Structural Approach

Actor Centric Approach (McFaul)

Institutional/Structural Approach (Game Theory, Cooperative Bargaining)

Transition Approach (Dahl)

Moore – Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy
3 Pathways:
        Turn to commercial farming (England)
            This leads to democracy
        Shy away from commercial farming
            Leads to large peasant populations, if revolt, communism
        Subdue the labor force, extract commerce
            Leads to fascism

FIVE CONDITIONS:
1) Commercial/Industrial advance (meeting market requirements)
2) Independence from monarchy (relationship of landed to royalty)
3) Solve peasant problem
4) Prevent landed elite from allying with bourgeoisie (relationship of landed with townies)
5) Reduce power of landed elite/Violent break from history
        At the end of the day, the landed upper-class had to help the revolution or be destroyed by it

Dahl – Polyarchy
Axioms:
1) Gov will tolerate opposition if the costs are low (aren't threatened by them)
2) Gov will tolerate opposition if suppression costs are high
3) The more costs of suppression exceed the costs of toleration, the higher chance of competition
4) Gov will tolerate opposition increases as resources to oppress decline relative to resources of opp.
5) Gov will tolerate opposition when ability to use violence or inducement/sanctions decreases
        They can lose the ability to coerce: weak/non-monopolized/wrong type of military

Gradual Liberalization is most stable for democracy
Revolution/Conquering: Polyarchy

Levitsky and Way – The Durability of Revolutionary Regimes
Revolutionary regimes are stable because:
        Armed Liberation Struggle
        Post-Revolutionary State-Building
        Violent conflicts to carry out social change
Lead to 4 legacies:
        1) Destruction of Independent Power Centers
        2) Cohesive Ruling Parties
        3) Tight partisan control over security forces
        4) Powerful coercive apparatuses
Protect against the three major sources of authoritarian breakdown:

Elite defection
Military Coups
Mass Protests

1) Conflicts destroy opposition
2) Cohesive parties from military discipline and heroes
3) Tight control over security makes you invulnerable to coups (these were the revolutionaries)
4) Lots of experience with risky violence; garrison states.

McFaul – The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship
Post-communist regimes operated differently
      Change was rapid (economic change *helped* democracy)
      Resources not divisible (one group won in the end, *necessary* for theory)
      Masses were not problematic (Masses *want* democracy)
One-sided outcomes: when democrats win, they enact democracy
      Person-centered theory

	Dictatorships	Partial Democracies[a]	Democracies
Balance of Power for Challengers		Armenia Bosnia- Herzegovina Georgia	Croatia Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia
Balance of Power Even or Uncertain	Tajikistan	Moldova Russia Ukraine Albania Azerbaijan Macedonia	Bulgaria Mongolia
Balance of Power for Ancien Régime	Belarus Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	Yugoslavia/Serbia	Romania

Aberrant cases:
      Border disputes (Armenia)
      Close to the "west" (Romania)

Rustow – Transitions to Democracy
Turkey and Sweden…two cases…
Precondition
One precondition: Sense of national unity (everyone recognizes the polity)
Preparatory Phase
Prolonged political struggle

Decision Phase
Accepting plurality and making laws to address this
      1) Democracy may be incidental to actual desires
      2) Compromise means outcomes will be second-best, at best
      3) Even procedures will incur different preferences
      4) What leaders compromise to must still gain support from politicians/citizenry
Habituation Phase
Democracy normalizes…

Wood – An Insurgent Path to Democracy
Poor people, when brutalized *too much* will resist, harm the market, and create incentives to cooperate
Democracy "from below"
      1) Repression was *too* extreme, created strong opposition
      2) This highly mobilized opposition led to high costs to quell the insurgency
            Elites didn't want to pay the cost
      3) The poor and weak were allowed political power so long as they accepted liberal economy
            Maintenance of the wealth disparity
El Salvador and South Africa
Elites incentivized to compromise

Brownlee – Why The Modest Harvest
Democracy won't happen when you have heredity or oil

EXPERIMENT

Scientific inquiry is all about asking what would happen when a unit (like a person) is exposed to a treatment (like a drug). Ideally, you want two units that are exactly the same, one of which you give the treatment to, and one of which you give nothing to, and then you measure the difference. That difference can be said to be _caused_ by the treatment.

Unfortunately, nothing in the social world has an exact copy; no two humans are the same, no two political systems are the same, and certainly no two countries are the same. One way around this problem is to look at a large number of cases and to _randomly assign_ cases two either a treatment group or a control group. If we properly randomize these groups, we shouldn't expect there to be any systematic differences between them _on average_. Thus, when you treat one group and leave the other as a control group, the differences you measure, on average, can be said to be caused by your treatment. Again, this is because the two groups are the same _in expectation_. Of course we know that the two groups won't be exactly equal, but the larger the groups you have, the more likely the differences will average out.

Because countries are so unique, and because there are so few of them (relative to other social units, like people), it becomes more difficult to apply the above scientific method. In the real world you can never know the _counterfactual_ (i.e. what would have happened if Egypt was a major oil exporter?), and when your sample is small and your units are extremely _heterogeneous_, it's even harder to know. Still, in all scientific endeavors, in order to try to gain knowledge, some manifestation of the above method should be applied. This is what led Rustow to claim, "Any country study nevertheless sacrifices the advantages of comparison, the social scientist's nearest substitute for a laboratory." Rustow wants to

avoid the pitfalls of only studying one case, because the counterfactual essentially becomes impossible to know.

When you write your paper, you should try to think in these terms when analyzing any causal claims that Brownlee et al makes. But the degree to which a research project mimics a laboratory experiment is not the only concern one should have when analyzing a causal claim (though it is extremely important). The following concepts can and should also guide you when making your judgments.

Necessity and Sufficiency: A necessary condition is one which is required for a claim to be realized. For example, Rustow claims that the only necessary condition for a transition to democracy is that the people in a polity have a sense of national unity. A sufficient condition, on the other hand, is one which mandates an outcome. Sufficient claims are more difficult to make because they *always* claim that an outcome will happen. An example would be something like McFaul's claims about elite preferences for democratic change. For McFaul, having a power *imbalance* is a necessary condition for democratic regime change, and having the winners of that imbalance embrace democratic principles is a sufficient condition (all other things being equal). When you are assessing Brownlee et al, determine whether the arguments are necessary, sufficient, both, or neither for regime stability.

Reverse Causation: Reverse causation means that a stated causal relationship actually goes in the wrong direction. An example may be something like gun laws and illegal firearms use. One might think that as illegal firearms use increases, you will see an increase in gun laws. At the same time, however, it's easy to recognize that as more activities become illegal, more behaviors are defined as crimes, whether or not the behavior changes at all. In other words, making more things illegal *causes* them to become crimes.

Omitted/Confounding Variable (Bias): Social scientists like to use terms like Independent Variable and Dependent Variable. You can just consider the definitions of the words Independent and Dependent to figure out what these mean. The Independent Variable (IV) is the one that doesn't (or shouldn't) change. In experimental terminology, this is simply the treatment. If you are running a drug trial, it makes sense to give everyone the same drug if you want to test that drug against a control group. The drug is Independent because it is (or should be) unaffected by anything else. In other words, it is administered equally and in an unbiased way. The Dependent Variable (DV), on the other hand, does change. This is exactly the change you want to measure. In experimental terminology, this would just be the difference in the effect between the experimental and the control group. This outcome *depends* on whether or not someone received the treatment. Additionally, if you didn't get variance in this outcome, you would have measured nothing.

So in an experimental study, you would have a model that looks something like this:

IV → DV

This is simple and straightforward. Receiving your treatment causes a change in your measurement of interest. Another way to think of this is the following:

Headache Medicine → Reduced pain

Simple, elegant, publishable, great work! This is easy to claim in a randomized control experiment in a lab. This is much less easy to claim in the social world. Let's try to take a real world example. There is a

strong correlation between ice cream sales and incidence of crime. You might think there's a relationship here. Maybe eating too much ice cream makes people crazy:

Ice cream → Crime

Or maybe once people are criminalized they seek solace in a nice bowl of ice cream:

Crime → Ice Cream

While there may be some truth to these claims (probably not), there's a much more likely explanation for this apparent relationship; some other unmeasured variable is causing both crime rates and ice cream sales. It just so happens that more crime happens in the summer and more ice cream is purchased in the summer. Instead of there being a relationship between ice cream and crime, each of those things is actually related to summer, and not directly to each other:

                    Summer

                 /   \

         Ice Cream   Crime
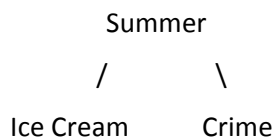
This is the omitted or _confounding_ variable bias. This happens when you *think* you see a relationship but it doesn't exist in reality. The relationship is *spurious*. This is exactly why the phrase "_correlation is not causation_" exists. When you analyze Brownlee et al, you definitely want to determine whether what they show is a correlational or a causal relationship.

To illustrate this point even further, consider this obviously ridiculous example:

When reading Wood, I noticed a relationship between the two countries she studied; both El Salvador and South Africa have two words in their names. Based on this similarity, I claim that all countries with two words in their names will lead to democracy. When I look at the real world, I also notice that The United States of America has *all kinds* of words in it, so I further conclude that more words leads to more democracy. Here we clearly see that the relationship we observe is completely spurious, and is likely an issue that would wash away (average out) in a much larger sample size.

Tautology: Another potential problem with a causal argument is that it might be _tautological_, or in other words, the IV is the same thing as the DV. For example, if one of the authors is suggesting that having a strong regime leads to stability, is that really a relationship, or is that just a definition? Tautological arguments do not demonstrate a relationship because, as stated, the DV is the same as the IV. This doesn't mean the authors are incorrect; in point of fact all tautologies are axiomatically correct. It just means that they haven't said anything new.

Statistical Significance: Statistical significance is a somewhat amorphous term given that there are various levels of significance, and all of them are arbitrarily chosen. Social science likes to use the probability .05 level of significance as the minimum acceptable, but this is not a hard and fast rule. What this means is that social scientists tend to believe results if they are only likely to happen by chance 1 out of 20 times. This is a somewhat more complicated argument to make since it involves an understanding of statistics that you might not yet have acquired, but if this is a skill set you have you can bring it to bear. Relating back to the experimental language, the more units (i.e. cases) you have to measure, the more likely the differences between those cases average out. Without this kind of confidence, researchers must do a much more in depth level of _qualitative_ analysis to make their point. Because country studies are quite often limited to very few cases, even when they do obtain statistical

significance it's often hard to believe, and we demand a much more rigorous study of the processes, systems, institutions, actors etc. before we accept the results. If a study is missing both numbers and an in depth analysis, you should worry about their findings.

Internal Validity: Internal validity asks the question of whether or not a research model is actually measuring what it intends to measure. I could claim that I am going to study the effects of high partisanship on regime stability, but if my measure of partisanship is how strongly people prefer chocolate ice cream over vanilla (i.e. ice cream partisans), my study would lack internal validity. When analyzing Brownlee et al, you certainly want to make sure that they are measuring what they claim to measure.

External Validity: On the other hand, you also want to get a sense of the external validity of a research project. External validity concerns the question of whether and how well a project's findings generalize. Some studies don't claim that their findings generalize at all. Several of the authors this week suggest that their finding might only apply to a particular set of institutions that exist in a particular time in history and that we would be unlikely to find again. You might think of McFaul in this way. McFaul is studying a specific group of once-communist countries that slowly collapsed as their primary benefactor/coercive hegemon also collapsed (Russia). Do we expect to see what McFaul has shown at any point in the future? Probably not. When reading Brownlee et al, you will want to consider whether the claims they are making are generalizable to other countries, and if so, are these claims believable.

Face Validity: Finally, there's the more informal idea of face validity. Face validity simply asks the question "Does this argument make any sense just looking at the face of it?" The ice cream/crime relationship severely lacked face validity.

Discussion Questions:

1) If you were a revolutionary leader who wanted to establish a democracy, how would you go about it? What institutions would you target first, that you see as key to be conquered in order to successfully topple the existing regime? Would you try to make a pact with the opposition, or would you plan to fight instead?

2) Is it simply better for a revolutionary government in a country with a weak state to be authoritarian in order to rebuild the state before trying to become democratic?

3) This week we've seen many authors make many different claims about regime formation and regime stability. Which account of regime stability do you find most convincing? Which account of regime formation do you find most convincing? Why? Are you more convinced by the structural explanations, the transitional approach, or the actor-centric approach?

4) Should disparate phenomena like the Arab Spring and the Collapse of Communism even be considered as the same thing? How generalizable are any of these theories?

5) McFaul proposes that in post-communist countries an imbalance of power leads to democracy, so long as democrats benefit from this imbalance. If this is true, why shouldn't it work for non-post-communist revolutions? Is there anything in McFaul's theory to suggest an answer?

Exercise:

Your group is a consulting team hired by the U.S. State Department to analyze the probability of and potential for democratic consolidation in Nigeria, and to suggest possible policy interventions. Nigeria is an oil-rich weakly- institutionalized democratic country where the corruption, modernization, repression, and rentier mechanisms all hold, which is to say they are all, at the moment, preventing democratic consolidation.

Pick two of the following interventions that you would undertake to promote democratic transition and consolidation. Be sure to consider whether timing matters and how you would defend your choices against opponents to your plan:

1. Military interventions

2. Military supplies to opposition movements

3. Financial aid to opposition movements

4. Programs to strengthen civic education, literacy, advanced schooling

5. Economic investments in large industries

6. Funding local political/anti-regime NGOs

7. Direct cash transfers to citizens

8. Promotion of trade agreements with neighboring countries

9. Promotion of trade agreements with the US

10. Technical assistance to the government for economic reforms

11. Diplomatic program to mediate the relationship between the regime and opposition groups

12. Promoting land reforms and land redistribution

13. Economic sanctions

14. Other (specify)

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