

**THE PARADOX OF POWER: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF
BASHAR AL-ASSAD'S IDIOSYNCRASY FROM 2018 TO 2024 IN
THE FALL OF HIS CENTRALIZED CONTROL IN SYRIA**



UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

Submitted as one of the requirements to obtain Sarjana Sosial (S.Sos.)

By

Vina Jauharotun Nisa

Student ID No: 016202200135

Supervised by

Ilmi Dwiastuti, S.H.Int, M.SS.

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Acknowledgement Page'

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Abstract

The Syrian civil war had started to increasingly emanate in 2011 when the Arab spring was rising. Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad, tried to sustain his power amidst demanding protests among societies. However, the way he managed conflicts reflects his limitation as a political actor struggling to uphold authoritarian resilience. This study tests the paradox of power by analyzing Bashar al-Assad's idiosyncrasy implemented during the period of 2018 to 2024 affecting the fall of his long-standing centralized control in Syria. It utilizes a qualitative approach employing data triangulation in order to ensure the validity of each finding. This study proves the significant role of idiosyncrasy for the fall of power. Besides applying Idiosyncrasy Credit Theory and Authoritarian Leadership Theory, this research does adapt an individual level of analysis which examines Assad's personality and decision in shaping perseverance and erosion of his domination. The findings underline interaction between individual actors and structural factors in forming state dynamics. Ultimately, this study contributes to a broad and deep understanding of authoritarian leadership on how personalized power does not only function to sustain a leader's domination, it can even undermine ruler's control massively.

Keywords: Bashar al-Assad, Syria, Idiosyncrasy, Authority, Centralized Control, Idiosyncrasy Credit Theory, Authoritarian Leadership Style

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