Indoctrination, Citizenship and Political Regimes*

Anja Neundorf[a], Eugenia Nazrullaeva[b], Ksenia Northmore-Ball[c]
and Katerina Tertytchnaya[d]

[a]University of Glasgow

[b]LSE School of Public Policy

[c]Queen Mary, London

[d]University College London

Sep 2021

(To be presented at the 2021 APSA Annual Meeting)

Abstract

What are the origins of sincere mass support for nondemocratic regimes? Influential research on authoritarian politics commonly emphasizes the importance of repression and goods provision for generating citizen compliance. In this paper, we instead aim to draw the focus on indoctrination, and especially the use of education as a political tool. Firstly, we review and synthesize the existing, but scattered literature on indoctrination, education and mass media. Secondly, we provide a new theoretical framework, focusing on indoctrination as a political tool to shape sincere public support for autocracies. We further outline an empirical strategy on how to measure indoctrination and present first empirical results from a pilot study in six countries, including China and Russia.

Keywords: Indoctrination, autocracies, citizenship, education, mass media.

1 Introduction

What are the origins of sincere mass support for political regimes, whether democratic or authoritarian? As has been widely demonstrated, citizens play a crucial part in the consolidation and stability of democratic regimes (Almond and Verba, 1963; Easton, 1965, 1975; Lipset, 1959; Booth and Seligson, 2009; Diamond, 1999; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Norris, 2011; Claassen, 2020). For example, Diamond (2008, 294) argues, "for democracy to endure, their leaders and *citizens* must internalise the spirit of democracy" (emphasis added). But how do citizens internalise this spirit and learn their role within the political system? And is citizen support in autocracies as important as in democracies?

Empirical evidence confirms citizens sincerely support current (Frye et al., 2017; Robinson and Tannenberg, 2019; Guriev and Treisman, 2020*a*)[1] as well as past dictatorships (Pine, 2010; Voigtländer and Voth, 2015). Furthermore, existing research demonstrates the long-term legacy of autocracies on citizens' political preferences and behavior, leading to lower support for democracy, nostalgia for and ideological congruence with the previous regime (Neundorf, 2010; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Dinas and Northmore-Ball, 2020; Neundorf, Gerschewski and Olar, 2020). Based on this work, the remaining puzzle is where contemporary sincere support and attitudinal legacies come from and how dictatorships create sincere support among their subjects.

The political opinions of ordinary citizens and the various strategies autocrats use in order to shape them, have traditionally remained one of the silent voices in the scholarship on authoritarian politics. Instead, the bulk of existing research focuses on the origins and consequences of formal political institutions, and how dictators manage conflict within elites and the opposition (e.g. Geddes, 1999; Brownlee, 2007; Gandhi and Lust-Okar, 2009; Magaloni, 2006; Schedler, 2013; Svolik, 2012). Influential research on authoritarian politics commonly emphasizes the importance of repression

---

[1]For example, using list experiments – that deal with potential preference falsification – Robinson and Tannenberg (2019, 5) demonstrated that 65% of Chinese citizens have confidence in the government and 45% believe that the Chinese system of government is better than any other. Using a similar design, Frye et al. (2017) estimate support for Putin of approximately 80%.

and goods provision for generating citizen compliance (e.g. Gehlbach, 2018; Egorov and Sonin, 2020). However, modern autocracies rely less and less on repression (Guriev and Treisman, 2019) and are limited in their use of public or private goods to silence popular dissent, as this requires sustained economic performance.[2] Instead, informational autocrats use propaganda and censorship to create more short-term, specific support (Lee, 2010; Brandenberger, 2012; Roberts, 2018, 2020; Guriev and Treisman, 2020b). However, the existing formal and empirical literature on authoritarian politics rarely considers what shapes citizens' original political attitudes (prior beliefs).

In our view, indoctrination, and especially the role of education, is the most plausible but widely overlooked answer to this puzzle. Here we argue that investment in building popular support is an alternative strategy to manage the masses. This directly relates to the idea of Lukes (1974) as power to shape desires and beliefs. These are in fact not new topics, as our review of the historical development of indoctrination reveals (see e.g. Dewey, 1916; Pittenger, 1941; Arendt, 1966; Gatchel, 1959; Moore, 1966; Pine, 2010; Lee, 2010). The state-provided education received early in life can influence individuals' diffuse, long-term regime support (Easton, 1965). As Koesel (2020, 273) put it, to build loyal regime supporters "is intended to work as the regime's insurance policy (...) to ensure that they are fully covered for when times get tough."

This essay will advance scholarship on authoritarian politics by firstly reviewing and synthesizing the existing, but scattered literature on indoctrination, education and mass media, and secondly by providing a new theoretical framework, focusing on indoctrination as a political tool to shape sincere public support for autocracies as well as democracy. As we will argue, support for any political regime needs to be generated in the population for people to learn their respective roles as citizens. We hence propose a broader definition of indoctrination, where a doctrine represents the core principles, values, and norms of a society that are used by the regime to legitimize its existence and actions. We argue that there are two key dimensions to indoctrination in education: indoctrination

---

[2]The exception to this limitation are resource-rich autocracies, which use the revenues of natural resources to implement generous public good policies (Ross, 2015).

content and indoctrination strength (capacity). For each dimension, we discuss potential indicators of education content, policies and practices.

Lastly, based on the theory, we develop comparative measures of the first-ever global dataset that contains information on autocratic and democratic indoctrination, covering up to 150 countries from 1945 to today. The data will be compiled by a mix of factual and expert coded data. This comprehensive new dataset will allow us to study the long-term bottom-up causes of democratisation and democratic backsliding, as well as authoritarian stability and breakdown. In this paper we present first empirical results from a pilot study in six countries, including China and Russia.

2   Indoctrination and citizen support: A theoretical overview

This paper is part of a larger project, which aims to present a unified framework of the inter-relationship between political regimes and their citizens. In a first step - in this paper, we take a top-down perspective, focusing on the question: *How do regimes use indoctrination to create citizens that fit their ruling strategy?*

This question rests on the assumption that political regimes – whether democratic or autocratic – need a supportive citizenship for the political system to function as well as for remaining in power. However, as we argue, to achieve this, idealized citizenship greatly varies between different political regimes. The question therefore mainly centres on the active role that political regimes take to create *their* model citizens, thereby focusing on the intention to treat (not necessarily the treatment effectiveness, which we will research later). In this project we are particularly interested in the use of indoctrination to shape political beliefs, which in our view has remained under-studied in the literature.

To answer the main research question, the new theoretical framework identifies and synthesizes into a single framework the main tools and strategies that political regimes use to build popular support among their citizens. Emphasis is thereby placed on conceptualizing regime indoctrination,

Figure 1: Summary theoretical expectations

which we expect to have persistent effects on citizens' political preferences and thus lead to phenomena such as authoritarian nostalgia and democratic backsliding.

Figure 1 summarizes our theoretical expectations. We expect that the type of regime – whether democratic or autocratic – to impact what type of citizenship the regime is seeking to create to achieve its political purposes, such as consolidation and survival. Depending on the nature of the model citizenship in a country, the regime will use indoctrination in different ways to foster an environment to create these model citizens.[3] Based on the effectiveness of these tools, the regime will be successful or unsuccessful in creating support among its citizens.[4] As a large theoretical and empirical literature on democracies has argued, citizen support is crucial for the survival of democracies. We expect the same for autocracies. This paper focuses on the first three steps of this model - from a theoretical perspective as well as empirically by developing measures for indoctrination tools.

3 What is the model of citizenship in democracy and autocracy?

Ordinary citizens are the biggest group of individuals in any type of regime, compared to organised groups such as elites, the military, and interest groups.[5] They hence play a potentially important role in the power structure of a political regime. This is most evident in democracies, where regular elections lead to turn-over of power. If we think of regimes as institutions whose aim is the organisation of power, and taking Dahl (1977) idea of democracy as polyarchy, we understand the basic spectrum

---

[3]We acknowledge that some regimes may not want or do not have the capacity to use indoctrination tools.

[4]We do not assume that all indoctrination efforts are successful, as (some) citizens might be resistant to these efforts and reject indoctrination (Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017).

[5]We follow the definition of Bermeo (2003, 3) who defines ordinary citizens as individuals (opposed to some form of group) that do not "have any extraordinary powers vis-à-vis the states they live in."

between democracy and full autocracy as being about the dispersion versus concentration of power. More specifically, we distinguish three main dimensions of model citizenship:

1. Citizen participation

2. Accountability

3. Pluralism

The first dimension of model citizenship relates to citizen activism – the involvement of citizens in governance. This dimension corresponds to the participatory citizen model in Westheimer and Kahne (2004) and relates to the position of ordinary citizens within the political power structure. For example, within democracies, citizens are constitutionally protected as the sovereign of power. Further, political elites are open to ordinary citizens to take-up political positions, while political elites are (at least in theory) responsible to their voters and expected to act in the interest of citizens (Marshall (2009) concept of political citizenship). The model democratic citizen will have a habit of taking active part in politics and will have the civic skills and competence to exercise power as a true participant in politics.

In an autocratic system, citizens also have (certain) civic skills (see for example Distelhorst and Fu, 2019), but these will mainly represent habits of loyalty and unity as well as potentially the ability to inspire loyalty in others on behalf of the regime. Furthermore, in autocracies we find variation in citizen activism. Most importantly, citizen participation is used to build and defend a unified mission, for example of building a Communist or religious society. The main purpose of citizen participation is not co-governance, but citizens' responsibility to contribute to the unity of the nation and its people. Some regimes further hold regular elections, as part of their legitimacy strategy, as they acknowledge that an elected government will be seen – nationally and internationally – as more legitimate (von Soest and Grauvogel, 2017). Citizens in these regimes are therefore encouraged to participate in elections, pro-regime mass organizations and gatherings. However, although citizens in autocracy may be active, this activity does not constitute true participation in governance. Other

6

regimes refrain from any kind of involvement of citizens in any capacity of the political process (even just for window-dressing) and rather expect citizens to be quiescent. This is common in right-wing regimes allied with the Catholic Church such as the Franco regime in Spain, which mainly aim to demobilize citizens and to seek obedience.

The second dimension of model citizenship focuses on the question whether citizens are allowed and actively encouraged to criticize and challenge political authorities, whether as an expression of opinion or through behavior such as protest or voting. For example, Westheimer (2006, 3) distinguishes between critical thinking as opposed to non-questioning loyalty, teaching conformity as opposed to encouraging dissent. In democracies, critical thinking is a crucial element of vertical accountability (Lührmann, Marquardt and Mechkova, 2020) and finds its most important expression in regular free and fair elections, freedoms of speech and assembly. On the other hand, autocracies are usually defined by very limited challenge of political authorities. Civil liberties, which relate to this dimension of citizenship are often heavily restricted and even if elections take place, they are usually not meant to hold authorities accountable, as they are neither free, fair nor competitive to allow for a rotation of power.

The third dimension of model citizenship relates to the level of pluralism, which includes abstract ideologies, concrete issue policies as well as the integration of minority views. The opposing ends of this dimension are "open pluralism", which respects the existence of diverse ideologies, policy positions, and protects the position of minorities. Democracies are characterised by this model, which allows a competition of ideas among citizens and political elites. On the other end of this dimension is a closed "Weltanschauung", which prescripts to one specific regime doctrine (e.g. Communism, nationalism, Islam), restricted policy positions and no protection of minority views. Autocracies promote one single view by propagandizing a coherent regime narrative, which in the most advanced form consists of a set of ideological principles. These regimes do not allow for competition of ideas and expects an uncritical acceptance of the regime's guiding principles (doctrine and policies) and the regime's mission by its citizens.

Patriotism is an important related concept, which maps onto our three dimensions of model citizenship. Generally, we can define patriotism as the love for one's country (Westheimer, 2006, 2). Regimes can use this devotion for their purposes to create a bond between the country, the regime and citizens. This generally relates to what Easton called diffuse support for the political community. High levels of patriotism are believed to mobilize citizens to engage with the regime. In the most extreme case, patriotism is a driver to take-up arms or create rallying-around-the-flag in case of an external threat against the nation (Zajda, 1980).

Patriotism is moreover interesting in how it varies for our purposes to study democracies and autocracies. For example,Westheimer (2006) distinguishes between democratic and authoritarian patriotism that are mainly divided in their level of critical thinking. The two forms of patriotism are however not exclusive to democracies or autocracies. Rather, both forms can exist within a democratic system, as Westheimer (2006) illustrates using the United States as an example. Democratic patriotism or what Ben-Porath (2007) calls "civic virtue" inspires questioning, critical, deliberative patriotism that explicitly encourages the condemnation of shortcomings, especially within nation. For example, Howard Zinn describes democratic patriotism as "being true and loyal — not to the government, but to the principles which underlie democracy" (cited in Westheimer, 2006, 3), which again also relate to the level of pluralism.

On the other hand, authoritarian patriotism refers to "resigning of one's will, right of choice, and need to understand the authority. (...) Authoritarian patriotism asks for unquestioning loyalty to a cause determined by a centralized leader or leading group. Authoritarian patriotism demands allegiance to the government's cause and therefore opposes dissent" Westheimer (2006, 2). This again is a reflection of a model citizen that is loyal and uncritical to the regime, which is usually based on monism.

To sum, a model democratic citizen obeys laws but also can be a participant in making them (Almond and Verba, 1963). The citizen upholds democratic values of tolerance and pluralism and holds elites accountable to the standards of democracy. The citizen may not always participate at

8

every opportunity, but the democratic model citizen has critical skills and confidence to do so and to increase participation if needed to check elites in power. Thus, the standards of democratic civic education emphasize civic competence, democratic norms (such as tolerance and pluralism), and the habit of participation of politics (Finkel and Smith, 2011).

To understand the essence of model citizenship in autocracy we turn these principles on their head: if autocracy is about concentration of power, the model citizen plays a role in aiding that aim. Therefore, the model citizen does not hold norms that support pluralism and tolerance, but is willing to support the restriction of rights they themselves, or rather the regime, disagrees with. As one extreme, the model citizen does not hold those in power accountable as that would mean to question their authority and thus share power with them. Distelhorst and Fu (2019, 117) refer to this type of citizenship as "subjecthood", when the state's authority rests on its "despotic power".[6] Finally, if the citizen engages in any political participation, that action displays acquiescence of a loyal subject not co-governance or sharing in power. Thus participation – if it even happens in an autocracy – fulfils the purpose to signal loyalty to further the mission of the regime.

Table 1 below summarises our framework of model citizenship in autocracies and democracies (inspired by the classification of civic skills in Westheimer and Kahne (2004); Westheimer (2015) and patriotism in Westheimer (2006)).

4 What is indoctrination and how is it used by political regimes?

In this section we outline the key concept of this paper: indoctrination, which we argue is crucial in building the aspired citizenship of a society. The focus on indoctrination rests on the assumption that regimes have an intention to build broad support among their citizens for the core principles and norms of the regime through political and patriotic socialization. Further, citizens need to

---

[6]The power dynamics between ordinary citizens and the state can be more nuanced, however. Distelhorst and Fu (2019, 114) distinguish between three types of legitimacy "scripts" in citizens' public behaviour in contemporary China: subjecthood (citizens are loyal subjects of the state), legal citizenship ("the state is bound to enforce its own laws and not to act arbitrarily") and socialist citizenship (the state has moral obligations to "provide for collective welfare").

Table 1: Model citizenship framework

Dimensions	*Authoritarian Model Citizen*	*Democratic Model Citizen*
Citizen participation	Loyal "subjecthood", obeys the laws	Actively involved in co-governance, habit of participation in politics to make the laws
Accountability	Non-questioning loyalty to the nation or the leader	Critical loyalty to the principles of democracy, questions the regime's actions and holds it accountable
Pluralism	Single doctrine or coherent regime narrative	Variety of issue policies, integration of minority views

learn their role(s) within the nation as outlined above. To achieve this, regimes use tools related to indoctrination, namely education and political communication (e.g. propaganda censorship, but also the politicization of the arts). In this section, we briefly outline the historical development of the academic use of the term indoctrination, before going into detail about its definition, sub-dimensions of the concept, and specific tools used.

4.1   Historical development in the academic use of the term indoctrination

The term indoctrination has been used since the Middle Ages. Under the Roman Catholic Church, European education was synonymous with the "implanting of Christian doctrine" (Gatchel, 1959, 304). However, in the late 19th century, the term became broader and essentially a synonym to education (Puolimatka, 1996, 109). According to the 1901 New England Dictionary indoctrination is "instruction, formal teaching" (Raywid, 1980, 2). This also resonates with new research by Paglayan (2020a, 1), who finds that the early expansion of primary education in 18th and 19th century Prussia, France, and Argentina was mainly motivated by the aim "to indoctrinate the masses to be content with the status quo in an effort to promote long-term social order and political stability."

After WWI, the term indoctrination acquired a derogatory connotation similar to propaganda and brainwashing and came to be regarded as the "antithesis of education for life in a democracy" (Gatchel, 1959, 206). "As early as 1915, Dewey accused authoritarian education of engendering

10

attitudes of "obedience", "docility", "submission," and "passivity."" (John Dewey and Evelyn Dewey, *Schools of Tomorrow*, 1915 cited in Raywid (1980, 3)).

However, indoctrination was still an ambiguous concept in the 1940s: in 1941, Benjamin Floyd Pittenger published Indoctrination for American Democracy: his main argument was that indoctrination was necessary, especially during the war years, to create "nationalistic loyalty" (as cited in Gatchel, 1959, 307-8) in the form of democratic patriotism. However, after the end of WWII, the debate on the meaning of the term was revived: "depending upon the definition of the word and the educational philosophy of the educators, [indoctrination] is either desirable or not" [ibid., p. 308]. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s "Indoctrination (. . .) came into popular currency in the United States" (Brandenberger, 2012, 7) with the aim that the youth should be indoctrinated with the core ideas of democracy (Moore, 1966, 398).

The rise of dictatorships in Europe and the WWII period contributed a lot to shaping the negative meaning of the term in the subsequent decades. Indoctrination became more and more associated with authoritarian rule, whereby political education in democracies was described as 'education' or more specifically 'civic education', while in autocracies similar teaching methods are described as 'indoctrination' (Gatchel, 1959, 397) by Western analysts, a position which many would still subscribe to today.[7]

By the end of the 1980s, the interest to the concept subsided. Woods and Barrow (2006, 70) observed that around this time, "consideration was given to cutting out [their book] chapter [on indoctrination] altogether, on the grounds that the word 'indoctrination' was no longer in common use and the practice perhaps not as significant as had once been thought." Their observations were based on newspapers. However, is this true for academic research as well? In order to explore this question, we conducted a full-text search of the number of journal articles, books and book chapters that mention the stemmed term "indoctrinat*" at least once, using the JStor database since 1900.[8]

---

[7]"With the derogation of the term [indoctrination] American educators and educationists have been obliged to devise a word to describe the process of cultural transmission in a pluralistic society. 'Socialization' was and might have continued to be the answer" (Gatchel, 1959, 309).

[8]The fields included are: Economics, history, political science, philosophy, education, and other social sciences. The database was accessed 21/01/21, using https://tdm-pilot.org.

Figure 2: Number and proportion of journal articles, books and book chapters that mention the term *"indoctrinat*"* at least once on JStor

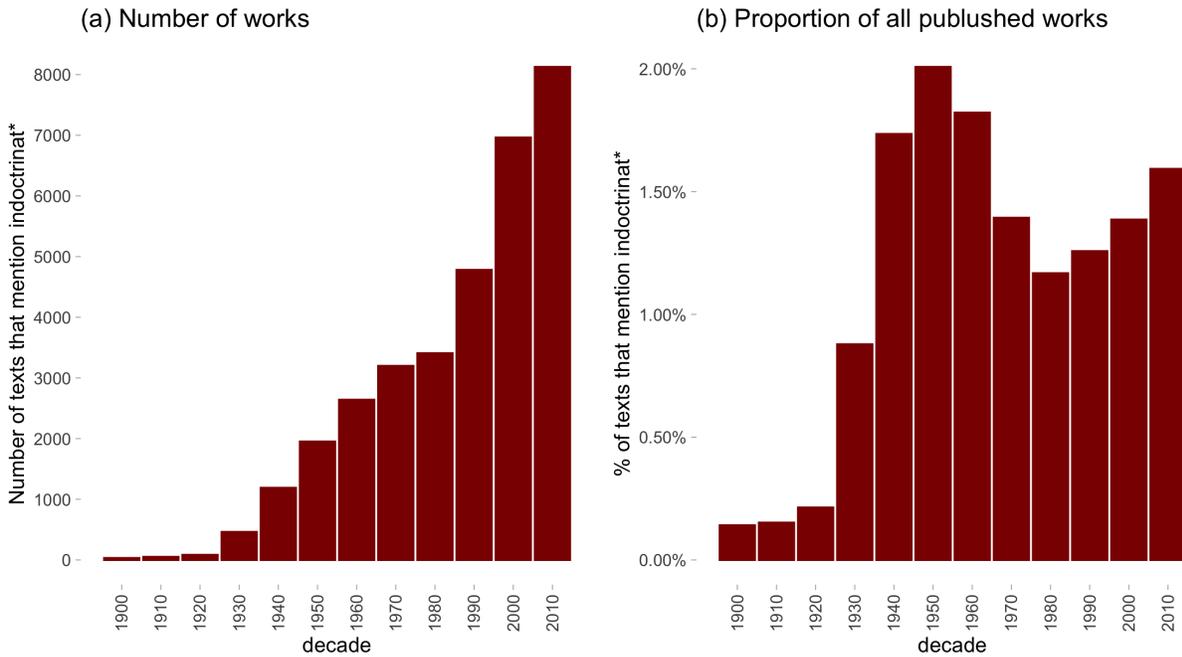(a) Number of works   (b) Proportion of all publushed works

Figure 2.a plots the total of 33,071 documents by decade.[9] Even taking into account that over time, more and more research is getting published (Figure 2.b), there is no doubt that indoctrination is still a widely used term in the academic literature, with about 15,000 works mentioning the term in the past 20 years.

We can further zoom into the corpus of these selected documents that refer to indoctrination to investigate whether these texts also refer to other relevant concepts. Figure 3 plots the proportion of documents that mention "democracy" or "authoritarian". First of all, we note that democracy is still the most likely connection to indoctrination. We do see the normalization of the term in the pre-WWI period to describe indoctrination generally as education, with a slight decline in the 1920s, as observed by Gatchel (1959). The graph also picks-up the revival of the term in democracies as described by Pittenger (1941). After that we do see a decline in the use of the term in democracies until the 1990s, when it starts to raise again. On the other hand, Figure 3 also confirms that the use

_____

[9]It should be noted that the 2010 decade is partially truncated, as JStor only includes full-text searches of journal articles until 2017.

Figure 3: Proportion of mentions of "democracy" and "authoritarian" in academic works that mention the term "indoctrinat*"
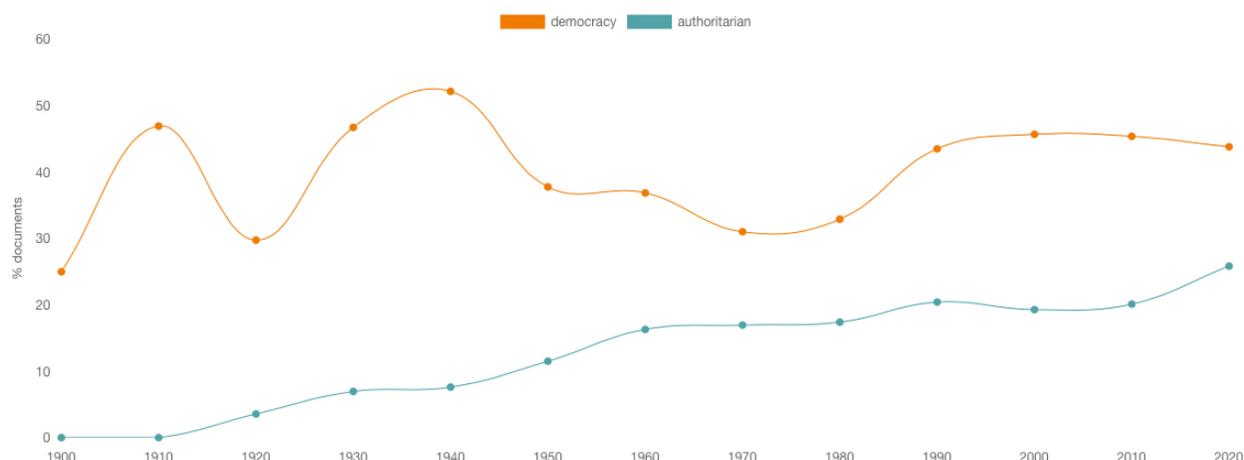
of indoctrination in connection with authoritarianism is also on a steady rise throughout the 20th century, with about 20% of works that refer to indoctrination also referring to "authoritarian".

4.2 A conceptual definition

As we have argued in the previous section, the term indoctrination has a long historical and contemporary relevance. After WWII it has mainly been associated to authoritarian education. However, as we argue in this project, indoctrination can be a helpful concept that applies to both democracies and autocracies, as it was used in the past. We further argue that both regime types need indoctrination for their sustained survival. In this section, we present our general definition of indoctrination – building on a long tradition of research – as well outline in which way indoctrination is distinct in democracies and autocracies.

We start by focusing on the purpose of indoctrination for any political regime. Indoctrination is an intentional tool of socialization used by the regime to create sustained regime support. This resonates with Gatchel (1959, 309) definition of indoctrination as the enculturation process to influence citizens' beliefs and attitudes.[10] The goal is hence to instill specific and especially diffuse

---

[10]Gatchel (1959, 309) more specifically refers to "future generations", as in his work he mainly focuses on education as the mechanism through which indoctrination is achieved. However, as we argue below, in our conception of

system support for the political regime. Based on the seminal work by Easton (1965), we assume that any type of regime requires genuine commitment to the political community and support for the regime as a whole, for example a sense of patriotism.[11] Building this support will create a community and harmonize society, which we expect will reduce the costs of ruling and potential societal conflicts (Paglayan, 2020*a*). This is true for both democracies and autocracies.

Indoctrination intends to propagandize a coherent narrative or regime mission, in form of a set of (ideological) principles or ideas at the expense of other competing worldviews and principles (Brandenberger, 2012, 7). Indoctrination helps citizens internalize the regime's preferences and helps build shared identities, norms and a common doctrine. Once developed, shared values and common identities are repeatedly evoked. This is important to attaining citizens' commitment to the political regime, whether democratic or autocratic.

Based on this definition, the ultimate goal of indoctrination is hence for individuals to learn their role as citizens of a society. Going back to the motivation of this paper: "Citizens must internalise the spirit of democracy", as Diamond (2008, 294) put it. Without this deep-routed commitment, democracies are at risk of backsliding (Claassen, 2020). Woods and Barrow (2006, 71) refer to this key part of the concept of indoctrination as the "blind unshakable commitment" or as Gatchel (1959, 309) put it indoctrination as "uncritical implantation of beliefs".

Democracies are often constitutionally protected against anti-system forces that challenge the core principles of democracy (such as civil and political rights, individual liberties, minority protection, and rule of law).[12] We further argue that mass support for these principles functions as a bulwark or as Koesel (2020, 273) put it an "insurance policy" against any authoritarian tendencies, which threatens the overall existence of democracies. The same is probably true in dictatorships that

---

indoctrination, it is not just restricted to education and young people, but can be extended to the use of political communication, which also affects older citizens.

[11] An example of the attempt to increase patriotism and commitment to the political community is the daily recital of the pledge of allegiance in US schools.

[12] Democracies usually have a constitutional protection against organizations or individuals that threaten the democratic order. For example, it is common that anti-system parties are panned to operate in democracies (Bourne, 2019).

require (or aspire) the same kind of commitment of their citizens to the regime and its own core principles, which function as a protection against democratization efforts. This is exactly where indoctrination comes in.

4.3 Dimensions of indoctrination

In this section, we focus on the two key dimensions of indoctrination: 1) Content – what is indoctrinated, and 2) the strength of indoctrination.

4.3.1 Indoctrination content

The question of what is indoctrinated, is closely linked with the model citizenship model, introduced above. Pluralism of opinions and critical thinking skills are often used to separate model citizens in democracies from autocracies (Gatchel, 1959; Westheimer and Kahne, 2003, 2004). Our goal is therefore to create a unidimensional scale of indoctrination content ranging from democratic (participatory, critical, pluralist) to autocratic (loyal/obedient, uncritical, single view/ideology). To achieve this, we focus on two elements: 1) the regime's doctrine and 2) the level of contestation.

The doctrine: Indoctrination is about imparting citizens' beliefs.[13] The question that follows is what is the content or doctrine that is inculcated in the popular mind? Many people associate certain ideologies such as Communism or Fascism with indoctrination, which certainly inspired important work in this area (Friedrich and Brzezinski, 1956; Arendt, 1966). Figure 4 confirms that the bulk of the earlier academic works (especially between 1930-1970) that refer to indoctrination, refer to either of these all-encompassing ideologies. With the declining role of ideologies (Guriev and Treisman, 2019), the usefulness of the concept of indoctrination in contemporary political regimes might however be limited.

Figure 4 supports this, as we can see from the declining role of the two core ideologies of the 20th century. Instead, recent research that mentions indoctrination refers more and more to

---

[13]Indoctrination is different from conditioning, where conditioning is about causing an individual "to behave in certain ways and does not necessarily involve any reference to beliefs at all" (Woods and Barrow, 2006, 71).

Figure 4: Proportion of mentions of "Communism", "Fascism","Nationalism", "Legitimacy" in academic works that mention the term "indoctrinat-"
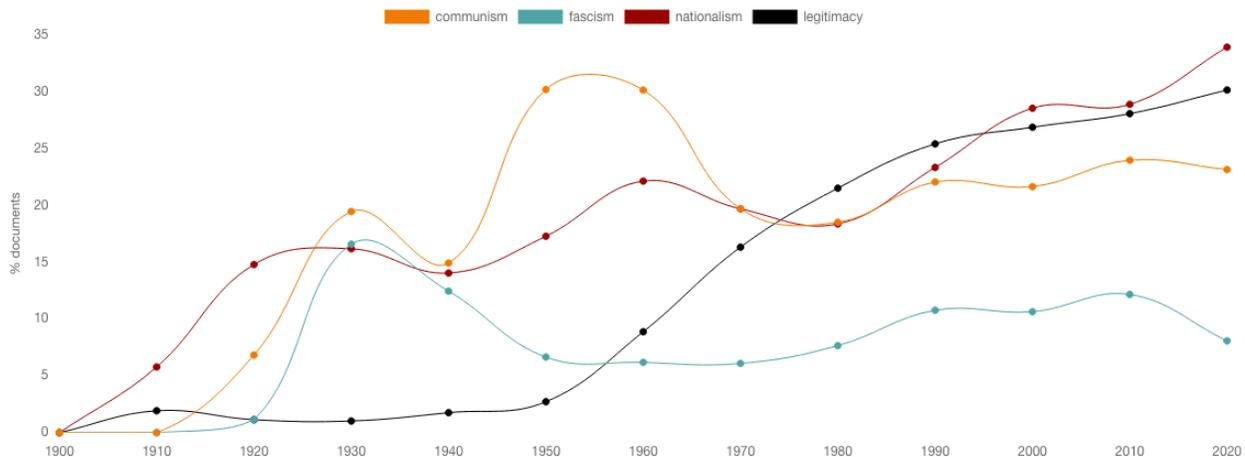

legitimacy or weak ideologies such as nationalism, which together constitute more than 50% of research that refers to indoctrination in the past 20-30 years. Based on this finding, we propose a broader definition of doctrine, which represents the core principles, values, and norms of a society that are used by the regime to legitimise its existence and actions.[14] This definition applies to both democracies and autocracies. In this respect, liberal democracy can be classified as a doctrine. Hence, the content of the "doctrine" is necessarily the best indicator for the difference between indoctrination in democracy and autocratic regimes.[15]

From this discussion it follows that indoctrination can vary greatly in its content, as the doctrine that is inculcated will be based on very different sets of core societal principles. To support this argument, we can see from Figure 5 that there is a lot of variation in the V-Dem index of ideology, broadly defined, and although there is a period between the 1960s and the 1990s when ideologies are more prominent, the post-1990s period does not differ significantly from the pre-1930s period.

---

[14]This definition also corresponds to the definition of ideology by V-Dem Coppedge et al. (2020, 208): "To what extent does the current government promote a specific ideology (an officially codified set of beliefs used to justify a particular set of social, political, and economic relations) or social model (for example socialism, nationalism, modernization, religious traditionalism, etc.) in order enhance the legitimacy of the regime in place?"

[15]While to some extent we will see differences in the "core concepts" being emphasized i.e. freedom for liberal democracy versus equality for communism, and more importantly, in the accompanying constellation of peripheral concepts, many of the concepts will be shared. This implies that we need to distinguish between the idea of liberal democracy as a doctrine, which is often used by autocratic regimes as well, versus *actual* implementation of democracy as a form of rule

Figure 5: VDem Ideology Index
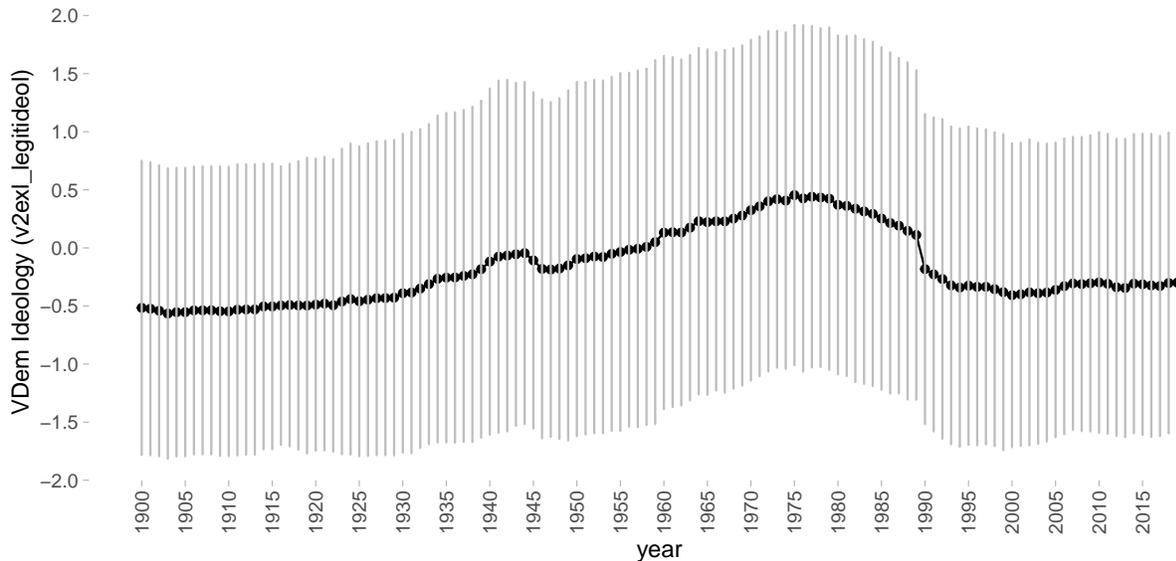
Our dimensions of model citizenship directly connect to the content of doctrines, which will lead to differences between democracies and autocracies. For example, as a core principle of democracy we expect the content of indoctrination to inculcate the principles of pluralism to explicitly encourage a competition over policy proposals (political competition) as well as minority protection, while the content of indoctrination in autocracies will be characterised by more homogenous messages that do not encourage pluralism.

Contestation: Another defining characteristic of the indoctrination content is the level of contestation, which can vary between different political systems. As argued above, we assume that there is a certain level of "unshakable commitment" to the core principles of any political regime. However, regimes vary in the degree to which they allow criticism and challenges to agents of authority. The key difference in the use and definition of indoctrination between autocracies and democracies is the degree to which the "doctrine" has to be univocally accepted in the population. Democracies allow (to some degree) diverting opinions. This relates to the extent of the "monopoly"

of the political discourse. If the control of the political discourse is held by a plurality of actors, then there is room to develop critiques of the dominant discourse.

We therefore expect democracies to allow a higher degree of contestation, which in fact is a key feature of democracy. Indeed, citizens are encouraged to be critical, which is a key part of democratic accountability and core to our definition of democratic citizenship. However, this refers to "political authorities" (to use Easton's terminology) such as political leaders and parties. The competition over ideas and best policies is explicitly democratic. Nevertheless, also democracies require an "unshakable commitment" to its core principles. The difference to autocracies is however that democracies will base its indoctrination efforts on persuasion rather than "beyond reasoning".

In 1972, William H. Kilpatrick writes on indoctrination and education for democracy in Indoctrination and Respect for Persons (Snook ed. *Concepts of Indoctrination*, 1972, pp. 50 and 52):

> "To teach democracy . . . [so as] to foster uncritical acceptance would seem an odd way of fostering democracy. To indoctrinate a belief in democracy without including the reasons for democracy, and without building ability to think critically about it, is to make blindfolded adherents of democracy. Such people would not know the why of their practices or dogmas and consequently could not be trusted to apply the doctrines intelligently."

In autocracies we expect contestation to be very limited and guided by a dominant message, for example the mission to build a Communist society. This is achieved through teaching someone to accept the regime's doctrine uncritically and to accept this "truth" universally regardless of evidence. Indoctrination in autocracies is expected to close alternatives through the promotion of a single view (Sears and Hughes, 2006) and censorship of any evidence that can be used to construct alternative narratives. This also corresponds to how Woods and Barrow (2006, 71) further specify indoctrination, especially in non-democratic countries, as "beyond argument" and "beyond reasoning".

4.3.2 Indoctrination strength

Just because a regime requires citizen support for its core principles and legitimization strategy, does not mean that all regimes use indoctrination in the same intensity. Some regimes might not have the *capacity or intent* to indoctrinate its citizens. The reasons for this variation could be manifold, ranging from state capacity to intentional importance of citizen inculcation to the regime. Using indoctrination for the purpose to inculcate the regime's guiding doctrine is achieved through the investment of regime resources and the intentional use of certain practices (e.g. from Testa (2018, 68): high centralization of the education system, strong propaganda technology or media control). However, we do not expect all regimes to make use of these tools and therefore regimes will vary in the strength of their indoctrination efforts.

Furthermore, the indoctrination strength will be affected by the *coherence* of the regime's doctrine – whether democratic or autocratic. We could imagine a regime where there is a very coherent single doctrine of political values and model citizenship that is known and promoted by all agents of socialization. In other words, there is no competition and disagreement on what the model citizen is and the regime is promoting a consistent set of beliefs, which are in line with its doctrine. The intensity of indoctrination and the ability to deliver a coherent message rests on the premise that indoctrination involves an *authority* relationship, whereby values and practices are inculcated by instructional agents who are formally charged with this responsibility. The strength of indoctrination hence rests mainly on the *control over the agents* of indoctrination (e.g. teachers, media) by the principal (the regime/government). We assume that the stricter control is, the stronger (and hence also more effective) will indoctrination be.

Lastly, the strength of indoctrination will be impacted by the degree to which a regime relies and actively builds patriotism, which assume will function like a fertilizer of the regime's indoctrination content. Not all regimes rely on patriotism. However, those that do are expected to have stronger indoctrination.

4.4 Connecting the dimensions of indoctrination

It is our goal to conceptualize and measure indoctrination on two dimensions that range 1) from democratic to authoritarian indoctrination and 2) from high to low strength. Firstly, based on model citizenship, we expect democratic indoctrination to inculcate principles that are core to the concept of liberal democracy, e.g. pluralism and citizen activism. Further, democratic indoctrination is based on a level of contestation, which inculcates citizens to be critical with political authorities, as a core aspect of vertical accountability. Authoritarian indoctrination on the other hand is expected to inculcate non-democratic doctrines, such as monism, that cannot be challenged by citizens without fear of repression.

The second dimension of strength relates to both democratic and authoritarian indoctrination, as it impacts how central the efforts to indoctrinate citizens is to the regime and how much efforts are put into it. We therefore expect that the success of indoctrination in impacting the hearts and minds of citizens depends on the strength (capacity/intent, coherence, and level of patriotism) of the indoctrination efforts of the regime.

Figure 6 provides an illustration of the two dimensions of indoctrination and some historical examples of political regimes. For example, we expect that the USSR can be classified as an authoritarian and high intensity indoctrination case, while Franco's Spain was characterized by much lower indoctrination efforts, passing responsibility of school education to the Catholic Church (Domke, 2011). The US is an example of democratic indoctrination. However, over the last 100 years its efforts to inculcate democratic values have declined, evident for example by the declining role of civic education in school (Leming, Ellington and Schug, 2006).

5 What are the tools of indoctrination?

Indoctrination, a manifestation of "normative" state power, consists of various strategies, and is mainly achieved through state-administered education and political communication. There are

Figure 6: Illustration and examples of two-dimensions of indoctrination
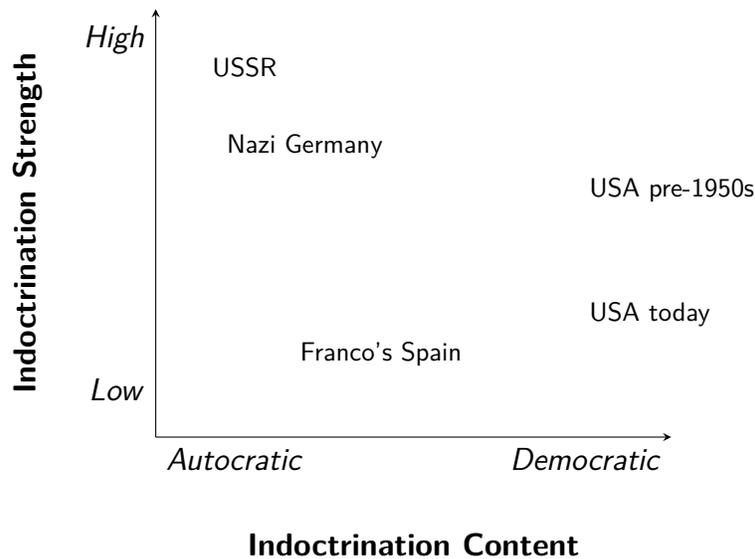
Notes on cases: (1) Nazi Germany: high intent but lower capacity, less time; (2) Franco's Spain: moderate intent, but low control over education; (3) USA pre-1950s: 1st half of 20th century with higher emphasis on civics in curriculum, strong desire to form democratic citizens; (4) USA today: low capacity, little emphasis on civic education, de-centralized, low intent and little desire to shape citizens, apart from high patriotism.

various ways in which political regimes can make their "imprint". Subjects are infused with political messages at schools, universities, the military, the media, and the arts. Ritual praise and expressions of love were directed by teachers, textbooks, and students towards the leaders. Indoctrination can involve the strategic use of intimidation, ritual denunciation of an enemy, mass rehearsal of reverence and love for the great leader (Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Salter, 1998, 432).

Here we explicitly expand the use of concept of indoctrination beyond education, which is the traditional focus of indoctrination research (see discussion above). This is confirmed by Figure 7, which demonstrates that education is key to the concept of indoctrination. Between 60-75% of academic texts that mention indoctrination also refer to education or schools. This confirms the close (historical) connection between the two concepts, as outlined above. However, the figure also illustrates the relative importance of the media and propaganda in connection to indoctrination, with historically about 30% of academic works mentioning propaganda, with the most recent academic work on indoctrination 50% mentioning the media.

Figure 7: Proportion of academic works that mention indoctrination and also mention indoctrination channels
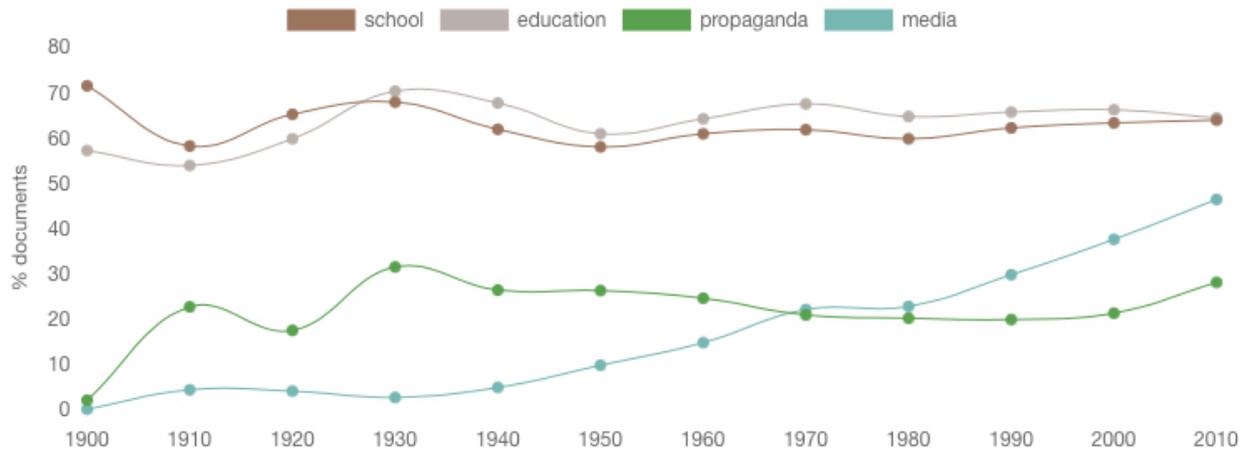
We argue that indoctrination through education is a long-term process, which takes place through socialization and habituation early in life, while information control through propaganda and censorship mainly targets adult citizens to instill specific and diffuse support for the regime. The regime's messages disseminated through the education system can be reinforced by propaganda and censorship.

5.1 Education

Education can be used as a tool of indoctrination or dissemination of "publicly controlled information" (Lott, 1999, 127). In particular, the importance of a regime narrative makes public education (focusing on formal primary and secondary education), an important activity to help to create mainly diffuse support for the regime's guiding principles. Further, as education is usually compulsory for all children and young people, the political regime ensures that entire cohorts get exposed to the intended education content. Historically, one of the key goals of mass education was nation building: inculcating state-approved civic values in children and teaching common language to build national identity (Alesina, Giuliano and Reich, 2018; Bandiera et al., 2018; Paglayan, 2020*b*,*a*; Guevara, Paglayan and Perez Navarro, 2018).

We can measure the extent of indoctrination from the following three key dimensions of education: 1) official school curricula – e.g. subjects taught, instructional time, topics covered in subject syllabi, authorized textbooks and teaching methods (Benavot, 2004, 10); 2) the overall organization of the educational system – e.g. school oversights by the authorities, compulsory schooling - and 3) the agency of teachers – e.g. including recruitment, training and level of independence. These sub-dimensions are expected to differ in autocracies and democracies. The first dimension is explicitly related to indoctrination content, while the other two dimensions can be used to measure indoctrination strength.

Some autocracies can focus their efforts on building essential skills (e.g. emphasizing math and science subjects in school) over political literacy and critical thinking (e.g. emphasizing humanities and social science subjects) (Guevara, Paglayan and Perez Navarro, 2018; Kamens and Benavot, 1991; Sanborn and Thyne, 2014). States can "produce extremely well-schooled, capable people without the presumption that they be active members of the political system" (Kamens and Benavot, 1991, 151). Guevara, Paglayan and Perez Navarro (2018, 20-1) argue that teaching skills and teaching values can serve the same goal of indoctrination: to homogenize the masses, in the late 19th, a more conservative regime in Chile focused on religious and moral education, while the regime in Argentina promoted math and science.

In addition to the broad curriculum structure, actual education content is another dimension important for the measurement of indoctrination. Patriotism in education content can be explicitly mapped to our concept of model citizenship. Civic education in autocracies is often framed around patriotic narratives used by the regime to legitimize its rule (Koesel, 2020; Zajda, 1980; Rapoport, 2009).[16] Authoritarian patriotism in education is focused on teaching "non-questioning loyalty" (Westheimer, 2006, 3). Hence, textbooks in civics and social studies in autocracies are less likely to discuss individual agency (empowered and active citizens as opposed to obedient subjects) (Lerch et al., 2017) or highlight the importance of diversity and pluralism (Bromley, 2014).

---

[16]However, Lerch, Russell and Ramirez (2017, 153) find that nationalistic narratives (broadly defined as the attributes of the nation-state model) in school textbooks persist both in autocracies and democracies and despite economic, political and social globalization processes.

In education, he/she who teaches or indoctrinates others exercises a power that is often considered to be legitimate (Momanu, 2012). The instructional agents have been formally charged with the responsibility of indoctrinating. Teacher agency in the classroom is key to bridging the gap between the regime's intent to indoctrinate and the effectiveness of indoctrination: are teachers allowed to deviate from the official curriculum and/or criticize the regime without consequences?

Furthermore, young people can be indoctrinated by the regime outside the classroom. For example, in the USSR, the Pioneer organization, with its symbols and traditions, was an integral part of political socialization in education, where "millions of children undergo ideological, political, and moral upbringing: they learn to live, work, and fight as the great Lenin bequeathed" (Brezhnev's address in 1976, as cited in Zajda, 1980, 154–5). Moreover, Hitler believed that political socialization of the young should be extended beyond schools (Pine, 2010, 95). Issued in 1936, the law on the Hitler Youth (*Hitlerjugend*) stated that "[all] German young people, apart from being educated at home and at school, will be educated in the Hitler Youth physically, intellectually, and morally in the spirit of National Socialism to serve the nation and the community", with the goal to educate the young boys in "love of the country" (Pine, 2010, 100-1).

Although this project focuses on the intent to indoctrinate and not the effectiveness of indoctrination, Cantoni et al. (2017) illustrate the strength of school indoctrination by studying the effects of introducing new pro-regime contents in the curriculum in China. Their results show that the curriculum reform led to higher trust in government officials and re-alignment of views on democracy with those promoted by the authorities.

5.2 Political communication

Modern-day autocrats increasingly rely on information manipulation to survive in office (Guriev and Treisman, 2019, 2020*b*). Indoctrination through the education system is sometimes conceptualized as another dimension of propaganda (Brandenberger, 2012; Testa, 2018; Wojdon, 2018). Autocrats' official political discourse can simulate pluralism to mimic the discourse of democratic leaders

(Guriev and Treisman, 2019; Maerz, 2019). However, Maerz (2020, 532) find that in 1999–2019 the most common topic in autocrats' political communication is nationalism and national pride, with the second most common topic being focused on religion. Democratic leaders in their official rhetoric appeal to the topic of collective memory.

The regime's intention to indoctrinate can encompass various channels, not just the media but also arts and culture (Kenez, 1985; Belodubrovskaya, 2017). The regime can actively foster pluralism, by allowing media and artistic freedom or they can curtail these freedoms restricting political communication to propagandize the regime doctrine and censoring any diverging voices. Political communication is thought to provide citizens with (biased or unbiased) information about the political regime, national and international affairs, policies and elite behavior, which forms the basis of citizens' capacity to critically (uncritically) challenge (accept) the regime.

Propaganda and censorship were frequently used by the regimes of the past (Brandenberger, 2012; Adena et al., 2015). State-controlled media continue to serve as a tool of information control, however, with the rise of the internet and social media (and the loss of monopoly over information dissemination), autocrats' strategies now range from internet shutdowns (Vargas-Leon, 2016) to strategic censorship (Roberts, 2018, 2020; King, Pan and Roberts, 2013) and distraction (Stukal et al., 2019; King, Pan and Roberts, 2017; Sobolev, 2019). Furthermore, censorship of the arts, such as in films, can be used to impact popular support for the regime (Esberg, 2020).

6 Why is indoctrination particularly important for the study of autocracies?

Indoctrination is an understudied factor in the study of autocracies. There are at least four potential research themes related to indoctrination. Firstly, indoctrination is possibly a key factor that affects the survival of authoritarian regimes. We know relatively little about the effectiveness of indoctrination as a whole and its different channels in stabilizing the power of the regime. Secondly,

the study of civil society and normal citizens in autocracies is very limited. The focus of research on autocracies focuses on institutions and political elites. Indoctrination is clearly targeted towards the population as a whole. However, we know very little whether indoctrination does successfully inculcate a certain doctrine in the mass public. Thirdly, indoctrination is done through institutional channels that have partly been overlooked in the study of dictatorships, most importantly the education system.

Fourthly, beyond the effects of indoctrination on authoritarian regimes itself, there could potentially be important legacy effects on democracies. Indoctrination is organized socialization through which process a subject irreversibly learns an attachment (Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Salter, 1998, 422). We know from social psychology that basic values and identities of a person are relatively stable and that these fundamental values are acquired to a large extent already in early adulthood (Krosnick and Alwin, 1989; Sears and Funk, 1999). Hence, people who had been socialized for decades in paternalistic and authoritarian societies are hence expected to remain influenced by the doctrine of past regimes and become nostalgic of these times (Bernhard and Karakoç, 2007; Neundorf, 2010; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2011). This process could potentially undermine the democratization process.

6.1 Connection to public goods provision

Public good provision is distinct from indoctrination. It is also related to the legitimacy of the regime, in particular to output legitimacy more and more used by autocracies. One key difference to indoctrination is that the goal of public good provision is specific system support rather than diffuse system support (Easton, 1965). Public goods provision and indoctrination go hand in hand and help cement indoctrination.

More specifically, we need to distinguish between actual tangible public goods (general and targeted) and the official information disseminated by the regime on the general public good provision and economic performance of the regime. The latter will most certainly be part of indoctrination

– part of the communist propaganda was comparing living standards and workers' rights under communist regimes to the West with conclusions favoring the communist regimes. The former aspect of public goods provision, that is what people actually get, is valuable to the regime in so far as it validates the outcomes promised through the regimes "mission." If the regime can be seen to deliver, then that is a bonus for the regime, but delivery on promises is still distinct from the making people believe in the aims of the regime and the value of the promise to deliver on those aims. A skillful regime can find ways to blame external and internal enemies for failure to make timely delivery on the promises. Finally, regimes whose guiding idea is not as closely related to the economy, public goods provision may be less important, so delivering on promises might be related to nation-building for example.

6.2   Conceptual connection to repression

Repression is a separate concept from indoctrination, but these two concepts are related. One for the primary reasons why repression appears to be linked to indoctrination is that the regimes with the greatest capacity for repression often will also have great capacities for indoctrination. Fear could be seen as a tool of state indoctrination (Feher and Heller, 1981), as it can be used as a weapon to destroy existing attachments as a prelude to re-molding human consciousness to form new individuals (Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Salter, 1998, 432). Most importantly, authoritarian regimes use repression to enforce an uncritical following of the regime's doctrine.

However, the two "tools of compliance" are quite distinct. Firstly, going back to the nature of the regimes and Linz's distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, he makes the point that authoritarian regimes, as he defines them, focus very much on de-mobilization of the population (i.e. through repression of various social organizations) – hence here we already see how a regime type that does not necessarily engage much in indoctrination will use repression. Next, the targets of repression and indoctrination will be different. Some would argue that hard repression will be most useful against people who are resistant to indoctrination and co-optation (including through the means of rents and targeted public goods provision i.e. buying off "careerists" by offering them

good jobs and positions) ([Backes and Kailitz, 2015](#)). Finally, the outcome product of repression will be distinct from indoctrination: particularly hard repression creates a "negative" outcome that is the absence of opposition and behaviors that can undermine the regime. Of course, one could counter that the general threat of repression (both hard and soft) helps "nudge" people towards accepting co-optation and possibly indoctrination.

7 Measuring regime indoctrination

No measures for indoctrination exist so far. To date, global comparative data relating to education and political communication are very limited. For example, current global measures on education are limited to average years of education, enrolment rates, literacy, and inequality in education access. No comparative data exists on the capacity and intent of regimes to use education for indoctrination purposes. Based on our theory and key concepts, we are developing comparative measures of the two key dimensions of regime indoctrination: content and strength. In this section, we first give a short overview of the data format and data collection, which will commence in January 2022. Secondly, we provide an overview of the indicators that will be collected in a newly implemented expert survey.

7.1 A new global historical dataset

The newly created country-year data will be collected through a mix of expert coding and factual information. Wherever possible we will rely on official and archival data, for example about the education systems and policies, such as the centralization of education, curriculum and content development. Here we are further collaborating with another project led by Carl Henrik Knutsen who will create these factual data. However, other dimensions of indoctrination are not directly measurable through official sources. In these cases, we will develop proxy measures that can be collected using experts who, for example, will evaluate the level of indoctrination in school textbooks

or politicization of the hiring and firing of teachers. Expert coding requires in-depth case knowledge and evaluative judgment (Marquardt and Pemstein, 2018).

To achieve the highest possible quality of expert coding, we are collaborating with and draw from the expertise of the influential Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute at the University of Gothenburg. Building on the V-Dem Institute's established research infrastructure and methodology, we will create new historical data for up to 150 countries extending back to 1945. To create the expert-coded data we will rely on multiple (5-6 per country), independent coders for each (nonfactual) question. Based on a set of 27 questions that tap into very specific aspects of indoctrination through the education system as well as the media, we will create latent indices for our key indoctrination dimensions - content and strength, using a Bayesian measurement model, which estimates confidence bounds for all point estimates associated with non-factual questions. All data will be freely available for download and online analysis, including original coder-level judgments (Coppedge et al., 2020; Pemstein et al., 2020).

7.2   Indicators of regime indoctrination

As outlined above, we think of indoctrination firstly as different channels: 1) education and 2) political communication. Secondly, we distinguish two key dimensions of indoctrination in terms of 1) content and 2) strength. To measure these concepts, we plan to combine existing data (mainly from V-Dem) with new items, which will be added to a new expert survey. We summarize our outline – from abstract concepts to measurement – as a scheme in Figure 8 below. In the next section as well as in Appendix A, we list some examples on how the tools and dimensions of indoctrination are measured.

Figure 8: Map of our conceptual outline: from abstract concepts to concrete measures
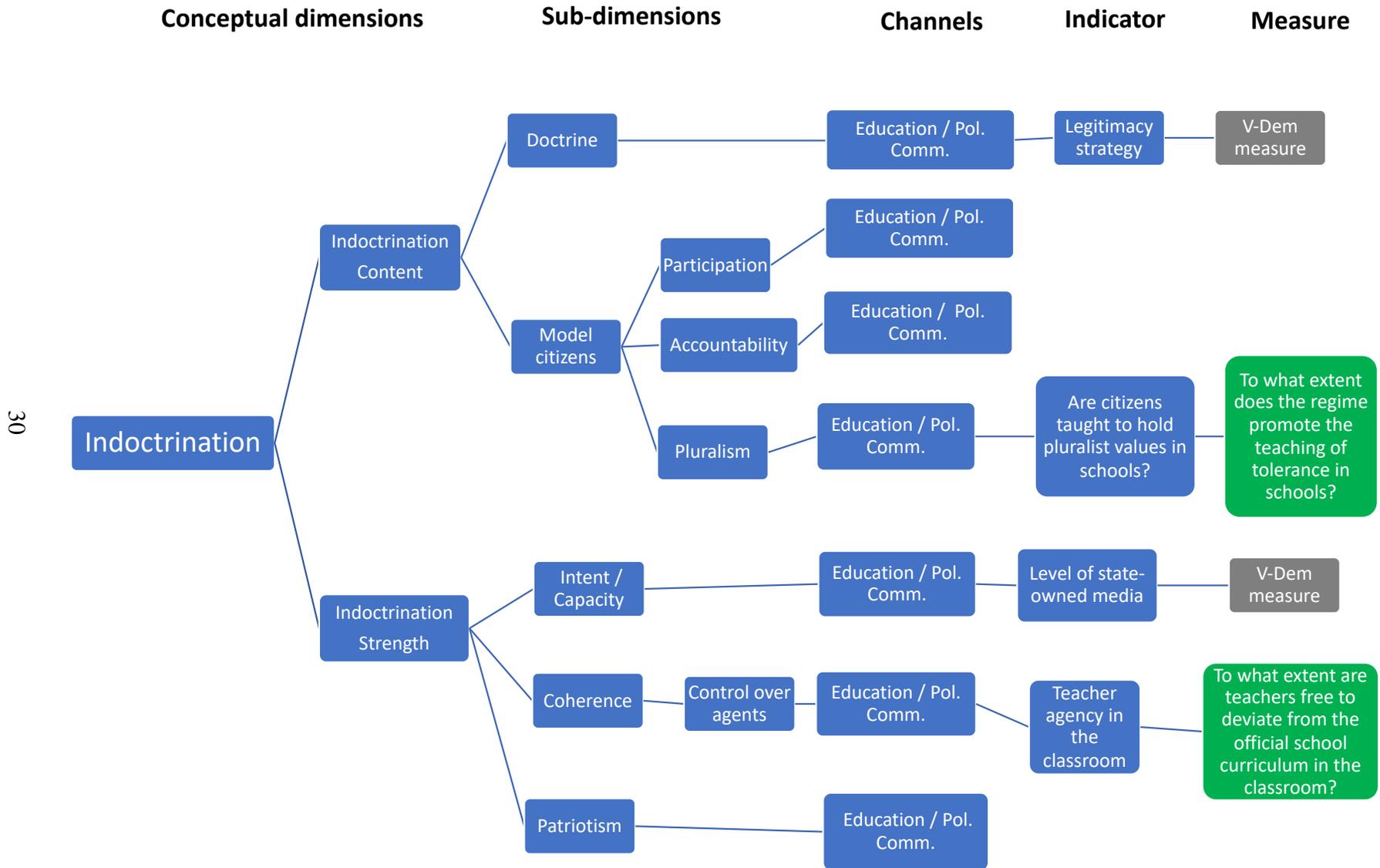
8 Preliminary findings: Pilot results

To test the validity of our draft expert survey, we piloted 26 questions focusing on indoctrination via education in April/May 2021. We selected six countries to represent different types of countries - ranging from established democracies to closed autocracies as well as covering different levels of economic development to capture varying levels of state capacity, which we expect to affect indoctrination capacity. The cases selected are as follows: Chile, China, Russia, Tanzania, Turkey, and the US. For each country we recruited on average two education experts who coded each question for seven years in 20 years intervals between 1900 to 2020.[17] Based on this pilot study, we selected the following indicators to measure our two main dimensions of indoctrination.[18] All indicators range from 0 to 1. To create the indices we used simple averages across all indicators.[19]

Indoctrination Content (0=authoritarian; 1=democratic)

- Curriculum incorporate topics related to domestic civic and political rights

- Students allowed to question what they are taught

- Mode of teaching promotes critical thinking

Indoctrination Strength (0=low; 1=high)

- Extent of teaching political education in primary/secondary schools.

- Promotion of a specific societal model/ideology

- School textbooks approved by a national authority

- Official school curriculum set by a national authority

- Monitoring the quality of teaching at schools

- Teacher unions independent from political authorities

- Politically motivated hiring & firing of teachers

- Teacher agency to deviate from official curriculum

- Patriotic symbols displayed in schools

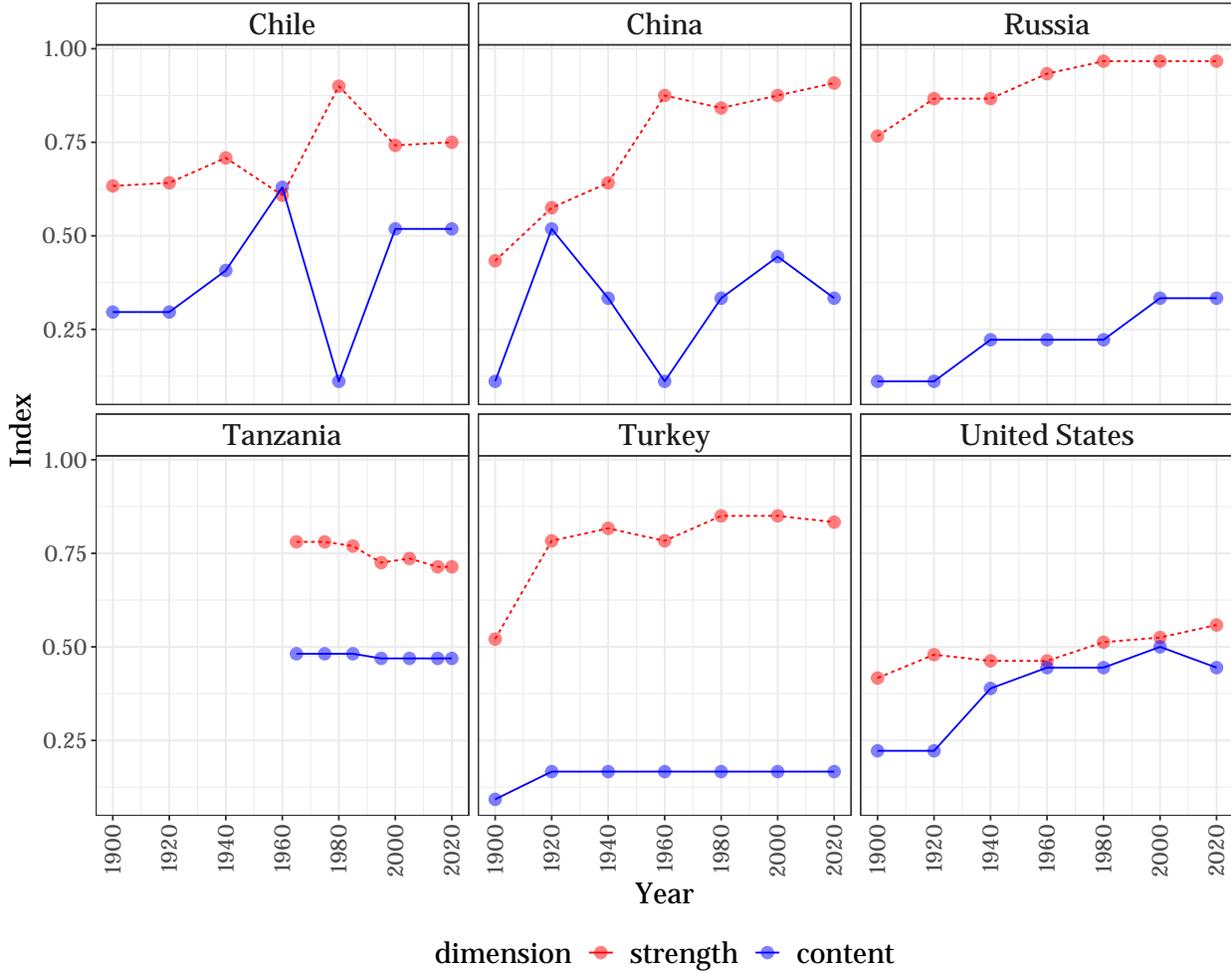Figure 9: Comparing indoctrination dimensions across pilot cases

Figure 9 displays the preliminary results of the pilot study, focusing on the over-time development of the two indoctrination dimensions for our six pilot cases. The Figure shows that our indices capture some expected patterns. For example, indoctrination strength in the Soviet Union (since 1920) and today's Russia are particularly high. Over time, the content of indoctrination became slightly less authoritarian, especially since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Our findings also pick-up expected patterns in China. Indoctrination was strongest and most authoritarian during the

---

[17]For our pilot in Tanzania, we selected seven years between 1965 and 2020.

[18]The exact question wording of each indicator is listed in Appendix A.

[19]In the final measures, we will use a Bayesian IRT measurement model. However, in the pilot data, we did not have enough data to apply such a model.

Figure 10: Indoctrination versus repression in China
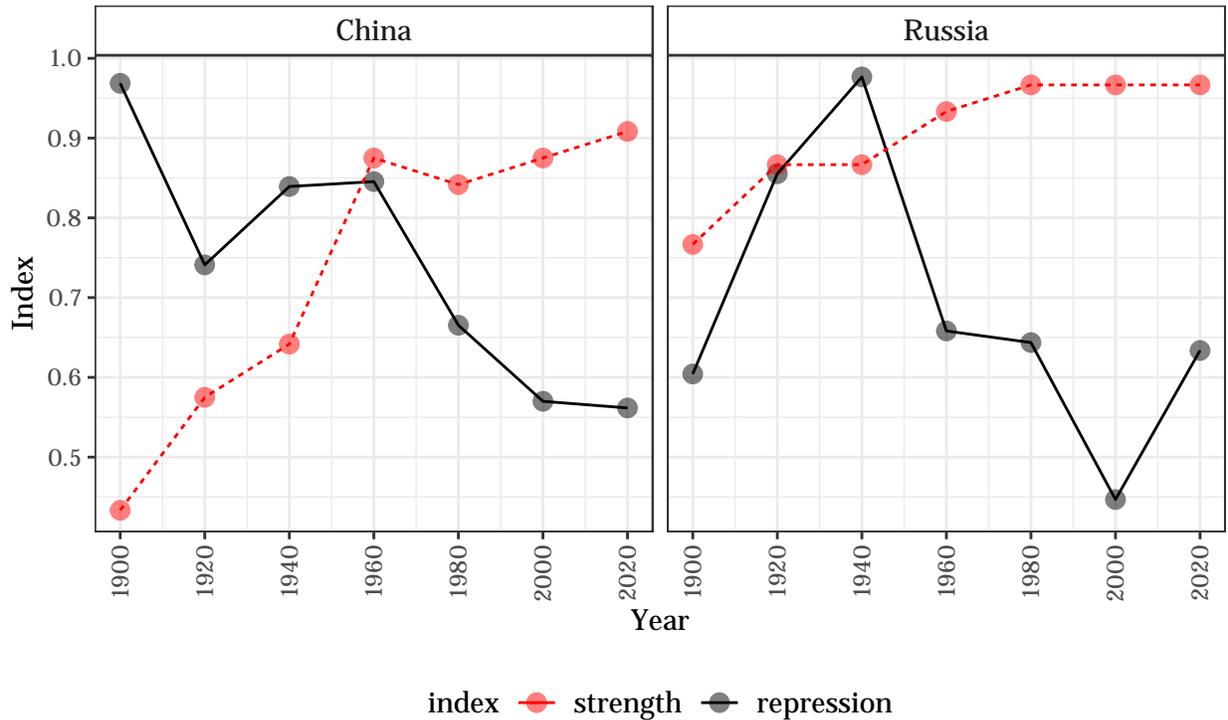
Cultural Revolution during the 1960s. Despite liberalizing slightly until about 2000, indoctrination efforts remain very high in China today and have even slightly increased in the past 40 years.

Our measures also pick-up the changes in indoctrination during the Pinochet directorship in Chile, when the content became more authoritarian and the level of indoctrination increased. However, Figure 9 also reveals some issues with our pilot data. For example, the measure of indoctrination content in the US is much lower than expected. As we use average scores of indicators instead of a more sophisticated method usually used by the V-Dem team, for example, using vignettes to deal with differential item functioning (DIF), the level differences between countries need to be interpreted cautiously.

Another crucial question for our research is whether indeed indoctrination can be used as an alternative tool to manage the masses. To explore this question, we turn in more detail to our China and Russia data. Figure 10 compares our measures of indoctrination to the level of repression,

using V-Dem's physical integrity index (*v2x_clphy*, Coppedge et al. 2020), whereas higher values indicate more repression. As expected, in more recent years, the level of repression decreased in both countries, while simultaneously the strength of indoctrination increased. These preliminary findings provide first evidence of our expected relationship between repression and indoctrination and the changing nature of dictatorships.

References

Adena, Maja, Ruben Enikolopov, Maria Petrova, Veronica Santarosa and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya. 2015. "Radio and the Rise of The Nazis in Prewar Germany." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 130(4):1885–1939.

Alesina, Alberto, Paola Giuliano and Bryony Reich. 2018. "Nation-Building and Education." Last accessed Feb 1, 2021.

URL: *https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S0tSRSR4MeaDiy02hbRgnZUUHk9CVowV/view*

Almond, Gabriel A. and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton University Press.

Arendt, Hannah. 1966. *The Origins of Totalitarianism [1951] 10th ed*. Meridian.

Backes, Uwe and Steffen Kailitz. 2015. *Ideocracies in Comparison: Legitimation – Cooptation – Repression*. Abingdon/New York: Routledge.

Bandiera, Oriana, Myra Mohnen, Imran Rasul and Martina Viarengo. 2018. "Nation-building Through Compulsory Schooling during the Age of Mass Migration." *The Economic Journal* 129(617):62–109.

Belodubrovskaya, Maria. 2017. *Not According to Plan: Filmmaking under Stalin*. Cornell University Press.

Ben-Porath, Sigal. 2007. "Civic virtue out of necessity: Patriotism and democratic education." *Theory and Research in Education* 5(1):41–59.

Benavot, Aaron. 2004. A Global study of intended instructional time and official school curricula, 1980-2000. Education for all global monitoring report UNESCO International Bureau of Education.

Bermeo, Nancy. 2003. *Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times: The Citizenry and the Breakdown of Democracy*. Princeton University Press.

Bernhard, Michael and Ekrem Karakoç. 2007. "Civil Society and the Legacies of Dictatorship." *World Politics* 59(4):539–567.

Booth, John A. and Mitchell A. Seligson. 2009. *The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Political Support and Democracy in Eight Nations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourne, Angela. 2019. *Democratic Dilemmas: Why democracies ban political parties*. Routledge.

Brandenberger, David. 2012. *Propaganda state in crisis: Soviet ideology, indoctrination, and terror under Stalin, 1927-1941*. Yale University Press.

Bromley, Patricia. 2014. "Legitimacy and the Contingent Diffusion of World Culture: Diversity and Human Rights in Social Science Textbooks, Divergent Cross-national Patterns (1970–2008)." *The Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers canadiens de sociologie* 39(1):1–44.

Brownlee, Jason. 2007. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. Cambridge University Press.

Cantoni, Davide, Yuyu Chen, David Y. Yang, Noam Yuchtman and Y. Jane Zhang. 2017. "Curriculum and Ideology." *Journal of Political Economy* 125(2):338–392.

Claassen, Christopher. 2020. "In the Mood for Democracy? Democratic Support as Thermostatic Opinion." *American Political Science Review* 114(1):36–53.

Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I. Lindberg, Jan Teorell, David Altman, Michael Bernhard, M. Steven Fish, Adam Glynn, Allen Hicken, Anna Luhrmann, Kyle L. Marquardt, Kelly McMann, Pamela Paxton, Daniel Pemstein, Brigitte Seim, Rachel Sigman, Svend-Erik Skaaning, Jeffrey Staton, Steven Wilson, Agnes Cornell, Nazifa Alizada, Lisa Gastaldi, Haakon Gjerløw, Garry Hindle, Nina Ilchenko, Laura Maxwell, Valeriya Mechkova, Juraj Medzihorsky, Johannes von Römer, Aksel Sundström, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi ting Wang, Tore Wig and Daniel Ziblatt. 2020. "V-Dem [Country–Year/Country–Date] Dataset v10. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project.".

Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I. Lindberg, Jan Teorell, David Altman, Michael Bernhard, M. Steven Fish, Adam Glynn, Allen Hicken, Anna Lührmann, Kyle L. Marquardt, Kelly McMann, Pamela Paxton, Daniel Pemstein, Brigitte Seim, Svend-Erik Skaaning Rachel Sigman, Jeffrey Staton, Agnes Cornell, Lisa Gastaldi, Haakon Gjerløw, Valeriya Mechkova, Johannes von Römer, Aksel Sundtröm, Eitan Tzelgov, Luca Uberti, Yi ting Wang, Tore Wig and Daniel Ziblatt. 2020. "V-Dem Codebook v10 Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project.".

Dahl, Robert A. 1977. "On Removing Certain Impediments to Democracy in the United States." *Political Science Quarterly* 92(1):1–20.

Dewey, John. 1916. *Democracy and Education : An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. The Floating Press.

Diamond, Larry. 1999. *Developing democracy: Toward consolidation*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Diamond, Larry. 2008. *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies Throughout the World*. New York: Henry Holt.

Dinas, Elias and Ksenia Northmore-Ball. 2020. "The Ideological Shadow of Authoritarianism." *Comparative Political Studies* 53(12):1957–1991.

Distelhorst, Greg and Diana Fu. 2019. "Performing Authoritarian Citizenship: Public Transcripts in China." *Perspectives on Politics* 17(1):106–121.

Domke, J. 2011. "Education, Fascism, and the Catholic Church in Franco's Spain.". Dissertation. Loyola University Chicago.

Easton, David. 1965. *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*. New York/ London/ Sydney: John Wiley & Sons.

Easton, David. 1975. "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support." *British Journal of Political Science* 5(4):435–457.

Egorov, Georgy and Konstantin Sonin. 2020. The Political Economics of Non-democracy. Working Paper 27949 National Bureau of Economic Research.

Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Irenäus and Frank-Kemp Salter. 1998. *Indoctrinability, ideology, and warfare: Evolutionary perspectives*. Berghahn Books.

Esberg, Jane. 2020. "Censorship as Reward: Evidence from Pop Culture Censorship in Chile." *American Political Science Review* 114(3):821–836.

Feher, Ferenc and Agnes Heller. 1981. "The Fear of Power. A Contribution to the Genesis and Morphology of Eurocommunism." *Thesis Eleven* 2(1):127–161.

Finkel, Steven E. and Amy Erica Smith. 2011. "Civic Education, Political Discussion, and the Social Transmission of Democratic Knowledge and Values in a New Democracy: Kenya 2002." *American Journal of Political Science* 55(2):417–435.

Friedrich, Carl J. and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski. 1956. *Totalitarian dictatorship and autocracy*. Praeger.

Frye, Timothy, Scott Gehlbach, Kyle L Marquardt and Ora John Reuter. 2017. "Is Putin's popularity real?" *Post-Soviet Affairs* 33(1):1–15.

Gandhi, Jennifer and Ellen Lust-Okar. 2009. "Elections Under Authoritarianism." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12(1):403–422.

Gatchel, Richard H. 1959. "Evolution of Concepts of Indoctrination in American Education." *The Educational Forum* 23(3):303–309.

Geddes, Barbara. 1999. "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2(1):115–144.

Gehlbach, Scott. 2018. Chapter 2: What is next for the study of non-democracy? In *A Research Agenda for New Institutional Economics*, ed. Claude Menard and Mary M. Shirley. Elgar Research Agendas pp. 20–26.

Guevara, Jennifer L., Agustina S. Paglayan and Camila Perez Navarro. 2018. "The Political Economy of National School Curricula: Evidence from Argentina and Chile, 1860-1970." Mimeo.

Guriev, Sergei and Daniel Treisman. 2019. "Informational Autocrats." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 33(4):100–127.

Guriev, Sergei and Daniel Treisman. 2020*a*. "The popularity of authoritarian leaders: A cross-national investigation." *World Politics* 72(4):601–638.

Guriev, Sergei and Daniel Treisman. 2020*b*. "A theory of informational autocracy." *Journal of Public Economics* 186:104158.

Kamens, David H. and Aaron Benavot. 1991. "Elite Knowledge for the Masses: The Origins and Spread of Mathematics and Science Education in National Curricula." *American Journal of Education* 99(2):137–180.

Kenez, Peter. 1985. *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1929.* Cambridge University Press.

King, Gary, Jennifer Pan and Margaret E. Roberts. 2013. "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression." *American Political Science Review* 107(2):326–343.

King, Gary, Jennifer Pan and Margaret E. Roberts. 2017. "How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, Not Engaged Argument." *American Political Science Review* 111(3):484–501.

Koesel, Karrie. 2020. Legitimacy, Resilience, and Political Education in Russia and China. In *Citizens and the State in Authoritarian Regimes: Comparing China and Russia*, ed. Karrie Koesel, Valerie Bunce and Jessica Weiss. Oxford University Press pp. 250–278.

Krosnick, Jon A and Duane F. Alwin. 1989. "Aging and susceptibility to attitude change." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 57(3):416–425.

Lee, Stephen J. 2010. Indoctrination and Propaganda. In *Hitler and Nazi Germany*. Taylor & Francis Group pp. 52–71.

Leming, James S., Lucien Ellington and Mark Schug. 2006. "The state of social studies: a national random survey of elementary and middle school social studies teachers." *Social Education* 70(5):322–327.

Lerch, Julia C., S. Garnett Russell and Francisco O. Ramirez. 2017. "Wither the Nation-State? A Comparative Analysis of Nationalism in Textbooks." *Social Forces* 96(1):153–180.

Lerch, Julia, Patricia Bromley, Francisco O Ramirez and John W Meyer. 2017. "The rise of individual agency in conceptions of society: Textbooks worldwide, 1950–2011." *International Sociology* 32(1):38–60.

Linz, Juan J. and Alfred Stepan. 1996. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *The American Political Science Review* 53(1):69–105.

Lott, Jr., John R. 1999. "Public Schooling, Indoctrination, and Totalitarianism." *Journal of Political Economy* 107(S6):S127–S157.

Lukes, Steven. 1974. *Power: A radical view*. London: Macmillan.

Lührmann, Anna, Kyle L. Marquardt and Valeriya Mechkova. 2020. "Constraining Governments: New Indices of Vertical, Horizontal, and Diagonal Accountability." *American Political Science Review* 114(3):811–820.

Maerz, Seraphine F. 2019. "Simulating pluralism: the language of democracy in hegemonic authoritarianism." *Political Research Exchange* 1(1):1–23.

Maerz, Seraphine F. 2020. "The Many Faces of Authoritarian Persistence: A Set-Theory Perspective on the Survival Strategies of Authoritarian Regimes." *Government and Opposition* 55(1):64–87.

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. "Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico.".

Marquardt, Kyle L. and Daniel Pemstein. 2018. "IRT Models for Expert-Coded Panel Data." *Political Analysis* 26(4):431–456.

Marshall, T.H. 2009. Citizenship and Social Class. In *Inequality and Society (first printed in 1950)*, ed. Jeff Manza and Michael Sauder. W.W. Norton and Co. First published in 1950.

Momanu, M. 2012. "The pedagogical dimension of indoctrination: Criticism of indoctrination and the constructivism in education." *META: Research in Hermeneutıcs, Phenomenology, And Practical Phılosophy* pp. 88–105.

Moore, Willis. 1966. "Indoctrination as a normative conception." *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 4(4):396–403.

Neundorf, Anja. 2010. "Democracy in Transition: A Micro perspective on System Change in Post-Socialist Societies." *The Journal of Politics* 72(4):1096–1108.

Neundorf, Anja, Johannes Gerschewski and Roman-Gabriel Olar. 2020. "How Do Inclusionary and Exclusionary Autocracies Affect Ordinary People?" *Comparative Political Studies* 53(12):1890–1925.

Norris, Pippa. 2011. *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited*. Cambridge University Press.

Paglayan, Agustina S. 2020*a*. "Civil Conflict, State Consolidation, and the Spread of Mass Education." Mimeo.

Paglayan, Agustina S. 2020*b*. "The Non-Democratic Roots of Mass Education: Evidence from 200 Years." *American Political Science Review* p. 1–20.

Pemstein, Daniel, Kyle L. Marquardt, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi ting Wang, Juraj Medzihorsky, Joshua Krusell, Farhad Miri and Johannes von Römer. 2020. "The V-Dem Measurement Model: Latent Variable Analysis for Cross-National and Cross-Temporal Expert-Coded Data.". V-Dem Working Paper No. 21. 5th edition.

Pine, Lisa. 2010. *Education in Nazi Germany*. Berg: Oxford, New York.

Pittenger, Benjamin Floyd. 1941. *Indoctrination for American Democracy*. The Macmillan company.

Pop-Eleches, Grigore and Joshua A. Tucker. 2011. "Communism's Shadow: Postcommunist Legacies, Values, and Behavior." *Comparative Politics* 43(4):379–408.

Pop-Eleches, Grigore and Joshua A. Tucker. 2017. *Communism's Shadow: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Political Attitudes*. Princeton University Press.

Puolimatka, Tapio. 1996. "The Concept of Indoctrination." *Philosophia Reformata* 61(2):109–134.

Rapoport, Anatoli. 2009. "Patriotic Education in Russia: Stylistic Move or a Sign of Substantive Counter-Reform?" *The Educational Forum* 73(2):141–152.

Raywid, Mary Anne. 1980. "The Discovery and Rejection of Indoctrination." *Educational Theory* 30(1):1–10.

Roberts, Margaret E. 2018. *Censored: Distraction and Diversion Inside China's Great Firewall*. Princeton University Press.

Roberts, Margaret E. 2020. "Resilience to Online Censorship." *Annual Review of Political Science* 23(1):401–419.

Robinson, Darrel and Marcus Tannenberg. 2019. "Self-censorship of regime support in authoritarian states: Evidence from list experiments in China." *Research & Politics* 6(3):1–9.

Ross, Michael L. 2015. "What Have We Learned about the Resource Curse?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 18(1):239–259.

Sanborn, Howard and Clayton L. Thyne. 2014. "Learning Democracy: Education and the Fall of Authoritarian Regimes." *British Journal of Political Science* 44(4):773–797.

Schedler, Andreas. 2013. "The Politics of Uncertainty: Sustaining and Subverting Electoral Authoritarianism.".

Sears, Alan and Andrew Hughes. 2006. "Citizenship: Education or indoctrination. Citizenship and Teacher Education." 2(1):3–17.

Sears, David O. and Carolyn L. Funk. 1999. "Evidence of the Long-Term Persistence of Adults' Political Predispositions." *The Journal of Politics* 61(1):1–28.

Sobolev, Anton. 2019. "Dictators in the Spotlight: What They Do When They Cannot Do Business as Usual.".
URL: *escholarship.org/uc/item/8810356j*

Stukal, Denis, Sergey Sanovich, Joshua A. Tucker and Richard Bonneau. 2019. "For Whom the Bot Tolls: A Neural Networks Approach to Measuring Political Orientation of Twitter Bots in Russia." *SAGE Open* 9(2):1–16.

Svolik, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics Cambridge University Press.

Testa, Patrick A. 2018. "Education and propaganda: Tradeoffs to public education provision in nondemocracies." *Journal of Public Economics* 160:66 – 81.

Vargas-Leon, Patricia. 2016. Tracking Internet Shutdown Practices: Democracies and Hybrid Regimes. In *The Turn to Infrastructure in Internet Governance*, ed. Francesca Musiani, Derrick L. Cogburn, Laura DeNardis and Nanette S. Levinson. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US pp. 167–188.

Voigtländer, Nico and Hans-Joachim Voth. 2015. "Nazi indoctrination and anti-Semitic beliefs in Germany." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112(26):7931–7936.

von Soest, Christian and Julia Grauvogel. 2017. "Identity, procedures and performance: how authoritarian regimes legitimize their rule." *Contemporary Politics* 23(3):287–305.

Westheimer, Joel. 2006. "Politics and Patriotism in Education." *Phi Delta Kappan* 87(8):608–620.

Westheimer, Joel. 2015. *Educating Our Children for the Common Good*. Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

Westheimer, Joel and Joseph Kahne. 2003. "Teaching justice: indoctrination, neutrality, and the need for alternatives." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association at Chicago.

Westheimer, Joel and Joseph Kahne. 2004. "What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy." *American Educational Research Journal* 41(2):237–269.

Wojdon, Joanna. 2018. *Textbooks as Propaganda: Poland under Communist Rule, 1944-1989*. Routledge.

Woods, Ronald and Robin Barrow. 2006. *Indoctrination*. Taylor & Francis Group pp. 71–83.

Zajda, Joseph I. 1980. *Education in the USSR*. Pergamon International Library of Science, Technology, Engineering and Social Studies Pergamon.

A   Question wording of indicators used in pilot study to create indoctrination indices

Indoctrination Strength

- To what extent does the official curriculum for primary/secondary education incorporate topics related to political education?

- To what extent does the official curriculum promote a specific societal model over others in the context of political education?

- What proportion of school textbooks is approved centrally by a national authority?

- To what extent is the official school curriculum set by a national authority?

- To what extent can relevant authorities monitor the quality of teaching at schools?

- To what extent are officially recognised teacher unions independent from political authorities?

- To what extent are hiring decisions for teachers based on their political views and/or behaviour and/or moral character?

- How likely is it that teachers will be fired if they were to publicly express political views that contradict the dominant political order?

- To what extent are social science and humanities teachers free to deviate from the content of the official curriculum in the classroom?

- To what extent are patriotic symbols displayed in schools?

Indoctrination Content

- To what extent does the official curriculum in social sciences and humanities incorporate topics related to domestic civic and political rights?

- To what extent are students allowed to question what they are taught in social science and humanities classes?

- To what extent does the mode of teaching in social sciences and humanities promote critical thinking?