

KOSMOS DIALOGUE INVITATION

Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

Department of Social Sciences

Comparative Political Sciences and Political Systems of Eastern Europe



POPULIST-MANIPULATIVE REGIME: A NEW PATTERN OF DEMOCRACY?

Theoretical Model and Empirical Study for the 21st Century Democracy

a lecture held by Prof. Marina Muskhelishvili | Georgian-American University

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Conference Room 144

Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences

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Luisenstraße 56, 10117 Berlin

Modern democracies are called liberal constitutional democracies. They are based on the following assumption: there are (or could be) procedures (rules of the game, constitutional arrangements) that are neutral and impartial towards the substance of politics.

This assumption may appear to be questionable if we take a close look at the problem of agenda setting. If somebody has a power to set issue A before issue B in the agenda of voting, his power looks purely procedural and neutral towards the preferences of voters regarding A and B issues. However, the theorem of chaos proves the opposite. By sequencing the voting questions, such person can achieve any outcome, even the one that contradicts preferences of all voters.

By assuming that the substance and procedure of decision-making are linked through the mechanism of interpretation, the author links institutions of democracy with their normative meanings and suggests an extended classification of electoral democracies: majoritarian, proportional and populist.

This theoretical approach is translated into mathematical model, which may help to do a comparative empirical study of current democracies. It can also help to explain the centrifugal trends and polarization, typical for such countries as Georgia.