Illiberal Democracies: Overview

• “Transitions to democracy”
• Democracy with adjectives
• Illiberal democracies in practice:
  – Russia and “stable” illiberalism
  – Kenya: Violently democratic
  – Romania: from ill to liberal

• (In)conclusions
“Transitions to democracy”

• Transitions literature comes out of a reading of democratization in L.Am., ‘70s & ‘80s.

• Mechanisms of transition (O’Donnell and Schmitter):
  – Splits appear in the authoritarian regime
  – Civil society and opposition develop
  – “Pacted” transitions
Democracy with Adjectives

• Problem: The transitions model is excessively teleological and just inaccurate

• “Illiberal” meets “democracy”
  – What is democracy (again, and in brief)?
  – Why add “liberal”?
  – What in an illiberal democracy is “ill”?
A Typology of Regimes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regime Types</th>
<th>Countries over one million population N (%)</th>
<th>Countries under one million population N (%)</th>
<th>All countries N (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democracy (FH score 1-2.0)</td>
<td>45 (30)</td>
<td>28 (66.7)</td>
<td>73 (38.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Democracy</td>
<td>29 (19.3)</td>
<td>2 (4.8)</td>
<td>31 (16.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambiguous Regimes</td>
<td>14 (9.3)</td>
<td>3 (7.1)</td>
<td>17 (8.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Authoritarian</td>
<td>19 (12.7)</td>
<td>2 (4.8)</td>
<td>21 (10.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hegemonic Electoral Authoritarian</td>
<td>22 (14.7)</td>
<td>3 (7.1)</td>
<td>25 (13.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politically Closed Authoritarian</td>
<td>21 (14)</td>
<td>4 (9.5)</td>
<td>25 (13.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150 (100)</td>
<td>42 (100)</td>
<td>192 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do “gray zone” regimes develop?

- Thomas Carothers: Absence of pre-conditions to democracy, which is tied to… (Culturalist)
- Fareed Zakaria: When baking a liberal democracy, liberalize then democratize (Institutionalist).
- Michael McFaul: Domestic balance of power at the outset matters (path dependence). Where even, illiberalism may develop (Rationalist).
Case studies: Russia

• 1991-93: An even balance of power between Yeltsin and reformers feeds into political ambiguity…and illiberalism
• After Sept 1993 - Yeltsin takes the advantage and uses it to shape Russia into a delegative democracy
• The creation of President Putin
• Putin and the “dictatorship of law”
• Reining in a “managed democracy,” and 2008?
Kenya: Violently Democratic

- External pressure on Moi/KANU forces liberalization, and opposition strength is real
- Moi warns of the ethnic violence that will “spontaneously” accompany democratization
- His prophesies proved self-fulfilling, as every set of elections has been accompanied by a period of anti-opposition violence (both pre- and post-poll)
  - Dominance of state-run media allows for depiction of violence as supposedly spontaneous/anarchic
  - Running as an opposition candidate (even as a loser) is considered illegitimate
Romania: From Ill to Liberal

• 1990: Front, under Iliescu takes role as interim government, runs as party in May elections. Easy victory…but balance of power is not clear.

• 1990: The Front “invites” miners to help crush opposition movements

• Very few real reforms…falls into illiberalism

• Proximity to West, lure of NATO and EU membership “free up” the 1996 elections. Opposition victory.

• NATO membership and the road to consolidation
(In)Conclusion

• Illiberal democracies: Stable or not?
  
  • Yes: Institutionalization shapes the individual preferences of contestants and the political culture of possible participants
  
  • No: External impetus can shift internal actions