Introduction

Why do some authoritarian regimes collapse or initiate transitions to democracy but others do not? Why do some of these transitions succeed, while others fail or only lead to temporary periods of democracy? Why do democratizations happen more in some regions of the world and less in others? These are the kinds of questions at the core of this course, where we will talk about different explanations of transitions to democracy and consolidation (or lack thereof) of these new democracies.

To answer these questions, we will look at the roles of elites and masses in authoritarian regimes, at that of international actors and organizations, at the relation to economic development and ethnic diversity and to (civil) war and state failure. The course will not have a regional focus and concentrate on the various theories on democratic transitions, but developments in particular countries will be discussed as examples.

Except for the occasional lecture, most classes will take the form of discussion seminars and small group exercises. The first two weeks will contain a general introduction with an overview of the many processes of democratization in world history and a discussion of the classification of political regimes and the measurement of democracy. After that, the first block will discuss the various factors that play a role in explaining why some countries make a transition to democracy while others do not and the second part will discuss a number of complications that new democracies often experience, such as civil war, ethnic conflict, corruption, and lack of state legitimacy.
Grading

The grade will consist of the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaction papers (5)</td>
<td>10% each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper proposal</td>
<td>22/3 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>26/4 5pm</td>
<td>50%</td>
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Assignments

Reaction papers: Every other week you will be asked to write a short, one page “reaction paper” to the readings of that week. The class will be split in two groups, so you will either write a reaction paper in weeks 2, 4, 6, 9, and 11 or in weeks 3, 5, 7, 10, and 12. Because the reaction paper might be used in the discussion in class, you will have to submit an electronic copy by email at least 24 hours before class and you will have to bring a printed copy to class for your own use. The reaction paper should make a short argument - with some introduction, arguments, and conclusion - about anything that strikes you as interesting or strange or contradictory in the readings. The essay should make an argument, rather than summarize the literature. Generally the readings will contain both short articles on a specific case and more theoretical research papers - the reaction papers should be based on the latter, but can be related to the specific example country. Using literature that was not on the syllabus is of course always welcome, but not a requirement. Approximately 500 words. Due: 24 hours before class. To be submitted by email, in PDF format.

Research paper: This has to be an original research paper. The paper should contain a comparison of at least two cases - (failed) transitions to or collapses of democracy - focusing on the application of any theories and concepts from the course. A case study is possible if a good argument can be made why this would be theoretically interesting. Halfway the course, 22/3 5pm, a brief paper proposal should be submitted. The final paper should be approximately 4000, maximum 5000 words. Due: 26/4 5pm. To be submitted by email, in PDF format.

Plagiarism

Although this should be obvious, plagiarism - copying someone else’s text without acknowledgement or beyond “fair use” quantities - is not allowed. UCD policies concerning plagiarism can be found online.¹ A more extensive description of what is plagiarism and what is not can be found at the UCD Library website.²

¹http://www.ucd.ie/regist/documents/plagiarism_policy_and_procedures.pdf
²http://www.ucd.ie/library/students/information_skills/plagiari.html
Contact

If you need to contact me outside class hours, you can find me in room F304 in the Newman Building. I do not have fixed office hours, so if you want to make sure I am present, you can make an appointment by email (jos.elkink@ucd.ie).

Schedule overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18/1</td>
<td>Introduction and waves of democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25/1</td>
<td>Conceptualisation and measurement</td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>Masses: social mobilization and revolution</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8/2</td>
<td>Masses: civil society</td>
<td>Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15/2</td>
<td>Masses: socio-economic prerequisites</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>22/2</td>
<td>Elites: political economy</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>Elites: international factors</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>22/3</td>
<td>research proposals</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>29/3</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>5/4</td>
<td>Presidentialism and parliamentarism</td>
<td>Russia</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Postcommunism and dual transitions</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>19/4</td>
<td>Hybrid regimes</td>
<td>Belarus</td>
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Readings

Week 1: Introduction and waves of democracy

Introduction to the course schedule and approach. What are the waves of democratization? Overview of the history of democratizations. Setting the context for the course.

Introduction of some recurring questions throughout the course:

- Is democratization an elite or a mass affair?
- What role does public opinion play in democratization?
- What role can international actors play in democratization?
Are democratization dynamics different for different dimensions of democracy?

Required reading: none.

More on waves: Huntington (1991); Markoff (1996); Kurzman (1998); Doorenspleet (2000); Rose and Shin (2001); Elkins and Simmons (2005).

Week 2: Conceptualisation and measurement

What is democracy? What is democratization? What are the dimensions of democracy and democratization? How is democracy measured?

Example: Venezuela (contemporary)


Note that these readings are ordered from easier to harder, so it is advisable to read them in this order.

More on conceptualization: Schumpeter (1976); Dahl (1971); Linz (1975); Collier and Levitsky (1997); Collier (1999); Rudebeck (2002); Rose (2009).


http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm
http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Governance/Vanhanens-index-of-democracy/
http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=263&year=2010
http://www.unified-democracy-scores.org/

Week 3: Social mobilization and revolution

How do social revolutions come about? What explains the visibility or invisibility of public attitudes?

Example: Ukraine (“Orange Revolution”)


More on revolution: Skocpol (1979); Bermeo (1997); Goldstone (2001); de Mesquita (2010).

Week 4: Civil society

*What role does civil society play? Does the concept of social capital matter? What role does public opinion play? How is this affected by the social structure?*

Example: Yemen (contemporary)


More on civil society: Almond and Verba (1963); Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti (1993); Nagle and Mahr (1999: ch 4); Diamond (1994); Diamond (1999: ch 5-6); Doorenspleet (2001: ch 9); Gibson (2001); Paxton (2002); Mercer (2002); Bernhard and Karakoç (2007); Letki (2009); Roßteutscher (2010); Cavatorta and Durac (2011).

Week 5: Socio-economic prerequisites

*Discussion of the modernization thesis. What is the role of economic development prior to democratization? What role does the social class structure play?*

Example: The Netherlands (19th century)

Required reading: Lipset (1959); Przeworski and Limongi (1997).

More on modernization: Lipset (1960); Cutright (1963); Bollen (1983); Przeworski et al. (2000); Doorenspleet (2004); Inglehart and Welzel (2005); Robinson (2006); Inglehart and Welzel (2010). More on the Netherlands: Gosses and Japikse (1947); Lijphart (1968); Ertman (2000).

Week 6: Political economy

*How does the economy relate to democratization? How do economic policies matter? What effect does the economic structure and size of economic groups have?*

Example: Argentina

Required reading: Acemoglu and Robinson (2001); Boix and Stokes (2003).

More on redistribution: Acemoglu and Robinson (2000, 2006); Acemoglu et al. (2008); Ansell
Week 7: International factors

What international factors play a role (at elite level)? What is the role of democracy promotion? Of aid conditionality? Of membership conditionality? Can democracy be imposed?

Example: Kyrgyzstan (2005)


More on diffusion: Most and Starr (1990); Starr (1991); Starr and Lindborg (2003); Whitehead (1996); Ward et al. (1996); O’Loughlin et al. (1998); Gleditsch (2002); Gleditsch and Ward (2000, 2006); Elkins and Simmons (2005); Wejnert (2005); Brinks and Coppedge (2006); McFaul (2007); Elkink (2009, 2011).

More on aid conditionality: Robinson (1993); Limpach and Michaelowa (2010).


Week 8: Paper proposals

Very brief introduction to research design concepts useful for course paper. Short presentations by all students in which you present your research proposal, with a brief class discussion on each.

Week 9: Diversity

How does ethnic diversity impact on institutional building and survival? How do electoral systems and institutional designs matter? What is the debate on presidentialism vs parliamentaryism? How do party systems develop in new systems?


Required reading: Beissinger (2008); Croissant and Schächter (2010); Akdede (2010).

Further reading: Kopstein and Wittenberg (2010).
**Week 10: Presidentialism and parliamentarism**

Required reading: Linz (1990); Lijphart (2004); Cheibub and Limongi (2002).

Further reading: Kuenzi and Lambright (2005); Cusack, Iversen and Soskice (2010).

**Week 11: Postcommunism and dual transitions**

*In many post-communist countries, a dual transition was made from non-democracy to democracy and from planned to free market economy. How do these two transitions coincide, interact, influence each other? What problems do these dual transitions experience?*

Example: Russia

Required reading: TBA.

**Week 12: Hybrid regimes**

*What are hybrid regimes? How common are they? Why do some authoritarian leaders have elections? How are those elections won or lost?*

Example: Belarus

Required reading: TBA.

More on public opinion and democratization: Diamond (1999: ch 5); Maseland and van Hoorn (2010).

**References**


http://www.joselkink.net/research


http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2010


Maseland, Robbert and André van Hoorn. 2010. “Why Muslims like democracy yet have so little of it.” *Public Choice*. Published online: 8 April 2010.


Wilson, A. 2005. Ukraine’s orange revolution. Yale Univ Pr.