Toward a Theory of Authoritarian Extraterritorial Image Management

Alexander Dukalskis,

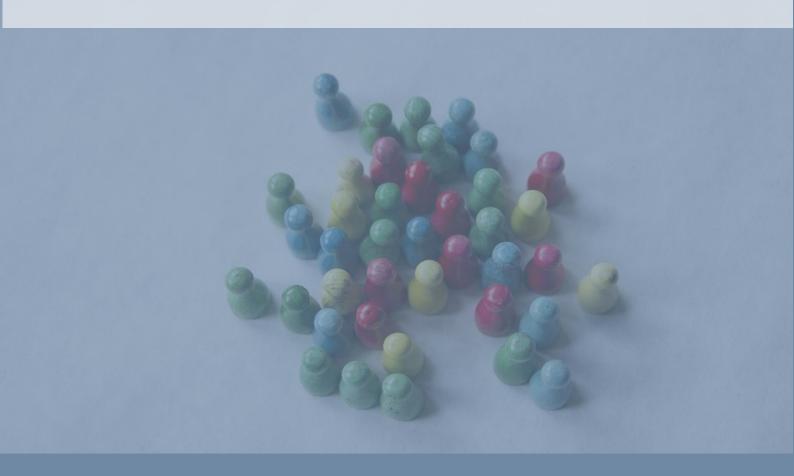School of Politics & International Relations, UCD

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Abstract
Authoritarian states externalize their image management techniques for foreign publics in order to bolster the status of the state abroad and mitigate criticisms of it in international discourse. This can take many forms, ranging from innocuous efforts like hosting a sporting event to more insidious tactics like threatening a critical dissident. This paper builds a theoretical framework to understand the dynamics of authoritarian states externalizing their image management. To do so it must answer four questions. First, what is authoritarian image management and what kind of tactics comprise it? To address this question, the paper draws on scholarship about "authoritarian practices" and divides tactics into those that consist of promoting content that is favorable to the government and those that aim to eradicate or expunge unfavorable ideas disseminated by other actors. Second, does it matter that autocracies do this? The paper posits that scholarship on authoritarian legitimation and on autocracy promotion reveals that external image management can have causal effects. Third, what motivates autocracies to externalize image management? The paper argues that authoritarian states do so for both internal security (to bolster their domestic rule) and external security (to help build a friendlier international environment for their policies). All states attempt to manage their image abroad to some degree, but authoritarian states in the post-Cold War era have special incentives to do so given the ideological predominance of democracy as an international norm. Fourth and finally, how do external image management strategies vary between autocracies? Here the paper proposes a typology of authoritarian states based on their material power and ideological orientations. The aim of this theory-building paper is to posit conceptual tools to facilitate empirical analysis of authoritarian image management.

Alexander Dukalskis is an Assistant Professor in the School of Politics & International Relations at University College Dublin. He researches and teaches on authoritarianism, human rights, and Asian politics. His work has been published or is forthcoming in several academic journals, including *Journal of Peace Research*, *Democratization*, *Government & Opposition*, and *Review of International Studies*. His first book was published in 2017 and is tilted *The Authoritarian Public Sphere: Legitimation and Autocratic Power in North Korea, Burma, and China*. He can be reached at alexander.dukalskis@ucd.ie.

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Authoritarian states promote a positive image of themselves internationally. While most of the state's rhetorical and symbolic power is directed toward its own population, efforts at external image management aim to bolster the status of the state among foreign audiences and mitigate criticisms of it in international discourse. This can take many forms, ranging from innocuous efforts like hosting a sporting event to more insidious tactics like threatening or assassinating a critical dissident. All states attempt to manage their image abroad to some degree, but authoritarian states in the post-Cold War era have special incentives to do so given the predominance of democracy as an international norm.

This paper builds a theoretical framework to understand the dynamics of authoritarian states externalizing their image management. To do so it is necessary to answer a series of questions. First, what exactly do we mean by external image management? What kind of tactics comprise externalizing image control? Here the paper draws on scholarship about "authoritarian practices" and divides tactics into "positive" and "negative" types. The former consist of content that is favorable to the government, while the latter aim to eradicate or contain unfavorable ideas disseminated by other actors. Second, does it matter that autocracies do this? To address this question, the paper discusses two strands of literature, one on authoritarian legitimation and the other on autocratic promotion, to help understand what is at stake in studying the externalization of autocratic information politics.

Third, what motivates autocracies to externalize their image management? Here concepts associated with the imposition of ideological systems is useful. States impose their ideologies on other states for both internal and external security, and while external image management is only a pale imitation of direct ideological imposition, a similar logic holds. Autocratic states externalize their image management to bolster their domestic rule and to help build a friendlier international environment for their policies. Fourth and finally, how do external image management strategies vary between states? To answer this question, the paper proposes a typology of authoritarian states based on their material power and ideological orientations. The result is a categorization of autocracies that can be used to generate expectations that can be studied empirically.

Practices of Extraterritorial Image Management

Before moving on to discuss motivations and patterns of external image management, it is necessary to first briefly establish what it is. To do so it is useful to draw on Glasius' (2018a; 2018b) concept of "authoritarian practices" and its extension "extraterritorial authoritarian practices." Glasius (2018a: 527) defines authoritarian practices as a "pattern of actions" that sabotages accountability "by disabling access to information and/or disabling voice." The extraterritorial extension of such practices includes efforts to deploy Gerschewski's (2013) "pillars" of authoritarian rule, namely legitimation, repression and co-optation, beyond the borders of the state (Glasius 2018b). In both instances, Glasius is referring to the target audience being the citizens of the state in question with their presence within the state's borders in the former case

and outside the state's borders in the latter. In the case of external legitimation, Glasius (2018b) notes the tendency for states to mobilize positive sentiment from citizens abroad and target perceived traitorous citizens abroad.

This paper understands authoritarian external image management as comprising efforts by the state or its proxies to protect or enhance the legitimacy of the state's political system outside its borders. Taking inspiration from Glasius' framework but relaxing its assumption that the target of extraterritorial legitimation practices are necessarily the state's own citizens or exiles, we can elaborate two dimensions of such practices. Mirroring what authoritarian regimes do domestically one can distinguish between "positive" and "negative" tactics when it comes to external image management (Dukalskis 2017). Positive efforts include the dissemination of messages, symbols, arguments, stories, and so on. The general idea is to actively persuade listeners of the veracity or appeal of the message. While positive tactics produce favorable content, negative tactics aim to eradicate or contain unfavorable ideas disseminated by other actors.

"Positive" practices encompass publicity efforts to present a favorable image of the state's political system abroad. The domestic analogue is publicity or propaganda aiming to foster positive affinity for the government among citizens. The idea is to bolster the attractiveness, appeal, and legitimacy of the autocracy so that it is highly regarded. Extending the concept extraterritorially, positive practices to craft a favorable image can include investments in international media to influence international perception of the state, large showpiece events like hosting the Olympics or World Cup, educational diplomacy, the use of symbols like animals or historical figures, the promotion of particular celebrities, and so on. These are the tools of state-driven "soft power" when the latter is strictly defined: they are tactics of attraction. Of special interest for tactics deployed by authoritarian states are those that aim to bolster the image of the political system specifically or that aim to highlight other aspects of the state in order to obscure unseemly political realities.

"Negative" practices encompass acts of extraterritorial censorship, distraction, or even repression if it is aimed at mitigating the impact of critical voices. Negative extraterritorial image management practices have their domestic analogue in the restriction of "coordination goods" such as freedom of speech (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010), the censorship of news media (Stier 2015) and the internet (King, Pan, and Roberts 2013), and the repression of groups or individuals who might challenge the state's legitimating narrative (Ghodes and Carey 2017). Beyond the state's borders, this may include pressuring international companies to censor undesirable content, attempting to manipulate scholars or journalists, directly targeting exiled dissidents, and so on (see Glasius 2018b; Lewis 2015). These tactics can be seen as a form of transnational legitimation-protecting repression because they aim to protect the status and legitimacy of the state from criticism.

Positive and negative dimensions of extraterritorial legitimation practices work together insofar as the latter shield the former from criticism. When critical ideas are sheltered or the material upon which to build critical arguments is harder to find, marshalling a critique of an autocracy is rendered more difficult. However, it can also be the case that if negative practices are exposed they can become a liability for the image

of the source state. In this case, positive practices are required to repair the damage and bolster the image of the state by justifying the negative practice and/or distracting from it. The following section will situate these basic distinctions in emerging scholarship on authoritarian legitimation and autocratic promotion. Along with the remainder of the paper, it will expand on the distinction and present theoretical work that underpins the idea of external image management.

Authoritarian Legitimation & Autocratic Promotion

Two recent strands of research about authoritarian politics have enhanced our understanding of how autocracies work and relate to how and why autocracies would externalize their image management. The first concerns how authoritarian regimes legitimate their rule domestically. The second pertains to the international dimensions of authoritarian rule. With a few notable exceptions (e.g. Holbig 2011; Hoffmann 2015; del Sordi & Dalmasso 2018), they have thus far operated mostly in isolation from one another. This section will review each briefly before making the case that when combined they can tell us why it is important that authoritarian governments externalize their image management techniques.

Authoritarian regimes maintain their power through three main pillars: repression, co-optation, and legitimation (Gerschewski 2013). Repression concerns the punishment or deterrence of behaviors deemed to be threatening to the government. Co-optation is a process of tying strategically relevant actors to the survival of the regime, often through authoritarian institutions. Until recently most modern research on authoritarian regimes focused on some combination of these dimensions (see review articles of the field, e.g., Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009; Art 2010; Magaloni and Kricheli 2010; Brancati 2014; Geddes et al. 2014a). However, recently students of authoritarian politics have begun to pay more attention to the third pillar of authoritarian rule, namely legitimation.

Legitimation pertains to the claims that a government makes to justify its rule. It can be distinguished from legitimacy insofar as the former are the efforts the government makes to secure the latter (Dukalskis and Gerschewski 2017). Legitimation claims can be made on diverse foundations, such as performance, procedure, ethnic or nationalist appeals, personalist charisma of the ruler, utopian ideologies, and so on (von Soest and Grauvogel 2017; Kailitz 2013). The aim of legitimation efforts is to secure at best active belief in the regime's ideology or at minimum passive compliance among most of the population (Gerscehwski 2013). Various aspects of autocratic legitimation have been fruitfully examined in case studies of, for example, China (Holbig 2013), North Korea (Dukalskis and Hooker 2010), Cuba (Schedler and Hoffmann 2016), Singapore (Morgenbesser 2017), Central Asian states (Schatz and Maltseva 2012; Omelicheva 2016; Maerz 2018), Arab states (Schlumberger and Bank 2001; Edel and Josua 2018; Thyen and Gerschewski 2018), as well as in quantitative cross-national studies (Kailitz and Stockemer 2017).

However, the legitimation claims of authoritarian governments are not usually allowed to compete on an even playing field with alternative ideologies. Authoritarian governments more routinely censor political information than do their democratic counterparts (Stier 2015). They also restrict rights such as freedom of association or

assembly that facilitate the ability of citizens to gather together and articulate political critiques of the government (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010; Møller and Skaaning 2013).

There is therefore a darker side to the legitimation efforts of authoritarian regimes insofar as they censor information so as to bolster the appeal of their own ideological claims (Dukalskis 2017; Roberts 2018). They also physically target journalists who may report on human rights abuses or otherwise threaten the regime (Ghodes and Carey 2017). Censorship and the targeting of journalists or vocal activists is of course not a form of legitimation. Rather, they are acts of repression (Davenport 2007a). The repression is "soft" in the case of censorship and "hard" in the case of physical intimidation or action against the carriers of threatening messages (Gerschewski 2013). Either way, these behaviors cannot be seen as legitimation, but as acts that shield the government's legitimation claims from scrutiny or criticism. We might consider such acts a form of "legitimation-protecting repression" insofar as they target carriers of information that threaten the state's dominant narrative.

Alongside advances in research on legitimation in authoritarian regimes has come a wave of scholarship on the international dimensions of authoritarian rule. Some of this research adopts a "second image reversed" perspective by examining the ways that international factors such as multilateral sanctions, cross-border linkages, and human rights norms bear on the domestic processes of authoritarian regimes (e.g. Levitsky and Way 2006; Grauvogel and von Soest 2014; Escriba-Folch and Wright 2015). However, scholars have also begun to consider state-driven initiatives by examining how, if at all, authoritarian regimes promote authoritarianism outside their borders (Tansey 2016a; for reviews, see Yakouchyk 2018; Tansey 2016b).

This "autocracy promotion" scholarship tries to understand how authoritarian powers, in particular contemporary Russia and China but also regional powers like Saudi Arabia, seek to export or bolster authoritarianism to other states (e.g. Bader et al. 2010; Burnell and Schlumberger 2010; Vanderhill 2013). Regionally this research often has a focus on post-Soviet Central Asia or other post-Soviet regions as the putative target of Russian or Chinese efforts to promote autocracy (e.g. Jackson 2010; Melnykovska et al. 2010; Bader 2017). However, scholars have also examined historical cases in interwar Europe (Weyland 2017b), Latin American dynamics relating to Chavez's Venezuela (Vanderhill 2013; de la Torre 2017), consolidated democracies such as Australia as the putative target of authoritarian soft power (Chou et al. 2017), and global cross-national studies of the influence of major authoritarian powers on the regime types of other states (Bader 2015; Brownlee 2017).

The emergent consensus of this research is that contemporary authoritarian powers generally do not intend to export their own models of autocratic governance (Way 2015; von Soest 2015; Tansey 2016b; Bank 2017; Weyland 2017a; Yakouchyk 2018). Nor, argues Brownlee (2017), do their mere presence as a model or their economic interaction with other states lead to democratic breakdown. Venezuela under Hugo Chavez and Belarus as a target of Russian autocracy promotion in the mid-1990s are partial exceptions to this consensus (on Venezuela see de la Torre 2017; on Belarus see Way 2015: 697), but most argue that today's major authoritarian powers promote their own interests abroad that sometimes coincide with establishing or bolstering

autocratic regimes but sometimes not (Ambrosio 2010; Way 2015; Bank 2017). Rather, their interests are fundamentally defensive since they do not feature universalist ideologies. As Weyland (2017a: 1245-1246) argues:

> "…non-democratic regimes that do not embody a novel ideological model are fundamentally on the defensive. Their basic, acute political interest is in self-preservation; they seek insulation from foreign pressures."

However, there are still some recent or contemporary autocracies, such as Saudi Arabia or Cuba at certain times, as well as historical cases, such as the Soviet Union, that feature active attempts to promote their political blueprint in other states. States with a specific ideological agenda to spread their regime type go beyond merely protecting their interests or bolstering allies and try to recreate the politics of other states in their own image. As Tansey (2016a: 52, emphasis in original) observed with reference to the early Soviet Union, for example, "Stalin sought to create *communist regimes* rather than simply *compliant governments*." While most autocratic promotion in today's world does not have such ideological zeal, exceptions exist, and its return in a more robust form cannot be discounted.

Insights from these two strands of research – on authoritarian legitimation and on autocratic promotion – can fruitfully speak to one another. On the one hand, scholarship on autocratic legitimation, although sometimes addressing international sources of legitimacy (e.g. von Soest and Grauvogel 2017), generally does not pay attention to how and when authoritarian states externalize their legitimation messages. On the other hand, the autocracy promotion literature focuses on processes at the elite or government-to-government level and does not typically pay sustained attention to how authoritarian states may try to make a friendlier ideational environment for themselves by externalizing their image management efforts. The two literatures suggest that (1) autocracies legitimate their rule, and (2) they are interested in how political developments beyond their borders bear on the fate of authoritarian rule. It is therefore important to understand conceptually and empirically how these two impulses interact. The next section develops theoretical tools for understanding why an authoritarian state would have an interest in externalizing its image management.

Motivations for Authoritarian External Image Management

States have manifold incentives to promote their ideologies outside their borders. In his study of forcible regime promotion over a 500-year period, Owen (2010) provides an analytical starting point with his distinction between *internal security* and *external security* motivations for great powers imposing ideologies on foreign states. Although Owen's analysis is only about forcible regime promotion and not related components of it like inducements or propaganda, his categories are applicable to the less comprehensive strategies of extraterritorial authoritarian legitimation under consideration here. A state managing its image externally through messaging and/or extraterritorial censorship or targeted repression can be seen as a less elaborate and direct version of states forcibly promoting their ideologies abroad in a wholesale manner. States prefer to avoid using force to advance their ideologies because of the

high costs involved (ibid.: 241) and so also use other forms of regime promotion. Indeed, Owen himself notes that over time "non-forcible regime promotion…has probably been even more common" than the forcible type but that it is difficult to measure and analyze (ibid.: 14). The general point is that regimes promote their political ideas abroad "to make their domestic and international environments friendlier" (ibid.: 252).

Internal security has to do with the desire to solidify one's power domestically. Rulers have committed to their ideologies publicly and organized their societies to be commensurate with them and therefore would face high domestic audience costs by abandoning them. Therefore "…sometimes they find it in their interests to promote their ideology, because their hold on power depends on the progress of their ideology abroad" (ibid.: 36). Showing that their domestic ideology is taken seriously abroad and is on the march can make for an appealing message to a domestic audience keen to be a part of something larger. However, internal security has another side that calls for external action: curbing potentially threatening ideologies. When confronting a threatening ideology, "…the government can degrade it by attacking it abroad as well as at home. By suppressing an enemy ideology abroad, it can remove a source of moral and perhaps material support for enemy ideologues at home" (ibid.: 4)

External security pertains to a government's interest in shaping the international sphere to its advantage. By imposing their ideology on other states, rulers are "attempting to transform their environment so as to make it friendlier to the regime and hence to themselves" (ibid.: 69). In so doing, they hope to "set the standards by which regimes are judged" and thus make their own regime internationally legitimate (ibid.). An external environment friendlier to a state's ideology is beneficial because it allows the regime to pursue its foreign policy goals in a more enabling structure. As with internal security, there is both a promotional aspect (as states amplify their ideology abroad) and a containment aspect (as states undermine threatening ideologies abroad) to external security. States wish to see the international environment reflect their domestic ideologies and this may entail undermining the ideologies of rival states.

Thus far the discussion in this section has not been particular to authoritarian states, although for most of the historical period in Owen's study most regimes promoting their ideologies would be considered authoritarian by today's standards. Nonetheless, while democratic states have certainly promoted democracy abroad to varying degrees and with varying outcomes (e.g. Cox et al. 2000), authoritarian states also have incentives to do so. Jackson (2010: 114) encapsulates this point succinctly:

> "Just as Western democracies attempt to make the world secure for their ideas, values, and political practices, so do other states. All governments engage to some degree in advocacy to promote regimes similar to their own."

Indeed, at least three considerations hint at autocracies having particularly strong incentives to manage their images abroad in the post-Cold War world. First, as discussed above, authoritarian regimes have particular challenges when it comes to securing domestic legitimacy. It is more difficult for them to base their domestic legitimacy on procedural grounds like their democratic counterparts. Sometimes they

simulate compliance with democratic procedural legitimacy, but this is a fragile foundation for legitimacy insofar as it entails associated rights like freedom of the press or freedom of association. They cannot therefore take procedural legitimacy too seriously and therefore may appeal more actively to other legitimation grounds that feature an international dimension, such as communism, various forms of Islamism, and so on. Second, the post-World War II normative order, however hypocritical it may often be (Finnemore 2009), privileged the legitimacy of democracy (Ikenberry 2001; Allan et al. 2018). This means that in the contemporary world authoritarian regimes are norm-challengers who must more vigorously defend their legitimacy abroad.

Third and finally, democracy promotion can be existentially threatening to autocracies and so they are compelled to respond (Whitehead 2014). While powerful democracies prefer their neighbourhoods to be democratic for instrumental reasons (Bader et al. 2010: 86), autocracies have both instrumental and existential fears if their region swings democratic. From the perspective of a powerful authoritarian state, preventing democracy in nearby or particularly salient countries "helps to safe-guard authoritarian powers' developmental and geostrategic interests as well as to prevent democracy at home – that is, to maximize the chances of authoritarian regime survival" (von Soest, 2015: 629).

Given these broad incentives, it is useful to turn to more specific motivations for an authoritarian state to externalize its legitimation efforts. Owen's theoretical framework of internal/external security will be used to establish more specific drivers as authoritarian states seek to craft friendlier ideational environments for their rule. Of course, there is never a perfect division between internal and external politics, and there is unavoidably a degree of overlap between motivations for internal and external security. Nevertheless, the dichotomy is useful as a conceptual organizing device.

Internal Security

Authoritarian regimes jealously guard their hold on power. Indeed, the assumption in virtually every political science study on autocracy is that the leadership's most important objective is to retain power. Without holding onto power, dictators cannot instrumentalize that power to achieve their goals, whatever those may be. Part of retaining power domestically revolves around legitimating the regime domestically (Gerschewski 2013), but there are two sides to understanding how externalizing legitimation efforts can contribute to internal security: highlighting a positive image of the political system abroad and attacking foreign entities or ideas associated with domestic challengers.

First, externalizing image management can boomerang back to the domestic audience and assist with the government's domestic legitimation efforts. In other words, "…in their quest for domestic legitimacy, non-democratic regimes can…seek 'legitimation from abroad' – that is, through activities on, or by way of reference to, the international stage" (Hoffmann 2015: 558). Drawing on Beetham's classic formulation of political legitimacy as based on legality, justifiability, and consent, Holbig (2011) provides a framework for how external legitimation can reflect back to the domestic sphere. In terms of legality, states can emphasize their active membership and participation in international organizations to demonstrate to the domestic audience that they are an accepted member of the international community. To bolster their

justifiability states can burnish their credentials in solving international problems and can show that their ideologies are seen as legitimate abroad. Consent can be shown internationally by mobilizing external recognition and praise and highlighting it to the domestic audience. In the case of Fidel Castro's Cuba, for example, Hoffmann (2015: 563) writes about the leader's strategy of drawing on international legitimation, which relied on:

> "...symbolic gratifications derived when the island's leader acted as a heavyweight in international politics. As Castro wrestled with Kennedy and Khrushchev, any night watchman in a remote Cuban village could feel part of an epic global struggle. As Che Guevara became an icon of worldwide anti-imperial protest, any material shortcomings could be framed as a Che Guevara-inspired sacrifice in pursuit of higher goals....Under Fidel Castro's tenure, symbolic participation in Cuba's global fame became the charismatic 'currency' of the social contract Cuba's socialism offered to the population."

Actions like this show that the country's domestic system has appeal and respect abroad and is thus worthy of guiding domestic politics. This gives authoritarian regimes incentives to "try to improve international responses to specific political ideologies" or other belief systems upon which their rule is based in order to help "justify political rule at home" (Holbig 2011: 170). With a particular emphasis on the autocracy's immediate region, Kneuer and Demmelhuber (2016: 788-789) summarize the domestic logic for why authoritarian regimes have incentives to spread their ideologies:

> "Autocratic regimes are interested in creating transnational networks in order to disseminate ideas. The transport of ideas, arguments, or ideational frames aims at synchronizing perceptions in the neighborhood and at providing a common ground for a regional or sub-regional identity. The construction of strong ideational bonds is considered by autocratic leaders as a means of generating the legitimacy they are usually lacking, but remains simultaneously vital."

Such ideological dissemination may be due to a missionary zeal on the part of the autocratic state (Weyland 2017a; Weyland 2017b; Vu 2017). However, the argument here is that even absent a proselytizing impulse borne out of a deep belief in the rectitude of the ideology, an autocratic regime still has domestic reasons to manage its image beyond its borders. The more the authorities are able to highlight that its worldview is legitimate abroad the more material it has to demonstrate to a domestic audience that the leadership is guiding the state to international prestige and respect based on its domestic legitimating formula.

Second, there is a flip side to promoting a state's image abroad for internal security, namely containing or suppressing challenges to its legitimacy emanating from abroad. On a general level this may involve externally-facing media of the authoritarian state disseminating information designed refute criticisms, correct the record, and/or question the credibility of challengers. This is bound up with processes of authoritarian

"image crafting" designed to bolster the credibility of the dictator while undermining public criticisms in the host state (Cooley and Heathershaw 2017: 77-78). In doing so, autocracies can engage in lobbying, draw on networks of influential persons with connections to the foreign policy establishment of the host state, fund think tank activities, and retain public relations firms, among other tactics (ibid.).

However, beyond general image crafting to blunt criticisms internationally, authoritarian regimes actively target individuals, groups, or ideas that threaten their rule from abroad. Targeting challengers abroad is important because it undermines their ability to garner the funds and attention necessary to pursue their goals. The international advocacy sphere can be seen as a market, with groups wishing to challenge governments needing to present themselves and their goals as appealing and in line with the goals of funders able to support them (Bob 2005; see also Keck and Sikkink 1999). A common method to raise awareness about the group's cause is "diffuse consciousness-raising" consisting of speaking tours, interviews, media engagements, prizes, and so on (Bob 2005: 24). The effectiveness of these efforts depends a great deal on the international standing of the group itself (ibid.: 43). Activists therefore have strong incentives to limit "undesired news" about themselves and their allies so that funders can support them without incurring backlash (ibid.: 52). If a powerful authoritarian government can keep its challengers out of the international spotlight or undermine their credibility, they can keep their causes off the international agenda, thus limiting pressure that rebounds back on the government.

Often external challengers to authoritarian regimes are exiles from the country in question. These groups can take advantage of global communication tools to make links with domestic actors also interested in pressuring the government. Globalization means that "a national public sphere need not be co-terminus with territorial boundaries, and hence physical exit no longer necessarily implies exit from the national public sphere" (Glasius 2018b: 181). However, the same technologies that give activists the opportunity to operate transnationally to pressure an autocracy afford authoritarian regimes "opportunities to monitor and respond to the activities of political exiles rapidly and on a large scale" (Michaelsen 2018: 249; see also Moss 2018).

Autocracies can never quite replicate the control they have domestically in extraterritorial settings, but they target challengers abroad nonetheless. Doing so has both rhetorical and coercive dimensions (Glasius 2018). Rhetorically, authoritarian regimes can slander them and attempt to undermine their reputation. They can also mobilize regime-supporting activists abroad to manufacture the image of exiles as disconnected. They can use media campaigns abroad and at home to create a negative narrative about dissidents abroad, which helps justify repression against them and signals to the activists themselves that the state is keeping tabs on them (Lewis 2015: 146-147). For example, in its efforts to target exiles from the 2005 Andijan massacre, Uzbekistan launched a media campaign against the movement leaders, including via a documentary on Uzbek TV in 2010 that painted the activists as malign forces (Cooley and Heathershaw 2017: 201-209).

Coercively, autocracies can target political opponents abroad so that politics "outside" states does not infiltrate politics "inside" the state (Cooley and Heathershaw

2017: 191). Authorities can "extend its coercive power beyond borders" to target exiles by, for example, spying on activist groups, withdrawing their citizenship, detaining or harassing them, intimidating or arresting their families back home, or in extreme cases even beating or assassinating them (ibid. 187-219; Glasius 2018b; Lewis 2015). Silencing critics and activists abroad is part of a strategy to drive a wedge between external and internal activists so that they cannot effectively work together (Moss 2018). The ultimate aim is to prevent anti-regime mobilization taking place abroad from strengthening domestic challengers and in turn weakening authoritarian rule at home.

The internationalization of autocratic efforts at information management thus has a strong foundation in the quest for internal security. More than just promoting a positive image of the authoritarian state abroad, the tactics range from non-coercive and highly symbolic efforts to make the state look respected on the international stage to outright physical attacks on external challengers. The logic of maintaining internal security demands that the frontiers of image management must be expanded both to bolster "positive" legitimation messages at home but also to ensure that challenges to the regime's legitimacy emanating from abroad do not gain traction domestically.

External Security
Beyond directly preserving internal security, authoritarian states extend their legitimation practices abroad in order to shape their external environment. They wish to render the regional and international sphere more conducive to their interests. To do so they externalize aspects of their legitimation efforts beyond their borders. While there is certainly some overlap with the internal security logic discussed above, seeking external security relies on a slightly different set of underlying motivations and ultimate goals. Here we can conceive of an escalation of ambition and complexity ranging from (1) the minimalist goal of creating a regional political environment that does not ultimately become a domestic threat, to (2) the more ambitious goal of enhancing other foreign policy aims by improving the image of the authoritarian state abroad, to (3) the grand aspiration of forging an international normative environment conducive to the acceptance of authoritarian practices. Each level will be taken in turn.

Governments care about the regime types and ideologies of other states (Owen 2010). Particularly in their immediate neighbourhood, states prefer the familiarity that comes with similarly-constituted neighbours. As Bader et al. (2010: 85) observe, "governments are not indifferent with respect to the political regime type of other states, but do develop a preference toward systems convergence, in particular in their regional environment." For this reason, authoritarian states have incentives to promote the legitimacy of their political system in their immediate neighbourhood.

The most pressing external security logic then is to prevent the diffusion of democracy in the autocrat's immediate region. This sort of "democracy prevention" sees authoritarian regimes act to prevent spill-overs of democracy from neighbouring states (von Soest 2015). Given the tendency for democracy to diffuse geographically (e.g. Brinks and Coppedge 2006; Lankina et al. 2016), authoritarian leaders are right to fear the advance of democratic norms on their borders. Despite globalization processes, the dynamics of authoritarian cooperation, diffusion, and promotion still tend to display

geographical clustering that is at least partly due to shared language (Bank 2017; Kneuer and Demmelhuber 2016; Jackson 2010: 109-110).

While many scholars emphasize the coercive or manipulative dimensions of cooperation between regional autocratic regimes, blunting democratic advance can be ideational, for example through "a less coercive, but nonetheless active, process through which an authoritarian regime presents itself and its policies as an autocratic role model for emulation by other states" (Hall and Ambrosio 2017: 152; see also Weyland 2017a: 1237; Burnell and Schlmumberger 2010: 10). Autocratic powers can do this by, for example, "label[ing] their own regime as a 'new' or 'alternative' form of non-Western democracy and export[ing] the model to nations within their neighbourhood" (Kneuer and Demmelhuber 2016: 776; Ambrosio 2008). In addition to claiming such an alternative form of democracy as legitimate, democracy-resisters question the credentials and motives of democracy promoters in order to blunt the appeal of their messages (Whitehead 2014: 7).

This impulse for authoritarian regimes to externalize their legitimation efforts in their immediate neighbourhood for the minimalist goal of "diffusion proofing" their region resonates with studies of autocratic promotion that emphasize the fundamentally defensive character of contemporary autocracy (e.g. Ambriosio 2010; Bader et al.; von Soest 2015; Bank 2017; Yakouchyk 2018). The aim is not necessarily to advance a particular type of authoritarianism abroad, but rather to externalize authoritarian image management tactics in order to blunt the appeal of democracy and stabilize existing autocracies.

Beyond the minimalist goal of containing regional democratization processes, authoritarian states may externalize their image management to facilitate other foreign policy objectives. We would expect the motivation to be different with autocratic-autocratic dyads and autocratic-democratic dyads. For autocratic states, externalizing legitimation can provide cover for foreign relations that otherwise emphasize the securing of private goods. Bader et al. (2010) theorize that unless it comes at the expense of stability, autocracies prefer to deal with other autocracies because in both cases the winning coalition is smaller and the outcome is therefore likely to result in private goods for both parties. Here the regional autocratic power uses "its external relations as one way to secure the resources necessary in order to strengthen its domestic position" (ibid.: 87). The lack of accountability and oversight in autocratic systems mitigates the ability of the public to learn about the details, but stories or rumours of exploitation or corruption are still likely to come to light. An autocratic state legitimating itself externally as a worthy partner or emphasizing shared ideology can help refute such accusations. An ideologically permissive region can also help delegitimize external criticism from "outsiders" and widen the scope of what is tolerated domestically for autocracies to maintain power (Ambrosio 2008). This helps facilitate foreign policy goals for the state that successfully manages its image abroad.

When dealing with a democracy, the motivation is still to help achieve foreign policy aims, but the logic is slightly different. In a democratic state, the autocratic regime is likely to confront a sceptical public and may feel compelled to present itself in attractive and non-threatening terms in order to persuade public constituencies enough to not frustrate its foreign relations with the host state. This can be seen as a form of

what Adler-Nissen (2014) calls "stigma management". States that deviate from accepted norms, like democracy from the perspective of a democratic public, are frequently stigmatized and ultimately suffer from loss of status. However, stigmatized states do not passively accept their lot and instead actively cope with and manage their stigma in various ways. An authoritarian state attempting to assuage stigma emanating from democratic publics is likely to either reject the stigma (we are not authoritarian) or counter-stigmatize (we may be authoritarian, but you aren't perfect either). This is a process in which the state will "selectively devalue the performance dimensions that suggest that their group fares poorly and selectively value those dimensions on which their group excels" (ibid.: 165).

The upshot is that criticism of an authoritarian state's foreign policy goals or domestic system can be responded to publicly. This is important because while most foreign policy analysis emphasizes its elite nature, emerging research suggests that public opinion is important to the formation of foreign policy, at least in democratic societies (Rothschild and Shafranek 2017). People take their cues about how their state should deal with other states at least as much from their peers as they do from elites, which can then exert upward pressure to change policy orientations (Kertzer and Zeitzoff 2017). An authoritarian state wishing to improve its external security by achieving foreign policy objectives with democratic partners therefore has strong incentives to manage its image in the eyes of foreign democratic publics.

Beyond the goal of achieving specific foreign policy outcomes lies the grander ambition of making the world safe for autocracy. This entails forging a friendlier international environment for authoritarian practices. The aim is to alter the standards upon which legitimate political authority is judged. The international standards most likely to perturb authoritarian powers are those that revolve around human rights and liberal democracy. Authoritarian states would instead prefer norms associated with a strong emphasis on security and a relativism tied to the prominence of "traditional culture" (Cooley 2015). Norms about these concepts are malleable, though, and shaped in large measure by the political identities of major states in the system (Gunitsky 2017). As Ambrosio (2010: 377) puts it "as the legitimacy of authoritarianism increases, it is more likely that autocratic norms and practices will spread throughout the international system."

Sometimes such diffusion can happen without the specific intent of an authoritarian power. Elites in other states might find a rising authoritarian power appealing as a successful model and therefore adopt certain - or even most – of its institutions domestically (Gunitsky 2017; Møller et al. 2017; Fordham and Asal 2007). This can reify the appropriateness of authoritarian norms as such states can claim equal footing with the legitimacy of democratic states (Amrbosio 2010: 380-381). In other words, "states with a high level of prestige can help to set the tone about what is acceptable in the international system, a process which facilitates the diffusion of norms and values" (Ambrosio 2010: 386).

While this model of diffuse emulation does not result from the specific intent of an authoritarian state to coerce or induce other states to comply, it may stem in part from the state burnishing its image as a successful political model. The prestige of an authoritarian state can have impacts on the international system by altering

preferences and attitudes of other states (ibid.: 386). Such prestige results at least in part from great powers actively shaping their international image (Fordham and Asal 2007: 33). States have incentives to shape global norms to their favour, and a prestigious or at least positive image helps them do that. Authoritarian powers therefore have motives to bolster their image by externalizing their image management efforts. In their conceptual work on status in international relations, Larson et al. (2014: 19) note that states actively seek to get others to view them as high-status, in part because status esteem can secure material benefits: "High status…confers tangible benefits in the form of decision-making autonomy and deference on the part of others concerning issues of importance, including but not limited to security and prosperity."

Studies on ideas and international norms in world politics often emphasize the importance of elite receptivity as the major driver of socialization processes (e.g. Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990; Owen 2010; Haas 2014). Elites have access to international currents of information and the power to shape institutions that institutionalize norms even if the public is indifferent or unaware (e.g. Moravcsik 2000). Even norm change literature that focuses on grassroots activism stresses the need to change the decision-making calculus of elites (Keck and Sikkink 1998) and to rhetorically entrap elites in normative commitments (Risse et al. 1999).

From this perspective, authoritarian states aiming to manage their image abroad are likely to focus on elite audiences because they have more influence than mass publics. The capabilities and beliefs of elites are important in determining whether authoritarian norms are promoted in or by a given state (Vanderhill 2013). For example, political elites are able to use international organizations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to diffuse and entrench norms friendly to the maintenance of authoritarian power, such as no-questions asked extradition of political enemies, the stigmatizing of "extremist" political groups, and robust state sovereignty (Ambrosio 2008; Melnykovska 2010 et al.; Lewis 2015; Cooley and Heathershaw 2017). Elites have agenda-setting capabilities and have an outsized influence about which international norms that their state should support both at home and in international organizations. Writing about Central Asian autocracies, for example, Jackson (2010: 104) notes the importance of elite receptivity to norms:

> "Wary of the West's promotion of democracy and human rights, many of Central Asia's political elite view the Russian government's ideas about legitimacy, authority, respect, order, and sovereignty as more similar to their own indigenous norms and practices, and a better fit with their desire to strengthen existing institutions and power structures, than Western ideas of liberal democracy and human rights"

The causal emphasis attributed to elites in shaping international norms is warranted, but incomplete. Ideas about international order are most influential when they have traction both at the elite and the mass level (Allan et al. 2018). An authoritarian state wishing to see its preferred norms reflected in the international system therefore has incentives to not only gain support from political elites but also to legitimize its image at the popular level abroad. The aim is not necessarily to promote a change of regime type in the target state, but rather to generate mass attitudes

receptive to the state's priorities in the international sphere. Norms associated with human rights, for example, benefit from awareness and acceptance at the popular level (e.g. Ron and Crow 2015; Davis et al. 2012). If they are devalued or contested by other pro-authoritarian norms at the mass level, then public demand that states prioritize them in international fora would decrease. Ultimately, then, the ability of norms threatening to authoritarian rule are weakened.

A Typology of Capabilities & Intentions

Thus far the theoretical discussion has argued that authoritarian states have motivations to externalize their image management efforts for both internal and external security reasons. The overarching goal is to create an environment friendlier to their interests and aims and conducive to their hold on power. However, we would not expect all authoritarian states to act on these underlying motivations in the same way. A theoretically-informed typology is therefore necessary to explain how different types of authoritarian states would be expected to vary in their approach to externalizing their legitimation.

There is a rich tradition in comparative politics that creates and analyzes typologies of authoritarian regimes (e.g. Linz and Stepan 1995; Hadenius and Teorell 2007; Wahman et al. 2013; Kailitz 2013; Geddes et al. 2014b). These typologies typically clarify how power is organized at the domestic level, distinguishing between, for example, single-party, military, and personalist regimes. For the purposes of explaining domestic factors regime longevity (e.g. Hadenius and Teorell 2007), patterns of repression (Davenport 2007b), and policy performance (Cassani 2017) such typologies have proven extremely useful. One option would therefore be to look for the sources of variation in external image management patterns among authoritarian states in domestic institutions. Indeed, others have argued that the propensity for authoritarian states to engage in armed conflict abroad has its roots in domestic institutions that correspond to comparative politics typologies (Lai and Slater 2006; Weeks 2014).

While recognizing the value in these approaches, this study looks elsewhere to explain variation in authoritarian regimes' propensity to externalize their image management. Regime-type arguments fundamentally revolve around processes at the domestic level and while they may influence foreign policy outcomes, these typologies tell us little about the foreign policy goals of autocracies. Therefore, the framework will instead draw from the international relations tradition by looking to the capabilities and intentions of authoritarian states. These factors have long been key concepts to explain outcomes in international relations, particularly in the realist tradition (e.g. Walt 1997; Mearsheimer 2001). They will be used here to help generate expectations about how authoritarian states would approach externalizing their legitimation.

This study understands capabilities to comprise the material wherewithal of the state. Large powerful states have more ability to manage their image regionally or even globally in ways that lesser powers do not. The variables often used to measure state capabilities can be found in the National Material Capabilities (NMC) measure produced by the Correlates of War (COW) project. These include wealth, population, iron and steel production, and military strength (Singer et al. 1972). Some studies also include institutional factors, such as whether the state has a permanent seat at the United

Nations Security Council (e.g. Allan et al. 2018), although these will not be included here. The salient distinction here is between great power states and regional powers. It is unlikely that small, very poor autocratic states have the capacity to externalize their legitimation in any meaningful way and so they are therefore excluded from this analysis. There will naturally be many more regional powers than global powers, and of course the cutoff point between the two may exclude or include some borderline cases that will be subjects for debate.

To conceptualize intentions for this study, I draw inspiration from what Gould-Davies (1999: 106) calls the "security-seeking state" and the "ideology-implementing regime". These are ideal types existing as extremes on a spectrum and most cases "are less clear, not either-or but more-or-less" (ibid.: 107). Security-seeking states have more defensive intentions and seek power in the international sphere only to the extent that it enhances their own security. They may try to influence the foreign policies of other states, but they do not seek to implement their domestic regime in other states. Ideology-implementing regimes have more expansive goals and aim to more systematically influence the internal politics of other states in order to ultimately replace their domestic regime elsewhere. They seek power to advance an ideological agenda. This dichotomy of states tracks well with more recent conceptualizations in the autocratic promotion literature between autocracies motivated by "pragmatic self-interests" versus "ideological goals" (Weyland 2017a: 1237-1238).

Again, the reality is more complicated that these dichotomies suggest given that ideologies and interests in the international sphere can be seen as mutually constitutive (Owen 2010). However, for analytical purposes, this study proposes to differentiate between "ideologically expansive" and "ideologically defensive" autocracies. The former have more maximalist goals in that their domestic legitimation is bound up with their engagement on the global or regional stage. The latter are fundamentally more concerned with protecting their domestic image with less reference to international processes unless they bear directly on the political system.

When combined, these dimensions of capabilities and intentions generate a simple two-by-two that can help categorize cases. *Ideologically expansive great powers* have a global material presence and a domestic legitimation formula that compels them to actively externalize their image management efforts to foreign publics. *Ideologically expansive regional powers* also have ideational reasons to vigorously externalize their image management, but their ambitions are restrained to the regional sphere by material limitations. *Ideologically defensive great powers* have a global material presence, but their legitimation foundation is more self-referential and demands less active externalization. They are large and important states, but their external image management efforts do not extend much beyond internal security aims even though their tactics may be global in nature. *Ideologically defensive regional powers* aim to protect their image domestically and only engage in external legitimation in limited and specific ways. This categorization provides a way to systematically analyse the interplay between material power and ideas, which is a key dynamic for understanding ideational patterns in international politics (e.g. Pu 2012; Florini 2011; Brazys & Dukalskis 2017).

A typology of this sort benefits from exogenous coding rules to categorize cases. To do so involved combining data from the COW project to measure material

capabilities with von Soest and Grauvogel's (2017) expert survey on the legitimation foundations authoritarian states to measure ideological intentions. Because the latter only covers the post-Cold War period, only recent autocracies are included.

In terms of capabilities, "great power" status was assigned to each state if it was in the top ten of COW's Composite Indicator of National Capability (CINC) for the relevant year while "regional power" status was assigned if the state was not in the top ten but was in the top half of coded states for the relevant year. States in the bottom 50% of the CINC measure were excluded as it is difficult to consider them regional powers. Since the legitimation data is coded in a "spells" format (i.e. Belarus 1994-2010), the CINC measure for the year in the middle of the spell is taken (i.e. 2002 for Belarus). When the spell is an odd number and the middle falls between two years, the more recent year is taken. This approach differs from the COW "Major Power" categorization insofar as the latter includes more than only material capabilities, incorporating dimensions such as status or institutional leadership (see Correlates of War 2017: 3). It also differs from definitions of regional powers that include the self-conception to be a regional power as well as recognition by other states (Schirm 2009; Nolte 2010). Instead, the capabilities measure used here is strictly material and does not imply that the state actually uses its capabilities to influence the region.

Turning to intentions, the expert survey by von Soest and Grauvogel (2017) asked groups of country experts to code how frequently the authoritarian regime in question referred to six dimensions of legitimacy: foundational myth, ideology, personalism, procedures, performance, and international engagement. Each dimension received a score between 0 (hardly ever) and 5 (routinely). To assess how ideologically expansive the state is for the purposes of this study, the ideology and international engagement measures were combined. The ideology dimension tries to measure to what extent the "regime promote[s] a specific ideology or societal model" while the international engagement dimension attempts to capture the extent to which the regime refers to its international leadership or advocacy. When the combined ideology and international engagement scores for a state totalled 7 or more, it was coded as "ideologically expansive" and when it was below 7 it was coded as "ideologically defensive."

As with any data project, the von Soest and Grauvogel data has limitations. First, the project only codes states between 1991 and 2010 thus giving it limited historical and contemporary coverage. Second, the project codes relatively broad authoritarian "spells." They are therefore unable to differentiate between leadership transitions in within the same regime. The case of China illustrates these limitations well. The China "spell" is coded from 1991 to 2010, which of course does not account for the fact that the Chinese Communist Party has ruled from 1949 up until the time of this writing. Nor can it account for the leadership transition that took place in 2004 from Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao. Nevertheless, the data provide a useful and systematic assessment of 98 authoritarian regime spells in the post-Cold War era. Of these, 63 regime spells meet the material criteria described above as either a "great power" or a "regional power"; namely they are in the top half of the relevant year's CINC listing.

The coding scheme developed so far resembles the "authoritarian gravity centre" coding advocated by Kneuer et al. (2018) but is different in three key respects. First, it

captures global powers as well as regional powers. Second, the gravity centre approach includes a state if it is materially preponderant in a region *or* if it advocates an expansive ideological agenda. The coding of this study conceptually distinguishes material and ideological components of authoritarian powers such that an ideological expansive authoritarian regional power only counts as such if it has sufficient material capabilities *and* it has an ideologically expansive agenda. Third, the gravity centre scheme only includes "target states" for authoritarian promotion or diffusion if they are flawed democracies or autocracies. The approach advanced here conceptually includes all target states.

Figure 1: Capabilities and Intentions of Authoritarian States, 1991-2010

	Great Power	**Regional Power**
Ideologically Expansive	China 1991-2010 N=1	Cuba 2008-2010 Ethiopia 1995-2010 Indonesia 1991-1998 Iran 1991-2010 Iraq 2005-2010 Libya 1991-2010 Nepal 2008-2010 Qatar 1991-2010 Rwanda 1994-2010 Saudi Arabia 1991-2010 Sudan 1991-2010 Uganda 2009-2010 U.A.E. 1991-2010 Venezuela 1999-2010 N= 14

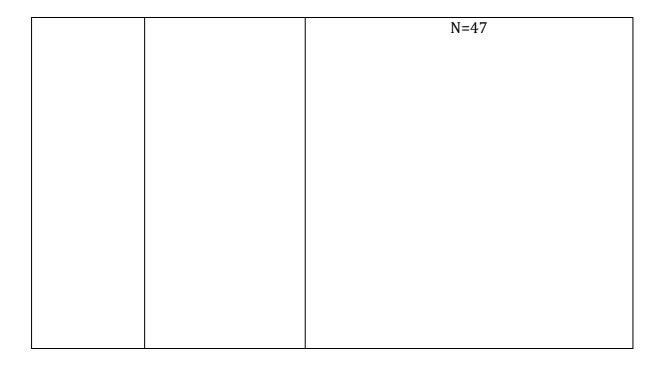|		
Ideologically Defensive	Russia 2000-2010 N=1	Afghanistan 2004-2010 Algeria 1999-2010 Angola 2008-2010 Azerbaijan 1993-2010 Bangladesh 1999-2010 Belarus 1994-2010 Cambodia 1993-2010 Cameroon 1992-2010 Colombia 1999-2004 Cote d'Ivoire 2000-2010 Croatia 1991-1999 D.R. Congo 1997-2010 Egypt 1991-2010 Eritrea 1993-2010 Ghana 1991-1992 Guatemala 2009-2010 Jordan 1991-2010 Kazakhstan 1991-2010 Kenya 2009-2009 Kuwait 1991-2010 Lebanon 1992-2010 Madagascar 2009-2010 Malaysia 1991-2010 Mexico 1991-1999 Morocco 1991-2010 Mozambique 2009-2010 Myanmar 1991-2010 Nigeria 1999-2010 North Korea 1991-2010 Oman 1991-2010 Pakistan 1999-2010 Peru 1991-1999 Romania 1991-1995 Serbia & Mont. 1992-2000 Singapore 1991-2010 South Africa 1991-1993 Sri Lanka 2006-2010 Syria 1991-2010 Tanzania 1995-2010 Thailand 2006-2010 Tunisia 1991-2010 Turkey 1993-2001 Ukraine 2010-2010 Uzbekistan 1991-2010 Vietnam 1991-2010 Yemen 1993-2010 Zimbabwe 1991-2010

		N=47

Figure 1 categorizes the spells according to their capabilities and intentions. The first thing to notice is that the two authoritarian great powers of the period are coded differently. Based on the autocracy promotion literature, the coding for Russia is likely to be uncontroversial (e.g. Ambrosio 2010; Whitehead 2014; Way 2015; Weyland 2017). The coding of China as "ideologically expansive", however, is likely to be contested and deserves some more discussion. Pre-reform China was ideologically expansive insofar as Mao Zedong posited China as a leader in the world communist revolution. Post-reform Chinese foreign policy has tended to tack more closely to Deng Xiaoping's advice that China should "bide its time, hide its brightness, not seek leadership, but do some things" (see Shambaugh 2013: 13-44).

However, careful attention among China's leadership to discourses surrounding China's "rise" or "development" indicate that Beijing understands that its international image requires management at a global scale (Buzan 2014; Edney 2014). Post-reform Chinese leaders have attempted to posit global concepts to characterize China's foreign policy orientations, such as Hu Jintao's "Harmonious World" (Zheng and Tok 2007) and Xi Jinping's "China Dream" (Callahan 2015). While some may dismiss these formulations as window dressing they are evidence that the Beijing is thinking about its ideological concepts in global terms even if the aim is not to create communist regimes abroad like the days of the Communist International.

The next point of interest is the most populated cell, namely ideologically defensive regional powers. Nearly three quarters of regimes in the universe of cases meet these criteria. They are in the top half of the global CINC listing for material power, but experts did not emphasize their ideological foundations or international engagement in their assessments of these regime's legitimation messages. By the definitions laid out here, most authoritarian powers have indeed been ideologically defensive in the post-Cold War era. These states are not likely to see their domestic

survival as dependent on an international mission and therefore are likely to pay more attention to the domestic sphere except in specific circumstances that demand an international response.

However, even in the ostensibly less ideological global environment after the collapse of Soviet communism, some regional authoritarian powers can still be seen as ideologically ambitious. Indeed, just over one in five states in the sample meet these criteria. Many of the regimes on the list will not be surprising to scholars who study the international dimensions of authoritarianism. Venezuela (de la Torre 2017), Cuba (Hoffmann 2015), Iran (Vanderhill 2013), and Saudi Arabia (Tansey et al. 2016), have all been analysed as ideologically expansive authoritarian states. Others on the list have received less attention in this literature, perhaps most interestingly Gadhafi's Libya, Kagame's Rwanda, Suharto's Indonesia, and Qatar. The general point is that while the modal type of autocracy in this typology of authoritarian powers is ideologically defensive, a significant subset of powerful authoritarian states harbours ideological orientations that transcend their own borders in meaningful ways.

This typology of authoritarian regime powers is preferable to a domestic regime typology for understanding patterns of external image management. *Figure 1* shows that a domestic regime-type categorization of autocracies may yield unsatisfying results. For example, among the most durable type of authoritarian regimes, single-party communist regimes occupy three of the four cells. China is an ideologically expansive great power while Cuba is an ideologically expansive regional power. Vietnam and North Korea are coded as ideologically defensive regional powers. Laos, the fifth remaining communist state, did not meet the criteria of being in the top half of the CINC listing. In most domestically-based typologies these cases are coded similarly or identically. However, the typology employed here teases out differences that are fruitful for analysing each government's capabilities and intentions (on changing patterns of domestic legitimation in these cases, see Dukalskis & Gerschewski forthcoming).

Figure 2 relaxes the coding rules above by noting some well-known historical cases. While CINC data is available for these states, thus allowing for coding on the capabilities dimension, the von Soest and Grauvogel data only goes back to 1991, so the legitimation foundations of the relevant state rest on the author's own judgement. Taken together the two figures reveal that it is empirically possible for each of the four cells to be populated by actual cases, thus revealing that the conceptual distinctions do manifest themselves in contemporary and historical examples of autocracies.

Figure 2	**Great Power**	**Regional Power**
Ideologically Expansive	Soviet Union Nazi Germany Imperial Japan	Vietnam during Cold War
Ideologically Defensive	Brazil under military junta KMT in Republican China	Marcos' Philippines

With this typology established and drawing on the previous section about the motivations for authoritarian states to externalize legitimation efforts, we can begin to develop hypotheses to explore empirically. First, we would expect ideologically

expansive great powers to have global reach with their external legitimation programs. This would manifest outside of the power's region and extend across regime types and geographies. We would expect the state to have a well-developed program that goes beyond direct refutations of negative portrayals abroad and aims to advance an ideological agenda.

Second, ideologically expansive regional powers would be more limited to seeking influence within the state's neighborhood. There may be exceptions for the "conceptual" neighborhood insofar as a regional power may have cultural or religious links with a physically far-away state or may seek to lobby a great power to take particular actions in the state's region, but in general regional powers are likely to focus more on shaping their regional environments. However, we would expect that are active external image managers despite geographic limitations. Third, ideologically defensive states would be likely to focus their external legitimation efforts more narrowly on regime security. Of course, this is the bottom line for all states, but we can expect defensive states to not go much beyond legitimation actions that bear more directly on regime security whereas ideologically expansive states would aim to positively shape global or regional discourse.

Conclusion

While all states have incentives to manage their image abroad, authoritarian states have extra motivation to do so in the post-Cold War era. Democracy is rhetorically prized in international discourse and authoritarian leaders frequently articulate their right to rule in democratic terms. However, sometimes this claim strains credulity and other times autocracies dispense with the pretense that they rule on procedural grounds. The rhetorical primacy of democratic values internationally means that authoritarian states must manage their image abroad in order to, at minimum, alleviate external pressure on their domestic political system, and more ambitiously to forge an international environment more conducive to their interests and identities. Both aims entail authoritarian states externalizing their legitimation claims and potentially their legitimation-protecting repression.

This paper has sought to answer four questions. First, what kind of tactics comprise externalizing image control by authoritarian states? Second, does it matter that autocracies manage their image abroad? Third, what motivates autocracies to externalize their image management? Fourth, how can we understand variation between states in their external image management strategies? The aim was to set a theoretical framework that can be used to explore how authoritarian states manage their images abroad. The framework draws on a variety of scholarship across comparative politics and international relations to understand the interconnections between the domestic and international levels.

Many questions remain unanswered. Most importantly we want to know whether these theoretical considerations actually play out in the empirical world. Do authoritarian states behave in the ways that this paper has posited? Future research will evaluate that question by bringing diverse forms of evidence to bear on a variety of authoritarian image management efforts. Second, we want to know whether these efforts actually work. Do they persuade people to view authoritarian states more

positively? Do they increase regime security for the sending state and improve the international environment for its foreign policies? To know what "success" would entail, we first need to understand how these processes work. Future research will address to this question by proposing a mechanistic approach to identifying and assessing authoritarian image management.

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