



INSTITUT DE HAUTES
ÉTUDES INTERNATIONALES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
GRADUATE INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AND
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Interdisciplinary Programmes

Academic year 2019-2020

Regimes, Institutions, and Political Violence

DE152 - Autumn - 6 ECTS

Wednesday 16h15 - 18h00

Course Description

This is a course on political institutions and regimes, with a particular focus on the interface between states and societies in contexts broadly understood to be “fragile,” “post-conflict,” or “failed”. The course will consider how political institutions are formed and changed, with an eye toward what “good” governance might look like from perspectives of ordinary citizens, elites, rulers and donors. We will use this lens to consider the relationship between ruler and subject, in particular considering how various institutional arrangements are built on and reproduce different distributions of violence, resources, and rights. We will study democracy and authoritarianism—and what lies in-between. After taking the course, students will be familiar with key theories and debates on democracy, authoritarianism, and “hybrid” regimes, and be able to apply them to contemporary cases. Pedagogically, the course requires regular participation and is structured around a group project and role play that will continue over the course of the semester and comprise half of the grade for the entire course. The course uses primarily academic sources from political science, as well as some readings from political anthropology, political theory, and history. The course focuses on states popularly understood as “fragile,” and in particular on the African continent.

> PROFESSOR

[Rebecca Tapscott](#)

[Office hours](#)

> ASSISTANT

[Aikokul Arzieva](#)

[Office hours](#)

Syllabus

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSEMENT:

Assessment is comprised of one major group project and a final exam.

- Class participation and in-class activities 20%
- Group project: Regime dossier 25%
- Group presentation: 25%
- Final Exam: 30%

Class participation will include discussion, as well as in-class activities. I have included questions in the syllabus for each class, which you should be prepared to discuss. These questions are subject to revision up to one week before the class. You may also be asked to complete short in-class written prompts, which will be graded on a ✓/✓+ scale and help me to assess how you understand the readings and class discussion. I have included questions in the syllabus for each class, which you should be prepared to discuss. These questions are subject to revision up to one week before the class.

Regime dossier group project: In this assignment, you will have the opportunity to select a country case study from a pre-determined list, which you will research over the course of the semester with a group. There will be two deliverables from this project: first, a written component that will include an annotated bibliography and a proposal for a “good governance” intervention, written to a donor agency. Second, an oral component, in which you and your group will present to the class (who also comprise the board of a major donor agency) to convince them to allocate their limited funds to your country and mission. After the presentations, the board will convene to allocate funds. Each group will receive a shared grade for the project, though I reserve the right to adjust individual grades for individual performance.

Final Exam: The final exam will include several essay questions designed to make you draw connections across course material and put different debates in conversation with one another. For each essay question, you will have a choice between two prompts. The exam is open note and open book; however, you are expected to complete it individually. It is designed so that it will be difficult to do well on without having previously read and absorbed the material from class over the course of the semester. Each question will have a word limit, and the total exam will be no longer than 3000 words.

Additional instructions will be available on Moodle for each assignment.

EXPECTATIONS:

Academic integrity: The [Institute's academic honesty and integrity policy](#), and the applicable university disciplinary procedures, apply to all academic work including the taking of examinations and submission of written work. This includes poor citation, plagiarism and resubmission of one’s own work. It is your responsibility to read and understand the guidelines before submitting any assignment.

I will use a software program such as TurnItIn **on every piece submitted to me for assessment** to check for plagiarism. **If you plagiarize your work, you will receive a 0 on the assignment and the case will be referred to IHEID administration.** Please look on Moodle for guidelines on what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. You must use a recognized citation style (Chicago, MLA, or other) in all written work and include a works cited section with **any and all** texts you used in the preparation of the assignment.

Reading: For each class, I have assigned approximately 50 to 90 pages of required reading. Students should read the selections in the order they are listed. Students must have read all the assigned readings before class and be prepared to discuss them in the context of the session’s themes, the discussion questions listed in the syllabus, and the course’s overall themes.

Course attendance: You are required to attend class. Barring exceptional circumstances, students who miss more than two class sessions (**including any sessions missed during add/drop period**), will receive no higher than the minimum passing grade for the course.

Students who miss the first two classes during add/drop period will be required to complete a short written assignment showing they have read and understand the subject matter covered before they joined the class.

Office hours: I will hold regular office hours each week. I strongly encourage you to attend! It is a great way for us to get to know each other and for me to help you engage with the course material in a way that is more directly tailored to your interests. If you would like to see me outside these hours, please contact me by email. We can also arrange Skype calls if this is more convenient. For administrative questions or clarifications on assignments, please contact the TA.

Other: If you have a special condition that requires accommodation in this course, let me know after class or in office hours during the first week of class. I will be happy to consider appropriate accommodations provided timely notice is received and the arrangement is consistent with the Graduate Institute's policies.

TIMELINE:

Due dates for written submissions are in red, class activities are in blue.

1. 18 September
2. 25 September
3. 2 October
4. 9 October: **Select regime dossier group and case**
5. 16 October: **Review MCC website; first meeting of regime dossier group in-class**
6. 23 October: **Submit readings for regime dossier**
7. 30 October: **Submit annotated bibliography**
8. 6 November: **Submit case description and project proposal; sign up for group meeting with Dr Tapscott**
9. 13 November
10. **20 November: Presentations**
11. **27 November: Presentations**
12. **4 December: Presentations**
13. **11 December: Debate and allocation of funds [Class activity]**
14. 18 December
 - **22 December [Saturday]: Final exam due**

PART 1: KEY CONCEPTS: WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT AND WHY?

This introductory portion of the course delves into the concepts of “violence” “institutions”, and “citizens” to deepen our understanding of “governance”. What exactly is an institution, and what does it have to do with governance? What does it mean to be a citizen? How does violence constitute these relationships, and how do these relationships in turn distribute violence? In this section, we'll discuss these questions, as well as why they matter. These classes will provide a foundation for the remainder of the course.

Week 1: Making (democratic) states

We often talk about ‘state building’ as a way to kick start a process of state formation and consolidation, that, done correctly, will lead to a liberal democratic state. But we know that in real life, it's more complicated. This class reviews some key concepts and arguments about the state, its formation and consolidation, and relationship to institutions, elites, and ordinary people. It starts with a reading by Dipali Mukhopadhyay, whose recent book applies Charles Tilly's theory on the emergence of the Westphalian and bureaucratic state to the case of Afghanistan. We use this text to identify and question common assumptions about how liberal democratic states emerge and the inevitability of this process. During class, we will discuss the emergence of (democratic) states and their societies, how the two constitute each other, the role of violence therein, and the inherent struggles to dominate on the one hand, and evade domination on the other.

- **MUKHOPADHYAY, Dipali.** *Warlords, strongman governors, and the state in Afghanistan*. Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 1-12; 49-62. [25 pages; NB: Read the footnotes, which give important summaries of key readings]

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- According to Mukhopadhyay, how would state formation theoretically occur?
- What role do warlord governors play in Afghanistan?
- What is “social control” in this story, and how does it relate to the state, institutions, and citizens?
- What is meant by the “western ideal type” discussed on p. 59? In what ways do the institutions described in this reading differ from western ideal type institutions?

BACKGROUND READINGS:

- **BARKEY, Karen.** *Bandits and bureaucrats: The Ottoman route to state centralization*. Cornell University Press, 1994.
- **MIGDAL, Joel.** *Strong societies and weak states: state-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton University Press, 1988.
- **SCOTT, James C.** *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. Yale University Press, 1998.
- **TILLY, Charles.** *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990*. Basil Blackwell, 1990.

Week 2: Violence

One of the main contentions of this course is that violence is intrinsic to governance. But what does that mean? This week, we discuss different kinds of violence, and how they relate to governing people over time and space. We start with a reading by Veena Das that elaborates different kinds of violence and their psychological, physical, and emotional impact on individuals and populations. We then turn to Foucault to think about how these kinds of violence might be used differently by different regimes and in different historical moments. You will also watch a film this week called *State Builders*, that looks at the violent conflict in South Sudan to help think about how violence is both constitutive of regimes, and how regimes are oriented around distributing violence.

- **DAS, Veena.** “Violence, gender, and subjectivity.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 37 (2008): 283-299.
- **FOUCAULT, Michel.** *Abnormal: lectures at the Collège de France, 1974-1975*. Vol. 2. Macmillan, 2003 (Chapter 4).
- **WATCH A FILM:** “*State Builders*.” Directed by Anne Poiret and Florence Martin-Kessler (2013)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- According to Foucault, how did the use of violence change after the French Revolution? Why did this change occur?
- Das discusses lots of different kinds of violence: torture, disappearance, terrorism, war, ethnic cleansing and genocide, sexual violence, and domestic violence. To these, we might add impoverishment from crises; spatial suffering such as displacement, confinement, or forced migration; famine and disease; emotional suffering; and post-war suffering such as PTSD (see Slim). Are these types of violence of the same “type”? How are they different and how are they similar?
- Das writes that a monopoly over legitimate violence does not end violence, but rather redistributes it (p. 286). What does she mean by this? Is this illustrated in the film, *State Builders*, and if so, how?

OPTIONAL FURTHER READING:

- **SLIM, Hugo.** *Killing civilians: Method, madness and morality in war*. London: Hurst, 2007. (Skim pp. 37-119)

**NB this reading includes very upsetting material. If you would prefer not to read graphic descriptions of violence, you can skip this reading. I will cover the main points in class.

- **WILCOX, Lauren.** "Explosive bodies and bounded states: Abjection and the embodied practice of suicide bombing." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 16, no. 1 (2014): 66-85.
- **FUJII, Lee Ann.** "Shades of truth and lies: Interpreting testimonies of war and violence." *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 2 (2010): 231-241.
- **HUTCHINSON, Sharon Elaine.** "Death, memory and the politics of legitimation: Nuer experiences of the continuing second Sudanese civil war." (1998): 58-70.

Week 3: Institutions

This week we turn to institutions—another highly contested term. What are they? How do different fields of study conceive of them differently, and how have these conceptions changed over time? In the class, we will review several different perspectives, and then focus our attention on the new institutionalist approach, which dominates much of political science literature today. We will then turn to a case study that highlights the complex relationship between institutional forms and violence in practice.

- **LOWNDES, Vivien.** 2010. "The institutional approach." In Davis Marsh and Gerry Stoker, eds. *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 60-79.
- **PORTES, Alejandro.** "Institutions and development: A conceptual reanalysis." *Population and development review* 32, no. 2 (2006): 233-262. **[Please read pp 233-236; 241-245; 249-252; 257-258.]**
- **NORTH, Douglass, John Joseph WALLIS, and Barry WEINGAST.** "Violence and the rise of open-access orders." *Journal of Democracy* 20.1 (2009): 55-68.
- **MARIJNEN, Esther.** "Public authority and conservation in areas of armed conflict: Virunga National Park as a 'state within a state' in eastern Congo." *Development and Change* 49, no. 3 (2018): 790-814.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- According to Lowndes, what differentiates new institutionalism from the approaches that came before it in political science? What are some of the challenges or problems with new institutionalism?
- What is Portes' main critique of new institutionalism? When you read North, Wallis, and Weingast, think—do you think this a fair critique? Why or why not?
- According to North, Wallis, and Weingast, what is the relationship between institutions, violence, and economic development? How does it link to the Weberian concept of the state?
- Marijnen's article puts a lot of new ideas on the table: what questions does it raise for you? How might a new institutionalist analyse her case? What, if anything, would they be missing?

OPTIONAL FURTHER READING:

- **THELEN, Kathleen.** 2003. "How Institutions Evolve: Insights from Comparative Historical Analysis." In James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 208-240.

Week 4: Subjects, citizenship, and civil society

An important part of governance is controlling people. How and under what conditions is this achieved? This class dives into the question of citizenship—what is it, and how is it distinct from subjecthood? What is the significance of governing people and their bodies—as opposed to resources or space? How does embodiment fundamentally shape the relationship between people and regimes? How can resultant tensions be used and abused? The readings for this class focus on the role of violence and institutions in shaping peoples' subjectivities so that even in the absence of ongoing, material violence, they adopt the role of citizen or subject.

- **MAMDANI, Mahmood.** *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism.* Princeton University Press, 1996. [Introduction, pp. 1-34]
- **MBEMBE, Achille.** "The Banality of Power and the Aesthetics of Vulgarity in the Postcolony." *Public Culture* 4, no. 2 (1992): 1-30.
- **MOUFFE, Chantal.** "The affects of democracy," *Eurozine*, 23 November 2019 <<https://www.eurozine.com/the-affects-of-democracy/>>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is Mamdani's basic contention? How does it relate to the discussion of institutions in our last class?
- Mamdani published his book in 1996: do you think that political changes over the past two decades in African states support or undermine his argument? If he was right, what does this suggest about the future of democratization in African states?
- Mbembe draws our attention to embodiment. How does his article relate to the Foucault reading we did in week 2? If we pair the two, what would it suggest about African states?
- What different strategies or approaches can citizens—or subjects—use to make claims on the people or systems that govern them? Do different strategies emerge under different regime types?
- Mouffe turns our attention from embodied subjectivity to how it plays out in a civic space. How would you relate the two?

PART 2: REGIME TYPES AND REGIME TRANSITIONS

Part 2 of the course focuses on regime types, ranging from authoritarian to democratic, and how we might identify and assess them. We will draw on the core concepts discussed in Part 1 to try to disentangle some essential differences between different regimes, as well as to identify entry points for change.

Week 5: Indicators and Intervention

We start our discussion of regime types with a reflection on indicators—a common tool used to assess whether a government is or is not authoritarian, democratic, or something else entirely. What are indicators? How are they developed? How are they used to evaluate things like good governance, rule of law, or democracy? This class will discuss some of the technicalities behind producing an indicator, as well as offer critical reflections on the politics of indicators, and their real-world impacts. We will also spend a portion of the class discussing how one funding agency, the United States' Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), uses indicators to identify recipient countries, in preparation for starting the group project.

- **DESAI, Deval and Marieke SCHOMERUS,** "There Was A Third Man...': Tales from a Global Policy Consultation on Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals" *Development and Change*, 49.1 (2018): 89-115.
- **ROSE, Sarah and D'ALELIO Drew.** "MCC's Next Move: Forecasting FY2019 and the Shift to Regional Programming," Center for Global Development Website, 6 December 2018. <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/mcc-next-move-forecasting-fy2019-and-shift-regional-programming#kosovo-possibly->
- **MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION WEBSITE** (see below in "assignment" for this week)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What makes a "good" indicator? [*Hint: What should "good" mean in this context? Who should decide what "good" means? How can we know who should decide?*]
- What do indicators do?
- Why do organizations like MCC use indicators to decide who to give money to?

ASSIGNMENT: Review the Millennium Challenge Corporation Website

- Explore the website, including how the MCC determines recipient countries, the country score cards and the projects that have been conducted.
- Find a country that you are familiar with. Review their scorecard, looking at several years. Do these evaluations make sense to you? Why or why not? Focus in on a few of the indicators and look at what underlying data they are based on. Is it a “good” indicator? For whom?
- Finally, look at a project that has been funded. What intervention did the project make, and why? Are you convinced by this approach?

Week 6: Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy and Non-Democracy

This week we turn to regime types as an object of study, in particular, how we might conceptualize and measure different regime types. We will try to explore the edges of what constitutes a “democracy” or a “non-democracy”, and the most appropriate way to evaluate this.

- **WALLACE, Jeremy.** “Authoritarian Turnover and Change in Comparative Perspective” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (2019).
- **COPPEDGE, Michael et al.** “Conceptualizing and measuring democracy: A new approach.” *Perspectives on Politics* 9, no. 2 (2011): 247-267.
- **SCHAFFER, Frederic.** “Thin descriptions: The limits of survey research on the meaning of democracy.” *Polity* 46, no. 3 (2014): 303-330.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What constitutes a democracy? Which factors do you think are most important, and why?
- What situations call for a “thick” description of democracy versus a “thin” description?
- Is the concept of “democracy” useful? Should we maintain it as a way to categorize regime types?
- What does it mean to be “authoritarian”? What trade-offs do authoritarian rulers have to make to maintain control?
- Looking back to the scorecards from the MCC, how do they square up when you consider the issues raised in these pieces? Should we use indicators like those used by MCC? Under what circumstances? What are the alternatives and trade-offs?

Week 7: State-Society Relations: Political Institutions, Social Institutions and Violence

This week, we will turn to the relationship between citizens—or subjects—and governments to consider how it differs between authoritarian and democratic regimes. We will discuss how different lenses emphasise different aspects of the civic experience, and how this might differently shape our understanding of “good” governance.

- **O’DONNELL, Guillermo.** “Democracy, law, and comparative politics.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36, no. 1 (2001): 7-36.
- **WEDEEN, Lisa.** 1998. “Acting ‘As If’: Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 40(3): 503-523.
- **CHIGUDU, Simukai.** “The politics of cholera, crisis and citizenship in urban Zimbabwe: ‘People were dying like flies’.” *African Affairs* (2019).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How do the three readings differently conceptualise the relationship between state and society? What institutions do they deem to be relevant? (Please look for specific references in the text to which you can point.)
- Drawing on the above question, how might these authors argue that state-society relations differ in democracies and non-democracies? Are these differences of type or of degree?
- What is Chigudu’s argument? How does it relate to our earlier discussions of citizenship in week 4?
- If governments lack the capacity to provide basic human rights to their populace, can they be democratic?

Week 8: Non-democracies

This week we will take a closer look at cases that fall into the gray space between democracies and authoritarian regimes. How do these in-between regimes work? How do they sustain themselves as neither fully repressive nor fully democratic? In particular, we will look at recent scholarship that attempts to understand how rulers seek to strike a balance between leveraging (and often hollowing out) institutions to consolidate their power, while maintaining them as sufficiently functional to govern. Here, we will think about the delicate dance between rulers and institutions, how this might complicate efforts on the one hand to categorise regime types, and on the other, to facilitate “good” governance and democratization.

- **LEVITSKY, Steven, and Lucan WAY.** “The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism.” *Journal of Democracy* 13.2 (2002): 51-65.
- **SCHELLEPELLE, Kim Lane.** “Autocratic Legalism.” *University of Chicago Law Review*.85 (2018): 545-583.
- **MAKARA, Sabiti, Lise RAKNER, and Lars SVÅSAND.** “Turnaround: The national resistance movement and the reintroduction of a multiparty system in Uganda.” *International Political Science Review* 30, no. 2 (2009): 185-204.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How do illiberal rulers manipulate processes and procedures? And why would they maintain them, rather than just eliminating processes and procedures altogether?
- Are “hybrid” states or “illiberal democracies” strong or weak?
- Should we categorize such states as a distinct category? How unique or common are the characteristics that distinguish them from democratic or fragile states?

Week 9: Development and democratization

This week, we will discuss key arguments about democratization and democratic “backsliding”. We will start with a discussion of the well-recognized relationship between economic development and democracy, asking questions like: does democracy cause development; or does development cause democracy, and what are the different implications of each? We will also consider the trade-offs between democratic and authoritarian styles of governance, human rights, and economic development—and how rulers can actually instrumentalise these assumed relationships. Finally, we will consider whether democracy can be hurried by external intervention—and if so, what might good entry points be?

- **MEYERROSE, Anna, Thomas FLORES, and Irfan NOORUDDIN.** “From Elections to Democracy in Hard Times.” In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. 2019.
- **MATFESS, Hilary.** “Rwanda and Ethiopia: Developmental authoritarianism and the new politics of African strong men.” *African Studies Review* 58, no. 2 (2015): 181-204.
- **CAROTHERS, Thomas.** *Aiding democracy abroad: The learning curve*. Carnegie Endowment, 2011. (pp. 255-280).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- According to the scholars, and any other reading you have done on this topic, is there evidence to support a causal relationship between economic development and democratization? If so, what direction does the causal arrow run?
- Is democracy promotion a mode of imperialism?

PART 3: Cases

Part 3 of the course includes three sessions dedicated to case studies. You will each have a chance, with your group, to propose a project to the MCC (played by your classmates) that will promote development in your selected country.

You will have to address concerns the MCC might have about your country's willingness and capacity to implement this project, and also explain how the project will result in positive development outcomes. In the final session of this Part, the entire class will vote on how to allocate the available funds amongst the proposed projects.

Week 10, 11, 12: Presentations

The assigned readings for each week will be comprised of packets produced by the presenting groups on their case studies. The presentations will resemble a kind of role play, with the presenters playing the part of the MCC country team that is making a bid for their project, and the rest of the class playing different kinds of technical experts (e.g. rule of law reformer, development economist, human rights advocate, gender specialist, conflict analyst, etc.). These sessions require active participation from everyone.

PART 4: Conclusions

Week 13: Democracy in global perspective

This week, we will try to view the main themes of the class through several global lenses, thinking about regime types in relation to the global political economy, changing environmental conditions, and neoliberalism. This class aims to offer a moment to reflect on what we have learned, and how far it can take us.

- **Readings TBC**

Week 14: Final exam