THE BLACKWELL ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Edited by Vernon Bogdanor

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Editor's Introduction

The purpose of this encyclopaedia is to provide a succinct guide to the central concepts used in the study of the political institutions of advanced industrial societies, the principal political organizations and movements in these societies and the main types of political community. It includes entries on leading political scientists of the past, but excludes political scientists still living (Woodrow Wilson, for instance, is included as a political scientist, not as the twenty-eighth President of the United States) and items relating to particular events or places on which information is easily available elsewhere. Also excluded are entries relating either to international relations or to purely local matters. There are, however, entries for some culture–specific terms that have either passed into general use, or whose use is confined to Britain, the United States and Western Europe. The *Encyclopaedia* is designed to be a source of reference for students and teachers of politics, history and allied subjects, and, more generally, for the large number of general readers looking for elucidation of the concepts and ideas used in the discussion of government and politics. It is hoped that this volume will prove complementary to *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought.*

Each entry is intended to be complete in itself, but where it might be helpful to consult other entries, cross-references are printed in capitals in the text. There is a general index at the end of the volume through which the reader can trace all references to a specific individual or subject. Almost every entry is followed by suggestions for further reading, and all works referred to are listed with full publication details.

I am deeply indebted to Dr David Butler and Professor S.E. Finer who offered advice, encouragement and stimulation during every stage of the preparation of this *Encyclopaedia.* Their influence extends considerably beyond the entries which they have themselves contributed. I should also like to thank Michael Steed for the care with which he read an earlier draft of the *Encyclopaedia* and for his critical comments.

The following have also given valuable advice on various aspects of the *Encyclopaedia*: Dr Marco Brusati; Professor Leon Epstein; Dr R.J.W. Evans; Professor Barry Nicholas; Professor Philip Norton; Miss Gillian Peele; Professor Gerald Pomper; Professor Austin Ranney; Dr John Rowett; Dr Vincent Wright.

I should also like to thank the 247 contributors from thirteen countries for putting their skill and expertise at the disposal of the *Encyclopaedia.* I am, however, entirely responsible for the selection of entries, which I have in some cases cut substantially, and the choice of contributors.

Jo Hadley, Carol Le Duc and Ann McCall of Blackwells worked heroically to transform pages of untidy copy into readable prose; while Janet Godden has supervised the *Encyclopaedia* from inception to completion with a rare mixture of imperturbable cheerfulness and unfailing efficiency.

It was with great sadness that the Editor and Publishers learnt as the *Encyclopaedia* was going to press of the deaths of three valued contributors: Sir Norman Chester, Dr J.D. Lees and Professor W.H. Walsh.

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A

absentee voting Many democracies provide facilities for absentee voting for those who might have difficulty through infirmity or absence in recording their vote at the polling booth. There are five types of absentee voting: *advance voting* in Canada, Finland, Israel, Japan, Norway and New Zealand by which the polling booth is open before the date of the election either for all those unable to vote on the appointed day or, as in Israel, Japan and Norway, for special categories; *postal voting* in fifteen countries; *proxy voting* in eight countries; *special polling booths* in hospitals, prisons, old people's homes etc. in eight countries and *constituency transfer* in seven countries.

The various arrangements make little difference to rates of TURNOUT. Postal voting, the most important of the provisions, is only taken advantage of in Britain by approximately 2 per cent of the electorate. DEB

Reading

Crewe, I.: Electoral participation. In *Democracy at the Polls*, ed. D. Butler, H.R. Penniman and A. Ranney. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1981.

absolute government/absolutism is government with plenary powers, freed from legal constraints (*legibus absolutus*, hence the word) and constitutional controls; normally monarchical. The term enjoys common use in European history, but there is much disagreement about the period to which it may properly be applied, as also about the relation between its status in political practice and in the writings of theorists. Despite antecedents in Plato and the medieval canonists, and notwithstanding the arguments for strong monarchy deployed from the Renaissance onwards, the main impetus towards absolute government seems to have come from an extension of the activities of rulers and consolidation of their courts which proceeded swiftly after the early sixteenth century. The first stage was heavily confessional in character, as the state gained dominance over the church – especially in Protestant countries, where the process is often described as Erastianism – and used religion as a legitimating channel ('divine right of kings'). The most important manifestations were in Habsburg Spain and in the France of Louis XIV. Yet the executive authority of such rulers remained comparatively weak. Only the eighteenth century saw a more thoroughgoing development of absolutism, as monarchs – controlling large bureaucracies and standing armies – mounted major reform programmes in the economic, social, and legal spheres, which were justified in largely secular terms as serving the public good. The most celebrated 'enlightened absolutists' were Frederick II of Prussia (1740–86), Catherine II of Russia (1762–96) and Joseph II of Austria (1780–90). Most parts of Europe experienced such regimes, the main exceptions being Britain, the Netherlands, and Poland. Obstacles to efficient government, however, remained great, and in France the inability of absolutism to promote change led directly to the Revolution. Absolutist forms were widely reinstated in the period of restoration after the French Revolution; Napoleon I has frequently been claimed as a ruler in this tradition. Yet Bonapartism, with its plebiscitary style and extensive social mobility, introduced

different accents, and by the time of its final fling during the 1850s and 1860s absolute government in Europe was losing its distinctive features.

As a construction in political philosophy, absolutism was fed by the experience of anarchy and the fear of barbarism. Its greatest expositors were Niccolo MACHIAVELLI, who drew on the Roman imperial example and exalted the strong prince over his own indecisive Florentine republic; Jean BODIN, who stressed the need for undivided sovereignty against a background of religious strife in France; and Thomas HOBBES, whose *Leviathan* written at the time of the English civil war, proposed a free and total subjugation of individual wills (*pactum subjectionis*) to the will of a single governor in return for protection. Not least because of its associations with reason of state, and above all in Britain and America, absolutism has often carried negative connotations, being identified with arbitrary rule, alien and bureaucratic government, social and economic regimentation, and sometimes with militarism. But its advocates, especially in central Europe, have pointed to the achievements of absolute monarchs in promoting equality before the law, rational administration, state education, economic development, public order and welfare. In fact absolutism embodied a complex blend of old assumptions and new initiatives; while frequently able to rally the support of rising middle-class commercial, professional, and intellectual interests, its proponents usually remained conservative in their view of society, maintaining the status of nobles while undermining their political privileges. Properly speaking, absolutism should be distinguished from DESPOTISM, which describes perverted or oriental forms of government, though enlightened absolutists have often been mischievously described as 'enlightened despots', and Russian AUTOCRACY (*samoderzhavie*) which represents an intermediate stage. It should also be distinguished from twentieth-century TOTALITARIANISM, since absolute monarchs were restrained, not only by a much less efficient repressive apparatus which usually confined its attention to the public sphere, but also by the claims of custom, Christian morality, and natural law. RJWE

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acephalous political systems See PRE-STATE POLITICAL SYSTEMS.

accountability See RESPONSIBILITY.

Act A BILL that has been sanctioned by a LEGISLATURE and that has also passed through any other procedure required by the constitution of a state before it is accepted as a law. Once a bill has become an act it will be enforced by the courts of law. An act or sections of it may not come into effect immediately if the act itself requires that these sections shall not come into force until a further STATUTORY INSTRUMENT has been issued. Lawyers commonly refer to acts as statutes. PGR

Adams, John (1735–1826) Born in Braintree, Massachusetts, educated at Harvard College, and practised law. He was highly-strung and intensely ambitious, emotions which he transferred to his country in the form of resentment of British sovereignty. Adams's first publication, *Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law* (1765), was a violent attack on feudal and ecclesiastical influences in govern-

ment. A signer of the Declaration of Independence, diplomatic emissary in Europe and first US minister at the Court of St James, Adams was first Vice-President and Washington's successor as President of the USA (1797–1801). He wanted republican government genuinely deriving from the people, but he also wanted it securely based on the rule of law. The Massachusetts Declaration of Rights accompanying the Constitution of 1780, which he helped to draft, contains a full articulation of the principle of the SEPARATION OF POWERS 'to the end that it be a government of laws and not of men'. Similar views expressed in a pamphlet, *Thoughts on Government* (1776), influenced the constitution-makers of Virginia. During the War of Independence Adams became sceptical of the virtue of his fellow countrymen, but defended their political arrangements at great length in his learned but rambling *Defence of the Constitutions of the United States* (1787) evoked by French criticisms of the state constitutions. Here Adams defended separation of powers and balanced government against democratic unicameralism. He believed emulation to be the cardinal human motive – an insight into his own character – and also held that the haughtiness of the aristocracy would always render them difficult to govern. For this reason he advocated an upper chamber as 'a kind of ostracism'. He missed the Philadelphia Convention of 1787 (being in London) but soon came to support the stronger form of government as necessary to continental unity. Though still dedicated to separation of powers, he came to believe in a stronger executive, and signed the highly oppressive and questionably constitutional Alien and Sedition Acts. JRP

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additional member system Term used for an ELECTORAL SYSTEM such as that in the Federal Republic of Germany in which a single-member constituency element is combined with proportional representation, the 'additional members' being derived either from a party list – whether national or regional – or, as in the electoral system of Baden-Württemberg, from losing candidates in the constituencies with the highest percentages of votes. VBB

adjudication The application by courts or tribunals of legal rules to particular cases or controversies. Historically the theory of the SEPARATION OF POWERS treated adjudication as one of three governmental functions along with the making and execution of laws. In modern constitutions in which powers are constitutionally allocated to the legislative, executive and judicial branches there has been much difficulty in defining the idea of adjudication or judicial action. A similar difficulty arises in administrative law as to the precise meaning of acting 'judicially'. Most definitions emphasize the idea that an adjudicative act is one that decides upon the allocation in a binding manner in a suit between parties of rights that are presumed to be already determined in principle by existing law. The British Committee on Ministers' Powers in 1932 concluded:

> A true judicial decision presupposes an existing dispute between two or more parties, and then invokes four requisites:
> (1) the presentation (not necessarily orally) of their case by the parties to the dispute;
> (2) if the dispute between them is a question of fact, the ascertainment of the fact by means of evidence adduced by the parties to the dispute;
> (3) if the dispute between them is a question of law the submission of legal argument by the parties;
> (4) a decision which disposes of the whole matter by a finding upon the facts in dispute and an application of the law of the land to the facts so found, including, where required, a ruling upon any disputed question of law.

The clarity of the distinction between the three functions of government is threatened by the fact that executive as well as judicial officers may be authorized to apply rules to individual cases, and judges or adjudicators may create new law or in effect legislate in the course of carrying out their adjudicative function.

In the United States the role of adjudication in constitutional cases has been a constant subject of debate among legal and political commentators, especially where federal and state legislation is reviewed by the federal courts. Major disagreements have arisen, for example, as to whether in applying the broad guarantees of the constitution, judges should attempt to discover and give weight to the historical intentions of those who draft it, or whether they should interpret the constitution in the light of present-day political morality. In all jurisdictions judges may also be divided between a concept of their function that emphasizes an active policy-making role and one that sees non-elected judicial officers as owing a duty in a democratic political system to exercise restraint and deference to the elective branch of government and to limit their own policy-making role.

To some extent this dilemma arises in all legal systems in the ordinary business of interpreting statutory enactments and developing judicial doctrine from case to case. In addition, in the interpretation of any instrument, adjudicators may be torn between efforts to infer the intentions of those who originated the document and treating the task of interpretation as one of drawing out the meaning of the terms in question with the aid of linguistic rules or conventions. In the United Kingdom recourse to the proceedings of the legislature as an aid to statutory interpretation is severely restricted. In the United States and many other countries recourse to such legislative material is permitted.

Among legal theorists, as well as administrative and constitutional lawyers, adjudication has been a major topic of debate. Legal realists in the United States and Scandinavia have always emphasized the factual and psychological elements in the judicial role as against the so-called formal character of the legal rules. In recent years debate about the character of legal rules themselves as elements in a legal system has involved British and American legal theorists in extended arguments about the nature of the judicial process. A main feature of the controversy has been the theory of adjudication advanced in the writings of Ronald Dworkin and in particular the analysis of the judicial role in so-called 'hard cases' in which existing law presents no clear answers to a legal controversy and courts are involved in balancing apparently conflicting rights and weighing issues of public policy. These controversies reflect more general disagreements about the nature of legal rules, legal systems, and legal rights. GM

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administration In general terms, the tidying-up side of life. In an army camp, or a coal mine, or a hospital, the administration block is where paper is pushed around, in contrast with the 'proper' work of the place: soldiering, or digging coal, or treating patients. Professional men similarly tend to distinguish part of their work (which they often call administration) from what they are 'really there for'. Administration as 'the paperwork' is a widespread experience, whatever it is