

Introduction to Authoritarian Rule
Middle Eastern Cases
Week 3

Outline

I. Why Should We Examine Authoritarian Rule (A. R.)?

1. Approximately half of the world's population still lives under an authoritarian rule of sorts.
2. Most of the developing world and all poor nations (except India) are ruled by dictatorships. All Arab Middle Eastern states are authoritarian.
3. Finally, authoritarianism breeds extremism everywhere because, by definition, it restricts/limits lawful political participation. Again, the Arab world is a case in point.
 - a. contrast with "democracy:" two reasons for the lack of violent opposition (lawful participation + repeated game)
 - b. under A.R., "winner takes all" leads to rising stakes:
 - gives rise to cycle of violence
 - radicalizes the opposition by transforming
 - 1) demands, 2) strategy, and 3) method
 - c. outcome as cycle: extreme oppression vs. extreme responses

II. The Methodological Problem (in prevailing literature)

1. Explaining a negative (i.e., lack of democracy) by a negative (i.e., lack of prerequisites for democracy): i.e., instead of focusing on "what is," focus has been on "what is lacking."
2. Normative, not Scientific
3. The need for positive explanations: i.e., what gives rise to, and sustains, authoritarian rule? What are its features?

III. Authoritarian Rule: Basic Features

A. Four Common Misconceptions:

1. One-man rule
2. A traditional form of rule
3. No elections
4. No party life

B. Juan Linz's Definition:

"Political systems with limited, not responsible, political pluralism, without elaborate and guiding ideology, but with distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political mobilization, except at some points in their development, and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones."

C. Six components of Linz's working definition

IV. How Do Authoritarian Regimes Come About?

- A. Struggle for independence against external/colonial power (Populist Authoritarianism)
- B. Crisis in liberal or populist "democracies" (Bureaucratic Authoritarianism)

V. Authoritarianism in the Arab World

Terms and Concepts

1. Authoritarian Rule
2. Radicalized Opposition
3. Limited Pluralism
4. Corporatism
5. Totalitarian Rule
6. Ideology
7. Mentality
8. Mobilization
9. Populist Authoritarianism
10. Bureaucratic Authoritarianism