

Fragile democracies

Associated Press AP

Masai women casting their votes. Kajiado, Kenya

Today the vast majority of countries have formally democratic systems of government. But gains remain fragile—vulnerable to voter disillusionment, ethnic conflicts and takeover by technocrats.

As the Social Summit emphasized, social development requires more than additional funds or better economic and social policies. It also requires a supportive environment—in particular, vigorous democratic institutions that allow citizens to participate freely in decision making.

On this point at least there has been some advance. One of the most cheering developments of recent decades has been the spread of democracy. Progress has been uneven, and democratic principles may not always have percolated very deeply into the national consciousness. But the direction of change has been positive.

The number of sovereign states has been increasing rapidly. Between 1900 and 1950, an average of 1.2 new states were created per year. Between 1950 and 1990 the rate was 2.2, but between 1990 and 1998 the rate increased to 3.1. By 1998 there were 185 sovereign members of the United Nations, and in 1999 they were joined by Kiribati, Nauru and Tonga.

Many of these states are now formally democratic, as reflected in increased electoral activity around the world. Over the period 1990–99, there were about 300 competitive elections in 160 of 185 states—an average of 1.9 elections per country. Some regions have had more intensive activity than others, as indicated in figure 3.1, which shows the number of elections per country to be greatest in the industrialized countries and least in North Africa and the Middle East.

Nevertheless, there have also been some reversals of democracy, in the form of military

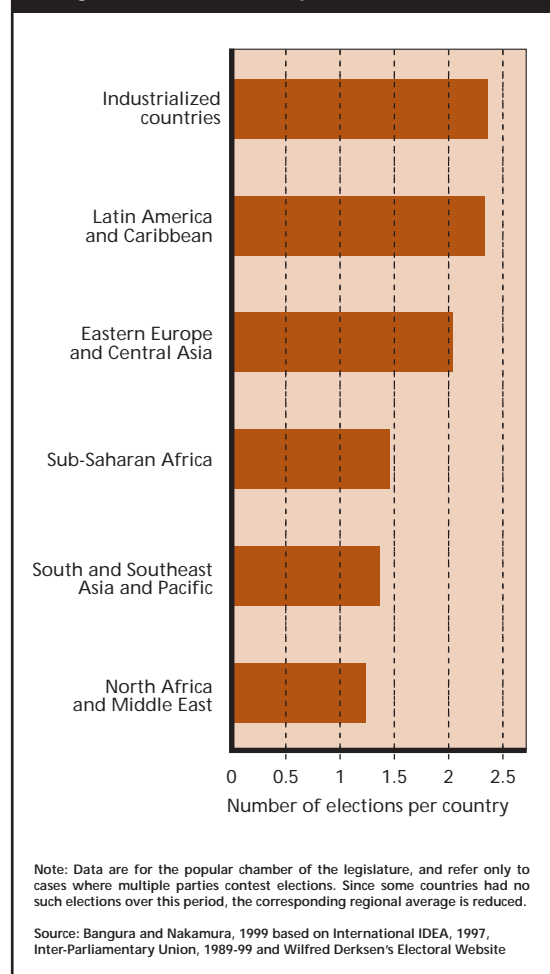
coups: between 1990 and 1999, sub-Saharan Africa had 15 coups, Latin America had one (in Haiti), and Asia also had one (in Pakistan).

The United Nations has played a key role in the extension of democracy. In addition to sponsoring conferences on democracy, the UN has provided technical assistance to electoral commissions, helped supervise elections and supported national and international election observers (box 3.1).

The governing dilemma

Representative democracy is a solution to a fundamental dilemma. In a democracy everyone is presumed to have equal rights. Ideally, each citizen should be able to express his or her

Figure 3.1 – Elections per state, 1990–98



preferences directly. Even for the 78,000 people of the UN's smallest member, Kiribati, this is impractical. Instead people have to aggregate their interests through political parties and pressure groups. And they delegate power to politicians to formulate public policy and deliver services.

At a basic minimum this demands that elections are free and fair, and that citizens enjoy

full civil and political rights, particularly the rights of organization, assembly and expression. Were all the elections of the 1990s free and fair? Not all of them—but a reasonable proportion, at least if a change of government counts as success. One common danger is that the ruling party may use its current power to retain future power—directly, by controlling the electoral authority so as to falsify the outcome, or

Box 3.1 – The United Nations promotes democracy

The UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have guided the UN's work on democratization. More recently, in 1988, the General Assembly adopted a resolution supporting the principle of free, fair and periodic elections. Other activities promoting these ideals have included three UN-sponsored conferences on "new and restored democracies"—1988 in Manila, 1994 in Managua and 1997 in Bucharest. A fourth is planned in Cotonou for 2000.

In 1995, the World Summit for Social Development also focused on the importance of democracy, declaring that the promotion of social development "requires democratic institutions, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, increased and equal economic opportunities, the rule of law, the promotion of respect for cultural diversity and the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and an active involvement of civil society". Between 1994 and 1998, the Secretary-General prepared four special reports on the various ways in which the UN system could help governments to promote and consolidate new democracies.

In terms of direct assistance, the UN has helped organize, supervise and verify elections and has also provided technical assistance and support for national and international election observers. In Cambodia in 1993, for example, the UN trained about 5,000 Cambodians as election officers. In Namibia in 1994, a special representative of the Secretary-General supervised the electoral process during the period leading to Namibian independence. In Mozambique in 1994, the UN assisted with the establishment of a national electoral commission and an electoral tribunal for the elections that ended 16 years of civil war.

In the field of technical assistance, the UN has provided training and education, as well as logistics, to about 50 countries. Between 1989 and 1996, the UN also sent election observer missions to 24 states. During the same period, it received 187 requests from 69 states for various forms of electoral assistance. Around half of these took the form of technical assistance, and most activities were concentrated in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe—the three regions where the wave of democratization has been strongest.

indirectly, by intimidating the electorate and opposition groups or controlling the media. A good indication of fairness, therefore, is that the ruling party loses. Having the same party in power for a long time does not necessarily imply fraud—in Japan and Sweden, for example, the same parties have remained in government for 20 or even 30 years. But for new democracies, a change of government does indicate a degree of flexibility and maturity in political processes.

As figure 3.2 indicates, the region whose elections were least likely to result in a change in the ruling party was sub-Saharan Africa. Significantly, this was the region where the opposition was most likely to have contested election results. This was also the region where opposition groups were most likely to refuse to participate—they boycotted around one-quarter of elections.

In Asia and Latin America, the picture appears healthier. Here elections are more likely to have produced changes of government and election results are less likely to have been contested. In the industrialized countries during this period, no elections were boycotted by major parties and no results were contested.

Incomplete transitions

Though most countries have been moving in a democratic direction, many are still some way from mature democracies. Autocratic regimes often find ways of retaining much of their power even in a formally democratic environment.

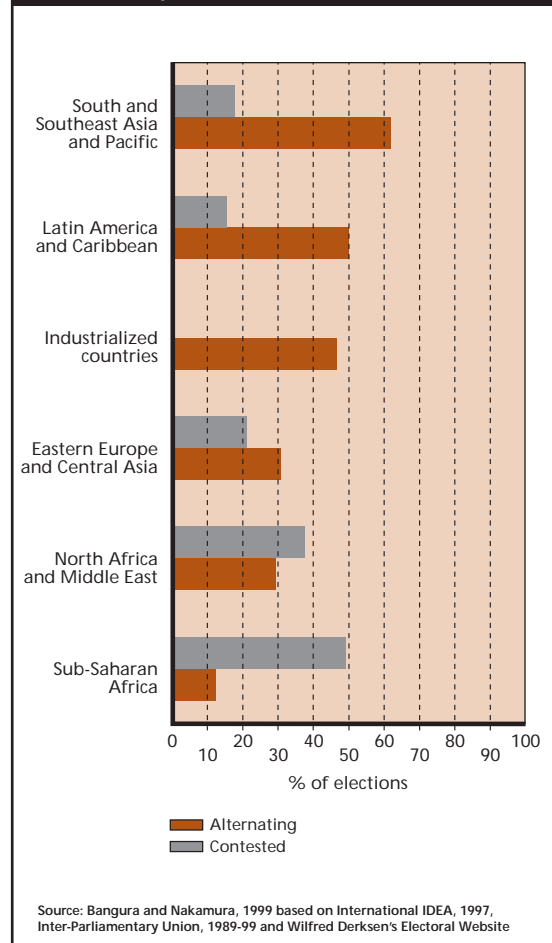
LATIN AMERICA—MILITARY IMPUNITY

In Latin America, most transitions from military rule to democracy took place in the 1980s. But former military rulers often found ways to retain some vestiges of power or to protect themselves from prosecution for crimes committed during their regimes. They extracted these concessions as the price of a peaceful handover of power and of avoiding future mili-

tary insurrections. But such guarantees have not necessarily proved sufficient. The attempt to prosecute former Chilean President Augusto Pinochet is the sharpest reminder of the limits of impunity. Argentina now seems less forgiving of its ex-dictators as well: since 1998 a number of former military leaders have been prosecuted for kidnappings and “disappearances”.

The concessions in Latin America’s transitions were not made solely to the military. Probably more enduring were those offered to the traditional elites who managed to hold on to much of their power. In Brazil during the mid-1980s, elites supported the change to democracy in exchange for political posts, state jobs and money for specific projects.

Figure 3.2 – Alternations in power and disputed elections, 1990–99



Another development in Latin American democracy is the attempt to change rules that forbid the re-election of incumbent presidents. Leaders cite the unfinished business of economic reforms as justification for passing *continuismo* legislation that will enable them to run for second terms. More than half of the countries in Latin America were governed by *continuista* regimes in 1998.

OVERCOMING OPPOSITION IN AFRICA

Africa's autocratic regimes were often able to retain power because opposition parties were not sufficiently well organized to replace them. In Côte d'Ivoire, for example, President Houphouët-Boigny had ruled for decades and caught opposition leaders by surprise in 1990 when he announced an instant election that gave them little time to prepare. He won the ensuing election comfortably; and though he

died in office in 1993, his appointed successor also maintained a strong grip, banning opposition rallies and jailing members of the opposition until ousted in a coup in 1999. As one of Côte d'Ivoire's opposition leaders has pointed out, this kind of repression of opposition in Africa is a way not just to retain power, but also to avoid the humiliation of defeat.

THE NOMENKLATURA OF EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

In Eastern Europe, transitions have often been managed by the old party bosses, the nomenklatura, who have managed to hold on to power, or at least wield enormous influence. In Belarus, the Central Asian republics and Ukraine, they influenced the way in which public assets were privatized; and they remain active in the region's rapidly growing criminal gangs. In Turkmenistan, for example, the



Troops seize control. Islamabad, Pakistan

Turkmen Communist Party has been renamed the Democratic Party and remains the only legal political party. Most of the opposition is exiled. The former communist leader is still the country's president. He has ruthlessly suppressed all dissent and enforced a personality cult—calling himself the “Turkenbashi” (leader of the Turkmen).

The progress of political parties

The basis of all democratic systems is the political party, which organizes people who share a common interest or purpose. Often this has been based on an economic or social philosophy—typically set somewhere along a left-right, socialist-capitalist spectrum. Most Western European parties organize on this basis—reflecting divisions that emerged many decades ago, following the enfranchisement of the working classes. In the United States as well, the differences between Republican and Democratic parties have reflected the interests respectively of capital and labour. Political culture in Latin America has developed in a similar way: parties often align themselves with business interests and landlords on one side and trade unions on the other.

Another party rallying point is religion. European Christian Democratic parties are a residue of religious affiliations. But religion is still a live political force as well. India, for example, has since 1998 been governed by a Hindu-dominated party.

Many countries, such as Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Turkey, have Islamic parties that compete with other parties in democratic states. But there is always a concern that Islamic parties ultimately seek absolute rule. Non-religious parties are understandably alarmed by the prospect of an Islamic party victory, which can be interpreted as a challenge to secular democracy itself—a prospect that led in 1991 to a military coup in Algeria, and civil war and bloodshed in the years since.

Another familiar basis for party organization is ethnic identity. In some cases this may be linked with religion, as in former Yugoslavia. And it may have a strong regional character. But the most ethnically diverse countries are typically found in Asia and Africa.

Other parties may be based not on divisions of class or religion but on personalities, as people align themselves behind one powerful or charismatic figure. Such parties often emerge after a period of dictatorship, when a military leader seeks to legitimate authority by creating a new party. In Ghana, for example, the military takeover by then flight-lieutenant Jerry Rawlings in 1981 resulted in a Provisional National Defence Council. But after a new constitution in 1992, Rawlings won the presidency at the head of a newly created party, the National Democratic Congress.

Another personality-based system emerges when an individual with a strong following, or at least a strong will, enters politics on his or her own account and creates a party to provide support. One example is President Alberto Fujimori of Peru.

In principle, all these systems of party organization are valid. All respond to the representational dilemma—resolving the tension between individual and group rights. But they also have to settle differences and conflict in an equitable and peaceful fashion. On the whole the systems that have achieved this with least disruption have been those based on class interests. Most industrialized countries have maintained a reasonable balance between left- and right-wing parties. Both left and right have acquired mass followings and over the long run have alternated in power. Indeed, a greater worry in industrialized countries is that this process is now too smooth—that modern parties anxious to claim the centre ground have been discarding their class characteristics and becoming virtually indistinguishable, leading to disillusionment with the democratic process itself.

Democracies are less stable when parties are based on ethnic groups or regional identities. Ethnic or religious parties seem to have greater potential for intolerance and violence, and strong regional identities can lead to conflict or secession. Mindful of this, some constitutions, such as those of Kazakhstan and some African countries, forbid the formation of parties that have an ethnic or religious basis.

Least stable of all are the democracies based on individual personalities or narrowly constituted interest groups. Many of these tend not to be programmatic. Rather than attempting to carry out any popularly agreed mandate, they pursue the self-interests of individuals or elites.

President or parliament?

States differ not only in their party systems, but also in their systems of government. Democratic countries have to choose whether to vest executive power in a president or in a parliament led by a prime minister. They can also operate somewhere in the middle—distributing power between an executive president and a prime minister. A strongly presidential system tends to be more centralized: the president is generally elected for a fixed term and is difficult to remove. He or she can thus exercise power in a more single-minded way. A prime minister, on the other hand, is more beholden to a political party and can be removed at any time after losing a vote of confidence. This means that more time will have to be spent cultivating political support.

INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES

Of the major industrialized countries, the United States and France are the only ones with executive presidents. Both operate on the balance of power principle, and in both cases the president has recently had to cohabit with an elected assembly controlled by an opposition party. In France, where there is both a president and a prime minister, the latter enjoys

enormous powers in the making of economic and social policies. In the United States, cohabitation has sometimes led to gridlock and a failure to take important decisions. But the US system functions thanks to a long democratic tradition bolstered by strong institutions, including the judiciary and the press.

Most other industrialized countries have opted instead for parliamentary systems. They, too, have their weaknesses and can centralize power. If the prime minister is a powerful personality with a large parliamentary majority—as was the case with Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative government in the UK in the 1980s—he or she has considerable freedom of action. On the other hand, a parliamentary system that generates a multiplicity of small parties can lead to weak government. Italy is the most notable example among the industrialized countries—the constantly shifting allegiances among dozens of small parties have given Italy 59 governments since the Second World War.

DEVELOPING AND TRANSITION COUNTRIES

Developing countries have generally opted for a presidential system. Most have done so as a way of solidifying national unity—particularly when the integrity of their societies is weakened by multiple ethnic cleavages. Unfortunately, this also means that they risk electing autocrats who subsequently pay scant heed to the rules and procedures that brought them to power.

As in the United States, the president may come into conflict with the legislature. But in the absence of strong institutions, particularly the judiciary and the press, the president may be tempted to undermine parliamentary powers or to rule by decree. Latin America borrowed the institution of the presidency from the United States, but a number of elected presidents have eventually chosen to ignore even their own parties and rule directly

through personalist movements and media appeals—as was the case with Carlos Menem in Argentina, and Fernando Collor in Brazil.

Developing countries with parliamentary systems should in principle be more protected from autocrats. But autocrats can also surface as prime ministers, especially when they enjoy large majorities. Nawaz Sharif operated in a fairly dictatorial fashion within a parliamentary system in Pakistan until ousted by a coup in 1999.

At the other extreme, parliamentary systems with a plethora of parties can also be difficult to manage in developing countries. Benin, for example, is seen as one of Africa's leading democracies. Nevertheless, in 1999 more than 17 parties were represented in its parliament, the largest of which had only 25 per cent of the seats. Suriname, a country with less than half a million people, had eight parties represented in its 51-member parliament in 1999 and was run by a five-party coalition.

Some Eastern European countries emerging from communism sought to build more democratic societies by opting for parliamentary systems. Since then, however, several have retreated. Albania, the Czech Republic and Poland have subsequently weakened their parliaments. In Poland, for example, Lech Walesa, the Solidarity leader, changed the constitution to a mixed system that gave substantial power to the presidency.

A presidential system may seem particularly attractive when the government feels it has to push through unpopular reforms—which can be easier if there is a strong president who can employ trusted technocrats insulated from popular pressure. Whether this produces long-term stability is doubtful. Parliamentary systems certainly demand greater efforts to build working coalitions. But once achieved, these broadly based governments can prove more durable. Even junior partners in coalitions have an incentive to prevent the collapse of the gov-

ernment—especially if they are nervous about the prospect of a snap election they might not win. One study of 53 non-OECD countries over the period 1973–79 found that governments based on parliamentary systems had a 61 per cent survival rate, compared with a 20 per cent rate for presidential systems. Presidential systems were also twice as likely to suffer a coup d'état.

Democracy as means or end?

Democracy is usually seen as an end in itself. It allows people to express their opinions freely and make their own choices. Democracy thus offers a way of fulfilling basic human rights. But many people see systems of government in more limited, instrumental terms. For them, a system of government is merely a means to an end—a way of achieving social stability and economic development. If democracy serves this purpose, all well and good. If it does not, then it might be better to have a more autocratic system.

There is always, therefore, a risk that underperforming democracies will harden into autocracies. An analysis of Freedom House data for Latin America in 1996 concluded that while six out of 22 countries had registered some increases in freedom, 10 others had experienced significant declines. The most recent dramatic example is in Venezuela, where President Hugo Chávez has weakened Congress and greatly expanded his presidential powers.

A preference for more authoritarian government has also been attributed to cultural predisposition (box 3.2). Some people argue that Asian societies place a high value on consensus and are thus less keen on the adversarial style of Western democracies. The “Asian values” of East and Southeast Asia have been used to justify autocratic governments and to account for their economic success. Former President Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore has been one of the

Box 3.2 – Human rights controversies

The Copenhagen Declaration places human rights at the centre of development. This is understandable. The principles of human rights offer rallying points that even the most regressive governments find difficult to deny completely. And though these rights may previously have been seen as abstract formulations, they are now being elaborated in much greater detail and have been supported by numerous decisions of courts and tribunals. Claims based on human rights have been putting greater pressure on governments and the international community.

But this apparent consensus hides a number of sharp disagreements. The first is over whether rights are genuinely universal. Government leaders in Asia and Africa, for example, say that Western societies have been preoccupied with rights, while their own societies place special importance on duties. And many people point to a similar theme in the world's major religious and spiritual beliefs. Leaders in Southeast Asia say that they owe their political stability and economic development to Asian values oriented toward harmony and the community.

This kind of cultural relativism conveniently insulates societies from external criticism, and serves to consolidate privilege and hierarchy. It ignores the many commonalities between cultures and the ways in which they interact and change. And while government leaders often espouse the distinctive values of their societies, many of the neediest are more attracted by the egalitarian and redistributive dimensions of universal human rights.

The other main argument is over what should be regarded as rights. Some governments in the West, particularly in the United States, have objected to considering economic and social benefits as rights, a principle they have associated with communist ideology. On the other hand, many governments in Asia and Africa have resisted the implementation of civil and political rights on the grounds that they are less important and urgent than economic and social rights.

Some of this gap has been bridged in recent times. The conventions on the rights of women, children and migrants, for example, recognize that improvement in their situation requires progress on both sets of rights. But many disagreements remain, and the tensions and contradictions between different sets of rights have become more evident—for example, the tension between the right to freedom of expression and the need to protect communities from hate propaganda or incitement to war.

One strategy has been to pair the traditional bundle of rights with the right to development. The 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights endorsed this approach. The West withdrew its objections to the right to development in return for the acceptance by Asian states of the hallowed formula that human rights were universal, indivisible, and interdependent.

Such tensions are reflected in the Copenhagen Declaration itself, where the commitment to human rights is qualified with “full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of people”.

most vociferous advocates of such a position.

This case is weakened by the sheer diversity and heterogeneity of Asian countries. As Amartya Sen has noted, “the so-called Asian values that are invoked to justify authoritarianism are not especially Asian in any significant sense”. Most Asian countries have also had opposition to autocratic government. In the Republic of Korea, this has frequently been organized by trade unions. Even China had a widespread movement for greater democracy prior to the massacre in Tiananmen Square in 1989. The few social science surveys done since then in China show a strong desire for more democracy, although hardly anyone questions the legitimacy of the state.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

One of the supposed advantages of autocratic government is that it makes it easier for a country to be a developmental state—one that is strong and coherent, and focuses all its efforts on economic and social development. Developmental states are assumed to have a number of core elements. The first is autonomy—the government can operate free from the pressures of particular interest groups. The second element is high capacity—the country’s political elite is supported by an efficient bureaucracy, and these two work together in pursuit of their agreed goals. A third element is nationalism: the political elite develops a nationalist project of industrialization that is different from current notions of free trade and capital movements.

The tiger economies of Southeast Asia could be considered developmental states—as could the People’s Republic of China in the 1960s, and also post-war Japan. All were authoritarian to some degree, but they did not rely simply on the exercise of authority. These governments were deeply embedded in their societies, and they maintained strong links with social forces conducive to development.

Authoritarianism that is not similarly embedded tends to lead not to development but to predation. In many African countries authoritarianism has been profoundly anti-developmental. Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire, for example, had sufficient autonomy to create a developmental state. Instead, he exploited his power to amass a huge fortune for himself and his cronies while leaving his country in ruins.

The “soft authoritarian” states of East and Southeast Asia were historically unique. Many of the fundamental changes, such as land reform in Japan, that laid the foundation for equitable development arose during US occupation and were shaped by the disciplines of the Cold War. Authoritarianism on its own rarely creates these egalitarian circumstances or generates progressive political leadership.

The democratic alternative

Authoritarian regimes cannot be relied upon to be developmental, but neither can democratic ones. In theory a liberal democratic government should be responsive to the electorate—and thus meet basic needs and fulfill rights. This does happen in some cases. The industrialized countries are generally democratic, and their people have the lowest levels of poverty. A number of developing countries, such as Botswana and Mauritius, also manage to combine democratic rights with growth that may lead to poverty reduction. Figure 3.3 illustrates this and other possible combinations in developing countries.

Unfortunately, there are many counter-examples. Indeed, most countries that have recently moved toward democracy also seem to have suffered reverses in economic growth and human development. Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in particular, have seen devastating rises in poverty: between 1987 and 1998, the number of people living on less than \$1 per day rose from one million to 24 million. Why is this? A number of reasons have been put forward.

- **Illiberal democracies**—Achieving democracy is a complex business that requires several stages of democratic deepening. Unfortunately, many countries appear to be stuck in the early stages. Elections may take place, but the press is often muzzled and the courts corrupt, and many sections of state power lie beyond democratic control. Incomplete transitions produce illiberal democracies. And because democracy has not got very far, neither has social development.

- **Weak institutions**—The essential institutions of democracy do not materialize overnight. In many sub-Saharan African countries, for example, state institutions remain inadequate. Badly paid civil servants are often obliged to concentrate not only on public duties, but also on extra income-earning activities. In Latin America as well, many of the old problems survive; traditional clientelism remains strong. Eastern Europe has confronted the additional challenge of having to dismantle one set of institutions and create another. Where institutions are weak, one of the most serious outcomes is rampant corruption—as reflected in Transparency International's corruption perception index. The bottom 10 countries (out of 99) in the 1999 index were, in order of increasing corruption: Kenya, Paraguay, Yugoslavia, Tanzania, Honduras, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Nigeria and Cameroon. Developing countries and transition countries do not, of course, have a monopoly on corruption, which in recent years has become an issue in Italy, the United Kingdom, Japan and, more recently, Germany.

- **Elite domination**—Even when countries move toward democracy, the old elites may remain in control through strategies of compromise or force. African countries that are formally democratic maintain entrenched systems of personal rule that frequently channel resources to individuals in favoured ethnic groups. They also mutate according to shifting power allegiances. In Kenya, for example, the

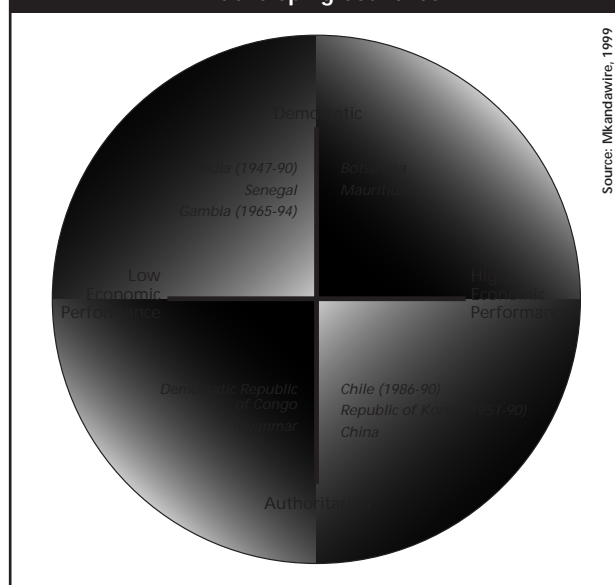
ruling Kenya African National Union party was originally dominated by the Kikuyu; but President Moi has steadily transformed the party into one that primarily serves the needs of members of his own group, the Kalenjin. In Latin America, the military managed to retain much of its authority, even if some of this is now unravelling. In Guatemala the same landed and business oligarchies have had considerable influence over the economy for 80 years or more, and in the democratic era remain firmly in charge.

The rise of the technocrats

Local political circumstances push some countries toward autocracy. But external influences also play a part in dampening democracy. They can encourage more technocratic forms of governance that weaken the position of elected politicians and concentrate day-to-day decision making in the hands of a few national experts or institutions operating beyond democratic oversight and control.

One of the main pressures in this direction is the increasing predominance of the financial markets. All countries now find themselves at

Figure 3.3 – Democracy and economic performance in developing countries



the mercy of international financiers. This applies particularly to those that have attracted large amounts of private funds—the OECD countries, Latin America, East Asia and parts of Eastern Europe. In the past, most such flows were the result of companies making foreign direct investments—whether in factories or mines or other enterprises. These companies were making fairly long-term commitments; and in order to protect their investments, they tried to establish good relations with governments, trade unions and other local institutions. They were not particularly sensitive to immediate changes in the macroeconomic environment. Indeed they might welcome a bout of inflation if it helped stimulate local demand for their products. Even when there were deeper economic problems in the country, each company's physical investment retained much of its value.

Now, however, as described in chapter two, more capital is coming from financial investors—those buying equities or bonds. Portfolio investors and traders in bonds or currencies will always be more nervous about inflation, or about any development that depreciates the currency in which their bonds or equities are denominated. They have no way of recovering their position other than to sell. And they have short time horizons: indeed, they have to make many of their decisions in seconds.

Aware of this, governments are permanently looking over their shoulders to see how the markets react to their macroeconomic decisions—particularly those that have a bearing on inflation. A government might prefer a looser monetary policy as a way of stimulating demand. But even a rumour of such a change could cause capital to flee.

THE RISE OF THE CENTRAL BANK

In these circumstances, governments may believe that the best approach is to remove

monetary policy from the political arena altogether and to pass all decisions on monetary and even fiscal policy to technocrats in the central bank.

Independent central bankers are presumed to have several advantages over politicians as far as consistent monetary policy is concerned. First, they are less susceptible to immediate popular pressure and so can steer a steadier course. Second, since they are likely to be in office longer than politicians, they can have a long-term strategy that does not need to be in tune with electoral cycles. Third, they are not distracted by other considerations, such as popular pressures to boost growth and employment.

The delegation of authority to central banks is well advanced in industrialized countries. The United States and many Western European countries have now given varying degrees of autonomy to their central banks, and a similar process is under way in developing countries. In Chile, for example, the Pinochet dictatorship in 1989 gave independence to the central bank as a way of tying the hands of the incoming government and preventing a reversal of its own neoliberal economic policies. And during the 1990s, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela also granted substantial autonomy to their central banks. The trend is less advanced in Africa, though in most of Francophone Africa price stability is delivered by membership in the Franc Zone.

For the transition countries of Eastern Europe, one of the strongest forces encouraging technocratic decision making is the drive toward the creation of a common currency for the European Union. This requires countries in Euroland to converge toward similar rates of interest, budget deficits and inflation. While the transition countries wanting to join the EU are not expected to meet the same convergence criteria, they still have to pass some rigorous tests on economic management before they can be admitted to the club. They must

demonstrate clear progress in a number of areas, including liberalizing capital flows and establishing independent central banks.

THE RISE OF THE TECHNOCRATIC FINANCE MINISTER

Finance ministries have always been important, but in most governments they have now been catapulted to positions of dominance. Pressures for economic stabilization and balanced budgets have drained power away from the spending ministers and pushed it toward finance ministers. And in an increasingly complex world economy, finance ministers themselves are now required to be specialists. Gone are the days when the job could be filled by any politician. Today, the candidate is expected to have academic training in economics, or at least to be fully conversant with complex economic issues. Ministers such as Leszek Balcerowicz of Poland, Yegor Gaidar of Russia, and Kwesi Botchway of Ghana were all highly trained economists or academics. This trend is particularly evident in Latin America. Alejandro Foxley in Chile, Domingo Cavallo in Argentina and Pedro Aspe in Mexico received doctorates from US universities. On returning home, these technocrat-politicians—"technopols"—then assembled cadres of like-minded people and built a power base in their respective political parties.

THE NEW MANAGERIALISM

The drift to technocracy is also evident in the reorganization of government bureaucracies. Here, the trend is shifting responsibilities from government departments to executive agencies. Although staffed by civil servants, agencies are headed by chief executives, on fixed-term contracts, who have independent boards of directors. This trend is furthest advanced in OECD countries, notably in the United Kingdom, where by 1995 two thirds of civil servants were employed in agencies—dealing with everything from teacher training to the issuing of passports. Developing countries have been following the same path—notably Ghana, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Venezuela.

The same impulse has also led to the establishment of independent systems for tax administration. These are run separately from the Ministry of Finance, and sometimes even from the regular civil service. Uganda, for example, followed this path and as a result managed to raise tax revenue over the period 1992–94 from 0.9 to 1.7 per cent of GDP—an example that has encouraged neighbouring Kenya and Tanzania to follow suit.

Executive agencies can operate with greater managerial discipline and more direct incentives than government departments. But even when agencies succeed, they do so at the expense of day-to-day democratic control.



G-7 finance ministers and central bank governors, Tokyo, Japan.

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM WASHINGTON

Moves toward more technocratic control in developing countries have been encouraged by the IMF and the World Bank. From their point of view, insulating governments from democratic pressures is an advantage when carrying out structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). Such programmes are often highly unpopular—which is understandable, since they generally increase unemployment, reduce wages and cut government services. In a number of cases, they have provoked riots in the streets.

Unpopularity was not a handicap when SAPs were being imposed by military dictatorships or single-party regimes; but in a more democratic era, public participation can make such programmes more troublesome. The Bretton Woods institutions tended, therefore, to confine policy discussions to a small group of people. In Latin America, for example, they worked through business groups and the technopols with whom they had close relationships. In Africa, the situation was slightly different. Since governments had fewer trained people who were enthusiastic about market reforms, the Bretton Woods institutions had to supply most of the technocrats themselves—placing experts in key financial and economic ministries. When, as democratization proceeded, there was greater pressure for local autonomy, this international staff was gradually replaced with local technocrats who could be relied upon to support adjustment.

TECHNOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY

Citizens in emerging democracies may not object to more technocratic government if it delivers economic stability and development. But this assumes that the technocrats get things right. When they get things wrong, they may undermine not just their own position but the legitimacy of democracy itself. In Eastern Europe, for example, where much public policy has been put into the hands of finance min-

istries and technocrats, the public response to economic failure and collapsing welfare systems is to aspire not to greater democracy but to the old certainties of communism. Surveys in Bulgaria, Slovakia, Belarus and Ukraine all show good ratings for the defunct regimes.

But the main danger of technocratic control, and of isolating policy makers from popular sentiment, is that it can alienate quite a large proportion of the population and thus block the way to future progress. Experience has shown that the best way to achieve durable support is through democratic processes of participation, dialogue and compromise. They should not merely promise long-term prosperity but also take care to compensate the short-term losers. In 1999 the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, reviewing 10 years of transition, concluded: "It is commonly believed that successful reform requires a stable, strong government of technocrats committed to reform, but the experience of the last 10 years of transition has contradicted this view. A high degree of political competition, rather than a government insulated from electoral pressures, has promoted reform in many countries".

Without these processes of adjustment and adaptation, countries also risk lurching into political volatility, low voter turnout and a regression to primordial and sectarian forms of politics. Even industrialized countries such as Sweden, Italy, Austria and the US have seen the rise of new parties and charismatic figures with few or no links to established parties. In Eastern Europe it is noticeable that countries pushing ahead most rapidly with reform have had more frequent changes of government than those that moved more slowly. Poland, for example, had seven prime ministers and three presidents between 1990 and 1997.

Technocratic government poses serious problems for old and new democracies. It empowers narrow elites and undermines

both democratic accountability and popular sovereignty. Clearly, policy making does now require greater technical expertise. But such expertise should still be open to democratic oversight.

INTEREST GROUPS AND SOCIAL PACTS

The most direct form of oversight is via elected representatives and the ballot box. But citizens have many other ways of influencing governments, through membership in other organizations and institutions of civil society. Many of these contacts are sporadic and involve trying to influence governments on particular issues. But there can also be more formal arrangements that culminate in social pacts—as individual interest groups pledge support or restraint in the national interest.

These efforts fit into a corporatist model of government in which different interest groups are incorporated into the political process. In exchange for having an influence over the formulation of public policies, these groups then have to assume responsibility to help implement them.

The most important of these interest groups have been the trade unions and employers' associations—the social partners who have entered into tripartite relations with government. Such negotiations flourished in the Keynesian era, when governments felt more confident about manipulating their economies to achieve high growth with low unemployment and low inflation. Trade unions could, for example, be offered better working conditions in exchange for wage restraint. In many cases this process involved an annual round of wage negotiations—as in Germany or the United Kingdom in the 1970s. But there have also been more formal social pacts, particularly in smaller countries like Sweden and Switzerland. In Latin America, such pacts have a long history.

The era of liberalization and globalization

might have been thought to have done away with corporatism. Governments are less confident about controlling their economies. Trade union membership rates have gone into freefall. And employers' associations are being overtaken by the spread of multinationals.

In Mexico, for example, corporatism has been assailed from many different directions. The long-dominant Institutional Revolutionary Party is slowly loosening its grip on political life. And the central labour organization, the authoritarian Confederation of Mexican Workers, is seeing its influence eroded. Faced with lower wages and rising unemployment, workers are now forming smaller independent unions.

Yet the idea of social pacts seems far from dead in countries that are attempting to build more stable and more democratic political systems. In 1997, for example, the government of the Republic of Korea established a tripartite commission consisting of the state, labour and other forces of civil society. This reached an impasse when the government refused to accept union proposals for wide-ranging social safety nets. Probably the best example of a social pact in the developing world is South Africa's National Economic Development and Labour Council, which is attempting to bring together the state, organized labour, business interests and community groups in an elaborate set of corporatist institutions (box 3.3).

Ethnicity and democratization

States may become more technocratic and centralized. But along with the centripetal forces drawing power to the centre, there are also centrifugal forces tending to wrench democratic states apart. One of the most evident in recent years has been ethnicity. The Balkan wars, the secessionist claims in Indonesia, and the continuing struggles across Africa, from Western Sahara to Somalia, are all evidence of continuing ethnic tension.

All states are multi-ethnic, though some have many more groups than others. On the basis of language, European political systems include among their citizens only around 9.5

ethnic groups per state, compared with 21 in Latin America and the Caribbean. But the most ethnically segmented states tend to be found in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, where

Box 3.3 – Social pacts in South Africa

The ANC was elected in 1994, pledging to build a more egalitarian society. It had long maintained an alliance with the main trade union organization, the Congress of South African Trade Unions. But the ANC government also recognized the importance of protecting the country's industrial base and its international competitiveness. How could it transform South African society while maintaining industrial peace? One response in 1995 was to establish the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC)—a multipartite body designed to reach consensus on economic and social policy between organized labour, organized employers, community groups and the government.

One of its most important achievements has been the Job Summit in 1998. This created possibilities for a negotiated social pact that would include wage and price increases, the distribution of the benefits of productivity improvements, and agreement on macroeconomic policy, social welfare and the investment regime.

But on some issues consensus has proved elusive, and at times NEDLAC has been bypassed in favour of bilateral negotiations. The Social Plan and Basic Conditions of Employment Act, for example, caused a major dispute. Employers were worried that it would affect their global competitiveness; and some of their views were reflected in the final Social Plan, which provides for the active management of workforce reduction when large-scale job losses are unavoidable. The trade unions wanted full protection against job losses, and in 1997 they staged a series of strikes to achieve a 40-hour week—though in the end they compromised in return for government commitment to resist employers' demands for greater flexibility in working hours between sectors.

NEDLAC faces a number of problems. Its members do not represent all the affected parties—notably those who are not trade union members. Some of its members have stronger negotiating skills than others. Also, although NEDLAC requires the government to bring its major policies to the negotiating table, it does not require the same of the other social partners.

The wide-ranging public sector strikes of the last few months of 1999 suggested that unions were becoming disenchanted with their limited scope to influence policy. But NEDLAC does provide the institutional basis for South Africans to engage with the new global order. This process, which may be called liberalized bargaining, assumes that participants accept the need to open up the economy; but it also offers them the opportunity to influence the terms on which this is done.

the number of groups per state averages 50 or more. In some countries there are many hundreds—Nigeria has 470, India 407, Indonesia 712, and Papua New Guinea 817.

In the majority of countries, one ethnic group tends to dominate. Even in ethnically diverse Asia, one group makes up more than half the population in 34 of 46 states, and the same is true in 19 out of 26 states in the Pacific. The only region to break this pattern is sub-Saharan Africa where, if the small island states are excluded, a single group dominates in only 12 out of 34 states.

A useful way of considering the ethnic structures of different countries is in terms of polarity. This is illustrated in table 3.1, which classifies countries in five types. The simpler cases are unipolar, bipolar or tripolar. A unipolar structure refers to cases where one group enjoys an overwhelming majority. A bipolar ethnic structure may either be composed of only two main ethnic groups or, as in Sierra Leone, it may contain a multiplicity of groups in which two roughly equal groups account for more than 60 per cent of the population. In a tripolar ethnic setting, there are either only three ethnic groups or three large groups in a multi-ethnic setting. Then there are multipolar countries—either concentrated or fragmented. In the concentrated multipolarity case, one ethnic group may constitute half or 40 per cent of the population, but still not be large enough to outnumber clusters of smaller groups. In the case of fragmented multipolarity, no group is large enough to dominate the political system. The conflicts that are often difficult to manage are those that occur in bipolar or tripolar settings. Government reforms should aim toward moderation, weakening polarity, and revealing multiple cleavages.

Ethnic diversity is not in itself a problem. Individuals and states can be enriched by cultural and ethnic diversity. Nor is ethnicity fixed and thus likely to store up trouble for the

Table 3.1 – A typology of ethnic structures

	Number of groups	Percentage of population made up of		
		largest group	two largest groups	three largest groups
Unipolarity				
Botswana	30	70	80	82
Equatorial Guinea	12	75	77	79
Cambodia	17	90	94	96
China	205	70	78	82
Viet Nam	85	87	88	89
Bulgaria	9	85	94	96
Bipolarity				
Rwanda	2	90	99	100
Burundi	2	85	99	100
Belgium	4	57	90	91
Fiji	10	49	95	99
Guyana	6	51	82	93
Sierra Leone	20	31	61	69
Tripolarity				
Switzerland	4	74	92	99
Nigeria	470	19	38	54
Malawi	15	32	47	58
Fragmented multipolarity				
Cameroon	279	5	9	11
Namibia	27	7	13	17
Tanzania	131	15	30	34
Papua New Guinea	817	4	7	8
Solomon Islands	66	5	10	13
Vanuatu	109	4	7	9
Concentrated multipolarity				
India	407	50	57	64
Congo ^a	60	51	64	73
Niger	20	43	61	70
Kenya	61	20	34	47
Togo	43	21	33	42
Ethiopia	82	29	36	44

Note: ^a Republic of the Congo

Source: Bangura and Nakamura, 1999, based on Grimes, 1996 and Premdas, 1995

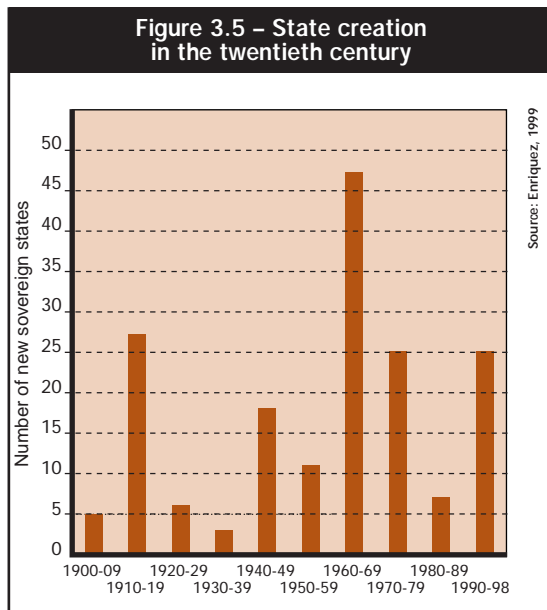
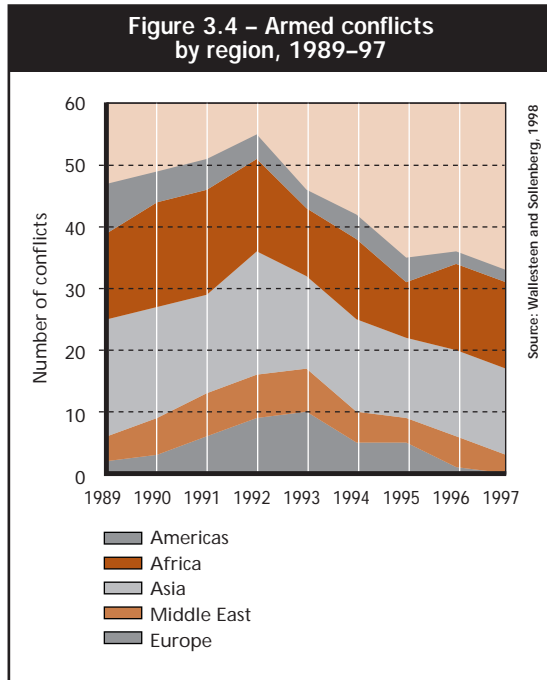
future. Ethnicity is constantly adapting: it is a variable and shifting attribute that can never pin a person down to a precise identity. Many ethnic markers—physical characteristics, language, religion and culture—are very fluid. And while some societies consider religion, say, or language to be defining characteristics, others

may ignore such considerations altogether.

The problems arise only when ethnic identity is politicized—at which point it can be used to provoke behaviour that is insular, xenophobic and destructive. It has this power because, *in extremis*, ethnic identity overrides all other loyalties and obligations.

One of the clearest indicators of the increase in ethnic strife was the alarmingly high number of civil wars in the 1990s, even though these decreased between 1992–94, and 1996–97. In the 1990s most wars were not inter-state but intra-state. These may not have started as ethnic conflicts, but ethnic identity certainly came to the fore once they were under way. Such conflicts typically originate in the maldistribution of resources or jobs, or in abuses of cultural or human rights. Those who struggle to preserve or overturn these inequalities often use ethnicity as their focal point.

As figure 3.4 illustrates, most of these conflicts have been in the more ethnically diverse regions—Africa and Asia. These are also the regions that have produced the majority of refugees: of the 11.4 million refugees in 1998, 41 per cent came from Asia and 28 per cent from Africa.



THE RISK OF SECESSION

Inter-ethnic strife may end in the crushing of an insurrection or a change in the national power structure. But it can also lead to secession and the creation of a new state. Figure 3.5 indicates the rate of sovereign state formation in the last century. The peak in the 1960s and 1970s represents the period of decolonization and independence, while that in the 1990s largely corresponds to existing states breaking up. The most dramatic sequence was in East and Central Europe in the 1990s, when 22 new states appeared, most of which had been parts of the former Soviet Union or Yugoslavia. Few new states have been created elsewhere: none in the Americas, and only one in Asia—East Timor.

Paradoxically, despite the turmoil in Africa, only one fully recognized state has been created (Eritrea), though two others—Anjouan (which seceded from the Comoros in 1997) and Somaliland (which has effectively become a separate state within Somalia)—may be recognized in the near future.

The main reason for Africa's slow rate of state formation is the degree of ethnic fragmentation. Africa has more than 2,000 ethnic groups, whose average size is less than one million. It is hardly practical for each of these to have a state of its own. Instead, political leaders have tried to forge new states within their inherited colonial boundaries. The reluctance of political leaders to seek new nation states has been reinforced by the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, which forbids redrawing of colonially inherited borders and makes it difficult for secessionist movements to gain recognition. In fact, sub-Saharan Africa has only three states where ethnicity has been linked to statehood—Lesotho, Swaziland and Somalia, though the third is in the process of breaking up.

The African situation is mirrored to some extent in Asia. All the larger states—China, India, Indonesia and Pakistan—are multi-ethnic. Of these, probably only Indonesia, where ethnic fragmentation is compounded by geographical dispersion into islands, is at serious risk from secession.

Electoral systems and ethnic diversity

Governments have adopted a number of strategies for accommodating ethnic diversity within single states. In some cases they have done so by altering the structure of the state in ways that allow distinct groups to have greater autonomy. Some of the larger and most diverse countries, such as India, have federal structures that devolve considerable authority to state or provincial assemblies. Many states have also made efforts to decentralize—deconcentrating

their activities, or delegating administrative tasks, or in some cases devolving considerable authority to local governments. The primary purpose of decentralization is usually to make the government more responsive to regional and local sensitivities. But since most ethnic groups also tend to be concentrated in specific regions, this effectively permits greater ethnic autonomy.

Uganda, for example, has since 1994 been decentralizing authority to 46 districts, whose activities now account for 30 per cent of government expenditure. In many respects this is thought to have been a success and to have consolidated national unity. But there have also been complaints that the districts were actually created along ethnic lines, so that decentralization has intensified ethnic politics—making it difficult for civil servants to work outside their home areas.

In addition to changing the structure of their states, governments have also tried to accommodate ethnic divisions by devising more appropriate voting and governance systems. Here there are two main options. One, the “alternative vote”, encourages political parties to be multi-ethnic. The other, the “list system”, accepts that parties will be rooted in ethnic identities but tries to make these parties share power.

PLURALISTIC PARTIES AND THE ALTERNATIVE VOTE

One electoral system that encourages parties to appeal across ethnic lines is the alternative vote. This system requires voters to rank candidates in an order of preference. If no candidate receives more than 50 per cent of the vote in the first count, the last candidate is eliminated and his or her second-preference votes are transferred to the remaining candidates. The process is repeated until a winner emerges. This system can still allow candidates who adopt an ethnically extreme position to be

elected, but it reduces their chances of success—and improves the prospects of those who adopt more centrist positions and are prepared to appeal to people outside their own core group.

The alternative vote was initially devised for fairly homogenous industrialized countries—to address some of the weaknesses of the first-past-the-post system, where a candidate may be elected even if heartily disliked by the majority of voters who split their vote between two or more other parties. The main Western democracy to use this system is Australia.

But the alternative vote could also be of value in ethnically diverse developing countries. So far, it has not been used extensively. Papua New Guinea used it in early elections but subsequently replaced it with a first-past-the-post system. Sri Lanka has a variant of the alternative vote for presidential elections, and Fiji adopted it in 1996.

CONSOCIATION AND THE PARTY LIST

A diametrically opposed approach accepts that citizens will vote along ethnic lines but obliges the ethnically based parties to share power in a government of national unity. This “consociation” model thus tries to promote diversity not within parties, but within governments.

Consociation typically requires a system of voting based on party lists. A country is divided into very large constituencies—or may even be treated as a single constituency, which is usually the case in a presidential election. In the case of a parliamentary election, voters do not choose an individual candidate, but instead vote for a party. Parties are then allocated parliamentary seats according to their proportion of the total vote—nominating their representatives from a previously prepared ranked list of candidates.

The consociational governments that this system permits ideally have four key elements. First, they are coalitions that reflect all seg-

ments of society. Second, they distribute public sector jobs proportionally to each ethnic group. Third, they offer a high degree of territorial autonomy—through federalism or decentralization. Fourth, they allow minority groups a veto on important issues. This system effectively encourages each key group to form its own party in order to gain representation in both the government and the civil service.

Consociational systems are to be found in Austria, Belgium and Switzerland, and also in developing countries such as Malaysia and South Africa. They are also a popular choice for negotiators trying to devise solutions for war-torn societies, as in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Northern Ireland. But this does not always work. There have been failures in Cyprus and Lebanon, for example, and the consociational agreement for Angola was never fully implemented because of the recalcitrance of the rebel leader, Jonas Savimbi.

THE MERITS OF DIFFERENT SYSTEMS

There has been considerable debate about the relative merits of these two approaches. This has centred on four main issues.

- **Promoting moderation**—The alternative vote will only be biased toward moderate candidates if each constituency has an ethnically mixed electorate across which candidates are obliged to appeal. If constituencies have one dominant group, then ethnically extreme candidates can still be elected. In this case, the party list and consociation may be a better option.
- **Voter empowerment**—The alternative vote has the advantage of allowing voters to identify with a particular candidate and monitor his or her performance. The party list system discourages accountability to voters. After the election, successful candidates are more likely to respond to the wishes of their party, particularly those of the party leader.
- **Ease of use**—Illiterate voters may find the alternative vote system too complex, though

this can be alleviated by the use of separate and differently coloured ballot papers to indicate second and third choices. Ballot boxes can also be arranged in a rank-ordered way for voters to express their preferences.

- **Strong government**—The alternative vote system is majoritarian—electing people who appeal to a broad spectrum. Opposition parties and more extreme groups are thus excluded, but this may provoke them into extra-parliamentary activity that could destabilize the government. Also, when groups are sharply polarized voters may refuse to exercise their second-preference votes. The consociational approach, conversely, will draw in even the most extreme groups. This may build stability, but it will not necessarily produce strong government.

The two basic models have their strengths and weaknesses. And of course they do not exhaust the possibilities. Countries contemplating a new electoral system can spend many years mulling over a plethora of options. Another popular choice is the “single transferable vote”, where voters list their preferred candidates in order; when the leading candidate has received sufficient votes to be elected, his or her surplus votes are transferred to other candidates. Under the single transferable vote system more than one candidate may be eligible for election in a constituency: this offers opportunities for smaller parties to be elected into parliament. Elections may also be conducted in a series of separate rounds, progressively eliminating weaker candidates.

There are other ways of modifying party behaviour. There can be a ban on ethnic or religious symbols, for example, or parties may be obliged to establish offices throughout the country rather than exclusively in their home territory. There are also many variations on the rules of consociation. Thus party lists may be required to have a minimum number of individuals from more than one region, or the pres-

idential and vice presidential candidates of political parties may be chosen from different regions—as in Sierra Leone. And there can be various forms of affirmative action, including reserved seats for minorities, as in New Zealand.

In practice, states have a broad palette of options and tend to mix and match systems of voting with different structures of government. Very few adopt all elements of the ideal consociational model. They are unlikely to allow a minority veto, for example, or to distribute civil service posts on a strictly proportional basis. And there are many forms of power sharing. The Swiss model is based on strong, multi-ethnic parties. Nigeria rotates the presidency among individuals from different regions. And Malaysian political parties create their “grand coalition” prior to the election.

The choice of solutions depends very much on ethnic make-up. Consociational or power-sharing instruments may be unavoidable in bipolar and tripolar ethnic structures, but may not have the same urgency in unipolar or multipolar settings. And there are many forms of power sharing. Thus bipolar states such as Rwanda, Burundi and Cyprus are likely to opt for some form of power sharing, although there may have to be specific provisions to allow the minority group to provide the prime minister or president at some stage. In Rwanda and Burundi, where there are mixed settlements, this may best be combined with an alternative vote system to encourage the formation of plural political parties. In Northern Ireland, the Good Friday Agreement was based on power sharing using the single transferable vote system. Under this scheme, the more moderate Ulster Unionist Party increased its share of parliamentary seats by 4.6 per cent through second-order preference votes; and the strongly anti-war Northern Ireland Women’s Coalition won two seats despite its poor showing in the first-order preferences. The major pitfall of Bosnia’s power sharing government, which is

based on the party list system, is that it offers no incentives for parties to attract votes outside of their ethnic enclaves. In tripolar structures such as Nigeria, which has a very large number of ethnic groups, there is more room for manoeuvre. Nigeria has a non-ethnic-based party system that has power sharing within a federal structure.

When considering the possibilities, the designers of institutional systems should be careful not to freeze existing ethnic cleavages, but always to allow citizens room to change their affiliation or express multiple identities. They should also promote institutions that are likely to reflect cross-cutting cleavages—such as trade unions, professional associations, and other civic organizations. Whatever system is chosen should aim to build a pluralistic state that will promote economic development and deliver social services to all, without prejudice or discrimination.

The democratic process

People who live in democratic societies tend after a while to become complacent—to forget that democracy involves a constant process of negotiation, and that its institutions need to be regularly reassessed and reinvigorated. The older democracies in Europe, from Austria to Sweden, frequently hear disturbing echoes of the fascism and racism that they thought had long been banished. And the United States, which is in the forefront of media technology, has yet to address the serious democratic implications of the fact that it takes a great deal of money to be elected to the highest office.

Many other societies have more fragile democracies that could yet slide backward. Latin America appeared to have banished the era of military coups, but Ecuador started the twenty-first century with something that came very close, and Venezuela seems to have settled for an old-fashioned centralized presidency.

Elsewhere, many developing and transition

countries have yet to be convinced of the value of democracy. They seem prepared to experiment with participation and accountability, but also to set these aside if they do not deliver economic progress or social peace. Probably the most difficult circumstances arise when people feel they do not have enough in common to be willing to share a common government—and threaten to fracture their states along religious or ethnic fault lines. And all over the world there is a risk that even the most mature democracies can ossify into technocracies that place many functions of the state beyond the control of ordinary citizens.

All these possibilities underline the need for governments to maintain their vigilance, to develop new constitutional devices and instruments that not merely proclaim grand ideals but also help to meet people's immediate needs, and to fulfil their basic human rights. Democracy is not a static condition; it is a constantly evolving process—and one that can always mutate in unpredictable and unsettling directions.