**PhD Abstract**

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**Governance Legitimacy in *Oligarchized* Settings: the Case of Bulgaria**

In 2013, Bulgaria was hit by a series of large-scale protests that lasted for over a year. Another wave of mass demonstration occurred in 2018, and the last large-scale protests, that lasted for more than 100 days, hit the country in 2020. In all cases, the protestors have alleged the *state capture* andoligarchic ruleand demanded resignation of GERB’s government.  In spite of all the public dissatisfaction with the rule of the dominating party, there has not been any political change in Bulgaria since 2009, when GERB won the elections for the first time. From the outset, it has seemed that the legitimacy of the ruling party has been undermined and one can doubt whether its governance is legitimate. On the other hand, GERB has celebrated victory in four consecutive elections. In this regard, this research addresses the issue of the governance legitimacy in a context of the involvement of the superrich in policy making. The main objective of this study is to examine to what extent could be governance in Bulgaria since 2009 perceived as legitimate. Additionally, it aims to question the notion that national states have been facing the decrease in legitimacy and to fill the gap in the legitimacy literature that has so far neglected the role of the superrich in forming and implementing policies.