

SABANCI UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
POLS 565 Rise and Fall of Democracy

Instructor: Berk Esen, PhD
Office: FASS 2137
E-mail: besen@sabanciuniv.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 10.30-12.30
Class Hours: M 1.40-3.40
 W 2.40-4.30

Introduction

The phenomenal rise in the number of democratic transitions during the Third Wave has recently come to a halt. As the initial optimism of early post-Cold War had subsided, we witnessed the global rise of hybrid regimes that merge elements of democratic and authoritarian systems. In the past decade, for instance, the Freedom House has recorded no expansion in the number of electoral democracies around the globe. One major reason for this trend is the widespread retreat of democratic regimes that had not yet consolidated. While some cases reverted to autocracy due to military coups as in Thailand or executive power grabs as in Venezuela and Russia, still others witnessed an incremental but sustained democratic backsliding facilitated by executive aggrandizement at the hands of leaders who initially came to power through the ballot box. This global transformation of political regimes over the last three decades will be the primary topic of inquiry in this course. The course offers a survey of the field through an in-depth analysis of cases that have experienced democratic backsliding in recent years.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the scholarship on the rise and fall of democratic regimes across the globe. It is designed to give the student an understanding of the democratic regime as well as the ways in which open political systems have come under attack in the contemporary period. The course offers an introduction to the conflicting definitions of the term and studies the phenomenal rise of electoral democracies during the Third Wave and the subsequent proliferation of 'democracy with adjectives'. It then reviews those factors and mechanisms that have gradually eroded democratic institutions and facilitated democratic backsliding and breakdown, particularly during the last decade. In particular, we will explore when, why and how democracies die. The course also takes advantage of applied learning methods offered by an international cross-university effort that aims to develop a comparative understanding of democratic backsliding around the globe. You can find more information about this project at www.democratic-erosion.com.

REQUIREMENTS

Required readings

The assigned readings for each week are listed in the course schedule below. As it is designed to prepare students for the qualifying exam, this is a reading-intensive course. As such, you are expected to do the required readings before class each week and then participate to class

discussion. Since the course is double-coded, I plan to hold an extra hour of discussion session with only the graduate students. This is essential for you to follow and contribute to the class discussion.

Blog Post

Each student is required to write a post to the Democratic Erosion blog site (<https://www.democratic-erosion.com/blog>). This post will describe and analyse a contemporary political event that occurred in a case that has experienced democratic backsliding. Please note that this will not be an academic text but rather a short informative piece for the wider audience.

Video Assignment

Each graduate student is expected to prepare a short video clip that describes a democratic transition case. For this assignment, you will describe why the authoritarian regime ended and how the case transitioned to a democratic regime based on the different typologies that will be discussed in the first few weeks of this course. You are free to choose this case from any country and any period. Ideally, this 5-minute-long video clip will summarize all the essential details of that case. The assignment is envisioned as a fun project that will be easy to complete during the pandemic.

Research Paper

A significant portion of your grade will come from a research paper on a case that experienced democratic erosion in the 21st century. For this assignment, student will discuss the democratic roots of their case and then outline how democratic backsliding occurred in that particular country. While historical summary can be shortly added to the text, the assignment should focus on recent developments (post-2000). Students are therefore expected to conduct original research on developments that occurred in the case they pick. There is no page limit for the final paper but the minimum length of the paper is 8000 words. Please note that writing a short paper is in many ways more difficult than writing its longer version as you need to be very concise in the former case. Feel free to consult me on your topic and I would be happy to direct you to the relevant literature at any time during the semester, preferably sooner rather than later.

GRADING

1. Class Participation & Attendance: 30 %
2. Research Paper 40 % (January 12)
3. Blog Post 15 % (November 27)
4. Video Assignment: 15 % (November 13)

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course and thus penalized accordingly. Students need to submit the work that they do without outside help. Please make sure to cite your sources properly. Persons who commit or attempt to commit plagiarism will be penalized in accordance with the rules of Sabancı University.

Course Schedule and Readings

Week 1. What is Democracy? Concepts, Processes and Trends

Coppedge, M., Gerring, J., Altman, D., Bernhard, M., Fish, S., Hicken, A., ... & Semetko, H. A. (2011). Conceptualizing and measuring democracy: A new approach. *Perspectives on Politics*, 247-267.

Amartya Sen, "Democracy as a Universal Value," in *Journal of Democracy* 10, no. 3, 1999: 3-17.

Mancur Olson, "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development," *American Political Science Review* 87, no. 3 (September 1993): 567-576

Schmitter, Philippe C., and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is... and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* 2, no. 3 (summer 1991): 75-88.

Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, 13-40

Przeworski, Adam. 1991. *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 1

Dahl, Robert A. 1971. *Polyarchy*. New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press (Ch.1)

Week 2. Democratic Consolidation

Acemoglu, Daron, and James A. Robinson. 2019. *The Narrow Corridor: States, Societies, and the Fate of Liberty*. New York, NY: Penguin. TBA

Svolik, M. (2008). Authoritarian reversals and democratic consolidation. *American Political Science Review*, 153-168.

Schedler, A. (1998). What is democratic consolidation? *Journal of democracy*, 9(2), 91-107.

Özbudun, E. (1996). Democratization in the Middle East: Turkey-How Far from Consolidation? *Journal of Democracy*, 7(3), 123-138.

Weingast, B. (1997). The political foundations of democracy and the rule of law, in «*American Political Science Review*», 91.

O'Donnell, Guillermo, "Illusions About Consolidation," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (1996): 34-51.

Week 3: Democracy with Adjectives

Merkel, W. (2004). Embedded and defective democracies. *Democratization*, 11(5), 33-58.

Carothers, Thomas, "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (Jan. 2002): 5-21.

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

Collier, D., & Levitsky, S. (1997). Democracy with adjectives: Conceptual innovation in comparative research. *World politics*, 49(3), 430-451.

O'Donnell, Guillermo, "Delegative Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 1 (January 1994): 55-69.

Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December, 1997): 22-43.

Week 4: Democratic Transitions: Structure vs Agency

Munck, Gerardo L. 2018. "Modernization Theory as a Case of Failed Knowledge Production." *Comparative Democratization (APSA-CD)* 16(3): 37-41.

Haggard, S., & Kaufman, R. R. (2016). *Dictators and democrats: Masses, elites, and regime change*. Princeton University Press. Ch. 1

O'Donnell, Guillermo, and Philippe C. Schmitter, "Opening (and Undermining) Authoritarian Regimes," pp. 15-36 in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

Boix, Carles, and Susan Stokes. 2003. "Endogenous Democratization." *World Politics* 55: 517-549

Bunce, Valerie J. and Sharon L. Wolchik (2010). "Defeating dictators: Electoral change and stability in competitive authoritarian regimes". *World Politics* 62 (1). 43–86.

Carothers, T. (2007). How democracies emerge: The "sequencing" fallacy. *Journal of democracy*, 18(1), 12-27.

Bellin, Eva. 2000. "Contingent Democrats: Industrialists, Labor, and Democratization in Late-Developing Countries." *World Politics* 52 (January): 175-205.

Week 5: Democratic Transitions: Popular Movements/Protests

Brancati, D., & Lucardi, A. (2019). Why democracy protests do not diffuse. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 63(10), 2354-2389.

Rosenfeld, B. (2017). Reevaluating the middle-class protest paradigm: A case-control study of democratic protest coalitions in Russia. *American Political Science Review*, 111(4), 637-652.

Brancati, Dawn. 2014. "Pocketbook Protests: Explaining the Emergence of Pro-Democracy Protests Worldwide." *Comparative Political Studies* 47, no. 11: 1503-1530.

Tucker, Joshua A. 2007. "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions." *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 3 (September): 535-551.

Wood, E. J. (2001). An insurgent path to democracy: Popular mobilization, economic interests, and regime transition in South Africa and El Salvador. *Comparative Political Studies*, 34(8), 862-888.

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

Week 6: Democratic Transitions: Democracy Promotion and the International Regime

von Borzyskowski, I. (2019). The risks of election observation: International condemnation and post-election violence. *International Studies Quarterly*, 63(3), 654-667.

Muftuler-Bac, M. (2019). Backsliding in judicial reforms: domestic political costs as limits to EU's political conditionality in Turkey. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 27(1), 61-76.

Carnegie, A., & Marinov, N. (2017). Foreign aid, human rights, and democracy promotion: Evidence from a natural experiment. *American Journal of Political Science*, 61(3), 671-683.

Haggard, S., & Kaufman, R. R. (2016). *Dictators and democrats: Masses, elites, and regime change*. Princeton University Press, pp.. 142-156

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A. Way, "International Linkage and Democratization," *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 3 (July 2005): 20-34.

Carothers, Thomas, "The Backlash Against Democracy Promotion," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 2 (Mar-Apr 2006): 55-68.

Week 7: Democratic Breakdown and Authoritarian Regimes

Svolik, M. W. (2012). *The politics of authoritarian rule*. Cambridge University Press. pp 1-17, 22-32

Geddes, B., Wright, J. G., Wright, J., & Frantz, E. (2018). *How dictatorships work: Power, personalization, and collapse*. Cambridge University Press. pp 25-43

Linz, J. J. (1990). The perils of presidentialism. *Journal of democracy*, 1(1), 51-69

Berman, S. (1997). Civil society and the collapse of the Weimar Republic. *World politics*, 49(3), 401-429.

Slater, D., Smith, B., & Nair, G. (2014). Economic origins of democratic breakdown? The redistributive model and the postcolonial state. *Perspectives on Politics*, 353-374.

Esen, B., & Gumuscu, S. (2020). Why did Turkish democracy collapse? A political economy account of AKP's authoritarianism. *Party Politics*, 1354068820923722

Mainwaring, S., & Pérez-Liñán, A. (2013). Lessons from Latin America: Democratic breakdown and survival. *Journal of Democracy*, 24(2), 123-137.

Week 8: Democratic Erosion/Backsliding

Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. (2018). *How Democracies Die*. New York: Crown. Chapter 1.

Kaufman, R. R., & Haggard, S. (2019). Democratic decline in the United States: What can we learn from middle-income backsliding?. *Perspectives on Politics*, 17(2), 417-432.

Waldner, David, and Ellen Lust (2018). "Unwelcoming Change: Comping to Terms with Democratic Backsliding," *Annual Review of Political Science* 21: 93-113.

Bermeo, Nancy. (2016). "On Democratic Backsliding," *Journal of Democracy* 27(1): 5-19

Esen, B., & Gumuscu, S. (2016). Rising competitive authoritarianism in Turkey. *Third World Quarterly*, 37(9), 1581-1606.

Corrales, Javier. (2015). "The Authoritarian Resurgence: Autocratic Legalism in Venezuela," *Journal of Democracy* 26(2): 37-51

Week 9: Populism, demagoguery and fake news

Weyland, K. (2020). Populism's Threat to Democracy: Comparative Lessons for the United States. *Perspectives on Politics*, 18(2), 389-406.

Rogenhofer, J. M., & Panievsky, A. (2020). Antidemocratic populism in power: comparing Erdoğan's Turkey with Modi's India and Netanyahu's Israel. *Democratization*, 1-19.

Esen, Berk, and Şebnem Yardımcı-Geyikçi. (2019). "An Alternative Account of the Populist Backlash in the United States: A Perspective from Turkey," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 52(3): 445-450.

Rodrik, D. (2018). Populism and the Economics of Globalization. *Journal of international business policy*, 1(1-2), 12-33.

Samanth Subramanian (February 15, 2017). "Inside the Macedonian Fake-News Complex," *Wired*.

Kaltwasser, C. R. (2014). The responses of populism to Dahl's democratic dilemmas. *Political Studies*, 62(3), 470-487.

Levitsky, Steven, and James Loxton. (2013). "Populism and Competitive Authoritarianism in the Andes," *Democratization* 20(1): 107-136.

Week 10: Polarization

Svolik, Milan W. (2019). "Polarization Versus Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 30(3): 20-32.

Aydin-Düzgüt, S., & Balta, E. (2019). When elites polarize over polarization: Framing the polarization debate in Turkey. *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 60, 153-176.

McCoy, Jennifer, Tahmina Rahman, and Murat Somer. (2018). "Polarization and the Global Crisis of Democracy: Common Patterns, Dynamics and Pernicious Consequences for Democratic Polities," *American Behavioral Scientist* 62(1): 16-42.

Shoup, B. D. (2018). Ethnic polarization and the limits of democratic practice. *Democratization*, 25(8), 1419-1440.

Iyengar, Shanto, and Masha Krupenkin. (2018). "The Strengthening of Partisan Affect," *Political Psychology* 39(1): 201-218.

Week 11: Military coups, repression and autogolpes

Croissant, A., Kuehn, D., & Eschenauer, T. (2018). Mass Protests and the Military. *Journal of Democracy*, 29(3), 141-155.

Geddes, B., Wright, J. G., Wright, J., & Frantz, E. (2018). *How dictatorships work: Power, personalization, and collapse*. Cambridge University Press. ch. 3

Chacha, M., & Powell, J. (2017). Economic interdependence and post-coup democratization. *Democratization*, 24(5), 819-838.

Thyne, C. L., Powell, J. M. (2016). Coup d'état or coup d'autocracy? How coups impact democratization, 1950–2008. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 12(2), 192–213.

Varol, O. O. (2012). The democratic coup d'état. *Harv. Int'l LJ*, 53, 291.

Quinlivan, J. T. (1999). Coup-proofing: Its practice and consequences in the Middle East. *International Security*, 24(2), 131-165.

Cameron, M. A. (1998). Self-Coups: Peru, Guatemala, and Russia. *Journal of Democracy*, 9(1), 125-139.

Week 12: Authoritarian Durability

Lachapelle, J., Levitsky, S., Way, L. A., & Casey, A. E. (2020). Social Revolution and Authoritarian Durability. *World Politics*, 1-44.

Hellmeier, S., & Weidmann, N. B. (2020). Pulling the Strings? The Strategic Use of Pro-Government Mobilization in Authoritarian Regimes. *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(1), 71-108

Tansey, Oisín, Kevin Koehler, and Alexander Schmotz. (2017). "Ties to the Rest: Autocratic Linkages and Regime Survival," *Comparative Political Studies* 50(9): 1221-1254.

Bellin, Eva. 2012. "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring." *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 2 (January): 127- 149.

Svolik, M. W. (2012). *The politics of authoritarian rule*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 88-100

Greene, K. F. (2010). The political economy of authoritarian single-party dominance. *Comparative political studies*, 43(7), 807-834.

Gandhi, Jennifer, and Przeworski, Adam. 2007. "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats." *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 11: 1279–301

Week 13: Turkish Democracy in Comparative Perspective

Yardımcı-Geyikçi, Ş., & Yavuzylmaz, H. (2020). Party (de) institutionalization in times of political uncertainty: The case of the Justice and Development Party in Turkey. *Party Politics*, 1354068820960010.

Wuthrich, F. M., & Ingleby, M. (2020). The Pushback Against Populism: Running on "Radical Love" in Turkey. *Journal of Democracy*, 31(2), 24-40.

Arslanalp, M., & Deniz Erkmen, T. (2020). Mobile emergency rule in Turkey: legal repression of protests during authoritarian transformation. *Democratization*, 1-23.

Selçuk, O., & Hekimci, D. (2020). The rise of the democracy–authoritarianism cleavage and opposition coordination in Turkey (2014–2019). *Democratization*, 1-19.

Esen, B., & Gumuscu, S. (2018). Building a competitive authoritarian regime: State–Business relations in the AKP’s Turkey. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 20(4), 349-372.

Kars Kaynar, A. (2018). Withering constitutional state?:Recent “police state” discussions in Turkey. *Research and Policy on Turkey*, 3(1), 90-102.

Week 14: Future of Democracy?

Stasavage, D. Democracy, Autocracy, and Emergency Threats: Lessons for COVID-19 From the Last Thousand Years. *International Organization*, 1-17.

Diamond, L. (2020). Breaking Out of the Democratic Slump. *Journal of Democracy*, 31(1), 36-50.

Lührmann, A., & Lindberg, S. I. (2019). A third wave of autocratization is here: what is new about it?. *Democratization*, 26(7), 1095-1113.

Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan Way. (2015). "The Myth of Democratic Recession," *Journal of Democracy* 26(1): 45–58.

Way, Lucan A. (2015). "The Limits of Autocracy Promotion: The Case of Russia in the 'Near Abroad'," *European Journal of Political Research* 54: 691-706.