

## ***Section 1 – Democrazia e democratizzazioni***

### **Panel 4. Authoritarianism and hybrid regimes after the Third Wave of democratization - democratic rules without democratic rule.**

**Chair: Leendert Jan Gerrit Krol**

The concept of democratization refers to a transition from nondemocratic to democratic government. An essential part of this transition is the enactment of a constitutional framework that establishes democratic rule. Democratic institutions are, however, most likely to be effective in a system in which a democratic rule of law is already established. This inconstancy points towards the distinction between democracy and democratic rules. Generations of ‘transitologists’ have analyzed why in the Third Wave of democratization these two phenomena have simultaneously emerged successfully in some countries (Linz & Stepan, 1996; O’Donnell & Schmitter, 1986), while elsewhere democratic constitutions did not create a democratic rule of law. Several scholars have argued, in fact, that not only have authoritarian systems failed to democratize by adopting democratic constitutions, they have become more durable nondemocracies precisely because of these (formally) democratic rules (Gandhi, 2008; Geddes, 1999). Despite a strong correlation, however, research needs yet to demonstrate that it is because of these constitutions, rather than confounding factors, that ‘liberalized autocracies’ (or hybrid regimes) survive longer than despotic systems.

This panel discusses papers from a rapidly expanding field of research into what causal effect a democratic legal framework has without a democratic system of rule of law. The challenge facing this paradigm is to separate the effects of rules from the intentions and capacities of those in control of their enforcement (Brancati, 2014; Pepinsky, 2014). Contemporary autocrats hold elections regularly, but scholars disagree why they do so and what effects elections have if not holding rulers accountable. Whereas some have argued that elections provide autocrats with useful information about the strength of opposition and where to distribute patronage strategically (Blaydes, 2011; Gandhi & Lust-Okar, 2009), others argue the opposite, namely that rulers use their administrative resources to inflate their electoral success and intimidate their potential opponents with incredible electoral margins (Hale, 2015). The panel looks forward to receiving papers that theoretically and empirically disentangle the effects of electoral laws on regime stability from the effects of leadership characteristics of the actors enforcing and/or manipulating these laws.

The panel is also pleased to host paper presentations about the role of legislative institutions and parliamentary representation under authoritarian rule. Research highlights the positive effect of legislative representation on regime stability by constituting a credible commitment to power sharing (Magaloni, 2008; Svoboda, 2009). Parliaments, supposedly, tie the hands of authoritarian rulers to power sharing deals with their allies, while simultaneously enabling them to co-opt opposition into the regime (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007). The assumption underlying this argument is, however, that the constitutional rules empowering the legislature vis-à-vis the executive are effective. This panel welcomes papers that investigate how rules of legislative accountability have a constraining effect on the authoritarian governments that manipulate them.

Research on nondemocratic politics has given political scientists several interesting hypotheses about the counterintuitive effect of democratic constitutional law supporting systems of nondemocratic government that lack a rule of law. Despite correlations, however, theoretical inconsistencies and empirical questions remain. This panel gathers scholars who address the curious effects of democratic institutions without the guarantee of their effectiveness. Scholars are invited to contribute papers from across various methodological disciplines and are encouraged to combine conceptual analysis with (comparative) empirical evidence.

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

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Magaloni, B. (2008). Credible Power-Sharing and the Longevity of Authoritarian Rule. *Comparative Political Studies*, 41(4-5), 715–741.

O'Donnell, G. A., & Schmitter, P. C. (1986). *Transitions from authoritarian rule: tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Pepinsky, T. (2014). The Institutional Turn in Comparative Authoritarianism. *British Journal of Political Science*, 44(3), 631–653.

Svolik, M. W. (2009). Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 53(2), 477–494.