



New Kremlinology: The Challenge of Understanding and Studying the Russian Political Regime

Thursday 14 March 5:00pm – 6:30pm

Speaker

**Associate Professor
Alexander Batur**

Visiting Fellow
School of Politics and International
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Location

LJ Hume Centre

Copland Building ANU

Register online:

http://bit.ly/new_kremlinologyANU

This lecture is free and open to the public

In a departure from accounts centred on the failure of democratisation in Russia, my argument begins from a basic assumption that the political regime of Vladimir Putin is a personalist regime in the making. How do regimes turn personalist? How do their rulers acquire and maintain personal control?

Focusing on the politics within the Russian ruling coalition since 1999, The New Kremlinology explains the process of regime personalisation, that is, the acquisition of personal power by a political leader. The investigation is based on four components of regime personalisation: patronage networks, deinstitutionalisation, media personalisation, and establishing permanency in office. Drawing from comparative evidence and theories of personalist rule, I explain how Putin's patron-client network became dominant and how, subsequently, the Russian ruler elevated himself above his own ruling coalition.

The lessons extend beyond Russia and illuminate how other personalist regimes emerge and develop. Furthermore, the title of the book (the talk is based on a book manuscript under review), The New Kremlinology, is chosen to emphasise not only the subject matter, the what, but also the how --- the battery of innovative methods employed to study the black box of non-democratic politics.

Alexander Batur, Associate Professor of Government, Dublin City University, is engaged in research addressing global challenges including the study of dictatorships and leadership. His work appeared in the Journal of Politics, Comparative Political Studies, British Journal of Political Science, Political Research Quarterly and Public Choice. His book, Democracy, Dictatorship, and Term Limits, was published by the Michigan University Press in 2014 and he is a co-editor of the Politics of Presidential Term Limits, 2019, Oxford UP.

His work has significant societal impact and has been cited, inter alia, in the Washington Post and Tages Anzeiger. In the past, Alexander held visiting fellowships at the University of Leiden, Essex University and the Perry World House of the University of Pennsylvania. He is committed to policy and worked in the past for the Freedom House and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

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