

**Project summary:**  
**The legacy of authoritarian regimes on democratic citizenship**

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This research will study the legacy impacts of previous authoritarian regimes on its citizens' political attitudes today. It thereby addresses important and unresolved questions of democratisation, by using a new methodological approach of cohort analysis to examine the lasting legacy of authoritarian dictatorships. Previous research has overlooked the possibility of citizens' formative experiences in non-democratic systems that might impact their political attitudes, values, and behaviour even after the existence of these regimes. We expect that these legacy impacts have important implications for the development of a democratic political culture in transitioning societies.

We will hence develop a new Theory of Authoritarian Socialization, which assumes that different authoritarian regimes vary in the way they suppress their citizens, and that this in turn will lead to distinctive beliefs and behaviour in the population. Studying the experience of whole generations (or cohorts as they are also referred to) to grow-up under dictatorships makes it possible to investigate whether distinct regimes differ in the impact on their citizens' beliefs. Further we are interested in whether this imprint might negatively affect the establishment of a democratic political culture. The objective of this project is to develop a typology of regime characteristics and their lasting impact on the population. We expect that this typology and an accompanying "Democratisation Policy Brief" can inform practical developmental work of organisations working in transitioning societies.

This objective will be achieved by conducting a comprehensive analysis of post-authoritarian countries from different parts of the world during the entire 20th century that experienced different types and durations of suppression. This includes the military regimes in South America, but also the socialist regimes in the former Eastern block. It is not possible to study the impact of these regimes during their existence, as representative public opinion research is not possible during dictatorships. We argue, however, that this is not necessary. Instead we rely on the method of cohort analysis, developed by the principle investigator Dr. Neundorf. One of the main methodological innovations of this project, this method allows us to identify distinct characteristics of those generations that were mainly socialised during dictatorships.

To test our new Theory of Authoritarian Socialization we will merge existing survey data from numerous post-authoritarian countries. Today this is possible, as survey research and public opinion polls are widespread beyond established Western democracies. For example, since 1995 several Latin American countries annually take part in the Latinobarometro. Other data that will be used includes the World Value Survey (1980-2012), and Asiabarometer (2001-2012) as well as all six rounds of the ESRC-funded European Social Survey (2002-2012). The different survey questions included in the diverse datasets will be harmonised so that a joint analysis is possible. This is a major task of this project and will yield a unique longitudinal, global database of individuals' political attitudes and behaviour.

In order to assign the regime characteristics under which each generation grew up, we will further merge existing data sources (e.g. Polity IV and Autocratic Regime Transitions data) on authoritarian regimes to measure the distinct features of each regime. We will focus, on factors such as intra-elite structure, extent, scope and density of repression, and transition to democracy. The two datasets of individual-level survey data and regime characteristics will be jointly analysed using quantitative statistical analysis of hierarchical age, period, cohort analysis to estimate the generational differences in democratic attitudes and behaviour.

### **Non-academic beneficiaries**

We will devise a typology of political regime characteristics and their lasting influence on the population. The introduction of a democratic culture in the mass public is crucial for the sustainability of democracy. Our typology will be an important tool to account for different contexts that require different solutions during the democratisation process. For example, we expect that a population that experienced a military dictatorship to be fearful of public institutions that could hinder the development of democratic cultures in which political participation is crucial. Alternatively, a population that experienced one-party rule that is guided by a certain ideology will be very much infiltrated by a certain set of beliefs and values that are usually incompatible with the norms and values of democracy. The first example will require institutions and citizens' programmes that mobilise people to become active in the political process, while the second example will require a re-education programme. Based on our research, we will be able to develop a tool to give direct guidance to policy-makers and NGOs, which work on democracy aid that focuses on civil societies. We have already confirmed support from the following organisations:

- The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, an inter-governmental organisation that supports national and local actors who are working for democratic reform, and facilitates dialogue in support of democratic change.
- The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, a German non-governmental organization that promotes democracy and is active in more than 100 countries.
- The Organization of American States, an inter-continental organisation that promotes and consolidates representative democracy in the American continent.
- The Overseas Developmental Institute, the UK's leading independent think tank on international development. One of the co-investigators, Dr. Tim Kelsall, works for the ODI.

Besides these organisations, we further plan to approach and work with the following organisations:

- USAID
- NORAD
- British Department of International Development
- SIAD
- Danida
- Ford Foundation
- OXFAM