

### China Questions

1. The traditional Chinese belief in the mandate of heaven defines the
  - A) right to rule as seen by the collective ancestral wisdom
  - B) role that bureaucrats play in government
  - C) balance of power between central and regional governments
  - D) relationship of the government to foreign powers
  - E) allegiances that peasants owe to the ruler
2. The Chinese philosophy that emphasizes the importance of order and harmony and defines the duties of rulers and subjects is
  - A) Daoism
  - B) Buddhism
  - C) Shintoism
  - D) Confucianism
  - E) Maoism
3. Which of the following political plans had as its main goal the removal of all vestiges of the old China?
  - A) the Long March
  - B) the Great Leap Forward
  - C) the Cultural Revolution
  - D) Four Modernizations
  - E) open door policy
4. An important source of legitimacy for the government in Maoist China was the belief in
  - A) mass line
  - B) internationalism
  - C) the socialist market economy
  - D) Confucianism
  - E) The mandate of heaven
5. An important difference between Russia and China in the process of political and economic change is that
  - A) China established itself as a major world power much earlier in its history than Russia did.
  - B) Russia established itself as a major world power much earlier in its history than China did.
  - C) during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Russia experienced regime change; China did not.
  - D) Russia moved from hereditary, authoritarian rule to communism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; China never had hereditary, authoritarian rule.
  - E) change in Russian history can best be explained by dynastic cycles; China experienced no similar pattern of change.
6. Which of the following democratic reforms has been enacted in China?
  - A) Citizens now vote for leaders on both the local and national levels.
  - B) Other political parties openly compete with the Communist Party for leadership positions.
  - C) Patron-client relationships are now much weaker than before, and many political leaders come from peasant stock.
  - D) Village elections are now semi-competitive, with some choices of candidates.
  - E) The Chinese president, as well as regional leaders, may be removed from office through impeachment proceedings.
7. The “one country, two systems” agreement governs China’s relationship with
  - A) Taiwan
  - B) Hong Kong
  - C) Japan
  - D) Korea
  - E) Tibet

8. The regime type that currently exists in the People's Republic of China is

- A) corporatism
- B) democracy
- C) authoritarianism
- D) oligarchy
- E) monarchy

"It doesn't matter whether a cat is white or black, as long as it catches mice."

9. The famous statement above reflects the governing approach taken by

- A) Maoism
- B) Confucianism
- C) collectivism
- D) egalitarianism
- E) Deng Xiaoping Theory

10. The patron-client system in China may best be described as

- A) a strong sense of nationalism based on identity as Han Chinese
- B) an informal network of leaders whose factions compete for power
- C) a formal network of leadership positions defined by the Chinese Communist Party
- D) a set of rules that defines recruitment of elites for leadership positions
- E) a set of traditions that defines the relationship between Confucianism and Maoism

11. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of 20<sup>th</sup> century change in Russia and China?

- A) Both countries experienced gradual reform but no major revolutions.
- B) Russia experienced gradual reform but China had several important coups d'état.
- C) Russia experienced two major revolutions but China did not.
- D) Both countries experienced major revolutions during the first half of the century.
- E) Russia experienced a major revolution during the early part of the century, and China experienced a major revolution during the last years of the century.

12. Which of the following is an important contributing factor to urban/rural cleavages in China?

- A) steady migration of people from urban to rural areas
- B) tendency for protests to occur in urban areas only
- C) growing gap between urban and rural incomes
- D) recent increases in international contacts with people in rural areas
- E) policies in many urban areas that encourage people in rural areas to move to cities

13. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of British and Chinese governments?

- A) Neither government has a high level of transparency.
- B) The British government has a higher level of legitimacy than the Chinese government has.
- C) Both British and Chinese governments have become less stable during the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- D) The Chinese government has a higher level of stability than the British government does.
- E) The British government has a higher level of transparency than the Chinese government has.

14. The “princeling” faction in Chinese politics is composed mainly of

- A) 2<sup>nd</sup> generation revolutionists
- B) members of families with revolutionary credentials from the days of Mao Zedong
- C) businessmen who favor further development of capitalism
- D) supporters of democratic reform
- E) western-educated political leaders who support an open door international trade policy

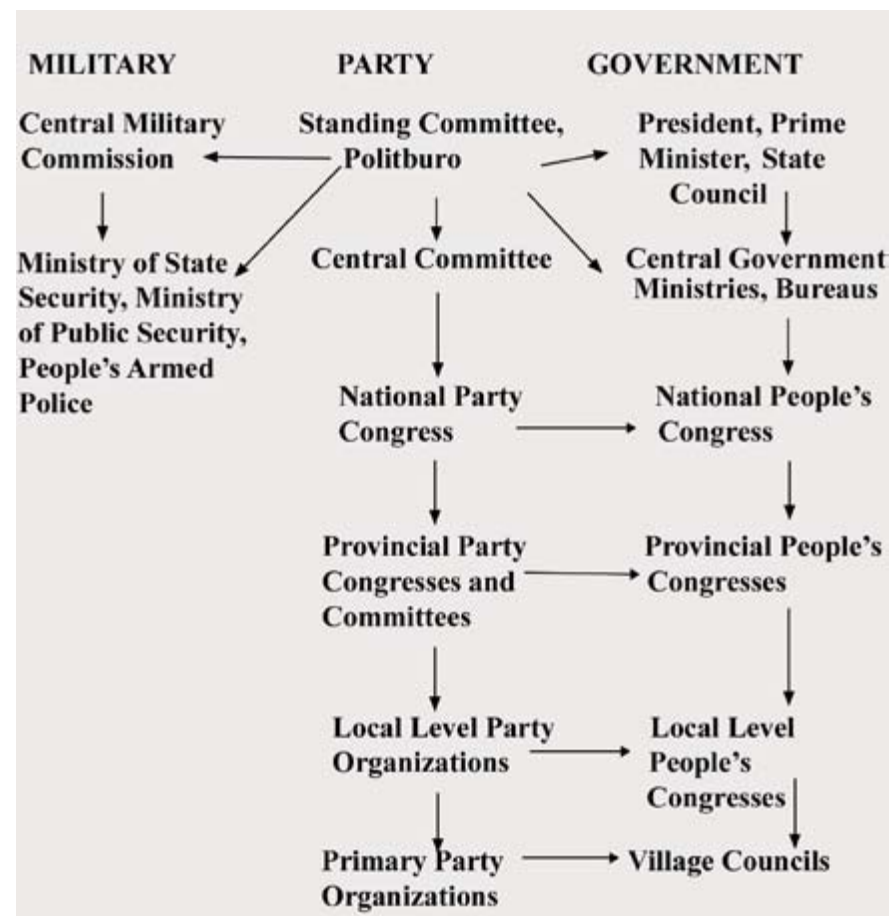
15. Which of the following statements accurately compares Mao Zedong to Deng Xiaoping?

- A) Mao was a communist; Deng Xiaoping was not.
- B) Mao wished to keep capitalism out of China; Deng supported a gradual infusion of capitalism.
- C) Mao led China before it became the People’s Republic of China; Deng was a leader of the People’s Republic of China.
- D) Mao supported a directly elected legislature for China; Deng Xiaoping did not.
- E) Neither Mao nor Deng supported contact or trade with western countries.

16. Which of the following is a normative statement about government and politics in China?

- A) Confucianism is still an important influence on the Chinese political culture.
- B) The Chinese government has endorsed and promoted economic liberalization since 1978.
- C) The Chinese Communist Party still controls the policymaking process in China.
- D) The Chinese political system is characterized by a high level of corruption.
- E) The Chinese judicial system would serve the country better if it was more independent.

(Questions 17 and 18 are based on the following chart):



17. The chart illustrates the principle of

- A) parallel hierarchy in China
- B) corporatism in China
- C) *fang-zhou* in China
- D) patron clientelism in China
- E) the federal government structure in China

18. The most important policymaking body on the chart is the

- A) Central Military Commission
- B) Standing Committee of the Politburo
- C) State Council
- D) People's National Congress
- E) National Party Congress

19. The Chinese government's tolerance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is an indication of the development of

- A) civil society
- B) *guanxi*
- C) the ethic of struggle
- D) *danwei*
- E) collectivism

20. Which of the following is a basic difference between Maoism and Leninism?

- A) Leninism was based on the importance of a party vanguard; Maoism emphasized the strength of the peasant.
- B) Leninism is based on Marxism; Maoism is not.
- C) Leninism does not support collectivization of agriculture; Maoism does.
- D) Leninism does not support capitalism; Maoism does.
- E) Leninism emphasizes equality and the ethic of struggle more than Maoism does.

21. All of the following elements of Chinese political culture originated during the dynastic era EXCEPT:

- A) mandate of heaven
- B) Confucianism
- C) mass line
- D) centralized, authoritarian rule
- E) bureaucratic hierarchy based on scholarship

22. Which of the following is an accurate description of the judicial system in modern day China?

- A) The higher courts have the power of judicial review.
- B) The Chinese Communist Party controls Court procedures and decisions.
- C) Local courts have a great deal of autonomy, although higher courts are dominated by the CCP.
- D) Most judges that sit on courts on all levels make independent decisions.
- E) All judges are members of the CCP, but they have the final say in the decisions that they make.

23. Which of the following is the most direct basis for the development of factions in Chinese politics?

- A) *danwei*
- B) *fang-shou*
- C) *nomenklatura*
- D) *zhongguoi*
- E) *guanxi*

24. Which type of elite recruitment was (is) used in both the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China?

- A) *danwei*
- B) education in a few select universities
- C) *nomenklatura*
- D) *guanxi*
- E) mass line

25. Which of the following events was most important in establishing Mao Zedong's reputation as a strong leader early in his career?

- A) the Revolution of 1911
- B) the split with Chiang Kai-shek in the early 1920s
- C) the Great Leap Forward
- D) the Long March
- E) the Cultural Revolution

26. *Hukou* restrictions in China have most heavily impacted

- (A) the government's ability to tax citizens
- (B) population growth
- (C) media coverage of the government's activities
- (D) trade with other countries
- (E) rural to urban migrations

27. Since the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident, protest in China has

- A) all but disappeared
- B) become an acceptable type of political participation
- C) re-emerged on a smaller scale, but has been suppressed
- D) not been reported to international media sources
- E) been confined to major cities, such as Beijing and Shanghai

28. In this system individual families take full charge of the production and marketing of crops. After paying government taxes and contract fees to the villages, families may consume or sell what they produce.

The statement above describes

- A) one of the Special Economic Zones
- B) the Town Village Enterprise system
- C) the household responsibility system
- D) *danwei*
- E) collectivization of agriculture

29. Which of the following is the most important reason that the influence of the *danwei* system in China has declined in recent years?

- (A) the decreasing importance of family ties
- (B) rapid urbanization
- (C) decentralization of political power
- (D) the increasing liberalization of the Chinese economy
- (E) loosening of state restrictions on civil liberties

30. One consequence of the one-child policy has been

- (A) a lopsided number of young adult males to young adult females
- (B) an even reduction in the number of boy and girl babies who survive infancy
- (C) shorter life expectancies
- (D) falling overall population numbers since the 1980s
- (E) falling birth rates in rural areas but not in cities

### Free-Response Question:

Both China and Russia have had population problems in recent decades.

- a) Describe one population problem that China has had in recent decades. Describe one population problem that Russia has had in recent decades.
- b) For the problem in China that you identified in A), explain one reason that the problem occurred. For the problem in Russia that you identified in B) explain one reason that the problem occurred.
- c) Describe one policy that the Chinese government implemented to address the problem you identified in A). Describe one policy that the Russian government implemented to address the problem you identified in A).



### UNIT THREE: NEWLY INDUSTRIALIZING AND LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

So far, we have investigated countries that represent two types of political systems – advanced democracies and communist and post-communist countries. However, the vast majority of countries in the world have had neither liberal-democratic nor communist regimes. They are often categorized by political scientists and other observers as “less-developed countries”, or LDCs. Formerly they were known as “third world countries,” but since the Cold War ended in the early 1990s, the term is obsolete. Their very categorization invites students to overlook the vast differences that exist among them. LDCs exist on most continents, and they have a wide array of ethnicities, racial characteristics, political cultures, and political economies.

What do these countries have in common? Most obviously, they all struggle with economic issues, including poverty, low GNP, trade dependency, and weaknesses in infrastructure. And, despite a wide variety of government types, most LDCs are currently developing fragile democracies. Many are still ruled by dictators, military leaders, or hereditary monarchs, but most absolute rulers have been challenged in some way by democratic movements.

## TWO CATEGORIES

We will begin by dividing this huge category of countries in two: **newly industrializing countries** and **less-developed countries**. During the last few decades, some countries, mostly in Asia and parts of Latin America, have experienced both economic growth and democratization. As a result, they now exhibit many characteristics of advanced democracies, including relative political and social stability. An ex-

ample is South Korea, a country that only a few decades ago was a poor agricultural country. During the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century, South Korea developed into one of the world’s largest economies and also experimented with democratic institutions. The process that it experienced is sometimes called **compressed modernity** – rapid economic and political change that transformed the country into a stable nation with democratizing political institutions, a growing economy, and an expanding web of nongovernmental institutions. In this book, newly-industrializing countries are represented by Mexico, a country that has experienced this compressed modernity over the past 40 years or so, and Iran, that has partially industrialized but has not democratized as Mexico has.

Less-developed countries form a larger category than newly-industrializing countries do, and we will examine Nigeria as an example. Nigeria has experienced political and economic change, but it has not developed distinct characteristics of advanced democracies. It has had economic difficulties, political instability, and authoritarian rule during the past few decades.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development by itself cannot explain the differences among the core countries of the AP Comparative Government and Politics Course, but it is an important consideration since economic and political development most often reinforce one another. In recent years in most countries, economic development has been based on free market capitalism, with **economic liberalization** taking place through privatization (expanding private ownership of property) and marketization (allowing free-market principles to govern the economy). Economic development is often measured by the **Gross National Product** (the total market value of all goods and services produced in the country), but GNP gives us a limited amount of information about the economic or human conditions of the people living in an economy. Another way to measure economic development is by using **purchasing power parity (PPP)**, a statistical tool that estimates the buying power of income across different countries by using prices in the United States as a benchmark. It is generally a better indicator than **Per Capita Gross National Product (GNP)**, which merely divides the total mar-

ket value of all goods and services produced by the population of the country. PPP takes into consideration the fact that some countries are more expensive to live in than others, and it is usually expressed as a per capita figure.

Clearly, our three countries in this section (Mexico, Nigeria, and Iran) vary widely in terms of PPP, with Nigeria falling far behind any other countries on the chart. One notable variation is the size of PPP in the United Kingdom compared to any of the others. It is also worth noting that despite its recent economic development, China's PPP is still relatively low, far behind those of Mexico and Iran, although China's PPP is rising at a faster rate. For comparison's sake, the highest PPP in the world is that of Qatar at \$143,400, and the next highest is Luxembourg at \$92,000, followed by Liechtenstein at, \$89,400 (The U.S. is \$50,700). Most of the top PPP countries are advanced democracies, although Qatar is ruled by an authoritarian hereditary Amir. The variations among communist, post-communist, newly-industrializing, and less-developed countries are huge.

#### COMPARATIVE PER CAPITA PPP, 2014

Country	PPP (in U.S. dollars)
United Kingdom	\$39,500
Russia	\$24,800
China	\$12,900
Mexico	\$17,900
Iran	\$17,100
Nigeria	\$6,000

Source: *The CIA World Factbook*, 2014 estimates

#### COMPARATIVE ECONOMIC SECTORS (as percentage of labor force by occupation)

Country	Primary (Agriculture)	Secondary (Industry)	Tertiary (Services)
China	33.6%	30.3%	36.1%
Iran	16.3%	35.1%	48.6%
Mexico	13.4%	24.1%	61.9%
Nigeria	70%	10%	20%
Russia	9.7%	27.8%	62.5%
United Kingdom	1.3%	15.2%	83.5%

Source: *The CIA World Factbook*, 2008-2014 (except Nigeria, 1999)

Another way to consider economic development is by examining economic sectors:

- **The primary sector (agriculture)** is the part of the economy that draws raw materials from the natural environment. The primary sector – agriculture, raising animals, fishing, forestry, and mining – is largest in low-income, pre-industrial nations.
- **The secondary sector (industry)** is the part of the economy that transforms raw materials into manufactured goods. This sector grows quickly as societies industrialize, and includes such operations as refining petroleum into gasoline and turning metals into tools and automobiles. As a country's industrial sector grows, its population begins to migrate from rural to urban areas to take advantage of growing urban job opportunities created by industrialization.
- **The tertiary sector (services)** is the part of the economy that involves services rather than goods. The tertiary sector grows with industrialization and comes to dominate **post-industrial societies**, or countries where most people are no longer employed in industry. Examples of tertiary jobs include construction, trade, finance, real estate, private services, government, and transportation.

Because the sectors represent necessary economic activities, most countries have some people employed in all three. However, the percentages vary widely, especially if you compare percentages of people employed in each sector.

By comparing economic sectors, the United Kingdom is the best example of a post-industrial society, with only 1.3% of its population engaged in agriculture, and 83.5% in services. Even though Russia's PPP was fairly low (\$18,000), Russia appears to have moved into post-industrialism as well. Likewise, Mexico has moved away from agriculture (13.4%) toward services (61.9%), as has Iran to a lesser extent. Despite its recent economic boom, 33.6% of China's population is still employed in agriculture, and Nigeria, along with its sagging PPP (\$6,000) has the largest percentage of its people (70%) employed in the primary sector.

### Theories of Economic Development

What factors explain the lack of economic development in LDCs, and what is in store for their future? Their condition is often referred to as **neocolonialism**, or an unequal relationship in a world in which new indirect forms of imperialism are at play. Two conflicting theories have guided political scientists in answering these questions:

- **Westernization (modernization) model** – According to this theory, Britain was the first country to begin to develop its industry. The Industrial Revolution was spurred by a combination of prosperity, trade connections, inventions, and natural resources. Once started, the British model spread to other European nations and the United States, which prospered because they built on British ingenuity and economic practices. By extension, any country that wants its economy to grow should study the paths taken by the industrial nations, and logically they too can reap the benefits of modernization, or “westernization.” According to this model, the biggest obstacle for LDCs is tradition because holding on to old values and beliefs often hinders progress.

- **Dependency theory** – In contrast to the westernization model, dependency theory holds that economic development of many countries in the world is blocked by the fact that industrialized nations exploit them. How can a country develop when its resources (natural and human) are controlled by a handful of prosperous industrialized countries? Dependency theory is an outgrowth of Marxism, which emphasizes exploitation of one social class by the other. The same dynamic is at work in assessing relationships among countries. Problems, then, cannot be solved by westernization, but must be addressed by establishing independence. In reaction to this theory, many LDCs have experimented with forms of socialism with the intent of nationalizing industry and narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor.

Most political scientists today do not adhere to one theory or the other, but instead take a pluralist approach: a country's problems have many sources, and no one formula will work for all. Many LDCs today have “mixed” economies – with some elements of capitalism and some of socialism – and they take a variety of approaches in trying to solve their problems. Political leaders are influenced by both theories, with left-leaning governments usually preferring dependency theory, and more conservative governments looking to westernization as a model.

### Economic Policies in the Less-developed World

Two distinct types of economic policies have been applied throughout the less-developed world in an effort to jump-start their economies:

- **Import substitution** is based on the belief that governments in poorer countries must create more positive conditions for the development of local industries. If these countries are to compete successfully with the advanced industrialized democracies, the governments must restrict imports by setting quotas or imposing heavy import taxes. The reasoning is that people then will have to buy locally, and that demand will stimulate the growth of domestic businesses. Eventually these businesses will develop the



ability to compete in the international market because they will have built the capital and the infrastructure necessary for success. Beginning in the 1930s, import substitution was used widely in Latin America, and later in parts of Africa, and Asia.

- **Export-oriented industrialization** has been used by the so-called “**Asian tigers**” – Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore – whose economies boomed starting in the 1960s. This strategy seeks to directly integrate the country’s economy into the global economy by concentrating on economic production that can find a place in international markets. The countries have watched the “product life cycle” that follows stages: first an innovator country produces something new; next that country moves on to other innovations. Meanwhile, other countries think of ways to make the first product better and cheaper, and export it back to the innovator country. For example, Asian countries have prospered from this strategy with automobiles and electronics in their trade with the United States.

## POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

As we explored briefly in the introductory review chapter of this book, a major political trend of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries is **democratization**, or the process of developing a political system in which power is exercised either directly or indirectly by the people. A state that progresses from procedural democracy (regular competitive elections) to substantive democracy (with civil liberties, rule of law, and open civil society) through democratic consolidation is said to experience **political liberalization**, which eventually leads other states to recognize them as liberal democracies.

Characteristics of liberal democracies include regular competitive elections, civil liberties, rule of law, neutrality of the judiciary, open civil society, and civilian control of the military. It is true that most countries that have high PPPs and developed tertiary sectors are also liberal democracies. However, does this correlation mean that economic development cannot occur without democratization? If not, then Russia’s recent move toward centralized authority is not a good

sign for the future of the Russian economy. China has experienced an almost unprecedented economic boom since 1978, but the political system is still authoritarian. Does this situation spell trouble for China’s current political regime? The answers to these questions are uncertain, but they have tremendous implications for the countries that we will study in this section. For example, might it be correct to categorize Iran as a “less developed country” because it has an authoritarian government? Economically its PPP is a relatively healthy \$17,100, and 48.6% of its people are employed in the tertiary sector. These statistics imply stronger economic development than China. Our categories are imperfect, partly because no one knows for sure if postindustrial societies are by necessity democracies. Many developing nations may be categorized as “**hybrid regimes**,” which have some characteristics of a democracy, but in many ways are still authoritarian regimes.

One important threat to some newly developing and less developed countries is the possible collapse into a **failed state**, a situation in which the very structures of the state may become so weak that it collapses, resulting in anarchy and violence that erupts as order breaks down. Somalia is a clear example of a failed state today, where a civil war has raged for almost two decades. Even though several foreign interventions have attempted to reverse the anarchy, ethnicity-based factions continue to kill Somalis in one of the world’s most dramatic humanitarian catastrophes in recent years. Of the three case studies of the AP Comparative Government and Politics Course that fall into this category, the weakest state is Nigeria, which suffers from economic stagnation, regional rebellions, and government corruption.

In the pages that follow, three very different countries illustrate some of the common characteristics and issues facing newly-industrialized and less-developed countries today. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century Mexico was declared by some observers to be a poster child for the benefits of westernization, only to have their economy come crashing down with the oil bust of the early 1980s. Since then, the economy has improved, but the country is still riddled with political and economic problems. Nigeria, as Africa’s most populous nation, illustrates the perils of new democracies, especially in countries with strong military traditions. Iran represents a part of the world where democracy has very little



**TWO CATEGORIES FOR COMPARISON**

<p><b>Newly industrializing countries</b> have experienced both economic growth and democratization, a process known as <b>compressed modernity</b>. Representative for this category is <b>Mexico</b>.</p>	<p><b>Less developed countries (LDCs)</b> form a larger category than newly industrializing countries. They have experienced political and economic change but have not developed distinct characteristics of advanced democracies. LDCs are represented by <b>Nigeria</b>.</p>
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**Iran** is harder to categorize because it has experienced economic growth but its government has not democratized.

foothold. However, countries of Southwest Asia have asserted themselves in many ways in recent years, and they have profoundly affected the balance of power among nations of the world.

### IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS

“Asian tigers”

compressed modernity

democratization

dependency theory

economic liberalization

economic sectors: primary, secondary, tertiary

export-oriented industrialization

failed state

GNP

GNP per capita

“hybrid regimes”

import substitution  
political liberalization  
PPP  
westernization model



Not too many years ago, observers considered Mexico to be a model for LDCs (less-developed countries) around the world. The “**Mexican miracle**” described a country with a rapidly increasing GNP in orderly transition from an authoritarian to a democratic government. Then, the economy soured after oil prices plummeted in the early 1980s, the peso took a nosedive, and debt mounted during the decade. Ethnic conflict erupted in the mid-1990s when the Zapatistas took over the capital of the southern state of Chiapas and refused to be subdued by the Mexican army. On the political front, the leading presidential candidate was assassinated, and top political officials were arrested for bribery, obstructing justice, and drug pedaling. Then under new leadership, Mexico surprised the world by recovering some financial viability through paying back emergency money it borrowed from the United States. In 2000, under close scrutiny by western democracies, Mexico held an apparently honest, competitive presidential election, and confirmed the emergence of a competitive electoral system. Then, just as pundits were declaring Mexico’s path to capitalism and liberal democracy a successful one, the contentious presidential election of 2006 threatened to rock the government’s legitimacy to its core. Once again, Mexico survived the uproar, only to be hit hard by the global economic crisis in late 2008.

Today it is the BRIC countries – Brazil, Russia, India, and China – that attract world consideration, while Mexico draws attention for the drug-fueled violence that has plagued some of its cities in recent years. Still, the elections of 2012 confirmed the existence of a competitive party system, with the presidency recaptured by the party that domi-

nated Mexico during the 20th century, but many legislative seats staying firmly in the hands of opposition parties.

Despite its uncertain path, Mexico may be seen as a representative for the category of “newly-industrializing countries.” Its purchasing power parity (\$17,900) is fairly high, and about 62% of its workers are employed in the service sector. This “developing” nation is full of apparent contradictions that make its politics sometimes puzzling, but always interesting and dynamic. Mexico is generally described economically as a developing country and politically as a “transitional democracy.” In both cases it is at an “in-between” stage when compared with other countries globally, but the transition has had its surprises, and its successes and challenges may well serve as beacons for other nations to follow.

## SOVEREIGNTY, AUTHORITY, AND POWER

Like many other Latin American countries, Mexico’s sources of public authority have fluctuated greatly over the centuries. From the time that the Spanish arrived in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century until independence was won in 1821, Mexico was ruled by a viceroy, or governor put in place by the Spanish king. The rule was centralized and authoritarian, and it allowed virtually no participation by indigenous people. After Mexican independence, this ruling style continued, and all of Mexico’s presidents until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century were military generals. The country was highly unstable during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and even though a constitution was put in place, Mexico’s presidents dictated policy until very recently. Significant economic growth characterized the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, followed by democratization that is currently reshaping the political system.

### Legitimacy

In general, Mexican citizens consider their government and its power legitimate. An important source of legitimacy is the **Revolution of 1910-1911**, and Mexicans deeply admire revolutionary leaders throughout their history, such as Miguel Hidalgo, Benito Juarez, Emilio Zapata, Pancho Villa, and Lázaro Cárdenas. Revolutions have been accepted as a path to change, and charisma is highly valued as a leadership characteristic.

The revolution was legitimized by the formation of the **Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)** in 1929. The constitution that was written during that era created a democratic, three-branch government, but PRI was intended to stabilize political power in the hands of its leaders. PRI, then, served as an important source of government legitimacy until other political parties successfully challenged its monopoly during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. After the election of 2000, PRI lost the presidency and one house of Congress, so that by 2006, the party held only a minority of seats in both houses of the legislature. Then, in the 2009 mid-term election, PRI showed that it was still a viable party by capturing a plurality of seats in the Chamber of Deputies. In 2012, the party won the presidency for the first time since 1994, although it still does not dominate the legislature. Today, sources of public authority and political power appear to be changing rapidly. However, some characteristics carry through from one era to the next.

### Historical Traditions

Mexico's historical tradition may be divided into three stages of its political development – colonialism, the chaos of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the emphasis on economic development during its recent history.

- **Authoritarianism** – Both from the colonial structure set up by Spain and from strong-arm tactics by military-political leaders such as Porfirio Diaz, Mexico has a tradition of authoritarian rule. Currently, the president still holds a great deal of political power, although presidential authority has been questioned during the past few years.
- **Populism** – The democratic revolutions of 1810 and 1910 both had significant peasant bases led by charismatic figures that cried out for more rights for ordinary Mexicans, particularly Amerindians. The modern Zapatista movement is a reflection of this historical tradition, which is particularly strong in the southern part of the country.
- **Power plays/divisions within the elite** – The elites who led dissenters during the Revolutions of 1810 and 1910, the war-lords/caudillos of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the *politicos* vs.

*tecnicos* of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century are all examples of competitive splits among the elite. Current party leaders are often at odds, as displayed during the election crisis of 2006. Presidential candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's challenge of the election results threatened to destroy fragile democratic structures, although the crisis passed without destabilizing the country.

- **Instability and legitimacy issues** – Mexico's political history is full of chaos, conflict, bloodshed, and violent resolution to political disagreements. As recently as 1994, a major presidential candidate was assassinated. Even though most Mexicans believe that the government is legitimate, the current regime still leans toward instability, and the current outbreak of gang-related violence – especially in the north – seriously challenges the government's authority.

### Political Culture

Mexicans share a strong sense of national identification based on a common history, as well as a dominant religion and language.

- **The importance of religion** – Until the 1920s, the Catholic Church actively participated in politics, and priests were often leaders of populist movements. During the revolutionary era of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the government developed an anti-clerical position, and today the political influence of the church has declined significantly. However, a large percentage of Mexicans are devout Catholics, and their beliefs strongly influence political values and actions.
- **Patron-clientelism** – The system of cliques based on personal connections and charismatic leadership has served as the glue that has held an agrarian Mexico together through practicing “you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours.” The network of **camarillas** (patron-client networks) extends from the political elites to vote-mobilizing organizations throughout the country. **Corruption** is one by-product of patron-clientelism. Democratization and industrialization have put pressure on this sys-

tem, and it is questionable as to whether or not modern Mexico can continue to rely on patron-clientelism to organize its government and politics. The defeats of PRI for the presidency in 2000 and 2006 are indications that clientelism may be on the decline, but corporatism still plays a big role in policymaking.

- **Economic dependency** – Whether as a Spanish colony or a southern neighbor of the United States, Mexico has almost always been under the shadow of a more powerful country. In recent years Mexico has struggled to gain more economic independence.

### Geographic Influence

Mexico is one of the most geographically diverse countries in the world, including high mountains, coastal plains, high plateaus, fertile valleys, rain forests, and deserts within an area about three times the size of France.

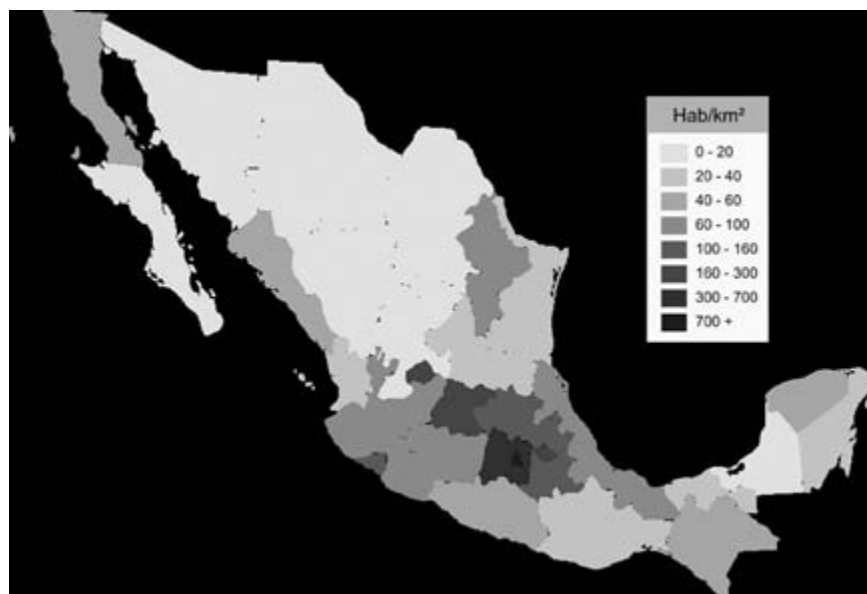
Some geographical features that have influenced the political development of Mexico are:

- **Mountains and deserts** – Because large mountain ranges and vast deserts separate regions, communication and transportation across the country is often difficult. Rugged terrain also limits areas where productive agriculture is possible. Regionalism, then, is a major characteristic of the political system.
- **Varied climates** – Partly because of the terrain, but also because of its great distance north to south, Mexico has a wide variety of climates – from cold, dry mountains to tropical rain forests.
- **Natural resources** – Mexico has an abundance of oil, silver, and other natural resources, but has always struggled to manage them wisely. These resources undoubtedly have enriched the country (and the United States), but they have not brought general prosperity to the Mexican people.



**Geographic Influences.** The geography of Mexico varies widely – mountains, deserts, coastal plains, and valleys. The country also has a long border with the United States to its north, although most large cities are far away from the border. The largest city in the north is Monterrey.

- **A long (2000-mile-long) border with the United States** – Contacts – including conflicts and migration and dependency issues – between the two countries are inevitable, and Mexico has often been overshadowed by its powerful neighbor to the north.
- **122 million people** – Mexico is the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world, and among the ten most populous of all. Population growth has slowed significantly to about 1.1%, but population is still increasing.
- **Urban population** – Mexico has urbanized rapidly, as people have moved to cities from rural areas. Today about 3/4 of all Mexicans live in cities of the interior or along the coasts. Mexico City is one of the largest cities in the world, with about 21 million inhabitants living in or close to it. The shift from rural to urban population areas during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century disrupted traditional Mexican politics, including the patron-client system.



**Population Density in Mexico.** The population of Mexico is unevenly distributed across the country, with a vast majority of the people living in the mid-section, centered on Mexico City but spreading to several other major cities, such as Guadalajara and Puebla.

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

Mexican history dates back to its independence in 1821, but many influences on its political system developed much earlier. Over time, Mexico has experienced authoritarian governments first under the colonial control of Spain, and then under military dictatorships during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 19<sup>th</sup> century also saw populist movements influenced by democratic impulses, accompanied by violence, bloodshed, and demagoguery. The first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw an intensification of violence as the country sank into chaos, and the political system was characterized by serious instability and rapid turnover of political authority. Stability was regained by resorting to authoritarian tactics that remained in place until the latter part of the century. In recent years, Mexico has shown clear signs of moving away from authoritarianism toward democracy.

Economic changes in Mexico have been no less dramatic. For most of its history, Mexico's economy was based on agriculture, along with other primary sector activities such as mining. However, Mexico was

strongly influenced by the industrialization of its northern neighbor, the United States, starting in the late 1800s. Under the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz, U.S. business interests were encouraged to develop in Mexico, and a strong dependency on the U.S. economy was put in place. Mexican nationalists have reacted against U.S. participation in the Mexican economy at various times since those days, so that anti-U.S. sentiments have become one dynamic of political and economic interactions. During the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mexico industrialized rapidly, with its rich natural resource of oil serving as the wind that drove the economic expansion. Mexico has struggled since then to break its dependency on one product, especially after the sudden drop in oil prices during the early 1980s sent the Mexican economy into a tailspin. Today Mexico has moved rapidly from an agricultural society to an industrial one, and even in some ways toward post-industrialism.

We will divide our study of historical influences into three parts:

- Colonialism
- Independence until the Revolution of 1910
- 1910 to the Present

### Colonialism

From 1519 to 1821 Spain controlled the area that is now Mexico. The Spanish placed their subjects in an elaborate social status hierarchy, with people born in Spain on top and the native Amerindians on the bottom. Colonialism left several enduring influences:

- **Cultural heterogeneity** – When the Spanish arrived in 1519 the area was well populated with natives, many of whom were controlled by the Aztecs. When the conquistador Hernan Cortés captured the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, the Spanish effectively took control of the entire area. Even though status differences between natives and Spanish were clearly drawn, the populations soon mixed, particularly since Spanish soldiers were not allowed to bring their families from Spain to the New World. Today about 60% of all Mexicans are **mestizo** (a blend of the two peoples), but areas far away from Mexico City – particularly to the south – remain primarily Amerindian.

- **Catholicism** – Most Spaniards remained in or near Mexico City after their arrival, but Spanish Catholic priests settled far and wide as they converted the population to Christianity. Priests set up missions that became population centers, and despite the differences in status, they often developed great attachments to the people who they led.
- **Economic dependency** – The area was controlled by Spain, and served the mother country as a colony, although the territory was so vast that the Spanish never realized the extent of Mexico's natural resources.

### Independence/New Country (1810-1911)

As part of a wave of revolutions that swept across Latin America during the early 1800s, a Mexican parish priest named Miguel Hidalgo led a popular rebellion against Spanish rule in 1810. After eleven years of turmoil (and Father Hidalgo's execution), Spain finally recognized Mexico's independence in 1821. Father Hidalgo, though of Spanish origins, was seen as a champion of the indigenous people of Mexico. He still symbolizes the political rights of the peasantry, and statues in his memory stand in public squares all over the country. However, stability and order did not follow independence, with a total of thirty-six presidents serving between 1833 and 1855.

Important influences during this period were:

- **Instability and legitimacy issues** – When the Spanish left, they took their hierarchy with them, and reorganizing the government was a difficult task.
- **Rise of the military** – The instability invited military control, most famously exercised by Santa Anna, a military general and president of Mexico.
- **Domination by the United States** – The U.S. quickly picked up on the fact that its neighbor to the south was in disarray, and chose to challenge Mexican land claims. By 1855, Mexico had lost half of its territory to the U.S. What is now Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Utah, and part of Colorado

fell under U.S. control after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in 1848.

- **Liberal vs. conservative struggle** – The impulses of the 1810 revolution toward democracy came to clash with the military's attempt to establish authoritarianism (as in colonial days). The Constitution of 1857 was set up on democratic principles, and a liberal president, **Benito Juarez**, is one of Mexico's greatest heroes. Like Father Hidalgo, Juarez was very popular with ordinary Mexican citizens, but unlike Hidalgo, he was a military general with a base of support among elites as well. Conservatism was reflected in the joint French, Spanish, and English takeover of Mexico under Maximilian (1864-1867). His execution brought Juarez back to power, but brought no peace to Mexico.

### The "Porfiriato" (1876-1911)

**Porfirio Diaz** – one of Juarez's generals – staged a military coup in 1876 and instituted himself as the president of Mexico with a promise that he would not serve more than one term of office. He ignored that pledge and ruled Mexico with an iron hand for 34 years. He brought with him the *cientificos*, a group of young advisors who believed in bringing scientific and economic progress to Mexico. Influences of the "Porfiriato" are:

- **Stability** – With Diaz the years of chaos came to an end, and his dictatorship brought a stable government to Mexico.
- **Authoritarianism** – This dictatorship allowed no sharing of political power beyond the small, closed elite.
- **Foreign investment and economic growth** – The *cientificos* encouraged entrepreneurship and foreign investment – primarily from the United States – resulting in a growth of business and industry.
- **Growing gap between the rich and the poor** – As often happens in developing countries, the introduction of wealth did not insure that all would benefit. Many of the elite became quite

wealthy and led lavish lifestyles, but most people in Mexico remained poor.

Eventually even other elites became increasingly sensitive to the greed of the Porfirians and their own lack of opportunities, and so Diaz's regime ended with a coup from within the elite, sparking the Revolution of 1910.

### 1910 - Present

The Revolution of 1910 marked the end of the "Porfiriato" and the beginning of another round of instability and disorder, followed by many years of attempts to regain stability.

#### The Chaos of the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century

In 1910, conflict broke out as reformers sought to end the Diaz dictatorship. When Diaz tried to block a presidential election, support for another general, Francisco Madero – a landowner from the northern state of Coahuila – swelled to the point that Diaz was forced to abdicate in 1911. So the Revolution of 1910 began with a movement by other elites to remove Diaz from office. In their success, they set off a period of warlordism and popular uprisings that lasted until 1934.

The influence of this era include:

- **Patron-client system** – In their efforts to unseat Diaz, **caudillos** – political/military strongmen from different areas of the country – rose to challenge one another for power. Two popular leaders – **Emiliano Zapata** and **Pancho Villa** – emerged to lead peasant armies and establish another dimension to the rebellion. Around each leader a **patron-client** system emerged that encompassed large numbers of citizens. Many caudillos (including Zapata and Villa) were assassinated, and many followers were violently killed in the competition among the leaders.
- **Constitution of 1917** – Although it represents the end of the revolution, the Constitution did not bring an end to the violence. It set up a structure for democratic government – com-

plete with three branches and competitive elections – but political assassinations continued into the 1920s. The constitution also sought to limit foreigners' rights to exploit natural resources by declaring that all subsoil rights are the property of the nation.

- **Conflict with the Catholic Church** – The Cristero Rebellion broke out in the 1920s as one of the bloodiest conflicts in Mexican history, with hundreds of thousands of people killed, including many priests. Liberals saw the church as a bastion of conservatism and put laws in place that forbid priests to vote, restricted church-affiliated schools, and suspended religious services. Priests around the country led a rebellion against the new rules that contributed greatly to the chaos of the era.
- **The establishment of PRI** – Finally, after years of conflict and numerous presidential assassinations, President Calles brought caudillos together for an agreement in 1929. His plan – to bring all caudillos under one big political party – was intended to bring stability through agreement to "pass around" the power from one leader to the next as the presidency changed hands. Each president could only have one six-year term (**sexenio**), and then must let another leader have his term. Meanwhile, other leaders would be given major positions in the government to establish their influence. This giant umbrella party – **PRI** (Institutional Revolutionary Party) – "institutionalized" the revolution by stabilizing conflict between leaders. Other parties were allowed to run candidates for office, but the umbrella agreement precluded them from winning.

#### The Cardenas Upheaval – 1934-1940

When Calles's term as president was up, **Lazaro Cardenas** began a remarkable sexenio that both stabilized and radicalized Mexican politics. Cardenas (sometimes called "the Roosevelt of Mexico" by U.S. scholars) gave voice to the peasant demands from the Revolution of 1910, and through his tremendous charisma, brought about many changes:



### COMPARATIVE REVOLUTIONS EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Country	Motivations	Characteristics	Outcomes
<b>Russia (1917)</b>	Defeat authoritarian government; carry forward Marxist ideology	Led by V.I. Lenin, Bolsheviks; violent, sudden change; carried out in middle of World War I	Four years of civil war; triumph of Marxism-Leninism; one-party state
<b>China (1911)</b>	Drive out “foreign devils”; defeat authoritarian, weak government; assert nationalism	Regional warlordism, violent, sudden change; chaotic, competing forces	Years of chaos; two competing forces; triumph of Maoism; one-party state
<b>Mexico (1910)</b>	Defeat authoritarian government; break dependency on foreign governments; elite power struggle	Began as a conflict among elites; joined by populist forces; sudden, violent change; chaotic competing forces	Years of violence, instability; elites “umbrellaed” under PRI for stability; one-party state

**Origins of one-party states.** Although the early 20<sup>th</sup> century revolutions of Russia, China, and Mexico had some very different motivations, characteristics, and outcomes, they had a few things in common, including the outcome of a one-party state.

- **Redistribution of land** – Land was taken away from big landlords and foreigners and redistributed as *ejidos* – collective land grants – to be worked by the peasants.
- **Nationalization of industry** – Foreign business owners who had been welcomed since the time of Diaz were kicked out of the country, and much industry was put under the control of the state. For example, **PEMEX** – a giant government-controlled oil company – was created.
- **Investments in public works** – The government built roads, provided electricity, and created public services that modernized Mexico.

- **Encouragement of peasant and union organizations** – Cardenas welcomed the input of these groups into his government, and they formed their own *camarillas* with leaders that represented peasants and workers on the president’s cabinet.
- **Concentration of power in the presidency** – Cardenas stabilized the presidency, and when his *sexenio* was up, he peacefully let go of power, allowing another *caudillo* to have the reins of government.

The strategy of state-led development that Cardenas followed is called **import substitution industrialization**. ISI employs high tariffs to protect locally produced goods from foreign competition, government ownership of key industries, and government subsidies to domestic industries. Since there was relatively little money in private hands to finance industrialization, the government took the lead in promoting industrialization. Although including peasant and union organizations in the policymaking process is a populist touch, the Cardenas government is still an example of **state corporatism**, with the president determining who represents different groups to the government.

#### The Emergence of the *Tecnicos* and the Pendulum Theory

Six years after Cardenas left office, Miguel Aleman became president, setting in place the **Pendulum Theory**. Aleman rejected many of Cardenas’ socialist reforms and set Mexico on a path of economic development through economic liberalization, again encouraging entrepreneurship and foreign investment. He in turn was followed by a president who shifted the emphasis back to Cardenas-style reform, setting off a back-and-forth effect – socialist reform to free-market economic development and back again. As Mexico reached the 1970s the pendulum appeared to stop, and a new generation of *tecnicos* – educated, business-oriented leaders – took control of the government and PRI with a moderate, free-market approach to politics. In many ways, the pendulum swung between modernization and dependency theories (see p. 324-325), with the government eventually settling on modernization theory. By the 1980s, Mexico practiced **neoliberalism**, a strategy that calls for free markets, balanced budgets, privatization, free trade, and limited government intervention in the economy.

By the 1950s, Mexico was welcoming foreign investment, and the country's GNP began a spectacular growth that continued until the early 1980s. This "**Mexican Miracle**" – based largely on huge supplies of natural gas and oil – became a model for less developed countries everywhere. With the "oil bust" of the early 1980s, the plummeting price of oil sank the Mexican economy and greatly inflated the value of the peso. Within PRI, the division between the "*políticos*" – the old style caciques who headed camarillas – and the *tecnicos* began to grow wider, as demands for political liberalization grew in intensity.

### CITIZENS, SOCIETY, AND THE STATE

For many years Mexican citizens have interacted with their government through an informal web of relationships defined by patron-clientelism. Because the camarillas are so interwoven into the fabric of Mexican politics, most people have had at least some contact with the government during their lifetimes. However, interactions between citizens and government through clientelism generally have meant that the government has had the upper hand through its ability to determine which interests to respond to and which to ignore. The role of citizens in the Mexican political system is changing as political parties have become competitive and democracy seems to be taking root, yet the old habits of favor-swapping are ingrained in the political culture.

### Cleavages

Cleavages that have the most direct impact on the political system are social class, urban v. rural, mestizo v. Amerindian, and north v. south. These cleavages are often **crosscutting**, with different divisions emerging as the issues change, but in recent years they have often **coincided** (see p. 46) as urban, middle-class mestizos from the north have found themselves at odds with rural, poor Amerindians from the south.

- **Urban v. rural** – Mexico's political structure was put into place in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – a time when most of the population lived in rural areas. PRI and the patron-client system were intended to control largely illiterate peasants who provided political support in exchange for small favors from the *políticos*. Today Mexico is more than 75% urban, and the lit-

eracy rate is about 90%. Urban voters are less inclined to support PRI, and they have often been receptive to political and economic reform.

- **Social class** – Mexico's Gini coefficient is .47 (2014 estimate), which means that economic inequality is high. In 2010, the richest 10% earned 37.5% of all income, reflecting the unequal distribution of income. This economic divide translates into higher infant mortality rates, lower levels of education, and shorter life expectancies among the poor. In very recent years Mexico's middle class has been growing, even in poorer sections of the country. Some are from the **informal economy** (businesses not registered with the government), and others from new industries or service businesses. Middle and upper class people are more likely to support PAN, and are more likely to vote than the poor, especially as PRI-style patron-client ties unwind.
- **Mestizo v. Amerindian** – The main ethnic cleavage in Mexico is between mestizo (a blend of European and Amerindian) and Amerindian. Only about 10% of Mexicans actually speak an indigenous language, but as many as 30% think of themselves as Amerindian. Amerindians are more likely to live in marginalized rural areas and to live in poverty. This cleavage tends to define social class, with most of Mexico's wealth in the hands of mestizos.
- **North v. south** – In many ways, northern Mexico is almost a different country than the area south of Mexico City. The north is very dry and mountainous, but its population is much more prosperous, partly because many are involved in trade with the United States. The north has a substantial middle class with relatively high levels of education. Not surprisingly, they are generally more supportive of a market-based economy. The south is largely subtropical, and its people are generally less influenced by urban areas and the United States. Larger numbers are Amerindian, with less European ethnicity, and their average incomes are lower than those in the north. A typical adult in the south has only six years of schooling, as compared

to 8.1 years on average in the north. Although their rural base may influence them to support PRI, some southerners think of the central government as repressive. The southernmost state of Chiapas is the source of the Zapatista Movement, which values the Amerindian heritage and seeks more rights for natives.

One recent change worth noting is that the incomes of the poorest half of the population are growing faster than the average. Poverty levels as defined by the government have fallen, and income distribution is becoming less unequal. For example, Mexico's Gini coefficient has dropped from more than .54 in 2002 to .47 in 2014. If significant numbers of the poor begin making enough money to move them into the middle class, cleavages that define political behavior will certainly be affected. Likewise, if job opportunities in the formal sector (businesses recognized by the government) spread into new regions of the country as the economy grows, regional and ethnic divisions may also change.

### Political Participation

Political participation in Mexico has been characterized by revolution and protest, but until recently, Mexican citizens were generally subjects under authoritarian rule by the political elite. Citizens sometimes benefited from the elaborate patronage system, but legitimate channels to policymakers were few. Today, citizens participate through increasingly legitimate, regular elections.

#### The Patron-Client System

Traditionally, Mexican citizens have participated in their government through the informal and personal mechanisms of the **patron-client system**. Since the formation of PRI in 1929, the political system has emphasized compromise among contending elites, behind-the-scenes conflict resolution, and distribution of political rewards to those willing to play by the informal and formal rules of the game.

The patron-client system keeps control in the hands of the government elite, since they have the upper hand in deciding who gets favors and who doesn't. Only in recent years have citizens and elites begun

to participate through competitive elections, campaigns, and interest group lobbying.

**Patron-clientelism** has its roots in warlordism and loyalty to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century **caudillos**. Each leader had his supporters that he – in return for their loyalty – granted favors to. Each group formed a **camarilla**, a hierarchical network through which offices and other benefits were exchanged. Until the election of 2000, within PRI most positions on the president's cabinet were filled either by supporters or by heads of other camarillas that the president wanted to appease. Peasants in a camarilla received jobs, financial assistance, family advice, and sometimes even food and shelter in exchange for votes for the PRI.

Despite trends toward a modern society, the patron-client system is still very important in determining the nature of political participation. Modernization tends to break up the patron-client system, as networks blur in large population centers, and more formal forms of participation are instituted. However, vestiges of the old patron-client system were at work in the controversy surrounding the 2006 presidential election, with the losing candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador accusing the winning candidate's PAN party of election fraud. Polls indicate that between a quarter and a third of voters believed Obrador, since decades of one-party rule had sustained fraudulence under the patron-client system. As a result, many Mexicans still deeply distrust government officials and institutions.

#### Protests

When citizen demands have gotten out of hand, the government has generally responded by not only accommodating their demands, but by including them in the political process through **co-optation**. For example, after the 1968 student protests in Mexico City ended in government troops killing an estimated two hundred people in **Tlatelolco Plaza**, the next president recruited large numbers of student activists into his administration. He also dramatically increased spending on social services, putting many of the young people to work in expanded antipoverty programs in the countryside and in urban slums.

Social conditions in Mexico lie at the heart of the Chiapas rebellion that began in 1994. This poor southern Mexican state sponsored the **Zapatista (EZLN) uprising**, representing Amerindians that felt disaffected from the more prosperous mestizo populations of cities in the center of the country. The Chiapas rebellion reminded Mexicans that some people live in appalling conditions with little hope for the future. President Vicente Fox (2000-2006) made some efforts to incorporate the Zapatistas into the political system, but the group still has not formally called off its rebellion. However, the federal government currently supplies electricity and water to the villages the Zapatistas still control, a measure that may have helped to quiet the movement.

In recent years, the Zapatistas have put down their weapons and adopted a strategy that attempts to gain both Mexican and international support. Through an internet campaign, they have received support from a variety of NGOs and organizations, and their movement has gained international attention. In 2005, the Zapatistas presented the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Junge, which promoted rights of the indigenous people and called for an alternative national campaign to replace the presidential campaign. Since then, the EZLN has worked to organize an international organization for indigenous people around the world.

Some protests have been staged by drug gangs. For example, on May Day 2015, the Jalisco New Generation, a relatively new organization, defied the federal government by burning buildings, creating road blocks, and shooting down an army helicopter. Fifteen people died in the violence. The incident calls into question the success of the government's strategy of going after gang leaders with the assumption that the groups will be dismantled. New Generation formed from the remnants of defeated groups, suggesting that the gangs will not go away just because leaders are captured.

#### Voter Behavior

Before the political changes of the 1990s, PRI controlled elections on the local, state, and national levels. Voting rates were very high because the patron-client system required political support in exchange for political and economic favors. Election day was generally very festive, with the party rounding up voters and bringing them to the

polls. Voting was accompanied by celebrations, with free food and entertainment for those who supported the party. Corruption abounded, and challengers to the system were easily defeated with "tacos," or stuffed ballot boxes.

Despite PRI's control of electoral politics, competing parties have existed since the 1930s, and once they began pulling support away from PRI, some distinct voting patterns emerged. Voter turnout was probably at its height in 1994, when about 78% of all eligible citizens actually voted. This is up from 49% in 1988, although any comparisons before 1988 have to be considered in light of corruption, either through fraudulent voting or simply the announcement from PRI of inflated voter participation rates. Voter rates have declined since 1994, but a respectable 64% of those eligible actually voted in the election of 2000, 60% in 2006, and 63% in 2012.

Some factors that appeared to influence voter behavior in recent elections are:

- **Region** – Regional differences are quite dramatic, with PRI usually dominant in the north/northeast and in the Yucatan. It usually competes with PRD in southern Mexico, and with PAN in the north. PRD has built its strongest support bases in and around Mexico City, which it has governed since mayors were first elected in the city in 1997. In the 2012 presidential election, PRI candidate Enrique Peña Nieto performed well all over the country, winning in 21 of 32 states, whereas PRD candidate López Obrador did well in and around Mexico City and also in the southern states. Pan candidate Josefina Vázquez Mota only won three states in northern and central Mexico.
- **Poverty/marginalization** – Traditionally, PRI benefitted from strong electoral support in the rural, marginalized parts of the country, with votes secured through clientelism and assistance that obligated peasants to vote for PRI. During 12 years of PAN presidents, government poverty alleviation programs expanded and clientelism weakened, so that the results of the election of 2012 show that PAN, and to a lesser extent PRD, have expanded their popularity in rural parts of the country.

## Civil Society

Despite the fact that PRI formed an umbrella party over elites in the years that it ruled, Mexico has always had a surprising number of groups who have refused to cooperate. These groups have formed the basis for a lively civil society in Mexico, which also has provided an atmosphere where public protests have been acceptable. PRI practiced **state corporatism**, with the state mediating among different groups to ensure that no one group successfully challenged the government. PRI formally divided interest groups into three sectors: labor, peasants, and the middle class (“popular”), with each dominated by PRI-controlled groups. However, The Confederation of Employers of the Mexican Republic (a labor group) was an autonomous group that vocally and publicly criticized the government.

PRI’s downfall started in civil society with discontented businessmen who were not incorporated into the government’s system. This group was behind the formation of PAN in 1939, and though the party did not successfully challenge PRI for many years, PAN’s 2000 presidential candidate – Vicente Fox – emerged to successfully challenge PRI partly because he had the backing of powerful business interests. With the narrow PAN victory in 2006, business interests again benefitted, so PRI’s old state corporatism clearly has been broken up, and even though PRI candidate Enrique Peña Nieto won the presidency in 2012, PRI did not capture either legislative house.

In recent years, the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has increased significantly. Many have pressured the government to crack down on gang-related violence, and some are supported by powerful business interests and are well funded. Others focus on campaigns for clean government. After the murder of 43 students in late 2014 by a drug gang, NGOs pushed the president to go further than he wanted in a constitutional reform to tackle corruption.

What will emerge in the place of PRI’s domination is now the question – state corporatism, neo-corporatism (where interests, not the government controls), or pluralism (independent interests have input, but don’t control).

## POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Mexico is a country in economic and political transition. As a result, it is difficult to categorize its regime type. For many years its government was highly authoritarian, with the president serving virtually as a dictator for a six-year term. Mexico’s economy has also been underdeveloped and quite dependent on the economies of stronger nations, particularly that of the United States. However, in recent years Mexico has shown strong signs of economic development, accompanied by public policy supportive of a free market economy. Also, the country’s political parties are becoming more competitive, and the dictatorial control of PRI has been soundly broken by elections since 1997. Although the political structures themselves remain the same as they were before, significant political and economic reforms have greatly altered the ways that government officials operate.

### Regime Type

Traditionally, Mexico has had a **state corporatist structure** – central, authoritarian rule that allows input from interest groups outside of government. Through the *camarilla* system, leaders of important groups, including business elites, workers, and peasants, actually served in high government offices. Today political and economic liberalization appears to be leading toward a more open structure, but corporatism is still characteristic of policymaking. Is the modern Mexican government authoritarian or democratic? Is the economy centrally controlled, or does it operate under free market principles? The answers are far from clear, but the direction of the transition is toward both economic and political liberalization.

### “Developed,” “Developing,” or “LDC”?

Categorizing the economic development of countries can be a tricky business, with at least four different ways to measure it:

- **GNP per capita** – This figure is an estimate of a country’s total economic output divided by its total population, converted to a single currency, usually the U.S. dollar. This measure is often criticized because it does not take into account what goods and services people can actually buy with their local currencies.

- **PPP (Purchasing Power Parity)** – This measure takes into account the actual cost of living in a particular country by figuring what it costs to buy the same bundle of goods in different countries. Mexico's figure is \$17,900 per year.
- **HDI (Human Development Index)** – The United Nations has put together this measure based on a formula that takes into account the three factors of longevity (life expectancy at birth), knowledge (literacy and average years of schooling), and income (according to PPP). Mexico's literacy rate is 96.2% for men and 94.2% for women, and life expectancy is 72.88 for men and 78.55 for women.
- **Economic dependency** – A less developed country is often dependent on developed countries for economic support and trade. Generally speaking, economic trade that is balanced between nations is considered to be good. A country is said to be "developing" when it begins relying less on a stronger country to keep it afloat financially. Despite recent attempts to change the balance, Mexico is still quite dependent on the U.S. for trade, jobs, and business.
- **Economic inequality** – The economies of developing countries usually benefit the rich first, so characteristically the gap between the rich and poor widens. This trend is evident in Mexico with its high Gini coefficient of .47.

No matter which way you figure it, Mexico comes out somewhere in the middle, with some countries more developed and some less. Since these indices in general are moving together upward over time for Mexico, it is said to be "developing."

#### A Transitional Democracy

Politically, Mexico is said to be in transition between an authoritarian style government and a democratic one. From this view (modernization theory), democracy is assumed to be a "modern" government type, and authoritarianism more old-fashioned. Governments, then,

may be categorized according to the degree of democracy they have. How is democracy measured? Usually by these characteristics:

- **Political accountability** – In a democracy, political leaders are held accountable to the people of a country. The key criterion is usually the existence of regular, free, and fair elections.
- **Political competition** – Political parties must be free to organize, present candidates, and express their ideas. The losing party must allow the winning party to take office peacefully.
- **Political freedom** – The air to democracy's fire is political freedom – assembly, organization, and political expression, including the right to criticize the government.
- **Political equality** – Signs of democracy include equal access to political participation, equal rights as citizens, and equal weighting of citizens' votes.

Mexico – especially in recent years – has developed some democratic characteristics, but still has many vestiges of its authoritarian past, as we have seen. *The Economist*, in its 2014 democracy index (p. 27), categorizes Mexico as a "flawed democracy," ranking it 57th of 167 countries in terms of its functioning as a democracy, its electoral process, political participation, political culture, and civil liberties. Another often used standard for considering a country a democracy is the longevity of democratic practices. If a nation shows *consistent* democratic practices for a period of 40 years or so (a somewhat arbitrary number), then it may be declared a stable democracy. Mexico does not fit this description.

#### Linkage Institutions

Before the trend toward democratization took hold during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mexico's political parties, interest groups, and mass media all worked to link Mexican citizens to their government in significant ways. This linkage took place under the umbrella of PRI elite rulers so that a true, independent civil society did not exist. However as democratization began and civil society developed, the structures were

already in place, so that activating democracy was easier than it would have been otherwise.

### Political Parties

For most of the 20th century, Mexico was virtually a one-party state. Until 2000 all presidents belonged to PRI, as did most governors, representatives, senators, and other government officials. Over the past twenty years or so other parties have gained power, so that today competitive elections are a reality, at least in many parts of Mexico.

The three largest parties in Mexico today are PRI, PAN, and PRD.

#### *PRI*

The *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* was in power continuously from 1920 until 2000, when an opposition candidate finally won the presidency. PRI was founded as a coalition of elites who agreed to work out their conflicts through compromise rather than violence. By forming a political party that encompassed all political elites, they could agree to trade favors and pass power around from one cacique to another. The party traditionally was characterized by:

- **A corporatist structure** – Interest groups are woven into the structure of the party. The party has the ultimate authority, but other voices are heard by bringing interest groups under the broad umbrella of the party. This structure is not democratic, but it allowed input into the government from party-selected groups whose leaders often held cabinet positions when Mexico was a one-party state. Particularly since the Cardenas sexenio (1934-1940), peasant and labor organizations have been represented in the party and hold positions of responsibility, but these groups are carefully selected and controlled by the party.
- **Patron-client system** – The party traditionally gets its support from rural areas where the patron-client system is still in control. As long as Mexico remained rural-based, PRI had a solid, thorough organization that managed to garner overwhelming support. Until the election of 1988, there was no question that

the PRI candidate would be elected president, with 85-90% victories being normal.

PRI lost the presidency in 2000 to The National Action Party's Vicente Fox, and it trailed the other two major parties in the election of 2006. However, in the mid-term election of 2009, it picked up major support in the legislature and – by forming a coalition with a minor party – held a majority of seats in the lower house of the legislature. In 2012, PRI candidate Enrique Peña Nieto won the presidency, but PRI lost a significant number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

#### *PAN*

The National Action Party, or PAN, was founded in 1939, making it one of the oldest opposition parties. Although PAN provided little competition for PRI for many years, it began winning some gubernatorial elections in the north in the 1990s. It was created to represent business interests opposed to centralization and anti-clericism (PRI's practice of keeping the church out of politics.) PAN is strongest in the north, where the tradition of resisting direction from Mexico City is the strongest. Under Felipe Calderón's presidency, the party also gain support in the south, partly because Calderón, and Vicente Fox before him, expanded poverty assistance programs that helped indigenous people in the southern states.

PAN's platform includes:

- Regional autonomy
- Less government intervention in the economy
- Clean and fair elections
- Good rapport with the Catholic Church
- Support for private and religious education

PAN is usually considered to be PRI's opposition to the right. PAN's candidates won the presidency in 2000 and 2006, and between the 2006 and 2009 (mid-term) elections it had more deputies and senators in the legislature than any other party. Although Felipe Calderón



remained popular as president, the party experienced a major setback when it lost more than 60 seats in the lower house of the legislature in 2009, and 28 more seats in 2012. PAN's hold in the Senate increased slightly in 2012, with a gain of three seats (33 senators). The PAN candidate for president in 2012, Josefina Vásques Mota, came in third, gaining majorities in only four states.

### PRD

The Democratic Revolutionary Party, or PRD, is generally thought of as PRI's opposition on the left. Its presidential candidate in 1988 and 1994 was **Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas**, the son of Mexico's famous and revered president Lazaro Cárdenas. He was ejected from PRI for demanding reform that emphasized social justice and populism, and he responded by switching parties. In 1988 Cárdenas won 31.1% of the official vote, and PRD captured 139 seats in the Chamber of Deputies (out of 500). Many observers believe that if the election of 1988 had been honest, Cárdenas actually would have won.

PRD has been plagued by a number of problems that have weakened it since 1988. It has had trouble defining a left of center alternative to the market-oriented policies established by PRI. Their leaders have also been divided on issues, and have sometimes publicly quarreled. The party has been criticized for poor organization, and Cárdenas is not generally believed to have the same degree of charisma as did his famous father. PRD's standard-bearer has been **Andres Manuel López Obrador**, the popular mayor of Mexico City that barely lost the presidential elections in 2006 and 2012. However, Obrador's refusal to accept the results of the election of 2006 split PRD once again into factions – those that support Obrador and those that oppose him. The party made significant gains in the legislative elections of 2006, but the disarray after the election caused it to lose more than half its seats in the lower house in 2009. In 2012, the party regained some of those seats: 100 deputies, up from 69 in 2009. However, in 2015, it lost those gains, only winning 56 seats. Obrador lost the presidency of the party in 2008, and announced his resignation from the party in 2012. He has supported smaller parties on the left, including national Regeneration Movement (Morena) and Citizens' Movement.

### Elections

Citizens of Mexico directly elect their president, Chamber of Deputy representatives, and senators, as well as a host of state and local officials. Although the parties have overlapping constituencies, typical voter profiles are:

- PRI – small town or rural, less educated, older, poorer
- PAN – from the north, middle-class professional or business, urban, better educated (at least high school, some college), religious (or those less strict about separation of church and state); lost support in the 2012 presidential election to PRI
- PRD – younger, politically active, from the central states, some education, small town or urban; drew some middle-class and older voters in 2006; gained support in 2012 in southern states; strongest in Mexico City area

#### LINKAGE INSTITUTIONS IN MEXICO: POLITICAL PARTIES



Party to PRI's left;  
First won support during the late 1980s;  
Has had trouble defining a left of center alternative to the market-centered policies set by PRI;  
Appeals to the young, populists, some intellectuals; main strength is in the Mexico City area



Ruled as a one-party system from 1929 to the late 20th century;  
Corporatist structure that brought competing elites into the cabinet;  
Patron-client system that included most people in the country;  
Appeal to rural people, residents of southern Mexico; in 2012 presidential election, won broad support in the north



Party to PRI's right;  
PRI's oldest opposition party, created to represent business interests;  
Advocates regional autonomy, less government intervention in the economy;  
good rapport with the Catholic Church;  
Appeals to middle class, northerners, and those with higher levels of education



Elections in Mexico today tend to be most competitive in urban areas, but more competition in rural areas could be seen in the presidential and legislative elections of 2006 and 2012. Under PRI control, elections were typically fraudulent, with the patron-client system encouraging bribery and favor swapping. Since 1988, Mexico has been under pressure to have fairer elections. Part of the demands have come from a more urban, educated population, and some have come from international sources as Mexico has become more and more a part of world business, communication, and trade.

The elections of 2000 brought the PAN candidate, **Vicente Fox**, into the presidency. PAN captured 208 of the 500 deputies in the lower house (Chamber of Deputies), but PRI edged them out with 209 members. 46 of the 128 senators elected were from PAN, as opposed to 60 for PRI. The newly created competitive electoral system has encouraged coalitions to form to the left and right of PRI, and the split

in votes may be encouraging gridlock, a phenomenon unknown to Mexico under the old PRI-controlled governments.

### The Elections of 2006

When the votes were counted in the presidential election on July 2, 2006, PAN candidate Felipe Calderón and PRD candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador were virtually tied for the lead, with PRI candidate Roberto Madrazo trailing far behind. The official vote tally put Calderón ahead by about 230,000 votes, out of 41.5 million votes cast, about a half percentage point difference. Obrador challenged the results as fraudulent and demanded a recount. The election tribunal investigated his allegations, and for more than two months the election was held in the balance until the tribunal gave its report. In early August the tribunal ordered recounts on only about 9% of the precincts, not the full recount demanded by Obrador. In early September, the tribunal announced that the recount did not change the outcome, despite some errors in math and some cases of fraud. During the entire process Obrador held rallies for supporters, and he refused to accept the tribunal's decision, claiming that the election was "stolen" by a broad conspiracy between business leaders and the government. He encouraged his supporters to protest, and he claimed to be the legitimate president. Obrador's challenge drew strength from well established traditions from the political culture – populism and dissent among the elites – but by 2007 the crisis had passed.

The legislative elections of 2006 changed the power balance as PRI lost heavily in both houses, PAN received modest gains in the Chamber of Deputies, and PRD gained many seats in both houses.

### The Election of 2012

PRI's prospects for the 2012 presidential election were enhanced by the popularity of Enrique Peña Nieto, who stepped down from the governorship of Mexico State in 2011. PRI capitalized on a growing sense among voters that neither PAN nor PRD is any less corrupt than PRI, and many think that PRI is more able to deliver on political promises. About 30% of Mexican voters were younger than 18 when PRI lost power in 2000, so they do not remember some of the party's worst excesses when it dominated government and politics in Mexico.

COMPARATIVE PARTY SYSTEMS			
	BRITAIN	RUSSIA	MEXICO
Type of system	multi-party system	multi-party system	multi-party system
relationship to the legislature	2 parties dominate the legislature	1 party dominates the legislature	3 parties well-represented in the legislature.
relationship to the executive	1 party dominates the executive	1 party dominates the executive	unclear pattern, appears competitive
Types of parties	parties on the left, center, and right; regional parties relatively strong	parties of power common; party in the previous one-party system is still competitive.	parties on left and right; party in the previous one-party system is still competitive.

In 2012, the presidency was recaptured by PRI, with Peña Nieto winning with more than 38% of the vote. Andres Manuel López Obrador, the PRD candidate, came in second with less than 32% of the vote, and Josefina Vázquez Mota, the PAN candidate, was third with just over 25% of the vote. In the Senate, PRI gained two seats from 2006, but still held only 52 of the 128 seats. In the Chamber of Deputies, PRI lost 32 seats from 2009, as did PAN, with PRD and several minor parties making some significant gains. PRI also gained some gubernatorial seats, but the balance of power at the state level remained similar to the configuration before the election. The election of 2012 affirmed the fact that Mexico has developed a competitive multi-party electoral system, with PRI still playing an important, but not dominant, role in Mexican politics.

#### Mid-Term Election 2015

In the mid-term election of 2015, PRI took the largest portion of seats in the Chamber of Deputies but still held only a plurality, not a majority. PRI won 203 seats; PAN won 108 seats; and PRD won only 56 seats. Notably, minor parties collectively gained 133 seats, drawing support from voters who had previously supported PRD. Obrador's National Regeneration Movement (Morena) drew almost 8% of the vote, and the Ecologist Green Party and Citizens' Movement also drew a significant number of votes.

The mid-term election was also notable in that it allowed independent candidates to run for office for the first time. Independent Jamie "El Bronco" Rodríguez won the governorship of the wealthy northern state, Nuevo Leon. Other independents ran strong campaigns elsewhere in Mexico.

#### Electoral System

The president is elected through the "**first past the post**" (plurality) system with no run-off elections required. As a result, the current Mexican president, Enrique Peña Nieto, was elected with only a little more than a third of the total popular votes. Members of congress are elected through a dual system of "first-past-the-post" and **proportional representation**. Proportional representation was increased in a major reform law in 1986, a change that gave power to political par-

ties that have challenged PRI's control. Each of Mexico's 31 states elects three senators. Two of them are determined by plurality vote, and the third is determined by whichever party receives the second highest number of votes. Also, thirty-two Senate seats are determined nationally through a system of proportional representation that divides the seats according to the number of votes cast for each party. In the lower house (the Chamber of Deputies), 300 seats are determined by plurality within single-member districts, and 200 seats are chosen by proportional representation.

#### Interest Groups and Popular Movements

The Mexican government's corporatist structure generally responds pragmatically to the demands of interest groups through accommodation and co-optation. As a result, political tensions among major interests have rarely escalated into the kinds of serious conflict that can threaten stability. Where open conflict has occurred, it has generally been met with efforts to find a solution. Because private organizations have been linked for so long to the government, Mexico's development of a separate civil society has been slow.

In the past 30 years or so, business interests have networked with political leaders to protect the growth of commerce, finance, industry and agriculture. Under **state corporatism**, these business elites have become quite wealthy, but they were never incorporated into PRI. However, political leaders have listened to and responded to their demands. Labor has been similarly accommodated within the system. Wage levels for unionized workers grew fairly consistently between 1940 and 1982, when the economic crisis prompted by lower oil prices caused wages to drop. The power of union bosses is declining, partly because unions are weaker than in the past, and partly because union members are more independent. Today with PAN recently controlling the presidency, business interests may exhibit more characteristics of **neo-corporatism**, but there is no clear evidence that businesses are controlling the government.

One powerful interest group is the Educational Workers' Union, Latin America's largest trade union. It has long had the power to negotiate salaries for teachers each year, and many see it as a neo-corporatist

group that has a great deal of power over government decisions in education. In early 2013, Peña Nieto's government sent a message to the union when it arrested a powerful leader, Elba Esther Gordillo. Federal prosecutors charged her with the embezzlement of 2 billion pesos of union funds that she allegedly spent on designer clothes, art, property, and cosmetic surgery. The arrest came the day after Peña Nieto had signed into law an education reform designed to pry control of schools from the union. The government promised that teachers' jobs would no longer be for sale or inherited, and teachers who failed assessments would be fired.

In rural areas, peasant organizations have been encouraged by PRI, particularly through the *ejido* system that grants land from the Mexican government to the organizations themselves. Since the 1980s these groups have often demanded greater independence from the government, and have supported movements for better prices for crops and access to markets and credit. They have joined with other groups to promote better education, health services, and environmental protections.

Urban popular movements also abound in Mexico, with organizations concerned about social welfare spending, city services, neighborhood improvements, economic development, feminism, and professional identity. As these groups have strengthened and become more independent, the political system has had to negotiate and bargain with them, transforming the political culture and increasing the depth of civil society.

### The Media

As long as PRI monopolized government and politics in Mexico, the media had little power to criticize the government or to influence public opinion. The government rewarded newspapers, magazines, radio, and television stations that supported them with special favors, such as access to newsprint or airwaves. The government also subsidized the salaries of reporters, writers, and media personalities who strongly supported PRI initiatives. A considerable amount of revenue came from government-placed advertisements, so few media outlets could afford to openly criticize the government.

The media began to become more independent starting in the 1980s at the same time that PRI began losing its hold in other areas. Today there are several major television networks in the country, and many people have access to international newspapers and networks, such as CNN and BBC. Several news magazines now offer opinions of government initiatives, just as similar magazines do in the United States. One indication of freedom of the press came early in the Fox administration when the media publicized "Toallagate," a scandal involving the purchase of some significantly overpriced towels for the president's mansion. The Mexican press also criticized President Fox for his "*Comes y te vas*" (eat and leave) instructions to Fidel Castro after a United Nations gathering, so as not to offend U.S. President George W. Bush with Castro's presence. So, for better or for worse, Mexican citizens now have access to a much broader range of political opinions than they ever have had before.

During the presidential campaign in 2012, protests took place in Mexico City against alleged bias toward PRI and Peña Nieto in the print and television media, particularly Televisa, the largest multimedia company in North America. The movement, *Yo Soy 132* ("I am 132") formed, accusing Peña Nieto as the candidate of "corruption, tyranny and authoritarianism." Mass protests organized by university students then took place across the country, and the movement successfully demanded that, unlike the first presidential debate, the second debate be broadcast on national television.

Despite the changes, the media's independence from the government came into question in early 2015 when MVS Radio fired a popular host, Carmen Aristegui after she launched a series of critical attacks on the government. One controversial exposure was that President Peña Nieto's wife had bought a mansion with money loaned by one of the government's preferred contractors. Aristegui's firing raised the suspicion that the government put pressure on MVS Radio to get rid of her.

### GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

Mexico is a federal republic, though the state and local governments have little independent power and few resources. Historically the

executive branch with its strong presidency has had all the power, while the legislature and judiciary followed the executive's lead, rubber-stamping executive decisions. Though Mexico is democratic in name, traditionally the country has been authoritarian and corporatist. Since the 1980s, the government and its citizens have made significant changes, so that – more and more – Mexico is practicing democracy and federalism. An important consequence of growing party competition has been that state governors have become more willing to exercise their formal powers.

According to the Constitution of 1917, Mexican political institutions resemble those of the U.S. The three branches of government theoretically check and balance one another, and many public officials – including the president, both houses of the legislature, and governors – are directly elected by the people. In practice, however, the Mexican system is very different from that of the United States. The Mexican constitution is very long and easily amended, and the government can best be described as a strong presidential system.

### The Executive

A remarkable thing happened in the presidential election of 2000. The PRI candidate did not win. Instead, Vicente Fox, candidate for the combined PAN/PRD parties won with almost 43% of the vote. He edged out Francisco Labastida, the PRI candidate, who garnered not quite 36%. This election has far-reaching implications, since the structure of the government is built around the certainty that the PRI candidate will win. This election may have marked the decline of patron-clientelism and the beginning of a true democratic state. The election of Felipe Calderón in 2006 secured PAN's control of the presidency, but since he only received about 36% of the vote – only .5% more than PRD's Obrador – he had to build a coalition cabinet. In 2012, Enrique Peña Nieto recaptured the presidency for PRI, but only with 38% of the vote. Peña Nieto's cabinet is a mix of business-oriented technocrats and veteran PRI party insiders, but a few members are from outside the party. PRI failed to win a majority in either house of the legislature.

Since the formation of PRI, policymaking in Mexico had centered on the presidency. The president – through the patron-client system – was virtually a dictator for his **sexenio**, a non-renewable six-year term. The incumbent always selected his successor, appointed officials to all positions of power in the government and PRI, and named PRI candidates for governors, senators, deputies, and local officials. Until the mid 1970s, Mexican presidents were considered above criticism, and people revered them as symbols of national progress and well-being. As head of PRI, the president managed a huge patronage system and controlled a rubber-stamp Congress. The president almost always was a member of the preceding president's cabinet. Despite recent changes, the Mexican president remains very powerful.

During his sexenio, Vicente Fox had to manage Mexico without the supporting patron-client system of PRI behind him. His predecessor, Ernesto Zedillo, had responded to pressure to democratize by relinquishing a number of the traditional powers of the presidency. For example, Zedillo announced that he would not name his PRI successor (the candidate in 2000), but that the party would make the decision. Even so, President Fox inherited a job that most people still saw as all-powerful, and they often blamed him for failing to enact many of his promised programs, despite the fact that he did not have a strong party in Congress or many experienced people in government. Although PRI won the presidency in 2012, no single party has a majority in the legislature, and Mexico's evolution of a multi-party system continues, a trend that impacts the president's ability to control policymaking.

### The Bureaucracy

Almost 1 1/2 million people work in the federal bureaucracy, most of them in Mexico City. More government employees staff the schools, state-owned industries, and semi-autonomous agencies of government, and hundreds of thousands of bureaucrats fill positions in state and local governments.

Officials are generally paid very little, but those at high and middle levels have a great deal of power. Under PRI control, all were tied to the patron-client system and often accepted bribes and used insider information to promote private business deals.

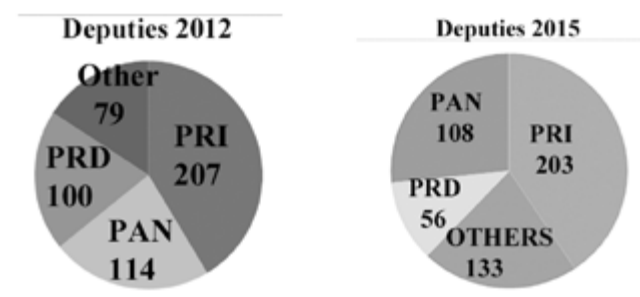
Under PRI, the **para-statal** sector – composed of semiautonomous or autonomous government agencies – was huge. These companies often produce goods and services that in other countries are carried out by private individuals, and the Mexican government owned many of them. The best-known para-statal is PEMEX, the giant state-owned petroleum company. After the oil bust of the early 1980s, reforms eliminated many para-statals, and the number has continued to dwindle, so that many of them are now privately owned. President Fox pushed for privatization of PEMEX, but did not succeed, and President Enrique Peña Nieto has proposed significant reforms that would effect the operation of the energy giant and its relationship to the government.

### The Legislature

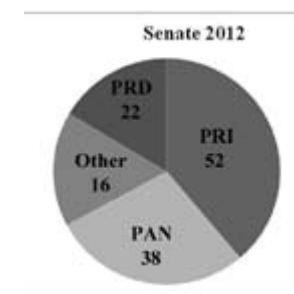
The Mexican legislature is bicameral, with a 500-member **Chamber of Deputies** and a 128-member **Senate**. All legislators are directly elected: deputies have three-year terms and senators have six-year terms. Like the Russian Duma until 2007, the Chamber of Deputies includes some deputies (300) who are elected from **single-member districts**, and others (200) who are elected by **proportional representation**. Unlike the Russian upper house – the Federation Council, which is filled with appointed representatives – the Mexican Senate is also directly elected by a combination of the electoral methods: three senators are elected from each of 31 states and the federal district (Mexico City), with the remaining senators selected by proportional representation. Although legislative procedures look very similar to those of the United States, until the 1980s the legislature remained under the president's strict control.

PRI's grip on the legislature slipped earlier than it did on the presidency. The growing strength of opposition parties, combined with legislation that provided for greater representation of minority parties (proportional representation) in Congress, led to the election of 240 opposition deputies in 1988. After that, presidential programs were no longer rubber-stamped, but were open to real debate for the first time. President Salinas's reform programs, then, were slowed down, and for the first time, the Mexican government experienced some gridlock. In

1997, PRI lost a majority in the Chamber of Deputies when 261 deputies were elected from opposition parties. The election of 2000 gave PRI a bare plurality – but far from a majority – in both houses. In the election of 2003, the pattern held, with voters selecting 224 PRI deputies, to 149 for PAN and 97 for PRD. In the election of 2006, PRI's support slipped in both houses, PAN gained some seats in the Chamber of Deputies, and PRD made big gains in both houses. In the 2009 mid-term elections – with only deputies up for election – PRI again gained control of the lower house, but only could muster a majority by forming a coalition with the minority Green Party. In 2012, PRI's representation in the Chamber of Deputies slipped by 32 seats, and in the Senate, the party gained two, resulting in 52 seats out of 128. In 2015, PRI won 203 seats, a slight loss, but PRD slipped from 100 to 56 seats. Minor parties collectively won 133 seats, a notable increase from 79.



**Mexican Legislative (Lower House) Elections in 2012 and 2015.** PRI and PAN lost a few seats in 2015, but PRD had the biggest loss. Minor parties gained a significant number of seats, many at the expense of PRD.



**The Mexican Senate.** Senators are elected every six years, so the current Senate was elected in 2012.

The developing multi-party system also encouraged the implementation in 2002 of an election law that required political parties to sponsor women candidates. Parties must run at least 30% women for both lists for the proportional representation election, as well as candidates for the single-member districts/states. In an effort to regain some of its lost clout, PRI has exceeded the requirements by instituting a 50% quota for its candidates. A minor party – Social-Democrats and Farmers – ran Patricia Mercado in 2006 for the presidency, and in 2012, PAN's candidate was Josefina Vásquez Mota, who came in third, with just over 25% of the vote.

As a competitive multiparty system begins to emerge, the Mexican Congress has become a more important forum for various points of view. Competitive elections are the rule in many locales, and the number of “safe seats” is declining. The legislature has challenged recent presidents on a number of occasions, but whether or not a true system of checks and balances is developing is still unclear.

### Judiciary

A strong judicial branch is essential if a country is to be ruled by law, not by the whim of a dictator. Mexico does not yet have an independent judiciary, nor does it have a system of judicial review. Like most other non-English speaking countries, it follows code law, not common law (see p. 29). Even though the Constitution of 1917 is still in effect, it is easily amended and does not have the same level of legitimacy as the U.S. Constitution does.

Mexico has both federal and state courts, but because most laws are federal, state courts have played a subordinate role. If states continue to become more independent from the central government, the state courts almost certainly will come to play a larger role.

The **Supreme Court** is the highest federal court, and on paper it has judicial review, but in reality, it almost never overrules an important government action or policy. Historically, then, the courts have been controlled by the executive branch, most specifically the president. As in the United States, judges are officially appointed for life. In practice, judges resign at the beginning of each sexenio, allowing the

incoming president to place his loyalists on the bench as well as in the state houses, bureaucratic offices, and party headquarters.

The administration of **Ernesto Zedillo** (1994-2000) tried to strengthen the courts by emphasizing the rule of law. Increasing interest in human rights issues by citizens' groups and the media has put pressure on the courts to play a stronger role in protecting basic freedoms. Citizens and the government are increasingly resorting to the courts as a primary weapon against corruption, drugs, and police abuse. President Zedillo often refused to interfere with the courts' judgments, and Vicente Fox promised to work for an independent judiciary, although the results were disappointing to many people.

The strength of the judiciary is limited by the general perception that judges are corrupt, especially at the local level, where many decisions are made. In areas of Mexico where drug wars currently rage, many judges are afraid to rule against gang leaders for fear of reprisal, and others almost certainly are bribed into compliance. As part of a Calderón reform package, federal and state courts conducted oral trials, in which lawyers have to argue before the bench rather than simply push papers across a clerk's desk. It is hoped that the change will improve methods of gathering and presenting evidence in court. Calderón also pushed through a change in the criminal appeals system that makes it harder for the accused to frivolously block or delay prosecutions. In 2011, the president stated that his long-term goal is for “judicial institutions that Mexico has too long lacked and without which the advance of criminals is understandable – and a future for Mexico is incomprehensible.”

In 2013, President Peña Nieto announced plans to add a constitutional amendment to permit Congress to pass a uniform procedures code and a new General Criminal Law, abolishing 31 state codes. This may be difficult, since several previous presidents have tried and failed to unify the criminal codes. For example, Mexico City allows abortion, but it is a crime in most states.

### Military

Military generals dominated Mexican politics throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The military presided over the

chaos, violence, and bloodshed of the era following the Revolution of 1910, and it was the competitiveness of its generals that caused PRI to dramatically cut back the military's political power. Although all presidents of Mexico were generals until the 1940s, they still acted to separate the military from politics. Even critics of PRI admit that gaining government control of the military is one of the party's most important accomplishments. Over the past fifty years, the military has developed into a relatively disciplined force with a professional officer corps.

Much credit for de-politicizing the military belongs to Plutarco Calles and Lazaro Cardenas, who introduced the idea of rotating the generals' regional commands. By moving generals from one part of the country to another, the government kept them from building regional bases of power. And true to the old patron-client system, presidents traded

favours with military officers – such as business opportunities – so that generals could enjoy economic, if not political power.


The tendency to dole out favors to the military almost certainly has led to the existence of strong ties between military officers and the drug trade. In recent years, the military has been heavily involved in efforts to combat drug trafficking, and rumors abound about deals struck between military officials and drug barons. In 2009, Calderón created an entirely new police force that formed part of Mexico's first national crime information system, which stores the fingerprints of everyone arrested in the country. This force has assumed the role of the army in several parts of the country. The federal police enjoy greater public confidence than do state and local police, and President Peña Nieto has promised to draft 40,000 soldiers to serve on the federal police force.

### POLICIES AND ISSUES

Mexican government and politics has changed dramatically since the 1980s. Today Mexico has taken serious steps toward becoming a democracy, but the economy that had shown signs of improvement since the collapse of 1982 took a nosedive after the global economic crisis in 2008. The country is trying to move from regional vulnerability to global reliability, but those connections to other parts of the world made the Mexican economy responsive to the contraction of the U.S. economy. Stubborn problems remain, both economic and political. PRI has been entangled with the government so long that creating branches that operate independently is a huge task. The gap between the rich and poor is still wide in Mexico, despite the growth of the middle class in the north. President Peña Nieto faces a big challenge in shaping Mexico's relationship with the United States and in controlling violence associated with the drug trade. How does Mexico retain the benefits of trade and cooperation with its neighbor to the north, and yet steer its own independent course?

### The Economy

Mexico's economic development has had a significant impact on social conditions in the country. Overall, despite the economic downturn of 2008, the standard of living has improved greatly since the

 <b>GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN MEXICO</b>		
<b>EXECUTIVE BRANCH</b> First non-PRI president elected in 2000, also in 2006 President still has a great deal of power through informal political ties Large, poorly paid bureaucracy, susceptible to bribes	<b>LEGISLATIVE BRANCH</b> Chamber of Deputies (500 members) Senate (128 members) Deputies and senators come from all three major political parties Number of women legislators has increased since 2002 implementation of law that requires parties to sponsor women candidates.	<b>JUDICIAL BRANCH</b> The Supreme Court is the highest court, and on paper has judicial review. Traditionally judges have been controlled by the president, resigning at the end of each sexenio. In recent years, attempts have been made to strengthen, but judges still are seen as corrupt.



1940s. Rates of infant mortality, literacy, and life expectancy have steadily improved. Health and education services have expanded, despite severe cutbacks after the economic crisis of 1982 and again in 2008.

### “The Mexican Miracle”

Between 1940 and 1960 Mexico's economy grew as a whole by more than 6% a year. Industrial production rose even faster, averaging nearly 9% for most of the 1960s. Agriculture's share of total production dropped from 25% to 11%, while that of manufacturing rose from 25% to 34%. All this growth occurred without much of the inflation that has plagued many other Latin American economies, but it meant that large numbers of people have moved from rural to urban areas, creating new urban issues.

### Problems

- **A growing gap between the rich and the poor** was a major consequence of rapid economic growth. Relatively little attention was paid to the issues of equality and social justice that historically had led to revolutions in the first place. Social services programs were limited at best. From 1940 to 1980, Mexico's income distribution was among the most unequal of all the LDCs, with the bottom 40% of the population never earning more than 11% of total wages. Today inequality has lessened slightly, but it is still an important issue.
- **Rapid and unplanned urbanization** accompanied the growth. In recent years, millions have migrated to cities, and as a result, the Federal District, Guadalajara, and other major cities became urban nightmares, with many people living in huge shantytowns with no electricity, running water, or sewers. Poor highway planning and no mass transit means that traffic congestion is among the worst in the world. Pollution from cars and factories make Mexico City's air so dirty that it is unsafe to breathe.

### The Crisis

In its effort to industrialize, the Mexican government borrowed heavily against expectations that oil prices would remain high forever. Much of the rapid growth was based on oil, especially since Mexico's production began increasing just as that of OPEC countries was decreasing during the early 1970s. When the price of oil plummeted in 1982, so did Mexico's economy. By 1987, Mexico's debt was over \$107 billion, making it one of the most heavily indebted countries in the world. The debt represented 70% of Mexico's entire GNP.

### Reform

President Miguel de la Madrid began his sexenio in 1982 with all of these economic problems before him. He began a dramatic reform program that reflected the values of the new *tecnico* leaders. This program continued through the presidencies of Salinas and Zedillo, and it brought about one of the most dramatic economic turnarounds in modern history.

- **Sharp cuts in government spending** – According to agreements with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the U.S. government, and private banks, Mexico began an austerity plan that greatly reduced government spending. Hundreds of thousands of jobs were cut, subsidies to government agencies were slashed, and hundreds of public enterprises were eliminated.
- **Debt reduction** – Debt still continues to plague Mexico, although the U.S. spearheaded a multinational plan to reduce interest rates on loans and allow more generous terms for their repayment. Mexico still pays an average of about \$10 billion a year in interest payments.
- **Privatization** – In order to allow market forces to drive the Mexican economy, Madrid's government decided to give up much of its economic power. Most importantly, the government privatized many public enterprises, especially those that were costing public money. President Salinas returned the banks to the private sector in 1990. By the late 1980s a “mini



Silicon Valley” was emerging in Guadalajara where IBM, Hewlett-Packard, Wang, and other tech firms set up factories and headquarters. Special laws – like duty-free importing of components – and cheap labor encouraged U.S. companies to invest in Mexican plants.

Today, Mexico’s economy has diversified significantly, and is not as dependent on oil production. Still, the problems persist today, particularly those of income inequality, urban planning, and pollution. As a businessman, Vicente Fox made a campaign promise to oversee a 7% annual growth in the Mexican economy during his sexenio, but his hopes fell short. Between 2001 and 2003, Mexico’s economic slowdown can be partially explained by the U.S. recession after the September 11 attacks. In 2004, the economy grew by 4.1%, but an estimated 40% of the Mexican population was still below the poverty line, despite some new initiatives by the government to provide benefits and pensions for those not covered by jobs in the formal economy.

#### Energy Reform and the Economic Crisis of 2008

When Felipe Calderón became president in 2006, oil production in Mexico was falling off, largely because little exploration for new oil fields had taken place for decades. PEMEX was a large, inefficient para-statal that provided almost 40% of the budget, but its technical capabilities had atrophied. President Fox had tried to privatize PEMEX, but had met with too much resistance, so Calderón tried another approach. In early 2008, he announced a reform to give PEMEX greater budgetary autonomy and strengthen government regulations on the oil industry. However, his plan also enabled private contracting of refining, and would allow PEMEX to hire private contractors for the distribution and storage of refined products. The reform included a large bond issue to raise money for two new refineries. His plan met opposition in the legislature, especially from PRD, whose leaders accused Calderón of privatizing PEMEX. However, the president’s plans were foiled by an even deeper problem: the effects of the global economic crisis of 2008.

By early 2009, the Mexican economy was shrinking quickly, with experts estimating the rate at 5.9% reduction during the first quarter of

2009, four times the predicted fall in Latin America as a whole. The main cause was the nation’s close integration with the United States, since exports across the Rio Grande River are equivalent to a fifth of Mexico’s GDP. These exports fell by 36% in 2008 as demand from the U.S. dried up. U.S. investors also froze their operations in Mexico as they tried to resuscitate their businesses at home, which in turn caused a depreciation of the Mexican peso. The recent explosive growth of Brazil has led the Inter-American Development Bank, the biggest lender in the region, to describe a “two speed” Latin America, in which economies, such as Mexico, which do most of their trade with developed countries, lag behind those, such as Brazil, that have forged links with emerging markets. Whereas Brazil sent 16% of its exports in 2009 to fellow BRICs (Russia, India, and China), only 3% of Mexico’s exports went to the BRICs. Once again, Mexico has found that events to the north dictate the country’s economic development, keeping it from charting the independent course so necessary for its prosperity.

During the 2012 election campaign, Enrique Peña Nieto promised to reform PEMEX, not to privatize it, but to allow joint ventures with private firms. PRD has vowed to keep PEMEX’s monopoly intact, and Obrador prepared to take his populist battle against energy reform to the streets. In recent years, PEMEX has been plagued by deficits and two explosions in 2013, one of which claimed 37 lives. In late 2014, the government began the process of inviting private oil companies to bid for new oil exploration blocks. The government hopes that foreign and private companies will team up with PEMEX, increasing private energy investments in Mexico.

#### Telecommunications Reform

In June 2013, Peña Nieto signed into law a far-reaching reform of the telecommunications and broadcast industries that aimed to curb the market power of big companies in order to increase competition and investment in the industries. The law created a new regulatory body, Ifetel, which has the power to regulate and even force dominant players to sell assets. According to the Wall Street Journal, the company expected to be the most affected by new regulations is America Movil, which is controlled by billionaire Carlos Slim, and has 70% of the

country's wireless customers and more than 70% of the fixed phone lines. Televisa SAB, which controls close to 70% of the broadcast television market, and TV Azteca SAB, which has around 30%, faced competition from two new planned digital networks.

### Foreign Policy

The crisis that began in 1982 clearly indicated that a policy of encouraging more Mexican exports and opening markets to foreign goods was essential. In the years after 1982 the government relaxed restrictions on foreign ownership of property and reduced and eliminated tariffs. The government courted foreign investment and encouraged Mexican private industry to produce goods for export. Mexico's foreign policy is still more concerned with the United States than with any other country, but in recent years Mexican leaders have asserted themselves in international forums, such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization.

### *Maquiladora*

A manufacturing zone was created in the 1960s in northern Mexico just south of the border with the United States. Workers in this *maquiladora* district have produced goods primarily for consumers in the U.S., and a number of U.S. companies have established plants in the zone to transform imported, duty-free components or raw materials into finished industrial products. Industrialization of the zone was promoted by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a treaty signed in 1995 by Mexico, the United States, and Canada, that eliminated barriers to free trade among the three countries. Today hundreds of thousands of workers are employed in the *maquiladora* district, accounting for over 20% of Mexico's entire industrial labor force. U.S. companies have been criticized for avoiding employment and environmental regulations imposed within the borders of the U.S., hiring young women for low pay and no benefits who work in buildings that are environmentally questionable.

### Trade Agreements

Since the mid-1980s, Mexico has entered into many trade agreements and organizations in order to globalize its economy and pay its way out of debt:



**The Maquiladoras District.** This industrial zone exists right along the Mexican border with the United States.

- **GATT/WTO** – In 1986, Mexico joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), a multilateral agreement that attempts to promote freer trade among countries. The World Trade Organization was created from this agreement, and Mexico has been an active member of the WTO. Under WTO agreements, Mexico has expanded the diversity of its exports beyond oil, and has developed new trade relationships with countries other than the United States.
- **NAFTA** – The North American Free Trade Agreement was signed by Mexico, Canada, and the United States. Its goal is to more closely integrate the economies by eliminating tariffs and reducing restrictions so that companies can expand into all countries freely. Mexico hopes to stimulate its overall growth, enrich its big business community, and supply jobs for Mexicans in new industries. U.S. firms gain from access to inexpensive labor, raw materials, and tourism, as well as new markets to sell and invest in. Mexico runs the risk of again being over-

shadowed by the United States, but hopes that benefits will outweigh problems. Presidents Fox and Calderón generally supported freer flow of labor and goods between Mexico and its northern neighbors, but the issue of road transport turned into a political battle between the two countries. American truck drivers lobbied the U.S. Congress to ban Mexican trucks from crossing into the U.S., claiming that these trucks are unsafe and the drivers insufficiently trained. In 2007 the Bush administration set up a pilot program to allow a limited number of Mexican trucks to enter, and Calderón's government reacted strongly when the pilot program was rescinded by the Obama administration. In 2011, an agreement that allowed Mexican trucks to cross into the U.S. was finally reached.

### Immigration Policy

Unlike the agreement among member nations of the European Union, the NAFTA agreement currently does not allow free flow of labor across borders. Early in his term, Vicente Fox pushed hard to solve tensions between the United States and Mexico regarding immigration policy. Fox proposed a bold immigration initiative that included a guest worker program, amnesty for illegal immigrants, an increase in visas issued, and movement to an eventual open border. The plan would have allowed Mexicans to work legally in the U.S., while amnesty for illegal immigrants would have eventually offered a green card as well as legal citizenship to over three million undocumented Mexicans living in the U.S. In exchange, Fox pledged to tighten the Mexican border to prevent additional illegal immigration. President George W. Bush responded positively to Fox's initiatives, but the plan fell through after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States. President Bush reevaluated the security risks involved with Fox's plan, and the whole thing unraveled within weeks, and only recently came to life again.

In 2014, after Congress took no action on immigration policy, U.S. President Barack Obama announced by executive order that his administration would provide up to four million undocumented immigrants the ability to live and work in the U.S. without fear of deportation. However, a conservative legal campaign blocked the president's

actions while judges considered their legality. The delay has held up the implementation of the plan, and it appears as if Obama will leave office before the courts rule.

Another immigration issue has to do with the route that Central American migrants take through Mexico on their way to the United States. In 2014, Mexican authorities began cracking down on those following "La Bestia" (the Beast), a train route that goes through Mexico south to north. The plan included replacing large stretches of track so that trains go faster, making them harder for migrants to board.

### Drug Trafficking

Drug trafficking between Mexico and the United States has been a major problem for both countries for many years. The drug trade has spawned corruption within the Mexican government, so that officials have often been bribed to look the other way or even actively participate in the trade. The depth of drug-related problems was evident in early 2005, when the government staged a raid on its own maximum-security prison, *La Palma*, in an effort to regain control of the prison from drug lords who had engineered the murder of a prominent fellow inmate. Fox vowed to stamp out the corruption and some major arrests were made, but the problem remained far from resolved at the end of his sexenio.

When Felipe Calderón took office he stepped up the war on drugs, sending troops and federal agents into areas where gangs control local officials. He also promised to remake the nation's police departments, root out corrupt officers, and support legislation that makes it possible for the local police to investigate drug rings. The immediate reaction has been one of the worst waves of drug-related violence ever. The number of brutal murders, often of policemen, has increased significantly. One cause of the violence is a fierce competition between competing drug rings that want exclusive control of very lucrative smuggling routes between Mexico and the United States.

Calderón reacted to these problems by turning to the army, sending thousands of troops to patrol the streets in the most troubled cities. It was supposed to be an emergency measure, but the troops have re-

mained, and some have criticized them for brutality against ordinary citizens. In May 2008 the violence reached a fevered pitch after Mexico's police chief was gunned down as he arrived home late at night. Other top officials have also been assassinated, including the police second-in-command in the border town of Juárez and a top policeman from Mexico City. This targeting of senior law-enforcement officials is unprecedented in Mexican history. U.S. President Bush pushed for government assistance to Mexico to fight the drug wars, but the funding became bogged down in the U.S. Congress. On a visit to Mexico in early 2009, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton frankly admitted that America's "insatiable demand for illegal drugs fuels the drug trade" and that "our inability to prevent weapons from being illegally smuggled across the border to arm these criminals causes the deaths of police officers, soldiers, and civilians" in Mexico. She promised Black Hawk helicopters for the Mexican police, but funding for them was cut by the U.S. Congress.

By 2011, the U.S. widened its role by sending new C.I.A. operatives and retired military personnel to a military base in Mexico, where security officials from both countries work side by side in collecting information about drug cartels and helping plan operations. In another operation, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and a Mexican counter-narcotics police unit collaborated on an operation that led to the arrest of a prominent drug trafficker. However, in 2010 the murder rate in Mexico was 17 per 100,000 people, up more than two-thirds from 2007. The fighting was concentrated in a few areas, most notably in Ciudad Juárez, a center of *maquila* factories just across the border from El Paso, Texas. There the murder rate had climbed to one of the highest in the world as two cartels battle for control of the border crossing. Since 2010, many drug lords have been killed or arrested, and in 2012, the national murder rate fell for the first time since 2008. President Peña Nieto vowed to reduce it by half during his six-year tenure.

After taking office in December 2012, President Peña Nieto moved to end the widespread access that U.S. security agencies had in Mexico to tackle the violence that affects both sides of the border. Since then U.S. law enforcement has had to go through Mexico's federal Interior Ministry, the agency that controls security and domestic policy.

Despite these efforts, a tragedy occurred in 2014 with the disappearance of 43 students in the southwestern state of Guerrero. The Mexican attorney-general's office held that the students had been handed over by local police to a drug gang, which killed them, apparently because they believed the students were members of a rival gang. The government's report was disputed, and as of late 2015, the murders were still under investigation.

### **Ethnic Rebellions**

In his first year in office, Fox made several efforts to negotiate with the **Zapatistas** to settle their dispute with the government. The **EZLN** (Zapatista National Liberation Front) began in 1994 in the southern state of Chiapas in protest to the signing of the NAFTA treaty. Zapatistas saw the agreement as a continuation of the exploitation of voracious landowners and corrupt PRI bosses. Their army captured four towns, including a popular tourist destination, and they demanded jobs, land, housing, food, health, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace. Their rebellion spread, and Zapatista supporters wear black ski masks to hide their identity from the government. Today the rebellion is technically still on, but has quieted down considerably.

The Zapatista rebellion was based on ethnicity – the Amerindian disaffection for the mestizo, urban-based government. It has since spread to other areas and ethnicities, and it represents a major threat to Mexico's political stability. The 2006 uprising in Oaxaca is another indication that hostilities toward the rich and the government are still quite strong in the south, particularly toward PRI leaders.

### **Democracy and Electoral Reform**

Part of the answer to Mexico's economic and foreign policy woes lies in the development of democratic traditions within the political system. Mexico's tradition of authoritarianism works against democratization, but modernization of the economy, the political value of populism, and democratic revolutionary impulses work for it. One of the most important indications of democracy is the development of competitive, clean elections in many parts of the country. The Mexi-

can political system went through a series of reforms during the 1990s that solidly directed the country toward democracy.

The **IFE (Instituto Federal Electoral)** was created as an independent regulatory body to safeguard honest and accurate election results. Although it was dominated by PRI in its early years, in recent elections it appears to be operating as it should. Some election reforms include:

- Campaign finance restrictions – laws that limit contributions to campaigns
- Critical media coverage, as media is less under PRI control
- International watch teams, as Mexico has tried to convince other countries that elections are fair and competitive
- Election monitoring by opposition party members

The 1994 campaign for the presidency got off to a very bad start when PRI candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio was assassinated in Tijuana. PRI quickly replaced him with Ernesto Zedillo, but the old specters of violence and chaos threatened the political order. The incumbent president's brother was implicated in the assassination, and high officials were linked to drug trafficking. Despite this trouble, Zedillo stepped up to the challenge, and PRI won the election handily. Many observers believe that the elections of 1994 and 2000 have been the most competitive, fair elections in Mexico's history. The election of 2000 broke all precedents when a PAN candidate – Vicente Fox – won the presidency, finally displacing the 71-year dominance of PRI.

The controversial election of 2006 was clearly competitive, but it also threatened to tear the fragile base of democracy apart. Obrador questioned the very legitimacy of the process, and the strong support he received from his followers is evidence that instability is still a part of the Mexican political system. However, the fact that the election tribunal followed the process set by law is a step toward becoming a liberal democracy. Members of Obrador's own party – the PRD – eventually came to criticize him for his behavior. Even more significant is the eventual acceptance by most Mexican citizens of its decisions, evidence that the country successfully passed through the crisis.

During the 2013 state and local election campaigns, violence broke out that resulted in the death of six candidates, with another wounded and numerous assaults of family members and party and campaign officials. The violence was an embarrassment for Peña Nieto's new government, and opposition leaders called on the president to put the army in the streets in some states to protect voting procedures and voters. Most of the killings took place in small towns, which are less protected and more vulnerable to actions by drug and organized-crime groups. Whereas the motives for the killings are murky, they continue Mexico's tradition of violence associated with political campaigns.

In his first full day of office in December 2012, President Peña Nieto unveiled a “**Pact for Mexico**” of 95 loosely defined proposals, signed by the leaders of all three main parties. Although many political leaders, particularly PRD officials, oppose the president, he expressed the hope that all parties could work together to solve Mexico's problems. Peña Nieto's cabinet consists of PRI technocrats and party stalwarts, but also includes PAN finance officials and one former leader of PRD. These moves indicate that Mexico is maintaining its competitive party system, despite PRI's return to the presidency.

What will the future bring? Will Mexico be able to sustain a strong, stable economy? Has the political system fully emerge from its peasant-based patron-client system and authoritarianism as a modern democracy? Will more social equality be granted to peasants and city workers? Many observers await the answers to these questions, including people in less developed countries that look to Mexico as an example for development. More powerful countries – particularly the United States – realize that international global politics and economies are tied to the successes of countries like Mexico. Despite the instabilities of its past, Mexico does have strong traditions, a well-developed sense of national pride, many natural resources, and a record of progress, no matter how uneven.

## IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Amerindians  
Calderón, Felipe  
camarillas

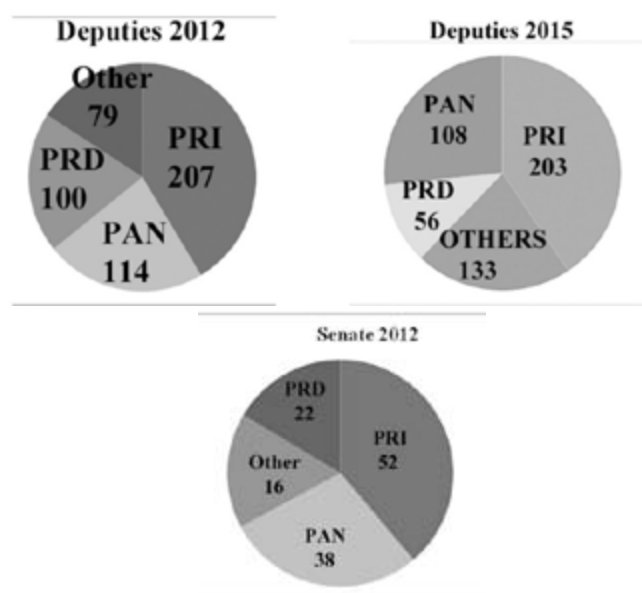
Chamber of Deputies, Senate  
 co-optation  
 Cardenas, Cuauhtemoc  
 Cardenas, Lazaro  
 caudillos  
 Chiapas rebellion  
 corporatism (state and neo)  
 Cristeros Rebellion  
 dependency  
 Diaz, Porfirio  
*ejidos*  
 election reform (in Mexico)  
 EZLN  
 Father Hidalgo  
 Federal Election Commission  
 Fox, Vicente  
 GATT  
 GNP per capita  
 HDI  
 IFE  
 import substitution  
 Juarez, Benito  
 mestizos  
 "Mexican Miracle"  
 NAFTA  
 neoliberalism  
 Obrador, Andres Manuel Lopez  
 para-statal  
 patron-client system  
 PEMEX  
 pendulum theory  
 plurality (first past the post)/proportional representation electoral  
 systems  
 Pact for Mexico  
 PAN  
*politicos*  
 Porfiriato  
 PPP

PRD  
 PRI  
 proportional representation in Mexico  
 Santa Anna  
 sexenio  
*technicos*  
 Villa, Pancho  
 WTO  
 Zapata, Emiliano  
 Zapatistas  
 Zedilla, Ernesto

### Mexico Questions

1. According to dependency theory, less developed countries
  - A) should follow the western model of economic development
  - B) are blocked by the fact that industrialized countries exploit them
  - C) must devalue old traditions
  - D) control the corruption of their leaders
  - E) should mix their economies with some elements of capitalism and some of socialism
2. A “hybrid regime” is one that
  - A) mixes capitalism and socialism
  - B) is in danger of political and economic collapse
  - C) has some characteristics of a democracy and some characteristics of an authoritarian regime
  - D) has an even mix of workers in the primary and industrial sectors
  - E) has a mid-range comparative per capita PPP

(Questions 3 and 4 refer to the charts below):



3. Which of the following is an accurate description of an important change between 2012 and 2015 in the Chamber of Deputies that is reflected in the charts on the opposite page?
  - A) PAN gained a significant number of seats.
  - B) PRI lost a significant number of seats.
  - C) PRD lost a significant number of seats.
  - D) PRI gained a majority in the house.
  - E) “Other” parties lost a significant number of seats.
4. Which of the following statements about the Mexican political system do the charts support?
  - A) PRI is on its way to controlling the political system as it did during most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
  - B) The Chamber of Deputies is dysfunctional because no party holds a majority of seats.
  - C) The Chamber of Deputies reflects a multiparty system whereas the Senate does not.
  - D) The trend away from a one party system toward a multiparty system is still in place.
  - E) The same party that holds the presidency also controls the Chamber of Deputies.
5. Since the 1980s, both Mexico and China have experienced significant
  - A) privatization of the economy
  - B) political revolutions
  - C) liberalization of the political system
  - D) progress in containing pollution and other environmental problems
  - E) regime changes

6. In comparison to government bureaucrats in Mexico, government bureaucrats in Britain

- A) have much more discretionary power
- B) are generally more corrupt
- C) must bow to the will of cabinet members
- D) are less likely to stay in their jobs when a new cabinet is formed
- E) are more likely to run for elected office after several years of service

7. In China, and Mexico, clientelism is almost always accompanied by

- A) corruption
- B) privatization of the economy
- C) growth of the GNP
- D) neo-corporatism
- E) higher HDI scores

Questions 8 and 9 are based on the following chart:

<b>COMPARATIVE ECONOMIC SECTORS</b> (as percentage of labor force by occupation)			
<b>Country</b>	<b>Primary (Agriculture)</b>	<b>Secondary (Industry)</b>	<b>Tertiary (Services)</b>
<b>China</b>	<b>33.6%</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>36.1%</b>
<b>Iran</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>35.1%</b>	<b>48.6%</b>
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>13.4%</b>	<b>24.1%</b>	<b>61.9%</b>
<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Russia</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>27.8%</b>	<b>62.5%</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>15.2%</b>	<b>83.5%</b>

8. According to the chart on the opposite page, the best example of a post-industrial country is

- A) China
- B) Mexico
- C) Nigeria
- D) Russia
- E) the United Kingdom

9. According to the chart, the least industrialized country is

- A) China
- B) Iran
- C) Mexico
- D) Nigeria
- E) Russia

10. An important similarity between the Revolution of 1910 in Mexico and the Revolution of 1911 in China was that both revolutions

- A) were led by Communists
- B) were led by populists
- C) resulted in years of chaos
- D) quickly resulted in a one-party state
- E) involved conflict with the Catholic Church

11. One reason that it is difficult to categorize Mexico as a liberal democracy is that

- A) little political liberalization has taken place
- B) little economic liberalization has taken place
- C) no competitive party system exists
- D) elections are as corrupt as they were when PRI dominated the country
- E) consistent democratic practices are relatively new, only dating back to about 1988



12. Both Mexico and Russia have political systems characterized by

- A) a federalist structure
- B) post-industrialism
- C) high levels of transparency
- D) democratic consolidation
- E) parliamentary structure

13. Like the Federation Council in Russia, the Senate in Mexico is primarily intended to represent

- A) different ethnicities
- B) urban areas
- C) different regions
- D) rural areas
- E) lower social classes

14. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of Chinese and Mexican judicial systems?

- A) The Mexican Constitution provides for judicial review; the Chinese Constitution does not.
- B) Both systems have judicial review, but both are characterized by corruption.
- C) In China, the president dominates the judiciary; in Mexico, the president does not.
- D) Neither judicial system has a Supreme Court.
- E) In China, the judiciary has the power to overturn legislation; in Mexico, it does not.

15. Which of the following is the most reliable indication that a country is a “failed state”?

- A) a low GNP
- B) government corruption
- C) a civil war
- D) persistent anarchy
- E) an authoritarian government

16. Britain’s upper house of the legislature differs from Mexico’s upper house in that representatives to Britain’s upper house

- A) have more political experience
- B) are elected officials
- C) represent regions of the country
- D) have to be approved by the head of state
- E) are non-elected officials

17. The most important single explanation for Mexico’s percentage of women in the lower house of the legislature is that the country has

- A) a political culture that de-emphasizes traditional values
- B) more women who are interested in politics
- C) a patron-client system that encourages participation by all
- D) well established democratic values and beliefs
- E) a law that requires political parties to sponsor women candidates

18. For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both Russia and Mexico were ruled by

- A) democratically elected presidents
- B) one political party
- C) military dictators
- D) parliamentary government
- E) state corporatists

19. The main reason for the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement was to provide support in Mexico, the United States, and Canada for

- A) the development of a common currency
- B) a more uniform pricing of products and wages for labor
- C) a more intense trade with Europe
- D) a reduction in tariffs and trade restrictions
- E) the economic unification of the Western Hemisphere

20. The *maquiladora* district in Mexico developed in response to
- A) joint U.S./Mexico policies to restrict immigration across mutual borders
  - B) demands of the Zapatistas for government action
  - C) pressures to decentralize the government
  - D) attempts to control drug trafficking
  - E) the NAFTA agreement
21. Britain, Russia, and Mexico all do NOT have a well-developed
- A) electoral system
  - B) system for judicial review
  - C) multi-party systems
  - D) civil society
  - E) system of linkage institutions
22. The political systems of Britain and Mexico both have
- A) More than two parties competing in popular elections
  - B) two political parties dominating the legislature
  - C) one party dominating the executive branch
  - D) parties of power that dominate both the executive and legislative branches
  - E) coalition parties forming a government
23. Mexico's inclusion of proportional representation in their electoral system directly resulted in
- A) a more powerful legislative branch
  - B) a clear majority in both legislative houses for PAN
  - C) three well-represented parties in both legislative houses
  - D) a rubber-stamp legislature
  - E) growing representation for minority parties in the lower house only

24. The political systems of China, Mexico, and Russia all have
- A) legitimacy primarily based on a written constitution
  - B) code law systems
  - C) prime ministers
  - D) active military participation in the policymaking process
  - E) separation of power among government branches
25. Which of the following is the BEST explanation for why PRI succeeded in monopolizing political power in Mexico after its establishment in 1929?
- A) PRI leaders outmaneuvered leaders from other parties, such as PAN and PRD.
  - B) PRI leaders took advantage of Mexico's independence from Spain to establish a power base.
  - C) Mexican elites were willing to join together as PRI leaders in order to alleviate the chaos and violence of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
  - D) By 1929, the Catholic Church in Mexico had lost influence, and could no longer control the government.
  - E) PRI had the support of the United States government, and so was able to defeat the competing parties of the day.
26. The Mexican political system that existed for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was BEST described as a
- A) monarchy
  - B) patron-client system
  - C) limited democracy
  - D) communist regime
  - E) direct democracy

27. Which of the following is the BEST description of the societal cleavages in Mexico between north and south?

- A) Northerners are generally more prosperous than southerners, but they are ethnically similar.
- B) Southerners are more likely to be Amerindian with less European ethnicity than northerners.
- C) Northerners are more likely to be engaged in agriculture as a main occupation than southerners are.
- D) Northerners are less likely to support a market-based economy than southerners are.
- E) Northerners are generally less well educated than southerners are.

28. Which of the following is an accurate contrast of the democratization process in Mexico with the democratization process in Russia?

- A) Mexico's democratization process started much later than Russia's.
- B) Mexico's democratization process was highly decentralized; Russia's was centralized in Moscow.
- C) Russia's democratization process was violent and bloody; Mexico's was not.
- D) Since 2000 Mexico's legislative and presidential elections have been more competitive than Russia's elections.
- E) Since the early 1990s, Mexico's legislative and presidential elections have been markedly more corrupt than Russia's elections.

29. Which of the following is an accurate description of the electoral system for selecting representatives to the Mexican Chamber of Deputies?

- A) All deputies are chosen to represent single member districts.
- B) All deputies are chosen by proportional representation.
- C) All deputies are chosen by a plurality system, but they do not represent single member districts.
- D) Some deputies are chosen to represent single member districts, and some are chosen by proportional representation.
- E) All deputies are chosen in a 2-round election with many candidates in the 1<sup>st</sup> round, and the top two vote getters in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round.

30. Import substitution industrialization was used as a technique to improve the economy in Mexico during the sexenio of

- A) Vicente Fox
- B) Ernesto Zedillo
- C) Carlos Salinas
- D) De la Madrid
- E) Lazaro Cardenas

Free-Response Question:

(a) Describe how Mexico has experienced significant change since 1985 in each of the following areas:

- Election procedures
- Economic policy

(b) Explain two consequences of the change in election procedures for the Mexican political system.

(c) Explain two consequences of the change in economic policy for the Mexican political system.



## CHAPTER SEVEN: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN IRAN

“This is the voice of Iran, the voice of the true Iran, the voice of the Islamic Revolution.”

Iran National Radio  
February 11, 1979

This dramatic announcement came on Iran's national radio the first evening after the coup d'état that deposed Muhammad Reza Shah, who had followed his father in ruling Iran with an iron fist for more than half a century. The announcement struck fear into the hearts of many westerners who today see the 1979 Revolution in Iran as the beginning of a great conflict between western and Islamic civilizations. According to this line of reasoning, the events of 1979 started a great fundamentalist movement that spread throughout the Islamic world and eventually culminated in the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon in the United States. For some political scientists, Samuel Huntington foresaw this situation in his 1993 article in *Foreign Affairs* magazine called, “The Clash of Civilizations.”

This view of Iran's role in modern world politics, however, ignores the complexities of Iran's political culture, which was so apparent in the reactions within the country to the 2009 presidential elections. Iran's identity is steeped in thousands of years of history that not only includes a deep attachment to Islam, but also a popular revolution in the

early 20<sup>th</sup> century that resulted in a western-style constitution that was intact until 1979. These influences are still at odds today, and they shape the major challenges that face the political system. Is democracy incompatible with Islam, or is true Islam actually based on popular support? The first impulse leads Iran toward a **theocracy**, or a government ruled strictly by religion, and the second leads the country toward **secularization**, or the belief that religion and government should be separated. These political questions are complicated by Iran's developing economy that squarely places it in the global market, but is heavily reliant on one product. Iran is the second largest oil producer in the Middle East and the fourth largest in the world. Should these resources be controlled by clerics, or do economic matters require an expertise outside the realm of religious leaders?

In many ways, Iran is a unique addition to the AP Comparative Government and Politics course because it is the only one of the six countries that currently is governed as a theocracy. However, Iran shares a characteristic with Russia, China, Mexico, and Nigeria in its possession of that all-important modern resource – oil. Like Mexico, its economy may be labeled “developing” rather than “less-developed,” as is the case for Nigeria. China also may be seen as having a rapidly “developing” economy. Similar to all the other five countries, Iran's political system is multi-faceted, and cannot be boiled down simply to a monolithic representation of the Islamic world.

### SOVEREIGNTY, AUTHORITY, AND POWER

An early Iranian concept of sovereignty may be traced to the days of the ancient Achaemenian Empire (called Persia by the Greeks) that existed as the world's largest empire from its founding by Cyrus in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. till its defeat some 200 years later. Iran's greatest rival was ancient Greece, and the two civilizations couldn't have been more different. Greece was divided into quarreling city-states, and its economy and transportation were heavily reliant on the sea. In contrast, Persia emerged from the dry lands north of the Persian Gulf and spread its power through highly centralized military leadership by land as far as the Aegean Sea, where its interests conflicted with those of the Greeks. The clash between two great civilizations may be seen

as the first act of a drama that has played out over the centuries: West vs. East. Ironically, both civilizations were conquered by a Macedonian, Alexander the Great, but Alexander's affinity for Greeks led him to spread their culture to lands that he conquered. Less well known is the fact that Alexander much admired the Persian political structure, and left it largely in place as he conquered those lands.

The Persian sovereigns were always hereditary military leaders who very much enjoyed the trappings of royalty. One king, Darius, built a magnificent capital at Persepolis, and joined his new city to many parts of the ancient world by an intricate system of roads that carried his armies all over and allowed people from many lands to pay tribute to him. His title was "The Great King, King of Kings, King in Persia, King of countries," and he referred to everyone, even the Persian nobility, as "my slaves." The king's authority was supported by a strong military as well as a state-sponsored religion, **Zoroastrianism**.

Although none of the rulers of empires that followed were able to centralize power so successfully as the Achemenians did, the stage was set for the authoritarian state. Zoroastrianism did not survive as a major religion, but it continued to be sponsored by rulers for centuries, including those of the Sassanid Dynasty (226-651 C.E.)

### The Importance of Shiism

From the 7<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries C.E., the geographical region of Iran had little political unity, and experienced numerous invasions, including that of Arabs, who brought Islam to the area. What emerged was a new glue that held the Persians together – not political, but religious in nature. As a result, even when their caliphate (an Islamic empire put in place by Arabs) was defeated by the mighty Mongols in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the religion survived the chaos as the invaders converted to the religion of the conquered. Despite the changes in political leadership over the years, the religion of Islam has continued to be a vital source of identity for Iranians.

The brand of Islam that distinguishes Iran from its neighbors today – **Shiism** – was established as the state religion in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by Ismail, the founder of the Safavid Empire. Ismail and his *qizil-*

*bash* ("redheads," because of their colorful turbans) were supporters of this sect of Islam that had quarreled bitterly with **Sunni** Muslims for centuries. The division originated after the religion's founder, Muhammad, died without a designated heir, a significant problem since his armies had conquered many lands. The Sunnis favored choosing the caliph (leader) from the accepted leadership (the Sunni), but the Shiites argued that the mantle should be hereditary, and should pass to Muhammad's son-in-law, Ali. When Ali was killed in the dispute, the Shiite opinion became a minority one, but they kept their separate identity, and carried the belief that the true heirs of Islam were the descendants of Ali. These heirs, called **imams**, continued until the 9<sup>th</sup> century, when the 12<sup>th</sup> descendant disappeared as a child, only to become known as the "**Hidden Imam**."

When Ismail established Iran as a Shiite state in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, he distinguished it as different from all Sunni states around him, a characteristic that still exists today. He gave political legitimacy to the belief that the "Hidden Imam" would eventually return, but until he did, the rulers of Iran stood in his place as the true heirs of Islam.

### Legitimacy in the Modern State

To a remarkable extent, these historical influences still shape the modern state. Authoritarian leaders played an important role in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the **Pahlavi** shahs ("King of Kings," or "shah in shah") ruled from 1925 to 1979. Their attempts to secularize the state, though, were undone by a charismatic leader – the **Ayatollah Khomeini** – who personified the union of political and religious interests from ancient days. His appeal may be likened to that of Ismail – the protector of the "true faith" that unites the Shiite religion with the power of the state. The Ayatollah was hailed as the "Leader of the Revolution, Founder of the Islamic Republic, Guide of the Oppressed Masses, Commander of the Armed Forces, and Imam of the Muslim World" – titles that blend the historical influences into the persona of one very powerful religious/political leader.

The Ayatollah Khomeini led the **Revolution of 1979**, an event that transformed the legitimacy of the state, anchoring it once again in prin-

ciples of Shiism. The most important document that legitimizes the state today is the **Constitution of 1979**, along with the amendments of 1989, written during the last months of the Ayatollah Khomeini's life. The document and the 40 amendments are a highly complex mixture of theocracy and democracy. The preamble of the constitution reflects the importance of religion for the legitimacy of the state, affirming faith in God, Divine Justice, the Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad, the Twelve Imams, and the eventual return of the Hidden Imam. Khomeini's doctrine of **jurist's guardianship** (which we'll define later) is included along with the other "divine principles."

In recent years two conflicting ideas – sovereignty of the people and divinely inspired clerical rule – have created a crisis of legitimacy in Iran. During the presidency of Muhammad Khatami (1997-2005), reformers who supported a democratic government came to the forefront, but with the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005, the conservatives who endorsed a theocracy took control. As a result, the rift between these two forces – conservatives and reformers – has illustrated the issue of just how a theocracy can also function as a democracy. The conflict is reflected in differences among clerics in the seminaries of **Qom** (a city south of Tehran) through their interpretations of the true meaning of jurist's guardianship.

### Political Culture

Although the Safavid Empire was followed by centuries of weak political organization in Iran, Shiism continued as an important unifying thread to the political culture. However, the dynasty that followed – the Qajars – did not claim the imam's mantle, so Shiite clerical leaders came to be the main interpreters of Islam, and a separation between religion and politics developed. Although the Qajars were never very strong, they did not succumb to European imperialism, and they ruled until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These complex historical influences – with roots in ancient times – have formed a multi-faceted political culture characterized by:

- **Authoritarianism, but not totalitarianism** – Beginning with the Safavid Empire, the central political leaders did not control all areas of individuals' lives. While the leaders claimed to be

all-powerful, in reality they were not, and people became accustomed to paying attention to local officials and/or to leading their own lives within civil society.

- **Union of political and religious authority** – From the days of the ancient Persians, political and religious leaders were often one and the same. However, starting with the rule of the Qajars (1794-1925), the two types of authority were separated, only to be brought back together by the Revolution of 1979.
- **Shiism and *sharia* as central components** – Today almost 90% of all Iranians identify themselves as Shiite, a fact that links citizens to the government, which is officially a theocracy. Islamic law, the *sharia*, is an important source of legitimacy that the modern government particularly emphasizes.
- **Escape from European colonization** – Unlike most countries of Asia, Africa, and South America, Iran was never officially colonized by Europeans during the imperialist era of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although the area was heavily impacted by European power moves, imperialism did not have the same direct control of Iran that it had of Mexico and Nigeria.
- **Geographic limitations** – A great deal of Iran's land space is unusable for agriculture, with a vast central desert plain, and mountains to the north and northeast. Such geographic restrictions caused the early Persians to seek better lands to the west by expansion and conquest. In modern day, the population of Iran is unevenly distributed, with most living in cities and in the northwest, where the most arable land is located.
- **The influence of ancient Persia** – Differences between Iran and neighboring countries is not only based on Shiite vs. Sunni Islam. Even after the Arabs invaded Iran, people continued to speak Persian rather than Arabic, and many of their other cultural habits remained as well, including distinctive architecture, literary works, poetry, and decorative arts (such as "Persian rugs"). This identity shapes Iranian nationalism today.



The Geography of Iran.

- **Strong sense of Iranian nationalism** – Public opinion surveys show that Iranians in general have a stronger sense of national identity than do citizens of most Arab countries. As a result, they are more likely to identify themselves as Iranians first and Muslims second. Their Persian roots encourage the perception that Iran is a distinct culture, and pride in being Iranian is quite pronounced.

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

Not surprisingly, with Iran's long, complex history, political and economic change has taken many forms, including both evolution and revolution. Politically, Persia established itself as the first large empire in world history – a military powerhouse with strong leaders and centralized governing structures. Despite the continuity of religious and political union, a gradual separation of religion from politics re-

sulted in declining centralization of political power over time before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw two revolutions: one in 1905-1909 that set democratic impulses in place, and one in 1979 that reunified religion with politics in the modern theocracy.

Economically, Iran has both suffered and benefited from natural resources. A lack of arable land has meant that the agricultural basis of the empires was never secure, and geographical location also caused Iran to emphasize trade by land. When world commerce turned to sea-based powers beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Iran was marginalized. Although Iran maintained its independence during the age of European imperialism, it did not prosper until its greatest modern natural resource was discovered. However, oil has brought its own set of economic problems to Iran – that of managing this necessary commodity for industrialization in such a way that it benefits not only the state but its people as well.

We will follow political and economic change through four eras: The Safavids (1501-1722); The Qajars (1794-1925); the Pahlavis (1925-1979); and the Islamic Revolution and Republic (1979-the Present).

### The Safavids (1501-1722)

As discussed in the previous section, modern Iran traces its Shiite identity to the **Safavid Empire** that began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, the Safavids had succeeded in converting nearly 90% of their subjects to Shiism. Sunnism has survived to modern day among ethnic groups along the borders: Kurds in the northwest, Turkmen in the northeast, Baluchis in the southeast, and Arabs in the southwest. Despite their religious fervor, the Safavids tolerated the Sunnis, as well as smaller numbers of Jews, Zoroastrians, and Christians. They shared with other Muslim rulers a special regard for **People of the Book** – monotheistic people who subjected their lives to holy books similar to the Qur'an. They respected all these religions because they had their own books: Jews, the Torah; Christians, the Bible; and Zoroastrians, the Avesta.

The Safavids ruled from Isfahan, a Persian-speaking city, and most of their bureaucrats were Persian scribes. However, the Safavids had serious economic constraints. Trade routes from Iran to the ancient Silk

Route had broken up, and world trade had shifted to the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. Isfahan was far inland with little access to sea-based trade, and agricultural production was hampered by lack of arable land. These economic problems affected the Safavids' ability to rule, since they did not have money for a large bureaucracy or a standing army. As a result, they had to rely largely on local rulers to keep order and collect taxes. In theory, the Safavids claimed absolute power, but in reality they lacked a central state and had to seek the cooperation of semi-independent local leaders. Geographic features fragmented the empire, particularly the mountains, and many clerics lived safely outside the reach of the government. As a result of both political and economic factors, the monarchy became separated from society and lost a great deal of its power by 1722.

### The Qajars (1794-1925)

The Safavid Empire ended when Afghan tribesmen invaded Isfahan in 1722. Iran was in disarray for more than a half century, until the land was finally conquered by another Turkish group, the **Qajars**. The Qajars moved the capital to Tehran, and they retained Shiism as the official state religion. However, the Qajar rule marked an important political change. Whereas the Safavids claimed to be descendants of the Twelve Imams, the Qajars obviously could not tie their legitimacy to such a link. As a result, the Shia clerical leaders could claim to be the main interpreters of Islam, and the separation between government and religion widened significantly.

Economically and politically Iran's power eclipsed during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Qajars ruled during the era of European imperialism, and they suffered land losses to the north and northwest to the growing power of Russia. They sold oil-drilling rights in the southwest to Britain, and they borrowed heavily from European banks to meet their considerable court expenses. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the shah had led the country into serious debt, and many Iranians were upset by his lavish lifestyle.

These problems encouraged the **Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1909**. The revolution began with business owners and bankers demonstrating against the Qajars' move to hand over their customs collections to Europeans. Although the Qajars were attempting to settle

their debts, middle-class people were fed up, particularly because they suspected that the shah would sacrifice paying domestic debts in order to repay European loans. In 1906 the merchants and local industrialists, affected by British liberalism, demanded a written constitution from the shah. The British, who had many business interests in Iran, encouraged the shah to concede, particularly since Iran did not have an army to effectively put down an insurrection.

The Constitution of 1906 was modeled after western ones, and included such democratic features as:

- Direct elections
- Separation of powers
- Laws made by an elected legislature
- Popular sovereignty
- A Bill of Rights guaranteeing citizens equality before the law, protections for those accused of crimes, and freedom of expression

The revolution sparked a debate about separation of religion from the government – the trend that the Qajars themselves had initiated. The constitution retained the monarchy, but it created a strong legislature to balance executive power. The new assembly was called the *Majles*, and seats were guaranteed to the “People of the Book”: Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians. The *Majles* not only had the authority to make and pass laws, but it also controlled cabinet ministers, who reported to the legislature, not the shah.

The Constitution of 1906 did not turn away from Shiism completely. Shiism was declared the official state religion, and only Shiites could hold cabinet positions. The constitution also created a **Guardian Council** of clerics that had the power to veto any legislation passed by the *Majles*.

These political reforms could do nothing, however, for Iran's economic woes. World events of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century led to Iran's division into three parts, with one piece for themselves, but another piece occupied by Russia, and another by Britain during World War I. By 1921



Iran was in political and economic disarray, with quarreling factions polarizing the *Majles* into an ineffective ruling body. The country was ready for a strong leader to deliver them from complete chaos.

### The Pahlavis (1925-1979)

The Cossack Brigade had been one of the few areas of strength in the latter days of the Qajars, since it was the only force that resembled a real army. The brigade's commander, Colonel Reza Khan, carried out a successful coup d'état against the weakened political state in 1921, and declared himself shah-in-shah in 1925, establishing his own Pahlavi dynasty, using a name of an ancient language from Iran's glorious past.

Under Reza Shah, the *Majles* lost its power, and authoritarian rule was reestablished in Iran. He ruled with absolute authority until he turned over power to his son, Muhammad Reza Shah in 1941. Despite the fact that the Pahlavis reestablished order in Iran, democratic experimentation resulting from the Constitution of 1906 was not forgotten, and the second shah had to confront some democratic opposition. One group that challenged the shah was the communist **Tudeh** (Masses) **Party** that gained most of its support from working class trade unions. A second group was the **National Front**, led by **Muhammad Mosaddeq**, whose life influenced many later political leaders in Iran. The National Front drew its support from middle-class people who emphasized Iranian nationalism. Mosaddeq advocated nationalizing the British-owned company that monopolized Iran's oil business, and he also wanted to take the armed forces out from under the shah's control. Mosaddeq was elected prime minister in 1951, and his power grew so that the shah was forced to flee the country in 1953. Mosaddeq's career was cut short when the British struck back by co-sponsoring with the U.S. an overthrow of Mosaddeq, and restoring the shah to full power again. The U.S., ever mindful of keeping Soviet power contained in these Cold War days, was motivated to reinstall the shah as a pro-Western force in the Middle East. As a result, many Iranians came to see Britain and the U.S. as supporters of autocracy, and the shah as a weak pawn of foreign powers.

Economically, Iran was transformed into a **rentier state** under the Pahlavis because of the increasing amount of income coming in from

oil. A rentier economy is heavily supported by state expenditure, while the state receives rent from other countries. Iran received an increasing amount of income by exporting its oil and leasing oil fields to foreign countries. The income became so great by the 1970s that the government no longer had to rely on internal taxes for its support, but paid most of its expenses through oil income. In short, the government didn't need the people anymore. Iran was quickly transformed into a one-product economy, and was heavily dependent on oil to keep the government afloat. Even though the shah adopted **import substitution industrialization** by encouraging domestic industries to provide products that the population needed, by 1979 oil and its associated industries made up a large percentage of Iran's GNP, and provided 97% of the country's foreign exchange.

### The White Revolution

During their rule, the two Pahlavi shahs built a highly centralized state, the first since the ancient days of the Persian Empire. The state controlled banks, the national radio-television network, and most importantly, the National Iranian Oil Company. The armed forces grew into the fifth largest army in the world by 1979, and came to include a large navy and air force as well. The central bureaucracy gained control of local governments, and the *Majles* became a rubber-stamp legislature that let the shah rule as he pleased. Whereas Iran remained a religious state, its courts became fully secularized, with a European-style judicial system and law codes in place. Most controversial of all was the shah's **White Revolution** (so named because it was meant to counter communist, or "red" influences) that focused on land reform, with the government buying land from large absentee owners and selling it to small farmers at affordable prices. The purpose was to encourage farmers to become modern entrepreneurs with irrigation canals, dams, and tractors. The White Revolution secularized Iran further by extending voting rights to women, restricting polygamy, and allowing women to work outside the home.

### Patronage and the Resurgence Party

Both Pahlavi shahs bolstered their own personal wealth first by seizing other people's property, and eventually through establishing the tax-

exempt **Pahlavi Foundation**, a patronage system that controlled large companies that fed the pocketbooks of the shah and his supporters. In 1975, Muhammad Reza Shah announced the formation of the **Resurgence Party**, and declared Iran to be a one-party state with him as its head. He replaced the Islamic calendar with a new one, and adopted two new titles: “Guide to the New Great Civilization,” and “Light of the Aryans.” The shah also dared to create a Religious Corps, whose duty it was to teach Iranian peasants “true Islam.”

### The Islamic Revolution and the Republic (1979-Present)

Great revolutions have shaken the world in many places since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the causes and consequences of Iran’s 1979 revolution are in some ways very similar to those in Russia, China, and Mexico in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, Iran’s revolution is unique in that it was almost completely religious in nature. The dominant ideology was religion, whereas revolutions in Russia and China revolved around communism. Although the Catholic Church was very much involved in the revolutionary era (early 20<sup>th</sup> century) in Mexico, the Church did not direct the military, and PRI quickly sidelined the Church once the party gained control of the country. In Iran, the dominant ideology was Shiism, and the most important revolutionary leader was a cleric, who in turned ruled Iran for ten years following the revolution. Perhaps most significantly, Iran’s revolution resulted in the establishment of a theocracy, while other revolutions often tried to break religious control of the government.

The shah’s behavior disturbed Iranians largely because from many people’s points of view, he overstepped the bounds of the political culture in three ways:

- He was perceived as being totalitarian, not just authoritarian, as shahs before the Pahlavis had been. Not unlike Porfirio Diaz in Mexico, the shah set about to create a patrimonial state, with patron-clientelism in place, but without any real input from interest groups. As a result, true corporatism did not develop.
- He broke the balance between the secular and the religious state by secularizing Iran too much too fast, certainly from the point of view of the clergy.

### COMPARATIVE RULING FAMILIES: IRAN

SAFAVIDS (1501-1722)	QAJARS (1794-1925)	PAHLAVIS (1925-1979)
<b>Characteristics</b>		
Converted Iranians to Shiism Tolerated “People of the Book” Ruled from Isfahan Relied on local rulers Rulers claimed to be descendants of the 12 Imams	Turkish invaders Ruled from Tehran Retained Shiism, but lost hereditary claims to 12 Imams Dominated by other countries; Loved luxury; fell into debt	Overthrew a representative government; Centralized power in shah Increasing oil income: creation of the rentier state Contact with the West Secularization of Iran Corruption; shah’s personal enrichment
<b>Influences on modern political system</b>		
Almost 90% of Iranians today are Shiite Tradition of isolation Authoritarianism, not totalitarianism Foundations for a theocracy	Loosened Shiite influence Tradition of trade/contact with others Authoritarianism, not totalitarianism Foundations for secularism, separation between religious and political leaders Failures of regime led to the creation of a representative government	Reinforced authoritarian rule; led to resistance to totalitarianism Modern corruption issues in government, economy Increased secularization led to reestablishment of a theocracy

**The Creation of a Conflictual Political Culture.** Between 1501 and 1979 Iran was ruled by three families that shaped the modern day clash between the conflicting political goals of authoritarianism, democracy, and theocracy.

- His ties to the West (particularly the United States) offended Iranian nationalists as well as the clergy.

In many ways, the shah created a divide in the political culture, with one side supporting modernization in the sense of establishing closer ties to the West, and the other side staunchly defending traditional ways, in particular Shiism. A clerical elite rose to oppose the shah, lead a revolution, and eventually take over the government.

One more ingredient for the success of the revolution was the charisma of its leader, the **Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini**. He not only defended Islamic **fundamentalism**, which emphasized literal interpretation of Islamic texts, social conservatism, and political traditionalism, but

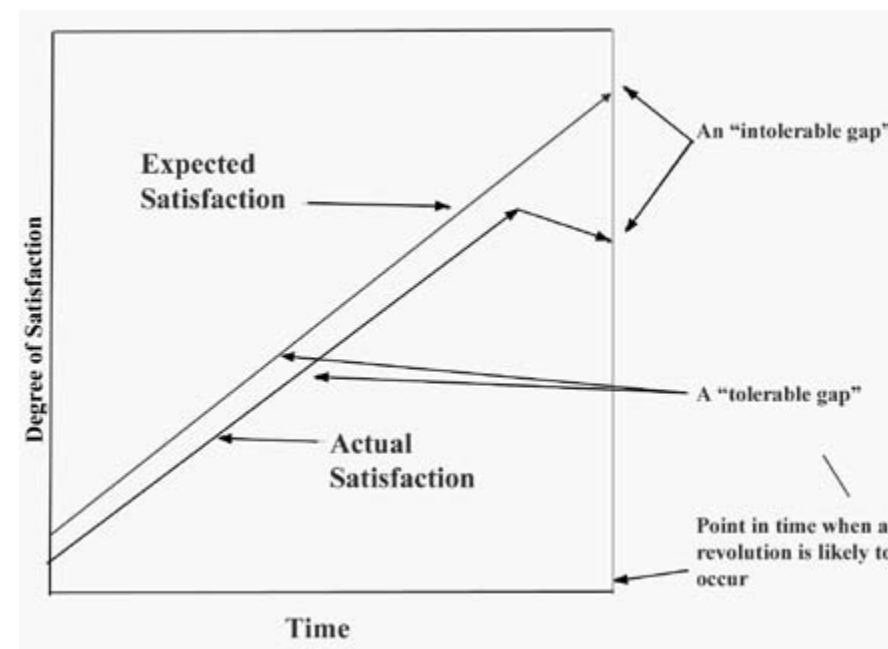
he also articulated resentments toward the elite and the United States. His depiction of the United States as the “Great Satan” puzzled many Americans, but resonated with many frustrated people in Iran. The Ayatollah gave new meaning to an old Shia term *velayat-e-faqih* (**jurist’s guardianship**). The principle originally gave the senior clergy (including himself) broad authority over the unfortunate people (widows, orphans, mentally unstable) in the society, but Khomeini claimed that the true meaning of jurist’s guardianship gives the clergy authority over the entire Shia community.

### The Revolution Begins

Revolutions generally need a spark to begin the crisis. Although discontent had been building for a long time, two factors brought the situation to explode in revolution:

- Oil prices decreased by about 10% in the late 1970s at the same time that consumer prices increased about 20% in Iran. According to the theory of the **revolution of rising expectations**, revolutions are most likely to occur when people are doing better than they once were, but some type of setback happens. Iran fits this classic model in the early days of 1979.
- The United States put pressure on the shah to loosen his restraints on the opposition. President Jimmy Carter was a big promoter of human rights around the globe, and the shah’s tight control on Iranian civil society was worrisome to his administration. However, in this situation, when the shah let his opponents speak, it encouraged others to voice their frustrations.

Once the reins loosened, many groups supported the revolution – political parties, labor organizations, professional associations, bazaar (merchant) guilds, college students, and oil workers. In late 1978, hundreds of unarmed demonstrators were killed in a central square in Tehran, and oil workers had gone on strike, paralyzing the oil industry. Anti-regime rallies were attracting as many as 2 million protestors. It is important to note that the rallies were organized and led by clerics, but were broadly supported by people from many sectors of society.



**Revolution of Rising Expectations.** In this chart the line that dips represents a drop in a standard of living that had been going up for some time. However, expectations rise along with living standards, and when the drop occurs, people are more likely to support a revolution.

(Source: James Davies, “Toward a Theory of Revolution,” *The American Sociological Review*, February 1962)

Although Khomeini was in exile in Paris, audiotapes of his speeches were passed out freely at the rallies, where people called for the abolition of the monarchy. The shah fled the country at the beginning of February 1979, and his government officially ended on February 11 with the famous announcement from the national television-radio station quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

### The Founding of the Islamic Republic

In late April 1979, a national referendum was held, and the Iranian people officially voted out the monarchy and established the Islamic Republic in its place. A constitution was drawn up late in the year by the **Assembly of Religious Experts**, a 73-man assembly of clerics elected directly by the people. The constitution gave broad authority to Khomeini and the clergy, although Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan

strongly objected. Bazargan advocated a presidential republic based on Islam, but democratic in structure. However, Khomeini's constitution was presented to the people in the midst of the U.S. hostage crisis, a time of high hostility toward Americans. The result was not surprising: 99% of the electorate endorsed it, even though only 75% of the eligible voters actually voted.

Once the constitution was endorsed, the Shia leaders launched the **Cultural Revolution** with goals that were very similar to Mao Zedong's goals as he led China's Cultural Revolution in 1966. The Cultural Revolution in Iran aimed to purify the country from not only the shah's regime, but also from secular values and behaviors, particularly those with western origins. The universities were cleared of liberals and staffed with faculty who supported the new regime. The new government suppressed all opposition, including almost all groups from civil society, and many were executed in the name of "revolutionary justice."

#### Post-Khomeini – 1989-Present

Until the Ayatollah Khomeini's death in 1989, the clerics consolidated and built their power. Their success was cemented by several important factors that brought them popular support:

- World petroleum prices rebounded, so Iran's economy improved accordingly. The government was able to afford social programs for the people, such as modern improvements for housing and medical clinics.
- Iraq (under Saddam Hussein) invaded Iran in 1980, beginning a war between the two countries that continued throughout the decade. The people rallied around the government in response to this threat.
- The charisma of Khomeini remained strong, and the power of his presence inspired faith in the government.

Khomeini's death in 1989 marked the beginning of a new era for the Republic. His successor, **Ali Khamenei**, does not have the same magnetism of personality, nor does he have the academic credentials

that Khomeini had, facts that have encouraged some scholars in Qom to question the legitimacy of the theocracy. The Iran-Iraq War ended in 1988, and world oil prices fell again during the 1990s. Most importantly, many in the population began to criticize the authoritarian rule of the clerics, and to advocate a more democratic government.

In many ways the conflict between theocratic and democratic values has played itself out during the presidencies of Mohammad Khatami (1997-2005) and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005-Present). Khatami was a reformist who aimed to end the freeze in relations between Iran and the West, particularly the United States. He believed in a "dialogue among civilizations" that fostered positive relationships with other countries, not just a cessation of hostilities. Although he never advocated changing theocratic political structures, reformers became a strong presence in both the *Majles* and the executive branch. In contrast, Ahmadinejad is a conservative who has antagonized western countries, although he has not isolated himself from them. He has asserted theocratic values, and has appealed to Iranian nationalism to solidify his **white** (bloodless) **coup** of the reformists.

### CITIZENS, SOCIETY, AND THE STATE

Iranian citizens have had little direct experience with democracy, but they generally understand the importance of civil society. Until the Pahlavi shahs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the authoritarian rulers had very little power to reach into citizens' everyday lives. Local officials were a presence, to be sure, and religious law, *sharia*, set strict rules for behavior. The democratic experiment after the Constitution of 1906 created an elected legislature, the *Majles*, but the new government was so unable to solve the country's problems that chaos followed, inviting authoritarian rule to return with the Pahlavis.

#### Cleavages

Major divisions in Iranian society are based on:

- **Religion** – Almost 90% of all Iranians are Shia Muslims, but almost 10% are Sunni, and 1% are a combination of Jews, Christians, Zoroastrian, and Baha'i. Although the Constitution recognizes religious minorities and guarantees their basic

rights, many religious minorities have left the country since the founding of the Republic in 1979. The Baha'i faith, which many Shiites believe to be an unholy offshoot of Islam, has been a particular object of religious persecution. Its leaders have been executed, imprisoned, and tortured, schools closed, and community property taken by the state. Many Baha'i have immigrated to Canada, as have a large number of Jews and Armenian Christians. The Constitution does not mention Sunnis, and so their rights are often unclear.

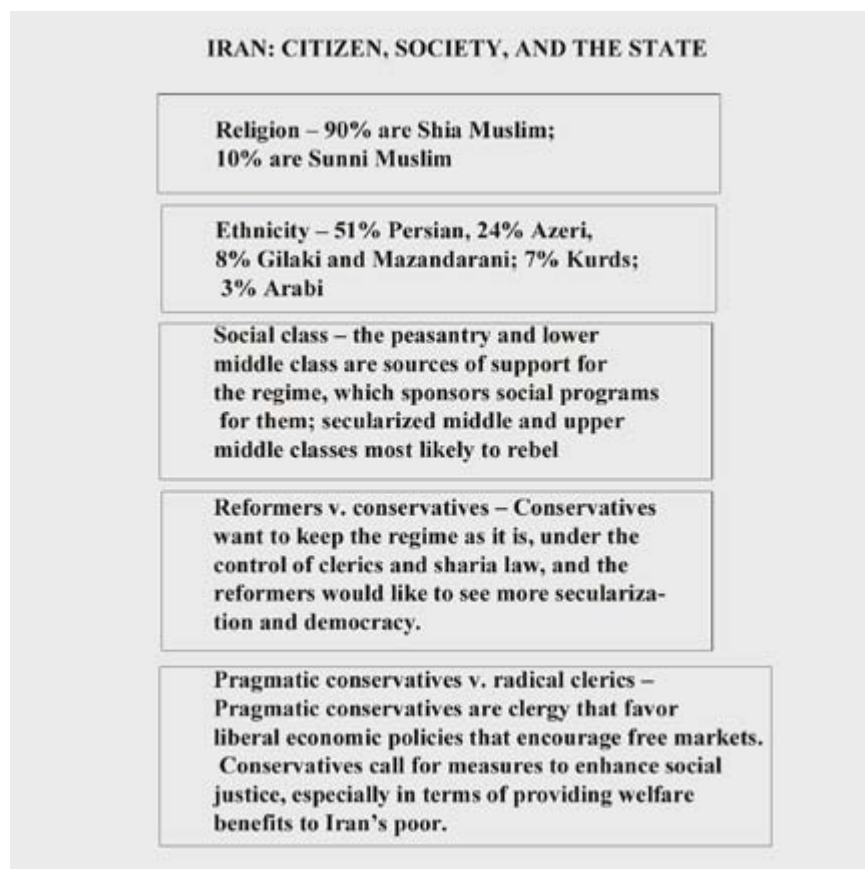
- **Ethnicity** – Ethnicity is closely tied to religion, but other cultural differences distinguish minorities in Iran. 51% may be considered Persian, speaking Persian (Farsi) as their first language; 24% are Azeri; 8% are Gilaki and Mazandarani; 7% are Kurds; 3% are Arabi; and the remaining percentages are a mixture of other groups. Many Azeris live in the northwest close to the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan, creating a worry for the Iranian government that the Azeris will want to form a larger state by taking territory away from Iran. The Azeris do not speak Persian, but they are strongly Shiite, and the supreme leader that followed Khomeini in 1989 – Ali Khamenei – is Azeri. Kurds and Arabs tend to be Sunni Muslim, so the religious cleavage is reinforced by ethnicity.
- **Social class** – The peasantry and lower middle class are sources of support for the regime, partly because they have benefited from the government's social programs that have provided them with electricity and paved roads. However, middle and upper-middle class people are largely secularized, and so they tend to be highly critical of the clerics and their control of the society. Many middle-class people have not fared well economically during the years since the Republic was founded. As a result, their cultural and political views of secularism are reinforced by their economic problems, creating discontent and opposition to the regime.
- **Reformers v. conservatives** – A fundamental cleavage in the political culture since the founding of the Republic has to do with a debate about the merits of a theocracy v. a democracy.

The conservatives want to keep the regime as it is, under the control of clerics and *sharia* law, and the reformers would like to see more secularization and democracy. Most reformers do not want to do away with the basic principles of an Islamic state, but they display a wide array of opinions about how much and where secularization and democracy should be infused into the system.

- **Pragmatic conservatives v. radical clerics** – The complicated set of cleavages in Iran is made more complex by distinct divisions among the clergy that have led to many important disagreements at the top levels of policymaking. Pragmatic conservatives are clergy that favor liberal economic policies that encourage foreign trade, free markets, and direct foreign investment. They base their points of view on strong personal ties to middle-class merchants (*bazaaris*) and rural landowners who have long supported mosques and religious activities. Conservatives argue that private property and economic inequality are protected under Islamic law. They are generally willing to turn over economic management to liberally-inclined technocrats. Radicals are more numerous among younger and more militant clerics, and they call for measures to enhance social justice, especially in terms of providing welfare benefits to Iran's poor. Radicals generally endorse state-sponsored wealth redistribution and price controls.

### Civil Society

A major source of unhappiness with the rule of the Pahlavi shahs was the government's incursion into private lives of citizens – the civil society. However, civil society has not been restored under the current regime, and this fact tends to create discontent, especially among middle-class people. The Shiite revolutionary elites launched a campaign that may be compared to Mao's Cultural Revolution in that they sought to impose values of the Islamic state on the general population. University professors with reputations for western preferences were fired and replaced with people that clearly supported the regime. Other professionals quietly left the country to seek refuge in western



Some Major Cleavages in the Iranian Political System

nations. However, the desire to preserve civil society did not disappear – it was too large an influence on the political culture before the takeover by Reza Shah in the early 1920s.

Under the presidency of **Muhammad Khatami** (1997-2005), Iranians experienced the so-called “Tehran spring” – a period of cautious political liberalization, with a loosening of freedom of speech and press, a more open economy, and a friendlier stance towards the outside world. However, the Iranian president has only limited powers, and the reforms were hampered by more conservative elements in the government. When **Mahmoud Ahmadinejad** became president in 2005, the government closed down newspapers, banned and censored

books and websites, and did not tolerate the peaceful demonstrations and protests of the Khatami era. Prominent scholars were arrested, including Haleh Esfandiari, the director of the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. Dr. Esfandiari had dual citizenship (the U.S. and Iran), but was arrested in 2007 while visiting her mother in Tehran. She was imprisoned for more than three months before being released to return to the United States. After the election of 2009, the government out of fear of a backlash did not arrest the liberal candidates who officially lost the election, but their political activities were limited to putting out statements on their websites. Less visible opposition figures have been arrested, including three reform-minded journalists, four opposition politicians, and an economist who criticized some of Ahmadinejad's programs. In January 2011, Nasrin Sutoodeh, a human-rights lawyer, was jailed for 11 years, and film-makers around the world protested the six-year sentence imposed in 2011 on Jafar Panahi, a dissident Iranian director.

One indication that civil society is alive and well in Iran may be found among Iran's growing number of young people. Demographically, the young have grown in proportion to old at very dramatic rates, partly because of the Republic's encouragement of large families during the first years after it was founded. Many are the sons and daughters of disillusioned middle-class professionals, and they appear to be very attracted to western popular culture – music, dress, cars, and computers. The regime under Khatami showed some signs of tolerating this behavior, but under Ahmadinejad there was a crackdown against western dress, with arrests of women who show too much hair under their headscarves or wear makeup.

### Political Participation

Despite the fact that guarantees for civil liberties and rights were written into the 1979 Constitution, the Islamic Republic from the beginning closed down newspapers, labor unions, private organizations, and political parties. Due process principles were ignored as many were imprisoned without trials. Political reformers were executed, and others fled the country. The regime also banned demonstrations and public meetings.



### Protests and Demonstrations

The Republic's actions against public demonstrations did not curtail them, particularly on college campuses. In 1999, protests erupted in universities all across the country when the government shut down a reformist newspaper. In late 2002, similar demonstrations broke out among students when the courts ruled a death sentence for a reformist academic. In Iran in the summer of 2003, student demonstrations escalated into mass protests over the privatization of the university system. The protesters called for the overthrow and even death of Iran's religious and political leaders. Thousands were arrested during 4 days of protest in June. Because more than half of all Iranians alive today have been born since the Revolution of 1979, these youthful protesters may be a force for change in the future. Factory workers also tend to participate in rallies against the government. Their concerns are high unemployment rates, low wages, and unsatisfactory labor laws. Since Ahmadinejad became president in 2005, the government has renewed its crackdown on protests and demonstrations. For example, in January 2007 security forces attacked striking bus drivers in Tehran and arrested hundreds of them. Two months later police beat hundreds of men and women who had assembled to commemorate International Women's Day.

Most remarkably, the days of protests that followed the presidential election of 2009 demonstrate the Iranian capacity to react strongly to repressive government. When the election results were announced, supporters of opposition candidates to President Ahmadinejad cried foul, and the biggest popular upheaval since the 1979 revolution began. The announcement that Ahmadinejad had won with 63% of the vote, against 34% for **Mir Hossein Mousavi**, caused the opposition candidates to call for the election to be annulled, and people on both sides of the issue poured out into the streets. Demonstrations and rallies continued for several days, and the government arrested many protesters, including some top leaders of the opposition. The government sent tens of thousands of Revolutionary Guards and voluntary militiamen, known as the Basij, to disperse the crowds, and violence followed. The death toll is disputed, with state-controlled media reporting 20 people killed, but others put the figure much higher. The

protesters, calling themselves the "Green Movement," after Mousavi's campaign colors, rallied around the image of a young woman, Neda Agha Soltan, who was photographed in a demonstration in Tehran as she lay dying after being shot by an unknown assailant.

The government contained the protesters, and a few months later, the Ayatollah Ali Khamenei declared that the society had been "vaccinated" against these "germs." In December 2009 a huge rally of the regime's supporters seemed to cast the Green Movement into the shadows. However, in early 2011, Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi (another liberal candidate for president in 2009) revived when they encouraged their supporters to march in honor of freedom-seeking protesters in demonstrations in Egypt and Tunisia, and Green Movement advocates gathered in Tehran in large numbers and began marching, mostly in silence, before the security forces responded. Police and members of the *basesej* militia, using tear-gas and clubs, subdued the crowd, but not before two people were killed and dozens arrested. U.S. President Barack Obama – who had approached the 2009 election aftermath cautiously – called on Iran to let people express their opinions.

### Women and the Political System

One of the most frequently heard criticisms of Iran by westerners is the regime's treatment of women. The veil has become a symbol of oppression, but probably more for westerners than for Iranian women themselves. The wearing of veils predates the birth of Islam as a religion in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, and women of many other religions in Southwest Asia have also worn veils. However, traditionally women in Islamic cultures have stayed home, with little education or opportunity to work outside the home. 20<sup>th</sup> century Iran is something of an exception because women have had better access to education. Educated women harbor particular resentments toward the regime. Their educations have led them to expect better job opportunities and more political rights than they have been granted. Judges often interpret the *sharia* narrowly, so that women are considered to be wards of their male relatives. However, today more than half of all college students are women, and they are also well represented as doctors and government employees.

The Islamic Republic calls its policy toward women “**equality-with-difference**,” meaning that divorce and custody laws now follow Islamic standards that favor males. Women must wear scarves and long coats in public, and they cannot leave the country without the consent of male relatives. Occasional stoning of women for adultery has also taken place, though the government recently issued a ban on them. However, women are allowed educations and entrance to at least some occupations. Women now constitute about 33% of the total labor force.

Iranian women are not well represented in the *Majles*, as the chart below shows. Mexico’s large representation is partly due to the recent parity laws that require political parties to run women candidates for office. Nigeria’s low representation is probably reflective of traditional society there, and China’s relatively large representation may be influenced by a lingering communist ideology that emphasizes equality. Russia does not appear to be influenced by its former status as a communist nation.

WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS		
Country	Lower House % Women	Upper House % Women
China	23.6%	— *
Iran	3.1%	— *
Mexico	42.4%	33.6%
Nigeria	5.6 %	6.5%
Russia	13.6 %	17.1%
United Kingdom	29.4%	24.6%
* No directly comparable upper house		

Source: *Women in National Parliaments*, [www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org) (figures based on last election as of 2015)

## POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

The political system of Iran is unlike any other in the world today in that it blends a theocracy with a democracy. The theocracy is represented in the national government by the supreme leader, and two governmental bodies: the Guardian Council and the Expediency Council. The president, the Assembly of Religious Experts, and the national assembly (the *Majles*) are democratically elected. Linkage institutions are in various stages of development, and tend to be fluid in nature.

### Linkage Institutions

The constitution guarantees citizens the right to organize and to express themselves, so some institutions that link people to the government have developed. Some organizations, such as interest groups and the press, developed long before 1979 and continue today. Others, like political parties, had to begin all over again.

### Political Parties

The constitution provides for political parties, but the government did not allow them until Muhammad Khatami’s election as president in 1997. Since then, multiple parties have formed, with most of them organized around personalities, not issues.

A number of new parties appeared for the *Majles* elections of 2007 and the presidential elections of 2009 and 2013, and only a few have carried over from previous elections, so current parties are highly unstable and very likely to change in the near future. However, the parties usually operate in loose alignments within two main coalitions: the conservative and the reformist. The alliances/parties that sponsored presidential candidates in 2013 are:

- **Islamic Society of Engineers** – This organization is a former member of the conservative Alliance of Builders of Islamic Iran. Members include Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, but the society did not support him for president in either 2005 or 2009. In 2013, the party ran Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf for president.



- **Front of Islamic Revolution Stability** – This conservative coalition was formed in 2011 and ran Saeed Jalili for president in 2013. Jalili had been Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council as well as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- **Moderation and Development Party** – This political party brands its approach as “moderate.” The party’s 2013 candidate was Mohsen Rezaee, who ran for the presidency in 2005 and 2009 as well.
- **Combatant Clergy Association** – This party was supported in 2013 by the Iranian Reform Movement and represented the reformist coalition, although it has been described as a conservative party in the past. Its candidate, Hassan Rouhani, had been a member of the Assembly of Experts since 1990, as well as a member of the Expediency Council since 1991. Rouhani won the presidential election of 2013.
- **Islamic Coalition Party** – This party was founded in 1962, so it is one of the oldest, and it generally is seen as part of the conservative coalition. The party’s candidate in 2013 was Ali Akbar Velayati, who had refused to run as a conservative alliance candidate in 2005. He was supported by some conservative groups, but came in 5th out of 6 candidates in 2013.

Many political parties of former dissidents are now in exile but still active. The Liberation Movement, a moderate Islamic party, was established by Mehdi Bazargan (Khomeini’s first prime minister) in 1961, but was banned in 2002 as a subversive organization. The National Front, headed by the shah’s dissident Prime Minister Mossadeq in the 1950s was banned in the late 1980s. Other parties in exile are the Mojahedin, a guerilla organization that fought the shah’s regime; the Fedayin, a Marxist guerilla group that modeled itself after Latin American hero Che Guevara; and Tudeh, a communist party.

The party system reflects **factionalism**, or the splintering of the political elites based not just on points of view, but also on personalities. Since parties are fluid and weak, they are not vehicles for discussing policymaking alternatives. Instead, factions tend to coalesce before elections and then break apart if their candidates are chosen. Defeated

factions tend to stay together between elections in hopes of reversing their fortunes in the next election.

### Elections

On the national level, citizens over the age of eighteen (minimum age changed in early 2007 from fifteen to eighteen) may vote for members of the Assembly of Religious Experts, representatives to the *Majles*, and the president of the Republic. The Republic is a highly centralized regime, although citizens may also vote for officials on the local level. Elections to the *Majles* and the presidency are conducted according to plurality, or winner-take-all, and no proportional representation is used. However, elections consist of two rounds, so that one of the two contenders left in the second round will get a majority of the votes.

#### *The Majles Elections of 2004 and 2008*

The first round elections to the *Majles* were held on February 20, 2004, but they took place after the Guardian Council banned thousands of candidates from running, mainly from the reformist parties. Particularly hard hit was the Islamic Iran Participation Front. Out of a possible 285 seats (5 seats are reserved for religious minorities), reformist parties could only introduce 191 candidates. Some reformists refused to vote, and the official turnout was only about 51%. Not surprisingly, conservative candidates won about 70% of the seats. In 2008, conservatives held on to about 70% of the seats, but reformists managed to win 46, an increase over their numbers in 2004.

#### *The Presidential Election of 2005*

The Constitution provides that presidents may not run for more than two terms of office, so President Khatami had to step down in 2005. The Guardian Council disqualified about 1000 candidates, leaving only seven to run, some with the support of a party, and some not. The results of the first round were very close, with two candidates going on to the second round: **Akbar Hasemi Rafsanjani**, a former president known for his moderate and pragmatic views (21% of the vote); and **Mahmoud Ahmadinejad**, the conservative mayor of Tehran (19.5% of the vote). Ahmadinejad won in the second round with almost 62% of the vote, since Rafsanjani was not able to organize the

reformist vote behind him. Ahmadinejad is known for his populist views, and he announced after his victory that he meant for prosperity to be shared among all classes, not just the elite.

### *The Presidential Election of 2009*

Charges of election fraud were made after the presidential election of 2005, but they were dismissed, even though many were surprised that Ahmadinejad won. One reason for his victory was that many reformists did not vote, since they rejected both major candidates. As the election of 2009 approached, the Iranian reform movement attempted to rally behind one candidate. Many reformists hoped that former President Mohammad Khatami would win the election, but Khatami dropped out of the race and endorsed his former prime minister, Mir-Hossein Mousavi. One other reformist ran, Mehdi Karroubi, and one conservative – Mohsen Rezai – challenged Ahmadinejad for conservative support. The debates leading up to the election focused mainly on the economy, a main concern of Iranian citizens after the global economic crisis of late 2008.

Opinion polls – not always very reliable in Iran – showed a close race between Ahmadinejad and Mousavi as the election approached on June 12, so the official results – nearly 63% for Ahmadinejad and less than 34% for Mousavi – surprised many people. Record numbers (85% of the electorate) turned out for the election, and many reformists that had not voted in 2005 went to the polls in 2009. Mousavi urged his supporters to fight the decision, without resorting to violence, and protests in favor of Mousavi broke out in Tehran. Mousavi appealed the result to the Guardian Council two days after the election, and Supreme Leader Khamenei agreed to an investigation into the fraud. The votes were recounted, but Iran's electoral board concluded that Ahmadinejad won the election. When Khamenei publicly endorsed the decision, many criticized him for shutting down the popular outcry prematurely. The inauguration of Ahmadinejad was held in early August, with protests held outside the Parliament.

In the election's aftermath, many were arrested, and some high-ranked clerics accused foreigners – including some British embassy employ-

ees – of stirring up the protests. Mousavi was portrayed as a tool of secular foreigners who plotted for the downfall of the country. The government also claimed to have confessions from top reformers who were arrested, who allegedly pleaded guilty to accusations of organizing a “velvet revolution” to overthrow the country's leaders. Mousavi and Karroubi were not arrested, but accusations soon surfaced that some of those who had been detained were tortured and/or killed by government officials. Mr. Mousavi responded by announcing on his website the formation of a “grass roots and social network” to promote democracy and adherence to the law. The formation of a new party would have required a government permit, which would have been denied.

The election brought many disparate elements of Iran's political culture together for the biggest confrontation since 1979. Although the protests finally cooled, charges of voter fraud continued to circulate, and the legitimacy of the government was shaken to its very core, most profoundly by those who questioned the authority of the supreme leader.

### *The Elections of 2012 and 2013*

As tensions mounted over a number of issues between Supreme Leader Khamenei and President Ahmadinejad, the legislative election in 2012 was described by many journalists and analysts as a contest between the two men, with Khamenei supporters winning a large majority of seats. More than 5,000 candidates registered, but more than a third were disqualified by the Guardian Council. 290 seats were up for election, with alliances shifting into two camps: the United Front of Principalists (UFC – supporters of Supreme Leader Khamenei) and the Resistance Front (FSP – supporters of Ahmadinejad). The UFC won 101 seats (34.8%) and the FSP won 50 seats (17.2%). Even though most reformist candidates had been disqualified by the Guardian Council, the reformist alliance, Democratic Coalition of Reformists, won 43 seats (14.1%).

The presidential election in June of 2013, the first since the disputed election of 2009, took place at a time when international concern for

Iran's nuclear programs was high. Western sanctions had weakened the Iranian economy, and Israel had threatened a military strike, so international interest was high. In May, the Guardian Council disqualified two prominent candidates: former president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, and Ahmedinejad's hand-picked choice, Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei. Of the eight candidates selected, one – Hassan Rouhani, a former nuclear negotiator – had even slightly different stances from the traditionalists. Three of the qualified candidates had direct links to Supreme Leader Khamenei: Gholam Ali Haddad Adel, a close adviser and relative; Ali Akbar Velayati, his foreign policy adviser; and Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalil. Another candidate, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, mayor of Tehran, had previously served as a commander of the Revolutionary guard, and had played a leading role in the maintenance of Iran's internal security.

Although most analysts projected that someone close to the Ayatollah would win, Mr. Rouhani pulled votes that would have gone to the two disqualified candidates, and in a late surge, he won the election with a majority vote in the first round. Turnout was high, with 72% of the electorate voting, and Rouhani won with 50.7% of the votes, with Bagher Ghalibaf coming in a distant second, with 16.6% of the vote, and Saeed Jalili netting third place with 11.4%. With the backing of former reformist presidents Mohammad Khatami and Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Rouhani had a powerful mandate to improve Iran's international relations and attempt to negotiate a settlement of Iran's nuclear activities.

### Interest Groups

Since political parties are ill-defined in Iran, it is often difficult to draw the line between parties and interest groups. A large number of groups have registered with the government, including an Islamic Association of Women and a Green Coalition. The parties in exile, such as the National Front, the Liberation Movement, and the Mojahedin also have members still in Iran that work for their benefit.

An important interest group for factory workers is called **Workers' House**, that operates with the help of its affiliated newspaper, *Kar*

*va Kargar (Work and Worker)*. Their political party, Islamic Labor Party, backed Khatami in the 2000 election, but its coalition with other reform parties was broken up by the Guardian Council's banning of reformist candidates in 2004 (*Majles* election), and 2005 (presidential election). Workers' House holds a May Day rally most years, and in 1999 the rally turned into a protest when workers marched to parliament to denounce conservatives for watering down labor laws. When bus drivers joined the protest, most of central Tehran was shut down. A bus drivers' protest was crushed by the government in 2007.

Few interest groups have formed for business because private businesses have been crowded out since the Revolution of 1979, when many were taken over by the government. Agriculture, internal trade, and distribution are mostly in private hands, but the government controls between 65% and 80% of the economy.

### Mass Media

Over 20 newspapers were shut down shortly after the Revolution in 1979, and by 1981 an additional seven were closed. In 1981 the *Majles* passed a law making it a criminal offense to use "pen and speech" against the government. In more recent years, some of the restrictions have been lifted. The Rafsanjani government permitted some debate in the press on controversial issues during the 1990s, and the Khatami administration issued permits to dozens of new publications, apparently hoping to establish an independent press. However, freedom of the press is still a major issue between conservatives and reformists, and the large-scale student demonstrations in 1999 were sparked by newly imposed restrictions on the media. Shortly after the 2000 *Majles* elections, when many reformists were elected, the outgoing *Majles* approved a press control law, which the Council of Guardians ruled could not be overturned by the new legislature. Some 60 pro-reform newspapers were shut down by 2002.

Radio and television are government-run by the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), but many newspapers and magazines are privately owned. Compared with other regimes in the region, the Iranian press has more freedom to criticize the government. Iran's elite

is well educated, and many of these publications cater to their needs as professional journals, sports magazines, and publications for the fine arts, cinema, and health care. Most are nonpolitical, however. A semipublic institution whose directors are appointed by the Supreme Leader runs the country's two leading newspapers, *Ettela'at* and *Kayhan*.

## GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

Iran is a highly centralized unitary state, but it is divided administratively into provinces, districts, sub-districts, and local areas. The Islamic Constitution of 1979 promises elected councils on each level of administration, and it also requires governors and other regional officials (who are all appointed) to consult local councils. No steps were taken to hold council elections until 1999 when President Khatami insisted on holding nationwide local elections. The election resulted in a landslide for reformists, presenting a challenge for the conservative clergy. Local elections in December 2006 supported candidates critical of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, reflecting a weakness in the president's popularity.

The government structure of Iran is complex, but the most important thing to remember is that it attempts to blend theocratic ideals with democratic ones. Every structure has a purpose in terms of one or both of these principles.

### Jurist's Guardianship

The supreme leader, the Guardian Council, the Assembly of Religious Experts, and the Expediency Council do not fit into a three-branch arrangement of government institutions. All three have broad executive, legislative, and judicial powers that allow them to supersede all other positions and bodies. They abide by the Ayatollah Khomeini's overarching principle of *velayat-e-faqih* (**jurist's guardianship**) in that they have all-encompassing authority over the whole community based on their ability to understand the *sharia* and their commitment to champion the rights of the people. The Constitution of 1979 specifies the duties of government institutions, including prerogatives and

responsibilities of the dual executive: the supreme leader and the president.

### The Supreme Leader

This position at the top of Iran's government structure was clearly meant to be filled by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the 1979 Revolution. The supreme leader is seen as the imam of the whole community, and he represents the pinnacle of theocratic principles of the state. The Constitution specifically put Khomeini in the position for life, and stated that after his death, his authority would pass to a leadership council of two or three senior clerics. This did not occur when Khomeini died in 1989 because his followers did not trust the clerics, so instead they changed the Constitution and selected as Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, a cleric of the middle rank who had none of Khomeini's formal credentials. Khamenei also was appointed for life, and continues as supreme leader to the present.

The Constitution gives the supreme leader many powers. First and foremost, he is the *faqih*, or the leading Islamic jurist to interpret the meaning of religious documents and *sharia*, Islamic law. He links the three branches of government together, may mediate among them, and is charged with "determining the interests of Islam." His many powers include:

- Elimination of presidential candidates
- Dismissal of the president
- Command of the armed forces
- Declaration of war and peace
- Appointment and removal of major administrators and judges
- Nomination of six members of the Guardian Council
- Appointment of many non-governmental directors, such as the national radio-television network and semi-public foundations

Although the dual executive positions of the Iranian government may be categorized as **head of state** (the supreme leader) and **head of government** (the president), the supreme leader holds ultimate power, and is far from a figurehead.

### The Guardian Council

A body that also represents theocratic principles is the Guardian Council, which consists of twelve male clerics. Six are appointed by the supreme leader, and the other six are nominated by the chief judge and approved by the *Majles*. Bills passed by the *Majles* are reviewed by the Guardian Council to ensure that they conform to *sharia*, and the council also has the power to decide who can compete in elections. In 2012 and 2013 they disqualified thousands of candidates for both the *Majles* and the presidential elections.

Together the supreme leader and the Guardian Council exercise the principle of **jurist's guardianship**, making sure that the democratic bodies always adhere to Islamic beliefs and laws.

### The Assembly of Religious Experts

In 1989 a smaller Assembly of Religious Experts was expanded to be an 86-man house directly elected by the people every four years. The Assembly is given the responsibility, along with the supreme leader and the Guardian Council, of broad constitutional interpretation. One of the new Assembly's first actions was to elect Ali Khamenei as Khomeini's replacement as supreme leader. The Assembly also reserved the right to dismiss him if he was unable to fill Khomeini's shoes. So far, that has not happened. The Assembly's members were required to have a seminary degree equivalent to a master's degree, but in 1998 revisions were made that allowed nonclerics to stand for the Assembly, but the candidates are still subject to approval by the Guardian Council.

In 2007 former President Hashemi Rafsanjani was picked as chairman of the Assembly, a move that many thought would pose a challenge to

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and possibly even Supreme Leader Khomeini. Rafsanjani, a moderate, was Ahmadinejad's main opponent in the presidential election of 2005, and he also tends to side with pro-democracy reformers who believe the government's authority is derived from popular elections. However, in 2011, Rafsanjani was pressured to step down from his position, leaving many to speculate about how his loss of power would impact opposition movements to the government. Rafsanjani ran for president in 2013 but was disqualified by the Guardian Council.

### The Expediency Council

Because the Guardian Council can overturn decisions and proposals for law made by the *Majles*, the two bodies often argued fiercely during the days of the early republic, so Khomeini created a body to referee their disputes. It began as a council with thirteen clerics, including the president, the chief judge, the speaker of the *Majles*, and six jurists from the Guardian Council. The Expediency Council eventually passed some compromise bills, and was institutionalized by the 1989 constitutional amendments. Today it consists of 32 members, and it has many more powers than it had originally. For example, it now may originate its own legislation. Not all of its members today are clerics, but they are still appointed by the supreme leader (Ali Khomeini). Collectively they are the most powerful men in Iran.

### The Executive

Iran does not have a presidential system, so the head of the executive branch does not have the same authority as presidents in countries that have a presidential system, such as the U.S., Mexico, and Nigeria. However, the president is the highest official representing democratic principles in Iran, and he functions as the head of government, while the supreme leader serves as head of state.

 <b>THEOCRATIC GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN IRAN</b>		
<b>GUARDIAN COUNCIL</b>	<b>ASSEMBLY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERTS</b>	<b>THE EXPEDIENCY COUNCIL</b>
<p>Consists of twelve male clerics: six appointed by the supreme leader and six nominated by the chief judge and approved by the <i>Majles</i></p> <p>Review bills passed by the <i>Majles</i> to be sure they adhere to sharia</p> <p>Decides who can compete in elections</p> <p>Along with the <i>Majles</i>, the most important policymaking body in Iran</p>	<p>86-man house directly elected by the people every eight years</p> <p>Selects the supreme leader and has the right to dismiss him</p> <p>Until recently, was headed by Hashemi Rafsanjani, a cleric and former president who has been critical of the regime</p>	<p>32 members appointed by supreme leaders</p> <p>Designed to referee disputes between the <i>Majles</i> and the Guardian Council</p> <p>May originate its own legislation</p> <p>Not all are clerics</p> <p>Until recently, headed by Hashemi Rafsanjani</p>

### The President and the Cabinet

The president is the chief executive and the highest state official after the Supreme Leader. He is directly elected every four years by Iranian citizens, and he is limited to two consecutive terms in office.

Although he is democratically elected, the Constitution still requires him to be a pious Shiite who upholds Islamic principles.

Some of the president's powers include:

- Devising the budget
- Supervising economic matters

- Proposing legislation to the *Majles*
- Executing policies
- Signing of treaties, laws, and agreements
- Chairing the National Security Council
- Selecting vice presidents and cabinet ministers
- Appointing provincial governors, town mayors, and ambassadors

All of the six presidents of the Islamic Republic have been clerics, except for two: Abol-Hasan Bani-Sadr, who was ousted in 1981 for criticizing the regime as a dictatorship, and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, president from 2005 to 2013. The cabinet conducts the real day-to-day work of governance. Practically all new laws and the budget are initiated and devised by cabinet members, and then submitted to parliament for approval, modification, or rejection.

Former president Ahmadinejad and the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, generally supported one another, but in the last years of Ahmadinejad's presidency, the two were often openly competitive. In 2011, Ahmadinejad fired his minister of intelligence, Heidar Moslehi, for bugging the offices of Ahmadinejad's chief of staff, but Khamenei exercised his authority and quickly reinstated him. The president responded by refusing to attend cabinet meetings, but he resumed his duties after 300 MPs urged him to respect Mr. Khamenei's decision. The two men are both conservative but disagreed on economic policy issues, and a two-headed executive leaves room for internal disputes. The supreme leader, as head of state, is supposed to stay aloof from everyday politics, and Khamenei said as much when he praised the government in a 2011 speech and stressed that he intervened only when he felt that "expediency is ignored." However, each time that the supreme leader gets involved in politics, he risks his ability to rise above the fray and exercise undisputed authority based on jurist's guardianship.

## The Bureaucracy

The president heads a huge bureaucracy that has expanded over the years to provide jobs for college and high school graduates. It has doubled in numbers since 1979. Some of the newer ministries include: Culture and Islamic Guidance that censors the media; Intelligence that serves as the chief security organization; Heavy Industry that manages nationalized factories; and Reconstruction that expands social services and sees that Islam extends into the countryside. The clergy dominates the bureaucracy, just as it controls the presidency. The most senior ministries – Intelligence, Interior, Justice, and Cultural and Islamic Guidance – are headed by clerics, and other posts are often given to their relatives.

## Semipublic Institutions

These groups are theoretically autonomous, but they are directed by clerics appointed personally by the Supreme Leader. They are generally called “foundations,” with such names as the “Foundation for the Oppressed and Disabled,” the “Martyrs Foundation,” and the “Foundation for the Publication of Imam Khomeini’s Works.” They are tax exempt and are reputed to have a great deal of income. Most of the property they supervise was confiscated from the pre-1979 elite. Because they are run by people with strong connections to the government, these organizations are called **para-statals**, or **bonyads**, which trace their roots to royal foundations established by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. These bonyads invested in property development, which catered to the middle and upper classes. After the 1979 Revolution, the bonyads were nationalized and renamed with the intention of redistributing income to the poor and families of martyrs, those killed in the service of the country. They received land confiscated from those who did not support the government, and so many gained considerable wealth as a consequence.

Today, there are over 100 bonyads, and they are criticized for many of the same reasons as the earlier organizations. As charity organizations they are supposed to provide social services to the poor and the needy,

but without direct government supervision, no one knows how much or to whom this help is given. They have been accused of funneling their money to support the regime, and of turning to commercial activities since the death of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Others criticize bonyads for unfairly competing with private companies, since bonyad firms have political connections that prevent private firms from succeeding.

## The Legislature (The *Majles*)

For most of its recent history Iran has had a unicameral legislature, the *Majles*, although in some ways the Assembly of Religious Experts has functioned as an upper house since 1989, when its membership was expanded to 86 elected representatives. Both the *Majles* and the Assembly are directly elected by the people.

The *Majles* was first created by the Constitution of 1906, when it was part of Iran’s early 20<sup>th</sup> century experiment with democracy. The *Majles* survived the turmoil of its early days as well as the dictatorship of the Pahlavi shahs, and was retained as the central legislative body by the Constitution of 1979. Although the 1989 constitutional amendments weakened the *Majles* in relationship to the presidency, it is still an important political institution with significant powers. Some of those powers are:

- Enacting or changing laws (with the approval of the Guardian Council)
- Interpreting legislation, as long as they do not contradict the judicial authorities
- Appointing six of the twelve members of the Guardian Council, chosen from a list drawn up by the chief judge
- Investigating the cabinet ministers and public complaints against the executive and judiciary
- Removing cabinet ministers, but not the president
- Approving the budget, cabinet appointments, treaties, and loans

The *Majles* has 290 seats, all directly elected through single member districts by citizens over the age of eighteen. The election of 2000 saw many reformists fill the seats through a coalition of reformist parties called the **Khordad Front**. They won 80% of the vote in a campaign that drew over 70% of the electorate. Many supporters of secular parties, all banned from the campaign, voted for the reformers since they saw them as better alternatives to religious conservatives. Before the 2004 elections, the Guardian Council banned many reformist candidates from entering the race, and the result was an overwhelming victory for conservatives. Significantly, control of the *Majles* flip-flopped dramatically from the hands of reformers to religious conservatives. For the 2012 election, about 1200 of the 5000 candidates for legislative seats were disqualified, mostly reformists.

### The Judiciary

The judiciary is headed by a chief justice, who must have an understanding of *sharia*, so by necessity he must be a cleric. The chief justice is appointed by the supreme leader for a five-year term, and he is charged with managing the judiciary and overseeing the appointment and removal of judges. Beneath the chief justice is the Supreme Court, which is the highest court of appeals in the land. Judges on the Supreme Court, like the chief justices, are all high-ranking clerics who are familiar with *sharia*.

Two very important things to remember about Iran's judiciary are: 1) the distinction between two types of law: *sharia* and *qanun*; and 2) the principle of jurist's guardianship means that the supreme leader and the Guardian Council have the final say regarding interpretation of law.

Two types of law are:

- **Sharia**, or Islamic law, was built up over several centuries after the death of the religion's founder, Muhammad, in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. *Sharia* is considered to be the foundation of all Islamic civilization, so its authority goes far beyond Iran's borders. It has incorporated the ideas of many legal scholars,

and captures what many Muslims believe to be the essence of Muhammad himself. Overall, *sharia* is meant to embody a vision of a community in which all Muslims are brothers and sisters and subscribe to the same moral values. The very foundations of Iran's political system rest in the belief that *sharia* supersedes all other types of law, and its interpretation is the most important of all responsibilities for political and religious leaders. The principle of jurist's guardianship reflects reverence for *sharia*, and much of the legitimacy of the supreme leader is based on his ultimate authority as the interpreter of this sacred law.

- **Qanun** – Unlike *sharia*, *qanun* has no sacred basis, but instead is a body of statutes made by legislative bodies. In Iran, *qanun* are passed by the *Majles*, and they have no sacred meaning. *Sharia*, then, is divine law derived from God, and *qanun* is law made by the people's elected representatives. Of course, *qanun* must in no way contradict *sharia*, so the *Majles* must pass responsible *qanun*, especially since the Guardian Council (and ultimately the Supreme Leader) review the work of the legislature and apply the interpretation of *sharia* to all laws passed.

In a very different way than we have seen it applied in other countries, judicial review does exist in Iran. However, ultimate legal authority does not rest in the Constitution, but in *sharia* law itself. Because *sharia* is so complex, its interpretation is not an easy task, and it has been applied in many different ways. In Iran, the Ayatollah Khomeini's importance in shaping the political system is that his interpretation of *sharia* came to be the standard that influenced all leaders that followed him – Supreme Leader Khamenei, the seven presidents, and all other high officials. In other words, a core principle of the present-day regime is to accommodate Islam to a constitutional framework, as provided by the Constitution of 1979.

The Islamic Republic Islamized the judiciary code by interpreting the *sharia* very strictly. The new regime passed the Retribution Law, which permitted families to demand "blood money" (compensation to the victim's family from those responsible for someone's death), and mandated the death penalty for a whole range of activities, includ-



ing adultery, homosexuality, drug dealing, and alcoholism. The law also set up unequal legal treatment of men and women, and Muslim and non-Muslim. The government also banned interest rates on loans, condemning them as “usury,” which implies that people in need of loans are taken advantage of by the lenders.

Although Khomeini argued that the spirit of *sharia* calls for local judges to pronounce final decisions, the regime realized that a centralized judicial system was needed to tend to matters of justice in an orderly fashion. The regime retained the court structure from the shah’s government, keeping the appeals system, the hierarchy of state courts, and the central government’s right to appoint and dismiss judges. Furthermore, the interpretation of *sharia* has broadened gradually, so that the harsh corporal punishments outlined in the Retribution Law are rarely carried out today. Modern methods of punishment are much more common than harsh public retributions, so that most law breakers are fined or imprisoned rather than flogged in the town square.

### The Military

Immediately after the 1979 Revolution the Ayatollah Khomeini established the **Revolutionary Guards**, an elite military force whose commanders are appointed by the supreme leader. The shah had built the regular army, navy, and air forces, and so the Revolutionary Guards was created as a parallel force with its own budgets, weapons, and uniforms, to safeguard the Republic from any subterfuge within the military. The supreme leader is the commander in chief, and also appoints the chiefs of staff and the top commanders of the regular military. According to the Constitution, the regular army defends the borders, while the Revolutionary Guards protect the republic. Both regular armed forces and the Revolutionary Guards were greatly taxed during the war with Iraq that finally ended in 1988.

The **Basij** is a loosely-organized military that is formally part of the Revolutionary Guards, and it gained international attention in the aftermath of the disputed presidential election of 2009, when the opposition candidate, Mir-Hussein Moussavi, accused the Basij of brutality

### THEOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC ELEMENTS IN IRAN’S GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

Structure/Position	Theocratic Characteristics	Democratic Characteristics
Supreme Leader	Jurist guardianship; ultimate interpreter of <i>sharia</i> ; appointed for life	
Guardian Council	Jurist guardianship; interpreter of <i>sharia</i> ; six members selected by the supreme leader	Six members selected by the <i>Majles</i> , which is popularly elected; indirect democratic tie
Assembly of Religious Experts	Jurist guardianship; interpreter of <i>sharia</i>	Directly elected by the people; nonclerics may be members
Expediency Council	Appointed by the supreme leader; most members are clerics	Not all members are clerics
<i>Majles</i>	Responsibility to uphold <i>sharia</i>	Directly elected by the people; pass <i>qanun</i> (statutes)
Judiciary	Courts held to <i>sharia</i> law; subject to the judicial judgments of the supreme leader, Guardian Council	Court structure similar to those in democracies; “modern” penalties, such as fines and imprisonment

as it contained the demonstrations and addressed dissidents. The word Basij means “mass mobilization” in Persian, and it dates back to the Iran-Iraq War, when the Ayatollah Khomeini asked for civilian volunteers to go to the war front. The militia was reinvented in the late 1990s, when the government quelled the street celebrations when Iran advanced to the playoffs in the World Cup soccer championship in 1998. The Basij also helped the government contain students protests in 1999.

Iran currently has about 540,000 active troops, making it the eighth largest military in the world. Much about the military is kept secret, but its advanced abilities and technologies have been shown through the building of long-range missiles. The Revolutionary Guard remains

an important political force, with its own ministry, army, navy, and air-force units, and appears to have a great deal of say in Iran's nuclear program. The Guard is becoming increasingly independent, and takes an active role in policymaking. A large number of former Guards sit in the *Majles*, and men with close links to the Guards control principal media outlets, such as the state broadcaster and the powerful Ministry for Islamic Guidance and Culture. In 2004 the Guards showed their strength by deciding on their own authority to close down the airport in Tehran on the grounds that a national security threat was present. The Guards' engineering arm, known as Ghorb, has been granted big state projects, such as a new section of the Tehran metro.

## PUBLIC POLICY

The policymaking process in Iran is highly complex because laws can originate in many places (not just the legislature), and can also be blocked by other state institutions. Also, policies are subject to change depending on factional control. The two most powerful policymaking institutions in Iran are the *Majles* and the Guardian Council, with the Expediency Council refereeing disputes between the two.

### Policymaking Factions

The leaders of the Revolution of 1979 and their supporters agreed on one thing: they wanted the shah to abdicate. Most people also wanted the Ayatollah Khomeini to lead the country after the shah left. After that, the disagreements began and continue until this day. Two types of factions are:

- **Conservative vs. reformist** – By and large, these factions are created by the often contradictory influences of theocracy and democracy. **Conservatives** uphold the principles of the regime as set up in 1979, with its basis in strict *sharia* law with a minimum of modern modifications. They are wary of influence from western countries and warn that modernization may threaten the tenets of Shiism that provide the moral basis for society, politics, and the economy. They support the right and

responsibility of clerics to run the political system, and they believe that political and religious decisions should be one and the same. **Reformists**, on the other hand, believe that the political system needs significant reform, although they disagree on exactly what the reforms should be. They are less wary of western influence, and tend to advocate some degree of international involvement with countries of the West. Most reformers support Shiism and believe it to be an important basis of Iranian society, but they often support the idea that political leaders do not necessarily have to be clerics.

- **Statists vs. free-marketers** – This rift cuts across conservatives and reformers, and has taken different meanings over the years. Basically, though, the **statists** believe that the government should take an active role in controlling the economy – redistributing land and wealth, eliminating unemployment, financing social welfare programs, and placing price ceilings on consumer goods. We have seen this point of view at work in Mexico under Lazaro Cardenas during the 1930s, and in Russia and China under communism. Statists are not necessarily communists (and few in Iran are), but the same philosophy directed the economy of the Soviet Union with its Five-Year Plans, and continues to direct China's "socialist market economy." On the other hand, the **free-marketers** want to remove price controls, lower business taxes, encourage private enterprise, and balance the budget. In many ways they believe in the same market principles that guide the United States, but they envision it working within the context of the theocratic/democratic state.

These factional disputes have often brought about gridlock and instability, such as the flip-flop that occurred in the *Majles* between the election of 2000 and 2004 from reformist to conservative control. The disputes among the factions have led many of Iran's best and brightest to leave the country, and have deprived the reformists in particular of some potentially good leadership. Factions have also led to confusion on the international scene as well. For example, after the September

11, 2001 attacks in the United States, President Khatami almost immediately extended his condolences to the American people. However, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei forbid any public debate about improving relations with the United States, and also implied that Americans had brought the situation on themselves.

President Hassan Rouhani included a broad number of factions in his cabinet selections in 2013, appointing moderate reformists from President Khatami's administration, technocrats from President Rafsanjani's administration, and moderate conservatives, who are the closest political alignment to a centrist party. Still, factional splits threaten the stability of any president's cabinet, and Rouhani's success will also depend on the relationship he forms with Supreme Leader Khamenei.

### The Importance of Qom

The legitimacy of the modern Iranian theocracy has its roots in Qom, a desert city about 60 miles south of Tehran. It was from Qom that Ayatollah Khomeini began to denounce the shah, and it was there that he set up his government after returning from exile in France. It is a city of seminaries, and the scholars that inhabit them help to define the very foundation of Iranian society. Ironically, despite the fact that Khomeini's doctrine of *velayat-e-faqih* was devised in Qom, many scholars there are not entirely comfortable with the theocratic state. Their debate frames the factionalism of Iranian politics.

From some perspectives, the only rightful union of religion and politics will occur when the Twelfth Imam (see p. 395) returns from hiding. Until then, these scholars say, men of religion should be careful not to get involved in politics, and no one has special authority to guide society during this period called "occultation" between the disappearance and the return of the twelfth imam. Therefore, *velayat-e-faqih* is invalid, because it endows the supreme leader – and other government structures – with divine authority. President Khatami's reform movement drew heavily on the views of clerics that see politics as an experimental, man-made activity that Islam should respect. These pragmatists, of course, clashed with conservative religious scholars, who agree with the doctrine of *velayat-e-faqih* and the divine author-

ity that it implies, and their points of view are very influential in the reversal of the Khatami reforms under President Ahmadinejad.

The presidential candidates who challenged the 2009 election results appealed directly to the scholars of Qom without challenging *velayat-e-faqih* as a doctrine. The response from Qom was mixed, with one group of mid-ranking scholars and a few senior clergy denouncing the election as a fraud, but most kept quiet. However, the election and its aftermath no doubt fueled the disagreements among clerics, further factionalizing the country.

### Economic Issues

The factional disagreements within the political elite are apparent in Iran's struggles with economic policymaking. On the international scene in 2002, a bill was drafted in the *Majles* that would have permitted foreigners to own as much as 100% (up from 48%) of any firm in the country. Not surprisingly, the bill came from the reformists. Predictably, the bill was not approved by the Guardian Council, a reflection of the tug of war between reformists and conservatives. Domestically, most Iranian leaders want improved standards of living for the people, but conservatives are cautious about the influence of secular prosperity on devout Shiism.

Oil has created a vertical divide in the society, particularly among the elites. On one side are elites with close ties to the oil state. On the other side is the traditional sector of the clergy. It was this divide that was clearly evident during the Revolution of 1979, and despite the fact that the clerics won, the secularists have not gone away. Almost no one denies the benefits that oil has brought to Iran. Money from the rentier state that grew under Muhammad Reza Shah helped to build the economic infrastructure and fuel the growth of a middle class. By the 1970s Iran was clearly an industrializing country with increasing prosperity, and its economy was integrated into the world economy.

The Ayatollah Khomeini famously stated that "**economics is for donkeys**," disdaining the importance of economics for policymakers and affirming the superiority of religious, rather than secular leaders.

Even conservatives today don't deny the importance of economic policy decisions, but the factions don't agree on whether or not secularists should be allowed to make policy. The main economic problem plaguing the Islamic Republic has been the instability in the price of oil. The country suffered greatly when oil prices plunged in the early 1980s, rebounded somewhat, and then dropped again in the 1990s. Prices stayed relatively low until the end of the century. After that, oil prices have rebounded, and the Iranian economy benefited but again suffered when prices fell in 2014.

The management of the economy has been criticized, especially under President Ahmadinejad. He was elected based on his promises to provide government subsidies for consumers, and government expenditures on subsidies increased to about 25% of Iran's GDP in 2005-2006. The programs include food, housing, and bank credit, and perhaps most controversially, gasoline. Until 2011, gasoline was priced so low that domestic refiners refused to raise production to meet demand, so Iran had to import about 40% of its oil. This situation encouraged oil smuggling to neighboring countries, and corruption among the quasi-state companies that deal in oil products. The global economic recession that began in late 2007 impacted Iran deeply, especially the dramatic decline in the price of oil in 2008.

In 2010, the government made a bold announcement that major reforms would end many economic subsidies, especially those that encouraged people to waste precious resources. By dropping subsidies, the government allowed prices of oil, gas, electricity, and other basic commodities to reach market levels, and within a month of the president's announcement of the reforms, the price of gasoline had gone up by 75% and that of diesel by more than 2000%. Electricity and water bills also increased, as did the price of some types of bread. Supported by state television, President Ahmadinejad pointed out that the old system favored the rich, whose lifestyles – including heating big houses and fueling multiple cars – were subsidized by the cheap commodities. Indeed, the reforms were structured so that the more water, gas, and electricity an Iranian consumes, the more expensive these utilities become. In order to compensate ordinary Iranians for raising prices closer to world levels, the government has given monthly cash

transfers to families. These reforms have reduced waste and encouraged conservation, and yet the cash transfers have kept people from openly protesting or resisting the changes.

Even so, today almost all Iranians receive cash transfers intended for the poor, with the government spending \$100 billion in subsidies in 2013. With the arms agreement in mid-2015, many hoped that with the lifting of sanctions, the economy would turnaround, but inefficiencies abound, making Iran's economic future uncertain.

In order for President Rouhani to address the country's economic problems, he turned his attention to foreign policy to find a way to ease international sanctions imposed on Iran because of its nuclear activities. In 2015, Iran's oil exports had dwindled to half their former levels. GDP had fallen, currency rates had plunged, and unemployment had risen sharply. Rouhani's success as president depends heavily on his ability to resuscitate the economy.

### Population Policy

One major initiative of the government in recent years has been to bring down the overall birth rate in Iran. The population surged after the Revolution of 1979, when Iranians were encouraged to have large families. As a result, the percentage of young people in the country grew tremendously, placing pressure on schools and eventually the workforce. Unemployment rates increased as too many young people sought the same jobs, so the clergy approved policies to lower the birth rate and reduce long-term burdens from overpopulation. Beginning in the late 1980s, the government reversed its policy and began discouraging large families. This new emphasis occurred at the same time that greater educational and professional opportunities opened to women, so the fertility rate declined, especially in urban areas. Although the population will continue to grow for some time because there are still so many young people of childbearing age, the government appears to have reversed the population crisis.

Today, the effects of these policy shifts is evident, with Iran fast becoming a middle-aged country. Those born in the early years of the re-

public are now in their late 20s, 30s, and early 40s, and they create an ever-aging bubble in the populations pyramid. Birth rates are down, with experts estimating 1.6-1.9 children per woman of childbearing age, broadly in line with European rates.

### Foreign Affairs

Iran's international profile was raised considerably by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whose statements and actions were quite controversial. He became the most polarizing head of government in the Muslim world when he declared the Holocaust a "myth," and argued that Israel should be "wiped away." After that, he threatened to retaliate against American interests "in every part of the world" if the U.S. were to attack Iran. His 2006 letter to George W. Bush inviting him to a televised discussion about their differences was openly published in newspapers, and although Bush declined, Ahmadinejad received a great deal of international publicity for his gesture. He held regular press conferences with western journalists, and he traveled widely. Yet the stance that he generally took was to defend Iran against the rest of the world, particularly the West, reinforcing the historical perception of an isolated country.

President Rouhani has a long record of experience in international relations. He, like many other Iranian leaders, sees the United States and other western countries as permanently in conflict with Iran. However, he has expressed concern over Iran's "brain drain" (exit of scholars to the West), and he has supported membership in the World Trade Organization. During his years as the secretary of the National Security Council, Mr. Rouhani prevented hard-liners from forming an alliance with Saddam Hussein after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, according to *The New York Times* in a July 27, 2013 article. He also directed Iran's negotiations with western countries in 2003, which resulted in an agreement in 2003, the only nuclear deal between Iran and the West in the past 11 years.

The attitudes toward international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization are mixed. Iran's application to join the WTO in 1996 failed in part because of the

difficulties in making foreign investments within the country's borders. The application also failed because the United States opposed it, so these hostilities between the two countries have reverberated into many areas of international economic policy. Iran's most important international membership is probably in OPEC (Organization for Petroleum Exporting Countries) that controls the price of oil exported from its member states.

Iran has long sought to spread its influence throughout the Middle East, an effort that benefited after the United States removed hostile regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Quds Force has exploited the region's instability, carrying out assassinations and bombings, and supplying arms and training to militia's deemed helpful to its interests. Syrian President Assad relies on Iran for cash, advice, and training for its paramilitary fighters.

### Nuclear Energy

"States like these [Iran, Iraq, and North Korea], and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States."

U.S. President George W. Bush  
State of the Union Address  
January 29, 2002

President Bush's "**axis of evil**" statement quoted above created a stir of controversy regarding Iran's international relations with western countries. Iran's nuclear program goes back many decades, but this program has been under serious scrutiny by western nations since the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Iran has maintained that the purpose of its nuclear program was for the generation of power, not for use as weapons. However, in August 2002, a leading critic of the regime revealed two secret nuclear sites, a uranium

enrichment facility in Natanz and a heavy water facility in Arak. Late in 2003, the U.S. insisted that Iran be “held accountable” for allegedly seeking to build nuclear arms in violation of international treaties, including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that Iran had signed. Then in November 2004, Iran’s chief nuclear negotiator announced that Iran had temporarily suspended the uranium enrichment program after pressure from the European Union. This dispute boiled over in August 2005, when the International Atomic Energy Agency announced that Iran had broken seals on one of its nuclear sites – seals that had been placed there by the United Nations in 2004. In 2006 Britain, France, and Germany offered Iran trade, civil-nuclear assistance, and a promise of talks with America if it stopped enriching the uranium that could produce the fuel for a bomb. When Iran refused, diplomacy led in December 2006 to the imposition of formal economic sanctions by the United Nations’ Security Council.

Years of diplomacy efforts followed, and finally in mid-2015, Iran, the United States, and five other world powers reached an agreement about the future of Iran’s nuclear programs. Important parts of the agreement include:

- Limits on Iran’s nuclear programs – Iran agreed to turn its Fordow facility (a site where many experts believe Iran was enriching uranium in centrifuges) into a research center where Iranian and world scientists would work together. Iran also agreed to rebuild its Arak facility so that the production of weapons-grade plutonium would be impossible. Iran also agree to give up most of its centrifuges, which are used to enrich uranium.
- Continuation of enrichment – Iran has long contended that its nuclear program is focused on peaceful purposes, so the agreement allowed Iran to use its Natanz facility for those purposes. However, levels of enrichment were limited, so that the building of weapons would be impossible.
- Extension of the “breakout time” – President Obama argued that the deal extends the time it would take Iran to make enough highly enriched material for a nuclear bomb. However, the agreement has time limits, so it is unclear what might happen when it expires.
- Sanctions may return – If Iran does not comply with the agreement, the U.N. Security Council may vote to reinstate economic

sanctions on Iran.

- Comprehensive inspections – Inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency would have continual access to Iranian facilities, especially if any suspicious activity occurs.

This agreement will no doubt impact Iran’s economic future as well as its relations with other countries, especially the United States. Since the terms of the agreement begin to expire 10 and 15 years from the time of the agreement, critics say that it only delays the Iranians’ ability to obtain a nuclear weapon and so is not a long-term solution.

Iran’s complex political culture and internal factional debates make it very difficult to predict its future. Oil continues to fill the government’s coffers with income, but the economy’s dependence on one product is worrisome to economists and politicians alike, especially after the price of oil plummeted in 2008 and again in 2014. Iran’s unique political system is a bold experiment, and tests the question as to whether or not it is possible for a theocracy to be democratic. Another major theme in government and politics that Iran’s case raises is the relationship between religion and politics. Is a democracy possible without separating the two into different spheres? Does the state benefit from being based in religious principles that are meant to guide human life in general? On the other hand, does religion increase tensions in the relationship between citizens and state so that the government loses its objectivity and essential fairness to its citizens? For these reasons and more, the evolution of Iran’s political system is interesting to watch and vital to understand.

## IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Ahmadinejad, Mahmoud  
 Assembly of Religious Experts  
 “axis of evil”  
 Basij  
 Baha’i  
 Constitution of 1979  
 Constitutional Revolution of 1905-09  
 Cultural Revolution

“economics is for donkeys”

equality-with-difference

The Executives of Construction Party

*faqih*

fundamentalism

Guardian Council

head of state, head of government

Hidden Imam

imams

import substitution industrialization

Iranian Militant Clerics Society

Islamic Iran Participation Front

Islamic Society of Engineers

jurist's guardianship (*velayat-e-faqih*)

Khamenei, Ayatollah Ali

Khatami, Muhammad

Khomeini, Ayatollah Ruhollah

Khordad Front

*Majles*

*Majles* Election of 2004, 2008

Mosaddeq, Muhammad

Mousavi, Mir-Hossein

Muhammad Reza Shah

National Front

*qanun*

Qajar Empire

Qom

Pahlavi Foundation

Pahlavis

People of the Book

Persian Empire

presidential election of 2005, 2009

Rafsanjani, Akbar Hasemi

reformers v. conservatives

rentier state

Resurgence Party

Revolution of 1979

revolution of rising expectations

Revolutionary Guards

Reza Shah

Safavid Empire

secularization

*sharia*

Shiism

statists v. free-marketers

Sunni Muslims

Supreme Leader

theocracy

Tudeh Party

white coup

White Revolution

Workers' House

Zoroastrianism

**Iran Questions**

1. In contrast to Mexico, the political history of Iran does not include
  - A) an era in which the country lost its independence to European imperialists
  - B) major revolutions during the 20th century
  - C) authoritarian rule by elites
  - D) major attempts to secularize the political culture
  - E) economic dependence on one product
2. Unlike the Russian and Chinese Revolutions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Iran's Revolution of 1979 was almost completely based on
  - A) ideology
  - B) military might
  - C) the desire to control oil
  - D) authoritarian motives
  - (E) religion
3. Which of the following pairs of countries are unitary states?
  - A) Russia and China
  - B) Iran and China
  - C) Britain and Russia
  - D) Mexico and Iran
  - E) Russia and Mexico
4. Which of the following accurately compares the Chinese military to the Iranian military?
  - A) In China, the military actively participates in policymaking; in Iran, the military does not.
  - B) In Iran, the military actively participates in policymaking; in China, the military does not.
  - C) The military in neither country actively participates in policymaking.
  - D) The military in both countries actively participates in policymaking.
  - E) The military in both countries controls the government.
5. Presidents in both Iran and Mexico are
  - A) limited to serve for only one term
  - B) directly elected by the people
  - C) heads of state
  - D) heads of ideological parties
  - E) commanders of the armed forces
6. Which of the following ethnic groups in Iran tend to be Sunni Muslims?
  - A) Persians and Azeri
  - B) Zoroastrians and Persians
  - C) Kurds and Arabs
  - D) Arabs and Gilaki
  - E) Persians and Kurds



7. Which of the following is the BEST description of the political system of Iran?

- A) It is a unitary state, but has taken significant steps toward devolution.
- B) It is a unitary state, with few signs of real authority granted to local officials.
- C) It is a federalist state in name, but in reality is a unitary state.
- D) It is a federalist state in name and in reality.
- E) It is a confederal state, with little power granted to the central government.

8. Which of the following is a NOT feature of the Iranian political system?

- A) dual executive positions
- B) the president's exercise of jurist's guardianship
- C) a unicameral legislature
- D) a military active in policymaking
- E) only clerics sit on the Guardian Council

9. A major geographical limitation of Iran is that

- A) there is no access to warm water ports
- B) it has a climate that is generally too cold for agriculture
- C) the densely populated south is separated by mountain ranges from the sparsely populated north
- D) much of the land is either desert or mountains
- E) it straddles two continents so that citizens are physically separated

10. Which of the following characteristics have shaped the political cultures of Russia, China, Mexico, and Iran?

- A) authoritarianism
- B) Shiism
- C) union of political and religious authority
- D) escape from European colonization
- E) little arable land

11. Which of the following countries did NOT have a major internal revolution in the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

- A) China
- B) Russia
- C) Great Britain
- D) Mexico
- E) Iran

12. Iran's Constitution of 1979 differed from the Constitution of 1909 because it (the Constitution of 1979) put more emphasis on

- A) the legislative processes
- B) democratic electoral processes
- C) divinely inspired clerical rule
- D) The rule of law
- E) civil rights and liberties

(Questions 13 and 14 refer to the following chart):

WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS		
Country	Lower House % Women	Upper House % Women
China	23.6%	— *
Iran	3.1%	— *
Mexico	42.4%	33.6%
Nigeria	5.6 %	6.5%
Russia	13.6 %	17.1%
United Kingdom	29.4%	24.6%
* No directly comparable upper house		

13. According to the table, which of the following is the BEST description of women's participation in the Iranian legislature?

- A) Women are well represented.
- B) Women are represented more fairly than they are in Mexico and Nigeria.
- C) Women are seriously under-represented.
- D) Women are represented more fairly than they are in Russia and China.
- E) Women are represented equally well in Iran and Great Britain.

14. In which of the following areas of life are women in Iran BEST represented?

- A) property ownership
- B) political representation
- C) religious leadership
- D) employment
- E) university enrollment

15. The political party system in Iran is characterized by

- A) a strong party in power
- B) two large parties
- C) one party
- D) factional splits
- E) numerous stable parties

16. The body of statutes with no sacred basis in the Iranian system is called

- A) *sharia*
- B) *faqih*
- C) *velayat-e-faqih*
- D) Baha'i
- E) *qanun*

17. In Iran ultimate legal authority rests in

- A) the Supreme Court
- B) the Supreme Leader
- C) the Constitution of 1979
- D) *sharia* law
- E) the *Majles*

18. An important cultural characteristic that separates Iran from most of its near neighbors is its

- A) history of authoritarian hereditary rule
- B) identity as Shiite rather than Sunni
- C) identity as Arab rather than Persian
- D) reliance on *sharia* law
- E) weak sense of nationalism

19. Under the Pahlavis, Iran was transformed into a rentier state because of its

- A) reliance on income from oil
- B) high level of agricultural productivity
- C) renting of land to its people to use as they saw fit
- D) adaptation of western-style democracy
- E) one-party system

20. The Ayatollah Khomeini changed the meaning of jurist's guardianship by

- A) expanding it to give the clergy authority over the entire Shia community
- B) limiting it to the clergy's authority over the unfortunate people in society
- C) interpreting it to grant the power to rule to the people
- D) creating a Supreme Court to carry out its basic principles
- E) interpreting it to reinforce separation of religious and political authority

21. Radical clerics differ from pragmatic conservative clerics in their support of

- A) the movement to overthrow the supreme leader
- B) economic liberalism
- C) political liberalism
- D) state-provided welfare benefits to the poor
- E) traditional ties to bazaaris and rural landowners

22. Civil society in Iran expanded most noticeably during the time

- A) when the Pahlavi shahs ruled
- B) just after the Revolution of 1979
- C) just after the death of the Ayatollah Khomeini
- D) when Muhammad Khatami was president
- E) after Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became president

23. Which of the following are elected to office by direct popular vote in Iran?

- A) Guardian Council and the Assembly of Religious Experts
- B) Assembly of Religious Experts and the *Majles*
- C) Expediency Council and the Guardian Council
- D) supreme leader and the *Majles*
- E) president and the supreme leader

24. Political parties in both Iran and Russia tend to be organized

- A) by positive v. negative attitudes toward the government
- B) by religious beliefs
- C) by conservative v. liberal political beliefs
- D) according to specific interest groups
- E) around prominent political leaders/personalities

25. The Expediency Council was first created by the Ayatollah Khomeini for the purpose of

- A) exercising jurist's guardianship
- B) passing qanun law
- C) refereeing disputes between the Guardian Council and the *Majles*
- D) recommending appointments for government office to the supreme leader
- E) devising the country's budget

26. Which of the following is a political power held by both the Iranian president and the British prime minister?

- A) leading the ruling political party
- B) commanding the armed forces
- C) declaring war
- D) appointing judges
- E) devising the budget

27. Ultimate legal authority in Iran rests in

- A) *qanun*
- B) the Constitution of 1979
- C) the Supreme Court
- D) the Guardian Council
- E) *sharia*

28. Which of the following policymaking factions is most likely to support the government taking an active role in controlling the economy?

- A) conservatives
- B) reformists
- C) statist
- D) pragmatic clerics
- E) free-marketers

29. Which of the following accurately compares elections in Mexico and Iran?

- A) Both have direct elections for president.
- B) Neither have direct elections for an upper house of the legislature.
- C) Mexico has direct elections for the lower house of the legislature, but Iran has no direct elections for legislators.
- D) Iran uses proportional representation to elect its legislature; Mexico uses a plurality system to elect its legislature.
- E) Elections in Iran are generally less fraudulent than elections in Mexico are.

30. Which of the following was NOT a part of the nuclear agreement reached between Iran, the United States, and five other world powers in 2015?

- A) Iran will never be allowed to enrich uranium to the level necessary for creating a nuclear weapon.
- B) Iran will give up most of its centrifuges.
- C) Iran will still be allowed to continue enrichment for peaceful purposes.
- D) If Iran doesn't comply, sanctions can return.
- E) International inspectors will have access to Iranian facilities.

### Free-Response Question: 20 minutes

The legislatures of both Iran and Mexico are important political institutions.

- (a) Identify a function that is common to legislatures in both Iran and Mexico.
- (b) Describe one difference in the way that the legislatures in Iran and Mexico are structured.
- (c) Describe one difference between the way that legislators are selected in Mexico and Iran.
- (d) Describe two limitations on the power of the legislature in Mexico. Describe two limitations on the power of the legislature in Iran.



## CHAPTER EIGHT: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN NIGERIA

As Nigeria goes, so goes the rest of sub-Saharan Africa.”

a common saying

The quote above reflects both the importance of Nigerian political and economic issues as well as the vulnerability of its political system. With its history of tradition-based kingdoms, colonialism, military dictatorships, and disappointing steps toward democracy, Nigeria faces daunting problems, and it is anyone's guess as to what the future holds. Its importance lies partly in the fact that it is Africa's most populous state, with about 140 million citizens, making it one of the largest countries in the world. Nigeria, like many of its neighbors, is a study in contrasts. The political traditions include strong democracy movements, coupled with a susceptibility to totalitarian military rule. It has vast resources, including one of the largest oil deposits in the world, but 70% of the people live in poverty, with a PPP per capita of about \$6000 a year. Nigeria is also a microcosm of worldwide religious tensions, with its population split almost evenly between Islam and Christianity. Yet this division masks an even greater challenge to the nation state: the lack of a coherent national identity that binds together the many ethnicities encompassed within the country's borders. The government's legitimacy was rocked to the core by the flagrantly fraudulent national elections of 2007, which observers declared to be even more flawed than previous elections. However, the elections of 2011 and 2015 appear to have been far cleaner, and hopes for democracy lifted as the crucial element of fair elections were tenuously met.

Is it possible for Nigeria to somehow reconcile a tradition-based and colonial past with the present needs of a modern nation? Will Nigeria's fledgling democracy survive? Will its leaders successfully harness the political muscle once held by the military and learn to better manage the country's resources? Finally, is it possible for the country to stay together, even though its people identify more with individual ethnic groups than with the nation of Nigeria? An examination of these questions, with answers that are far from certain, will help us to understand the dynamics of these issues not only in Nigeria, but in lands far beyond.

## SOVEREIGNTY, AUTHORITY, AND POWER

Citizens of all countries have different opinions about how political power should be distributed and how the government should be structured. However, in Nigeria the differences run far deeper than in most other countries. Even though it has been an independent nation since 1960, neither its leaders nor its citizens agree on the basics of who should rule and how. This dilemma is known as the “**national question**” of how the country should be governed, or even if Nigeria should remain as one nation. The issue is magnified by regional disagreements and hostilities and by the tendency to solve problems by military force and authoritarian leaders, not by mutual agreement.

### Constitutionalism

Nigeria's first constitution was written in 1914, but since then, eight more constitutions have been written, with the last one introduced in 1999 and heavily amended since. Nigerian constitutions represent attempts to establish a basic blueprint for the operation of the government, but none have lasted for any length of time. As a result, **constitutionalism**, or the acceptance of a constitution as a guiding set of principles, has eluded Nigeria. Military and civilian leaders alike have felt free to disobey and suspend constitutional principles, or to toss out older constitutions for those more to their liking. Without constitutionalism, the “national question” has been much harder to answer.

## Legitimacy

The fact that Nigeria is a relatively young country, gaining its independence in 1960, means that establishing the government's legitimacy is a challenging priority. The "national question" is at the heart of the country's legitimacy problems. Nigeria has strong impulses toward fragmentation, or the tendency to fall apart along ethnic, regional, and religious lines. The country's history is full of examples of ethnic and religious conflicts, economic exploitation by the elite, and use of military force. Ironically, the military is one of the few truly national organizations in Nigeria, so despite the problems that it has posed for democracy, it has also been an important source of stability in an unstable country. That stability lends legitimacy to the military's right to rule, and explains why, despite the fact that the last four presidents of Nigeria have been civilians, two (Olusegun Obasanjo and Muhammadu Buhari) were formerly a military general. Most major candidates for the presidency in recent years have also been drawn from the military, except for two presidents – Umaru Yar'Adua, elected in 2007, and **Goodluck Jonathan**, who became president in 2010.

The legitimacy of the Nigerian government is currently at very low ebb, with many citizens having little or no trust in their leaders' abilities to run an efficient or trustworthy state. Part of the problem lies in the different political impulses originating in contradictory influences from Nigeria's past. As a British colony, Nigerians learned to rely on western rule of law, in which even those that govern are expected to obey and support laws. On the other hand, almost since independence was granted in 1960, Nigerian leaders have used military might to enforce their tentative, personalized authority. These military strong men generally adhered to no discernible rule of law. The corruption associated with General **Ibrahim Babangida**, who ruled from 1985 to 1993, and General **Sani Abacha** (1993-1998) alienated citizens even further. Many people questioned why they should pay taxes when their hard-earned money went straight to the generals' bank accounts. This corruption has tainted civilian rule as well, so that most Nigerians are very skeptical about their government. Yet democratic movements have continued throughout the years, so there is a certain hope beneath the cynicism on the surface.

An important source of legitimacy in the north has been *sharia*, especially since the fall of military rule in 1999. Before that, Islamic law influenced the private sphere for centuries, but in many areas of the north it became public law after 1999. In some areas, Hisbah, a police force charged with enforcing Islamic morality, has searched the streets for violators, and has taken them to Islamic courts to face sentences like death by public stoning. However, in 2008 the federal government cracked down on the Hisbah, enforcing a national ban on religious and ethnic militias, and the secular, federally controlled police force has little interest in enforcing the harshest strictures of *sharia*. It now appears that the application of Islamic law is returning to the role that it has long had – a compromise between the dictates of faith and the realities of modern life in Nigeria. The shift reflects the fact that religious law did not transform society. However, *sharia* is evident in new programs that encourage parents to send their daughters to hybrid public elementary schools that offer traditional Islamic education along with math and reading, an initiative that could significantly improve female literacy rates. State officials are using *sharia* rules on cleanliness to encourage recycling of plastic materials that choke landfills and gutters. If this trend toward moderating Islamic law continues, it is possible that tensions between Muslims and Christians will ease in the future, lessening the pressure on the state to fall apart.

A generation ago novelist Chinua Achebe wrote, "The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership," a statement that strikes at the heart of the country's legitimacy crisis. The deeply flawed election of 2007 reinforced Achebe's statement, as it became apparent that the state and national leaders were selected amidst widespread vote rigging, intimidation, fraud, and violence. As president from 2010 to 2015, Goodluck Jonathan was unable to harness the military to deal with Boko Haram, an Islamic terrorist group in the north. In the election of 2015, the people chose Muhammadu Buhari, a former military general, with the hope of defeating the group and regaining stability.

## Political Traditions

Nigerian political traditions run deep and long. Kingdoms appeared as early as 800 C.E., and historical influences may be divided into

three eras: the pre-colonial era, the colonial era, and the era since independence.

### The Pre-Colonial Era (800-1860)

Centralized states developed early in the geographic area that is now Nigeria, especially in the northern savanna lands. Transportation and communication were easier than in the southern forested area, and the north also needed government to coordinate its need to irrigate crops. Influences from this era include:

- **Trade connections** – The Niger River and access to the ocean allowed contact and trade with other civilizations. Also, trade connections were established across the Sahara Desert to North Africa.
- **Early influence of Islam** – Trade with the north put the early Hausa and other groups in contact with Arabic education and Islam, which gradually replaced traditional customs and religions, especially among the elite. Islamic principles, including the rule of religious law (*sharia*), governed politics, emphasizing authority and policymaking by the elite. All citizens, especially women, were seen as subordinate to the leaders' governance.
- **Kinship-based politics** – Especially among the southern people, such as the Tiv, political organization did not go far beyond the village level. Villages were often composed of extended families, and their leaders conducted business through kinship ties. This political organization contrasts greatly with the tendency toward larger states in the north.
- **Complex political identities** – Unfortunately for those trying to understand Nigeria's political traditions, the contrast between centralized state and local governance is far from clear-cut. Even in the south, some centralized kingdoms merged (such as Oyo and Ife), and many small trading-states emerged in the north.

- **Democratic impulses** – One reason why the people of Nigeria today still value democracy despite their recent experiences is that the tradition goes back a long way. Among the Yoruba and Igbo especially, the principle of accountability was well accepted during the pre-colonial period. Rulers were expected to seek advice and to govern in the interest of the people. If they did not, they were often removed from their positions. Leaders were also seen as representatives of the people, and they were responsible for the good of the community, not just their own welfare.

### The Colonial Era (1860-1960)

Colonialism came much later to Africa than to many other parts of the world, but its impact was no less important. In contrast to Mexico that gained independence in 1821, Nigeria only broke with its colonial past in 1960. As a result, Nigeria has had much less time to develop a national identity and political stability. Ironically, even though they brought the rule of law with them, the British also planted influences that worked against the democratic patterns set in place in Nigeria during the pre-colonial period.

- **Authoritarian rule** – The British ruled indirectly by leaving chiefs and other natives in charge of governments designed to support British economic interests. In order to achieve their goals of economic domination, the British strengthened the authority of the traditional chiefs, making them accountable only to the British. This new pattern resulted in the loosening of the rulers' responsibility to the people.
- **The interventionist state** – The colonialists trained chiefs to operate their governments in order to reach economic goals. Whereas in Britain individual rights and free market capitalism check the government's power, no such checks existed in Nigeria. This practice set in place the expectation that citizens should passively accept the actions of their rulers.
- **Individualism** – Capitalism and western political thought emphasizes the importance of the individual, a value that gener-

ally works well in Britain and the United States. However, in Nigeria it released a tendency for chiefs to think about the personal benefits of governance, rather than the good of the whole community.

- **Christianity** – The British brought their religion with them, and it spread throughout the south and west, the areas where their influence was the strongest. Since Islam already was well entrenched in the north, the introduction of Christianity created a split between Christian and Muslim dominated areas.
- **Intensification of ethnic politics** – During the colonial era, ethnic identities both broadened and intensified into three groups: the **Hausa-Fulani**, **Igbo**, and **Yoruba**. This process occurred partly because the British pitted the groups against one another in order to manage the colony by giving rewards (such as education and lower-level bureaucratic jobs) to some and not to others. Another factor was the anti-colonial movement that emerged during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Independence leaders appealed to ethnic identities in order to gain followers and convince the British to decolonize.

#### The Era since Independence (1960 to the present)

In the first years after independence, Nigeria struggled to make the parliamentary style of government work, and then settled into military dictatorship by 1966, interspersed with attempts to establish a civilian-led democracy. Traditions established during this era include:

- **Parliamentary-style government replaced by a presidential system** – From 1960 to 1979 Nigeria followed the British parliamentary style government. However, the ethnic divisions soon made it difficult to identify a majority party or allow a prime minister to have the necessary authority. In 1979 the country switched to a presidential system with a popularly-elected president, a separate legislature, and an independent judiciary. However, the latter two branches have not consistently checked the power of the president.



**Nigeria's Location in Africa.** Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with about 140 million people. It is located in the "bight of Africa" along a coastline that Europeans dominated from the late 19th century until the mid-20th century.

- **Intensification of ethnic conflict** – After independence the Hausa-Fulani of the north dominated the parliamentary government by nature of their larger population. To ensure a majority, they formed a coalition with the Igbo of the southeast, which in turn caused resistance to grow among the Yoruba of the west. Rivalries among the groups caused them to turn to military tactics to gain power, and in 1966 a group of Igbo military officers seized power and established military rule.
- **Military rule** – The first military ruler, Agiyi Ironsi, justified his authority by announcing his intention to end violence and stop political corruption. He was killed in a coup by a second general, but the coup sparked the Igbo to fight for independence for their land – called **Biafra** – from the new country of Nigeria. The Biafran Civil War raged on from 1967 until 1970, creating more violence and ethnic-based conflict. Although the country remained together, it did so only under military rule.
- **Personalized rule/corruption** – During colonial rule, native leaders lost touch with the old communal traditions that encouraged them to govern in the interest of the people. Individualism translated into rule for personal gain, and the military regimes of the modern era generally have been characterized by greed and corruption.



- **Federalism** – In an attempt to mollify ethnic tensions yet still remain one country, Nigerian leaders set up a federalist system, with some powers delegated to state and local governments. Although this system may eventually prove to be beneficial, under military regimes it did not work. Theoretically, power was shared. However, military presidents did not allow the sub-governments to function with any separate sovereignty. Instead, the state remained unitary, with all power centered in the capital city of Abuja.
- **Economic dependence on oil** – In many ways, Nigeria's good fortune has been a liability in its quest for political and economic stability. Its rich oil reserves have proved to be too tempting for most of the military rulers to resist, and corruption has meant that oil money only enriched the elite. Abundant oil also has caused other sectors of the economy to be ignored, so that Nigeria's economic survival is based almost exclusively on oil. When the international oil markets fall, so does Nigeria's economy.

### Political Culture

All-important historic traditions have shaped a complex modern political culture characterized by ethnic diversity and conflict, corruption, and a politically active military. However, it also includes a democratic tradition and the desire to reinstate leadership that is responsible to the people. Characteristics of the political culture include:

- **Patron-clientelism (prebendalism)** – Nigeria is the third example that we have seen of a political culture characterized by **patron-clientelism**. Just as in China and Mexico, clientelism, the practice of exchanging political and economic favors among patrons and clients, is almost always accompanied by corruption. The patron (or political leader) builds loyalty among his clients (or lesser elites) by granting them favors that are denied to others. For example, in Nigeria, in exchange for their support, a president may grant to his clients a portion of the oil revenues. This practice invites corruption, and it usually means that the larger society is hurt because only a few

people benefit from the favors. In Nigeria, patrons are generally linked to clients by ethnicity and religion.

- **State control/rich civil society** – Civil society refers to the sectors of a country that lie outside government control. In Nigerian history, the state has tried to control almost all aspects of life, first under British rule and then under military dictatorship. However, the government has never succeeded in totally dominating civil society. Formal and informal ethnic and religious associations, professional and labor groups, and other NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) have long shaped the society. These groups have related to the government mainly through corporatism and clientelism, but potentially they could form the base of a viable democracy.
- **Tension between modernity and tradition** – Nigeria's colonial past has encouraged it to become a strong, modern nation, but it also has restricted its ability to reach that goal. For many years, Nigeria's status as a colony kept the country in a subservient economic position. Once independence was gained, modernity was difficult to attain because of ethnic-based military conflicts and personalized, corrupt leadership practices. The independence movement itself encouraged Nigerians to reestablish contact with their pre-colonial roots that emphasize communal accountability. Values established in the pre-colonial era conflict with those established in the colonial era, creating the basis for the serious problems that Nigeria faces today.
- **Religious conflict** – Islam began to influence northern Nigeria as early as the 11<sup>th</sup> century, at first coexisting with native religions, and finally supplanting them. Christianity arrived much later, but spread rapidly through the efforts of missionaries. These two religions have intensified ethnic conflict, and they also have fed political issues. For example, Muslims generally support *sharia*, or religious law, as a valid part of political authority. Christians, of course, disagree. As a result, an ongoing debate about the role of *sharia* in the Nigerian state has sparked religious conflict.

- **Geographic influences** – Nigeria is located in West Africa, bordered on the south by the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. Its population of 140 million is greater than all the other fourteen countries of West Africa combined, partly because of its size and the lure of employment in its cities and in the oil industry. Nigeria's ethnic groups may be divided into six geographic zones:

1. Northwest – Dominated by two groups that combined as the Hausa-Fulani people, the area is predominately Muslim.
2. Northeast – This area is home to many smaller groups, such as the Kanuri, which are also primarily Muslim.
3. Middle Belt – This area contains many smaller ethnic groups, and it is characterized by a mix of both Muslims and Christians.
4. Southwest – The large ethnic group called Yoruba dominate this area. The Yoruba are about 40% Muslim, 40% Christian, and about 20% devoted to native religions.
5. Southeast – This area is inhabited by the Igbo, who are primarily Roman Catholic, but with a growing number of Protestant Christians.
6. The Southern Zone – This area includes the delta of the huge Niger River, and its people belong to various small minority groups.

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

Political and economic change in Nigeria may be analyzed by dividing its history into three parts: pre-colonial, colonial, and modern eras. Nigeria's political influences in pre-colonial days varied widely according to ethnicity and region, as did its economic practices. British control during the colonial era brought contradictory political influences – democracy vs. subjugation to colonial rule. Economically Ni-

geria became highly dependent on British demands, and the colony established a mercantilist role of providing raw materials (like oil) to industrialized nations. Independence in 1960 meant that one of Nigeria's biggest challenges was just that – How does the new country truly become independent, when it has been dependent for so long? The sources of change have varied with each era, but they have all had important consequences for the modern Nigerian state.

### The Pre-Colonial Era (800-1860 C.E.)

From the beginning, Nigerian geography has dictated political, social, and economic development. The savanna areas of the north invited easy trade through Saharan Berber traders up to northern Africa, whereas the people of the forested areas of the south were not in contact with the Berbers. Change occurred through cultural diffusion, or contact with and spread of customs and beliefs of other people. Most important was the diffusion of Islam, a change that was gradual, with conversion to the religion occurring slowly but steadily over time.

Despite the overall nature of gradual change, an important group – the Fulani – came to the north through jihad, or Islamic holy war, so this change occurred abruptly. In 1808 the Fulani established the **Sokoto Caliphate**, a Muslim state that encompassed the entire northwest, north mid section, and part of the northeast. The caliphate traded with Europeans, and eventually succumbed to British colonial rule by 1900. However, it put in place the tradition of an organized, central government based on religious faith.

In contrast, people in the south generally lived communally and in closer contact with the Atlantic Ocean trade. As a result, even before the colonial era, they came into contact with Europeans who converted many of them to Christianity. An important consequence of this contact plagued Nigeria from the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the form of the Atlantic slave trade. The first contacts were with the Portuguese, but the real displacement of people began in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the Dutch, British, French, and Spanish traders began transporting Africans in large numbers to the New World from the Nigerian

coast. The impact on the people is difficult to quantify, but the very nature of the slave trade meant that countless young males were forced to leave their native lands.

### The Colonial Era (1860-1960)

European influence began in the earlier era, but in 1860 the British imposed indirect rule, in which they trained natives, primarily from the south, to fill the European-style bureaucracy. The British established the area that would become Nigeria in 1860 as a trading outlet, where they made use of natural resources and cheap human labor. The British influence was strongest in the south, emanating from the ports along the coast.

Because the north was already organized into political hierarchies according to Islamic tradition, the British left that area's government structures primarily intact. These political changes gave more power to elites, and reinforced their tendencies to seek personal benefit from their positions. It further emphasized differences between north and south, leaving the colony vulnerable to divisions that later caused serious conflict and violence.

Another important influence from the colonial era was the introduction to Nigeria of western-style education. Christian missionaries set up schools subsidized by the British government, primarily for elementary education. In 1934, the first higher education institution was opened, and the first university was founded in 1948. This change had many important consequences, the most obvious being the creation of a relatively literate population. However, it also reinforced some growing cleavages. Elites became more and more separated from the people because they received most of the benefits of education. As a result, they tended to see themselves as privileged leaders who deserved economic rewards. Another consequence was a deepening of the rift between north and south, since most of the British schools were located in the south, and very few northerners had access to western-style education. In turn, northerners came to be seen as backward by southerners, and northerners came to resent this stereotype.

### Modern Nigeria (1960-Present)

Nigeria's transition to independence began to take place in the years preceding 1960, with the British trying to "prepare" Nigerians to rule their own country. Indeed, the preparation began early because the British trained natives to join the bureaucracy. Education invariably included the teaching of western political values, including freedom, justice, and equality of opportunity. These lessons were not lost on the native leaders for Nigerian independence, so British education sowed the seeds for decolonization.

An important change in the early post-colonial days came in 1966 when the parliamentary government was replaced by a military dictatorship. This action set in motion the tendency for government to change hands quickly and violently, as the nation began to experience a series of military coup d'états. In 1979 the military dictator, **Olusegun Obasanjo**, willingly stood down for a democratically-elected president, Shehu Shagari, but Shagari was forced out of office in 1983 by a military coup led by General Muhammadu Buhari. Two more coups kept Nigeria under military dictatorship until 1999, when a democratic election brought Obasanjo back to power, but this time as a civilian. The elections of 1999, 2003, and 2007 were rife with fraud and violence, with the election of 2007 probably the worst of all. At the same time, the development of nationalism eluded Nigeria, and created the "**national question**," or the possibility that Nigeria would not survive as a country.

The modern era has also seen ethnic identities become the major basis for conflict in Nigeria. Before the colonial era, these ethnicities certainly existed, but the different identities did not lead to constant conflict. Independence brought on a competition among groups, based on heightened awareness of ethnic differences encouraged by the British. Once the British were gone, competition among military generals for control of the country became based on ethnicity, and the heightened tensions have left reconciliation of differences all the more difficult.

Another change brought about during the modern era has been the institutionalization of corruption among the political elite. This ten-

dency was made much worse by two military presidents: General Ibrahim B. Babangida, president from 1985 to 1993, and General Sani Abacha, from 1993 to 1998. Both generals maintained large foreign bank accounts, with regular deposits being diverted from the Nigerian state. Other funds went to the Nigerian elite through the patron client system. For example, it is estimated that about 2/3 of the windfall Nigeria received in oil sales during the first Persian Gulf War in 1991 ended up in the hands of Nigerian elites.

Each military leader between 1966 and 1999 promised to transfer power to civilians as soon as the country was “stable.” In 1993 it seemed as if the time had arrived when civilian Moshood Abiola won the presidential election. However, General Babangida annulled the election, only to lose power to General Sani Abacha in a military coup later that year. When Abacha died suddenly in 1998, a Middle-Belt Muslim General, Abdulsalami Abubakar succeeded him, with the now-familiar promise to eventually hand over the government to a duly elected civilian. He set up a transition team, elections were held in 1999, and the winner, Olusegun Obasanjo, became president. Obasanjo was re-elected in 2003, and some hope that these events indicate the long anticipated arrival of a democratic government. However, two facts made it difficult to claim the triumph of democracy: Obasanjo was a former military general, and both elections were characterized by voting fraud. The election of 2007 was even more questionable than the previous two, and so the potential for instability is still a threat to the country. Even though the elections of 2011 and 2015 were an improvement, no clear trend toward democratization is yet in place.

### CITIZENS, SOCIETY, AND THE STATE

The people of Nigeria have some huge challenges in establishing democratic ties with their government. Democratization is always a difficult process because it assumes that citizens have both the time and means to pay attention to political and societal issues. Even in advanced democracies, people often do not link their everyday concerns with those of the government. Many societal characteristics of Nigeria make democratization a challenge:

#### LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS IN NIGERIA SINCE 1960

	RULER	GOVERNMENT TYPE	REASON FOR TRANSITION
1960-1966	Tafawa Balewa (Prime Minister)	Republic	Military coup; Balewa assassinated
1966	Johnson Aguyi-Ironsi	Military dictatorship	Military coup; Ironsi assassinated
1966-1975	Yakubu Gowon	Military dictatorship	Military coup; Gowon replaced
1975-1976	Murtala Muhammed	Military dictatorship	Military coup; Muhammed assassinated
1976-1979	Olusegun Obasanjo	Military dictatorship	Replaced by democratically elected president
1979-1983	Shehu Shagari	Presidential democracy	Military coup; Shagari replaced
1983-1985	Muhammed Buhari	Military dictatorship	Military coup; Buhari replaced
1985-1993	Ibrahim Babangida	Military dictatorship	Military coup; Babangida resigned under pressure
1993-1998	Sani Abacha	Military dictatorship	Death of Abacha; Abdulsalami Abubakar rules temporarily
1999-2007	Olusegun Obasanjo	Presidential democracy	Reached end of two-term presidency
2007-2010	Umaru Yar'Adua	Presidential democracy	/Death of Yar'Adua
2010-2015	Goodluck Jonathan	Presidential democracy	Defeated in election
2015	Muhammadu Buhari	Presidential democracy	

**Leadership transitions.** Nigeria's unstable leadership is reflected in the table above as the country first tried parliamentary government that was taken over by military coup, and then changed to a presidential system in 1979, only to have the government seized again by the military in 1983. Since 1999 the country has elected the president in a series of questionable elections (1999, 2003, 2007), although the elections of 2011 and 2015 appeared to be cleaner.

- **A large gap between the rich and the poor** – Like Mexico, the distribution of income in Nigeria is very unequal (Gini index of .48), with a few people being very wealthy and most being very poor. However, Nigeria's economy shows fewer signs of growth, and so the outlook for closing the income gap is much bleaker.
- **Health issues** – Like many other African nations, Nigeria has high rates of HIV/AIDS, with some estimating that one of every 11 HIV/AIDS sufferers in the world lives in Nigeria. The toll that the disease has taken on the African continent is incalculable, and the cost to the Nigerian economy, as well as to society in general, is immeasurable. The government has generally made AIDS a secondary priority, leaving much of the challenge to a small group of underfunded nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The government has provided medications through a small number of clinics, but they reach only a few thousand people in a country where several million people are estimated to be HIV positive.
- **Literacy** – Nigeria's overall literacy rate is 59.6%, but there is a gap between the male literacy rate at 69.2%; and the female rate of 49.7%. This is higher than for many other nations in Africa, but is below the world average of 89.9% for men, and 82.2% for women.

### Cleavages

Nigeria has one of the most fragmented societies in the world, with important cleavages based on ethnicity, religion, region, urban/rural differences, and social class. Nigeria is similar to Russia in that both have had to contend with ethnic-based civil wars – Russia in the ongoing conflict with Chechnya, and Nigeria with the Biafran Civil War between 1967 and 1970. In both countries, the ethnic conflicts have undermined the basic legitimacy of the government. The consequences of these cleavages for the Nigerian political system have been grave because they have made any basic agreements about governance almost impossible.

COMPARATIVE LITERACY RATES	
<b>China</b>	
<b>Males</b>	<b>98.2%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>94.5%</b>
<b>Iran</b>	
<b>Males</b>	<b>91.2%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>82.5%</b>
<b>Mexico</b>	
<b>Males</b>	<b>96.2%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>94.2%</b>
<b>Nigeria</b>	
<b>Males</b>	<b>69.2%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>49.7%</b>
<b>Russia</b>	
<b>Males</b>	<b>99.7%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>99.6%</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	
<b>Males</b>	<b>99%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>99%</b>

Source: *CIA Factbook*, 2012-2015 estimates

The table above shows that Nigeria's literacy rates for both men and women are significantly lower than those for the other five countries. China and Russia's high rates reflect the emphasis that communist leaders put on literacy, as well as equality between the sexes. Nigeria's rates are not only low, but they also show a large gap between male and female literacy rates, as do the rates for Iran. A related statistic for Nigeria is that each woman bears an average of 4.91 children in her lifetime, which means that women's educational opportunities are often cut short by having children at a young age and remaining at home with offspring.

- **Ethnicity** – Nigeria has between 250 and 400 separate ethnic groups with their own array of customs, languages, and religions. The three largest groups – the Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba – have very little in common, and generally cannot speak one another's languages. They live separately in their own enclaves, and virtually no contacts take place among the groups.

- Religion** – In China and the former Soviet Union, ethnic tensions are (were) managed by imposing communism on the society so that some unifying ideology held the people together. Nigeria has had no such ideology, but instead its political culture is made more complex by competing religions. About half of all Nigerians are Muslim, 40% are Christian, and the remaining 10% affiliate with native religions. Ethnic tensions are exacerbated by religious differences among Muslims, Christians, and those that practice native religions. International tensions between Muslims and Christians are reflected in Nigeria, but their arguments are rooted in the preferential treatment that the British gave to Christians. Disputes regarding the religious law of Islam, the *sharia*, and its role in the nation's policymaking practices reflect the significance of religious cleavages.
- Region/north vs. south** – Although Nigeria's ethnic divisions are multiple, the country was divided into Three Federated Regions in 1955, five years before independence was official. These regions follow ethnic and religious divisions, and they are the basis for setting election and legislative procedures, as well as political party affiliations. Another way to divide Nigeria by region is north vs. south, with the north being primarily Muslim, and the South mainly Christian.
- Urban/rural differences** – As in many other countries, significant urban/rural differences divide Nigeria. Political organizations and interest groups exist primarily in cities, as well as newspapers and electronic media sources. Although their activities were suppressed by the annulment of the election of 1993 and the execution of rights activist and environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1995, most organized protests have taken place in cities.
- Social class** – The division between elites and ordinary people runs deep in Nigeria. The wealth of the elites stems from control of the state and the resources of the country. They have maintained power through appealing to ethnic and religious identities of the people. The elites generally have found it dif-

ficult to abandon their access to the government's treasury for personal gain, and yet many educated elite would like to see Nigeria transformed into a modern nation based on democratic principles.

### Public Opinion and Political Participation

Nigeria is not yet a democracy, and despite a historically rich civil society, its citizens have been encouraged to relate to government as subjects, not as active participants. Some activities are now taking



**Nigeria's Diversity.** The ethno-linguistic map above shows the diversity of Nigeria and its neighboring countries, Benin and Cameroon. The shade variations in the map indicate different languages, and the names show some of the many ethnic groups that inhabit the area. Notice how the political boundaries between countries do not follow ethno-linguistic lines. In recent years, the capital of Nigeria was moved from Lagos (on the coast) to Abuja (in the center of the country) in an effort to create a neutral zone in the center of the country.

place in civil society, or the realm outside the government influence, with some professional associations, trade unions, religious groups, and various other interest groups emerging. Even with the presence of military rule, presidents have generally allowed a free press to exist and interest group membership to be maintained.

#### Patron-Clientelism (Prebendalism)

Much participation, particularly in rural areas, still takes place through the patron-client system. The special brand of clientelism in Nigerian politics is known as “**prebendalism**,” a term borrowed from Max Weber’s concept of an extremely personalized system of rule in which all public offices are treated as personal fiefdoms. By creating large patronage networks based on personal loyalty, civilian officials have skewed economic and political management to such an extent that they have often discredited themselves. Local government officials gain support from villagers through dispensing favors, and they in turn receive favors for supporting patron bosses. Of course, most favors are exchanged among the political elite, but the pattern persists on all levels. With patron-clientelism comes corruption and informal influence, but it does represent an established form of political participation in Nigeria.

#### Civil Society

In Nigeria’s postcolonial history, many formal interest groups and informal voluntary associations have actively sought to influence political decisions. Since 1999 many have strengthened, some serving as centripetal forces, encouraging Nigerian unity, and others creating centrifugal influences, causing Nigeria to fragment along ethnic and religious lines. One group that has managed to do both is the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, or MOSOP, founded by dissident **Ken Saro-Wiwa** in the 1990s. MOSOP has worked to apply national laws to secure financial benefits for the Ogoni in the Niger Delta and to hold foreign-operated oil companies to environmental standards.

Trade unions and professional organizations have been particularly active in trying to protect the rights of their members. For example, the National Union of Petroleum and Gas Workers (NUPENG) has been an influential voice for workers in the all-important petroleum industry. Formal associations for legal, medical, and journalism professions articulate the political interests of Nigeria’s growing professional class.

#### Voting Behavior

Nigerian citizens have voted in national elections since 1959, but since many elections have been canceled or postponed by the military and others have been fraudulent, voter behavior patterns are difficult to track. Political parties are numerous and fluid, with most formed around the charisma of their candidates for office, so party loyalty is an imperfect reflection of voter attitudes. Babangida’s annulment of the 1993 election also put a damper on political participation during most of the 1990s. However, elections on local, state, and national levels were held in 1999 and 2003, although their results appear to be fraudulent. Nevertheless, Nigerian citizens voted in large numbers in both the 1999 and 2003 elections. One estimate is that close to 2/3 of eligible voters actually voted in 2003, but the widespread corruption around the election make those figures highly unreliable. The participation rates in the 2007 election are almost impossible to calculate because of voter fraud and inability of legitimate voters to cast their ballots. In the more reliable election of 2011 more than 3% of the votes were declared invalid, but the turnout of valid voters was almost 54%. In 2015, 2.8% were declared invalid, but the turnout was less than 44%, partly because of difficulty voting in areas in the northeast where the terrorist organization, Boko Haram, held control at the time of the election.

#### Attitudes toward Government

Not surprisingly, most Nigerians have a low level of trust in their government. General Abacha was so widely disliked that there was rejoicing and celebration in the street when he died unexpectedly in

1998, with some citizens dubbing the event a “coup from heaven.” Nigerians in general are skeptical about the prospects for democracy, and they do not believe that elections are conducted in a fair and honest way. Whether or not Nigerians will remain cynical, however, is yet to be seen. In the early days of independence, attitudes toward the government were generally much more favorable, and many citizens expressed an identity as Nigerians, not just as members of ethnic groups. Perhaps the cynicism results from the notorious rule of Babangida and Abacha in the 1980s and 90s and will soon change. However, without the commitment to democracy from political elites, ordinary citizens are unlikely to see their government in a positive light in the near future.

According to an Afrobarometer survey published in 2013, the majority of citizens (67 percent) describe the present economic condition of the country as “very bad or fairly bad.” Additionally, the survey revealed that 81 percent of Nigerians assessed the government’s performance in managing the economy as “very badly or fairly bad.” 50 percent say they would go to the police for assistance if they were victims of crime (the top reason for not going to the police is the need to pay a bribe). Despite these bleak statistics, many Nigerians thought the quality of the election of 2011 was “better” than the election of 2007. Still, only 38% rated the election “completely free and fair.” Nigerian attitudes toward democracy are shared by citizens in many other African countries. According to an Afrobarometer survey published in 2006, 6 in 10 Africans sampled in 18 countries said that democracy was preferable to any other form of government. However, satisfaction with democracy dipped to 45% from 58% in 2001.

Nigerian citizens’ negative perceptions of their government are based in some very solid evidence that government officials are quite corrupt. **Transparency International**, a private organization that compiles statistics about corruption in countries around the world, usually ranks Nigeria very low in the “Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index” that they publish every year. In 2006 Nigeria ranked 142nd out of 146 countries in terms of how “clean” its government is. In 2014, the country’s rank was 136, still toward the bottom of the list, but with the same score (27) as Iran and Russia. Mexico’s score (35)

COUNTRY	CPI SCORE*	RANK (178 COUNTRIES TOTAL)
China	36	100
Iran	27	136**
Mexico	35	103
Nigeria	27	136**
Russia	27	136**
United Kingdom	78	14

\*The Corruption Perception Index Score is compiled every year by Transparency International. Countries are ranked from 1 to 100, with a 100 reflecting a corruption-free government.  
 \*\*a tie

Source: *Transparency International*, [www.transparency.org](http://www.transparency.org)

and China’s score (36) were somewhat higher, but five of the six core countries are low, considering that the scale is 1-100. Only the United Kingdom, with a score of 78, can claim to have a relatively “clean” government, with a rank of 17 out of 178 countries.

China, Mexico, and Nigeria all are characterized by patron-clientelism, so it is not surprising that all have relatively low CPI scores. Since Transparency International considers a score of 1 to be “highly corrupt,” the chart supports the fact that corruption is a big problem in all of the six countries except for the United Kingdom. In all five cases (China, Mexico, Nigeria, Iran, and Russia) corruption is part of the political culture, and bribes and favoritism are a part of the ways that governments operate. Nigeria’s prebendalism permeates the political system to such a degree that political participation cannot take place outside its influence.

One controversial action taken by Yar’Adua’s administration in 2008 was the removal from office of Nuhu Ribadu, the head of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), a government or-



ganization set up to fight corruption. Since 2003, Ribadu had gained a reputation for bravely charging and prosecuting the politicians, particularly the state governors, who are responsible for most of the fraud and looting of public funds. In 2007 the EFCC arrested seven former governors, including James Ibori of the oil-rich Delta States, who was a leader of the ruling People's Democratic Party and a major funder of Yar'Adua's election campaign. Two weeks after Ibori's arrest, the government announced that Ribadu was resigning in order to be "re-educated" in a special training program. Many believe that EFCC had made real progress in addressing Nigeria's corruption, but the agency was not allowed to continue its investigations and arrests.

During the election campaign of 2015, Muhammadu Buhari promised to curb corruption, including theft of public funds by elites and poor government practices and supervision. If he succeeds in his promise, he will reverse a decades-old pattern of imbedded corruption.

#### Protests and Political Participation

Since the return of democracy in 1999, a number of ethnic-based and religious movements have mobilized to pressure the federal government to address their grievances. International oil companies have been major targets, especially in the Niger Delta where the companies and oil fields are centered. A widely publicized protest occurred in July 2002 when a group of unarmed Ijaw women occupied Chevron-Texaco's Nigerian operations for 10 days. The siege ended when Chevron-Texaco's officials agreed to provide jobs for the women's sons, and set up a credit plan to help village women start businesses. Although this protest ended peacefully, others were violently suppressed by the Obasanjo government. A major upswing in protests and unrest began in early 2006, with groups organizing to attack the foreign-based oil companies. Armed rebel gangs have blown up pipelines, disabled pumping states, and kidnapped foreign oil workers. These events in Nigeria, the world's eighth largest oil exporter, have affected international energy markets, contributing to higher prices and tighter supplies. As a result, production sites have been shut down, and some companies have left Nigeria, often blaming the government for its in-

ability to stop the problems. An amnesty was signed in 2009, and so in recent years, the conflicts have lessened but the uneasiness remains.

After the election of 2011, when Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian from the south, retained the presidency that he had assumed when Yar'Adua died in 2010, protests erupted in the north among people who believed that the informal rule of alternating presidents from the north and south had been violated. One group, Boko Haram, carried out almost daily shootings and occasional bombings, trying to undermine Jonathan's authority. The group, whose name means "Western education is sinful," says it is fighting for the wider application of *sharia* law in Nigeria, and has claimed responsibility for hundreds of attacks in the north, often aimed at police, churches, and bars. Although Boko Haram's ideology is not widely supported in Nigeria, where most Muslims are moderate, it has built a following by playing on people's frustrations. Amnesty International has criticized the Nigerian military's retaliation to attacks, claiming that unlawful arrests, extra-judicial killings and unexplained disappearances have occurred.

By 2013, Boko Haram had killed more than a thousand people, and so the Nigerian government launched a campaign to crush the insurgency, using thousands of troops, vehicles, and even fighter jets and helicopter gunships. President Jonathan placed a large part of Nigeria's north under a state of emergency, ordering troops to "take all necessary action" to end the terrorism. In May 2013, more than 200 people were killed in what local officials, residents, and human rights groups said was a sweeping massacre by Nigerian forces in Baga, in northern Nigeria. Since much of the area was put under a communications blackout, it was difficult to know what was going on, but the crackdown resulted in thousands of people fleeing across the border to Niger.

In 2014-2015, Boko Haram stepped up the attacks, and gained international attention with the kidnapping and disappearance of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in April 2014. In mid-2014, the group gained control of territory in their home state of Borno. In 2015, a military coalition, including Chad, Niger and Nigeria displaced the group from

most of its territory. However, violence continued as Boko Haram claimed responsibility for further attacks that continued into the fall.

## POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

In its long history, Nigeria has experienced many different regime types. In its pre-colonial days, the regime type varied from one area to another. In the north and west, well-developed large states with hereditary monarchs developed, and in the south, small communal kinship-based rule predominated. The Hausa people in the west were organized into powerful trading city-states. Regime-type changed dramatically with colonization, with the British imposition of indirect rule. Where chiefs did not exist, the British created them, and authoritarian rule under British direction was well developed by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Authoritarian rule has continued into the independence era, when a military-style regime emerged by 1966.

Today the government structure is formally federalist and democratic, but it has not generally operated as such. The British controlled economic life during the colonial era, and the economy remains under state control today. However, international factors have forced Nigeria to turn to supranational organizations – such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund – for help in restructuring the economy.

### Linkage Institutions

Because Nigeria's efforts to democratize are so far incomplete, linkage institutions in general are both newly developed and highly fluid. However, Nigerian citizens have organized in a number of ways with varying degrees of impact on Nigerian politics.

#### Political Parties

Predictably, political parties in Nigeria have almost always been regionally and ethnically based. Unlike Mexico, Nigeria did not develop a one-party system in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that contributed to political

stability. Instead, Nigeria's extreme factionalism led to the development of so many parties that it was almost impossible to create a coherent party system. The resulting multi-party system has reinforced and deepened ethnic and religious cleavages. Parties also form around powerful individuals, and so tend to fade with leadership changes.

Parties have appeared, disappeared, and reorganized frequently. However, in the election of 2015, these two parties supported major presidential candidates:

- **The People's Democratic Party (PDP)** – This is one of the better-established parties, having run candidates for office as early as 1998. The PDP is the party of Olusegun Obasanjo, and in 2003 he received about 62% of the vote for president. In 2007, amidst widespread fraud, Umaru Yar'Adua received almost 70% of the vote. The party also gained the overwhelming majority in the National Assembly, and most of the governors elected were candidates of the PDP. However, because the elections were fraudulent, it is very difficult to know how much real support the PDP actually has. Obasanjo is a Christian and Yoruba from the south, but the party won elections throughout the country. Yar'Adua was a Muslim from the north, and when he died in 2010, his vice president, Goodluck Jonathan, a Southern Christian took over as acting president, and in 2011, Jonathan was elected president in his own right, but he lost the 2015 election to All Progressive Congress candidate Muhammadu Buhari.
- **All Progressive Congress** – Prior to the election the All Progressive Congress was formed as an alliance of four opposition parties – the Action Congress of Nigeria, the Congress for Progressive Change, the All Nigeria People's Party, and the All Progressives Grand Alliance. In primaries held in December 2014, Muhammadu Buhari won the new party's candidacy for president, and eventually won the election.

One trend since 1999 is for parties to lose their regional base and to draw support from many parts of the country. The PDP originated in the Muslim north, but deliberately ran Obasanjo, a Christian Yo-

rubia from the south, as its candidate in 1999 and 2003. As a result, it became the dominant party; however, all three elections before 2011 were fraudulent, and the violence levels were high enough (more than 200 people were killed in protests surrounding the 2007 elections) that it was difficult for PDP to claim legitimacy. Since the 2011 elections were much cleaner, the PDP's legitimacy increased, although the party was criticized for not running a Muslim from the North, since Jonathan – a southern Christian – had been president since 2010. In 2015, the All Progressive Congress made big inroads into the South, insuring the election of Buhari as president.

A flurry of party registrations with the **Independent National Election Commission (INEC)** followed the death of President Abacha in 1998. In order to run candidates for the legislative and presidential elections of 1999, a party had to qualify by earning at least 5% of the votes in two-thirds of the states in the December 1998 local elections. This practice effectively cut the number of parties running to three, and also limited the eligible parties to five in the presidential election of 2003. The INEC was widely accused of corruption in the election of 2007, and of complying with President Obasanjo's desire to keep Vice President Abubakar from running for the presidency. The INEC left his name off the list of official candidates, but his disqualification was overturned by the Supreme Court. Before the election of 2011, President Jonathan asked Attahiru Jega, a respected academic, to head the INEC, and Jega drew up a new voter register, removing names that were obviously fraudulent. For example, a village in Kanduna state that reported 50,000 votes for the PDP in 2007, was shown to contain only 4,000 voters. He also had ballot papers printed abroad to limit their supply, though a later delivery forced a one-week delay in legislative, gubernatorial, and presidential elections. Jega also supervised a switch to the "open secret ballot" system: voters were asked to register at polling stations on election day, and they were encouraged to stay there until results were posted locally in order to verify them and to prevent multiple voting. These reforms contributed to a relatively fair and open elections in 2011 and 2015, the first in Nigeria's recent history.

## Elections and Electoral Procedures

Citizens vote for candidates on three levels: local, state, and national. On the national level, they vote for the president, representatives to the House of Representatives, and for senators from their states.

### National Elections

- **Presidential elections** – The first presidential election after the annulled election of 1993 took place in 1999, followed by a second election in 2003. If a presidential candidate does not receive an outright majority, a second ballot election may take place. A candidate won in the first round for the first time in 2011, when Goodluck Jonathan won almost 59% of the vote. An unusual requirement, however, reflects Nigeria's attempt to unite its people. A president also must receive at least 25% of all the votes cast in 2/3 of the states. In other words, a purely regional candidate cannot win the presidency. The requirement also indicates how difficult unification has been for Nigeria since independence in 1960.
- **Legislative elections** – The **Senate** has 109 senators, three from each of 36 states, and one from the federal capital territory, Abuja. They are elected by direct popular vote. The 360 members of the **House of Representatives** are elected from single member districts by plurality vote. No run-offs take place for these seats. The result in both houses is regional representation, with a wide array of ethnicities that try to form coalitions, even though legislative policymaking power is very weak anyway. Currently, the PDP holds a majority in both houses, although several other parties are represented.

### Election Fraud

Many observers believe that Nigeria has made significant progress simply to be able to sustain four regularly scheduled popular elections in a row. During the April 12, 2003 legislative election, about a dozen people died, but many commented that it was not as bad as it could

have been. Additionally, several politicians were assassinated, including Marshall Harry, one of the leaders of Mr. Buhari's All Nigeria People's Party. However, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), with outside pressure, made an attempt to cleanse the electoral process when it declared almost six million names to be fraudulent. The names were struck from the voter rolls. On the other hand, international teams that observed the election generally concluded that the election was corrupt, with ballot boxes being vandalized, stolen, and stuffed with fraudulent votes. Some concluded that voting patterns in the south were particularly suspicious.

The elections of 2007 were even worse, with national legislative and presidential races deeply flawed, as were the state and local contests. The year before the election President Obasanjo sponsored a plan to modify the 1999 constitution that would allow him to run for a third term of office, but the National Assembly failed to ratify it. Next, the Independent National Election Committee disqualified Vice President Abubakar from running for president, but the Supreme Court declared that the INEC had no such power. Last-minute ballots were printed and distributed to include him, but the ballots showed only party symbols, not the names of candidates, and lacked serial numbers that help reduce fraud. On election day, international observers, including some from the European Union and some from the United States, witnessed instances of ballot-box theft, long delays in the delivery of ballots and other materials, and a shortage of ballots for the presidential race. Often there was no privacy for voters to mark their ballots in secret. Observers also witnessed unused ballots being marked and stuffed into ballot boxes. Frustrated voters erupted in protest, and the ensuing violence ended in the deaths of about 200 people.

#### The Elections of 2011

The elections of 2011, however, were considered by most observers to be a big improvement over 2007, at least partly because of reforms initiated by the INEC. Goodluck Jonathan (from the south) won almost 59% of the vote, and Muhammadu Buhari (from the north) won 32%. PDP candidates won majorities in both houses of the legisla-

ture, although the ACN, CPC, and several other parties won Senate and House seats. Flaws – such as under-age voting and chaotic local counting centers – were noted, but the reforms apparently controlled the amount of fraud. Despite these changes, the election starkly exposed the ethnic and religious divide between north and south. Mr. Jonathan did not win a single one of the 12 northernmost states, out of Nigeria's total of 36. Mr. Buhari got less than a quarter of the vote in the 20 southernmost ones. Even before the results were tallied, youths began burning buildings in northern cities, and bombs exploded in the days that followed. Human rights groups claimed that hundreds of people were killed, and a heavy military presence and curfews in the worst-hit states of the north restored the calm. Still, the violence reflected the country's cleavages, and almost certainly resulted from discontent fed by high poverty rates in the north, leaving Nigeria's "national question" as open as ever.

#### The Elections of 2015

The elections were first scheduled to be held on February 14, 2015, but they were postponed to March 28, mainly due to the poor distribution of Permanent Voters' Cards, especially in areas where people had been displaced from their homes by Boko Haram. The government also claimed that the postponement was necessary to allow time to contain the group's insurgency in several northeastern states. Critics claimed that the postponement was a ploy by the incumbent president, Goodluck Jonathan, to buy time to sway support from the main opposition candidate, Muhammadu Buhari. However, Buhari won the election by more than 2.5 million votes, marking the first time an incumbent president has lost re-election in Nigeria. Buhari's party, All Progressives Congress, also picked up seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate, and Jonathan's People's Democratic Party lost seats in both houses.

Boko Haram attempted to disrupt the elections by attacking voting centers, killing 41 people, and an opposition politician, Umaru Ali, was gunned down in one attack. However, the elections were generally peaceful and orderly, according to observers from the African Union, Commonwealth of Nations, Economic Community of West

African States, and the European Union. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon congratulated Nigerian citizens and the government for conducting a successful and peaceful election.

### Interest Groups

Perhaps surprisingly, interest groups have played an important role in Nigerian government and politics. Although the development of an active civil society has been hampered by prebendalism and corruption, there is an array of civil society organizations that often cooperate with political parties. Some of them are based on religion, such as the Christian Association of Nigeria that protested loudly when Babangida decided to change Nigeria's status in the Organization of the Islamic Conference from observer to member. A large number of Muslim civil society organizations in the north work to support the *sharia* court system. They have had to work around military control, but citizens have sought an impact on political life through labor unions, student groups, and populist groups.

### Labor Unions

Labor unions before the military oppression of the 1980s were independent and politically powerful. Organized labor challenged governments during both the colonial and post-colonial eras, but the Babangida regime devised methods to limit their influence. This was established through corporatism, or government-approved interest groups that provide feedback to the government. A central labor organization supplanted the older unions, and only candidates approved by Babangida could be elected as labor leaders. However, the labor movement still is alive, and retains an active membership. If democracy indeed is established, labor unions could play a vital role in the policymaking process. For example, in July 2003, labor unions widely and openly protested the government's attempt to raise oil prices for Nigerian consumers.

By 2007 it was clear that labor unions had regained much of their previous power when the **Nigeria Labor Congress** called and successfully orchestrated a general strike of workers in cities across Nige-

ria. The strike was organized to protest the government's hike in fuel prices and taxes. The government agreed to rescind their hikes, but strike organizers wanted further reductions. The Nigerian government has subsidized fuel heavily, just as the Iranian government has, and in both cases, the subsidies are quite expensive. Nigeria especially is under international pressure to cut the subsidies so that the immense national debt can be paid.

### Business Interests

Business interests have tended to work in collaboration with the military regimes during the last decades, and have shared the spoils of the corruption within the elite classes. However, some business associations have operated outside the realm of government influence in the private sector. Associations for manufacturers, butchers, and car rental firms are only a few groups that have organized. In the 1990s, some of these groups became a leading force in promoting economic reform in Nigeria.

### Human Rights Groups

Other interest groups have organized to promote human rights. University students, teachers, civil liberties organizations, and professional groups (doctors, lawyers) protested the abuses of the Babangida and Abacha regimes, and remain active promoters of democratic reform. They staged street demonstrations and protests in 1997-98 as Abacha prepared to orchestrate a campaign to succeed himself. Although the groups are now only loosely connected, their willingness to collaborate and remain active might play an important role in creating a true democracy in Nigeria.

### Mass Media

In contrast to most less developed countries, Nigeria has long had a well-developed, independent press. General Abacha moved to muffle its criticisms of his rule when he closed several of the most influential and respected Nigerian newspapers and magazines in 1994. However,

the tradition remains intact, although the press reflects, like so many other institutions, the ethnic divisions within the country. Most of the outspoken newspapers are in the south, although a few have been published in the north. Generals from the north have often interpreted criticisms of the press as ethnic slurs reflective of region-based stereotypes. The media actively spread news as the events of the 2007 elections unfolded, and many journalists were highly critical of the government's actions.

Radio is the main source of information for most Nigerians, with newspapers and TV more common in the cities. All 36 states run their own radio stations.

## THE INSTITUTIONS OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Nigeria is in theory a federal political system with government organizations on local, state, and national levels. Its various constitutions have provided for three branches of government, but in reality its executive branch has dominated policymaking. In the Second, Third, and Fourth Republics (all since 1979), Nigeria has had a presidential system, with a strong president theoretically checked by a bicameral legislature and an independent judiciary. Each of the 36 state governments and 774 local governments has an executive and a legislative branch, and a network of local, district, and state courts exists. Currently, neither federalism nor checks and balances operate, and state and local governments are totally dependent on the central government.

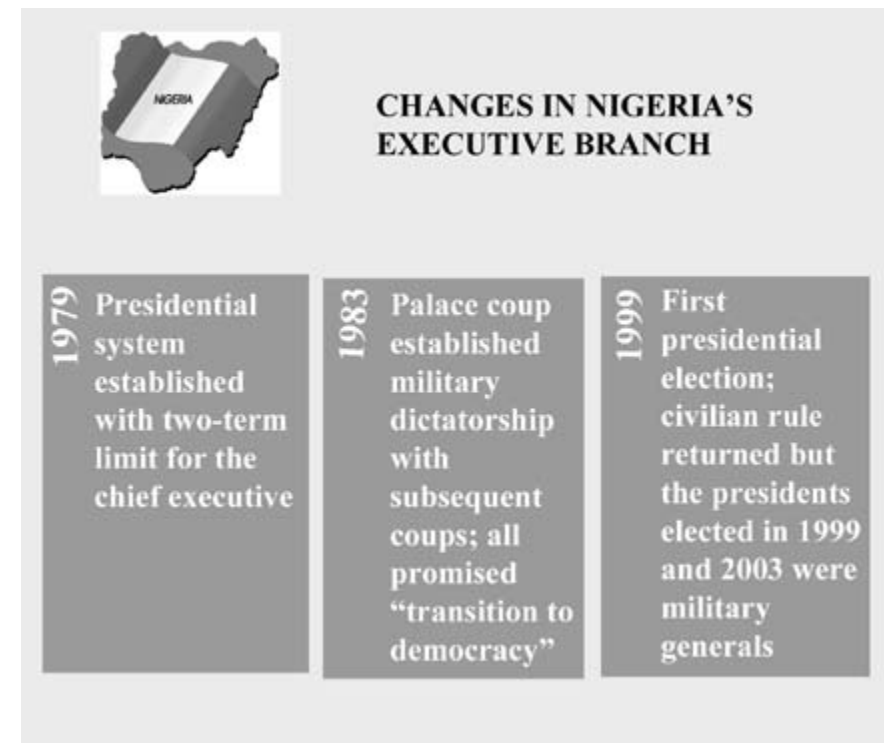
### The Executive

In 1979, with the establishment of the Second Republic, the parliamentary system modeled after Britain was replaced by a presidential system. Nigeria's many ethnicities fragmented its multi-party system and legislature so seriously that a prime minister could not gain the necessary authority to rule. The belief was that a popularly-elected president could symbolize unity and rise above the weak party system.

The U.S. presidential model was chosen, including a two-term limit for the chief executive. Nigeria followed the model until 1983, when Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (also a candidate for president in the 2003, 2007, and 2011 elections) staged a palace coup. He in turn was ousted by General Babangida in 1985, who was replaced by General Abacha in 1993. Civilian rule returned in 1999, and President Obasanjo was reelected in 2003, and in 2007 Nigeria had its first experience of one civilian president handing power to another, no matter how flawed the election. Another civilian, Goodluck Jonathan, was elected in 2011, the 2015 election brought back a former military general – Muhammadu Buhari – as president.

### The Executive under Military Rule

Nigeria's seven military leaders did not all rule in the same fashion. All promised a "transition to democracy," but only two gave power over to elected leaders: General Obasanjo in 1979, and General Abubakar in 1999. Generals Buhari (1983-1985), Babangida (1985-1993), and



Abacha (1993-1998) were known for their use of repressive tactics during their rule, but virtually all military and civilian administrations have concentrated power in the hands of the executive. The presidents appointed senior officials without legislative approval, and neither the legislature nor the judiciary has consistently checked executive power.

### Patrimonialism

The generals ruled under a system of patrimonialism, in which the president was the head of an intricate patron-client system and dispensed government jobs and resources as rewards to supporters. As a result, cabinet positions, bureaucracy chiefs, and virtually all other government jobs were part of the president's patronage system. The fact that generals repeatedly were overthrown indicates that the system is unstable, or possibly that the impulse toward democracy is keeping patrimonialism from working.

### The Bureaucracy

The British put an elaborate civil service in place in Nigeria during colonial days, allowing Nigerians to fill lower-level jobs in the bureaucracy. After independence, the civil service remained in place, and has grown tremendously over the past decades. Many observers believe that the bureaucracy is bloated, and it is a generally accepted fact that it is corrupt and inefficient. Bribery is common, and jobs are awarded through the patron-client system, or prebendalism. Not surprisingly, this system has led to a rapid increase in the number of bureaucratic jobs.

### Para-statals

Like Mexican organizations before the 1980s, many Nigerian government agencies are actually **para-statals**, or corporations owned by the state and designated to provide commercial and social welfare services. Theoretically the para-statals are privately owned, but their boards are appointed by government ministers, and their executives are interwoven into the president's patronage system. Para-statals commonly provide public utilities, such as water, electricity, public transporta-

tion, and agricultural subsidies. Others control major industries such as steel, defense products, and petroleum.

### State Corporatism

As we saw in Mexico in its pre-democracy days, corporatism may function in an authoritarian political system where the government allows political input from selected interest groups outside the government structure. Although corporatism in PRI-dominated Mexico was far from democratic, political leaders generally did take into consideration the opinions of these selected groups. In Nigeria, as in Iran, para-statals provide this input, but because they are controlled by the government, they create state corporatism. Para-statals fulfill important economic and social functions, and they insure that the state controls private interests as well. They serve as contact points between the government and business interests, but the state ultimately controls the interactions. Para-statals generally are inefficiently run and corrupt, and many believe that they must be disbanded if democracy is to survive in Nigeria.

One para-statal, founded by President Obasanjo to provide better electrical service, was known as N.E.P.A., but Nigerians joked that the initials stood for "Never Expect Power Again." When the para-statal was renamed the Power Holding Company, the new joke was that it stood for "Please Hold Candle." Recently, however, Nigeria privatized many state-owned power distribution companies, and many hope that the power infrastructure will improve as a result.

After his election in 2011, President Jonathan promised to make electricity reform a priority, hoping to transform the lives of millions of Nigerians who have no electric power. However, his power minister, Bartholomew Nnaji, resigned in August 2012, when a conflict of interest was exposed. In an effort to privatize the industry, Mr. Nnaji was found to hold shares in one firm that bid for business, although it is not unusual for Nigerian politicians to engage in business overseen by their office. Nevertheless, this scandal was a setback for the president's initiative, especially since it discouraged foreign investments necessary for the project's success.

## The Legislature

The Nigerian legislature has taken several different forms since independence, and it has been disbanded a number of times by military rulers. A parliamentary system was in place until 1979, when it was replaced by a presidential system with a bicameral legislature, known collectively as the **National Assembly**. Both representatives and senators serve four-year renewable terms, and elections are held the week preceding the presidential election.

- **The Senate** – Currently the upper house is composed of 109 senators, three from each of 36 states and one from the federal capital territory of Abuja. Senators are elected directly by popular vote. Its equal representation model for states is based on that of the United States Senate, so some senators represent much smaller populations than others do. However, the ethnic and religious diversity of the 36 states means that senators are also a diverse lot.
- **The House of Representatives** – The House of Representatives has 360 members from single-member districts. They are elected by plurality, and like the senators, represent many different ethnicities. After the elections of 2015, only 20 representatives were women, as were only 7 of the 109 senators, giving Nigeria one of the lowest rates of female representation in the legislature in the world.

Nigerian legislatures under military governments have had almost no power, and even under civilian control, the legislature has only recently become an effective check on the president's power. A notable example is the National Assembly's failure to ratify President Obasanjo's plan to alter the Constitution to allow him to run for a third term in 2007. Even though the president's party (PNP) held a majority in the Assembly, the legislative leaders were highly critical of the fraud and violence associated with the election of 2007. Even though the elections of 2011 and 2015 were an improvement, like so many other government officials, representatives and senators have often been implicated in corruption scandals. For example, in 1999

the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives were removed from their positions for perjury and forgery. In August 2000, the Senate president was removed on suspicion of accepting kickbacks for government contracts, and in 2011, the speaker of the House of Representatives was investigated for "misappropriating" \$140,000,000.

## The Judiciary

During the early years of independence the Nigerian judiciary actually had a great deal of autonomy. Courts combined British common law with an assortment of traditional or customary law, including *sharia* in the Northern Region. They were known for rendering objective decisions and for operating independently from the executive. However, the years of military rule ravaged the court system. The judiciary was undermined by military decrees that nullified court decisions, and the generals even set up quasi-judicial tribunals outside the regular system. Judicial review was suspended, and the presidents' cronies were appointed as judges. As a result, many judges today are not well versed in law and render decisions that are manipulated by the government.

Today the judiciary is charged with interpreting the laws in accordance with the Constitution, so judicial review exists in theory. Court structures exist at both federal and state levels, with the highest court in the land being the Supreme Court. The court structure is complicated by the *sharia* courts that exist side by side with courts based on the British model. The 1999 constitution established a Supreme Court, a Federal Court of Appeals, and a single unified court system at the national and state levels. Individual states may also authorize traditional subsidiary courts, with the most controversial being the Islamic *sharia* courts, which now function in twelve of the predominantly Muslim northern states.

Two notorious cases from the 1990s indicate to many people how deeply the Nigerian judiciary fell under the sway of military rulers. **Mshood Abiolao**, the winner of the 1993 election annulled by Babangida, was detained and eventually died while in custody. The



presiding judges for his detention changed often, and critics of the government believe that justice was not served. In 1995, activist **Ken Saro-Wiwa** and eight other Ogonis were detained and hanged under orders from a court arranged by the military, consisting primarily of military officers.

The establishment of tribunals to hear accusations of voting fraud during the election of 2007 is an indication that Nigeria's institutions are taking the rule of law seriously. The fact that they actually had the power to remove officials from their positions reflects the fact that the judiciary is stronger and more independent now than in the past. The courts set the bar high for proving election irregularities, and Yar'Adua was not removed from office, but the procedures were followed, and the cases were referred to the Supreme Court.

### The Military

It goes without saying that the military has been a strong force behind policymaking in Nigeria. Yet by becoming so active in political affairs, the military lost its credibility as a temporary, objective organization that keeps order and brings stability. Starting in 1966 when the first coup took place, the military made distinctions between the **“military in government”** and the **“military in barracks.”** The latter fulfills traditional duties of the military, and its leaders often have been critical of military control of political power. As a result, the military has been subject to internal discord, and the military presidents often had to keep a close eye on other military leaders. Babangida protected his authority by constantly moving military personnel around and by appointing senior officers through his patronage system.

Although the military is a strongly intimidating force in the Nigerian political system that has often blocked democratic reforms, it is important to understand that it is one of the few institutions in the country that is truly national in character. When the deep ethnic cleavages within Nigerian society have threatened instability, the military has been there to restore order. Nigeria's best, brightest, and most ambitious have often made their way by rising through the military, a fact particularly important for the ethnic Muslims of northern Nigeria who

have not had the same opportunities that many in the south have had. Because of these factors, generals had the ability to keep control of the government for many years, and it helps to explain why the democracy has been so fragile so far.

The military suffered major setbacks in 2014 and 2015 as Boko Haram gained territory in the north-east and spread their attacks to neighboring countries. The Nigerian military could not contain the group's territorial gains, with some Nigerian soldiers refusing orders and others fleeing the country. In early 2015, a coalition of military forces from Nigeria, Chad, and Niger began a campaign against Boko Haram, and in September the military claimed victory. However, bombings continued as Boko Haram proclaimed its goal of creating a new Islamic caliphate in the region. President Buhari promised to quell corruption in the army, since embezzlement by generals contributed to the army's lack of resources to defeat Boko Haram.

### PUBLIC POLICY

Nigeria's years of military rule resulted in a top-down policymaking process. Power is concentrated in the presidency, and much outside input comes to the president and his cabinet ministers through channels established by patron clientelism. Senior government officials are supported by a broader base of loyal junior officials, creating a sort of **“loyalty pyramid.”** State control of resources means that those in the pyramid get the spoils, and they alone have access to wealth and influence. These loyal clients have had many nicknames, including the **“Kaduna Mafia,”** **“Babangida's Boys,”** and **“Abacha's Boys.”** Since the military was in control until 1999, the pyramids are backed by guns, so that protesting the corruption could be dangerous.

The system operated under the assumption that the military and political elite rule with only their self-interest in mind. Historically, this pattern of top-down, self-interested rule was put in place during colonial times when the British relied on native chiefs to ensure that Nigerian trade and resources benefited Great Britain. To break this pattern, political elites must get in touch with their older roots – the

communalism from pre-colonial days. Democratic rule requires that political leaders are responsible for the welfare of their people, not only to those that they owe favors to.

### Economic Issues

One result of the loyalty pyramids has been the squandering of Nigeria's wealth. Currently the country finds itself deeply in debt, and most of its people live in poverty. Tremendous oil revenues have disappeared into the pockets of government officials, and most Nigerians have not profited from them at all. The situation is complicated by ethnic and regional hostilities and by widespread popular distrust of the government. In February 2001, the federal government asked the Supreme Court to allow the federal government to collect oil revenues and pool them into a "federal account." On the surface, this appears to be revenue sharing, or allowing the entire country to benefit from offshore oil profits. However, the areas in the south along the Niger Delta protested the practice strongly, partly because they saw the policy as coming from northerners who wanted to take southern profits away. And without trust in the government, almost no one believed that the profits would benefit anyone except corrupt government officials.

#### Oil: a Source of Strength or Weakness?

Like Iran, Nigeria is a **rentier state**. A rentier economy is heavily supported by state expenditure, while the state receives rent from other countries. Iran and Nigeria receive income by exporting their oil and leasing out oil fields to foreign companies. The state's main role in the economy is in controlling the nation's revenues, and in spending those earnings, known as **rents**, which come mainly from oil. Individuals, groups, and communities have learned to respond through **rent-seeking** behavior, primarily by competing for the government's largesse. Those that win the competition do so through political connections provided through the patron-client system, with the president having control over who gets what. Most Nigerians struggle along without much access, and participate in the **informal economy** of unreported incomes from small-scale trade and subsistence agriculture.

During the 1970s Nigeria's oil wealth gave it a great deal of international leverage. As an active member of OPEC, Nigeria could make political and economic demands because developed countries needed its oil. Through the years Nigeria has gained clout whenever Middle Eastern tensions have cut off oil supplies from that region, forcing developed countries to rely more heavily on Nigerian oil. However, Nigeria's over reliance on oil has meant that the country's economy suffers disproportionately whenever oil prices go down. During eras of low oil prices, Nigeria has amassed great debt, partly because the profits do not remain in the state's coffers long enough to cover the lean years.

An important issue is the fact that oil is being stolen at record rates, so that no one knows for sure what Nigeria's actual production is. The state-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation has often been judged one of the world's most closely oil companies. A joint report by Transparency International and the Revenue Watch Institute in New York recently claimed that the NNPC had the worst record of 44 national and foreign companies examined. An external audit said it was "accountable to no one," and it has been called a "slush fund for the government." A Petroleum Industry Bill has been in the works for more than 15 years, intended to overhaul the industry, make it more transparent, and improve regulatory institutions and fiscal policies. However, the bill has yet to be passed.

Another major issue since early 2006 has been the unstable situation in the Niger Delta regarding protests and subterfuge on foreign-based oil companies there. Some groups are idealistic, such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), which wants more oil money going to the people of the Delta states. However, the group has chosen violent methods, such as kidnapping foreign workers, and others have joined in the mayhem, including gangs with no such communal goals. MEND has also siphoned oil illegally to sell to refineries overseas, and gun-running is believed to be a big source of the group's revenue. The violence has driven some companies away, such as Willbros, one of the world's largest independent contractors that left Nigeria in the summer of 2006. Other companies have cut

production, so that by mid-2007 about a quarter of Nigeria's oil output had been shut down since January 2006.

Dealing with this issue was one of the biggest challenges facing President Jonathan, and he made it one of his priorities. However, despite the army's attempt to contain the rebels, the violence continued. Yar'Adua created a dedicated ministry for the Niger Delta to oversee development in 2008 and convened a committee to look for long-term solutions. The environmental impact of oil production in the delta was the focus of a 2011 report from the United Nations, which declared that it could take 30 years and at least 41 billion to rid the mangroves of a thick carpet of crude oil. About the time that the report was released, Shell Oil admitted liability for the first time for two big leaks in the delta, and the company paid out \$1,700,000 in compensation to groups in the delta affected by spills.

In the north, an Islamist group called Ansaru kidnapped several foreign construction workers in the state of Bauchi. The kidnapping rattled foreigners working in the north, so that some companies have transferred family members of workers to the south. An increase in polio has been reported in Nigeria since the rebellion started by Boko Haram about four years ago, according to the World Health Organization. Polio vaccinators have been a particular target of the militant groups, with several health workers killed early in 2013.

Despite these economic problems, Nigeria's economy is growing quickly, with an increase of 6.3% in 2014. The GDP is fast approaching that of South Africa, where growth is about 3% annually, so it is possible that Nigeria will become Africa's biggest economy within a decade.

### Structural Adjustment

After international oil prices plummeted in the early 1980s, Nigeria was forced to turn to international organizations for help in managing its huge national debt. In 1985, the Babangida regime developed

an **economic structural adjustment** program with the support of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The program sought to restructure and diversify the Nigerian economy so that it could decrease its dependence on oil. The government also pledged to reduce government spending and to privatize its para-statals. This "shock treatment" has had mixed results, but generally timelines for debt repayment have been restructured because Nigeria could not keep up with its payments. Para-statals are still under state control, and the private economic sector has not grown significantly. The large national debt remains a major problem for Nigeria today, especially as oil prices plummeted in 2008. By 2011, with oil prices once again higher, the challenge of using the oil-created wealth to benefit the country was still unmet, and with the drop in oil prices in 2014, the problems deepened.

Recent reforms include a professionally managed sovereign-wealth fund to replace the current slush-fund that was used by the government to give away more than \$10 billion in the run-up to the 2011 election. More Nigerians now have bank accounts, with more expected as mobile-phone banking becomes more common over the next few years. The main goal of most suggested reforms is to funnel oil revenues into a more efficient financial system that could provide capital to the private sector to build roads and power stations, and expand private enterprises, such as farming.

### Reactions to the Global Economic Crisis of 2008

Nigeria's economy hasn't suffered as much as many others since the crisis of 2008, partly because the banking system improved significantly under an initiative during President Obasanjo's second term in office (2003-2007). As part of a policy to squeeze weak or failing banks out of business, in 2005 the Central Bank of Nigeria raised banks' capital requirements (money they must have on hand), so that the number of banks dropped from 89 to 24 by the end of the year. Another contributing factor to Nigeria's relatively stable economy was the fact that it had paid off sizeable debts under the structural adjustment program. However, the sharp decrease in the price of oil did a great deal of economic damage, including a devaluation of the

currency, the naira. The Nigerian Stock Exchange also went into steep decline, housing prices dropped, and the small amount of international tourism that Nigeria attracted virtually disappeared.

Nigeria's inability to provide electric power has continued, with President Yar'Adua reversing Obasanja's order to privatize power companies. President Jonathan has made increasing electricity supply a priority, and he put forward a privatization plan that aims to raise \$35 billion of investment over the next decade and stipulates that companies put money into electricity transmission. Under Jonathan's plan, grid transmission remained in government hands but was privately managed. The aim was to triple supply by 2013. However, the scandal that caused his power minister to resign derailed that goal since it discouraged investment.

### **"Federal Character"**

Federalism is seen by most Nigerians as a positive, desirable characteristic for their country. Federalism appeals to many countries because it promises that power will be shared, and that all people in all parts of the country will be fairly represented. Federalism also allows citizens more contact points with government, so that true democratic rule can be more easily achieved. In Nigeria, the goal is to seek a "federal character" for the nation, a principle that recognizes people of all ethnicities, religions, and regions, and takes their needs into account. The Nigerian Constitution has put many provisions in place that support the goal of "**federal character**." For example, senators represent diverse states, representatives are elected from diverse districts, and the president must receive 25% of the vote in 2/3 of the regions in order to be elected. However, so far this ethnic balancing has not promoted unity or nationalism, but has only served to divide the country more.

One negative effect of federalism has been to bloat and promote corruption within the bureaucracy. Since all ethnicities must be represented, sometimes jobs have been created just to satisfy the demand. Once established within bureaucratic posts, these appointees see themselves

as beholden to ethnic and regional interests. Another negative effect takes place within the legislative chambers. The 36 states vie for control of government resources, and see themselves in competition with other ethnic groups for political and economic benefits.

The "federal character" issue is based squarely on the fact that the "national question" in Nigeria remains unanswered. Do Nigerians have enough in common to remain together as a country?

Many southerners contend that true federalism will exist only when the central government devolves some of its power to the state and local levels. For example, Nigerians of the Niger Delta believe that regions should control their own resources. For them, that means that the federal government should not redistribute their region's oil revenues. Other southerners have suggested that police duties and personnel should be relegated to local and state levels as they are in the United States. Northerners generally don't support the "**true federalism**" movement because their regions historically have not had as many resources or as much revenue to share. Many northern states benefit more than southerners from nationally-sponsored redistribution programs.

### **Democratization**

Some changes have occurred in Nigeria since the last military regime left in 1999. For example, some public enterprises have been privatized, opening the way for limitations on the economic control of the central government. Also, a scheme for alleviating poverty has been set forward. Public wages have increased in recent years, with the hope that well-paid public employees won't be as susceptible to bribery. Some of the money that General Abacha stashed in his foreign bank account has now been returned to the state treasury. Finally, Nigeria's financial reserves have grown, partly because oil prices have been rising over the past few years.

Despite all its problems, Nigeria shows some signs that democracy may be taking root in its presidential system, including these:

- **Some checks and balances between government branches** – The legislature rejected President Obasanjo’s attempt to change the Constitution to allow him to run for a third term in 2007, despite a great deal of pressure from the political elite.
- **Some independent decisions in the courts** – President Obasanjo’s attempt to keep his vice president, Atiku Abubakar, from running for president in 2007 were foiled by the courts after the president’s allies used corruption charges to bar his candidacy. The Supreme Court ruled in Abubakar’s favor, even though his name was not returned to the ballot until the last minute. The election tribunals set up to investigate allegations of electoral fraud were allowed to function under President Yar’Adua’s new administration, and some officials were actually removed from office through court order.
- **Revival of civil society** – Nigeria’s many civic and religious groups, driven underground by military rule, have reactivated and freely criticized the government’s handling of the 2007 election. They pushed for reform for the elections that followed, with a fair degree of success
- **Independent media** – During the 2007 election the media sent countless correspondents across 36 states to bring back reports of stuffed ballot boxes, intimidated voters, and phony results. Internet and cell phone connections allowed poll observers, voters and political parties to freely communicate, making it much more difficult to hide election fraud. The media watched the 2011 and 2015 elections carefully and reported irregularities.
- **Peaceful succession of power** – For the first time in Nigeria’s history, power passed between two civilians as President Olusegun Obasanjo stepped down in 2007, peacefully allowing Umaru Yar’Adua to take over. When Yar’Adua died in 2010, Goodluck Jonathan, his vice president, took over as acting president without any major problems. When Jonathan was defeated by Muhammadu Buhari in 2015, he conceded the election graciously, and Buhari took power without major resistance.

- **Improving Freedom House scores** – Freedom House, an organization that studies democracy around the world, ranks countries on a 1 to 7 freedom scale, with countries given a 1 being the most free and those given a 7 being the least free. In 2015 Freedom House gave Nigeria a “4.5”, putting it squarely in the “partly free” category. Nigeria’s score has improved over the years, along with those of many other countries in Africa. In 1976, the vast majority, 25 (including Nigeria) were “not free.” Today the not-free category has shrunk to 14 states, with most falling into the “partly free” category (including Nigeria).

Are the recent reforms indications that Nigeria may finally be stabilizing as a nation? In many ways, Nigeria’s massive economic and political troubles are intertwined in such a fashion that it is difficult to tell where to start in unraveling the issues. Economic problems are rooted in patron-clientelism, which in turn breeds corruption, which makes the economic problems more difficult to solve. Patron-clientelism also has encouraged ethnic discord, and has proved to be a major stumbling block to the development of a democracy.

One of the key characteristics of a true democracy is the existence of regular competitive elections in which citizens have real choices of leaders. Recent Nigerian elections may be interpreted to support either an optimistic or pessimistic view for Nigeria’s future prospects. On the one hand, it is easy to criticize the Nigerian election process as a farce. After all, the election of 1993 was annulled, and the elections of 1999 and 2003 only put a former military general back in power. The elections of 1999, 2003, and 2007 were also characterized by ballot box theft and stuffing. Several candidates were assassinated, and ordinary people were killed in their efforts to vote. How can this be a democracy? On the other hand, three elections were held in a row without being suspended or annulled, and the elections of 2011 and 2015 were hailed by most observers as a big improvement over the previous ones. Some argue that the recent generation of presidential candidates consists of military men because they are the only ones with the experience necessary to govern. These hopeful ones point out that the last two presidents of Nigeria have not been military men

and predict that younger, nonmilitary leaders will emerge as political candidates in the near future. After all, the experience of democracy has deep roots in Nigerian political culture. Perhaps the best question is, “Was this election better than the last one?” If so, perhaps a new, more optimistic pattern is developing in Nigeria.

### IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Abacha, Sani  
 Abubakar, Atiku  
 ANC  
 Babangida, Ibrahim  
 Biafra  
 Buhari, Muhammadu  
 civil society  
 constitutionalism  
 corporatism  
 CPC  
 cultural diffusion  
 “federal character”  
 Hausa-Fulani  
 Ife  
 Igbo  
 indirect rule  
 informal economy  
 INEC  
 jihad  
 Jonathan, Goodluck  
 Kanuri  
 kinship-based politics  
 “loyalty pyramid”  
 “military in barracks”  
 “military in government”  
 National Assembly  
 “national question”  
 nongovernmental organizations  
 Obasanjo, Olusegun  
 Oyo

para-statal  
 patrimonialism  
 patron-client system (prebendalism)  
 PDP  
 plurality vote  
 rents, rent-seeking  
 revenue sharing  
 rule of law  
 Saro-Wiwa, Ken  
*sharia*  
 Sokoto Caliphate  
 state corporatism  
 structural adjustment program  
 Transparency International  
 “true federalism” movement  
 Yar’Adua, Umaru  
 Yoruba

### Nigeria Questions

1. Which of the following groups of countries have economies that are almost completely dependent on one product: oil?

- A) Nigeria, Iran, and Mexico
- B) China, Nigeria, and Iran
- C) Russia, Britain, and Mexico
- D) Britain, Nigeria, and Iran
- E) Russia, China, and Mexico

2. Nigeria's Gini index is high, which means that the country has a

- A) great deal of wealth
- B) high percentage of trade that is international
- C) low rate of literacy
- D) large gap between the overall status of men v. women
- E) large gap between the rich and the poor

3. In comparison to Britain and Russia, the literacy rates in Iran and Nigeria

- A) are higher for men, but lower for women
- B) show a larger gap between literacy rates for men and literacy rates for women
- C) are higher for both men and women
- D) show a smaller gap between literacy rates for men and literacy rates for women
- E) are higher for women, but lower for men

4. The requirement that a president must receive at least 25% of all the votes cast in 2/3 of the states is intended to insure that

- A) no candidate will win in the first round
- B) the candidate of the elites will not automatically win
- C) voting rates are relatively similar in all states
- D) a purely regional candidate cannot win the presidency
- E) the candidate with the most political experience will win

5. The loyalty pyramid, prebendalism, and patrimonialism are all Nigerian versions of

- A) economic liberalization
- B) patron clientelism
- C) co-optation
- D) integration
- E) pluralism

6. One reason that a parliamentary-style government failed in Nigeria was that it was difficult to

- A) identify a majority party
- B) form interest groups
- C) hold votes of no confidence
- D) control corruption
- E) control the military

7. Which of the following is a similarity in representation in the legislature in Iran and Nigeria?

- A) Both countries select representatives through proportional representation.
- B) Nigeria has a law that requires parties to run women candidates to the legislature; Iran does not.
- C) Women are seriously underrepresented in the legislatures of both countries.
- D) In both countries, representatives are appointed by the president.
- E) In both countries, representatives are selected through a system that combines both proportional representation and single-member districts.

Questions 8 and 9 refer to the map below:



8. The map above shows that one of the most important social cleavages in Nigeria is

- A) religion
- B) colonial/non-colonial areas
- C) ethnicity
- D) urban/rural differences
- E) social class

9. The map provides evidence for which of the following statements?

- A) Governments of religiously divided countries often must resort to force.
- B) The political boundaries of states do not always coincide with boundaries of nations.
- C) Colonialism shaped the development of most countries in Africa.
- D) Northern Nigeria is much more densely populated than southern Nigeria.
- E) Speaking a common language almost always serves as a centrifugal force within a country

10. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of the development of party systems in Nigeria and Mexico during the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

- A) Neither country developed a coherent party system.
- B) Both Mexico and Nigeria developed one-party systems that lasted until the last years of the century.
- C) Whereas Mexico's one-party system contributed to political stability, Nigeria's extreme factionalism made it impossible to develop a coherent party system.
- D) In Mexico, parties formed around powerful individuals, whereas in Nigeria parties formed based on ideological differences.
- E) In both Mexico and Nigeria, so many parties formed that most were narrowly-based interest groups who ran candidates for public office.

11. The main goal of structural adjustment programs for Nigeria has been to

- A) increase oil production and refinement
- B) keep a steady flow of Nigerian oil going to North America and Europe
- C) insure that the government keeps control of para-statals
- D) reduce Nigeria's dependence on oil
- E) use surpluses in the country's budget to help the poor



Questions 12 and 13 are based on the following chart:

COUNTRY	CPI SCORE*	RANK (178 COUNTRIES TOTAL)
China	36	100
Iran	27	136**
Mexico	35	103
Nigeria	27	136**
Russia	27	136**
United Kingdom	78	14

12. Which of the following statements is supported by the information in the chart above?

- A) All of the core countries except the United Kingdom have low literacy rates.
- B) All of the core countries except the United Kingdom have high levels of economic inequality.
- C) Russia, Nigeria, and Iran have high poverty rates.
- D) Corruption is a problem for all of the core countries except for the United Kingdom.
- E) Democratization has not taken hold in any of the core countries except the United Kingdom.

13. In China, Mexico, and Nigeria, the low CPI scores are almost certainly impacted by a history of

- A) democratic centralism
- B) statism
- C) military dictatorships
- D) patrimonialism
- E) patron-clientelism

14. In comparison to the Iranian Constitution of 1979, the 1999 Nigerian Constitution

- A) is a much less important source of political authority
- B) has been amended less frequently
- C) is based more solidly in sharia
- D) provides for a president as head of government
- E) gives the military much less policymaking power

15. Which of the following is a major societal problem for both Mexico and Nigeria?

- A) conflict between Christians and Muslims
- B) lack of natural resources
- C) large gap between the rich and the poor
- D) rates of HIV/AIDS higher than most other countries
- E) below average literacy rates

16. The institution in the Nigerian government created to give equal representation to the states is

- A) the Senate
- B) the House of Representatives
- C) the para-statal
- D) the Supreme Court
- E) the vice presidency

17. Which of the following statements about the Nigerian executive is NOT true?

- A) The executive branch has both a president and a prime minister.
- B) The president is directly elected by the people.
- C) The president must win 25% of all the votes in 2/3 of the states.
- D) The president is limited to serving two terms by the constitution.
- E) The president has generally headed an intricate patron-client system.

18. When Muhammadu Buhari replaced Goodluck Jonathan as president in 2015, it was the first time in Nigeria since independence that a
- A) civilian replaced a military leader
  - B) president running for re-election was not elected
  - C) president had died in office
  - D) man with a non-military background replaced another man with a non-military background
  - E) active military leader replaced a man with a non-military background
19. Which of the following is the most important social cleavage in modern Nigeria?
- A) social class
  - B) urban v. rural
  - C) immigrant v. native
  - D) gender
  - E) ethnicity
20. The Mexican and Nigerian political systems both currently have
- A) para-statal
  - B) military rule
  - C) electoral rules that include proportional representation
  - D) two-party systems
  - E) small bureaucracies
21. Which of the following characteristics is most problematic for answering Nigeria's "national question"?
- A) lack of formal structures of government
  - B) lack of a colonial model for democratic government
  - C) reliance on *sharia*
  - D) lack of constitutionalism
  - E) adoption of the presidential style of government
22. Nigeria's move of their capital city from Lagos to Abuja was an attempt to
- A) take power away from Muslim leaders
  - B) unify a multi-ethnic state
  - C) move control of its oil industry from the northern part of the country
  - D) encourage industrialization in the center of the country
  - E) create two major economic centers within the country
23. In China, Mexico, and Nigeria, patron-clientelism has almost always been accompanied by
- A) fragmentation
  - B) federalism
  - C) religious conflict
  - D) rent seeking
  - E) corruption
24. One effect of the British introduction of western-style education to Nigeria was to
- A) unify the elite in the north with the elite in the south
  - B) lessen the tensions among ethnic groups
  - C) deepen the rift between north and south
  - D) lessen the corruption of the tribal chiefs
  - E) increase British influence in the north

25. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of Mexico and Nigeria's south/north cleavages?

- A) The south in both countries is poorer than the north.
- B) The north in both countries is poorer than the south.
- C) The cleavage between north and south in both countries is based on religion.
- D) In Mexico, the north is poorer than the south; in Nigeria, the south is poorer than the north.
- E) In Mexico, the south is poorer than the north; in Nigeria, the north is poorer than the south.

26. Which of the following correctly compares selection of representatives to the lower houses of the legislature in Nigeria and Russia?

- A) Both countries use mixed systems with some representatives coming from single-member district elections and others elected by proportional representation.
- B) Russia's deputies are elected from single-member districts; Nigeria's representatives are elected by proportional representation.
- C) Nigeria's representatives are elected from single-member districts; Russia's deputies are elected by proportional representation.
- D) Russia's deputies are appointed by the president; Nigeria's representatives are elected from single-member districts.
- E) Both countries elect all of their representatives by proportional representation.

27. The relationship between the government and para-statal in Nigeria is an example of

- A) neo-corporatism
- B) interest group pluralism
- C) rational-legal authority
- D) fragmentation
- E) state corporatism

28. Like Iran, Nigeria is a

- A) federalist system
- B) post-modernist society
- C) military dictatorship
- D) rentier state
- E) unitary system

29. The impact of colonialism was different in Nigeria than in Iran because

- A) Nigeria was never colonized; Iran was.
- B) Iran was never colonized; Nigeria was.
- C) both countries were colonized, but Nigeria's natural resources were exploited more completely.
- D) both countries were colonizers, but Iran was more successful.
- E) Iran had no natural resources that imperialist countries were interested in; Nigeria did.

30. An important trend in the organization of Nigerian political parties since 1999 is that they have

- A) become more fluid and unpredictable
- B) tended to lose their regional bases
- C) become more centered on powerful individuals
- D) become less inclined to form coalitions
- E) adopted stricter rules concerning corruption

**Country-Context Question (20 minutes):**

The political systems of many developing and less-developed countries adopt a mixture of authoritarian and democratic practices. Apply the statement to Mexico and Nigeria by doing the following:

- a) Explain how two specific practices of the political system in Mexico reflect authoritarianism.
- b) Explain how two specific practices of the political system in Nigeria reflect authoritarianism.
- c) Explain how two specific practices of the political system in Mexico reflect democratic influence.
- d) Explain how two specific practices of the political system in Nigeria reflect democratic influences.

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## PRACTICE EXAMS

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**PRACTICE EXAMINATION ONE****Part I – Multiple-choice Questions****55 Questions (45 minutes)****50% of the Exam**

1. Which of the following is the best example of a regime change?
  - A) A successful coup d'état occurs in which one political leader replaces another as head of state.
  - B) A change occurs in a country's political institutions and practices, as from totalitarian to democratic rule.
  - C) One long-time ruler dies or retires, and is replaced by another, who in turn rules the country for a long period of time.
  - D) A country's political leader is replaced by a competitor, either by election or by military force.
  - E) An authoritarian ruler is defeated by military force, and a new leader emerges from the lower ranks of the military to replace him.
  
2. A special requirement for presidential elections in Nigeria is that a successful candidate must
  - A) win 2/3 of the popular vote
  - B) win a majority of electoral votes in each state
  - C) win 50% of the vote in only one round
  - D) receive at least 25% of all the votes cast in 2/3 of the states
  - E) select a vice president from a different region of the country
  
3. The requirement identified in #2 makes it difficult for a presidential candidate to win who is
  - A) not officially sponsored by a political party.
  - B) a senator or representative.
  - C) not a military leader.
  - D) not well known across the country before the election.
  - E) a purely regional favorite.

4. Which of the following is a mismatch between country and ethnic minority group?
  - A) Iran/Azeri
  - B) China/Han
  - C) Russia/Chechen
  - D) Mexico/Amerindian
  - E) Britain/Pakistani
  
5. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 was different from 20<sup>th</sup> century revolutions in Russia and China because it resulted in a
  - A) religious state
  - B) dictatorship
  - C) one party state
  - D) ideological government
  - E) failed state
  
6. Which of the following is most likely to link the political attitudes of citizens to the government's policymaking process?
  - A) courts
  - B) political elites
  - C) political parties
  - D) bureaucracies
  - E) political culture
  
7. Which of the following was a common characteristic of the Russian, Chinese, and Mexican revolutions of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century?
  - A) All were ideological.
  - B) All resulted in the overthrow of a strong, authoritarian government.
  - C) All resulted eventually in a one-party state.
  - D) All put charismatic leaders strongly in control of the government.
  - E) All were focused on driving westerners from the country.

8. Interest group pluralism is best defined as

- A) the existence of a high level of participation by citizens in a wide variety of interest groups
- B) participation by ethnic and racial minorities in interest group politics
- C) many interest groups competing to influence policy makers and the policy making process
- D) participation by interest groups in decision making at local, regional, and national levels
- E) successful lobbying efforts to influence policy making through an iron triangle network

9. Which of the following courts has used the power of judicial review most effectively?

- A) the British law lords
- B) the Russian Constitutional Court
- C) the Supreme Court in Mexico
- D) the European Court of Justice
- E) the People's Courts in China

10. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of privatization and marketization in China and Russia since 1980?

- A) Russia infused capitalism slowly; China made a rapid transition from a command to a market economy.
- B) China and Russia have both infused capitalism slowly.
- C) Russia and China have both made rapid transitions from a command to a market economy.
- D) Leaders of both countries vigorously opposed privatization and marketization.
- E) China infused capitalism slowly; Russia made a rapid transition from a command to a market economy.

11. The presidents of both Mexico and Russia have the power to

- A) appoint the prime minister.
- B) dissolve the lower house of the legislature.
- C) issue decrees.
- D) appoint cabinet members.
- E) write a new constitution.

12. Despite its authoritarian methods during the time it ruled Mexico, one of PRI's accomplishments was

- A) establishing interest group pluralism.
- B) gaining civilian control of the military.
- C) developing an independent judiciary.
- D) developing checks and balances between the executive and legislative branches.
- E) weakening the patron-client system.

13. Political legitimacy is best defined as

- A) the right to rule, as determined by a country's own citizens and recognized by other countries.
- B) democratic rule by officials chosen in regularly scheduled elections.
- C) the evolution of political traditions that shape the people's political beliefs so that they are uniform.
- D) the collection of political beliefs, values, practices, and institutions that shape the nature of government and politics.
- E) divisions within a country based on ethnic and racial groups, religions, and/or languages.

14. What common phenomenon that characterizes presidential systems is almost non-existent in parliamentary systems?

- A) collective responsibility
- B) arguments among major political parties
- C) gridlock
- D) majority rule
- E) a strong bureaucracy

15. Which of the following types of countries would be most likely to include military leaders in the policy making process?

- A) a stable, long-standing democracy with industrial development and a heavy reliance on a service sector economy
- B) a country with authoritarian rule, with a highly industrialized economy
- C) a country that selects its political leaders through proportional representation
- D) a country in transition from authoritarian to democratic rule, and from an agricultural to industrial-based economy
- E) a stable democracy with a large, powerful military

16. Which of the following is the structure in Russia's government that is most comparable to the *Majles* in Iran?

- A) the Duma
- B) the Federation Council
- C) the president's cabinet
- D) the Constitutional Court
- E) the Politburo

“A system in which a powerful boss or dominant party offers resources (such as land, jobs, and protection) in exchange for the support and services (such as labor or votes) of less powerful individuals”

17. The political system described above is

- A) a representative democracy
- B) *nomenklatura*
- C) a matriarchy
- D) protectionism
- E) a patron-client system

18. A civil society is best defined as one that

- A) emphasizes the importance of a strong government that provides for its citizens.
- B) values privacy and freedom, and de-emphasizes the importance of having a strong government
- C) accepts two areas of life: a public one defined by the government and a private one in which individuals have free choice.
- D) is generally free of conflict and strife, and is characterized by a consensual political culture.
- E) endorses considerate, cooperative behavior and punishes aggression and deviance.

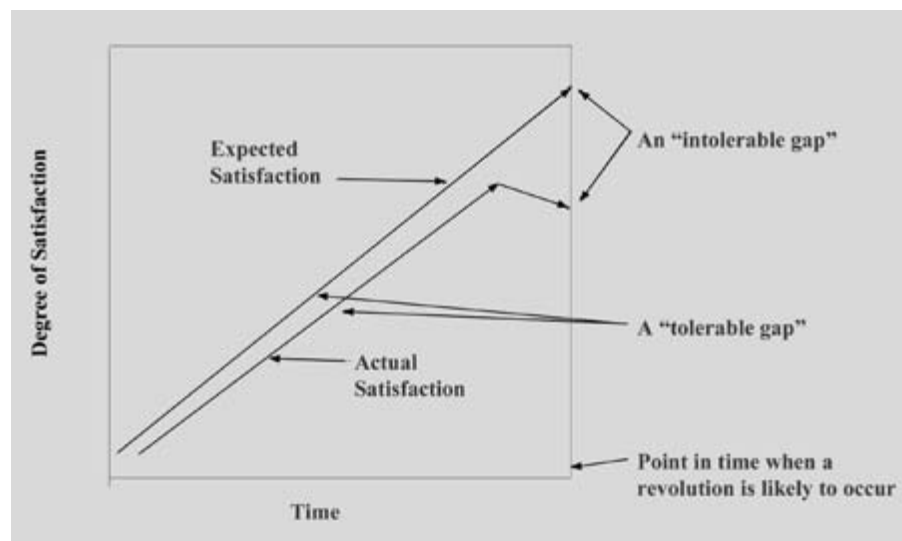
19. A command economy is best defined as a system in which

- A) key economic decisions are made by various private individuals and companies
- B) the government has great control of the economy and competition and profit are prohibited or strongly restricted
- C) the government owns basic industries, but citizens have some economic freedom
- D) competition and profit are regulated by the government
- E) the right of individuals to own private property is unlimited

20. Which of the following election systems is most likely to produce the largest number of competitive political parties?

- A) plurality
- B) first-past-the-post
- C) proportional representation
- D) two-round majority system
- E) referendum-based system

(Questions 21 and 22 are based on the following chart):



21. According to the chart, under what circumstance is a revolution most likely to occur?

- A) when expected satisfactions go up
- B) when actual satisfactions go up
- C) when the difference between expected and actual satisfactions is not great
- D) when an intolerable gap appears between expected and actual satisfactions
- E) when expected and actual satisfaction go down

22. Applying the circumstance that you identified in #21, in which of the following situations would a revolution most likely be spawned?

- A) Russia in 1945
- B) Iran in 1979
- C) Mexico in 2007
- D) Nigeria in 1998
- E) China in 1982

23. The greatest social cleavage manifested in modern Nigerian politics is

- A) social class
- B) urban v. rural
- C) immigrant v. native
- D) gender
- E) ethnicity

24. Which of the following pairs of countries have economies that currently operate with mostly neoliberalist practices?

- (A) Iran and Russia
- (B) China and Britain
- (C) Russia and Nigeria
- (D) Britain and Nigeria
- (E) Britain and Mexico

25. According to dependency theory, industrially developed countries

- A) serve as models for less developed countries to follow
- B) have very little influence on less developed countries
- C) can best help less developed countries through allowing them to participate in international organizations
- D) exploit less developed countries in order to enhance their own power
- E) trade primarily among themselves, leaving the less developed countries outside the profits of world trade



26. Which of the following legislative houses consists of a number of seats that are based on heredity?

- A) the Duma in Russia
- B) the Senate in Nigeria
- C) the House of Lords in Britain
- D) the Senate in Mexico
- E) the *Majles* in Iran

Questions 27 and 28 are based on the following quote:

“To bring political knowledge to the workers the Social Democrats [Bolsheviks] must go among all classes of the population; they must dispatch units of their army in all directions...For it is not enough to call ourselves the ‘vanguard’, the advanced contingent; we must act in such a way that all the other contingents recognise and are obliged to admit that we are marching in the vanguard.”

27. The author of the quote is

- A) V. I. Lenin
- B) Karl Marx
- C) Joseph Stalin
- D) Nikita Khrushchev
- E) Mikhail Gorbachev

28. The reasoning in the quote represents a significant revision in the theory of

- A) conservatism
- B) liberalism
- C) fascism
- D) Marxism
- E) Mercantilism

29. A country is said to have an indirect democracy when

- A) its executive branch is not directly elected by the people
- B) decisions are made by the judicial branch
- C) elected officials represent the people in government
- D) the scope of government activity is limited
- E) it allows citizens freedom but has identifiable political elites

30. Which of the following is NOT an example of a common political institution?

- A) civil societies
- B) legislatures
- C) executive cabinets
- D) judicial systems
- E) bureaucracies

31. Nigeria’s “national question” is whether or not it should

- A) have an official state-sponsored religion
- B) remain as one country
- C) keep its presidential system
- D) trade with other countries
- E) disband the military-in-government

32. Which of the following is the BEST reason why Nigeria does not have as many women in their legislature as Mexico?

- A) Nigeria is a more traditional society.
- B) Nigeria does not have a law that requires parties to run female candidates for office.
- C) Nigeria has not had an active women’s rights movement.
- D) Nigerian women are not allowed to vote.
- E) Nigeria’s middle class is much smaller in proportion to its total population.

33. Which of the following countries does NOT have a written constitution?

- A) Britain
- B) Russia
- C) China
- D) Iran
- E) Nigeria

34. The legal system is based almost entirely on common law in

- A) Britain
- B) Russia
- C) China
- D) Iran
- E) Nigeria

35. An opposite concept to devolution is

- A) integration
- B) fragmentation
- C) sovereignty
- D) succession
- E) globalization

36. The sovereign debt crisis in the EU reflects a tension between

- A) communist and capitalist economies
- B) the Commission and the European Parliament
- C) those who favor open free markets and those who seek to protect national economic interests
- D) those who support enlargement of the EU and those that do not
- E) EU and non-EU countries in Europe

37. Which of the following is the best description of the policymaking process in China?

- A) The president and cabinet members make decisions that are presented to the legislature for rubber-stamp approval only.
- B) The leader of the People's Liberation Army, the president, vice president, and premier make the decisions, but the legislature has the right to veto or amend the government's decisions.
- C) Decisions are made by the members of the National People's Congress, but are formally announced by the politburo.
- D) The general secretary of the party, who also is the president, has the final say over decisions made collectively by the Politburo.
- E) The main decision making body is the Politburo, whose members' decisions are influenced heavily by *guanxi* connections and factions.

38. Which of the following pairs are parties that are generally seen as existing on the left side of the political spectrum?

- A) Labour in Britain and PRD in Mexico
- B) PAN in Mexico and the People's Democratic Party in Nigeria
- C) Liberal Democrats in Britain and United Russia
- D) the Communist Party in Russia and the Alliance of Builders of Islamic Iran
- E) the People's Democratic Party of Nigeria and PRI in Mexico

39. In China "parallel hierarchies" exist among the Communist Party, the state or government, and

- A) interest groups
- B) business leaders
- C) the Russian Orthodox Church
- D) ruling families
- E) the military

40. Which of the following is the BEST description of China's criminal justice system?

- A) China has no organized criminal justice system, since it was destroyed under Mao Zedong.
- B) The Chinese criminal justice system has a high rate of conviction and often uses the death penalty as punishment.
- C) The Chinese criminal justice system is highly decentralized and disconnected from the hierarchy of the Communist Party.
- D) Since the reforms of Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese criminal justice system has been based on judicial review.
- E) The Chinese criminal justice system is slow-moving and inefficient.

41. Which of the following principles/characteristics is relatively undeveloped in all six core countries?

- A) democratic consolidation
- B) transparency
- C) common law
- D) civil society
- E) judicial review

42. Unlike the head of state in Britain, the head of state in Russia

- A) is also the head of government
- B) has much more actual policymaking power
- C) only has ceremonial powers
- D) is also a member of the upper house of the legislature
- E) is an appointed official

43. Which of the following is the BEST description of Deng Xiaoping Theory?

- A) authoritarian political rule and government ownership of the means of production
- B) centralized government control of the economy, but relegation of much political authority to the local level
- C) a practical mix of authoritarian political control and economic privatization
- D) modernization of the economy and the political system
- E) anti-Maoism

44. The Chinese "socialist market economy" is a good example of a

- A) capitalist economy with little government control
- B) politicized economy
- C) command economy
- D) international economy
- E) mixed economy

45. *Guanxi* and prebendalism are both based on

- A) free market principles
- B) democratic centralism
- C) egalitarianism
- D) patronage
- E) parallel hierarchies

46. Mexico's inclusion of proportional representation in their electoral system directly resulted in

- A) A more powerful legislative branch
- B) A clear majority in both legislative houses for PAN
- C) Three well-represented parties in both legislative houses
- D) A rubber-stamp legislature
- E) Growing representation for minority parties in the lower house only

47. If a study finds that a change in one variable is accompanied by a change in another, a researcher has proved the existence of

- A) a causation
- B) a correlation
- C) empirical data
- D) a dependent variable
- E) normative influence

48. Which of the following types of organizations are MOST likely to directly foster the development of a global civil society?

- A) unitary governments
- B) federal governments
- C) nongovernmental organizations
- D) independent judiciaries
- E) political parties with a broad appeal across many groups

49. Tatars, Ukrainians, Bashkir, and Chuvash are relatively large minority ethnic groups in

- A) China
- B) Iran
- C) Nigeria
- D) Russia
- E) Britain

50. “collectivism, struggle and activism, mass line, egalitarianism, and self-reliance”

The values listed above are central to

- A) Maosim
- B) Deng Xiaoping Theory
- C) Marxism-Leninism
- D) Confucianism
- E) Stalinism

51. Russia’s Constitution of 1993 created the Constitutional Court for the purpose of

- A) serving as a final court of appeals in criminal and civil cases
- B) backing the president when his decrees are challenged by the Duma
- C) making sure that all laws and decrees are constitutional
- D) training lawyers and judges to understand and apply the rule of law
- E) serving as the only court that makes use of trial by jury

52. As a general rule, cabinet members in Britain are

- A) policy experts in their area of responsibility
- B) politicians who rely on the expertise of high-level bureaucrats
- C) usually a mix of leaders from both major political parties
- D) relatively permanent in their positions
- E) not held responsible for the decisions of the prime minister

53. Which of the following political bodies was (is) the center of policymaking in both the former Soviet Union and China?

- A) the Central Committee
- B) the Secretariat
- C) the Council of Ministers
- D) the National People’s Congress
- E) the Politburo

54. Which of the following is NOT a linkage institution?

- A) The People’s Democratic Party in Nigeria
- B) Trades Union Council in Britain
- C) the British Broadcasting Corporation
- D) PRD in Mexico
- E) the Guardian Council in Iran

55. Which country does NOT have a significant minority of Muslims?

- A) Mexico
- B) China
- C) Russia
- D) Nigeria
- E) Britain

## Section II – Free-Response Questions

**Time – 1 hour and 40 minutes**

**50% of the Exam**

### Short-Answer Concepts: 5 questions (30 minutes)

1. Describe the current relationship between Britain and the European Union. Describe one way that membership in the EU benefits Britain. Describe one disadvantage of membership in the EU for Britain.
2. A major reform bill in 1986 changed the procedure for selecting representatives to Mexico's Chamber of Deputies. Describe the procedure that the bill put in place. Explain two political consequences of the reform.
3. Describe a major social cleavage in Russia. Describe one problem that the cleavage has created for the Russian political system. Describe one policy that the Russian government has put in place to address that problem.
4. Explain two reasons why most countries have bicameral legislatures. Describe one disadvantage of a bicameral legislature for the policymaking process.
5. Describe Iran's population policy during the first few years after the Revolution of 1979. Describe one way that Iran's population policy has changed in recent years. Describe one consequence of that policy change for Iranian society.

**Conceptual Analysis Question (30 minutes)**

6. Democracies may be categorized as either liberal or illiberal.

- a) Describe three characteristics of a liberal democracy.
- b) Describe two characteristics of an illiberal democracy.
- c) Describe one characteristic that liberal and illiberal democracies have in common.
- d) Explain one difference between an illiberal democracy and an authoritarian regime.

**Country Context Questions (40 minutes)**

7. The executive branch in both Britain and Russia have a head of state and a head of government.

- a) Identify the head of state and the head of government in Britain.
- b) Identify the head of state and the head of government in Russia.
- c) Explain two differences between the role that the head of state in Britain plays in policymaking and the role that the head of state in Russia plays in policymaking.
- d) Explain two differences between the role that the head of government in Britain plays in policymaking and the role that the head of government in Russia plays in policymaking.

8. The legislatures of both Mexico and Nigeria are basic structures of the political system.

- a) Identify the legislative body in Mexico that represents regions of the country. Identify the legislative body in Nigeria that represents regions in the country.
- b) Describe one similarity in the way that representatives to the lower house are selected in Mexico and Nigeria. Describe one difference in the way that representatives to the lower house are selected in Mexico and Nigeria.
- c) Explain one similarity between the relationship of the legislature to the executive branch in Mexico and Nigeria. Explain one difference between the relationship of the legislature to the executive branch in Mexico and Nigeria.

## PRACTICE EXAMINATION TWO

### Part I – Multiple-choice Questions

**55 Questions (45 minutes)**

**50% of the Exam**

1. Which of the following is the best explanation for the rampant corruption within the Chinese economic and political system?
  - A) the combination of *guanxi* and the economic boom of the past few decades
  - B) appointment of leaders through the *nomenklatura* system
  - C) the absence of any viable religions in China
  - D) weak enforcement of laws and a weak military
  - E) new restrictions on entrepreneurs
  
2. The only international organization that has adopted a common currency is
  - A) NAFTA
  - B) the European Union
  - C) the United Nations
  - D) the World Trade Organization
  - E) the World Bank
  
3. Which of the following is the MOST significant source of legitimacy and authority for the Iranian political system?
  - A) The Constitution of 1979
  - B) *Qanun*
  - C) *Sharia*
  - D) Popular elections
  - E) *Velayat-e-faqih*
  
4. Rational-legal legitimacy is based on
  - A) strong historical traditions
  - B) a charismatic personality
  - C) authoritarian power
  - D) a system of well-established laws and procedures
  - E) the reasoning ability of a highly educated elite
  
5. The practice of establishing state-owned companies headed by men loyal to the heads of state and government in both Russia and Iran is a form of
  - A) democratic centralism
  - B) state corporatism
  - C) interest group plurality
  - D) statism
  - E) totalitarianism
  
6. Which of the following is/are NOT appointed by Iran's supreme leader?
  - A) half of the members of the Guardian Council
  - B) members of the Expediency Council
  - C) the head of the Judiciary
  - D) many nongovernmental directors
  - E) the president

7. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of the judicial systems of modern Russia and China?

- A) Both systems act independently from the executive and judicial branches.
- B) The Russian system includes a structure that has the power of judicial review; China does not.
- C) Both systems are firmly under the control of each country's communist party.
- D) Neither system has courts on a national level; all proceedings occur in local courts.
- E) Neither system adheres to specific law codes.

8. Which of the following institutions in the Iranian political system MOST directly reflects democratic principles?

- A) the cabinet
- B) the Guardian Council
- C) the Expediency Council
- D) the *Majles*
- E) the Revolutionary Guards

9. Which of the following is a feature of the current Mexican political system?

- A) It is a one-party state.
- B) It has a parliamentary system.
- C) Both houses of the legislature have strong representation from three political parties.
- D) The executive is composed of both a president and a prime minister.
- E) It is a unitary state with regional officials appointed by the president.

10. In comparison to the Iranian Constitution of 1979, the 1999 Nigerian Constitution

- A) is a much less important source of political authority
- B) has been amended less frequently
- C) is based more solidly in sharia
- D) provides for a president as head of government
- E) gives the military much less policymaking power

11. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of political systems in Mexico and Iran?

- A) Mexico has an elected president; Iran's president is appointed by the supreme leader.
- B) Neither system makes use of a plurality electoral system.
- C) In both systems, religious institutions play an active role in policymaking.
- D) Both systems have bureaucracies that operate independently from the president.
- E) Iran has a unicameral legislature; Mexico has a bicameral legislature.

12. International organizations have developed structural adjustment programs for Nigeria in order to help the country

- A) boost profits from oil
- B) pay down its debt
- C) close the gap between the rich and the poor
- D) compete with Latin American countries in the international market
- E) develop a federal character



13. In comparison to the National People's Congress in China, the *Majles* in Iran

- A) is not directly elected by the people
- B) represents regions
- C) selects the president
- D) has real policymaking power
- E) allows only clerics to be representatives

14. Two revolutions whose major goal was ideological purification were

- A) China's Cultural Revolution and Iran's Cultural Revolution
- B) Russia's Revolution of 1917 and Mexico's Revolution of 1910-1911
- C) China's Cultural Revolution and Russia's Revolution of 1917
- D) Iran's Cultural Revolution and Mexico's Revolution of 1910-1911
- E) China's Revolution of 1911 and China's Cultural Revolution

15. According to the Constitution of 1917, the Mexican political system is

- A) presidential
- B) parliamentary
- C) semi-presidential
- D) a theocracy
- E) unitary

16. Which of the following is an accurate statement about the population of China?

- A) The population is spread out fairly evenly across the country.
- B) Population is more concentrated in the southern part of the country.
- C) The western part of the country is sparsely populated.
- D) Population hugs the coastlines with almost no large inland cities.
- E) Population is more concentrated in the northern part of the country.

17. Which of the following is an ideology that places a great deal of emphasis on individual political and economic freedom?

- A) liberalism
- B) communism
- C) fascism
- D) socialism
- E) corporatism

18. In Chinese politics *fang-shou* is the process of

- A) decentralizing policy making powers to the regional levels
- B) a tightening up-loosening up cycle that reflects factional power
- C) establishing a line of communication between party leaders and ordinary citizens
- D) allowing capitalist competition within the Special Economic Zones
- E) vertical supervision of each level of government by a higher level

19. Reactionaries are similar to conservatives in that they generally

- A) support gradual reform
- B) support revolutions
- C) want to turn the clock back to an earlier era
- D) advocate coups d'état
- E) oppose both revolution and reform

20. The commander in chief of the armed forces in Iran is the

- A) supreme leader
- B) president
- C) head of the Assembly of Religious Experts
- D) chief of staff
- E) head of the Guardian Council

21. Asymmetric federalism describes the Russian political system because

- A) The Duma has no real check on the president
- B) The president is much more powerful than the prime minister
- C) Some regions are more autonomous than others
- D) Some areas are called republics and others are called autonomous regions
- E) Governors of states are appointed by the president

22. Which of the following types of organization generally exists within civil society?

- A) legislatures
- B) judiciaries
- C) political parties
- D) advocacy groups
- E) government bureaucracies

23. A state that concentrates all policy-making powers in one central geographic place has a

- A) confederal system
- B) federal system
- C) unitary system
- D) first past the post system
- E) parliamentary system

24. The ability of a state to carry out actions or policies within their borders independently from interference either from the inside or the outside is best defined as

- A) power
- B) sovereignty
- C) authority
- D) centralization
- E) politicization

25. A group of people that is bound together by a common political identity is best defined as a(n)

- A) state
- B) regime
- C) society
- D) ethnicity
- E) nation

26. The belief that a strong government should have control of the political and economic systems is called

- A) liberalism
- B) corporatism
- C) secularism
- D) statism
- E) positivism

27. In contrast to proportional-representation systems, plurality electoral systems tend to encourage political party systems characterized by

- A) large, broad-based, and fewer parties
- B) more parties with extreme ideological views
- C) large competitive regional parties
- D) smaller, more ideological, and more parties
- E) parties based on informal patron-client networks

28. Post-modernist values contrast with modernist values in that post-modernist values emphasize

- A) materialism
- B) rationalism
- C) freedom
- D) technology
- E) quality of life

29. A major criticism of a pluralist interest group system is that it

- A) creates confusion and inefficiency in the policymaking process
- B) discourages interest group participation
- C) gives the government too little power in the policymaking process
- D) puts groups in an unequal partnership with government
- E) allows interest groups to be controlled by the political parties

30. a coup d'état is LEAST likely to occur in a(n)

- A) less developed country
- B) developing country
- C) authoritarian regime
- D) totalitarian regime
- E) liberal democracy

31. When people find common interests with people that live in other corners of the globe through nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), they contribute to the development of a global

- A) Nationalism
- B) Democratization
- C) Cosmopolitanism
- D) "transmission belt"
- E) Patron-client system

32. A bureaucrat is most likely to have discretionary power in a(n)

- A) Authoritarian state
- B) Liberal democracy
- C) Country with a mixed economy
- D) Country that practices state corporatism
- E) Developing country

33. Britain's gradual inclusion of people in the political process during the 19<sup>th</sup> century was one reason that few of its citizens were attracted to

- A) A market economy
- B) Fascism
- C) Religious fundamentalism
- D) Marxism
- E) Nationalism

34. Britain has a relatively high amount of social capital, which means that the country has

- A) a high GDP per capita
- B) a relatively narrow gap between the rich and the poor
- C) a high Human Development Index (HDI) score, according to the United Nations
- D) a mixed economy with a good bit of capitalism
- E) reciprocity and trust among citizens and between citizens and the state

35. The European Parliament is the only directly elected body of the EU, and it is the weakest one. This fact may be used to argue that the EU

- A) has not successfully formed a common market
- B) can never replace national governments
- C) will have problems integrating its newest members
- D) does not have true separation of powers
- E) has a democratic deficit

36. Which of the following political parties have formed a one-party system that controlled a country's government in recent years?

- A) PRI in Mexico and CCP in China
- B) People's Democratic Party in Nigeria and CCP of China
- C) Communist Party in the Soviet Union and Labour Party in Britain
- D) PRI in Mexico and People's Democratic Party in Nigeria
- E) Communist Party in the Soviet Union and PAN in Mexico

37. *Sharia* law is commonly applied in the legal systems of

- A) Iran and southern Nigeria
- B) southern and northern Nigeria
- C) Iran and northern Nigeria
- D) Iran only
- E) northern Nigeria only

38. Which of the following political parties has a history of domination by one man?

- A) PRD in Mexico
- B) Labour Party in Britain
- C) People's Democratic Party in Nigeria
- D) United Russia Party in Russia
- E) Chinese Communist Party

39. Which of the following countries has had the MOST pronounced democratization movement in recent years?

- A) Russia
- B) Mexico
- C) China
- D) Nigeria
- E) Iran

40. Plenums play an important role in Chinese government and politics because they

- A) bring together the political elite and provide the forum for selection of CCP leadership
- B) provide a way for ordinary citizens to participate in political activities and give feedback to the government
- C) allow capitalism to flourish in selected places and encourage profits from trade
- D) encourage towns and villages to develop industry and agricultural productivity
- E) allow members of the politburo to solicit financial backing for their programs and expenses

41. Which of the following countries has created NO political structure for judicial review?

- A) Nigeria and Iran
- B) China and Russia
- C) Mexico and Nigeria
- D) Britain and Mexico
- E) China and Britain

42. Which of the following is an accurate description of population issues in Russia?

- (A) Currently there is a significant imbalance between the number of men and women.
- (B) Currently, the population is growing more rapidly than the economy can comfortably accommodate.
- (C) Life expectancy is significantly higher for men than for women.
- (D) In recent years, Russia has suffered a dramatic drop in its overall population.
- (E) Death rates in Russia are declining significantly, but so are birth rates.

43. Which of the following elected officials is limited by the country's constitution to only one term of office?

- A) the Russian president
- B) the British prime minister
- C) the Nigerian president
- D) the Mexican president
- E) the Iranian president

44. Which of the following is the BEST description of the political system of Iran?

- A) It is a unitary state, but has taken significant steps toward devolution.
- B) It is a unitary state, with few signs of real authority granted to local officials.
- C) It is a federalist state in name, but in reality is a unitary state.
- D) It is a federalist state in name and in reality.
- E) It is a confederal state, with little power granted to the central government.

45. An example of a "transmission belt" interest group is the

- A) Trades Council in Britain
- B) Power Holding Company in Nigeria
- C) Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People in Nigeria
- D) *Majles* in Iran
- E) Youth League in China

46. The gap in literacy rates between men and women is highest in

- A) China and Iran
- B) China and Russia
- C) Iran and Nigeria
- D) Nigeria and Mexico
- E) Mexico and Russia

47. If a country has a low level of social capital, a likely result is that it will be

- A) difficult to maintain economic health
- B) more inclined to develop a conflictual political culture
- C) difficult to establish reliable trade networks with other countries
- D) more inclined toward authoritarian government
- E) a parliamentary, rather than a presidential, system

48. Which of the following government officials would be most likely to have a considerable amount of discretionary power in political policymaking?

- A) a cabinet member in a communist state
- B) a patronage appointee in an authoritarian regime
- C) a bureaucrat in a democratic regime
- D) a technocrat
- E) a military officer in a democratic regime

49. The head of government in Iran is the

- A) supreme leader
- B) head of the Guardian Council
- C) prime minister
- D) president
- E) shah

50. The presidents of Mexico and Russia are both

- A) heads of majority parties in the lower house of the legislature
- B) directly elected by the people
- C) second in command to a prime minister
- D) heads of unitary states
- E) protected from impeachment by a constitution

51. The British House of Commons and the Russian Duma both have the power to

- A) impeach the president
- B) call for new elections to their respective upper houses
- C) pass legislation
- D) select a vice president
- E) appoint judges to Constitutional Courts

52. Which of the following best explains why two parties have usually dominated the British House of Commons, even though several candidates compete in most races for seats in Commons?

- A) Very often more than two candidates from the same party compete against one another.
- B) Run-off elections almost always leave candidates from the major parties to compete in the second round.
- C) No third party has ever garnered enough widespread support to gain seats in Commons.
- D) Most challengers for seats in Commons are not affiliated with political parties.
- E) The first-past-the-post (plurality) voting system strongly favors victory for large parties with widespread appeal.

53. The Russian tradition of statism has meant that citizens generally

- A) mistrust the government
- B) function more as subjects than as participants
- C) believe in egalitarianism
- D) experience conflict between Slavic and western values
- E) support broad political and economic reforms

54. In Mexico, in comparison to PRI and PAN, the ideological leanings of PRD may best be described as

- A) to the left of both the other parties
- B) to the right of both the other parties
- C) more conservative than PRI, but not as liberal as PAN
- D) neutral; PRD is not an ideological party
- E) more liberal than PRI, but more conservative than PAN

55. Which of the following is the BEST example of the loss of legitimacy by a left wing authoritarian regime during the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

- A) the Iranian Revolution of 1979
- B) the Mexican Revolution of 1911
- C) the Chinese Cultural Revolution
- D) the breakup of the Soviet Union
- E) the fall of the last military regime in Nigeria in 1999

**Section II – Free-Response Questions****Time – 1 hour and 40 minutes****50% of the Exam****Short-Answer Concepts: 5 questions (30 minutes)**

1. Explain the difference between common law and code law. Identify one country studied in the AP Comparative Government and Politics course with a legal system based on common law. Explain one consequence of a common law basis for the country's legal system.
2. Political legitimacy has long been problematic for Nigeria. Explain three reasons why the political legitimacy of Nigeria's government is currently at a low level.
3. Corruption is a major problem for the governments of many countries, including China. Explain two reasons why corruption in China has become a serious issue over the past 30 years. Explain one policy response of the Chinese government intended to curb corruption.
4. Define a coalition cabinet. Describe one reason why a government might form a coalition cabinet. Describe one disadvantage of a coalition cabinet for policymaking.
5. Define state corporatism. Define neocorporatism. Describe the country studied in the AP Comparative Government and Politics that practiced state corporatism until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century but now practices neocorporatism.

**Conceptual Analysis Question (30 minutes)**

6. Democracies may organize their governments as parliamentary systems or presidential systems.
  - a) Describe a parliamentary system. Describe a presidential system.
  - b) Explain two advantages that a parliamentary system has over a presidential system.
  - c) Explain two advantages that a presidential system has over a parliamentary system.

**Country-Context Questions (40 minutes)**

7. The military plays varying roles in the policymaking process from country to country.
  - a) Compare the role the military plays in the policymaking process in China with the role the military plays in policymaking in Nigeria.
  - b) Discuss two political consequences of the military role in the policymaking process in China.
  - c) Discuss two political consequences of the military role in the policymaking process in Nigeria.
8. Contrast the success of economic reform programs in Iran and Mexico by doing the following:
  - a) Identify one specific reform measure taken since 1985 in Iran. Identify one specific reform measure taken since 1985 in Mexico.
  - b) Discuss one barrier AND one advantage that Iran has had in implementing economic reform. Identify one barrier AND one advantage that Mexico has had in implementing economic reform.
  - c) Explain why one country that you discussed in part (b) was more successful than the other in implementing economic reform programs.

## COMPARATIVE EXECUTIVES

"H.O.S." = Head of State, "H.O.G." = Head of Government

Country	Title(s)	How Chosen	Terms in Office	Powers
United Kingdom	Monarch (H.O.S.)	Hereditary (Royal succession is approved by Parliament)	Life	Minimal: as symbolic H.O.S., she "approves" the election of the majority party and asks its leader (the future Prime Minister) to form "her Majesty's Government"
	Prime Minister (H.O.G.)	Elected by a majority of the House of Commons	Five years; less, if a vote of "no confidence" requires new elections	
Russia	President (H.O.S.)	Elected by popular majority in a national election (a runoff election is required if no candidate wins over 50% of the vote)	Six years: with a consecutive two-term limit	Initiates domestic and foreign policies; submits legislation to the Duma for approval; may call a referendum
	Prime Minister (H.O.G.)	Appointed by President; must be approved by the Duma	Subject to removal by either the president or a vote of no confidence by the Duma	Manages legislation in the Duma; may initiate legislation; oversees cabinet and government departments
China	President and Vice President (H.O.S.)	Top leaders of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP); formally elected by the National People's Congress	Five years, with a two term limit	All foreign and domestic policy
	Prime Minister (H.O.G.)	Appointed by the President, confirmed by the NPC		Oversees government bureaus and the implementation of policies
Nigeria	President (H.O.S. and H.O.G.) Vice President	Election by popular vote; a candidate must win a minimum of 25% of votes in at least 2/3 of Nigeria's 36 states	Four years, with a two-term limit	Directs all foreign and domestic policy decision-making
Mexico	President (H.O.S. and H.O.G.)	National popular election; there is no constitutional requirement that a candidate must win a majority of votes to win	Six years ( <i>sexenio</i> ) for one term only	--Foreign and domestic policy --cabinet appointments --appointment, with approval of the Senate, of judges of the the Supreme Court
Iran	Supreme Leader (H.O.S.)	Chosen by the Assembly of Religious Experts. Must be a Shi'ite cleric (and thus always a male)	No fixed term. He may be replaced by the Assembly as well; the Assembly has never acted on this power.	Extensive powers include commander in chief of the armed forces, power to declare war; direct appointment of judges, nomination of half (6) of the Guardian Council, appointment of the Expediency Council, and dismissal of the president.
	President (H.O.G.)	Popular election in a nationwide vote (all citizens 18 and over) Must be a Shi'ite Muslim.	four years, with a two-term limit	Manages the budget and economic policies, signs treaties, proposes legislation to the <i>Majles</i> . Appoints vice-presidents (no fixed number), cabinet officers, and most government officials, including governors

## COMPARATIVE BUREAUCRACIES

The executive branch carries out ("executes") national policies and laws. Governments employ people as civil servants to do this work. This group is known collectively as the nation's bureaucracy.

## UNITED KINGDOM

The party in power (known as "Her Majesty's Government") is led by the Prime Minister, who chooses a Cabinet, usually from among the Members of Parliament. Each Cabinet member is the head of an existing bureaucracy, and develops legislation in consultation its civil servants. Government employees in the United Kingdom are generally regarded as professionally trained and politically neutral.

## RUSSIA

Since 1991 the Russian bureaucracy has remained large, as it was under the former Soviet regime. Civil servants can have great powers, especially when the Russian President decides to expand an agency or even to create a new one to carry out policies based on personal preferences. In practice, the Russian state bureaucracy has little separation or political independence from the President.

## CHINA

An appointed State Council of appointed ministers directs the bureaucracy, which is very large (40 million is one estimate) and has extensive powers to manage all aspects of political, economic, and social life in China. Civil servants (called cadres) are often members of the Communist Party, but this is not a requirement. Recently the Chinese government has embarked on a program to reduce the overall size of the bureaucracy by eliminating many positions, especially at the local level.

## NIGERIA

Nigeria's bureaucracy has grown in size for many years. Civil service positions are frequently treated as rewards and political favors, and used for personal benefit (in Nigeria this type of patron-client network is called prebendalism); in practice, the system diminishes the professionalism and political neutrality of Nigerian civil servants, and produces widespread corruption

## MEXICO

Mexican Presidents appoint large numbers of upper-level civil servants as part of their party's patron-client system. Lower-level bureaucrats are unionized, and their positions are protected by civil service laws. The Mexican para-statal system also employs over a million Mexicans as well.

## IRAN

Iran's bureaucracy is large, and has increased in size since the Revolution. Most senior positions are held by Shi'ite clerics, and policy decisions are consistently reviewed to make sure they are compatible with Islamic law.

(Charts compiled by Gray Pederson)



COMPARATIVE LEGISLATURES			
Country	Upper House	Lower House	
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b> Parliament	<p>(In a bicameral system, this term usually designates the chamber in which members are chosen by a <i>less directly representative</i> method. Also, the upper house often provides regional representation.)</p> <p><b>House of Lords</b></p> <p>Approximately 720 members (this number can vary)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--92 Hereditary Peers: hold their seats through inheritance</li> <li>--622 Life Lords: awarded seats by HM Government for an individual's lifetime only</li> <li>--4 Lords Spiritual: 26 Bishops of the Church of England</li> <li>--Lords has no power to initiate or veto legislation, but can delay bills originating in the House of Commons.</li> </ul>	<p>(In a bicameral system, this term usually designates the chamber in which members are chosen by a <i>more representative</i> method)</p> <p><b>House of Commons</b></p> <p>650 members (number can vary) ("MPs" elected in single-member-districts (SMD))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--Hold office up to five years, unless an election is called sooner.</li> <li>--The majority party (or coalition) chooses its leading MP to be the Prime Minister</li> <li>--(PM): PM chooses others MPs to be members of the Cabinet.</li> <li>--Speaker of the House presides, but does not vote unless there is a tie.</li> <li>--The Prime Minister and Cabinet initiate legislation, which must be approved by a majority of the House. The lack of majority on an important vote (called a "vote of no confidence") may result in the PM calling for a new election.</li> </ul>	
<b>RUSSIA</b> Federal Assembly	<p><b>Federation Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--166 Seats, appointed by the executives and heads of legislatures in 83 sub-governments (republics, oblasts, and krais); each unit appoints two members</li> <li>--Members serve four year terms, but changes in term of office may occur because of changes in governorships</li> <li>--The Council may not propose legislation, but its approval is required for measures started by the Duma to become law. The Council may veto or delay passage of a bill.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Duma</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--450 seats, elected on a nationwide basis by proportional representation (PR). A party must receive 7% of the national vote to qualify for a seat.</li> <li>--The Duma may override, with a 2/3 vote, a veto by the Federation Council.</li> <li>--Russia's Prime Minister, who is appointed by the President, must be confirmed by a majority vote of the Duma. If, after three votes, the Duma does not approve the appointment, the President may call for the election of a new Duma.</li> <li>--Members elected for four-year terms, unless the President calls an election sooner.</li> </ul>	
<b>CHINA</b> National People's Congress	<p><b>The National People's Congress is a unicameral body.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--According to the 1982 Constitution, the Congress is highest political authority in the state.</li> <li>--Formal powers include approval of legislation and the appointment of the President, Vice-President, and Premier.</li> <li>--The Congress is composed of approximately 3,000 members who serve for five-year terms.</li> <li>--Election of members takes place through a multi-step process in which candidates run in competitive elections at the local level, then move up through further elections at city, county and provincial congresses. Except at the lowest level, candidates must be approved by the Communist Party.</li> <li>--The Congress meets for two-week sessions once a year. During the rest of the year the business of the Congress is carried on by the Standing Committee</li> <li>--Members of the Congress may carry on significant debate on some issues, but most policy decisions are made by the President and other executives, along with leaders of the Communist Party. Many observers, both inside and outside of China, believe the Congress has limited power to affect policy.</li> </ul>		

COMPARATIVE LEGISLATURES			
UPPER HOUSE		LOWER HOUSE	
<b>NIGERIA</b> The National Assembly	<b>Senate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>--109 members.</li><li>--Each of the 36 states has equal representation, with 3 Senators elected from each state, plus one for the federal district of Abuja.</li><li>--Senators serve for four years term</li><li>--The Senate elects its President, who is third in line of succession for national presidency (after the Vice President).</li><li>--Writes legislation, subject to House and Presidential approval</li></ul>	<b>House of Representatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>--360 members</li><li>--Elected from districts based on equal population. (SMD)</li><li>--Representatives are elected in the same year as the Senate to four-year terms.</li><li>--The House elects a Speaker as leader.</li><li>--Writes legislation, subject to Senate and Presidential approval</li></ul>	
<b>MEXICO</b> Congress	<b>Senate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>--128 Members.</li><li>--Elected by a mixed SMD and PR system. Each of the 32 states elects 3 Senators, a total of 96. A state's winning party may only appoint two, and the party in second place is given the 3rd seat. Another 32 seats are awarded on a national, proportional representation (PR) basis drawn from party lists.</li><li>--Senators serve 6-year terms</li><li>--Writes legislation, subject to Chamber of Deputies and Presidential approval</li></ul>	<b>Chamber of Deputies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>--500 Members.</li><li>--300 are chosen by SMD; 200 are chosen by PR from party lists in five regional districts. No party may have more than 300 seats.</li><li>--Deputies serve for three years</li><li>--Writes legislation, subject to Senate and Presidential approval</li></ul>	
<b>IRAN</b> <i>Majlis</i>	<b>Unicameral legislature:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>--290 Members</li><li>--Elected for four years from single-members districts (SMD) in a national vote by all citizens 16 years and older</li><li>--Members must be Muslim, except for five seats set aside for religious minorities (Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians)</li><li>--chooses six members of the Guardian Council</li><li>--can enact laws (qanun, or "secular" laws) but all legislative actions are subject to approval by the Guardian Council</li><li>--approves budgets</li></ul>		

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