

# Modernism and Post- Modernism

Course on Values

# Traditional Modernization Theory

- Industrialization = modernization = democracy
- A larger middle-class emerges, which demands democratic rights
- Problem: some relatively modern countries became dictatorships, such as Germany and later Czechoslovakia
- Many wealthy capitalist countries in the 1970s were still dictatorships, such as Taiwan

# Post-Modernism

- Daniel Bell: post-industrial society, based on services and knowledge, not industry
- Knowledge-based society

# Post-Modernism and new social movements

- “old social movements” were class-based
- “new social movements” based on post-modern values
- Examples: anti-Vietnam, civil rights, environmental, women’s movement, gay rights
- Emphasis on creating new identities, changing preferences

# Post-Modernism as a Scientific School

- Belief that there is no objective reality
- Some think there is, but we cannot know it
- If they believe there is an objective reality, but we cannot know it, then already rather close to Popper, but more pessimistic: we cannot falsify theories and are not necessarily coming closer to understanding the objective world
- But we can tell good stories
- We can give marginalized groups a voice
- In this direction come close to anthropology
- Or they analyze debates and “deconstruct” terms, which means they still have a method
- But often their method is to confuse people!

# Inglehart

- Agrees that industrialization changes our values
- We become more materialist, achievement oriented
- This does not necessarily make us democratic
- Dictatorships can bring economic growth

# Post-Modernism as Values

- Once we enter the post-industrial stage our values begin changing
- Maslow's hierarchy of needs
- If we have economic security (which the welfare state has given us), we are more highly educated, we work in the service or knowledge sector, then we become less concerned with material needs
- We become more interested in issues, such as the environment, individual autonomy
- Post-modern societies are more likely to demand democracy
- Authoritarian regimes can still repress the public, but the costs are higher

# The Shift toward Modernization

- Weber: the shift toward Protestantism
- Inglehart: shift from placing value on continuity, understanding one's place in society toward instrumental rationality
- Calvinism placed emphasis on achievement motivation
- Preindustrial economies are zero-sum
- Because they have no economic growth, upward social mobility can only come at somebody else's expense
- Thus traditional cultural norms encourage one to accept one's social position
- Social status is hereditary rather than achieved



# The post-modern shift

- Secularization: economic security lowers the need for the reassurance traditionally given by absolute belief systems
- Post-modernism = shift from instrumental rationality to value rationality
- PM= shift from religious and state authority toward individuation
- Today most Catholic societies in Europe also have this trend as to many Asian societies, so not statically linked to Protestantism

# Two Factors

- Secular-Rational Authority versus Traditional Authority (modernism versus traditionalism)
- Survival versus well-being (modernism vs. post-modernism)
- The Scandinavian countries plus the Netherlands score the highest

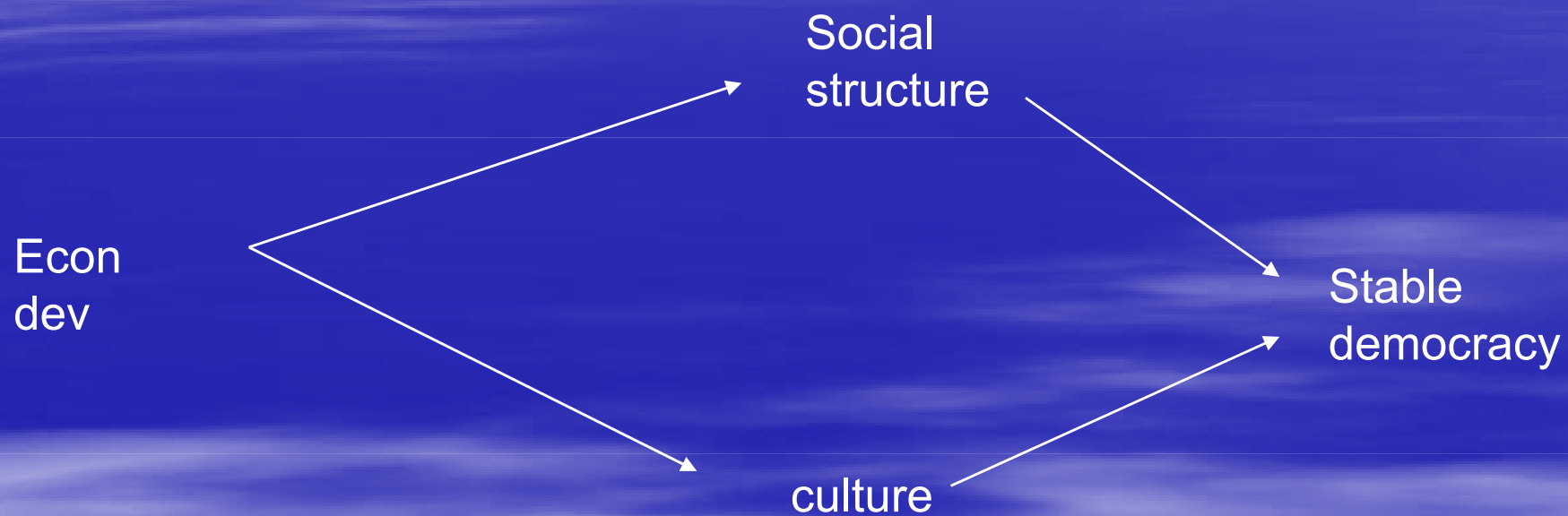
# Different than traditional Modernization theory

- Modernization theory claims that modernization brings democracy
- Inglehart argues that post-modernization is likely to bring about democracy
- Countries, where citizens have post-modern values are more likely to have stable and longer-lasting democracies
- But other factors will bring about the actual collapse of a dictatorship at a certain date
- He only can predict long-term trends

# The Difference between Democratization and Democratic Stability

- Stable democracies arise in societies with high levels of well-being
- But democratization often comes about when well-being is low, because people are dissatisfied with the undemocratic regime
- But to survive in the long-run the new democratic regime must be able to create a feeling of well-being

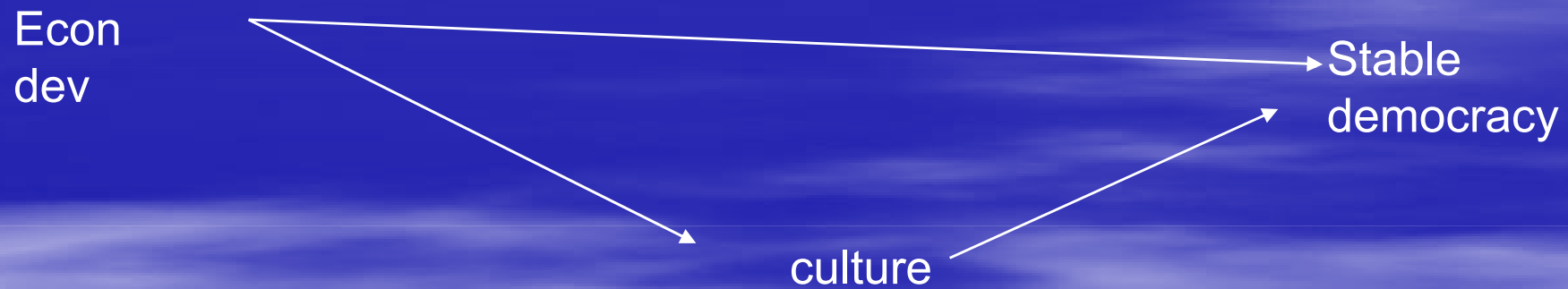
# Inglehart's Model p. 184



# Social Structure

- Defined as two variables:
- % working in the service sector
- % with higher education
- These are not statistically significant when controlling for GNP/capita
- When eliminating GNP/capita only % service sector is significant
- So not clear why he kept these variables

# Inglehart's actual statistics



# Culture in the model

- Well-being
- Trust



# The Method Side

- Explanation of rotation in factor analysis

# Inglehart's Definition of Culture p. 55

- “Culture is the subjective component of a society's equipment for coping with its environment: the values, attitudes, beliefs, skills, knowledge of its people.”
- “When dealing with human beings, there is a continual interaction between subjective and objective factors—between culture and environment.”

# Changing culture

- Cultural approaches usually emphasize why change is difficult
- For example, communism failed because the regimes could not change the national cultures and create “new socialist men.”
- Modernization theory explains cultural change

# Inglehart on culture and change

- Inglehart p. 66: “Culture is resistant to change, partly because people tend to believe whatever their society’s institutions teach them.”
- “But one’s worldview is also influenced by one’s firsthand experience—and if the two are in conflict, one’s firsthand experience may have even greater credibility than what one is told.”

# Culture and Growth

- Countries where people value achievement motivation will have higher growth
- Under post-modernism growth decreases because people value other things than growth, such as the environment, quality of life, etc.
- Inglehart forgets some simple mathematics
- If GDP/capital is 1000\$ and increases by 1000\$ = 100% increase
- If GDP/capital is 100,000\$ and increases by 10,000\$, the increase is 10 times greater (10,000\$ rather than 1,000\$), but the % increase is only 10% rather than 100%

# Inglehart and Welfare State

- The welfare state has improved our lives by giving us security
- This makes it easier to achieve well-being and stable democracies, which the free-market cannot achieve
- But in the 1980s the welfare state reached its “natural limit”: when the state starts taking more than 50% of GDP it becomes more profitable to use time figuring out how to avoid taxes rather than working
- Neither communism nor free-market capitalism work well, but there is some kind of convergence toward the welfare state

# New Left-Old Left

- The old Left was focused on nationalization and supported by the working class
- The new Left has post-modern values and supports gay rights, feminism, environmentalism, but is against state-ownership
- It is skeptical of the state and for individual autonomy
- Interestingly: his survey shows great support for joint employ-ownership or influence over decision-making
- Leftist parties have to balance the old-left (workers) with the new left (middle-class)



# Growing Apathy?

- In post-modern societies people vote less and are more dissatisfied with their governments
- Inglehart claims governments have not been performing less well, but our expectations have changed
- Yet, maybe it was easier to perform well when building up the welfare state than when administering a mature welfare state?
- Problem of the Left during a period of neo-liberal hegemony not mentioned, neither is the change toward globalization
- But he claims that we are more active in organizations and more interested in politics, although we reject hierarchal parties
- Yet studies show that although we join more organizations, we are more passive in them. We pay membership fees and let professionals lobby for us. (Topic of Putnam's book *Bowling Alone*).



# Summary

- By bringing in post-modernism, Inglehart can explain more than traditional modernization theories
- He gets around the lack of correlation between capitalism/industrialization and democracy
- He is able to explain cultural change
- I am skeptical to the idea of natural limits
- Other studies show that even if we are more likely to join organizations, we are less active in them, instead these organizations are professionalized and based on passive members