UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

Ideology and Public Opinion in China

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

by

Jason Yuyan Wu

Committee in charge:

Professor Victor Shih, Co-Chair
Professor Margaret Roberts, Co-Chair
Professor Seth Hill
Professor David Lake
Professor Susan Shirk

2018

The dissertation of Jason Yuyan Wu is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

_____

_____

_____

_____
Co-Chair

_____
Co-Chair

University of California San Diego

2018

DEDICATION

To Julia.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Over the past six years I have accumulated a collection of debts that I am ill-equipped to repay. I am particularly grateful to my advisors, Victor Shih and Molly Roberts, for encouraging me to take on this project and providing me with the opportunities to make it possible. I am in debt to the other members of my committee- Susan Shirk, David Lake, and Seth Hill - for taking the time to think through these ideas and for sharing their wisdom.

Many mentors at UCSD and elsewhere have also helped shape this work. The second chapter has its origins in my conversations with Sebastian Saiegh, who introduced me to the idea of the spatial valence model. Zoltan Hajnal, Steph Haggard, Gary Jacobson, John Ahlquist, Kaare Strom, Megumi Naoi, Lei Guang, and Yiqing Xu all set aside their other responsibilities to help enrich my work. Francis Fukuyama, Katherine Unterman, and Lee Patterson made it possible for me to set down this path.

I would also like to thank my fellow travelers, who helped make this journey an agreeable one: Nazita Lajevardi, Michael Davidson, Dotan Haim, Jack Zhang, Andy Janusz, Brian Tsay, John Kuk, Kelly Matush, Inbok Rhee, Matt Nanes, Debbi Seligsohn, Shannon Carcelli, Clara Suong, Sean Morgan, Ike Sharpless, Dimitar Gueorguiev, Weiyi Shi, Steven Oliver, Zack Steinert-Threlkeld, Blake McMahon, Trinh Duc Duy, Brandon Merrell, Abigail Vaughn, Sara Kerosky, Scott Guenther, Jonghyuk Lee, and Jason Kuo. Thank you all for lending me your ears.

The Carnegie Corporation of New York, the 21st Century China Center at UCSD, the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation, the Smith Richardson Foundation, and the Friends of the International Center all contributed crucial financial support which helped make this venture possible - I am grateful to them for their support.

My parents provided me with the first example of the promise of an academic life, and they continue to inspire me as I make my way. My sister, Sophia, reminds me why all of this is worthwhile. And of course none of this would have been possible without the love and support of my wife. Thank you Julia, this work is dedicated to you.

Chapter 1 is co-authored with Tianguang Meng. I am grateful to him for supervising the implementation of the Chinese Urban Governance Survey, and for extending his permission for this paper to be included in my dissertation. Chapters 1, 2, and 3 are being prepared for publication. As the primary author, all remaining errors are my own.

VITA

2010	B. A. in English, Yale University
2014	M. A. in Political Science, University of California San Diego
2018	Ph. D. in Political Science, University of California San Diego

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Ideology and Public Opinion in China

by

Jason Yuyan Wu

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California San Diego, 2018

Professor Victor Shih, Co-Chair
Professor Margaret Roberts, Co-Chair

How do people living under authoritarian rule organize their beliefs about politics? Are their political preferences still organized along ideological lines? My research focuses on understanding the structure of mass attitudes under autocracy, using new data from China. I show that ideology in China is loosely organized around a left-right economic dimension and an authoritarian-democratic political dimension, and that the most politically sophisticated individuals are the least likely to constrain their ideological preferences to one dimension. Contrary to what we might expect, ideological polarization in China is largely absent at the mass level. In a second paper, I investigate the relationship between ideology and political participation. Using

a spatial model of choice, I discover that for most Chinese, perceived government competence is a bigger factor than ideological distance in political participation. The implication of the model is that the diffuse nature of public preferences gives the Communist party a free hand to implement its policy initiatives without alienating key constituencies. The last paper explores the meaning of ideological labels in China, using three national surveys. I find that while many Chinese citizens are willing to locate themselves on a left-right scale, the labels left and right do not carry a consistent programmatic meaning. Further analysis reveals that the partisan and symbolic content of these ideological labels is also limited. I argue that the absence of a shared ideological understanding prevents Chinese citizens from exercising political agency.

Chapter 1

The Nature of Ideology in Urban China

A foundational question in political behavior is whether the public possesses structured political preferences, something we can call ideology. The nature of ideology under authoritarian rule is particularly mysterious. In this paper, we examine the structure of ideology in Chinese public opinion using a nationally representative urban survey. We show that ideology in China is organized around a left-right economic dimension and an authoritarian-democratic political dimension, and that the most politically informed individuals are the least likely to constrain their ideological preferences to one dimension. By analyzing the correlates of ideology, we see that younger and better-educated individuals are the most likely to favor free markets, and that while members of the Communist Party no longer possess any sort of distinct economic preferences, they are markedly more authoritarian. We argue that individuals can acquire a weakly structured understanding of politics in the absence of open partisan conflict.

Introduction

What do the citizens of an authoritarian regime know and believe about politics? Is there a structure to their political attitudes, something we can understand as ideology? In democracies, partisan conflict is one of the most important sources of the structure in public opinion. Electoral competition creates divisions within the public and reproduces ideological divides between political parties as divides within public opinion (Jacobson, 2012; Hetherington, 2001; Abramowitz and Saunders, 1998, 2008; Layman and Carsey, 2002; Zaller, 1992). In majoritarian systems, these divides typically manifest themselves in a unidimensional ideological space, while in proportional systems, the contours of partisan competition tend to produce a multidimensional structure instead (Bakker, Jolly and Polk, 2012).

How is ideology structured in an authoritarian context, where electoral competition between multiple political parties is either impossible or a sideshow? This paper investigates the structure of political beliefs under authoritarian rule by measuring the ideology of Chinese citizens in an original survey. We show that public opinion in China is organized around two major axes. The first is an economic divide over the role of the state in the economy, while the second is a split between authoritarian and democratic orientations. Chinese citizens who are more informed about politics are also more likely to organize their thinking about politics using two dimensions instead of one.

We argue that a two-dimensional understanding of the Chinese public sheds new light on a number of long-standing puzzles in Chinese politics. In particular, it suggests that the regime's ability to sustain economic reforms while stifling political reforms may not be a puzzle at all, since in a two-dimensional policy space, the winners from economic reforms may have nothing to do with the segment of the public that supports political change.

The last part of our empirical analysis describes the relationship between ideology and a host of socioeconomic variables, such as membership in the Communist party, education and age. We show that Communist party membership is no longer associated with leftist economic views

in China- party members have the same beliefs about the proper role of the state in the economy as non-party members. Where party members differ from non-party members is in their attitude towards democracy; party members are more likely to endorse authoritarian ideological beliefs than non-party members.

We also find that while more educated individuals are more likely to support the market economy, they are not any more supportive of democratic ideals. A better-educated public may push the party to institute economic reforms, but it may not have a meaningful effect on political reform. Age, on the other hand, does correlate with both dimensions of ideology. Younger respondents in our sample are more likely to prefer a market economy and a more democratic political system.

We conclude with some thoughts about the sources of structure in Chinese public opinion. We argue that a relatively diffuse ideological structure is likely when demand for political conflict exists among the public, but the supply of such conflict among elites is limited.

The Structure of Ideology in Comparative Perspective

Scholars of political behavior have engaged in a wide-ranging debate about the nature and existence of ideology in democracies since *The American Voter* (Campbell et al., 1960) and Converse (1964) asserted that most Americans lacked any meaningful structure to their political opinions. While most observers agree that political rhetoric and the behavior of politicians is well-characterized by a single left-right dimension in the US (Poole and Rosenthal, 2007), scholars still disagree about the nature of ideology in the general public. Some scholars contend that ordinary citizens' opinions about politics lack ideological coherence (Broockman, 2016; Fiorina, Abrams and Pope, 2010). Others find a structure to ideology among the general public, but disagree as to whether it is largely characterized by one dimension (Jessee, 2009) or two (Treier and Hillygus, 2009). In contemporary American politics, when a second dimension appears, it tends to capture social and cultural issues such as abortion (Treier and Hillygus, 2009), though issues like slavery

and race relations have also characterized the second dimension in the past (Poole and Rosenthal, 1997).

In European parliamentary democracies, ideological divisions at both the party and the mass level historically appear in two dimensions - an economic dimension that captured class divides, and a cultural dimension which captured divisions over religion (Kriesi et al., 2006). These ideological divisions are rooted in political and social cleavages, such as the class cleavage, the religious cleavage, and the center-periphery cleavage (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Over time, as social movements transformed the left and the right, the second dimension also began to capture issues such as immigration, ethnicity, and the divide between nationalism and European integration (Kriesi et al., 2006; Henjak, 2010).

In practice, however, political contestation often occurs along a one-dimensional axis. A one-dimensional ideological spectrum facilitates coalition formation for parties (van der Brug and van Spanje, 2009), and can also lighten the intellectual burden on voters (Downs, 1957; Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2002). Kitschelt (1994) reports that the first dimension of ideology in Europe is a Socialist-Capitalist divide, while the second dimension is a Libertarian-Authoritarian division. However, in his view partisan competition in Western Europe actually occurs along a single Left-Libertarian and Right-Authoritarian axis; citizens who have Left-Authoritarian and Right-Libertarian views are left without political parties that align with their views. In Eastern Europe, a similar two-dimensional space collapses into one axis of partisan conflict, which proceeds along a Left-Authoritarian and Right-Libertarian division instead (Marks et al., 2006; Kitschelt, 1992).

In nearly all conceptions of two-dimensional ideological spaces, the first dimension describes the left-right debate over the role of the state in the economy. The second dimension, however, is frequently unique to the country in question. In Argentina, for instance, the first, left-right dimension, is supplemented with a second, Peronist- Anti-Peronist dimension, while in Paraguay the second dimension captures intraparty factional divisions (Saiegh, 2009).

What then, do we know about the structure of ideology in authoritarian regimes? Most studies of authoritarian regimes have been focused on political institutions, or the elite. Classic models of autocracy considered the dynamics of political competition within the elite, and in particular the strategic choices of the winning coalition and the selectorate (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2003; Shirk, 1993). More recent work on authoritarian regimes has taken a turn towards institutions. These works have sought to uncover the significance of nominally democratic institutions such as elections, legislatures, and parties (Blaydes, 2011; Svolik, 2012).

Some studies of authoritarian regimes have turned their attention to ideology to explain the effects of institutional changes. Pioneering work by Manion (1996) found that competitive village elections in China produced greater ideological congruence between villagers and their leaders on economic issues. Ideology is also considered an important mediating variable between the rulers and the ruled. Magaloni (2006), for instance, argues that an individual's ideology is one of the parameters that determines the price of his vote. Voters who do not share the regime's ideology are expected to name a higher price to support the ruling regime.

However, until recently, little work had focused on characterizing the overall structure of political attitudes under authoritarian rule. Most survey research in China, for instance, has focused instead on specific features of public opinion, such as support for the government (Tang, 2005; Chen and Dickson, 2010), economic preferences (Whyte, 2010), democratic values (Nathan and Shi, 1996; Chen, 2013), political trust (Li, 2004; Shi, 2001), or political culture (Shi, 2014; Tang, 2016).

This paper explores the nature of ideology under authoritarian rule. We investigate the structure of political attitudes in urban China, using a nationally representative face-to-face survey. Our work builds on new research[1] by Pan and Xu (2018) which examines the structure of political attitudes in China by using a sample of individuals who took a popular online survey called the Chinese Political Compass. Pan and Xu find that in their opt-in sample, the ideology of

[1] See also Wu (2014) and Lu, Chu and Shen (2016) for studies of ideological structure, and Cantoni et al. (2017) for an evaluation of the effect of curricular reform on political attitudes.

Chinese citizens is organized around three dimensions which are highly correlated with each other. Individuals who support greater state involvement in the economy are also more likely to favor authoritarian rule and nationalism. On the other hand, individuals who prefer market reform are also likely to endorse democratic institutions and to oppose nationalism.

Ideological Divisions in China

While relatively little research to date has focused on the ideological structure of public opinion in China, the history of China under Communist rule is in many ways a history of ideological transformation. During the Mao era, the Communist Party used ideology and thought work as tools to both unify and reshape Chinese society (Schurmann, 1968). Ideological unity was enforced by the regime through re-education campaigns, repression, and a burgeoning propaganda apparatus (Brady, 2008). The party's conception of ideology during this period was one-dimensional. The regime identified Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought as its exemplars of pure and applied ideology, and organized ideological campaigns like the Anti-Rightist Movement and the Cultural Revolution to detect and punish individuals who deviated from the party line.

Deng Xiaoping's decision to open up the Chinese economy at the Third Plenum of the 11th Party Congress in 1978 created the preconditions for new ideological patterns to emerge in Chinese society. During the 1980s, the Chinese leadership pursued a course of rapid economic and limited political reform. By decentralizing power and loosening the strictures of the planned economy, China's leaders lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty (Montinola, Qian and Weingast, 1995; Naughton, 1995). At the same time, the overwhelming success of economic reform brought about wrenching changes in Chinese society. China became one of the world's most unequal nations, and hundreds of millions of people moved from the countryside to the prosperous cities along the coast in one of the largest migrations in human history (Wallace, 2014). Emboldened by the success of the economic reforms, liberal intellectuals called for the

party to embrace political reform as well (Womack, 1984).

The 1989 Tiananmen Square tragedy spurred a period of conservative retrenchment. The party instituted a sweeping new patriotic education campaign to bolster its legitimacy (Zhao, 1998), while leftist intellectuals called for China to embrace traditional Chinese values and eschew westernization (Song, Zhang and Qiao, 1996). Other elements of what came to be known as the New Left demanded that China do more to ameliorate rising inequality and the costs of globalization by instituting greater state control of the economy (Li, 2010; Misra, 2003).

Liberals in this period took note of many of the same problems in Chinese society, but argued that the best way to solve these problems was to implement more comprehensive economic reform, embrace grassroots democracy, and enforce rule of law (Goldman, 2009; Xu, 2003). These patterns of ideological debate within the elite persist to this day.

Theoretical Intuitions and Testable Implications

Studies of mass opinion in democracies and the state of elite ideological debates in China allow us to generate some expectations about the structure of ideology in contemporary China. One possibility is that ideology in China is largely unidimensional because it is based on the winners and losers of reform. If this is the case, then we would expect relatively well-off respondents to support economic and political reform, while relatively worse-off respondents oppose both economic and political reform. This hypothesized structure approximates what Marks et al. (2006) find in Post-Communist Eastern Europe - a dominant left-authoritarian and right-democratic axis.

A second possibility is that ideology in China is unidimensional but organized around support or opposition to the regime. If this is the case, then the questions we include in the survey about the political system are likely to be the best at discriminating between individuals on the dominant ideological dimension. Respondents who support the political system under this scenario might also be expected to support the party's status quo economic policies.

We have good reason, however, to think that ideology in China is best explained by more than one dimension. Because open elite ideological conflict remains a taboo in Chinese politics (Shirk, 2007; Gueorguiev and Schuler, 2016), the general public does not typically see the types of elite cues which help structure ideology in democracies. In democratic states, cues from partisan competition, the need to form governing coalitions, and the need to simplify policy debates for voters all push ideology into lower-dimensional space. In an authoritarian regime that does not conduct meaningful national-level elections, these forces are not able to constrain mass attitudes in the same way.

However, even if we find that ideology among most Chinese citizens is multidimensional, the structure of ideology for more informed individuals may not follow the same pattern. One possibility, drawn from the US case, is that politically knowledgeable individuals constrain their thinking about politics to one dimension, but most of the public lacks the political knowledge to function with the same degree of ideological constraint. If this is true, then we could summarize the preferences of the most knowledgeable individuals using one dimension, while the beliefs of the least informed citizens would be harder to reduce to a single dimension.

A final possibility is that ideology is multidimensional in China among both the well-informed and the general public. This may be because economic issues have diverged from political issues in Chinese society in the reform era. If this were the case, then the most informed citizens may be more multidimensional in their thinking about politics than the least informed citizens, because their thinking more nearly captures the ideological divisions among elites or because they are more likely to consider each policy on its own merits.

To distinguish between these last two possibilities, we condition our analysis of the dimensionality of ideology in China on the political knowledge of our respondents. By analyzing the beliefs of our least, moderately, and most informed respondents separately, we will be able to see if the structure of ideology we observe is related to a lack of political knowledge. This approach parallels a series of studies in the US which discovered that for well-informed citizens,

the structure of their ideological preferences was similar to the one-dimensional structure of ideology for elites (Jennings, 1992; Jacoby, 1995; Lupton, Myers and Thornton, 2015).

The Chinese Urban Governance Survey

To estimate the ideology of Chinese citizens, we use new data from the Chinese Urban Governance Survey (CUGS), which was conducted in the summer of 2015. Since traditional samples based on household lists tend to undercount migrants from rural areas in China, this survey used GPS Assisted Area Sampling to generate a nationally representative urban sample (Landry and Shen, 2005). Our enumerators interviewed a total of 3513 respondents in 50 cities from 24 different provinces in China. The response rate for the survey was 63.6%.

Our analysis focuses on twelve questions that asked citizens whether they agreed or disagreed with a set of statements, which were selected to represent a variety of politically, economically, and culturally salient issues, such as the role of the state in the economy and the proper limits to freedom of speech.

Since we are interested in how the dimensionality of ideology changes with the level of political knowledge in the population, we also use seven factual questions from the survey to generate a measure of political information.[2] The full text of these questions is presented in the appendix.

We report response proportions for the ideology questions in Table 1.1, and descriptive statistics for our key variables[3,4] in Table 1.2.

[2]We measure each respondent's level of political information using an item response model. We assume that political information is a latent characteristic and that respondents who are more knowledgeable about politics will be more likely to respond correctly to our questions about current events and China's political institutions. We estimate each respondent's level of political information using a binary IRT (Imai, Lo and Olmsted, 2016). The advantage of using this method (instead of a simple count of correct answers) to measure political knowledge is that it allows the model to discover how effective each question is at discriminating between highly informed and poorly informed individuals. "Don't Know" answers are coded as incorrect, rather than as missing data.

[3]Educational attainment is measured on a 7-point scale, from 1 (Less than Elementary School) to 7 (Postgraduate Education).

[4]Our income variable is a composite of two measures. The first measure asks respondents to list their family income in 2014. Some respondents did not produce a response to the first question but did answer a second question

Table 1.1: Responses to the Chinese Urban Governance Survey Ideology Questions

	% Strongly Disagree	% Somewhat Disagree	% Somewhat Agree	% Strongly Agree	%. DK	% NA
Individuals should be able to own land 个人应当可以拥有土地	2.8	20.5	44.3	19.4	12.1	1
The minimum wage should be set by the state 最低工资应由国家规定	2.3	19	47.6	18.3	11.8	1
Western Multiparty systems are unsuitable for China in its current state 西方的多党制不适合中国国情	2.6	16.1	42.1	14.6	23.4	1.1
The modern Chinese society needs Confucianism 现代中国社会需要儒家思想	2	18.9	41.7	13.5	22.8	1
Indiscriminately imitating western-style freedom of speech will lead to social disorder 照搬西方式的言论自由, 社会就乱了	3	20.7	39.6	13.5	22.1	1.1
Private ownership of property disadvantages working class people 发展私有制经济会导致劳动人民沦为弱势群体	3.9	26.5	34.2	7.4	27.4	0.6
Privatizing the assets of state-owned enterprises should not be allowed 不能允许民间资本兼并国有企业	6.1	31.8	27.4	6.7	27.4	0.6
Attempting to control real estate prices will undermine economic development 试图控制房地产价格的行为会破坏经济发展	5.8	29	30.6	7	26.8	0.8
Marketization exacerbates economic inequality 市场化必然加剧贫富两极分化	3	23.9	35.2	10.5	26.7	0.7
Sectors important to people's livelihoods must be controlled by state-owned enterprises 关系到国计民生的领域, 必须全部由国有企业掌控	7.8	30.6	28.4	7.5	25.1	0.6
Media should be allowed to represent the voice of specific social strata or interest groups 应当允许媒体代表特定阶层或利益集团发言	6.3	23	32.8	10	27.3	0.7
China's current political system is the one that is best suited for China's circumstances 我国目前的政治制度是最适合中国国情的	1.9	15.5	47.9	19.7	14.3	0.8

Table 1.2: Summary Statistics

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Ideology (Left-Right)	3,513	0.00	1.00	−3.81	4.03
Ideology (Authoritarian-Democratic)	3,513	0.00	1.00	−4.06	4.09
Information	3,513	0.00	1.00	-2.09	1.42
CCP Member	3,494	0.12	0.32	0	1
State Sector Employment	3,231	0.38	0.49	0	1
Age	3,513	43.20	15.04	18	70
Education	3,467	3.74	1.47	1	7
Female	3,513	0.50	0.50	0	1
Rural Hukou	3,510	0.33	0.47	0	1
Family Income	2,181	74,903	76,588	2,500	800,000

Note: Because we produce our ideology measures using a Bayesian item response model, we can still generate ideology estimates for respondents who have missing values in their answers.

Empirical Strategy

We begin by investigating the amount of variance explained by each dimension of the ideological space with a weighted Principal Components Analysis (PCA)[5] of the ideology questions. We also analyze the structure of ideology separately for low, medium, and high information respondents to see if more knowledgeable citizens have a different understanding of the nature of ideology in China.

We use the results from the weighted PCA and an exploratory factor analysis model to specify a series of two-factor confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) models[6] to evaluate the structure of our respondents' political attitudes. We again specify separate models for low, medium, and

which asked them to choose an income bracket. When respondents answered the second question but not the first, we imputed their income as the midpoint of the bracket they selected. For the respondents who picked the top bracket (More than 400,000 RMB in 2014), we imputed a value based on the number of respondents in the highest and second-highest categories, using a modified Pareto distribution (Hout, 2004).

[5]Since our survey used a stratified cluster sampling strategy, we use the inverse probability weights, adjusted for unit nonresponse, to conduct weighted PCA. Weighting our analysis in this way gives us results that are more representative.

[6]Standard maximum likelihood estimation assumes that the variables are continuous and that they follow a multivariate normal distribution. When these assumptions are violated, the standard errors may be biased. As a result, we estimated our CFA models using robust maximum-likelihood. The estimation procedure we use also adjusts for the design effect from our complex sampling strategy (Oberski, 2014).

high information respondents to see if political knowledge conditions the structure of ideology for our respondents.

The last part of our analysis explores the relationship between ideology and socioeconomic variables, such as age, education, and party membership. To generate individual-level measures of ideology we use Bayesian item response theory (IRT). The model we use is based on the standard ideal point model (Clinton, Jackman and Rivers, 2004), but is adjusted to allow for analysis of ordinal variables (Quinn, 2004).

The Ordinal Item Response Model

Formally, suppose we have $i = (1, ..., n)$ respondents, $j = (1, ..., p)$ items, $k = (1, ..., s)$ dimensions or factors, and then $c = (1, ..., C)$ categories of ordinal variables. Then we have the latent variable x^*_{ij} while we also observe x_{ij}, where $x_{ij} = x^*_{ij}$ for continuous variables j, and $x_{ij} = c$ if $x^*_{ij} \in (\gamma_{j(c-1)}, \gamma_{jc})$ for ordinal variables j, where γ_{jc} is the cutpoint for category c in ordinal variable j.

Following (Quinn, 2004) we set γ_{j0} to $-\infty$, γ_{j1} to 0, and γ_{jC_j} to ∞ for identification. Then we have a factor model for n individuals where

$$x^*_i = \Lambda\phi_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{1.1}$$

where x^*_i is a vector with length p which contains individual i's latent responses, and Λ is a $p \times s$ matrix of factor loadings for each of the s factors we have estimated. We also have ϕ_i which is an s length vector of factor scores for individual i, and normal error term ε_i. The first element of $\phi_{i,...,n}$ is set to 1 so that we can specify the elements of the first column of $\Lambda_{1,...,p}$ as the item difficulty parameter. ϕ_{i2} is individual i's ideal point or factor score for the first factor, and ϕ_{i3} is the ideal point for the second dimension or factor. Meanwhile, we have Λ_{j1} as the difficulty parameter for item j, Λ_{j2} as the discrimination parameter for the first factor or dimension, and

Λ_{j3} as the discrimination parameter for the second dimension.

The discrimination parameters for each question estimate the strength and the direction with which a respondent's position on a given ideological dimension is related to her answers to that question. When questions have large discrimination parameters, a respondent's answers to that item will be strongly related to her overall ideal point.

We estimate a two-dimensional item response model using the `R` package `MCMCpack` (Martin, Quinn and Park, 2011). For identification purposes, we constrained the discrimination parameter for the question on the role of state owned enterprises to be negative on the first dimension and 0 on the second dimension. We also constrained the discrimination parameter for the Confucianism question to be negative on the second dimension. This means that individuals who agree that state-owned enterprises should control the key sectors of the economy will have a negative ideal point for the first dimension, while individuals who believe modern Chinese society needs Confucianism will have a negative ideal point for the second dimension. To estimate the ideal points and parameter estimates, we implement an MCMC model with normal priors for Λ. After discarding a burn-in of $50,000$ iterations, we thin the next $1,000,000$ iterations by 100 to generate $10,000$ posterior samples. We present convergence diagnostics in the appendix.

The Structure of Mass Attitudes in China

Our weighted PCA results show that multiple dimensions explain how Chinese citizens structure their political preferences. The left-most panel of Figure 1.1 shows that the first dimension explains 25.5% of the variation in our data, while the second dimension explains 13.8%. Both figures are significantly more than we would expect if the answers to the ideology questions were uncorrelated.[7] Since the third dimension does not do any better at explaining the

[7] To verify this, we generated 1000 simulated datasets with no correlation between answers, but with marginal distributions for each ideology question which matched the actual survey responses. We found that the first dimension would only be expected to explain 9.7% of the variation ($SD = 0.19\%$), while the second dimension would only be expected to explain 9.3% ($SD = 0.14\%$).

variance in the data than random chance, we conclude that the ideology of Chinese citizens is best modeled in a two-dimensional space.

What remains unclear from this preliminary analysis is whether we find a two-dimensional structure in our data because most people lack the political awareness to detect a one-dimensional ideological cleavage in society. If we were basing our intuitions on the US case, then we might expect that one latent dimension effectively summarizes the ideology of elites and the well-informed, while two are needed to effectively characterize the general public (Lupton, Myers and Thornton, 2015; Barber and Pope, 2016).

To explore this possibility, we divided our sample into thirds based on their level of political information and used weighted PCA to examine each subset of our sample. Our results in the next three panels of Figure 1.1 show that the ideological preferences of the most informed respondents are also the hardest to summarize using one latent dimension, contrary to our expectations. For the least-informed third of our respondents, the first dimension of ideology explains 31.6% of the variation in the data, while for the middle third it explains 27.4%. For the most informed, the first dimension only explains 21.8% of the variation in their preferences.

This result shows that political ignorance is unlikely to explain the structure of beliefs we find in our data. What is more likely is that the two dimensions of ideology we recover are rooted in substantive organizing principles, which politically knowledgeable individuals are better able to grasp and use to structure their beliefs.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The results of the PCA suggest that a theoretical model with two latent factors best explains the variation in the ideology data. To test this model, we used the results from an exploratory factor analysis to specify a two factor confirmatory factor analysis model. Table 1.3 shows the factor loadings for each question, as well as the correlation between the two factors and a collection of fit indices, which include the comparative fit index (CFI), standardized root

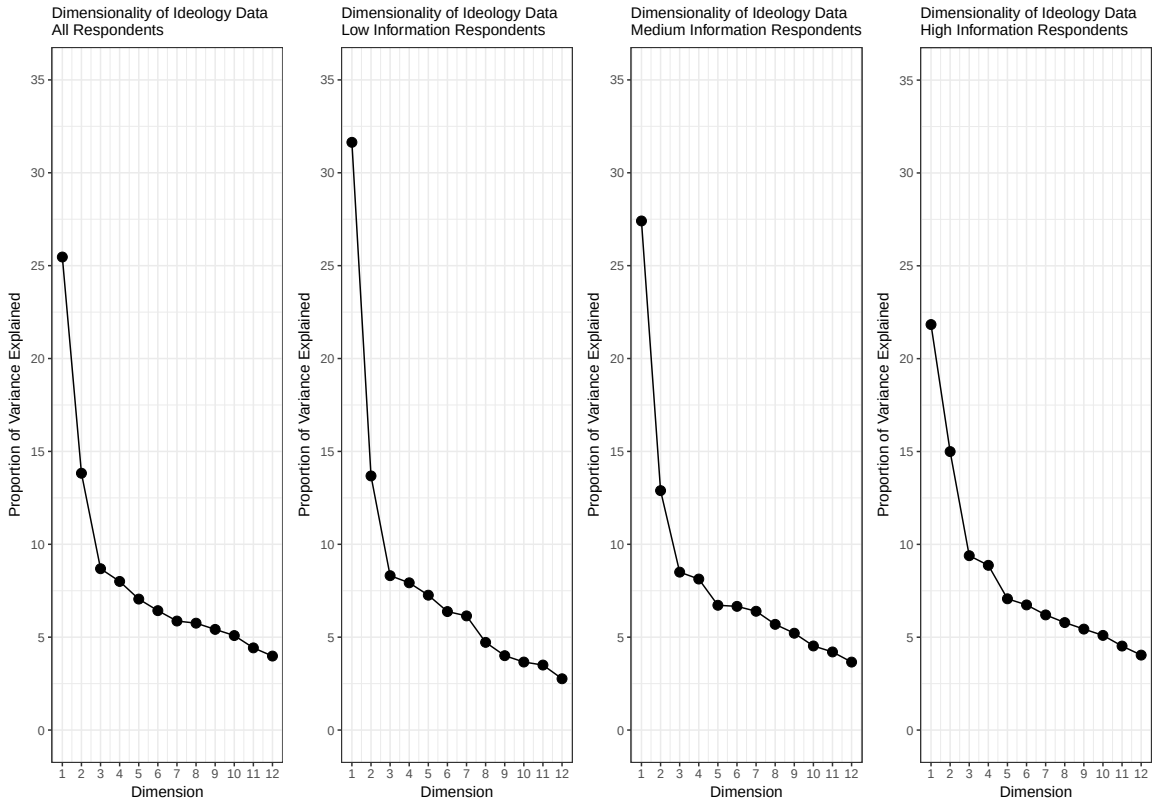


Figure 1.1: Proportion of variance explained by each dimension of the principal components analysis, by level of political knowledge.

mean squared residual (SRMR), and the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA). We find that the two factor model we have specified fits the data well (CFI = 0.910, SRMR = 0.038, RMSEA = 0.028).[8]

We find that the questions that load the most heavily on the first factor, which we call Left-Right, correspond with the familiar debate about the role of the state in the economy. These questions ask about the consequences of economic reform, as well as whether privatization has helped the working class in China, whether state-owned enterprises should control the key sectors of the economy, and whether free markets exacerbate inequality. Also loading on this dimension is a question about whether the media should be allowed to represent the interests of specific groups in society.

The second factor, which we call Authoritarian-Democratic, loads most heavily on political and cultural issues, such as multiparty democracy, China's political system, freedom of speech, and Confucianism. A question about whether the minimum wage should be set by the state also loads on this factor, while a question about land ownership is only very weakly related to this factor.[9] The factor correlation for the overall sample is relatively low at 0.394, which further indicates that the ideology of Chinese citizens is not well characterized by a single dimension.[10]

To evaluate the effect of information on the structure of political attitudes, we estimate separate factor analysis models for low, medium, and high information groups. If multiple dimensions are needed to summarize the preferences of well-informed individuals, the correlation between the two factors should be relatively low for the high information group. Table 1.4 shows

[8] As a rule of thumb, a RMSEA that is close to or below 0.06 and a SRMR that is close to or below 0.08 are signs of good fit. A CFI that is close to or greater than 0.95 is also a sign of good fit; a CFI that is between 0.90 and 0.95 signals acceptable fit (Brown, 2006).

[9] This question does not load significantly on either factor. Moving it to the first factor results in roughly the same model fit.

[10] We also estimated one factor and three factor models. For the one factor model, the model fit was noticeably worse (CFI = 0.595, SRMR = 0.076, RMSEA = 0.058). For the three factor model, only the question about privatization loaded heavily on the third factor, while the other questions continued to load on the same factors as they did in the two factor model, though the order of the factors reversed (authoritarian-democratic became the first factor, while left-right became the second factor). The three factor model fits roughly as well as the two factor model (CFI = 0.909, SRMR = 0.038, RMSEA = 0.028).

Table 1.3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Variable	*All Respondents*		
	Left-Right Factor	Authoritarian-Democratic Factor	
Worker Status	.660		
Privatization	.555		
Real Estate Prices	.579		
Free Market Inequality	.530		
State Owned Enterprises	.523		
Media Independence	.427		
Multiparty Democracy		.697	
Confucianism		.536	
Minimum Wage		.436	
Free Speech		.558	
Political System		.466	
Land Ownership		.175	
Factor Correlation			.394
Fit Indices			
CFI			.910
SRMR			.038
RMSEA			.028

the factor analysis results after we condition on political information. The factor correlation for the most informed third of the population is 0.242, while the factor correlation for the least informed and moderately informed thirds is 0.480 and 0.506, respectively. This result shows high information respondents are much more likely to draw a distinction between a left-right ideological dimension and an authoritarian-democratic dimension, and to use these constructs to guide their answers to our questions about political attitudes.

These findings support our argument that the ideological structure of the Chinese public is two-dimensional. Our results show that the ideological divide in China is not simply organized around support or opposition to the regime. Moreover, our results provide some insight into why the public's ideology is structured in this way. Ideology in the US is sometimes described as two-dimensional because less informed citizens do not hold political beliefs that are consistent with the left-right divide among elites. What we find, however, suggests that in China, ideology is not two-dimensional because of a lack of constraint among less informed citizens, but rather because more informed citizens organize their policy preferences along separate economic and political lines.

Measuring Individual Ideal Points

The weighted PCA and factor analysis results show that Chinese public opinion is structured along both a left-right and an authoritarian-democratic axis. The next question is where different groups in Chinese society fall along these two dimensions. Who is on the left and who is on the right in China? What sorts of people tend to endorse more authoritarian or more democratic attitudes? In this section we use an ordinal IRT model to estimate the ideal points for each individual and then evaluate the relationship between each dimension of ideology and a group of socioeconomic variables, including age, education, and party membership. We also report the difficulty and discrimination parameters we find for the twelve ideology questions.

Our IRT analysis confirms the finding that the first dimension of ideology in China is the

Table 1.4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results Conditioned on Political Information

Variable	Left-Right Factor			Authoritarian-Democratic Factor					
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High			
Worker Status	.661	.622	.697						
Privatization	.626	.593	.486						
Real Estate Prices	.723	.498	.553						
Free Market Inequality	.552	.436	.582						
State Owned Enterprises	.656	.577	.412						
Media Independence	.528	.534	.306						
Multiparty Democracy				.760	.743	.652			
Confucianism				.618	.511	.513			
Minimum Wage				.424	.470	.409			
Free Speech				.715	.565	.466			
Political System				.406	.412	.543			
Land Ownership				.225	.365	.031			
							Low	Medium	High
Factor Correlation							.480	.506	.242
Fit Indices									
CFI							.912	.945	.911
SRMR							.050	.041	.046
RMSEA							.043	.026	.028

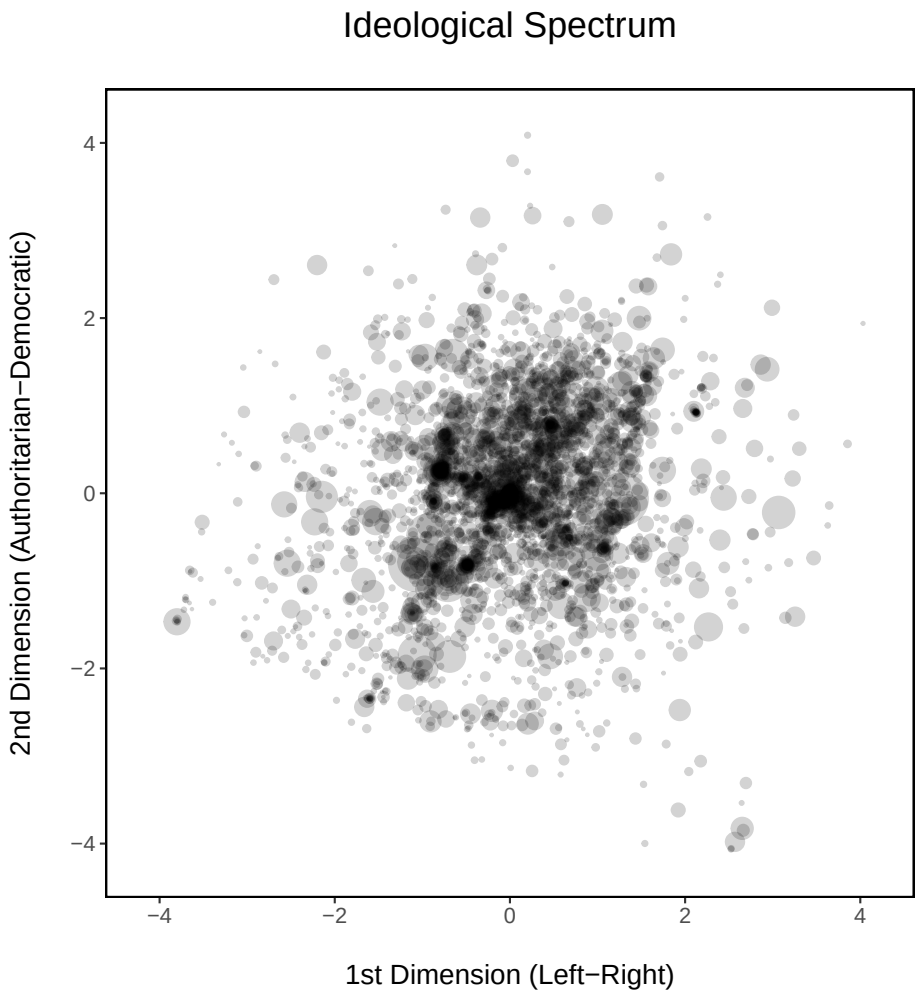


Figure 1.2: Scatterplot of respondent ideology estimates from our ordinal item-response model. The size of each point is proportional to the inverse probability weight, adjusted for nonresponse, for a given respondent.

left-right divide between market and anti-market orientations. The questions that load the most heavily on this dimension have discrimination parameters (Λ_{j2}) with large absolute values. These questions ask if private ownership of property disadvantages working class people, if privatization of state-owned enterprises should be forbidden, and if the expansion of the market has exacerbated income inequality. Respondents who generally agreed with the anti-market position in these questions come away with negative first dimension ideology scores (that is, $\phi_{i2} < 0$), while those who disagreed received positive scores ($\phi_{i2} > 0$).

Table 1.5: Difficulty and Discrimination Parameters

	Difficulty Parameter	Left-Right Discrimination Parameter	Auth.-Dem. Discrimination Parameter
Private ownership of property disadvantages working class people 发展私有制经济会导致劳动人民沦为弱势群体	2.37	−1.09	0.20
Privatizing the assets of state-owned enterprises should not be allowed 不能允许民间资本兼并国有企业	1.75	−0.80	0.17
Attempting to control real estate prices will undermine economic development 试图控制房地产价格的行为会破坏经济发展	1.72	−0.71	0.13
Sectors important to people's livelihoods must be controlled by state-owned enterprises 关系到国计民生的领域, 必须全部由国有企业掌控	1.51	−0.67	0.00
Marketization exacerbates economic inequality 市场化必然加剧贫富两极分化	2.07	−0.65	−0.01
Western Multiparty systems are unsuitable for China in its current state 西方的多党制不适合中国国情	2.78	−0.60	−1.04
Media should be allowed to represent the voice of specific social strata or interest groups 应当允许媒体代表特定阶层或利益集团发言	1.55	−0.53	−0.16
Indiscriminately imitating western-style freedom of speech will lead to social disorder 照搬西方式的言论自由, 社会就乱了	2.34	−0.50	−0.76
The modern Chinese society needs Confucianism 现代中国社会需要儒家思想	2.48	−0.46	−0.71
The minimum wage should be set by the state 最低工资应由国家规定	2.19	−0.44	−0.40
China's current political system is the one that is best suited for China's circumstances 我国目前的政治制度是最适合中国国情的	2.36	−0.34	−0.54
Individuals should be able to own land 个人应当可以拥有土地	1.88	−0.16	−0.14

The second dimension of ideology captures political and cultural divides in China. It is most clearly associated with a divide between traditional-authoritarian orientations (which show up as negative ideal points) and democratic orientations (which show up as positive). The questions that load the most heavily on the authoritarian-democratic dimension have discrimination parameters (Λ_{j3}) with high absolute values. These items ask whether Western multiparty systems are unsuitable for China, whether indiscriminately imitating Western-style freedom of speech will lead to chaos, and whether modern Chinese society needs Confucianism. Respondents who agreed received negative second dimension ideology estimates ($\phi_{i3} < 0$), while respondents who disagreed received positive scores ($\phi_{i3} > 0$).

We scaled the respondent ideal points so that on each dimension, the mean was 0 and the standard deviation was 1. Figure 1.2 shows the weighted distribution of respondent ideology over these two dimensions, while Table 1.5 presents the discrimination and difficulty parameters. The discrimination parameters we recover are very similar to the factor loadings we found through confirmatory factor analysis. One difference from the factor analysis is that the questions about whether the minimum wage should be set by the state and whether individuals should be able to own land load relatively equally on both dimensions.

The Correlates of Ideology

Measuring ideology at the individual level allows us to explore the variation in ideology for different segments[11] of Chinese society. Figure 1.3 presents the relationship between ideology and age, education, income, and political information. In the top-left panel we find that age has clear associations with both ideological dimensions. Younger respondents are farther to the right economically, while older respondents are farther to the left. On the second dimension, younger respondents show less attachment to traditional and authoritarian political attitudes than

[11] Because our data come from a complex survey design, and we wish to generalize our findings to the broader urban population, we adjust for the uncertainty introduced by weighting, stratification and clustering in our comparisons of each subpopulation (Lumley, 2010).

older ones do. The size of the differences between young and old respondents is substantial; respondents between the ages of 18 and 29 are, on average, about four-tenths of a standard deviation farther to the right than those between 60 and 70 years old on economic issues and also about four-tenths of a standard deviation more democratic on the second dimension.

The top-right panel of Figure 1.3 shows that education correlates with the first dimension of ideology. The most educated respondents are more likely to support the market economy, while the poorly educated support greater state intervention. Individuals who have graduated from college or attended graduate school are roughly half of a standard deviation farther to the right than the least educated respondents, who had at most an elementary school education.[12]

However, the relationship between education and the authoritarian-democratic dimension of ideology is less clear. While the least educated respondents are the most authoritarian group, the differences between each category are for the most part insignificant, and a bivariate regression[13] using education as a predictor and the second dimension of ideology as an outcome variable does not return a significant association.

The relationship between ideology and information is similar to the one we found for ideology and education. As the bottom-left panel of Figure 1.3 shows, more informed individuals are more likely to favor the free market and position themselves farther to the right on the first dimension, but the relationship on the second dimension is again not significant.

The relationship between ideology and income is harder to interpret. The poorest individuals in our sample, who report a family income of less than $30,000$ RMB in 2014, are the most likely to favor state involvement in the economy - they fall the farthest to the left on the first

[12] We collapsed our seven point education index into five categories in Figure 1.3 to keep all of our plots on the same scale and to ease interpretation. Respondents who graduated from college are grouped with those with a postgraduate education, and individuals with less than an elementary school education are grouped with those who finished elementary school. If we use the full seven point measure of education, then the survey-weighted difference on the first dimension for the tails of our distribution is larger than what we see in Figure 1.3 - individuals with a postgraduate education are about seven-tenths of a standard deviation farther to the right than individuals with less than an elementary school education.

[13] We estimate a survey-weighted regression model with design-based standard errors here to take the nature of our sample into account.

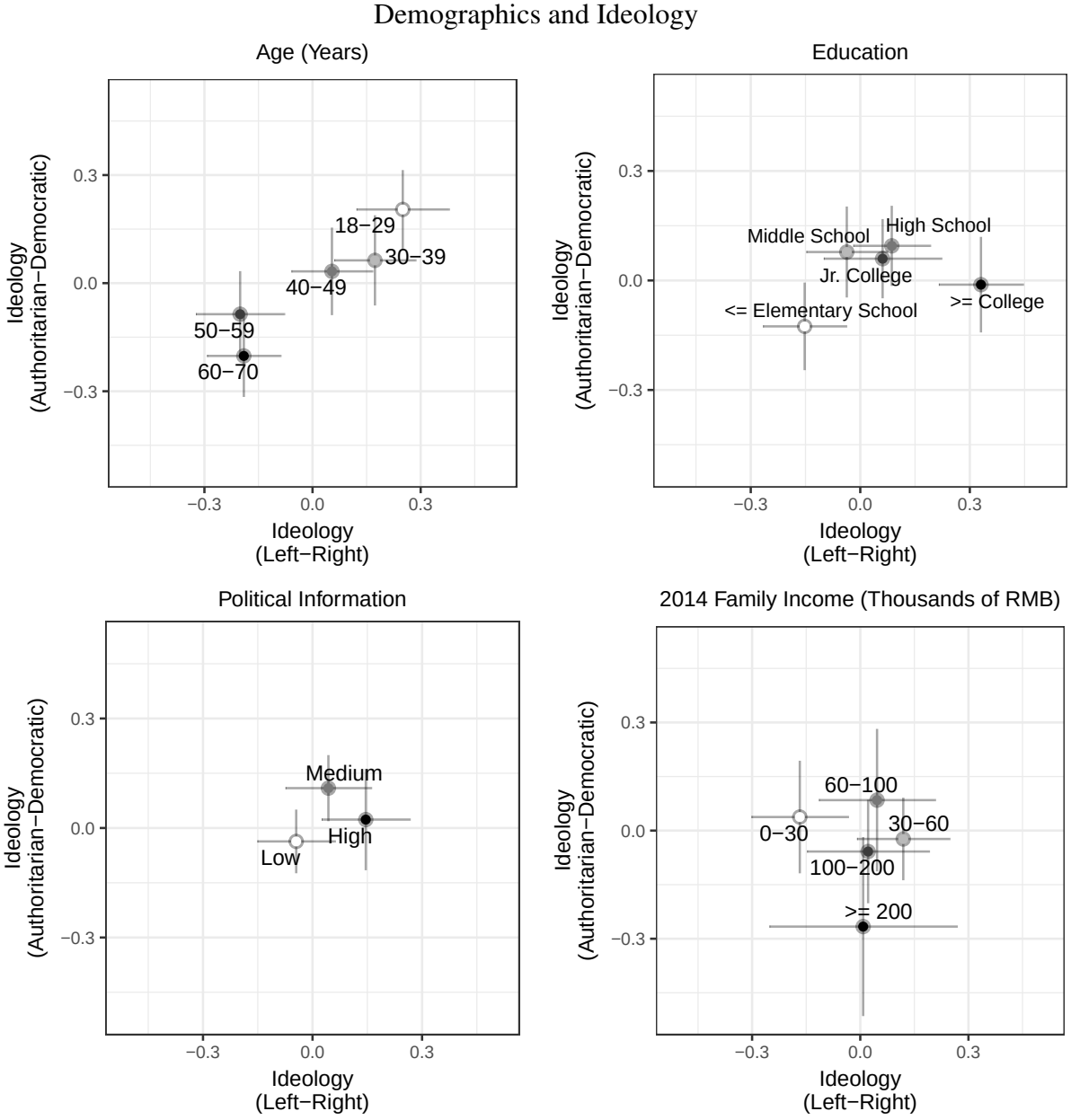


Figure 1.3: The relationship between ideology and age, education, political information, and family income. The location of each point indicates the mean ideology for a given group. Darker points have higher values of the demographic variable in question. The 90% confidence intervals for each estimate have been adjusted to reflect the uncertainty introduced by the sampling strategy.

dimension. Meanwhile, the richest individuals, who report family incomes in excess of $200,000$ RMB a year, are the most authoritarian on the second dimension. However, bivariate regressions do not find a significant relationship between income and either ideological dimension.

Figure 1.4 reports the relationship between ideology and membership in the Communist Party, state sector employment, gender, and *hukou* status. We find that Communist Party members are indistinguishable from people outside the party on the left-right scale in the top-left panel of Figure 1.4. Party members are, however, more authoritarian by a quarter of a standard deviation on average.

We do not find a definitive relationship between ideology and state sector employment. In the top-right panel we see that individuals who work for party or government organizations, state-owned enterprises, and other work units inside the state sector are on average slightly farther left and slightly more authoritarian than those who work for private or foreign-owned enterprises, but these differences are insignificant once the uncertainty introduced by sampling is taken into account.

We learn from the bottom-left panel of Figure 1.4 that gender also does not have a significant bivariate relationship with ideology. While men are slightly farther to the right on the first dimension and slightly more democratic on the second dimension than women, neither difference is significant if we adjust our standard errors to reflect the stratification and clustering in our sample.

The bottom-right panel shows that migrants from rural areas (who have what is known as a rural household registration status, or a rural *hukou*) tend to be more democratic on the second dimension than people with an urban *hukou*.[14] Rural migrants are also slightly farther to the right on the first dimension, though this difference is not significant.

We present a multiple regression analysis of the relationship between these demographic variables and ideology in Table 1.6. The first model examines the left-right dimension of ideology

[14] A design-based t-test reveals that this difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), though the confidence intervals overlap.

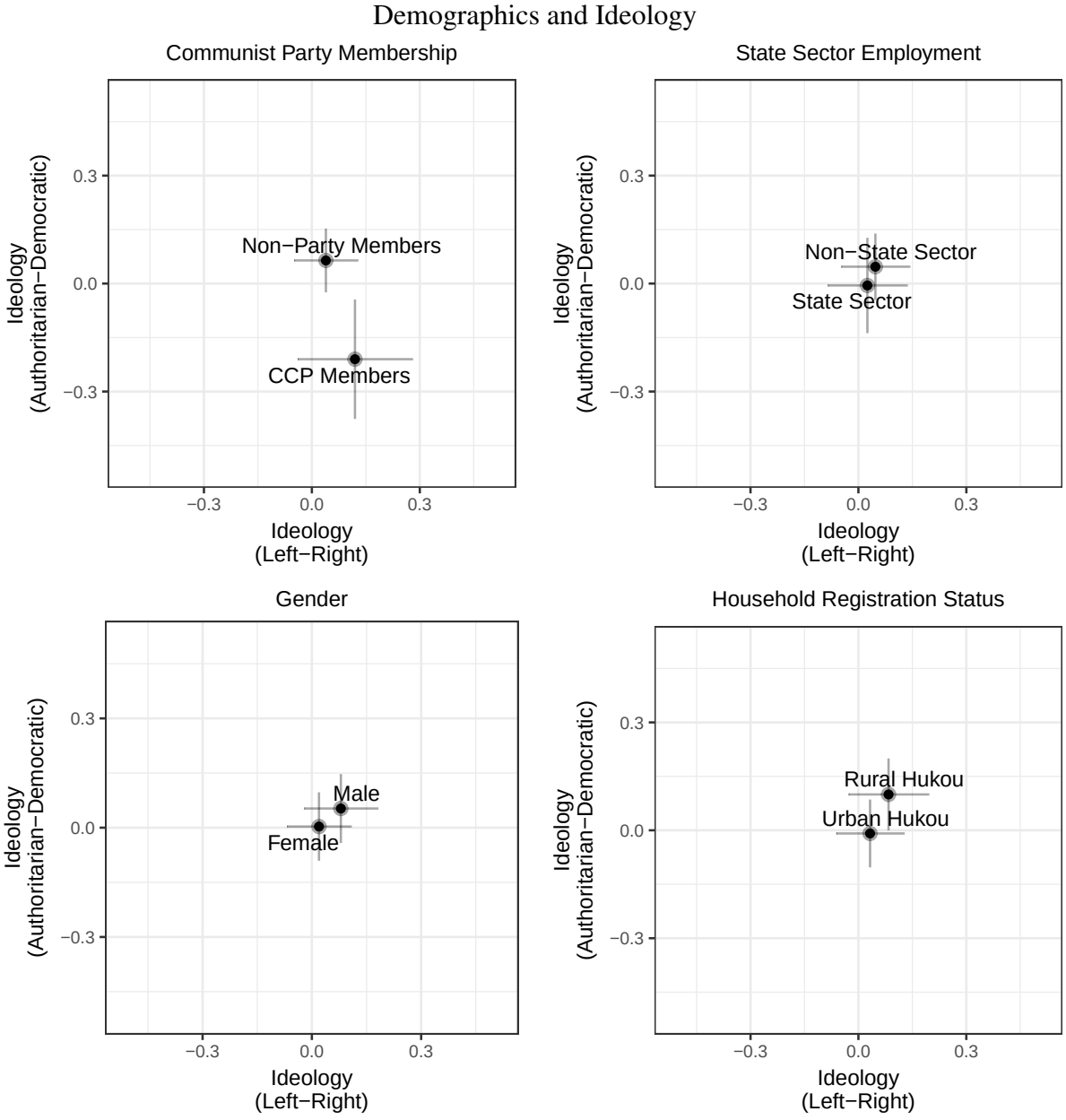


Figure 1.4: The relationship between ideology and membership in the Communist Party, state sector employment, gender, and household registration status. The point estimates indicate the mean ideology for each group, and the 90% confidence intervals for each estimate have been adjusted to reflect the uncertainty introduced by the sampling strategy.

as an outcome variable, while the second model regresses demographics on the authoritarian-democratic dimension. To alleviate missing-data concerns, we pre-processed the data using multiple imputation. Both models use survey-weighted regressions with design-based standard errors to account for the stratification and clustering in our sample.[15]

Model one reveals that age and education[16] are significant predictors of left-right ideology. Older respondents are farther to the left, while the highly educated are farther to the right. For the authoritarian-democratic dimension of ideology, our significant predictor variables are age and party membership. Older people and members of the Communist party are more likely to endorse traditional and authoritarian views. All of these relationships are consistent with what we found in Figure 1.3, though the bivariate associations we found between ideology and information or household registration status are not statistically significant in a multivariate setting.

We do not ascribe a causal interpretation to these results. Reverse causality is one threat to inference that we are unable to rule out. We are also limited by the nature of our data. Our conclusions are based on an analysis of a nationally representative urban sample. While we do have some insight into the political attitudes of migrants from rural areas, the ideology of the people who have decided to stay in the countryside may be characterized by different patterns.

In addition, our cross-sectional analysis does not allow us to say why age, for instance, correlates with preferences for authoritarianism or government intervention in the economy. These associations could be a result of aging, but they could also be a cohort effect for individuals who were socialized during the era of the planned economy. More research is needed to understand the mechanisms behind the correlations we have described in this study.

[15] Five of our observations were missing sampling weights and were dropped from the regression analysis.

[16] Here we use the full seven point scale as our measure of education.

Table 1.6: Regression Analysis of Demographics and Ideology

	Dependent variable:	
	Left-Right Ideology	Auth.-Dem. Ideology
	(1)	(2)
Age	-0.009^{***}	-0.011^{***}
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Education	0.055^{**}	-0.022
	(0.021)	(0.026)
Information	0.027	-0.031
	(0.045)	(0.035)
Log(Income)	-0.031	-0.066
	(0.040)	(0.044)
CCP Member	0.052	-0.257^{**}
	(0.094)	(0.080)
State Sector Employment	0.050	0.124
	(0.060)	(0.070)
Female	-0.020	-0.051
	(0.047)	(0.036)
Rural Hukou	0.090	0.062
	(0.065)	(0.052)
Constant	0.519	1.269^{*}
	(0.440)	(0.494)
Observations	3,508	3,508

Note: Estimates from survey-weighted regression analysis of imputed data. Design-based standard errors in parentheses. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Discussion

Our analysis of ideology demonstrates that China's ideological spectrum has a state-market divide along the first dimension, and an authoritarian-democratic divide along the second dimension.

We have also gained some new insight into why Chinese citizens conceive of ideological issues in two dimensions. By performing a separate analysis of the least informed, moderately informed, and most informed respondents in our sample, we rule out the possibility that mass ideology is two-dimensional in China because the least-informed citizens fail to grasp a one-dimensional divide which is obvious to people who are better-informed. What we find instead is that the most informed individuals are also the most likely to organize their thinking about politics using multiple dimensions.

The two-dimensional ideological structure we recover in our data is consistent with one of the major developments in the relationship between state and society during the reform era. When the party abandoned the planned economy and embraced free markets, it also hollowed out its core message of building socialism through class struggle. Our hypothesis is that as the party separated socialist dogma about economics from the political system, the public followed suit.

This result sheds new light on a key puzzle in Chinese politics - the ability of the party to conduct economic reforms without political reform. Our analysis suggests that the regime may have been able to do this because the supporters of political reform are not in fact the same people as the supporters of economic reform. If this is the case, then economic reform does not necessarily empower or enrich the individuals or groups who would support political reform. This gives us a new explanation for why businessmen and private entrepreneurs in China prefer authoritarian political outcomes (Chen and Dickson, 2010). We argue that this phenomenon is only puzzling if we conceive of ideology in China as a one-dimensional spectrum, where the beneficiaries of economic reform are also expected to support political reform. In a two-dimensional policy space where economic attitudes and political attitudes are largely orthogonal

to one another, there is no inherent reason for private entrepreneurs to also support democracy.

Our study also provided new insight into the correlates of ideology in China. We found that younger, more educated, and better-informed respondents are more likely to be on the right on economic issues. This tells us that those best poised to take advantage of the opportunities of the free market are more likely to support further economic reform. On the economic dimension of ideology, we see some evidence to support the idea that the outcomes of reform help structure political attitudes towards the market.

We also see that some groups who are relatively better off are more likely to endorse authoritarian political attitudes. This result is consistent with existing literature on democratic attitudes in China (Chen, 2004, 2013). The respondents who are at the top of the income distribution appear to be somewhat more authoritarian than members of the working or middle class. Citizens with an urban *hukou* are significantly more authoritarian than rural migrants.

And while party members no longer adhere to any sort of consensus about the proper role of the state in the economy, they do tend to oppose democratic ideals, such as multiparty competition and freedom of speech. The direction of this relationship is less clear. Party membership may lead people to adopt more authoritarian preferences by socializing them or exposing them to a different information environment. But at the same time, individuals who grow up with more authoritarian attitudes may also be more likely to decide to apply for party membership. But what we have shown is that the Communist party label has lost some of its original meaning. Under Mao, the CCP was expected to serve as the vanguard of the proletariat and to lead the socialist transformation of the country, but these days, party members do not appear to be any more committed to state control over the economy than anyone else.

The dimensionality of mass ideology that we have uncovered has important implications for China's political future. If an authoritarian state has a two-dimensional structure to its public opinion, its leaders have the opportunity to divide and conquer public opinion. In this way they may be able to forestall the emergence of a polarized public sphere by strategically soliciting

support on both dimensions. If the party is able to co-opt entrepreneurs with economic reforms at the same time that it rallies the old guard with nationalist appeals, then it can avoid becoming overly reliant on any one source of regime support. In future work we hope to better understand how the party takes advantage of the structure of public opinion to promote regime resilience.

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1 is co-authored with Tianguang Meng. I am grateful to him for supervising the implementation of the Chinese Urban Governance Survey, and for extending his permission for this paper to be included in my dissertation.

Chapter 2

A Spatial Valence Model of Political Participation in China

In spatial models of political competition in democracies, citizens vote for the party or candidate that is the closest to their own ideological position, while in valence models, voters decide on the basis of non-policy factors, such as competence. What remains unclear, however, is whether citizens in authoritarian regimes use spatial or valence considerations to guide their decisions to participate in politics. This study uses data from the 2015 Chinese Urban Governance Survey to measure the ideology of Chinese citizens, and estimates an empirical stochastic model to explore how Chinese citizens use ideological distance and valence to determine how they want to participate in politics. The results show that valence issues, such as perceived government competence, play a larger role in political participation than ideology.

Introduction

How do people make political choices under authoritarian rule? Spatial theories of political behavior in democracies model voting using the ideological distance between individuals and political parties, while valence theories argue that non-policy evaluations of a political actor are also important. Whether citizens in autocracies primarily participate in politics because of ideological or valence motivations is an open question. In this paper I use a survey of Chinese citizens and an empirical stochastic model which incorporates both spatial distance and valence to venture an answer to this question. I find that while the spatial model does explain a significant part of the decision to consider protesting or the decision to join the Communist party, valence, and in particular evaluations of the government's competence, is a more important factor for explaining political participation in China.

The logic of the spatial model also predicts that political actors should locate themselves at a particular point in the ideological space to maximize their popular support. In the classic spatial model, which considers ideology along one dimension and models individual choice in a deterministic fashion, that point is the median voter (Downs, 1957; Riker and Ordeshook, 1973). In stochastic spatial models, parties are expected to converge on the electoral mean (McKelvey and Patty, 2006). These results are at odds with cases such as the US, where political parties fail to converge on the median voter. To reconcile this divide between theory and outcomes, Schofield (2007) incorporates asymmetries in valence into the model. In the Schofield model, political parties do not necessarily converge on the electoral mean in equilibrium. Lower-valence political actors may be forced to move to the fringe of the ideological space to maximize their support.

Although the spatial model was designed to explain electoral politics, a similar spatial logic guides political contestation in authoritarian regimes. High valence political actors, such as the government, attempt to occupy the center of the ideological space and paint the potential opposition as the ideological fringe (Schofield and Levinson, 2008). In my analysis, I find however that because ideological distances between Communist party members and members

of the potential opposition are relatively small, the Communist party, the potential opposition, and other groups in Chinese society should converge on the ideology of the average citizen in equilibrium. This result suggests that both the Communist party and the potential opposition would be best served by making appeals on valence issues, rather than ideological ones, in future political struggles.

In the next section of this paper, I review previous research on the spatial model and generate our theoretical expectations for how ideology and valence operate in China. Then, after sketching Schofield's spatial valence model, I explain how I constructed my measures of ideology, estimate the model, and present the empirical results. The conclusion explores some of the implications of the findings for political contestation in China in the future.

Spatial and Valence Explanations of Political Behavior

In the classic spatial model popularized by Hotelling (1929) and Downs (1957), political parties are motivated by holding office and choose a policy position in the ideological space to maximize their share of the vote. Citizens vote for the party that has the policy position that is closest to their own views. Under this framework, political parties converge on the median voter, which leaves voters indifferent between their electoral choices.

One of the early objections to this line of reasoning was that not all issues lent themselves to variation along an ideological space. While public opinion is divided in its support for some policies, such as the proper level of state involvement in the economy, for certain *valence* issues, such as the need for honest leaders, or the need for competent administration, there is broad consensus among the public. When politicians campaign on valence issues, instead of taking specific policy positions, they attempt to associate themselves with some sort of positive symbol or goal, such as honesty or competence (Stokes, 1963, 1992). If they succeed in drawing some type of valence distinction between themselves and their opponents, then they may not need to

converge to the same ideological position.

In recent years, scholars of mass-elite linkages have sought to formally combine spatial models of political competition with valence issues (Groseclose, 2001; Ansolabehere and Snyder, 2000). Empirical work in this literature has modeled vote choice probabilistically, using a mixed logit statistical model (Adams and Merrill, 1999; Adams, Merrill and Grofman, 2005; Schofield and Sened, 2005; Micozzi and Saiegh, 2015). By combining spatial and valence considerations, these models can help explain why parties fail to converge on the mean voter in some cases. In majoritarian or winner-take-all electoral systems, these models find that centripetal electoral forces tend to encourage political parties to converge on the center (Schofield et al. 2011a; Schofield et al. 2011b), but in proportional electoral systems, these models expect parties to diverge in equilibrium (Schofield and Sened, 2005; Schofield et al. 2011c; Kurella and Pappi, 2015).

Studies of hybrid regimes or electoral autocracies in this framework find that valence is an especially important factor in political behavior. In Russia, for instance, while ideological distance was a significant factor in the 2007 Duma elections, a voter's opinion of Vladimir Putin was the most important factor for vote choice (Schofield and Zakharov, 2009). Valence differences also explain why political parties in electoral autocracies fail to converge on the mean voter. One common result is that lower-valence opposition parties are forced to the fringe of the ideological space, while the higher-valence ruling party occupies the center of the distribution (Schofield et al. 2011c; Schofield et al., 2012). Because the government maintains control over the media in these states, opposition parties are often forced to use protests to express their discontent with government policy. This tends to make it difficult for the opposition to raise its valence in the eyes of the general population.

Since the empirical study of ideology under authoritarian rule is still in its early stages,[1] what remains unclear is whether a spatial logic guides the political behavior of citizens in

[1] See Pan and Xu (2018); Wu and Meng (2016); Lu, Chu and Shen (2016) for new work in this area.

personalist, military, or single-party authoritarian regimes. If citizens decide to support the regime or rebel because of the spatial distance between them and the government, then autocrats may feel the constraints of the public's policy preferences even in the absence of free and fair elections. However, if valence issues predominate, then an autocrat may be able to select an ideal point that is far from the average citizen and stay in power, so long as the regime maintains a valence advantage over the potential opposition.

Schofield and Levinson (2008) argue that political contestation in authoritarian regimes can be understood according to the logic of the spatial valence model. The autocrat generally attempts to capitalize on his high valence by occupying the center of the ideological space. This way, he has the option of co-opting potential opposition by offering policy compromises. Dictators often lose power when they lose their valence advantage or allow the potential opposition to occupy the center of the ideological space.

Theoretical Expectations

The leaders of the Chinese Communist Party have often argued that incorrect ideological positioning undermines its control over society. One theme of official doctrine is the need to avoid veering too far to the "Left" or the "Right."

In a 1955 speech at a national Communist Party conference, Mao explained that "to move far ahead of the times, to outpace current developments, to be rash in action and in matters of principle and policy and to hit out indiscriminately in struggles and controversies - these are "Left" deviations and are no good. To fall behind the times, to fail to keep pace with current developments and to be lacking in militancy - these are Right deviations and are no good either" (Mao, 1977, 167).

As Mao grew frustrated with the bureaucracy's resistance to his efforts to transform Chinese society, more and more officials began to find themselves accused of ideological deviancy. During the purges of the Anti-Rightist Movement and the Cultural Revolution, the range of

acceptable ideological views converged to Mao's purported positions (Nathan and Shi, 1996; MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, 2006).

After Mao's death, the party concluded that the Cultural Revolution had been a grave "Left" error which was both the product of Mao's mistakes and an aberration inconsistent with Mao Zedong Thought (CCP Central Committee, 1981).[2] After ascending to power, Deng Xiaoping cautioned that the party needed to return to the center. In his speech "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," he argued "both the ultra-Left and Right currents of thought run counter to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought and obstruct our advance towards modernization" (Deng, 1984, 173).

This rhetorical tradition leads us to a theoretical expectation for the Communist Party, which is that it will attempt to locate itself in the center of the ideological spectrum. If this is the case, then we might also expect that the individuals who choose to join the party are relatively centrist in their ideological views, and that they become party members for valence reasons. This expectation is in keeping with the party's strategy of preferentially enrolling the elite segments of Chinese society (Dickson and Rublee, 2000), and with the fact that many party members join the party to advance their career prospects and enjoy access to particularistic benefits (Dickson, 2014).

The motivations of the potential opposition are necessarily more opaque. One class of political economy models conceives of the decision to protest in material terms. The poor in authoritarian states with high levels of inequality are expected to support regime change because they stand to gain from additional taxes and redistribution under democratic rule (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2001, 2006; Boix, 2003). If this is the case, then income should best predict willingness to protest.

Another possibility is that dissatisfaction with the political system is the driving force

[2]In this account, the political mistakes of other CCP leaders were also essentially ideological ones. Chen Duxiu's "Right capitulationism" had led to the CCP's misfortune in the 1927 Shanghai massacre, while Wang Ming's "Left" adventurism produced defeat to the KMT during the civil war. After Mao's death, Hua Guofeng had been guilty of Left errors with his "Two Whatevers" policy.

behind the collective action. In China, some members of the potential opposition, such as the dissidents and activists who supported the Charter 08 movement, do have a clear ideological agenda which revolves around political and legal reform (Potter, 2011).

But for many others, the impetus to collective action is a combination of diverse and localized grievances about poor governance (Chen, 2012; Lorentzen, 2013). If dissatisfaction with corrupt or inept administration is the key predictor of protest, then citizens who take part in collective action are making a valence-driven decision which is predicated on their perceptions of government competence. They may consider protesting even if their ideological preferences are largely the same as the policy positions put forward by the party.

An Empirical Stochastic Model

In this study I use Schofield's stochastic valence model to assess the motivations that drive political participation in China. Formally, the model $M(\lambda, \beta)$ has individual utility which is determined by the expression

$$u_{ij}(x_i, z_j) = \lambda_j - \sum_{k=1}^{\omega} \beta_k ||x_{ik} - z_{jk}||^2 + \varepsilon_{ij}.$$

Here λ_j is the exogenous valence of party j, and β_k is a vector of positive ideological distances with length ω, where ω is the number of dimensions in the ideological space. x_{ik} is individual i's ideal point for the ideology dimension k, z_{jk} is group j's ideological position on dimension k, and $||x_{ik} - z_{jk}||$ is the Euclidean distance between the respondent x_{ik} and the group z_{jk} on dimension k. ε_{ij} is the error term, which is assumed to follow the Type I extreme value or Gumbel distribution. This allows us to estimate the model in a multinomial logit (MNL) framework.

$M(\lambda, \beta)$ is a *pure spatial* model which only incorporates terms for spatial distance and valence. It is also possible to specify a *joint* model $M(\lambda, \theta, \alpha, \beta)$ if we model individual decisions

with additional terms for socio-demographic variables and attitudes towards the government. If we model individuals this way, then utility for individual i is governed by the equation

$$u_{ij}(x_i, z_j) = \lambda_j - (\theta_j \cdot \nu_i) + (\alpha_j \cdot \tau_i) - \sum_{k=1}^{\omega} \beta_k ||x_{ik} - z_{jk}||^2 + \varepsilon_{ij}.$$

Here, θ_j is a vector that contains the effect of each sociodemographic variable (age, education, gender, and family income) on the choice to join group j, while ν_i is the vector of sociodemographic characteristics for individual i. The $(\theta_j \cdot \nu_i)$ terms are scalar products which we call the *sociodemographic valences* for group j.

α_j is a vector that contains the effect of an attitudinal variable (the perception of government competence) on the choice of group j, while τ_i is individual i's score on the competence measure. We call the scalar product $(\alpha_j \cdot \tau_i)$ the *institutional valence* for our model.

For both of our models, if we specify each group's ideological position with $\boldsymbol{z}$, the probability that individual i chooses group j is

$$\rho_{ij}(\boldsymbol{z}) = Pr[[u_{ij}(x_i, z_j) > u_{il}(x_i, z_l)], \text{ for all } l \neq j].$$

In other words, an individual chooses to join one group to maximize her own payoff. This payoff is based on the distance between her own ideology and the ideal point of each of the groups, though it is also shaped by sociodemographic variables and attitudes towards the government. The ideology of each group is in turn assumed to be the mean ideology of the group members.

Empirical Analysis

Data and Measurement

The data for this study come from the Chinese Urban Governance Survey (CUGS), which was administered in the summer of 2015 in 50 cities from 24 different provinces. This survey used GPS-assisted area sampling (Landry and Shen, 2005) to generate a nationally representative urban sample of 3513 respondents. Respondents answered a series of questions about political issues and the state's capabilities in a variety of areas, ranging from its ability to maintain social stability to its ability to provide social welfare. Table 2.1 reports the essential descriptive statistics, as well as an index for perceived government competence, which is calculated as the mean of the seven measures of government capabilities.

Table 2.1: Summary Statistics

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Ideology (Left-Right)	3,513	0.00	1.00	−3.81	4.01
Ideology (Authoritarian-Democratic)	3,513	0.00	1.00	−4.08	4.06
CCP Member	3,494	0.12	0.32	0	1
Age	3,513	43.20	15.04	18	70
Education	3,243	10.59	4.22	0	25
Gender	3,513	0.50	0.50	0	1
Family Income	1,112	72,848	78,025	2,500	800,000
Willingness to Protest	2,343	0.11	0.31	0	1
Propaganda Capacity	3,132	2.84	0.70	1	4
Stability Capacity	3,227	2.96	0.67	1	4
Price Control Capacity	3,034	2.81	0.73	1	4
Tax Collection Capacity	2,939	3.07	0.76	1	4
Representation Capacity	3,075	2.39	0.79	1	4
Social Welfare Capacity	3,138	2.37	0.77	1	4
Control Cadres Capacity	3,064	2.37	0.83	1	4
Competence	2,662	2.70	0.53	1	4

Each respondent's ideological position was estimated using Bayesian item response theory (IRT) and a set of twelve ideology questions, which were selected to cover the most salient set of political, economic, and cultural issues in China. I used an ordinal model to take advantage of the full variation in the responses, which were on a four point scale (Quinn, 2004).

A two-dimensional model best fits the ideology data from the survey. The first dimension, which I call Left-Right, captures a divide between pro-market and anti-market sentiments. For the Left-Right dimension, the most discriminating questions ask respondents whether they believe private ownership of property disadvantages working class people, whether privatization of state-owned enterprises should be outlawed, and whether state-owned enterprises should control the key sectors of the economy.[3] Respondents who agreed with these statements received negative scores on the first dimension, which would put them on the left, while those who generally disagreed had positive scores, which are associated with the right.

The second dimension of ideology is associated with political and cultural divisions. The items that load most heavily on this dimension include questions about whether Western multiparty democracy is suitable for China, whether freedom of speech will lead to chaos, and whether Confucianism is suitable for modern Chinese society. Individuals who tended to agree with these statements received a negative score on the second dimension, which put them closer to the more authoritarian end of the spectrum; individuals who supported multiparty democracy and freedom of speech received positive scores on the second dimension.

Table 2.2 presents the difficulty and discrimination parameters for each ideology question. In general, the questions that load most heavily on a given dimension have discrimination parameters with high absolute values. For more details on how the model was specified and identified, see Wu and Meng (2016).

To estimate the spatial model, respondents were divided into four mutually exclusive groups based on whether they were members of the Communist Party and on whether they would be willing to consider protesting in the future. All respondents who were members of the party are coded as *CCP Members*, regardless of whether they said they would consider protesting. For the respondents who were not party members, those who said they would never protest were coded as

[3]Note that this is a narrower definition than the one used by Mao and other leaders of the CCP, which concerns the pace of societal change. For the purposes of this paper, the Left-Right axis captures a policy debate over the role of the state in the economy.

Table 2.2: Difficulty and Discrimination Parameters

	Difficulty Parameter	Left-Right Discrimination Parameter	Auth.-Dem. Discrimination Parameter
Private ownership of property disadvantages working class people 发展私有制经济会导致劳动人民沦为弱势群体	2.38	−1.09	0.20
Privatizing the assets of state-owned enterprises should not be allowed 不能允许民间资本兼并国有企业	1.75	−0.80	0.17
Attempting to control real estate prices will undermine economic development 试图控制房地产价格的行为会破坏经济发展	1.71	−0.71	0.13
Sectors important to people's livelihoods must be controlled by state-owned enterprises 关系到国计民生的领域, 必须全部由国有企业掌控	1.51	−0.68	0.00
Marketization exacerbates economic inequality 市场化必然加剧贫富两极分化	2.07	−0.65	−0.01
Western Multiparty systems are unsuitable for China in its current state 西方的多党制不适合中国国情	2.81	−0.62	−1.05
Media should be allowed to represent the voice of specific social strata or interest groups 应当允许媒体代表特定阶层或利益集团发言	1.55	−0.53	−0.16
Indiscriminately imitating western-style freedom of speech will lead to social disorder 照搬西方式的言论自由, 社会就乱了	2.34	−0.51	−0.76
The modern Chinese society needs Confucianism 现代中国社会需要儒家思想	2.49	−0.46	−0.71
The minimum wage should be set by the state 最低工资应由国家规定	2.20	−0.44	−0.40
China's current political system is the one that is best suited for China's circumstances 我国目前的政治制度是最适合中国国情的	2.38	−0.35	−0.54
Individuals should be able to own land 个人应当可以拥有土地	1.88	−0.16	−0.14

Table 2.3: Group Proportions

Group	Respondents	Percent of Sample	Mean Left-Right Ideology	Mean Authoritarian-Democratic Ideology
Bystanders	1821	52.1%	-0.045	-0.040
Undecideds	1049	30.0%	0.049	0.094
Potential Protesters	215	6.2%	0.084	0.287
CCP Members	409	11.7%	0.023	-0.207

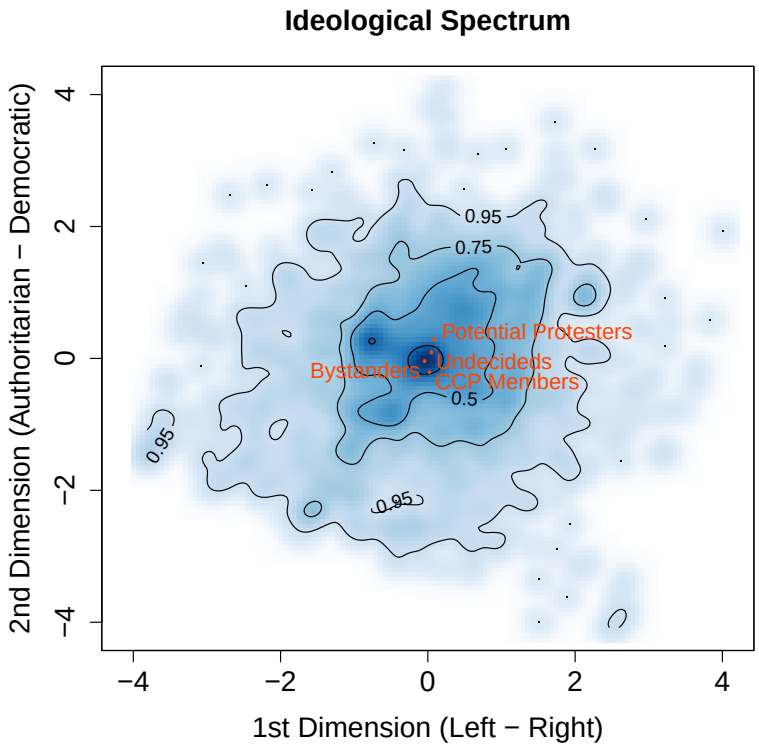
Bystanders, those who were unsure as *Undecideds*, and those who would consider protesting in the future as *Potential Protesters*.[4] A total of 19 respondents did not answer the survey question about membership in the Communist Party and were dropped from the analysis, leaving us with a total of 3494 observations.

Following previous research using the empirical stochastic model, the ideal point of each group is taken as the mean of the ideal points of the members of that group. Table 2.3 gives the proportion of our sample which fell into each group, as well as the mean ideal points for each group on both the Left-Right and the Authoritarian-Democratic dimensions of ideology. The top panel of figure 2.1 presents the distribution of ideology estimates for the survey as a whole, while the bottom panel shows a close-up of the center of our distribution.

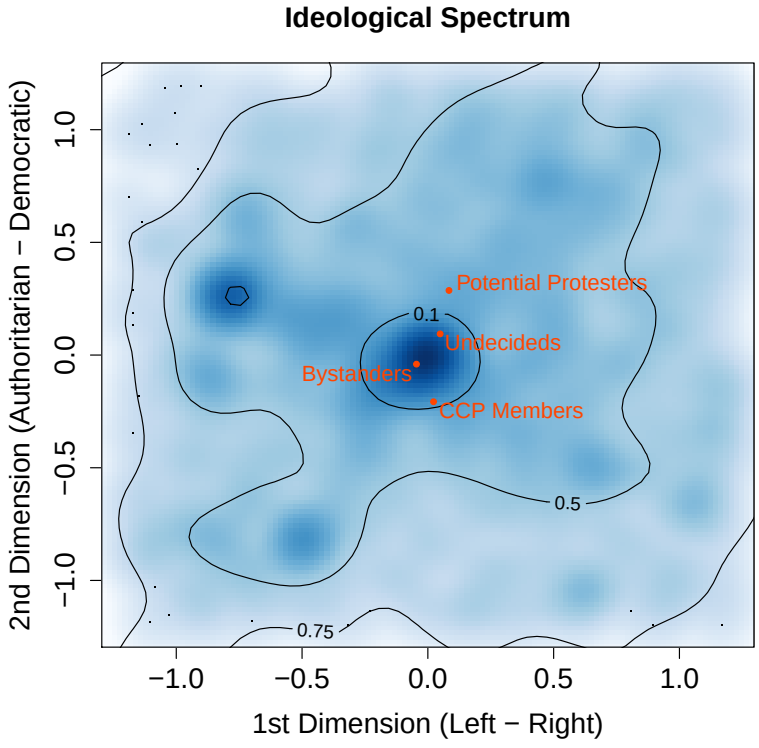
Results

The results of our mixed logit model show that while both valence and ideological distance shape political participation decisions in China, valence is the more powerful factor. Institutional valence, or the perception of government competence, is the key factor that encourages individuals to consider protesting in the future, while sociodemographic valences, such as education, age, and income, are key factors that shape the decision to join the Communist Party.

[4]These groups are analytic constructions and with the exception of the CCP Members, they are unable to coordinate on an ideological message. They also are not vote-maximizing entities. However, the logic of the spatial valence model still applies, insofar as individuals choose how they participate in politics (either by joining the party or contemplating protest) based at least in part on the ideological distance between them and other people engaging in the same activities.



(a) The overall distribution of ideology in the sample



(b) A close-up view of the center of the ideology distribution

Figure 2.1: The Ideological Distribution of Protesters and Party Members in China.

Table 2.4 presents the results from the pure spatial model, $M(\lambda, \beta)$. In this model, the spatial coefficients for both the left-right and authoritarian-democratic dimensions of ideology are significant. The valence terms are calculated with respect to the Bystanders, who are the highest valence group.

Table 2.4: Pure Spatial Model Results (base Bystanders)

Variable	Coefficient (Std. err.)
Spatial distance	
Left-Right Ideology (β_1)	0.380^{**} (0.181)
Auth.-Dem. Ideology (β_2)	0.492^{***} (0.075)
Valence terms	
Potential Protesters	-2.137^{***} (0.073)
Undecideds	-0.552^{***} (0.039)
CCP Members	-1.492^{***} (0.055)
Observations	3,494
Log Likelihood	−3,899.469
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I also estimate a joint model, $M(\lambda, \theta, \alpha, \beta)$, which includes sociodemographic terms and a measure of one key component of valence, the perceived competence of the government. To alleviate missing data concerns, I conducted the multinomial logit analysis after multiple imputation. Table 2.5 presents the results of the joint model after imputation, while Table A.1 in the appendix presents the results of the model if listwise deletion is used to deal with missing observations.

The results show that spatial distances on the authoritarian-democratic dimension of ideology explain how individuals choose to protest or join the party in China. Individuals do not, however, choose how they participate based on the left-right dimension of ideology, which concerns the proper role of the state in the economy. This result is robust to imputation and runs counter to our intuitions formed from similar analyses of democracies, where economic ideology

is typically a strong factor that shapes vote choice (Schofield et al. 2011b; Schofield et al. 2011c).

Table 2.5: Joint Model Results after Imputation (base Bystanders)

Group	Variables	Coefficients (Std. err.)
	Left-Right Ideology (β_1)	0.044 (0.189)
	Auth.-Dem. Ideology (β_2)	0.294^{***} (0.079)
Potential Protesters		
	Valence	-2.448 (1.722)
	Competence	-0.724^{***} (0.160)
	Age	-0.043^{***} (0.007)
	Education	0.015 (0.025)
	Gender	-0.588^{***} (0.154)
	Log Income	0.363^{**} (0.157)
Undecideds		
	Valence	1.857^{*} (1.072)
	Competence	-0.037 (0.094)
	Age	-0.029^{***} (0.003)
	Education	-0.046^{***} (0.013)
	Gender	-0.167^{**} (0.080)
	Log Income	-0.049 (0.096)
CCP Members		
	Valence	-9.737^{***} (1.166)
	Competence	-0.075 (0.119)
	Age	0.048^{***} (0.005)
	Education	0.214^{***} (0.021)
	Gender	-0.591^{***} (0.119)
	Log Income	0.368^{***} (0.092)
Observations	3494	
Log Likelihood	-3620.16	
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

The pre- and post-imputation models also come to the same conclusions when it comes to the issues of competence and valence. Individuals who do not perceive the government to be competent become significantly more likely to say they would consider protesting in the future. Perceptions of government competence do not however determine whether individuals decide to join the Communist party, or explain why some respondents are unsure when asked if they would

protest in the future.

Once sociodemographic characteristics and perceptions of competence are taken into account, in both models the CCP Members have a significantly lower valence as a group than the Bystanders, or the other groups. This suggests that something other than ideological distance or the perceived competence of the government explains why a relatively small share of the urban population opts to join the Communist party. One possible explanation is simply that the Communist Party is not seeking to maximize its membership in the same way that parties in democracies seek to maximize votes, since it preferentially admits individuals from the more elite segments of Chinese society.

The model tries to account for this possibility by estimating the effect of sociodemographic valences on political participation. In the imputed sample, respondents are more likely to consider protesting in the future, instead of saying they would never protest, if they are younger, male, and, notably, more affluent, which disconfirms the hypothesis that the poor are the key potential opposition group.

Younger, male, and less educated respondents are more likely to say they are unsure about protesting in the future, again in comparison to the people who would never protest. On the other hand, respondents are more likely to be members of the Communist party if they are older, male, more educated, and come from a higher-income family. The importance of sociodemographic valences for membership in the Communist party is consistent with the argument that in the reform era, the party has strategically recruited elites and intellectuals with less attention to their ideological bona fides.

Not all of these relationships are apparent in the pre-imputation sample. While the relationships between age and political participation are the same for all groups, the effects of gender, education, and family income on participation are only significant for Communist party members.

Discussion

This paper has shown that the spatial model can help explain political participation even when it is applied in a non-democratic context. Chinese citizens are more likely to consider protesting or joining the Communist party if their ideological beliefs are consistent with the preferences of other people engaging in the same types of behavior. However, only the second, Authoritarian-Democratic dimension of ideology produces this effect. Individuals in China do not choose to participate based on the Left-Right dimension, which captures their beliefs about the state's role in the economy.

Valence explains more of the political participation decision than ideology. Individuals are willing to consider protesting if they take a dim view of the government's competence, while sociodemographic characteristics, like education, income, gender, or age explain the decision to become a member of the Communist party.

Of particular interest is the finding that, by the standards of a wide variety of democratic electoral systems, the ideological differences between the Communist party and the members of the potential opposition are relatively small. This suggests that repressing ideological debates among elites and the media can forestall political polarization. In fact, the ideological differences between groups are sufficiently small in China to encourage all groups to converge on the ideology of the mean citizen in equilibrium. This means that in the future, neither the Communist party nor the potential opposition can improve its share of the Chinese population by deviating from the policy preferences of the average citizen.

The implications of this finding are two-fold. First, the leaders of the CCP will be ideologically constrained going forward, and unable to change the ideal point of the party without making the party as a whole less attractive to new members. The second implication is that potential opponents of the regime would also be best served by adopting the policy views of the average citizen, rather than by articulating a different set of ideological preferences. Their best hope of gaining support is to improve their valence vis-à-vis the CCP. If the party's performance

suffers, the latent opposition could be well placed, ideologically, to expand its support.

One of the biggest unanswered questions is whether this state of affairs is tenable if the party loses control over political association. A well-known result in the political psychology literature is that members of deliberating groups tend to move towards a more extreme view than the pre-deliberation preferences of those individuals (Sunstein, 2002). This suggests that the narrow ideological distances between groups in Chinese society would not survive the onset of open political debate and freedom of association.[5] If this comes to pass, then political competition in China may turn on ideological differences after all.

[5]Though an alternative possibility is that open discussion over political issues reveals differences in opinion within the public, which discourages individuals from engaging in collective action. See Chen and Xu (N.d.).

Chapter 3

Categorical Confusion: Ideological Labels in China

The idea of a left-right ideological dimension helps citizens and parties organize their thinking about politics. While the left-right dimension is traditionally organized around questions of inequality and change in democracies, its meaning under authoritarian rule remains opaque. This paper uses three national surveys to investigate the policy, partisan, and symbolic content of the left-right dimension in China. The analysis of these surveys reveals that while many Chinese citizens are willing to locate themselves on the left-right scale, the labels of left and right do not carry a consistent programmatic meaning. I also show that the partisan and symbolic content of these ideological labels is limited. I argue that the absence of a shared ideological understanding prevents Chinese citizens from exercising political agency.

Introduction

The left-right ideological spectrum serves as a way for both politicians and members of the mass public to summarize and communicate their political preferences. The labels of left and right help simplify democratic politics by helping voters orient themselves in a multidimensional issue space (Hinich and Munger, 1994; Fuchs and Klingemann, 1989). While the specific meaning of these labels varies by locale (Jou, 2010; Zechmeister and Corral, 2012; Knutsen, 1997), they are commonly understood to contain information about a mix of policies, partisanship, and symbolic issues (Inglehart and Klingemann, 1976; Huber, 1989; Conover and Feldman, 1981).

The utility of the left-right distinction is largely predicated on the political choices that voters and parties face in democracies. What meaning might we expect these labels to carry in an authoritarian regime like China? While the historical legacy of the Communist party is often understood with reference to the idea of left and right, and intellectuals commonly speak in terms of a left or right agenda, my argument in this paper is that these labels do not carry a consistent meaning for the general public. I present results from three national surveys which show that while many people are willing to place themselves on a left-right spectrum, there is at best a weak association between these self-identified labels and policy issues, even for people who are well-informed about politics. Although Chinese citizens who call themselves left or right rarely reach a consensus on issues, they do tend to relate their own ideological placements with the perceived ideology of other political actors, such as the Communist party or the Kuomintang.

This paper contributes to a burgeoning literature on the nature of ideology in authoritarian regimes by examining coherence of ideological self-conceptualizations among the general public. In this way it complements previous work on the structure of political preferences in public opinion, which focused more on the latent structure of citizen beliefs (Nathan and Shi, 1996; Pan and Xu, 2018; Wu and Meng, 2016; Cantoni et al., 2017).

The next section of this paper reviews the comparative literature on ideological labels. I then develop a theory of ideological self-identification under authoritarian rule and examine

variation in left-right placement using national surveys of the Chinese public from 1993, 2002, and 2008. My analyses compare the issue content of left and right in China with the partisan component of these labels. After considering the results in comparative context, I conclude with some thoughts about how Chinese citizens' conceptual understanding of ideology has changed over time.

Left and Right in Comparative Perspective

The left-right dimension is commonly understood to be organized around two major divisions: advocating for social change versus protecting tradition, and rejecting versus accepting inequality (Jost, Federico and Napier, 2009). The meaning of these labels tends to vary, since it reflects the core divisions in each society (Benoit and Laver, 2006), but in many cases the left-right dimension becomes a "super-issue" which eventually encompasses all of the important issues in a polity (Inglehart, 1990). While the terms left and right are essentially abstractions constructed by elites, they serve as anchors for an underlying operational ideology that is composed of bundles of policy issues (Sniderman and Bullock, 2004; Jost, Federico and Napier, 2009). These bundles of issues form what is known as the ideological component of the left-right dimension.

In addition to its policy content, the left-right dimension also encodes information about partisanship and evaluations of symbolic issues, such as attitudes towards social groups. Partisanship provides a shortcut for individuals to infer what the label means (Inglehart and Klingemann, 1976; Huber, 1989; Knutsen, 1997; Evans, Heath and Lalljee, 1996; Zechmeister, 2006). Moreover, in contrast to the ideological component of the label, which is more meaningful for well-informed individuals, the partisan component is easily accessible, even for the poorly-informed (Inglehart and Klingemann, 1976). While many voters may not have a grasp of the policy content of ideological labels, the labels themselves take on symbolic meanings which are in turn driven by attitudes towards social groups, such as businessmen and minorities (Levitin and Miller, 1979; Conover and Feldman, 1981).

The degree to which these ideological labels carry a programmatic meaning is shaped by factors such as the age of the regime, the level of polarization, and the effective number of political parties. In new democracies, such as the post-communist states of Eastern Europe, it often takes a few years for the general public to coalesce around a shared understanding of the policy content of the left-right dimension (Evans and Whitefield, 1998; Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2008; Evans and Whitefield, 1993). In polarized societies, ideological self-placement plays a larger role in vote choice than it does in places where polarization is less in evidence (Huber, 1989; Dalton, 2011; Zechmeister and Corral, 2012; Zechmeister, 2015). Studies of European democracies have found that the ideological content of the left-right label is greater in societies with a large number of effective parties (Inglehart and Klingemann, 1976), though Zechmeister and Corral (2012) argue that a different pattern holds in Latin America because fragmentation in the party system there is associated with a large number of relatively young parties which have not yet established a strong ideological reputation.

The utility of these labels also varies by cultural context. In East Asian democracies, for instance, a smaller proportion of people are willing to place themselves on the left-right scale, compared to respondents in the West. A larger proportion of those who do volunteer an ideological placement in these states put themselves at the center of the scale (Jou, 2010). While citizens in Japan are likely to associate the left-right dimension with bundles of policies, citizens in newer democracies, such as the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan, are less likely to do so (Jou, 2011). Hsiao, Wang and Achen (2017) go a step further and argue that the left-right dimension carries little meaning in Taiwan, in large part because most issues get interpreted in light of the unification-independence divide instead.

A Theory of Authoritarian Ideological Divisions

What meanings do we expect the left and right labels to carry under an authoritarian regime? Many dictators come to power on the strength of social movements which are bound

together by left-wing or right-wing ideals (Schurmann, 1968), but once they have established themselves in office, the absence of a political alternative allows them to lay claim to the center of the policy space and to rule by relying on their valence advantages, rather than on their ideological brand (Schofield and Levinson, 2008; Wu, 2017).

Since the left-right schema is essentially an intellectual heuristic, its coherence among the general public requires regular political stimulus to sustain. If this is missing, then we might expect that "in keeping with the principle of least effort, [the left-right dimension] would not be a salient feature of a given political culture unless there is a need for it. Consequently, one might expect this dimension to play a relatively prominent role where there is a multiplicity of salient political alternatives. If there are no salient alternatives, obviously it will not play an important role" (Inglehart and Klingemann, 1976, p. 245-246). Following this logic, we expect that ideological divisions along the left-right dimension will fail to become broadly salient in consolidated authoritarian regimes. While individuals in consolidated autocracies will still have different preferences about policy, when there is no public debate between political alternatives, the public's views take on an ad hoc character that lacks consistency. My argument is that we should only expect the dictatorships that are facing salient political alternatives to possess ideological divisions that are broadly understood by the public. If a credible alternative to the ruling regime exists, then these ideological divides will become part of the meaning of the left-right dimension.

The experience of newly democratic states points the way to what this division might entail. While the left-right divide in consolidated democracies takes on the character of the labor-capital, center-periphery, church-state, and land-industry cleavages that Lipset and Rokkan (1967) first laid out, left and right often take on the character of a democratic-authoritarian dimension in new democracies. In new democracies, the most salient political issue is not the redistribution of wealth, but rather the redistribution of power (Moreno, 1999). Societies that have just emerged from the crucible of democratization are likely to be polarized between supporters

of the new democracy and authoritarian loyalists. New democracies moreover face a common set of governing problems, which include the creation of new democratic institutions, the effort to wrest power away from the old authoritarian elites, and the need to manage an economy in crisis. These political dynamics enhance the salience of the democratic-authoritarian cleavage and create the conditions necessary for it to become part of the meaning of left and right.

A similar process may be at work in authoritarian regimes that are collectively contemplating the specter of democracy. If the prospect of democracy becomes a salient alternative to the current regime for the general public, then we would also expect the democratic-authoritarian dimension to become one of the organizing principles of public opinion. Since the terms "left" and "right" are, as Inglehart and Rabier (1986, p. 470) put it, "like a universal solvent" which "[tends] to absorb whatever major conflicts are present in the political system," we would expect the left-right dimension to encode preferences about democracy under these circumstances.

Left and Right in China

The meaning of the left-right dimension for politicians and intellectuals in China has historically been broadly consistent with its more general definition, which emphasizes debates about redistribution and the pace of change. For Mao, it was possible to make a political mistake by hewing too far to the left or to right. In a 1955 speech before the Central Committee, he explained that "When the right time comes for something to be done, it has to be done. If you don't allow it, that is a Right deviation. If the right time has not come for something and yet you try to force it through, that is a 'Left' deviation" (Mao, 1977, p. 230-231).

The labels themselves were often used as a weapon during power struggles. During the Anti-Rightist campaign (1957-58), after Mao had asserted that one percent of the work units participating in the campaign should be labelled as rightists, over half a million people received the label for their failure to demonstrate sufficient loyalty to the Communist Party (Chung, 2011). In many cases the ideological offense was to stand for conventionally liberal principles, such as

free speech or freedom of the press. In the early years of the Cultural Revolution, Mao went on to explain that rightists were one of the five bad categories of people, alongside landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, and bad elements (Link, 2013, p. 66).

After Mao's death, the party's official verdict on history declared the Cultural Revolution to be a mistake and laid much of the responsibility for its excesses at the feet of the ultra-leftist Gang of Four (CCP Central Committee, 1981).[1] During this time, the Mao loyalists were accused of being both ultra-leftists and conservatives for opposing Deng Xiaoping's reform program, and the association between the ultra-left and conservatism remained in the air afterwards (Link, 2013, p. 250).

In the mid-1990s, the emergence of the New Left introduced a new wrinkle into the meaning of these ideological labels. The scholars and intellectuals who called themselves the New Left had generally spent time abroad and were heavily influenced by contemporary Western academic critiques of capitalism and imperialism. While contemporary Chinese liberals (rightists) are united by their critique of the CCP and its totalitarian past, many members of the New Left sought to revive the egalitarian elements of the Maoist legacy, even if they acknowledge the excesses under Mao (Li, 2017). In economic debates, the New Left focuses on the disruption created by privatization and generally opposed China's accession to the WTO, while liberals continued to advocate for the benefits of market allocation (Goldman, 2005).

Specific Expectations

If the cues from the Communist party and from the intellectual debates about ideology have filtered down into the mass public, we might expect for the left and right labels to be associated with certain issues in public opinion. Individuals who self-identify as left should be more likely to support increased state control over the economy and an authoritarian political

[1] Though the Gang of Four had also been accused of being ultra-rightists by Mao's successor, Hua Guofeng, shortly after he had engineered their arrest (Baum, 1994, p. 43).

system. While national identity is often orthogonal to the left-right dimension (Inglehart and Klingemann, 1976), the patriotic message coming from the party suggests that nationalism is also part of the meaning of the left. The party's efforts to inculcate conservative social values suggest that traditional views on social issues are associated with the left as well. Meanwhile, we should expect for people who self-identify as right to be more likely to favor free markets, democracy, and progressive social values. In keeping with findings from other cases, however, we might expect for the correlation between issues and ideological self-identification to be low and perhaps limited to the most-informed individuals.

While recognition of the policy content of ideological labels might be restricted to the most knowledgeable segments of the population, the partisan meaning of left and right should be accessible to a larger proportion of the population. My expectation is that the Communist Party is identified with the left, and that members of the Communist party are more likely to place themselves on the left. This prediction is tempered, however, by previous research which suggests that while party members are more likely to endorse authoritarian views, the ideological preferences of party members and non-party members are broadly similar (Wu and Meng, 2016; Wu, 2017).

We also expect for left and right self-identifications to be related to evaluations of political symbols, such as social groups or the United States. While this association should be attenuated by the absence of top-down messaging that identifies political groups with either the left or the right, liberals are generally accused of harboring a stronger attachment to the US and other Western democracies. To the extent that a relationship exists between ideological self-placement and political symbols, approval of the US and other Western democracies should be associated with the right.

Data

The analysis for this paper draws on three national Chinese surveys - the 1993 Survey of Political Culture and Political Participation, the 2002 wave of the Asian Barometer survey, and the 2008 China Survey. All three surveys were conducted face-to-face using a stratified multistage area sampling procedure with probabilities proportional to size measures (PPS). The primary sampling units in each case were counties in rural areas and cities in urban areas, while the secondary sampling units were townships or township-level administrative districts. The populations that were sampled are representative in each instance of the national over-18 population, with the exception of the Tibet Autonomous Region. The 1993 survey successfully interviewed a total of 3,287 respondents, with a response rate was 94.5%. The 2002 survey interviewed 3,183 respondents with a response rate of 84.1%, while 3,989 respondents completed the 2008 survey questionnaire, with a response rate of 72.2%.

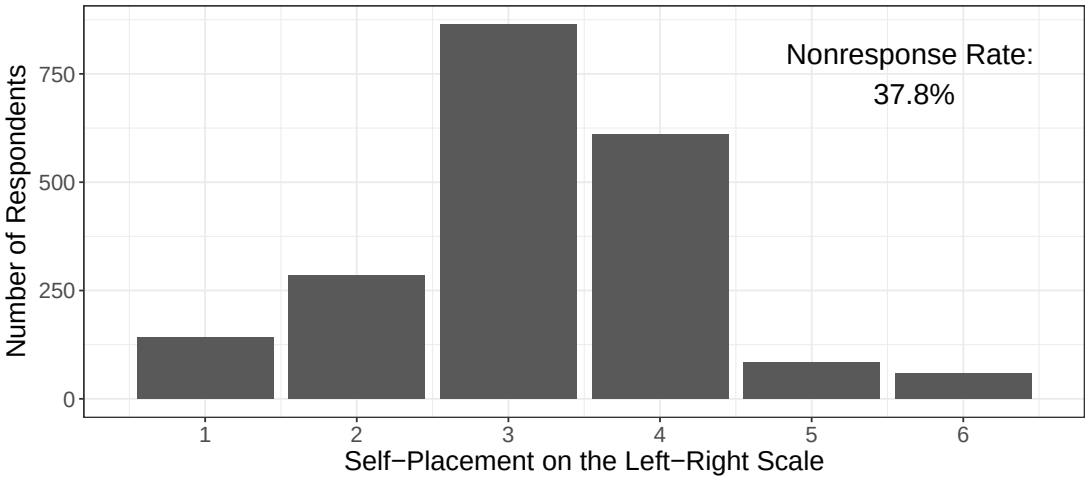
Variation in Left-Right Placement in China

Each of the three surveys asked respondents to place themselves on a left-right scale in slightly different ways. In the 1993 survey, respondents were asked to place themselves on a spectrum that ran from 1 to 6, where 1 represented the most "left" and 6 represented the most "right" political attitudes. In addition to identifying their own ideological position, they were also asked to identify the position of the Chinese Communist Party, their father, and the Kuomintang.

The 2002 survey asked respondents to place themselves and the Communist Party on a 1-7 scale, where 1 represented the left and 7 represented the right.[2] The 2008 survey only asked respondents to place themselves, and this time the scale ran from 0 (left) to 10 (right).

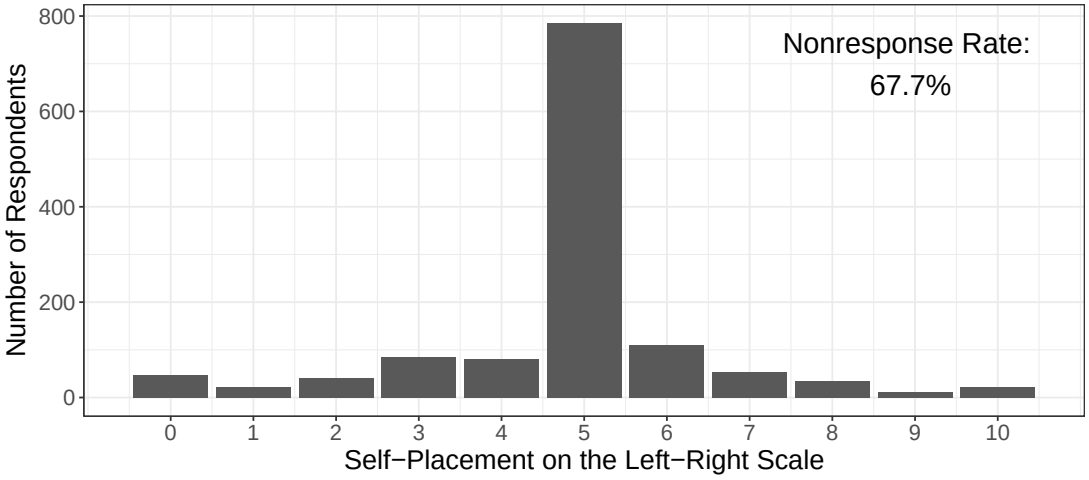
Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of ideological self-placements in 1993, 2002, and 2008. Non-response for this question was relatively high. 37.8% of respondents declined to place

[2]The published questionnaire lists a 1-6 scale instead, but during the survey, enumerators used a 7 point scale instead (Tianguang Meng, Personal Communication).



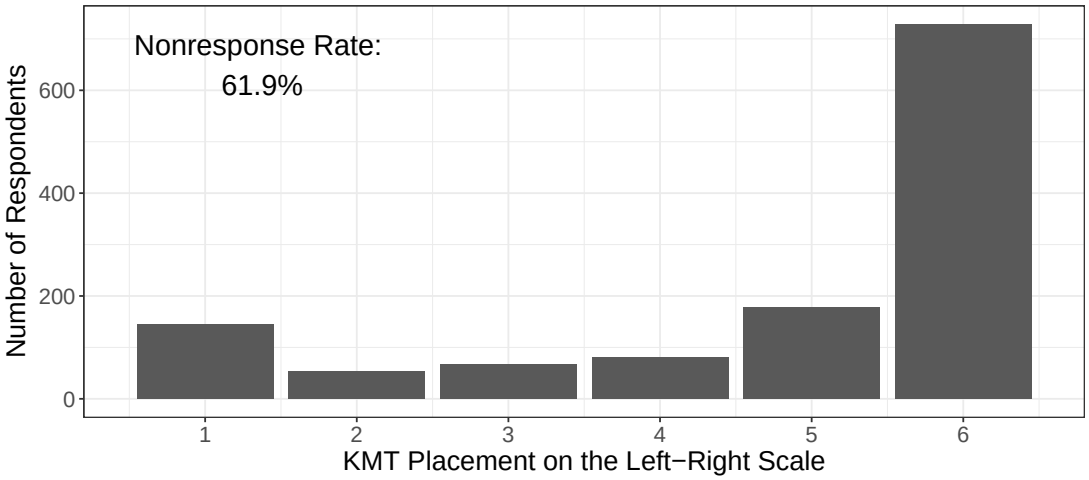
(a) 1993 Survey

(b) 2002 Survey

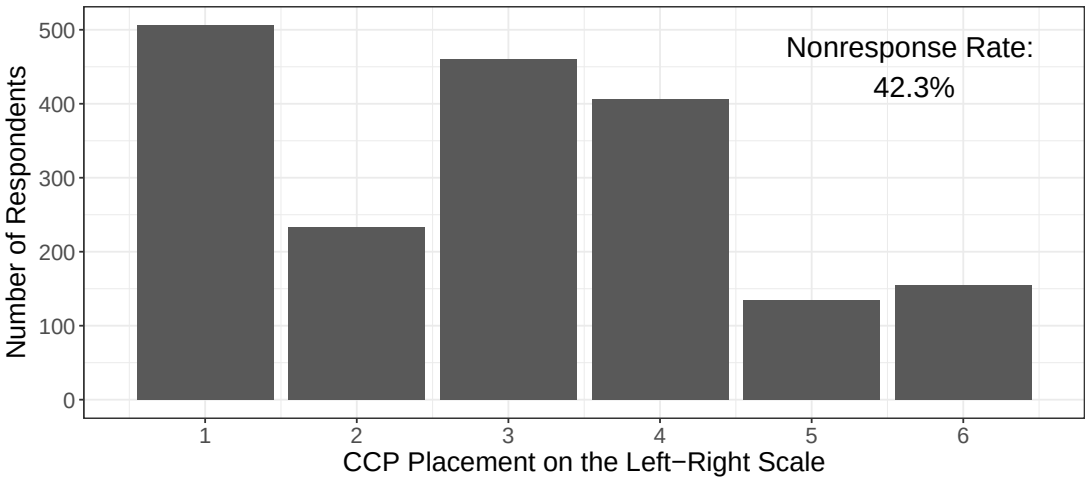


(c) 2008 Survey

Figure 3.1: Distribution of Left-Right Self-Placements.



(a) 1993 Survey



(b) 1993 Survey

(c) 2002 Survey

Figure 3.2: Distribution of Left-Right Placements for the KMT and CCP.

themselves on the left-right spectrum in 1993, 42.3% did not respond in the 2002 survey, and 67.7% did not respond in 2008. These figures are noticeably higher than the averages of 12.1% in Western Europe, 22.8% in Eastern Europe, 19.5% in Latin America, and are comparable to the non-response rate in Taiwan, which was 54.2% in 2001 and 44.4% in 2008 (Mair, 2007; Zechmeister and Corral, 2012; Hsiao, Wang and Achen, 2017).

Most respondents in each year decided to place themselves in the middle of the spectrum. The left-right scale for the 1993 survey did not have a midpoint, but 72.1% percent of respondents placed themselves at 3 or 4 on the 6 point scale. 38% placed themselves at the midpoint of the 7 point scale in 2002. The phenomenon of middle placements was especially pronounced for the 2008 survey, where 61% of the respondents who placed themselves on the 11 point left-right scale chose the midpoint. These figures are high compared to the proportion of middle placements in established and ex-communist European democracies, which average between 27.5% and 34.4%, though they are less exceptional when we consider response patterns in East Asia, where 36.9% of Japanese respondents (2004), 41.5% of Filipinos (2004), and 51.6% of respondents in Taiwan (2001) opted to place themselves at the center (Jou, 2010).

These patterns of ideological self-identification are quite different from the ways in which respondents choose to place the Communist Party and the Kuomintang. Figure 3.2 shows that in 1993, the left-right distribution for the Communist Party was bimodal, with peaks on the far left and in the center; in 1993 the far left formed the largest single category. Fewer respondents were able or willing to identify the position of the KMT, but for the 38.1% of respondents who did answer the question, the far right was by a fair margin the most popular placement.

The 2002 survey only asked respondents to identify the position of the CCP, while the 2008 survey did not ask respondents to identify any parties at all. The bottom panel of figure 3.2 shows that respondent placements of the Communist Party changed by 2002. The distribution of party placements now only has one peak, at the center of the left-right scale, and more respondents perceive the party to be on the right than on the left.

The Policy Content of Ideological Labels

What do these labels mean? Figures 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 show the correlations between left-right self-identification and positions on issues in 1993, 2002, and 2008, respectively. Figure 3.3 shows that there is no association between a respondent's beliefs on economic issues and her left-right self-identification in 1993. There is also no correlation between her views on social issues and her left-right placement. There does, however, appear to be a slight correlation between pro-authoritarian views and placement on the left. Respondents who call themselves leftists are slightly more likely to believe that too many political parties in a society will produce chaos, that China's political system is suitable for its current circumstances, and that the government should control the spread of information in society. These correlations are all relatively small, and the 95% confidence intervals for our estimates suggest that none of the policy issues have a correlation with ideological self-identification above 0.15; this is true even if we confine our analysis to the most-informed third of the sample.[3] There are also hints of inconsistency. The question that asked whether expanding democracy will affect stability is slightly correlated with rightist views, for instance.

When combined with the placements of the Communist party in Figure 3.2, these correlations suggest that in 1993, at a time when memories of the regime's near-death experience at Tiananmen were still fresh, the left was associated with authoritarianism while the right was associated with democracy. In a sense this confirms the prediction that the left-right dimension will end up taking on the meaning of the most salient political issues in a given society.

The correlations in the 2002 and 2008 surveys show however that the association between left and authoritarianism can be fleeting. In Figure 3.4, we see that in the 2002 survey, the correlations between authoritarian views on political issues and self-placement on the left are

[3]Though correlations between policy issues and ideological labels tend to be small even in democracies. Levitin and Miller (1979) show that in 1972, the correlation between ideological self-placement and issues ranged from 0.12 (tax policy) to 0.38 (busing), with an average correlation of 0.29. In Taiwan, Hsiao, Wang and Achen (2017) find correlations between -0.02 (social welfare) and 0.13 (environment), which they argue is evidence that the left-right labels lack any consistent meaning there.

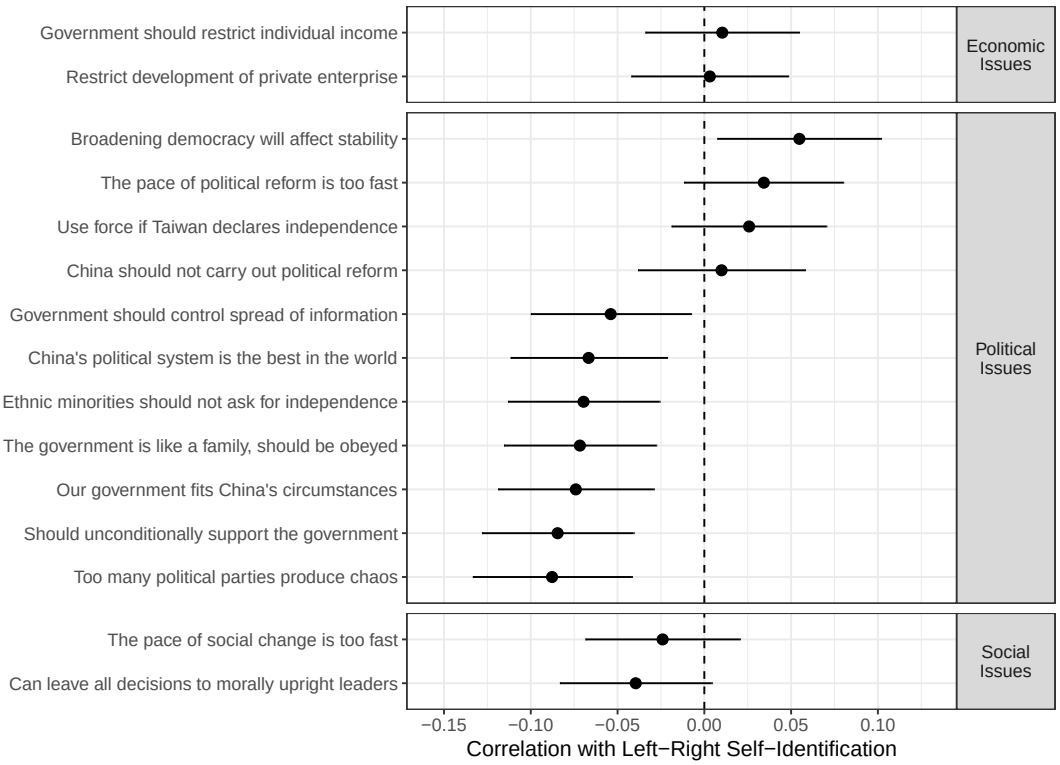


Figure 3.3: Correlations (with 95% confidence intervals) between Left-Right placement and specific issues in the 1993 survey.

generally indistinguishable from zero. Both the left and the right is modestly associated with a few attitudes that are consistent with an authoritarian worldview. Respondents who self-identify as right are slightly more likely to agree with the notion that pace of political reform is too fast, while self-identified leftists are likely to agree with the idea that the Communist party should take the lead in the implementation of democracy.

Economic issues in 2002 are also generally uncorrelated with left-right placement, though self-styled rightists are more likely to agree that poverty is the product of individual, rather than societal factors. Examination of social issues reveals that the right is slightly more likely to endorse traditional gender attitudes, which would not be surprising elsewhere but which runs counter to our expectations in China. We should note however that none of these correlations are large in magnitude. Our estimated confidence intervals suggest that we can be confident that

none of these correlations are much larger than 0.13.[4]

Figure 3.5 depicts the correlations between policy issues and left-right self-placement in the 2008 survey. In 2008, none of the political issues have a significant correlation with ideological self-identification. The slight correlation we saw between authoritarianism and the left from the 1993 survey is nowhere to be found.

Some of the correlations between ideological self-placement and economic issues follow our expectations from theory: leftists are more likely to favor redistribution and a strong state hand in the economy, though several other economic items do not show any significant correlations with the left-right dimension.

The results on social issues are generally inconclusive, and the items to do show a significant correlation suggest that traditional values are a province of the left, rather than the right, as we found in 2002. Views on most of the social items are uncorrelated with left-right placement. The exceptions are questions on whether men should receive preferential treatment in the labor market and whether it is possible to be Chinese without respecting traditional culture. Individuals who agreed with both questions were somewhat more likely to place themselves on the left.

On the whole, the results from the three surveys suggest that the policy content of ideological labels in China is weak and inconsistent. In 1993, much of the population perceived the Communist Party to occupy the far left of the ideological space, and people who self-identify as left are also slightly more likely to hold authoritarian political views, though the correlation is relatively unimpressive. In the 2002 and 2008 surveys, the political connotations of the left and right are less clearly delineated, and in 2002, most respondents placed the party in the center; only a handful perceived it to be on the far left. While some individuals are willing to identify themselves as part of the left or the right, their preferences on issues do not seem to follow a common pattern.

[4]Our analyses here are also subject to multiple comparisons concerns. Many of the initial correlations are no longer significant after a Bonferroni adjustment.

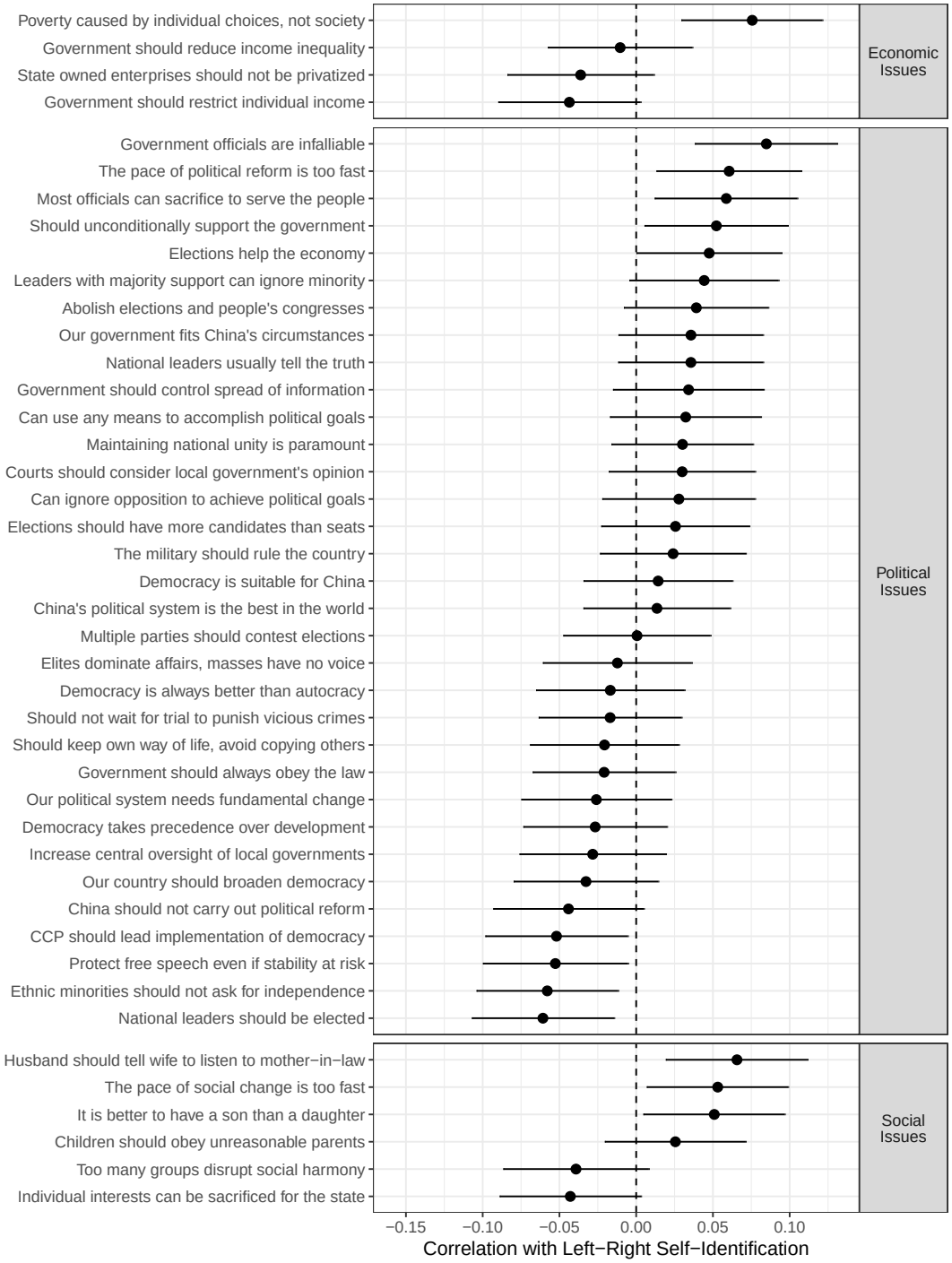


Figure 3.4: Correlations (with 95% confidence intervals) between Left-Right placement and specific issues in the 2002 survey.

The relationship between economic issues and ideological self-placement is similarly inconsistent. There are some hints that leftists favor a greater state role in the economy, but the preponderance of the evidence suggests that the economic content of the left-right label is limited. The left-right dimension also does not appear to possess a clear set of meanings when it comes to social issues. Traditional values about the gender and the family are in a few cases associated with the right in 2002, but with the left in 2008.

We should note that it is hard to say whether the differences we do observe between surveys are a product of change over time, or if they are an artifact of the different measures of left-right self-identification used in each year. While some of the trends are likely to be true regardless of the scale used (i.e. the change in the perceived location of the Communist party between 1993 and 2002), others, such as the increase in non-response, may be a function of the decision to use a scale with an exact midpoint. Given the shifting public debate over ideology during this period, it is also possible that respondents understood the question differently in each year.

The Partisan and Symbolic Content of Ideological Labels

While the policy content of left and right in China appears to be limited and contradictory, ideological labels are customarily understood to contain a mixture of policy, partisan, and symbolic meanings. Figure 3.6 shows that the labels are strongly correlated with the perceived location of both the Communist Party and the Kuomintang. The estimated correlation between the perceived position of the Communist Party and respondent left-right placement is 0.56 in 1993 and 0.48 in 2002[5], while the estimated correlation between self-placement and the perceived position of the Kuomintang was -0.42 for the respondents who answered both questions.[6]

[5] We should note here that the correlation is higher in 1993, even though more respondents perceived the CCP to have an extreme position in that year. This implies that respondents who placed the party on the left were also likely to self-identify as leftists.

[6] The relationship between ideological self-identification and the perceived position of the KMT that we find in the 1993 survey is especially interesting in light of the Hsiao, Wang and Achen (2017) argument that the left-right

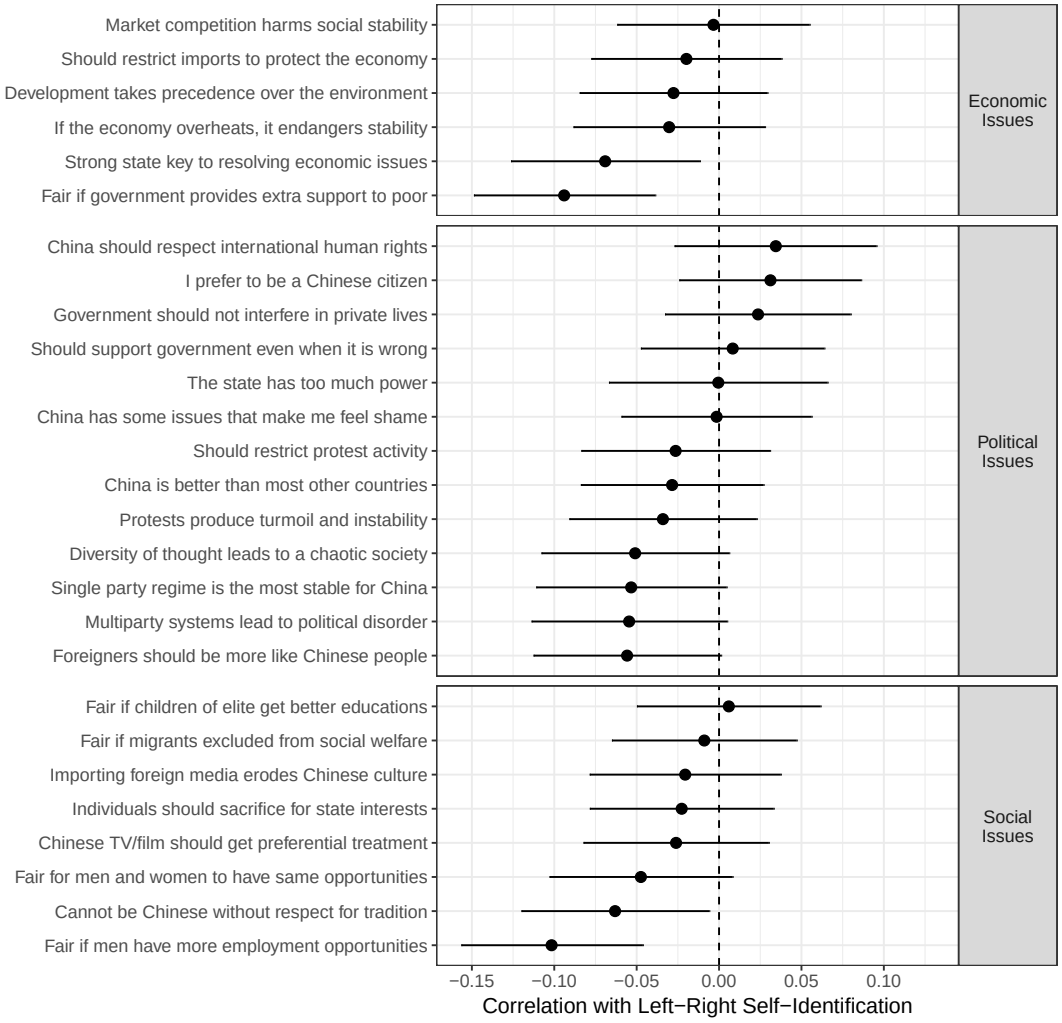


Figure 3.5: Correlations (with 95% confidence intervals) between Left-Right placement and specific issues in the 2008 survey.

However, while the perceived location of political parties has a strong association with left-right self-placement, there is no significant correlation between membership in the Communist party and left-right self-placement in 1993 or in 2008. There is a significant correlation between party membership and self-placement on the left in 2002, but even then it is substantively small ($r = -0.06$).

While we have shown that there is a partisan component to the left-right label, in some respects our findings here only open up new questions. What does the strength of the association

spectrum is essentially meaningless in Taiwan.

between self-placement and the perceived position of the party tell us, if the party itself has a somewhat indistinct ideology?

If ideological labels are capturing subjective evaluations of political symbols, like the US, then we might expect attitudes towards these symbols to show a strong correlation with ideological self-identification. Figure 3.6 suggests that individuals who have a positive view of the US and Japan may also be slightly more likely to consider themselves part of the right (all of the correlations are between 0.03 and 0.06, though the only item to possess a statistically significant correlation with the left-right dimension here is the respondent's attitude towards Japan in 2002).

Figure 3.6 also shows that there is an association between the belief that the Gang of Four should be thoroughly abolished and self-placement on the left. This result is the opposite of what we would expect, since the Gang of Four is still, despite some mixed messaging from the party, one of the leading cautionary tales of the dangers of leftist excess. While few respondents of any persuasion in 1993 might be expected to harbor sympathy for them, it is still surprising to see self-identified leftists take a harder line. This result suggests that we still have a lot to learn about how the public conceives of left and right in China.

Concluding Remarks

The evidence presented in this paper shows that ordinary citizens lack a shared model of the ideological space in China. The number of people who are unable or unwilling to place themselves on the left-right dimension is high by comparative standards. Citizens who do call themselves leftists or rightists tend to have disparate preferences on economic, political, and social issues, and as a result the relationship between the left-right dimension and issues is still poorly defined. While self-placements are clearly correlated with the perceived position of the Communist Party (and the Kuomintang), we know even less about the origins of these perceptions.

In many ways, the public's conceptions of left and right confound our expectations. Scholars and officials often use left and right to describe China's debates about economic reform

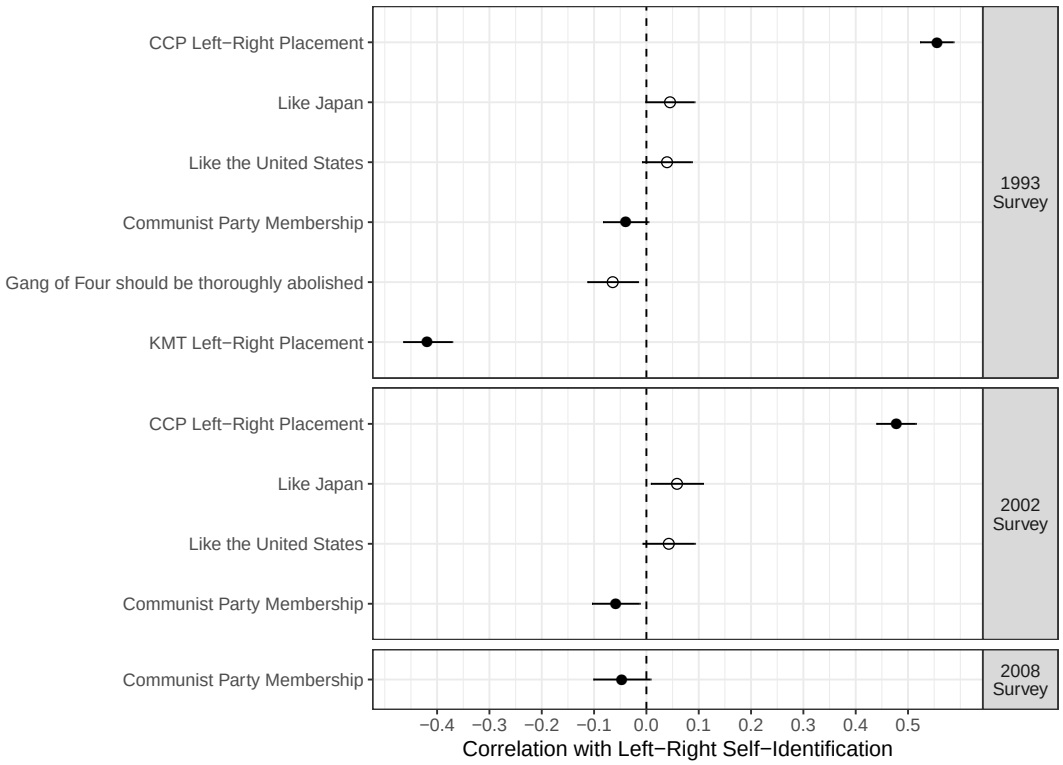


Figure 3.6: Correlations (with 95% confidence intervals) between Left-Right placement and partisan and symbolic variables in the three surveys. Black dots represent partisan variables; white dots represent symbolic variables.

and the proper role of the market, but left-right placements are largely uncorrelated with economic preferences among the general public.

The left does carry some authoritarian connotations for respondents in the 1993 survey, though these associations are thin on the ground in 2002 and 2008. One possible explanation for this observation is that democracy was a relatively salient alternative to Communist rule in 1993, and that as a result the left-right dimension captured this debate. If we posit that democracy had receded from public consciousness by 2002 or 2008, then it may also make sense for the left-right schema to lose this association over time. Unfortunately, differences in the survey instruments used in each year prevent us from ruling out the possibility that this shift is a product of question wording.

The findings of this paper provide further support for the idea that public opinion in China

is diffuse and disorganized. The confusion surrounding ideological labels suggests that Chinese citizens still lack a common language to summarize and communicate their political preferences. The creation of this language will be at the center of political developments in China in the years to come.

Appendix A

2015 CUGS Survey Measures

1. Interviewer, please record the sex of the respondent:

   1. Male 2. Female

2. In what year were you born?

3. How many years of education have you received?

4. How much was your total family income last year? (Including all pay from work, bonuses, earnings from a second job, gifts from friends and relatives, profits from each kind of investment, other gains, payments in kind, such as grain, cotton, or vegetables, converted to cash, hobby earnings, and wages earned elsewhere, etc.)

5. Are you a Communist Party member?

6. Regardless of whether you have participated in the activities listed, in the future would it be possible for you to engage in these activities?

   a) Participate in a protest/demonstration/mass incident

7. From time to time society faces certain issues, and government must have certain capabilities to deal with these issues. In the issues below, do you think the government's capabilities

are very strong, somewhat strong, somewhat weak, or very weak?

a) Capacity to maintain a system of values and education

b) Capacity to maintain social stability

c) Capacity to influence market prices

d) Capacity to monitor tax receipts

e) Capacity to reflect mass opinion

f) Capacity to redistribute goods

g) Capacity to restrain the behavior of officials and government offices

MCMC Convergence Diagnostics

In this section we present diagnostics for the MCMC model we ran using the Chinese Urban Governance Survey data. In the figures below we see that the traceplots for our quantities of interest are generally stationary, that autocorrelation subsides over time, and that the running mean of our values of interest converge on a stable value. We confirm that our chain is well-mixed and stationary using the Geweke and Raftery-Lewis convergence diagnostics.

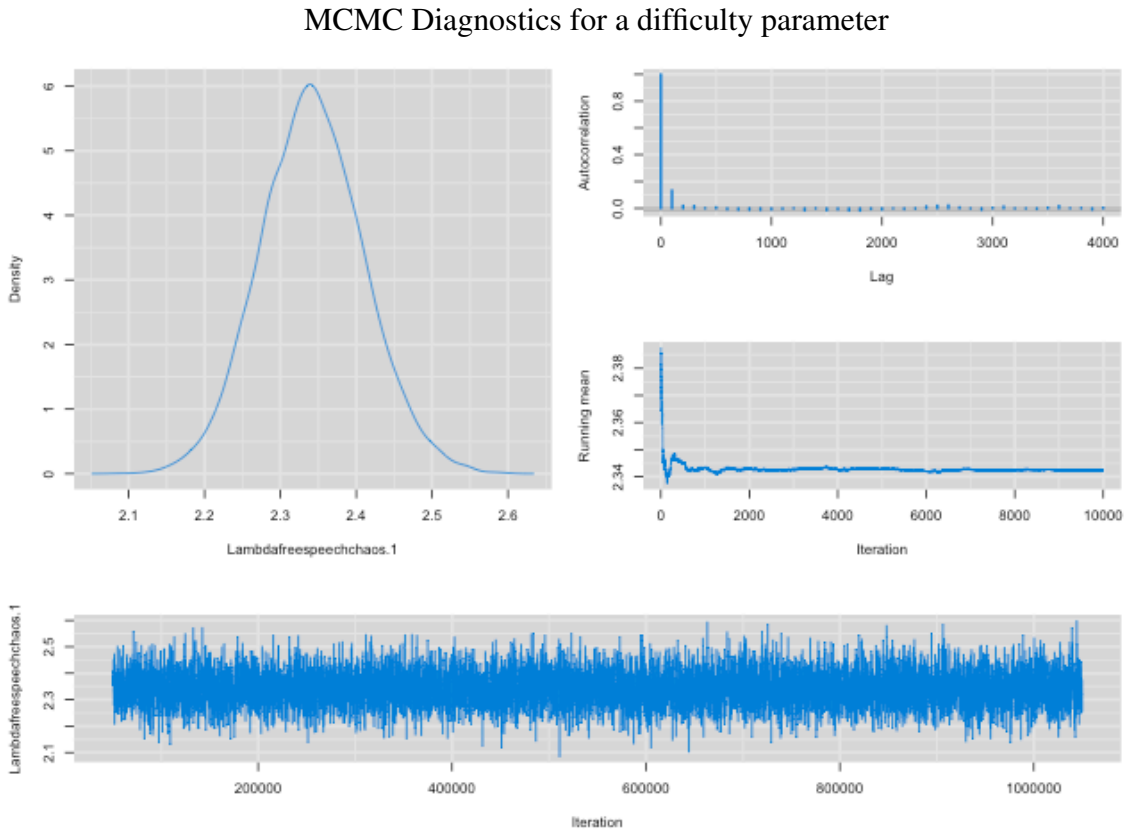


Figure A.1: Convergence diagnostics for a difficulty parameter. We present the trace, density, autocorrelation, and running mean diagnostic plots.

MCMC Diagnostics for a discrimination parameter

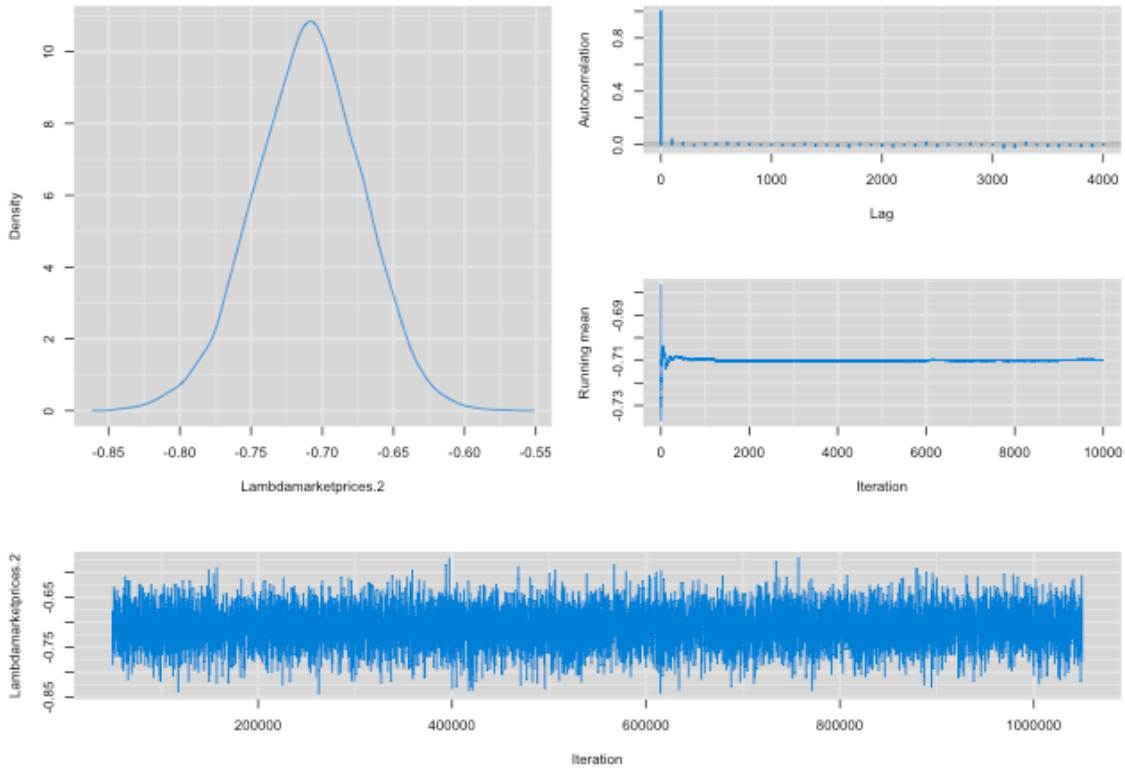


Figure A.2: Convergence diagnostics for a discrimination parameter.

MCMC Diagnostics for an ideal point estimate

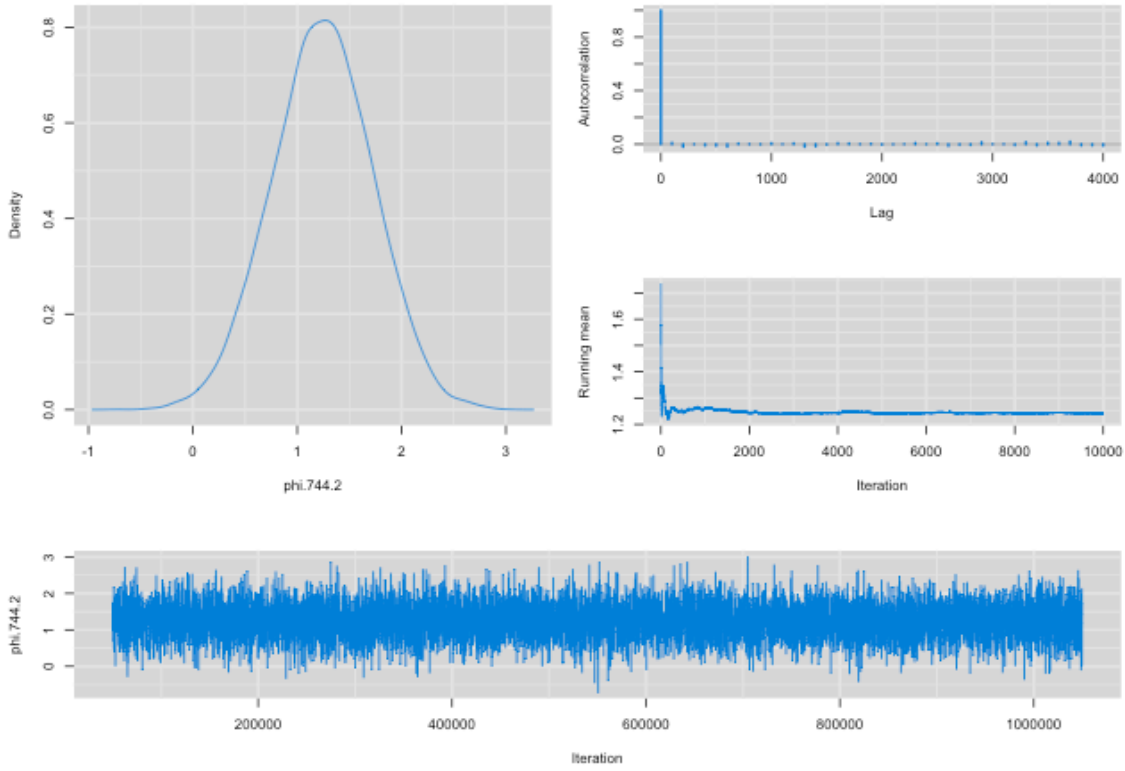


Figure A.3: Convergence diagnostics for the first dimension ideal point for a randomly selected respondent in our survey.

Table A.1: Joint Model Results before Imputation (base Bystanders)

Group	Variables	Coefficients (Std. err.)
	Left-Right Ideology (β_1)	0.312 (0.368)
	Auth.-Dem. Ideology (β_2)	0.402^{***} (0.150)
Potential Protesters		
	Valence	-2.168 (2.689)
	Competence	-1.135^{***} (0.254)
	Age	-0.037^{***} (0.013)
	Education	-0.015 (0.049)
	Gender	-0.381 (0.287)
	Log Income	0.433^{*} (0.229)
Undecideds		
	Valence	0.757 (1.730)
	Competence	0.096 (0.168)
	Age	-0.027^{***} (0.008)
	Education	-0.048 (0.030)
	Gender	0.121 (0.185)
	Log Income	-0.046 (0.145)
CCP Members		
	Valence	-9.934^{***} (2.019)
	Competence	0.156 (0.207)
	Age	0.054^{***} (0.009)
	Education	0.188^{***} (0.036)
	Gender	-0.542^{**} (0.219)
	Log Income	0.329^{**} (0.163)
Observations	831	
Log Likelihood	-850.391	
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Bibliography

Abramowitz, Alan I and Kyle L Saunders. 1998. "Ideological Realignment in the U.S. Electorate." *The Journal of Politics* 60(03):634–652.

Abramowitz, Alan I and Kyle L Saunders. 2008. "Is Polarization a Myth?" *The Journal of Politics* 70(2):542–555.

Acemoglu, Daron and James A Robinson. 2001. "A Theory of Political Transitions." *The American Economic Review* 91(4):938–963.

Acemoglu, Daron and James A Robinson. 2006. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Adams, James F, Samuel Merrill and Bernard Grofman. 2005. *A Unified Theory of Party Competition*. A Cross-National Analysis Integrating Spatial and Behavioral Factors New York: Cambridge University Press.

Adams, James and Samuel Merrill. 1999. "Modeling Party Strategies and Policy Representation in Multiparty Elections: Why Are Strategies so Extreme?" *American Journal of Political Science* 43(3):765.

Ansolabehere, Stephen and James M Snyder. 2000. "Valence Politics and Equilibrium in Spatial Election Models." *Public Choice* 103(3-4):327–336.

Bakker, Ryan, Seth Jolly and Jonathan Polk. 2012. "Complexity in the European Party Space: Exploring Dimensionality with Experts." *European Union Politics* 13(2):219–245.

Barber, Michael and Jeremy C Pope. 2016. "Lost in Issue Space? Measuring Levels of Ideology in the American Public.".

Baum, Richard. 1994. *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Benoit, Kenneth and Michael Laver. 2006. "Party Policy in Modern Democracies." London: Routledge.

Blaydes, Lisa. 2011. *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Boix, Carles. 2003. *Democracy and Redistribution*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brady, Anne-Marie. 2008. *Marketing Dictatorship*. Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Broockman, David E. 2016. "Approaches to Studying Policy Representation." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 41(1):181–215.

Brown, Timothy A. 2006. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Applied Research*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Alastair Smith, Randolph M Siverson and James D Morrow. 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Vol. 67 MIT Press.

Campbell, Angus, Philip Converse, Warren E Miller and Donald E Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago 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.

CCP Central Committee. 1981. "On Questions of Party History: Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China." *Beijing Review* 24(27):10–39.

Chen, Jidong and Yiqing Xu. N.d. "Why Do Authoritarian Regimes Allow Citizens to Voice Opinions Publicly?" *The Journal of Politics*. Forthcoming.

Chen, Jie. 2004. *Popular Political Support in Urban China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Chen, Jie. 2013. *A Middle Class without Democracy: Economic Growth and the Prospects for Democratization in China*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chen, Jie and Bruce J Dickson. 2010. *Allies of the State*. China's Private Entrepreneurs and Democratic Change Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chen, Xi. 2012. *Social Protest and Contentious Authoritarianism in China*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Chung, Yen-lin. 2011. "The Witch-Hunting Vanguard: The Central Secretariat's Roles and Activities in the Anti-Rightist Campaign." *The China Quarterly* 206:391–411.

Clinton, Joshua, Simon Jackman and Douglas Rivers. 2004. "The Statistical Analysis of Roll Call Data." *American Political Science Review* 98(2):355–370.

Conover, Pamela Johnston and Stanley Feldman. 1981. "The Origins and Meaning of Liberal/Conservative Self-Identifications." *American Journal of Political Science* 25(4):617.

Converse, Philip E. 1964. The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics. In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David Apter. New York: Free Press.

Dalton, Russell J. 2011. Left-Right Orientations, Context, and Voting Choices. In *Citizens, Context, and Choice*, ed. Russell J Dalton and Christopher J Anderson. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 103–125.

Deng, Xiaoping. 1984. *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, 1975-1982*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.

Dickson, Bruce J. 2014. "Who Wants to Be a Communist? Career Incentives and Mobilized Loyalty in China*." *The China Quarterly* 217:42–68.

Dickson, Bruce J and Maria Rost Rublee. 2000. "Membership Has Its Privileges The Socioeconomic Characteristics of Communist Party Members in Urban China." *Comparative Political Studies* 33(1):87–112.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper & Row.

Evans, Geoffrey, Anthony Heath and Mansur Lalljee. 1996. "Measuring Left-Right and Libertarian-Authoritarian Values in the British Electorate." *The British Journal of Sociology* 47(1):93.

Evans, Geoffrey and Stephen Whitefield. 1993. "Identifying the Bases of Party Competition in Eastern Europe." *British Journal of Political Science* 23(4):521–548.

Evans, Geoffrey and Stephen Whitefield. 1998. "The Evolution of Left and Right in Post-Soviet Russia." *Europe-Asia Studies* 50(6):1023–1042.

Fiorina, Morris, Samuel J Abrams and Jeremy C Pope. 2010. *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*. 3rd ed. New York: Pearson Longman.

Fuchs, Dieter and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. 1989. The Left-Right Schema. In *Continuities in Political Action: A Longitudinal Study of Political Attitudes in Three Western Democracies*, ed. M Kent Jennings and Jan W van Deth et al. Berlin: Walter deGruyter pp. 203–234.

Goldman, Merle. 2005. *From Comrade to Citizen*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Goldman, Merle. 2009. "Repression of China's Public Intellectuals in the Post-Mao Era." *Social Research* 76(2):659–686.

Groseclose, Tim. 2001. "A Model of Candidate Location When One Candidate Has a Valence Advantage." *American Journal of Political Science* 45(4):862.

Gueorguiev, Dimitar D and Paul J Schuler. 2016. "Keeping Your Head Down: Public Profiles and Promotion Under Autocracy." *Journal of East Asian Studies* 16(1):87–116.

Henjak, Andrija. 2010. "Political Cleavages and Socio-economic Context: How Welfare Regimes and Historical Divisions Shape Political Cleavages." *West European Politics* 33(3):474–504.

Hetherington, Marc J. 2001. "Resurgent Mass Partisanship: The Role of Elite Polarization." *American Political Science Review* 95(03):619–631.

Hinich, Melvin J and Michael C Munger. 1994. *Ideology and the Theory of Political Choice*. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press.

Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks and Carole J Wilson. 2002. "Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?" *Comparative Political Studies* 35(8):965–989.

Hotelling, Harold. 1929. "Stability in Competition." *The Economic Journal* 39:41–57.

Hout, Michael. 2004. "Getting the Most Out of the GSS Income Measures." Chicago: National Opinion Research Center.

Hsiao, Yi-Ching, T.Y. Wang and Christopher H Achen. 2017. Political Left and Right in Taiwan. In *The Taiwan Voter*, ed. Christopher H Achen and T.Y. Wang. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press pp. 198–222.

Huber, John D. 1989. "Values and partisanship in left-right orientations: measuring ideology." *European Journal of Political Research* 17(5):599–621.

Imai, Kosuke, James Lo and Jonathan Olmsted. 2016. "Fast Estimation of Ideal Points with Massive Data." *American Political Science Review* 110(4):631–656.

Inglehart, Ronald. 1990. *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Inglehart, Ronald and Hans Klingemann. 1976. Party Identification, Ideological Preference and the Left-Right Dimension among Western Mass Publics. In *Party Identification and Beyond: Representations of Voting and Party Competition*, ed. Ian Budge, Ivor Crewe and Dennis Farlie. London: John Wiley & Sons pp. 243–276.

Inglehart, Ronald and Jacques René Rabier. 1986. "Political Realignment in Advanced Industrial Society: From Class-Based Politics to Quality-of-Life Politics." *Government and Opposition* 21(4):456–479.

Jacobson, Gary C. 2012. "The Electoral Origins of Polarized Politics Evidence From the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study." *American Behavioral Scientist* 56(12):1612–1630.

Jacoby, William G. 1995. "The Structure of Ideological Thinking in the American Electorate." *American Journal of Political Science* 39(2):314.

Jennings, M Kent. 1992. "Ideological Thinking among Mass Publics and Political Elites." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 56(4):419–441.

Jessee, Stephen A. 2009. "Spatial Voting in the 2004 Presidential Election." *American Political Science Review* 103(01):59–81.

Jost, John T, Christopher M Federico and Jaime L Napier. 2009. "Political Ideology: Its Structure, Functions, and Elective Affinities." *Annual Review of Psychology* 60(1):307–337.

Jou, Willy. 2010. "The Heuristic Value of the Left—Right Schema in East Asia:." *International Political Science Review* 31(3):366–394.

Jou, Willy. 2011. "How do Citizens in East Asian Democracies Understand Left and Right?" *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 12(1):33–55.

Kitschelt, Herbert. 1992. "The Formation of Party Systems in East Central Europe." *Politics and Society* 20(1):7–50.

Kitschelt, Herbert. 1994. *The Transformation of European Social Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Knutsen, Oddbjørn. 1997. "The Partisan and the Value-based Component of Left-Right Self-placement: A Comparative Study." *International Political Science Review* 18(2):191–225.

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschier and Timotheos Frey. 2006. "Globalization and the Transformation of the National Political Space: Six European Countries Compared." *European Journal of Political Research* 45(4):921–956.

Kurella, Anna-Sophie and Franz Urban Pappi. 2015. "Combining ideological and policy distances with valence for a model of party competition in Germany 2009." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 27(1):86–107.

Landry, Pierre F and Mingming Shen. 2005. "Reaching migrants in survey research: the use of the global positioning system to reduce coverage bias in China." *Political Analysis* 13(1):1–22.

Layman, Geoffrey C and Thomas M Carsey. 2002. "Party Polarization and "Conflict Extension" in the American Electorate." *American Journal of Political Science* 46(4):786.

Levitin, Teresa E and Warren E Miller. 1979. "Ideological Interpretations of Presidential Elections." *American Political Science Review* 73(3):751–771.

Li, He. 2010. "Debating China's Economic Reform: New Leftists vs. Liberals." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 15(1):1–23.

Li, Junpeng. 2017. "The Making of Liberal Intellectuals in Post-Tiananmen China." Ph.D. diss. Columbia University.

Li, Lianjiang. 2004. "Political Trust in Rural China." *Modern China* 30(2):228–258.

Link, Perry. 2013. *An Anatomy of Chinese*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lipset, Seymour M and Stein Rokkan. 1967. Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction. In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*, ed. Seymour M Lipset and Stein Rokkan. New York: The Free Press pp. 1–64.

Lorentzen, Peter. 2013. "Regularizing Rioting: Permitting Public Protest in an Authoritarian Regime." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 8(2):127–158.

Lu, Ye, Yajie Chu and Fei Shen. 2016. "Mass media, new technology, and ideology: An analysis of political trends in China." *Global Media and China* pp. 1–32.

Lumley, Thomas. 2010. *Complex Surveys : a Guide to Analysis Using R*. New York: Wiley.

Lupton, Robert N, William M Myers and Judd R Thornton. 2015. "Political Sophistication and the Dimensionality of Elite and Mass Attitudes, 1980-2004." *The Journal of Politics* 77(2):368–380.

MacFarquhar, Roderick and Michael Schoenhals. 2006. *Mao's Last Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mair, Peter. 2007. Left–Right Orientations. In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, ed. Russell J Dalton and Hans-Dieter Klingemann. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 206–222.

Manion, Melanie. 1996. "The Electoral Connection in the Chinese Countryside." *American Political Science Review* 90(4):736–748.

Mao, Zedong. 1977. *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*. Vol. 5 Peking: Foreign Languages Press.

Marks, Gary, Liesbet Hooghe, Moira Nelson and Erica Edwards. 2006. "Party Competition and European Integration in the East and West Different Structure, Same Causality." *Comparative Political Studies* 39(2):155–175.

Martin, Andrew D, Kevin M Quinn and Jong Hee Park. 2011. "MCMCpack: Markov chain Monte Carlo in R." *Journal of Statistical Software* 42(9):1–21.

McKelvey, Richard D and John W Patty. 2006. "A theory of voting in large elections." *Games and Economic Behavior* 57(1):155–180.

Micozzi, Juan Pablo and Sebastian M Saiegh. 2015. "An empirical stochastic model of Argentina's Impossible Game (1955–1966)." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 28(2):266–287.

Misra, Kalpana. 2003. "Neo-Left and Neo-Right in Post-Tiananmen China." *Asian Survey* 43(5):717–744.

Montinola, Gabriella, Yingyi Qian and Barry R Weingast. 1995. "Federalism, Chinese style: The Political Basis for Economic Success in China." *World Politics* 48(1):50–81.

Moreno, Alejandro. 1999. *Political Cleavages. Issues, Parties, and the Consolidation of Democracy*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Nathan, Andrew J and Tianjian Shi. 1996. "Left and Right with Chinese Characteristics: Issues and Alignments in Deng Xiaoping's China." *World Politics* 48(4):522–550.

Naughton, Barry. 1995. *Growing Out of the Plan: Chinese Economic Reform, 1978-1993*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Oberski, Daniel. 2014. "lavaan. survey: An R package for Complex Survey Analysis of Structural Equation Models." *Journal of Statistical Software* 57(1):1–27.

Pan, Jennifer and Yiqing Xu. 2018. "China's Ideological Spectrum." *The Journal of Politics* 80(1):254–273.

Poole, Keith T and Howard L Rosenthal. 2007. *Ideology and Congress*. Transaction Publishers.

Poole, Keith T and Howard Rosenthal. 1997. *Congress*. A Political-economic History of Roll Call Voting New York: Oxford University Press.

Potter, Pitman B. 2011. "4 June and Charter 08: Approaches to remonstrance." *China Information* 25(2):121–138.

Quinn, Kevin M. 2004. "Bayesian Factor Analysis for Mixed Ordinal and Continuous Responses." *Political Analysis* 12(4):338–353.

Riker, William H and Peter C Ordeshook. 1973. *An Introduction to Positive Political Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Rohrschneider, Robert and Stephen Whitefield. 2008. "Understanding Cleavages in Party Systems: Issue Position and Issue Salience in 13 Post-Communist Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 42(2):280–313.

Saiegh, Sebastian M. 2009. "Recovering a Basic Space from Elite Surveys: Evidence from Latin America." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34(1):117–145.

Schofield, Norman. 2007. "The Mean Voter Theorem: Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Convergent Equilibrium." *The Review of Economic Studies* 74(3):965–980.

Schofield, Norman and Alexei Zakharov. 2009. "A stochastic model of the 2007 Russian Duma election." *Public Choice* 142(1-2):177–194.

Schofield, Norman, Claassen, Christopher, Gallego, Maria and Ozdemir, Ugur. 2011. Empirical and Formal Models of the United States Presidential Elections in 2000 and 2004. In *Political Economy of Institutions, Democracy and Voting*, ed. Norman Schofield and Gonzalo Caballero. New York: Springer pp. 217–258.

Schofield, Norman and Itai Sened. 2005. "Multiparty Competition in Israel, 1988–96." *British Journal of Political Science* 35(04):635–663.

Schofield, Norman, JeeSeon Jeon, Marina Muskhelishvili, Ugur Ozdemir and Margit Tavits. 2011. Modelling Elections in Post-Communist Regimes: Voter Perceptions, Political Leaders and Activists. In *Political Economy of Institutions, Democracy and Voting*, ed. Norman Schofield and Gonzalo Caballero. New York: Springer Berlin Heidelberg pp. 259–301.

Schofield, Norman, Maria Gallego and JeeSeon Jeon. 2011. "Leaders, voters and activists in the elections in Great Britain 2005 and 2010." *Electoral Studies* 30(3):484–496.

Schofield, Norman, Maria Gallego, JeeSeon Jeon and Marina Muskhelishvili. 2012. "Modelling Elections in the Caucasus." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties* 22(2):187–214.

Schofield, Norman and Micah Levinson. 2008. "Modeling authoritarian regimes." *Politics, Philosophy & Economics* 7(3):243–283.

Schurmann, Franz. 1968. *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*. 2nd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Shi, Tianjian. 2001. "Cultural Values and Political Trust: A Comparison of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan." *Comparative Politics* 33(4):401.

Shi, Tianjian. 2014. *The Cultural Logic of Politics in Mainland China and Taiwan*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Shirk, Susan L. 1993. *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Shirk, Susan L. 2007. *China: Fragile Superpower*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sniderman, Paul M and John Bullock. 2004. A Consistency Theory of Public Opinion and Political Choice: The Hypothesis of Menu Dependence. In *Studies in Public Opinion: Attitudes, Nonattitudes, Measurement Error, and Change*, ed. Willem E Saris and Paul M Sniderman. Princeton: Princeton University Press pp. 337–357.

Song, Qiang, Zangzang Zhang and Bian Qiao. 1996. *China Can Say No*. Beijing: Zhonghua gongshang lianhe chubanshe.

Stokes, Donald E. 1963. "Spatial Models of Party Competition." *American Political Science Review* 57(02):368–377.

Stokes, Donald E. 1992. Valence Politics. In *Electoral Politics*, ed. Dennis Kavanagh. Oxford: Clarendon Press pp. 141–164.

Sunstein, Cass R. 2002. "The Law of Group Polarization." *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 10(2):175–195.

Svolik, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tang, Wenfang. 2005. *Public Opinion and Political Change in China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Tang, Wenfang. 2016. *Populist Authoritarianism: Chinese Political Culture and Regime Sustainability*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Treier, Shawn and D Sunshine Hillygus. 2009. "The Nature of Political Ideology in the Contemporary Electorate." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 73(4):679–703.

van der Brug, Wouter and Joost van Spanje. 2009. "Immigration, Europe and the 'new' cultural dimension." *European Journal of Political Research* 48(3):309–334.

Wallace, Jeremy L. 2014. *Cities and Stability: Urbanization, Redistribution, & Regime Survival in China*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Whyte, Martin. 2010. *Myth of the Social Volcano*. Perceptions of Inequality and Distributive Injustice in Contemporary China Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Womack, Brantly. 1984. "Modernization and Democratic Reform in China." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 43(03):417–439.

Wu, Angela Xiao. 2014. "Ideological Polarization Over a China-as-Superpower Mindset: An Exploratory Charting of Belief Systems Among Chinese Internet Users, 2008-2011." *International Journal of Communication* 8:2650–2679.

Wu, Jason. 2017. "A Spatial Valence Model of Political Participation in China." Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago.

Wu, Jason and Tianguang Meng. 2016. "The Nature of Ideology in Urban China." Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago.

Xu, Youyu. 2003. "The Debates Between Liberalism and the New Left in China Since the 1990s." *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 34(3):6–17.

Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zechmeister, Elizabeth. 2006. "What's Left and Who's Right? A Q-method Study of Individual and Contextual Influences on the Meaning of Ideological Labels." *Political Behavior* 28(2):151–173.

Zechmeister, Elizabeth J. 2015. Left-Right Identifications and the Latin American Voter. In *The Latin American Voter*, ed. Ryan E Carlin, Matthew M Singer and Elizabeth J Zechmeister. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press pp. 195–225.

Zechmeister, Elizabeth J and Margarita Corral. 2012. "Individual and Contextual Constraints on Ideological Labels in Latin America:." *Comparative Political Studies* 46(6):675–701.

Zhao, Suisheng. 1998. "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31(3):287–302.