Comparative Politics of Regulating Infrastructure and Development in Asia

Summer Semester 2019

Seminar Handout

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1. Important Information
   - Seminar time: Wednesdays 14:15 to 15:45
   - Seminar place: Voßstr. 2, CATS / EG SR 01
   - First session: Wednesdays 24 April 2019
   - Last session: Wednesdays 24 July 2019
   - Lecturer: Dr. Seyed Hossein Zarhani
   - Office: SAI, 1st floor, Room 3
   - Office Hours: Mondays 14–15:30 and upon arrangement
   - Email: zarhani@uni-heidelberg.de
   - Seminar Website: https://elearning2.uni-heidelberg.de/ then Fakultät für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften then Politische Wissenschaft
   - Assessment: Attendance, presentation, and essay

2. Course Description

In the last quarter of the twentieth century and after the regulatory reforms in the advanced capitalist countries as an aftermath of the dominance of neo-liberal paradigm, the notion of the regulatory state emerged to display a distinctive mode of governance. Both neo-institutionalism and new governance perspective have focused on the structure of the relationships among regulatory actors and types of regulatory mechanisms in this new institutional setup. Nevertheless, the appearance and development of Chinese illiberal regulatory state and the emergence of India as one of the fastest growing economies despite what had been labeled as ‘embedded particularism’ challenge the conventional conceptualization of the regulatory state, which has been developed based on experiences of advanced liberal democratic states.

The seminar will deal with the political economy of regulation and regulatory governance in the non-western contexts. This seminar will explicate how regulation gets made and implemented—and who influences regulatory decisions in order to get what, when, and how, exemplifying some selected cases from Asia like India, China, and Iran. The seminar will be divided into three parts:

1. The seminar will discuss the socio-economic context of the emergence of the notion of the regulatory state as an alternative to the welfare state and the developmental state.
2. The second part of the seminar will introduce the comparative research designs in the study of regulation and their implication for our course.
3. The third part of the seminar will be case-oriented analysis and comparative understanding of regulation in infrastructure and development in selected cases like the power sector or telecommunication.

At the end of the seminar, students should be able to analyze regulatory problems from a political-economic perspective grounding their analysis in theoretical, historical and comparative knowledge.

3. Prior Requirements

This is an MA level class. What is required is a commitment to South Asia and social science theory. The language of instruction will be English and students are expected to have prior knowledge of political economy. Students are required to go through the readings mentioned just below the titles.

4. Organization

This seminar is based on lectures, student presentations, and in-class discussions. The first meeting will be a discussion on how we will run the seminar. The theory and historical lecture will be given in the second session. The student presentations will take place in the next sessions based on the reading materials.

5. Course Text

The seminar will consist of the reading of a selection of the academic literature on regulatory politics and its institutions, structures, and process. There is no single text. No reader. For each session, two or three texts have to be read by all participants. They are the basis for a discussion in the seminar. The course is taught as a political science course; however, the approach is multidisciplinary, making use of texts from diverse fields of study like public administration, political economy or public policy to highlight the complex nature of the phenomena.

Students are encouraged to ask critical questions and develop interdisciplinary reflections in understanding the different issues. Their respective diverse backgrounds and majors, as well as cultural experience and political knowledge, are highly valued.

6. E-learning platform

The seminar is registered in the university eLearning platform. You will find it opening “Fakultät für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften” and then “Politische Wissenschaft.” The enrollment key is Infrastructure19. All course materials and other details will be uploaded there. Students who desire a “Schein” must register on Moodle.

7. Class Organization and Presentations

There will be no student presentations in the first two sessions of the seminar, which will provide an introductory framework including a discussion of theories, important terminologies, and a review of key concepts. The allocation of presentation themes will be done on 8 May session.

Students will be expected to present at least once. Presentations must be between 30 to 40 minutes and should aim at answering a central question. After that, it will be a general discussion. All participants are expected to read all the essential readings. Presenters are expected to draw on additional information and must provide their colleagues with a handout.
8. Schedule

April 24
Introduction and Organizational issues

May 8
Politics of Regulation, Concepts, Debates, and Theories

May 15
Methodology: Comparative Research Design in Study of Politics of Regulation

May 22
Rise of the Regulatory State in the non-Western Contexts

May 29
China as an Illiberal Regulatory State: Dilemmas and Debates (1)

June 5
China as an Illiberal Regulatory State: Dilemmas and Debates (2)
June 12 (Reading Week, No class)
Regulating the Power Sector in China

June 19
Regulating the Telecommunication Sector in China

June 26
India: Regulation in the Environment of Embedded Particularism (1)?

July 3
India: Regulation in the Environment of Embedded Particularism (2)?

July 10
Regulating the Telecommunication Sector in India

July 17
Iran: Failure of a Regulatory State?
July 24 Regulating the Telecommunication Sector in Iran

- Zarhani, Seyedhossein, Political Economy of Regulation and Privatization in Iran’s Telecommunication Sector, Department of Political Science, South Asia Institute, an unpublished Material, a working draft

9. Assessment and Submission Dates

Students wishing to obtain a “Schein” and/or Credit Points for the block seminar would be required to:

- Attend each session of the seminar, be familiar with the core texts contained in the reader and actively participate in discussions. (2 CPs)
- Hold a 30-40 minute presentation on one of the topics of the seminar and prepare a handout and PowerPoint for this presentation, including, but not limited to, the core-question, main points in a bullet-form and a selected bibliography. (2 CPs)
- Submit a paper (Seminararbeit), 5000 to 6000 words. The deadline for submission is September 30, 2019 (2 CPs).

10. Teaching Support and Student Feedback

As always, student feedback is essential to the success of the seminar, and your comments are welcome at any time. Please contact me if you have any difficulties with this seminar or if you wish to discuss your work and progress. My Office Hour: Mondays 14–15:30.

11. Seminar Evaluation

Student feedback is essential to the success of the seminar, and your comments are welcome at any time. Near the end of the semester, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which enables the Department to monitor the lecture and addresses any apparent problems or difficulties.

Please also contact me in the case of difficulties or if you wish to discuss your work and progress. In particular, please do not hesitate to inform me if a book or journal is not available in the library.