

Thomas Hazell

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Research Interests

Autocracy & institutions	Central Asia & the FSU
Bureaucracy & bureaucrats	State building
Computational social science	Subnational governance

Education

DPhil (PhD) in Politics 2024 –
Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford

Funded by an Economic and Social Research Council Studentship. Supervised by Dr Katerina Tertychnaya.

MPhil in Politics (Comparative Government) 2022 – 2024
Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford

Grade: *Distinction*. Funded by an Economic and Social Research Council Studentship. Thesis: ‘Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan,’ supervised by Dr Katerina Tertychnaya.

BA in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics 2019 – 2022
Lincoln College, University of Oxford

Grade: *First Class*. Finals examinations in politics and economics. Thesis: ‘Changing the rules of autocracy: the politics of electoral reform in competitive authoritarian Ukraine,’ supervised by Dr Jody LaPorte.

Selected Scholarships and Awards

Grand Union Doctoral Training Programme Studentship, Economic and Social Research Council, 2022–2026.

Competitively awarded doctoral studentship, covering fees and stipend for the MPhil in Politics followed by the DPhil (PhD) in Politics, both at Oxford. Value: \approx £145,000.

Work in Progress

‘Subnational governance, co-optation, and political careers in Kazakhstan’. *Working paper*.

‘The manager, the bureaucrat, and the autocrat: Personnel appointments in authoritarian bureaucracies’. *Working paper*.

‘Local elections and elite management in authoritarian regimes: evidence from Kazakhstan’. With Eleonora Minaeva and Kirill Melnikov. *Working paper*.

Conferences and Workshops ‘Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan.’ *Conference of the European Political Science Association (EPSA)*. 27 June 2025. European Political Science Association, Madrid.

‘Local elections and elite management in authoritarian regimes: evidence from Kazakhstan.’ *Conference of the European Political Science Association (EPSA)*. 27 June 2025. European Political Science Association, Madrid.

‘The manager, the bureaucrat, and the autocrat: Personnel appointments in authoritarian bureaucracies.’ *3rd APSG Conference on Authoritarian Politics*. 23 June 2025. Authoritarian Political Systems Group, King’s College London.

‘The manager, the bureaucrat, and the autocrat: Personnel appointments in authoritarian bureaucracies.’ *3rd Conference “New Advances in the Political Economy of Development in Eurasia.”* 6 June 2025. Almaty Management University, Almaty.

Past

‘Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan.’ *Conference of the Midwestern Political Science Association (MPSA)*. 5 April 2025. Midwestern Political Science Association, Chicago.

‘Shuffling to co-opt: Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan.’ *ESRC Grand Union DTP Annual Conference*. 4 June 2024. Grand Union Doctoral Training Programme, University of Oxford.

‘Shuffling to co-opt: Subnational governance, patronage, and political careers in Kazakhstan.’ *Emerging Scholars Workshop on the Study of Challenges in Eurasian Politics and Society*. 24 May 2024. Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Presented Online.

Professional Experience

Consultant Researcher
Ridgeway Information, London
June 2024 – present

Occasional consultancy supporting the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)’s nuclear non-proliferation work. I provide open source methods and Russian-language support, especially on projects related to the former Soviet Union.

Research Experience	Research Assistant on Non-Violent Repression in Electoral Autocracies Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford September 2024 – present Research assistance to Dr Katerina Tertychnaya’s ESRC-funded project on administrative and bureaucratic repression. Research Assistant on AUTHLIB (PI: Stephen Whitefield) Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford September 2023 – January 2024 Part of the joint UKRI/Horizon Europe funded project ‘neo-authoritarianisms in Europe and the liberal democratic response’ (https://www.authlib.eu/), led at Oxford by Stephen Whitefield, Spyros Kosmidis, and Zofia Stemplowska. Coding tweets to train a natural language processing model. Research Assistant to Dr Lenka Bušíková Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, University of Oxford May – September 2023 Data collection for projects on illiberalism and irregular armed groups’ political role in Ukraine. Research Assistant on the Oxford University Economic Recovery Project Smith School of Energy and Enterprise, University of Oxford February – November 2021 Research assistance, using government and media sources to track state spending in response to Covid-19.
	Voluntary Experience Election Observer, Samarqand region, Uzbekistan OSCE ODIHR Election Observation Mission October 2024
	Other Experience Intern Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford Summer 2021
	International Experience Intensive Russian language training in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Summer 2022. Travel in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia.
	Languages Native English. Intermediate Russian.

Computer Skills

Advanced R: Modelling. Managing/wrangling large datasets. `tidyverse`. Visualisation with `ggplot2`. Web scraping with `rvest`, `RSelenium`, `Chrome DevTools`. R Markdown/Quarto. Basic machine learning with `tidymodels` and hosted LLM fine-tuning. GIS with `SF`.

Basic Python: Scraping (`Selenium/SeleniumWire`). Data management.

Other: Advanced \LaTeX . Functional use of Git (and GitHub), SSH, Azure (VMs and pipelines).

Additional Training

Comprehensive E-learning Course for OSCE/ODIHR Observers, September 2024.

Fieldwork Safety Overseas, University of Oxford Safety Office, June 2023.

Advanced R for the Social Sciences, Social Sciences Division, University of Oxford, February 2023.

References

Dr Jody LaPorte
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International Relations
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University of Oxford
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Dr Katerina Tertytchnaya
Associate Professor of
Comparative Politics
Department of Politics and
International Relations
University of Oxford
`katerina.tertytchnaya@politics.ox.ac.uk`

Professor Lenka Buřtiková
Department of Political Science
University of Florida
`lenka.bustikova@ufl.edu`