

Democracy and Political Change in the 'Third World'

Edited by
Jeff Haynes

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Democracy and Political Change in the 'Third World'

This book examines the current position of democracy in the 'Third World'. Its context is set up by a puzzle: after up to two decades of democratisation, why have so few new democracies in the 'Third World' managed to consolidate their democratic status? Many are 'unconsolidated', or 'electoral' democracies – where democracy is not habituated – principally because there is not general consensus among all political actors that democracy is 'the only game in town'.

There are, the book argues, however, reasonably free and fair elections, with a handing over of power to the victorious presidential candidate and/or the parties winning most seats. Few among the new democracies of the 'Third World' have deeper democratic or liberal credentials – when judged against the criteria of organisations, such as Freedom House, or those of Western governments and international organisations, such as the EU. This raises the issue of whether there should be a universal standard of democracy; and this book considers whether political systems in the 'Third World' should be seen as contemporary manifestations of local processes and structures rooted deep in history and cultures, rather than pale approximations of Western forms.

Democracy and Political Change in the 'Third World' analyses the recent transitions to, and consolidations of democracy; the overall patchy democratic record among such countries; and the relationship of external and domestic factors to these attempts to democratise. It focuses on four diverse 'Third World' countries: India, Indonesia, Mexico and Zambia. Very few other books on democracy have considered the situation of 'Third World' countries so this book fills an important gap. It will be vital reading for students and researchers in comparative politics, Third World politics, politics – and sociology – of development, and international studies.

Jeff Haynes is a Professor of Politics at London Guildhall University. His books include *Religion in Third World Politics*, *Religion and Politics in Africa*, *Third World Politics: A Concise Introduction*, *Democracy and Civil Society in the Third World*, *Religion in Global Politics* and an edited volume *Religion, Globalisation and Political Culture in the Third World*.

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Series editor's preface

Ever since Athens' rise to a brief period of political dominance, the unlikelihood of the emergence and consolidation of democratic decision-making processes has been recognised. Next to the question of how to obtain democracy, the most heated controversies are addressed to the problems and prospects of defending, maturing and expanding democracies. Why would a ruling elite withdraw from the centre of power by non-violent means? Which social, societal and economic conditions facilitate democratic decision-making? Are established political parties a sufficient condition for democracy or a necessary condition only? What alternatives are available to the European/North American conceptualisations? Why would people in new democracies accept a system that promises more than it delivers? What are the prospects for increasing the number of democratic states in the near future?

The rapidly expanding literature in this area used to focus on 'waves'. More than a decade after the revolution in Eastern and Central Europe, we are watching the ebbing of the 'third wave' and discern the paradox that democratisation does not necessarily imply democracy. These problems cannot be understood within the conventional, conceptual borders of democratisation, transition, democracy and consolidation, or by relying on Western European and North American experiences only. What is needed is, first of all, a rethinking of the concepts 'democracy' and 'democratisation', allowing for much more analytical depth and details than the simplistic contrast between democracy on the one hand, and everything else on the other. A number of these conceptualisations are available ('illiberal democracy', 'facade democracy', 'thin democracy', 'full democracy' and the like) and most of them try to avoid the 'fallacy of electoralism' and the old disease of 'imputism'. Second, the scope of research should be broadened considerably, not only to cover conventional 'Western' types of regimes, but to deal also with developments and specific circumstances in Asia, Africa and Latin America. 'Eurocentrism' is hard to cure, since it usually relies on a mixture of latent ideological and historical prejudices as well as on evident analytical shortsightedness.

The contributors to the volume all accepted the challenge to deal with these two requirements simultaneously. They differ clearly in their research interests, study designs, selected material, and the scope of the analyses presented, but they all cope with the chances for (continued) democratic decision-making in

so-called 'Third World' countries. Before these specific analyses are presented, Jeff Haynes summarises the major questions and approaches in his introduction to this volume by elaborating the central concepts 'Third World' and the 'third wave of democracy' (Chapter 1). His double conclusion – some degree of democratisation is visible, but the impact of the third wave is patchy – is clearly corroborated by the other authors.

The first four contributions are addressed to general problems of democratisation and comparative research in this area. Bruce Baker proposes a 'democratic audit' in order to perform reliable quality assessments based on a wide variety of indicators (Chapter 2). Jan Engberg and Svante Ersson operationalise the concept 'illiberal democracy' and conclude from a comprehensive empirical analysis of about 100 states in the last decades, that we are dealing with a 'growth industry' (Chapter 3). The pitfalls of restricting democracy to elections only are discussed by Jørgen Eiklit (Chapter 4), while the need for established political parties is underlined in the analysis presented by Vicki Randall and Lars Svåsand (Chapter 5).

The next contributions focus on the developments in specific countries. Before we turn to these case studies Armin K. Nolting examines the relationship between the European Union and Malawi, to find out that the pooled experiences of EU-member countries and the European culture of cooperation do not have much impact on democratisation in Africa (Chapter 6). Detailed overviews of the specific developments and the huge problems confronting processes of democratisation and consolidation are discussed by Darren Wallis for Mexico (Chapter 7), by Peter Burnell for Zambia (Chapter 8), by Andrew Wyatt for India (Chapter 8), and by Olle Törnquist for Indonesia (Chapter 10). These chapters provide an impressive amount of thoroughly collected information that enriches our knowledge and offers very interesting opportunities for improving existing approaches. The inherent value of this information is especially illustrated in the last chapter, where Olle Törnquist's astonishing amount of information about Indonesia is luckily not harmed by his irrelevant and ritualistic rudeness against 'internationally reputed scholars of democracy, and so-called friendly governments and organisations'. Finally, Jeff Haynes returns to the major problems and prospects in his concluding chapter by warning against rather naïve expectations about the chances of democracy to develop under clearly different social, economic and cultural conditions (Chapter 11).

The heydays of Athens' dominance and democracy lasted a very short period only. Despite the fact that a tendency towards somewhat more respect for the right of individuals to be free from political oppression and arbitrary abuse of government power can be observed in many former authoritarian regimes, democratic processes are hard to establish – and perhaps even harder to consolidate. Nothing valuable is free of charge. This platitude remains highly relevant for democratic developments in the so-called 'Third World'.

Jan W. van Deth, Series editor
Mannheim

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1 Introduction

The 'Third World' and the third wave of democracy

Jeff Haynes

The third wave of democracy started in Southern Europe in the mid-1970s, before spreading in the 1980s to Latin America, Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa (Huntington 1991). Until then there had been very few – less than a dozen – democratically-elected governments in the 'Third World'.¹ Instead, political terrains were filled with various forms of authoritarian regimes, including: military-led, one-party, 'no-party' and personalist dictatorships. The result of the wave of democratisation was that by the end of the 1990s around three-quarters of countries, world-wide, had democratically-elected governments.

As the twenty-first century began, all Latin American countries (with the exception of Cuba) had elected governments. In Asia, many formerly non-democratic polities, including Bangladesh, Nepal, the Philippines, Taiwan, South Korea, Mongolia, and, most recently, Indonesia had become democracies. Africa showed a similar picture, with democratically-elected governments in, *inter alia*, Benin, Zambia, Ghana, Uganda, Mali and Tanzania. So widespread was the shift to democratically-elected governments that of 'Third World' regions, only the Middle East and Central Asia stood apart. In the former, apart from the reintroduction of democracy to Lebanon in the early 1990s (after nearly twenty years of civil war) and gradually deepening political liberalisation in Jordan, authoritarian regimes were still very common; in the latter, the demise of Soviet rule was not followed smoothly by democratisation.

On the basis of Freedom House ratings, Diamond (1999) calculated that between 1992 (the 'high point for freedom in the world') and the mid-1990s, the number of 'free' states stagnated, declining quite significantly as a proportion of democratic countries.² The consequence, he claimed, was that there was growing evidence of a 'reverse wave' back to authoritarianism. However, Karatnycky (1999) argued that there were still clear indications of continuing democratic progress in the 'Third World' at the end of the 1990s. The division between Karatnycky and Diamond reflects a wider controversy in political science: how to explain and account for the progress, or its lack, in new democracies. The debate was initially focused on a concern with democratic transitions – or, 'transitology': the study of shifts from authoritarian to democratically-elected governments. Later, when it became clear that there was not, generally speaking, a smooth shift to clearly democratic regimes in many new democracies, attention shifted to