

# Politics of Authoritarian Regimes

PS 397, Spring 2013

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*Instructor:* Milan Svolik, Department of Political Science

*Class Meetings:* Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00 - 3:20 p.m., 222 David Kinley Hall

*Office Hours:* Fridays 3-5pm, 311 DKH, or by appointment

*Email:* [msvolik@illinois.edu](mailto:msvolik@illinois.edu)

*Course Web Page:* <http://compass2g.illinois.edu>

*Data Collection Assignment:* TBD

*Midterm Book Review:* TBD

*Final Paper:* TBD

*No class on:* TBD

**Description:** For most of its history, humankind has lived under dictatorship. This course examines various aspects of the politics in authoritarian regimes: their emergence and breakdown, the policy choices and institutions they adopt, leadership change, and the theories that explain these outcomes. We will use contemporary events, historical case studies, as well as statistical data in order to examine real-world cases. The goal of this class is to introduce students to the scientific study of authoritarian politics and thus help them understand and evaluate the public policy discourse on the politics of authoritarian regimes as well as the potential for their transition to democracy.

**Course Requirements:** Students are required to attend classes, read the assigned material, and discuss assigned research articles. The final grade will be composed as follows: class participation 30%, data collection assignment 20%, midterm book review 20%, and final research paper 30%. Class participation includes a presentation of an assigned discussion article (including a handout/summary and a few presentation slides) (10%), a paragraph-per-reading email summary of the readings assigned for each meeting (10%), and participation in the class discussion (10%).

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is required. Notify me in advance if you will be absent.

The University's official policy on absences is at

[http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1\\_part5\\_1-501.html](http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part5_1-501.html).

**Email summaries:** I will ask you to submit a paragraph-per-reading summary/discussion of the readings assigned for each meeting to "Reading Summaries" on Compass by 11am on the day of the class (not necessarily two paragraphs per reading, just two paragraphs for all the readings assigned for a meeting). The purpose of these summaries is to facilitate your preparation for the class and encourage you to participate in class discussion. You can also use these summaries as an opportunity to provide feedback on the assigned readings.

**Participation in class discussion:** I will keep notes of your participation in class discussion. I will not post these, but you can always ask me about how you are doing.

**Class presentation:** An important part of your participation will be to present a research article of your choice (from the discussion readings listed below, (★) denotes a discussion reading.) Please also prepare a one-page handout of the article for the class with questions for discussion and a few presentation slides. If you email your handout to me in advance (by 5pm on the day before your presentation), I will make copies for the class. Please post your presentation slides to "Presentation Slides" on Compass.

**The midterm book review:** A five-page review and discussion of one among the following books (all have been placed on the course reserve):

Castañeda, Jorge G. 2000. *Perpetuating power: How Mexican presidents were chosen*. New York: New Press.

Karsh, Efraim. 2002. *Saddam Hussein: A Political Biography*. New York: Grove Press

Khlevniuk, Oleg V. 2009. *Master of the House: Stalin and his inner circle*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

McGregor, Richard. 2010. *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*. Harper.

Vargas Llosa, Mario. 2001. *The Feast of the Goat*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

For an example of a critical, analytical book review see e.g. Tony Judt's "Whose story is it? The Cold War in Retrospect", which is on Compass, or the book reviews that appear in journals like *The Economist*, *Perspectives on Politics*, and *The New Yorker*.

**Data collection assignment:** I will ask you to collect data (typically from online resources) on one topic on the syllabus. The assignment will be submitted in the form of an Excel spreadsheet. We will specify the details later.

**The final research paper:** The culmination of this course is a final research paper on a research question chosen by the instructor (maximum of 15 pages). Students can choose from among three formats: an original data collection and analysis, an original analytical argument, and a critical synthesis of a literature. We will also hold several (usually three) meetings dedicated to developing your ideas on the final paper and answering any questions. I will also distribute a handout with the criteria that I plan to use when grading the final paper. Assignments will be due on the dates established in this syllabus or in class; failure to turn an assignment on time results in an automatic failing grade for that assignment. Plagiarism will be punished severely; see the University's official policy on academic integrity at [http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1\\_part4\\_1-402.html](http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part4_1-402.html).

**In-class behavior:** All cell phones, laptop computers, and related devices must be turned off during class and stowed away. Laptop computers may be used only when explicitly requested by the instructor for a designated class purpose.

**Readings:** You are required to bring any assigned readings or materials to class. The course readings are available either on reserve at the library (books) or on Compass (articles

and book chapters). Any lecture materials will be posted on Compass.

We will read extensively from the following book, you may therefore consider purchasing it:

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

## **Course Outline:**

### **Democracy and Dictatorship: Concepts and Measures (2 meetings)**

Chapter 5, “Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy” in Clark, William R., Golder, Matt, and Golder, Sona N. 2008. *Principles Of Comparative Politics*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Chapter 1, “Democracies and Dictatorships” in Przeworski, Adam, Alvarez, Michael E., Cheibub, Jose Antonio, and Limongi, Fernando. 2000. *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

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

### **Case study: Elections, Competitiveness, and Political Regimes (2 meetings, bring a laptop if you can)**

### **Democracy and Dictatorship: Causes (2 meetings)**

Chapters 1 and 2 in Acemoglu, Daron and Robinson, James A. 2005. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Przeworski, Adam and Limongi, Fernando. 1997. Modernization: Theories and facts. *World Politics*, 49(3):155–83.

Welzel, Christian and Inglehart, Ronald. 2007. Mass beliefs and democratic institutions. In Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes, editors, *The Oxford handbook of comparative politics*,

pages 297–316. New York: Oxford University Press.

### **Non-democratic Regimes: Conceptual issues (1 meeting)**

(★) Chapter 1, “The World of Dictatorial Institutions”, in Gandhi, Jennifer. 2008. *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

(★) Geddes, Barbara. 1999. What do we know about democratization after twenty years? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2:115–144.

Chapter 2, “The World of Authoritarian Politics”, in Svobik, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

### **Case study: Classifying Dictatorships (1 meeting, bring a laptop if you can)**

#### **Theories of Authoritarian Politics (2 meetings)**

Chapter 1, “The Anatomy of Dictatorship”, in Svobik, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

(★) Chapters 1 and 2 in Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Smith, Alastair, Siverson, Randolph M., and Morrow, James D. 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

#### **Repression and Protest (1 meeting)**

(★) Kuran, Timur. 1991. Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989. *World Politics*, 44:7–48.

#### **Case study: The Arab Spring (1 meeting)**

(★) Goldstone, Jack A., “Understanding the Revolutions of 2011,” *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2011, Vol. 90, Issue 3, p. 8-16.

(★) Gladwell, Macolm, “Small Change: Why the revolution will not be tweeted,” *The New Yorker*, October 4, 2010, Vol. 86 Issue 30, p. 42-49.

- (★) Fallows, James, “Arab Spring, Chinese Winter, ” *Atlantic Monthly*. September 2011, Vol. 308, Issue 2, p. 50-58.
- (★) Goldberg, Jeffrey, “Danger Falling Tyrants,” *Atlantic Monthly* , June 2011, Vol. 307, Issue 5, p. 46-54.
- (★) Steavenson, Wendell, “Who Owns the Revolution? The Army or the people?” *New Yorker*, 8/1/2011, Vol. 87, Issue 22, p. 38-57.

### **The Emergence of Personal Authoritarian Rule (1 meeting)**

Pages 53-63 and 75-81 in Chapter 3, “And Then There Was One! Authoritarian Power-Sharing and the Path to Personal Dictatorship”, in Svoboda, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- (★) Chapter 6 in Rouquié, Alain. 1987. *The Military and the State in Latin America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

### **Case study: Stalin’s Rise to Power (1 meeting)**

- (★) Gorlizki, Yoram and Khlevniuk, Oleg. 2006. Stalin and his circle. In Ronald G. Suny, editor, *The Cambridge history of Russia, Volume 3*, pages 243–267. New York: Cambridge University Press.

### **Book Discussion (based on the midterm)**

#### **Coups d’état and Military Dictatorships (2 meetings)**

- (★) Chapter 9, “The Antirevolutionary Military Regimes” in Wright, Thomas C. 2001. *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution*. Westport: Praeger.
- (★) Chapter 4, “From Revolution to War, 1917-1941” in Taylor, Brian D. 2003. *Politics and the Russian army: civil-military relations, 1689-2000*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Pages 123-138, 148-153, and 159 in Chapter 5, “Moral Hazard in Authoritarian Repression and the Origins of Military Dictatorships”, in Svobik, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

## **Final Paper Meeting I**

### **Institutions and Dictatorships: Legislatures and Parties (2 meetings)**

(★) Introduction and Chapters 2 and 3 in Gandhi, Jennifer. 2008. *Political Institutions under Dictatorship*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

(★) Jensen, Nathan M. et al. 2012. “What do legislatures in authoritarian regimes do?”, A blog post.

Chapter 6, “Why *Authoritarian* Parties? The Regime Party as an Instrument of Cooptation and Control”, in Svobik, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

### **Case study: China (1 meeting)**

(★) Li, Cheng. 2010. China’s communist party-state: The structure and dynamics of power. In William A. Joseph, editor, *Politics In China: An Introduction*, pages 165–191. New York: Oxford University Press.

## **Final Paper Meeting II**

### **Elections and Dictatorships (2 meetings)**

(★) Schedler, Andreas. 2002. The menu of manipulation. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2):36–50.

(★) Hsieh, Chang-Tai, Miguel, Edward, Ortega, Daniel, and Rodriguez, Francisco. 2011. The price of political opposition: Evidence from venezuela’s maisanta. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 3(2):196–214.

(★) Chapters 1-3 in Levitsky, Steven and Way, Lucan A. 2010. *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- (★) Tucker, Joshua A. 2007. Enough! electoral fraud, collective action problems, and post-communist colored revolutions. *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(4):535–551.
- (★) Chapter 4, “Does Election Monitoring Matter?”, and Chapter 5, “The Quality of Monitoring and Strategic Manipulation” in Hyde, Susan D. 2011. *The Pseudo-Democrat’s Dilemma: Why Election Observation Became an International Norm*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

### **Policies in Dictatorships: Economic Development (1 meeting)**

- (★) North, Douglass C. and Weingast, Barry R. 1989. Constitutions and commitment: The evolution of institutions governing public choice in seventeenth-century england. *Journal of Economic History*, 49(4):803–832. ISSN 0022-0507.
- (★) Olson, Mancur. 1993. Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development. *American Political Science Review*, 87:567–576.
- (★) Jones, Benjamin F. and Olken, Benjamin A. 2006. Do leaders matter? National leadership and growth since World War II. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 120(3):835–864.

### **Case Study: The Natural Resource Curse (1 meeting)**

- (★) Friedman, Thomas L. 2006. The first law of petropolitics. *Foreign Policy*, (154):28–36.
- (★) Treisman, Daniel. 2010. Is Russia cursed by oil? *Journal of International Affairs*, 63(2):85–102.

### **Final Paper Meeting III**