

# Democratic norms and the dynamics of state social relations

Arts and Humanities in Higher Education 2024, Vol. 22(2): 61–65  
© The Author(s) 2024



URL: <https://www.ajhr.org/ahhe/2024-vol-22-issue-2>  
DOI: 10.1177/14740222241256165



**Bakhtiyor Qudratov**

Gulistan State University, UZB

G. O'Donnell (1936-2011) believes that the important factors of the formation of various types of democracy are not related to the characteristics of the previous authoritarian system. Although many countries have a deep socio-economic crisis left behind by the former authoritarian regime, new democracies may turn to authoritarian rule or remain weak and uncertain. Such a situation can be maintained for a long time and block the ways leading to institutional forms of democracy.

Social sciences owe the theory of "bureaucratic authoritarianism" to G. O'Donnell, who justified the need to reduce state social costs and restrain democratic organizations in the context of transition from "light" to "heavy" form of industrialization. After all, socio-economic development never leads to democratization. In addition, according to him, there are some subtypes of democracy (for example, "demokratura").

The connection between authoritarianism and democracy is not expressed in economic terms, F.Fukuyama emphasizes. Indeed, many countries, especially Asian countries, have successfully transitioned to democracy through "authoritarian" means, but it would be absurd to suggest that the former communist regimes in Eastern Europe suspend democratic transformation until market reforms are introduced in the economy. There are soft and strict forms of authoritarianism, authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes, right and left supporters of authoritarianism. Totalitarianism does not imply diversity in the composition of the societies to which it belongs. Authoritarian rule eventually loses the trust of the society without being able to fulfill its mission.

---

Corresponding author:

Bakhtiyor Qudratov, Gulistan State University, 120100 Uzbekistan, Gulistan City, 4<sup>th</sup>-microregion.

Email: [bakhtiyorqudratov@mail.ru](mailto:bakhtiyorqudratov@mail.ru)

The successful transition from authoritarianism to democracy in Spain in the 70s of the 20th century was largely due to the parliamentary system of government, believes Juan Linz (b. 1926), an American sociologist, professor of political science at Yale University, author of classic works on the theory of totalitarian and authoritarian systems, various forms of transition to democracy). It is doubtful that the American model of democracy will be suitable for countries with serious social and economic problems and difficulties related to the heavy legacy of the authoritarian system. H. Linz was one of the first to note the lack of basic totalitarian features in many modern autocracies. He considered authoritarianism as a separate type of regime that differs from democracy, totalitarianism, post-totalitarianism, sultanism. He singled out a number of features characteristic of totalitarian terror, such as: systematicity, ideology, unprecedented prohibition and repression, and the absence of a clear legal basis.

According to Z. Brzezinski, democracy, if it is not rooted in the society and strengthened by the traditions of constitutionalism, can turn into a system of plebiscites and give legitimacy to extremism and authoritarianism.

A number of researchers argue that authoritarianism and collectivism are opposed to individualism, suggesting that there is a connection between them. Collectivism leaves no room for either humanistic or liberal approaches, but only opens the way to totalitarian particularism, writes F. Hayek. By collectivism, F. Hayek understands any theoretical system that seeks to organize the whole society in the direction of the main single goal and refuses to recognize the area of individual autonomy protected by law.

Barbara Geddes, associate professor of political science at the University of California, proposed a classification of widely recognized authoritarian regimes as personalist, military, and one-party. It justifies the different interests of political actors depending on the type of authoritarianism, and this affects the pace of political change. For example, in a military regime, the logic of management is more likely to separate the best representatives, while a one-party and personalist regime is able to eliminate the struggle between them early and preserve the integrity of the ruling groups.

B. Geddes analyzed the role of civil society in the conditions of authoritarianism. For example, in a number of countries (for example, Uruguay and Brazil), the public actually managed to stop privatization and reduce public spending through democratic processes.

B. Geddes also explained the system of checks and balances in authoritarianism. For example, in Greece, Uruguay and Brazil, the measures to limit the amount of payment, and in others to reduce it, came mainly from the executive branch and were not approved by the legislature. Liberalization initiated by representatives of the executive branch may be blocked by factions of the ruling party accustomed to relying on the state for political resources and ready to unite with opposition parties to mobilize popular movements.

According to B. Geddes, one of the discoveries made during the research of 11 countries indicates that most of the reforms are the initiative of the representatives of the executive power, who for one reason or another are not indebted to the party, faction or group that used the opportunities as a result of state intervention in the economy. B. Geddes notes that the probability of the success of reforms increases in cases where the representatives of the executive power 1) are represented by parties or factions that do not set the distribution of the income obtained as a result of state management of the economy, and 2) are supported by the majority of legislators or organized parties.

According to Australian politician Andreas Schedler (b. 1964), an expert in the field of comparative studies of post-authoritarian changes and democratization, the founder of the theory of electoral authoritarianism, and the founders of the theory of competitive authoritarianism - Steven Levitsky, professor of political science and social sciences at Harvard University, and Lucian Wei, professor of political science at the University of Toronto, within the mentioned forms of authoritarianism, elections to the executive and legislative branches are held on a regular basis, but not directly under the veil of dictatorship. Although both opposed and open to the participation of the opposition, reminiscent of the democratic mechanism for replacing the best representatives, they are agents of legitimizing and maintaining the positions of power of authoritarian rulers. Here the elections are fair but not fair, the opposition is open but not equal.

According to Georgetown University political science professor Mark Howard and German politician of Vietnamese origin, Philip Rössler, Vice-Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, - the electoral authoritarian regime is divided into two types: hegemonic and controversial. In the hegemonic type, the opposition is not elected and they are not competitive at all. In the second round, the opposition has wide freedom, but the electoral barriers are very low. Arguably, the level of stability of authoritarianism largely depends on the behavior of the opposition: first, it is important that the opposition participates in the electoral process, not boycott. Secondly, it is necessary to unite the opposition parties and present a single candidate.

If we cannot find a way to protect the culture of freedom, it will suffer, and the free society will fall under the pressure of authoritarian collectivism and tribalism. Wearing the new masks of nationalism and religious fanaticism, these forces will become the most serious enemy of democracy and take the place of communism, believes the laureate of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2010, Peruvian and Spanish writer, playwright, publicist, political figure Mario Vargas Losa (b. 1936).

In totalitarianism, the consolidation of power occurs and the separation of powers is complete, the separation of civil society and the state disappears, and civil society quickly absorbs power and eventually disappears. All aspects of human life (economic, social, family and personal) are under state control.

The most common approach among social scientists is the method of totalitarianism, which was proposed in 1956 by Harvard University professor Carl Friedrich (1904-1974) and Z. Brzezinski. This method is based on some common aspects of Stalinist USSR, German nationalists and Italian fascists. They proposed six signs of totalitarianism as chrestomatists: ideology, mass party, terrorist system, monopoly in mass media, monopoly of armed forces and centralized control of economy.

The theory of totalitarianism highlighted the negative aspects of the political system of nationalist Germany and the USSR, and highlighted the similarities between the communist and fascism-like rule of the various parties. Jürgen Habermas (born in 1929), a German philosopher and sociologist, one of the representatives of the Frankfurt School, had such an opinion.

The importance of Y. Habermas's approach consists in the clarity of the "democratic process" and the necessary conditions for the decision to be considered "democratic", writes Bent Flyvberg, professor of the Department of Development and Planning of the University of Alborg (Denmark). Yu. Habermas scheme can be used as an example of legislation, development of institutions, process planning. However, Habermas was an idealist who did not fully understand the functioning of power, strategy and tactics that ensure the development of democracy. Making decisions, writing a constitution and developing institutions is easy, but specific constitutional and institutional changes are quite another matter.

The Austrian and British philosopher and sociologist Karl Popper (1902-1994) argues that the ideal state management, which forms the basis of totalitarianism, does not actually exist - it is opposed by a liberal democracy, a delicate political system, and an open pluralistic society.

Reimon Aron (1905-1983), one of the major researchers of totalitarianism, a French philosopher, one of the authors of the theory of industrialization and post-industrial societies, gives the following acceptable system of division of power into independent branches: "In a sense, this is true. The holder of executive power - the President is elected in a different way than the holder of legislative power - the House of Representatives and the Senate. But the functioning of the system requires the President and Congress to work together." "Power is divided: it is no longer concentrated in the hands of a group of people, and in the systems we are interested in, it is not always clear who actually makes the decisions. In practice, not everyone accepts such a division of power, so the myths about the "negative group" with real power are increasing, and it is absolutely absurd to look for its open manifestation. The separation of economic and political power in all constitutional-pluralist systems of Western Europe and the United States is considered acceptable in most respects.

## Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## References

- Brzezinski Z. The Wrong Way to Sell Democracy to the Arab World // *The Washington Post*. – 2004. – March 08.
- Fukuyama F. Confucianism and Democracy // *Journal of Democracy*. – 1995. – Vol.6. – No.2. – pp.20-23.
- Geddes B. What do we know about democratization after twenty years? // *Annual review in political science*. -1999. –Vol.2. – P.121-123.
- Habermas J. Die Kulturkritik der Neokonservativen in den USA und in der Bundesrepublik // Habermas J. Die Neue Unübersichtlichkeit. - Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag 1985. - S.30,56.
- Howard M., Roessler Ph. Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes // *American Journal of Political Science*. - 2006. - Vol.50. - № 2. – P.375-376.
- Linz J. An Authoritarian Regime: the Case of Spain. *Mass Politics: Studies in Political Sociology*. – N.Y.: Free Press, 1970.
- O'Donnell G., Schmitter Ph. Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies. - Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.
- O'Donnell G. Delegative Democracy // *Journal of Democracy*. - 1994. - Vol. 5. - No.1. - P.55.
- Vargas Llosa M. Global Fortune: The Stumble and Rise of World Capitalism. - Washington: Cato Institute, 2000. - pp. 6.
- Геддес Б. Вызов здравому смыслу // *Пределы власти*. – 1997. – №8. Оригинал: Geddes B. Challenging the Conventional Wisdom // *Journal of Democracy*, 1994. - Vol.5. – No.4. – PP.104-118.
- Линц Ч. Опасности президентства // *Пределы власти*. – 1994. - № 2-3.
- Флишберг Б. Хабермас и Фуко - теоретики гражданского общества // *Социологические исследования*. – 2000. – № 2. – С.127-136.
- Фридрих К., Бжезинский З. Тоталитарная диктатура и автократия // *Тоталитаризм: что это такое?* / Ред. кол. Л.Н. Верчёнов и др. - М., ИНИОН, 1992. - Т.2. – С.12.
- Хайек Ф. Дорога к рабству / Пер. с англ. - М.: Новое издательство, 2005. — С.147. Оригинал: Hayek F. The Road to Serfdom. – Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956.