Democratic Regression in Comparative Perspective

Panel proposed for Section 12 "Comparative Area Studies: Methodological Rationales and Empirical Applications"

Panel Chairs:
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Abstract

Since the turn of the century, we observe a critical development for what scholars have found different notions: be it regression of democracy (Erdmann and Kneuer 2011), hybridization (Diamond 2002), democratic backsliding (Lust 2015, Bermeo 2016) or deconsolidation (Foa and Mounck 2017). Despite the fact that democracy measures like Freedom House *prima vista* do not reveal a change in distribution between democratic and non-democratic regimes, a closer look points to a series of problematic dynamics within the different types of more or less democratic regimes (independently of how we might classify them). Across all regions of the world, we see democratically elected governments acting in rather authoritarian ways, implementing limitations to judicial independence and the rule of law, curtailing media freedom and/or imposing restrictions on dissident voices or on civil society space in general. As a consequence, observers see "young" democracies moving in the direction of competitive authoritarianism or even towards outright autocracy. And even established democracies, like India under Prime Minister Modi or the USA under President Trump, reveal strikingly similar dynamics.

This panel, on the one hand, invites papers that are dedicated to the task of conceptualization and differentiation. How can we delineate concepts like the loss of quality of democracy, democratic breakdown, and the rather incremental erosion of democratic structures and processes? On the other hand, studies with empirical analyses are welcome, preferably with an interregional or cross-regional perspective.

If you have a Paper you think might fit in this Panel, please contact the Panel Chairs before **12 February** with the following information:

- Title of the paper (no more than 20 words)
- Abstract of the paper (no more than 250 words)
- Author's (and if applicable co-author's) email address as registered in their MyECPR account
- 3–5 keywords