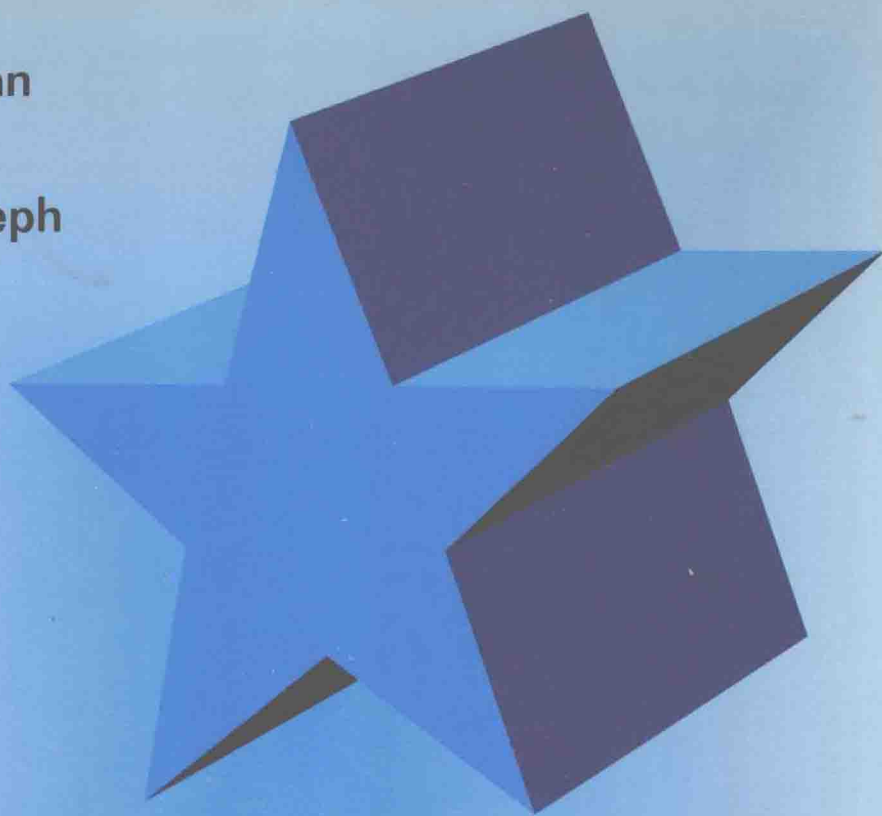


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DEMOCRACIES AT THE CROSSROADS

Democracies at the Crossroads

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Preface

These are exciting—yet daunting—times to teach about democratic countries. After years in which the contours of the subject matter were quite familiar, the democratic revolutions of the last decade have challenged scholars and teachers to think anew about the conditions creating and sustaining democracy. Paradoxically, even as countries that have been ruled for decades by authoritarian regimes have recently adopted democratic institutions, long-established democracies have been buffeted by new economic, cultural, and political challenges. For the countries included in *Democracies at the Crossroads*, there seems to be no end to history.

We have written this book to help students analyze the problems confronting some important democracies throughout the world and to equip them with an understanding of where these countries may be headed politically once they move beyond the current crossroads. Our text covers Britain and France, which rank among the most durable democracies; Germany and Japan, industrialized countries whose postwar democratic experience may provide lessons in how formerly authoritarian regimes can consolidate democracy; India, one of the world's most poorest and populous nations whose democratic institutions have endured for half a century despite severe strains; and Brazil, a Third World nation that has recently undergone a democratic transition after decades of military rule. The wide range of cases we provide enables students to analyze continuities and contrasts among democratic regimes.

At the same time, we have kept the needs of instructors—for clear and readable prose, for comparative analysis focused on countries and political systems, for comprehensive treatment of institutions, political behavior, political economy, and the policy-making process—very much in mind. A chapter is devoted to each country. Within each chapter are five sections that treat the historic formation of the modern state, the political economy of past and current national development, the major institutions of governance and policy-making, the processes of representation and participation, and the major issues that confront the country and are likely to shape its future as we approach the end of the twentieth century.

In *Democracies at the Crossroads*, we emphasize patterns of state formation, political economy, domes-

tic politics, and the politics of collective identities within the context of an international political and economic system. The most innovative feature of the book is the use of four comparative themes to frame our presentation of each country's politics. We explain the themes in the Introduction and present an intriguing puzzle for each. These themes—treated in each country study—focus attention on the continuities and contrasts among the six country studies:

- **A World of States** highlights the importance of state formation and the interstate system for political development.
- **Production and Exchange on a Global Scale** analyzes state strategies for governing the economy, and stresses the effects of economic globalization on domestic politics.
- **The Democratic Idea** explores the challenges posed by citizens' demands for greater control and participation even in countries generally regarded as highly democratic.
- **The Politics of Collective Identities** considers the political consequences of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and nationality and their complex interplay with class-based politics.

Through our four themes, the methods of comparative analysis come alive as students examine similarities and differences among countries and within—and between—democratic political systems. This thematic approach offers timely and comprehensive analysis of the historical continuities and contemporary challenges that locate each country at the crossroads of change.

Democracies at the Crossroads strikes a balance between the richness of national political development and a more general comparative analysis. The Introduction explains the comparative method, analyzes the four key themes of the book, and describes core features of democratic political institutions and processes. Each country study presents a clear and thorough treatment of political institutions and their relation to socioeconomic, cultural, and transnational influences.

Several special features assist in the teaching and learning process. At the beginning of each chapter, students will find a page of basic demographic, social,

economic, and political information to aid in comparing countries. Two appendixes provide comparable data on the United States and explain how development is measured using the Human Development Index. Throughout the chapters a host of maps, tables, charts, photographs, and political cartoons enliven the text and present key information in clear and graphic ways. Each country study features sidebars that highlight some interesting and provocative aspects of politics—for example, a critical political development or the biography of an especially important political leader. Key terms are set in boldface when first introduced and are defined in the Glossary at the end of the book. Students will find that the Glossary defines many key concepts that are used broadly in comparative politics.

In *Democracies at the Crossroads*, we combine an innovative thematic approach and comprehensive coverage of political institutions and processes. We hope that it serves as a stimulating and accessible introduction to the study of democratic politics for your students.

One final note: *Democracies at the Crossroads* is part of a larger project which also features an introductory comparative politics text, *Comparative Politics at the Crossroads (CPC)* as well as two other specialized texts on communist and post-communist political systems and Third World countries. The democratic country studies included here are drawn from *CPC*, from which the Introduction to this volume is also adapted in a somewhat modified form. Anyone interested in these volumes should contact his or her D. C. Heath sales representative.

We are grateful for the advice and critical comments of many colleagues, including Alfred P. Montero for his assistance in the preparation of the chapter on Brazil, and Ms. Rehnuma Shehabuddin for her research assistance in preparing the chapter on India. We

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M. K.
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W. A. J.

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CHAPTER 1

*Democracies
at the
Crossroads*

SECTION 1

The Global Context

We are living in extraordinary times. Since the mid-1980s, politics throughout the world has been rocked by dramatic and unpredictable developments. The revolutions of 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe marked the disintegration of much of the communist world. One after another, in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, hardline leaders resigned, free elections were held, and political power was transferred democratically. When the Berlin Wall—which divided East and West in both physical and symbolic terms—was dismantled brick by brick beginning in November 1989, the architecture of Europe was forever recast. Within a year, Germany was unified after nearly a half-century of Cold War division, and by the end of 1991, the Soviet Union, once a formidable superpower, had collapsed into fifteen troubled republics, including a much humbled Russia. By the middle of the decade, Nelson Mandela was transformed from prisoner to president of a newly democratic South Africa. An awkward handshake on the White House lawn between Yasir Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin in 1994 launched the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel on a fitful and uncertain peace process in the Middle East. The unbelievable mixed with the unthinkable.

Beyond the unforgettable images captured in front-page news photos, these developments mark a fundamental political crossroads for our world. They reflect a shift in historical epochs that creates exciting opportunities for human progress, but also increases the risks of instability and conflict.

As the world has painfully learned in recent years, freedom, peace, and a reasonable standard of living cannot be built on hopes alone. It is desperately hard to make such dreams a reality. Toppling dictatorial regimes often proves less difficult than building new democracies. In many countries, the rush to democracy awakens new and restless constituencies with demands that cannot easily be met by the government or the economy. Although the majority of countries in the world have adopted democratic political institutions, it is too soon to say how many new democracies will be able to remain democratic in the face of intense challenges. This is the reason why *Democracies at the Crossroads* studies long-established democracies,

countries whose democratic institutions have surmounted past challenges and therefore can be considered more likely to meet current and future ones. By studying a wide variety of established democracies, with quite diverse political systems, it may be possible to understand the conditions that foster democratic stability.

Yet our study of some of the oldest democratic regimes will suggest that even the countries classified as stable democracies are confronting severe difficulties. Consider, as one important example, the minimum that citizens can expect of their government: the right to live in physical peace and security. In 1995 alone, citizens of every country included in *Democracies at the Crossroads* were the target of violent attacks. In Tokyo, a devastating explosion on a subway train killed twelve and injured several thousand. In Paris, a series of bomb blasts at supermarkets, schools, and subway stations produced an atmosphere reminiscent of a nation at war. India was the site of repeated bombings and massacres. In Brazil, horrifying cases of police viciously murdering homeless children came to light. In Britain, decades of violence in Northern Ireland slowed but did not cease. Turkish immigrants in Germany were brutalized and several were burned alive by skinheads, young thugs who boasted of their admiration for the Nazi leaders who ruled Germany in the 1930s and 1940s and who unleashed world war and murdered millions.

We have chosen to entitle our text *Democracies at the Crossroads* because even the most apparently stable democracies face a host of severe challenges linked to the cataclysmic changes that the world is presently undergoing. Post-Cold War political upheavals and the transformation of the global balance of power have produced new forms of international cooperation and competition—and new sources of international tension and violence. The grim but predictable bipolar world of superpower rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, reinforced by their respective NATO and Warsaw Treaty Organization (Warsaw Pact) alliances, has been replaced by the uncertainties of a more fragmented map of global power. During the **Cold War**, the hostility between the Soviet Union and the United States was often fought



This cartoon captures some of the trends and tensions of comparative politics at the crossroads. It depicts a triumphant and rich, but economically fragile, "First World" (the capitalist industrial democracies), a defeated "Second World" (the Soviet bloc) led to ruin by misguided policies (that's Stalin's head being cut off), and a deprived and neglected "Third World." The venomous snake of "nationalism" threatens all parts of the world with ethnic, religious, and other types of communal conflict. Source © 1991 WittyWorld International Cartoon Magazine. Reprinted with permission.

out and contained in the Third World, as in the Vietnam War or Middle Eastern conflicts. But now with no superpower standoff to channel and contain conflicts, increasing economic, religious, and ethnic divisions create tension and crises throughout the world. We have witnessed a surge of violent conflicts between and within countries and a quieter dynamic of fierce competition and serious trade wars among professed allies. The long-established democracies have begun to align into three rival trading blocs: Japan and its East Asian allies, the United States and its North American allies, and most Western European nations. Although an adage in the field of international relations has it that democracies do not make war on each other, the proposition does not prepare one for the trade wars pitting democracies who are supposedly allies in economic combat.

It is not surprising that in the flash of newspaper headlines and television sound bites, politics may ap-

pear chaotic beyond comprehension. Although the study of comparative politics can help us understand current events in a rapidly changing world, it involves much more than snapshot analysis or Monday-morning quarterbacking. *Democracies at the Crossroads* describes and analyzes in detail the government and politics of six countries, including established Western industrial democracies with quite different political institutions (Britain, France, and Germany); an established non-Western industrial democracy (Japan); an established democracy in a less economically advanced nation (India); and a recently reestablished democracy (Brazil). It identifies common themes in their development that can explain longer-term causes of both changes and continuities. The book provides cross-national comparisons and explanations based on four themes that we believe are central for understanding democratic regimes and how our world has reached such a crucial political crossroads:

- The interaction of states within the international order.
- The role of states in economic management.
- The particular challenges facing democratic regimes and the pressures for more democracy.
- The political impact of diverse sources of social identity, including class, gender, ethnicity, and religion.

We hope that these four themes, discussed in Section 3 below, will be useful for understanding where the countries covered in this book may be heading politically once they move beyond the crossroads. The themes also illustrate what valuable intellectual tools comparative politics offers for making some sense of even the most tumultuous times. The closing years of the twentieth century present an extraordinary challenge to those who study comparative politics, but the study of comparative politics also provides a unique opportunity for understanding this uncertain era.

There is an added benefit. By comparing political institutions, values, and processes in other democratic countries throughout the world, the student of comparative politics acquires analytical skills that can be redeployed at home. After you study comparative politics, you begin to think like a comparativist. As comparison becomes almost automatic, you look at the politics of your own country differently, with a wider focus and fresh insights.