

Soc 924/Geog 918
Agenda #3
Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the market*

I. Basic concepts & definitions

- Definition of *democracy*: How should we interpret Przeworski's claim "that compliance can be self-enforcing if the institutional framework [in a democratic society] is designed in such a way that the state is not a third party but an agent of coalitions of political forces"...and thus the distinction between rules and ruled dissolves? (Jason)
- Logic of *liberalization*: how liberalizers become reformers
- *Extrication from dictatorship*: hardliners, reformers, moderates, radicals
- *Consolidation of democracy*: why is this a problem?

II. Agenda from Interrogations

1. On the assumptions of rational choice models:
 - Can actors be expected to behave rationally under extraordinarily complex, somewhat "unreadable," and unpredictable conditions? (Joe)
 - Do these assumptions restrict or invalidate the conclusions? (Peter)
 - How is empirical evidence marshaled in this account, and to what effect? (Lena, Oriol)
 - Do actor-centered, game-theoretic approaches under-estimate or mis-specify more "structural" contexts of action, and the path-dependency of "regime change"? (Brent, Dan, Oriol)
 - How does this approach differ from macrohistorical comparative research? What is the nature of the critique of same? (Kevin)
2. How are international interests, and the relative positioning of nation states, handled within an approach that privileges rational behavior within national political systems? (Kevin, Jason, Oriol, Amy)
3. On the concept of "consolidated democracy:" is there evidence that newly-democratized economies have reached the point in which democratic institutions are self-reinforcing? (Adam)
4. How does Przeworski handle the question of state autonomy, say relative to Evans? (Jason)
5. With the benefits of hindsight ... Given the subsequent experience of Latin American and Eastern European countries, did the pace of reform (gradual vs. rapid) make a decisive difference? (Peter, Jae-Youl) How do we explain Brazil and Venezuela? (Brent) What about Russia? (Kevin)
6. Economic transition problem:
 - Can economic and political transformation be accomplished simultaneously? (Sarah)
 - Is the high cost of "transition" (the bitter, but necessary, pill) a convenient fiction, like the promise of trickle down, to render palatable otherwise unacceptable dislocations? (Sarah, Brent, Jae-Youl)
 - Under what (political and economic) conditions is redistribution most easily/sustainably achieved? (Joe)
 - Is there always a transition trough? (Sarah)
 - How important are the specific institutional designs of democracy for the economic transition? Przeworski's democracy in this discussion is pretty amorphous (Brett)
7. Socialism, nice idea, but unfortunately not really practical! Really? (Lena, Richard)
8. Are the (structural) contradictions of state-market relations under-estimated? (Adam) Are power relations and asymmetries under-estimated? (Richard, Dan)
9. Ideology, normative commitments: can we really have a satisfactory theory of democracy that largely ignores these? (Amy)