

Paradoxes of constitutional politics in authoritarian and hybrid regimes (Fellowship am Department of Government der Universität Texas in Austin)

Initiative: Postdoctoral Fellowships in den Geisteswissenschaften an Universitäten und Forschungsinstituten in Deutschland und den USA

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This project examines the impact of constitutional politics on the stability of autocratic and hybrid regimes. In line with recent research, it argues that constitutions and constitutional politics have a variety of purposes both in substance and in effect in these contexts. Assuming that ruling alone and absolutely is merely a theoretical possibility, political power is always, even in its most absolute sense dependent on a cohesive group and "a device" (following Ginsburg and Simpser) to control this group. In a surprisingly high number of cases, these devices of choice are constitutions. More importantly, hybrid regimes establish a unique form of commitment to constitutions. This results in fierce political conflicts over amendments. Hence, this project aims to understand how and why constitutional rule in autocratic and hybrid regimes helps to consolidate state power. The project utilizes an event-history approach, which allows to estimate the effects of the factors on the dependent variable (duration of the autocratic regime) over time. The preliminary factors found to hold some predictive power are few leadership changes, defeat in war, and low level of constitutional politics in general. The sample includes the constitutions of independent states that have existed between 1918 and 2015.

Projektbeteiligte

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