

Sovereignty Referendums in Comparative Politics

Advanced Undergraduate Course IBEI

University of Konstanz

Winter 2016/17

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Office: D 230

Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Course Location: D 247

Course Time: Wednesday,

11:45am – 1:15pm

Overview

The failed push of the Catalans for a referendum in 2014, the 2016 negotiations over a new referendum in Scotland, the Russian annexation vote in Crimea in 2014, and the state building referendum in South Sudan in 2011 highlight the timeliness of the study of popular votes on issues of self-rule. This seminar investigates the processes leading to the realization of a subnational sovereignty referendum, developing a deeper understanding of the specific subject matter while also addressing core concepts in comparative politics. We will briefly examine the sources of self-determination demands before we go on to assess the dynamics of mobilization leading to the push of the claim onto the public agenda. The ideal types of decentralization and violence as expressions of demands are contrasted and related to sovereignty referendums. In the second half of the semester, we will develop analytical tools to understand and compare referendums, which will be applied to case studies.

Requirements

Grading of the course will be based on in class participation, presentation, a news summary, and a research paper, which are described in detail below. The purpose of the requirements is to create an environment enabling for maximum learning success. I therefore expect everyone to come prepared to every session, complete the required readings, as well as to adhere to the deadlines and formal criteria laid out in this syllabus. The failure to comply with the requirements will be reflected in the grading, and might even result in failing the course. Following the examination regulations, failure to submit or failing any of the examination requirements, also including plagiarism, results in failing the complete course.

Office hours are offered from the second week of the lecture period onwards, Wednesday 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm. Please sign up in advance on the list at my office door.

(1) Active Participation (15%)

Active participation from everyone is essential for making the seminar fruitful, and therefore constitutes a significant part of the final grade. Both the discussion of shortcomings of the literature as well as suggestions for improvement are essential components of class discussion. Regular and active participation are therefore critical to

make the seminar worthwhile and instructive. Following the departmental guidelines, you are allowed to miss a maximum of two sessions. The grades for participation will be announced at the end of the lecture period on request.

(2) Presentation (20%)

Every student will prepare a presentation of around 15 min duration based on the literature assigned to the respective session, indicated by an asterisk (*). Summarizing the assigned piece is not the primary function of the presentation, as all participants prepared the readings in advance. Rather, I expect you to go beyond the arguments forwarded in the piece and point your audience to possible flaws in the conceptual or empirical set up of the article. The purpose of the presentation is to get engaged with the literature and to develop and defend your own opinion. Please feel encouraged to do this in a non-conventional way if you feel that this better serves the message you want to communicate. The duration of the presentation might be extended if necessary following prior consultation with me. If you are unsure whether your presentation idea meets the requirements of the course, make sure to discuss them beforehand during the office hours.

If you need a beamer and/or laptop, please inform me during the session a week ahead of your presentation. Furthermore, I expect you to send me any supporting materials you plan to use during your presentation, such as power point presentations, handouts, etc., in .pdf-format **the day before the relevant session until 6 pm.**

(3) News summary (15%)

Identify a news issue relevant to sovereignty referendums in Europe or worldwide. Read at least 5 news articles on the topic from major quality newspapers and write a 2-page summary of the issue (font size 12, Times New Roman or the like, 1.5 spacing, margins 2.5cm). **The news summary is due on December 21 in digital (.pdf) and paper format.** Please enclose the declaration of independent work provided by the Department, which I will make available on ILIAS.

(4) Research Paper (50%)

The research paper will build on the aspects covered in the seminar, but has to involve a substantive amount of work outside of the approaches and literature discussed during the semester. I encourage you to work on a topic you are interested in, and to think about what you want to do from early on. The purpose of the paper is to identify a puzzle, develop a theoretical argument responding to it, and to test the expectations empirically. Both quantitative and qualitative work is welcome. There will be a session on December 21 where you have a chance to present your ideas and receive feedback by your peers and the instructor. Please keep in mind to sign up a week earlier (until December 14) if you are interested. The paper has to meet the standards of good scientific practice. For general inquiries and writing support see <https://www.polver.uni-konstanz.de/en/study/craft-of-research/>. The formatting of the paper is: 10-12 pages, font size 12, Times New Roman or the like, double spacing,

margins 2.5cm. **All papers are due until March 31, 2017 in digital (.pdf) and paper format.** You are, of course, welcome to submit earlier. Please enclose the declaration of independent work provided by the Department, which I will make available on ILIAS.

Topics and Readings

All readings listed are required to be completed by all participants for the respective sessions. Items with an asterisk (*) are presented by a fellow student. The readings which are not freely available online will be uploaded to the ILIAS page of the course. A password is required to access the materials, which is announced in the first session. In addition, there is a "Semesterapparat" containing relevant literature in the library. The following book, which is available in the library, serves as background reading for the course and will be part of the required readings:

Samuels, D. (2013). *Comparative Politics*, Boston: Pearson.

Session 1 (October 26): Introduction

Session 2 (November 2): Definitions

- Sovereignty, referendum, self-determination etc., literature tba

Session 3 (November 9): Sources of Self-Determination Demands

- Samuels Ch. 6 (Political Identity)
- Kelle, F. L. (2016). To Claim or not to Claim? How Territorial Value Shapes Demands for Self-Determination, forthcoming at *Comparative Political Studies*.
- *Sambanis, N., & Milanovic, B. (2014). Explaining Regional Autonomy Differences in Decentralized Countries. *Comparative Political Studies*. doi:10.1177/0010414013520524

PART 1: PROCESSES

Session 4 (November 16): Mobilization Processes

- Samuels Ch. 9 (Collective Action)
- *Opp, K.-D. (1988). Grievances and Participation in Social Movements. *American Sociological Review*, 53(6), 853-864. doi:10.2307/2095895
- Hechter, M., & Okamoto, D. (2001). Political Consequences of Minority Group Formation. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4(1), 189-215. doi:doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.4.1.189

Session 5 (November 23): Political Leaders

- Durán-Martínez, A. (2012). Presidents, Parties, and Referenda in Latin America. *Comparative Political Studies*, 45(9), 1159-1187. doi:10.1177/0010414011434010
- *De Vreese, C. H., & Semetko, H. A. (2004). *Political Campaigning in Referendums: Framing the Referendum Issue*. Abingdon: Routledge, Ch. 1, 5, 6.

Session 6 (November 30): The Voter

- Schneider, G., & Weitsman, P. A. (1996). The Punishment Trap: Integration Referendums as Popularity Contests. *Comparative Political Studies*, 28(4), 582-607. doi:10.1177/0010414096028004004
- *Hug, S., & Sciarini, P. (2000). Referendums on European Integration: Do Institutions Matter in the Voter's Decision? *Comparative Political Studies*, 33(1), 3-36. doi:10.1177/0010414000033001001

PART 2: RELEVANCE

Session 7 (December 7): Why do we need referendums? (I) – Violence

- Samuels Ch. 10 (Political Violence)
- Kelle, F. L. (2016a). The Force Awakens: Territory and Violence in Subnational Conflicts over Self-Determination University of Konstanz, unpublished manuscript.
- *Griffiths, R. D. (2015). Between Dissolution and Blood: How Administrative Lines and Categories Shape Secessionist Outcomes. *International Organization*, 69(03), 731-751. doi:doi:10.1017/S0020818315000077

Session 8 (December 14): Why do we need referendums? (II) – Decentralization and Partition

- *Brancati, D. (2006). Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism? *International Organization*, 60(3), 651-685. doi:doi:10.1017/S002081830606019X
- Christin, T., & Hug, S. (2012). Federalism, the Geographic Location of Groups, and Conflict. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 29(1), 93-122. doi:10.1177/0738894211430280
- Kaufmann, C. (1996). Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars. *International Security*, 20(4), 136-175. doi:10.2307/2539045
- *Sambanis, N., & Schulhofer-Wohl, J. (2009). What's in a Line? Is Partition a Solution to Civil War? *International Security*, 34(2), 82-118. doi:10.1162/isec.2009.34.2.82

- Register for the feedback session next week if you are interested -

Session 9 (December 21): Feedback Session for Research Papers

You are invited to prepare a short presentation on your ideas for a research paper and get feedback by your peers and the instructor. You are required to attend the session even if you decide not to present. Please register in advance (by December 14)!

- *News summary is due* -

- *Christmas Holiday* -

Session 10 (January 11): Are Referendums bad for Democracy?

- *Hug, S. (2008). Some thoughts about referendums, representative democracy, and separation of powers. *Constitutional Political Economy*, 20(3), 251-266. doi:10.1007/s10602-008-9065-1
- Wheatley, J. (2012). The Disruptive Potential in Direct Democracy in Deeply Divided Societies In W. Marxer (Ed.), *Direct Democracy and Minorities* (pp. 64-73). Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- McNamara, Kathleen R. (2016): Brexit's False Democracy, in *Foreign Affairs*, June 28, 2016, available from: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-kingdom/2016-06-28/brexit-false-democracy?cid=nlc-twofa-20160630&sp_mid=51732172&sp_rid=ZnJpZWRLcmlrZS5rZWxsZUB1bmhta29uc3RhbnouZGUS1&spMailingID=51732172&spUserID=MTA3Njk4NzkxODg2S0&spJobID=960061064&spReportId=OTYwMDYxMDY0S0

PART 3: ANALYSIS

Session 11 (January 18): Measuring Sovereignty

- Hooghe, L., Marks, G., & Schakel, A. H. (2008). Operationalizing Regional Authority: A Coding Scheme for 42 Countries, 1950–2006. *Regional & Federal Studies*, 18(2), 123-142. DOI: 10.1080/13597560801979480
- *Marks, G., Hooghe, L., & Schakel, A. H. (2008). Patterns of Regional Authority. *Regional & Federal Studies*, 18(2-3), 167-181. doi:10.1080/13597560801979506

Session 12 (January 25): Comparing Referenda

- *Schiller, T. (2012). The Emergence of Direct Democracy – a Typological Approach In W. Marxer (Ed.), *Direct Democracy and Minorities* (pp. 64-73). Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

- Mendez, F., & Germann, M. (2016). Contested Sovereignty: Mapping Referendums on Sovereignty over Time and Space. *British Journal of Political Science, FirstView*, 1-25. doi:10.1017/S0007123415000563
- Hug, S. (2004). Occurrence and Policy Consequences of Referendums: A Theoretical Model and Empirical Evidence. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 16(3), 321-356. doi:10.1177/0951629804043205

Session 13 (February 1): Case Studies

- group work on selected cases, cases and literature tba

Session 14 (February 8): Case Study Presentations and Discussion

Session 15 (February 15): Wrap-up