

Volha Charnysh

Lesson plan for GOV 20, Week 5

Start discussion with bigger questions and prod students to use readings

* Start with Dahl's argument about the costs of tolerance & repression & think of how international context can affect these costs

* Brainstorm about the most relevant aspects of international context:

- Demonstration effects: both autocrats & publics learn [Huntington, Chinese learning from USSR collapse – Nathan; example of color revolutions in post-Soviet space]
- Briefly debate prospects in democracy in multipolar/ bipolar/unipolar world [Huntington, Levitsky & Way] **In my sections, this question really got the discussion going and people had quite different views on US role in particular.**
 - What motivates the West to call for democratization? Why did it not do so during Cold War?
 - Do authoritarian states promote their regime type, too?
- Globalization: capital mobility & interdependence
- What is the role of international forces and context in democratization? Based on discussion, are domestic and international determinants of regime change to be seen as competing hypotheses, scope conditions, mechanisms?
- Are procedural definitions of democracy sufficient to understand regimes? (Levitsky & Way)
- Does democratization depend on prerequisites for democracy or on the weakness of authoritarianism (Bellin, Huntington, Levitsky & Way)? Bring in differences between installation and consolidation of democracy.

Group activity:

Divide class into two groups (Syria & China) & ask each to come up with predictions for whether they will democratize based on readings. **In both of my sections, students were absolutely pessimistic about democracy... maybe these cases were somehow one-sided?**

Some notes on Syria that students received:

- Bordering Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Israel.
- Diverse ethnic and religious groups
- Established after WWI as a French mandate after Ottoman empire collapsed.
- gained independence in April 1946 and suffered military coups and numerous impositions of emergency laws.
- Assad is president since 2000, succeeding father Hafez el-Assad (in office from 1970 to 2000).
- lower middle income country, dependent on oil (40% of export earnings) & agriculture exports (20% of GDP) as well as on credit from Iran, Russia and China
- International pressure – US vs Russia (check news)

Questions from the readings to consider when debating Syria case:

1. Are Middle Eastern states exceptional? (Bellin vs Ross) Which arguments about authoritarianism in the Middle East resonate with theories from other regions and which do not?
2. So does Oil Hinder Democracy? What are the mechanisms through which this occurs? (Ross)

Volha Charnysh

Lesson plan for GOV 20, Week 5

3. What are the implications? [e.g., vulnerability to exogenous shocks]
4. Should we generalize by geographic region, by regime type [revolutionary autocracies, republics vs. monarchies], or maybe wave of democracy?

Some notes on China that students received:

- established following a civil war between the Kuomintang and the Communists in 1949
- Major economic reforms, Cultural revolution
- closed-door policies until the mid-1970s, followed by some liberalization
- territorial disputes (Taiwan, India, Japan)
- nuclear weapons, UN SC seat
- world's fastest growing economy: export-led development
- middle-class population reached more than 100 million by 2011; urbanization rate increased from 17.4% to 46.6% between 1978 and 2009
- 56 distinct ethnic groups (Han Chinese ~91%)

Questions from the readings to consider china case:

- Why do revolutionary regimes rarely democratize? (Levitsky & Way's explanation vs Pei's & Nathan's)?
- Can we transition to developed economy without a transition to democracy?
- How do regime's beginnings explain its end? [e.g. conditions at the establishment of a revolutionary regime or of establishing a monarchy in Middle east [see above]]