

## **HYBRID REGIMES IN MODERN TIMES: Between Democracy and Autocracy**

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MA Programme in Political Science (1 year and 2 years)

Doctoral School of Political Science, International Relations and Public Policy Core course  
Comparative Politics and Political Economy Tracks

Winter semester 2020 (4 credits, 8 ECTS credits)

### **Class meetings:**

XXX

### **Office hours:**

XXX

### **Introduction to the issue**

Hybrid regimes that alloy democratic rules with authoritarian governance are the most widespread political systems in the world at the beginning of the 21st century. Conventional accounts describe them as defective democracies or competitive authoritarian regimes. Alternative views point to the genuine features and functions of these regimes that cannot be reduced to those of half-democracies or half-autocracies. In fact, hybrid regimes are puzzling in several ways: (1) their establishment and sustainability have been unexpected either by the school of democratization/transitology or by the school of (new) authoritarianism; (2) neither democratic institutions (e.g. elections) nor autocratic institutions (e.g. dominant parties) function in a conventional way there; and (3) contrary to the expectations of stability, hybrid regimes have demonstrated a variety of (within-type) dynamics.

### **Topics and regional focus**

In this course, we will seek to unpack the category of hybrid regimes and explore the following questions: What are the origins of hybrid regimes? What are the specifics of their institutional functionality in comparison with democracies and/or autocracies? What determines their durability and dynamic nature? We will review the major research approaches that analyze the political regimes in the 'grey zone' between democracy and autocracy and further link these approaches to the broader literature on statehood, economic development and social order. We will identify 'who governs' in hybrid regimes and by which means (coercion, patronage, ideology, Internet, among others) the power is exercised and maintained. Also, we will look at how governments interact with business elites, civil society, as well as with their regional

neighbors and international community. Finally, we will identify the ways the study of hybrid regimes can inform contemporary policies and practices in the democratization processes.

This course offers an opportunity to study the current landscape of hybrid regimes in Eastern Europe and Eurasia in depth and with a worldwide comparative perspective. Most of our focus will be on the post-Soviet area, where some of the most obvious examples of hybrid regimes may be found. In addition, hybrid regimes from Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia will be included in comparison.

### **Approach to teaching and learning**

Although our readings will include empirical material from different countries and regions, our seminar sessions will be thematic, dealing with one or another puzzling feature of hybrid regimes. A session will usually consist of three parts: first, we will critically review main conceptual and theoretical approaches; second, we will deal with relevant empirical cases, and finally we will have a policy-relevant discussion or exercise on contemporary word-based problems.

The course will build on the techniques of collaborative and peer-to-peer learning. In other words, students will learn from and with each other. Our sessions will include brainstorming exercise, team presentations, group work and discussions. Also, the course integrates exercises of a simulation game and role playing in order to let students experience real-life political processes in hybrid regimes and expose them to contemporary challenges of promoting democracy and good governance in the 21st century.

The instructor will overtake the functions of a coach and a moderator by generating discussion topics, raising questions, and developing collaborative exercises. She will make short inputs to the sessions. However, no lecturing should be expected. It means in this course student will learn by doing, not pure listening.

### **Pre-conditions**

No prior knowledge is assumed.

### **Learning outcomes**

At the end of the course, you will

- gain the understanding of the differences between hybrid, democratic and authoritarian regimes;
- become familiar with the major research schools dealing with hybrid regimes, their (normative) premises as well as their strengths and weaknesses;
- accumulate the knowledge about the actors, institutions and processes responsible for establishment, functioning, and dynamics of hybrid regimes;

- understand the interaction mechanisms between actors and structures as well as the links between global and local in hybrid regimes;
- know specifics of East European and Eurasian hybrid regimes relative to the hybrid regimes in other world regions;
- learn how to identify empirical puzzles and how to address them with theoretical knowledge and methodological tools;
- be skilled in ‘translation’ of research findings into practical policy recommendations.

### **Course requirements and assessment**

Regular attendance is required. Students are expected to be present at all seminars and to come prepared. If you are unable to attend class, you should notify me via e-mail prior to the session.

The grading follows the standard scale adopted by the Department of Political Science: A: 100-94; A-: 93-87; B+: 86-80; B: 79-73; B-: 72-66; C+: 65-59; F: 58-0

The final grade will be composed as follows:

- Active in-class/online participation – 15%
- Two team presentations – 40%
- Presentation of research design – 10%
- Final paper – 35%

Active class participation is expected and graded. Students are required to read the assigned material, and participate in the discussions and working groups regularly. Students’ contributions should be informed by the readings, focused on the main analytical points, formulated clearly, refer to other contributions in discussions, and demonstrate critical engagement. Note that the quality of your contributions would count more than their quantity. In addition to class participation, students have the opportunity to contribute online by commenting on the op-eds posted on the online discussion platform. Online discussions will follow the topics of our sessions. The online discussion will be open on Sunday in the week before the sessions and close on Saturday after the sessions.

Each student does two presentations on the topics of our weekly seminars. The task is to check the validity of theoretical approaches against the background of the empirical developments of student’s interest (more details on the content will be provided in the first session). The presentation should be done in teams of 2-4 students. The grade will be distributed between individual and group performance: 10% to 10% for each presentation. The presentation should be no longer than 20 minutes and will be followed by a 10-min Q&A. The presentation should be submitted to the instructor prior to the session. The preparations for the presentations should include additional literature to the required readings.

Each student will design a research project dealing with a specific puzzle and question related to hybrid regimes. Against the background of contemporary research students are asked to formulate 2 hypotheses and with reference to methodological rules select the cases of hybrid regimes, either within a region or across the world or across the time, to test these hypotheses. The aim is to get first-hand experience with the research on hybrid regimes. The research project can be done on one of the (sub-)topics the presentation was done. The research project will be presented as a PowerPoint presentation of 15 minutes maximum (plus 10-15 minutes of the follow-up Q&A). The guidelines for the research design will be introduced in the first session of the first week. The presentations will be scheduled to the end of the semester (after week 9). Students should receive the approval of the instructor on their chosen topic for the research design by 01.03. This approval is mandatory.

The final paper will contain the final version of the research design, applied and tested empirically for the selected cases of hybrid regimes. It should be no more than 5000 words long (without references, but including possible appendices). Details will be introduced in the first session of the first week.

Please note that for all assessments, late submission, and violation of the word or time limit will result in a lower grade. Plagiarism is not acceptable and will be punished according to the departmental rules.

### **Deadlines:**

1. Choose the seminars you are going to present – by 14.01
2. Get the approval of the (sub-)topic for the presentation – one week prior to the session in which you are going to present
3. Submit the presentation in the day before the presentation is done by 1:00pm.
4. Get the approval of the topic for the presentation of a research design – by 01.03
5. Submit the final paper – by 08.04

### **Reading material**

All the course material is available in electronic form. The syllabus only contains the required readings. Suggestions for further reading will be made in class and consultations via email or office hours.

## **Course schedule**

### **PART I: CONCEPTS AND MEASURES**

In weeks 1-3 we will review approaches to conceptualize and measure hybrid regimes. Democracy-rooted approaches will be contrasted with autocracy-rooted approaches.

Furthermore, approaches that handle these regimes as a genuine regime type will be considered.

### **Week 1 – Introduction: topics, requirements and organizational issues**

The sessions in the first week introduces students to the topics of the course, explains course requirements and clarifies all organizational issues. In these sessions we will start to explore the conceptual question: what hybrid regimes are (and aren't).

#### *Readings:*

Carothers, Thomas (2002). "The end of the transition paradigm." *Journal of Democracy* 13(1): 5-21.

Diamond, Larry (2002). "Thinking about hybrid regimes." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 21-35.

Morlino, Leonardo (2009). "Are there hybrid regimes? Or are they just an optical illusion?" *European Political Science Review* 1(02): 273-296.

### **Week 2 – What is hybrid regime? Democratic and authoritarian paradigms**

Sessions in week 2 will be devoted to the approaches to hybrid regimes that are rooted in the concepts of democracy and/or autocracy.

#### *Readings:*

Collier, David and Steven Levitsky (1997). "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research." *World Politics* 49 (10): 430-451.

Merkel, Wolfgang (2004). "Embedded and Defective Democracies." *Democratization* 11, 5: 33-58.

Schmitter, Philippe C., and Terry L. Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is... and Is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 75–88.

Levitsky, S. and L. A. Way (2002). "The rise of competitive authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 51-65.

### **Week 3 – What is hybrid regime? Genuine perspective**

In week 3 we will discuss weaknesses and strengths of the democratic and authoritarian perspectives on hybrid regimes and explore novel approaches to deal with these regimes as a genuine regime type.

#### *Readings:*

Bogaards, M. (2009). "How to classify hybrid regimes? Defective democracy and electoral authoritarianism." *Democratization* 16(2): 399-423.

Cassani, A. (2014). "Hybrid what? Partial consensus and persistent divergences in the analysis of hybrid regimes." *International Political Science Review* 35(5): 542-558.

Bogaards, Matthijs (2018) *De-democratization in Hungary: diffusely defective democracy, Democratization*, 25:8, 1481-1499, DOI: 10.1080/13510347.2018.1485015

Magyar, Bálint. *Post-Communist Mafia State: The Case of Hungary*. NED - New edition, 1 ed., Central European University Press, 2016. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctt19z391g](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctt19z391g). Ch. 4 and 5.

## **PART II: FUNCTIONING AND IN-/STABILITY**

In weeks 4-10 we will analyze the specifics in functioning of hybrid regimes that make these regimes endure or fail.

### **Week 4 – Why do some hybrid regimes survive while the other collapse? Conditions of revolutionary breakdowns and stability**

In week 4 we will address the puzzle of stability and breakdown of hybrid regimes. In particular, we will elaborate debates between so called diffusion-centered and structural explanations.

#### *Readings:*

Bunce, V. J. and S. L. Wolchik (2010). "Defeating Dictators. Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes." *World Politics* 62(1): 43-86.

Gerschewski, J. (2013). "The three pillars of stability: legitimation, repression, and co-optation in autocratic regimes." *Democratization* 20(1): 13-38.

Way, L. A. (2008). "The real causes of the color revolutions." *Journal of Democracy* 19(3): 55-69.

Way, L. A. & Casey, A. (2018) *The structural sources of postcommunist regime trajectories, Post-Soviet Affairs*, DOI: 10.1080/1060586X.2018.1494959

Gerschewski, Johannes, and Christoph Stefes, eds. (2018) *"Crisis in Autocratic Regimes"*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

### **Week 5 – Why do autocrats need formal democratic institutions? Elections, Legislatives and Constitutions and authoritarian practices**

In week 5 we will deal with interactions of formal democratic institutions and authoritarian practices. We will look at some examples how elections, legislatives and contribute to the stability of hybrid regimes.

#### *Readings:*

Hale, H. E. (2011). "Formal Constitutions in Informal Politics: Institutions and Democratization in Post-Soviet Eurasia." *World Politics* 63(4): 581-617.

Gandhi, J. and E. Lust-Okar (2009). "Elections Under Authoritarianism." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12(1): 403-422.

Gel'man, V. (2008). "Party Politics in Russia: From Competition to Hierarchy." *Europe-Asia Studies* 60(6): 913-930.

### **Week 6 – Sources and mechanisms of patronage**

In week 6 we will deal with sources and mechanisms of patronage the incumbent rulers in hybrid regimes use to coopt their clients.

#### *Readings:*

Franke, A., et al. (2009). "Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan as Post-Soviet Rentier States: Resource Incomes and Autocracy as a Double 'Curse'in Post-Soviet Regimes." *Europe-Asia Studies* 61(1): 109-140.

Hale, H. E. (2014). *Patronal Politics: Eurasian Regime Dynamics in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Ch. 1.

Kopecký, P. and M. Spirova (2011). "'Jobs for the Boys'? Patterns of Party Patronage in Post-Communist Europe." *West European Politics* 34(5): 897-921.

### **Week 7– Repress or not repress? Coercion and civil society**

Sessions in week 7 discuss the benefits and pitfalls of repression politics in hybrid regimes and the ways non-democratic incumbent rulers learned to manage civil society. In addition, we will also review the protest strategies of opposition and civil society in hybrid regimes.

#### *Readings:*

Robertson, Graeme. 2009. "Managing Society: Protest, Civil Society, and Regime in Putin's Russia." *Slavic Review* 68(3): 528-47.

Rogov, K (2018) *The Art of Coercion: Repressions and Repressiveness in Putin's Russia*, *Russian Politics* 3, 151-174.

Way, L. A. and S. Levitsky (2006). "The dynamics of autocratic coercion after the Cold War." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 39(3): 387-410.

Yang, G. "Online Activism." *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 20 no. 3, 2009, pp. 33-36.

Additional readings:

- Chyzh, Olga V., and Elena Labzina. 2018. "Bankrolling Repression? Modeling Third-Party Influence on Protests and Repression." *American Journal of Political Science* 62(2): 312-324.
- Conrad, Courtenay R., and Emily Hencken Ritter. 2013. "Treaties, tenure, and torture: The conflicting domestic effects of international law." *The Journal of Politics* 75(2): 397-409.
- Davenport, Christian. 2007. "State repression and political order." *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 10: 1-23.
- Davenport, Christian. 1996. "The weight of the past: Exploring lagged determinants of political repression." *Political Research Quarterly* 49(2): 377-403.
- Earl, Jennifer. 2011. "Political repression: Iron fists, velvet gloves, and diffuse control." *Annual review of sociology* 37: 261-284.
- Earl, Jennifer. 2005. "'You Can Beat the Rap, But You Can't Beat the Ride:' Bringing Arrests Back into Research on Repression." In *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change*. 101-139. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Frantz, Erica, and Andrea Kendall-Taylor. 2014. "A dictator's toolkit: Understanding how co-optation affects repression in autocracies." *Journal of Peace Research* 51(3): 332-346.
- Gel'man, Vladimir. 2015. "The politics of fear: how the Russian regime confronts its opponents." *Russian Politics & Law* 53(5-6): 6-26.
- Gerschewski, Johannes. 2013. "The Three Pillars of Stability: Legitimation, Repression, and Co-Optation in Autocratic Regimes." *Democratization* 20(1): 13-38.
- De Jaegher, Kris, and Britta Hoyer. 2019. "Preemptive repression: deterrence, backfiring, iron fists, and velvet gloves." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63(2): 502-527.
- De Mesquita, Bruce Bueno, George W. Downs, Alastair Smith, and Feryal Marie Cherif. 2005. "Thinking inside the box: A closer look at democracy and human rights." *International Studies Quarterly* 49(3): 439-457.
- Kaire, José. 2006. "Compensating Autocratic Elites: How International Demands for Economic Liberalization Can Lead to More Repressive Dictatorships." *International Studies Quarterly*.
- Maida, Adam. Online and All Fronts. Russia's Assault on Freedom of Expression. Human Rights Watch. July 18, 2017. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/07/18/online-and-all-fronts/russias-assault-freedom-expression#>
- Marx Ferree, Myra. 2004. "Soft repression: Ridicule, stigma, and silencing in gender-based movements." In *Authority in Contention*, pp. 85-101. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Olar, Roman-Gabriel. 2019. "Do they know something we don't? Diffusion of repression in authoritarian regimes." *Journal of Peace Research*: 0022343318822718.
- Rogov, Kirill. 2018. "The Art of Coercion: Repressions and Repressiveness in Putin's Russia." *Russian Politics* 3(2): 151-174.
- Regan, Patrick M., and Errol A. Henderson. 2002. "Democracy, threats and political repression in developing countries: are democracies internally less violent?." *Third World Quarterly* 23(1): 119-136.
- Ritter, Emily Hencken, and Courtenay R. Conrad. 2016. "Preventing and responding to dissent: The observational challenges of explaining strategic repression." *American Political Science Review* 110(1): 85-99.



- Robertson, Graeme B. 2009. "Managing society: protest, civil society, and regime in Putin's Russia." *Slavic Review*, 68(3): 528-547.
- Roth, Andrew. Young Russians posting memes face jail for 'extremism'. *The Guardian*. September 1, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/01/young-russians-posting-memes-face-jail-for-extremism>
- Schneider, Carsten Q., and Seraphine F. Maerz. 2017. "Legitimation, cooptation, and repression and the survival of electoral autocracies." *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft* 11(2): 213-235.
- Shen-Bayh, Fiona. 2018. "Strategies of Repression: Judicial and Extrajudicial Methods of Autocratic Survival." *World Politics* 70(3): 321-357.
- Sullivan, Christopher M. 2016. "Undermining resistance: Mobilization, repression, and the enforcement of political order." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 60(7): 1163-1190.
- Way, Lucan A., and Steven Levitsky. 2006. "The dynamics of autocratic coercion after the Cold War." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 39(3): 387-410.
- Wintrobe, Ronald. 2000. *The political economy of dictatorship*. Cambridge University Press.

### **Week 8 – Powers of media, symbols and ideas? Internal sources of legitimation**

Sessions in week 8 explore how media propaganda and ideologies contribute to stability of hybrid regimes.

#### *Readings:*

- von Soest, Christian and Grauvogel, Julia (2017), *Identity, Procedures and Performance: How Authoritarian Regimes Legitimize their Rule*, in: *Contemporary Politics*, online first, 1-19
- Matveeva, A. (2009). "Legitimising Central Asian Authoritarianism: Political Manipulation and Symbolic Power." *Europe-Asia Studies* 61(7): 1095-1121.
- Gerschewski, Johannes (2018). "Legitimacy in Autocracies. Oxymoron or Essential Feature?" *Perspectives on Politics*, 16, 3, 652-665.
- Dukalskis, Alexander, and Johannes Gerschewski. "Adapting or Freezing? Ideological Reactions of Communist Regimes in a Post-Communist World." *Government & Opposition*.

### **Week 9 – External legitimation**

In week 9 we will overview the external factors that contribute to or undermine the legitimacy of incumbents in hybrid regimes.

#### *Readings:*

- Börzel, T. A. (2015). "The noble west and the dirty rest? Western democracy promoters and illiberal regional powers." *Democratization* 22(3): 519-535.

Jackson, N. J. (2010). "The role of external factors in advancing non-liberal democratic forms of political rule: a case study of Russia's influence on Central Asian regimes." *Contemporary Politics* 16(1): 101-118.

**Week 10 – Authoritarian modernization mission impossible? Sources of bad governance and mechanism of policy-making**

In the final regular sessions in week 10, we will deal with policy-making, bad governance and modernization attempts in hybrid regimes.

*Readings:*

Gel'man, Vladimir (2017): Political foundations of bad governance in post-Soviet Eurasia: towards a research agenda, *East European Politics*, DOI: 10.1080/21599165.2017.1348350

Petrov, N., et al. (2013). "Three dilemmas of hybrid regime governance: Russia from Putin to Putin." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 30(1): 1-26.

**PART III: PRACTICAL APPLICATION**

No REGULAR classes in weeks 11 and 12. Instead, we will reserve one afternoon for the presentations and discussions of the student research projects.

**Week 11 – Students' Presentations, Open Questions, Topics of Students' Interest**

**Week 12 – Students' Presentations, Open Questions, Topics of Students' Interest**