

Political Science 356/456: Transitions to Democracy and Dictatorship

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Everyday life is dramatically different depending on whether one resides in a democracy or under a dictatorship. People who once lived under a dictatorship often describe the experience as having lived with “two faces”: one for the public sphere, where they dare not share their true thoughts, and one for the private sphere, where they can speak openly to only a small number of people. How do these two different regime types develop? This course explores this question, specifically examining successful, incomplete, and failed transitions to democracy. The incomplete transitions result in hybrid regimes, stuck between democracy and dictatorship, and the outright failures result in non-democracies, such as dictatorships. The course also investigates the development of dictatorship through the erosion of democracy. The course uses examples from most regions of the world, including Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, the former Soviet Union, North America, and Latin America.

Course Materials

We will read scholarly works as well as first-hand accounts from participants in and observers of transitions to democracy and dictatorship. The course also incorporates documentary film clips and policy exercises.

Books and Articles: Four works are available for purchase at the bookstore: *Santiago’s Children*, *The Magic Lantern*, *Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times*, and *How Democracies Die*. The books are also on reserve at Kelvin Smith Library. Other required materials will be available on the course Canvas site under Files, unless otherwise noted. Paper or electronic copies of readings should be brought to class the days they are assigned.

News: Students are strongly encouraged to follow world events. These sources offer some of the best foreign coverage:

- *The New York Times* can be accessed for free by registering through Kelvin Smith Library at <https://researchguides.case.edu/NYT>
- *The Economist* can be accessed for free on a Case computer or through VPN from Kelvin Smith Library’s eJournal Portal, <https://case.edu/library/>. For your own subscription, see <https://www.economist.com/subscribe/>
- National Public Radio offers a free app, which includes brief news updates and news analyses from programs like Morning Edition, All Things Considered, and Marketplace.

Course Requirements

Participation: The focus of each class will be on discussion. Students should craft two analytical questions based on each week's readings and post them on the course Canvas site by 7 pm Monday prior to class meetings during Parts I through IV of the course. To Post, go to Discussions, select the appropriate week and reply to the existing post under that week. Students should read their classmates' questions before the start of class. The instructor will select some questions for class discussion, and students are welcome to raise questions in class. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussion. Students are strongly encouraged to take notes on the readings in order to be prepared to integrate and critique the materials and to pose questions for discussion. Readings should be completed by the first day of the week they are assigned, and paper or electronic copies of readings should be brought to class the days they are assigned. Because participation is critical to understanding the material, students are expected to attend all classes. Except under extraordinary circumstances, repeatedly not posting discussion questions or absenteeism will negatively affect students' final grades.

Short Essays: In addition to reading course materials and participating in class, undergraduates will write a short essay for two weeks during Part II of the course, one week during Part III of the course, and one week during Part IV of the course, for a total of four short essays. The purpose of the short essays is to help students understand, critique, and integrate the readings and prepare to pose questions for discussion in class. In the papers for Parts II and III of the course, students should develop an argument related to an analytical question and their countries of focus (see below), such as what impact have the economic systems had on regime change in their countries. The paper for Part IV of the class should also develop an argument related to an analytical question but need not address their countries. The strongest short essays typically introduce the argument in the first paragraph and then use evidence from the readings throughout the remainder of the paper to defend the argument. They also usually incorporate ideas from each reading for that week and perhaps draw on ideas from previous readings and the documentary films as well. Short essays should be between one and a half to two pages double-spaced. Papers, printed out, must be submitted at the beginning of the first class of the week the analyzed materials are assigned. Evaluation of the papers will take into account the degree of independent thinking, use of assigned materials, and quality of writing.

Country Research: Students will select two countries from a list of authoritarian countries that have experienced political liberalization in recent decades. They will identify and read materials about the countries during weeks two through 10 of the semester in order to write three reports, described below, and inform their short essays. There is no required number of sources. Instead students should read sufficient sources in order to develop convincing arguments for their reports. A research workshop will be held in class September 5. Students will submit in print at the beginning of class September 12 a bibliography of potentially useful materials with the names of their two selected countries written at the top.

Country List: Bahrain (2003), Bhutan (2009), Burundi (2004), Djibouti (2000), Egypt (2013), El Salvador (1998), Ethiopia (1996), Gambia (2002), Georgia (2002), Ghana (2001), Guyana (1994), Haiti (2007), Indonesia (1999), Kenya (2003), Kyrgyzstan (2006), Lebanon (2006), Libya (2013), Malawi (1995), Mali (1991), Mexico (2000), Mozambique (1991), Nigeria (1998), Pakistan (2009), Panama (1994), Peru (2001), Philippines (1996), Romania (1996), Senegal (2003), South Africa (1994), Taiwan (1996), Tanzania (1995), Thailand (1998), Tunisia (2012), Ukraine (2006), Venezuela (1996)

Country Reports: Students will write three country reports. The first will analyze the countries' regimes and the regimes' evolution prior to political liberalization using regime theories from week one. The second will analyze the political liberalization in the two countries using the democratic transition theories from weeks two, four, five, six, and seven. The third will characterize obstacles to democratic consolidation in the countries using those theories from weeks eight through 10. The strongest papers typically introduce the argument in the first paragraph, offer a comparison and/or contrast of the countries as part of the argument, and use evidence from the research materials and assigned readings throughout the remainder of the paper to defend the argument. Each report should be approximately six pages double-spaced, excluding the work cited page(s). The first country report should be emailed to the instructor by 1 pm September 19. The second and third reports should be submitted in print at the beginning of class October 17 and November 19, respectively. Students will draw on their reports in discussions October 17 and November 19. Evaluation of the reports will take into account the quality of research, degree of independent thinking, use of assigned materials, quality of writing, and, for the second two reports, participation.

All written work should be carefully structured and grammatically correct. Informal citations—phrases like “as Dahl argues”—are acceptable. To avoid plagiarism, students should review “Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It,” distributed in class. Cases of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be investigated by university judicial bodies.

For **undergraduates**, the four short essays will together constitute 25 percent of the course grade; the initial country report bibliography 5 percent; the three country reports will together constitute 60 percent; and class participation and attendance 10 percent. Students will lose a half a grade on any assignment for each day it is late.

Graduate students will complete an additional assignment. Drawing on and augmenting the research and analysis from their country reports, graduate students will write a 23-25 page research paper, not including the works cited, that develops and provides evidence for an argument related to the political liberalization and obstacles to consolidation in their two countries. The research paper is due December 9 at 1 pm by email to the instructor.

For **graduate students**, the four short essays will together constitute 15 percent of the course grade; the initial country report bibliography 5 percent; the three country reports will together constitute 40 percent; the research paper 30 percent; and class participation and attendance 10 percent. Students will lose a half a grade on any assignment for each day it is late.

Course Schedule and Readings

Day 1 (August 27): Introduction to Democracy and Dictatorship and the Course

NO CLASS August 29

Read for next week.

PART I: REGIME TYPES

Week 1 (September 3, 5): Regime Types—Democracy, Dictatorship, Hybrid Regimes

Robert Alan Dahl. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971. Read 1-11.

Juan J. Linz. "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain." In *Mass Politics: Studies in Political Sociology*, edited by Erik Allardt and Stein Rokkan, 251-283. New York: Free Press, 1970. Read 251-268.

Larry Diamond. "Thinking about Hybrid Regimes." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (April 2002): 21-35.

Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (April 2002): 51-65.

Andreas Schedler. "Authoritarianism's Last Line of Defense." *Journal of Democracy* 21, 1 (2009), 69-80.

Steve Reifenberg. *Santiago's Children*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008. Read chapter two, pages 24-28, chapters 5, 8, 13, 14, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25, 28, 32, 33, and Epilogue. Also see map facing page 1.

PART II: TRANSITIONS to DEMOCRACY

Week 2 (September 10, 12): Transitions to Democracy—Socioeconomic Conditions

Seymour Martin Lipset. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (1959): 69-105. Read 75-85.

Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi. "Modernization: Theories and Facts." *World Politics* 49, (January 1997): 155-183.

Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes. "Endogenous Democratization," *World Politics* 55 (July, 2003), 517-549.

Review country list and read material about possible countries of interest in order to select two.

Due September 12: Declaration of two countries for research and bibliography of potentially useful materials. Write names of countries at top of bibliography.

Week 3 (September 17, 19): Research Week

Students should use this week to complete readings necessary to write their first country report. Class will not meet September 17 or September 19.

Due September 19: First Country Report

PART II: TRANSITIONS to DEMOCRACY [continued]

Week 4 (September 24, 26): Transitions to Democracy—Elite Bargaining

Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. Read "Opening (and Undermining) Authoritarian Regimes," "Negotiating (and Renegotiating) Pacts," "Resurrecting Civil Society (and Restructuring Public Space)," 15-36, 37-39, 48-56, 57-62, 74-78.

Timothy Garton Ash. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. 1st Vintage books ed. New York: Vintage Books, 1993. Read two of these three chapters or all three if you have time. "Witness and History" "Warsaw: The First Election," "Budapest: The Last Funeral," "Prague: Inside the Magic Lantern, 11-23, 25-60, 78-130.

Research materials for two selected countries.

Week 5 (October 1, 3): Transitions to Democracy—Social Forces

Barrington Moore. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1966. Read "England and the Contributions of Violence to Gradualism" [part], 3-20, 29-39.

Elizabeth Jean Wood. "An Insurgent Path to Democracy: Popular Mobilization, Economic Interests, and Regime Transition in South Africa and El Salvador." *Comparative Political Studies* 34, no. 8 (October 2001): 862-888.

Research materials for two selected countries.

Week 6 (October 8, 10): Transitions to Democracy—New Economic Approach

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Read "Paths of Political Development" and "Our Argument" [part]. 1-14, 15-43.

Research materials for two selected countries.

PART II: TRANSITIONS to DEMOCRACY [continued]

Week 7 (October 15): Transitions to Democracy—International Influences

Samuel Huntington. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). Read “Demonstration Effects or Snowballing,” 100-106.

Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way. “Linkage versus Leverage: Rethinking the International Dimension of Regime Change,” *Comparative Politics* 38, no. 4 (July 2006): 379-400.

Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik. *Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Postcommunist Countries*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Read “The Cross-National Diffusion of Democratizing Elections,” 278-306.

Research materials for two selected countries.

(October 17): Transitions to Democracy—Country Discussion

Due October 17: Second Country Report

NO CLASS October 22 and 24

PART III: INCOMPLETE TRANSITIONS

Week 8 (October 29, 31): Incomplete Transitions to Democracy—The Role of Weak States

Guillermo O’Donnell. “On the State, Democratization, and Some Conceptual Problems: A Latin American View with Glances at Some Postcommunist Countries.” *World Development* (1993): 133-173.

Stephen Holmes. “What Russia Teaches Us Now.” *The American Prospect* 33 (1997), 30-39.

Michael Bratton and Eric C.C. Chang. “State Building and Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa: Forwards, Backwards, or Together?” *Comparative Political Studies* 39, no. 9 (November 2006): 1059-1083.

Research materials for two selected countries.

Week 9 (November 5, 7): Incomplete Transitions to Democracy—Economic Obstacles

Kelly M. McMann. *Economic Autonomy and Democracy: Hybrid Regimes in Russia and Kyrgyzstan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Read 1-5, 28-37

Mary E. Gallagher. “Reform and Openness: Why China’s Economic Reforms Have Delayed Democracy.” *World Politics* 54 (April 2002): 338-372.

Michael Ross. “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53 (April 2001): 325–61.

Research materials for two selected countries.

PART III: INCOMPLETE TRANSITIONS [continued]

Week 10 (November 12, 14): Incomplete Transitions to Democracy—Violence as a Hurdle

Michael Bratton. “Violence, Displacement and Democracy in Post-conflict Societies: Evidence from Mali.” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 34, 4: 437-458.

Guillermo Trejo and Sandra Ley. “High-Profile Criminal Violence. Why Drug Cartels Murder Government Officials and Party Candidates in Mexico.” *British Journal of Political Science*, forthcoming.

Enrique Desmond Aria. “The Impacts of Differential Armed Dominance of Politics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.” *Studies in Comparative and International Development* 48 (2013): 263-284.

Research materials for two selected countries.

Week 11 (November 19, 21): Incomplete Transitions to Democracy—Country Discussion

Due November 19: Third Country Report

PART IV: BREAKDOWN of DEMOCRACY

Week 12 (November 26): Breakdown of Democracy Historically

Nancy Bermeo. *Ordinary People in Extraordinary Times: The Citizenry and the Breakdown of Democracy*. Princeton University Press, 2004. Read “Part 1: Our Literature and Interwar Europe,” “Heroes or Villains? Images of Citizens and Civil Society in Literature on Democracy,” “Ordinary People and the Breakdown of Democracy in Interwar Europe,” and chapter on Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, or Argentina, 3-6, 7-20, 21-63, 67-68 and pages of chapter of your choice.

NO CLASS November 28

Week 13 (December 3): Breakdown of Democracy Currently?

Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. Broadway Books, 2019.

PART V: CONCLUSION

Conclusion (December 5): Transitions to Democracy and Dictatorship

Students are expected to review their notes and be prepared to integrate the topics we studied.