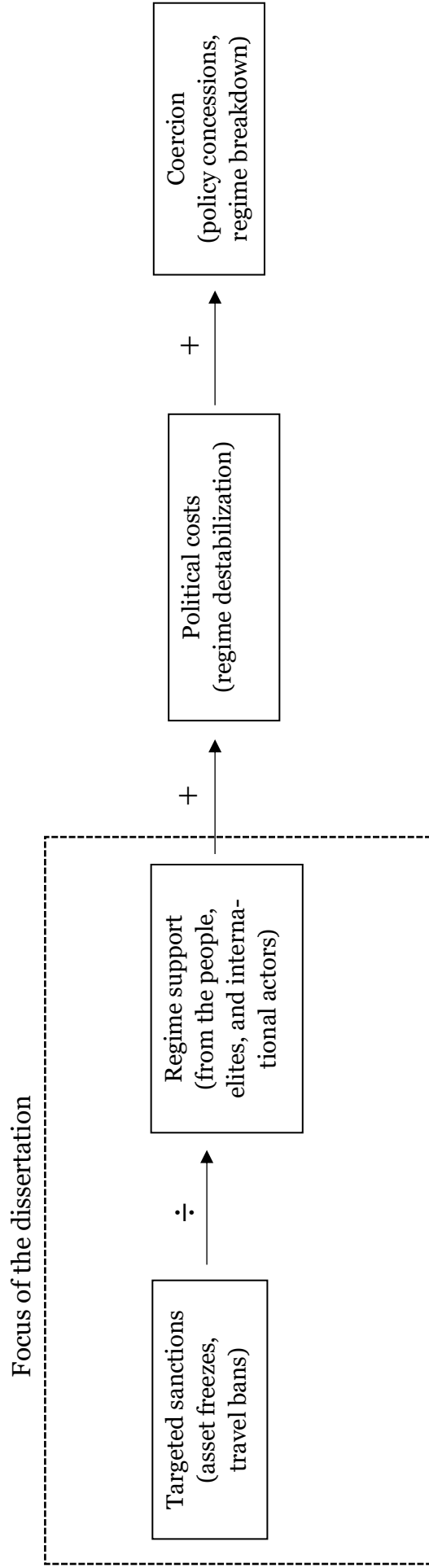
I address the second limitation by examining how targeted sanctions affect the relationship between the autocratic regime and its international and domestic supporters. Like most other coercive foreign policy tools, targeted sanctions alone cannot force a regime from power. Instead, targeted sanctions exert pressure by manipulating the interests and capacities of domestic and international actors who provide the support necessary for the regime to stay in power (Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2015: 19). Consequently, I focus on the effects of targeted sanctions on domestic and international actors that influence the decisions made by an autocratic leadership group,[6] namely the supporters of the regime. Specifically, I examine how targeted sanctions affect the relationship between the autocratic leadership group and three sources of support. First, the people living under autocratic rule (Wintrobe, 1990; Brancati, 2016) Second, economic and political elites who share the power and wealth generated by the regime with the leadership group (Svolik, 2012; Sudduth, 2017). Finally, international actors that choose to provide support for the autocracy for ideological or pragmatic reasons (Tolstrup, 2014; Bader, 2015a). In chapter 3, I develop theoretical expectations that outline how targeted sanctions may affect public, elite, and international support for the regime. Therefore, I pose a subsidiary research question for each of the three sources of support and devote an independent article to each:

> How can targeted sanctions decrease public support for autocratic regimes? (RQ1A)

> How can targeted sanctions decrease elite support for autocratic regimes? (RQ1B)

> How can targeted sanctions decrease international support for autocratic regimes? (RQ1C)

I examine all three sources in order to consider the most plausible ways whereby targeted sanctions can affect regime support. Thus, I focus on the elite actors who are personally affected by the targeted sanctions as well as the people and international actors who observe the targeted sanctions and may change behavior as a result. To provide a few examples, the people may perceive the regime as weakened by the targeted sanctions against regime members and therefore launch public protests to take advantage. The elites may

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[6] The autocratic leadership group is the small group of individuals at the political top of the regime, which makes the key policy decisions, predominately selects its own individual members, and exerts significant control over lower-ranking regime members. In turn, the leadership group relies on support from a wider group of regime members to maintain power (Geddes, Wright & Frantz, 2014: 315).

change their position on the contested policy and start lobbying for the leadership group to provide policy concessions. International actors may increase their demands to the regime in light of its international isolation and lack of alternative sources of support. The relationship between the autocratic leadership group and the three separate sources of support is illustrated in figure 2. The arrows denote the continuous exchanges between the autocratic leadership group and its supporters. The autocratic leadership provides rents and political influence to its supporters and receives political and economic support in return via continuous and often implicit exchanges (Wintrobe, 1990: 851-852).

Figure 2: The three major sources of regime support in autocracies
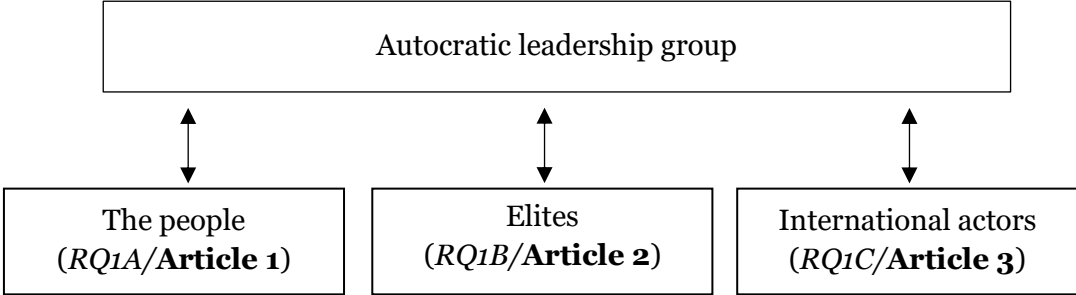
Finally, to address the third limitation concerning the choice to examine all instances of targeted sanctions imposed by a single sender, I construct a new dataset of targeted sanctions. I adopt a narrow definition of targeted sanctions and focus on financial sanctions and travel restrictions imposed against specific individuals by name on blacklists (Tourinho, 2015). Thereby, I take into account that other sanctions instruments considered as targeted sanctions, such as arms embargoes, may produce different effects. I include all targeted sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council, EU, and US between 2000 and 2017. This allows me to include as many comparable and homogenous cases as possible. I define targeted sanctions in chapter 2 and outline coding guidelines for the dataset in chapter 5.

Findings and contributions

Across the three independent articles, I identify mechanisms whereby targeted sanctions may decrease support for autocratic regimes. In **Article 1** concerning *RQ1A,* I find that targeted sanctions are more likely than conventional sanctions to elicit support from moderates and opposition supporters in a population living under autocratic rule. Thus, targeted sanctions may

serve as an international signal of support for opposition groups while minimizing the risk of triggering a rally-around-the-flag effect (Galtung, 1967; Mueller, 1970). In this way, targeted sanctions hamper the ability of autocracies to cultivate regime support by rallying the people against the sender as an external enemy.

In **Article 2** dealing with *RQ1B*, I find that senders tend to use targeted sanctions against elite regime members whom they perceive as proponents of the policy that the senders seek to change. Senders expect targeted sanctions to create an incentive for the autocratic leadership group to purge the targeted elite. Thus, senders use targeted sanctions as a way to change the composition of the autocratic regime and make it more favorable towards policy concessions and rapprochement with the sender. As such, targeted sanctions may change the range of preferences among the elites that support the regime.

In **Article 3** on *RQ1C*, I find that targeted sanctions change the bargaining dynamics between an autocracy and its key international supporter (known as a black knight). The targeted sanctions prevent the autocracy from credibly threatening to defect from its black knight, thereby weakening the bargaining position of the autocracy. Therefore, the autocratic regime must make visible and select concessions to the sender in order to improve its bargaining position. Through this mechanism, targeted sanctions may decrease the ability of an autocracy to obtain support from international actors in a cheap and reliable way.

In this dissertation, I make theoretical contributions to the research agendas on targeted sanctions and autocratic regimes. The three articles identify theoretical mechanisms whereby targeted sanctions can decrease support for autocratic regimes. This effect may occur through three major sources of regime support, namely the people, elites, and international actors. Moreover, the articles uncover conflicts between the autocratic leadership group and its core supporters as possible avenues for exerting coercive pressure on autocratic regimes. Furthermore, I contribute to the methodological advancement of the research field by showing the advantages of treating regime support as an indicator of pressure on autocratic regimes. Additionally, I show the benefits of combining diverse levels of analysis and methods to accurately observe domestic phenomena in research on the effects of foreign policy tools. Finally, my main empirical contribution is to identify how targeted sanctions can decrease public, elite, and international support for autocratic regimes. Overall, this dissertation improves our understanding of how targeted sanctions work and the ability of policymakers to use the tool effectively.

This summary has the following structure. Chapter 2 introduces the central concept of the dissertation, namely targeted sanctions, and its historical

origins. Chapter 3 introduces previous research on the effectiveness of targeted sanctions and identifies important limitations, and it presents the main theoretical arguments and formulates expectations regarding the effects of targeted sanctions for each of the three sources of regime support. Chapter 4 describes the methodological approach of the dissertation and explains the choice of method in each of the three articles. Chapter 5 introduces the dataset on targeted sanctions and reasoning behind the case selection. Chapter 6 summarizes the findings of the three articles. Finally, chapter 7 offers conclusions and avenues for future research.

Chapter 2:
What are targeted sanctions?

Definition and scope of this dissertation

Targeted sanctions are the main independent variable of this dissertation. Most research on targeted sanctions draws explicitly or implicitly on the definition from the influential volume *Smart Sanctions* (2002) edited by David (Cortright & Lopez, 2002a):

> In our definition, a smart sanctions policy is one that imposes coercive pressure on specific individuals and entities and that restricts selective products or activities, while minimizing unintended economic and social consequences for vulnerable populations and innocent bystanders. (p. 2).

In this definition and other definitions in previous studies (Hufbauer & Oegg, 2000; Biersteker & Eckert, 2001; Tostensen & Bull, 2002; Drezner, 2003), the policy tool is defined by its targeted or selective nature. While comprehensive sanctions are imposed against states, targeted sanctions are imposed against specific individuals[7] or products only. Thus, it is a more discriminating form of economic sanctions. This is the key criterion separating targeted sanctions from comprehensive sanctions.

Proponents of targeted sanctions believe that the ability to target specific individuals or products serves two functions: First, it enhances the effectiveness of the sanctions by concentrating costs on the influential and culpable actors. In theory, this should create an incentive for these actors to change behavior in accordance with the sender's wishes. Researchers typically mention decisionmakers, leadership, and core regime supporters as the most appropriate targets (Brooks, 2002; Drezner, 2011; Wallensteen & Grusell, 2012). Second, it prevents or at least minimizes the collateral damage suffered by the general population. Thus, in theory, targeted sanctions should be more effective and humanitarian than conventional sanctions (Tostensen & Bull, 2002; Shagabutdinova & Berejikian, 2007; Carneiro & Apolinário, 2016).

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[7] Senders also frequently impose targeted sanctions against legal entities, often organizations and companies. The entity may itself have a link to a specific crime or simply a link to a listed individual. Some early research on the effects of targeted sanctions against corporations shows a negative effect on revenue (Ahn & Ludema, 2017).

The prevailing definitions of targeted sanctions, such as Cortright and Lopez's (2002: 2) quoted above, are ideal types. The definitions describe an ideal that policymakers should aspire to when imposing economic sanctions. While informative and useful, such definitions are suboptimal for categorizing real instances of economic sanctions. Particularly, they are unable to draw a clear dividing line between conventional and targeted sanctions. In an alternative approach, Biersteker et al. (2016: 27) use a continuum of sanctions instruments that range from highly discriminating to entirely comprehensive. At one end of the spectrum, there are individual sanctions, specifically financial sanctions and travel bans, which are imposed against a specific individual or entity. This is the most discriminating sanctions instrument. In the middle, there are commodity sanctions that prohibit the exchange of specific goods or goods originating from a specific a geographical area. Commodity sanctions typically affect the local economy and therefore all inhabitants in the production area. For example, there are indications that bans on conflict minerals tend to increase conflict intensity in zones surrounding mining areas (Parker & Vadheim, 2017). Finally, at the other end of the spectrum, trade sanctions against a state or a group of states indiscriminately apply to all members of the population in the targeted states. As such, they are the least targeted of all the sanctions instruments. With this continuum of instruments in mind, it is clear that there are multiple levels of targeting and that the clear dividing line and dichotomy between targeted sanctions and comprehensive sanctions is a simplification.

The distinction between different sanctions instruments under the heading of targeted sanctions is important because it has implications for the findings of subsequent analyses. Previous studies show that different sanctions instruments tend to produce different effects, work through different mechanisms, and come into use in response to different crises (Shagabutdinova & Berejikian, 2007; Charron, 2011; Giumelli, 2011; Biersteker, Eckert & Tourinho, 2016b). Therefore, researchers should specify which sanctions instruments are under examination when studying targeted sanctions and consider further disaggregation of the concept. It is useful to focus on a single sanctions instrument under the heading of targeted sanctions to increase the likelihood of homogenous effects across cases and enable generalizations.

In this dissertation, I exclusively examine the effects of the most discriminating form of targeted sanctions, namely individual sanctions. This term refers to economic sanctions imposed against individual persons or entities by name and summarized on blacklists (Zarate, 2009; Wallensteen & Grusell, 2012; Drezner, 2015; Tourinho, 2015; Ahn & Ludema, 2017; Eggenberger, 2018). Therefore, in this narrow definition, targeted and individual sanctions

refer to the same sanctions instruments. Presently, two instruments are commonly imposed on an individual basis, namely individual financial sanctions and travel restrictions. First, individual financial sanctions (known as asset freezes) freeze all assets associated with the target and under the sender's jurisdiction. However, asset freezes also prevent any future transaction with the direct or indirect involvement of the targeted individual (Newcomb, 2002). Second, travel restrictions or travel bans prevent the targeted individual from obtaining a visa and entering the country of senders (Eriksson, 2011). In practice, the two sanctions instruments are almost exclusively imposed together and apply to the same specific individuals (Portela, 2010: 57; Tourinho, 2015: 1403). As such, it is meaningful to consider the effects of the two instruments collectively under the heading of individual sanctions. I have chosen to focus specifically on individual sanctions because they adhere closely to the ideal type of targeted sanctions. It is the most discriminating sanctions instrument. As such, they should clearly exhibit the virtues of targeting touted by the research agenda on targeted sanctions (Drezner, 2003, 2011)

My focus on individual sanctions influences my prospects for generalizing findings to all sanctions instruments under the heading of targeted sanctions. Above all, my findings concern the effects of individual sanctions on the relationships between an autocratic regime and its international and domestic supporters. An important omission from my focus is arms and commodity embargoes (Le Billon & Nicholls, 2007; Eriksson & Wallensteen, 2015). Frequently, senders use such instruments to ameliorate conflicts by weakening specific conflict actors, decreasing the overall conflict intensity, and creating an incentive to engage in peace processes. A new and promising research agenda focuses on the effects of these sanctions tools on conflict intensity and duration (Idrobo, Mejía & Tribin, 2014; Parker & Vadheim, 2017; Radtke & Jo, 2018). Although an important issue, the effects of arms and commodity embargoes on conflict amelioration is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge and recognize that targeted sanctions may perform multiple and diverse functions for senders (Giumelli, 2011). It is necessary to include the ability to perform all these functions when passing judgment on the utility of targeted sanctions (Baldwin, 1985, 2000). All of these functions are important and deserve further attention from researchers. For example, the government in a sender state may impose targeted sanctions in an attempt to placate voters at home and win reelection (McLean & Whang, 2014; McLean & Roblyer, 2016). Alternatively, a sender can use targeted sanctions to punish violations of valuable international norms, thereby creating a deterrent against similar violations in other states (Miller, 2014; Powell, Lasley & Schiel, 2016). However, the focus in this dissertation is on the ability of targeted sanctions to coerce autocratic regimes effectively.

The turn to targeted sanctions

Targeted sanctions appeared at the meeting of two distinct movements. First, a humanitarian movement within the UN system played a pivotal role in fostering an international norm against the use of comprehensive sanctions, thereby paving the way for the turn to targeted sanctions (Hawkins & Lloyd, 2003). The comprehensive sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council against Iraq in August 1990 precipitated this movement. The sanctions contributed to extreme increases in food prices in Iraq and played a role in widespread famine, epidemics of cholera and typhoid, and a health care system crumbling under the pressure (Drèze & Gazdar, 1992; Weiss, 1999). UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali noted the destruction caused by the comprehensive sanctions and declared sanctions a "blunt instrument" (Gordon, 2011). In spite of the vast economic damage caused by the comprehensive sanctions, the regime of Saddam Hussein remained unresponsive to the demands of the international community (Mazaheri, 2010).

The failure of comprehensive sanctions in Iraq intensified the search for alternative policy tools and a sanctions reform process began in the UN system (Tostensen & Bull, 2002). The reform process took place in collaborations between policymakers and academics. The Swiss, German, and Swedish governments all sponsored policy reform processes and a number of multilateral meetings in search of alternative policy tools. On the academic side, the contributions of David Cortright and George A. Lopez were pivotal to the reform and subsequent turn to targeted sanctions (Lopez & Cortright, 1997; Cortright et al., 2000; Biersteker & Eckert, 2001; Cortright & Lopez, 2002a). Overall, this humanitarian movement sparked an international demand for a new coercive foreign policy tool that could complement or even replace comprehensive sanctions.

In the mid-1990s, the Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) under the US Treasury began to impose asset freezes, primarily against individuals with links to the international drug trade, above all in reaction to new security threats posed by non-governmental entities (Zarate, 2009). For this purpose, OFAC developed the Specially Designated Nationals List, a publically available blacklist of individuals subjected to targeted sanctions. It conveys the names of targeted individuals to private banks and businesses to ensure banks and businesses conform to legislation and refrain from dealing with the listed individuals. The instrument was further refined and applied more frequently with the beginning of the War on Terror and corresponding need to manage the threat of non-governmental terrorist groups, most prominently the Al-Qaeda and Taliban (Zarate, 2013: 7). At this stage, the American model for imposing and managing targeted financial sanctions was the major source of

inspiration to policymakers elsewhere (Newcomb, 2002) and was soon incorporated into the procedures of the UN Security Council and EU (Zarate, 2009). In summary, the combination of an international demand for a more humanitarian alternative and a new technical solution sparked the turn to targeted sanctions, specifically travel bans and asset freezes, against individuals by name and administered by blacklists.

Chapter 3:
Theoretical approach

Previous research on the effectiveness of targeted sanctions

Most studies on the effects of targeted sanctions examine effectiveness, i.e. the ability to coerce a regime into offering policy concessions to senders (Cortright & Lopez, 2002a; Shagabutdinova & Berejikian, 2007; Charron, 2011; Eriksson, 2011; Biersteker, Eckert & Tourinho, 2016a).[8] The focus on effectiveness is distinct from the focus on regime support in this dissertation. However, regime support is an intermediate step between targeted sanctions, the infliction of costs on a regime, and policy concessions (see figure 1 in the introduction). Therefore, the studies on effectiveness are informative and vital to take into consideration for the purpose of this dissertation.

Cortright and Lopez (2002) examine sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council between 1990 and 2002, which includes 10 cases of targeted sanctions. The authors conduct a case study of each case to assess whether sanctions at least partially compelled the regime to meet the sender's demands. The underlying case studies are omitted from the analysis, but the authors draw on case material as examples. The study finds that targeted sanctions were partially effective in only two out of ten cases and explains the low rate with lacking enforcement by senders (p. 8-9). Therefore, the authors propose that better enforcement of the targeted sanctions, i.e. by limiting cross-border smuggling, would increase the probability of policy concessions. In an alternative analysis of the UN cases, Charron (2011) examines how the UN Security Council adopts different sanctions instruments depending on the type of conflict. Thus, rather than considering the effect of the targeted sanctions, the researcher considers how senders tailor their sanctions to the context in specific cases. Essentially, Charron reverses the causal arrow and considers how real-

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[8] A separate strand of research examines targeted sanctions and the violation of human rights, and scholars have found that targeted sanctions tend to violate the due process rights of the targeted individuals (see e.g. Gordon, 2011; Lopez, 2012; Carneiro & Apolinário, 2016; Portela, 2016; Early & Schulzke, 2018). Though informative and important, this strand is less relevant to this dissertation because it does not speak directly to the ability of targeted sanctions to coerce autocratic regimes.

world conditions influence the nature of the targeted sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council.[9]

Turning back to the question of effectiveness, Biersteker, Tourinho, and Eckert (2016) conduct case studies of all targeted sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council between 1991 and 2013. This approach is distinct from the one of Cortright and Lopez (2002) in two ways. First, the authors break the individual sanctions cases into shorter episodes with distinct dynamics. In effect, the analysis covers 23 UN targeted sanctions cases, which are subdivided into 63 case episodes (Biersteker et al., 2018). Second, the authors consider multiple purposes of the targeted sanctions in addition to the ability to generate policy concessions. For this dissertation, the coercion purpose is most relevant as it deals with policy concessions and therefore pressure on the regimes subjected to targeted sanctions. The study finds that targeted sanctions successfully coerced the target in only five of 50 cases where coercion was one of the sender's goals (Biersteker, Eckert & Tourinho, 2016b: 233). The authors desist from causal claims and instead identify variables that correlate with effectiveness. Ultimately, the authors identify three variables: Narrow sender goals, secondary sanctions on a neighboring country, and financial sanctions (p. 238). Thus, similar to Cortright and Lopez (2002), the authors explain effectiveness with characteristics of the targeted sanctions in place.

Portela (2010) examines targeted sanctions imposed by the EU between 1991 and 2010. For the purposes of this dissertation, I focus on her analysis of the targeted sanctions imposed under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) framework. This legal framework authorizes the use of asset freezes and travel bans against individuals (p. 57) and thereby corresponds to the definition of targeted sanctions applied in this dissertation. Rather than examining the ability to generate policy concessions, the author examines the contribution of the targeted sanctions to the outcome of a case. Thus, the analysis starts from the assertion that sanctions do not achieve anything alone, but may contribute in combination with other instruments to generate policy concessions (p. 45). To isolate the effect of the targeted sanctions specifically, the task is to determine whether sanctions contributed in specific cases. The author uses a case study approach in combination with a QCA analysis. Multiple combinations of factors produce policy concessions. Widespread international

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[9] This perspective indicates how difficult it is to accommodate selection effects in statistical analyses on the effects of comprehensive and targeted sanctions. Sanctions are a reactive policy tool that the senders change in light of changes on the ground. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a deeper understanding about the causes of sanctions to accurately assess the effects of sanctions (Nooruddin, 2002; Morgan, 2015).

support for the sanctions and the absence of economic pressure on the targeted regime appear in combinations with policy concessions. However, the only factor that emerges as a necessary factor to the attainment of policy concessions is the ability of the regime to maintain power despite providing policy concessions (p. 54). Eriksson (2011) examines the effects of targeted sanctions imposed by both the EU and the UN Security Council. The author focuses on the complex negotiations and interplay between the sender and the targeted regime. In deep case studies of Zimbabwe and Angola, Eriksson reiterates the difficulty in determining whether sanctions contributed to the outcome of the cases. Ultimately, the author concludes that individual sanctions likely had little effect on decisionmakers (p. 170, 231).

Finally, in a rare study of effectiveness in US financial sanctions, Shagabutdinova and Berejikian (2007) find that financial sanctions are on average more effective than trade sanctions. However, the authors consider all financial sanctions as targeted sanctions, which means that financial sanctions with great negative externalities are included in the sample. For example, it includes cases where financial sanctions were imposed against a state as a whole. The authors are restricted to data before 2006 when there were very few cases of targeted sanctions, so it is doubtful whether these results are replicable in a more recent sample of cases.

Overall, the previous studies on effectiveness are highly informative and provide an excellent basis for understanding how various senders impose and implement targeted sanctions. However, important limitations remain in the prevailing understanding of the effects of targeted sanctions. In this dissertation, I focus on three specific limitations. First, researchers use policy concessions as the main indicator for observing whether targeted sanctions exert pressure on the regime. This is a particularly rough indicator, which is likely to produce misleading conclusions. This predominately methodological shortcoming is discussed in chapter 4. Second, the previous studies treat the autocratic regime subjected to targeted sanctions as a black box. Important factors at the domestic level play little or no role in explaining the ability of targeted sanctions to exert pressure on a regime. Therefore, it is unclear how targeted sanctions create an incentive for the autocratic leadership group to make policy concessions to the sender. This is primarily a theoretical shortcoming, which I address in this chapter. Finally, most of the previous studies focus on many different sanctions instruments under the heading of targeted sanctions imposed by a single sender. In effect, researchers risk drawing misleading conclusions by conflating the effects of different instruments and ruling out relevant cases from other senders. This is primarily a data shortcoming, which I address in chapter 5.

Returning to the second of the three shortcomings, the theoretical focus in the previous studies is overwhelmingly on the legal frameworks authorizing the targeted sanctions and ongoing efforts to improve implementation and enforcement. Therefore, the ability to exert pressure on a regime and thereby generate policy concessions is understood primarily through the decisions of the senders. For example, the inability to reach policy concessions is explained as the result of poor enforcement by senders and their allies (Cortright & Lopez, 2002a). In this sense, the researchers expect to find a direct causal relationship between the targeted sanctions and the policy concessions.

Conversely, the inner workings of the autocratic regime subjected to the targeted sanctions plays a limited in role in the previous studies. The researchers generally acknowledge that factors at the domestic level are likely to be important, but there is little theorization about how targeted sanctions interact with domestic politics in an autocratic setting. This is somewhat paradoxical considering that the main reason for employing targeted sanctions is the ability to concentrate the economic pain on specific domestic actors (Drezner, 2003). As such, there is good reason to incorporate domestic actors in the analysis to understand the effects of targeted sanctions fully. The best attempt at incorporating the interests and resources of the autocratic regime in the theoretical argument is Portela's (2010) incorporation of the maintenance of power as an important factor in its own right. However, this factor alone is unlikely to capture the complex nature of autocratic politics adequately. Overall, it is fair to conclude that previous studies have treated the autocratic regime primarily as a black box and devoted insufficient attention to factors at the domestic level.

In contrast, the nature of autocratic regimes and domestic politics has played a greater role in research on comprehensive sanctions, which has found that the autocratic context conditions the effects of sanctions in complex ways (see e.g. Brooks, 2002; Allen, 2005, 2008; Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2010; Escribà-Folch, 2012). This is an indication that it is potentially misleading to look at the direct relationship between targeted sanctions and policy concessions at the international level alone. Rather, it is necessary to include factors at the domestic level to understand the effects of targeted sanctions. In relation to this dissertation, it is particularly noteworthy that some of the studies stress the distributive effects of comprehensive sanctions within a state. The main argument is that comprehensive sanctions must inflict costs on the right groups within the state to be effective. These studies are particularly relevant to this dissertation because of the connection to targeted sanctions, which aim to concentrate costs on specific domestic actors (Tostensen & Bull, 2002;

Drezner, 2003, 2011). In the following section, I review the most relevant theoretical contributions on the distributive effects of comprehensive sanctions and consider their implications for targeted sanctions.

How can targeted sanctions affect autocracies?

Autocratic regimes are defined by the absence of free and competitive elections for the legislature or the chief executive (Cheibub, Gandhi & Vreeland, 2010: 69; Svolik, 2012: 22). This definition encompasses autocratic regimes with regular elections and a ruling party that manipulates the electoral playing field to ensure its own victory as well as autocratic regimes without any of the democratic institutions.[10] Previous research on comprehensive sanctions contends that autocratic regimes are better at resisting comprehensive sanctions than democracies (Brooks, 2002; Allen, 2005, 2008; Lektzian & Souva, 2007). The negative economic effects of comprehensive sanctions tend to fall disproportionally on the lower and middle classes. These groups have limited resources and are therefore more vulnerable to economic change than the upper echelons of society, namely the economic and political elites. Moreover, elites are more likely to capture rents created by the sanctions and shift the costs of the comprehensive sanctions onto lower classes (Weiss, 1999; Peksen, 2009). In an autocratic setting, the absence of free and competitive elections prevent the lower and middle classes from voting the regime out of power. As such, people living under autocratic rule lack an effective instrument for punishing the regime and affecting the decisions of autocratic policymakers. Therefore, comprehensive sanctions tend to be less effective against autocracies than against democracies (Brooks, 2002; Kaempfer, Lowenberg & Mertens, 2004; Allen, 2005, 2008).

In contrast, targeted sanctions are able to concentrate economic costs directly on the regime, i.e. they can inflict economic costs on specific individuals, such as autocratic decisionmakers and regime supporters (Cortright & Lopez, 2002a). In contrast to comprehensive sanctions, this enables targeted sanctions to inflict costs on groups with real influence on the actions of the regime rather than on the disenfranchised masses. Consequently, targeted sanctions should be a more effective tool for coercing autocratic regimes (Brooks, 2002:

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[10] In this dissertation, I see the distinction between democracies and autocracies as a dichotomy. The underlying assumption is that the difference between democracies and autocracies is a matter of kind rather than degree. Once free and competitive elections are absent, the nature and dynamics of politics change fundamentally (Svolik, 2012: 23). However, autocratic regimes vary substantially although they share this defining criterion. Therefore, I also consider how my arguments apply to different types of autocracies (see p. 27-29).

40). The underlying argument is that the distribution of costs across domestic actors is important. The effects of sanctions depend on what groups are affected, and importantly, what role (if any) these groups play in the support structure of the regime (Olson, 1979: 493). Thus, the central challenge for researchers is to uncover how sanctions affect the balance of power between domestic actors (Escribà-Folch, 2012: 689).

The focus on the distribution of costs across actors is central in three theoretical approaches to the effects of comprehensive sanctions. First, Kaempfer and Lowenberg (1988, 1992) propose a public choice theory of economic sanctions. The theoretical argument is that sanctions generate policy concessions when they expand the political effectiveness of the opponents to the policy that the sender seeks to change and conversely reduce the political effectiveness of the proponents of the policy.[11] The implication is that even sanctions with a limited economic impact will lead to policy concessions if they affect the right interest groups. This is particularly important in autocratic regimes where large shares of the general population are outside political influence (Kaempfer, Lowenberg & Mertens, 2004: 31).

Second, Kirshner (1997) proposes a micro-foundations approach to sanctions that also stresses the distribution of costs across domestic actors. However, in contrast to the public choice approach, the micro-foundations approach allows the regime to hold autonomous preferences. Moreover, the micro-foundations approach does not see interest groups as the most central political actors (p. 45) but rather focuses on two groups of actors, namely the central government and its core supporters. Senders should seek to concentrate economic costs on these two groups. Economic pressure on the central government creates direct incentives to make policy changes. Similarly, economic pressure on core supporters generates indirect pressure by creating an incentive for supporters to lobby the central government for policy change. In turn, sufficient pressure on the central government and its core supporters will produce policy concessions, regime breakdown, or shift the balance of power within the government to alter its preferences (p. 42).

Finally, Jones (2015) examines the effect of economic sanctions on conflicts between social forces within a state. The argument is that a regime maintains power by incorporating some socio-political forces and excluding others. Economic sanctions affect social groups disproportionally. In turn, this may condition conflicts between different socio-political forces by altering the interests and resources of actors. This can generate changes to the social com-

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[11] For an extension and qualification of this argument, see Blanchard and Ripsman (2008)

position of society to the benefit of some groups and detriment of others. Similarly, it may expand the resources available to the ruling group. Ultimately, the changes to these conflicts can affect the preferred strategies of the regime (p. 42-45).

In summary, all three approaches contend that targeted sanctions exert pressure on an autocratic regime insofar as they concentrate cost on decisionmakers and regime supporters. However, there is disagreement over the source of political power in autocracies. The public choice (Kaempfer & Lowenberg, 1988, 1992) and social forces (Jones, 2015) approaches see power as flowing from below through societal actors, either interest groups or socio-political forces. In contrast, the micro-foundations approach (Kirshner, 1997) expects power to be concentrated at the top and ultimately rest with elites.

While this is useful for comparing approaches, I argue that it is inappropriate to describe the people or the elites as the main source of power in autocratic regimes. Instead, it is preferable to take multiple sources of support into consideration. According to the literature on autocratic regimes, the majority of autocracies maintain power through a combination of elite supporters and interest groups in the general population (Svolik, 2012). The people and elites pose separate threats to the survival of the autocratic regime. Consequently, the autocratic leadership group must maintain the loyalty of its elites supporters as well as some segments in society to remain in power (Roessler, 2011). Additionally, a number of studies show that international actors are able to deliver some of the support necessary to maintain power (e.g. Tolstrup, 2009; Whitehead, 2014; von Soest, 2015). As such, there is good reason to consider the effect of targeted sanctions on support from international actors as well.

Turning to the three sources of regime support

I argue that it is necessary to consider the effects of targeted sanctions for all actors that provide essential regime support and have a corresponding influence on the policy choices made by the regime. This simply allows one to develop a more complete understanding of how targeted sanctions can plausibly decrease regime support. Therefore, I examine the effect of targeted sanctions on support from all three sources of support, namely the people (*RQ1A* and **Article 1**), elites (*RQ1B* and **Article 2**), and international actors (*RQ1C* and **Article 3**). While the economic costs of the targeted sanctions only affect a relatively small number of individuals, targeted sanctions also serve as a signal to onlookers, such as the people living under autocratic rule and international actors. Consequently, it is likely that targeted sanctions will have effects beyond the economic costs incurred by the targeted individuals.

While all three sources are important, they are unlikely to be equally important across different cases. Autocratic regimes are a diverse group, especially when it comes to their preferred source of support. Some autocratic regimes depend almost exclusively on a narrow group of elites, whereas others rely on a much broader coalition across the general population and various elite communities. Previous research shows that this has implications for the effects of comprehensive sanctions (Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2010; Escribà-Folch, 2012). Similarly, it should condition how targeted sanctions are most likely to affect a specific autocratic regime.

I expect two factors to influence the relative importance of the people, elites, and international actors to the effects of targeted sanctions. First, the size of the winning coalition shapes the relative importance of the people and elites (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2003: 51). Targeted sanctions are more likely to work through the people in autocratic regimes with a relatively large winning coalition and better opportunities for meaningful political participation. This set of autocratic regimes are more vulnerable to a decrease in public support because they rely more on support from this particular source. Conversely, I expect that targeted sanctions are more likely work through elites in autocratic regimes with small winning coalitions. These regimes depend only on a very small group of elites and are accordingly vulnerable to a decrease in elite support. To take this into account empirically, I distinguish between autocratic regimes that combine some democratic features with a relatively broad winning coalitions (termed anocracies) and full-blown autocracies with few democratic features and relatively small winning coalitions (Marshall, Gurr & Jaggers, 2005: 92).[12]

Second, the level of reliance on support from international actors is also likely to condition the effect of targeted sanctions. While some autocracies rely heavily on foreign loans, others are able to independently produce a sufficient level of revenue (Bader, 2015b; Tolstrup, 2015; Tansey, Koehler & Schmotz, 2016). The regimes that depend heavily on international support are more

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[12] An alternative way to incorporate the diversity of autocratic regimes is to focus on the institutional features of different autocracies through autocratic regime types. The key distinction is between the autocratic regime types categorized as single-party regimes, personalist regimes, military regimes, and monarchies (Geddes, 1999; Geddes, Wright & Frantz, 2014, 2018). For example, single-party regimes tend to have larger winning coalitions than the other autocratic regime types (Escribà-Folch, 2012: 687). Instead, I focus on the distinction between anocracies and autocracies as it captures differences in the extent of meaningful political participation possible for the people. This corresponds to my theoretical focus on the relative level of influence through the people and the elites.

likely to be affected through the third source of regime support, namely international actors. The differences between autocratic regimes is particularly important to keep in mind when selecting cases for deeper examination, which is why I return to this issue in the section on case selection in chapter 5 (p. 54). In the next section, I outline how targeted sanctions may plausibly exert pressure on a regime through the people, elites, and international actors.

The first source of regime support: The people

I start by developing expectations for *RQ1A* concerning the effect of targeted sanctions on public support for the autocratic regime. While typically unable to vote the regime out of power, the people has an alternative way to challenge the regime, namely mass mobilization in the streets. Public protests have the potential to inflict severe costs and even topple autocratic regimes when a sufficient number of people choose to participate (Svolik, 2012; Brancati, 2016). However, a collective action problem impedes mass mobilization against the regime. If an insufficient number of people choose to participate, each participant is likely to face harsh punishment by the regime. Thus, the willingness to join the protests depends on the willingness of all other possible participants. The ability to overcome this collective action problem and successfully launch anti-regime protests is influenced by multiple factors, including signals of support from international actors (Hollyer, Rosendorff & Vreeland, 2015).

Economic sanctions may play a role in overcoming the collective action problem of mass mobilization, thereby increasing the likelihood of anti-regime public protests (Marinov, 2005; Allen, 2008; Wood, 2008; Peksen, 2009; Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2010). Research on comprehensive sanctions has found that sanctions tend to spark public protests by acting as a signal of support for opposition groups and disapproval of the regime. In contrast, it is rarely the economic deprivation of the people that sparks public protests (Blanchard & Ripsman, 1999; Grauvogel, Licht & von Soest, 2017). Therefore, it is also likely that targeted sanctions can facilitate mass mobilization. In previous research, there is some indication that this might the case. Carneiro and Apolinário find a positive relationship between targeted sanctions and human rights violations. They suggest that targeted sanctions tend to spark protests, which compel regimes to use state repression and lead to human rights violations (Carneiro & Apolinário, 2016).

However, multiple researchers argue that there is a risk that sanctions will backfire and fail to work as a signal of support for opposition groups (e.g. Galtung, 1967). The autocratic regime has an incentive to portray sanctions as an attack on the nation and its people. In the face of an external enemy and foreign aggression, people may rally behind the regime. Such a rally-around-the-

flag effect (Mueller, 1970: 21) increases rather than decreases regime support. Pressure on the regime with dissipate and policy concessions and regime breakdown will be less probable (Galtung, 1967; Allen, 2008; Grauvogel, Licht & von Soest, 2017). Therefore, researchers should seek to identify the factors that determine whether sanctions will backfire.

There is an argument that sanctions tend to generate a negative public reaction when people perceive them as an attack on the nation as a whole. Historically, this has been a reasonable interpretation because comprehensive sanctions have a negative effect on all members of a state. With this in mind, I argue, in **Article 1**, that people are more likely to support targeted sanctions because they are able to target specific regime members rather than the state as a whole. This should enable senders to send a clearer signal of disapproval of the regime and show support for opposition groups. Moreover, it should decrease the collateral damage that will adversely affect ordinary citizens. Consequently, there are good reasons to believe that targeted sanctions are less likely to backfire compared to comprehensive sanctions.

In **Article 1**, I examine empirically whether targeted sanctions are more likely to elicit support from the people and therefore less likely to generate the rally-around-the-flag effect. Two other recent studies have examined the link between targeted sanctions and public opinion in Russia (Frye, 2017) and Israel (Grossman, Manekin & Margalit, 2018). However, in both cases, senders imposed targeted sanctions to stop popular policies, namely the annexation of Crimea and the government policy on West Bank settlements respectively. Consequently, the regime and the people shared the same policy position and were united against the sender. In contrast, **Article 1** examines the effect of targeted sanctions on public opinion in a case where the sender seeks to stop state repression against protesters. In this case, the regime and public opinion diverge as state repression tends to elicits public condemnation. This is the most common scenario where senders utilize targeted sanctions. As shown in table 3 (p. 52), chapter 5, senders overwhelmingly use targeted sanctions to address conflicts between domestic actors. Therefore, it is useful to consider a case where a conflict between the regime and the people exists.

The second source of regime support: The elites

I now turn to *RQ1B* on the ability of targeted sanctions to decrease elite support for autocratic regimes. Not all individuals living under autocracy have an equal say over the decisions made by the autocratic leadership group. Some individuals possess valuable assets that make them particularly important to

the leadership group, for instance social control over ethnic communities, access to coercive instruments,[13] or economic wealth (Svolik, 2012: 3). I refer to these individuals of disproportionate influence simply as elites, but it is possible to subdivide elites into different types, e.g. political, military, and economic elites (Haggard & Kaufman, 1995). As my focus is on regime support, I consider only elites actors who form part of the winning coalition and therefore have significant influence on the political decisions made by the autocratic leadership group.[14]

Elites supply a substantial share of the support necessary for the regime to maintain power, and it is vital for an autocratic leadership group to maintain their support, which means that they possess a correspondingly large say over the policies implemented by the leadership group. This is the main reason that senders impose targeted sanctions against political elites specifically. I argue that targeted sanctions may influence the availability of regime support in three ways. First, targeted sanctions may change the policy preferences of the targeted elites. This is likely to occur when the targeted sanctions change the cost-benefit calculus of the individual. The targeted sanctions inflict economic costs on the targeted individual by obstructing business dealings and freezing assets. This gives the targeted elite an incentive to threaten to retract their support unless the leadership group changes policy and seeks rapprochement with the sender. Thus, the individual elite may start to lobby for policy change.

Second, as I argue in **Article 2**, targeted sanctions may increase the likelihood that the targeted elite exits the autocratic leadership group. This may occur through two mechanisms. Targeted sanctions mean fewer resources and thus less support to offer the regime, which increases the risk of being purged by the leadership group. Similarly, targeted elite supporters are unable to extract the same level of benefits from the regime, which increases the likelihood of defection. Through such mechanisms, targeted sanctions may alter the

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[13] There is an argument for considering the leaders of the coercive institutions, such as the army, police, and paramilitary forces, as a particularly important subsection of elites. Their coercive capacity enables them to effectively repress public protests to the benefit of the regime or launch coups d'états to the detriment of the regime (Roessler, 2011; Powell, 2012). Consequently, the decision of military leaders to side with the opposition groups or remain loyal to the regime is important to the stability of autocratic regimes (Bellin, 2012). I expect targeted sanctions to have similar effects on military elites and other elite actors and therefore theorize coercive capacity simply as one of the attributes that allows an individual to hold disproportionate political influence over a regime. Thus, I consider leaders of coercive institutions as being part of the elite coalition that supports the regime.

[14] Therefore, my argument does concern the incentives of opposition elites who are also less likely to become targets of individual sanctions.

composition of the elite support coalition behind the regime and thus the optimal choice of policy for the leadership group. **Article 2** develops this argument further and investigates to what extent this idea informs how senders select specific individuals to be targeted with sanctions.

Finally, the risk of a coup d'état is likely to increase as more elite supporters are targeted. The targeted sanctions decrease the benefits of supporting the regime for the targeted individuals. Moreover, the presence of coercive measures against the regime may convince untargeted regime members that the incumbent autocratic leadership group poses a threat to their long-term interests. Similarly, targeted sanctions may indicate that the leadership group is weak and thereby increase the expected benefits of a coup attempt. This may facilitate elite mobilization against the regime and help overcome the collective action problems inherent to the struggle between dictator and elite supporters (Svolik, 2012).

The third source of regime support: The international actors

Lastly, *RQ1C* concerns the effect of targeted sanctions on international support for the autocratic regime. It is common for international actors to provide economic and political support to autocratic regimes. In the literatures on economic sanctions and democratization, international actors that provide support for autocratic regimes are known as black knights (Hufbauer et al., 2007; Levitsky & Way, 2010; Early, 2011). Black knight support may enable an autocratic leadership group to pay off its domestic supporters and repress threatening opposition groups (Ambrosio, 2014; Tansey, 2016; Tansey, Koehler & Schmotz, 2016). In lieu of sufficient domestic support, international actors may prove a viable source for some of the resources needed to maintain power.

As it is costly to support another regime, international actors that are willing to do so are often regional powers with abundant resources. Most of the literature focuses on states such as Russia, China, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela (Ambrosio, 2009; Tolstrup, 2014; Bader, 2015a; Hassan, 2015; Wehrey, 2015; Darwich, 2017; de la Torre, 2017). International support for autocratic regimes can take many forms, such as loans, foreign direct investment, foreign aid, protection in international institutions, military forces, and remittances (Ahmed, 2012; Tolstrup, 2015; Escribà-Folch, Meseguer & Wright, 2018; Tolstrup, Seeberg & Glavind, 2018).

Like the domestic actors, the international actors possess instruments for punishing and undermining autocratic regimes. Once the autocracy is dependent on external support, the international actor can simply threaten to retract its support. Worse still, international actors may impose sanctions, support domestic opposition groups, or even launch an invasion (Meernik,

1996; Grauvogel, Licht & von Soest, 2017). Therefore, international actors that are willing to provide large amounts of economic and political support may hold leverage over an autocratic regime.

International support constrains the ability of targeted sanctions to exert pressure on autocracy. For example, it is possible for an international actor to provide economic support and thereby compensate an autocratic regime for economic costs inflicted by sanctions (Hufbauer et al., 2007; Early, 2011, 2015). However, targeted sanctions may in turn affect the relationship between an autocratic regime and its international supporters. Senders use targeted sanctions to signal their disapproval of the autocratic regime in a public and visible way. This generates audience costs by signaling to voters in the sender state or members of the international organization. In effect, the sender will incur costs if it chooses to provide support for the autocratic regime while the targeted sanctions are still in place. This creates an incentive for the sender to remain committed to the confrontation and avoid cooperation with the targeted regime. In this way, targeted sanctions work as a hand-tying mechanism (Fearon, 1997).[15]

An autocratic regime faces a limited international market of support. Therefore, it has repercussions for the market when the sender imposes targeted sanctions and reveals the sender's unwillingness to provide support. In **Article 3**, I explore how targeted sanctions influence the bargaining relationship between an autocratic regime and its black knight in this context. As the sender has stated its unwillingness to provide support, it becomes more difficult for the autocratic regime credibly to threaten defection from the black knight. This improves the bargaining position of the black knight to the detriment of the autocratic regime and should compel the autocratic regime to seek rapprochement with the sender, thereby increasing the credibility of its threat to defect and improving its bargaining position.

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[15] In this regard, targeted sanctions work similarly to comprehensive sanctions. There is an extensive literature on the ability of comprehensive sanctions to work as signals, see e.g. Galtung, 1967; Morgan & Schwebach, 1997; Schwebach, 2000; Ang & Peksen, 2007; Lektzian & Sprecher, 2007; Whang & Kim, 2015.

Chapter 4:
Methodological approach

Turning from policy concessions to regime support

In the introduction, I proposed that it is problematic to use policy concessions as the only indicator of effectiveness in targeted sanctions. In this section, I explain why this is true and suggest an alternative indicator, namely regime support. Most research on the effects of targeted sanctions focuses on the ability of targeted sanctions to compel an autocratic regime to change its policy in accordance with the sender's preferences (Cortright et al., 2000; Cortright & Lopez, 2002a; Tostensen & Bull, 2002; Drezner, 2003; Shagabutdinova & Berejikian, 2007; Portela, 2010; Drezner, 2011; Eriksson, 2011; Biersteker, Eckert & Tourinho, 2016b). On this basis, researchers wish to observe whether targeted sanctions work, i.e. exert pressure on the regime. The rationale is simple: If the targeted sanctions exert sufficient pressure, the regime will change its policy to placate the sender.

However, policy concessions are a particularly rough indicator, which may lead researchers to inaccurate or even misleading conclusions about the ability of targeted sanctions to exert pressure on a regime. Imagine a case where a sender imposes targeted sanctions and demands the end to a specific policy, which the autocratic leadership group sees as necessary to its own survival. In this case, the targeted sanctions will invariably fail to produce policy concessions, even under circumstances where they manage to exert significant pressure on the regime (Portela, 2010: 46). The cost of the policy concession is simply too high. When examining this case, researchers would erroneously conclude that the targeted sanctions failed to exert pressure on the regime because they were unable to generate policy concessions.

Imagine a different case where the autocratic leadership group places little value on the policy that the sender seeks to change. In this case, the leadership group is likely to concede its policy simply because it ascribes little value to the policy, even if the targeted sanctions exert limited pressure on the regime. The policy concession is cheap for the regime. Upon examining this case, researchers would erroneously conclude that the targeted sanctions exerted extensive pressure on the regime because they observed policy concessions. For example, the Gaddafi regime in Libya surrendered its nuclear program as the costs of the program rose rapidly and operational weapons remained unfeasible.

Therefore, it is likely that the regime ascribed little value to its nuclear program, which made it more attractive to surrender the nuclear program as a policy concession (St John, 2004; Jentleson & Whytock, 2006).

The value that an autocratic regime ascribes to its policy is very difficult to observe and compare to other cases. It would require the statements of an elite regime insider who is willing to act as an informant. This informant must have excellent access and the complete trust of the autocratic leadership group in order to obtain reliable information about such an important and sensitive issue. Without such information, we are unable to accurately observe the value ascribed to the policy by the regime. The regime has an incentive to overstate the value of the policy to improve its bargaining position and appear resolute in the eyes of its supporters. There is an argument that the value could be observable in an extreme case. Specifically, it seems obvious that the policy concession is very costly if it produces regime breakdown. However, even in this extreme case, the cost of policy concessions depends on the post-exit fate of the regime leadership and will therefore vary between cases (Escribà-Folch, 2013; Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2015). In summary, policy concessions will often fail to reflect the pressure exerted on the regime by the targeted sanctions.

Instead, in this dissertation, I use regime support as the dependent variable and main indicator of the pressure that targeted sanctions exert on the autocratic regime. I expect that targeted sanctions, like most other coercive foreign policy instruments, are unable to independently inflict costs and force an autocratic regime from power. Instead, targeted sanctions inflict costs by manipulating the resources and interests of politically relevant actors, namely domestic and international supporters (Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2015: 19). The paramount goal of autocratic regimes is to maintain political power. Therefore, costs for an autocratic regimes are factors that increase the probability of regime breakdown (Marinov, 2005; Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2010). It is only possible for the autocratic regime to maintain power if it can maintain a sufficient level of support from politically relevant actors (Wintrobe, 1990: 851). Therefore, a decrease in regime support inflicts costs on the regime because it equates a ceteris paribus increase in the likelihood of regime breakdown (Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2015: 23).

There is good reason to expect a relationship between regime support and some of the primary goals sought by senders, such as coercion and regime breakdown. In this sense, regime support is an intermediate variable between targeted sanctions, infliction of costs on the regime, and policy concessions (see figure 1 in the introduction). Coercion is definable as the infliction of *costs* on an entity in order to stop an ongoing action or start a new course of action by manipulating its cost-benefit calculus (Pape, 1996: 12). Targeted sanctions decrease regime support and thereby inflicts the *costs* necessary for coercion

to be possible. Admittedly, a drop in regime support is no guarantee that the autocratic regime will give policy concessions or fall to opposition groups. However, the sender's leverage over the autocracy and probability of regime breakdown depends on the ability to effectively decrease regime support. Consequently, regime support should be a key outcome of interests for practitioners and researchers.

Identifying mechanisms

In this dissertation, I avoid the otherwise unavoidable question in the literature: Do targeted sanctions work? (Blanchard & Ripsman, 1999: 220-221). Regardless of the overall track record and average effect of the instrument, practitioners have an interest in the potential of targeted sanctions to exert pressure on autocratic regimes (Baldwin, 1985, 2000). Similarly, researchers have an interest in uncovering how foreign policy tools shape and interact with domestic politics. Therefore, it is fruitful to focus on mechanisms rather than the average effect of the instrument.

In order to use any tool effectively and responsibly, it is necessary to understand its inner workings and mechanisms. It is crucial to know not only whether X produces Y, but also *how* X produces Y, i.e. through what mechanisms. A firm understanding of the underlying mechanisms enables observers to predict whether the tool will work the same way in new and different contexts. Similarly, it reveals why the tool produces the desired results in some settings but yields different results or even fails in other settings. In research on sanctions, the major question in this regard is how economic pain can feasibly produce pressure on a regime (Kirshner, 1997: 41). Therefore, I focus on identifying ways targeted sanctions can decrease regime support in autocratic regimes. This will invariably fail to answer whether targeted sanctions work on average, but it will improve our understanding of *how* targeted sanctions may exert pressure on an autocratic regime and of the inner workings of this new foreign policy tool.

Selecting appropriate levels of analysis

Researchers who wish to examine the effects of targeted sanctions confront difficult decisions about the most appropriate level of analysis. Targeted sanctions in the sense of asset freezes and travel bans have a direct economic effect on only the targeted individuals. Therefore, some researchers interviewed individuals who have personally been hit by targeted sanctions (Cosgrove, 2005; Eriksson, 2011; Wallensteen & Grusell, 2012). However, targeted sanctions seek to exert pressure and change the policies of an autocratic leadership

group that decides on policy as a collective. Therefore, most studies retain the unitary state actor model that is the most familiar to scholars in the International Relations discipline (Cortright & Lopez, 2002a; Portela, 2010; Biersteker, Eckert & Tourinho, 2016a).

Though informative, the existing approaches tend to overlook that some of the most important effects of targeted sanctions concern the behavior of onlookers, namely regime supporters, rather than the targets themselves. This is important to an analysis of the effects of targeted sanctions for three reasons. First, sanctions work by affecting the balance of power between domestic actors (Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2015: 23). Therefore, it is necessary to include these actors in the theoretical argument and accurately observe their behavior empirically. Second, an autocratic leadership group selects policies to balance against domestic threats (Svolik, 2012). This is also evident in research on comprehensive sanctions, which has shown that the target focuses on its own costs rather than its relative costs compared to the sender (Morgan, 2015: 749). As such, there is good reason to focus on the relationship between the regime and its supporters, which often takes places at the domestic level. Finally, as shown in chapter 5, senders use targeted sanctions to affect disputes between domestic actors, often in a conflict between the regime and opposition groups. For these three reasons, it is necessary to theorize and observe the actions of multiple domestic actors to understand the effects of targeted sanctions. Therefore, I utilize sub-national data to conduct accurate empirical tests of theoretical arguments concerning domestic actors (Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, 2012; Hyde, 2015). Specifically, I use a different level of analysis in each article that corresponds to the specific source of support under examination.

Article 1 examines the effect of targeted sanctions on people living under autocratic rule. I use individual-level data from a survey experiment, which allows me to examine the effect for specific individuals and take individual-level factors, such as partisanship, into consideration. **Article 2** investigates the way senders use targeted sanctions to affect elite regime members and uses blacklists to examine the identities of specific regime members who are subjected to targeted sanctions. Finally, **Article 3** looks at the effect of targeted sanctions on the cooperation between an autocratic regime and international actors and applies the unitary state actor model.

Combining diverse research methods

In all three articles, I seek to uncover mechanisms whereby targeted sanctions can decrease regime support from the people, elites, and international actors.

However, I use different methods to conduct the best possible test of each research question. In **Article 1,** I use a survey experiment to examine the public attitude towards targeted sanctions. Survey experiments combine excellent causal control through the random assignment of treatments with the generalizability of large samples (Barabas & Jerit, 2010; Mullinix et al., 2015), which makes them an ideal tool for understanding how international interventions affect public opinion and mass behavior. Moreover, it is a way to overcome the mismatch between macro-level data and individual-level theory, which is a common problem in the International Relations discipline (Hyde, 2015: 409; Grossman, Manekin & Margalit, 2018: 3).

In **Article 1**, the aim is to understand how the people living under autocratic rule respond to differences in the design of the sanctions. Therefore, each respondents was randomly assigned one of four different descriptions of a sanctions design. As the treatment assignment is random, the four groups of respondents are likely to be similar on other factors, including unobservable factors. The only factor that is systematically different between the groups is the treatment, namely the sanctions design. This makes it possible to attribute the difference to the treatment rather than confounders.[16]

In **Article 2**, I conduct a congruence analysis to test the main argument and two rival explanations. In this method, one develops and subsequently applies observable implications of the competing arguments to the cases. The level of consistency between the observable implications and events in the cases allows one to determine the extent of empirical support for the arguments. As the observable implications are mutually contradictory, it is possible to assess the relative validity of the arguments (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Beach & Pedersen, 2016; Møller, 2017). Thus, the major advantage of this design is its ability to incorporate multiple theoretical arguments and combine quantitative and qualitative evidence from a medium-sized population.

The aim of **Article 2** is to understand how senders select specific elite targets for individual sanctions. More to the point, the article seeks to uncover why senders often target administrators specifically. To answer this question,

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[16] It would be possible to examine the effect of the sanctions design on public opinion in other ways. For instance, one could compare cases with different sanctions designs and use statistical controls to isolate the effect of the sanctions design. However, multiple unobservable factors or data limitations would make it difficult to isolate the effect of the sanctions design. Moreover, the mismatch between macro-level data and individual-level theory would persist and potentially distort the empirical findings. Therefore, a survey experiment within a state and on the individual level is a better research design for isolating the effect of the sanctions design.

it is necessary first to establish whom senders tend to target and then illuminate the reasons behind their selection. I use the blacklists of individuals subjected to targeted sanctions to create an empirical overview of targeted individuals and treat each individual elite member as an observation in its own right. Subsequently, I use confidential information from leaked cables published by WikiLeaks to understand how and why specific individuals are selected. This concerns the motivations of the senders and therefore strongly encourages the use of qualitative data. I use confidential information specifically as senders have an incentive to misrepresent their intentions for the benefit of the public audience.

In **Article 3**, I conduct a deep single case study using process-tracing. The main argument outlines a bargaining process, which stipulates a series of interactions between the sender, an autocratic regime, and its black knight. When employing process-tracing, one examines a sequence of events over time encompassing cause, intervening mechanisms, and effect in order to test the validity of a causal argument. This is an ideal approach for probing my argument, which outlines a sequence of events with observable implications (Bennett & Elman, 2007; Mahoney, 2010; Bennett & Checkel, 2015; Beach & Pedersen, 2016).[17]

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[17] An alternative way of illuminating the outcomes of bargaining dynamics is game theory. Multiple studies on comprehensive sanctions use game theory to understand interactions between senders and targets (Tsebelis, 1990; Morgan & Schwebach, 1995; Drezner, 1999; Dorussen & Mo, 2001; Hovi, Huseby & Sprinz, 2005; Major & McGann, 2005). I chose to employ process-tracing to observe bargaining dynamics and outcomes in an empirical case. This inevitably leads to a loss of parsimony and consistency in the theoretical argument compared to a game theoretic analysis. Conversely, it is undeniably a strength that the theoretical argument can be corroborated by data from a real case.

Chapter 5:
Data

What senders to consider?

As mentioned in chapter 3, most research on the effectiveness of targeted sanctions examines only a single sender. Most authors focus on the UN Security Council (Cortright et al., 2000; Cortright & Lopez, 2002a; Wallensteen & Staibano, 2005; Charron, 2011) while there are fewer contributions on the EU (Grebe, 2010; Portela, 2010, 2016; Jaeger, 2016) and the US (Shagabutdinova & Berejikian, 2007). Comparisons are rare (although see Eriksson, 2011 for a study on the UN Security Council and the EU). In general, the previous studies seek to understand how the specific sender uses targeted sanctions. The focus on a single sender allows the researchers to examine a specific sender's institutional, legislative, and legal framework for imposing targeted sanctions.

In contrast, I seek only to understand how targeted sanctions affect their targets and therefore examine cases across three senders, namely the UN Security Council, EU, and US. It is an advantage to look across different senders to increase the number of comparable cases and the scope of the theoretical arguments. Moreover, it provides a more complete overview of the way targeted sanctions are used today. However, with this focus, I exclude targeted sanctions imposed by other states and regional organizations that have recently turned to targeted sanctions.[18] I focus on these three senders for three reasons. First, they are among the most influential actors in the international system in terms of economic and military power. Therefore, other senders will tend to implement targeted sanctions only in coordination with one of these senders. Second, the three senders have already employed asset freezes and travel bans in a relatively large number of cases because they were early adopters of the instrument. The use of asset freezes and travel bans remains quite new for most other senders, and it is probably too early draw conclusions for the second generation of senders. Third, the focus on three major international powers ensures some extent of homogeneity for the cases under consideration. When a major international power imposes targeted sanctions, the vast military and market power of the sender is likely to play into the effects.

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[18] Examples include states such as the United Kingdom (UK Treasury, 2019) and Canada (Government of Canada, 2019), and regional organizations like the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (Charron & Portela, 2015; Borzyskowski & Portela, 2016).

It is likely to shape the response of international as well as domestic actors. Therefore, targeted sanctions imposed by these specific powers are potentially more potent than the average case. For example, targeted sanctions imposed by a major international power is more likely to send a strong signal of support for opposition groups because of the sender's vast resources. In effect, my focus on major international senders improves my ability to observe effects of the targeted sanctions and thereby identify relevant mechanisms between targeted sanctions and regime support.

However, the focus on the UN Security Council, EU and US also limits the generalizability of the findings. Studies on comprehensive economic sanctions suggest that sender characteristics are likely to shape the effects of the targeted sanctions (Drury, 1998; Drezner, 1999, 2000). On one hand, it is plausible that targeted sanctions imposed by less powerful international actors are likely to elicit different and perhaps more limited effects. On the other hand, targeted sanctions could elicit stronger effects when imposed by a less powerful sender if this sender is perceived as a peer by the regime subjected to targeted sanctions. Due to this uncertainty and gap in our current understanding of targeted sanctions, this dissertation speaks primarily to the effects of targeted sanctions imposed by major international powers.

Constructing a dataset of targeted sanctions

In chapter 2, I outlined my focus on a narrow definition of targeted sanctions, i.e. asset freezes and travel bans administered with blacklists and imposed by the UN Security Council, EU, and US between 2000 and 2017. With this definition of targeted sanctions in mind, I constructed a dataset of targeted sanctions cases.[19] In this dataset, I follow the convention in the literature and use the name of the country or territory where the targeted actors reside to demarcate a case of targeted sanctions. Thus, the dataset exists in the format of sanctions cases based on the country name and the country-year format most familiar to conflict researchers.[20] For example, one of the cases in the dataset is

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[19] I chose not to use four existing dataset. First, the Hufbauer, Elliott, Schott, and Oegg (HSEO) sanctions dataset (Hufbauer et al., 2007) and the Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions (TIES) dataset (Morgan, Bapat & Kobayashi, 2014) only cover cases before 2006 and therefore miss most of the years when targeted sanctions have been in use. Second, the GIGA Sanctions Dataset also misses relevant recent cases as it only covers years before 2011 (Portela & von Soest, 2012). Finally, the Targeted Sanctions Consortium (TSC) Database only covers the UN Security Council (Biersteker et al., 2018).

[20] I am happy to send this dataset and the datasets from the three articles to the members of the assessment panel upon request.

the targeted sanctions against members of the Gbagbo regime in the Ivory Coast, which were imposed by the UN Security Council, EU, and US between 2005 and 2006. I refer to this case simply as Ivory Coast (2005).[21] Overall, this dataset serves three purposes for this dissertation. First, it provides an empirical overlook of the population. Second, it allows me to assess the regime types in the cases and thereby assess whether my focus on autocratic regimes is warranted. Third, it enables the selection of relevant cases for the three articles.

I coded the dataset based on the blacklists of targeted individuals. The European External Action Service in the EU and the Office of Foreign Asset Control in the US publish and update these lists. The historical versions of these lists are available in the EU and US, which allowed me to identify past instances of targeted sanctions. Unfortunately, the historical versions of the list from the US Security Council are not publically available. Instead, I relied on press releases and annual reports from sanctions committees to identify historical instances of targeted sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council. After identifying an instance of targeted sanctions, I searched the relevant legal databases of each sender, such as eur-lex for the EU, to identify the legislative acts authorizing the use of targeted sanctions. At this stage, I also searched for any legislative acts that may have lifted the targeted sanctions. Moreover, with the use of the blacklists, I coded the number of individuals listed under each case of targeted sanctions and role of the individual in the regime support structure from their occupation (see **Article 2** for further description and an application of this data).

I crosschecked my cases against media reports with the use of the LexisNexis database and the existing datasets with information about targeted sanctions cases (Charron, 2011; Eriksson, 2011; Portela & von Soest, 2012; Morgan, Bapat & Kobayashi, 2014; Biersteker et al., 2018).[22] As my focus is on autocratic regimes, I exclude cases of targeted sanctions imposed specifically against non-state actors on a global scale and without reference to a specific territory; for example, targeted sanctions against terrorism, drug trafficking, nuclear proliferation, and cybercrime on a global scale. Conversely, I include

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[21] The main alternative in the literature is to use sanctions episodes (Eriksson, 2011; Biersteker et al., 2018), but this practice has raised questions about the independence of the units. The use of episodes can unintentionally affect the empirical findings profoundly (Early, 2016). Consequently, I chose to follow the conventional approach and use country names.

[22] Naturally, I exclude a significant number of cases in comparison to other datasets due to my narrow definition of targeted sanctions. For example, I exclude cases where only an arms embargo was imposed.

the Transnistrian case because the Smirnov regime has asserted control over a territory for an extended period.[23]

Targeted sanctions cases since 2000

In this section, I use my dataset to provide an overview of the cases. Figure 3 shows the growth in the number of regimes subjected to targeted sanctions since the turn of the century. From this overview, it is immediately discernible that targeted sanctions are an increasingly popular foreign policy tool for coercing autocratic regimes.

Figure 3: Total number of regimes subjected to targeted sanctions per year
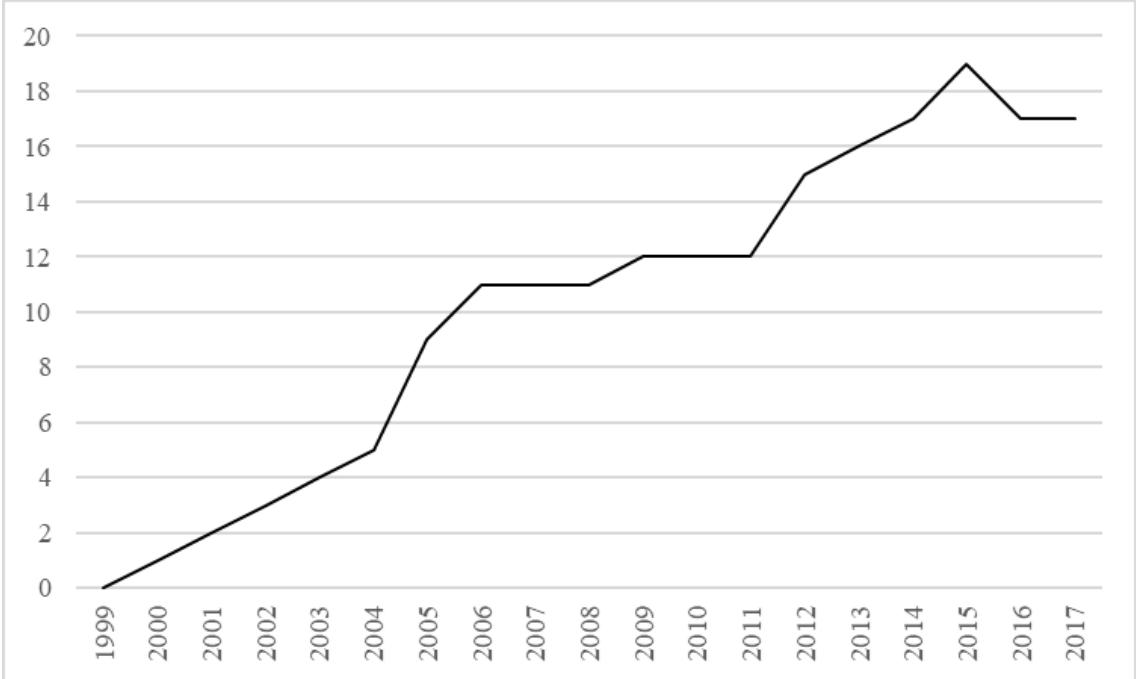
Source: Author's dataset.

There are noteworthy differences across the three senders. All sanctions imposed by the EU and the UN Security Council have been targeted since the mid-1990s (Cortright & Lopez, 2002: 1; Portela, 2010: 7). Therefore, it is fair to conclude that the turn to targeted sanctions has been complete for these senders. The turn has been less pronounced in the US, which continues to use a mix of comprehensive and targeted sanctions to the time of writing (Morgan, Bapat & Kobayashi, 2014). Table 1 depicts targeted sanctions cases corresponding to the narrow definition of the term in this dissertation.

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[23] There is an argument for also including the Aksyonov regime in Crimea from 2014. Presently, I exclude this case because the regime wishes to be incorporated in Russia and therefore understand the targeted sanctions to be against Russia rather than Crimea.

Table 1: Regimes subjected to targeted sanctions since 2000

		EU Years	US Years	UN Security Council Years
1	Belarus	2004-	2006-	
2	Burma	2000-2013	2007-2016	
3	Burundi	2015-	2015-	
4	Central African Republic	2014-	2014-	2014-
5	Democratic Republic of Congo	2008-	2006-	2008-
6	Guinea	2009-		
7	Guinea-Bissau	2012-		2012-
8	Iran	2011-	2005-2016	2006-2014
9	Ivory Coast	2005-2016	2006-2016	2006-2015
10	Liberia	2004-2016	2004-2015	2001-2015
11	North Korea	2007-	2008-	2009-
12	Russia	2014-	2013-	
13	Somalia	2009-	2010-	2010-
14	South Sudan	2014-	2014-	2015-
15	Sudan	2006-	2006-	2006-
16	Syria	2011-	2005-	
17	Transnistria	2003-		
18	Uzbekistan	2005-2009		
19	Venezuela		2015-	
20	Yemen	2014-	2012-	2014-
21	Zimbabwe	2002-	2004-	

Note: The cases of Angola, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia are omitted because they concern rebel groups only or an autocratic regime already out of power once subjected to targeted sanctions.
Source: Author's dataset.

Table 2 depicts the average Polity scores and regime types for all of the cases. All regimes subjected to targeted sanctions are undemocratic and therefore categorized as autocratic, i.e. either fully autocratic regimes or hybrid regimes (known as anocracies). This trend is consistent with research on comprehensive sanctions, which has found that most regimes affected by comprehensive sanctions are undemocratic (Kaempfer, Lowenberg & Mertens, 2004). This is likely to be important to the effects of targeted sanctions because of the distinct nature of autocratic politics. In the absence of free and competitive elections, there is no overarching authority to enforce agreements between parties. This influences the interests, resources, and actions available to the regime, its supporters, and opposition groups (Svolik, 2012: 23). Moreover, it vindicates the focus on autocratic regimes in this dissertation.

Table 2: Polity scores and regime types across cases

		Polity score	Regime type
1	Belarus (2004-)	-7	Autocracy
2	Burma (2000-2016)	-4	Autocracy
3	Burundi (2015-)	-1	Autocracy
4	Central African Republic (2014-)	3	Anocracy
5	Democratic Republic of Congo (2006-)	4	Anocracy
6	Guinea (2009-)	2	Anocracy
7	Guinea-Bissau (2012-)	5	Anocracy
8	Iran (2005-2016)	-7	Autocracy
9	Ivory Coast (2005-2016)	2	Anocracy
10	Liberia (2001-2016)	5	Anocracy
11	North Korea (2007-)	-10	Autocracy
12	Russia (2013-)	4	Anocracy
13	Somalia (2009-)	0	Anocracy
14	South Sudan (2014-)	0	Anocracy
15	Sudan (2006-)	-4	Anocracy
16	Syria (2005-)	-8	Autocracy
17	Transnistria (2003-)	-9	Autocracy
18	Uzbekistan (2005-2009)	-9	Autocracy
19	Venezuela (2015-)	2	Anocracy
20	Yemen (2014-)	0	Anocracy
21	Zimbabwe (2002-)	0	Anocracy

Note: Polity scores and regime types are averages for the period under targeted sanctions
Since Polity does not rate Transnistria, the reported score is determined by rescaling the
score of the territory on the Political Rights indicator from Freedom House.
Source: Marshall, Gurr & Jaggers (2005).

Senders may impose targeted sanctions for numerous reasons. In some cases, the sender adopts targeted sanctions in reaction to an international crisis, such as the outbreak of violent civil war (Charron, 2011; Eriksson & Wallensteen, 2015). In other cases, voters at home demand some form of foreign policy action and this compels senders to adopt sanctions (McLean & Whang, 2014). Different stakeholders in the sender state may support the imposition of targeted sanctions for different reasons. Overall, the policy process and factors conducive to the imposition of sanctions are complex and deserve deeper inquiry (see e.g. von Soest & Wahman, 2015; McLean & Roblyer, 2016). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to explain the imposition of targeted sanctions, but in the descriptions of the individual cases, I briefly outline the conflicts that precede the imposition of targeted sanctions. Table 3 provides an overview of the cases across conflict types. As argued by Charron (2011: 2), it is necessary to understand the effects of sanctions within the context of the

different conflict types that the sender seeks to affect. Moreover, it provides the reader with a useful overview of what is at stake on the ground in the individual cases.

The autocratic regimes in Burma (2000), Zimbabwe (2002), Belarus (2004), Uzbekistan (2005), Guinea (2009), Burundi (2015), and Venezuela (2015) were subjected to targeted sanctions after resorting to state repression against anti-regime protests. The regimes in Liberia (2001), Sudan (2006), and Russia (2013) became targets because of their involvement in internal conflicts in neighboring states. The regimes in the Ivory Coast (2005), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2006), Somalia (2009), Yemen (2014), the Central African Republic (2014), and South Sudan (2014) were targeted for fighting in their own civil wars. The Al-Assad regime in Syria was initially targeted by the US for its meddling in Lebanon (2005), but the number of targets was expanded after the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011. Targeted sanctions were added to an extensive set of sanctions already in place against the regimes in Iran (2005) and North Korea (2007) for the proliferation of nuclear weapons and human rights abuses. The regime in Guinea-Bissau (2012) was targeted for taking power in a coup d'état. Finally, the regime of Igor Smirnov in the Transnistrian region (2003) was targeted for its attempted secession from Moldova.

Table 3: Cases across conflict types

Conflict type	Cases
State repression	Burma (2000), Zimbabwe (2002), Belarus (2004), Uzbekistan (2005), Guinea (2009), Burundi (2015), Venezuela (2015)
Involvement in internal conflicts of neighboring states	Liberia (2001), Sudan (2006), Russia (2013)
Civil wars	Ivory Coast (2005), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2006), Somalia (2009), Yemen (2014), the Central African Republic (2014), South Sudan (2014), Syria (2005)
Nuclear proliferation	Iran (2005), North Korea (2007)
Coup d'état	Guinea-Bissau (2012)
Secession	Transnistria (2003)

It is notable that all the cases, except the two nuclear proliferation cases, concern conflicts between actors within the state.[24] In the state repression cases, the targeted sanctions play into a conflict between the autocratic regime and opposition movements. In the two types of conflict cases, the targeted sanctions are an attempt to dissuade one or both parties from participating in an armed conflict. In the coup d'état and secession cases, it is an attempt to convince illegitimate authorities to surrender power to the rightful decisionmakers. Thus, overall, it is clear that senders typically use targeted sanctions to affect the balance of power between competing actors within states. The goal is to empower some actors at the expense of others. This is a strong argument for examining the ability of targeted sanctions to affect the balance of power between domestic actors, which is the aim in this dissertation. In **Article 1**, I examine how targeted sanctions against members of the Maduro regime in Venezuela may play into the relationship between the people and the incumbent autocratic regime. In **Article 2**, I consider the effects of targeted sanctions on the relationship between the autocratic leadership group and its elite supporters. Moreover, I consider possible fault lines between factions within the elite community. In **Article 3**, I investigate whether the availability of international support and targeted sanctions influence the ability of the Lukashenko regime in Belarus to repress opposition groups. Thus, in the articles, I seek to uncover the ability of targeted sanctions to affect the balance of power between actors in domestic power struggles.

At the start of 2017, targeted sanctions were lifted entirely in four cases. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to explain fully the motivation for lifting the sanctions. Presently, I simply rely on the official statements from the senders to give the reader an impression of the cases. Years after losing power in bloody civil wars, the targeted sanctions have finally been lifted from the former regimes of Laurent Gbagbo in the Ivory Coast (2016) and Charles Taylor in Liberia (2016). The EU and US have lifted the targeted sanctions against the State Peace and Development Council in Burma (2016) after it took significant steps towards democracy. An arms embargo remains in force against the Burmese regime. The EU lifted the targeted sanctions against the Karimov regime in Uzbekistan (2009) after the release of political prisoners and abolition of the death penalty (Council of the European Union, 2009). Finally, senders have lifted targeted sanctions or significantly reduced the number of targeted

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[24] It is arguably telling that this is also the two cases where targeted sanctions coexist with strongly enforced comprehensive sanctions. Therefore, one could speculate that targeted sanctions perform a different function in these cases. It suggests that these targeted sanctions are attempts to simply increase economic pressure rather than affect the internal balance of power in the states.

individuals in light of limited policy concessions in cases such as Belarus and Iran (see figure 3 in **Article 2**).

Case selection

In chapter 3, I described autocratic regimes as a diverse group, especially when it comes to their preferred source of political and economic support. While most regimes receive some support from the people, elites, and international actors, there exists substantial variation between the regimes. There are anocracies that allow some degree of political participation and rely on public support to a large degree compared to other autocracies (Levitsky & Way, 2010: 5-7). Conversely, there are full-blown autocratic regimes that are more reliant on the support of powerful elite actors. This is also true for international support. Some autocratic regimes are entirely dependent on support from international actors while others are relatively self-sufficient (Tansey, Koehler & Schmotz, 2016). This diversity is reflected in the targeted sanctions cases since 2000. There are anocracies like Guinea-Bissau and Venezuela as well as full-blown autocracies like Syria and North Korea. There are regimes, like Russia and Iran, with abundant economic resources that enable them to provide economic support to their international allies. Conversely, there are regimes, like Belarus and Burma, with unreformed economic sectors that depend on economic support from their richer neighboring states.

In my case selection strategy, I take the diversity of the regimes into consideration. My overall aim is to understand how targeted sanctions can decrease regime support from the people, elites, and international actors. Therefore, I use the dataset to select cases where the effect and mechanisms are likely to be observable. In **Article 1** concerning support from the people, I focus on the anocracy of Venezuela and the Maduro regime. This is an advantage because it allows me to observe public opinion on sanctions in a state where the people pose real a threat to the regime. It is a setting where senders could feasibly use targeted sanctions as a signal of support to opposition groups and thereby exert pressure on the regime. The same is unlikely to be true in the most repressive autocracies, for instance North Korea, where the people have few or no tools to pressure the regime. In effect, North Korea is a poor case for examining whether targeted sanctions can act as a signal to opposition groups.

In **Article 2**, I focus on support from elites. First, I examine how senders select targets across cases before turning to the Syrian case. The Assad regime in Syria allows little meaningful political participation and relies on support from elites. It is one of the cases where targeted sanctions would be more likely to exert pressure on the regime by decreasing support from elites. This is a

plausible causal path in all autocracies, and it is a particularly important source of support in autocratic systems with narrow winning coalitions (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2003: 51).

Finally, in **Article 3**, I examine support from international actors and conduct a deep single case study of Belarus where the Lukashenko regime is particularly reliant on support from Russia. This is arguably the paradigmatic case of black knight support (von Soest, 2015: 631). We should expect international support to be important for the survival of the Lukashenko regime, which means that it is the case where senders have the clearest incentive to use targeted sanctions to disrupt the relationship between an autocratic regime and its black knight. Conversely, this mechanism would be impossible to observe in a relatively self-sufficient state, such as Iran or Russia. Thus, across the three articles, I select cases where the mechanism under investigation should be observable and senders could fruitfully use targeted sanctions to affect the particular source of support.[25]

[25] In a study of the average effect of targeted sanctions, this case selection procedure could inflate the observed effect of the targeted sanctions and therefore jeopardize the validity of the findings. However, it is a useful strategy in this study, which focuses on mechanisms.

Chapter 6:
Findings

In the introduction to this dissertation, I posed the overall research question: How can targeted sanctions decrease support for autocratic regimes? (*RQ1*) I argued that targeted sanctions could theoretically decrease regime support from three sources, namely the people, elites, and international actors. In this chapter, I provide an answer to my three subsidiary research questions (*RQ1A*, *RQ1B*, and *RQ1C*) based on the findings from my three articles.

The first source of regime support: The people

In **Article 1**, I examine whether the design of sanctions can play a role in minimizing the risk of a rally-around-the-flag effect. More to the point, I argue that targeted sanctions are less likely than conventional sanctions to inflict collateral damage on the general population. The fear of collateral damage is a major driver of the rally-around-the-flag effect. Furthermore, opposition groups are more likely to see targeted sanctions as an international signal of support to them and disapproval of the regime. Therefore, people are more likely to support targeted sanctions against regime members than conventional sanctions against the country as a whole.

Article 1 finds that people are more likely to support targeted sanctions than conventional sanctions. Similarly, the reason for imposing sanctions matters to respondents. Thus, targeted sanctions are less likely to spark the rally-around-the-flag effect, particularly when imposed for reasons considered salient by the general population. Importantly, this effect is strongest among moderates who are otherwise the group most likely to rally-around-the-flag. There is a smaller effect for opposition supporters. Finally, there is no effect or even a negative effect for regime supporters. The findings in **Article 1** answer *RQ1A* by indicating that targeted sanctions may serve as a signal of support for the opposition groups while minimizing the risk of triggering a rally-around-the-flag effect. Through this mechanism, targeted sanctions may decrease the ability of an autocratic regime to maintain the support of the people.

The second source of regime support: The elites

In **Article 2**, the goal is to identify how senders expect targeted sanctions to affect elite support for the regime. Senders tend to target administrators because they implement the specific policy that the sender seeks to change. For

example, the targeted administrator is often a police chief who oversees the violent repression of anti-regime protests. From the close involvement of the administrator in this policy, e.g. repression, the sender infers that the administrators are also supporters of the policy. I refer to the supporters of the policy as hardliners.

Senders prefer to target hardliners specifically because they expect the targeted sanctions to increase the likelihood that the targeted individual will exit the regime. Targeted sanctions decrease the volume of economic support the targeted individual can provide for the regime and receive in return. Therefore, the autocratic leadership group should be more likely to purge a regime member due to a drop in the level of support. Similarly, the targeted individual is more likely to defect from the regime due to the lower benefits received in return. Moreover, the targeted sanctions may reveal discrediting information about the targeted individual, such as involvement in crime or corruption, to the general population. This gives the leadership group another incentive to purge the targeted individual.

Senders target hardliners in an attempt to change the composition of the regime by weakening hardliners as a group, thereby increasing the relative capacity of softliners in the regime, i.e. proponents of policy concessions and rapprochement with the sender. In this fashion, targeted sanctions may affect the balance of power between different factions within the community of elite regime supporters. This is unlikely to precipitate regime breakdown but may instead facilitate successful coercion by giving softliners within the regime an advantage. The findings in **Article 2** reveal how senders expect targeted sanctions to affect regime support among elites. Moreover, the findings answer *RQ1B* by identifying a mechanism whereby targeted sanctions can decrease elite support for autocratic regimes.

The third source of regime support: The international actors

In **Article 3**, I assess whether the support of a black knight is able to nullify the pressure of targeted sanctions on an autocratic regime. I argue that the relationship between the autocratic regime subjected to targeted sanctions and the black knight is conflictual. Therefore, I develop a bargaining model for understanding this understudied aspect of black knight support. In general, the autocratic regime provides economic assets and sovereignty in return for economic and political support from its black knight. The autocratic regime defends its assets by threatening to defect from the black knight. However, the targeted sanctions have removed the most likely alternative for a sufficient level of support, namely the sender. Therefore, the autocracy grants

gradual and visible concessions to the sender in order to lift the targeted sanctions and maintain the credibility of its threat to defect from the black knight.

To test my argument, I examine the effects of EU targeted sanctions against the autocratic Lukashenko regime in Belarus between 2004 and 2016. I find ample empirical evidence that the targeted sanctions have increased the cost of electoral fraud and state repression in Belarus. The findings in **Article 3** answer *RQ1C* by indicating how targeted sanctions can decrease international support for an autocratic regime. The targeted sanctions give the black knight a marked advantage in the bargaining relationship. In turn, this compels the autocratic regime to seek rapprochement with the sender. Thus, black knight support is far from an insurmountable obstacle to the effects of targeted sanctions.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In this dissertation, I posed the central research question: How can targeted sanctions decrease support for autocratic regimes? The three articles collectively provide a clear answer to this question. The findings show how targeted sanctions may lower regime support from all three major sources of regime support, namely the people, elites, and international actors. First, targeted sanctions may signal support to opposition groups and impede attempts by autocratic regimes to create a rally-around-the-flag effect (*RQ1A*). Second, targeted sanctions may affect the balance of power between different factions within the overall population of elite regime members. Targeted sanctions can change the elite composition of an autocratic regime and thereby affect the leadership group's incentives (*RQ1B*). Finally, targeted sanctions weaken the bargaining position of an autocratic regime relative to its international supporters. This creates an incentive for the autocratic regime subjected to targeted sanctions to seek rapprochement with senders despite the availability of support from other international actors (*RQ1C*). Overall, there are clear and identifiable mechanisms whereby targeted sanctions can decrease support for autocratic regimes (*RQ1*).

Some observers contend that senders use targeted sanctions simply to "do something" about an international conflict and thereby placate voters who demand a foreign policy response. The minimal economic impact of targeted sanctions ensures minimal resistance from civil society and major corporations with business interests at stake (Drezner, 2011: 104). In this dissertation, I have not examined the intentions of sender decisionmakers, but the findings still contradict this argument. There are identifiable ways whereby targeted sanctions can decrease regime support and exert pressure on autocratic regimes. Thus, the assertion that targeted sanctions are a purely symbolic instrument is misleading. It is reasonable to expect voter preferences to influence the decision of a democracy to impose targeted sanctions (Lindsay, 1986; Nossal, 1989; McLean & Whang, 2014; McLean & Roblyer, 2016). However, this does not mean that targeted sanctions are unable to exert pressure on autocratic regimes and deserve the status as a purely symbolic instrument.

What should practitioners take away from the findings in this dissertation? Importantly, it is far from a recommendation that senders impose targeted sanctions indiscriminately or a suggestion that targeted sanctions are generally an effective means for coercing autocratic regimes. Instead, the findings provide practitioners with a stronger basis for the effective use of targeted

sanctions. Practitioners should not impose targeted sanctions simply "to exert pressure on an autocratic regime". Instead, they should consider which mechanism to utilize in order to exert pressure on the regime with targeted sanctions. For example, the goal of imposing targeted sanctions in a specific case could be to send a signal of support to opposition groups while preventing the autocratic regime from creating a rally-around-the-flag effect. The support structure of a specific autocratic regime informs practitioners about what mechanism is likely to work. For example, targeted sanctions are more likely to exert pressure through public protests in anocracies with some extent of meaningful political participation and relatively resourceful opposition groups. Thus, when employing targeted sanctions, it is crucial for practitioners to consider what coalition of supporters keeps the autocratic regime in power.

The focus on specific mechanisms provides useful information on when and how to use targeted sanctions with the greatest possible effect. Returning to the former example, practitioners should consider framing targeted sanctions in line with the demands of opposition groups. This ensures that members of the opposition groups actually perceive the targeted sanctions as a signal of support and therefore can help facilitate mass mobilization (see **Article 1**). This line of thinking also helps identify cases where targeted sanctions are unlikely to generate the desired effect. For example, senders are unlikely to create pressure through the people when imposing targeted sanctions for a widely popular policy, such as the annexation of Crimea in Russia (Frye, 2017) or the government settlement policy in Israel (Grossman, Manekin & Margalit, 2018). The focus on mechanisms also provides useful criteria for evaluating effects of targeted sanctions against autocratic regimes. For example, it would be useful for senders to consider whether opposition groups perceive targeted sanctions as a help or a hindrance.

The focus on regime support enables practitioners to observe whether targeted sanctions exert pressure on an autocratic regime. Moreover, it enables practitioners to detect attempts by the autocratic leadership group to construct countermeasures and nullify the effects of the targeted sanctions. In turn, this line of thinking may enable senders to construct their own countermeasures and ensure that the targeted sanctions continue to exert pressure. For example, autocratic regimes are likely to frame the targeted sanctions as an attack on the nation in the domestic news media in order to create a rally-around-the-flag effect. As a response, it may be possible for senders to counteract this process by supplying a counter narrative through opposition groups or the independent media.

Future research

The research agenda on the effects of targeted sanctions has progressed steadily, but numerous important questions remain unanswered at the time of writing. Above all, the next stages in the causal chain connecting targeted sanctions to coercion (see figure 1 in the introduction) need further examination. Presently, it remains unclear to what extent the loss of regime support will actually inflict costs on a regime. One of the main questions in this regard is the ability of autocratic regimes to compensate individuals and groups who suffer the costs of targeted sanctions. Previous studies indicate that autocratic regimes will compensate core supporters that are hurt by comprehensive sanctions to ensure their future loyalty. For example, military regimes tend to increase spending on military equipment and army wages when subjected to comprehensive sanctions (Escribà-Folch, 2012: 701). Similarly, the Rhodesian regime created a compensation scheme for tobacco farmers when sanctions against Rhodesia applied economic pressure on the powerful interest group. This made the farmers dependent on the regime and unable to lobby for the policy changes desired by the sender (Rowe, 2001). In a more recent example, there is anecdotal evidence that the Putin regime offers more government contracts to core supporters who are subjected to targeted sanctions (Ashford, 2016: 117). Thus, the most resourceful and inventive regimes may be able to deflect or even benefit from targeted sanctions through compensation schemes.

Another important question concerns the choice between targeted sanctions and other foreign policy tools. When reacting to an international crisis, policymakers usually compare various options and select the instrument that is expected to produce the best possible result. Therefore, the merits of a foreign policy instrument is best understood relative to its possible alternatives (Baldwin, 1985, 2000; Kirshner, 1997, 2002; Escribà-Folch & Wright, 2015). Future studies should compare the effects of targeted sanctions in a specific context to the effects of policy alternatives in the same context. Obvious candidates for alternatives are instruments such as comprehensive sanctions and the threat to use military force. Moreover, the use of one tool rarely rules out the use of other tools. In fact, policymakers tend to impose targeted sanctions in combination with other policy tools (Cortright & Lopez, 2002b; Biersteker et al., 2018). Therefore, researchers need to pay more attention to synergies between different instruments.

The effect of targeted sanctions on the people living under autocratic rule remains poorly understood. A comparison of the findings in **Article 1** and two other recent contributions (Frye, 2017; Grossman, Manekin & Margalit, 2018) gives rise to multiple questions about the effect of the domestic context on the

link between targeted sanctions and public opinion. Why do targeted sanctions elicit an overwhelmingly positive public response in Venezuela, an ambivalent response in Russia, and a negative response in Israel? Numerous variables vary between the cases, such as the regime type, relationship to the sender, policy disputed by the sender, and popularity of the incumbent regime. Generally, this suggests that targeted sanctions appear as political issues in the political debate of the state affected by them. It is important that observers and researchers reject overly simplistic expectations about a universally positive or negative response to targeted sanctions. Rather, people are likely to understand targeted sanctions in light of the dispute between the regime and the sender. Therefore, research on targeted sanctions and coercive foreign policy tools in general must uncover the factors that determine the public reaction to the involvement of an external actor. Research should pay particular attention to the ability of the regime to use its control over the domestic news media to frame and shape the national debate (Rowe, 2001; Jaeger, 2016).

In **Article 2** and this summary, I developed multiple theoretical expectations about the effects of targeted sanctions on elites, such as increasing the likelihood of defections, purges, and coup attempts. Therefore, the logical next step would be to investigate whether appearing on a sanctions list increases the risk of an individual leaving the regime through defection, purge or coup attempt. Good data on coups and coup attempts has been available for some time (Powell & Thyne, 2011), and data on elite purges has recently become available (Sudduth, 2017: 1781). There is also some anecdotal evidence that the regime in Myanmar has purged military officials as a reaction to targeted sanctions and international condemnation (Ellis-Petersen, 2018). This could be an indication that targeted sanctions increase the likelihood of purges, at least in regimes that seek rapprochement with the senders.

Overall, the findings in the dissertation hint at the importance of research on autocratic politics. Around 40 % of all states are under autocratic rule today, and they are responsible for most conflicts and instances of state repression. Autocracy continues to dominate and destroy the lives of millions worldwide (Geddes, Wright & Frantz, 2018), and democracies have an obligation to engage and challenge it. The aim is to create incentives for autocratic regimes to respect fundamental human rights and the autonomy of the individual. This will take positive incentives as well as coercion and a deep understanding of the inner workings of autocracy. Therefore, researchers must continue to uncover what makes autocracies tic and use this information to find novel ways to sever the lifelines of tyranny.

English summary

Previous studies have examined whether targeted sanctions can exert pressure on a regime and thereby generate policy concessions. However, these studies share three limitations. First, the focus on policy concessions is problematic. A regime that sees its policy as indispensable will always refuse to surrender it. As such, policy concessions often fail to reflect pressure exerted on the regime. Instead, I focus on regime support and pose the research question: *How can targeted sanctions decrease support for autocratic regimes?* Second, targeted sanctions manipulate the incentives of the domestic and international supporters of the regime. However, previous studies fail to explore how targeted sanctions affect these actors. Therefore, I examine how targeted sanctions can affect *public*, *elite*, and *international* support for autocratic regimes. Finally, previous research usually examines all types of targeted sanctions imposed by a single sender. This conflates the effects of different instruments and excludes relevant cases from other senders. I construct a dataset covering only asset freezes and travel bans imposed by the UN Security Council, EU, and US. Turning to my findings, targeted sanctions may decrease *public* support by acting as a signal of support for opposition groups while preventing the rally-around-the-flag effect. Targeted sanctions can decrease *elite* support by altering the balance of power between different factions that provide support for the regime. Finally, targeted sanctions may decrease *international* support by weakening the bargaining position of the regime relative to its international supporters. Overall, the findings improve the ability of policymakers to use targeted sanctions effectively.

Dansk resumé

Siden årtusindeskiftet er det blevet mere og mere almindeligt at anvende målrettede sanktioner, dvs. økonomiske sanktioner, som indføres over for enkeltpersoner. I dag ser man således ofte, at FN's sikkerhedsråd, EU og USA reagerer på en international konflikt ved at indføre målrettede sanktioner mod deltagere i konflikten. Målrettede sanktioner anvendes næsten udelukkende mod beslutningstagere i autokratiske regimer, men det er stadig uvist, hvorvidt og hvordan målrettede sanktioner egentlig kan påvirke et autokratisk regime. Det er hovedemnet i denne afhandling.

Der findes allerede undersøgelser af målrettede sanktioners evne til at tvinge et autokratisk regime til at foretage politikændringer. Man har lært meget om effekterne af målrettede sanktioner, men den eksisterende forskning er stadig præget af tre vigtige problemer, som jeg løser i denne afhandling. For det første er det problematisk at fokusere alene på politikændringer. Evnen til at opnå politikændringer er nemlig afhængig af værdien, som regimet tilskriver den politik, som forlanges ændret. Det vil eksempelvis være umuligt at opnå en politikændring, hvis regimet ser sin politik som livsnødvendig. Derfor er det uhensigtsmæssigt at vurdere målrettede sanktioners evne til at sætte et regime under pres ved at kigge på politikændringer. Jeg vælger i stedet at fokusere på støtte til regimet og fremsætter følgende forskningsspørgsmål: *Hvordan kan målrettede sanktioner mindske støtten til autokratiske regimer?* Autokratiske regimer ønsker først og fremmest at bevare magten, men har behov for støtte for at dette er praktisk muligt. Det kunne eksempelvis være støtte i befolkningen og blandt eliter. Derfor kan målrettede sanktioner lægge pres på et autokratisk regime ved at mindske dets adgang til denne livsnødvendige støtte.

For det andet må man forvente, at målrettede sanktioner virker ved at ændre incitamenter for regimets støtter, men den eksisterende forskning fremsætter ingen bud på, hvordan disse støtter påvirkes af målrettede sanktioner. Derfor undersøger jeg, hvordan målrettede sanktioner påvirker regimets evne til at finde støtte hos henholdsvis befolkningen, eliter og internationale aktører. For det tredje kigger tidligere undersøgelser almindeligvis på alle slags målrettede sanktioner indført af en enkelt stat eller international organisation og har derfor en tendens til at sammenblande effekterne af forskellige instrumenter og samtidig overse sammenlignelige sanktioner indført af andre afsendere. Jeg sammensætter derfor et nyt dataset, som udelukkende inddrager én bestemt slags målrettede sanktioner men samtidig kigger på tværs af forskellige afsendere. Jeg ser konkret på målrettede sanktioner indført af FN's sikkerhedsråd, EU, og USA mellem 2000 og 2017.

Mine undersøgelser viser, at målrettede sanktioner kan mindske støtten til et autokratisk regime igennem både befolkningen, eliter og internationale aktører. Målrettede sanktioner kan signalere støtte til oppositionsgrupper og samtidig forhindre regimet i at samle befolkningen bag sig ved at fremstille sanktionerne som et angreb fra en fælles fjende. Det er også muligt at bruge målrettede sanktioner til at skade fjendtligtsindede eliter blandt regimets støtter og derigennem styrke en gruppe af mere venligtsindede eliter. Det vil medføre, at regimet som helhed bliver mere tilbøjelig til at foretage politikændringer. Endelig svækker målrettede sanktioner det autokratiske regimes forhandlingsposition over for sine internationale støtter, hvilket mindsker regimets evne til at finde international støtte på sigt. Samlet set forbedrer mine fund i denne afhandling beslutningstageres evne til at anvende målrettede sanktioner på en effektiv vis.

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