

# DICTIONARY OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

## **absolute majority**

An absolute majority means more than half of those entitled to vote, as opposed to a mere *plurality*.

## **absolute majority electoral system**

Also known as the *alternative vote*, the absolute majority electoral system seeks to ensure that the winning candidate is acceptable to a majority of those voting. The procedure begins with voters ranking candidates in order of preference (1, 2, 3, etc). If no candidate wins a majority of first preferences, the bottom candidate is eliminated and his or her votes are redistributed according to second preferences. Repeat until a candidate has a majority. This system takes into account more information about voters' preferences than the *single-member plurality system* but is not a form of *proportional representation*.

## **accountability**

Accountability can be used narrowly, to refer to a reporting requirement ('to be called to account') or more broadly as a synonym for responsibility ('to be held to account'). In the latter sense, to be accountable is to be held responsible for one's actions by and often before another body. See *vertical* and *horizontal accountability*.

## **additional member system**

The additional member system is a phrase often used in Britain to describe *mixed electoral systems* in which electors vote for both a party list and a district candidate. Within this category, it is important to distinguish between *mixed member majoritarian* and *mixed member proportional* systems.

## **administrative capacity**

Administrative capacity refers to the bureaucracy's ability (or lack of it) to provide effective management and implementation of public policy. Capacity-building is currently an important theme of international development agencies, reflecting belated realization that competent public administration is an important condition of even market-led economic development.

## **administrative law**

Administrative law sets out the principles governing decision-making by public bodies, mainly the bureaucracy, and the remedies for breaching such rules. For example, America's Administrative Procedure Act (1946) requires courts to hold unlawful any agency action that is 'arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law'. The issues involved here concern public law and have no clear analogy in the private sector. Typical questions asked in administrative law are: was an official authorized to make a particular decision? Was the decision made in the correct way (e.g. with adequate consultation)? Does the decision accord with natural justice? Although administrative regulation may lack the high-profile political activity of constitutional courts, subjecting the work of public

officials to law is a function essential to a liberal society. Clear, enforceable regulations help to secure a balanced relationship between state and citizen.

### **adversary politics**

Adversary politics is a critical term denoting a sterile and negative competition between the leading parties in a two-party system. The phrase was coined by in the 1970s to describe British party politics during an era when neither the Conservative nor Labour governments seemed capable of resolving the country's economic difficulties. Party competition in Britain remains intense but is now less ideologically-based.

### **affirmative action**

Affirmative action means giving preference to the members of under-represented groups, particularly in allocating resources such as college places and public sector jobs. Affirmative action can help to compensate for past discrimination but can create new resentments. In practice, it tends not to reach the least advantaged members of under-represented groups. Also known as *positive discrimination*.

### **agenda-setting**

To set the agenda is to control what topics are discussed. Agenda-setting is a form of influence which might be missed when focusing solely on the debate about the topics that are on the agenda. For instance, it is often claimed that media coverage influences the agenda; reported events are widely discussed by the public but non-reported events lose visibility. See *non-decision*.

### **alternate**

As a noun, this word is used in politics (and elsewhere) to refer to a stand-in, substitute or replacement.

### **alternative vote**

Also known as the *absolute majority electoral system*, the alternative vote is an electoral system seeks to ensure that the winning candidate is acceptable to majority of those voting. The procedure begins with voters ranking candidates in order of preference (1, 2, 3, etc). If no candidate wins a majority of first preferences, the bottom candidate is eliminated and his or her votes are redistributed according to second preferences. Repeat until a candidate has a majority. This system takes into account more information about voters' preferences than the *single-member plurality system* but is not a form of *proportional representation*.

### **anti-clerical**

Opposition to the political influence of the church and its clergy. Anti-clericalism was an important theme in the political development of many West European countries where socialist and communist parties adopted an intensely secular approach in opposition to the traditional privileges of the Catholic church. The resolution of these clerical/anti-clerical conflicts has often left a legacy of a strongly secular state, even in Catholic countries such as France. Anti-clericalism has also surfaced in some nationalist movements.

### **apparentement**

An option in some *list systems* of proportional representation permitting parties to pool their votes for seat allocation purposes. Such alliances can be advantageous to small parties in electoral systems biased against small parties, for example the *D'Hondt formula*. *Apparentement* can also be used to marginalize extreme parties with which no other party is willing to ally.

### **apportionment**

Apportionment is the process of allocating seats to regions, usually to ensure that each region receives representation in proportion to population. See *districting*, *gerrymandering*.

### **appropriation**

An allocation of public funds for a stated purpose. In most countries, appropriations are controlled by the executive though the American Congress has retained control over the authorization of funds; this command of the purse is a crucial source of its influence.

### **aristocracy**

Aristocracy is government by the best. Aristotle distinguished between an *oligarchy* (a small minority which governs in its own interests) and an aristocracy (a small minority which governs in the general interest). 'Aristocracy' can also refer to government by the landed nobility or other privileged groups.

### **asymmetric federalism**

Asymmetric *federalism* arises when some states within a federation are given more autonomy than others. In Canada, for example, Quebec nationalists have long argued for special recognition for their French-speaking province; they view Canada as a compact between English- and French speaking communities rather than a contract between 10 equal provinces. By contrast, in the more common and straight-forward symmetrical federations, such as the United States all states within the country possess the same constitutional relationship with the centre.

### **attentive public**

The attentive or issue public consists of the minority with a particular interest in or knowledge of a given topic. The attentive public forms a small but influential part of *public opinion*. Often, politicians pay more attention to the attentive public than to the general public.

### **Australian ballot**

The Australian ballot is a term for a voting paper prepared by the authorities which contains the names of candidates (and perhaps parties) and which is marked in secret by all voters. Such ballots were introduced in Australia in the nineteenth century. They have long replaced most earlier methods such as public expressions of preferences. One surviving alternative (compatible with some but not all electoral formulae) is the ballot and envelope method. Here the voter selects a paper with the names of the preferred candidate (and perhaps party), places the ballot in an envelope and the envelope in the ballot box. Eventually, of course, these manual methods will be replaced by electronic voting.

## autarky

Autarky is a policy of national self-sufficiency, aimed at avoiding dependence (including economic dependence) on other countries. Not to be confused with autarchy, meaning self-government.

## authoritarian advantage thesis

The authoritarian advantage thesis is the proposition that non-democratic regimes are more capable than democratic ones of launching and guiding economic development. The argument is that democracy affords special interest groups the power to block, delay or hinder changes that stimulate growth, such as high investment in infrastructure. By contrast, authoritarian governments can enforce high tax, savings and investment regimes which are required for economic take-off. In reality, however, few authoritarian regimes successfully exploit these potential advantages and the growing availability of external private capital may have reduced the need to extract resources from an unwilling population. See *developmental state*.

## authoritarian rule

Authoritarian (non-democratic) rule is the most common form of rule in history. Rulers stand above the law and are free from effective popular accountability. The media are controlled or cowed. Political participation is usually limited and discouraged. Elections, if held, provide no meaningful choice. Some writers distinguish between authoritarian and *totalitarian* rule. In the former, the rulers' power is often constrained by the need for tacit alliances with landowners, industrialists, the armed forces or religious leaders. Examples include military governments and ruling monarchies. Some authoritarian regimes dress themselves up in democratic clothes and it is often difficult to tell where authoritarian rule ends and *illiberal democracy* begins.

## authoritative allocation of values

A term used by the American political scientist David Easton to refer to the core political function of making, and implementing, collective decisions. See *political system*.

## authority

Authority is the right to take decisions, even if those subject to them disagree with the actual decision made. Authority creates its own power so long as people accept that the person in authority has the right to make decisions. An influential classification by Max Weber distinguished between *traditional*, *charismatic* and *legal-rational* authority. To be in authority is not necessarily to be authority in the sense of an expert. See power.

## autogolpe

An *autogolpe* is a self-coup; that is, a coup launched by an existing president to extend and deepen his control over the political system. A president may judge that he lacks sufficient control over Congress to implement his initiatives; or he may simply wish to dispense with term limits so that he can continue in power, protecting the people against instability and disorder. See *coup d'état*.

## autonomy

Self-determination. The capacity of a group or country to shape its own destiny.

### **backsliding**

Backsliding occurs when a democratic transition is reversed, in whole or especially in part. For example, or a liberal democracy may slide back to authoritarianism or a democracy may revert to military rule. The term would not usually be used in cases such as the collapse of the Weimar Republic and its replacement by Hitler's dictatorship. Here the existing regime was replaced by a new form of rule.

### **Balkanization**

Balkanization involves dividing a state into smaller, independent and often hostile units, usually with the aim of reducing the military threat posed to an external power by the original, undivided entity.

### **ballot structure**

Ballot structure denotes the nature of the choices offered to a voter on the voting paper. How many candidates and parties can a voter support? Can or must the voter place preferences in order? The ballot structure and the linked *electoral formula* are essential components of an *electoral system*.

### **behavioralism**

The behavioural revolution was a post-war school of thought in political science, especially in the United States, which emphasized the study of individuals rather than institutions. The focus was on voters rather than elections, legislators rather than legislatures and judges rather than the judiciary. The aim was to replace the traditional study of *institutions* with a programme to discover scientific generalizations about political attitudes and behaviour. The project did deliver coherent if limited findings but eventually ran out of steam as it became immersed in statistical technicalities (behaviorism was an earlier and broadly similar movement in psychology. Reflecting American origins, both words are used here with their American spelling).

### **bicameral legislature**

A parliament with two chambers, as in Australia, Canada and the United States. In bicameral legislatures, the first or lower chamber is typically called the chamber of deputies, national assembly or house of representatives. The second or upper chamber is usually known as the senate (literally, council of elders). Weak bicameralism arises when the lower chamber dominates the upper house, providing the primary focus for government accountability in parliamentary systems. In strong bicameralism, found in a few federations, the two chambers are more balanced. Bicameralism is found in federations and many larger countries. However, most legislatures are *unicameral*.

### **bill**

A bill is a draft law put before a legislature. When passed, it becomes an act.

### **bill of rights**

A bill of rights is a statement of individual freedoms which can be enforced against the state and which normally form part of a codified constitution. Such declarations usually draw on the tradition of *natural rights*. Two influential examples, each dating from 1789, are the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen adopted in France and the first ten amendments appended to the American constitution.

### **block grant**

A block grant is a form of funding typically distributed from the central government to lower units. It covers a particular programme or function (e.g. medical care) rather than a specific project (e.g. a new hospital). Block grants are more specific than *revenue-sharing* but less specific than *categorical grants*.

### **bureaucracy**

Bureaucracy means rule by officials. The word 'bureau' comes from the Old French term *la bure*, meaning the brown woollen cloth on which the king's administrators laid out their accounts. The second half of the word comes from the Greek *kratos*, meaning rule, just as in *democracy*. Today, the bureaucracy refers to the salaried officials who conduct the detailed business of public administration, advising on and applying policy decisions. However, the fragmentation of the public sector into notionally autonomous agencies means that the bureaucracy can no longer (if it ever could) be treated as a single entity. See *new public management*, *public administration*.

### **bureaucratic authoritarianism**

A term coined to describe regimes in which technocrats in the bureaucracy imposed economic stability under the protection of a military government. Such regimes repressed popular movements. The concept emerged in the context of Latin America countries such as Argentina and Brazil in the 1960s and 1970s. See *developmental state*.

### **cabinet**

1. The cabinet is the ruling council of ministers in *parliamentary government*. This plural executive contrasts with the single chief executive in presidential systems. The cabinet is headed by a prime minister who may be the leading figure within the group (as in single-party administrations such as Britain's) or merely first among equals (as in many coalition governments). In governments of a substantial size, not all ministers will be members of cabinet. *Presidentialization* notwithstanding, cabinet government still allows for deliberation among different interests, parties and perspectives at the apex of the parliamentary executive.

2. Cabinet is also a French term for a group of about 15 to 20 people who form a minister's personal advisory staff and work directly under his or her control. French-style cabinets provide the minister with ideas and help in liaising with the department, other ministries, the party and the constituency. The danger, however, is that such personal advisers are too dependent on their patron, preferring to offer blandishments and flattery rather than home truths.

### **cabinet committee**

Cabinet committees are small workgroups of the full *cabinet*, established to focus on specific areas such as the budget, legislation or overall strategy. In addition to these

standing committees, prime ministers also set up *ad hoc* committees of ministers to respond to specific issues such as labour disputes and terrorism. In many governments, cabinet committees are closer to the point of decision than the full cabinet, which tends to become a ratifying, discussion and appeals body.

### **candidate-choice elections**

Candidate-choice elections only permit a choice of candidates from within a single ruling party. Such contests were characteristic of several East European countries in communism's later phase of the 1970s and 1980s. Central rulers found candidate-choice elections useful in testing whether local party officials retained the confidence of their communities. Such elections do not, however, provide an opportunity to change the governing party itself.

### **cadre**

From a French term for the officers of a military regiment, cadre denotes an organized group of political activists, particularly in the context of political parties. The cadres stand between the top leaders and ordinary members.

### **cadre party**

Cadre (or elite) parties are created within parliament. They are formed by groups of members – the *cadres* - joining together to express common concerns and then to fight effective campaigns in an enlarged electorate. The earliest nineteenth-century parties were of this cadre type: for example, the Conservative parties of Britain, Canada and Scandinavia. The first American parties, the Federalists and the Jeffersonians, were also loose elite factions, based in Congress and state legislatures. Such parties remain heavily committed to their leader's authority, with the members playing a supporting but certainly not a sovereign role. Reflecting the core position of the parliamentary members, cadre parties are sometimes called *caucus* parties. See *mass* and *catch-all party*.

### **cartel party**

Cartel parties are leading parties that exploit their dominance of the political market to establish rules of the game, such as public funding and high *electoral thresholds*, which reinforce their own strong position. By definition, if there any cartel parties in a political system, there must be at least two. In politics, as in business, the danger of cartels is that they damage the standing of the colluders over the longer term, increasing the distance between parties and society. See *political class*.

### **case study**

A case study is an intensive investigation of a single instance of a broader category. For example, the massacres in Rwanda in 1994 can be studied as a case of the wider phenomenon of genocide. Case studies can be classified as representative (typical of the category); prototypical (expected to become typical); deviant (exceptional); archetypal (a case that creates the category); and critical (if true here, then true everywhere). Case studies are generally multi-method, using a range of sources and techniques to investigate the case. Thus, case analysis can be contrasted with methods such as experiments and sample surveys, which investigate an issue through a specific technique.

### **catch-all party**

The catch-all party is a phrase developed by Otto Kirchheimer to describe the outcome of an evolutionary path followed by many European political parties, both *cadre* and *mass*, in post-1945 conditions. The catch-all party responds to a mobilized political system in which governing has become more technical and in which electoral communication takes place through the mass media. Leaders communicate with the voters through television, bypassing the membership. Such parties seek to govern in the national interest rather than as representatives of a social group. Catch-all parties seek electoral support wherever they can find it; their purpose is to govern rather than to represent. The broadening of Christian Democratic parties (such as the CDU in Germany) from religious defence organizations to broader parties of the centre-right is an example of the transition to catch-all status.

### **categorical grant**

A categorical grant is a payment for a specific project, such as building a new hospital. The term is typically used in the context of financial transfers from central to state and local governments. Categorical grants are more specific than *block grants* and *revenue-sharing*.

### **caucus**

A caucus is a closed meeting, particularly of all or a faction of the party's members in the legislature, to decide on a plan of action. See *cadre party*.

### **caudillo**

Caudillo is a Spanish term for a political boss who rules the roost in a particular territory, providing order and expecting allegiance. These local strong-men remain important figures in much of Latin America, where they reflect and reinforce the weakness of state institutions. This form of boss politics is called caudillismo.

### **celebrity politician**

Celebrities-turned-politicians (such as Arnold Schwarzenegger) exploit the fame they have acquired in non-political arenas to ease their entry into political office. Although politicians may increasingly need to compete in the celebrity space as exposure to political programming falls, American examples such as the actress Helen Gahagan Douglas and the astronaut John Glenn show that this political style predates the current century. Politicians-as-celebrities (as opposed to celebrities-turned-politicians) consist of politicians whose style is to present themselves to the electors as if they are famous stars of stage and screen.

### **centre-periphery**

The relationship between a country's core, usually based on the capital city, and its outlying regions or periphery, is an important theme in the political development of many states, notably in Western Europe. Nationalizing elites have frequently used force to impose central authority, often breeding resentments in the periphery which can fuel movements of protest or even *secession*.

### **charismatic authority**

Charismatic authority is based on the intense commitment of followers to the leader and his message. Charisma refers to the nature of the relationship between leader and followers, not to any intrinsic characteristics of the leader; thus, charisma is a

sociological rather than psychological construct. Charisma was an element of Max Weber's classification of authority. See *traditional authority*, *legal-rational authority*, *routinization of charisma*.

### **checks and balances**

Dividing political authority between distinct and independent bodies. The separation of executive, legislative and judicial authority in the United States is the classic expression of this liberal principle. Power is used to check power, with the underlying aim of producing a balanced constitution which minimizes the danger of tyranny (including the *tyranny of the majority*). The danger, however, is *immobilisme*; the more numerous the checks, the more difficult decisive action becomes. Whether power should be checked to prevent harm or concentrated to facilitate good is a fundamental question in politics. See *power-sharing*.

### **citizens' jury**

In a citizen's jury (or deliberative opinion poll), people are briefed by, and can question, experts and politicians on a given topic before their own opinions are measured. This technique seeks to measure what public opinion would be if the public were fully informed on the issue. It is an attempt to overcome the tendency for *opinion polls* to ascertain ill-considered judgements.

### **civic culture**

The ideal conditions for democracy, suggested Almond and Verba, emerge when many citizens are politically active in politics but a passive minority provide ballast and stability to the system. Further, participants are not so involved as to refuse to accept decisions with which they disagree. This blend of participation and passivity, of engagement and acceptance, is the civic culture. See *political culture*.

### **civil law**

Civil law systems are based on codified statements of law which present an overall framework for society. Such legal frameworks derive from the original *Roman law* codes. In civil law systems, judges reach decisions by applying extensive written codes to cases; they are treated as applying rather than making the law. By contrast, judges in the less common Anglo-American *common law* system compare cases and reach decisions accordingly, creating judge-made precedents (civil law is unconnected with a 'civil case', a term used to indicate a non-criminal action).

### **civil service**

The civil service consists of public officials directly employed by the state to advise on, and supervise the implementation of, government policy. The term is narrower than the *public sector*, which includes local government officials and many teachers. 'Civil' is in contrast to the military service; in Europe, both branches were originally servants of the monarch. See *bureaucracy*, *public administration*.

### **civil society**

Civil society consists of those groups which sit above the personal realm of the family but beneath the state. The term covers public organizations such as labour unions, interest groups and, on some definitions, recreational bodies. However, companies are usually excluded because they are not voluntary bodies emerging from society.

The continued weakness of civil society is a prominent theme in discussion of post-communist countries.

### **class action**

A class action is a legal device initiated by complainants on their behalf and 'for all others so situated'. The mechanism enables legal costs and gains to be shared among a large group and provides a lever by which interest groups can pursue their goals through the courts. Class actions are common in the United States but play a smaller role in most other legal systems.

### **cleavage**

A cleavage is a social division which creates a collective identity among those on each side of the divide. These interests are expressed in such organizations as trade unions, churches and parties. In Western Europe, class and religion were the widest and deepest cleavages, providing the foundation for many party systems. However, such divisions have been in decline for a generation, allowing opinion cleavages (such as pro-life v. pro-choice) to come to the fore.

### **clientelism**

Clientelism denotes politics substantially based on *patron-client relationships*. The patron provides protection to a number of lower-status clients who, in exchange, offer their unqualified allegiance and support. Clientelistic relationships provide the basis of political organization in many low income countries with extensive inequality. Such pyramids of personal relationships inhibit the development of programmatic political parties; of other horizontal groups, such as those based on social class; and of *civil society* generally. See *patriarchy*, *patronage*.

### **cloture**

Cloture is an American term for a rule ending legislative debate on a bill if a certain number of members agree. Cloture is a response to the *filibuster*. See also *guillotine*.

### **coalition government**

In a coalition government, executive power is shared between two or more political parties. Coalitions are normally based on a formal agreement setting out a common programme. A majority coalition controls more than half the seats in the legislature. A minority coalition lacks a majority but may still form especially when no positive *investiture vote* is needed. Coalitions are common in countries employing proportional representation, a system that rarely delivers a majority of parliamentary seats to a single party. Coalition government both reflects and reinforces a culture of cautious governance through inter-party agreement, a style that is particularly appropriate for societies characterized by ideological conflict and strong *cleavages*. See *grand*, *minimum winning*, *oversize* and *rainbow* coalitions, *divided government*.

### **coat-tails**

The electoral bonus accruing to lesser candidates from the strength of the person heading the party's ticket, as in 'he was elected purely on the president's coat-tails'. See *list-puller*.

### **conference committee**

A conference or mediation committee is a joint committee of both houses of a bicameral legislature. Its purpose is to reconcile differences in the versions of a bill passed by each chamber. An alternative but less common method is to call a joint session of both houses. See *shuttle*.

### **codetermination**

Codetermination is a system of company management found in Germany in which a supervisory board, representing diverse *stakeholders* (including union representatives) appoints and monitors the normal managing board as well as approving key corporate decisions. In a sense, codetermination is an industrial equivalent of a *coalition government*. As with coalitions, codetermination allows decisions to emerge through discussion and negotiation but at the risk of falling foul of the *joint decision trap*. See *coordinated market economy*.

### **codified constitution**

A codified constitution, as in the USA, is set out in a single document. An uncoded constitution, as in the UK, is spread among a range of documents and is influenced by tradition and practice. Nearly all constitutions are codified. See *civil law, common law*.

### **cohabitation**

Cohabitation occurs in a *semi-presidential executive* when the president and the prime minister are drawn from different political camps. It intensifies competition between the two principals and places the president in the awkward position of leading both the nation and the opposition. When *cohabitation* has occurred in France (as it did three times between 1986 and 2006), presidential power has tended to shrink as prime ministers have asserted their constitutional duty to 'determine and direct the policy of the nation'.

### **cold war**

The cold war refers to the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union which lasted from the late 1940s to the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991. In this era, the superpowers sought support wherever they could find it, showing little concern over an ally's internal politics. The end of the cold war was a decisive moment in world politics, unleashing forces such as democratization and nationalism which continue to unfold in the twenty first century.

### **collapsed state**

A collapsed state is usually defined institutionally, to denote the crumbling of state organization and its effective replacement by private and sub-national bodies. The term possess dramatic appeal but it is important to recognise that a collapsed state does not entail social anarchy. In addition, in *post-colonial* countries, the state's functions may never have been extensive to begin with. See *failed state*.

### **colour revolution**

A term applied to democratic protest movements in several former countries of the Soviet Union in the 2000s. The major cases are Georgia's Rose Revolution (2003),

Ukraine's Orange Revolution (2004) and the more violent and fragmented Tulip or Pink Revolution in Kyrgyzstan (2005).

### **command economy**

In a communist command economy, also called a centrally planned economy, the national government set quotas for state-owned production units and allocated resources to them. The bureaucracy then implemented the plan. Private ownership and market mechanism played little if any role. A command economy can speed the transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy by mobilizing inputs and holding back consumption. However, the political and human price is considerable; productivity (as opposed to production) remains low; and market-based allocations are more efficient in an advanced, services-based economy.

### **committee-based legislature**

In a committee-based or working legislature, such as the American Congress, most work takes place in committees. There, members transform bills into laws, conduct hearings and scrutinize the executive. In contrast to a *debating legislature*, debate on the floor possesses a formal, ritual quality in committee-based legislatures.

### **commodification**

The process of increasing the proportion of all goods and services which are supplied by a market price. The term is often used by those who regret the replacement of social by commercial values.

### **common law**

The common law, found in England and many of its former colonies, consists of judicial rulings on matters not explicitly treated in legislation. Common law is based on precedents created by decisions in specific cases. It therefore establishes a sphere of judicial authority to some extent separate from, and which certainly builds on, statute law. By contrast, judges in codified *civil law* systems perform a less exalted role, functioning as spokespersons for the code. See *civil law*.

### **communist state, communist party-state**

A regime nominally committed to the achievement of Marx's communist utopia. Such states were powerful dictatorships controlled by a ruling party and the term 'state socialism' is sometimes used to distinguish them from Marx's ideal of a stateless society. The first communist state was established by the Russian revolution of October 1917 and the form later spread to, and was imposed on, Eastern Europe and beyond. Before the decisive collapse of the late 1980s and early 1990s (again stimulated by reform in Russia), 23 regimes claiming Marxist inspiration ruled more than 1.5 billion people – about one in three of the world's population. Although the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev once boasted to the West, 'we will outlast you', once industrialization was achieved communist states proved to be sterile dictatorships based on unproductive *command economies*. The collapse of communism in the final decades of the twentieth century was a major turning-point that initiated the end of the *cold war*. The surviving 'communist' regimes, as in China, are in the main party-based dictatorships in which political contacts provide access to wealth-creating opportunities in a more market-oriented but still fundamentally corrupt economy.

### **comparative politics**

Comparative politics is a form of political analysis which seeks to understand the similarities and differences between political units, most often countries. Comparative politics adds variation which is unavailable to students of a single political system. Once such variation is identified, its causes and consequences can be explored and cross-national learning becomes possible. In this way, the study of comparative politics contributes to a broader and fuller understanding of the political world, including our own country.

### **concurrent jurisdiction**

Concurrent jurisdiction is a term used to describe functional responsibilities shared between different levels of government in a *federation*. In Canada, for instance, both the national and provincial governments can pass laws dealing with agriculture and immigration. Concurrent jurisdiction encourages *cooperative federalism* and can be contrasted with *dual federalism*.

### **concurrent majority**

A concurrent majority means that more than one majority is required: for example, a double majority comprising all voters and all states in a federation.

### **conditionality**

Conditionality means adding riders or provisos to an agreement. The term is usually used in the context of conditions attached by international organizations to financial aid offered to governments in low-income countries. These conditions typically included a commitment to economic reforms such as privatization. However, the instrument has proved to be excessively blunt, with the recipient government often lacking commitment to the conditions imposed. Conditionality is currently judged to be an inadequate tool for securing structural economic reform. Rather, the emphasis now is on encouraging governments to 'buy into' reform in a non-financial sense.

### **confederation**

A confederation is a weak link between participating countries, in which the members retain their separate statehood. Confederations fall between two stools, lacking both the flexibility of a traditional alliances and the binding character of a *federation*.

### **consociational democracy**

A cooperative association between the separate communities or *pillars* of a *plural society*. See *elite accommodation, power-sharing*.

### **constitution**

A constitution sets out the formal structure of the state, specifying the powers and institutions of central government, and its relationship with other levels. In addition, constitutions express the rights of citizens and in so doing create limits on government, thus implementing the liberal vision of the relationship between state and society. A codified constitution is set out in a single document; an uncoded constitution is spread among a range of documents and is influenced by tradition and practice.

### **constructive vote of no confidence**

The constructive vote of no confidence requires an assembly to select a new prime minister before it can dispose of the incumbent. The purpose is to prevent legislatures from acting destructively by bringing down a government without adequate thought to the successor. In this way, the mechanism is intended to enhance governmental stability in parliamentary regimes. The device comes from Germany but has also been adopted in Hungary, Israel and Spain.

### **cooperative federalism**

Cooperative federalism, as practiced in Germany, is based on collaboration between levels of government. National and state governments are expected to act as partners in following the interests of the whole. Cooperative federalism has been an integral theme in European federations, notably Germany. By contrast, the American tradition comes closer to *dual federalism* though the term cooperative federalism is often used there to describe the growing interdependence between levels in the first six decades of the twentieth century, as for example in Roosevelt's New Deal.

### **coordinated market economy**

In a coordinated market economy, the 'private' sector is seen less as an independent sphere of activity and more as an arena subject to control by social and political forces. These forces have included not just a strong socialist party but also an influential Catholic church. In societies divided by class, religion and ideology, economic competition has been subject to political control in order to deliver social stability. Social cohesion and *solidarity* are core values, reflecting a shared desire to prevent Adam Smith's invisible hand from becoming an invisible fist. Germany is the archetypal case. The contrast is with *liberal market economies* of which the USA is the archetype. See *codetermination*, *stakeholder capitalism*.

### **core state**

A term associated with Samuel Huntington, a core state is the most powerful and culturally central state in a civilization. India, for example, is a core state within the Hindu civilization. See *lone state*.

### **corporatism**

In a democratic context, corporatism is a relationship between the state and interest groups in which major domestic decisions emerge from discussions between the government and leading *peak associations* representing capital and labour. In return for their influence, the peak associations are expected to ensure the compliance of their large memberships. This system is sometimes called liberal or societal corporatism to distinguish it from the state corporatism of fascism. Traditional corporatist settlements, as in Austria, have decayed but looser *social pacts* retain appeal. Corporatist arrangements can be contrasted with *pluralism*, in which the government acts as an umpire in a free competition between interest groups.

### **correlation**

The correlation coefficient measures the accuracy with which we can predict from one statistical variable to another. In the most widely-used measure of correlation

(Pearson's  $r$ ), the relationship is measured on a scale from zero to one. Zero indicates the absence of correlation; one indicates the ability to predict the value of one variable from the value of the other with complete accuracy. Irrespective of its size, a correlation can be positive (when one variable goes up, so does the other) or negative (when one variable goes up, the other goes down). Thus, a perfect positive correlation is scored +1.0; a perfect negative correlation is -1.0. *Regression*, not correlation, measures the sharpness or impact of the independent variable; a correlation can be large even though the slope of the relationship, as shown visually in a scatterplot, is modest. Whether a correlation is *statistically significant* usually depends on the size of the sample as much as the magnitude of the correlation.

### **corruption**

Corruption is the use of public office for private gain. Taking bribes may be endemic in countries where public salaries are low or where loyalties to ethnic groups take priority over those to the state. In these circumstances, bribery may be accepted as a normal part of everyday life. What appears as corruption to the outsider can just be seen as by the participants as fulfilling obligations. Corruption is therefore a concept where the comparativist must take care to understand its application (if any) in a given culture.

### **cost-benefit analysis (CBA)**

Cost-benefit analysis is a framework for assessing the value of a particular policy or project. It involves giving a monetary value (positive or negative) to every consequence of choosing each option and then selecting the option with the highest net benefit. In this way, the efficiency gain from adding a new runway to an airport can be netted off against the additional noise pollution for local residents. The technique is time-consuming, difficult to apply but systematic nonetheless. Even when its conclusions are ignored (as they often are in the normal political process of adjusting interests), gross departures from the option with the highest net benefit can at least embarrass politicians.

### **council system of local government**

In the council system of local government, elected councillors form a committee ('the council') which operates through smaller subgroups or functional committees. The unelected and often barely visible mayor is appointed by the council or by central government. Belgium, Netherlands and Sweden are examples of countries employing this format. See *council-manager* and *mayor-council systems of local government*.

### **council-manager system of local government**

In the council-manager system of local government, the elected mayor and council appoint a professional manager to run executive departments. This format is employed in about 3,000 American cities, including Dallas, Texas and Phoenix, Arizona. Its origins lie in an attempt, rarely completely successful, to depoliticize the provision of local services. See *council* and *council-manager system of local government*.

### **counterfactual**

A counterfactual is a statement of what would have happened had something not occurred. Counterfactual analysis consists of thought experiments speculating on

likely outcomes if A had occurred rather than B. What would our world be like if Hitler had died in a car crash in 1932 or if his invasion of Russia had succeeded? Counterfactual thinking inheres in any effort to assign causes to an event.

### **coup d'état (putsch)**

A coup d'état is a sudden seizure of state power, typically by the military. Most military coups occurred in post-colonial countries between the 1960s and 1980s, with sub-Saharan Africa the major arena. The term conjures up images of a violent and unwelcome capture of power against civilian rulers but many coups replaced one military regime with another; involved little if any loss of life; and were more or less invited by the previous rulers. After the *Cold War*, the generals could no longer rely on the tolerance of a superpower; in the main, they returned to their barracks. See *autogolpe*.

### **critical election**

A critical election (or more often a critical sequence of elections) is a rare but pivotal contest instituting a *realignment* of party identification and a transformation of the relationship between social groups and political parties. The term is less useful in era of *partisan dealignment*. See *normal and deviating elections*.

### **critical theory**

A form of social and political analysis which seeks to demonstrate the interests underlying orthodox and establishment thinking. By this means, critical theory seeks to open new avenues for genuine, open and democratic deliberation. Critical theory shares Marx's concern with deconstructing dominant world-views but does not attribute such norms solely to the interests of the dominant economic class. Of course, the fact that a particular position represents the interests of a dominant group or interest does not show that this position is incorrect.

### **cumul des mandats (accumulation of offices)**

The *cumul* is found in a number of countries in continental Europe. In France, for example, national politicians often become or remain mayor of their home town. Even after a tightening of the rules in 1985 and 2000, the most popular *cumul* - combining the office of local mayor with membership of the National Assembly - is still permitted. The *cumul* comes in for widespread criticism but has provided an avenue through which well-connected localities can pursue their goals at national level.

### **dealignment**

Dealignment refers to the weakening of relationships between social groups, political parties and electors. It is a process rather than an outcome. The disappearance of such *cleavages* yields nonalignment; only their replacement would constitute realignment.

### **debating legislature**

In a debating or arena legislature, such as the British House of Commons, floor debate is the central activity. It is here, rather than in committee, that major issues are addressed and parties (and politicians) gain or lose ground. A debating legislature occupies with the grand questions affecting the nation, rather than the small prints of *bills*. See *committee-based legislature*.

### **decentralization**

Decentralization occurs when central government functions are executed by subnational authorities. For instance, local governments administer national welfare programmes in Scandinavia. However, in contrast to *devolution* the centre retains policy-making authority. Thus decentralization is consistent with – and indeed is a feature of – *unitary states*.

### **deconcentration**

Deconcentration occurs when the execution of central government functions is moved away from the capital, to the regions.

### **decree**

A decree is simply a an edict or order issued by a person in authority, especially presidents. Governing by decree is often contrasted with the *rule of law*. Certainly, decrees which are not based on law (or which automatically become law) indicate *authoritarian rule*.

### **delegated legislation**

Delegated legislation consists of detailed regulations issued by a government department to give effect to primary legislation. In the USA, the national government publishes about 70,000 pages of regulations in the Federal Register each year. The British government also publishes thousands of Statutory Instruments every year. Delegated legislation is also known as secondary or subordinate legislation.

### **delegative democracy**

Delegative democracy is a term used by Guillermo O'Donnell to describe a non-institutionalized and non-consolidated democracy in which presidents who win a presidential election consider themselves empowered to govern as they see fit for the term to which they have been elected. Numerous other phrases are used to describe this syndrome: for example, illiberal, low-intensity and managed democracy. What ever the wording, the contrast is with *liberal democracy*.

### **deliberative democracy**

A perspective on democracy which emphasises the value of public discussion among free, equal and rational citizens in giving legitimacy to decisions and in enhancing their quality. The expectation is that public discussion will yield a consensus on the way forward, since in a public forum special pleading for private interests will soon be unmasked. The perspective is theoretical but clearly implies dissatisfaction with *representative democracy*.

### **deliberative opinion poll**

In a deliberative opinion poll (or citizens' jury), participants are briefed by, and can question, experts and politicians on a given topic before their own opinions are measured. This technique seeks to measure what public opinion would be if the public were fully informed on the issue. As such, it seeks to overcome a weakness of a traditional *opinion poll* which asks only what people think, given what they already know.

## **democracy**

The core principle of democracy is self-rule; the word itself comes from the Greek *demokratia*, meaning rule (*kratos*) by the people (*demos*). In modern *representative democracies*, the people elect representatives to govern on their behalf. For the first time in history, most people in the world now live under tolerably democratic rule. This fact reflects the dramatic transformation of the world's political landscape in the final quarter of the twentieth century. Over that short period, the number of democracies more than doubled from less than 40 to more than 80. See *deliberative*, *direct*, *illiberal* and *liberal democracy*.

## **democratic consolidation**

A democracy has consolidated when it provides an accepted framework for political competition. Adam Przeworski suggests that a democracy has consolidated when its institutions have become the only game in town and when no-one can imagine acting outside this framework. An unconsolidated democracy, in which politicians seek to alter the rules in search of political advantage, is not necessarily unstable but may itself come to represent a form of *equilibrium*.

## **democratic deficit**

The democratic deficit is a phrase used to indicate the shortfall in the running of an organization against a democratic yardstick. The term developed in the context of the European Union but is also sometimes applied to intergovernmental organizations such as the International Monetary Fund. Use of the term 'deficit' presupposes that the absence of democracy is a lack or weakness; in that sense, the phrase expresses a political position.

## **democratic peace**

The democratic peace hypothesis is that democracies are less war-like than authoritarian regimes and that they rarely fight each other. The hypothesis possesses at least some supporting evidence.

## **density of membership**

The proportion of all those who are eligible to join a group who actually do so. An encompassing (high density) membership enhances an interest group's authority and strengthens its bargaining position with government.

## **dependency ratio**

The ratio of the economically dependent part of the population to the employed part. Dependents are those who are too young or old to work, the latter group being more significant in most developed states. Other things being equal, the higher the ratio, the greater the cost of welfare provision. As populations age, so dependency ratios increase, implying an increase of welfare expenditure (e.g. on medical care) even if the level of benefit for an individual remains the same.

## **dependent variable**

In a statistical analysis, the dependent variable is the factor we wish to account for; for example, party voted for. The phrase 'dependent variable' makes fewer assumptions than using such words as 'effect' or 'consequence' which imply a relationship of cause and effect. See *independent variable*.

### **deputy**

In contemporary politics, the word 'deputy' is typically used to describe a member of the lower house of parliament, which is itself sometimes known as the Chamber of Deputies. Strictly, the word implies that the member acts merely as an agent of the electors (just as the deputy sheriff stands in for the sheriff) but this connotation is often lost.

### **developmental state**

A developmental state leads a society to rapid industrialization by combining a powerful bureaucracy, which formulates national economic targets, with private ownership of the means of production. The main examples are East Asian states such as democratic Japan and initially non-democratic South Korea in the post-war decades. Like communist states, development states provided a route to industrialization in the twentieth century but needed to adapt – and found difficulty in doing so – once their economies matured. See *authoritarian advantage thesis*.

### **deviating election**

In a deviating election, the natural majority party loses the election due to short-term factors such as an unpopular candidate or a faltering economy. However, in contrast to a *critical election*, the defeat leaves the underlying balance of party identification unchanged, leading to the expectation that a *normal election* will restore the balance. The term is less useful in era of *partisan dealignment*.

### **devolution**

Devolution occurs when the central government of a unitary state grants some decision-making autonomy to lower levels. However, devolved authority can be regained by the centre, thus providing a contrast with the divided sovereignty of a federation. See *decentralization, deconcentration*.

### **D'Hondt formula**

The D'Hondt formula is a method for assigning seats to parties in multi-member districts. The D'Hondt formula is commonly used but shows some bias to larger parties. The alternative Sainte-Laguë method is fairer to small parties.

### **diaspora**

A diaspora is a national group which is dispersed beyond its homeland. The term was originally associated with the dispersal of the Jews from their Palestinian homeland following the defeat by the Romans in 70 AD. Only a minority of the world's Jews now live in the ancient homeland. Other examples from Asia include the Chinese diaspora in South East Asia linking the Chinese homeland with economically important groups in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

### **dignified part of constitution**

Walter Bagehot defined the dignified part of the constitution as that which excites and preserves the reverence of the population. By contrast, the efficient part is that by which the constitution in fact works and rules. Bagehot suggested that these two dimensions complement each other; a constitution must first gain authority and then use it in the work of government.

### **direct democracy**

In a direct democracy, the citizens themselves assemble to debate and reach decisions on matters of common interest. In its richest sense, democracy refers not to the election of the rulers by the ruled but to the denial of any separation between the two. In a direct democracy, state and society become one. The polis of ancient Athens is the pre-eminent example. In the modern world of large states, direct democracy has been supplanted by *representative democracy*, a system which grants decision-making authority to elected rulers who are expected to bring exceptional judgement and understanding to their task.

### **directional model**

The directional model of voting behaviour posits that electors are motivated by whether a party or candidate is on their side of an issue, rather than by the exact proximity of the party or candidate to the voter's own position. The directional model also imagines that electors are influenced by the intensity with which a party advocates its position, not just by the position itself. In these ways, the directional model challenges the traditional *proximity model*.

### **dirigisme**

A word of French origin (and a continuing French practice) meaning state direction and leadership, principally of the economy.

### **discount rate**

The discount rate is the factor by which the expected future benefits of a policy are reduced to estimate their present value. In general, a high discount rate based on market levels of interest will sharply reduce the current value of projects with long-term benefits, such as schemes to contain global warming. Although economists often use prevailing interest rates to discount future benefits, interest rates do not themselves seem to possess moral weight. The question of the appropriate discount rate to use in political decisions therefore remains unanswered.

### **distribution requirements**

Distribution requirements set out how a candidate's votes must be arranged across different sections of the electorate in order for the candidate to be declared the winner. The most common (but still unusual) requirement is for a minimum level of support in a certain number of provinces. Such requirements can require the winning candidate to acquire cross-community support but can lead to *failed elections* in which no candidate jumps through all the hoops.

### **district magnitude**

District magnitude refers to the number of representatives chosen for each electoral district (not to its number of electors). The more representatives to be elected for a

specific district, the more proportional the electoral system can be and the smaller the discrimination against minor parties. For this reason, district magnitude is an important source of variation within the category of *proportional representation* systems. See *electoral threshold*.

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### **districting**

Drawing the boundaries of electoral districts. Districts often need to be redrawn to reflect population change; they can also be manipulated for partisan purposes through *gerrymandering*. See also *apportionment*.

### **divided government**

Divided government is an American term denoting a situation in which the president's party lacks a majority in Congress. Overseas observers sometimes exaggerate the importance of divided government in explaining disagreements between the White House and Congress, failing to recognize that these conflicts can continue even when the same party occupies both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. The term is not usually used in the context of *coalition governments* or *cohabitation* in Western Europe.

### **dominant party system**

In a dominant party system, one party is a constant in office, either governing alone or in coalition with other parties. Generally, dominant parties have tended to fall victim to their own success. The very strength of a dominant party's position means that factions tend to develop within it, leading to an inward-looking perspective, a lack of concern with policy and increasing corruption. India's Congress Party is an example of a diminished – and no longer dominant – party. One of the few contemporary examples is the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa. The ANC has multiple strengths, benefiting not just from memories of its opposition to apartheid and from its strong position among the black majority but also from its use of office to reward its own supporters. Japan under the Liberal Democrats is another example.

### **dual federalism**

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As originally envisaged in the USA, federalism meant that national and state governments retained separate spheres of action. Each level would independently performed the tasks allocated to it by the constitution. This format, which we now call dual federalism has long been overtaken by the realities of interdependence and a national economy. See *cooperative* and *marble-cake federalism*.

### **dual system of local government**

A term used to describe a formal separation of central and local government. Although the centre is sovereign, local authorities are not seen as part of a single state apparatus; rather, they retain a separate standing deriving from historical traditions of local administration. Britain is an example of this dual system. The contrast is with the *fused system* exemplified by France.

### **due process**

Primarily an American term, due process refers to the implementation of an individual's legal rights as implied by the *rule of law*.

### **Dutch disease**

Dutch disease emerges when a predominance of commodity exports causes a country's exchange rate to rise, handicapping other sectors with export potential and exposing domestic producers to cheaper imports. The mechanism is named after the decline in the Dutch manufacturing sector following the country's discovery of natural gas reserves in the 1960s. Dutch disease is endemic in *rentier states*.

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### **Duverger's law**

Formulated by Maurice Duverger in the 1950s, this law states that an almost complete correlation exists between the *single-member plurality* method of election and a *two-party system*. The United Kingdom and the USA were prominent examples. Today, most observers would express greater caution, pointing out that *multiparty systems* are found in India and to a lesser extent the United Kingdom, even though both countries still use the plurality method. In an era of *partisan dealignment*, minor parties with a strong regional base can secure parliamentary seats even under the plurality method. Indeed, first-past-the-post can be an advantage to regional parties.

### **effective number of parties**

The effective number of parties is a statistical measure of party fragmentation within a political unit such as an assembly. Simply counting the parties achieving any representation gives a number which is over-sensitive to the presence of many small parties. For example, an assembly in which 10 parties each contain one representative but all the other seats are divided equally between two large parties is a 12-party system. Even so, it forms what is effectively a two-party system. Accordingly, the formula used to calculate the effective number of parties takes into account not just the number of parties but also their relative size. Thus, an assembly with three parties of equal size would score higher on the index than an assembly with one large party and two small ones, even though the number of parties is the same.

### **efficiency of the vote**

The efficiency of a party's vote is shown by its ratio of seats to votes. Under plurality elections, a perfectly efficient distribution consists in never winning a seat by more than one vote and securing no votes at all in seats unwon.

### **efficient part of constitution**

Walter Bagehot defined the efficient part of the constitution as that by which the constitution in fact works and rules. The dignified part, by contrast, is that which excites and preserves the reverence of the population. Bagehot's view was that these two dimensions complement each other; a constitution must first gain authority and then use it in the work of government.

### **election monitoring**

Since the 1980s, international bodies have increasingly been asked to assess whether an election is *free and fair*. Such monitoring provides a device through which the international community can promote democracy and through which the host government can add to its international and even domestic legitimacy. In practice, monitoring cannot cover the whole of an election and, in any case, many *made*

*elections* are heavily biased not just before election day but even before the campaign gets under way. The concept of election monitoring implies assessment against a standard and is therefore held to be more judgemental than the related notion of election observation.

### **election rule**

An election rule is an agreement among the partners in a coalition government to call an election if the coalition ends, thus embedding an incentive for the partners to soldier on.

### **electoral-professional party**

The concept of an electoral-professional party is used by Angelo Panebianco to denote parties centred on fighting elections through the mass media. Election campaigns are highly centralized, directed by a small inner circle within the party, and supported by paid professional advisors such as pollsters and advertisers. The clearest contrast is with a *mass party* but the electoral-professional party can also be seen as a further development of the *catch-all party*. In new democracies, however (especially those in post-communist Eastern Europe), electoral-professional parties emerge without passing through these earlier stages. Russian observers use the term *political technology* to refer to a similar emphasis within parties on modern campaigning techniques.

### **electoral authoritarian regime**

A form of rule in which the trappings of democratic rule disguise a more fundamental authoritarianism. Elections remain an important source of authority and are nominally competitive but not free and fair. Rather, control over the media, and selective repression of opponents, produce a biased result. The rulers stand above the framework of law, rather than being subject to it. The term overlaps with *illiberal democracy* but with greater emphasis on the authoritarian dimension.

### **electoral formula**

The rules governing the translation of votes into seats. In a single-member plurality system, the formula is that the candidate winning most votes is elected. In proportional representation, the formulae are more complicated. See *ballot structure*, *D'Hondt formula*.

### **electoral system**

A set of rules for conducting an election, with specific reference to the *ballot structure* and *electoral formula*. See *district magnitude*, *proportional representation* and *single-member plurality system*.

### **electoral threshold**

A level of electoral support below which a party receives no seats, whatever its entitlement under other rules of the electoral system. Explicit thresholds are often introduced in *list systems* of party list proportional representation and are typically no more than four or five per cent. Operating at district or national level, thresholds help to protect the legislature from extremes. Thresholds can also be used as a tool by the main parties to keep small parties out of the assembly. Implicit thresholds can also

operate, as in the *single-member plurality system* under which a party coming second in every district would win no seats.

### **elite accommodation**

An agreement between group leaders on distributing national resources without compromising the autonomy and distinctiveness of each *pillar* within a divided society. See *consociational democracy*.

### **enabling authority**

The enabling authority is a term used to summarize one vision of local governance. The enabling local authority does not provide many services itself. Rather, its concerns are to coordinate the provision of services and to represent the community both within and beyond its territory. An enabling authority is strategic, contracting out service provision to private agencies, whether voluntary or profit-making. The term carries most resonance in countries such as the United Kingdom where local authorities were traditionally service-providers.

### **enclave**

An enclave is a country or part of a country which is wholly surrounded by the territory of another country. For example, Lesotho is an enclave within South Africa. See *exclave* for another viewpoint.

### **elite political culture**

Elite political culture denotes the beliefs, attitudes and ideas about politics held by those who are closest to the centres of political power. The values of elites are more explicit, systematic and consequential than are those of the population at large and therefore merit particular scrutiny.

### **emergency debate**

A discussion on the floor of a legislative chamber of a matter formally designated as both important and pressing. Normally a minimum number of members, and the Presiding Officer (Speaker), must approve a proposal for such a debate. An emergency debate creates publicity and demands a considered response from the government's spokesperson.

### **equalization grant**

An equalization grant is a form of payment used in some federations (e.g. Canada and Germany) in an effort to harmonize financial conditions between the states. A policy of equalization can create resentment in the wealthier states without offering a clear strategy for long-term improvement in the poorer regions.

### **equilibrium**

A position of balance, with no tendency to change. A political equilibrium exists when no significant actors feel they would gain appreciably from changing the current position. For example, democracy is closer to equilibrium than dictatorship because in a democracy even the losers think their time will come, thus reducing their

incentive to rebel when their opponents are in power. Shocks may and do change the equilibrium point.

### **ethnic cleansing**

Ethnic cleansing means transforming an ethnically-mixed area into a homogenous one by forcible removal of a specific *ethnic group*. The term came into popular use in the 1990s as a critical term for deportations and mass killings during the Balkan Wars. See *genocide, partition*.

### **ethnic group**

A group with a shared identity, particularly of a racial kind. An ethnic group will usually claim a common ancestry, history and tradition but it matters little whether these claims are correct. 'Ethnic group' has largely replaced 'tribe' but lacks the biological connotations of 'race'. Examples of groups which would not be described as 'ethnic' are social classes and interest groups.

### **ethnocentrism**

A belief in the superiority of one's own culture. In comparative politics, an ethnocentric perspective involves viewing another political system through the lens of one's own. Such an approach does not always lead to error but it often does.

### **exclave**

An exclave is an area of territory which is physically separate from the country to which it belongs. For example, Kaliningrad is a Russian exclave which borders Lithuania, Poland and the Baltic Sea. See *enclave* for another viewpoint.

### **exclusive jurisdiction**

A political unit (e.g. the national government in a federation) possesses exclusive jurisdiction when it is solely responsible for a particular function (e.g. foreign affairs, the currency). See *concurrent jurisdiction*.

### **executive**

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The political executive forms the top tier of government, directing the nation's domestic and foreign affairs, supervising the implementation of policy, mobilizing support for its goals and offering crisis leadership. In a broader sense, the executive branch is often taken to encompass the bureaucracy as well as the political class, thus distinguishing the executive from the judiciary and the legislature. However, the political executive, which makes policy, must be distinguished from the bureaucracy, which puts policy into effect. Unlike appointed officials, the members of the political executive are chosen and removed by political means, most often by election. The political executive is the accountable body; it is where the buck stops.

### **executive privilege**

Executive privilege refers to the right of the president and government officials to withhold information from the legislature or the courts, and to decline to appear before these bodies. American presidents, for example, argue that some secrecy is essential for national security. Their claim is accepted but the boundaries of executive privilege remain subject to dispute.

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### **exit poll**

An exit poll is a survey of voting choices taken as electors leave the polling place. Unlike *opinion polls* of voting intentions, exit polls report behaviour and exclude non-voters. The accuracy of exit polls is well-attested, though issues of sampling, response rate and respondent misreporting still provide potential for error.

### **express powers**

Express powers are those explicitly granted in a constitution. For example, the American constitution declares that 'The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States'. See *implied powers*.

### **Faction**

A faction is an organized and aware group within a larger entity such as a political party. Factions are commonly based on ideology (e.g. left and right factions) or patronage (e.g. followers of a senior figure in the party). Factions are common within dominant parties, preventing the broader organization from acting coherently and often contributing to its eventual downfall.

### **failed election**

A failed election is a contest in which no candidate meets all the requirements for election. The rules may stipulate a minimum level of turnout (e.g. 50 per cent). Or they may require the winner to secure a majority of votes cast. Alternatively, *distribution requirements* may call for a minimum level of support in a certain number of provinces. If an election fails, the rules normally require another contest. The rules for this second election should be such that another failure is impossible.

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### **failed state**

A failed state no longer performs its key role of monopolizing the legitimate use of force within its territory. The term possess dramatic appeal but it is important to recognise that a failed state does not entail social anarchy. In addition, the state's functions, especially in *post-colonial* countries, may never have been extensive to begin with. See *collapsed state*.

### **federalism**

The principle of sharing *sovereignty* between central and state (i.e. provincial) governments. The existence of a federation does not depend on the extent of *decentralization* but only on the formal sharing of sovereignty. Federalism is a common method of political organization in large populous states such as India and the USA. See *asymmetric, dual, cooperative* and *fiscal federalism*.

### **federation**

A federation is a political system based on the principle of *federalism*. See *confederation*.

### **filibuster**

Blocking passage of a bill by exploiting the tradition of unlimited debate in a legislature. Procedures such as *cloture* and the *guillotine* have developed in response.

### **first-past-the-post electoral system**

Also known as the *single-member plurality system*. The candidate securing most votes (not necessarily a majority) is elected on the first and only ballot within each single-member district. This method is mainly found in the United Kingdom and its former colonies, notably the United States. The method can lead to a victory in seats for a party coming second in votes and also discriminates against those minor parties whose support is evenly distributed across the country. Where strong national parties exist (as in the UK and the USA), the system can deliver majority government by a single party even though no single party normally secures a majority of votes.

### **fiscal federalism**

Fiscal federalism denotes the financial relationships between central government and the states in a federation. The fiscal realities (which generally favour the centre but with variations over time) tend to drive the political balance of power and initiative. Fiscal federalism is also used more specifically, to describe the transfer of funds from the national government to the states for particular programmes.

### **fiscal policy**

The government's approach to taxation and spending. As long as a country's economy is not wholly dependent on larger neighbours, fiscal policy can be loosened or tightened so as to influence overall demand. See *monetary policy*.

### **flash party**

Flash parties exploit popular resentment against the government or the political system, usually by highlighting specific issues such as high taxation or a permissive immigration or asylum policy. They are short-lived *protest parties* which fall as quickly as they rise. Their leaders are typically populist but inexperienced, with activists operating on the margins of the law.

### **focus group**

A focus group is a moderated discussion among a small group of respondents on a particular topic. An open-ended technique that has found favour with party strategists, a focus group is a qualitative research method used to explore the thinking and emotions lying behind people's attitudes. In that way, they complement rather than provide an alternative to *opinion polls*.

### **focused comparisons**

Qualitative comparison of a few cases, typically two or three. Focused comparisons provide some of the intellectual gain of the comparative method without embracing the variable-based approach of *large-N* research. See *small-N*.

### **formateur**

A formateur is a person or party charged by the head of state with initiating negotiations for a coalition after a parliamentary election or government resignation.

The formateur is usually the leader of the party with most seats in parliament. Formateurs are only needed when no party possesses a majority; even so, not all political systems with a coalition tradition have established a formal position of this kind.

### **forum shopping**

Seeking to resolve a dispute in a jurisdiction or court most likely to deliver a favourable verdict. In a global world, corporations can choose to take a case to courts in a number of different countries.

### **founding election**

A founding or transitional election is the first to be held following the introduction of a new regime. The level of turnout serves as referendum on the legitimacy of the new order. Typically, turnout is high in a founding election but falls in second and subsequent elections.

### **framing**

Framing refers to the way an event is narrated as a coherent story. A frame focuses on particular aspects of a problem, often including its origins, remedies and evaluation. It encourages receivers to interpret the topic in the same way. For example, immigration might be framed as a negative threat to national identity or as a positive solution to a labour shortage. The term is usually encountered in studies of media coverage but can also be applied to how parties and rulers articulate particular themes, such as the war on terror. See *priming*.

### **franchise**

Generally, any right granted to an individual by an authority. Specifically, the franchise consists of those entitled to vote.

### **free and fair election**

A free and fair election is a phrase more often used than defined. Broadly, it indicates an election which allows an authentic choice to emerge. A free election implies freedom of speech and association, thus enabling genuine deliberation. A fair election is held on a level playing field, with no built-in advantages for any particular party. The Bergstraesser Institute suggests that elections should be universal, equal, secret and free. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe advocates seven principles: universality, equality, fairness, secrecy, freedom, transparency and accountability.

### **free rider**

A free rider benefits from a *public good* without contributing to its provision. Free riders pose particular difficulties with public goods such as national defence. An individual who avoids paying tax will still enjoy such goods but, if everyone free rides, the goods will cease to be supplied. So taxes, and sometimes military service, are compulsory.

### **free trade area (FTA)**

A free trade area permits the free flow of goods and services within a group of countries, usually in the same region. However, members continue to follow their own policies on trade with external countries. Free trade agreements offer gains from trade without the loss of *sovereignty* involved in a *federation*. However, free trade agreements are sometimes for show; they are rarely fully implemented; and they complicate the task of developing a multilateral regime policed by intergovernmental organizations.

### **free vote**

A vote in parliament on which no party line applies. Members can vote as they wish.

### **functionalism**

A form of political analysis which seeks to understand a particular process or institution by locating its significance for a wider political system, need or requirement. The part is understood by grasping its relationship to the whole. Thus, a functional interpretation of a legislature would identify its role in the wider system of government. Similarly, a functional account of the European Union might be that it contributed to the member states' need to achieve the efficiency gains of a larger market. In pure form, functional explanations are ahistorical and contrast with *process tracing*. See *political system, systems analysis*.

### **functional representation**

Functional representation occurs when the members of a body such as a legislature are selected through non-territorial organizations such as chambers of commerce, churches, universities and women's groups. Functional representation is often judged to be old-fashioned, especially in mobile societies in which the individual is held to be pre-eminent. Even so, the work-place is often a more important source of identity than the local area in which an elector lives and votes. See *corporatism*.

### **führerprinzip**

Associated with the German philosopher Hermann Keyserling (1880-1946), the führerprinzip (leader principle) views an organization as a quasi-military hierarchy of meritocratic leaders. Each leader possesses unqualified authority and answers only to those above. As applied by Hitler, the führerprinzip left little room for coherent, stable organization within the Nazi Party. See *bureaucracy*.

### **fused system of local government**

In a fused system of local government, municipalities form part of a uniform system of administration applying across the country. Centre and locality form a single structure of state authority, traditionally linked through the post of *prefect*. France is the archetype; Britain historically exemplifies the contrasting *dual system*. See *cumul des mandats*.

### **Gamson's law**

Gamson's law states that a party in a coalition government will obtain a share of government posts proportional to the resources – specifically, its share of legislative seats – that it contributes to the coalition. In the main, the law is accurate.

### **garbage-can model**

The garbage-can model of policy formulation sees problems and solutions mixing at random within an organization, rather as the garbage in a waste container depends on what garbage is produced at a given time and how often the bin is emptied. If organizational problems are resolved at all, it is in an *ad hoc*, piecemeal fashion. The model implies that organizations do not normally pursue coherent overall goals in a systematic fashion; rather, issues are fleetingly addressed by a series of distinct groups. Many universities illustrate *governance* by garbage can.

### **general competence**

Where general competence exists, local government is empowered to make regulations in any matter of concern to its area. Where general competence is lacking, local authorities are restricted to those tasks expressly delegated by central authority. See *ultra vires*, *Dillon's Rule*.

### **general election**

1. An election which selects all the members of a body such as a parliament. In this sense, a general election is distinguished from a by-election taking place in a specific district only.

2. An election which determines which candidate is selected for an office, as opposed to a *primary election* which determines who is to stand as candidates. parties.

### **general will**

The general will is followed when citizens make decisions for the good of society as a whole rather than for the interests of particular groups and individuals within it. The term was central to the political thought of the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) and still finds echoes in some distrust within France of special interests.

### **generational effect**

The tendency for political attitudes and behaviour to differ by generation. A generational effect implies a difference in attitudes or behaviour compared to another generation at the same age. If attitudes and behaviour are only measured at one point in time, it is impossible to distinguish empirically between *life-cycle*, generational and *period* effects.

### **genocide**

Genocide is the deliberate and systematic extermination of a large proportion of a people, nation, race or ethnic group. The term was coined by Raphael Lemkin, a Jewish lawyer from Poland who reached the United States during the war. The term comes from the Greek word *genos* (race, people) and the Latin word *caedere* (to kill). Lemkin applied his term to the destruction of the culture, language, national feelings and religion of a group, even if the group was physically eliminated. No comparable word exists to describe mass killings that are not ethnically based (e.g. by communist

leaders such as Stalin and Pol Pot) though politicide, democide and classicide have been suggested.

### **gerrymandering**

Gerrymandering is the art of drawing seat boundaries to maximize the *efficiency* of a party's vote. The term comes from an electoral district designed by Governor Gerry of Massachusetts in 1812. It was so long, narrow and wiggly that it reminded one observer of a salamander - hence gerrymander. The normal method is to construct electoral districts in which a party either wins narrowly or loses heavily, a strategy that can backfire if the party's level of support is over-estimated.

### **Gini coefficient**

A statistical measure of inequality, ranging from 0 (complete equality) to 1 (complete inequality).

### **glasnost**

A Russian term meaning open to scrutiny. Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of glasnost in the USSR, unaccompanied by substantial economic reform, contributed to the disintegration of communist rule in the Soviet Union and indeed of the USSR itself. See *perestroika*.

### **globalization**

Globalization is a process in which the constraints of geography on economic and political arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding. The term can refer either to a long-run trend in human history or, more specifically, to the rapid expansion of international trade and communication in the period since 1945.

### **going public**

A strategic option for American presidents, going public means exploiting unrivalled access to the mass media to influence public opinion and so persuade Washington indirectly. See *going Washington*.

### **going Washington**

A strategic option for American presidents, going Washington means engages in wheeling and dealing with Congress and its members, assembling majorities for his legislative proposals. See *going public*.

### **governance**

Governance is the activity of making collective decisions, as opposed to the institutions of government themselves. The term directs our attention to the fact that government may not play a leading role in collective regulation. In international relations, for instance, many issues are resolved by negotiation: governance without government. In domestic politics, too, decision-making authority is increasingly captured by regulatory agencies, expert practitioners and even interest groups that

bend only with difficulty to the government's will. Governance is also used to refer to the quality of public management, as in the phrase, 'good governance'.

### **government**

Government consist of institutions responsible for making collective decisions for society. More narrowly, government refers to the top political level within such institutions.

### **grand coalition**

A grand coalition is between the two largest parties in an assembly, typically one from the left and the other from the right. Examples include the coalitions formed in Germany in 1966, and again in 2005, between the Christian and Social Democrats. Grand coalitions are almost invariably *minimum winning* yet even so each partner must normally give up more than if they made a coalition with a smaller *pivot party*. For this reason, grand coalitions are unusual, typically forming in the context of substantial national problems. See *oversize* and *rainbow coalitions*.

### **gross domestic product (GDP)**

The total value of goods and services produced within a country over a year.

### **gross national income (GNI)**

*Gross domestic product*, plus income received from other countries, less similar payments made to other countries, over a year. Gross national income and gross national product (GNP) are one and the same.

### **guillotine**

The guillotine is a legislative procedure for limiting the amount of time set aside for debate on a particular topic, such as a bill. The ability to cut off discussion, and override a *filibuster*, is a mechanism through which the executive and majority parties can control parliament's agenda. See *cloture*.

### **hard money**

Expenditure on election campaigns which is officially regulated and limited. The stricter the control of hard money, the greater the emphasis on *soft money*.

### **hegemony**

A hegemon is the pre-eminent leader of a group; the top dog. A hegemon possesses a recognised position of ascendancy in which coercion ceases to be necessary. The challenge only comes (and come it will) when the hegemon is already weakened by the costs of sustaining the leadership position. The business class may be considered hegemonic within a capitalist society, just as in the late twentieth century the USA was judged to be the hegemon of the international system.

### **homing tendency**

The tendency for voters to return to the party with which they identify, or for which they normally vote, after a flirtation with other parties. Some homing tendency is often observed in the run-up to an election as mid-term defectors from the governing party

return to the fold. The homing tendency helps to explain why *deviating elections* are often followed by *normal elections*. However, the homing tendency may be less pronounced in an era of *partisan dealignment*.

### **horizontal accountability**

Horizontal accountability exists when oversight or superintendence operates at the same level. An example is a president whose actions are subject to judicial review. Weak horizontal accountability is a feature of illiberal democracy. See *accountability*, *vertical accountability*.

### **human development index (HDI)**

A rating of human development, by country, produced by the United Nations Development Programme. HDI is based on averaging three dimensions: life expectancy, education (enrolment, adult literacy) and *gross domestic product* per head. The aim is to produce and promote a broader measure of development than is reflected in economic statistics alone.

### **hypothesis**

A relationship posited between two or more factors or variables: for example, between electoral and party systems, or between war and revolution. See *large N*.

### **ideology**

A consistent system of ideas offering an interpretation of the political world and a guide to political action. Major ideologies include anarchism, conservatism, fascism, liberalism and socialism. The term is often used critically, to describe ideas acting as a cover for self-interest, and is sometimes compared unfavourably with science or even common-sense.

### **illiberal democracy**

In an illiberal democracy, leaders are elected with no or minimal falsification of the count. However, the rulers exploit their position to prevent a level playing-field. To keep their potential opponents off-balance, they interfere with the rule of law, the media and the market. *Horizontal accountability* is weak, with the rulers often claiming a *patriarchal* relationship with the people. Individual rights are poorly entrenched, the judiciary is weak and the rulers claim to be the best judge of the national interest and the guarantor of stability. An illiberal democracy is a common if far from inevitable outcome of the transition from authoritarian rule in poorer countries. See *delegative democracy*, *liberal democracy*.

### **immobilisme**

Immobilisme is a French word for the inability to reform, change and reach decisions. Immobilisme was a major feature of the French Third and Fourth Republics and a condition which the designers of the constitution of the Fifth Republic therefore sought to avoid.

### **immunity**

In politics, immunity refers to the freedom of members of parliament and the judiciary, and often the president, from legal liability, arrest and trial. Also known as

'parliamentary privilege' in the specific context of members of the legislature. In particular, members of the legislature are typically exempt from liability for statements made in the assembly. France's Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man and the Citizen (1789) declared that 'person of each deputy shall be inviolable'. Although the principle of immunity sits uncomfortably alongside the common law principle of one law for all, immunity for life can encourage presidents to leave office rather than remaining in post simply to avoid trial (of course, lifetime immunity may just encourage illegal acts in the first place). Presidential immunity can be compensated by special procedures of accountability, notably *impeachment*.

### **impeachment**

Impeachment is a process, usually based in the lower house of the legislature, for censuring a public official. Impeachment can lead to a trial, often held in the upper house. On conviction, the official may be removed from office. Impeachment and trial are separate stages but the word 'impeachment' often now denotes the whole process. Impeachment was occasionally used in England to hold ministers to account in the era when ministers were still primarily responsible to the crown. The device was adopted in the American constitution: 'The President, Vice President and all civil officers of the United States, shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors'. So far, just two - including Bill Clinton in 1998 - have been impeached though neither was convicted (however, Richard Nixon resigned in 1974, anticipating conviction).

### **incremental policy-making**

Policy-making in small steps. Unlike the more synoptic approach of *cost-benefit analysis*, incremental policy-making seeks modest improvements to the current position, rather than the implementation of a grand design. The object is policy acceptable to all sides. Goals and means are considered together, analysis focuses on a small number of options and comparison with similar problems is heavily used. The incremental model can be used both to describe how much policy is made in practice and as a guide to policy-making in situations of uncertainty and imperfect knowledge.

### **incumbency effect**

An incumbent is the current member of a body such as a legislature. Incumbents enjoy strategic advantages over challengers: for example, name recognition, experience and access to resources. These strengths give incumbents an electoral bonus in securing re-election: the incumbency effect. See *open seat*, *term limits*.

### **independent variable**

In a statistical analysis, the independent variable is the factor believed to influence the *dependent variable*. If we sought to explore the impact of level of education on electoral choice, vote would be dependent and education would be treated as independent. The language of independent and dependent variables is more neutral about causal relationships and direction than is the language of cause and effect.

### **indirect election**

In an indirect election, office-holders are elected by a body that has itself been chosen by a wider constituency. The device is employed in many presidential

elections and for upper houses of parliament. It was also employed in communist states to insulate elites from lower levels.

### **inherent powers**

Inherent or implied powers are those held to derive from an officer's *express powers*. For instance, the American president's obligation 'to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution' is taken to contain within it the notion of emergency powers. See *prerogative*.

### **initiative**

A procedure which allows a certain number of citizens (typically around 10 per cent in American states permitting the device) to initiate a *referendum* on a given topic.

### **institution**

An institution is a formal organization, often with public status, whose members interact on the basis of the specific roles they perform within the structure. In politics, an institution typically refers to an organ of government mandated by the constitution.

### **institutional agenda**

Cobb and Elder define the institutional agenda as consisting of the set of items under active and serious consideration by policy-makers. It is a small subset of the *systemic agenda*.

### **international law**

International law is traditionally defined as the system of rules which states (and other international actors) regard as binding in their mutual relations. It derives from treaties, custom, accepted principles and the views of legal authorities. The term 'international law' was coined by the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832). Today, however, many international agreements create domestic obligations on states, for example, in limiting pollution.

### **interpellation**

A procedure used in many legislatures in continental Europe, an interpellation is a question to a minister which interrupts normal business and requires a prompt answer. Unlike ordinary questions, interpellations may be followed by a debate and vote on the assembly's satisfaction with the answers given.

### **interest aggregation**

Interest aggregation is the process by which a multitude of specific demands are filtered and combined into more manageable packages of proposals. Where interest groups articulate detailed interests, political parties aggregate them. In this way, parties contribute to reducing the *systemic agenda* to the *institutional agenda*.

### **interest group**

Interest groups are organizations distinct from government itself but which aim to influence public policy. Examples include employers' organizations, trade unions,

consumer groups, bodies representing specific industries and professions, and broader campaigning organizations. Such groups are indispensable to governance, offering expertise and legitimacy to collective decisions while also, of course, defending the interests of their members. The relationship between groups and governments is a central concern of *pluralism* and *corporatism*. The term interest group is sometimes used in the context of *protective* rather than *promotional groups* with the related term *pressure group* is used more generally to describe any non-governmental body seeking political influence.

### **intergovernmental organization (IGO)**

An intergovernmental organization is a body whose members include states. IGOs are established by treaty and usually operate by consent, with a permanent secretariat. Examples include the International Olive Oil Council, the United Nations and the World Health Organization.

### **intergovernmental relations (IGR)**

A term used to describe the complex interactions between levels of government, particularly in federations. *Multilevel governance* (MLG) is a similar and more recent concept though multilevel governance also assumes the engagement of interest groups in the policy process. IGR is more commonly used in the USA; MLG, in the European Union.

### **internal colonialism**

A critical metaphor sometimes used to describe the political and economic dominance of a core region within a country over its poorer and more peripheral areas. The term should not be taken literally, however, since the peripheral areas are not established as subjects of a separate power. See *centre-periphery*.

### **interpretive approach**

An interpretive approach to politics emphasizes the importance of grasping the ideas which political actors themselves hold about their activities. The assumption is that political reality does not exist independently of people's ideas; rather, political discourse in a particular country largely defines that reality. An interpretive approach asks, 'what is the meaning of it?' rather than 'what is the cause of it?' Understanding meaning is a precondition of explanation but the two are far from synonymous. See *thick description*.

### **investiture vote**

A vote in parliament to formally approve a new government. Investiture votes may be positive (to take office, a new administration must obtain majority support) or negative (a new government takes office unless voted down by a parliamentary majority). Some countries, such as Denmark, do not require any investiture vote at all. See *minority government*.

### **iron law of oligarchy**

Robert Michels (1875-1936) was a German sociologist who became disillusioned with socialism. His iron law of *oligarchy* states that 'to say organization is to say a tendency to oligarchy' (often reproduced as, 'who says organization, says oligarchy').

Michels argued that even parties formally committed to democracy, such as socialist parties, become dominated by a ruling elite.

### **iron triangle**

Iron triangles, *subgovernments* and *policy communities* are terms used to refer to inward-looking coalitions of interests, based on senior bureaucrats, interest group leaders and sometimes relevant legislators, that dominate policy-making in particular sectors (e.g. agriculture). Many of the finest examples were found in the USA, where the decentralization of power allowed such coalitions to prosper. In many liberal democracies (including the United States), these informal cartels have given way to looser *issue networks* which are more open to outside organizations and considered debate.

### **irredentism**

An irredentist movement seeks to reclaim part of a foreign state which it believes belongs to it for cultural, linguistic or historic reasons. The original irredentists sought to incorporate Italian-speaking areas of Austria within Italy. Irredentists often use the prefix 'Greater ...'.

### **Islamic law**

Islamic law is based on the Sharia, which is in turn derived from the Koran (Muhammad's revelations) and the Hadith (reports of what the prophet said and did). The Sharia and the Hadith are refined and adapted in Islamic jurisprudence, known as the fiqh (understanding of details). It is the fiqh that classifies all actions into one of five categories: obligatory, recommended, neutral, discouraged or forbidden.

### **issue network**

An issue network is a concept used to denote the extensive range of loosely-connected actors involved in making policy in specialized policy sectors within contemporary liberal democracies. The participants in an issue network operate in a non-hierarchical way, engaging in a constructive exchange of resources such as knowledge (e.g. academic specialists), legitimacy (elected politicians), control over implementation (interest groups) and the capacity to draft bills and regulations (bureaucrats). While many members of the network may meet in formal settings such as government committee meetings, the term is informal, describing a pattern of interaction rather than a formal organization. The phrase developed as a contrast to the older and more collusive format of *iron triangles*. See *governance*.

### **issue public**

The issue or attentive public consists of the minority with a particular interest in or knowledge of a given topic. The issue public is a small but influential part of *public opinion*.

### **J-curve**

James Davies suggested that revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of economic and social development is followed by a short period of sharp reversal. The mechanism is *relative deprivation*: economic growth stimulates popular expectations of future improvement which are then frustrated by a phase of decline.

The hypothesis is so-called because the pattern of growth and decline is shown by an upside down J. In some other disciplines, the J-curve hypothesis has a different application.

### **joint decision trap**

The joint decision trap refers to the tendency for decisions requiring the approval of several actors to reduce to the lowest common denominator. Rather than seeking the best solution, the debate concentrates on finding a position acceptable to all. The European Union, and many *federations*, are said to be caught in the joint decision trap. See *codetermination*, *pluralism*.

### **judicial review**

Judicial review empowers ordinary or special courts to nullify both legislation and executive acts that contravene the constitution. Abstract review, practised by constitutional courts only, is an advisory but binding opinion on a proposed law. Concrete review, practised by both constitutional and supreme courts, arises in the context of a specific case.

### ***laissez-faire***

To leave to do. A policy of *laissez-faire* is an inherent part of liberalism's commitment to individual freedom; it is also favoured by those who advocate a market economy. However, a market economy requires a delicate balance between public and private sectors which is inadequately maintained by a crude *laissez-faire* policy. See *nightwatchman state*.

### **lame duck**

A phrase which denotes the declining authority of elected officials who are nearing the end of their non-renewable term or who have been defeated in an election but are seeing out their tenure. See *term limits*.

### **large-N**

Large-*N* analysis consists in quantitative, variable-based comparison of many or all cases. By contrast, *small-N* analysis focuses on case-based examination of one or a few examples. See *focused comparisons*.

### **law of 1/n**

The law of 1/*n* states that as the size of a legislature increases, so the efficiency of government spending declines. This effect arises because in a large legislature, the cost of a scheme is spread across more districts, reducing the incentive to oppose inefficient spending.

### **left and right**

In the French assembly of 1789, the nobility sat to the king's right while representatives of the commoners sat to his left. The notions of left and right have now broadened to encompass ideological perspectives and policy positions rather than just social groups. Traditionally, socialists (in support of public ownership) were

to the left while conservatives (in support of private property) were to the right. The collapse of socialism has made the distinction less clear-cut and, more significantly, less important. In general, the left favours change, particularly in the direction of greater equality; the right supports the status quo and is more sympathetic to hierarchy. The left advocates progress, reform, participation, democracy and an international outlook; the right is more cautious, conservative, nationalistic and traditional.

### **legal-rational authority**

As defined by Max Weber, legal-rational authority is based on regular and formal procedures; the basis of rule is the office rather than its occupant. Legal-rational authority was an element in Max Weber's influential classification of authority. See *charismatic authority*, *traditional authority*.

### **legitimacy**

A legitimate system of government is based on authority. That is, those subject to its rule recognize its right to make decisions, even if they disagree with the decisions themselves. A regime may operate in accordance with law but still be regarded as illegitimate; or be viewed as legitimate even without a constitutional basis.

### **liberal democracy**

In a liberal democracy, representative and limited government operating through law provides an accepted framework for political competition. Regular elections based on near universal suffrage are free and fair. Individual rights, including freedom of expression and association, are respected. In combining a measure of political equality with a market economy based on private property, liberal democracy has proved to be a successful form of rule. See *illiberal democracy*.

### **liberal market economy**

In a liberal market economy, competing firms operate in a flexible labour market, seeking to enhance profitability so as to satisfy the demands of their shareholders for a return. The government and the judiciary aim to ensure that contracts are enforced and disputes resolved but, as under *pluralism*, their function is to umpire rather than to play. Similarly, industry associations and trade unions seek to advise and support, but not to direct, their members. The United States is usually taken as the archetype of a liberal market economy. See *coordinated market economy*.

### **life-cycle effect**

The life-cycle effect is the tendency for political attitudes and behaviour to vary with age and the life stage. Turnout, for example, increases as people become more settled, only declining among the very old. However, the life-cycle effect is difficult to estimate. The main danger is that if attitudes and behaviour are only measured at one point in time, it becomes impossible to distinguish between life-cycle, *generational* and *period* effects.

### **line-item veto**

The ability of a president to veto part (lines) of a bill, and not to just to accept or reject the proposal as a whole. The absence of a line-item veto encourages legislators to add irrelevant riders to bills which they know the president is keen to enact. In the

United States, the Line Item Veto Act (1996) gave presidents the option of overriding part of a bill but was judged unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, which ruled that the president has no law-making power under the constitution. See *pork-barrel*.

### **list-puller**

The candidate in number one spot in a party list. See *list system*.

### **list system**

A widely-used form of *proportional representation* in which votes are cast for a party's list of candidates. The order on the list typically determines the order in which that party's candidates are elected though in some countries the voter can (but in the main does not) express support for individual candidates. The degree of proportionality achieved by a list system depends, among other factors, on its *district magnitude* and any use of an *electoral threshold*. List systems also often form part of *mixed member majoritarian* and *mixed member proportional* systems. See *D'Hondt formula*, *single transferable vote*.

### **lobby**

A lobbyist is defined by the United States Legislative Reorganization Act (1946) as any person or organization that receives money to be used principally to influence legislation before Congress. The term is derived from the hall or lobby of Britain's House of Commons where people can and do approach members of parliament to plead their case. As a general rule, lobbyists are more successful at securing access than influence for their clients. But even paying for access sits uneasily with the principle of equality underlying democracy.

### **logic of appropriateness**

The logic of appropriateness refers to actions which members of an *institution* take to conform to its norms. For example, a head of state will perform ceremonial duties because it is an official obligation. Appropriate behaviour is a ritual which serves its own end rather than as a means to a wider goal. Thus the logic of appropriateness contrasts with the *logic of consequences*.

### **logic of consequences**

The logic of consequences denotes behaviour directed at achieving a specific political goal such as re-election. The assumption is that political actors are purposeful in nature, pursuing specific goals through well-considered means. See *logic of appropriateness*, *rational choice analysis*.

### **log-rolling**

Mutual trading of favours, particularly by legislators busy at the *pork-barrel*. The term may derive from neighbours cooperating to move logs that none could move by themselves. Blog-rolling – you link to my blog and I'll link to yours – expresses the same notion of cooperative but self-interested back-scratching.

### **lone state**

A term associated with Samuel Huntington, a lone state lacks cultural commonality with other societies. Japan is an example. See *core state*.

### **machine politics**

A form of local party politics in which a ruling party secures votes in exchange for favours such as jobs, welfare and contracts. In the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, machine politics came to the fore in several American cities where the local party, controlled by a boss, could administer to the needs of new immigrants (or at least sufficient of them to secure its own continuation in power). The format is inherently transitional, proving less successful with better educated and more independent electorates. See *patronage*, *clientelism*.

### **made election**

As defined by W. J. M. Mackenzie, the outcome of a made election is manipulated, usually by incumbents exploiting their control of office and influence over the media, but without falsification of the count itself. Made elections are integral to illiberal democracy and contrast with the *stolen elections* of fully authoritarian regimes.

### **majority coalition**

Two or more parties which control most seats in the assembly join together in government. This is the most common form of government across continental Europe; it characterizes Belgium, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands in particular. But it is not the only kind; see *minority coalition*.

### **maladministration**

A failure of a public official to abide by the standards of *administrative law*.

### **manifesto**

A statement of a party's programme for office (a manifest is a list of the cargo on a train or plane).

### **marble-cake federalism**

Marble-cake federalism is characterized by an intermingling of all levels of government in the policy process. Often contrasted with layer-cake federalism.

### **marginal seat**

A marginal seat is a constituency which the incumbent party is at risk of losing at the next election. A statistical definition is a matter of judgement. In the United Kingdom, any seat vulnerable to a *swing* of five per cent or less is certainly marginal. See *safe seat*, *single-member plurality system*.

### **mass media**

Methods of communication that can reach a large and potentially unlimited number of people simultaneously. These channels include blogs, books, cinema, magazines, newspapers, posters, radio, television and websites. See *narrowcasting*.

### **mass party**

Mass parties originate outside the assembly, in groups seeking representation in the legislature as a way of achieving their goals. The working-class, mass membership socialist parties that spread across Europe around the turn of the twentieth century epitomize these externally created parties. The German Social Democratic Party (SPD), founded in 1875, is a classic example. These parties also sought influence over their members through affiliated organizations such as trade unions and sports clubs. Mass parties of the left exerted a driving influence on European party systems in the twentieth century, stimulating many *cadre parties* to copy their extra-parliamentary organization.

### **mayor-council system of local government**

In the elaborate mayor-council system of local government, an elected mayor serves as chief executive. Councillors elected from local wards form a council with legislative and financial authority. This format is often subdivided into *strong mayor* and *weak mayor* systems, depending on the mayor's executive power. The system is employed in about half the 7,000 cities in the USA, including Chicago and New York. See *council-manager* and *council systems of local government* and *separation of powers*.

### **maximin**

A maximin strategy is to select the outcome that delivers the best outcome even if the worst happens. The term derives from game theory, in which a maximin strategy is to act on the assumption that other players will grant you no favours.

### **mechanical effect**

Maurice Duverger defined the mechanical effect of electoral systems as arising directly from the rules converting votes into seats. An example is the threshold for representation used in many proportional systems; a party which falls below this level will mechanically be denied any seats in the assembly. See *psychological effect*.

### **median voter**

The voter in the middle when voters are ranked along a single dimension e.g. from left to right. The median voter has an equal number of voters to her left as to her right. Although the median voter is unidentifiable as a person in any substantial electorate, the notion has considerable importance in models of *spatial competition*.

### **mediation committee**

A mediation (conference) committee is a joint committee of both houses of a legislature which reconciles differences in the versions of a bill passed by each chamber. See *shuttle*.

### **merit system**

In a merit system, posts in the *bureaucracy* are filled through open and competitive recruitment. See *spoils system*.

### **microcosm**

An assembly would be a microcosm if it formed a miniature version of society, precisely reflecting its social diversity. An exact representation is impractical but there

may still be value in ensuring that all major social groups achieve some parliamentary presence.

### **military-industrial complex**

An informal alliance formed between the armed forces and corporations that supply them with equipment. President Eisenhower identified the danger of such a complex in his farewell address in 1961 (in an earlier draft of his speech, Eisenhower allegedly referred to the 'military-industrial-congressional complex').

### **minimum winning coalition (MWC)**

A minimum winning coalition is a government formed by the smallest number of parties which together can secure a parliamentary majority (if one party obtains a majority, no coalition is needed). Compared to *oversize coalitions*, MWCs avoid unnecessary dilution of the fruits of office, notably control of ministries and influence over policy. MWCs are the most common form of party government in post-war Europe. See *grand* and *rainbow coalitions*.

### **minority coalition**

A government formed by two or more parties which, even together, lack a parliamentary majority. Minority coalitions have predominated in Denmark since the 1980s. They were also found in Italy, especially before the transformation of the party system in the 1990s. See *majority coalition*.

### **minority government**

A minority government consists of either a *minority coalition* or a single party government lacking a parliamentary majority. The latter category comprised about 30 per cent of continental European governments between 1945 and 1999 and were the most frequent form in Norway and Denmark over the twentieth century. Single-party administrations often receive informal support from a parliamentary party which does not wish to join a formal coalition. Minority governments are facilitated by the absence of a positive *investiture vote*.

### **mixed electoral system**

In a mixed electoral system, electors vote for both a party list and a district candidate. The term is a broad one, as it covers both proportional and non-proportional systems. See *mixed member majoritarian* and *mixed member proportional*.

### **mixed member majoritarian (MMM)**

A non-proportional electoral system in which some candidates are elected for electoral districts while others are chosen through PR. Russia is one of a growing number of examples. Unlike the *mixed member proportional* method, the two types of contest remain separate, with no mechanism for achieving a proportional result overall. Also known as the mixed member parallel system.

### **mixed member proportional (MMP)**

A form of *proportional representation* (PR) in which some candidates are elected for electoral districts while others are chosen through PR. Electors normally have two votes. One is for the district election (which usually uses the *single-member plurality*

method) and the other for a PR contest (usually the *list system*). The two tiers are linked so as to deliver a proportional outcome overall. The party vote determines the number of seats to be won by each party. Elected candidates are drawn first from the party's winners in the district contests, then topped up as required by candidates from the party list. In the influential German case, parties that win more district seats than the total tone which they are entitled under the party vote retain these excess mandates, causing the size of the Bundestag to expand. Also known as the mixed member compensatory system.

### **monetarism**

The view that inflation is a monetary phenomenon best addressed by a cautious approach to the money supply. Monetarism is associated in modern times with the American economist Milton Friedman. His research suggested that tightening the supply of money will reduce economic activity and employment in the short-run but cool inflation within 12 to 18 months as wage negotiators lower their expectations of future price increases. In the long term, economic activity will recover in response to the stable and predictable environment which sound money provides. Politically, monetarism was associated with conservative leaders such as Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. See *fiscal* and *monetary policy*.

### **monetary policy**

The approach of the monetary authority to the supply of and demand for money (money is usually taken to include deposits as well as cash). Interest rates are the main mechanism of such control. The relevant authority may be the government itself or, increasingly, a central bank. See *fiscal policy*, *monetarism*.

### **moral panic**

A short-lived but intense collective concern, often media-based, that an outsider or deviant group constitutes a threat to social order. Sex criminals, gypsies and drug users are recurring subjects of moral panics.

### **most different design**

A most different design (such as statistical research with a large number of cases) seeks to show the robustness of a relationship by demonstrating its validity across diverse settings. For example, if proportional representation is linked to higher turnout across countries large and small, and rich and poor, the relationship is likely to be genuine.

### **most similar design**

A most similar design takes similar countries for comparison on the assumption that the more similar the units, the greater the potential for isolating the factors responsible for differences between them'. For example, if turnout is exceptionally high in one Scandinavian country, a most similar design would involve a comparison with the other countries in the region. This intra-regional comparison would hold constant the factors common to all the countries in the area.

### **multiculturalism**

The view that a state should accommodate a variety of ethnic, linguistic, racial and religious groups within its territory rather than seeking to impose a single interpretation of citizenship. From such a perspective, the diverse identities of a multicultural society are to be welcomed and should be regarded as compatible with shared membership of a larger, but no longer all-encompassing, state or nation. Thus, multiculturalists reject the liberal notion of ethnic and religious identity as solely a matter of individual choice, suggesting instead that minority cultures should be accepted as an integral component of the political fabric. However, the norms of a minority culture (e.g. discrimination against women; a tradition of arranged marriages) may conflict with wider liberal principles. In any case, advocacy of multiculturalism has softened in response to terrorist acts, particularly those committed by citizens of the country concerned. See *consociational democracy* and *nation-state*.

### **multilevel governance**

Multilevel governance emerges when experts from several tiers of government share the task of making regulations and forming policy, usually in conjunction with relevant interest groups. The term is commonly used in the European Union, whose presence adds a supranational tier to existing national, regional and local levels within most member states. See *intergovernmental relations*.

### **multinational state**

A state with more than one nation. For example, the United Kingdom contains the Scottish and Welsh nations, as well as England and Northern Ireland. See *multiculturalism*, *nation-state*.

### **multiparty system**

In a multiparty system, more than two parties are serious contenders for power. The legislature is composed of several minority parties, usually leading to government by coalition or the leading party. Multiparty systems are encouraged by *proportional representation* and are characteristic of democracies in Western Europe and Latin America. See *dominant* and *two-party systems*.

### **narrative approach**

A form of political analysis which emphasizes that beliefs emerge in the context of particular traditions and histories. The assumption is that political action can only be explained by reference to the meanings it carries for the actors themselves. These meanings derive from the background to and thinking leading up to the action. The stories that political actors tell about their actions give meaning by locating their acts in histories, sequences and traditions; indeed, they constitute the actions themselves. Thus the narrative approach is an example of the *interpretive approach* which was itself a reaction against *behavioralism*.

### **narrowcasting**

Communicating with specific recipients (e.g. subscribers to a cable channel). Narrowcasting contrasts with broadcasting which potentially reaches all those with appropriate receivers. The more narrowcasting supplants broadcasting, the harder it will become for politicians to reach a mass audience.

### **nation**

According to John Stuart Mill in *Considerations on Representative Government*, 'A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nationality if they are united among themselves by common sympathies ... which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same government, and desire that it should be government by themselves or a portion of themselves exclusively.'

### **nation-state**

A state with its own nation (or vice versa); for example, France and Iceland. Nation-states were considered the norm for much of the twentieth century but the current era has shown more concern with *multiculturalism* and *multinational states*.

### **national revolution**

The national revolution is a term used to describe the decisive moment in the development of the state in Western Europe: namely, the penetration of state authority throughout its territory. The national revolution established important *cleavages*. First, it encouraged the formation of conservative parties representing the centralising elite and, by reaction, regional parties representing the threatened periphery. Second, state-building often led to the founding of Catholic parties seeking to defend the traditional autonomy of the church against state encroachment, particularly in education.

### **nationalism**

The key ideology of the twentieth century, nationalism is simply the doctrine that nations are entitled to self-determination. It is a political principle asserting that the political and national units should be congruent. In stronger forms, nationalism claims that loyalty to the nation should be paramount, overriding other loyalties in a manner rejected by *multiculturalism*. Nationalist movements put an end to colonial empires in the second half of the twentieth century. Nationalism also outlasted the supposedly international aspirations of communism and gave legitimacy to the emergence of large national economies. It remains to be seen what role nationalism will play in the different conditions of the current century. See *nation-state*.

### **nationalization**

The transfer of assets from the private to the public sector.

### **natural rights**

Natural rights are supposedly given by God or by nature; in either case, their existence is taken to be independent of government. In the political thought of the seventeenth century, natural rights (e.g. to life, liberty and property) functioned to limit the authority of government, thus establishing the basis for liberalism.

### **new public management**

New public management (NPM) was a creed of public sector reform which swept through the Anglo-American world of public administration in the final decades of the twentieth century. NPM represented a powerful critique of Weber's ideas about *bureaucracy*. It was spoken of warmly by international bodies such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and led to substantial changes in the public sectors of Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and

especially New Zealand. Christopher Hood suggests that NPM comprised seven major dimensions: (1) managers are given more discretion but held responsible for results; (2) performance is assessed against explicit targets; (3) resources are allocated according to results; (4) departments are unbundled into more independent operating units; (5) more work is contracted out to the private sector; (6) more flexibility is allowed in recruiting and retaining staff and (7) costs are cut in an effort to achieve more with less. The achievements of NPM are hard to assess but may include greater efficiency, increased focus on *policy outcomes*, and enhanced service to the public. However, the reform process is itself expensive and may have resulted in increased complexity and uncertain accountability.

### **nightwatchman state**

The nightwatchman role was an early form taken by the post-feudal but pre-democratic state in much of Europe, notably the United Kingdom. The nightwatchman metaphor comes from John Locke (1632-1704), an English philosopher who laid the early foundations of liberal thinking. Locke considered the sole function of government to be that of protecting *natural rights* to life, liberty and property. In Locke's view, citizens should merely be provided with order, protection and the means of enforcing contracts. Thus, the nightwatchman state was a minimal operation, concentrating on maintaining law and order, protecting private property and extracting sufficient resources to allow rulers to pursue their foreign policy. The state apparatus remained poorly developed, with a limited bureaucracy. See *laissez-faire*.

### **nomenklatura**

Russian word meaning a list of names. The *nomenklatura* was a large panel of trusted individuals from which ruling communist parties appointed people to posts in the bureaucracy. Its existence provided a powerful incentive for the ambitious to gain and retain a sound reputation within the party. In China, the list was said to contain over eight million names by the start of the twenty-first century.

### **non-decision**

1. A decision not to reach a decision on a particular topic.
2. A decision not to discuss a particular topic. See *agenda-setting*.

### **non-governmental organization (NGO)**

In 1966, the United Nations defined a non-governmental organization as 'any international organization which is not established by a governmental entity or international agreement.' Examples include the International Red Cross, Greenpeace and the Catholic Church. Terms such as *interest group* and *pressure group* remain more common in describing private groups operating within a single country.

### **non-majoritarian institution (NMI)**

A public body which is neither directly elected nor directly managed by elected officials. Examples include independent courts and central banks.

### **no-party system**

No-party systems are pre-party or anti-party. In the former, parties have yet to emerge or be permitted by *authoritarian* rulers (for example, the ruling families in Middle Eastern kingdoms). In the latter, parties are banned following a change of regime (for example, after a military coup). No-party systems are rare in the contemporary world; even authoritarian rulers find that a party is useful in reinforcing their political control.

### **normal election**

The outcome of a normal election reflects the balance of long-term party loyalties in the electorate. The party leading in party identification wins. The term is less useful in an era of *partisan dealignment* and offers no purchase if electors do not distinguish between party identification and electoral choice. See *homing tendency*, *deviating election*, *realignment*.

### **oil shocks**

Oil shocks are rapid increases in the oil price that exert substantial effects on oil-consuming states and the world economy as a whole. The two major shocks occurred in the 1970s. In 1973, the price of oil increased four-fold as members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) reacted to Western support for Israel in the Yom Kippur War. In 1979, a second oil shock occurred as the oil price doubled following the Iranian Revolution. These crises served as catalysts for reducing the role of the state in Western democracies and also contributed to the ultimate collapse of communist states.

### **oligarchy**

Oligarchy is government by the few. Aristotle distinguished between an oligarchy (a small minority which governs in its own interests) and an *aristocracy* (a small minority which governs in the general interest). The word continues to imply self-interested governance by a ruling elite.

### **ombudsman**

An ombudsman (grievance officer) is a public official appointed by the legislature to investigate allegations of maladministration in all or a part of the public sector. These watchdogs originated in Scandinavia but have been emulated elsewhere though often with more restricted jurisdiction and resources.

### **OMOV (one member, one vote)**

This term is most often used in the context of ballots of party members to select candidates and leaders. There is usually an implicit contrast with narrower forms of selection, such as that by local party committees.

### **open seat**

In the United States, where the *incumbency effect* is large, an open seat is one in which the existing elected representative has stood down, creating a more even contest between the potential successors.

### **opinion leader**

A person who interprets media messages so as to influence the views of his or her followers in the wider population. The opinion leader stands between the source and multiple recipients, forming a link in the two-step flow of communication.

### **opinion poll**

An opinion poll is a series of questions asked in a standard way of a systematic sample of the population. The term usually refers to short surveys on topical issues for the media. Traditionally conducted face to face, opinion polls are increasingly carried out by telephone or electronic means. Increasing difficulties in obtaining a representative sample mean that results are usually adjusted to ensure that a group's significance in the sample reflects its weight in the population. See *exit poll*, *sample survey*

### **opportunity structure**

Factors in the environment which provide and limit the choices available to political actors. For example, the opportunity structure for aspiring politicians consists of the hierarchy of available posts.

### **outliers**

Outliers are the observations furthest away from the value predicted by the *regression* line. For example, Cuba's assembly is exceptionally large, given the country's small population. Outliers provide a basis for identifying deviant cases. See *case studies*.

### **oversize coalition**

An oversize coalition contains more parties than are required to form a *minimum winning coalition*. If two parties can command a majority of seats in the assembly, any coalition containing three or more parties would be oversize. Oversize coalitions are unusual because they involve sharing the fruits of office among more parties than are necessary to form a majority government. However, they do emerge, sometimes as *rainbow coalitions*. See *grand coalition*.

### **panachage**

Panachage allows voters to select candidates from more than one party list. See *list system*.

### **pariah party**

A political party that is rejected by other parties as a player in the political game. Specifically, pariah parties are excluded as potential coalition partners.

### **parliament**

A parliament is a multimember representative body which considers public issues, passes laws and ratifies political decisions on behalf of the wider society. Parliaments are an essential component of the democratic architecture but their prominence varies considerably. Generally, the executive keeps effective control of legislation, the budget and foreign affairs but parliaments (or at least committees within them)

have been growing in significance as agencies of oversight and arenas of accountability. The words used to denote these bodies reflect their origins: assemblies gather, congresses congregate, diets meet, dumas deliberate, legislatures legislate and parliaments talk. See *unicameral and bicameral legislatures*.

### **parliamentary government**

Parliamentary government possesses three main features. First, the governing parties emerge from the assembly and can be dismissed from office by a vote of no confidence. In many but not all cases, government ministers are drawn from, and remain members of, parliament. Second, the executive is collegial, taking the form of a cabinet in which the prime minister was traditionally just first among equals. This plural executive contrasts with the single chief executive in *presidential government*. Third, a ceremonial head of state is normally a separate position from that of prime minister. Parliamentary government is the norm in Europe. See *presidential government*.

### **parliamentary privilege**

Parliamentary privilege refers to legal immunities enjoyed by members of parliament, notably exemption from liability for statements made in the assembly but often also freedom from arrest. France's Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man and the Citizen (1789) declares that 'the person of each deputy shall be inviolable'. America's constitution affirms that Senators and Representatives 'shall, in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their Respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.' However, the principle of immunity sits uncomfortably alongside the common law principle of one rule for all. See *immunity*.

### **partisan dealignment**

Partisan dealignment refers to the weakening of bonds between (a) electors and parties, and (b) social groups and parties. In many liberal democracies, the ties which once bound voters, social groups and political parties together began to loosen in the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1990s, the proportion of party identifiers had declined still further. However, party loyalties have reduced in strength but they have not disappeared; electorates are dealigning rather than dealigned; indeed, in the early 2000s, partisan conflict in the United States stimulated a modest recovery of partisanship. What caused this general weakening of party loyalties? One factor was political; the decay tended to be focused on periods of disillusionment with governing parties. In the USA, for instance, the fall of party identification was sharpest during the period of the Vietnam War and the associated student protests. A broader factor was the diminishing capacity of social cleavages to fashion electoral choice. In Europe, class and religious identities became less relevant to young, well-educated people living in urban, mobile and more secular societies. Class voting, in particular, declined throughout the democratic world. Television - more neutral and leader-centred than the press - probably also contributed to the weakening of old commitments.

### **partisan realignment**

A major and long-lasting change in a) the distribution of *party identification* in the electorate, b) the *cleavages* on which parties are based, or c) the *party system*. Realignment is normally preceded by *partisan dealignment*. In the USA, realignments

are normally held to have occurred around 1820, 1860, 1896 and 1932. The regularity of these realignments suggested a natural cycle but the current era is characterized by dealignment without realignment.

### **partition**

To partition a state is to divide it into independent countries, usually in an attempt to separate conflicting ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. To be effective, partition may also require population movements, now generally condemned as *ethnic cleansing*.

### **party identification**

A long-term attachment to a particular party which anchors voters' interpretations of the remote world of politics. Party identification is often inherited through the family and reinforced by the elector's social milieu. In the USA, the traditional requirement to register as a Democratic or Republican in order to vote in that party's primaries encouraged electors to develop a psychological attachment to a party which was separate from their voting behaviour. See *homing tendency*, *normal election*, *partisan dealignment*.

### **party machine**

A form of local party organization in which the ruling party secures votes in exchange for favours such as jobs, welfare and contracts. In the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, machine politics came to the fore in some American cities where the local party, controlled by a boss, could administer to the needs of new immigrants (or at least sufficient of them to secure its own continuation in power). ). The format is inherently transitional, proving less successful with better educated and more independent electorates. See *patronage*, *clientelism*.

### **party of power**

A Russian term for a party which emerges not from society but from an *oligarchy* already in control of the government. A party of power exploits its position to ensure that it is supported by powerful ministers, regional governors and large companies.

### **party system**

Denotes the number of significant parties and the patterns of interaction between them. A significant party is normally defined as one that can exert an influence on government formation. A party system is a distinct level of analysis, analytically distinct from the parties themselves. For example, the United States shows that a party system can be stable and long-lasting even though each major party is considered weak individually, at least by West European standards. Election law and rules governing campaigns are best seen as properties of the party system since in theory they affect all parties equally. See *dominant*, *two-party* and *multiparty systems* and *effective number of parties*.

### **path dependence**

A political process is path dependent when its outcome depends on earlier decisions; that is, the destination depends on the route. Path dependence implies an emphasis on history generally and critical moments, conjunctures, turning points, branching points and lock-ins specifically. By contrast, path independence means that all roads

lead to Rome; the same destination will be reached, irrespective of the route. Path independence implies an emphasis on underlying structures and resources rather than historical sequences. For instance, the result of a football game is path dependent if the first score is vital; it is path independent if the better team always wins in the end. The outcome of a war is path dependent if it depends on a key battle; it is path independent if one side is so much stronger that it is bound to win eventually. See *equilibrium, process tracing, structural approach*.

### **patriarchy**

A patriarch is the male head of a social group or family. Patriarchy is the inheritance of such positions through the male line or, more generally, rule by the father or at least a venerable father-figure. See *patrimonial regime*.

### **patrimonial regime**

Patrimony is literally an inheritance from one's father. In a patrimonial regime, rule is cemented through the distribution of resources on a personal, rather than rule-governed, basis. The president is father figure to the national family, occupying a benevolent but dominant position that affirms a relationship of inequality. See *legal-rational authority, patriarchy*.

### **patronage**

Providing favours, usually on a personal basis and often with the expectation of loyalty from the recipient. See *patron-client relationship*.

### **patron-client relationship**

These are traditional, informal hierarchies fuelled by exchanges between a powerful leader and lower-status dependents. The colloquial phrase 'big man/small boy' conveys the nature of the interaction. Patrons are landlords, employers, party leaders, government ministers or most often ethnic leaders. Lacking resources of their own, clients gather round their patron for protection and security. The patron offers insurance against risks to which vulnerable people are otherwise exposed. Patron-client relationships are often traditional and personal, as in the protection provided to tenants by landowners in low income countries. But they can also be more instrumental, as with the resources which dominant parties in American cities provided to new immigrants in exchange for their vote. In either case, the relationship affirms the inequality from which it springs.

### **peak association**

A peak association is an organization representing the broad interests of capital or labour to government. The members of peak associations are not individuals but other organizations such as firms, trade associations or labour unions. In the European Union, for example, the main peaks are the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederation of Europe (UNICE) and the European Trade Union Federation (ETUC). See *corporatism, multilevel governance*.

### **perestroika**

From a Russian word meaning restructuring. Perestroika was pursued by Mikhail Gorbachev in the USSR, initially to reform the communist system but with the ultimate consequence of ending it. See *glasnost*.

### **period effect**

The impact of a short-term phenomenon such as a specific event on political attitudes or behaviour. When this impact differs by age or generation, it complicates the interpretation of what are often taken as life-cycle or generational effects.

### **permanent campaign**

The notion that governing with public approval requires a continuing political battle, especially through daily attempts to secure favourable media coverage. The idea questions the traditional distinction between the short campaign (the period of the formal election campaign) and the long campaign (the preceding period during which the political temperature begins to rise).

### **personal rule**

Jackson and Rosberg define personal rule as a system of relations linking rulers not with the public or even with the ruled but with patrons, associates, clients, supporters and rivals who collectively constitute the "system." Personal rule normally operates around formal institutions but can effectively supplant them. However, personal rule itself constitutes a regular and well-understood method of governing, with some elite circulation taking place, depending on the skill with which particular politicians play the *patronage* game. Personal rule characterizes many non-communist authoritarian regimes.

### **pillar**

1. Organized communities, typically based on religion (e.g. Catholic) or ideology (e.g. socialist). Depillarization refers to the weakening of the organized basis of such communities. See *consociational democracy*.
2. The three pillars (or columns, sectors, supports) of the European Union. These are the Community; Common Foreign and Security Policy; and Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters.

### **plebiscite**

A *referendum*, particularly by leaders seeking to demonstrate their public support (in ancient Rome, the plebeians were the ordinary citizens). The term was originally used in a derogatory sense but these connotations have declined.

### **plural society**

A society divided into separate groups but which maintains overall stability partly because of their separation. This term is most often used in the context of *ethnic* divisions. See *consociational democracy*, *elite accommodation*.

### **pluralism**

Pluralism or rule by the many, is a model of politics in which influence is shared among multiple interests and organizations, rather than concentrated on a single sovereign entity. In a pluralistic political system, the government acts primarily as an umpire, arbitrating between numerous independent interests. Rather than being imposed by the state, the common interest (to the extent that it exists at all) is

taken to be emerge from this open competition between particular groups. Pluralistic elements are present in all democracies but are less prominent in majoritarian democracies in which a single party forms a majority government with a clear mandate to implement a well-defined programme. 'Pluralism' is sometimes interpreted as an ideal, with *polyarchy* used to describe systems such as America's that approximate the model (Dahl, 1982). See *corporatism*, *general will*.

### **plurality**

The largest number, as of votes. See *absolute majority*, *single-member plurality system*.

### **pocket veto**

If an American president does not sign a bill submitted to him in the ten days before Congress adjourns, the bill is lost. To pocket the bill is effectively to kill it.

### **polarization**

A movement towards extremes. For example, a polarized party system might consist of a large socialist party on the left and a large fascist party on the right, with small parties in between. See *spatial competition*.

### **policy**

A policy is a plan of action, though the plan is not always implemented. A policy covers both an aim or goal (say, to discourage obesity) and a series of decisions, past or future, designed to achieve that objective (for example, reducing advertising of fast food).

### **policy community**

Policy communities, *subgovernments* and *iron triangles* are terms used to refer to inward-looking coalitions of interests, based on senior bureaucrats, interest group leaders and sometimes relevant legislators, that dominate policy-making in particular sectors (e.g. agriculture). In many liberal democracies, these secretive cartels have given way to looser *issue networks* which are more open to outside organisations and considered debate.

### **policy concertation**

Making public policy, particular on economic and social issues, through negotiated agreements ('acting in concert') between governments, employers and trade unions. See *corporatism*, *social pacts*.

### **policy implementation**

The art of putting policy into practice. A top-down approach conceives the task of implementation as ensuring that policy execution delivers the *policy outputs* and *policy outcomes* specified by the policy-makers. By contrast, a bottom-up view of implementation welcomes the contribution of local officials in reshaping broad objectives to fit specific, variable and changing circumstances.

### **policy instruments**

Policy instruments are the means through which governments seek to implement their plans. Legislation is the most obvious but also the rarest instrument. More common instruments include advertising, fees, information, loans, regulation, self-regulation agreements, subsidies and taxes.

### **policy outcomes**

*Policy outputs* are what government does; *policy outcomes* are what government achieves. Outcomes are the activity; outputs are the effects, both intended and unforeseen. Outputs are measured easily enough: so many new prisons built or a specified increase in the state pension. Outcomes are harder to ascertain: a reduction in recidivism or in the number of elderly people living in poverty. Outputs often have little effect on outcomes.

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### **policy stages**

The main stages of the policy process are initiation, formulation, implementation, evaluation and review. These divisions are more analytical than chronological, meaning that in the real world they often overlap.

### **policy window**

A period of time in which the policy community is open to addressing and adopting new proposals on a given topic. The window opens and closes rapidly, in response to shifts in the political agenda. The window typically opens when existing policy options are accepted as inadequate in responding to a problem requiring prompt attention.

### **political action committee (PAC)**

In the United States, political action committees are set up by organizations such as corporations and interest groups to raise money for candidates for elective office. PACs are limited in the amount they can give to a candidate but they can and do spend large sums on broader issue advocacy, thus providing indirect support. PACs are legal entities created by amendments in 1974 and 1976 to the Federal Election Campaign Act (1971).

### **political class**

*Professional politicians* are sometimes said to form a political class, implying the existence of a group that possesses, and can potentially act on, its shared interests. These interests include the desire for interesting work, re-election and a generous pension. Such a class encourages *cartel parties* and moderates party competition. The presence of a political class, both contributing to and reflecting the *incumbency effect*.

### **political culture**

Culture consists of the distinctive spiritual and symbolic characteristics of society; it is the essential human characteristic, articulating our nature as aware social beings. Political culture, similarly, refers to fundamental values, outlooks and knowledge that give form and substance to politics in a given country. See *civic culture*, *elite political culture*.

### **political economy**

The phrase originates in seventeenth-century France when it referred to the financial management of the royal household. The Scottish economist Adam Smith developed political economy as an academic field in the eighteenth century. He used the term to describe what is now called economics, proposing two objects for the subject: first, to enable the people to supply a plentiful revenue for themselves and, second, to endow the state with sufficient revenue to provide public services. Today, the term retains its focus on economic policy

### **political efficacy**

The ability of an individual to influence political decisions and, in particular, an individual's belief in his or her capacity to do so. A sense of political efficacy contributes to the stability of liberal democracy, even if it is not matched by actual participation.

### **political exclusion**

Political exclusion refers to those people who are effectively kept out of participation in collective decision-making because they occupy a marginal position in society. Examples include many migrant workers, prisoners and people who do not speak the language.

### **political participation**

Political participation is activity by individuals formally intended to influence who governs or the decisions taken by those who do so. In a liberal democracy, people can choose whether to get involved in politics, to what extent and through what channels. For most people, formal participation is confined to voting at national elections; more demanding acts, such as belonging to a party, have become less common. However, less conventional participation through *social movements* and *promotional groups* demonstrate a continuing interest in political issues. Participation is also found in some non-democratic regimes. Totalitarian states required citizens to engage in regimented demonstrations of support for the government. Other non-democratic regimes often demand at least a façade of participation though this too is manipulated so that it supports rather than threatens the existing rulers.

### **political system**

As defined by David Easton, the political system is a set of interactions abstracted from the totality of social behaviour, through which values are authoritatively allocated for a society. Easton's definition interpreted politics as a task or function, thus moving academic study away from a focus on institutions. For Easton, the particular institutions that perform the task of making authoritative judgements are secondary; he suggested that certain basic political processes are characteristic of all

political systems even though the structural forms vary through which they manifest themselves. These processes include articulating and aggregating demands from society, translating these demands into policies and putting policies into effect. See *functionalism, systems analysis*.

### **political technology**

Political technology refers to the practical application of computer-based techniques and other technologies to election campaigning. Examples include software for direct marketing, for integrating video into websites, for building online communities and for campaign communication with mobile devices. The United States leads in political technology but the term is also widely used in Russia, where its prevalence reflects an assumption that votes can be delivered through effective centralized control of communication.

### **politics**

Politics is the activity by which groups reach binding collective decisions through attempting to reconcile differences among their members.

### **polis**

*Poleis* were small independent political systems in the ancient Greek world, typically containing an urban core and a rural hinterland. Between 461 and 322 BC, Athens was the leading *polis* (city-community). Even with just 40,000 citizens (excluding slaves and women; neither group was eligible for citizenship), the Athenian *polis* was one of the larger examples. Athens provided an effective demonstration of the possibilities of direct citizen participation in collective decision-making within small communities. Though eventually overwhelmed by larger forces, the Athenian democratic experiment prospered for over 100 years, providing a settled formula for rule and enabled Athens to build a leading position in the complex politics of the Greek world. Its experience provided the foundations of Western thinking about democracy

### **political party**

Giovanni Sartori defines a political party as 'any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections candidates for public office'. Unlike interest groups, serious parties aim to obtain the keys to government'; in Weber's phrase, they live 'in a house of power'. Parties were central political actors of the twentieth century. In Western Europe, mass parties battled for the votes of enlarged electorates. In communist and fascist states, ruling parties monopolized power in an attempt to reconstruct society. In the developing world, nationalist parties became the vehicle for driving colonial rulers back to their imperial homeland. In the current century, though, parties are declining in centrality though they remain indispensable to government. No longer do parties seem to be energetic agents of society, seeking to bend the state towards their supporters' interests. Rather, they seem to be at risk of capture by the state itself. No longer do parties provide a home for the politically engaged; instead, we witness the export to the rest of the democratic world of the North American (and East European) format of weak, leader-dominated organizations

### **polyarchy**

Rule by the many. This term is occasionally encountered to describe political systems which come close to a *pluralist* model.

### **populism**

Populism is a style of political leadership in which the leader claims to represent ordinary people, or particular sections of it such as small farmers, slum-dwellers or the owners of small businesses, against organized interests such as government and large-scale capitalism. The word itself comes from a radical pro-peasant movement in late nineteenth century Russia; it was also used to describe the rural base and outlook of the People's Party in the United States which gained substantial electoral support in the same era. Populists articulate the frustrations, and glorify the understandings, of ordinary people against the views of the remote elite at the centre. Populist movements are anti-establishment and protest-based; they are often built round a single leader such as Ross Perot or Pierre Poujade; and they tend to be unstable. See *flash party*.

### **pork-barrel**

Pork-barrel politics consists of public action which benefits a particular area so as to advantage the local reputation (and re-election prospects) of its representative. 'Pork' is a major theme in American politics, where representatives bring home the bacon for their constituents in the form of, say, an army base or a subsidy for a local crop. Other members of the legislature are reluctant to condemn particular cases of pork because they benefit from similar extravagances themselves. See *incumbency effect*, *log-rolling*.

### **position issue**

A topic on which parties adopt different policies. The contrast is with *valence issues* on which parties agree on the goal and compete, if at all, in convincing voters of their competence at achieving it. See *salience theory*.

### **positive discrimination**

Positive discrimination means giving preference to the members of under-represented groups, particularly in allocating resources such as college places and public sector jobs. Positive discrimination can help to compensate for past injustice but can also create new resentments. In practice, it tends not to reach the least advantaged members of unrepresented groups. Also known as *affirmative action*.

### **post-colonial country**

A former colony that remains influenced by its colonial past. The term is most often applied to the states emerging from the wave of decolonization after World War Two. More generally, post-colonialism is the study of the continuing influence of colonial times on the politics and especially the culture of newly independent states.

### **post-conflict election**

Post-conflict elections occur at (or towards) the end of a period of domestic disorder and can contribute to the achievement of peace. They are often encouraged, supervised or even organized by the international community.

### **postmaterialism**

Postmaterialism is a commitment to radical quality of life issues (such as the environment) which can emerge, especially among the educated young, from a foundation of personal security and material affluence. Ronald Inglehart suggests that the rare combination of affluence, peace and security in Western countries in the post-war era created a silent revolution in Western political cultures, as the traditional priority accorded to economic achievement made way for increased emphasis on the quality of life. From the 1960s, a new generation of postmaterialists emerged: young, well-educated people focused on lifestyle issues such as nuclear disarmament and feminism. Where prewar generations had valued order, security and fixed rules in such areas as religion and sexual morality, postmaterialists gave priority to self-expression and flexible rules. Postmaterialists participate extensively in politics but are inclined to join elite-challenging promotional groups rather than mainstream political parties. See *social movement*.

### **power**

In its most general sense, power is the capacity to bring about intended effects. The term is often used as a synonym for influence, to denote the impact (however exercised) of one actor on another. In this broad sense, such benign mechanisms of influence as persuasion and commitment are forms of power. But the word is also used more specifically to refer to the more forceful modes of influence: for example, threats. In this narrower sense – the threat or use of sanctions – power is treated as a means of influence rather than as a synonym for it. It is this association of power with the stick which makes some authors reluctant to treat such mechanisms as control over information, or indoctrination, as forms of power. Note that invoking sanctions for a refusal to obey indicates a failure to exert power successfully; it is evidence of weakness rather than strength. See *authority*.

### **power-sharing**

Dividing executive authority between several groups. Although any multiparty *coalition* is a form of power-sharing, the term is most often used in the context of *plural societies* in which race, ethnicity or religion provide the main *cleavage*. Power-sharing mechanisms include multi-headed presidencies; alternation of a representative of each group in key positions; a mutual veto for each group over important decisions; guaranteed representation in cabinet for each group; and distribution of resources to each group in accordance with a formula such as relative population size. An orthodox *separation of powers*, as in the United States, would not normally be construed as power-sharing. See *consociational democracy*, *elite accommodation*.

### **power vertical**

The power vertical is a Russian phrase denoting central control over lower levels of government within the federation. Developing and entrenching the power vertical was a major concern of post-Yeltsin presidents.

### **praetorian regime**

A praetorian regime is one which lacks legitimate political authority and in which, as a consequence, the military selects or supervises the civilian authority. In the Roman republic, a praetor was a bodyguard of a general or emperor.

### **prefect**

A prefect is the state's representative in a local area. The prefect was traditionally an important figure in France, where the prefectural system helped to ensure central control and national uniformity. Although the symbolic function of the prefect was to symbolize central supremacy in *unitary states*, today French prefects represent local interests upwards as much as central concerns downwards. The prefectural model has been adopted by many French-speaking countries.

### preference voting

Preference voting allows or requires voters to express more than their first choice. The term is often used to describe list systems of proportional representation which permit *panachage*. The phrase is also employed to refer to electoral systems such as the *alternative vote* which require voters to rank candidates. Preference voting is an aspect of an electoral system but not a system in itself.

### preemption

To preempt is to take precedence over; to exclude others by asserting a prior right. In politics, preemption most often refers to the supremacy of national laws over local regulation in areas of *concurrent jurisdiction*. In the United States, federal preemption is expressed in the constitution's supremacy clause (Article VI, Clause 2).

### prerogative

A prerogative is a reserved or exclusive power. The term refers in particular to traditional powers of the executive and head of state which remain unshared with parliament. For example, a president might maintain that security policy must be an executive prerogative. See *inherent powers*.

### pressure group

Pressure groups are organizations distinct from government itself but which aim to influence public policy. Examples include employers' organizations, trade unions, consumer groups, bodies representing specific industries and professions, and broader campaigning organizations. Such groups are indispensable to governance, offering expertise and legitimacy to collective decisions while also, of course, defending the interests of their members. The relationship between groups and governments is a central concern of *pluralism* and *corporatism*. The term *interest group* is often preferred, particularly when referring to *protective* rather than *promotional groups*. See *non-governmental organization*.

### presidential government

Presidential government consists of four features. (1) Direct election of the president who directs the government and makes appointments to it. (2) Fixed terms of offices for the president and the assembly, neither of which can bring down the other. (3) No overlap in membership between the executive and the legislature. (4) The president serves as head of state. Presidential government is the norm in the Americas, South as well as North (but not Canada). In Europe, by contrast, *parliamentary government* predominates. The United States is the archetype of presidential government but in Latin America the form has offered less stability to what are unequal and divided societies.

### presidentialization

Presidentialization (strictly, prime-ministerialization) is the process by which prime ministers in parliamentary systems have, over the last few decades, strengthened their position in relation to their cabinet and government. The term is metaphorical, implying neither a formal transition from a parliamentary to a presidential regime, nor that presidents are dominant within their own political systems. The extent of presidentialization is often exaggerated by an over-concentration on exceptionally strong leaders. Any examination of presidentialization is best based on a precise comparison with a defined period in the past rather than just a diffuse comparison with an alleged golden age of cabinet government.

### **primary election**

A primary is an election in which a party's supporters select its candidate for a subsequent general election (a direct primary) or choose delegates to the presidential nominating convention (a presidential primary). A closed primary is limited to a party's registered supporters but any registered elector can participate in an open primary though only for one party. Primaries are rarely encountered outside the United States; they take control over selection away from the party itself, reducing its cohesion and giving an advantage to better-known, well-financed candidates.

### **prime minister**

The prime minister (premier, chancellor) chairs the cabinet in systems of *parliamentary government*. The powers of the prime minister vary; they are greater when the government is formed by a single party and when the prime minister has constitutional authority to direct the government, dismiss ministers and restructure departments. Where government is by multiparty coalition, and the parties themselves allocate ministers to 'their' departments, prime ministers can be little more than committee chairs. See *presidentialization*.

### **priming**

Priming occurs when coverage of a story influences the way we interpret other, similar events. Priming extends media impact beyond the particular story. For example, coverage of crime in the national media may encourage – or prime - people to report crimes in their local area. See *framing*.

### **privatization**

The transfer of assets from the public to the private sector. See *dirigisme, regulatory state*.

### **process tracing**

Process tracing involve identifying and describing the historical sequences linking a cause to its effect, or a dependent variable to an independent variable. For example, what were the steps leading from Hitler's anti-semitism to the holocaust? How did Russia's Bolsheviks succeed in overthrowing the preceding regime and imposing their own order on Russia? In this way, process tracing reconnects political science with history - and the 'why?' with the 'how?'. See *path dependence*.

### **professional politician**

In Max Weber's renowned distinction, professional politicians live off, and not merely for, politics. They are full-timers requiring appropriate income, support, career development and pension. Professional politicians are sometimes said to form a *political class*, implying the existence of a group that possesses, and can potentially act on, its shared interests.

### **promotional group**

A type of *interest group* which advocates a cause or value. Unlike protective groups, promotional groups are open to all, with little emphasis on the economic self-interest of their members. Sometimes termed a *public interest group*.

### **propaganda**

Propaganda is organizational communication designed to promote support for its cause by influencing the attitudes and especially the behaviour of large numbers of people. The word is religious in origin: the Catholic Church established a College of Propaganda in 1622 to propagate the faith.

### **proportional representation (PR)**

Any electoral system which aims to represent groups (usually, parties) in an elected body in proportion to the votes received in the election. In a perfectly proportional system, every party would receive the same share of seats as of votes; 40 per cent of the votes would mean 40 per cent of the seats. In practice, most PR systems show some bias against smaller parties. The most common form of proportional representation is the *list system*. See also *single transferable vote*, *mixed member proportional*.

### **protective group**

A type of *interest group* which seeks to defend the particular interests of its members. Protective groups include employers' associations, professional bodies and labour unions. See *promotional group*.

### **protest party**

Protest parties exploit popular resentment against the governing parties or the political system generally, usually by highlighting specific issues such as high taxes or a permissive immigration or asylum policy. They are often short-lived *flash parties* which fall as quickly as they rise. Their leaders are typically populist but inexperienced, with activists operating on the margins of the law.

### **proximity model**

The proximity model of voting behaviour posits that electors choose the party or candidate closest to their own policy preferences. This traditional account has been challenged by the directional model.

### **psephology**

The study of elections and voting. The ancient Greeks dropped pebbles into urns as a method of voting; psephos is Greek for pebble

### **psychological effect.**

Muarice Duverger defined the psychological effect of electoral systems as the impact of the rules on how electors cast their votes. An example is tactical voting in plurality systems when the first choice party has no prospect of winning in the elector's own district. In a proportional system, such incentives to vote tactically would be much reduced, limiting the importance of the psychological effect. See also *mechanical effect*.

### **public administration**

The public administration is the state's organization - the departments, divisions and agencies through which public services are managed and often delivered. Perhaps more often, public administration is used to indicate the academic subfield which studies such organizations. See *bureaucracy, civil service*.

### **public goods**

If supplied at all, public goods are supplied to all. It is impractical to exclude any specific person from consuming a public good such as clean air, national defence or statues in cities. Because this feature creates the possibility of *free riding*, governments usually take responsibility for ensuring the provision of public goods.

### **public interest**

The public interest is the long-term interests of a collective body such as a state. From a *liberal* perspective, the public interest is often interpreted as the interests that members of a community hold in common by virtue of their membership. From a state-centred perspective, the state possesses its own interests, distinct or additional from those of the current public. Interests can be divided into wants and needs and can extend to future as well as present members of the association. In practice, it is the task of politics to identify where the public interest lies on a given topic. See *general will*.

### **public interest group**

A type of *interest group* which advocates a cause or value. Unlike protective groups, public interest groups are open to all, with little emphasis on the economic self-interest of their members. Often termed a *promotional group*.

### **public opinion**

Public opinion can refer to (1) the direction and distribution of attitudes on a given topic, as shown by an *opinion poll* of the adult population; (2) the informed judgement of a community on an issue of common concern, where that judgement is formed in the context of shared political goals. See *attentive public, systemic agenda*.

### **public sector**

The public sector embraces all activities carried out by, and all the staff employed by, the state. Unlike the civil service, the term embraces local as well national government. By contrast, the private sector embraces not just profit-making firms but also third-sector voluntary organizations. Private organizations contracted to perform tasks for government remain outside the public sector, even though they are usually expected to abide by its rules.

### **qualified majority**

More than a simple majority: typically, two thirds.

### **quango**

Quango is a term of American origin that originally meant a quasi non-governmental organization but which is often now taken to mean a quasi-governmental organization. In either case, the word refers to public bodies such as regulatory agencies operating at one remove from government itself. The term usually carries critical overtones; quangos have few friends.

### **quorum**

The minimum number of participants needed to validate the proceedings and decisions of a body such as a legislative committee. Meetings which fall below this number are inquorate (but sometimes proceed anyway).

### **quota**

A prescribed number. Parties may set a quota for the number of women or ethnic minority candidates at a particular election. Also, quotas form part of the allocation procedure for systems of *proportional representation*, such as the *single transferable vote*.

### **race to the bottom**

An alleged tendency for public authorities such as states in a federation to compete for inward investment by offering lower taxes and regulation. The result of such a race is, by definition, negative overall. A race to the bottom results from regulatory arbitrage. There can also be a race to the top, where authorities compete to provide an educated workforce and a high quality of life to potential investors.

### **rainbow coalition**

A rainbow coalition brings together parties from several different positions on the ideological spectrum, often red (left-wing) and green (environmental). An influential example was the five-party rainbow coalition formed in Finland in 1995 and renewed in 1999. See *grand, minimum winning and oversize coalition*.

### **rational choice analysis**

A form of political analysis which views political outcomes as resulting from the consistent and informed pursuit of goals by individual actors. Rational choice analysis does not explain the origin of these goals (though some variants stress their roots in self-interest), nor does the approach directly account for the institutional framework within which people pursue their goals (though institutions which do not allow individual goals to be followed will usually lack *equilibrium*).

### **realignment**

The replacement of one set of relationships between social groups, political parties and electors by another. For example, parties representing particular religious groups may fade away with secularization, to be replaced by new or rebadged

parties pursuing the interests of emerging social classes. Realignment presupposes a prior alignment and is normally preceded by a phase of *dealignment*. *Critical elections* are a mechanism of realignment.

### **recall election**

A recall is a *referendum* on whether an elected official should be removed from office. Where permitted, a recall election normally follows from an *initiative* calling for such a contest. The initiative requires a *quota* of signatures, usually related to turnout at the original election.

### **rechtsstaat**

A German term for a state based on law and the constitution. See *legal-rational authority*.

### **referendum**

A referendum is a vote of the electorate on an issue of public policy such as a constitutional amendment. The vote may be binding or consultative. See also *initiative*, *recall election*.

### **regression**

The regression line is the line of best fit in a graph of the relationship between two statistical variables. The regression coefficient, specifically, is the average impact on the dependent variable of a change of one in the independent variable. For example, a regression coefficient of +10 indicates that a change of one in the independent variable brings about an average increase of 10 in the dependent variable. The regression coefficient is scored in the units of the dependent variable so that care needs to be taken in comparing coefficients. The regression coefficient should not be confused with the correlation coefficient.

### **regime**

A regime is an established framework of expectations governing repeated interactions between political actors. In that sense, a regime is an informal *institution*. More particularly, the word refers to a system of government, administration or rule. The term is commonly used when formal institutions are weak but where recognised patterns of interaction exist nonetheless: for example, the military regime, the international telecommunications regime. See *governance*.

### **regimented participation**

Regimented participation is a term for elite-controlled involvement in politics designed to affirm popular support for the notional attempt by the rulers to build a new society. Its purpose was to mobilize the masses behind the regime (and to confirm the rulers' control), not to influence the personnel or policies of the government. Regimented participation was practiced in fascist regimes and in communist states in their earlier period.

### **regulatory agency**

A public body established by government to oversee a specific sector by establishing standards and monitoring compliance. Examples include organizations to regulate

consumer safety, the nuclear power industry and elections. Such agencies, operating at one remove from government itself, are an important feature of contemporary *governance*.

### **regulatory arbitrage**

Regulatory arbitrage takes place when an organization subjects itself to the regime which is most favourable to its own interests. An example is an investment firm which locates to a country which places few restrictions on its actions. In a global world, regulatory arbitrage may encourage a race to the bottom. See *forum shopping*.

### **regulatory capture**

Regulatory capture arises when public agencies created to oversee a particular industry come to serve the interests of those they supervise. For example, a power regulator intended to protect consumers may be manipulated by the companies that supply energy. Capture is an inherent danger since regulated companies normally possess more resources and current knowledge of the field than their regulator.

### **regulatory state**

A regulatory state relies on setting rules and standards as its major governing device, without attempting extensive direct provision of goods and services. The increased emphasis on governance through regulation was an important development in many liberal democracies in the final decades of the twentieth century. See *welfare state*.

### **reinforcement thesis**

Early post-war studies of media effects found that exposure tended only to reinforce existing opinions, rather than to convert people from one view to another. People read newspapers which supported their existing outlook (*selective exposure*); interpreted information to render it consistent with their prior opinions (*selective interpretation*); and forgot information that ran counter to existing beliefs (*selective recall*). The reinforcement thesis is rarely advocated today but it remains a useful antidote to unqualified assertions of media omnipotence.

### **relative deprivation**

Relative deprivation arises when people believe they are receiving less (value capability) than they feel they are entitled to (value expectations). Relative deprivation breeds a sense of resentment which contributes to political discontent. Absolute deprivation, by contrast, leads to a struggle for survival and a lack of interest in wider political issues. See *J-curve*.

### **rent**

Rent is simply a flow of income derived from control of an asset. Political assets which generate rent include those based on the state's ability to licence desirable activities e.g. telecommunications licences. Similarly, a state can generate rent from its extraction of natural resources such as oil, either through direct ownership or by taxing the profits of licensed private operators. The notion of rent implies that the owner is not adding value to the asset by, say, refining the oil extracted from its wells. See *Dutch disease*, *rentier state*, *resource curse*.

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### **rentier state**

A rentier state obtains the bulk of its revenues from exporting natural resources, usually in unprocessed form. The state profits from its control of the commodity even though it adds little value to the resource. Many Middle Eastern states obtain the bulk of their revenues from such natural resources, diminishing their incentive to develop human capital. See *Dutch disease, rent, resource curse*.

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### **rent-seeking**

Rent-seeking consists in aiming to obtain an income from control of an asset. For example, a bureaucrat who offers to sign an official document in exchange for a bribe is engaged in rent-seeking behaviour.

### **representative**

A representative stands for another person, group or entity. A flag represents a nation, a lawyer represents a client and elected politicians represent their electors, districts and parties.

### **representative bureaucracy**

A term denoting a public sector whose staff profile reflect the major social groups in the wider population. The term was introduced by J. Donald Kingsley in 1944. He criticized the British civil service for its bias towards middle- and upper-class recruits who had been educated in the traditional ways of the ruling class.

### **representative democracy**

In contrast to a *direct democracy*, citizens in a *representative* democracy do not practice self-government. Rather, they elect governments to perform this task on their behalf. Except where term limits are used, these representatives are then held to account at the next election. Unlike direct democracy, representative democracy is easily compatible with the large states of the modern world. In addition, representation allows for public opinion to be filtered through a governing elite which possesses greater education, expertise and knowledge than the average voter.

### **republic**

Originally, a republic was an autonomous community governed by its citizens in the common interest, as in ancient Athens. Today, a republic is simply a state without a monarch, as in the French Republic. However, the republican tradition still expresses itself in a concern with civic virtue and the public sphere. Thus, to refer to America as a republic implies not just the absence of a monarchy but also, and more positively, a citizen community which seeks to determine and implement the *public interest*.

### **residual powers**

In a *federation*, the residual powers are those public functions not specifically allocated by the constitution. The constitution will grant such functions to either the centre or the states. In Canada, for example, the national parliament can make laws for the 'peace, order and good government' of the country. By contrast, any task not otherwise allocated by the Basic Law remains with the *Länder*.

### **resource curse**

The resource curse refers to the tendency for countries with an abundance of natural commodities such as oil, gas and scarce minerals to achieve only low economic growth. Such countries often become over-reliant on a single commodity and vulnerable to fluctuations in its price. They fail to develop a diversified economy, human capital and close links with society. See *Dutch disease*, *rentier state*.

### retrospective voting

Retrospective voting means casting one's ballot in response to the performance of the government, including its success in delivering a strong economy. The phrase was introduced by the American political scientist Morris Fiorina in 1981; it tells us much about the nature of electoral choice in an era of *partisan dealignment*.

### revenue-sharing

A form of funding which places fewer limits on the recipient's use of funds than *block* or *categorical* grants. Revenue-sharing by the national government with state governments formed part of Richard Nixon's 'New Federalism' in the United States.

### reversionary budget

The default budget which takes effect should the legislature fail to approve a budget in time for a new financial year. Typically, the new budget defaults to last year's; alternatively, the government's proposals may automatically go into effect.

### revolution

A revolution is the replacement of one established order with another, a transformation normally brought about through violence. It involves a rapid, fundamental and long-lasting transformation of the state and its relationship with society, partly carried out by revolts from below. The modern understanding of revolutions is shaped by the pivotal French Revolution of 1789. Revolutions are typically but perhaps not necessarily violent; after all, the collapse of communism in the 1990s was relatively peaceful in most cases. Typically, revolutions consist of three overlapping stages: state breakdown, the struggle for power and radical reconstruction. It is this last stage which converts a civil war into a revolution.

### Roman law

The original legal codes were developed under Justinian, Roman Emperor between 527 and 565. Roman law has evolved into distinct civil codes, as for example in France and Germany, but the principle of an overarching system of written law remains, with the codes amended and elaborated through laws passed by parliament. Roman codes are the basis of many *civil law* systems. Civil law has shaped the legal character of the European Union and is widely used in continental Europe and Latin America. See *common law*.

### routinization of charisma

As defined by Max Weber, the routinization of charisma is the process through which the individual authority of an inspirational leader is transferred to a permanent office or institution, thus becoming an instance of *legal-rational authority*. Routinization reflects the desire of the followers to place their position on a more secure footing as well as their commitment to the cause itself. Without routinization, charismatic authority must eventually fall victim to the problem of succession. See *charismatic authority*.

### **rule of law**

A Western and primarily Anglo-American term, the varied dimensions of the rule of law include consistent application of the law; the same law for all; and *due process* (respect for an individual's legal rights) in implementation.

### **safe seat**

An electoral district which the incumbent party is almost certain to retain at the next election. In the United Kingdom, a seat which could survive a *swing* of ten per cent or more to the second-placed party is unlikely to change hands in normal circumstances (but there are always exceptions). See *marginal seat*, *single-member plurality system*.

### **Salience theory**

Salience theory expression the notion that parties compete for electoral support by emphasizing 'their' natural issues. For example, a left-wing party may give priority to social justice while a right-wing party pays attention to economic growth. Thus party competition need not operate through either *position* or *valence* issues but rather through the importance or salience with which the electorate regards them. The object is to focus the agenda on 'our' issues and away from those that belong to the opposition.

### **sample survey**

A sample survey is study conducted using the same methods as an *opinion poll* but involving a more detailed questionnaire. The detailed questions are often constructed after completing one or more *focus groups* to gauge the concerns, language and understanding of the group to be surveyed. Sample surveys are often commissioned by government departments or academic researchers.

### **secession**

An area within a state secedes when it withdraws from the state's authority and becomes independent. Secession is rare. See *centre-periphery*.

### **second-order election**

The outcomes of second-order elections depend significantly on the results of first-order contests, often occurring at the same time. For example, a party's votes at a local election may reflect its popularity at national level, thus degrading the link between local governance and local elections. Unlike second-order contests, first-order elections typically influence the composition of national governments.

### **select committee**

In many parliaments, a permanent framework of select committees scrutinizes the executive, often with one committee shadowing each main government department. In addition, temporary select committees investigate particular matters of public interest. See *standing committee*.

### **selection bias**

Selection bias arises when the choice of what to study produces results that are unrepresentative of the wider class from which the topic is drawn. Studies of English-speaking democracies may be unrepresentative of all democracies; studies of communist parties that remain in power today may be untypical of ruling communist parties in the twentieth century. Considering the potential dangers of selection bias is an important aspect of research design. See *selection on the dependent variable*, *survivorship bias*.

### **selection on the dependent variable**

A research design in which only cases with a limited range on the *dependent variable* are chosen for investigation. For example, a study of turnout may investigate only non-voters, thus preventing any comparison with voters. Selection on the dependent variable is a form of *selection bias* which often unintentionally limits the significance of research results. In particular, selection on the dependent variable does not allow necessary conditions to be identified (e.g. those factors that are only found among non-voters). See *selection bias*, *survivorship bias*.

### **selective exposure**

Selective exposure is the tendency to seek exposure to information supporting one's existing opinions. A mechanism of the *reinforcement thesis*. See *selective interpretation*, *selective recall*.

### **selective interpretation**

Selective interpretation is the tendency to interpret information so as to render it consistent with one's existing opinions. A mechanism of the *reinforcement thesis*. See *selective exposure*, *selective recall*.

### **selective recall**

Selective recall is the tendency to forget information inconsistent with one's existing opinions. A mechanism of the *reinforcement thesis*. See *selective exposure*, *selective interpretation*.

### **selectorate**

A term used to describe those who nominate a party's candidates for an election. The selectorate often plays a more critical role than the electorate in determining who will represent the party in office; the selectors, not the voters, are gate-keepers to the house of power.

### **self-determination**

The choice of acts without external compulsion. The right of national self-determination is the right of a people to possess its own government, democratic or otherwise. This right was expressed in the influential Atlantic Charter (1941), a joint statement by Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. The Charter underpinned decolonization.

### **semi-presidential government**

Sometimes called the dual executive, semi-presidential government combines an elected president performing political tasks with a prime minister heading a cabinet accountable to parliament. The prime minister, usually appointed by the president, is responsible for day-to-day domestic government but the president retains an oversight role, responsibility for foreign affairs and can usually take emergency powers. The major example is the French Fifth Republic (1958- ), where the position of president was originally designed for the dominating figure of de Gaulle.

### seniority

Allocating resources (such as the chairs of legislative committees) by length of service.

### separation of powers

Dividing executive, legislative and judicial authority in such a way that no single form of power can dominate. The United States is the classic expression of this liberal principle. The underlying aim is to produce a balanced constitution which, by setting up a system of *checks and balances*, minimizes the danger of tyranny (including the *tyranny of the majority*). Power is used to check power. In practice, the separation is more of institutions than of powers; in the USA, again, both the White House and Congress seek to influence each other but, crucially, neither is in a position to dictate. See *power-sharing*.

### shareholder capitalism

In shareholder capitalism, those who own the company seek to maximise the financial return on their investment and are willing to replace managers who fail to achieve this goal. Firms are not expected to incorporate other stakeholders into their deliberations. This form is found, or at least accepted, in *liberal market economies*. By contrast, a wider range of stakeholders is acknowledged in *coordinated market economies*. See *stakeholder capitalism*.

### shuttle

In politics, the shuttle refers to the procedure whereby amended versions of a bill continue to travel between two legislative chambers until agreement is reached (if ever). Italy is the main example of this rare procedure. A *conference committee* is a more popular and decisive approach (the shuttle is sometimes referred to by its French equivalent, *navette*).

### side payment

A fee paid by one or more parties to an agreement to induce particular actors to join the scheme. Side payments, also known as gain-sharing and sometimes dismissed as bribery, enhance the ability to match costs and benefits. For example, in an oversupplied market no firm may be willing to close its factory unless the remaining suppliers provide a side payment.

### single-member plurality system

The candidate securing most votes (not necessarily a majority) is elected on the first and only ballot within each single-member district. This electoral system is mainly found in Britain and its former colonies such as India and the USA. Elsewhere,

proportional representation – based on the representation of parties rather than territories – is more common. The plurality system contains no mechanism to ensure that the party winning most votes across the country gains most seats in the legislature. On the other hand, the system often delivers a majority of seats to a single party, at least when two parties are engaged in a national competition. Also known as *first past the post*.

### **single transferable vote (STV)**

Voters rank candidates in order of preference. Any successful candidate needs a set number of votes - the quota. The quota is set as the smallest number of votes that it is possible for any winning candidate to obtain. All candidates are elected who exceed this quota on first preferences. Their 'surplus' votes - that is, the number by which they exceed the quota - are then distributed to the second preferences shown on these ballot papers (which ballots are deemed surplus varies from system to system). When no candidate has reached the quota, the bottom candidate is eliminated and these votes are also transferred. This process continues until all seats are filled. STV is a form of *proportional representation* but is much less common than the *list system*. In single member seats, it is equivalent to the *alternative vote*.

### **small-N (focused comparison)**

Qualitative comparison of a few cases, typically two or three. See *large-N*.

### **social contract**

A notional agreement through which people are held to join together in a political community. The contract leads naturally to limits on political authority and to the expression of the right of citizens to replace rulers who break its terms. Although the contract is notional, it serves to express what rational individuals acting in their own interest would agree to in a pre-political condition.

### **social capital**

Social capital refers to a culture of trust and cooperation that renders collective action possible and effective. As Robert Putnam suggests, it is the ability of a community to develop the "I" into the "we". A *political culture* with a fund of social capital enables a community to build political institutions with a capacity to solve collective problems. By contrast, a shortage of social capital leads to an under-supply of social initiatives and, in extreme case, a retreat into the family.

### **social movement**

Social movements (also called popular movements) consist of people who come together to seek a common objective through an unorthodox challenge to the existing political order. Movements are typically loosely organized, lacking the precise membership, subscriptions and leadership of both parties and *interest groups*. Like parties whose origins lie outside the legislature, movements emerge from society to challenge the political establishment. However, unlike parties movements do not seek to craft distinct interests into an overall package; rather, they claim the moral high ground in one specific area. Social movements are often said to engage in new politics.

### **social pact**

Agreements between government and peak associations representing capital and labour covering a package of issues, such as welfare benefits, price increases, job retention and taxation. The agreements are usually tripartite (government, capital and labour) but can be bipartite (capital and labour). Pacts reflect a tradition of social dialogue and consultation and presuppose a high level of social organization most often found in smaller countries in Western Europe. See *corporatism*.

### **soft money**

Soft money is election campaign spending which is not subject to official limits, typically because it is made by organizations claiming to be independent of a party. The term is American but there is a universal tendency for soft money to expand as *hard money* is regulated.

### **soft power**

Soft power is the ability to achieve goals without employing coercion or payment. The main use is in international politics, where soft power denotes the attractiveness to foreigners of a country's culture, ideals and policies. There is little doubt, for example, that America's soft power in the world declined following its use of hard power to invade Iraq in 2003.

### **solidarity**

Solidarity refers to an expression of shared interests, purposes and sympathies within a social group or to an expression of loyalty and mutual commitment from the members of one group to another group within the same 'family'. Solidarity establishes a solid resistance to attack and is expressed in such slogans as 'one for all and all for one,' and 'what affects one, affects all.' The term comes from the French sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) who used the phrase 'mechanical solidarity' to denote cohesion within small, homogenous groups. Politically, the term is most often encountered on the left where trade unions and socialist parties have promoted working-class solidarity as a way of fighting business interests. For instance, Solidarity was the name of the trade union led by Lech Wałęsa which overcame communist power in Poland in the 1980s. Solidarity between member states is also frequently advocated by leaders of the European Union, especially for member-states facing troubles that might equally have affected other members.

### **sophomore surge**

The increase in the vote share received by an incumbent when seeking re-election for the first time. The comparison is with the support received when the incumbent won as a challenger. The sophomore surge is a specific form of the incumbency effect.

### **sovereignty**

Sovereignty is the ultimate source of authority in society. The sovereign is the highest and final decision-maker within a community. The notion of sovereignty is central to the concept of the state; where the idea of sovereignty is strongest (Western Europe), so too is the notion of a state standing above, and authorising, the government. The retreat from sovereignty in recent times is also a withdrawal from the notion of a world divided into independent states, each entitled to act as it sees

fit within its 'sovereign' territory. A useful distinction separates internal and external sovereignty. Internal sovereignty refers to lawmaking power within a territory; external sovereignty denotes international recognition of the sovereign's territorial jurisdiction.

### **spatial competition**

The notion that parties will compete for electoral support by seeking to position themselves at that point in the policy space where most votes are to be found. For example, if the *median voter* is to be found at the centre of a left-right dimension, parties will also have an incentive to congregate there. A left-wing party which moves to the centre should retain the party's existing left support (unless another party emerges on the far left) while also attracting those voters who were previously closer to the right-wing party. In reality, parties sometimes move away from the median voter but spatial competition does suggest that such trajectories should be regarded as puzzling. See *rational choice, valence issue, salience theory*.

### **spin**

An attempt to *frame* a particular event or issue in a manner that serves the political interests of the spinner. See *spin doctor*.

### **spin doctor**

An often critical term applied to public relations experts working for politicians. The spin doctor's job is to facilitate favourable media coverage for a party or its leader. The term derives from the spins applied by baseball pitchers and was first applied to politics in 1977 by the novelist Saul Bellow. See *spin*.

### **spiral of silence**

The German political scientist Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann suggested that people are reluctant to express what they intuitively perceive as minority opinions, thus making such views appear (in, say, opinion polls) less popular than they actually are. Evidence of the bandwagon implied by the spiral metaphor is often limited, however.

### **split ticket voting**

Voting for candidates from more than one party on a ballot covering multiple offices. For example, an American elector might vote for a Republican president and a Democratic senator.

### **spoils system**

In a spoils system, successful candidates for elected office distribute government jobs to those with the foresight to support the winning candidate. In nineteenth-century America, for example, the election of a new president led to a virtually complete turnover of government employees. See *merit system*.

### **stakeholder capitalism**

In stakeholder capitalism, firms acknowledge - and often incorporate into their deliberations - a wide range of interests, including employees, trade unions, the local community and the government. Even private firms are considered to be public entities, with obligations to match. This form is found in *coordinated market*

*economies* such as Germany's. Stakeholder capitalism is an attempt to integrate *solidarity*, stability and long-term investment into the workings of a market economy. See *shareholder capitalism*.

### **standing committee**

The function of standing (or permanent) committees within a legislature is to engage in the detailed, usually line-by-line, examination of bills. In *committee-based legislatures*, standing committees can be an important forum for reconciling conflicting interests.

### **stare decisis**

Stand on decided cases. This principle of precedent is the basis of common law.

### **state**

A political community formed by a territorial population subject to one government.

### **stateless nation**

A nation which lacks its own state and whose people are spread across several countries; examples include the Kurds and Palestinians.

### **state-owned enterprise**

A government corporation established by statute to trade goods or services. For example, the mail service is still state-owned in many countries.

### **statistical significance**

A relationship is statistically significant if the likelihood of it arising in the sample when it does not exist in the population is only small. The normal level of significance is five per cent – that is, no more than a one in twenty chance of the relationship arising in the sample when absent in the population. Strictly speaking, statistical significance can only be calculated when the data are drawn from samples (as opposed, say, to an analysis of all American states or all countries). When an entire population is studied, the relationship is just whatever it is and any calculations of statistical significance are hypothetical ('if this were a sample ...'). Furthermore, the most straight-forward tests of significance assume simple random samples in which each unit has the same chance of selection. Statistical significance does not show that a relationship is either large or causal; most large samples will generate statistically significant relationships of no substantive interest.

### **statute law**

The body of law passed by the legislature. In *common law* systems, statute law is supplemented by judge-made precedents and interpretations of statutes. Judicial case law provides an independent source of legal authority.

### **stolen election**

A fraudulent election, in contrast to a *made election* in which the outcome is manipulated, usually by incumbents exploiting their control of office and influence over the media, but without falsification of the count itself. *Stolen elections*

*characterize* fully authoritarian regimes (or at least those which bother with elections at all) whereas made elections are integral to *illiberal democracy*.

### **strong mayor system**

A version of the *mayor-council* format of local government in which the mayor wields substantial executive power, as in New York.

### **structural approach**

A form of political analysis which emphasizes the relationships between the elements in a political system, rather than the characteristics of the units themselves. For example, Marxism stresses the importance of the relationships between social classes in determining a society's development; the individual members of these groups are unable to alter social evolution. The underlying structure is more important than its surface manifestations in individual attitudes. While Marxism itself was concerned with social change, much structural analysis is static in its approach. Structuralists have no time for *path dependence*. See *systems analysis*.

### **subgovernment**

Subgovernments, *iron triangles* and *policy communities* are terms used to refer to inward-looking coalitions of interests, based on senior bureaucrats, interest group leaders and sometimes relevant legislators, that dominate policy-making in particular sectors (e.g. agriculture). In many liberal democracies, these secretive cartels have given way to looser *issue networks* which are more open to outside organisations and informed debate.

### **subsidiarity**

The principle of subsidiarity is that no task should be performed by a larger and more complex organization if it can be executed as well by a smaller and simpler body. The tenet emerges from Catholic social thought, where it was invoked to defend the role of the Church and voluntary associations against the encroachments of the welfare state. Today, the term is often invoked to argue against the transfer of functions to the central authority in federations and especially the European Union.

### **suffrage**

Originally a form of prayer, the suffrage now means the right to vote. The suffragettes took direct action to extend the vote to women.

### **sultanism**

A dictatorship based on a single individual who rules through fear and rewards, relying on a personal security force and family members to maintain power. Examples include Rafael Trujillo's tyranny (1930-61) in the Dominican Republic and François Duvalier's rule (1957-71) in Haiti. Sultanistic regimes are rare but were most likely to arise in small, low-income countries during the *cold war*.

### **survivorship bias**

A form of *selection bias*, survivorship bias arises when non-survivors are excluded, leading to biased results. Studying contemporary communist states as representative of the entire class of such regimes (past as well as present) is a mistake because

those that survived are likely to differ from those that perished. A university may advertise the number of degrees it awards while keeping quiet about its drop-out rate but in politics analysis we should look through both ends of the telescope – at starters as well as finishers.

### **suspensive veto**

The ability of an executive to return a bill to the legislature which can nonetheless override this veto. If the legislature cannot override, the veto is absolute rather than suspensive.

### **swing**

The average of one party's gain in its share of the vote and another party's loss. For example, suppose the Conservative vote increases by four percentage points while Labour's share falls by two points. The swing to the Conservatives is  $(4+2)/2 = 3$  points. The components of swing include movements in and out of the electorate and transfers to and from minor parties; switches between the two main parties are often only a small element of overall swing. Swing is a useful summary measure when two strong parties coexist with minor parties. If there were only two parties, calculating swing would be pointless. Two-party swing is also less useful in multiparty settings; in such circumstances, measuring the change in each individual party's share of the vote is more straight-forward.

### **systemic agenda**

The broad systemic agenda contains 'all issues that are commonly perceived by members of the political community as meriting public attention and as involving matters within the legitimate jurisdiction of existing governmental authority' (Cobb and Elder, 1983, p. 85). The contrast is with the narrower *institutional agenda* containing the set of items under active and serious consideration by policy-makers

### **systems analysis**

David Easton conceived politics as a system which takes selected demands from society and converts them into concrete laws, policies and decisions. These allocations then feed back to society, so influencing the next cycle of demands. The assumption is that a continuous process of adjustment can maintain a broad *equilibrium* between the *political system* and the wider social system. See *structural approach*.

### **tactical voting**

Tactical voting occurs when electors vote instrumentally for a party or candidate other than their preferred choice. In *single-member plurality systems*, voters sometimes desert their favoured party when it has no chance of winning in their local district. A good electoral system will offer few incentives for voters to misrepresent their preferences in such ways.

### **tax-payers' revolt**

A campaign by a section of tax-payers to repeal, limit, or cap a tax. In the United States, such movements have formed the basis of periodic *initiatives* and

*referendums* at state level. In California, for instance, Proposition 13 in 1978 capped the increases permitted in the taxable value of property.

### **term limits**

Term limits restrict an incumbent to a maximum number of terms in office, typically one or two. The fear is that without such constraints elected officials will exploit their unique position to achieve re-election, preventing a fair contest and gradually becoming unrepresentative of those they serve. The USA introduced a two-term presidential limit after Franklin Roosevelt won four consecutive elections between 1932 and 1944. Mexican presidents (like the deputies in the country's parliament) cannot stand for re-election. Term limits enforce turnover at the price of diminished professionalism. Levelling the playing field between incumbents and challengers – no easy task – is perhaps a better solution. See *incumbency effect*.

### **terror**

Acts of political violence aimed at striking fear into a wider population extending through the media well beyond the immediate victims.

### **theocracy**

A theocracy is government by religious leaders. In ancient Israel, God's laws were expounded and applied by holy men. Theocracies are rare; even most Islamic countries separate religious and political roles. The regime established in Iran after the overthrow of the Shah in 1979 is a recent but now contested theocracy.

### **thick description**

A term used by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz to refer to the importance of understanding actions by locating their meaning in a cultural context. For instance, the political significance of voting against the party line is much greater in Britain's House of Commons than in the American Senate. Distributing gifts to voters during an election campaign may be expected in one country but regarded as shocking in another. In a sense, the acts themselves are defined by the cultural codes through which they are understood. Thus thick description overcomes the misunderstandings of *ethnocentrism*. In politics, the term is often used more generally, to denote any rich, rounded and nuanced *case study* of a particular phenomenon.

### **threshold**

In the context of electoral systems, a threshold is the proportion of votes a party must achieve if it is to be awarded any seats at all in parliament. Thresholds, operating at district or national level, reduce fragmentation in the assembly and help to protect it from extremes. Explicit thresholds, typically in the range of two to five per cent, are commonly used in systems of *proportional representation*. Even when no explicit threshold exists, as in many non-proportional systems, an effective threshold will operate below which a party will not win any seats. The effective threshold, found in non-proportional systems, depends mainly on *district magnitude*. Thresholds are a device available to *cartel parties*.

### **threshold effect**

A level above which a variable begins to exert a critical effect, such as the point at which sliding snow turns into an avalanche. In politics, it is sometimes suggested that

once the number of women representatives reaches a critical mass, the increase becomes self-sustaining. In politics, threshold effects are more often asserted than demonstrated and more often demonstrated than replicated.

### **ticket splitting**

Voting for candidates from more than one party on a ballot covering multiple offices. For example, an American elector might vote for a Republican president and a Democratic senator. Similarly, voters in mixed electoral systems can split their vote between the district contest and the party list vote. Ticket splitting is more common, but still the exception, in the current era of weakened party loyalties.

### **totalitarian state**

Friedrich and Brzezinski identified six features of the totalitarian syndrome: an official ideology aimed at perfecting a new and final state of mankind; a single ruling party led by a dictator; control by the secret police, based on terror; monopoly of the mass media; monopoly of armed force (no American 'right to bear arms') and central control and direction of the entire economy. Communist and fascist regimes subscribed to totalitarian thinking but the model was rarely fully implemented, except for a time in the Soviet Union. Contemporary regimes in which the secret police are instruments of control rarely exhibit other features of the syndrome, such as central control of the whole economy.

### **total war**

A significant notion in the twentieth century, total war required the mobilization of the population to support a conflict fought with advanced weaponry on a large geographical scale. Such wars were fought between countries, not just between armed forces, with citizens mobilized in the name of nationalism. Total war required state leadership, intervention and funding.

### **traditional authority**

Traditional authority is rule based on custom and established procedures. It formed an element of Max Weber's influential classification of authority. See *charismatic authority*, *legal-rational authority*.

### **transitional election**

A transitional or founding election is the first to be held following the introduction of a new regime. The level of turnout serves as referendum on the legitimacy of the new order. Typically, turnout is high in the first election in a new democracy but declines at the second election.

### **transmission model**

A simple and sequential account of communication which interprets the process as consisting of who says what to whom, through which medium and with what effects. So the model disaggregates communication into five components: sender, message, channel, receiver and impact. As such, the model performs a useful function.

### **trusteeship**

Trusteeship involves the appointment by the United Nations of a 'trust' state to administer a territory deemed unready for sovereignty. The trusteeship system replaced the mandate system operated by the League of Nations. In both cases, the purpose was to protect the former colonies of defeated powers.

### **turnout**

The number of voters at an election, usually expressed as a proportion of those entitled to vote. In the United States, where registration is voluntary, turnout is expressed as a proportion of the population of voting age, a procedure which complicates cross-national comparisons.

### **two-party system**

Two major parties compete to form a single-party government, as in the USA. Minor parties usually exist but without exerting a significant influence on government formation or altering the fundamental focus on the major parties (*divided government* complicates the issue).

### **two-round system**

If no candidate wins a majority on the first ballot, the leading candidates (usually the top two) face a second, run-off election.

### **two-step flow of communication**

The idea that messages are transmitted from the mass media to opinion leaders and then to the wider population. This notion rejects the idea that the media primarily exert direct effects on the consumers of its messages.

### **tyranny of the majority**

The use of state power by a majority group to coerce a minority. For example, in the transition to representative democracies, the minority of property-owners feared that their interests would be trampled on by the poor majority. To protect against majority tyranny, property-owners sought to entrench the right to property in the constitution, thereby helping to establish the hybrid of *liberal democracy*. Majority tyranny can also operate against ethnic minorities which can of course continue to experience substantial discrimination, no matter what the constitution says.

### **ultra vires (beyond the powers)**

In most unitary states, including the United Kingdom, local councils could traditionally only perform those tasks expressly designated by the centre. Any other act would be *ultra vires*. Some countries where *ultra vires* applies, including the United Kingdom and New Zealand, did establish a more liberal legal framework at the start of the twenty-first century but without granting the full power of *general competence* to local areas.

### **unanimity**

All to agree, assent or at least acquiesce.

### **unfunded mandate**

An American term with general relevance. An unfunded mandate indicates a federal requirement for state or local governments to perform an action in the absence of specific resources from the centre.

### **unicameral legislature**

A parliament with one chamber. Although some European assemblies originally contained multiple chambers, one for each of the feudal estates, most parliaments today are unicameral. See *bicameral legislature*.

### **unified bureaucracy**

In a unified bureaucracy, recruitment is to the civil service as a whole, not to a specific department nor to a particular job within the department. Administrative work is conceived as requiring intelligence and education but not technical knowledge. Britain is an example. By contrast, a departmental approach (as in the Netherlands) recruits people with technical backgrounds to specific ministries or posts.

### **unitary state**

In a unitary *state*, sovereignty belongs to the national level of government and lower levels exist at its discretion. The contrast is with federations in which sovereignty is shared between levels. In reality, even unitary states practice considerable *deconcentration*, *decentralization* and *devolution*. See *federalism*.

### **urgency decree**

An executive order which because of its pressing nature goes into effect without requiring prior approval by the legislature. Such orders may fall into abeyance unless subsequently endorsed by the legislature.

### **valence issue**

A valence issue is a policy such as economic growth or ecological sustainability on which all major parties agree. Consequently, any differentiation takes the form of the competence of the parties at delivering the agreed goal. Valence issues are sometimes underestimated by political scientists focuses on *spatial competition*; rarely are such issues ignored by politicians themselves. See *position issue*.

### **vanguard party**

The monopoly position of ruling communist parties was rationalized by Vladimir Lenin's notion of the vanguard party: the idea that only the party could fully understand the long-term interests of the working class. Accordingly, the party must place itself in the vanguard of the communist movement, leading the phase of dictatorship while the workers' revolutionary consciousness matures. Armed with this doctrine that the party was a more progressive and advanced force than the working class it was supposed to serve, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union sought to implement its vision of a total transformation of society following the 1917 Russian revolution.

### **vertical accountability**

Vertical *accountability* exists when an actor at one level is overseen or is subject to sanction by an actor at another level. An example is a president subject to periodic re-election. See *horizontal accountability*.

### **vote pooling**

An exchange of votes across group boundaries. For example, groups can agree to offer their second preferences under the alternative vote system to candidates from another group (and vice versa), thus providing a measure of integration in divided societies.

### **vote of confidence**

Votes of confidence or censure motions are the ultimate test which a legislature can pose to the executive in a parliamentary system. Such motions are not so much a form of detailed scrutiny as a decision on whether the government can continue at all. In some countries, including Sweden, votes of confidence can be directed against individual ministers as well as the government as a whole. See *interpellation*.

### **weak mayor system**

A version of the *mayor-council* format of local government in which the mayor lacks substantial executive power. London is an example.

### **weighted majority**

A majority after adjusting votes for differences in voting power. In the International Monetary Fund, for example, each member country is given a voting weight reflecting its subscription payment (known as its quota). Since quotas broadly reflect size of economy, large high income countries exert far more influence in IMF votes than would be the case under an *OMOV* system.

### **welfare state**

Directly or indirectly, a welfare state provides a minimum standard of security to all citizens. Welfare states reached their most extensive form in Western Europe during the second half of the twentieth century. There has been some retrenchment since but the provision of welfare remains a major collective undertaking in most European democracies and many elsewhere. Dimensions of welfare include insurance, health care, pensions and unemployment allowances. See *nightwatchman state*, *regulatory state*.

### **Westminster model**

A form of government abstracted from the system traditionally used in the United Kingdom and some of its former settler colonies such as Australia. Its features are rarely clearly defined but would normally include: 1) cabinet government, usually by a single party; 2) executive control of the dominant lower house; 3) an official opposition; 4) the ability of the lower house to dismiss a government; and 5) the ability of the government to call an election at any time. The Westminster model concentrates rather than diffuses power and can be contrasted with the more consensual political style found in the coalition-based parliamentary systems of Western Europe.

## **Westphalia**

The Peace of Westphalia (1648) is judged to be a significant moment in the emergence of the state. In bringing an end to the Thirty Years' War, the peace treaties gave territorial rulers more control over the exercise of religion within their boundaries, thus confirming the diminished transnational authority of the Church.

## **xenophobia**

Fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers, and their cultures.

## **zero-sum**

A relationship in which the gains of one actor are the losses of another, as in a football game or an election with only two candidates. Zero-sum games are naturally conflicting. By contrast, in a positive sum game, aggregate gains can exceed losses, providing the basis for cooperation.