

For **Traditional State's** overview – please see notes from 1st meeting.

Z. Brzezinski's definition of totalitarianism:

“Totalitarianism is a new kind of government, which fits into general classification of dictatorial systems, in which technologically advanced political power instruments are used without any constraints by centralized leadership of specific elitist movement, in order to conduct total social revolution of some sort, including shaping of a “New Man”. Planned revolution is based on some arbitrary, ideological assumptions, proclaimed by movement's leader in overall mood of complete unity of whole society.”

Six factors differentiating totalitarian regime from others (by C. Friedrich):

- Totalitarian ideology,
- one party, following this ideology, usually led by one person – dictator,
- extensive secret police system,
- state's monopoly over means of mass communication,
- all operational armed forces,
- all organizations, including non – political ones (religious, economical, cultural, etc)

Basic characteristics of totalitarian system:

- Importance of social mobilization, with only one party as mobilization's focal point
- importance of ideology, driving the party,
- one power centre (either one person or a small group)

All three of the above conditions have to be fulfilled, in order to call a system “totalitarian”.

Additional features of totalitarian system are:

- Merging of political and private sphere of life,
- relative lack of any opposition groups (either voluntary, caused by total support of society or enforced by terror),
- socio – political monism, lack of open competition for power,
- population is expected to participate in state's political life. It is both encouraged and enforced,
- terror is more often used inside the ruling group than outside of it

Authoritarian system's definition (by J. Linz):

*“**Authoritarian** systems are systems with limited responsibility of government before the society, devoid of any strong and coherent ideology and mass mobilization, featuring limited political pluralism. In authoritarian systems, the leader does not suffer from any formal constraints, though his power is limited by other, informal factors.”*

Basic features of **authoritarian** system:

- Limited political pluralism, meaning that power struggle exists, but it is limited to specific segments of society. Only few groups are able to participate in power competition and none of them is strong enough to eliminate other. Still, the government remains one most powerful actor, capable of removing any other group – but not all of them.
- Dependency between government and those interest groups is two – directional, government doesn't want to be contested actively, group needs approval for functioning.
- Strong ideology is rarely present. This way, it is easier for the ruling person to cooperate with all other political actors (lack of ideology means lack of constraints).
- Lack of strong ideology makes social mobilization much harder. Lack of broad mobilization and participation is one of most distinct features of authoritarian system. Increase in mobilization is likely to proper the system either towards more democratic or totalitarian one.

Authoritarian regimes are most common type of non – democratic political systems in contemporary world. J. Linz proposed their classification, based of three dimensions:

- Degree of social mobilization (usually low to very low),
- role of ideology (usually leader's mentality replaces s\coherent ideology),
- type of party system present (varying from one party system, through bi – party, to system without strong parties and technocratic / military elite present instead)

Definition of Theocracy:

“Theocracy may be:

- *a system of government in which God or a deity is held to be the civil ruler,*
- *a system of government by priests,*
- *a state under such a form of rule. is a government of a state by immediate divine guidance or by officials who are regarded as divinely guided”.*

Term derives from Greek *theos* = god + *kratos* = power.

Basic features of theocracy:

- Basic paradox – mixing “sacred” sphere with mundane, political action,
- specific type of dominant ideology – religion (organized, monotheistic one),
- specific type of mobilization – towards religious life, not political action,
- specific type of ruling organization – religious organization (even if not governing directly)
- strong affiliation with traditional type of the state,
- most distinct and unique type of state organization in modern times.

Recommended additional readings:

- J. Linz, *“Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regime”*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000.
- C. J. Friedrich and Z. K. Brezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*.
- H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

Democracy: a political system, in which those holding power are responsible before the citizens, where citizens elect their representatives and the representatives compete and cooperate with each other.

Public sphere: area, where collective norms and decisions are being created. Those norms often restrict individual freedom of action and have to be enforced by government. Even then, however they may be considered democratic.

Key features of democratic political system (by P.C. Schmitter and T.L. Karl):

- **Existence of people holding power**, occupying specific positions, allowing them to issue orders. What distinguish democratic systems from non – democratic ones are the rules of selecting occupants of such positions.
- There is **no simple set of “democratic institutions”**. One society might be more liberal (focused on upholding individual freedoms), other may be social democratic (focused on enforcing common good) – but may be considered democratic.
- **Citizens**, namely people allowed participating in public sphere and having influence of governance. The scope of such group may vary from one system to another.
- **Competition** and power struggle inside the system is considered “necessary evil” of any large (non – local) democratic political system.

Foundation of democratic system (by P.C. Schmitter and T.L. Karl):

- **Elections**, often considered basic (and sufficient) condition of democracy. Their purpose is to allow each citizen selecting people, that will represent them in various branches of government (most often, Parliament).
- **Majority rule**, attributing *democratic* feature to every institution legitimized by approval of more than 50% of citizens allowed participating in the election. Majority rule might cause some problems when, majority’s will violates various minority’s interests. Several ways of dealing with this may be enforced:
 - Constitutional constrains, that remove some issues from majority rule (Card of Basic Rights),
 - rules stating that in order to change some basic regulations, majority in several distinct institutions is required (confederalism),
 - guaranteeing of local autonomy in relation to central government demands (federalism),

- practice of negotiating all important issues with specific groups interested (neocorporativism).
- every day's work of interest – protection societies and social movements
- **Cooperation**, one of most important foundations of democratic system. Political actors have to focus on community as being most important, while making any common decisions. Competition is allowed and enforced, but it must have been conducted with peaceful, legal and non – disrupting means. Common description of such practice is **civil society**.
- **Representatives**, their presence is common characteristic of all contemporary political systems. They may be elected either directly or indirectly, most often they will be professional politicians, building their careers on occupying various governmental positions.

Procedures allowing democracy to work (by R. Dahl):

- Control over political decisions is assigned to **freely elected politicians**,
- “elected” positions are being filled in result of regular **and fair elections**, where no kind of compulsion is present,
- **practically all adult members** of society are allowed to participate in the elections and choose their representatives,
- **practically all adult members** of society are allowed to try to get elected as the such representative,
- citizens are **allowed to formulate their opinions** concerning all political matters freely, without risk of being punished for this,
- citizens **are allowed to seek alternative sources of information**, which exist and are protected by the law,
- citizens may **create and participate in** independent societies and organizations, including their own political parties and interest groups,
- elected officials may **work and make decisions, without encountering opposition** (even informal) from non – elected officials (eg. members of military),
- government's decisions must have be made **independently** of other, even much stronger political systems.

Proper functioning of democratic system rests on basic agreement concerning election effects; election winner is allowed to take power, but he will not try to use it to change the electoral system in his favor, to prohibit other actors from winning future elections.

Not all democracies are identical. They may differ to some extent, but they also have to fulfill some basic conditions:

- **Agreement**; not all citizens have to agree to system's basic goals and role,
- **participation**; not all citizens have to participate in the system to the same extent, however all of them should have the same possibilities to do so,
- **access**; although government does not have to react to all pleads of citizens, all citizens must be able to articulate them ,
- **responsibility**; government does not have to act in manner supported by citizens, however it must be responsible for its actions via established, objective procedures,
- **majority rule**; assignment to specific roles in government does not have to regulated only by the result of the elections, however deviations from such procedure have to be reported and explained to the society,
- **parliament sovereignty**; legislative branch of government does not have to be the dominant one in term of law making, however if any other branch (executive of judicial one) is capable of creating laws – it should be held responsible for doing so,
- **party rules**; it is not necessary to form government only on the basis some party, but this way is usually the easiest one to follow,
- **pluralism**; activity of diverse and autonomous interest groups does not have to be the only foundation of public life in the system, but where the monopolies, hierarchy and compulsory membership is present – the power struggle will be less democratic and more closely bound to the state's institutions,
- **federalism**; territorial division of the country does not have to assume self – governance, but the common notion of all democratic systems includes de-centralization of some sort,
- **president's office**; top executive authority does not have to be assigned to single person and such person does not have to be selected in free election. However, in every democratic system top executive officials must be responsible before the citizens in some way,

- **control and balance**; it is not required that all branches of government check and control each other all the time, however some kind of responsibility for their actions have to be present.

Democracy **does not** automatically mean:

- **greater economical performance**,
- **more efficient form of governance**, meaning less problems with forming governments and dealing with various challenges and problems,
- **stabilization**, agreement and smooth governance.

Although all three of the above are more often encountered in democratic systems, than in others, democracy does not automatically protect from economical breakdown, social crisis and switching to other forms of government.

Classification of democratic system, (by A. Lijphart):

		Dimension II (Federal – Unitary)		
		Majoritarian	Intermediate	Consensual
Dimension I (Executive – Parties)	Majoritarian	New Zealand United Kingdom	Ireland	Australia Austria Canada Germany United States
	Intermediate	Iceland Luxembourg	France V Norway Sweden	Italy Japan
	Consensual	Denmark Israel	Belgium Finland France IV Netherlands	Switzerland

Dimension I is defined by:

- Concentration of executive power versus executive power – sharing,
- executive dominance versus executive legislative balance,
- two – party versus multiparty system,
- one – dimensional versus multidimensional party system,
- plurality elections versus proportional representation.

Dimension II is defined by:

- Unitary and centralized versus federal and decentralized government,
- unilateralism versus strong bicameralism,
- unwritten versus rigid constitutions.

There is strong relationship between the degree to which the countries are plural and their type of regime. The *consensual* ones are more plural. Population size is linked with second dimension, 10 million being the dividing point between majoritarian (less than 10 mil) and consensual (more than 10 mil). The influence of tradition might be observed as well, strong influence of British governance model is visible with regard to dimension I (British – influenced countries are majoritarian ones).

According to A. Liphart, as far as system stability is concerned, consensus democracy is superior to majoritarian democracy for plural societies and the democratic quality of consensus democracy is superior insofar as its first dimension is compared with same dimension of majoritarian democracy.

Every existing democracy today is either:

- **Presidential** (e.g. United States),
- **parliamentary** (as in most of Western Europe),
- **semipresidential** (e.g. France, Portugal).

Pure parliamentary regime in a democracy is a system of mutual dependence:

- The chief executive power must be supported by a majority in the legislature can fall if it receives a vote of no confidence,
- The executive power (normally in conjunction with the head of the state) has the capacity to dissolve the legislature and call for elections.

A pure presidential regime in a democracy is a system of mutual independence:

- The legislative power has a fixed electoral mandate that is its own source of legitimacy,
- The chief executive power has a fixed electoral mandate that is its own source of legitimacy.

According to A. Stepan and C. Skach, parliamentary system is superior to others, especially presidential one:

- Parliamentary system has greater propensity for government to have **elected majorities implement their programs**,
- parliamentary system has greater ability **to rule in a multiparty setting**,
- parliamentary system has lower propensity for executives **to rule at the edge of constitution** and greater facility for **removing a chief executive who does so**,

- military coups are much more likely in pure presidential constitutional frameworks than in parliamentary ones, since several ways **to break the possible political impasse exist** (like vote of no confidence and possibility to dissolve the parliament),
- parliamentary system it has **greater tendency to provide possibilities of long term government careers**, which add loyalty and experience to political society,
- many new democracies select presidential because they believe it to be strong form of executive government. However, **between 1973 and 1987 presidential democracies enjoyed legislative majorities less than half of the time.**

Possible additional readings:

- P. C. Schmitter, “*What Democracy Is... and Is Not*”, *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 2, Summer 1991,
- M. Shugart, J. Carey, “*Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Social Dynamics*”, Cambridge University Press, 1992,
- J. J. Linz, A. Valenzuela, „*The Failure of Presidential Democracy, Comparative Perspectives*“, The John Hopkins University Press, 1994,
- A. Bebler, J. Serocka, “*Contemporary Political Systems, Classification and Typologies*”, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990