

# Tyrants, Dictators and Strongmen

Exploring Authoritarian Rule in Asia and the Struggle for Democracy

**Mark S. Cogan**

*Associate Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies*

**Office:** 601 (Nakamiya Campus)

**Office Hours:** TBD

**E-mail:** [mscogan@kansai.ac.jp](mailto:mscogan@kansai.ac.jp)

**Class Date/Period:** TBD

**Classroom(s):** TBD

## Course Description/Synopsis:

Following the Cold War, a 'wave' of democracy spread across the globe. As many as 50 countries started the long transition from authoritarianism to liberal democracy. While this was clearly evident in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and many former Soviet satellite states, democracy has had a much more difficult journey in Asia. The continent provides numerous examples of 'hybrid' or 'electoral autocracies', where a thin veneer of quasi-democratic institutions and multi-party elections masked autocratic manipulation, corruption and severe abuses of power. For example, the emergence of Thaksin Shinawatra in Thailand sparked hopes of democratic expansion, but military-backed *coups d'etat* have quashed hopes for change. Hong Kong was promised universal suffrage by the Chinese as a result of the handover with the British, but limited progress has been made, resulting in social unrest, anxiety and calls for independence. Frustration with crime, corruption, an elite-driven status quo, and a growing insurgency, the Philippines turned to the populist former mayor of Davao City Rodrigo Duterte after he promised swift solutions to persistent national challenges. Questions now linger about his successor, the son of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

This interdisciplinary course is divided into three distinct parts. Part one will provide an analytical framework for discussion by establishing core concepts, regime typologies, and baseline indicators for assessing democratization. Part two explores the role of values, norms, and traditions that have ostensibly made Asia resistant to liberal democracy. Finally, part three explores essential case studies: China/Hong Kong, Thailand, and the Philippines each of whom struggle with persistent challenges, from historical traumas, legitimacy crises, and populist leadership. This class is aimed at third and fourth-year undergraduate students. Previous studies in political science, international relations, or social anthropology would be helpful, but are not required.

## Course Objectives:

This undergraduate course will explore democratization in Asia after the Cold War, through multiple lenses and prescient case studies. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- **Understanding and Recognition of Regime Types:** Identifying regime typologies and subtypes in East and Southeast Asia; categorization of states according to typology; contrasting authoritarian and democratic regime types.
- **Evaluating Democratic Progress:** This course will attempt to provide answers to key questions: What factors contributed to democratization or democratic recession in Asia? How can we measure or evaluate democratization? What are the roadblocks or obstacles to further democratization in each country's context?
- **Analyze the Country Context** - Students will learn to distinguish histories and events that explain political behavior in each country context, from diplomatic relations, ideological struggles, past or current conflicts, and national identities.

At the end of this course, students should gain a basic understanding of the challenges facing democratic governance, structures and institutions and gain insight to potential solutions that could strengthen democratic traditions in Asia. Students will be able to use a variety of analytical tools,

concepts and methodologies, incorporating evidence from relevant Asian case studies.

### Classroom, Literature and Materials:

This course combines formal lectures by the instructor with assigned group work and student-led in-class activities. Before each class session, students are expected to have read the assigned reading before coming to class, where participation is both encouraged and expected. Reading newspapers, periodicals and other relevant material is encouraged. Student knowledge and analysis of the assigned material will be tested in class through substantive conversation and through Reading Summary Quizzes, a mid-term examination, and the final exam. Students will also be required to participate actively and equally to small group activities and presentations.

Each session will last 90 minutes, with classes held twice per week. Some classroom time will be allotted to small groups to discuss and prepare for assigned presentations.

Regular attendance is *not* a requirement for this course, however it is *strongly* encouraged. I believe that life somehow will find a way to interfere with regular classroom activities, from family visits, illnesses, pre-arranged travel, and more. Therefore, my attendance policy is lenient. Use common sense. If you are ill, please do NOT come to class. No official doctor's certificate is required. If you will be absent, please notify me BEFORE class so I can help you when possible with discussions or class plans that you missed.

**Course Readings:** Readings for this course have been uploaded to [Blackboard](#). No textbook is required.

### Course Schedule:

Introduction	
1 -	<p><b>Introductions / Syllabus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Please review the course syllabus, become familiar with <a href="#">Blackboard</a>, access all required course readings and familiarize yourself with the <a href="#">KGU Library</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Democratic Decay: An Example From Europe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Beauchamp, Z. (2018) It Happened There. How Democracy Died in Hungary <a href="https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/9/13/17823488/hungary-democracy-authoritarianism-trump">https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/9/13/17823488/hungary-democracy-authoritarianism-trump</a></li> <li>❖ Guasti, P., &amp; Bustikova, L. (2022). Pandemic power grab. <i>East European Politics</i>, 38(4). 529-550. <a href="https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/21599165.2022.2122049?needAccess=true&amp;role=button">https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/21599165.2022.2122049?needAccess=true&amp;role=button</a></li> <li>❖ Ágh, A. (2016). The decline of democracy in East-Central Europe: Hungary as the worst-case scenario. <i>Problems of Post-Communism</i>, 63(5-6). pp. 277-287. <b>(Optional)</b></li> </ul>
2 -	
Regime Typologies	
3 -	<p><b>Typologies - Definitions of Democracy and So-Called 'Hybrid' Regimes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Wigell, M. (2008). Mapping 'Hybrid Regimes': Regime Types and Concepts in Comparative Politics. <i>Democratization</i>, 15(2). pp. 230-250</li> <li>❖ Diamond, L.. The democratic rollback: the resurgence of the predatory state. <i>Foreign Affairs</i> (2008): 36-48.</li> </ul>



11 -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Subramaniam, S. (2000). The Asian Values Debate: Implications for the Spread of Liberal Democracy. <i>Asian Affairs</i>. 27(1). pp. 19-35.</li> <li>❖ Barr, M. D. (2000). Lee Kuan Yew and the 'Asian Values' debate. <i>Asian Studies Review</i>, 24(3), pp. 309-334.</li> </ul> <p><b>Class Discussion on Asian Values</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Based on your understanding of Asian Values, and incorporating your understanding of how authoritarian regimes operate, you will be required to participate in a class discussion about the merits of Asian Values.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading Summary Quiz #2: To be distributed via Blackboard.</b></p>
12 -	<p><b>Mid-Term Examination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Prepare for the mid-term examination on all course readings, lecture, and class discussions to date. It will be announced and the questions will be posted on Blackboard.</li> </ul>
<b>China and Hong Kong - National Trauma and Protracted Democracy</b>	
13 -	<p><b>China's Century of Humiliation and National Trauma</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Galtung, J. (1994) Are there therapies for bad cosmologies? <i>Medicine and War</i>, 10(3). pp. 170-182.</li> <li>❖ Wang, Z. (2012). Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations. Columbia University Press. Book Chapter. Memory, Nationalism, and China's Rise. p. 221- 242</li> </ul>
14 -	<p><b>Hong Kong and Democratization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Boniface, D., and Ilan A. (2010). Is Hong Kong Democratizing? <i>Asian Survey</i>. 50(4). pp. 786–807. <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2010.50.4.786">www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2010.50.4.786</a></li> <li>❖ Fong, B.C. (2017). One country, two nationalisms: Center-periphery relations between Mainland China and Hong Kong, 1997–2016. <i>Modern China</i>, 43(5). pp. 523-556.</li> <li>❖ Wong, S. H. W., &amp; Wan, K. M. (2018). The housing boom and the rise of localism in Hong Kong: Evidence from the legislative council election in 2016. <i>China Perspectives</i>. pp. 31-40. (Optional)</li> </ul>
15 -	<p><b>From the Umbrella Movement to the National Security Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Chan, J. (2014) Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement. <i>The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs</i>, 103(6). pp. 571-580.</li> <li>❖ Ortmann, S. (2015). The Umbrella Movement and Hong Kong's Protracted Democratization Process. <i>Asian Affairs</i>, 46(1). pp. 32-50.</li> <li>❖ Ping, Y.C. and Kwong, K. (2014). Hong Kong Identity on the Rise. <i>Asian Survey</i>, 54(6). pp. 1088–1112., <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2014.54.6.1088">www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2014.54.6.1088</a>. (Optional)</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading Summary Quiz #3: To be distributed via Blackboard.</b></p>
<b>Conflict Analysis and Mapping</b>	
16 -	<p><b>Conflict Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ After the lecture, please review the lecture slides, which will be uploaded</li> </ul>

	to Blackboard. In particular, review the “Conflict Tree” tool. The Conflict Analysis will serve as background knowledge for our discussion on the China/Hong Kong conflict.
17 -	<p><b>Conflict Mapping Exercise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Using the Hong Kong/China conflict as an example, this classroom exercise will map and analyze on-going tensions in Hong Kong after the June 2020 national security law.</li> </ul>
<b>Thailand - Legitimacy Crises</b>	
18 -	<p><b>Imagery and the Thai Monarchy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Stengs, I. (1999). A Kingly Cult: Thailand’s Guiding Lights in a Dark Era. <i>Etnofoor</i>, 12(2), pp. 41–75. <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/25757965">http://www.jstor.org/stable/25757965</a></li> <li>❖ Kurlantzick, J. (2016). The Mixed Legacy of King Bhumibol Adulyadej. <i>Council on Foreign Relations</i>. <a href="https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/mixed-legacy-king-bhumibol-adulyadej">https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/mixed-legacy-king-bhumibol-adulyadej</a></li> <li>❖ Cogan, M. S. (2021) Five years after Bhumibol’s passing, images reveal missed opportunities. <i>Southeast Asia Globe</i>. Web.</li> <li>❖ Heijmans, P. (2021). As Thailand’s troubles grow, the king moves to bolster his image, <i>The Japan Times</i>. Web.</li> </ul>
19 -	<p><b>Thailand: Torn Between Democracy and Military Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Sripokangkul, S. and Cogan, M. S. (2019), Political Demonology, Dehumanization, and Contemporary Thai Politics. <i>Asia-Pacific Social Science Review</i>, 19(2). pp. 115-130. <a href="http://apssr.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/RA-8-1.pdf">http://apssr.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/RA-8-1.pdf</a></li> <li>❖ Heinze, R.I. (1974). Ten Days in October -- Students vs. the Military: An Account of the Student Uprising in Thailand. <i>Asian Survey</i>. 14(6). pp. 491–508. <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/2642679">www.jstor.org/stable/2642679</a></li> <li>❖ Darling, F. (1974). Student Protest and Political Change in Thailand. <i>Pacific Affairs</i>, 47(1), pp. 5–19. <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/2755892">www.jstor.org/stable/2755892</a></li> <li>❖ Mallet, M. (1978) Causes and Consequences of the October 1976 Coup. <i>Journal of Contemporary Asia</i>, 8(1), pp. 80-103. (Optional)</li> </ul>
20 -	<p><b>Coups and Political Violence: Black May</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Paribatra, S. (1993). State and Society in Thailand: How Fragile the Democracy? <i>Asian Survey</i>, 33(9), pp. 879–893. <a href="https://doi.org/10.2307/2645235">https://doi.org/10.2307/2645235</a></li> <li>❖ Neher, C. (1994). Democratization in Thailand. <i>Asian Affairs: An American Review</i>, 21(4), pp. 195–209.</li> </ul>
21 -	<p><b>Thailand: The Network Monarchy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ McCargo, D. (2005), Network Monarchy and Legitimacy Crises in Thailand. <i>Pacific Review</i>, 18(4), pp. 499-519.</li> <li>❖ Chambers, P. (2010), Thailand on the Brink: Resurgent Military, Eroded Democracy. <i>Asian Survey</i>, 50(5). pp. 835–858. <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2010.50.5.835">www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2010.50.5.835</a> (Optional)</li> </ul>
22 -	<p><b>Legitimacy in Decline, The May 2014 Coup</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Mérieau, E. (2016). Thailand’s deep state, royal power and the constitutional court (1997–2015). <i>Journal of Contemporary Asia</i>, 46(3), pp. 445-466.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Chachavalpongpun, P. (2015). Neo-royalism and the Future of the Thai Monarchy: From Bhumibol to Vajiralongkorn. <i>Asian Survey</i>, 55(6), pp. 1193-1216.</li> <li>❖ McCargo, D. (2021). Disruptors' dilemma? Thailand's 2020 Gen Z protests". <i>Critical Asian Studies</i>, 53(2), pp. 175-191. (Optional)</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading Summary Quiz #4: To be distributed via Blackboard.</b></p>
<b>Philippines - A Legacy of Populism</b>	
23 -	<p><b>The Characteristics of Modern Populism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Canovan, M. (1999), Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy. <i>Political Studies</i>, 47. pp. 2–16.</li> <li>❖ Mudde, C. (2004) "The populist zeitgeist." <i>Government and Opposition</i> 39(4), pp. 541-563.</li> </ul>
24 -	<p><b>The Marcos Legacy - Philippines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Zich, A. (1986) The Marcos Era, <i>The Wilson Quarterly</i>, 10(3). pp. 116-129.</li> <li>❖ Overholt, W. (1986) "The Rise and Fall of Ferdinand Marcos," <i>Asian Survey</i>, pp. 1137-1163.</li> <li>❖ Durdin, T. (1975) The Philippines: Martial Law, Marcos-Style. <i>Asian Affairs</i>, 3(2). pp. 67–82. <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/30171506">www.jstor.org/stable/30171506</a></li> </ul>
25 -	<p><b>From Rodrigo Duterte to Bong Bong Marcos</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Curato, N. (2017). Flirting with authoritarian fantasies? Rodrigo Duterte and the new terms of Philippine populism. <i>Journal of Contemporary Asia</i>, 47(1), pp. 142-153.</li> <li>❖ Smith, T. (2022) Philippines election: how the Marcos clan might be heading back to power. <i>The Conversation</i>. <a href="https://theconversation.com/philippines-election-how-the-marcos-clan-might-be-heading-back-to-power-182477">https://theconversation.com/philippines-election-how-the-marcos-clan-might-be-heading-back-to-power-182477</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Reading Summary Quiz #5: To be distributed via Blackboard.</b></p>
26 -	<p><b>Class Discussion on Populism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Based on your understanding of populism, and incorporating your understanding of how such regimes rule, you will participate in a class discussion about the upsides and downsides of populism.</li> </ul>
<b>Group Presentations</b>	
27 -	<p><b>Group Presentations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ These three class periods are reserved for Group Presentations. See the Course Rubric below for further instruction.</li> <li>❖ Depending on attendance/enrollment, one of these days may be replaced with a lecture or group discussion.</li> </ul>
28 -	
29 -	
<b>Final Exam / Evaluation</b>	

30 -	<b>Final Exam Preparation / Evaluation</b> ❖ The final exam will be posted via Blackboard. See the Course Rubric below for further details.
------	--

**Class Etiquette:**

- Come to class prepared to learn and engage.
- Falling asleep or deliberately tuning out class discussions is disrespectful. If you need a drink of water, coffee, or food to help you maintain your focus, please do so by all means.
- Cellular phones or other mobile devices must be put away--turned off or put on silent.

**Learning Assessment/Course Rubric:**

Reading Summary Quizzes:	<b>35%</b>
Group Presentations:	<b>25%</b>
Mid-Term Exam:	<b>25%</b>
Final Exam:	<b>15%</b>

**Reading Summary Quizzes (35%):** Five (5) reading summary quizzes will be distributed periodically at the end of class on Blackboard. Each quiz will consist of no more than two essay questions covering key messages in assigned readings or as presented during lectures. You will be graded not only on your recollection of key arguments or concepts, but your ability to *critically* think about the material. There is no word limit and you will have roughly than a week to complete each quiz.

Each question will be scored according to the following scale:

**1/5** - Minimal effort.

**2/5** - Effort has been made, but the responses are factually incorrect and less than substantive.

**3/5** - Strong performance, but an element of the discussion is missing or inaccurate.

**4/5** - Strong performance and the response reflects what is contained in the course material/lectures.

**5/5** - Strong performance and the response reflects what is contained in the course material/lectures *and* the response thinks critically about the material, offering unique insights and analysis, and criticism of the material or limitations of the theories or concepts are employed.

**Group Presentations (25%):** You will be divided into small groups. Each group will give a 35-minute presentation on a country of their choice in broader Asia. Your task is to give the class a detailed examination of the country you selected. Your method of analysis can be creative. This is not a descriptive exercise. I am not as much interested in an explanation of events as much as I am interested in your analysis of democratization. *Why* is this topic worthy of study? *What* makes it significant and relevant? Audio-visual/multimedia presentations are strongly encouraged. Sample topics *could* include: consolidation of political power in Japan, the role of the Thai "network" monarchy, the struggle for democracy in Hong Kong, populism/rule of law in the Philippines, nationalism in South Korea, or democracy and Islam in Indonesia. All topics must be approved in advance. Each group must provide an outline of their presentation by Session 18 for approval.

**Mid-Term Examination (25%):** The mid-term examination will feature three (3) short-answer essay questions over required readings, class lectures, and discussions covered during the first half of the semester. The questions are graded on the same scale as the Reading Summary Quizzes.

**Final Exam (15%):** The final exam will feature no more than two essay questions covering key messages in assigned readings or as presented during lectures. Again, you will be graded not only on your recollection of key arguments or concepts, but your ability to *critically* think about the material. The due date for the final exam will be announced later in the semester.

## Classroom Policy Information:

- **Plagiarism** (*the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own*) of any kind will not be tolerated. If you intentionally copy an article without crediting the source or original author, it is unethical and will be considered cheating. As a rule, I use plagiarism detection software to screen for potential cases. It is in your own best interest to summarize ideas *in your own words*, or use quotes around thoughts or material that is not your own. Use in-text citations whenever possible. Quotes over 50 words in length should be indented and do NOT count toward the length of an assignment. No answer should contain more than 10% quoted material.
- **Disability Statement:** *This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation.* Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible (within the first week of class). It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor then meet to determine reasonable accommodation based on the official documentation/accommodation list.
- **Syllabus:** I reserve the right to modify the course syllabus at any time, especially if I feel it enhances the learning experience. I will provide advanced warning of any changes.
- **Free Speech/Safe Space:** This course will likely cover difficult topics which will result in a wide range of personal opinions and emotions. It is important to come to class with an open mind and a respect for diversity of opinion. Discrimination, marginalization or other abhorrent behavior based on gender, sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation will not be tolerated. Violators will be asked to leave the classroom. In this classroom, we respect each other.

## Recommended Reading: (suggested, not required)

Adorno, Theodor W., et al. "The authoritarian personality." 1950. New York: Harper.

Altemeyer, Bob. "The other "authoritarian personality"." *Advances in experimental social psychology*. Vol. 30. Academic Press, 1998. 47-92.

Dahl, Robert A. *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998. Print.

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. , 1991. Print.

Chachavalpongpun, Pavin, ed. *Good Coup Gone Bad: Thailand's Political Development since Thaksin's Downfall*. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2014.

De Bary, William Theodore, and Wm Theodore De Bary. *Asian values and human rights: A Confucian communitarian perspective*. Harvard University Press, 1998.

Diamond, Larry. "Hybrid regimes." *In Search of Democracy*. Routledge, 2015. 163-175

Diamond, Larry, Juan Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset. "Democracy in Developing Countries, Volume 3: Asia." Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner (1989).

Handley, Paul M. *The king never smiles: a biography of Thailand's Bhumibol Adulyadej*. Yale University Press, 2006.

De Mesquita, Bruce Bueno, et al. *The logic of political survival*. MIT Press, 2005.

Mutalib, Hussin. "Illiberal democracy and the future of opposition in Singapore." *Third World Quarterly* 21.2 (2000): 313-342.

McCargo, Duncan, and Ukrist Pathmanand. *The Thaksinization of Thailand*. Vol. 4. NIAS Press, 2005.

Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way. *Competitive authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the Cold War*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Linz, Juan José. *Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000.

Linz, Juan J., and Alfred C. Stepan. "Toward consolidated democracies." *Journal of Democracy* 7.2 (1996): 14-33.

Ma, Ngok. *Political development in Hong Kong: State, political society, and civil society*. Vol. 1. Hong Kong University Press, 2007.

Marcos, Ferdinand Edralin. *The democratic revolution in the Philippines*. Prentice Hall, 1974.

Stenner, Karen. *The authoritarian dynamic*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Zhao, Suisheng. "A state-led nationalism: The patriotic education campaign in post-Tiananmen China." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31.3 (1998): 287-302.