

## Week1

### Variation:

- **Dependent variable (or outcome):**  
The outcome we want to explain
- **Independent variable (or explanatory/causal variable)**  
Hypothesised cause of dependent variable
- **Comparative method:**
  - Mill's method of difference (or "most similar cases" comparison)**  
E.g. Nicaragua and Honduras
  - Mill's method of agreement (or "most different cases" comparison)**  
E.g. Nicaragua and Iran
- **Cross-national comparisons (comparing countries)**
- **Longitudinal comparisons (comparing same country in different time period)**
- **Subnational comparisons (comparing states, provinces, etc. of same country)**
- **Small-N vs. large-N analyses.**

### Classical theoretical approaches:

1. **Economic approach** (e.g. **Marxism**-class structure and economic system determine the political system. and **mordernisation theory** -from "traditional" to "modern" societies, more economically developed countries more likely to be democratic.)
2. **Cultural approach**
  - Ideas and values matter
  - People behave differently depending on their culture
  - Culture = cognitive lens that shapes how we view the world
3. **Institutionalism**
  - Institutions = rules and organisations that shape political life
  - Rules of the political game

### P.s. critique:

- cultures change slowly but politics sometimes changes quickly
- Institutions affected by culture; maybe countries end up with the institutions they deserve
- **Structuralism vs. voluntarism**
- Structuralists emphasise deeply rooted social, economic and cultural factors (ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL APPROACHES)
- Voluntarists think individual leaders and the decisions they make matter a lot  
@ Between structuralism and voluntarism: institutionalism

## Week2

- **State vs. regime vs. government:**
- **State:** Set of permanent administrative, legal and coercive systems that maintains a monopoly over the legitimate use of force in a given territory. [ Army, police, taxation office, "the bureaucracy" etc.]
- **Regime** ('the political system'): Set of rules and procedures by which political power is allocated and exercised. [e.g. democracy, military regime, etc.]
- **Government** : Group of people in power at any particular time. [e.g. Obama government, Trump government]
- **Development:** = the sustained increase in the standard of living of a country's population.
- **Middle-income countries**  
E.g. China, Brazil, Malaysia, Turkey, Russia, South Africa

1. Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism:
  - **Max Weber's The Protestant and the Spirit of Capitalism (1905):**
  - Max Weber (1864-1920), German sociologist
  - One of the founders of social science
  - Weber's dependent variables (DV): cross-regional variation, cross-national variation, subnational variation.
  - Weber's independent variable (IV): culture. Religious ideas emerging from Protestant, reformation help unleash "spirit of capitalism".
  - "spirit of capitalism" = acquisitiveness + austerity
  - Doctrine of predestination leads to psychological torment and desire to prove that one is 'saved'.
  - Acquisitiveness + austerity leads to accumulation of investment capital
  - Help to lay foundation for industrial revolution
  - Where Calvinism most influential : England, Scotland, Netherlands, New England.
  
2. **Modernisation theory**
  - **Decolonisation**
  - Modernisation theory
  - **Traditional vs. modern societies:**  
Are universal categories, not specific to any particular culture, but also thought that "modernisation" and "Westernisation" were essentially synonyms
  - Rostow's 5 stages of economic growth:
    1. Traditional society
    2. Preconditions for take-off
    3. Take-off
    4. Drive to maturity
    5. Age of mass consumption
  - **Historical timing and international context:**
  - Historical timing: when you try to develop. Sequence, i.e. coming after countries that have already developed
  - International context: division of labour between comparative politics and IR. But not airtight. International context affects domestic politics, and vice versa.
  
3. Alexander Gerschenkron and late industrialisation
  - **Alexander Gerschenkron:**
  - author of "economic backwardness in historical perspective"
  - Compares industrialisation in England, Germany, and Russia
  - Differences: speed, leadership, ideology, regime
  - Advantage of disadvantage of :**Relative backwardness** and **Late industrialisation:**  
Adv. : can copy early industrialisers and borrow technology  
Disadv.: competition from more industrialised, militarily stronger countries. Worker's right.
  - E.g. England :early: begins in late 1700s. Germany : late: begins in mid-1800s. Russia : later: begins in late 1800s/early 1900s
  - Sum: England : market-led. Germany: bank-led. Russia: state-led.
  
4. **Dependency theory**
  - Optimism about "new nations" in the 1950s and 1960s gives way to pessimism in the 1970s following disappointing results.
  - Two kinds of countries: **Core** (Western Europe +US). **Periphery** (Latin America, Africa, Asia, Middle East). The core is not a model for the periphery; it is the cause of the periphery's underdevelopment.

