

In the thesis “Electoral Authoritarianism in Comparative Perspective of Southeast Asia”, while analyzing for cases of regime survival and fall, author develops the argument that certain subtypes of authoritarian regimes are better build to cope with change than others. Since the four cases are under new institutionalism generally classified as electoral authoritarianism, the text depicts some of the methodological problems related to this particular research perspective.

Building on the systems approach and new institutionalism, the thesis analyzes the relation between institutional character of regime elite and its ability to cope with changes in the environment, i.e. adaptability. Author shows that at the time of crisis, personalistic regimes tend to react almost solely with repression a restrictions, whereas regimes with ruling parties exhibit a substantial degree of personal and policy flexibility, which positively informs their chances for survival.

The conclusion also demonstrates the methodological weaknesses of regime typology based on the quality of electoral process. It diverts the attention from other features of regimes which significantly inform logic and inner dynamics of authoritarianism. As a result, under the banner of electoral authoritarianism, there are regimes which differ from each other to the significant degree.