

Panel's title: Democratic Authoritarian Leaders in Asia

Coordinator (Affiliation, University): Assoc. Prof. Hyung-A Kim, School of Culture, History and Language of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia)

Language : Français/ English

Topics: (Arts, **Politics**, History, Migration....)

Panel Presentation :

Since Fareed Zakaria published his article, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy" in 1997, scholars have paid attention to the phenomenon of regimes that behave in authoritarian ways while preserving many characteristics of democracy. Terms like "hybrid regime", "illiberal democracy" or "semi-authoritarianism" are only a few derived from this phenomenon which Levitsky and Way have characterised as "competitive authoritarianism" because political control was combined with political competition to produce a hybrid system. Levitsky and Way attributed this phenomenon to the effects of international pressure for democratic behaviour in societies where local social factors were more conducive to authoritarianism.

Amid a series of crises for nearly a decade throughout the world, many leaders of democratic countries in Asia, as in other parts of the world, have contributed to the decline of global freedom according to the 2016 Freedom House Report. The ranking of Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Burma in 2016, for example, was 72nd, 70th, 130th and 143rd of 180 countries respectively, falling 11 and 10 places from 2015 in the cases of Japan and South Korea. In this panel, we suggest that semi-authoritarianism is also conditional upon the personality of the leader who presides over it. We argue that the personal characteristics of these leaders are shaped by personal background (both ideological and in terms of class interest) and by generational experience. By characterising these leaders as "semi-authoritarian leaders" or "democratic authoritarian leaders", we discuss leaders of the above four countries exploring the possibility that authoritarian democracy is contingent upon personality, including the personal ability of leaders to mobilize "communities of emotion" that undermine democratic conventions. In making this argument, we draw attention to the phenomenon of democratic authoritarian leaders in Asia while also noting the opportunity for genuine democratic progress that arises when an authoritarian leader departs.

Key words : Authoritarian democracy; democratic authoritarian leaders; personalized politics; ideological authoritarianism; centralization of decision-making

Participants :

1) Name(s) (Affiliation, University): (Assoc. Prof. Hyung-A Kim, School of Culture, History and Language of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia)

Communication's title: Former President Park Geun-hye's Imperial Presidency, Impeachment and its Reverberations

Language: Français/ English

Presentation:

As daughter of former president Park Chung-hee, who had left a deeply divisive legacy of Korea's economic miracle on the back of his 18-year dictatorship, former President Park Geun-hye represented to older voters the second coming of Korea's economic prosperity backed by a staunch anti-Communist stance, especially against North Korea. The younger generations, in contrast, equated Park's presidency to a return of her father's authoritarian rule. Park, who has been under arrest since late March over corruption charges shortly after her impeachment on 10 March, was formally indicted on April 17 on a total of 18 charges. Behind this extraordinary drama lay the mass-based anti-Park candlelight protests that involved 1550 citizens' organizations and groups which, through their "Candlelight Revolution", peacefully removed Park from the presidency. Recognizing the political influence of mass-based 'people power' movements as shown in the Candlelight Revolution, I argue that Park's impeachment, as much as it has raised expectations in Korean democracy, should not necessarily be seen as strengthening Korean democracy, but should rather be seen as a one-off event that has exposed flaws in Korean democracy which has yielded the fall from grace of five of the past six presidents since Korea democratized in 1987.

Key words: personalized politics; imperial presidency; impeachment, corruption

2) Name(s) (Affiliation, University): (Dr. Corey Wallace, Postdoctoral Fellow, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany)

Communication's title: The Marginalization of Dissent in the Second Abe Administration

Language: Français/ English

Presentation:

The second administration of Abe Shinzo (2012-) has roused significant media controversy and scholarly criticism due to the perception that political dissent in Japan is being marginalized due to an authoritarian impulse associated with Abe Shinzo's personality. This paper evaluates this argument. The first section reflects upon Abe's political biography in terms of the familial and historical connections to a traditional neo-Confucian Japanese elite view of the world that underpins his ideological convictions, and how these convictions run counter to post-war and newly evolving political norms in Japan. The second section reflects upon the marginalization of dissent in the second Abe administration, especially in comparison with the first Abe administration (2006-2007). It focuses on Abe's relationship with the media, and policy and legislative processes. Section three reflects upon whether Abe's endurance in office heralds a new 'authoritarian' development in Japanese politics that is likely to endure beyond Abe's time in power. While Abe has taken advantage of a strong public desire for political stability due to rapid changes in the domestic and international environments, this paper argues that the marginalization of dissent is contingent upon Abe's political personality acting in intimate combination with contemporary political dynamics in Japan.

Key words: Japanese politics, political dissent; marginalization; political stability.

3) Name(s) (Affiliation, University) : (Assoc. Prof. Youngmi Kim, Department of International Relations, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)

Communication's title: *Bogyoke* lives on: The legacy of Aung San in Myanmar's contemporary state-building

Language: Français/ **English**

Presentation:

The paper assesses the legacy of General Aung San through the political and personal biography of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in order to discuss the emergence of 'democratic authoritarian' leadership in post-transition Myanmar. Specifically, the paper focuses on two issues that are central to state-building in the country: ethnic politics and the government's relationship with the armed forces. Empirically, the paper discusses the two Panglong Conferences as the central founding myths of modern state-building in Burma/Myanmar and also the evolving, at times fractured, but always strategically important relationship between Aung San and Daw Suu and the Tatmadaw (the armed forces). The paper emphasises the personalization of politics both under authoritarian and 'democratic' rule and the centralization of decision-making, stemming from the acute awareness of the remarkably low state capacity and the lack of trust which generate a strong sense of personal and political isolation. Building strong state institutions was as much a tall order for Aung San as it is for Aung San Suu Kyi today. High expectations and enthusiasm accompany the challenges which, even today, remain daunting. While leadership is available, state capacity remains wanting.

Key words: ethnic politics; founding myths; modern state-building; personalization of politics.

4) Name(s) (Affiliation, University): (Prof. Robert Cribb, Department of Political and Social Change Coral Bell School of Asia-Pacific Affairs, College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University)

Communication's title: Indonesia's Jokowi: from populist lightweight to executive president

Language: Français/ **English**

Presentation:

Joko Widodo ('Jokowi') came to power as Indonesia's president in 2014 amid widespread enthusiasm for his democratic credentials. His success drew upon a populist political style that he had cultivated as mayor of Solo and then governor of Jakarta, and he saw off a strong campaign by former general Prabowo Subianto. His election appeared to mark Indonesia's definitive departure from the authoritarian instincts of Suharto's New Order. In office, however, he seemed to demonstrated clearly the weaknesses of a city populist, struggling to cope with complex, often Machiavellian pressures from the experienced politicians who surrounded him and whose cooperation was necessary for his success. Suddenly, however, the interpretation of Jokowi has changed. Half way through his presidency, he has become more assured and a more capable operator. With this assurance has come both a more authoritarian style and greater visibility for the use of mass forces to bolster his position. Where did this change come from? Has Jokowi learnt in office what the realities of Indonesian politics are, or does he now simply feel confident to wield at the national level the techniques that made him so formidable in urban government?

Key words: Indonesian politics; executive president; populist authoritarianism