

PSCI 116

Political Change in the Third World

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September 25, 2019



Illiberal Democracy - Zakaria

Argument

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- Illiberal democracy = elections free and fair, but democratic norms subverted. Examples?
- Liberal democracy = free and fair elections, but also rule of law, separation of powers, protection of freedoms
- Democracy is flourishing, liberalism is not

Illiberal Democracy - Zakaria

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- ① Tendency of a govt. to believe that it has absolute sovereignty (power) leading centralization of authority, both horizontal + vertical usurpation of power
- ② Introduction of govt. in deeply divided societies w/o systems in place to ensure liberalism does not further deepen the divisions; “bound together by force”

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“If a govt. with limited democracy expands personal freedoms, it should not be branded a dictatorship”. Agree?

Democracy in divided societies - Horowitz

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- Major reason for failure of democracy = ethnic conflict
- Preexisting conflict easily provides lines on the basis of which to include and exclude (eg becomes necessary to secure votes)
- Two types of exclusion: status-based (from power), material-based
- “Opposition to govt. is always portrayed as resisting popular will”, hence easy to get branded as anti-national
- Ethnic conflict is conducive to authoritarianism

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- Even if met, questions of “who belongs” can prevent democracy from consolidating

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- Three such questions: Who is a citizen? Who has privileges? Whose norms and practices aligned with those of the state?
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- State practices in response determine inclusion or exclusion
- Examples: admission to citizenship (or expulsion and repression), language laws, ultimately statutes and regulations to reduce representation (eg arbitrary arrest)
- Polarization increases this process (perhaps why we are seeing backsliding today)

Simultaneous transitions - Armijo et al

- Democracy and economic reform cannot be carried out simultaneously
- Problem of transitional incompatibility: democracy's potential to undermine economic reform, or cost of economic reform can turn social actors against democracy
- Democratic govts. under pressure to provide for citizens; adopt economically populist policies (politically motivated but expand govt. expense). These cost money
- Problem = new democracies experience capital flight, economic restructuring reduces available income
- Economic reform can undermine democracy too via political opposition from lower and middle class: 1) protest can become violent, 2) landed elites can repress lower classes, 3) failed reforms can undermine credibility of democracy

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- ① Avoid simultaneous reforms: consolidate democracy before initiating econ. restructuring (drawback: if crisis is economic in nature, reform cannot be delayed)
- ② Shock treatment: sneak attack where reforms occur without democratic vote, pain over before opposition has the ability to coalesce. (drawback: if econ. reform not stable everything can collapse)
- ③ Awaiting an economic trough: costs of not reforming become so large that they exceed costs of reform, so public is forced to accept new policies
- ④ Technical fixes: fine tuning design of reforms, building state capacity, perfecting political institutions

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- Remember to answer every part of the question + circle back to the main argument