

# NGOs and Authoritarianism

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# The Puzzle

Why do dictators let NGOs work in their country?

THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



## 一. 境外机构，物色人选

XX工人热线

幸会幸会，自当竭力

某国NGO组织

很高兴认识你，我们的  
劳工理念很值得推广

## 四. 基层松土，潜在危害

西方劳工理念

西方工会理念

xx工厂

xx工厂

xx工厂

xx工厂

xx工厂

xx工厂

xx工厂





中华人民共和国境外非政府组织境内活动管理法（英译文本）

时间：2016年11月17日 字体：【大】 【中】 【小】

**Order of the President of the People's Republic of China  
No. 44**

the People's Republic of China on the Administration of Activities of Overseas Nongovernmental Organizations, adopted at the 20th Meeting of the 12th Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on November 17, 2016, and shall come into force on January 1, 2017.

Xi Jinping

President of the People's Republic of China

April 28, 2016

**Law of the People's Republic of China on Administration  
of Activities of Overseas Nongovernmental Organizations  
in the Mainland of China**

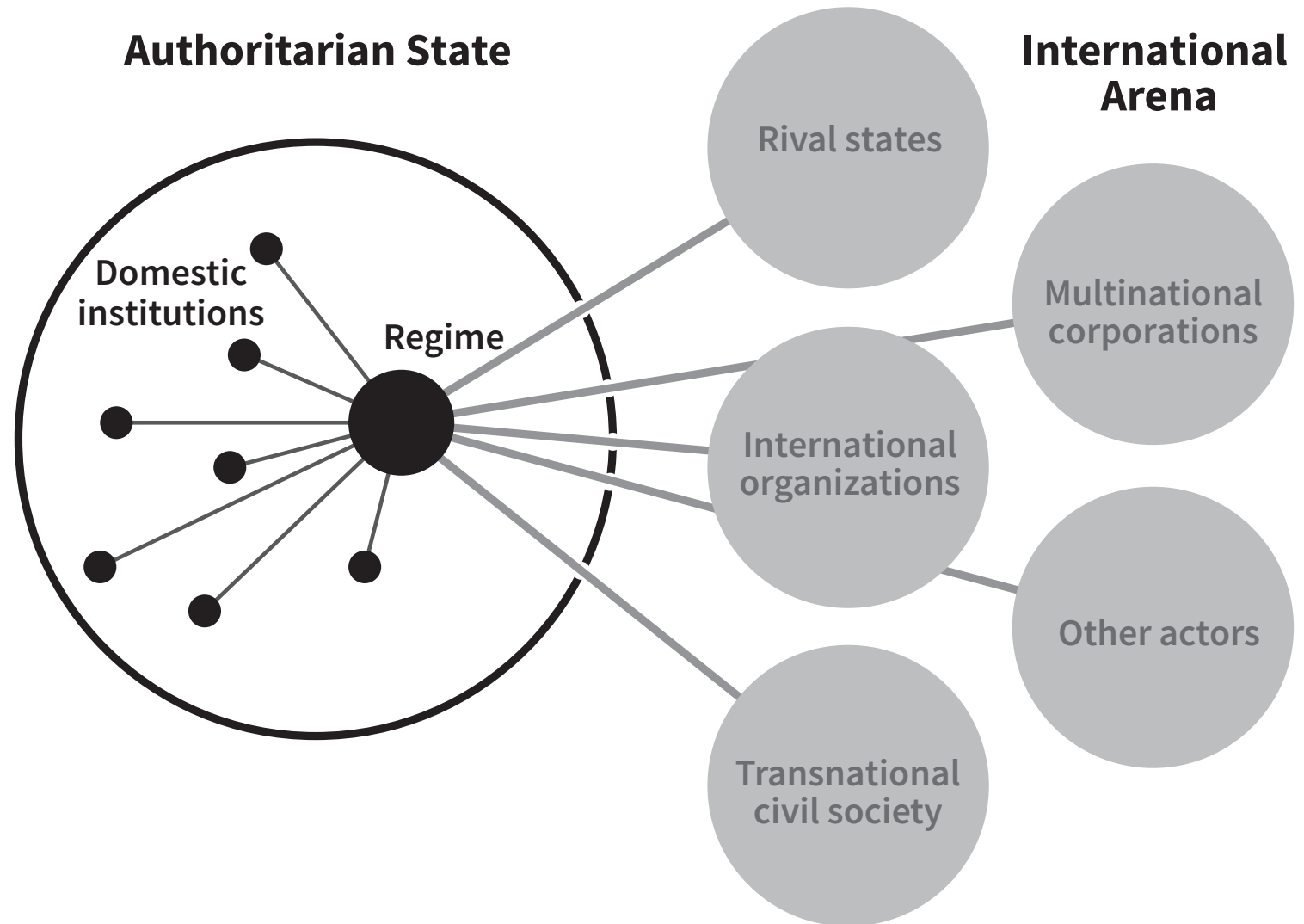


# Authoritarian Institutions

Dictators aren't as stable as they appear

# Institutional balancing

**To stay in power, dictators must give some power to rival institutions, but in a controlled and safe way**





# **“Donning democratic garb”**

**Dictators use democratic-ish  
institutions in the service of  
regime stability**

**Parliaments**

**Protests**

**Independent judiciary**

**Central banks**

# NGOs as Institutions

Collaborators, opponents, or substitutes?

# My argument

**NGOs are yet another institution that dictators have to deal with when pursuing regime stability**

# NGOs in dictatorships

Bowling leagues, networks,  
and **supporting** state power

“Standing up to city hall”  
and **challenging** state power

NGO fiefdoms  
and **replacing** state power

# NGO Restrictions

Fitting NGOs into authoritarian calculus



Civil liberties -  
international

## Human rights groups face global crackdown 'not seen in a generation'

Laws affecting funding, requiring registration and prohibiting protest are among  
that are making it difficult for NGOs and other campaign groups

## Resisting the Global Crackdown on Civil Society

July 11, 2013



Aid how change happens human rights NGOs Politics

## 5 trends that explain why civil society is under assault around the world

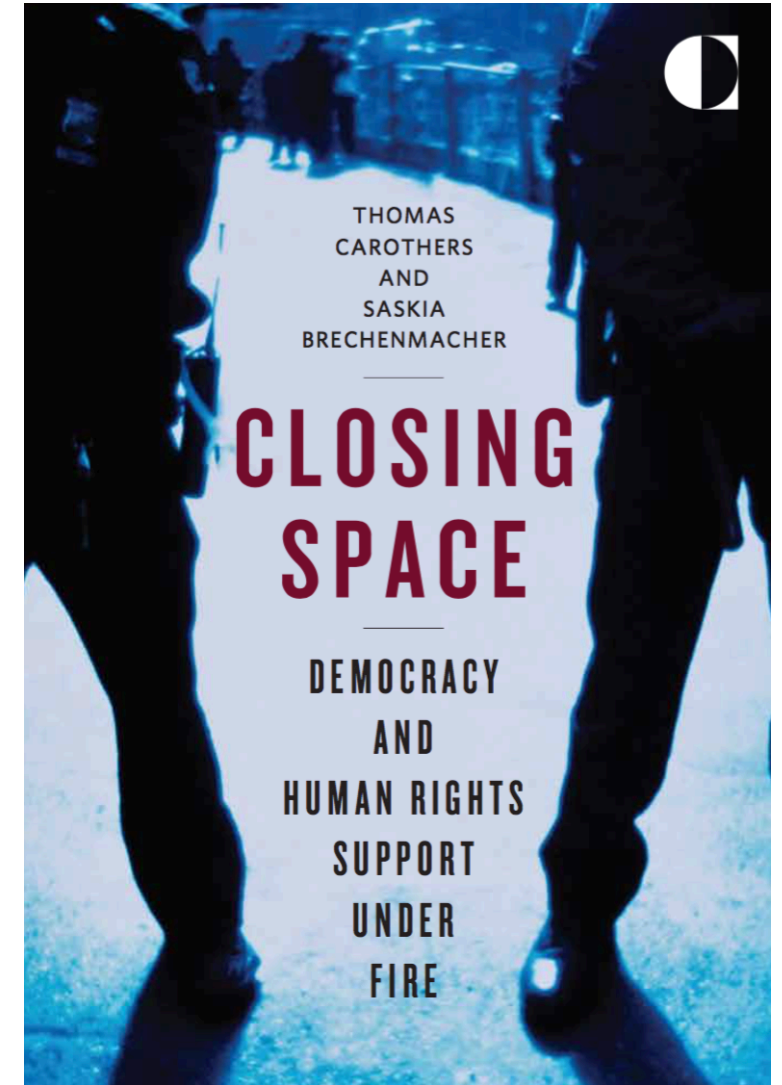
August 25, 2015

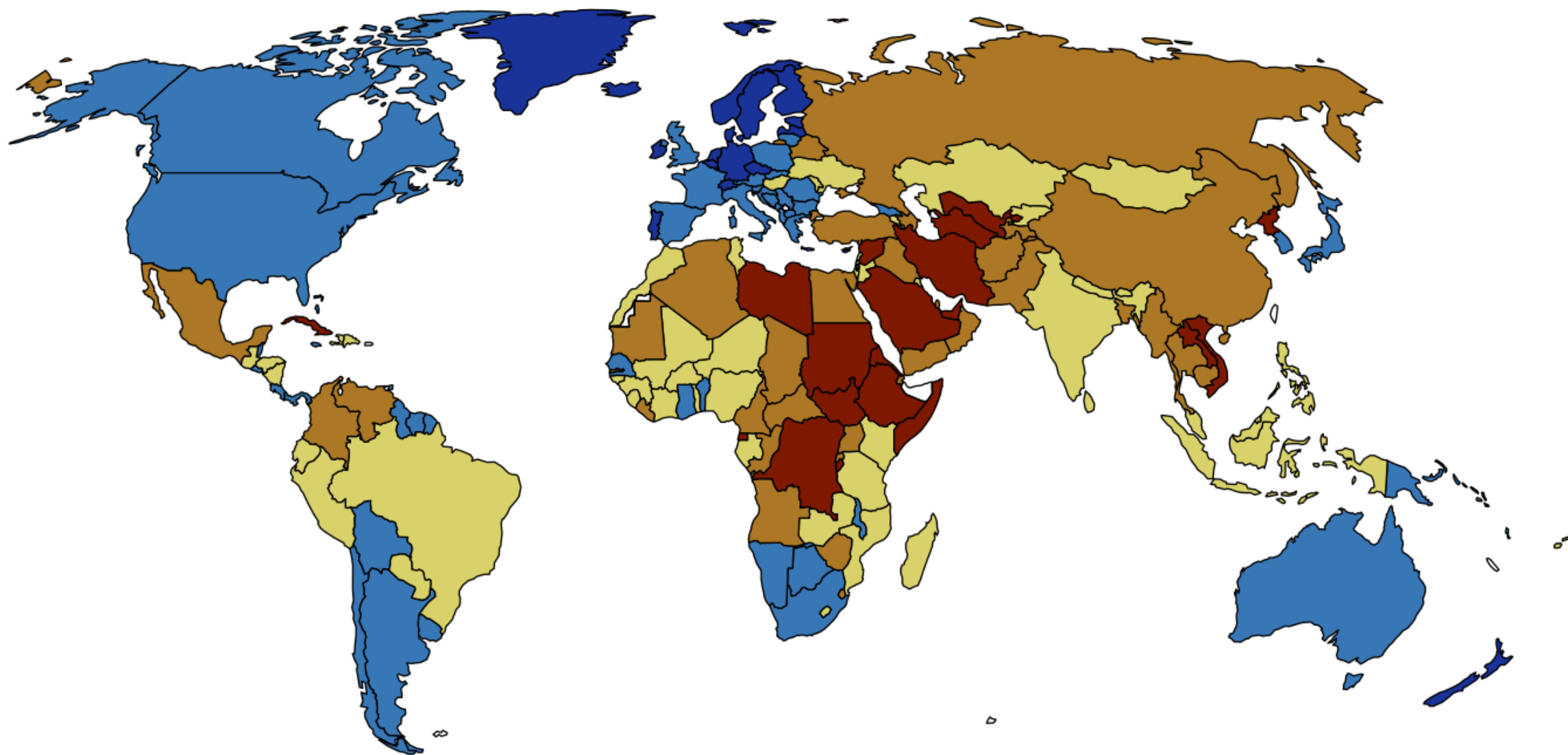
The  
Economist

World politics Business & finance Economics Science & technology Culture

NGOs in China

## Pummelling the little platoons





Civic space    Open    Narrowed    Obstructed    Repressed    Closed

# Costs and benefits of NGOs

**Coordinated  
understanding**

**Provide services  
for regime**

**Boomerangs  
and spirals**

**Bestow legitimacy  
to regime**

# Legal restrictions

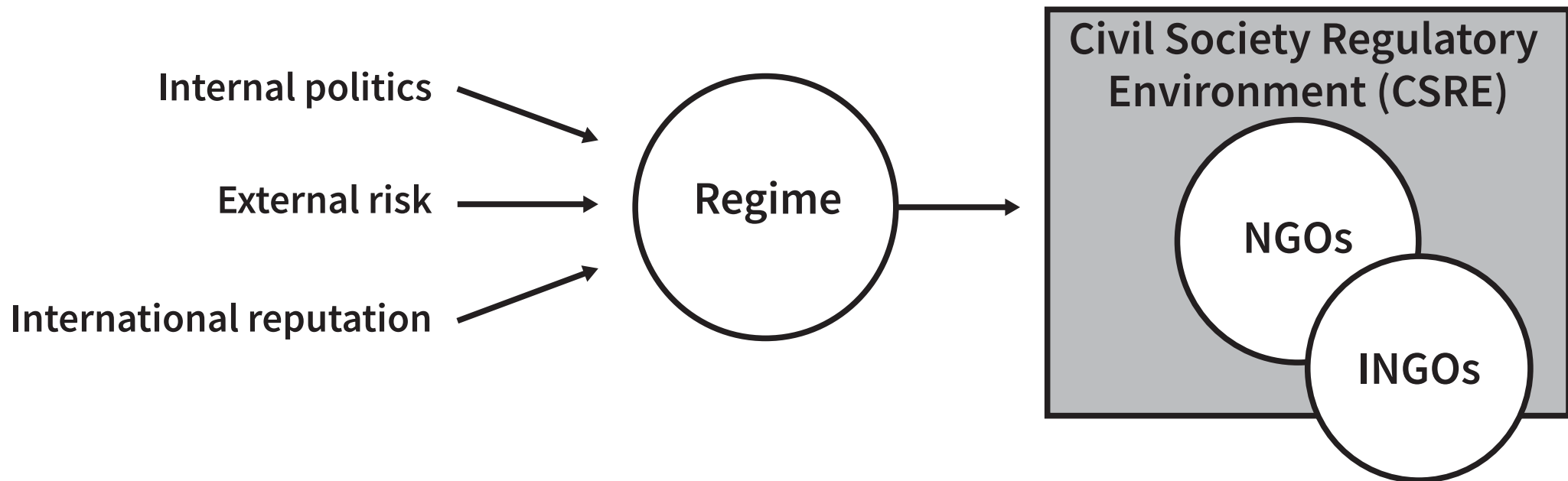
**Dictators use laws to avoid costs,  
reap benefits of NGOs**

**Gatekeeping**

**Programmatic**

# Varying enforcement

**Passage and enforcement  
depend on regime needs**





# Adjusting to the legal environment

Change staff

Change programs

Change laws

Leave and stop

Leave and sneak

	Conflict Countries and Failed States	Immediate Post-Conflict and Transitional Countries	Democratic Development Countries	Authoritarian Countries and Repressive Democracies
<b>Media Freedom</b>				
Safety and protection	●	●		●
Monitoring, research and advocacy	●	●	●	●
Media policy and professional environments		●	●	
<b>Media (Infra)structure</b>				
Alternative media (including community and exiled media)	●	●	●	●
Technical capacity and capacity building	●	●	●	
Digital Communications and Technologies	●	●	●	●
<b>Media Content</b>				
Specialised training		●	●	●
Media content monitoring		●	●	
Production of diverse and professional content	●	●	●	