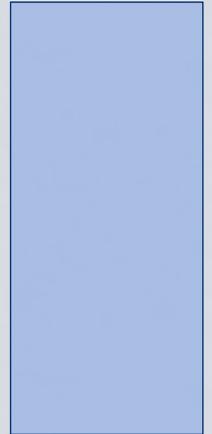


# **INRL 211 - CONTEMPORARY STATE SYSTEMS**

WEEK 4



# WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

# WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

- In 1900, there were no states with universal adult suffrage--today more than half do.
- Democracy: ‘a mode of decision-making about collectively binding rules and policies over which the people exercise control, and the most democratic arrangement [is] that where all members of the collectivity enjoy effective equal rights to take part in such decision-making directly.’ (Beetham: 1992)

# EXPANSION OF FRANCHISE: UK

- 1258: Barons
- 1341: Aristocrats are *represented*
- 1832: from 10% to 20% of 21+ males
- 1867: 40% of 21+ males
- 1884: 60% of 21+ males
- 1918: 100% of 21+ males / 80% of 21+ females
- 1928: 100% of 21+ males / 100% of 21+ females
- 1969: voting age reduced to 18

# EXPANSION OF FRANCHISE: USA

- 1788: first election (under Constitution of 1787)
- 1810: 10 % of males
- 1828: 16% of males
- 1870: former slaves/free blacks can vote
- 1920: women can vote at 21
- 1924: Native Americans can vote
- 1971: age requirement reduced to 18

# DEMOCRATIZATION

- ‘Democratisation studies examine and explain the processes whereby government, states and societies attempt to move away from some form of authoritarianism towards some form of democracy’ (Grugel: 2002)

# WHAT IS DEMOCRATIZATION?

## 3 basic components:

- 1. ending an authoritarian regime;
  - 2- installing a democratic regime;
  - 3- consolidating a democratic regime
- 
- Different causes may be responsible for each of these developments.

(Samuel Huntington)

# DEMOCRATIZATION (2/2)

- Democracy provides for **periodic changes** in government which effectively prevent a given majority or group of political elites from remaining in power for too long.
- But the process of democratization is very complex.

# ENHANCING DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS

(1) Constitutions and the Rule of Law

(2) Free and Fair Elections

(3) Strong Civil Society

(4) Economic Development

# CONSTITUTIONS AND THE RULE OF LAW

- The constitution provides the rules of the game for governing.
- Limitations on governments are enshrined in a constitution and in the concept of the rule of law, underscoring the fact that **politicians and government officials are not above the law.**

# FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

- An election is the only peaceful method through which citizens of a polity can change their government.
- Elections are there to “control political power”

# CIVIL SOCIETY

Larry Diamond defines civil society as “the realm of organized social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least potentially self supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared standards”

# **STRONG CIVIL SOCIETY**

- Powerful, autonomous groups can offset the dominating force of a powerful state, a state that may be tempted to arbitrarily use power to suppress opposition.
- But there must be balance between a strong civil society and the state.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Correlation between economic development and democracy (Lipset)
- Economic growth is a foundation for democracy
- Economic growth depends on sound, stable government

# EXPLANATIONS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION

- High overall level of **economic wealth**
- **Relatively equal distribution of income** and/or wealth
- **A market economy**
- Economic development and **social modernization**
- The **absence of feudalism** in society

# EXPLANATIONS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION

- **A strong bourgeoisie (capitalist class)**
- **A strong middle class**
- **High levels of literacy and education**
- **Social pluralism**
- **Development of political contestation prior to expansion of franchise**

# EXPLANATIONS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION

- **Democratic authority structures** within social groups
- Low levels of civil violence
- Low levels of political polarization and extremism
- Political leaders committed to democracy
- Traditions of toleration and compromise

# EXPLANATIONS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION

- Occupation by a pro-democratic foreign power
- Influence by a pro-democratic foreign power
- Elite desire to emulate democratic states

# EXPLANATIONS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION

- Traditions of respect for rule of law and individual rights
- Communal homogeneity or communal heterogeneity
- Consensus on political and social values or absence thereof

# ECONOMIC EXPLANATION?

- Almost all rich countries have democratic institutions
- **IMPORTANT: Among the 64 “low-income”** countries classified by the World Bank, **India is the only one in which democratic institutions** have survived continuously for more than a decade

# FACTORS OF THE REVERSE WAVES for Democratization

- Weak democratic values
- Economic crisis
- Polarization
- Breakdown of law & order by insurgency/terrorism
- Intervention/conquest by non-democratic foreign government
- Demonstration effect

# 3 “WAVES” OF DEMOCRATIZATION HUNTINGTON

- 1. 1818-1926: France, Britain, U.S., etc.
- 2- 1943-1965: West Germany, Italy, Austria, Japan, Korea, Columbia, Venezuela, etc.
- 3. 1974-1995 (?): Portugal, Greece, Turkey (again), Brazil, former East Bloc countries