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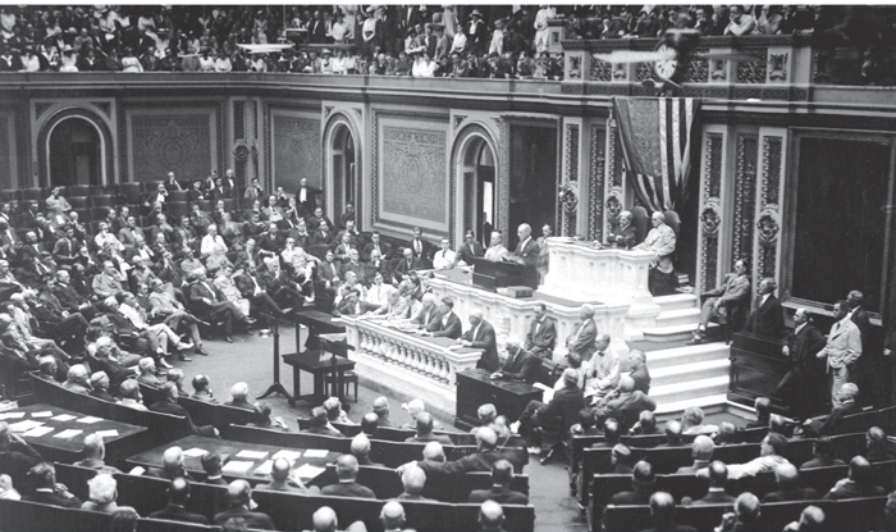


Political Science

An Introduction

FOURTEENTH EDITION

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PEARSON

Political Science

An Introduction

The above model of totalitarianism never matched reality. It was an *attempt* to impose total control, not the achievement of it. Starting in late 1989, as one country in Eastern Europe after another cast off its Communist system, we beheld how weak the system was. As to ideology, many citizens, even Party members, disdained communism. The single ruling parties collapsed and handed power over to non-Communists. Organized terror lost its punch. The official mass media, widely ignored for years, were simply discarded in favor of a free press. The controlled economies were turned, with much pain, into market economies. We now realize that these Communist regimes had never exercised total control.

Right-Wing Totalitarianism

We tend to focus on communism, but right-wing totalitarianism—Italian Fascism and German National Socialism—was somewhat different. It developed in industrialized nations plagued by economic depression, social upheaval, and political confusion and demoralization in which democracy was weak. Amid turmoil

Democracy

Why Democracies Fail

James Madison and John Stuart Mill regarded democracy as a powerful but imperfect mechanism that needed nurture and constant adjustment. One reason for the recent failures of democracy and democracy reversals is that there is too much emphasis on elections and too little focus on the essential features of democracy, like individual rights to freedom of speech and assembly. The temptation of majoritarianism, the idea that a majority can do what it pleases after winning an election, has led to the foundering of many new democracies. For example, following the collapse of Hosni Mubarak's regime in the course of the Arab Revolts of 2011, Muhammad Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood was elected president in Egypt's first democratically held elections. Hopes of any kind of democratic rule seemed distant when he packed the state with members of the Muslim Brotherhood, created an upper house with a permanent Islamic majority, and attempted to give himself almost unlimited powers. In July, 2013, democracy suffered a further defeat when the army stepped in, arresting the democratically elected President, killing pro-Morsi demonstrators and imprisoning many members of the Muslim Brotherhood.

A robust constitution is also needed for an effective democracy. New states sometimes draw up constitutions

that do not work, particularly if they are subverted by the ruling elite. Ukraine is a case in point. After the Orange Revolution of 2004 that ousted Viktor Yanukovich for alleged electoral corruption, he returned as president in 2010, because the replacement proved inefficient. He reduced the power of parliament and moved closer to Russia, leading to the 'Euromaidan' protests. This in turn made the Ukrainian Parliament use its "constitutional powers" to call new elections, which was followed by Russian intervention. One problem is that Ukraine's constitution of 1996 is weak, it was amended with little consultation in 2004. The amendments were then overturned in 2010 as it was seen as unconstitutional, but were reinstated again in 2014 without Yanukovich's consent. The president was then ousted from office.

Some features that go against democracy's survival are:

1. Long periods of one man/one party rule and aggrandizement of power by individuals/dynasties/ruling elite
2. Political corruption
3. Lack of vibrant civil society institutions
4. State indebtedness
5. Lack of a democratic culture

in 1922, Mussolini was named Italy's prime minister and soon turned himself into the first Fascist dictator. Germany after World War I suffered a punitive peace treaty (Versailles) and hyperinflation. When the Depression brought high unemployment and labor unrest, Communists and Nazis slugged it out in elections and street fighting. Hitler took over in 1933 with promises to restore order, to renounce the humiliating Versailles Treaty, and to protect private property from the Communist menace to the east. His program appealed to industrialists, militarists, and middle-class people, who typically support a fascist state.

Right-wing totalitarianism does not want revolution; rather, it aims to block leftist revolution by strengthening the existing social order and glorifying the state. It attempts to get rid of those deemed foreign or inferior, as Hitler strove to annihilate Jews and Gypsies. Citizens are also directed toward national glory and war. Private ownership is generally permitted, but obedient cartels and national trade associations carry out party directives.

Authoritarianism

5.4 Distinguish authoritarianism from totalitarianism.

Authoritarianism and *totalitarianism* are often confused but are different. **Authoritarian** regimes are governed by a small group—usually a dictator or the army—that minimizes popular input. They do not attempt to control everything. Many economic, social, religious, cultural, and familial matters are left up to individuals. Most of the six points of totalitarianism discussed earlier are diluted or absent. Authoritarian regimes, for example, rarely have a firm ideology to sell. Some called the Saddam regime in Iraq totalitarian, but it was closer to authoritarian. The main types of authoritarianism are shown in Table 5.3.

Authoritarian regimes limit individual freedoms in favor of a hierarchical organization of command, obedience, and order. Citizens obey laws and pay taxes that they have no voice in establishing. Some trappings of democracy may exist for appearance's sake. Rigged elections confirm the rule of the dominant party; opponents have no chance, and some are arrested. Legislatures rubber stamp the dictator's laws, and puppet prime ministers and cabinets carry them out. The media and academia practice informal "self-censorship," avoiding critical

authoritarian
Nondemocratic
government but
not necessarily
totalitarian.

Table 5.3 Types of Authoritarianism

| | Examples |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Military | Mauritania, Niger |
| Personalistic | Uzbekistan, Venezuela |
| Traditional monarchy | Saudi Arabia, Kuwait |
| Dominant-party | Russia, Zimbabwe |
| Single-party | China, Cuba |

comments in order to keep their jobs. Louis XIV of France showed an early form of authoritarianism with his famous phrase: “*L’état c’est moi*” (The state—that’s me).

Spain under Franco (1939–1975) was “traditional authoritarian” rather than totalitarian, as the *caudillo* (leader) sought political passivity and obedience rather than enthusiastic participation and mobilization. Franco and his supporters had no single ideology to promote, and the economy and press were pluralistic within limits. Some observers now see a new model, the “authoritarian capitalist” regimes of China and Russia, which allow partially market economies but tightly retain political control. Their selling points are economic growth and rising living standards, and most citizens accept them and show little interest in democracy. But what happens when growth stops, as it has in Russia?

Political scientist Jeane J. Kirkpatrick (1926–2006), President Reagan’s ambassador to the United Nations, argued that there is a difference between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. The former (such as Argentina, Chile, and Brazil) can reform, but once a totalitarian system (such as communism) takes over, the system cannot reform itself. Argentina, Chile, and Brazil did return to democracy in the 1980s. Kirkpatrick’s thesis was borne out in the fact that the Communist regimes of the Soviet bloc never did reform themselves; they collapsed while trying to reform. The big question of the twenty-first century: Is China’s rapidly growing economy producing an educated middle class that starts demanding democracy? Or can the regime forever buy off its people with rising living standards plus Chinese nationalism? China is developing problems, and many Chinese thinkers call for reforms, usually privately.

Authoritarianism and the Developing Nations

In the decades after World War II, the European empires granted their colonies independence. All the new nations, proclaimed themselves “democratic,” but it did not last long. The colonialists had never encouraged democracy. Democracy in the Western tradition grew out of individualism and a competitive market economy. The developing societies had preindustrial, traditional peasant economies that stressed families and tribes. Levels of education and income were low, and most people were absorbed in the struggle to survive. Postcolonial leaders had typically picked up socialist views while students in Britain and France and argued that political and economic survival and growth need centralized power and planning. The leaders claimed that they knew what the people needed and rigged elections.

In this way, much of the **Third World** fell into authoritarianism under single parties. Such systems are usually terrible. Government officials push wasteful, unrealistic projects, stifle individual initiative by regulations and taxes, and crush critical viewpoints. Corruption stunts economic growth. In this way, such countries as Tanzania and Myanmar (Burma) impoverished themselves, ending up with neither democracy nor economic growth. Zimbabwe, for example, started democratic in 1980, but some parties opposed the dominant party and its leader, Robert Mugabe, who cracked down harshly with soldiers of his

Third World

The developing areas: parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Case Studies

Democracy in Iraq?

Iraq was a new and artificial country the British put together in 1922 from three former Ottoman provinces. Its population groups do not like each other. Sixty percent of Iraqis are Shia Muslims, a repressed and suspect minority throughout the Arab world. Saddam Hussein had ruled through his Sunni Arabs (20 percent of the population) and murdered hundreds of thousands of Shias. Freed in 2003, Shias won subsequent elections and ignored Sunni demands to share power. Sunni extremists suicide-bombed Shias, who now controlled Iraq's police and army and retaliated by killing Sunnis. In the north of Iraq, Kurds (about 20 percent), who are Sunni but not Arab, rule themselves and are ready to declare independence. In 2014, Sunni militants from many countries proclaimed an Islamic State over much of Iraq and Syria. Funded by crime, they murdered all who did not share their faith.

Elections do not automatically produce democracy, which requires stable countries with much

economic, educational, and political development. Most of Iraq's neighbors are dictatorships, some more authoritarian than others. Saddam was not an accident but a product of a rebellious country that was ready to fall apart—and still is.

In 2005, the United States launched a major promotion of democracy in the Middle East, but it made little headway. Free elections in Lebanon and Palestine increased the power, respectively, of the extremist Hezbollah and Hamas. As Jeane Kirkpatrick observed: "No idea holds greater sway in the mind of educated Americans than the belief that it is possible to democratize governments, anytime and anywhere, under any circumstances." Iraq was an expensive lesson that taught Americans a more realistic view. In 2011, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen overthrew their presidents for life, but this unleashed Islamists who had little interest in establishing democracy.

dominant tribe and created an authoritarian system, arguing that this was the only way to build unity and a socialist economy. Miscalculated elections kept Mugabe in power as inflation topped 1,000,000 percent, most Zimbabweans were unemployed and hungry, and regime opponents were jailed or killed.

The Democratization of Authoritarian Regimes

5.5 Explain why new democracies often fail.

Since 1974, dozens of countries have abandoned authoritarian or totalitarian systems in favor of democratic systems, although recently some have slid backward. Still, around half the world's nations are at least a bit democratic. The expansion of democracy from the previous two dozen countries, mostly in Western Europe and North America, became a major scholarly topic. An excellent quarterly started in 1989, *Journal of Democracy*, explains why democracy appears and what policies encourage it.

Two types of regimes contributed to the latest wave of democracy: authoritarian regimes that enjoyed strong economic growth and collapsed Communist

regimes whose economic growth lagged. The fast-growth systems—such as Chile, Brazil, South Korea, and Taiwan—were politically authoritarian but developed private market economies. It was as if the dictator said, “I’ll take care of politics; you just work on your businesses.” The pro-growth regimes set macroeconomic policy (sound currency, low inflation, plenty of capital for loans) and exported to the world market. After a time, the growing economy transformed the whole society into a democracy, a process that illustrates **modernization theory**: As countries improve from poor to middle income, they become ready for stable democracy. Democracy seldom lasts in poor countries—India is an exception, and Indonesia, after decades of dictators, is becoming democratic—but it works in most middle-income and richer countries.

Why should this happen? First, economic growth creates a large middle class, which has a stake in the system; they may wish to reform it but not overthrow it. Second, education levels rise; most people are high-school graduates, and many are college graduates. They are no longer ignorant and do not fall for demagogues, extremist ideas, or vote buying. Third, people increasingly recognize their interests and express them: pluralism. They voice business, professional, regional, and religious demands. They can spot cruel, corrupt, or inefficient governments and do not like being treated like children. Urban, educated Russians showed this attitude in 2012. Finally, the market itself teaches citizens about self-reliance, pluralism, tolerance, and not expecting too much, all attitudes that sustain democracy. Gradually, if everything works right, the regime eases up, permitting a critical press, the formation of political parties, and finally free elections. Taiwan carried out this transition from 1984 to 2000 and is now a vibrant democracy, one whose elections are followed with great interest by mainland Chinese.

This transition does not work with **petrostates**. Oil exports, because they concentrate wealth and power in the hands of a few, retard democracy. None of the twenty-three countries that get 60 percent or more of their export income from oil or natural gas is a democracy. And that includes petrostates with high per capita GDPs. The oil industry does not employ many workers. Citizens depend on the government for jobs and handouts and do not form an autonomous, pluralistic middle class. In other words, a high per capita GDP is not the same as a robust, educated middle class. Such countries, many around the Persian Gulf, are ripe for overthrow but not for democracy.

The collapse of Communist regimes shows the role of the economy in a negative sense. It was poor economic performance and slow growth, especially in comparison with the West and with the rapid-growth countries, that persuaded relatively liberal Communists, such as Mikhail Gorbachev (1931–), to attempt to reform their systems. They knew they were falling behind, especially in crucial high-tech sectors, and thought they could energize the system by bringing elements of the free market into an otherwise socialist economy. But communism, like other brands of totalitarianism, is not flexible to reform. By attempting to control everything, as in Friedrich’s and Brzezinski’s six points, they have created a brittle system that can break but not bend. Once they started admitting

modernization theory

Economic growth fosters a large, educated middle class that demands democracy.

petrostate

Country based on oil exports, such as Saudi Arabia.

that the system needed to be fixed, they admitted that they had been wrong. The ideology was wrong, single-party control was wrong, the centralized economy was wrong, and so on. The reform attempt turned into system collapse.

Will the countries that emerge from the wreckage of dictatorship establish lasting democracies? So far, the ex-Communist lands of Poland and the Czech Republic have done so. Hungary, alas, has recently taken on authoritarian hues. Farther east and south, however, democracy is incomplete or in retreat. Market systems are strange and frightening to Russians, Uzbeks, and others, and indeed the transition from a controlled to a market economy inflicts terrible hardships. Some voters, never having known democracy, turn to authoritarian figures, who promise to restore stability and incomes. Vladimir Putin silenced or jailed opposition, and most Russians supported him. Russian political culture favors rule by one strong leader. The executive is extremely powerful and can rule by decree; the State Duma (parliament) is weak and obeys the executive. Putin brought the energy sector (oil and gas) back under state control, and most of the mass media obey him. A favored few get very rich. Some call this a **kleptocracy**, and it is found in much of the world.

kleptocracy

Rule by thieves, used in derision and jest.

Democracy is not easy. It is a complex, finely balanced system that depends on a political culture that grows best under a market economy with a large, educated middle class and a tradition of pluralism. Centuries of religious and philosophical evolution prepare democratic attitudes. Iraq lacked all of these. Eventually Iraq or any other country can turn democratic, but it may take decades. Most scholars look forward to it, as there is strong support for the theory of the **democratic peace**, that no two democracies have ever fought each other. If this is true, a more democratic world means a more peaceful world.

democratic peace

Theory that democracies do not fight each other.

Review Questions

1. Why does modern democracy mean representative democracy?
2. Which are the defining characteristics of democracy?
3. How is the polyarchy model different from elite theory?
4. Why is totalitarianism a twentieth-century phenomenon?
5. What is the difference between totalitarian and authoritarian?
6. Are totalitarian systems bound to fail? Why?
7. Why have so many post-colonial states turned authoritarian?
8. Why does democracy sometimes fail? Did it work in Iraq?
9. Does democracy always follow economic growth as modernization theorists suggest?

Key Terms

authoritarian, p. 116
caste, p. 105
civil disobedience, p. 107

democratic peace, p. 120
democracy, p. 102
elites, p. 108

hierarchy, p. 112
illiberal democracy, p. 103