

Abstract

The case of Syria presents an example of a regime performing authoritarian norms of peacebuilding that is indicative of new forms of geographical power implementing alternative models of post-conflict order. Bashar al-Assad utilises authoritarian conflict management to intensify its strategy of binary othering on which to exercise sectarian-infused practices of discrimination and violence to consolidate its power and subsequent legitimacy. The process of authoritarian upgrading left the Assad regime with vulnerabilities that were exploited during the uprising in 2011. Unable to control the protests, Assad intensified authoritarian and illiberal practices as a means to manage the civil war that emerged. Through discursive, spatial and economic practices, Assad was able to retain his seat of power. For example, drawing upon sectarianism as a tool of control, Assad put into place a process of binary othering that classifies citizens as loyal or disloyal. Citizens deemed disloyal are punished through a variety of measures. The authoritarian practices have led to dire conditions for the Syrian people, and are becoming entrenched into very structure of society through the process of reconstruction. However, liberal forms of peacebuilding lack the leverage to counter these practices.

Keywords

Syria; Civil War; Assad; Authoritarian Conflict Management; Reconstruction

Title

Strategy of Survival: the Resilience of the Assad Regime

Název práce

Strategie přežití: Rezilience Assadova režimu