

*The People and Power: Dictators, Supporters and Detractors*

Florida State University Conference, Feb. 20-22, 2019



*Center for the Advancement of Human Rights  
The Rintel Professorship on Holocaust Studies*

This century is seeing a new proclivity for populist dictatorships that few would have predicted two or three decades ago. At the same time, the world is witnessing an increased use of mass collective actions, a surge in ‘people power’ protests and grassroots initiatives together with human rights activism, that resist advances in tyranny. Individual autocrats are often blamed for autocracy. But how have peoples facilitated dictatorships or democracies in recent national histories? What (perceived) circumstances of opportunity or grievance explain the success of strongmen and their repression of democracy? This conference will examine the historical role over the course of the past several decades or more that a country’s people have played, collectively and aggregately, in movements toward or away from democracy and autocracy.

**Keynote/Introduction, Adam Roberts, Oxford University**

“Civil Resistance against Authoritarian Rule: The Tragedy of the Arab Spring”

**Andrew Bacevich, Boston University**

"Why Trump Is Not the Problem"

**Michael Bernhard, University of Florida**

“Paths of Extrication and the Framing of Post-communist Memory Politics”

**Grzegorz Ekiert, Harvard University**

"From contentious reformism to culture wars: civil society and politics in post-1989 Poland”

**Federico Finchelstein, The New School, Latin America**

“Populism in Latin America as Global History”

**Diana Fu, University of Toronto**

“The Era of Authoritarianism? Goliath State and Prostrate Civil Society in Contemporary China”

**Azat Gundogan, Florida State University**

“Mass Violence, Populism, and the State in Turkey: A Tale of Two Authoritarianisms, 1925 to Present”

**Laura Henry, Bowdoin College**

“People Power in Putin’s Russia: The Ambiguous Role of Popular Mobilization”

**Zachariah Mampilly, Vassar College**

“Protesting Democracy in Africa: Popular Movements and Political Transformation?”

**Olga Onuch, Manchester University**

“Revolutionary Moments and Movements: Mass Mobilization in Ukraine”

**Marina Ottaway, The Wilson International Center**

”The Arab Uprisings: Romantic Views and Hard Realities”

**Meredith Weiss, University at Albany/SUNY**

“Malaysia Paradoxes of Reform: Protest, Progress, and Polarization in Malaysia”