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Political Institutions and the Evolution of Character Traits

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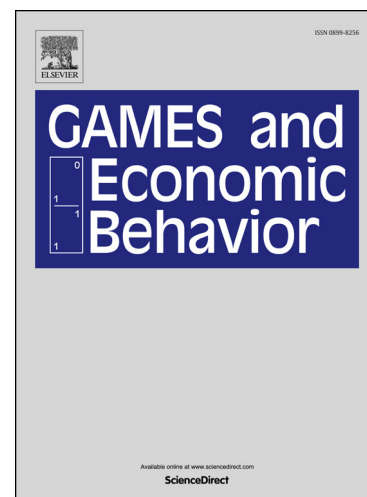
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Highlights

- This paper examines the role of political institutions in influencing the evolution of character traits.
- We propose a model in which two groups carrying different character traits battle over the relative representativeness of their traits for the high positions in the social hierarchy through a political institution.
- Any trait can be prevalent under “exclusive” political institutions. Therefore, a society can be trapped in a state in which traits associated with unfavorable economic outcomes persist.
- Evolution under “inclusive” political institutions has stronger selection power and only the traits that result in the largest comparative advantage in terms of holding a high position can be prevalent.

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