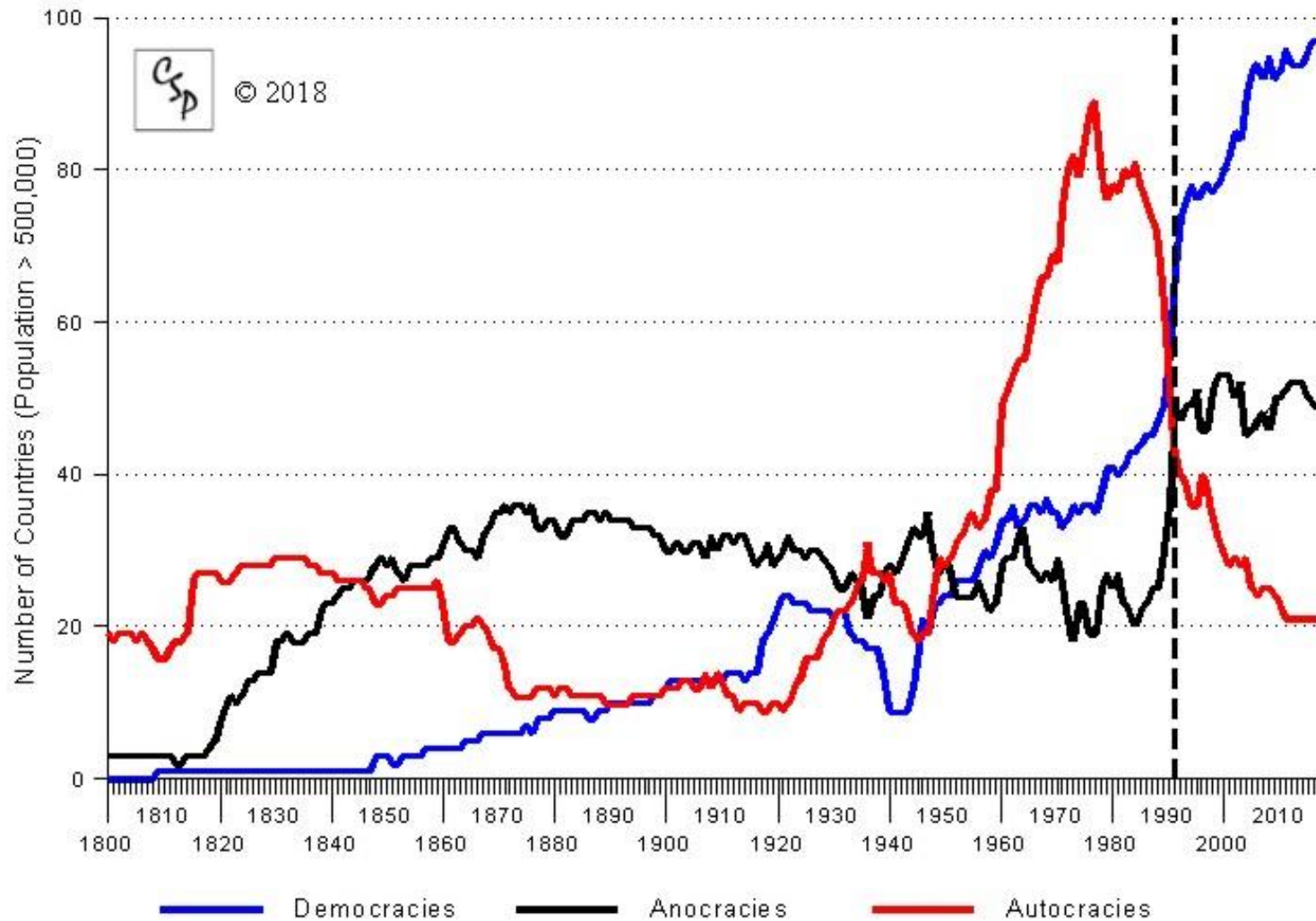


THE NEXT DICTATORSHIP WON'T BE LIKE THE LAST: AUTOCRATIC TOOLS IN THE INFORMATION ERA

Olomouc 2024

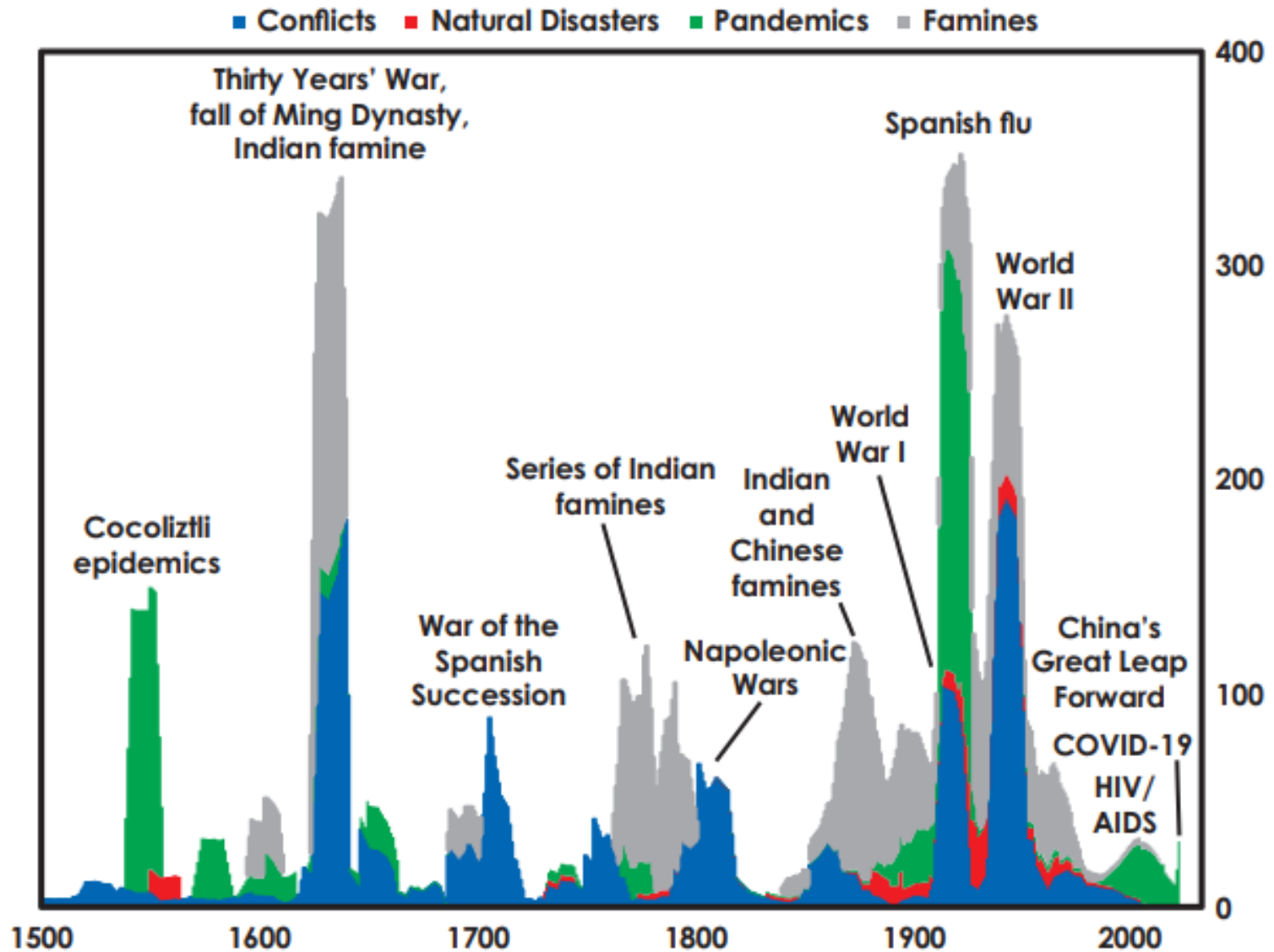
Richard Šmilňák

Global Trends in Governance, 1800-2017



Source: Center for systemic peace, 2017

GLOBAL DEATHS BY CATEGORY (RATE PER 100K PEOPLE, 15YMA)



Zdroj: Ray Dalio: The changing world order

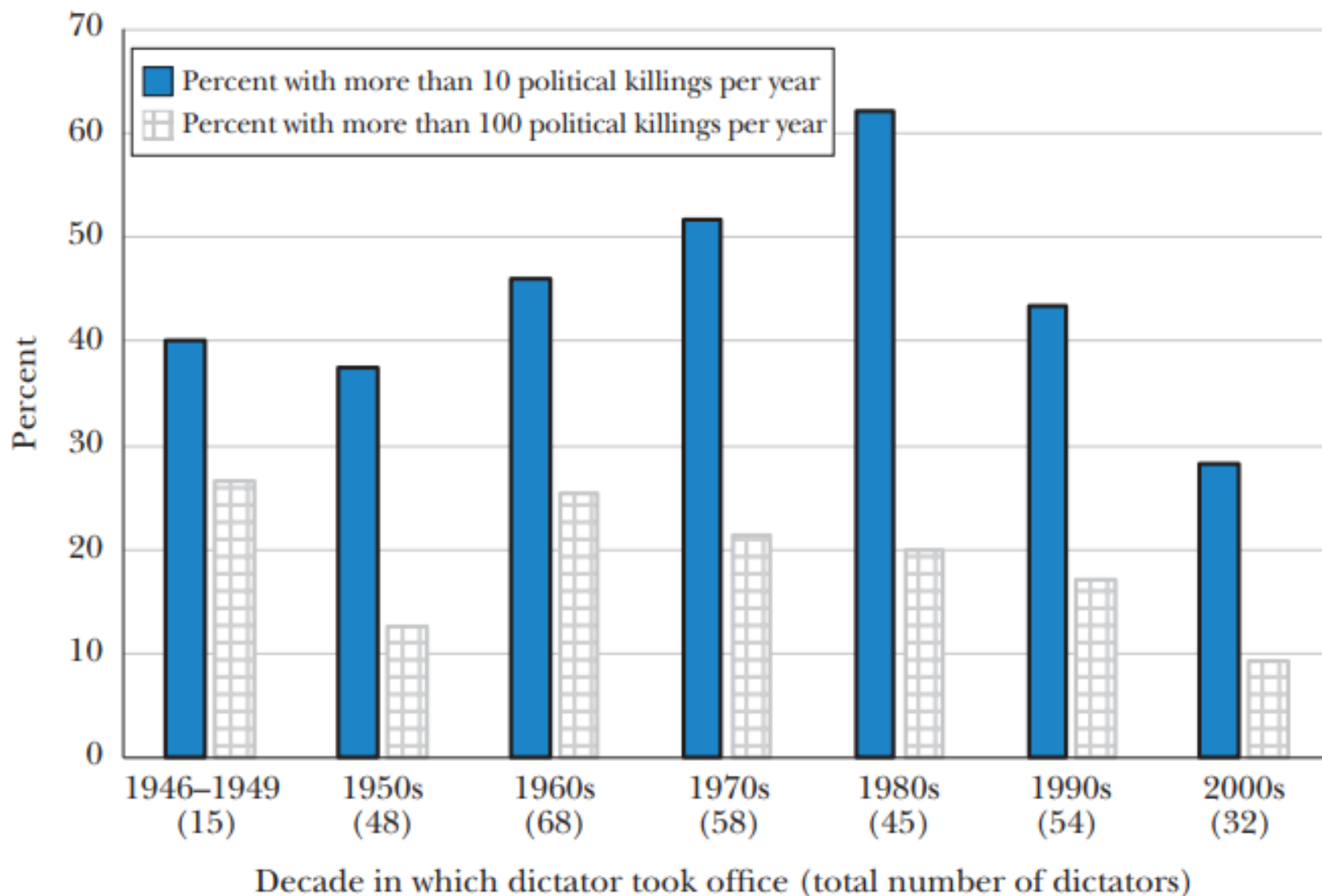
Information autocracy 101

- Mao, Stalin, Gottwald, Pol Pot, Salazar used violence, repression, coercion, fear, gulag
- The new set of autocratic sorcery is different, yet being deployed with the same goals: dominance, supremacy, control
- Means of getting things done: popularity gained (and maintained) through the control and manipulation of information
 - Hijacking democratic institutions to use them for dismantling democracy
- Talk like a democrat, use the symbols and rhetoric of democracy
 - No one is going to go into elections with fascist posters ← not popular
 - Build a democratic facade, talk about the ever-criticizing crooked journalists, free elections, worldwide conspiracy, weaknesses of the West, widespread corruption etc.

Information autocrats (dictators)

- Use public sector for weakening and silencing opponents
- Violence is not popular → becomes limited or hidden
- In an interconnected world where democracy is popular, you'd better stick with it → public opinion, investor sentiment etc.
- Countering these actors becomes harder as they operate within or on the edge of constitutional systems
- The boundaries of freedom get narrower step by step while everyone's „radar“ and elasticity in this sense is different
- Such regimes export corruption, influencing their neighbours
- In the long run, i.a. need smart people for economic progress ← but they repel them with their gimmicks and trickery (immigration) → reverse evolution phase (RF) / phase of democratization (Armenia)

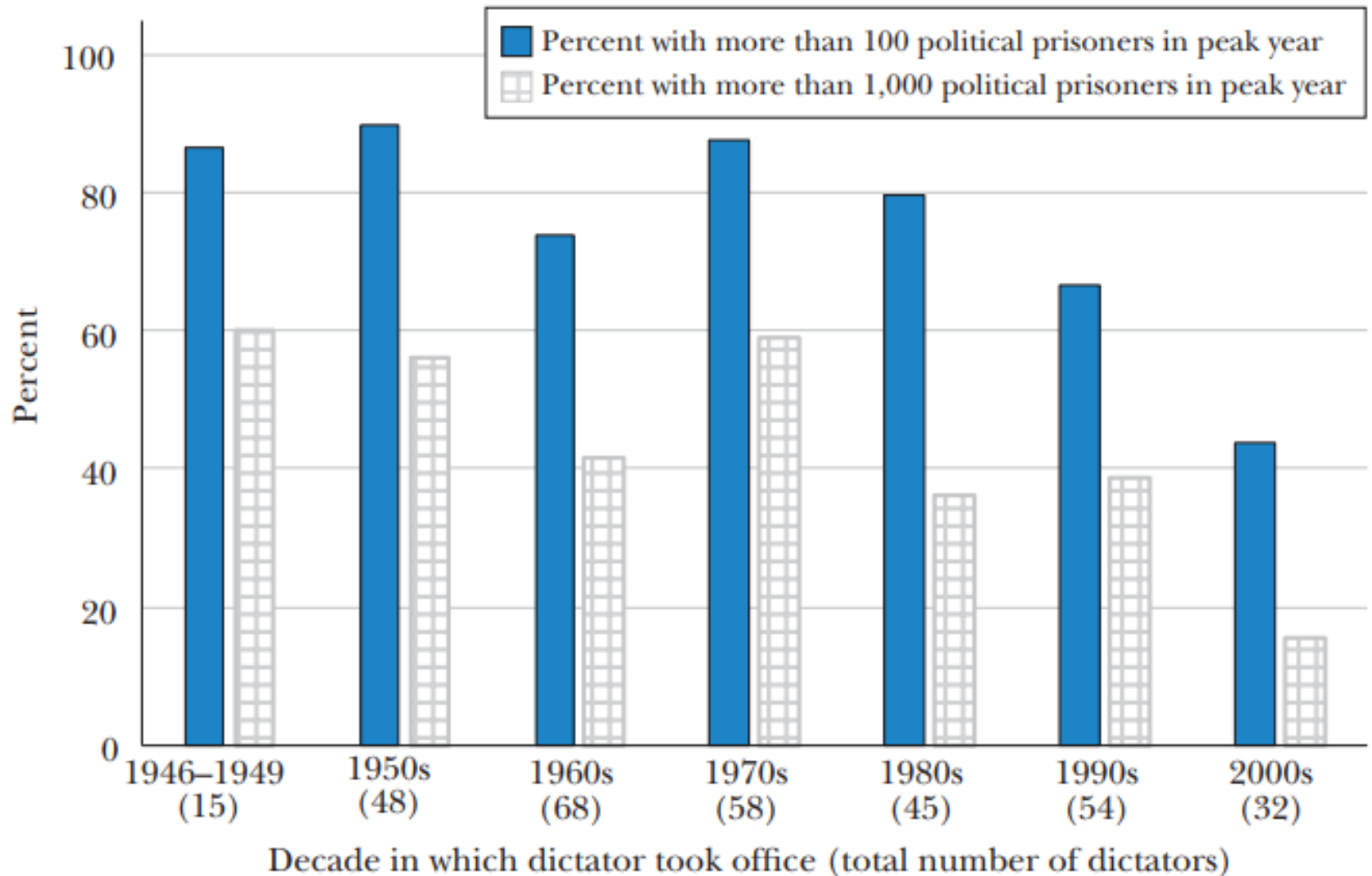
Political Killings per Year in Nondemocracies



Source: Guriev, S., & Treisman, D. (2019).

Informational autocrats. *Journal of economic perspectives*, 33(4), 100-127.

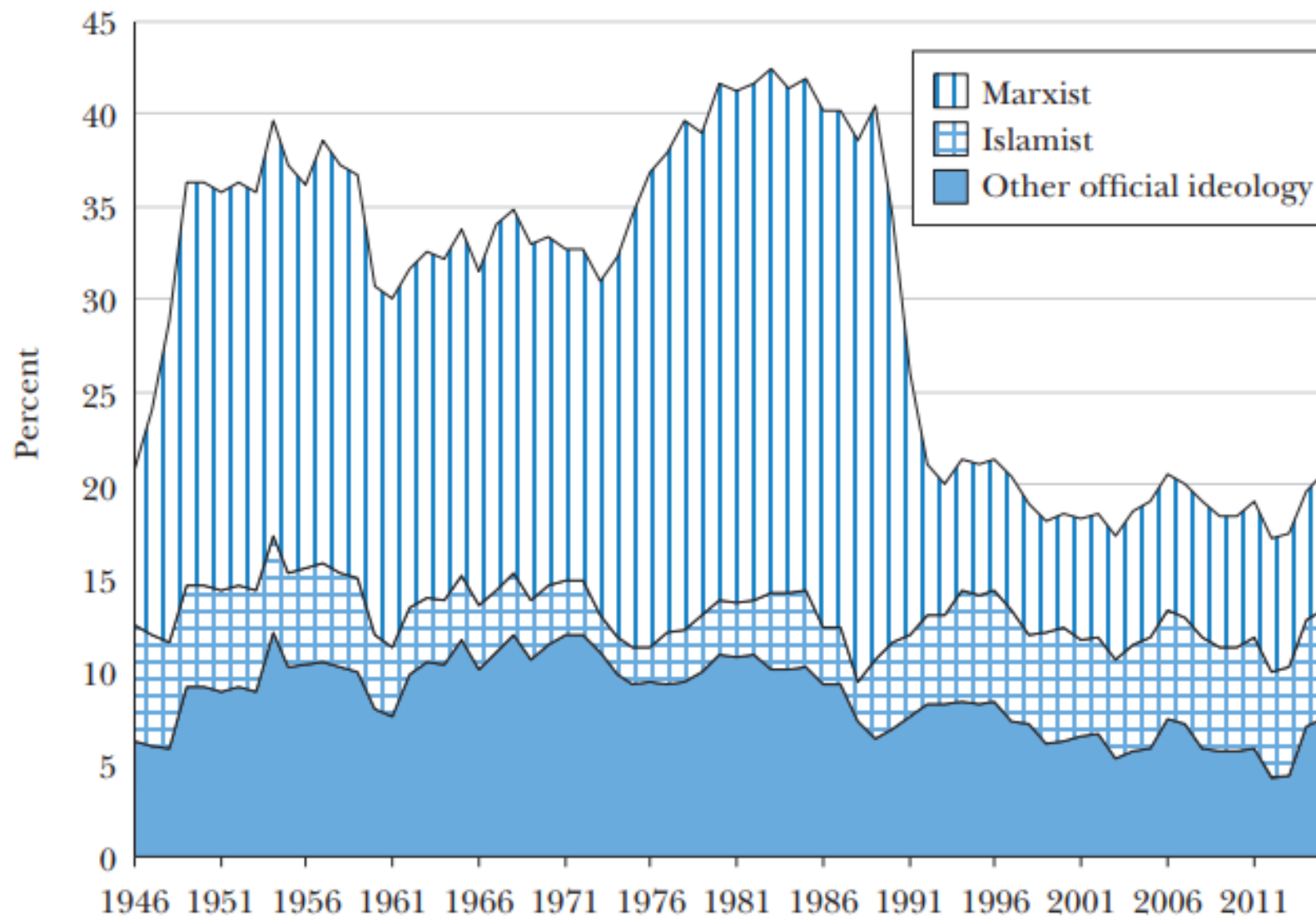
Political Prisoners and Detainees in Dictator's Peak Year



Source: Guriev, S., & Treisman, D. (2019).

Informational autocrats. *Journal of economic perspectives*, 33(4), 100-127.

Percentage of Nondemocracies with an Official Ideology



Source: Guriev, S., & Treisman, D. (2019).

Informational autocrats. *Journal of economic perspectives*, 33(4), 100-127.

How do you know it's them?

- They don't kill you and don't take thousands prisoners of consciousness
- The usage of political institutions for taming/silencing opposition voices (political and business alike)
- Control of media while allowing critics to publish in marginal outlets
- B-side political parties; political affection X fandom
- Election management practices
- Creation of the mask of competence and an interest in **people**
- Avoiding violent rhetoric and repression
- Labelling the chamber(s) of parliament as gossip rooms

How to counter them?

- Non-freezing ever-evolving open-eyed society upheld by:
 - Lawyers
 - Judges
 - Public office workers
 - Activists i.e. conscious public
 - Academics
 - Journalists
- Non-isolation and the support of the aforementioned from home and abroad