Ateneo de Manila University

Archīum Ateneo

2010

Democratization and peace within states

Cristina Jayme Montiel
Ateneo de Manila University, cmontiel@ateneo.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://archium.ateneo.edu/psychology-faculty-pubs

Part of the Social Psychology Commons

Custom Citation

THE
OXFORD INTERNATIONAL
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
PEACE

Nigel J. Young

Editor in Chief

VOLUME 1

Abraham Path Initiative–Dunant, Henri

Doyle, Michael W., and Nicholas Sambanis. *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Fearon, James, and David Laitin. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90.

Gleditsch, Kristian S. *All International Politics Is Local: The Diffusion of Conflict, Integration, and Democratization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002.

Hegre, Havard, Tanya Ellingsen, Scott Gates, and Nils Petter Gleditsch. "Toward a Democratic Civil Peace? Political Change and Civil War, 1816–1992." *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 1 (2001): 33–48.

Hegre, Havard, and Nicholas Sambanis. "Sensitivity Analysis of Empirical Results on Civil War Onset." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 4 (2006): 508–535.

Lacina, Bethany. "Explaining the Severity of Civil Wars." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 2 (2006): 276–289.

Paris, Roland. *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Walter, Barbara F. *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002.

BRUCE RUSSETT

DEMOCRATIZATION AND PEACE WITHIN STATES. Democratization is a political process marked by a transition from an authoritarian regime to a more open and representative form of government. Although democratization is often seen as a state process, the transition takes place also at other levels of society, as among social movements and individual political leaders.

During democratization, violence and peace display both direct and structural dimensions. The term "direct violence" denotes intended (rather than accidental) physical and mental harms inflicted on individuals; direct peacebuilding entails the cessation of direct violence. "Structural violence" operates in top-down, unequal social systems to prevent large groups from satisfying basic human needs. Structural peacebuilding transforms these unequal social structures, making them more equal and facilitating the satisfying of basic needs for large populations.

There are five major stages in the development of democratization—control by the authoritarian regime; the toppling of the regime; the power shift after a strong ruler or regime falls; state building; and nation building, that is, building the cooperation of peoples within state boundaries. The nature of violence and peace changes in each stage of democratization.

Stage One: Control by an Authoritarian Regime

An authoritarian regime usually involves full control of the state by one person or one political party, or by a combination of leader and party. Former or acting generals or juntas rule many regimes. In the former Soviet bloc, regimes were controlled by each nation's Communist party. To understand the social fabric of a new democracy, it is essential to analyze the interpersonal and intergroup relations that existed among key personalities and social movements at the height of the oppressive regime.

Direct peacebuilding during an authoritarian regime employs nonviolent means to fight the strong ruler. These include tactics like massive boycotts, offering flowers to the state police, and speaking out for human rights in spite of the risk. Direct peacebuilding eschews any form of militarized tactics such as suicide bombings, assassinations, or kidnapping.

In an authoritarian regime, structural violence thrives in the form of the concentration of power in the hands of a few; political decision making is highly centralized. At the height of the Cold War, many authoritarian regimes in Asia, Africa, and Latin America were propped up by an international form of structural violence—global power in the hands of superpowers like the United States, Russia, and China. At the national level, structural violence then and now creates and is created by direct violence in the form of massive violations of human rights to silence those who oppose the authoritarian regime. The temporal relation between structural and direct violence can be circular, with direct violence used as a tool for creating authoritarian regimes, and regimes employing their firepower to silence political opposition.

Structural peacebuilding in an authoritarian regime involves attempts by political opposition forces to wrest power from the dominant group and to reconfigure the political system from vertical to more horizontal and distributive. Equitable decision-making structures may grow within the very organizational structures of anti-regime political movements. A more democratic, decentralized social movement contains the seeds for future democratic structures, while a centralized movement perpetuates authoritarian systems within prodemocracy groups. A structural peacebuilding narrative should emphasize that political decisions must be made by the majority, rather than merely focusing on an antistrongman storyline.

Stage Two-A: Toppling the Authoritarian Regime

The overthrow of an authoritarian ruler may involve a combination of the weakening of a regime by internal fracturing (usually over access to resources) and the strengthening of opposition forces. Prodemocracy groups may grow stronger with the emergence of charismatic leaders, the creation of a united front incorporating various protest movements, and/or financial and media support from external, international groups. An authoritarian ruler may fall by being captured, killed, or pressured by People Power to flee, as to a Western safe haven. But rarely is a strongman removed by a seamless and open Western-style electoral process. At the end of a drawn-out struggle, the toppling of a strong ruler may include domestic and international negotiations about power sharing, or about the manner by which the ruler will leave his post. For example, as People Power escalated in the Philippines in 1986, the United States requested that President Ferdinand Marcos be allowed to fly to Hawaii and eventually provided a helicopter for his departure.

The fall of a regime may be marked by direct violence, through such militarized methods as the armed struggles of liberation forces and foreign military intervention—carried out in the name of democracy but likely to begin with the carpet bombing of local populations.

Direct peacebuilding, though, involves toppling an authoritarian regime through the use of nonviolent power. Producing the social forcefulness needed to remove a well-entrenched militarized regime calls for effective networking, mobilizing, and consciousness-raising. Networking among various antiauthoritarian forces creates the social infrastructure that draws people toward a shared political goal. During confrontations with the armed forces of the authoritarian state, networked social movements may then mobilize to create a collective force strong enough to face the regime. Consciousness-raising, on the other hand, is an educational process that produces a shared goal (or collective action-frame) among individuals and organizations engaged in the antiregime movement.

The overthrow of a regime may be brought about by a combination of peaceful and violent forms of opposition, at different historical stages of the prodemocracy struggle. For example, in the Filipinos' struggle against the Marcos regime, armed movements dominated the opposition during the darkest years of the dictatorship, while nonviolent groups took the political lead in the

years that immediately preceded the 1986 People Power movement. A similar pattern may be discerned in the mix of armed and nonviolent movements behind the democratic power shifts in East Timor (2002) and Nepal (2006).

The removal of an authoritarian leader is a necessary but insufficient step in a democratization process. If the lead forces are mostly from the wealthy sectors and if they are quiet about redistribution of power and wealth to the majority of the people, then structural peacebuilding does not move forward during the toppling of a regime. One stark form of structural violence during regime fall is foreign intervention, which may merely reinforce the unequal global distribution of power; thus, the intrusion of U.S.-led armed forces that toppled Iraq's Saddam Hussein demonstrates not only direct but also structural violence.

International pressures may push an authoritarian regime to hold elections. This allows the opposition to flex its political muscles openly against the regime. But when opposition groups envision a Western-style electoral campaign to remove an authoritarian regime, they must understand the complexities of the political diaspora under strongman rule. A stand-alone electoral exercise may not topple a regime. But in combination with nonviolent social movements or militarized pressures, the opposition may use an election to remove an authoritarian ruler.

Stage Two-B: Overthrowing a Regime through Elections

Direct and structural violence reinforce each other to deter change through the electoral process in democratizing states. Structural violence positions the dominant group atop a hierarchy that provides the ruling party with the backing of state-legitimized weaponry. Direct violence operates through intelligence networks, police, military, and paramilitary forces that support electoral victory by the dominant group.

Unlike structural violence, direct violence during elections is characterized by dramatic physical acts and permits the identification of particular victim-aggressor individuals. Both domestic and international human-rights organizations may be needed to protect both political leaders and ordinary citizens from direct violence during electoral exercises.

The methods by which a dominant political party or leader corrupts the electoral system so as to favor one

candidate or group over another may be considered structural violence. Transgressors, because their acts are acceptable in the political culture where they operate, usually believe they are doing the right thing. The invisibility and general acceptance of structural violence during elections in new states permits the continuation of electoral violence of a systemic nature.

Manifestations of both direct and structural violence change throughout an electoral process, which may be analyzed as having at least five identifiable segments: precampaign, formal campaign, election day, canvassing of votes until a winner is proclaimed, and the post-proclamation period.

Once a candidate or candidates decide to run, the precampaign begins. During this stage, direct violence may involve the assassination of potential political rivals or outspoken media critics. Structural violence may take the form of those who occupy state power using moves to disenfranchise their potential rivals through such mechanisms as selective tax investigations against opposition businesses and libel suits against critical media.

When the formal campaign starts, direct violence intensifies and may include the killing or kidnapping of rival campaign leaders and the deployment of counterfeit soldiers to burn a rival's house. One of the most striking images of direct violence in recent history is the December 2007 assassination of Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto, twelve days before voting was to take place.

During the formal campaign and in its aftermath, structural violence likewise operates to distort the electoral system. Since the state is expected to enforce electoral rules, state institutions may seize the opportunity to weaken the incumbent's political rivals. The institution best positioned to employ structural violence in favor of state-backed candidates is the electoral commission itself.

On election day direct violence is usually aimed at instilling fear and confusion among the supporters of opposition candidates. Intelligence agents and other militarized operatives may continue to harass insurgent candidates and their supporters by, for example, threatening civilians sympathetic to the opposition, kidnapping candidates or their relatives, or burning voting places. Structural violence may involve systematically positioning the state's militarized forces on the side of the state-backed candidate or candidates. Wealthy candidates, whether state-backed or opposition groups, may buy votes in impoverished communities or obtain them by ferrying voters to polling places.

Vote canvassing (counting and certifying votes) commences after the polls close. Because this is usually toward evening, much direct violence takes place when night falls. Polling places where a rival candidate is winning may be shot up or burned by armed men. Electric power may be cut off and ballot boxes snatched by armed intruders.

The effects of structural violence on the electoral process are most marked in the canvassing stage. Groups who control state and economic power use politico-military pressure and huge amounts of money to persuade canvassers and other electoral officers to count in favor of their respective candidates.

Even after a winner is proclaimed, electoral violence continues, but it changes in form. National electoral victories perceived to have been obtained fraudulently trigger street rallies that often turn bloody. Mass protests may start as nonviolent mobilizations, but if peaceful opposition gains popular support, the "legitimate" winner may activate militarized forces to silence them. As the camp of the proclaimed winner intensifies its assault on street marches, the opposition may divide into two camps. One remains nonviolent and relies on persuasive tactics such as legal action or diplomatic or media blitzes to press for a truthful electoral outcome. The other responds violently against the state's forces. This may result in hundreds or thousands of deaths and the displacement of whole communities. Thus, during an electoral power shift in an emerging democratic state, it is the postelection stage that is most vulnerable to massive direct violence.

Stage Three: Power Shift

After an authoritarian leader is removed from office, the process of democratization requires attendance to the immediate aftermath of a victorious struggle. This is a sensitive historical moment marked by celebrative euphoria and the danger of collective and personal vendettas conducted by the groups who struggled to topple the authoritarian regime. Victorious groups must now consolidate their hold on the new state, dismantling the authoritarian structure by removing its key backers and dealing with fellow opposition forces that may have nondemocratic agendas. New forms of negotiated power sharing may evolve among former oppositionists.

There is also a psychological change that arises among the victorious individuals and groups who had been operating against the state. Finding themselves at the center of the state, they may become intoxicated

with their new positions of power, falling into the abyss of corruption and abuse of power themselves. These new leaders may also carry with them personal and collective memories of victimization—by the previous regime. How they manage this psychological terrain may also influence the manner in which they lead during the volatile transition period.

Stage Four: State Building

As political instability subsides, the new democracy attends to state building. This entails making the state's executive, legislative, and judicial functions work to improve the lives of ordinary people as well as keeping military institutions from backing the interests of one family or political party. During the period of state building, direct violence may arise not only in the form of human-rights abuses by a restless military but also through the return to arms of liberationists whose personal or collective agendas were not satisfied during the transition from authoritarian rule.

State building is extremely difficult and should be viewed as a long-term project. Direct peacebuilding takes the form of making the state apparatus work for the people in an honest and efficient way, continuing political protests in nonviolent rather than armed forms, and building nonpolitical military and police forces.

During state building, structural violence may arise if the new political and economic configurations are essentially vertical, for example if the new system keeps power in the hands of one family, territory, or political group, and denies oppositionists the right to contest it. On the other hand, structural peacebuilding now may entail crafting legislation fostering more autonomous local governments or banning members of political dynasties from running for office.

It is also during state building that structural violence may arise from inequitable access to material resources. When an internal war comes to an end, new sources of wealth develop from an infusion of international development funds and the involvement of multinational companies. Foreign development agencies are eager to support a new democracy, and the funds are usually channeled through government agencies. But a new state's governmental players may lapse into a corrupt political culture. Since the country is now more stable, conditions become conducive to commercialism and the interests of multinational businesses. They may hold contracts to build technological infrastructure and permits to exploit natural resources such as oil and minerals. They may gain access through legitimate or special-favor deals with leaders in the new government.

In order to fortify structural peace as the country strengthens its state institutions, leaders must attend to the appropriate allocation of development funds, making sure that such funds actually benefit the poorest sectors of society. They must shift their focus from allocation of funds to the flow of funds, because in each step unseen processes may serve to channel material and political goods to development-aid and political brokers, rather than to impoverished communities. Another way to strengthen structural peace is to craft fair and honest procedures for international economic interactions; thus, in dealing with multinational companies, new governments could ensure that transnational corporations extracting oil, gas, or minerals benefit local communities—not only local political brokers—where they operate, as well as meet international environmental standards.

Stage Five: Nation Building

In some countries with ethnic groups another stage, nation building, takes place along with or after a few years of state building. A nation is about people within a political unit called the state. Nation building has to do with recognizing one or several categories of peoples within a state. This process may be especially complex in countries where boundaries were defined by imperial powers without regard to ethnic groupings.

During nation building, direct violence may arise in the form of armed struggle between the state and social movements pushing for increased territorial autonomy. In the name of state survival and proclaiming constitutional legitimacy, the state may use its military to suffocate autonomy or secession movements. These movements may retaliate militarily, claiming self-defense. In contrast, direct peacebuilding may take the form of the employment of culture-based conflict-resolution strategies to build harmonious intergroup relations and may deal with substantive political demands in other nonviolent ways.

A structural peacebuilding approach recognizes the need to reconfigure government and cultural structures so as to foster autonomy along ethnic lines and provide rules in anticipation of possible territorial breakaways. Experiments in federalizing a state structure may be considered vehicles for structural peacebuilding. But the substance of and social process for federalizing may be dissimilar from those in older federal states like Germany and the United States and may evolve from the

struggles of newer democracies like Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and perhaps eventually Iraq.

Decentralizing state structures is understandably an important but insufficient step toward nation building. Such changes must arise alongside other cultural and economic transformations. In the Philippines, for example, a new federal state would need to arise hand in hand with a change in political culture toward recognizing the value of local empowerment, the dismantling of local family dynasties, and a more equitable distribution of land, especially in more rural territories.

This entry was supported by a 2008 Professorial Chair from the Ateneo de Manila University.

[*See also* Civil Society and Peacebuilding; Democratization and Peacebuilding; Peacebuilding; *and* Violence, *subentry on* Direct, Structural, and Cultural Violence.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Badescu, Gabriel, and Eric M. Uslaner, eds. *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. [Describes the democratization process from a collective viewpoint and looks at groups, social movements, and organizations involved in the democratization process. This is usually the lens used by sociologists and social psychologists.]

Montiel, Cristina Jayme, and Daniel J. Christie. "Conceptual Frame for a Psychology of Nonviolent Democratic Transitions: Positioning across Analytical Layers." In *Global Conflict Resolution through Positioning Analysis*, edited by Fathali M. Moghaddam, Rom Harré, and Naomi Lee. New York and London: Springer, 2007. [Describes the interrelationship of persons, collectives, and the state during democratization.]

Nagle, John D., and Alison Mahr. *Democracy and Democratization: Post-Communist Europe in a Comparative Perspective*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1999. [Describes the democratization process from the viewpoint of the political state. This is the lens usually used by political scientists.]

Schatz, Sara, and Javier Jesus Gutierrez-Rexach. *Conceptual Structure and Social Change: The Ideological Architecture of Democratization*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002. [Describes the democratization process from a cognitive/mental viewpoint, looking at what goes on inside the individual's mind. This is the lens usually used by psychologists.]

CRISTINA JAYME MONTIEL

DESERTION FROM ARMED FORCES. See Conscientious Objection, *subentry on* Conscientious Objectors in the Armed Forces; Draft Evasion and Desertion; Mutiny and Organized Resistance in the Armed Forces; *and* War Resistance as a Global Phenomenon.

DÉTENTE AND HUMAN RIGHTS. *Détente* refers here to the particular relaxation of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union from the late 1960s until the end of the 1970s (rather than to the "thaw" of the 1980s). The Soviet Union had then achieved approximate parity with the United States in nuclear weapons. However, continued expansion of its nuclear capacity was exposing it to serious economic stress. It was also concerned about its rift with China and the possibility that the United States would exploit that. In positive terms, the Soviet leaders were encouraged by the Ostpolitik of Willy Brandt, the West German foreign minister (1966–1969) and then chancellor (1969–1974); they saw in it the possibility for better relations with Western Europe and the opportunity to drive a wedge between Western Europe and the United States. For its own part, the United States was engaged in the costly and seemingly endless war in Vietnam. Its leaders hoped that if it improved relations with the Soviet Union and China it could play one against the other, and persuade both to pressure the North Vietnamese to come to terms with the United States and its South Vietnamese client. In the late 1970s détente gave way—driven by the end of the Vietnam War and by the normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China and a more aggressive turn in the Soviet Union—to a period of renewed tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. President Jimmy Carter was less enthusiastic about détente than Presidents Richard Nixon or Gerald Ford had been. He emphasized the human-rights shortcomings of the Soviet Union, condemned its 1979 invasion of Afghanistan, and initiated a significant expansion of U.S. military might, which was continued by his successor, Ronald Reagan.

Arms-Control Agreements

While détente was primarily a thaw in military and diplomatic relations, it also provided the setting for significant developments in the area of human rights. If the most important of these is the inherent right to life and security of the person (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 3), détente produced a number of arms-control agreements that helped to lessen the threat of nuclear conflict. Among these were the Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968), the Seabed Treaty (1971), the Biological Weapons Convention (1972), the SALT I Agreement

RAFFAELE MARCHETTI
LUISS Guido Carli University, Rome
International Exclusion
Transnational Social Movements

CHRISTOPHER MARCOUX
College of William and Mary
Epistemic Communities

LILLIAN MARK
The Biosophical Institute, South Euclid, Ohio
Biosophy: The Work of Frederick Kettner
Spinoza's Ideas on War and Peace

BRIAN MARTIN
University of Wollongong, Australia
Anti-Coup
Information Technology and Peace Activism
Power in Nonviolence Theory

JIM MASSELOS
University of Sydney
Indian National Movement

DANIEL M. MAYTON II
Lewis-Clarke State College
Gandhian Theory of Nonviolence

JACK MENDELSOHN
George Washington University
Arms Control and Disarmament: Politics
No-First-Use Nuclear Policies

JULIE A. MERTUS
American University, Washington, D.C.
Humanitarian Law, International
Human Rights Watch

DAVID S. MEYER
University of California, Irvine
United States Peace Movement as Social Movement

HUGH MIALL
University of Kent, United Kingdom
Conflict Studies versus Peace Studies
Third-party Intervention: The Role of Intermediaries

ANNE MARIE MIELE
Independent Scholar, Vernon, New Jersey
Women's Role in Peacemaking

GEAROID MILLAR
Syracuse University
Truth and Reconciliation Commissions

IVANA MILOJEVIĆ
University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland,
   Australia
Education and Peace Futures

JOHN MINNION
Independent Scholar
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: 1965–1978

PATIT PABAN MISHRA
Sambalpur University, Orissa, India
Lebanon Hostage Crisis, UN Role in
Women's Peace Camps

CHRISTOPHER MITCHELL
George Mason University, Emeritus
Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension
   Reduction

BARBARA MITCHELS
Independent Scholar, Devon, United Kingdom
Curle, Adam

ELAHE MOHTASHAM
Foreign Policy Centre, London
Arms Control and Disarmament: Negotiations
Arms Control and Disarmament: Theory
Nuclear Proliferation Programs: Iran and North Korea
Unilateral Nuclear Disarmament

JERÓNIMO MOLINA CANO
Universidad de Murcia, Spain
Bouthoul, Gaston

LUCIA MONTANARO
International Alert, London
Peace Missions, International

CRISTINA JAYME MONTIEL
Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Phillipines
Democratization and Peace within States
Peacebuilding: An Overview