

Transitions to Democracy
Saint Michael's College
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STE 349

Freedom is on the march. Freedom is the birthright and deep desire of every human soul, and spreading freedom's blessings is the calling of our time. And when freedom and democracy take root in the Middle East, America and the world will be safer and more peaceful.

President George W. Bush
March 29, 2005
The Rose Garden

Course Description

What is a democracy? What institutional forms, social relationships, ideas, values and habits do we mean when we call a specific country “democratic”?

One of the key concerns in comparative politics is the origin of democratic institutions. We attempt to explain why some countries are democratic and others are not, or to establish some “mechanisms,” “variables,” or “causal factors” that determine how and/or why one country became a democracy when even its neighbors might not have made a similar transition. This is called “democratization” or “transitions to democracy.” One of the primary concerns in this effort has been the relationship between economic/social factors and democracy. Does capitalism, or do capitalists, promote democracy? Does increasing wealth – what we call economic development – lead to greater democracy? This is not an easy question. Capitalist Britain became increasingly democratic in the 19th Century, while capitalist Germany turned to totalitarianism in the 20th. In the second half of the 20th Century, less than capitalist and desperately poor India maintained democratic government, while a flourishing democracy was overthrown in capitalist and more developed Chile. Certainly, the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, which exhibited greatly varying wealth without true capitalist economies, raised additional questions. Democratization has also been tied – negatively and positively – to political culture, civil society, diversity, the values of leaders, neocolonial politics, and globalization.

In this course, we will examine several key theories about democratization in order to help us understand the possibility of promoting democracy in the 21st Century, and examine how these theories play out in specific countries. We will look to specific aspects of economic development that challenge or encourage democracy, as well as important threats to democracy, such as nationalist violence and poverty. We will see how “ideas” of governance, citizenship, and democracy diffuse as models, from the first democracies such as Britain and France to today's transitions. Throughout the course, we

will carefully consider what we mean by democracy, economic development, and capitalism.

Today, we have two examples that illustrate many of the tensions and controversies in competing theories of democratization. The first is China, where economic reform has been guided by a powerful and entrenched leadership. The second is the debate over a new constitution and government in Iraq, with possible approval of a constitution on the ballot as well as later elections for the new representative institutions. What are the chances for democracy to succeed in Iraq and China? What are the obstacles? By looking at “model transitions” and “failed transitions,” we will learn more about the economic cleavages, ethnic and sectarian conflict, and elite politics upon which successful transitions are sometimes predicated. As a result, the “real world” will be present in all our readings and discussions.

Requirements and expectations, readings, and evaluations

Texts

Sen, *Development as Freedom*

Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transitions and Consolidations*

Snyder, *From Voting to Violence*

Gilley, *China's Democratic*

Additional texts are on e-college

Course Requirements

2 *Essays* (26 Midterm, 30 Final).

Papers must be written in 12 point, New Times Roman. No late papers will be accepted, except in cases of emergency as determined by college policy. Papers with evidence of plagiarism or significant grammatical errors will not be accepted, and no resubmissions are allowed in such cases. Please see the college policy on plagiarism, and if you have any questions about grammar, contact the college writing center. Word Processing programs include spell and grammar checkers – pay attention to the red and green lines!!! Email submission are allowed only with prior approval.

To prepare for the final essay, you should monitor the politics of Iraq's transition and consolidation through mainstream American or foreign media sources. If you can read a language other than English, you should take advantage of this where possible. Every student is required to monitor Iraq through EITHER the New York Times or the Washington Times, AND one additional source as approved by the instructor.

Caution! Media is biased, though not necessarily consciously so. From the selection of what is “news” to its placement, reporters and editors shape events as much as report them. Television, driven by the visual image, structures news as much around what footage is available as what events are important. From any media, you will learn a version of local stories, told through a specific frame or world view. You will be able to

glean some facts and attitudes from local and American sources. But be critical in your reading.

Attendance/Weekly Assignments.

You are recorded as attending a class session when you hand in on:

1. Tuesdays (12 points total), a bylined article about democracy from a national newspaper or newsmagazine. 1 point each Tuesday. (1 sick day)
2. Thursdays (20 points total), a two page outline of the readings for the week, highlighting the argument and key points. These are a brief synopsis, but not in narrative form – think bullet points. You need to grasp the central argument or theme and the most important evidence supporting it. You will be evaluated on the completeness of the assignment – does it reflect all the readings for a week? 2 points *possible* each Thursday. (4 sick days)

As indicated, you have five “sick days” during the semester – to cover absences or not turning in notes/articles. This does not count the first day of class nor the midterm date.

Participation (12 points Total).

Your considered and thoughtful participation in classroom discussion is required. Points will be rewarded to students who raise questions or issues from the readings, from current events that relate to the topic for the week, and for insightful comments that advance the discussion in class. Participation means informed comments or questions, but you do not have to be “right” in your comments, only thoughtful and related to the readings, assignments, and discussion. In fact, you are encouraged to ask questions and point out anything you find confusing or difficult to understand. That is also participation. Bring several questions or key points that you might want to raise. ½ point per session.

100 Points Maximum for the course!

Bonus (5):

Engaged Participant Observation: perform 9 hours of community building or advocacy work during the semester to learn about democratic participation. You should try to work in class groups of no less than 3 and no more than 6, but exceptions can be made.

Proposal must be submitted by the fourth week of class. On campus examples are: Diversity Coalition, Green Up, Student Global AIDS Campaign, Common Ground, Women’s Center, Amnesty International, and commemoration of the Fifth Anniversary of the Iraq War. Off Campus examples are the Republican, Democratic, and Progressive Parties of Vermont, Vermont Cares (www.vtcares.org), Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program, and the Vermont Peace and Justice Center (<http://www.pjcv.org/center.htm>). Also check with MOVE.

An EPO project is explained in greater detail in a separate document on e-college.

General Rules and Regulations:

No late assignments will be accepted, except in cases of emergency as determined by college policy. Papers with evidence of plagiarism or significant grammatical errors will not be accepted, and no resubmissions are allowed in such cases. Please see the college policy on plagiarism, and if you have any questions about grammar, contact the college writing center. Word Processing programs include spell and grammar checkers – pay attention to the red and green lines!!! Email submissions are allowed **ONLY WITH PRIOR APPROVAL**.

All written work (excepting notes) will be double spaced, and all will be Times New Roman 12 pt. font, one inch margins, and STAPLED.

Note on sources for written work: Online encyclopedias and dictionaries are helpful for retrieving facts (statistics, institutions, leaders), but are not legitimate sources for research projects. You typically do not need to cite these sources for facts that are generally known (the president of a country, for example); only cite them for more obscure information (the percentage of citizens of foreign birth, for example). Legitimate research sources are academic books and articles, editorials and opinion articles, and political speeches or proclamations, expressing an argument or perspective. Ask a librarian about online searches through JSTOR and other databases.

Introduction

1T: Course Outline

1Th: Fukuyama, “The Neo Conservative Moment” 13 pgs
Krauthammer, “In Defense of Democratic Realism” 12 pgs

Democracy and Development: The Problem and the Challenge

2T: Karl and Schmitter, “What Democracy Is and Is Not” 16 pgs
Chatterjee, “Democracy and the Violence of the State” 15 pgs

2Th: Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Chapter 1 “Political Order and Political Decay” (from P. 1 – P. 59)

3T: Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens, *Capitalist Development & Democracy*, Chapter 2, “The Controversy” (P. 12 – P. 39)

3Th: Tilly, “Processes and Mechanisms of Democratization” 16 pgs

4T: Sen, *Development as Freedom*
Introduction, Chapters 1-2 (P. 3 – P. 54)

4Th: Chapters 4-5 (P. 87-145)

5T: Chapters 6, 10 (P. 146 – P. 159, P. 227 – 248)

5Th: Chapters 11-12 (P. 227 – P. 281)

Midterm

6T: No Class

6Th: Midterm

Compare and Contrast the theories we have covered in terms of the relationship of Economic and Social Structures to Freedom and Democracy. Define what is meant by Development, Society, Freedom, and Democracy.

NO NOTES

Complicating Democratization

7T-Th: Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transitions and Consolidations*
Part I, Theoretical Overview, Chapters 1 – 5
(P. 3 – P. 87)

8T-Th: Part II - III, 6. Spain, 12. Argentina, 13. Chile
(P. 87 – P. 116, P. 190 – P. 219)

9T-Th: Part IV, 15. Pre-Histories, 17. Hungary/Czechoslovakia/Bulgaria, 18. Romania
(P. 235 – P. 254, 293-344, P. 344 – P. 366)

BREAK

Violence or Consolidation

10T-Th: Snyder, *From Voting to Violence*
Chapters 1-2 (P. 15-92)

11T: Chapter 3 How Democratization Sparked Counterrevolutionary German
Nationalism (P. 93 – P. 127)

11Th: Chapter 4 Varieties of Nationalism: Civic Britain, Revolutionary France, and
Ethnic Serbia (P. 129 – P. 188)

12T: Chapter 5 Nationalism and the Ruins of Communism
(P. 189 – 204, P. 204 – P. 220, P. 235-250)

12Th: Chapter 6 Nationalism and Democracy in the Developing World
(P. 265 – P. 272, P. 273 – P. 287, P. 287-296, P. 306 – P. 312)

Democracy on the Horizon

13T-Th: Gilley, *China's Democratic Future*

Part 1 (P. 3 – P. 60)

14Tu: Part 1 (P. 60 – P. 97)

14Th: Part 2 (P. 97 – P. 150)

15T: Part 3, Chapter 8 (P. 151 – P. 200)

15Th: Part 3, Chapter 9 (P. 201 – P. 227)

Final: Is Iraq Democratic?

Final Paper: Can the US encourage and foster democratization and emerging democracies? Make your recommendations by looking specifically to the theories and case studies we have explored. If yes, How? If no, why not? BE SPECIFIC. Use Iraq and coverage of efforts to build democracy there as one example. Consider what the US policy should be toward China.