Comparative Politics of Eurasia

Higher School of Economics 2017-18
Mondays 6-9 PM
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Teaching Assistant: TBD
Coordinator: TBD

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Course Description: This course is a graduate seminar on comparative politics of modernization and development in Eurasia with an emphasis on research design and empirical analysis. The lectures formulate a comparative theory of modernization, political stability and political change, while the seminars focus on data methods in the context of six canonical cases: Russia, China, Turkey, Iran, Germany and Japan. We verify the theoretical trajectories of development in these countries, study their political experiments with popular mobilization and institutionalization of democracy and autocracy. At the end of the instruction period, students are expected to produce a research paper based on the results of their work during the course.

Comparative politics of modernization and development are outlined as a paradigm for inquiry, the formulation includes three theoretical axes and an empirical complement:

1. Elements of political participation: electoral mobilization (turnout), economic mobilization (shifts in sectorization)

2. Elements of political stability: institutions of electoral politics (presidential, or parliamentary politics), (de)stabilizing themes (nationalist unification, ethnic, religious, economic classification), party formation and alliance

3. Elements of political instability and disorder: breakdown of order (revolts, coups) and civil violence, breakdown of institutions—autocratic or democratic (corruption, fraud), breakdown of themes (new nationalist/ideological mobilization, religious radicalization, economic restructuring)

4. Microlevel studies of political modernization: democratic and authoritarian consolidation, economic transformation and social change in focal Eurasian polities

Each session is divided into a lecture and a seminar. Lectures are focussed on analytical theory on the themes outlined above, while seminars are specifically focussed on data methods,
i.e. structuring empirics for the aforementioned case studies. Pragmatic limitations of the cases shape our empirical strategies.

By the end of the first module each students adopts a) a theoretical puzzle b) a case study nation-state whose sub-national statistics they use to provide an–albeit imperfect–answer to a theoretical puzzle of comparative politics. Innovative research designs are encouraged.

Students are expected to synthesize the concepts outlined in class, devise an empirical strategy to examine the implications of their theoretical argument, and use data to test the validity of their comparative arguments. Working on the six aforementioned cases is strongly encouraged, but exceptions are made on a case by case basis. Those who intend to finish the equivalent of a conference paper during the course, are required to produce a plan for a microlevel quantitative–or qualitative–study of their own, and start preliminary analysis by the end of the first module. Extra points are given to successful compilation of primary data, of quantitative type, during the course.

**Evaluation:** The grade for this course is based on (eight) responses to assigned readings for lectures (500 words each, for a total of 40%), attendance in lectures and seminars (10%), and the final paper–6000 words and empirical analysis–(50%). The responses to assigned readings should be sent to the instructor in the digital format, on the day before the lectures.

The final paper should include some elements of theory building and production of empirics. Students can opt for a 30-30% division of the final paper grade, into two reports (3000 and 6000 words), each due at the end of two modules.

To emphasize, the final grade of the course is based on cumulative grades obtained during the semester (the final paper and the written reading responses).

**Readings:** Assigned weekly

**Office Hours:** TBD

**Prerequisites:** undergraduate level courses on 1) comparative politics 2) research methods
Course Type: TBD

Learning Objectives: Research design and implementation in comparative politics

Learning Outcomes: Final report in the format of a conference paper/policy appraisal memo including data analysis and student presentations

Outline and Schedule of Lectures

Section 1: Political modernization: participation and institutionalization – 4 sessions

- Lecture 1: Modernization as a comparative paradigm
- Lecture 2: Turnout and the electorate
- Lecture 3: Participation in politics and economy
- Lecture 4: Economic and political sectorization

Section 2: components of political stability – 4 sessions

- Lecture 5: Choice of electoral systems, presidentialism and parliamentarism
- Lecture 6: Institutionalization of democracy and rule of law
- Lecture 7: Institutionalization of Authority
- Lecture 8: Symbiotic coexistence of authoritarianism and democracy

Section 3: components of political change and instability - 4 sessions

\(^1\)Seminars are dedicated to the discussion of case studies and relevant data methods.
• Lecture 9: Civil conflict and Collective Action
• Lecture 10: Ethnic politics
• Lecture 11: Resource economy and rentier consolidation (Institutional corruption)
• Lecture 12: Electoral dysfunction

Conclusion:

• Lecture 13: Discussion and student presentations
• Lecture 14: Discussion and student presentations

Student Projects: Final Draft of Project Report

Weekly Readings:

Segment 1: Modernization as a comparative paradigm

• Mancur Olson (1993) “Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development” American Political Science Review 87(3) 567-576

• Przeworski, Adam, and Fernando Limongi. (1997) “Modernization: Theories and Facts” World Politics 49(2) 155-183


• Samuel Huntington, (1968) Political Order in Changing Societies, New Haven: Yale University Press, selections

• Theda Skocpol (1979) States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, selections


**Lecture 2: Turnout and the Electorate**


• Saumitra Jha, Kris Mitchener and Masanori Takashim (2015) “Swords into Bank Shares: Financial Instruments, Violent Conflict Resolution and Reform in Meiji Japan”


• Andrew Eggers and Jens Hainmueller (2009) MPs for Sale? Returns to Office in Post-war British Politics, American Political Science Review 103(4): 513-533


Lecture 3: Participation in politics and economy

• Seymour Martin Lipset. “Some Social Requisites of Democracy,” American Political Science Review, 1959


• Adam Przeworski et. al. (2000) Democracy and Development. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, selections


Lecture 4: Economic sectorization and political outcomes

• Carles Boix, Democracy and Redistribution, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003, select chapters


• Douglas North (1990) Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance Cambridge University Press, selections


• Robert Dahl (1971) Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition, Yale University Press, selections

• Arend Lijphart (1999) Patterns of Democracy, Yale University Press

causal identification using observational data


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**Segment 2: Elements of political stability**

**Lecture 5: Choice of electoral systems, presidentialism and parliamentarism**


• David Austen-Smith and Jeffrey Banks (1988) Elections, Coalitions, and legislative Outcomes *American Political Science Review* 82(2): 405-422


**Lecture 6: Institutionalization of democracy and rule of law**


**Lecture 7: Institutionalization of authority**


Lecture 8: Symbiotic coexistence of authoritarianism and democracy


Segment 3: Elements of political instability

Lecture 9: Civil conflict

• Charles Tilly (1978) From Mobilization to Revolution, New York: Addison-Wesley, select chapters


• Navid Hassanpour (2016) Leading from the Periphery and Network Collective Action, Cambridge University Press, select chapters


• Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly (2001) Dynamics of Contention, Cambridge University Press, selections


• James C. Scott, Domination and the Arts of Resistance (1990), selections

• Monica Toft and Yuri Zhukov (2015) “Islamists and Nationalists: Rebel Motivation and Counterinsurgency in Russia’s North Caucasus”, American Political Science Review 109(2) 222-238
Lecture 10: Ethnic politics


• James Fearon and David Laitin (2003) Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War *American Political Science Review*, 97(1) 75-90

• Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart (2011) Sacred and secular: Religion and politics worldwide, New York: Cambridge University Press, select chapters


Lecture 11: Resource curse


• Thad Dunning (2008) *Crude Democracy, Natural Resource Wealth and Political Regimes* Cambridge University Press, selections


Lecture 12: Electoral dysfunction


