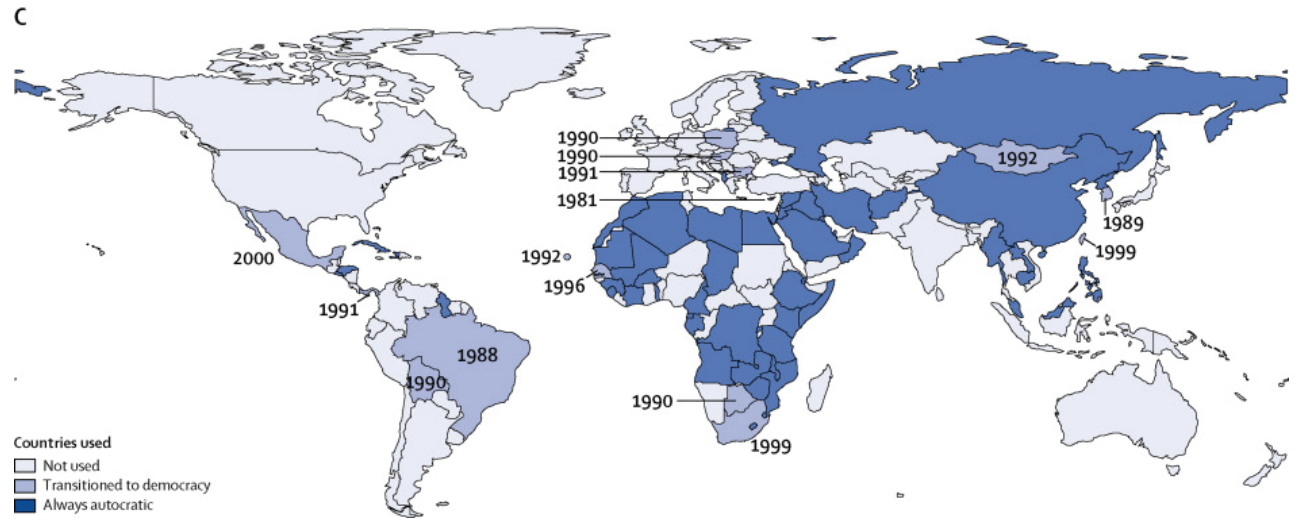
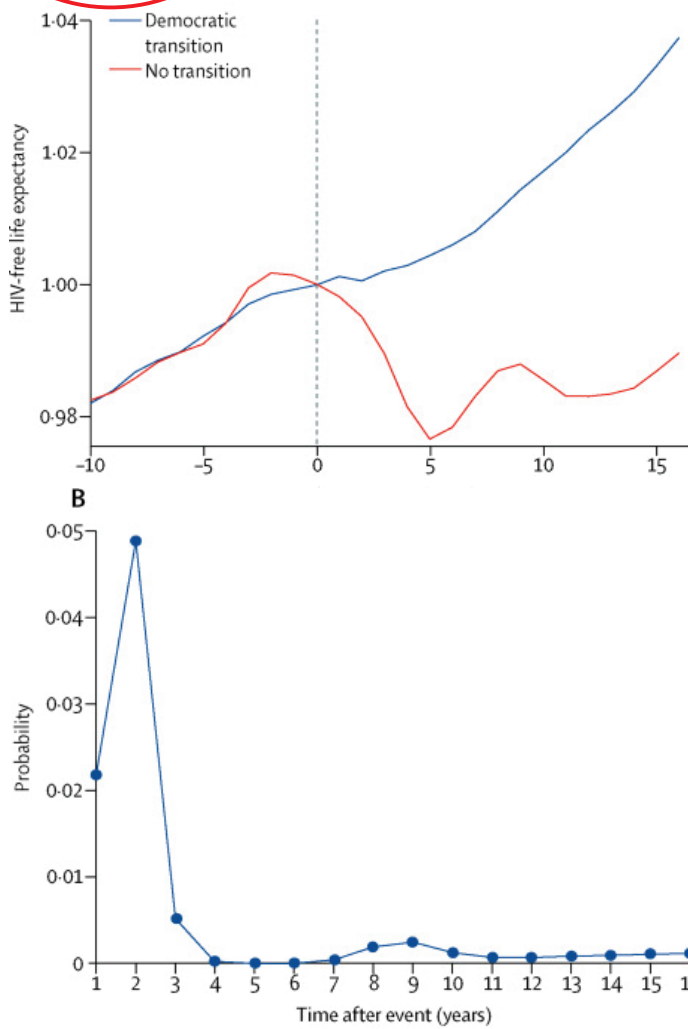




Faculty of Science Seminars



Spring 2019

Simon Wigley

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Democracy and Non-communicable Diseases

The global health community has historically prioritized communicable diseases and child mortality over non-communicable diseases and injuries. Non-communicable diseases are now the leading cause of death in the world. In addition, the disease burden is shifting rapidly from communicable to non-communicable diseases in low and middle-income countries. Global health donors and intergovernmental institutions have also tended to prioritize the intellectual and material resources needed to prevent premature death, over the incentives and capacity of local governments to effectively use those resources. Do the mechanisms through which political leaders are selected matter when it comes to population health? Previous studies on the relationship between democracy and health have focused almost exclusively on child mortality. In our Lancet study we examine the relationship between democratic institutions and cause-specific mortality. Using a variety of methods and a panel of 170 countries for more than 25 years we find that democratic experience - a measure of how democratic a country has been, and for how long - explains more of the variance in mortality due to cardiovascular diseases, transport injuries, cancers, cirrhosis, and other non-communicable diseases than GDP. Between 1995 and 2015, we estimate that increases in democratic experience averted 16 million deaths from cardiovascular diseases globally. This suggests that the institutions required to ensure accountability and responsiveness between citizens and political leaders is a key factor when it comes to the prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases.

Simon Wigley studied philosophy, politics and economics at Otago University in New Zealand. After completing his master's and doctoral studies at London School of Economics and Political Science he started working at the department of political science at Bilkent University. He is now associate professor and the chair of the Department of Philosophy at Bilkent University. His research interest are varied, ranging from theoretical work in normative political philosophy to empirical work in comparative politics. His work has been published in a number of journals.



May 7
Tuesday



SA-240



15:40

The Faculty of Science Seminars are designed to address a non-specialist, broad audience and introduce topics of contemporary research through lectures by leading experts. We warmly invite all members of the student body, including undergraduates enrolled in any programme.

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